The Impact of Security Perspectives on the Effectiveness of International Security Regimes

Omid Asiyaban [1]

Abstract

This research examines the reasons for the inefficiency of international security regimes in the international system. The main research question is: How have international security regimes faced significant challenges in achieving their objectives? According to the research hypothesis, the inefficiency of these regimes stems from conflicting identities and interests among great powers, particularly the United States, Russia, and China, as well as shifts in security paradigms that have complicated international cooperation. The objective of this study is to analyze the reasons behind the inefficacy of security regimes and propose solutions to enhance global collaboration in addressing emerging threats. The research employs a qualitative and descriptive-analytical methodology, drawing on credible academic sources and policy documents.The findings indicate that identity and interest conflicts among great powers, geopolitical rivalries, and evolving security threats have diminished the effectiveness of security regimes. The study concludes that improving the efficiency of these regimes requires innovative diplomacy and the establishment of consensus among great powers on security norms and principles. Additionally, participation in security regimes should be based on national interests and the security perspectives of each state to prevent unnecessary securitization.

Introduction

From the end of World War II to the present day, international security regimes have evolved in response to a dynamic global landscape, addressing diverse issues ranging from arms proliferation to environmental degradation. Particularly after the conclusion of World War II and the onset of the Cold War in 1945, many scholars of international relations and security focused their studies specifically on critical phenomena such as international security regimes. Consequently, the international community sought to broaden the scope of issues covered by these regimes, leading to the horizontal and vertical expansion of international security regimes.

Horizontally, the membership of security regimes expanded to include more states, while vertically, new issues such as climate change, cybersecurity, and transnational organized crime were incorporated into the agendas of international security regimes. As

Ph.D. in International Relations, Department of International Relations, Faculty of Law and Political Science, University of Tehran, Tehran, Iran.   E-mail: omid.asiaban4385@gmail.com
DOR: 0000-0002-8519-4080

a result, these regimes, as regulatory tools, were largely able to fulfill their function in addressing the concerns of major powers in the international system.

However, at the geostrategic level, a notable issue is that most contemporary international security regimes have failed to ensure security within their specific thematic domains. For example, the Paris Climate Regime has yet to achieve its objectives. Similarly, other security regimes in arms control face numerous challenges. This raises the question: How have international security regimes encountered significant obstacles in achieving their goals?

According to the research hypothesis, international security regimes are shaped by major powers, and their effectiveness depends on the absence of identity and interest conflicts, as well as cooperation among these powers. Identity conflicts and subsequent shifts in security paradigms have intensified rivalries between the United States, Russia, and China, thereby diminishing the efficacy of these regimes and complicating responses to emerging threats. The objective of this study is to examine the reasons behind the inefficacy and challenges facing international security regimes in the global order.

Methodology

The research employs a qualitative and descriptive-analytical methodology. First, the systematically collected and classified data is presented to provide a detailed explanation of international security regimes as a global political-social phenomenon. Subsequently, the relationships between variables are examined through analytical reasoning, and the data is interpreted using relevant theories or conceptual frameworks.

For data collection, the study relies on academic literature, policy documents, and credible online sources to ensure the validity and comprehensiveness of the findings.

Result and discussion

Considering Colin Gray's four key challenges—cultural-strategic differences, conflicting interests, evolving security threats, and the influence of major powers—it can be argued that international security regimes currently suffer from inefficacy. Divergent security perspectives within the structurally complex international system have led to fragmentation in the principles, norms, rules, and decision-making procedures of these regimes.

For instance, from a security perspective, the challenge of strategic cultural differences is evident in the NPT (Non-Proliferation Treaty) regime, which faces deep mistrust among states. These differing security outlooks have resulted in distinct strategic cultures. The United States and some European nuclear powers define security through the maintenance of nuclear arsenals and deterrence, arguing that nuclear weapons are essential for preserving international peace and stability. The U.S. consistently adheres to a status quo security paradigm, relying on nuclear deterrence as a tool to prevent war.

In contrast, Russia's revisionist security outlook—driven by its desire to alter the status quo (particularly its western borders)—and its resulting strategic culture are shaped by identity-based factors (rooted in Orthodox Christianity and Tsarist traditions). This perspective extends beyond mere deterrence. many Russian officials and intellectuals emphasize moving away from Western frameworks on nuclear proliferation, often discussing tactical nuclear weapons' potential use. Thus, Russia's strategic culture regarding nuclear weapons transcends traditional deterrence logic.

