

WHY WE SHOULD PRESERVE INTERNATIONAL INSTITUTIONS AND ORDER

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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 inter-

national 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.

David Baldwin
Columbia University

Michael Barnett
George Washington University

J. Lawrence Broz
University of California San Diego

William Clark
Texas A&M University

Jeff D. Colgan
Brown University

Richard Doner
Emory University

Songying Fang
Rice University

James D. Fearon
Stanford University

Michael Findley
University of Texas

Martha Finnemore
George Washington University

Jeffrey Frieden
Harvard University

F. Gregory Gause III
Texas A&M University

Judith Goldstein
Stanford University

Peter Gourevitch
University of California San Diego

Stephan Haggard
University of California San Diego

Emilie Hafner-Burton
University of California San Diego

Miles Kahler
American University

Peter J. Katzenstein
Cornell University

Robert O. Keohane
Princeton University

Stephen D. Krasner
Stanford University

David A. Lake
University of California San Diego

Brett Ashley Leeds
Rice University

Ian Lustick
University of Pennsylvania

Lisa L. Martin
University of Wisconsin-Madison

Helen V. Milner
Princeton University

Joseph S. Nye
Harvard University

Pablo Pinto
University of Houston

Robert Powell
University of California Berkeley

Lauren Prather
University of California San Diego

Scott Sagan
Stanford University

Richard Samuels
MIT

Christina Schneider
University of California San Diego

Kathryn Sikkink
Harvard University

Beth Simmons
University of Pennsylvania

Branislav Slantchev
University of California San Diego

Jack Snyder
Columbia University

Randall Stone
University of Rochester

Nina Tannenwald
Brown University

Alexander Thompson
Ohio State University

Peter Trubowitz
*London School of Economics and
Political Science*

David G. Victor
University of California San Diego

Barbara F. Walter
University of California San Diego

Institutional affiliations are for
identification purposes only.