

# World peace is a choice of superpowers

## Outline

### 1. Introduction

Thesis Statement: The determination and facilitation of world peace is complex as its determinants are contestable. Hence, superpowers are not the sole instigators of world peace. The will of the majority in the global arena spread the power of attaining world peace.

### 2. Complexities of world peace

### 3. World peace has moved away from reliance on superpowers

(a) Interdependence of states in the globalization era

(b) Nuclear capabilities not only in the hands of the superpowers

(c) Strong advocacy of national sovereignty and territorial integrity for all states

(d) Lobbying by the UNGA to ~~counter~~ <sup>influence</sup> the will of the UNSC

(e) Emergence of regional alliances

### 4. Superpowers have the ultimate say to impact world peace

(a) Realist ideologies still prevail and

(b) military capabilities increasing exponentially with regards to superpowers

(b) Nuclear capabilities much more advanced in superpowers

(c) Notion of pre-emptive strike and facade of ~~the~~ Responsibility to Protect

(d) Veto power takes precedence in the UN

(e) Presence and puppeteering of other global players by superpowers

5. Superpowers are not the sole craftsmen of world peace as majority over-rides

(a) Will of the majority over the few prevails and democracy wins

(a) Constructivism ideology propounds that global actors forge their own ideology and destiny

(b) Nuclear capability will determine peace and no state can be forced to give it up

(c) Avoidance of world war as each actor refuses to choose a single side

(d) Will of the majority over the few prevails and democracy wins

(e) Regional alliances have a greater say in peaceful strategies and military power

## 6. CONCLUSION

### ESSAY

A precise balance needs to be achieved when concocting the potion of peace. If the balance is not just right, the entire potion will prove to be fatal. For one, all ingredients (global actors) need to be stable and non-reactive. Even in the case of two ingredients (global actors) reacting adversely, the peace potion will become spoil. Moreover, the composition of the ingredients needs to be similar - they must hold similar ideologies of attaining peace as their end goal. Thus, the delicate balance of world peace is composed of ~~not~~ global actors.

working well together for a common goal. The determination and facilitation of <sup>world</sup> peace is complex as its determinants are contestable. Hence, superpowers are not the sole instigators of world peace. The will of the majority in the global arena spread the power of attaining world peace. World peace is largely manifested through interdependence and globalisation of the world community, advocacy of national sovereignty and territorial integrity and balance of nuclear capabilities possessed apart from the world superpowers. On the flip side, world peace is claimed to be determined by world superpowers because of the rigid structure of the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) and veto capabilities, prevalent realist ideologies and puppeteering of global actors by superpowers. However, it <sup>is</sup> ~~cannot~~ undeniably that superpowers are the sole craftsman of world peace as majority rule and democracy prevails and different countries can develop their own strategy strategies to attain world peace.

Peace is a complex phenomenon with a myriad of determinants. What constitutes as peace for one may not constitute as peace for the other. Zooming out to the global lens, countries have different and often times conflict ideologies that don't mesh well with each other. The global north ~~however~~ believes that a world peace can be achieved through promotion of democratic ideals and free market mechanisms or capitalism. The global south sees these ideologies

as having a thin shiny surface but beyond the glamorous facade, it is seen as imperialistic and sinister. The global south believes that world peace can be achieved through equitable distribution of income and circulation of ideologies that provide equality among all. It should also be noticed that with the two large groupings exist some differences which make them heterogeneous and sometimes, conflicting. In terms of war, the legitimate use of force is often contested with some claiming pre-emption is fair game and some viewing it as a means to unscrupulously attain power. Hence, world peace ~~is~~ is complex and constitutes a conweb of factors that are all intertwined with a delicate balance.

In today's globalized world, world peace is largely dependent upon the world.

In today's globalized world, world peace is a product of ~~and~~ interdependent states. ~~the~~ countries have largely come to depend on each other economically, politically and strategically so much so that welfare of one state is dependent on the other. World peace is derived from welfare of states as progress ensures that states are unlikely to conflict with each other. For instance, China ~~and~~ is seen as hegemonic in the Indo-Pacific region but despite this, ~~the~~ conflict is avoided because of the economic dependence of regional players such as Japan, South Korea and the ASEAN countries. (John Baylis, The Globalisation of World Politics, 1997)

Therefore, interdependence of the global community outside of superpowers has been a major reason for world peace.

