

Global Summitry: Its Meaning and Scope Part One

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This article by the Senior Editors describes the scope and areas of interest of the new *Global Summitry* journal. Given the breadth of the topic, the article is divided into two parts, with the second to appear in the next issue. The narrative begins with an account of the current state of the global order and goes on to develop a working definition of global summitry. It looks at various facets of the concept with particular emphasis on the fact that global summitry is more than periodic, highly visible gatherings of leaders. We propose the “Iceberg Theory” of global summitry, metaphor for the substantial ongoing below-the-surface activity that gives support to the leaders’ *ensemble*. We distinguish global summitry from global governance while raising to prominence the many actors and international arrangements in global governance today. The article outlines the historical evolution of summitry, highlighting “revolutionary” changes over the last two hundred years. As its subtitle signals, the Journal is committed to a multidisciplinary approach that will engage economists, lawyers, and historians as well as experts in international relations.

Global Summitry in a World of Order and Disorder

It is appropriate at the launch of *Global Summitry: Politics, Economics and Law in International Governance* to outline the scope of the new journal while giving shape to the concept, “global summitry.” The narrative is split into two parts. In this inaugural issue, Part 1 describes the contemporary international order and the key terms that animate summitry and analysis of global governance. Part 2, to appear in the second issue, will focus on structure and power and how summitry fits within established concepts of international relations. It will also explore traditional and not-so-traditional concepts of international cooperation. For the sovereign state, challenges to collaboration and to overcoming the collective action problem head the list of concerns about governance.

The strongest thought current in contemporary global affairs is that we live in times of growing disorder. The *New York Times*’ Friedman (2006, 2014a, 2014b, 2014c) points to the clamor of chaos in international politics, especially in the Middle East. Traub (2015), reflecting on Kissinger’s *World Order* (2014), has declared that today’s world “is scarcely a Kissingerian one” and that world order is “increasingly like a chimera.” Traub adds that “state relations have become more conflictual than they were a decade ago; but states, collectively, are much weaker than they were . . .” Meanwhile, Patrick and Bennett (2015) of the Council of Foreign

Relations address the situation with the provocative title, “*Geopolitics Is Back - and Global Governance Is Out.*”

What can we take from this chorus of commentators? What does it suggest for a new journal with an announced focus on global summitry? Is the realist world back with such vengeance that we ought to discard examination of the post-Cold War world and the evolution of global governance that researchers, experts, commentators, and officials have dealt with for decades? Was global governance just a minor “blip” in a world of unending international conflict?

While many are enthralled by rivalry, grand strategy, and conflict; the character, shape, and direction of world order is more than a mechanical teeter-totter. It is not a realist world of conflict and security at one moment and then international collaboration and cooperation in the next. Geopolitics is not back. It never went away. Nor has summitry faded away. Today’s global order combines geopolitics and global governance. Order and disorder, power and cooperation, are always tied together.

Global Summitry – A Working Definition

Given the scope of this new journal, there is a call for a working definition of “global summitry” to help set the editorial boundaries. This in turn demands a distinction between global summitry and the more familiar global governance. And whereas “summitry” is inherently international, does the qualifying “global” add substantial meaning and, if so, does it alter the scope of inquiry anticipated for the journal? Then there is the issue of whether global summitry and/or global governance relate to the more traditional but imprecise concept of multilateralism. Once past such definitional issues, we will be in a position to outline the evolution and extent of global summitry today which is an aim of this lead article.

A working definition of global summitry:

Global summitry involves the architecture, institutions and, most critically, the political and policy behavior of the actors engaged in the influence of outcomes of common concern in the international system. Global summitry includes all actors - international organizations, trans-governmental networks, states and non-state entities whether individuals, corporations or associations - that influence the agenda, the organization and the execution of global politics and policy.

This definition broadly captures two principal aspects in international relations: the international structure built on power, tradition, and behavior – known as statecraft or diplomacy – and the more collaborative interaction that underlies global governance.

Our focus in this first segment, Part 1, is on the many actors and their aims and actions that determine order and stability in the international system. There is also a strong historical theme in Part 1, outlining the evolution of summitry and its development and departure from traditional multilateralism. In Part 2, we address the current architecture of the global political order. We also examine how meaningful collaboration is achieved, or not, with special concern for the collective action problem that poses a fundamental limitation on international governance.

Global summitry is concerned with the behavior of actors in the international system, or more precisely what the diplomatic historian Paul

Schroeder (2000, 261)¹ calls the “human conduct” in the system. Such analysis encompasses traditional diplomatic behavior as well as rational modeling. The question is how states, individually and collaboratively, meet the interdependent challenges facing the system? How do these states, their leaders, and the many other actors achieve stability in international governance? Or do they fail to do so?

Contrary to a popular perception, summitry is more than the leaders. Leaders form a vital element of summitry, but they do not fully describe it. The G20 summit, created in 2008 after the outbreak of the global financial crisis, provides a telling example. The G20 leaders’ summit came into play some ten years after the original G20 had been formed as a gathering of finance ministers and central bankers. These ministers and bankers continue to meet to inform their heads of government. Thus, historically, heads of government have not been the sole actors in summitry. As we will show, substantial machinery underpins summit decision-making today, which leads to our Iceberg Theory.

Summitry is not new. Indeed, the use of the term is ascribed to Winston Churchill (Hamilton and Langhorne 1995, 2011, 221, 222). In a 1950 election speech, Churchill called for a “parley at the summit” – in that instance suggesting that such a meeting would help ease the mounting East-West tensions. While Churchill may be the source of the contemporary term “summit,” our working definition is somewhat wider than his specific usage.

Leaders met only occasionally over many decades from the first appearance of contemporary summitry. More traditional diplomacy dominated. Seldom were leaders directly engaged. But as leaders grew increasingly unwilling to limit their diplomacy to traditional diplomatic practice, personal leadership has come to occupy an increasingly prominent role. Thus, through World War II we saw a series of the Big Three leaders’ gatherings. Black argues:

At the same time, there was an emphasis on personal agreement among the leaders rather than on formal diplomatic processes, an emphasis that reflected the conviction on the part of leaders that they could change the world by personal diplomacy. . . . Summit diplomacy represented a continuation of pre-war practices including special diplomatic missions, as well as an attempt to maintain alliances and provide forums for negotiation to cope with the failures or deficiencies of international agencies such as the League of Nations and, later, the United Nations. (Black 2010, 209)

We will look at global summitry’s emergence, targeting several organizational and institutional creations and reforms that formed the core elements of the evolution in global summitry.

