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TRUMP2.0: THE GLOBAL CHALLENGE¹

Key Characteristics of the Existing Post World War Two United Nations Based Liberal World Order

EVALUATION NOTE

The United Nations (UN) is, perhaps, the world's most enduring, all-encompassing "global public good". Its founding fathers included great statesmen like President Franklin Delano Roosevelt (FDR) of the United States of America who originally suggested the name United Nations as well as Sir Winston Churchill of Great Britain, Maxim Litvinov of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR) and T.V. Soong who represented pre- 1948 revolution China.

The four of them, representing the Allies during the Second World War, signed the Declaration by the United Nations in 1942. These clearly enlightened, visionary individuals were willing to prioritize global peace and security above all else, never wishing to see a repeat of the totally unnecessary horrors, widespread destruction and millions of deaths and wounded because of World War Two.

The 1942 Declaration was followed by the signing of the UN Charter in San Francisco on June 26, 1945, and the creation of the United Nations on October 24 later the same year. None of this would have been possible without the leadership of the United States of America. Both US President FDR and Harry S. Truman, who followed him, played pivotal roles in the UNs creation. Eleanor Roosevelt was the primary author of the equally inspiring and complementary (to the UN Charter) Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR), which was adopted by consensus in 1948. She was also the first Chair of the UN Human Rights Commission.

The UN is an intergovernmental organization which commands genuine political legitimacy, derived from it's

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unique, near universal State membership. It is the closest to an organisation of global governance which the world has ever had. Its main purposes are to ensure global peace and security, to prevent another world war, to promote human rights and sustainable development and to create a world without discrimination and inequality. The UN is now almost 80 years old and its three main pillars—peace and security, human rights, and development—have stood the test of time.

The UNs original mandates and the inspiring and timeless UN Charter principles and values remain as relevant and critical in the current global conjuncture as they were in 1945, even if some important amendments to the Charter are necessary in the changed context of the 21st Century.

The Organization remains both relevant and central to global governance, not just today, but for the foreseeable future in the 21st century, because the world currently faces unprecedented global challenges such as transnational conflict and crime, climate change, pandemics and other existential challenges which only a politically legitimate body such as the UN can have a hope of addressing.

Moreover, an overall independent, objective assessment of the Organization would probably correctly conclude that it has made an enormous positive and constructive contribution to the world and its citizens. Its major achievements include, but are not limited to, significant contributions towards preventing a third world war, overseeing decolonization, the adoption of universal human rights normative standards and institutions around much of the world, saving millions of lives during humanitarian crises, eradicating life-threatening diseases, and significantly facilitating the fastest pace of genuine global, regional, and national developmental progress in world history.

The new ambitious United Nations Pact for the Future and its accompanying Global Digital Compact and Declaration on Future Generations were all agreed by consensus by the UNs 193 Member States on 22 September 2024. They reaffirmed the UNs three foundational pillars as well as that they are integrally linked: you cannot have peace and security without development or development without peace and security and neither will be possible without human rights. The 2024 UN Pact for the Future also added a few more critical areas for the UNs specific focus like science, technology and innovation and digital technology. It has also placed a new emphasis on youth and future generations.

The three documents agreed in New York by consensus just a little over two months ago are testimony to the fact that the United Nations will remain centre stage in terms of the world's current and future global, regional and national governance architecture.

There is no doubt, however, that the UN needs urgent and serious reform at global, regional and national levels if it is to retain its political legitimacy and have a real chance of resolving the world's current complex, growing and intractable problems as well as its future challenges.

Trump 2.0 and the Future of the Global World Order

There are several key questions which need to be urgently asked about the implications of Trump 2.0 for the direction and substantive content of the evolving global world order. Both his personal decisive victory and that of his Republican Party in the recently concluded November 2024 US Presidential, Congressional and Senate elections and his intended Cabinet appointments should make the citizens across the world very concerned about its future trajectory given the US' continuing disproportionate influence on world affairs.