Nuclear capabilities are no longer restricted in the hands of the superpowers and this has enabled world peace to also lie in the hands of countries outside the Permanent 5 members of the UNSC. Nuclear power has the means to destroy countries and regions at large and is possessed by Pakistan, India, North Korea and Israel. These countries also have the means to push the world into chaos if they please which makes them one of the reasons that world peace ~~is present~~ exists. For example, if India and Pakistan decided to conduct a nuclear war, the entire world would be drawn into the conflict and every individual would be adversely impacted through ~~use of~~ a nuclear winter man would likely be annihilated through a nuclear winter (Brian Toon, I've studied nuclear nuclear war for 35 years - you should be worried. TED Talks, 2018). Ergo, world peace is the absence of ~~no~~ war and since non-superpowers have the means to carryout nuclear war, they can also choose peace.

National sovereignty and territorial integrity are advocated by the global community at large which provides world peace by all members. National sovereignty was crafted by the Treaty of Westphalia (1648)

and has since formed the basis of global interactions. Countries are prevented from infiltrating national borders and also imposing their own way of life or expansion ~~or~~ strategies on others. For example, Pakistan ~~constituted~~ was part of the larger Indian subcontinent but since independence, India cannot ~~to~~ take Pakistan back (even forcibly) due to the acceptance of territorial integrity and national sovereignty. All in all, national sovereignty practiced by all nations is ~~seen as~~ a constituent of world peace that is not determined by world superpowers.

Ironically, while world superpowers wield significant powers in the UNSC, they are influenced by other countries through the prevalence of lobbying which ultimately determines world peace or lack thereof. ~~World superpowers~~ don't completely make their decisions based ~~on~~ on their own benefit but also account for their allies. This is ~~strongly~~ witnessed with the use of veto power to determine peace or conflict. The US, for example, has vetoed several resolutions for ceasefire in Gaza based on Israeli strong lobbying and has ultimately vetoed peace (Maleeha Lodhi, Vetoing peace, 2023). Overall, world peace is not solely the choice of world superpowers as they are influenced by their allies, directly and indirectly.

The division of the world into different regions politically has led to the emergence of powerful regional alliances that impact world

place. Some regions have become begun to see economic prosperity, military power and political legitimacy legitimacy which has facilitated regional alliances to counter threats to peace. The Indo-Pacific region is currently a popular destination for power, and ~~it~~ it has also become a ~~volatile~~ entered a precarious situation where different powers are scrambling to attain the most power while also threatening world peace. With conflicting interests, peace is inevitably threatened. For instance, the South China Sea is a hotbed of conflict due to territorial claims of many within region, presence of oil and trade routes (Baylis, **The Globalisation of World Politics, 1997**).

~~These~~ These regional actors can impact world peace by choosing to engage in military conflict ~~with~~ using regional alliances like **Quad**. Hence, regional power plays impact <sup>world</sup> peace, not just world superpowers.

However, realist ideologies among superpowers denote that military capabilities and spending increase exponentially which impacts world peace. ~~These~~ Superpowers hold significant power and influence militarily and have been in that position for decades. While China is a relatively new superpower compared to its western counterparts, it too undermines the notion of military supremacy of the west. ~~There~~ There are guns and weapons have ~~the~~ throughout history controlled power and

world peace. It can be deduced that the nation-states that have the most strongest strategic and military capabilities will control peace. To put into perspective, the US is the world leader in military expenditure with USD 877 billion spent in 2022. The second position is occupied by China that spend USD 292 billion in 2022 (Stockholm International Peace Research Institute, World military expenditure reaches new record high as European spending surges, 2023). Hence, militarily powerful superpowers choose whether they want world peace in the presence of realist ideologies.