In today’s global politics—in a world marked by increasing connectedness—international relations are shaped to a large extent by market forces and what is often referred to as globalization. The current international political order is built on the foundation of two interlocking areas: security and economic progress. The old divisions of “high” and “low” politics, once so prominent in the Cold War era, have faded. Joseph Nye, a practitioner and an acute observer of international relations over decades, at a time when he was examining U.S. grand strategy in East Asia, reflected on the need for

¹Paul Schroeder is one of diplomatic history’s contemporary greats. He adds analytic clarity to the world of diplomacy. His most influential work sets out Europe’s eighteenth and nineteenth century diplomatic history (see Schroeder 1994).

experts and officials to understand international relations as a fabric built on two frames: a political order and an economic one:

Political order is not sufficient to explain economic prosperity, but it is necessary. Analysts who ignore the importance of this political order are like people who forget the importance of the oxygen they breathe. Security is like oxygen – you tend not to notice it until you begin to lose it, but once that occurs there is nothing else that you will think about. (Nye 1995, 91)

Summitry then is embedded in a context of national, regional, and international decision-making that involves a web of actors concerned with security, with its bias toward sovereignty, and the common pursuit of prosperity. Summitry helps shape the process.

Finally, does “global” add to or subtract from summitry? A “global” perspective may lead to a particular focus on universal instruments such as the United Nations (UN). Yet “global” should not be taken as that alone. Even at the UN, the presumed seat of universality, the critical UN Security Council is far from universal.

Summitry includes a diversity of leaders’ assemblies. There is no minimum attendance required for summitry. China’s Xi Jinping’s meeting with U.S. President Obama—the leaders of the two great powers in the contemporary global order—is a global summit. Then too is the meeting of leaders at the Nuclear Security Summit. The first NSS meeting held in 2010 included some forty-seven leaders.

Some summitry settings are regional in character. For example, the annual meeting of ASEAN leaders brings together the ASEAN 10. Every three years, western hemispheric leaders meet at the Summit of the Americas. These important summits are perhaps not “global” summitry insofar as they are restricted to a regional context and do not generally have the broader influence of a more inclusive summit. On the other hand, on the day following the annual ASEAN meeting, leaders meet for the East Asia Summit (EAS). The EAS is a regional forum—an expanded set of sixteen leaders of the ASEAN plus China, Russia, India, Australia, and the United States. It is the only great power setting with Asia-Pacific security in its mandate, though not all leaders are comfortable with the focus.² In striving for proper definition, we recognize that summitry includes high-level discourse with specifically regional concerns and that such deliberations can have a profound impact on global affairs.

One might reasonably ask whether ongoing European concerns about Greece and its place in the monetary union are regional or global issues.

Global summitry accepts that the contemporary order is complex: sharp boundaries of international, regional, and national policy are blurring. In turn, international institutions are undergoing significant change as well. The UN, the International Monetary Fund (IMF), and the World Bank have certainly not disappeared, but in many respects their traditional roles as hard law institutions have been displaced or supplemented by a less formal soft law approach.

Global summitry today is keenly interested in the “rise of the informals” wherein traditional diplomacy that in the past was conducted primarily by foreign ministers and their officials has been remade through the rise of meetings of national leaders, mainline ministers, and their officials—finance

²China, for instance, has objected to the security dimension in the discussions at the EAS.

and trade, central bankers *et cetera*—and get-togethers of interested and informed actors, both public and self-regulatory, of many stripes. We see constructive gatherings that address national security, science and technology, agriculture, immigration, the environment and other issues of common concern among sovereign states. All this reflects the “Iceberg Theory.” Anne-Marie Slaughter, a strong proponent of networks in the contemporary global order, identifies the implications for international governance:

From a theoretical perspective, government networks straddle and ultimately erase the domestic/ international divide. (Slaughter 2004)

Global summitry then is part of a complex international politico-economic system.

Global Governance, Global Summitry

Global governance has become a ubiquitous term in international relations. It was not always the case. As a focus of concern, the idea of global governance emerged at the end of the Cold War. This reset in international political perspectives marked a turning point in the evolution of the geopolitical landscape. There were, and are, both analytic and practical reasons for the emergence of discourse on global governance. On the analytic side, the demise of the Soviet Union altered the shape of the international political order. As Barnett and Duvall (2005, 5) write in their volume, *Power in Global Governance*:

The vocabulary of “global governance” appeared at the very same moment that the Cold War receded from view. The Cold War was not only a description of a bipolar system; it also represented a mode of organizing the analysis and practice of international politics. With the end of the Cold War, the issue became what would and should take its place. For many, global governance represented a way of organizing international politics in a more inclusive and consensual manner. . . . Alongside the eclipse of the Cold War was the emergence of globalization. Although globalization had various dimensions, a unifying claim was that intensifying transnational and interstate connections requires regulatory mechanisms – governance, although not a government – at a global level.

While the context and dynamics of global governance were not then fully articulated, one structural element was evident: the international system had gone from two superpowers to one—the United States. Unipolarity and U.S. hegemony commanded attention in international relations and global governance. This structural change raised questions about the dominant realist mechanism—the contemporary balance of power. In fact, balance of power, so much a part of the Cold War attention on international governance, faded from discussion in international relations. Further elaboration will follow in Part 2 of this article.

Global summitry is alert to the continuous rearrangement of politics and policy premised on changing actors, structures, and agendas. Besides the critical element of power with its distribution and redistribution among states, other dimensions are very much a part of global summitry and impact this redistribution as well. The international system has seen a marked shift from “hard” to “soft” law; from formal—often hierarchical—institutions to less formal, horizontal, or “flattened” ones; from national sovereignty to interdependency.

This enlargement, however, raises concern among international relations experts as for some it veers uncomfortably close to global government. North America scholars in particular tended to avoid terms such as global governance, preferring to retain more traditional terms such as “multilateralism.” Yet even in North America, the language evolved. Karns and Mingst (2010, 4), in their *International Organizations* (IOs), are unambiguous:

Thus global governance is not global government; it is not a single world order; it is not a top-down, hierarchical structure of authority. It is the multilevel collection of governance-related activities, rules and mechanisms, formal and informal, public and private, existing in the world today.

