WHY WE SHOULD PRESERVE INTERNATIONAL INSTITUTIONS AND ORDER
July 23, 2018

The international order formed after World War II provides important benefits to the United States as well as to other countries. The United Nations, NATO, the World Trade Organization, the European Union, and other postwar institutions all help to provide economic stability and international security, contributing to unprecedented levels of prosperity and the longest period in modern history without war between major powers.

U.S. leadership helped to create this system, and U.S. leadership has long been critical for its success. Although the United States has paid a significant share of the costs of this order since its inception, it has greatly benefited from its rewards. Indeed, the United States has gained disproportionate influence on setting the rules of international exchange and security cooperation in ways that reflect its interests around the globe.

Today, however, the international institutions supporting the postwar order are under attack by President Donald J. Trump. As scholars of international relations, we are alarmed by these attacks. We should reform, but not destroy, the system that has served the United States and its allies well for more than seven decades. The global order is certainly in need of major changes, but absolutely not the reckless ones President Trump is pursuing. Institutions are much harder to build up than they are to destroy. Almost nobody benefits from a descent into the chaos of a world without effective institutions that encourage and organize cooperation.

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