Another prospect of superpowers determining world peace is that while countries apart from the superpowers possess nuclear powers, the superpowers have nuclear capabilities that are much more advanced. Superpowers have possessed and ~~work~~ worked on the advancement of nuclear power longer than non-superpowers. Moreover, they have the means to ~~future~~ further develop their nuclear capabilities through research and experimentation. The United States for example has the world's top research institutes that are dedicated to development of nuclear bombs such as MIT. ~~and~~ On the other hand, countries like Pakistan rely on relatively older technologies. Through advancement of these nuclear capabilities, it could be said that superpowers have



the punch of power and legitimacy in the world arena and can choose world peace over their less capable nuclear power states.

While the global community advocates national sovereignty and territorial integrity, reality doesn't minimize this notion as superpowers engage in pre-emptive strikes or quote the facade of Responsibility to Protect. Superpowers often show themselves as saviours and knights in shining armour by forceful infiltration of national boundaries. Despite no credible information on the presence of weapons of mass destruction, the US invaded Iraq in 2003 and destroyed the country while <sup>and killed</sup> ~~with~~ killing a million innocent civilians. Despite calls by the UN to stop and respect the national sovereignty of Iraq, the US followed its ambitions which showed that when it comes down to power, narrow objectives of superpowers will reign supreme over ~~from~~ the charter of the UN. The impact of this superpower can be envisioned by the words of former President of the US, Donald Trump.

"They lied. They said there were weapons of mass destruction, there were none." Thus, world peace is ultimately determined by superpowers <sup>that</sup> ~~who~~ can choose ~~to~~ not engage in war or follow narrow ambitions.

~~and~~ Even though the UNSC members are influenced by allies, they ultimately hold veto power and can determine whether peace ensues or not. The UNSC ~~can~~ can veto any issue if it pleases ~~even if~~ ~~the~~ ~~the~~ world community is

against it. This has unfolded in the case of many conflicts where veto power is ~~also~~ used and abused. The Ukraine conflict is one such example which is currently taking place since 2022. ~~The~~ The Russian Federation unilaterally invaded Ukraine and vetoed ~~any~~ calls for ceasefire despite the world community condemning them. Russia is accused of crimes against humanity and harming civilians that were unarmed and non-threatening such as the civilians in Bucha that were tied and shot in short range (Rafia Zakaria, The massacre in Bucha, 2022). Ergo, despite lobbying and influence and all-out call to stop war and promote peace, the power of superpowers has ~~overstated~~ ~~the~~ ~~war~~ prevailed.

~~Superpowers~~ Despite the growing power of regional organisations, superpowers have begun to shadow such regional alliances and use actors as puppets to ensure their influence on world peace. Most regional organisations have at least one superpower in the mix that ensures that their ideology and power prevails. This has been the case in Quad 2.0 which constitutes Japan, India, Australia and the US. The balance of power is maintained in the area despite conflict in the South China Sea. This is because of the countering effect of China and the USA. These two ~~to~~ superpowers have ensured that all-out war is avoided among claims of resources, territory (islands) and

trade routes. ~~Thus~~ The US also provides military assistance and training to these regional actors to maintain peace. For example, the recent military alliance with India through **INDUS-X** in 2023 and the provision of nuclear-powered submarines to Australia in 2022. To summarise, global superpowers have the final say in world peace through their influence and power-balancing.

The arguments presented by those who claim that ~~superpowers~~ choose peace is the choice of superpowers fail to account for carry out outdated ideologies that are no longer relevant in today's world. The world is increasingly complex and interconnected and global actors can forge their own destiny. Each country can influence world peace through their actions and in some cases coalition. This ideology is ~~promoted~~ highlighted through constructivism which states that a nation's ideology is often what it makes of it and reality is dependent on one's perception. One such example is given by Waltz who puts the notion of the US being threatened by 5 nuclear missiles ~~is~~ possessed by North Korea but not threatened by 500 nuclear missiles possessed by the UK. It is claimed that it is not the weapon but the ideology the North Korea is the enemy and the UK is not, hence peace can be achieved by adopting the ideology that that is the goal for all nations. The fluidity of the world order ensures that all actors have

a say in world peace and power doesn't lie with just the superpowers. (Touqir Hussain, **A fluid world order, 2023**). Conclusively, the globalized world entails that peace depends on many as opposed to a handful of superpowers.