Yet, definitions of global governance may vary. Weiss, Thakur, and Ruggie (2010, 6) present it this way:

“Global Governance” – which can be good, bad or indifferent – refers to existing collective arrangements to solve problems. Adapting our definition of governance, “global governance” is the sum of laws, norms, policies, and institutions that define, constitute, and mediate relations among citizens, society, markets and the state in the international arena – the wielders and objects of international public policy. Even in the absence of an overarching central authority, existing arrangements bring more predictability, stability, and order to transboundary problems than we might expect.

This Journal favors an examination of behavioral inputs and policy outputs of international governance. This avoids the wider but unfocused inquiry that globalization might otherwise bring.

The Global Order: Actors and Arrangements

The working definition makes clear that global summitry includes not just the traditional actors – states and their officials – but also a host of new IOs, institutions, and regimes along with transgovernmental organizations and networks. Traditional formal arrangements are now supplemented by what we call the “informals.” Additionally, global governance encompasses a host of non-state actors including non-governmentals (NGOs), civil society organizations (CSOs), and various so-called multistakeholder organizations that some refer to as “regime complexes.”³ Abbott, Green, and Keohane (2015, 3) draw attention to the variety of actors identified in areas as seemingly distinct as financial regulation and climate change:

New organizational forms, in contrast, have emerged and expanded rapidly. States have created informal institutions and plurilateral “clubs,” such as the G20 and other “G-groups.” In response to increasing institutional fragmentation, states have also established meta-institutions to coordinate other entities, such as the High Level Political Forum for sustainable development and the G20 for financial regulation. IOs have created their own “emanations.” National regulatory agencies have established influential transgovernmental institutions, such as the Basel Committee on Banking Supervision. Sub-national governments have also established transnational networks, such as the C40 Cities Climate Leadership Group. Transnational public-private partnerships (PPPs) have expanded and gained official recognition as at the 2002 World Summit on Sustainable Development.

³This term emerges in the climate change literature. See for instance: Keohane and Victor (2011, 7–23).

These more complex and inclusive arrangements seem to overlap with international society as understood in part by the international relations English School.⁴

The range of relevant actors has increased in the contemporary world order and our working definition of global summitry takes that into account. Nevertheless the focus remains on those that influence and lead policy development on the global stage.⁵ Our interest is not limited to the old-line concern for foreign policy. Global summitry deals with “get-it-done” decision-making at various levels in view of a variety of policy objectives. Slaughter (2013, 6), again, suggests such a tilt in contemporary international relations is required:

Foreign policy, which has always been about advancing one nation’s interests and values with respect to those of other nations, is now increasingly about solving national, regional, and global problems that affect us all in myriad and often unpredictable ways.

Inquiry into global governance has expanded inexorably. A relatively narrow institutional focus would emphasize organizations and institutions. The reality of globalization leads to a broader inquiry into more organic global governance with less concern for narrow national interests. Rosenau (1992) opened up the global governance inquiry to a non-state actor-focused inquiry. In turn, Goldin (2013, loc. 187) sees an intimate link between globalization and global governance:

... the same processes of integration and innovation have also greatly increased the potential for systemic risk and global crises. Globalization is leaping ahead of the lethargic institutions of global governance.

The focus of international relations and international governance, as seen from the IO perspective has undergone a roller coaster of shifting attention: from formal international organizations, multilateralism, globalism, and transnationalism (including complex interdependence) to international regimes, various state and non-state actors, and new arrangements that seek to manage collaboration in international governance. Such diversity and complexity demand attention and fail to take into account the many methodological approaches and “isms” that have come to dominate analysis from one moment to another in the work of international relations specialists.⁶

The various strands of inquiry into global governance have become more sharply defined since end of the Cold War. One strand suggests that global governance principally focuses on traditional IOs. According to Stein (2008a, 203), IO involves “concrete entities with a physical presence – names addresses and so on.” Similarly, Diehl and Frederking (2010, 1) argue that “security interdependence” – where no single state can meet the challenges of international politics – demands a definition to match current international

⁴Buzan is perhaps the most descriptive and analytic of experts interested in the English School and its various elements of world order: the international system, international society, and world society (see Buzan 2004).

⁵It is possible to add focus to “agenda setting.” Many experts are concerned with who sets the agenda. Agenda setting is not unimportant in trying to assess effectiveness; we feel that on balance the “outputs” side remains key to assessing effectiveness.

⁶A number of attempts to review the ups and downs in the international relations of IOs include: Rochester (1986), Kratochwil and Ruggie (1986).

relations . . . “[it] requires global governance, and international organizations are a central component of global governance.”

As a practical matter, Stein (2008b, 17) points to the explosive growth of IOs in the last century, though Abbott, Green, and Keohane (2015) point to a significant decline in their creation more recently. In 1909, according to Stein, there were 37 IOs; by the end of the twentieth century there were 6,400. While this says little about what types of organizations or arrangements these IOs were engaged in, or the effectiveness of their specific operations,⁷ it nevertheless reflects the growing presence of these institutions in international relations and international governance.⁸ Stein notes, as well, that few of these IOs actually disappear over time. In fact what you see is the continued accumulation of IOs over time.

IOs, according to this perspective, are vital elements of global governance and global summity as well. For example, Murphy (1994, 1) suggests:

One of the best ways to explore global governance, what world governments we actually have had, is to consider the history of world organizations, those inter-governmental and quasi-governmental global agencies that have (nominally) been open to any independent state (even though all states may not have joined).

A distinct strand of global governance analysis emerged with the so-called globalists, a view less focused on formal state-centric IO institutions. Instead, the globalists “ . . . stressed a more complex set of relationships between national governments as well as transnational and other nonstate actors . . . ” (Rochester 1986, 792). This approach expanded the scope of IOs beyond intergovernmental organizations to include non-governmental institutions and transgovernmental ones as well (Rochester 1986, 792). Attention shifted from the traditional state-centric global governance to non-governmental organizations, civil society, and even to individuals in international affairs.

Despite distinct strands, multilateralism remains at the core of international governance. But what sort of multilateralism? How is multilateralism related to global governance? Ruggie (1992, 567) suggests a generic structural form and state that constitutes multilateralism in the international system:

Multilateralism is a generic institutional form of modern international life, and as such it has been present from the start. The generic institutional form of multilateralism must not be confused with formal multilateral organizations, a relatively recent arrival and still of only relatively modest importance. Historically, the generic form of multilateralism can be found in institutional arrangements to define and stabilize the international property rights of states, to manage coordination problems, and to resolve collaboration problems.

