

“All Politics Is Regional”: Emerging Powers and the Regionalization of Global Governance



Andrej Krickovic

*Tip O'Neill famously claimed, "All politics is local." As global governance falters and US leadership wanes, will "all politics" become regional with emerging powers (China, Russia, Brazil) taking responsibility for leadership at the regional level? While regional powers are providing effective leadership on free trade and financial stability, they have made much less progress on security issues where their approaches to certain problems, such as human security, diverge from those adopted by the West. Their ability to provide regional leadership is hampered by the increasing complexities of the modern world, including the conflicting dynamics of regionalism itself. The emergence of a centralized system of regional governance based on the hegemony of regional leaders is therefore unlikely. Instead, we are seeing the emergence of a complex and dynamic system of governance that includes a broad range of actors operating on multiple and overlapping levels. **KEYWORDS:** global governance, regionalism, emerging powers.*

THE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY IS HAVING AN INCREASINGLY DIFFICULT TIME in dealing with global governance issues. The established multilateral global governance framework is failing to adequately address global crises and challenges, and is increasingly unable to get states to comply with existing binding global arrangements or to implement new ones. Progress on global free trade is making little headway. Though the membership of the World Trade Organization (WTO) has expanded in recent years, no new liberalization of trade in goods has come from multilateral negotiations since the WTO's founding in 1995. Little progress has been made to reform the world financial system to remove the imbalances that caused the last global financial crisis. Global negotiations on climate change are at a standstill, with fundamental disagreements between developing and developed countries over how the responsibility for reducing carbon emissions should be divided between them. Nonconventional security threats, such as terrorism and the spread of weapons of mass destruction, seem no nearer to being eliminated. Even conventional security threats, which if measured in terms of interstate war and armed conflict and conventional battle deaths have declined markedly since the end of World War II, again seem to be on the

rise. The post-Cold War security order in Europe, which has kept peace between Russia and the West for decades, is unraveling as a result of the Ukraine crisis and NATO and Russia are again starting to look at each other as their primary security threat. China's territorial claims in the South China Sea are giving rise to naval arms races and bring the real possibility of open military conflict between China and Asia's smaller powers (possibly backed up by the United States, depending on the country and the exact circumstances).

As global governance begins to falter, issues that in the past have been addressed at the multilateral (global) level are increasingly being addressed at the regional level with emerging regional powers taking the lead. US senator Tip O'Neill famously claimed, "All politics is local." As the United States' and the West's willingness and ability to lead decline and the power and capabilities of regional leaders such as China, Russia, and Brazil continue to rise, will all international politics become regional? Will governance at the regional level under the stewardship of regional powers provide a viable alternative framework for global governance and the provision of global collective goods such as security, free trade, and financial stability?

In this article, I look to answer this question by examining recent efforts by three major regional powers (Russia, China, and Brazil) to take the lead in tackling global governance issues at the regional level. I chose these three countries because they have been the most proactive in terms of their willingness to take on global governance responsibilities at the regional level. Though often considered to be important emerging powers, India and South Africa were excluded from my analysis because they have failed to take up regional responsibilities, either because of their unwillingness to do so (India) or their still limited capabilities (South Africa).

I focus on three key issue areas here: free trade, finance (particularly the ability to be the lender of last resort in times of crisis), and security (with a focus on nontraditional security threats). Not only are these three issue areas critical global governance questions, they are also the areas where regional leaders have invested the most effort in bringing concerns that have previously been addressed at the global to the regional level. Critical global governance issues, such as the environment, have received much less attention at the regional level from emerging powers. To be sure, regional powers such as India and Brazil have been active on global environmental issues, representing the concerns of developing states and proposing innovative solutions to environmental problems at global fora like the UN Conference on Climate Change. However, their leadership in this area is focused on the multilateral and global level.

Moreover, there is an interesting variation in the degree to which these three problems are successfully being dealt with at the regional level. Regional powers are providing effective leadership on free trade and have

made great efforts to set up financial stability. However, their record on security is mixed. They have made considerable efforts to promote regional security institutions and have had some success in increasing their region's capacity to counter nontraditional security threats such as terrorism. But they have been less successful in providing human security, that is, in promoting the security interests of individuals and populations rather than the security interest of states.

How can we explain this mixed record? First, as developing states, they are more willing to embrace leadership on economic issues and are wary of taking on security burdens that can detract from their efforts at internal economic development. Second, emerging powers' approaches to certain security issues, such as terrorism and other nonconventional security threats, differ markedly from that of the West. From the Western point of view, important aspects of human security such as democracy and human rights are inadequately provisioned under their regional leadership. But from the point of view of many emerging states, the promotion of these goals must take a back seat to other priorities such as economic development, nation and state building, and the maintenance of social and political stability. Finally, they face many of the same problems in pursuing leadership at the regional level that Western powers face at the global level. The world is becoming an increasingly complex and interdependent place—both regionally and globally—and it is increasingly difficult for powerful states to manage these complexities and take the lead in solving global governance problems.

Taken together, these findings suggest that the current global governance framework, based on US and Western leadership, will not simply be moved to the regional level with regional powers taking on the leadership role. Instead, we can expect a much more complex system of global governance to emerge that will be made up of overlapping levels (global, regional, transnational, and even subnational) and that will include a greater plurality of actors (global and regional powers as well as smaller regional states and nonstate actors).

