

POST-CORONA PANDEMIC WORLD: FUTURE SCENARIOS FOR THE GLOBAL SYSTEM



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Abstract:

The world has lately witnessed the largest crisis in terms of size, effects and privacy. It created a set of challenges on a large scale and drove the most powerful political systems unable overcome or at least to cope with that terrible situation. The Pandemic damages have highly affected the international system.

Due to the wide-ranging, highly complex, changing repercussion of Covid-19 on the nature, patterns of interaction in the international system, a lot of nations had become commercially isolated; and the balance of power standards shifted from focusing on logistical standards to concentrating on scientific knowledge to confront the Pandemic, or at least reducing its severity, and thus suggesting scenarios about the future of the international system after the pandemic.

Our research paper will focus on the repercussions and paths of the international system after Corona in terms of the balance of power, the strategic position of the major powers - progress / deterioration.

Key words: *COVID-19 Pandemic; International Interactions; world order; geopolitical; scenarios.*

Introduction:

The Corona pandemic was such a hit to the international community. Its deep-impact and widespread repercussions had affected several aspects of life – health, economic, social, political and even military. As a result, borders had been closed, international trade had stopped and lockdown quarantine had been urged as

a necessity for world's safety. However, new patterns of interaction appeared in the international community, in which electronic transactions shaped the basis of the foundation, was reflected on the form of the international system that witnessed a crack in the level international interactions, the regional role and international blocs

Researchers emphasize that the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic are overtaken by the geopolitical dimensions of the international system, which may draw a new global map with new actions and culture, allowed new forces to emerge and gain international prominence. This led to a second thought about the structure of the current international system and highlighting the shape of the balance of power and its distribution.

It is clear from the forgoing that the coronavirus pandemic has become a new variable in international interactions, which we intend to deepen our understanding and analysis according to recognized scientific and methodological foundations by asking the following pivotal question:

How has the coronavirus pandemic changed the pattern of international interactions? What are the possible scenarios for the world, the contexts and directions of the international system in the post-coronavirus world?

I- Examples of some countries' response to the coronavirus pandemic

Countries' handling of the coronavirus pandemic has been highly uneven, as a result of the specificity of governing political systems, and the associated influence on decision makers' attitudes towards adopting policies in their own hands. Francis Fukuyama believes that the factors responsible for determining an effective response are the State's capacity, community confidence and leadership. States with highly efficient State machinery, a government trusted, listened to by citizens and influential leaders have been able to minimize the scale of the damage suffered. (Minah, 2020, p. 05).

1- how the Chinese model has dealt with Covid-19

Chinese authorities officially recorded the first coronavirus infection on December 08th, 2019, and delayed notifying the World Health Organization about the emergence of the new virus until December 31, 2019, as the virus spread widely in Khuji province (more than 380 confirmed infections). However, the Chinese Government quickly declared a state of emergency that included imposing

a comprehensive and tightened quarantine on the city of Wuhan, and then on the entire province of Hubei (approximately 60 million people). But the taken was not merely quarantine, as it was a complete closure of the Territory imposed by the Chinese authorities with stringent security and military mechanisms, and checkpoints were imposed on the main roads leading to the Territory's various cities.

So, China was soon able to build 14 field hospitals in the territory in record time, helping it contain and confine the virus to specific regions. Remarkably, the data show a correlation between the containment pathways of the epidemic outbreak in Hubei province and the containment of its outbreak in the rest of Chinese cities. (Political Studies Unit, 2020, p. 04).

The Chinese Government has also taken a number of economic decisions to confront the pandemic:

- Support for the most vulnerable groups, such as low-income families;
- Exemption of small companies from social security fees, utility bills and credit through faintish companies;
- Provision of subsidized credit to support increased production of health equipment and other vital activities within the epidemic's response;
- Supporting interbank transaction markets, providing financial support to companies under pressure, and incentivizing banks to lend to smaller companies through private financing available from the Central Bank of China. (Political Studies Unit, 2020, p. 05).

2- How the UK model has faced the Covid-19?

Like the rest of the world, the United Kingdom has not been in the position of a spectator, and has been quick to adopt a number of measures, the most important of which may be the following: (Dhikru Allah, 2020, p.p. 9-16).