Trump's re-election is likely to push a global world order, which is already tethering, and has shown visible signs of tilting in an illiberal direction, into a decisive far-right illiberal corner. His second Presidency also has the real potential to obliterate many of the tangible peace and security, human rights and development gains resulting from eight decades of liberal idealism embodied in and led by the United Nations.

I have already stated that US Presidents FDR played a leading and outsize role in the drafting of the UN Charter which led to the creation of the United Nations while US First Lady Eleanor Roosevelt was key to the drafting and adoption of the UDHR. Most US Presidents after FDR and then Harry Truman who continued in his footsteps in the early days of the UN, including most recently, Presidents Obama and Biden, reinforced the UN's founder's early attempts to create a relatively democratic global world order ensconced in a liberal multilateralism which itself was rooted in a universal membership, one country, one-vote, United Nations.

Even Trump's Republican predecessors like President Ronald Reagan, George Bush Sr. and George W Bush, despite the latter's unilateral invasion of Iraq under false pretences, wilfully violating both the international rule of law and the UN Charter, did not fundamentally question or irretrievably undermine the existing UN based global liberal world order.

The pendulum began to swing in an illiberal direction under Trump 1.0, reinforced in 2022 by President Putin of Russia's illegal invasion of Ukraine which continues to represent a total disregard for the international rule of law and the UN Charter. In late 2023, Israel's genocidal invasion of Gaza and now the West Bank and Lebanon, have further compounded and have gone well beyond even Putin's unprecedented transgressions.

Despite all of these gross violations of both the spirit and content of the UN Charter and UDHR, action at the UN against Putin, backed by and sometimes even led by the Biden Administration, has still been possible. For example, the UN General Assembly expelled Russia from the UN Human Rights Council and has overwhelmingly voted against the Russian invasions in multiple UN General Assembly Resolutions, even if these, sadly, have not been binding on all UN Member States. While decisive action against Israel has not been possible because of the veto used by the US in the Security Council to protect even its worst genocidal acts, the UN General Assembly has overwhelmingly voted against the Israeli genocide multiple times as well.

The Biden Administration which succeeded Trump 1.0 also swung the pendulum back from his predecessor's unilateral policy actions against the UN on his very first day in office, January 20, 2021, when the US rejoined both the 2015 Paris Climate Change Agreement and the World Health Organisation (WHO), both of which Trump had initiated the process of withdrawing the United States from during his first Presidential term.

However, these cumulative actions have put unprecedented and extraordinary stress on the UN and broader multilateral system. Against this background and in the context of two major, protracted wars in Europe and the Middle East, Trump's re-election could well be the straw that broke the camel's back. This is because there is now little doubt that Trump 2.0 will seek to push the liberal global world order over the cliff, through what is consciously intended by him and his loyalist Permanent Representative-designate to the United Nations to be a decisive push.

Sadly, neither the new US Congress or US Senate are likely to have any effective checks and balances during Trump 2.0. The only constraining forces on Trump and his Cabinet members in the next four years which the world can count on will be the Trump Administration's own self-goals. The only other deviation from his policies will happen if the President-elect's own narcissistic, narrow self-interest, one of his few predictable attributes, requires this. There will,

no doubt, be many self-goals and chaotic self-interest swings, but will these be early enough or elicit strong counter-reactions from most UN Member States to bring the current liberal global world order back from the brink? Even if so, and that is a tall order now, will there be enough momentum to swing the pendulum back in the opposite direction to where Trump and his loyalists want to take it? Only time will tell since much of this is hard to predict since we are in uncharted territory in the absence of the traditional checks and balances which have existed over the last eight decades since the founding of the United Nations rule of law-based international order.

As a result of many illiberal pushes and shoves, many multilateral institutions, Conventions and Agreements, agreed at or centred around the United Nations, will inevitably feel practical, negative effects of Trump 2.0 very quickly. The soldiers who will lead the charge will be Trump's Vice-President Vance, Cabinet and other senior nominees who appear to have been hand-picked for their blind loyalty to him and because they mirror two of his key characteristics: hawkishness and a preference for unilateralism, or at best bilateral deals, over multilateralism.