Amusingly, nuclear capabilities have the power to achieve peace through maintaining a balance which is unrestricted not restricted to superpowers only. Nuclear powers & states outside of the PS will always add legitimacy when it comes to world peace. Moreover, they cannot be convinced or forced to give it up. ~~to~~ In an anarchical world, each state will always seek to increase power and prioritise its national security even in the face of adversity. In the case of Pakistan, despite sanctions such as the Pressler Amendment, Pakistan developed its nuclear capabilities (~~to~~ Abdul Sattar, **Pakistan's Foreign Policy 1947-2019**).

This shows that peace is not solely in the hands of the superpowers and other actors have a valid claim to world peace.

At this stage of international politics, global actors are refusing to choose sides and maintain their right to national sovereignty. Influence and puppeteering by the superpowers is seeming less relevant as time passes because ~~actors~~ countries are more concerned about their national interests, ~~over~~ ~~the~~ ~~objectives~~ previously, countries used to ally with power ~~to~~ for protection or to ~~be~~ simply

to not unleash the wrath of the superpower. This ensued during the world wars with the world divided into two blocs and during the cold war with world divided into communism and capitalism. Now, one can see refusal to engage by most actors in the case of the Ukraine war where countries chose to abstain in order to not anger the US or Russia. India, for example, bought oil at a cheap price while maintaining strong ties with the US. In other words it was ~~been~~ <sup>been</sup> ~~limiting~~ <sup>limiting</sup> with the wounds and running with bare. The world community looked after their national interests which shows superpowers can no longer wield power to coerce countries (Aizaz Ahmad Chaudhry, The Ukraine Crisis, 2022). To end, national sovereignty prevails and the decision of the global community at large is a major indication of world peace despite the will of superpowers.

Throughout history, democracy has been successful over the will of the few who exult that superpowers are not the sole creators of peace. If global actors band together and demand what they want eventually their voices will be heard because of their sheer size and power in numbers. Peace exists the world is not dragged into chaos and anarchy because that is what the majority desires. Democracy is a concept that is promoted by western superpowers themselves so expanded via global

scale. This ideology holds, ~~for~~ it was also promoted by <sup>Franklin</sup> Fukuyama in 'The End of History and The Last Man' (1992) which entails the victory of democracy. Thus, world peace is a product of the will of the majority in the world community as opposed to the superpowers.

\* This notion can also be seen to influence other superpower powerful actors such as the call for ceasefire in Gaza led to the UN eventually abstaining from voting while previously being against it.

The division of the world into regions has legitimated regional alliances more than international organisations in some cases. Recently, more regional institutions have popped up to create their own spheres of influence to counter world superpowers. Peace <sup>has</sup> ~~has~~ thus prospered have thus been hunkily spread amongst up-and-coming global players. Alliances such as Quad, AUKUS and ANZUS have increasingly come to the limelight in ~~as~~ their role to achieve peace. They have been able to ensure countering forces that threaten world peace. For example, Quad is used as a counter for North Korea which is seen as power hungry and carrying malicious designs. Through this, it can be seen that peace no longer lies in the hands of superpowers but amongst

Other actors particularly regional players who ensure peace in their regions.

In conclusion, world peace cannot be claimed to be a choice of superpowers, ~~solely~~ at least solely. World peace is complex and it is defined through various differing lenses but a common ideology is the absence of war. It can be seen that world peace has moved away from being determined by ~~two~~ superpowers and towards reliance on the global community at large. Globalisation has entailed that states are interdependent and peace is a product of this interdependence along with growing call for national sovereignty and the influence of actors ~~is~~ not directly part of the UNSC. Some claim that global superpowers still wield enough power to determine peace through their advanced nuclear capabilities, veto power and ~~facade of~~ ~~the~~ farical notion of pre-emptive ~~strikes~~ ~~still~~ strikes. However, it would be incorrect to claim that superpowers are the sole craftsmen of peace due to the supremacy of democratic ideals, presence of nuclear capabilities outside of superpowers, superpowers and refusal of nation-states to choose sides in the face of achieving national interest.