- The Government has used public expenses to meet the costs incurred by companies, most notably, the State's holiday costs, cancelling business rate payments for 2020-2021 for companies in England in the retail, hospitality and leisure industries, and for incubations.
- The Government provided cash grants to some companies, where the Government provided cash grants worth £25,000 to companies in the retail, hospitality and leisure sectors with an estimated amount of £ 15, 000pounds and

£51,000. Equivalent grants will also be provided by Scottish and Welsh Governments;

- Pay a £10,000 grant to all companies eligible for rural relief;
- The government announced on March 20, 2020 that it would pay companies up to 80% of salary costs to paid workers up to a maximum of £2,500 per month per worker.
- Deferral of payment of taxes.
- Low-interest loans financing system- 19 COVID- for large (non-financial) companies;

3- The US model in the face of Covid-19

The U.S. experience in dealing with the coronavirus has been marked by two levels of government response, including the U.S. federal government's response represented by President Trump's administration and Congress and the steps taken to manage the crisis. The second level is the level of dealing with it at the local level within the various U.S. states. (Ibrahim, 2020, link: <https://futureuae.com/ar-AE/Mainpage/Item/5362>).

✓ Task Force :

On 29 January 2020, President Trump formed a presidential task force to manage the coronavirus crisis. "The Working Group" monitors, contains and mitigates the spread of the coronavirus, ensures that Americans have access to up-to-date accurate information about the spread of the coronavirus situation. The group includes members working in national security agencies, homeland security, the budget and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention " CDC" and at the beginning of the formation of the group chaired by the Secretary of Health. (Vice-President) to chair the group that was in permanent session, to maintain constant contact with President Trump, and to hold press conferences on an ongoing basis to update the American people on developments in the situation.

✓ Coordination at the Federal and Local levels:

The Trump administration of the United States President continued to coordinate with Congress to provide private funds for the response to COVID-19. Initially, the government requested emergency funds of \$2.5 billion. In response to the spread of the virus, Congress approved additional funding of \$7.5 billion to \$8 billion to support the government's efforts.

✓ **Health Emergency :**

States: Washington, New York, California - with the highest infection rates - have declared a state of emergency, as well as other states such as Arizona, Delaware, Florida and other states.

✓ **precautionary measures :**

Numerous precautionary measures taken in the United States, both at the federal and local levels, included those associated with travel restrictions and travel bans on arrivals from China, and announced a 30-day ban on travel from Europe to the United States, announced by the President "Trump", prompted Homeland Security authorities to declare that it does not include U.S. citizens with permanent residency cards, add to those measures the health isolation of those suspected of being infected from the disease from abroad, and strictly restrict travel on cruise ships.(Hassan Abdel-Aleem, 2020, p. 10).

The varying international response to the coronavirus pandemic, especially after the United States announced its exit from the World Health Organization (WHO) and the latter's accusation of covering up information and favoring China, reflected the nature, characteristics and trends of the international system.

II- Potential geopolitical implications of the coronavirus pandemic:

Historical studies have shown that epidemics are capable of changing and accelerating existing trends, which we are currently observing in many sectors, especially in the economic and political sphere.

The coronavirus pandemic is a catalyst that has accelerated current trends in international policy and not a catalyst for change, and given the persistence of deteriorating U.S. leadership, tense transatlantic relations, and diminished global and regional cooperation.

However, it is today's decisions that will ultimately determine whether these trends become a reality or remain unchanged.

Today's world stands at a crossroads, as Bauman says, "We, the inhabitants of the Earth, find ourselves (more than ever) facing a real dilemma: either cooperate and intensify or we organize to a funeral procession and bury in one mass grave."(Stoian, 2020, <https://euro-sd.com/2020/09/headline/18821/the-covid-19-saga-global-implications-geopolitical-trends-and-the-balance-of-power/>).

Firstly : Impact on international interaction :

The coronavirus pandemic is threatening bilateral relations between the United States and China, undermining global stability, such as China, which recognizes American superiority in military defense, has been able to assume the role of global leadership through its soft diplomacy and humanitarian assistance to countries at risk of spreading the virus.

The two sides also engaged in a war of words and mutual accusations;

The United States accused China of creating the crisis, while China accused The USA of creating the virus as a tool for global biological warfare. These bickering deteriorated relations between the United States and China. Since both are key actors in the international system. This probably will lead to significant repercussions on other actions.