The US President-elect has nominated a Secretary of Environmental Protection who advocates withdrawing the US again from the 2015 Paris Climate Agreement (as was also attempted during Trump 1.0). Further approval of US federal funding needed to achieve the global climate Net Zero target appears impossible now. So does the achievement of the 2030 target of an annual USD 1 trillion of climate finance. This is the minimum that experts say is needed to stem the world's existential climate crisis. While this target has support and is being discussed at the UNs Climate Change Conference of the Parties (CoP) 29 meeting in Baku, Azerbaijan where the US is still represented by the Biden Administration, it seems unlikely to be achieved now.

Trump has also signaled the appointment of a Health Secretary who opposes many vaccines, an Energy Secretary who is a key opponent of efforts to limit greenhouse gas emissions linked to the fossil-fuel based oil and gas industry and a Secretary of State who cannot easily travel to or talk to senior officials of the People's Republic of China because of its 2020 sanctions against him.

Trump and his Permanent Representative-designate to the United Nations have also signaled that they will give Prime Minister Netanyahu of Israel full leeway and a free pass to continue his genocide and repeated violations of the UN Charter. The UN is likely to double down and continue to abet the genocide by arming Israel with lethal and other weapons. These two highest functionaries of the new US Administration and the new Attorney General designate will also continue to turn a blind eye to Israeli violations of the Geneva Convention as well as the UNs International Court of Justice (ICJ), International Criminal Court (ICC), and UN Human Rights Council rulings against Israel, Prime Minister Netanyahu and other members of his Cabinet.

The only long-lasting solution to the Israeli Palestinian and broader Middle East conflict i.e. the two-state solution, is also either now dead or placed in "deep freeze". Trump will also turn a blind eye to the proliferating illegal Zionist settlements in the West Bank. In fact, Trump has signaled de facto permission to Prime Minister Netanyahu and the extreme right-wing Zionist zealots in his Cabinet on whom he depends for his own political survival, not only to continue building illegal settlements but also to annex the West Bank.

On the other major protracted and intractable regional war front, President Putin and Russia's illegal invasion of Ukraine, he is not just relieved about Trump 2.0 but positively elated. As a

result, he is likely to become much more belligerent and confident in his continued violations of both the international rule of law, the UN Charter and other UN General Assembly Resolutions, not just with respect to Ukraine but also Moldova and Georgia. He can be confident that Trump will turn a blind eye to his many transgressions, leaving it to the Europeans to address, if they can. In this context, tensions between both Trump and NATO and Putin and the European members of NATO will likely continue to escalate quickly.

On the economic front, tensions between the World Trade Organisation (WTO) and Trump's Trade Representative designate, already high during Trump 1.0, when the same person was the US Trade Representative, will also likely escalate. The WTO's Dispute Settlement Mechanism and the appointment of new judges will more than likely remain in the freezer, blocked and stalemated by the United States.

Multilateral funding will suffer across the board. There is likely to be a significant cut in the US' core "assessed contribution" to the United Nations which, in any case, was often overdue and never paid on time even under the Biden or previous Democratic administrations. The already existing core UN funding gap will widen and is unlikely to be filled by the UN's European Member States, leaving open the opportunity for the People's Republic of China to fill part of the gap in return for greater influence and even a greater number of Under Secretary General level and other senior positions in the global body. The cumulative effect of these two developments—the US' financial cuts and China's increase of core funding to the UN will be a further undermining of the UN's still largely liberal, democratic principles and practices. The widening core resources financing gap will also translate into less core funding for the achievement of the SDGs and Agenda 2030, the current Secretary-General's UN Development System Reform and its One UN centrepiece, UN Peacekeeping and Political Reform and other critical current and future planned initiatives.