Western Leadership on Global Governance Breaks Down

By definition, *global governance* is the complex of formal and informal institutions that address global issues; that is, issues such as international security, trade, global finance, and the environment that no state can tackle through its own efforts.¹ Global governance faces a fundamental paradox: the policy authority for tackling global problems and mobilizing the necessary resources is vested primarily at the country level, in states, while the source and scale of the problems and potential solutions to them are transnational or global.² States can address these problems only by pooling

their efforts and cooperating with each other. But cooperation is often stymied by collective action problems—from how to keep states from renegeing or cheating on agreements to the tricky issue of relative gains—making it difficult for states to respond to global problems in a coherent and coordinated way.³

Since the end of the Cold War, the established global governance architecture has relied on the leadership of the United States and other Western powers, which have used their international clout to coordinate cooperation between states on global governance issues and impose solutions on issues where there is not enough common ground among states. Today, however, US and Western leadership has begun to break down. Two larger historical processes are eroding the West's ability to lead. First, the rise to prominence of large developing states is challenging the West's economic and political dominance. Each of these new players is eager to have a bigger say in international affairs, making it more difficult for Western states to lead the way in coordinating a common approach to global problems. For example, China and Russia have scuttled US efforts to formulate a coordinated international response to the crisis in Syria. In Iraq, the United States is being forced to work with Iran (a rival and unfriendly state) in finding a strategy to quell growing disorder. Second, as globalization advances and the world becomes increasingly interdependent and interconnected, it is also becoming increasingly unmanageable and chaotic. The authority and relevance of the state is being ever more challenged as "information, pollution, migrants, arms, ideas, images, news, crime, narcotics, disease, amongst other things, readily and frequently flow across national territorial boundaries."⁴ These processes are giving rise to black swan events such as the 2007–2008 financial crisis and the Arab Spring that perplex even the most powerful states.

A Regional Alternative?

While effective global governance is increasingly elusive at the global level, it may develop at the regional level, with dominant regional states acting as benevolent regional hegemony that can facilitate cooperation and provide collective goods. Advocacy for the regionalization of global governance has a long pedigree. At the end of World War II, Winston Churchill proposed that the world be organized as a "three legged stool," with an overarching World Council resting on three regional councils—one for Europe, one for the Western hemisphere, and one for Asia and the Pacific.⁵ Since the end of the Cold War, many scholars have stressed the growing significance of economic, political, and security developments at the regional level, developing international relations theories that focus on regions as the most important level of analysis.⁶ Regional organizations and initiatives of all types are

playing an increasingly significant role in addressing transborder problems, helping to fill the governance void that has developed at the global (i.e., multilateral) level.⁷ Recognizing these developments, the United States and other Western powers have often called on regional powers to take greater responsibility for political and economic stability in their home regions.⁸

There are good reasons why many global governance issues may be more successfully addressed at the regional, rather than global, level. Interdependencies of all kinds (security, the environment, economics) are greatest between states that share borders or are in geographical proximity. All regional states are exposed to the negative effects of regional problems, often to a relatively equal degree. Interdependence across issue areas also opens up the possibility of issue linkages. States that may not be concerned with a particular problem may nevertheless cooperate to ensure regional cooperation on problems that are important to them. This makes it easier to coordinate their actions and overcome collective action problems associated with cooperation. Churchill noted this long ago when contemplating the issues of security: "I attached great importance to the regional principle. It was only the countries whose interest were directly affected by a dispute who could be expected to apply themselves with sufficient vigor to ensure a settlement."⁹ In terms of immediate payoffs, regional powers may have more to gain from exercising leadership locally, at the regional level, than from accepting global responsibilities. Pursuing regional leadership is in line with regional powers' more narrow security and economic interests. Offensive realists argue that the anarchical nature of the international system creates security pressures that lead regional powers to initially try and establish hegemony in their home regions.¹⁰ In taking the lead on regional economic integration, regional powers also strengthen their economies by opening up new markets and new opportunities for their domestic businesses. While they may be suboptimal to global free trade, regional free-trade agreements represent sensible alternatives as trade remains restricted at the global level and it is much more difficult to coordinate free-trade agreements among a larger number of states. In recent years, trade liberalization has happened primarily at the regional level, with dominant regional states often taking the lead.¹¹ Regional integration can also be used as a tool of economic modernization and to diversify developing states' current dependence on Western markets (at a time when many Western economies face slow growth and economic stagnation). Regional powers are using regional economic integration to restructure their foreign trade relationships away from the production of lower value-added goods (commodities and natural resources, or cheap high-labor value-added manufacturing). Regional markets shelter local firms from competition, allowing them to develop higher value-added production and move up the global value-added chain.¹²

Regional leadership is also more in tune with regional powers' still limited capabilities. With the possible exception of China, none of today's emerging powers truly aspires to global leadership or hegemony.¹³ Building global capabilities is costly and requires vast resources. It is much easier for states to exercise power closer to home. Pursuing regional hegemony is a cost-effective power-building strategy for emerging powers. It allows dominant states to take advantage of economies of scale, as military and economic capabilities created to exert influence over one subordinate state can easily be applied to other regional states.¹⁴

Moreover, regional approaches to solving global governance problems may also have greater legitimacy than those brokered at the global level. In a world where cultural and civilization differences between societies and states are so pronounced that an actual consensus on fundamental values is elusive, regions are an embodiment of cultural distinctiveness and can serve as containers for cultural and value diversity.¹⁵ Up until now, solutions for solving global governance problems have primarily come from the Western world and have fundamentally been shaped by Western values and preferences. These solutions often conflict with the identities and values of the developing world. The devolution of responsibility for global governance to the regional level may allow more diverse approaches to solving these problems to emerge. According to Andrew Hurrell, "The capacity of regions to generate and promote ideas of global order, and the claim of different regions to be presented more fully and more equally, are likely to play a central role in the coming struggle for global political legitimacy."¹⁶ A more pluralistic approach that allows for diverse solutions at the regional level can better represent the values and preferences of a broader section of the world and, therefore, may enjoy greater legitimacy than global solutions that are seen by many outside the West as being imposed by a privileged minority of Western states.

In recent years, non-Western emerging regional powers have stepped up their efforts to establish regional leadership and to promote regional integration. Russia has reinvigorated its effort to reintegrate the post-Soviet space program and is sponsoring new regional organizations such as the Customs Union and the Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO). According to President Vladimir Putin, the ultimate goal is to establish a Eurasian Economic Union (EurAsEc) "capable of becoming one of the poles in a future multi-polar world."¹⁷ Brazil is promoting several South American integration projects, including the Southern Common Market (Mercosur), Union of South American Nations (UNASUR), and South American Defense Council (CDS). The latter two projects expand the integration agenda beyond Mercosur's focus on trade and economy to include security and political and social issues. China has partnered with Russia to bring political stability and promote economic development in Central Asia through the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO). China is also a key player in a variety of

regional organizations in East Asia including ASEAN+1 (the Association of Southeast Asian Nations plus China) and ASEAN+3 (ASEAN plus China, Japan, and South Korea).