The coronavirus crisis revealed a decline in the role of the United States of America in the international arena because of its unresponsiveness in providing aid to the affected countries and those in need of assistance. The United States of America has stepped back from the role of world leader and first in the international system, in China's quest for this status. (Ilyas, p.p. 07-08).

In the same vein, the American thinker Joseph S. Nye Jr in that Covid-19 proves that the new national security strategy announced by President Donald Trump in 2017 focuses on great power competition them inadequate and useless, even if the United States prevails as a superpower, it cannot protect its security by acting on its own, and believes that when it comes to cross-border threats such as COVID-19 and climate change. It is not enough to think about American power and entrench influence over other countries .It must be know the importance of power with others, and this prompted the United States to consider adjusting its strategy to keep peace with the new world. (Ibrahim Abdul Rahman, <https://www.iasj.net/iasj/download/22037c0686a05ff1>).

Arguably, the coronavirus pandemic contributes to accelerating the transformation of global policy milestones by influencing the behaviour of international political units in their interactions with their external surroundings, and could be the beginning of a new era that establishes new concepts and contents in international policy.

Secondly: the impact on international and regional institutions:

The European Union has long maintained that it is an organization of unlimited cooperation for well-being beyond the financial cooperation of its

member States. However, the coronavirus pandemic has exposed the disadvantages of the principle of cooperation and the defects in its structure. Italy, severely affected by the coronavirus pandemic, has not received assistance to obtain supplies of medical equipment from member States or the European Union's Emergency Response Coordination Centre's position and its failure to respond to it.

Given that the EU is unable to provide assistance to Italy and Spain... The assistance of China and the Republic of Korea has increased the disappointment of all parties to the regional order in Europe. The border has become a more profound reality than the European unity they sought during the crisis. In this regard, the President of Serbia said that In his speech, European Solidarity as: " Hoax accuses union of hypocrisy ".(Ilyas, p.10).

The Covid-19 pandemic has also proved the World Health Organization's inefficiency in managing emerging health crises, as well as NATO's failure to provide assistance and solidarity with Italy. The coronavirus crisis has exposed the dysfunction of international institutions, eroding states' confidence in them. Italian Prime Minister Giuseppe Conte warned, "if Europe fails to reach sufficient monetary and financial policy to meet the greatest global challenge since the Second World War, Europeans, will be deeply disappointed, if we do not seize the opportunity to breathe new life into the European project, the risk of failure is real". (Lika, 2020, p. 14).

Thirdly: Strengthening the State's economic role and deterioration of globalization:

The Covid-19 pandemic has revealed the disadvantages of the prevailing global capitalist discourse, the most important of which can be summarized in the following points: (Bekhouche, 2020, p.p. 80-82).

✓ International trade liberalization and the free market promoted by international institutions such as International Monetary Fund (IMF) and World Trade Organization (WTO) - do not offer solutions. It poses problems that are essentially linked to the value and standing of the human being, who is transformed into a market instrument, Instead of being the target and focus of any economic science, today's inability of health systems to cope with the spread of Covid-19 infection due to lack of financial allocations is a clear indication, Certainly, market mechanisms on their own can no longer control market forces that seek to maximize their profits, at the expense of social and environmental balances that have become fragile, and therefore one of the most important features

of post-Covid-19 seems to be the opening of the debate on the humanity of globalization and standing up to savage liberalism.

✓ The manner in which political regimes deal with this pandemic has revealed a shocking disparity in favour of autocratic regimes at the expense of democratic regimes. People of different affiliations, economic and cultural levels today feel that their members are transformed day in and day out into merely commodities in a constantly globalizing market, their value is not linked to their humanity as an absolute value, but rather a relativity determined by market mechanisms.

✓ The coronavirus pandemic has led democracies and dictatorships to expand the use of electronic surveillance techniques to curb their spread, what has implications for the principles underlying contemporary democracies. New techniques for political systems provide new ways to maintain power and exercise AI-powered control and surveillance, which brings to the debate the issues of digital dictatorships at the level of political systems and Electronic Colonialism.