Some Geo-Political and Geo-Economic Impacts of Weakened Multilateralism

The abdication of the US' leadership role vis-à-vis both multilateralism and the liberal world order, together with President-elect Trump's strong preference for self-serving unilateral or bilateral deals will have far-reaching geo-political and geo-economic impacts.

Most significantly, the already visible tensions between the US and China in multilateral, regional and bilateral forums will grow, perhaps exponentially, especially given Trump's choice of two extreme China hawks as his Secretary of State and Secretary of Defence. The clear winner in all of this is likely to be China, not just in the UN where its influence will substantially increase and where it will seek to put its own illiberal stamp on the future of multilateralism more firmly, but also through its growing influence in or over major regional plurilateral bodies such as the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP) and the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), both of which it already has considerable influence. This is likely to both consolidate and increase rapidly in both forums.

The Quad Grouping (US, Australia, Japan, India), which was revived in 2017 under Trump 1.0 as a bulwark against China and then given a leg up by the Biden Administration who elevated its Summits to Heads of State level, is still a paper tiger. As such, it is unlikely to be able to play the NATO style collective, multilateral security role urgently needed in East and Southeast Asia in the face of Chinese expansionism in the East and South China Seas, against Taiwan, Republic of China and even in the Indian Ocean and Indian sub-continent.

An adapted NATO style Indo-Pacific collective security organization which will, arguably, be better suited than the Quad to restrain China seems dead in the water under Trump 2.0. In the absence of such a mechanism, and in the presence of a growing RCEP in the region, China

will soon have developed its hegemony over East and Southeast Asia, the most important geographic and geo-political region in the world for China-US contestation, which the US has been noticeably distracted from over the last few years because of both its internal domestic conflict and as a result of the conflicts in the Middle East and Ukraine. Taiwan should be seriously worried by Trump 2.0, as should the Philippines and Vietnam, given the numerous Chinese intrusions into their territorial waters which are likely to escalate.

Meanwhile tensions are also bound to grow on the Korean peninsula, not just because of Chinese assertiveness in the region, but because of Trump's transactional approach to South Korean security which the US has guaranteed since the Korean War in the early 1950s. President-elect Trump has been reported to have already told the South Koreans that they will need to increase their contributions for their own self-defence on the Peninsula by 900% from the current US 1.13 billion per year to US\$ 10 billion. This is a recipe for serious US- South Korean tensions at the highest political level not unlike the tensions Trump had with most NATO European leaders during Trump 1.0 when he threatened them with withdrawal of the US from its current Nato financial role, a threat he is likely to repeat and even escalate further with NATOs European members during Trump 2.0.

Nervousness within the South Korean political leadership is also likely to grow because of the high level of comfort they know President-elect Trump enjoys with Kim Jong Un, the Supreme Leader North Korean leader, ever since their 2019 Hanoi Summit. Kim, already emboldened by his recent pact with Putin's Russia is likely to flex his muscles under Trump 2.0, fully knowing that Trump is not likely to interfere if he does something to further destabilize his relations with South Korea.

On the economic front, President Trump has made the return of the US' decades old lost manufacturing and other jobs back onshore to the United States, through the levy of high tariffs on imported products from China, (60%) Mexico, Vietnam and other countries (20%), central to his 2024 re-election campaign. While it is naïve, at best, to believe that these lost jobs can be recouped, Trump is certain to fulfil his promise to levy such higher tariffs. Far from crippling China, their direct and side- effects will be passed on to consumers resident in the United States, leading both to higher inflation and a higher cost of living for displaced workers and others resident in the United States. Meanwhile, while such tariffs will, no doubt, aggravate an already tense relationship between the United States and China, which will have far-reaching negative global and regional implications.

Trump 2.0: Three Additional Major Geo-Political Implications

There are many other geo-political and geo-economic implications of Trump 2.0, but I will highlight only three given their potential for significant regional and even global disruptions.