All three regional powers use regional integration to increase their own power and to curtail US and other great powers' influence in their home regions. Russia's decision to push forward with the Customs Union and CSTO integration were at least partly a response to NATO expansion and the Eastern Partnership program of the European Union (EU), which has tried to form association agreements with post-Soviet republics such as Ukraine.¹⁸ Brazil's efforts to expand Mercosur into UNASUR and the CDS must also be understood as a response to efforts by the George W. Bush administration to promote a Free Trade Area of the Americas (FTAA), which Brazil opposed fiercely but discreetly behind the scenes.¹⁹ China's regional integration projects in Asia position China as the first mover in broader East Asian integration, and may be a first step in developing a China-led regional economic bloc that would exclude the United States.²⁰

Regional powers also see regionalism as an alternative to established multilateral global governance structures, which are failing to rise to the challenges posed by an increasingly complex and highly unpredictable global environment. This is spelled out explicitly in Russia's 2013 Foreign Policy Concept: "The decentralization of global governance is strengthening the importance of political processes at the regional level, and creating the basis for a polycentric model of governance that best embodies the diversity, heterogeneity and stratification of the world. The new centers of economic growth and political influence are increasingly confident and take responsibility for the affairs in their regions."²¹ Moreover, regional powers are beginning to question Western approaches to solving problems such as terrorism and global financial stability. Some even see the West's solutions as exacerbating these problems rather than contributing to their resolution. According to Russian observer Feodor Lukyanov, "Western policy is ineffective and short-sighted and fails to produce the desired effect. . . . The great paradox is that politicians in America and Western Europe, on whom the future of the world depends, have become the main obstacle to preserving the status quo and a smooth recovery."²² Regional powers are recognizing that, in the future, they no longer may be able to rely on US and Western leadership. They will have to coordinate regional responses to global problems and provide collective goods on a regional level.

Regional Free Trade

As free trade begins to falter at the global level, an alternative may be to promote free trade at the regional level. In fact, this has been the case over the past few decades. The WTO has made slow progress in liberalizing trade between member states. At the same time, trade liberalization has

made the most progress within regions, both in terms of tariff reductions and the adoption of technical and regulatory standards that facilitate the free movement of goods and services. Regional powers are playing a key role in facilitating the development free trade at the regional level. They have been the driving force behind regional free-trade agreements, using their political clout to push regional agreements through and enticing other regional states to open up and liberalize their domestic markets by offering them access to their own large markets in return.

Russia has looked to boost trade within the post-Soviet region by promoting the development of the Customs Union of Russia, Belarus, and Kazakhstan. The three countries have adopted common tariff policies and eliminated border controls on the movement of goods. Russia has transformed the Customs Union into a more comprehensive Eurasian Economic Union (EEU), which has begun the long and arduous process of harmonizing legal and regulatory frameworks between member states and setting up supranational governance bodies that will have authority over certain areas of economic policy. EEU membership has been expanded to include Armenia and Kyrgyzstan (Tajikistan is also in the process of negotiating its membership), and Russia has used diplomatic leverage and economic inducements to get these countries to join the integration process. Russia has placed a great deal of political and economic pressure on Ukraine to join these integration projects, and this has been one of the root causes of the ongoing political crisis that now grips the country.

The Customs Union has experienced some immediate success. According to a recent report by the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD), trade between Customs Union members increased by over 70 percent between 2009 and 2013.²³ Admittedly these figures may be inflated by the resumption of trade flows interrupted by the 2007–2008 financial crisis. But they may also underestimate the union's long-term trade-creating effects, as it typically takes years to establish new trade links and cross-border production networks.²⁴

Brazil has used Mercosur to push for free trade in Latin America. Brazil has been frustrated with the limited progress being made in multilateral trade negotiations, such as the Doha Round, that have stalled because of divisions between developed and developing countries over issues that include nontariff barriers and agricultural subsidies (of particular interest to Brazil, which is an agricultural powerhouse). Regional integration allows Brazil to develop alternative markets for these goods while, at the same time, increasing its leverage in any future multilateral trade negotiations. Mercosur countries have a combined population of more than 270 million people and gross domestic product (GDP) of more than \$3 trillion a year, making Mercosur the world's fourth-largest trading bloc after the EU, North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA), and ASEAN+1. Mercosur has eliminated trade tariffs between its members and adopted

common external tariff and customs policies. As a result intrabloc trade has grown from \$10 billion in 1991 to more than \$88 billion in 2010.²⁵

China has also pushed for free trade in Asia. China sees this as a way to decrease its dependence on Western markets, a concern that has taken on new urgency after the 2008 financial crisis.²⁶ The centerpiece of these efforts is the ASEAN–China Free Trade Area (ACFTA), which establishes a free-trade zone between China and ASEAN member states. Trade has grown over sixfold, from \$59.6 billion in 2003 to \$362 billion in 2011.²⁷ China-ASEAN trade was almost insignificant in the 1990s, but now China is the largest external trading partner of ASEAN (accounting for over 25 percent of ASEAN's total foreign trade). In promoting trade, China has adopted many of the policies prescribed by classic studies of hegemonic stability. China has willingly accepted the costs of promoting free trade, rapidly opening its markets to ASEAN while allowing these countries to gradually lower their tariffs on Chinese goods. ASEAN states' trade surplus with China rose from \$7.6 billion in 2002 (when the free-trade agreement process began) to \$22.7 billion in 2011.²⁸

Regional Lenders of Last Resort

Russia, Brazil, and China are also taking a lead in improving their regions' ability to deal with financial crises, and are embracing the role of lender of last resort in the event of a protracted regional financial crisis. These efforts are influenced by dissatisfaction with the way that multilateral efforts have dealt with past crises, particularly with the Russian and Asian financial crises of the late 1990s. Regional powers resent the heavy-handed way that the International Monetary Fund (IMF) deals with creditor nations as well as the stringent conditions that it often imposes for access to loans. Many Asian leaders believe that austerity measures imposed by the IMF on Asian countries during the Asian financial crisis made it more difficult for their economies to recover and created political and social instability in countries such as Indonesia.²⁹