✓ The pandemic underscores the concept of a self-sustaining nation-State. It is a threat that requires it to take action as a provider of health care and security services. The State is the primary actor in both global and national epidemics. Measuring the State's strength is limited to determining actual authority, health-care systems, supply chains and emergency response capacity, as well as population size, military and economic strength. (Stoian, 2020, <https://euro-sd.com/2020/09/headline/18821/the-covid-19-saga-global-implications-geopolitical-trends-and-the-balance-of-power/>).

✓ Stephen M. Walter said that COVID-19 will have a major impact on the change of power and influence from the West to the East, and will create a less open, less prosperous and less free world. He stressed on this crisis will strengthen the national status and the sense of belonging of the people. The decline in globalization will not fundamentally change the conflicts that shape the current global political characteristics. (Ibrahim Abdel Rahman, <https://www.iasj.net/iasj/download/22037c0686a05ff1>).

In the light of previous theses and perceptions, we envisage that the lockdown approach taken by the world's countries to confront the coronavirus will revitalize the national pattern at the expense of the globalized pattern that has proved to be unsuccessful. It will strengthen the nation-State's role as an influential and legitimate actor in international relations but is unable unilaterally to meet the cross-border challenges that lead to follow the principle of international

cooperation and support. The global system faces a number of variables that may shape its features in the post-epidemic phase.

III- Scenarios of the global order post- COVID-19 pandemic

As the chances of traditional security threats decline, new variables have emerged capable of shaping the new world order, and the coronavirus pandemic is one of the most important threats.

Stephen Walt also noted to Foreign Policy Magazine that the world will see an accelerated transition of power and influence from the West to Asian countries, especially China, Singapore and South Korea, due to their ability to manage the coronavirus crisis, improving their international image in exchange for a decline in the image of European countries and the United States of America, whose response to COVID-19 has been indiscriminate and weak. (Abou Karim, 2020, <https://www.aljazeera.net/blogs/2020/4/19>).

The features of the post-COVID-19 global system may appear in one of the following scenarios:

Firstly: Unipolarity Persistence Scenario: The Survival of American Unipolarity

The proponents of this trend focus on two main things: first: China's unpreparedness to lead the world, perhaps its unwillingness, as well as its need for the United States of America in the context of the interconnection of interests in the global economy; and, second, that the United States of America still has an enormous reserve force, controls the world currency, possesses a military force and has strong Western allies.

Joseph Nye asserts in his book *The End of the American Century* that national output alone is not the norm on state power on the international scene. The fact that the State, whatever it possesses from the main power resources, is poor in its ability to transform economic power into a political force on the international scene, Like what happened with the United States of America in the 1930s. China, even if the United States of America exceeds its gross economic product (GDP); We will not see the end of the American century mechanically, taking into account the three dimensions: "economic, military and soft power". (Abou Karim, 2020, <https://www.aljazeera.net/blogs/2020/4/19>).

In this regard, it can be said that the United States of America, with military power, economic dominance and military and nuclear superiority, will, to

the extent possible, prevent the emergence of potential new competing actors. Despite the repercussions of the coronavirus pandemic on the US economy, it is able to quickly recover from its effects and struggle to maintain leadership in the international system. However, there is a set of indicators and challenges on the horizon that could change the scenario's forecast.

Secondly: the bipolar scenario between the United States of America and China:

After 2012, China embarked on a series of reforms and initiatives aimed at pushing China into the future. In autumn 2013, China launched a project now known as the "Belt and Road Initiative" with an international infrastructure and reach, but in fact it is a project designed to "promote... new form of globalization", allowing it to sweep Asia, Africa and many European countries, and in Europe China's direct investment increased from 1 billion euros in 2008 to 35 billion euros in 2016.

Xi Jinping, the Chinese President, presented his vision for 2050, in which he outlined the way forward for China. By 2035, China must become a leader in innovation, and by 2050, China must become a powerful and influential global actor. (Department for External Relation, 2020, p.p. 06-07).

In an article by John Mischheimer in 2019, he explained that with the rise of China and the return of Russia, the global distribution of power away from unipolarity has shifted to multilateralism, and the future will see two realistic systems with the United States of America and China.

