

The Floundering of America's Rule-Based Order:

A Call for a Just New World Order

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As global geopolitics pivot, the once-dominant rule-based order championed by the United States faces increasing scrutiny and decline. Recent developments highlight the urgent need for a fresh framework that transcends the failings of both Western hegemony and authoritarian alternatives.

In October, Russian President Vladimir Putin, bolstered by successful summits of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) and BRICS, reiterated calls for a multipolar world order. At a conference in Sochi, he asserted that the U.S. "will not be at the center of the new world order." The sentiment aligns with the growing disenchantment among nations toward U.S.-led systems that many perceive as exploitative and selective in their application of justice. BRICS and other alternative blocs offer a framework to dilute U.S. dominance. However, as these forums grow, their alignment with authoritarian powers like Russia and China raises concerns about whether they can truly champion justice and human dignity—principles that should underpin any global system.

The Gaza crisis has further exposed the fragility of the U.S.-led order. Washington's unwavering support for 'Israel', despite mounting civilian casualties in Gaza, has provoked widespread criticism. Many accuse the U.S. of hypocrisy, prioritizing strategic alliances over the principles of human rights and international law it claims to uphold. This erosion of legitimacy extends beyond Gaza. Across the Global South, America's selective approach to justice has alienated nations seeking a more equitable global order. The vacuum left by the decline of U.S. influence calls for leadership that prioritizes fairness and the protection of all human lives, regardless of geography or political alignment.

Senator Lindsey Graham's recent warnings to U.S. allies and other countries highlight the coercive nature of American diplomacy. Threatening consequences for countries supporting an International Criminal Court (ICC) investigation into 'Israeli' Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu underscores the duplicity at the heart of U.S. foreign policy. Such behavior lends credence to criticisms that America's global role has become one of imposition rather than inspiration. These actions resonate with the claims of leaders like Putin, who argue that the U.S. should no longer sit at the helm of global governance. However, the alternative offered by nations like Russia and China, characterized by oppression and disregard for human rights, is equally inadequate.

Amid these failings, Islam offers a transformative framework for global governance rooted in justice, equity, and compassion. Unlike systems driven by the pursuit of power or wealth, Islamic principles emphasize accountability, mutual respect, and the protection of human dignity. The Qur'anic injunction to **﴿يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا كُونُوا قَوَّامِينَ بِالْقِسْطِ شُهَدَاءَ لِلَّهِ وَلَوْ عَلَىٰ أَنفُسِكُمْ أَوِ الْوَالِدِينَ وَالْأَقْرَبِينَ﴾** **“O you who believe! Stand out firmly for justice, as witnesses to Allah, even though it be against yourselves, or your parents, or your kin”** [TMQ 4:135] highlights a universal ethic that transcends borders and biases.

Islamic governance, as demonstrated historically by the Rashidun, Ummayyad, Abbasid and Uthmani Caliphates—they prioritized the welfare of all citizens, regardless of religion or background. Its emphasis on consultation (shura), the equitable distribution of resources, and the prohibition of exploitation aligns with the aspirations of many nations for a more inclusive and compassionate global order.

The decline of the U.S.-led world order and the inadequacies of alternative power centers present an opportunity to reimagine global governance. Muslims must take it upon themselves to establish the rightly guided Caliphate and usher in a period of peace and prosperity. Allah says: **﴿وَمَا أَرْسَلْنَاكَ إِلَّا رَحْمَةً لِّلْعَالَمِينَ﴾** **We have sent you 'O Prophet' only as a mercy for the whole world.”** [TMQ 21:107].