US-Europe Relations

A major one worth noting and following closing is the US' relationships with its transatlantic allies especially in NATO but in Europe more broadly. They are nervous and had already recognized during Trump 1.0 that the period of their defence and military free ride underwritten by the US through NATO was over.

European leaders, especially the French President and German leaders, not just the Polish Donald Tusk must act quickly now since an emboldened Putin poses an existential threat to the future of NATO, the European Union and Europe more broadly as we have known them since the fall of the Iron Curtain! For their own survival and self-interest, all three must be more visibly, substantively and concretely supportive of Ukraine, not just in humanitarian and

economic terms, but also militarily. This is vital and urgent if both Ukraine and Western and Eastern Europe as we have known them are to survive and remain liberal in orientation. The latter is crucial not just for Europe's future but for that of the world liberal order in the face of a now markedly illiberal United States of America.

Russia's apparent inclusion of North Korean foot soldiers in its ground operations in Kursk has opened the door for Poland to invite South Koreans in as advisers. This demonstrates that the war is not just escalating but already includes non-European state actors and combatants. This is an extremely dangerous development. Europe will need to stem this quickly, but it can only do so if it is more militarily assertive and supportive of Ukraine than it has so far been in the war against Russia.

Germany has been the weakest link in the European chain and it needs to show both leadership and more resolve including by providing more military support to Ukraine and further reducing its considerable unfortunate dependency on Russia for natural gas, a mistake of Angela Merkel's and its own doing, when it agreed to build Nord Stream 2, a network of offshore natural gas pipelines which run under the Baltic Sea from Russia to Germany to provide Western Europe with natural gas, despite Putin's invasion and takeover of Crimea in 2014 and his attempt to level Aleppo in Syria to the ground in October 2016. Its construction began in 2018 and was completed in 2021 and was a strategic blunder for Europe, highlighted by many as early as 2016. France's far-right, led by Marie Le-Pen has also been sympathetic with Putin and its rise should be a cause for concern as should the rise of the far-right in Italy, the Netherlands and other parts of Europe. Orban, in Hungary, is Putin's natural ally as he is of Trump and openly admits both with pride. In this context and given his own personal views, Trump 2.0 is likely to leave the Europeans without the support they have counted on and taken for granted from the United States both through NATO and other means in the past.

Moreover, within Europe, Trump's affinity clearly not with most governing parties and their leaders but mainly with other illiberal far-right populists, many of whom are in the opposition, especially Nigel Farage in the United Kingdom. He also has publicly expressed chemistry with the leaders of far-right some governing parties such as Georgina Meloni in Italy and Viktor Orban in Hungary whose Danube Institute has recently, in 2023, finalized a cooperation agreement with the Heritage Foundation in the US, Trump 2.0's go-to think tank which has been the home for the radical Project 2025 which will be the main basis for both Trump 2.0's domestic and international policies.

The United States, Iran and the broader Middle East

A second geo-political hotbed worthy of continuous independent and critical scrutiny during Trump 2.0 are US-Iran relations and tensions and the implications for the broader Middle East conflict. This will need close and constant monitoring since what happens in this set of relations during Trump 2.0 in the next four years will determine the future of the Middle East for a long time to come.

Clearly, any US nuclear deal with Iran is now off the table for a long time, if not permanently, and Iran may well decide that, given recent events in the region and the carte blanche freedom to act that Trump has already given Netanyahu's Israel, that it needs to develop a nuclear capability as a deterrent to Israel in the region. This is likely to significantly escalate tensions both in the region and between Iran and the US and could lead to Saudi Arabia also publicly indicating its desire to also develop nuclear capability.

Mass Detentions, Incarcerations and Deportations from the United States of America

A third set of issues relate to the geo-political and geo-economic implications, especially for Mexico and Central America, but also for the whole of Latin America and other parts of the world, of the mass incarcerations in encampments and detention camps followed by mass deportations, that the President-elect has promised as a Trump 2.0 priority.