China was able to control the pandemic and provide medical cells that travelled to assist endemic countries while providing medical equipment to counter the spread of the Corona virus. In conjunction with a total disregard for America, which, since the events of September 11, 2001, has regarded itself as a policeman who always ensures the protection of global security and the maintenance of peace in the world? On March 18th, 2020, Donald Trump said in a press statement that the world was slowly paying a "high price" for China to provide information about the coronavirus. And it would have been a lot better if we had learned all that months ago, could have been contained in a region of China from which the virus had emanated. (Lika, 2020, p.p. 12-13).

China has taken advantage of the coronavirus pandemic to serve its strategic and political objectives, turning the health crisis into a media tool to showcase its services and equipment, which has heightened US concern about Chinese movements. German Science and Policy Foundation published in

February 2020 in Berlin and emphasized that it was a matter of exploring new balances between the two great Powers, although each had its own vision, but there are indications that the US president sees superiority, especially military hegemony. as such, and not necessarily an instrument in the service of certain interests and values the Chinese President seems to be led by a vision of a global order in which Chinese superiority is both a goal and a means ". (Balawi, 2020, p.p. 19-20).

Proponents of this scenario believe that the post-coronavirus global system will be led by the two main poles, America and China. But it will not be the rigour and polarity that was during the cold war, According to these, the most important features of this new system will be flexibility. and will exploit other parties, notably the European Union and Russia, to transform this system into a resilient polar system in order to strengthen its role and place within the global system, The intensification of the conflict between the two sides, China and America, especially on the trade side, will provide an opportunity for international and regional actors to take an advanced position in the post-coronavirus world. (Al-Hafyan, 2020, p. 12).

Third: Multipolar scenario: Strengthening competition in a multipolar world

Kori Shake has said that, after the coronavirus crisis, the United States will not be seen as an international leader as the crisis revealed that the United States failed to choose leadership because of its administration's narrow self-interest behavior and insufficient management of the crisis, and that the world has become worse off as a result of that failure. (Ibrahim Abdul Rahman, <https://www.iasj.net/iasj>).

On the one hand, China's spectacular economic rise in recent years, and its successful management of the 2008 financial crisis, lead it to try to achieve regional hegemony in Asia, where Brazilian scholar and politician wrote Joao Stedell: The United States is unable to respond to successive crises from the spread of the virus and the economic recession and the continued collapse of oil markets, which brings with it an ongoing economic crisis, while on the other bank we are witnessing the conjunction of a new world order led by China, which today strengthens its political and economic strength, taking advantage of its ability to deal effectively with crises, To confirm that the coronavirus is a symptom of capital aging that has shown its weakness in the face of the emergence of new possibilities to overthrow the dominance of international single pole institutions and their local followers. (Abou Nafeth, 2020, p. 149).

On the other hand, Russia made a strong comeback led by its President, Vladimir Putin, and Russia was able to annex Crimea one month after the outbreak of the Ukraine crisis in February in 2014, the first strong change of international borders since the end of the Second World War.

In this context, the weakness of the United States emerged, especially after Moscow's intervention in Syria in September 2015 to protect Bashar al-Assad's regime and remain in power. Russia's growing influence in the Middle East and its ongoing war against Ukraine show that it is a superpower and that the balance of power in the international system is spread across more than two parties

Conclusion:

As a conclusion of our presentation, and in the midst of answering the research problem, the study reached a number of conclusions regarding the coronavirus implications for geopolitics and the scenarios of the post-pandemic system, which remain subject to change depending on the behaviour of the components of the international system and how they deal with international developments.

The coronavirus is not the primary factor that will change the nature and composition of the international system in the future. It is an intermediate variable that may increase the speed of the emergence of systemic catalysts and move them to emergence.

After the COVID-19, the power map in the international system will not change. The United States continues to dominate the international arena because it has the conditions of control and hegemony: its military, economic, political and cultural advantages as a diplomat, whether in Europe or Asia, its hegemony does not seem to be under any real threat in the short term, but in the long run, it seems that it will face challenges from emerging powers, as well as the possibility that its economic strength will decline due to COVID-19, which will make it lose. Many of its competitive elements benefit other parties.

Changes will occur of varying severity, and a data base that will be determined in the future, as COVID-19 questions the credibility of the United States' ability to manage crises and provide assistance to countries in the international system in the context of the epidemic, the severity of the change will vary according to future data. On the other hand, China is attempting to fill the vacuum left by the United States by ignoring its role as a leader in the international

system. In the long run, we will see the influence of China and Russia in the international system.

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