This has prompted China and other Asian leaders to work toward improving regional financial crisis mechanisms.³⁰ China has partnered with Japan, South Korea, and the ASEAN countries (the ASEAN+3 format) to establish the Chiang Mai Initiative (CMI), a multilateral currency swap arrangement designed to make bailout funds available to member states in the event of liquidity crises. Many experts believe the CMI can help to increase regional financial stability and ease the shock of any future crisis.³¹ In response to the ongoing European debt crisis and anxieties about the stability of the global financial system, member states doubled the CMI's reserves to \$240 billion in 2012. China has also taken the lead in pushing for the creation of an Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB), which would finance infrastructure projects in the Asia Pacific region and

serve as an alternative to established institutions such as the World Bank and Asian Development Bank (ADB). According to some estimates the region will need at least \$8 trillion in investment in infrastructure over the next decade if it is to maintain the current pace of economic growth.³² China and other regional states are unhappy with the way that the World Bank and ADB are responding to this problem. Moreover, China wants to establish an institution to deal with this issue in which it—and not developed countries (that are not sensitive to these problems) such as the United States and Japan—will have the deciding voice.

Under Russia's initiative, the Eurasian Economic Union established a \$10 billion crisis fund to help its members cope with the world financial crisis. Belarus has already drawn over \$3 billion from the EurAsEc crisis fund, which is helping it to meet its international debt obligations and averting a default of its sovereign debt. By drawing on EurAsEc funds, Belarus also avoids having to go to the IMF, which undoubtedly would have demanded that the country undergo reforms in exchange for loans.³³ In 2013, Russia also offered Ukraine \$12 billion in loans to help it meet its international obligations, in exchange for the country stepping away from signing an association agreement with the EU. The incumbent government in Kiev accepted Russian aid as an alternative to IMF loans that would most certainly come with painful and unpopular austerity requirements. This move, however, has backfired. Kiev's decision to reverse course on EU ascension gave rise to massive street demonstrations that violently overthrew the incumbent government and eventually led to the current international crisis in which Ukraine, Russia, and the rest of the world community now find themselves.

Compared to the above examples, Brazil has made much less progress in organizing financial crisis mechanisms in Latin America. However there are plans to establish a Bank of the South, a regional monetary fund and lending organization that will allow member countries to borrow money and will also fund projects and investments without World Bank or IMF involvement. The move at least partly reflects South American countries' negative experiences with the IMF in the 1980s and 1990s, when many were saddled with austerity measures and crushing debt repayments.³⁴ Mercosur countries have already pledged \$20 billion to establish the fund, which is slated to begin funding its first development projects by the end of 2015.

China, Russia, and Brazil have also partnered with India and South Africa to establish the Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa (BRICS) Development Bank. With starting capital of \$50 billion and an additional \$100 billion in currency reserves, the bank is intended to become the developing world's alternative to the Western-dominated World Bank and IMF. As such, the project will focus on areas, such as infrastructure development, that are important to developing states but currently are underfunded by established international financial intuitions.

Regional Security

While most mainstream international relations theories focus on security developments at the global level (i.e., the level of the international system), a growing number of scholars have argued that security studies must start with the regional level. Some approaches divide the world into distinct and durable regional security complexes (RSCs), each of which, while being tied to the larger global system, also has its own particular security dynamics. All states in the international system are, to one degree or another, interdependent when it comes to security. However, physical proximity tends to generate more security interaction among states that are neighbors.³⁵ The intense international competition between the superpowers during the Cold War obscured the importance of regional dynamics, as each superpower played a big role in regional security politics. The end of the Cold War competition between the United States and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics has returned autonomy to RSCs.³⁶ Regional dynamics may be even more important in the future as the sole surviving superpower, the United States, becomes less willing (or even able) to intervene in RSCs.

RSC theory recognizes that RSCs can become centered on dominant regional states, which bring order and structure to security relations in their respective regions.³⁷ Today's regional powers are looking to take greater responsibility for regional security and are organizing regional institutions that can respond to traditional and nontraditional security threats. These efforts are in part a response to the United States' and the West's failure to adequately address regional security issues. But they are also intended to replace US and Western efforts, which are often seen as coming with strings attached. As such, regional institutions also function to decrease the region's security dependence on the United States, thereby curtailing US influence.

Russia has pushed for the CSTO to become the premiere security organization in the post-Soviet space. The organization brings together Armenia, Belarus, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Russia, and Tajikistan. Uzbekistan, which is wary of Russian dominance and harbors its own ambitions toward regional leadership, has vacillated back and forth on CSTO membership. It currently is a member, but has suspended its membership. The CSTO charter does not legally bind the countries to come to each other's aid (as Article 5 of the NATO Charter does) but it does prevent them from joining any other alliances, thus forestalling their entrance into NATO—a key Russian goal in the region. The CSTO has conducted regular large-scale military exercises since 2006, including a 6,000-troop exercise in Kazakhstan in 2009.³⁸ These exercises simulate responses to conventional external threats as well as incursions by “terrorists” and “militants.”³⁹ CSTO countries are organizing a 20,000-troop rapid reaction force, including a smaller unit that would be under joint command and operate from a joint base in Osh, Kyrgyzstan. This force is specifically designed to inter-

vene against unconventional security threats and challenges, and could be used to quell internal unrest in member states.⁴⁰

The CSTO plays a useful geopolitical role for Moscow as a counterweight to NATO expansion in the post-Soviet region. States that join the organization are not allowed to join other military alliances or blocs (i.e., they cannot join NATO). As regional capabilities to respond to security threats improve, regional states will become less dependent on the United States and NATO and will instead look to Russia for their security needs. Moreover, the CSTO may have a comparative advantage to NATO in the eyes of the region's authoritarian regimes because it is willing to help these regimes suppress internal unrest—something NATO is loathe to do.

Russia has also partnered with China to develop the capabilities of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization, which brings together China, Russia, and the five former Central Asian republics. Senator Sam Brownback called the SCO "the most dangerous international organization that the American people have never heard of."⁴¹ Russia and China have used the organization to stem the growth of US and Western influence in the region and to speak out against US policies (e.g., missile defense and the United States' alleged support for color revolutions).