The President-elect continues to offer his voter base the false promise that if illegal immigrants are deported and new immigration tightened, jobless growth will go away, high prices which remain stubborn post-Covid and are not likely to go down will somehow magically reduce, de-industrialization in parts of the Midwest of the United States of America will also magically and immediately reverse itself, and that their livelihoods and lives will quickly and significantly improve, and Make America Great Again (MAGA).

All these fake promises defy the facts on the ground. Quite apart from the fact that the MAGA rooted voter base will inevitably be complicit in mass deportations and forced encampments on a scale that many of them cannot visualize or imagine, even many innocent, legal migrants, some of whom may well have supported Trump in the 2024 elections, now risk both incarceration and deportation.

The deportations planned do not portend well for the US economy either, much of which depends on many of the very same legal and illegal immigrants who are under threat of deportation since they provide critical labor for the economy in areas and through jobs which most white Americans cannot do or will not accept. MAGA supporters do not wish to see this even though it is staring them in the face. Nor do they appear to understand or care about the immense, geo-political, geo-economic, social and other implications of such impending transnational disruptions.

President-elect Trump's picks for Homeland Secretary and his Deputy Chief of Staff who will jointly oversee the immigration portfolio have already conveyed their chief's deportation, incarceration and other messages even more forcefully than him. They are truly scary.

If even a fraction of them become reality, which sadly is more than likely quite early in 2025, the US will also be, at the very minimum, in violation of the 1951 UN Refugee Convention and other Conventions governing and binding the mandates of both the UN Office of the High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and the UN Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR).

Mexico and Central America will be at the most direct receiving end of any forced exodus from the United States, which could be of the magnitude of anywhere between 10-25 million people, if the number crunchers are right. Together with the Wall which Trump has pledged to build across the US' border with Mexico in 2025, this portends unprecedented and multiple crises for Mexico and Central America neither of which is prepared for such an exodus.

Canada will need to be prepared for a different type of voluntary exodus, of large numbers of liberal-minded and persecuted US citizens and residents seeking to become permanent residents there. Neither Canada or any other Five Eyes (Canada, UK, Australia, and New Zealand, in addition to the US), European or any other country in the world will be ready for the numbers seeking either residence, refuge or citizenship in their jurisdictions, either.

2.0: Some Implications for India

India's Minister for External Affairs, S. Jaishankar, has been widely quoted as glibly commenting that India, unlike, much of the world welcomes Trump 2.0 and is not worried. Some Indian newspaper and other commentators have also either naively or disingenuously

highlighted Trump's criticism of atrocities against Hindus in Bangladesh just before the US elections and his nominations of known far-right anti-China hawks for the Secretary of State and Defence Secretary positions as reasons for India to cheer.

Trump 2.0 is unlikely to be good either for India's genuine national interest or even the narrower Hindutva nationalist interest of India's current ruling dispensation, notwithstanding the unsurprising, obvious and visible chemistry between Prime Minister Modi and President-elect Trump, both known, illiberal leaders who bonded in front of large crowds, both in Gujarat, India and Texas, USA, both bastions of illiberalism now, during Trump 2.0.

What both the Minister for External Relations and these commentators fail to either take adequate cognizance of or understand is that Trump is both opportunistic transactional at his best, and openly vindictive, as a matter of routine. If this is understood and acknowledged, then his comments on Hindus in Bangladesh will be understood as most likely aimed at getting the vote of certain Hindu US citizens before the November 4, US elections, which he probably succeeded in doing. That is over now and has served its purpose for him.

The two nominees in question are hawkish on China for sure. However, their pro-India stand should be understood in terms of its size which makes it the only possible bulwark against China in the Indo-Pacific region, not because there is any love for India's pluralistic democracy. It should also be recognized that their pro-India words may just be empty rhetoric. They have not committed anything to India and most likely will not do so quickly. Their relationship with India, like Trump's, will be transactional and will come at a huge cost which will be extracted from India beforehand.

