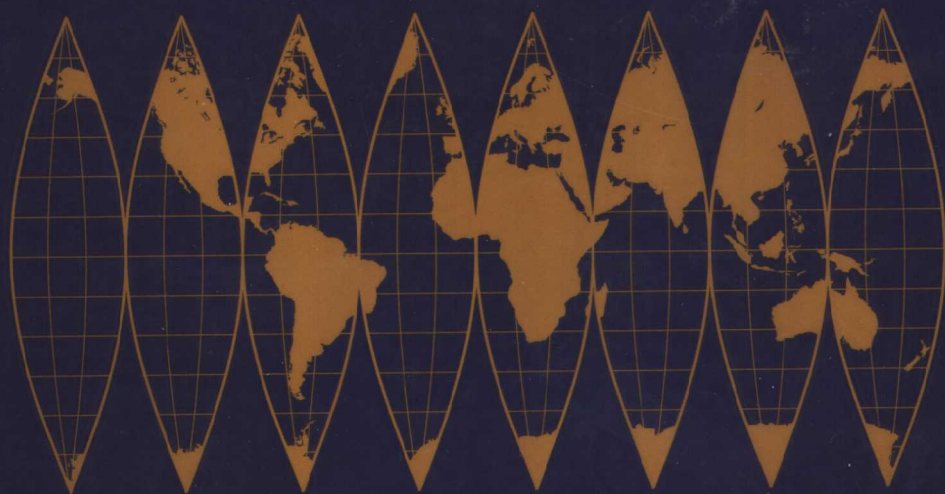


SECOND EDITION

THE POLITICS OF
**Global
Governance**

INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS
IN AN INTERDEPENDENT WORLD



Edited by

PAUL F. DIEHL

second edition

The Politics of Global Governance

International Organizations in
an Interdependent World

edited by
Paul F. Diehl



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Part 1

INTRODUCTION



THERE ARE TWO predominant views of international organizations among the general public. The first is a cynical view that emphasizes the dramatic rhetoric and seeming inability to deal with vital problems that are said to characterize international organizations and the United Nations in particular. According to this view, mirrored in some realist formulations, international organizations should be treated as insignificant actors on the international stage. The other view is an idealistic one. Those who hold this view envisage global solutions to the major problems facing the world today, without recognition of the constraints imposed by state sovereignty. Most of the naive calls for world government are products of this view. An understanding of international organizations and global governance probably requires that neither view be accepted in its entirety, nor be wholly rejected. International organizations are neither irrelevant nor omnipotent in global politics. They play important roles in international relations, but their influence varies according to the issue area and situation confronted.

This book is designed to provide a balanced view of international organizations. Toward this end, the selections in this collection dispel a number of myths. Narrow views about how international organizations make decisions or respond to conflict are called into question. An understanding of international organizations requires knowledge of how, where, and why they operate. Only then can we learn to recognize their limitations as well as their possibilities. We begin the study of international organizations by briefly tracing the origins of the present United Nations system.

The League of Nations was formed following World War I, and it represented an attempt at international cooperative efforts to prevent war. The breakdown of the League system in the 1930s was the product of many factors, although the failure of will by the major powers of the era and the unwieldy requirements for concerted action certainly were the primary causes. As with most experiments, the initial results were far from ideal, but the total effort gives some basis for optimism. In the case of the League of Nations, it was not able to prevent World War II, but it did provide a means for cooperation and consultation among states on a variety of issues not confined to security matters, although this was the major purpose for which it was created.

It is, therefore, perhaps not surprising that world leaders sought to form another general international organization at the conclusion of World War II. The occurrence of war has generally had a stimulating effect on the development of international organizations in the modern era.¹ What may be surprising to some is the similarity between the League of Nations and

its successor, the United Nations.² The Security Council and the General Assembly of the United Nations had comparable antecedents under the League system. Furthermore, the United Nations was also predicated on the assumption that continued cooperation among the victorious coalition in the previous war would insure global stability. One might think that given the League experience, the United Nations would suffer similar setbacks. Although the United Nations and its affiliated agencies have not achieved most of the goals set out in its charter, neither have they been insignificant in dealing with many of the most pressing problems in the world. This can be attributed to the radically differing environments faced by the League and the United Nations.