And he adds the following for good measure:

In sum, what is distinctive about multilateralism is not merely that it coordinates national policies in groups of three or more states, which is something that other organizational forms also do, but that it does so on the basis of certain principles of ordering relations among those states. (Ruggie 1992, 567)

⁷A passionate debate in international relations deals with whether IOs have much impact at all in international relations outcomes. Realists generally minimize the impact of IOs. A well-known critique of IOs is Mearsheimer (1994).

⁸There are technical definitional differences between IOs and international institutions. For a discussion of these differences, see Stein (2008a). As is commonly the case, we use the terms here interchangeably.

Alternative forms of multilateralism build on different ordering principles. Ruggie argues for distinct forms of multilateralism that contrast the multilateral forms created after World War II under the strong influence of the United States versus the multilateral organizations and processes with the New Economic Order created by the Nazis before World War II. In the former, nondiscrimination and aspects of reciprocity governed; while for the latter these norms and rules do not define the multilateral process.

The arrangements that emerge even in the Cold War era were, it seems, driven in part by hegemonic leadership – U.S. leadership, in particular. One of the first to take note of this and analyze changes in the form of multilateralism was Kahler (1992, 686, 690). As opposed to “classic” multilateralism, Kahler identifies a new form of arrangement – minilateralism.

The obstacles to multilateral institution building were often dealt with not by American hegemony but by creating a core of minilateral cooperation among the economic powers ... Minilateralism was a chosen means of governance for the United States in those issue-areas in which free riding by the other principal economic powers was unacceptable (often for domestic political reasons), additional legitimation was required, and exclusion or threat of exclusion from the regimes was undesirable (often for reasons of international security).

To this point, contemporary international relations have been described more in terms of global governance terms than multilateralism. The framing is broad, encompassing economics as well as politics; the analysis spans beyond the traditional state focus. The proliferation of those engaged in global governance is apparent in a number of key areas including, as mentioned, international banking and finance, but also climate change, border security, migration, public health, energy, and terrorism. *Avent, Finnemore, and Sell (2010)* focus on the variety of those involved in global governance by rhetorically asking, “Who are the governors?” Their answer is both extensive and inclusive (2010, 1): “... international organizations, corporations, professional associations, advocacy groups, and the like – seeking to ‘govern’ in issue areas they care about.” The rise of the “informals” and the appearance of global summitry add to the variety of actors and arrangements that press for collective action in international governance.

The language of old-line multilateralism is fading. Acharya (2014, 192) suggests the question for international governance is not whether there is a future for multilateralism but rather “... which multilateralism has a future?” While perhaps semantical, we have an evolving “new multilateralism” that both reflects and influences today’s global order. Acharya’s concern is whether the form of multilateralism will be altered again with the demise of hegemonic stability and U.S. leadership. Acharya sees as “post-hegemonic multilateralism.” We shall see.

Global order today – using the perspective of global governance – is filled with state and non-state actors, with economic and political influence. And the global order encompasses an array of networks – both public, private, and mixed – that serve a growing number of leader gatherings.

“Iceberg Theory” of Global Summitry

Many who have turned attention to contemporary global governance have focused, as we described above, on its nonhierarchical dimensions and on the informal structures that have emerged. The emphasis is on non-state actors in great diversity, including individuals. Recently Mitzen, in her book

Concert of Europe, underscores that the much of the discourse on global governance has become tied to globalization. As a result, she says:

... what has come to be known as global governance in IR has been, largely, neo-liberal global governance, that is, the institutional preconditions for the invisible hand of the market to operate beyond the state. (Mitzen 2013, 3)

Still while international law, political economy, and international relations have more generally extended beyond states alone, the focus remains authority-oriented and the capacity and commitment to implement policy. Global summitry acknowledges the flattening of authority structures, yet the state and institutions of the global system remain at the heart of global summitry. Global summitry is about decision-making. Slaughter suggests in respect of governmental organizations and contemporary networks that the state does not disappear, but often finds itself "... disaggregating into its component institutions which are increasingly interacting principally with their foreign counterparts across borders." (Slaughter 2004, 18)

Global summitry is especially attuned to leaders' summits. However, summitry must take into account the many organizations that, as we have described above, constitute the "galaxy of global order." This broadened scope of inquiry underlies the "Iceberg Theory" of global governance. Below the leaders' level lies not only a significant international bureaucratic machinery: a system of meetings and the work of ministers, and their ministries, working groups, international institutions but also transgovernmental organizations and regulatory networks with formal and informal regulatory actors. As Dingwerth and Patterberg (2006, 191) describe in "Global Governance as a Perspective on World Politics":

In essence global governance implies a multi-actor perspective on world politics. ... the term global governance conceives of world politics as a multilevel system in which local, national, regional, and global political processes are inseparably linked.

A more concise, targeted definition is posed by Goldin (2013, loc. 175 of 3186):

By global governance, I mean the institutions and processes which seek to manage global problems.

Below the "waterline," the machinery of the Iceberg can best be understood in contemporary global summitry institutions such as the G20 Leaders' Summit (figure 1)

Analysts generally, but the media in particular, tend to be drawn to the leaders' gathering—the very top of the diagram; the tip of the iceberg. Though this graphic is not fully complete from the Mexico Summit in 2010, it reveals just some of the significant G20 machinery that operates at the global summitry level. Many relevant institutions and transgovernmental networks are tasked by leaders and their ministers and working groups to prepare the agendas, action plans, and reports that are in part the outputs of global summitry. In addition, the diagram identifies some of the outreach that the G20 global summitry undertakes as it prepares for annual meetings and partakes in policy consultations.

