Introduction: Drivers and Change in Global Governance

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The purpose of this roundtable is to add momentum to our own long-standing analytical efforts to push outward the boundaries of what we understand as "global governance"—something that every contributor to this issue has struggled to accomplish in her or his own scholarship and teaching. Specifically, our analytical quest here is to advance the concept of governance from a simple association with international organization and law, multilateralism, and what states do in concert to one that looks at the kinds of world order in which their interactions take place, while also paying attention to a host of other actors, principles, norms, networks, and mechanisms. In brief, we aim to enhance our understanding of global complexity and the way that it is governed. We take seriously the idea that global governance actors are not merely involved in the creation and preservation of the status quo but are also agents of change.

The contemporary study of "global governance" sprouted and took root among academics and policy wonks in the 1990s, coinciding with the end of the cold war. This newfound attention reflected growing global interdependence and rapid technological advances as well as the sheer expansion in numbers and importance of civil society organizations and for-profit corporations during this time. The term came to refer to collective efforts to identify, understand, or address worldwide problems and processes that went beyond the capacities of individual states. It reflected a capacity of the international system to provide government-like services in the absence of world government. The concept of global governance encompassed a wide variety of cooperative problem-solving arrangements that were visible but informal (for example, practices or guidelines) or were temporary formations (such as coalitions of the willing). Such arrangements could also be more formal, taking the shape of hard rules (laws and treaties). They also included

institutions with administrative structures and established practices that managed collective affairs by a variety of actors—including state authorities, intergovernmental organizations, nongovernmental organizations, private sector entities, and other civil society actors.

We must change the way we govern the planet. With refugees and internally displaced persons fleeing in record numbers, the climate changing at alarming rates, weapons of mass destruction circulating, pandemics lurking, and terrorism thriving, the contributors to these pages, like the readers of *Ethics & International Affairs*, need no persuading on this point. Transformation is a necessity, not an option, and thus analysts need not be shy about the use of "ought." It is imperative to frame more specifically "the world we want" (to use the catchphrase of the Sustainable Development Goals, which were agreed by the UN General Assembly in September 2015) and to find paths toward this world. An initial step on that journey is to better understand the dynamics of continuity and change.

At the same time, it is crucial not to overlook previous steps, small and not so small, toward a more desirable world order. We are not starting from scratch. Indeed, many times it was not so much the world that changed but that observers noticed something that had long been there or "rediscovered" something that was hardly new at all. Of course, change has taken place. Hence, we should not underestimate the extent to which order, stability, and predictability exist despite the lack of a central authority to address the planet's problems. On any given day in virtually every corner of the world, exchanges take place smoothly, with neither notice nor comment. Mail is delivered among 200 countries. Travelers arrive at airports, harbors, train stations, and by road—many of them crossing borders with barely a notice. Goods and services move by land, air, sea, and cyberspace. A range of transboundary activities occur with the expectation of safety and security. In fact, disruptions and failures are often less frequent and spectacular in the international arena than within such countries as Afghanistan, Syria, Zimbabwe, and others that supposedly have functioning governments.

That largely unseen economic, political, and technological structures enable the provision of some global public goods is uncontroversial. Moreover, there are even more remarkable nonevents: Today there are no children dying from smallpox, and no nuclear weapon has been detonated in war since the two horrific explosions in Japan in 1945.

While global governance helps us to understand the way that the current world order works, too rarely do we push ourselves beyond asking the analytical

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question: Can the world be governed better? We also should ask an essential normative question: How can we change the way that it is governed? We simply have to do better in confronting the range of problems that threaten dignified human survival. Our predecessors on planet Earth have waffled; we cannot.

The essays here grow out of roundtables that we organized at the 2015 annual meeting of the International Studies Association and from subsequent conversations. We put together the five essays here in order to begin to parse better the dynamics of state and nonstate actors in global governance. We also hope to comprehend the kind of change that these actors might bring about (progressive or regressive, *in* world orders as well as *of* world orders). Our intention is to engage in a conversation in a way that sees these aspects of global governance as organic features involved in the creation, perpetuation, and alteration of the world order that we currently have.

Analysts have made significant advances in identifying the actors and issues—as well as strengths and weaknesses—that are key features of contemporary global governance. Yet as a scholarly community, we have had far too little to say about what might drive change in the way that the world is governed and organized. We have had even less to say about what kinds of changes might take place or about their scale and consequences. Indeed, with the notable exception of war and—more recently—of "rising" powers, commentary on the actual drivers of change has been remarkably thin in discussions about the problems and prospects of global governance.