The following analysis examines some of the most significant arms control and disarmament regimes through the lens of these challenges: divergent security and strategic cultures, conflicting interests, shifting security threats, great power influence, and technological hurdles.

Conclusion

Given current security paradigms and their associated challenges, it must be acknowledged that international security regimes are facing significant inefficacy in addressing security issues. When examined through the five key indicators of actor participation, power dynamics, interests and motivations, effectiveness and efficiency, and ultimately adaptability and flexibility, it becomes evident that the emergence of new powers like China and Russia, coupled with growing non-state actor influence, is challenging traditional models of global governance.

In this evolving landscape, emerging powers are attempting to shape security regimes that align with their own strategic cultures and security perspectives within a multipolar framework. This allows them to emphasize their specific security imperatives and concerns, which may not always align with Western viewpoints. This paradigm shift could potentially weaken existing security regimes while simultaneously creating new opportunities for either novel forms of cooperation or the redefinition of international relations.

Moreover, geopolitical fault lines stemming from conflicting interests and great power competition are significantly impacting the efficacy of security regimes. In this context, any divergence among major powers risks creating new crises and undermining collective efforts to address emerging threats. This dynamic is particularly visible in confronting challenges like climate change and international terrorism, where global cooperation is essential for developing comprehensive solutions.

Given these divergent security outlooks, security regimes appear compelled to continuously adapt and evolve to meet contemporary challenges. However, these very differences in perspectives may create substantial obstacles to adaptation and consensus-building regarding principles, norms, rules, and decision-making procedures. Consequently, there is a pressing need for innovative diplomatic approaches capable of reconciling competing interests through constructive negotiation frameworks.

Keywords: International Security Regimes, Security Perspectives, Arms Control, Great Powers, Geopolitical Fault Lines.

References

1. Abe, T. (2023). Syrian chemical weapons and international law. Springer.
2. Ali, H. (2020). The rise and fall of Islamic State: Current challenges and future prospects. Asian Affairs, 51(1), 71-94.
3. Asgarkhani, A. (2004). International Regimes. Tehran: Abrar Contemporary International Cultural Institute for Studies and Research Publications. (In Persian)
4. Asgarkhani, A., & Asiyaban, O. (2020). Structural Complexity and New Patterns of Hegemonic War. Political and International Research Quarterly, 45, 62-81. (In Persian)
5. Asiyaban, O. (2022). Governance Patterns; Geopolitical Fault Lines and U.S. Competition with China and Russia. American Strategic Studies Quarterly, 2 (3), 121-151. (In Persian)
6. Asiyaban, O. (2023). Tactical Nuclear Weapons: From Nuclear Deterrence to Nuclear Compellence. World Politics Quarterly, 12 (4), 7-38. (In Persian)
7. Blumenthal, D., & Kagan, F. W. (2023). China's three roads to controlling Taiwan. American Enterprise Institute.
8. Bunton, M. (2024). The contemporary Middle East: Foreign intervention and authoritarian governance since 1979. John Wiley & Sons.
9. Buzan, B., & Hansen, L. (2009). The evolution of international security studies. Cambridge University Press.
10. Chekov, A. D. (2024). Five years without the INF Treaty: Lessons and prospects. Russia in Global Affairs, 22(4), 24-47.