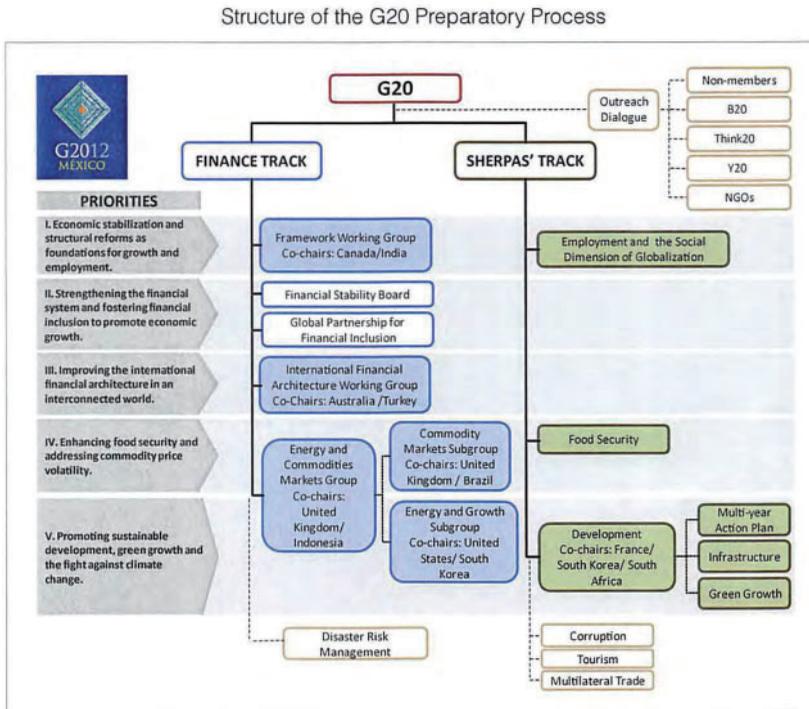


Figure 1 Structure of the G20 preparatory process.

Evolving Global Summitry

There is no consensus on the evolution of global summitry. For instance, the international relations theorist Hedley Bull (1966b, 36) suggests a teleological vector:

The League of Nations and the United Nations we are invited to see not as diplomatic machinery in the tradition of the Concert of Europe, but as first steps towards a world state.

The question remains: is Bull's perspective correct? Significant changes occur with each institutional reconfiguration. In the following section we point to a few revolutionary turns. However, advances in the international order do not necessarily imply an ineluctable path toward world government.

Confusion in the terminology of global order and the mechanics of creating stability in the international system hinders an examination of the arrangements and behavior of states. For instance, there is a long-standing misperception of "balance of power." Balance of power is often used in reference to the nation or nations that hold economic and military sway over the rest. Many international relations theorists presume, for instance, that balance of power governed through much of the nineteenth century even though the first decades after the Napoleonic Wars were governed by the Concert of Europe. One of the true balance of power historians, Vose Gulick (1955, 305-6), in his classic study distinguishes between what he calls "alliance balance" and "coalition equilibrium":

The years 1812-1815 are especially meaningful to the student of the balance of power for the further reason that they witnessed the temporary evolution of a

coalition equilibrium from the antecedent, eighteenth century system of **alliance balance** [emphasis added]. . . is the conception of the coalition equilibrium which emerged at Chaumont, suffered various vicissitudes at Vienna, and remained, after the dust had begun to settle, as the chief means of enforcing Europe's new territorial balance. The choice between the alliance and the coalition is a very fundamental decision, since the consequences are so different. Both may start near the same point, but they diverge quickly and widely as one advances along their paths, and they end at separate places. For example, if enforcement by coalitions sticks, certain means of the alliance balance should wither away, such as the magpies' nest of bilateral alliances and holding the balance. The major allied powers of 1815, chose the coalition and wrote this conception into the Quadruple Alliance of November 20, 1815, where they provided for periodic conferences of sovereigns or ministers to deal with the major postwar problems, this decision laying the legal basis for the international conferences of the next decade by which European statesmen hoped to give a peacetime reality to their new coalition equilibrium.

Vose Gulick is pointing out the distinction between balance of power and what some analysts refer to as "concert diplomacy." While balance of power discussions center round power, concert diplomacy shifts analysis to the institutions and the mechanics of collaboration.

Elrod (1976), a well-known diplomatic historian, argues that diplomats of the nineteenth century recognized the need for a different mechanism from the balance of power. Too many of these diplomats of the time recognized that the disorder generated by balance of power had to be avoided. Thus both Elrod 1976 and Schroeder (1994) argue that it was not a balance of power that operated following the Napoleonic Wars. As Elrod (1976, 161) contends:

In the first instance, the Concert derived from the common realization of European statesmen of the Napoleonic era that something new and different must be devised to mitigate the increasingly chaotic and warlike balance-of-power system of the previous century. Both critics and defenders of the balance-of-power idea, even during its apogee, recognized that it was unsatisfactory.

This coalition equilibrium, concert diplomacy, or in the specific historical circumstance, the Concert of Europe, then marks the emergence of concert diplomacy and indeed modern summity. In more contemporary social science terms, Mitzen (2013, 11) describes what historically has been identified as a concert:

The framework I develop in this book helps bring into focus a distinct and relatively neglected public beyond the state: the power constituted by states acting together, sharing authority and responsibility for their actions. . . . My argument is that one way states manage their security situation in a given issue is by forming collective intentions, that is, by committing to address the issue together. From here, the dynamics of sharing authority constitute those states as an international public power.

As implied by the definition, and in contrast to hegemony, the emphasis in the description of concert diplomacy is not on hierarchy nor the special responsibilities and relationships of the hegemon. It is also not built on the explicit commitment to come to the defense of the other members—collective security, in other words.⁹

⁹Kupchan and Kupchan (1991, 119) argue that at one point the Concert of Europe represented a collective security arrangement, though at another point, Charles Kupchan alone suggests that the Concert of Europe is in fact a pluralistic security community (Kupchan 2010).

The Concert of Europe

As Ikenberry properly points out, throughout history rearrangements of great power generally followed the conclusion of major wars. But postwar creation of concert diplomacy is in fact apparently no longer the monopoly moment, notwithstanding Ikenberry and indeed Jervis's (1986, 60) injunction that concert diplomacy "form[s] after, and only after, a large war against a potential hegemon because such a conflict alters the last two assumptions and increases the incentives to cooperate." And the less explicit assumption—that is that global summitry is focused on the creation and passage of formal institutions only—is also no longer the case either as we describe the "rise of the informals" below. Starting in the 1970s, informal institutions have arisen and global summitry today in large measure operates through informal mechanisms. This is notwithstanding that the so-called Gx system is seldom identified by international relations experts as representing any more than a minor aspect in the evolution of global governance.¹⁰

The dilemma for leaders of each concert organization is to promote order and stability, but at the same time to permit change. Elrod (1976, 169) suggests that the summit system created after the Vienna Congress did just that:

At best, it represented a reasonably satisfactory solution to the most difficult problem of international systems: how to accommodate the forces of change and yet preserve peace and stability. Concert diplomacy allowed the great powers to sanction necessary alterations of the existing order; it provided the means of legitimizing change without endangering the general system.

