

REPORT
**ROUNDTABLE - RETHINKING GLOBAL COOPERATION: THREE NEW FRAMEWORKS FOR
COLLECTIVE ACTION IN AN AGE OF UNCERTAINTY**
6TH MARCH 2023

Presenters – Richard Ponzio (Program Director the Global Governance, Justice & Security Program, Stimson) and Muznah Siddiqui (Research Consultant).

Mr. Richard Ponzio commenced by providing a comprehensive report on the problem set, conceptual framework, and the key concepts that were studied. He highlighted four key global threats or “the four Cs” - Conflict Prevention and Management for Building Peace; COVID-19, Representation, and Human Rights Promotion; Climate Action and Governing the Global Commons; and Collaborative Economy and Promoting Global Public Goods. The primary goal of the report was identified as addressing global governance challenges & opportunities by building on UN Secretary-General’s *Our Common Agenda* (OCA) report (2021). Ponzio argued that a multilateral harnessing of ideas, networks, and collective capabilities of states and non-state actors could capitalize on the upcoming ‘Summit of the Future’ (to be held in September 2024), through the crafting of innovative institutional, legal, operational, and normative policies.

The study revealed that the ‘new social contracts’ which are created at the ‘sub-national level’ complements the ‘new global deal’, while the latter in turn facilitates the former. Ponzio also proposed three global policy frameworks on the road to 2024: ‘a new agenda for peace’, ‘a global digital compact’, and ‘a declaration on future generations. Speaking of the changing nature of conflicts, he highlighted the need for prevention of conflict, inclusiveness, and a collective security architecture in the United Nations.

Pointing out the insufficiencies in the UN Security Council’s attention to the requirements of civilian protection, sustenance of peace, and reduction of violent conflict recurrence, Ponzio argued for the upgradation of the UN Peacebuilding Commission into an empowered Peacebuilding Council that would lead on conflict prevention (with a Peacebuilding Audit tool), focusing on peacebuilding policy development, coordination, and resource mobilization. The strategies for reform included stakeholder consultations and pilot testing the proposed Peacebuilding Audit tool by deriving lessons from the HRC’s Universal Periodic Review.

Speaking on the topic of global digital compact, Muznah Siddiqui stressed the significance on global cooperation on innovation, infrastructure, and information. She emphasized the need for

the promotion of public interests, safeguarding environmental sustainability, and adhering to basic human rights norms in the digital world.

Ponzio concluded the presentation with a recommended roadmap to the 2024 'Summit of the Future'. In the context of Agenda 2030 and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), he also discussed the obligation of states toward future generations and their 'duty of care'.

Discussant – Dr. Sultan Barakat, Founding Director of the Center for Conflict and Humanitarian Studies and Professor in Public Policy at Qatar Foundation's Hamad Bin Khalifa University

Dr. Barakat commended Stimson for upholding the importance of multilateralism and global cooperation despite the huge recent wave against it. He said the need for contextualization and region specificity in such studies must not be overlooked as such tendencies encourage the challenging of the very nature of the nation-state system. The unit of state, which is the basis for modern intergovernmental and supra-national organizations and global structure, is being questioned.

Dr. Barakat pointed out that changes in the sub-national social fabric is limited largely to more developed states as impoverished countries do not have the ability for such mobilizations. Even upon success in similar sub-national mobilizations, their voices are not heard in Washington or New York. Another remark was regarding digital space. It is one thing to regulate, and another thing to share. Redistribution is necessary, he added.

He also called for change within the United Nations Security Council, citing the lack of implementations of regulations/legislations and a western bias, which he argued was evident in the responses and reactions towards the Ukraine crisis. Ending on a cautionary note, Dr. Barakat said that the Ukraine crisis has made many unwilling for global cooperation and multilateralism.

Questions, Comments, Remarks

The presenters received daunting questions on the need for greater regional representation, regional sensitivity, the feasibility of multilateralism in the new emerging world order, the tendency of states to move away from multilateralism towards 'mini-lateralism' and coalitions, power imbalance, the case of Gambia, and the need for finding an effective recipe for balance between "carrots" (incentives) and "sticks" (punishments) in global cooperation.

Addressing the questions and comments, the presenters highlighted the need for realistic, practical, feasible, focused, comprehensive, and collaborative approaches towards crafting

solutions to the global problems. Ponzio opined that as the present Westphalian nation-state system is a result of the Thirty Years war (1618-1648), the possibility of the Ukraine war leading to a possible shift from the present Westphalian state system exists.

Concluding Remarks – Dr. Leslie A Pal, Dean of College of Public Policy

Dr. Pal opined that Stimson has a unique style wherein the content has three elements: first, global governance; second, institutional reform and a comprehensive understanding of the UN system; and finally, a focus on solutions. Whereas most think tanks only focus on a combination of two of these factors. Dr. Pal added that the manner in which Richard and Muznah tackled the extremely daunting questions put forth to them during the discussion reveals the importance Stimson gives to being practical, realistic, and focused in their approach. Their proposed agendas are built on a theoretically sophisticated understanding of issues, he added.

About Stimson

The Stimson Center was founded in the twilight years of the Cold War and has been a torchbearer on finding solutions for urgent global issues for the past three decades. The center promotes shared prosperity and international security through independent analysis, applied research, policy innovation, and global engagement. In the new reality of changing power structures and technological advancements, Stimson is at the forefront in generating innovative analysis and ideas, engaging young voices, and building solutions that promote international justice, security and prosperity. Stimson’s Global Governance, Justice & Security Program aims to develop global and regional institutions with better capacity to cope with global challenges through comprehensive multilateral action that includes the global business communities and civil societies. “Visit the new Global Governance Innovation Network, a collaborative project of the Stimson Center, Academic Council on the United Nations System (ACUNS), Plataforma CIPÓ, and Leiden University: <https://ggin.stimson.org>.”¹

About the Doha Forum

The Doha Forum is a global platform that brings together policy makers to discuss critical global challenges and builds action-driven innovative networks. Discourses towards policymaking and action-oriented recommendations are encouraged under the Doha Forum’s banner “Diplomacy,

¹ Stimson. (n.d.). *Mission & Vision*. Retrieved March 2023, from Stimson: <https://www.stimson.org/about/stimson/mission-vision/>

Dialogue, Diversity". Doha Forum believes that in a world with porous borders, challenges and their solutions also remain interlinked.²

² Doha Forum. (n.d.). *About US*. Retrieved March 2023, from Doha Forum: <https://dohaforum.org/about-us/about-us>