While much attention has been devoted to the SCO's supposed role as a counterweight to NATO, its most significant achievements have been in addressing regional security issues, particularly unconventional threats, which it identifies as the "three evils" of terrorism, separatism, and extremism.⁴² The three evils are an important concern for China and Russia, which face active terrorist and separatist movements. China is particularly concerned with Uyghur separatism in its northern provinces, which border Central Asia. The SCO's smaller Central Asian member states welcome Russian and Chinese leadership on these issues since the three evils also present a direct threat to their authoritarian governments.⁴³

Russia and China are also pushing for the CSTO and SCO to play a larger role in Afghanistan as US and UN-NATO efforts in the country begin to wind down. Moscow is trying to boost the CSTO's airpower and its peacekeeping capacities so that it can respond to growing unrest in the country.⁴⁴ The CSTO and SCO have granted Afghanistan observer status, and top Afghan leaders regularly attend these organizations' meetings and conferences. Russia is disappointed with US efforts at combating drug trafficking—a grave threat to Russia with its more than 1 million heroin addicts—and is looking to beef up the SCO's and CSTO's capabilities to deal with narcotics trafficking.⁴⁵ China believes that the United States is not doing enough to promote economic development (which it sees as the key to promoting political stability in Afghanistan) and is stepping up its investments in the country.⁴⁶ Neither the SCO nor the CSTO are prepared to replace the United States and NATO with troops on the ground. However,

they are looking to increase their capabilities to deal with security threats that growing instability or a Taliban return to power may produce.

In South America, Brazil has played the leading role in establishing and directing the activities of the CDS, UNASUR's security arm. One of this organization's core goals is to build trust and defuse suspicions among regional states by increasing transparency in military matters. States have recently begun to exchange data on defense spending and there are also plans to increase the transparency of local military exercises. In strengthening military-to-military contacts in the region, the CDS also helps local militaries deal with common threats (e.g., drug trafficking) more effectively. Its support for the CDS shows Brazil's growing willingness to assume regional leadership while, at the same time, reducing US influence in the region.⁴⁷ When the United States expressed interest in cooperating with the CDS, Brazil rejected any US participation.

In the past, Brazil was willing to defer to the United States on regional security issues and it cooperated with the US-led Organization of American States (OAS). Over time, it has become disillusioned with US security leadership and has developed major differences with the United States over Washington's punitive policies toward Cuba and Venezuela and with US efforts to establish permanent military bases in Colombia. Brazil often considers the United States to be a source of regional instability and sees itself as better placed to take on the role of mediator in regional conflicts.⁴⁸ Brazil is using UNASUR and its security component, the CDS, to strengthen the ability of the region's states to respond to security challenges locally and without the leadership of the United States. UNASUR played a key role in mediating the constitutional crisis in Bolivia in 2008, the police rebellion against the government of Ecuador in 2010, and the Venezuela-Colombia diplomatic crisis of 2010. In each of these cases, Brazil spearheaded UNASUR efforts that intentionally sidestepped the United States and OAS (which many in the region see as a tool of US policy).⁴⁹ Brazil is also strengthening its military and peacekeeping capabilities. In 2004, Brazil took over command of the UN Stabilization Mission in Haiti and it has played a key leadership role in the country in the aftermath of the 2010 earthquake. By developing UNASUR and the CDS, Brazil is hedging against a time when the United States will not be able to act as the region's primary peacemaker and is developing its military capabilities to prevent other powers from poaching its rich Amazonian and offshore resources.⁵⁰

A Mixed Record on Human Security?

Regional powers have exhibited some successes in building regional institutions that mediate conflicts between states and in addressing nonconventional security threats such as terrorism and drug trafficking. However, their

collective record of regional security leadership is less impressive if viewed from the perspective of human security. Both China and Russia are reluctant to take on the burdens of humanitarian intervention in their respective regions. Despite its efforts to build up the CSTO's capabilities, Russia refused the government of Kyrgyzstan's request to send peacekeepers to quell ethnic unrest in the south of the country, leading many observers to conclude that the organization had failed its first true test.⁵¹

Western approaches to human security often center on the protection of human rights and the advancement of democracy. Russia and China reject this interpretation of the human security agenda. They hold to the belief the safety and well-being of populations must ultimately be entrusted to strong sovereign states. Any outside intervention to promote democracy and human rights can create social and political instability and give rise to the very kinds of events it ostensibly seeks to prevent. They feel these beliefs have been vindicated by recent events in Libya, Syria, and other developing states where Western-led humanitarian intervention has occurred.⁵² Russia and China often cooperate with Central Asia's autocratic states to suppress the development of democracy and human rights and preserve autocratic rule. This is seen as a collective good from the point of view of the region's authoritarian regimes. The SCO defines nonconventional threats such as "terrorism" and "extremism" more broadly than is usually accepted in the West, placing a greater emphasis on actions taken against the state rather than against public safety. On several occasions, the SCO has spoken out against color revolutions and against Western democracy promotion efforts, which they have characterized as "meddling" in sovereign affairs of the region's states. The SCO also organizes its own election monitoring efforts, whose findings are used by governments to give a stamp of legitimacy to manipulated elections and counter criticism by international observers.⁵³

In contrast to Russia and China, Brazil has been much more willing to lead on the issue of human security in the Western hemisphere. It took on the burdens of peacekeeping and state building in Haiti. It has also been a strong supporter of democracy and human rights in the region, often clashing with the United States over human rights and democracy issues as it emerges as a more principled defender of these norms than Washington. In several cases (Venezuela in 2002, Honduras in 2009, and Paraguay in 2012), Brazil has helped return to power elected incumbents who were ousted by coups that were at least tacitly supported by the United States. Most recently, Brazil has led the way in forming a UNASUR commission to help mediate the political crisis in Venezuela, where antigovernment demonstrations have left scores dead. The Venezuelan government has rejected OAS offers to mediate, as it views the OAS as being under US influence.⁵⁴ While it has supported democratically elected governments that have faced threats from coups and other attempts to seize power through extraconstitutional means, Brazil has not embraced democracy promotion

as a major foreign policy goal, either regionally or globally, and has generally refrained from criticizing other countries for violations of human rights or democracy.