The pattern of global summitry evolution started in the nineteenth century following twenty years of Napoleonic conflict and continued through several decades of the century.

It can indeed be agreed that, seen from the vantage point of 1986, [when the article was written] the greatest significance of the Vienna settlement lies in the fact that it saw the creation of the first deliberately contrived international system rather than in the precise nature of its territorial dispositions. Such a development had been proposed on many occasions throughout the 17th and 18th centuries, but had signally failed to attract the interest or support of rulers or statesmen: the propositions remained of purely intellectual interest. Since 1815, however, the world has never been without a deliberately contrived international organization of some kind. Vienna was thus in this respect a pivotal point (Langhorne 1986, 314).

While there is no consensus on the particular mechanisms employed by the Congress of Europe, certainly the periodic gathering of the great powers was the noticeable mechanism. Great powers acknowledged the collective restraint that concert brought; while the concert could not eradicate conflict, it made a concerted effort to manage international strife. The Concert of Europe was built on ideological uniformity but the decades of concert diplomacy, namely the Bismarckian Concert of 1871–1890, a later hybrid concert system, that was built less on common ideology than on practical crosscutting alliances (Rosecrance 2010, 25). Thus, mechanisms have varied over periods of concert diplomacy.

¹⁰A typical example is the recent volume by Hale, Held, and Young (2013).

The League of Nations

Ad hoc conferences and congresses addressed great power problems—in what Castlereagh (Webster 1934, 144) referred to as “reunions.” Castlereagh contends that such gatherings were key to maintaining stability through congress diplomacy in the nineteenth century:

I am quite convinced that past habits, common glory and those occasional meetings, displays and repledges are among the best securities Europe now has for a durable peace (144).

However the conferences became passé after the formative years of the Concert of Europe: concert diplomacy faded away. The crises leading up to the outbreak of war in August 1914, invoked little interest for a gathering of the great powers to resolve the issues in Europe. They simply did not meet. War followed—the Great War or the “War to End All Wars.” (Lauren, Craig, and George 1983, 2014, 46):

Structurally, for example, there was not much left of the some of the best-known entities of the past. Of the five Great Powers that had dominated the classical system, more than half – the German Empire, the Russian Empire, and the Austro-Hungarian Empire – had succumbed to revolution and collapsed. The Ottoman Empire no longer existed.

The complex ending of the war by the allied and associate leaders failed to reflect back in any substantial way to the concert diplomacy of Vienna and the Congress of Europe. While the peace efforts devised at the Paris Peace Conference were incomplete, and in some respects harmful, there were significant innovations in concert diplomacy devised by the Leaders. Though Jervis (1986, 58) suggests that concert diplomacy existed just for a year, in fact the concert diplomacy of the League organization struggled on for years before ending with the outbreak of World War II.¹¹

The League of Nations was the first permanent institution designed to maintain international order. With the Covenant, the League the great powers sought to employ collective security to prevent future aggression. The great powers would form the core of a new “democratic” community, at least according to its principle advocate U.S. President Woodrow Wilson, but the balance of power politics would be replaced by the rule of law and collective dispute resolution. The key article in the management of international governance for this concert diplomacy was Article 10:

The members of the League undertake to respect and preserve as against external aggression the territorial integrity and existing political independence of all Members of the League. In case of any such aggression the Council shall advise upon the means by which this obligation shall be fulfilled.

While a revolutionary effort to promote collective great power commitment, the League and its collective security principle were deeply flawed. Besides the fact that U.S. Senate rejected the League, which led to U.S. withdrawal from League arrangements, the collective security commitment was

¹¹The demise of this fatally flawed institution, and the criticism of the leaders that brought it to life, has left much still to be written on *The League of Nations*. Still there are a number of valuable studies including Berg (2013), Clavin (2013), Clavin and Wessels (2005), Levin (1972), Northedge (1986), and Smith (1965).

limited and weak. In part due to U.S. sovereignty concerns, the collective security commitment relied principally on the moral force of global publics. The collective security pledge, in fact, was built largely on a foundation of persuasion and not great power commitment.

As Ikenberry (2011, 26) assesses the League:

The Wilsonian version of liberal internationalism was built not just around a “thin” set of institutional commitments, but also on the assumption that a “thick” set of norms and pressures – public opinion and the moral rectitude of statesmen – would activate sanctions and enforce the territorial peace.

Little explored but a rather unique intergovernmental body of the League, including representation from nonmember states, most particularly the United States, was the Economic and Financial Organization (EFO). The EFO was the first intergovernmental body dedicated to promoting economic and monetary cooperation. Though most countries believed that international economics and international finance were to be left to the work of central bankers and private actors, the Great Depression and the failed international efforts to ameliorate the global economic conditions, most particularly the 1933 London Economic Conference, left a deep impression on officials and leaders in the West.

Many features of this failed concert diplomacy, a formal institution including a secretariat, a collective security commitment by the great powers and even the development of policies with respect to economics, development and human rights were to be reborn with the conclusion of the next war.

UN and the Bretton Woods System

Well before the end of World War II, leaders were considering the management of international order. The Commission to Study the Organization of Peace (CSOP) in fact was created in 1939 by professors Quincy Wright, James T. Shotwell, and Clyde Eagleton to examine the future international architecture. This Commission was not as formal as the Inquiry – an expert panel of 150 academics, directed by Colonel House, Wilson’s close advisor, and initiated to help Wilson develop his ideas for peace and recommend specific elements for a comprehensive peace settlement. Nevertheless the CSOP prepared reports about a postwar order. Among those who aided its efforts were Sumner Welles, the Undersecretary of State and also the future Secretary of State, John Foster Dulles. These reports were provided to Secretary of State Cordell Hull and to President Franklin Roosevelt himself. The reports provided valuable recommendations for building the postwar order and the CSOP was eventually included in the State Department’s planning process.

In the reports from the CSOP, driven particularly by Professor Wright, were recommendations to achieve the goal of a world organization that would provide globally collective security, “but also collaborative action to reduce poverty, disease, and hunger and provide for greater opportunities for education, social growth and cultural exchange.” (Throntveit 2011, 369) The CSOP recognized that such a world organization could not be created immediately and it foresaw that for a “transitional period” and in light of the tremendous problems presented the war’s end, the great powers – the leaders of the anti-fascist alliance, the United States, Russia, Great Britain

and China, Roosevelt's Four Policemen – would be required to take the lead and govern.