After 1945, the international system was structured in a bipolar fashion, with each superpower retaining an interest in maintaining its status. Consequently, there was little pressure from the rapid systemic upheaval that characterized the periods prior to the world wars. This does not imply that conflict has abated; rather, such conflict has been more limited and less threatening to the international system or the existence of the United Nations. Second, there seemed to be a greater recognition of a need for cooperation among states. The ideas behind the United Nations are not new ones, but the prospects of global devastation from nuclear war or environmental disaster were sufficient to prompt a greater commitment to international organizations. It has become clear that various problems, such as pollution, hunger, and nuclear proliferation, are not amenable to action by only one or several states.

Finally, the United Nations acquired a symbolic importance that the League of Nations lacked. States feel obligated to justify their actions before the main bodies of the United Nations, even when they may appear contrary to the charter principles. As the United States did during the Cuban missile crisis, states may use the United Nations as a means to legitimize their actions or policy positions.³ Most important, however, states are exceedingly hesitant to withdraw from membership in the United Nations, even when that organization's actions appear contrary to their national interests. Such reluctance prevents the debilitating loss of significant actors that plagued the League during most of its existence.

The end of the Cold War (now conventionally designated as 1989) signaled a new era for the United Nations and international organizations in general. On the one hand, the end of the superpower rivalry removed many of the barriers that had heretofore prevented the United Nations from taking action, especially in the security realm. The United Nations supported global military action against Iraq in the Gulf War, the first such global collective enforcement effort since the Korean War. The United Nations also authorized far more peacekeeping operations in the decade that followed

the end of the Cold War than in the forty-five years that preceded it; many of these new operations took on functions such as humanitarian assistance, nation building, and election supervision that previously were not within the province of UN peacekeeping. On another front, the European Union took further notable steps toward complete economic integration, and other nascent regional economic blocs, such as the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) entity and that formed under the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA), began to take shape.

The prospects for expanding the roles, functions, and powers of international organizations in global governance seemed bright at the beginning of the 1990s. Yet a series of events underscored the problems and limitations of international organizations as they entered the twenty-first century. The enhanced ability of the UN Security Council to authorize new peacekeeping missions did not necessarily translate into greater effectiveness in halting armed conflict or promoting conflict resolution. The United Nations was largely ineffective in stopping the fighting in Bosnia, could not produce a political settlement in Somalia, and was too slow to prevent genocide in Rwanda. Despite its successes, the European Union stumbled badly in its peace efforts toward Bosnia, and attempts to create a common currency as well as other integration efforts have produced significant domestic and foreign political controversies. Other organizations, such as the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), now struggle with the new environment and the redefinition of their roles as their original purposes have been significantly altered or rendered obsolete. As we enter the twenty-first century, international organizations play a greater role than they ever have in history. Yet we are still reminded that state sovereignty and lack of political will by members inhibit the long-term prospects of those organizations for creating effective structures of global governance.

The United Nations and its affiliates are the most significant international organizations, but they are hardly the only ones. In the last century, the number of international organizations grew substantially. Although definitions and estimates may vary, the total number of all types of international organizations may now exceed twenty or thirty thousand. The list includes a wide range of memberships and purposes, and they vary in significance from the Inter-American Tropical Tuna Commission to the World Bank.

One method of classifying international organizations is according to their membership potential and scope of purpose.⁴ International organizations can either be designed for universal membership, potentially including all states in the world, or the membership may be limited, as are many regional organizations. We may also classify international organizations according to the breadth of their concerns. Specific purpose organizations

may be confined to one problem, such as the South East Asia Treaty Organization (SEATO) Medical Research Laboratory, or one issue area, such as the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), whereas general purpose organizations are concerned with a variety of problems in several issue areas. Most international organizations are nongovernmental entities in the limited membership, specific purpose category.

The only universal, general purpose organization (and its affiliated agencies)—the United Nations—receives a disproportionate amount of attention in this volume. The United Nations and its agencies remain the *centerpiece among international organizations in the security realm* and play prominent roles in most other issue areas. Although the United Nations is centrally important, any treatment of international organizations and global governance would be incomplete without a consideration of the thousands of other international organizations throughout the world. Over the past decade, two other types of international organizations have played increasingly important roles in global governance: nongovernmental organizations (NGOs), such as the International Red Cross, and regional organizations, such as the European Union. Accordingly, included here are articles that demonstrate how NGOs and regional organizations form webs or networks that intersect, replace, or supplement those IO webs composed primarily of global intergovernmental organizations such as the United Nations.