11. Claude, I. L. (1992). Collective security after the Cold War. Collective Security in Europe and Asia, 7-28.
12. Collins, A. (Ed.). (2022). Contemporary security studies. Oxford University Press.
13. Dalby, S. (2009). Security and environmental change. Polity.
14. Edwards, B., Novossiolova, T., Crowley, M., Whitby, S., Dando, M., & Shang, L. (2022). Meeting the challenges of chemical and biological weapons: Strengthening the chemical and biological disarmament and non-proliferation regimes. Frontiers in Political Science, 4, 805426.
15. Gheciu, A., & Wohlforth, W. C. (Eds.). (2018). The Oxford handbook of international security. Oxford University Press.
16. Gray, C. S. (1984). Comparative strategic culture. The US Army War College Quarterly: Parameters, 14(1), 13.
17. Griffiths, M. (2013). Encyclopedia of international relations and global politics. Routledge.
18. Hanhimäki, J. M. (2015). The United Nations: A very short introduction. Oxford University Press.
19. Harris, P. G. (2002). Environmental security: Will Bush follow Clinton's lead? Pacifica Review: Peace, Security & Global Change, 14(2), 149-157.
20. Ikenberry, G. J. (2011). Liberal leviathan: The origins, crisis, and transformation of the American world order. Princeton University Press.
21. Ilić, S. D., Radovanović, R. V., & Ivković, A. S. (2024). International security regimes in preventing the spread of nuclear armaments and their global significance. Vojnotehnički glasnik/Military Technical Courier, 72(2), 896-923.
22. Izmailov, Y., & Yegorova, I. (2024). Global challenges to modern international security system. Economics and Technical Engineering, 2(1), 22-30.
23. Kahler, M. (2013). Rising powers and global governance: Negotiating change in a resilient status quo. International Affairs, 89(3), 711-729.
24. Keohane, R. O. (2020). International institutions and state power: Essays in international relations theory. Routledge.
25. Krasner, S. D. (Ed.). (1983). International regimes. Cornell University Press.
26. Kupchan, C. A. (2012). No one's world: The West, the rising rest, and the coming global turn. Oxford University Press.
27. Laraia, M., & Pescatore, C. (2013). International nuclear cooperation. In Managing nuclear projects (pp. 322-346). Woodhead Publishing.
28. Leffler, M. P., & Westad, O. A. (Eds.). (2010). The Cambridge history of the Cold War (Vol. 1). Cambridge University Press.
29. Levi, M. A., & O'Hanlon, M. E. (2004). The future of arms control. Rowman & Littlefield.
30. Lustgarten, L. (2015). The arms trade treaty: Achievements, failings, future. International & Comparative Law Quarterly, 64(3), 569-600.
31. Malygina, A., Notte, H., & Rusten, L. (2024). The risk of renewed nuclear testing. Risk.
32. Martin, L. (2008). Global governance. Routledge.
33. Meyer, P. (2021). Does the Conference of Disarmament have a future? Journal for Peace and Nuclear Disarmament, 4(2), 287-294.
34. Nayan, R. (2012). The emerging nuclear security regime: Challenges ahead. Strategic Analysis, 36(1), 87-99.
35. Northedge, F. S. (1986). The League of Nations: Its life and times 1920-1946.

36. Nye Jr, J. S. (2022). The end of cyber-anarchy? How to build a new digital order. Foreign Affairs, 101, 32.

37. Nye, J. S. (2010). Cyber power (pp. 1-24). Harvard Kennedy School, Belfer Center for Science and International Affairs.

38. Nye, J. S., & Keohane, R. O. (1990). Power and interdependence. HarperCollins.

39. Orhan, E. (2022). The effects of the Russia-Ukraine war on global trade. Journal of International Trade, Logistics and Law, 8(1), 141-146.

40. Prokop, M. (2023). Russia-Ukraine: Difficult neighbourly relations. In The Russia-Ukraine War of 2022 (pp. 6-21). Routledge.

41. Raine, S., & Le Miere, C. (2013). Chapter four: The US in the South China Sea. Adelphi Series, 53(436-437), 151-178.

42. Rakhra, K. (2023). The state of the NPT: Challenges ahead. In The global nuclear landscape (pp. 101-115). Routledge.

43. Schelling, T. C., & Strategy, M. H. H. (1961). Arms control. The Twentieth Century Fund.

44. Stojanović, G. (2022). Hybrid wars in the 21st century: Study on the Russia-Ukraine conflict. In Fighting for empowerment in an age of violence (pp. 238-248). IGI Global.

45. Vinaya, S. (2022). Implementing the prohibition on chemical and biological weapons: A study of disarmament under international law. Part 1 Indian Journal of Integrated Research in Law, 2, 1.

46. Weber, C. (2013). International relations theory: A critical introduction. Routledge.

47. Włodkowska, A. (2022). The strategic culture of Russia: Why is the dialogue so challenging? In Disinformation, narratives and memory politics in Russia and Belarus (pp. 135-150). Routledge.

48. Yost, D. S. (2015). The Budapest Memorandum and Russia's intervention in Ukraine. International Affairs, 91(3), 505-538.

49. Young, O. R. (1982). Regime dynamics: The rise and fall of international regimes. International Organization, 36(2), 277-297.