The victorious powers and their allies gathered in San Francisco in 1945 to construct a new global order. The organization contemplated first a small but powerful Security Council, a reflection of earlier concert diplomacy with 15 members but dominated by the five great powers: the United States, the Soviet Union, the United Kingdom, France, and China. These five, the P5, were granted permanent membership and veto authority. In fact the transitional period of leadership envisioned by the CSOP was adopted by San Francisco in the Security Council. Roosevelt and his officials, however, determined that the great powers needed to be permanent and have a continuing role in the international order:

The temporary great-power directorate became, with a few alterations, a permanent feature of the United Nations Organization in the form of the Security Council – which by common agreement among its creators-cum-permanent members gave each of the Great Powers veto over the rest of the world's decisions. (Throntveit 2011, 370)

In addition to the Security Council, the gathering created a General Assembly to serve as a setting where global public opinion could be heard through their governments. In addition, the San Francisco assembly created an Economic and Social Council to “address conditions of stability and well-being, including issues of human rights” (Lauren, Craig, and George 1983, 2014, 77). In addition, the gathering created a Trusteeship Council for the yet non-sovereign people of the world. Finally, the International Court of Justice (ICJ) was established to advance international law and to serve as the successor to the Permanent Court of International Justice set up in 1922 and attached to the League of Nations.

The United Nations, through its Charter, identified two sources for the use of force in international settings – self-defense and a resolution of the Security Council under Chapter VII. The use of force is justified to maintain or restore peace where there is a threat to the peace, a breach of the peace, or an act of aggression. Here then was a much strengthened collective security mechanism – in contrast to the League of Nations – that could, it was hoped, create and maintain a postwar security system. But the architecture that was created at San Francisco was barely able to function as the allied powers split apart. The Cold War saw the United States emerge as a nascent hegemon that built a liberal world order in the West and sought to contain the Soviet Union and Communist China. Eventually, with the end of the Cold War, the United States emerged as the sole hegemon over what would be seen as a truly global economy.¹²

The UN system was not the only architecture put together by the victors at the end of the war (Black 2010, 212). The most substantive revolution at that time in global summitry was the creation of international economic institutions – the IMF, the World Bank, albeit marred by the failed effort to create the International Trade Organization – that would limp on to become the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (technically the ITO and then

¹²The pertinent literature is extensive. A few select studies include: Kelsen (1948, 1950), Goodrich and Hambro (1949), Hurd (2008), Weiss and Daws (2008), Weiss, Thakur, and Ruggie (2010), Weiss and Urquhart (2012).

the GATT were parts of the UN system).¹³ The prevailing view of the time was that the Great Depression gave rise to fascism in Italy and Nazism in Germany. To avoid such outcomes in the future required the victors to build organizations to regulate international finance and economics. Global economics was too important to be left to business and central bankers. Until the collapse of the Bretton Woods system, the postwar economic order was

... built on an historic political compromise: Unlike the economic nationalism of the thirties, the international economic order would be multilateral in character; but unlike the liberalism of the gold standard and free trade, its multilateralism would be predicated upon domestic interventionism. (Ikenberry 1992, 294–5)

Economic issues have long had a place in global summity, although in the past the concerns were more about dividing the economic pie rather than enlarging it—settling scores on war reparations as was done at Versailles in 1919, for example, or drawing imperial borders as was the case in the Hadda Agreement in November 1925 between the British and the House of Saud.

At the Paris Peace Conference in particular, the delegates' lack of understanding of the negative economic consequences of the proposed Versailles Treaty prompted John Maynard Keynes, perhaps the most insightful economist of the twentieth century, to write presciently, "The Economic Consequences of the Peace." According to Keynes, it was a "Carthaginian peace" that would brutally crush the enemy at the cost of future peaceful prosperity.

This lack of appreciation of the economics of interdependent nations was to come into sharp relief twenty-five years later at the famous conference at Bretton Woods, New Hampshire with forty-three countries represented. Keynes, then a British delegate, remembered the lessons from Versailles as well as the Great Depression. The so-called Bretton Woods institutions—the World Bank and the IMF—emerged as part of the coordinative effort to rebuild the shattered postwar economy. At Keynes' insistence, an orderly, resilient international economic system was agreed as central to a new world economic order. Such institution building requires coordination and commitment at the highest level.

Other summit-like initiatives of the time reflect similar insights into the importance of agreements to achieve aims of common interest, especially peace and prosperity. The Marshall Plan tore a page from *The Economic Consequences of the Peace*. The Treaty of Rome (officially the Treaty Establishing the European Economic Community, 1957) advanced the progressive ideas of Jean Monnet, a senior French civil servant, and Robert Schuman, the French Foreign Minister, in the Treaty of Paris (1950)—to wit, an economically integrated Europe is less likely to resort to war.

Two milestones mark the rise to prominence of economics in later day global summity. First, was the US reticence to continue to permit the convertibility of U.S. dollars for gold, the so-called "closing of the gold window" in 1971. Until then, *à la* the Bretton Woods system of fixed exchange

¹³Again, the literature dealing with the political security dimensions of the global order is extensive. Select number works include: Helleiner (1994), Kenen (1994), Eichengreen (1996, 2008), Pauly (1996), Jackson (1997), Zeiler (1999), Andrews, Henning, and Pauly (2002), Irwin (2010), Drezner (2014), and Helleiner (2014).

rates, global exchange rate stability had relied on major currencies being tied to the U.S. dollar and the U.S. dollar in turn to gold. The IMF stood by to deal with nations in currency crisis. All that ended abruptly in August 1971. The U.S. unilateral action was driven in part by its own reckless monetary policy and the inflation that it generated. Thus began the modern era of flexible exchange rates along with exchange rate volatility and unfamiliar forms of risk associated with interest rates, capital flows, and international trade. Such issues demanded international discussion regarding the state of international finance, which led to the Rambouillet meetings in 1975, described below.

The second event to propel the role of economics in summitry is, of course, the global financial crisis of 2007–08 and its aftermath, now referred to as the Great Recession. The global financial crisis was ignited in the United States; the flames quickly spread throughout the world, shifting from bank failure to widespread collapse of credit. Asset values plummeted. The impact on the “real” economy was felt in sharply reduced growth, contraction of international trade, and a steep rise in unemployment. Macroeconomic shocks looped back into key established power public finances and erosion of the balance sheets of the banking systems of most major countries. This was a crisis of global proportions.