More specifically, India will need to demonstrate to them that it can stand up to China militarily, economically and diplomatically, neither of which seems likely in any real, practical sense in the foreseeable future. Economically, India is increasingly dependent on China for the import of strategic and critical intermediary products, and this dependency is growing rather than reducing with its trade deficit with China having grown to USD 41.9 billion by 2024. Indeed, India's imports from China have grown at a much faster pace than from the rest of the world, despite many restrictions on Chinese businesses following the India-China Galwan border clash in 2020. Goods imports have, ironically, soared since then, surpassing a record USD 100 billion in the 2023-24 financial year.

Militarily, by some credible reports, the Chinese appear to have occupied as much as 20% of disputed territory at the China-India border during and since the Galwan incursion in 2020. Despite Ministry of External Affairs and mainstream press optimism about a recent agreement and conversation between President Xi and Prime Minister Modi on the sidelines of the BRICS Summit in Kazan, Russia, many knowledgeable commentators believe that the deal involving Beijing's troops pulling back from the Line of Control or disputed territory remains debatable in terms of what the different sides interpret it to mean. They also believe that the cost to India of China having agreed to return to their previous 2020 position remains opaque.

It should also be understood in the wider geo-political regional context, as I have elaborated in a previous article in this magazine, **"India's Act East Policy" Re-energize and Make it 21st Century Relevant!"** that India has been a non-starter in terms of providing any serious competition to China in East or Southeast Asia, given its too little, too late Look East and Act East policies.

Trump 2.0 should also be worrying for India in terms of its trade relationship with the US since he has referred to India as a major trade abuser on multiple occasions, given India's long-standing relatively high tariffs on US and other manufactured goods and many other imports.

Indian exports to the US are likely to face tariffs of between 10-20% across the board, if it does not cut its own import tariffs, making them less competitive. India will be expected to drastically reduce its tariffs in many sectors which it can only do at the risk of creating further job losses in an already dismal unemployment, underemployment, unemployability, ill-suited employment and informal unpaid work which afflicts India's workforce across the country, especially youth and women.

Tighter US immigration rules and quotas on the heels of a similar tightening in Canada from where thousands of Indians have been crossing the border into the US on foot, and restrictions on the grant of H1B visas should also be causes for concern since these are inevitable under Trump 2.0 with negative consequences both for aspiring professionals who wish to work in the US and aspiring immigrants. Illegal immigration from across both the Mexican and Canadian borders will also be all but shut down ruthlessly.

Conclusion

Is Trump 2.0 akin to an "end of history" moment for the post-World War Two UN-based global liberal world order? Is 2025 that crucial year in the 21st century when the pendulum begins to more vigorously swing not just against democratic liberalism in terms of the global world order, but also against the United States, an already declining power, and in favour of the People's Republic of China, as the ascending global power as "primus inter-pares" in a multi-polar, not unipolar world?

If one wishes to see a continuation of a liberal global liberal order, one can only hope that of these questions will have negative responses and that the global impact of Trump 2.0 will prove to be as short-lived and fallacious as Fukuyama's 1991 "end of history" prediction was about the implications of the dissolution of the USSR for the international world order.

Regardless of whether this is the case, Trump 2.0 cannot be easily dismissed as the aberration that Trump 1.0 was put aside as in November 2020 when Biden defeated him in the US election that month. And it is certain that at the global level, climate finance and action are more than likely to be amongst the biggest casualties, as are the international rule of law and adherence to UN Charter obligations by UN Member States, especially but not only the Permanent Five members of the UN Security Council. Much needed positive and constructive UN Reform will also likely be a casualty. Multilateralism, with the United Nations as its most credible and visible manifestation, will be put through a stress test, even if they are put on life support.

I am, confident, however, that both, will come out stronger as a result in the end. However, given the heavy dark clouds that now hang over the Post World War Two global liberal world order, it is too early to predict when that end will be visible or attained.