Part 1 offers an overview of the purposes, creation, and termination of international organizations. Kenneth Abbott and Duncan Snidal tackle the fundamental question of why states pursue their interests through formal international organizations rather than through other diplomatic channels such as bilateral agreements. The authors argue that two of the characteristics of international organizations—*centralization and independence*—allow them to perform various functions more efficiently. The remaining sections of that chapter illustrate how international organizations can perform a number of functions, including norm creation and arbitration of disputes, often to promote global community values. International organizations don't merely serve immediate needs, however, and then disappear. Richard Cupitt, Rodney Whitlock, and Lynn Williams Whitlock reveal that international governmental organizations have enormous staying power in international relations. Their adaptability has apparently not slowed the creation of new, more specialized organizations. Yet the trend toward more numerous and varied international organizations is not confined to those of the governmental variety. Nongovernmental organizations have perhaps expanded at a greater rate. John Boli and George Thomas trace the development of international nongovernmental organizations over time, arguing that they constitute an expression of a "world culture." Their data clearly

reveal that nongovernmental organizations have expanded in all areas of international discourse.

Part 2 details the decisionmaking processes of international organizations. The range of activities and the bureaucratic actors and processes that are often hidden from public view are revealed in these selections. Furthermore, proposals to change the most visible aspect of decisionmaking—voting—are assessed. After the first three parts, the reader will have a broad view of the place of international organizations in the world system and the patterns of their activities. Armed with this understanding, the reader is directed to the actions of international organizations in three major issue areas: peace and security, economic, and social and humanitarian. In Parts 4 through 6, one can appreciate the number of organizations involved, the scope of activities undertaken, and the variation in effectiveness across organizations and issue areas. While the first three parts highlight common patterns in international organizations, the next three parts provide more details and reveal the diversity of these bodies.

Part 3 explores the effectiveness of collective security and peacekeeping operations, but also considers the changes that the end of the Cold War has wrought. That series of events has led intervention strategies to evolve into its second and third generations and has also called into question the existence and purposes of NATO, the bedrock of deterrence and security in Europe over the past fifty years; articles address each of these concerns. The economic issue area, addressed in Part 4, is one of great importance especially to many underdeveloped countries. An article on the New International Economic Order (NIEO) shows how those third world countries would like to change the current method of global governance with respect to economic issues. Articles on the International Monetary Fund and regional economic organizations illustrate how international institutions have played a role in creating the structure of international finance and development, how they have adapted (or not) to changing demands, and how they paradoxically may both enhance and mitigate the dependence of poorer countries on their wealthier counterparts. Part 5, on humanitarian activities, shows the interface of many organizations in a variety of important concerns, including human rights, the status of women, environmental protection, and humanitarian relief.

Part 6 returns to the more general concerns addressed at the outset of the book: What roles can international organizations play in global governance? The first chapter in this section addresses the critical U.S.-UN relationship, one that will largely define how the UN can perform its functions and how far it can expand its roles in the future. The collection concludes with an essay that traces the evolution of the UN system, seeking insights from its past to understand how it might develop in the future.

Notes

1. See J. David Singer and Michael Wallace, "International Government Organizations and the Preservation of Peace, 1816-1964," *International Organization* 24 (1970): 520-547.

2. For a definitive comparison, see Leland Goodrich, "From League of Nations to United Nations," *International Organization* 1 (1947): 3-21.

3. Ernst Haas, "Collective Legitimization as a Political Function of the United Nations," *International Organization* 20 (1966): 36-379.

4. Harold Jacobson, *Networks of Interdependence*, 2nd edition (New York: Random House, 1984), pp. 11-13.

Why States Act Through Formal International Organizations

Kenneth W. Abbott and Duncan Snidal

- When the United States decided to reverse the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait, it did not act unilaterally (although it often does). It turned to the United Nations (UN) Security Council.
- When the Security Council sought to learn the extent of chemical, biological, and nuclear arms in Iraq, it did not rely on U.S. forces. It dispatched inspectors from the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA).
- When the international community sought to maintain the suspension of combat in Bosnia, it did not rely only on national efforts. It sent in peacekeeping units under the aegis of the UN and North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO).
- When states liberalized trade in services and strengthened intellectual property protection in the Uruguay Round, they were not content to draft rules. They created the World Trade Organization (WTO) and a highly institutionalized dispute settlement mechanism.