The reluctance of some emerging powers to engage in humanitarian intervention or to promote human rights and democracy beyond their borders does not mean that they reject the concept of human security altogether and that they are ready to abandon vulnerable populations to their grim fates. While developing states do value human rights, they also value goals such as economic development, the preservation of political and social stability, and the maintenance of traditional cultures that are often taken for granted in the West. Their solutions to the problem of human security reflects these different priorities.

Developing states (including Russia and China) have actively embraced the norm of Responsibility to Protect (R2P), which sees sovereignty as being conditional on states' ability to protect their populations from the most egregious atrocities and war crimes and justifies foreign intervention in cases where states do not live up to these obligations. But given their colonial histories, they are also wary about what they suspect are Western efforts to use the protection of human rights concerns and R2P to advance more narrow geopolitical or economic goals. While emerging powers accept R2P, they insist on certain safeguards to prevent R2P from being abused or misused. To this end, intervention must be approved by the UN Security Council and that can be justified in only the most extreme circumstances: the case of war crimes, genocide, ethnic cleansing, and crimes against humanity.⁵⁵ These concerns are heightened by the way in which the international intervention in Libya, approved by Security Council Resolution 1973, played itself out. From the perspective of many in the developing world, Western states overstepped the original UN mandate to pursue regime change against a government it opposed for geopolitical or ideological reasons.

To bridge the widening gap that has emerged between the West and developing world as a result of the Libya crisis, in 2011 at the UN Brazil called for the development of a clear set of guidelines for Responsibility While Protecting (RwP). These would include rules that would govern military interventions to ensure they do not cause more harm than they prevent, monitoring and review mechanisms that would assess whether intervening states are following mandates set by the UN, and a renewed emphasis on preventive measures that would build up the international communities to avert these kinds of crises in the first place.⁵⁶ Despite its promising start, however, Brazil's proposal never got off the ground because it was rejected by Western leaders who saw it as a Trojan horse that would make it more difficult for the international community to intervene to stop massive violations of human rights, and also by China and Russia for whom the proposal did not do enough to assuage their concerns about sovereignty.⁵⁷

Conclusion

As global governance falters, emerging powers are beginning to take leadership for global governance problems at the regional level. However, the discussion above has shown that their record for doing so has been uneven. Leadership has been strongest on economic issues (particularly in promoting free trade). But with the exception of Brazil, their collective record on security has been spotty—particularly when viewed from the perspective of human security (at least according to the ways in which this principle is defined in the West).

How can we explain this outcome? Miriam Prys argues that regionally dominant states will not automatically aspire to regional leadership or take responsibility for the provision of regional collective goods.⁵⁸ Their willingness to take on these burdens will depend on whether regional leadership will also lead to tangible gains in terms of economic wealth and global standing. For example, India has neglected to take on regional leadership because it sees its home region, South Asia, as more of a drain on its political economic power than as an asset (and this is why it has been excluded from this analysis). Many of today's regional powers are developing states. As such, they are focused on their own domestic economic development. They are reluctant to take on any foreign burdens (even regional ones) that detract from this goal. Thus, the most progress has been made in areas such as free trade and financial crisis management, as taking charge in these areas is essential to their economic development goals. Regional powers are less willing to take on responsibility in areas where immediate gains are not readily apparent. They are willing to take on responsibility for regional security when this helps strengthen their global position or when it curtails the regional influence of other great powers (especially the United States). But they back away when these larger geopolitical interests are not in play—as was the case with Russia's reluctance to intervene in Kyrgyzstan in 2010. Nevertheless, if the United States continues to pull back and security problems begin to mount, Russia and other regional powers may have no choice but to accept regional security burdens. In this respect, the US withdrawal from Afghanistan will be an important test for Russian and Chinese security leadership.

Regional powers have failed to take leadership on certain security issues because they simply do not see them as a part of the overall solution to their region's problems. Western approaches to human security focus on the promotion of human rights and democratic governance. From this perspective, emerging powers such as Russia and China are not doing enough to address human security concerns because they do not support these values. This view ignores the fact that states do not attach the same importance to the same issues nor do they agree on the best way address global problems. The global governance agenda has largely been dominated by the leading West-

ern states. But as it moves to the regional level, it will increasingly be shaped by emerging powers and other actors from the developing world who will bring their own perspectives on these issue to the discussion.

For many developing states, concerns about democracy and human rights take a back seat to economic development and the maintenance of political and social stability. They have adopted their own approaches to the problem of human security, which reflect these priorities. For example, Russia and China's approach to dealing with nontraditional security threats in the SCO focuses on building up the regional states' capacity to assert their authority over all nonstate actors—be they terrorist groups or human rights nongovernmental organizations (NGOs)—and on the promotion of regional economic development to deal with the social problems that give rise to these threats in the first place.

Regionalism itself is an extremely complex and multifaceted process that cannot simply be reduced to the rise of dominant regional states and their efforts to establish their regional hegemony through the provision of regional collective goods. According to Hurrell, "Regionalism is best viewed as an unstable and indeterminate process of multiple and competing logics with no overriding teleology or single end point."⁵⁹ Some logics (e.g., increased economic and societal integration within regions and the emergence of regional identities) favor the development of regional approaches to global governance. Others (e.g., increased political competition between regional states and regions' increased permeability to outside actors and influences) make it more difficult for regional powers to take the lead in solving global governance problems at the regional level. This is particularly true when it comes to security. Uzbekistan, Georgia, and Ukraine have resisted Moscow's efforts to establish a Russian-led regional security order and have looked to hedge against rising Russian influence by developing security cooperation with Western powers. Future efforts by China to take the lead on security issues in Asia are also likely to meet with resistance by the region's smaller states—many of whom have strengthened their security ties with the United States in recent years.