Our own overview in the first essay aims to spell out "Change and Continuity in Global Governance." This analysis seeks to understand the dynamics of both inertia and movement. As we note, debates about what drives change and what encourages continuity in global governance have typically been limited to privileging alterations in the distribution of relative power capabilities among states, identifying war and alternations in material power as markers of transitions, and perceiving intergovernmental organizations to be tenacious. While we do not want to lose sight of the state as essential actor, we do seek to conceptualize changes—large and small, transformative and system-stabilizing—as a means to understand why systems endure or fade away, and why they may change abruptly or not at all. As the reader might suspect, our normative goal is clear: harnessing this knowledge for thinking about more stable and just world orders. Part of this exercise involves enlarging the boundaries of time and space. Global governance, if it is to make sense at all, is not merely a descriptor for a post–cold war pluralistic moment

but rather a legitimate set of questions about how the world is governed and ordered at all levels and in every historical period.

Another macroview is given in the second essay, "Global Governance and Power Politics: Back to Basics," by Roland Paris. He begins by indicating that the fundamental challenge in global problem solving is not the absence of cooperative mechanisms, but rather a shift in power away from the West and toward emerging countries that do not necessarily share the assumptions about the objectives and procedures developed since World War II. No amount of institutional innovation can replace the most fundamental need: agreement on "the rules of the game." Paris proposes to bring back material power and power politics into analyses of global governance, which he argues have been shortchanged in the post–cold war era. He does not wish to abandon the lenses that have contributed much to understanding the pluralization of contemporary world politics, but rather to think about innovative forms of cooperation that may provide us with a better understanding of the dimensions of contemporary power and how to forge major-power consensus.

Three more specific interpretations follow these first two overviews. They seek to reinterpret global governance in light of dramatically different illustrations of the drivers of change as viewed from the perspective of: an emerging power (China); a specific issue (the global environment); and an ignored dynamic (voluntary standard-setting).

The third essay, "The Rise of China: Continuity or Change in the Global Governance of Development?" by Catherine Weaver, looks at China's role in the global order. Working inductively and emphasizing the role of material power, Weaver analyzes the rise of Chinese development financing to illustrate what it may mean in terms of new players, new power, and possibly new paradigms for the global governance of development aid. Her analysis of the Chinese case leads her to conclude with an intriguing irony: actors most ardently using their power to defend continuity in global governance may, in fact, create the conditions under which new players are compelled to contest existing multilateral institutions—and that, in turn, produces deeper change.

The fourth essay is Susan Park's "Governing the Environment: Three Motivating Factors." Very few politicians, pundits, or members of the public still dispute that human beings have changed the planet's climate, a view held by 97 percent of the world's scientists. Indeed, the global environment is probably the best illustration of both the need to devise global solutions to ongoing

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degradation as well as the collective action problems involved in so doing. Park examines how a number of factors—environmental crises and clashes in values and in calculating the utility of various responses—come together (or not) to drive change in the field of global environment. Of particular interest in examining drivers of change is her effort to distinguish "fast-burn" from "slow-burn" crises. The former dominate international discussions, requiring rapid reactions until a situation is contained or exhausted. However, tackling the global environment involves challenges of a different sort, and it can take decades ("slow-burn") before there is awareness that they require urgent action at the global level. Even then, robust reactions to these problems are only effected with the greatest of difficulty.

The forum ends with Craig Murphy's "Voluntary Standard Setting: Drivers and Consequences." Murphy seeks to shed light on a significant part of the contemporary system of global governance that most readers may not have even noticed: the legitimacy and effectiveness of voluntary standard setting. Indeed, some informed politicians and international relations theorists view such standard setting as a possible supplement or replacement for the traditional and more visible intergovernmental processes of global governance. The drivers for standards are in many ways different from those encountered in other essays, namely, the demand of industrial economies for standards and the existence of technicians to voluntarily spell them out and monitor their application. Murphy's examination of the mundane, rather than the spectacular, opens an essential window that helps us view how the world is ordered, as well as what causes forms of global governance to change and endure.

The essays that follow bring together some of the very best minds currently thinking about global governance. Of course, no set of essays can possibly do justice to the magnitude of our stated task, but the following pages represent a modest step toward a better understanding of continuity and change in contemporary world politics.