Formal international organizations (IOs) are prominent (if not always successful) participants in many critical episodes in international politics. Examples in addition to those above include the following: Security Council sanctions on Libya, IAEA inspectors in North Korea, UN peace-

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keepers in the Middle East, and so forth. The UN secretary-general's 1992 Agenda for Peace sets out an even broader range of current and proposed UN functions in situations of international conflict: fact finding, early warning, and preventive deployment; mediation, adjudication, and other forms of dispute resolution; peacekeeping; sanctions and military force; impartial humanitarian assistance; and postconflict rebuilding. But IO influence is not confined to dramatic interventions like these. On an ongoing basis, formal organizations help manage many significant areas of interstate relations, from global health policy (the WHO) to European security (OSCE and NATO) to international monetary policy (IMF). What is more, participation in such organizations appears to reduce the likelihood of violent conflict among member states (Russett, Oneal, and Davis 1998).

IOs range from simple entities like the APEC secretariat, with an initial budget of \$2 million, to formidable organizations like the European Union (EU)¹ and the World Bank, which has thousands of employees and multiple affiliates and lends billions of dollars each year. Specialized agencies like the ILO, ICAO, and FAO play key roles in technical issue areas. New organizations like UNEP, the EBRD, and the International Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia are regularly created. Older IOs like NATO and the Security Council are rethought and sometimes restructured to meet new circumstances.² As the examples illustrate, moreover, even the most powerful states often act through IOs. In short, "it is impossible to imagine contemporary international life" without formal organizations (Schermers and Blokker 1995: 3).

Why do states so frequently use IOs as vehicles of cooperation? What attributes account for their use, and how do these characteristics set formal organizations apart from alternative arrangements, such as decentralized cooperation, informal consultation, and treaty rules? Surprisingly, contemporary international scholarship has no clear theoretical answers to such questions and thus offers limited practical advice to policy makers.

We answer these questions by identifying the functional attributes of IOs across a range of issue areas. Although we are concerned with the concrete structure and operations of particular organizations, we also see IOs as complex phenomena that implicate several lines of international relations (IR) theory. From this vantage point, we identify two functional characteristics that lead states, in appropriate circumstances, to prefer IOs to alternate forms of institutionalization. These are centralization and independence.

IOs allow for the centralization of collective activities through a concrete and stable organizational structure and a supportive administrative apparatus. These increase the efficiency of collective activities and enhance the organization's ability to affect the understandings, environment, and interests of states. Independence means the ability to act with a degree of

autonomy within defined spheres. It often entails the capacity to operate as a neutral in managing interstate disputes and conflicts. IO independence is highly constrained: member states, especially the powerful, can limit the autonomy of IOs, interfere with their operations, ignore their dictates, or restructure and dissolve them. But as in many private transactions, participation by even a partially autonomous, neutral actor can increase efficiency and affect the legitimacy of individual and collective actions. This provides even powerful states with incentives to grant IOs substantial independence.

The broad categories of centralization and independence encompass numerous specific functions. Most IOs perform more than one, though each has its own unique combination. We do not enumerate every such function or provide a comprehensive typology. Instead, we highlight several of the most important. We focus especially on the active functions of IOs—facilitating the negotiation and implementation of agreements, resolving disputes, managing conflicts, carrying out operational activities like technical assistance, elaborating norms, shaping international discourse, and the like—that IR theory has only sparingly addressed. Rational states will use or create a formal IO when the value of these functions outweighs the costs, notably the resulting limits on unilateral action.

Distinguishing formal IOs from alternative forms of organization is important from several perspectives. For IR scholars, who largely abandoned the study of formal IOs in the move from the legal-descriptive tradition to more theoretical approaches, developing such distinctions should “open up a large and important research agenda” with institutional form and structure as central dependent variables (Young 1994: 4; see also Koremenos et al. 1997). This will complement emerging work on international legalization, a closely related form of institutionalization (Burley and Mattli 1993; Abbott and Snidal 1997; Keohane, Moravcsik, and Slaughter 1997). Such research will also benefit practitioners of conflict management and regime design (Mitchell 1994). The policy implications of our analysis are significant as well. Many states, notably the United States, now resist the creation of IOs and hesitate to support those already in operation, citing the shortcomings of international bureaucracy, the costs of formal organization, and the irritations of IO autonomy. This is an ideal time for students of international governance to focus on the other side of the ledger.

The next section spells out our theoretical approach, drawing lessons from the ways in which different schools of theory have dealt with (or have failed to deal with) the questions posed above. It is followed by an analysis of the organizational attributes of centralization and independence and the functions they make possible—especially in contexts of cooperation and nonviolent conflict. The final section explores two composite functions that challenge conventional views of IO capabilities and demonstrate the complementarity of prevailing theories: developing, expressing, and carrying