The modern world is ultimately too complex and interconnected for regional governance to simply replace global governance. Critical problems, such as global warming, cannot be solved regionally. They require the participation of all major states and can be successfully addressed only at the global level. Today's rising regional powers recognize the need for global solutions and their efforts are not limited to the regional level. They are also actively pursuing global leadership. In addition to its efforts on RwP and the environment, Brazil has pushed for reform of the global intellectual property regime to ease the burden that it represents to many developing countries. India has taken the lead in representing the concerns of developing states on food security issues. Emerging powers are also coop-

erating in such global forums as the G-20 and the BRICS. The latter is fast becoming an important global forum where non-Western alternatives to global problems, such as the reform of the world financial system, can be discussed. The BRICS are starting to move beyond discussion to concrete action. The group has founded its own development bank with initial capital reserves of \$50 billion. The project, designed as an alternative to the World Bank, will fund the kind of development projects that they feel have been neglected by Western-led lending institutions.

The emergence of a centralized system of regional governance based on the hegemony of regional leaders is unlikely. Instead, we are seeing the emergence of a complex and dynamic system of global governance that is made up of multiple and overlapping levels (global, transregional, regional, and local), that have competing multilateral organizations (both Western and non-Western), and which includes a wide range of relevant actors (NGOs and international organizations as well as larger and lesser regional powers). Such a multilayered and multifaceted system will be messier and more chaotic than the system to which we have grown accustomed. At its worst, it may resemble the kind of "G-Zero world" described by Ian Bremmer and Nouriel Roubini—where no state or group of states is willing or able to take ultimate responsibility for leadership.⁶⁰ But it will also be more inclusive, as a wider range of voices and interests will contribute to governance. This will allow for the adoption of solutions that are more representative and, therefore, more legitimate in the eyes of the global community as a whole. 🌐

Notes

Andrej Krickovic is assistant professor at the Faculty of World Economy and International Affairs, National Research University Higher School of Economics (HSE), Moscow. The article was prepared within the framework of the Academic Fund Program at the National Research University HSE in 2015–2016 (Grant no. 14-05-0042) and supported within the framework of a subsidy granted to the HSE by the Government of the Russian Federation for the implementation of the Global Competitiveness Program.

1. Thomas G. Weiss and Ramesh Thakur, *The UN and Global Governance: An Idea and Its Prospects* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2006).

2. Ramesh Thakur and Luk Van Langenhove, "Enhancing Global Governance Through Regional Integration," *Global Governance* 12, no. 3 (2006): 233–240.

3. Robert Keohane, *After Hegemony* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1984).

4. Anthony McGrew, *The Transformation of Democracy: Globalization and Territorial Democracy* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1997), p. 6.

5. Amitav Acharya, *Whose Ideas Matter? Agency and Power in World Regionalism* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2009), p. 42.

6. Andrew Hurrell and Louis Fawcett, eds., *Regionalism in World Politics: Regional Organization and International Order* (Oxford: Oxford University Press,

1995); Peter Katzenstein, "Regionalism in Comparative Perspective," *Cooperation and Conflict* 31, no. 2 (1996): 123–159; David A. Lake and Patrick Morgan, *Regional Orders: Building Security in a New World* (University Station: Pennsylvania University Press, 1997); Barry Buzan and Ole Waever, *Regions and Power: The Structure of International Security* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010).

7. Luk Van Langenhove, *Building Regions: The Regionalization of World Order* (Ashgate: Farnham, 2011).

8. Miriam Prys, "Hegemony, Domination, Detachment: Differences in Regional Powerhood," *International Studies Review* 12, no. 4 (2010): 479–504, at 480.

9. Winston Churchill, *The Second World War*, vol. 4. (London: Reprint Society, 1953), p. 464.

10. John Mearshimer, *The Tragedy of Great Power Politics* (New York: Norton, 2003).

11. Richard E. Baldwin, "Multilateralizing Regionalism: Spaghetti Bowls as Building Blocks on the Path to Global Free Trade," *World Economy* 29, no. 11 (2006): 1451–1518.

12. Joseph Grieco, "Systemic Sources of Variation in Regional Institutionalization in Western Europe, East Asia and the Americas," in Edward Mansfield and Helen Milner, eds., *The Political Economy of Regionalism* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1997), pp. 164–187.

13. Amitav Acharya, "Regional Worlds in a Post-hegemonic Era," *Cahiers de Spirit Working Papers No. 1* (Bordeaux: Sciences Po, June 2009).

14. David Lake, "Regional Hierarchy: Authority and Local International Order," *Review of International Studies* 35, no. 1 (February 2009): 35–58.

15. Andrew Hurrell, *On Global Order: Power, Values, and the Constitution of International Society* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007): 247–248.

16. *Ibid.*, p. 261.

17. Vladimir Putin, "Novyi integratsionii proekt dlya Evrazii" [The new integration project for Eurasia], *Izvestia* (online), 3 October 2011.

18. Sergey Zhiltsov, "SNG pod natiskom 'Vostochnogo partnerstva'" [CIS under onslaught from the 'Eastern partnership'], *Nezavisimaya Gazeta*, 30 April 2009.

19. Laura Gomez-Mera, "Explaining Mercosur's Survival: Strategic Sources of Argentine-Brazilian Convergence," *Journal of Latin American Studies* 37, no. 1 (February 2005): 109–140.

20. Marvin Ott, "South East Asia's Strategic Landscape," *SAIS Review* 32, no. 1 (2012): 113–124.

21. Ministerstvo Inostranikh Del, "Kontseptsiya vneshney politiki Rossiyskoy Federatsii" [Foreign Policy Concept of the Russian Federation], 12 February 2013, www.mid.ru/bdomp/ns-osndoc.nsf/e2f289bea62097f9c325787a0034c255/c32577ca0017434944257b160051bf7f?OpenDocument.

22. Fyodor Lukyanov, "The Reckless West," RIA Novosti, 21 July 2011.

23. "Trade Among Customs Union Member-states Up by Almost 9% in 2012," ITAR-TASS, 20 February 2013.

24. Evgeny Vinokurov, "The Customs Union and the Single Economic Space," in Evgeny Vinokurov, ed., *Eurasian Integration Yearbook 2012* (Saint Petersburg: Eurasian Development Bank, 2012).