Intervention was swift. U.S. President George W. Bush was persuaded to call a high-level meeting to be held Washington. The perplexing question was, “Who to invite?” In the end President Bush turned to the membership of the G20, which to that point had been an informal forum for central bank governors and finance ministers. He invited the heads of state of the G20 member nations, all of whom agreed to attend in November 2008. The shift to Leaders in the G20 marked the “leap to leaders” in the world’s most prominent summit and a significant rise in the prominence of economics in the agenda.

The legacy of the global financial crisis includes its history of massive economic stimulus, new ways to operationalize that stimulus (such as “quantitative easing”), and extensive reassessment of risk in the banking sector and management of that risk.

Economics in global summitry today is now broader than the concern for global growth and financial sector resiliency. Environmental protection, trade, food safety, infant health, nuclear security, immigration, income inequality, international taxation, and the like all have an underlying economic foundation. All these concerns affect sovereign nations individually while the aim and purpose of global summitry is to address the interdependencies, recognizing that we are more than the sum of the parts.

In national capitals across the globe, economists’ planning and policy development skills are in play to prepare the summit leaders and their Sherpas of pertinent, often technically intensive analysis that inform priorities and proposals that ascend to summit meetings. The multilateral agencies, including the World Bank and the IMF, play crucial coordinative roles in policy development. We are of course deeply interested in receiving submissions on all these economic questions—whether the policy or the institutions that drive the global economy today.

Keynes would no doubt be proud of his profession, especially its modern integration with other social sciences. While Keynes would not likely crow

about the “superiority of economists,”¹⁴ his views resonate to this day. In his words, “The master economist must possess a rare combination of gifts... He must be a mathematician, historian, statesman and philosopher – in some degree.” This combination of intellectual gifts underpins the success of summitry.

Rise of the Informals

In some respects, the revolutionary character of the “rise of the informals” is premised on their very existence. The first to appear was the G7—actually the G5 and then G6 but then the G7 by 1975 at Rambouillet, as noted above. Subsequently, a significant number of other informals have appeared to tackle the international order broadly but then also targeted on very specific sectors and problems. The originality of the informals has disappeared and they are not limited to the Gx system of institutions. Just recently, President Obama convened the Nuclear Security Summit in 2010 and Summits were held in 2012 and 2014. But in this particular summit process, a time deadline has been incorporated. This global summit will meet in Washington once again in 2016 and, at least for the moment, this would appear to be the last Leaders’ Summit for this particular Informal.

These changes—particularly the emergence of the G7 (an informal leaders gathering) and then the creation of the G20 leaders’ summit in 2008—have come without the reordering occasioned by the termination of major power conflict. Though some have argued that the events that gave rise to this first Informal represented an effort to meet and overcome the consequences in economic terms of something akin to a conflict in political terms, it seems rather an exaggerated premise. In one of the first examinations on the rise of informal global summitry, Putnam and Bayne (1984/1987, 14), argue that these structural changes caused ministers and then leaders of the G5 to come together. These structural changes included: the growing interdependence among the advanced industrial countries; the decline in U.S. hegemony (though this appears to be a repeated narrative) and the growing bureaucratization in these states that led to much frustration by leaders over the disaggregation of policy authority. The international economic order was changing, it appears, and it seems that the United States had decided that it could not lead. It chose a minilateral leaders forum. Nevertheless, the contemporary era has witnessed the evolution of global summitry without the necessity of a postwar period rearrangement.¹⁵

The Rambouillet Summit in 1975 was then the first G-summit. The G7 leaders addressed challenges faced by nations that are sovereign but nevertheless economically interdependent with others. The Rambouillet agenda included *inter alia* the imperative of global growth, the economic gains from expanded world trade, the threat of protectionism, the new reality of flexible exchange rates, cooperation via IOs, and the importance of understanding

¹⁴“The Superiority of Economists” is the provocative title of a recent article in the prestigious *Journal of Economic Perspectives* (Fourcade, Ollion, and Algan 2015). In the pecking order of social sciences, it seems that economics is at the top. This pride of place stems from economics’ empirical, model-based analytic methods – versus the more discursive approaches of political science, law, sociology, or history.

¹⁵John Kirton in many respects is the unsung hero of the “rise of the informals.” As the head of the G8/G20 Research Groups at the University of Toronto, Kirton and his colleagues have examined the informals’ evolution of in constructive detail. See Kirton (2010, 2013) and the work of his colleague Hajnal (1999, 2013) and Nicholas Bayne (2000).

developing countries—soon to be called developing and emerging powers. The Rambouillet doctrine, which carries through to today, was a call for economic counsel to politicians and bureaucrats.

The summits, many of which meet annually at the leader and ministerial levels, vary in form and foundation. Many of these global summits do not have permanent secretariats, though some do. Most are self-identified and fail to have anything close to universal membership. The most evident small club was of course the first, the G7, frequently referred to as the “Club of the Rich.” Most are not built on formal legal foundations and their decisions bind only those states whose leaders attend. And even in those circumstances, national implementation may or may not be forthcoming.

What is evident is that at least in political economy issues, global summits have taken leaders outside the formal institutions created following World War II. And in fact, as is evident in the case of the G20 Leaders’ summit, the leaders and their ministers have tasked formal institutions such as the International Monetary Fund (IMF), World Bank, or Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) to prepare some of the policy initiatives that these Leaders have subsequently ratified.

This selective historical review illustrates the complex evolution of the global political order over the last two hundred years. Much ground is left for historians, political scientists, economists, lawyers, and others to examine in their inquiries into past and current global summity.

Closing Remarks—Linked to the Aims of the *Global Summity Journal*

This lead piece in the inaugural issue of *Global Summity: Politics, Economics and Law in International Governance* outlines the scope of inquiry of the journal while giving definition and shape to the basic concept, “global summity.” It depicts the contemporary international order and defines key terms that animate summity and analysis of global governance. Part 2, in the next issue, will focus on structure and power and how summity fits within established concepts of international relations while exploring traditional and not-so-traditional concepts of international cooperation.

We have proposed the “Iceberg Theory” of global summity, metaphor for the substantial ongoing below-the-surface activity that gives support to world leaders’ *ensemble*. Global summity—a multifaceted organizational process—is distinguished from global governance, a political philosophical concept, by raising to prominence the actors in summity that inform governance. The article also outlines the historical evolution of summity, highlighting “revolutionary” changes over the last two hundred years. As its subtitle signals, this new journal is committed to a multidisciplinary approach to engage economists, lawyers, and historians as well as experts in international relations.

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