25. María Victoria-Balbi, "El Mercosur hoy, a 20 años de su constitución" [Mercosur 20 years after its creation], *Semanario Economía, Gobierno and Sociedad* 8, no. 418 (June 2011): 1–2.

26. Yuzhu Wang and Sarah Tong, *The China-ASEAN FTA: Changing ASEAN's Perspective on China* (Singapore: East Asian Institute, 2010).

27. National Bureau of Statistics of China, "Statistical Communiqué on the 2011 National Economic and Social Development," 22 February 2012, www.stats.gov.cn/english/newsandcomingevents/t20120222_402786587.htm.

28. Joshua Kurlantzick, "ASEAN's Future and Asian Integration," Working Paper (New York, NY: Council on Foreign Relations, November 2012).

29. Hyoung-kyu Chey, "The Changing Political Dynamics of East Asian Financial Cooperation: The Chiang Mai Initiative," *Asian Survey* 49, no. 3 (May–June 2009): 450–467.

30. C. Randall Henning, "Regional Arrangements and the International Monetary Fund," in Edwin M. Truman, ed., *Reforming the IMF for the 21st Century* (Washington, DC: Peterson Institute, 2006).

31. Hyoung-kyu Chey, "The Changing Political Dynamics of East Asian Financial Cooperation: The Chiang Mai Initiative," *Asian Survey* 49, no. 3 (May–June 2009): 450–467.

32. Biswa Bhattacharyay, "Estimating Demand for Infrastructure in Energy, Transport, Telecommunications, Water and Sanitation in Asia and the Pacific: 2010–2020," Working Paper No. 248 (Tokyo: Asian Development Bank Institute, September 2010), www.adbi.org/files/2010.08.09.wp248.infrastructure.demand.asia.pacific.pdf.

33. "Belarus Will Get By Without Foreign Loans," RIA-Novosti, 17 December 2012.

34. Joseph Stiglitz, *Globalization and Its Discontents* (New York: Norton, 2002).

35. Buzan and Waeber, *Regions and Power*, pp. 45–46.

36. Lake and Morgan, *Cooperation and Conflict*, pp. 3–4.

37. *Ibid.*

38. "Kazakhstan Hosts 'Interaction-2009' Exercises," RIA Novosti, 20 August 2009.

39. Richard Weitz, "Is the Collective Security Treaty Organization the Real Anti-NATO?" *World Politics Review*, 23 January 2008, www.worldpoliticsreview.com/articles/1531/is-the-collective-security-treatyorganization-the-real-anti-nato.

40. Pavel Felgenhauer, "A CSTO Rapid-reaction Force Created as a NATO Counterweight," *Jamestown Eurasia Daily Monitor* 6, no. 24 (5 February 2009).

41. US Commission on Security and Cooperation in Europe, "Hearing: The Shanghai Cooperation Organization: Is It Undermining U.S. Interests in Central Asia?" 26 September 2006, www.csce.gov/index.cfm?Fuseaction=ContentRecords.ViewTranscript&ContentRecord_id=381&ContentType=H,B&ContentRecordType=H&CFID=23356507&CFTOKEN=36916429.

42. Stephen Aris, "The Shanghai Cooperation Organisation: 'Tackling the Three Evils'. A Regional Response to Non-traditional Security Challenges or an Anti-Western Bloc?" *Europe Asia Studies* 61, no. 3 (April 2009): 457–482.

43. *Ibid.*

44. Roger McDermott, "Moscow Promotes Airpower and Peacekeeping on Afghanistan-linked CSTO Agenda," *Eurasia Daily Monitor* 10, no. 86 (7 May 2013).

45. Andrei Tsygankov, "Russia's Afghanistan Debate: Managing Fear of and in the West," *Problems of Post-Communism* 60, no. 6 (2013): 29–41.

46. "Top Official Says Chinese Security Depends on Afghan Stability," Reuters, 22 February 2014.

47. Jose Antonio Sanahuja, "Post-liberal Regionalism in South America: The Case of Unasur," Working Paper 2012/05, Robert Schuman Centre for Advanced Studies (Florence: European University Institute, May 2012).

48. *Ibid.*

49. Brigitte Weiffen, "Persistence and Change in Regional Security Institutions: Does the OAS Still Have a Project?" *Contemporary Security Policy* 33, no. 2 (2012): 360–383.
50. Sanahuja, *Post-liberal Regionalism in South America*, p. 20.
51. "CSTO Fails Test in Kyrgyzstan," *Nezavisimaya Gazeta*, 23 June 2012; Kommersant, "I ODKB vyshla blokom" [And the CSTO becomes a bloc], 13 August 2013.
52. Yevgeny Primakov, "The Islamic State Is a Formidable Threat," *Rossiskaya Gazeta*, 2 October 2014.
53. Alexander Cooley, *Great Games, Local Rules: The New Great Power Contest in Central Asia* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), pp. 114–115.
54. Marcela Estrada, "UNASUR: An Opportunity for Dialogue in Venezuela?" *Pan Am Post*, 13 March 2014, <http://panampost.com/marcela-estrada/2014/03/13/unasur-an-opportunity-for-dialogue-in-venezuela>.
55. Ramesh Thakur, "R2P After Libya and Syria: Engaging Emerging Powers," *Washington Quarterly* 36, no. 2 (Spring 2013): 61–76.
56. Oliver Stuenkel, "Brazil as a Norm Entrepreneur: The Responsibility While Protecting," in Eduarda P. Hamann and Robert Muggah, eds., *Implementing the Responsibility to Protect: New Directions for International Peace and Security?* (Brasília: Igarapé Institute, 2013), pp. 59–63.
57. Stuenkel, "Brazil as a Norm Entrepreneur," p. 63.
58. Prys, "Hegemony, Domination, Detachment."
59. Hurrell, *On Global Order*, p. 243.
60. Ian Bremmer and Nouriel Roubini, "A G-Zero World," *Foreign Affairs* 90, no. 2 (March–April 2011).

Copyright of Global Governance is the property of Lynne Rienner Publishers and its content may not be copied or emailed to multiple sites or posted to a listserv without the copyright holder's express written permission. However, users may print, download, or email articles for individual use.