

Future of the Global Compacts, global co-operation, and international organizations

Martin Geiger, Carleton University

The Covid-19 pandemic hampers much of the ideas and goals set out in the two Global Compacts. During at least the first 1.5 years of the pandemic, states almost exclusively adopted and relied on unilateral, unparalleled and strong-impact border and related immigration and refugee policy measures, with little or no interest in coordinating with other states or the UN, and also often in contradiction to both Compacts' agreed stipulations and principles.

Meanwhile, the withdrawal of U.S. and other Western-allied troops from Afghanistan, and the chaos following the re-establishment of Taliban rule, caused strong doubt in established instruments and ideas of humanitarian intervention, protection, peacebuilding, post-conflict stabilization and democratization. While these events question what the global community had set out to achieve through the two Compacts, Russia's war on Ukraine has brought further serious challenges. The massive displacement of Ukrainians, and the departure of many dissidents and other populations from Russia and Belarus to other countries, yet again demonstrate the need for a better, more effective, and comprehensive global response to refugee movements, displacement, and other forms of migration.

This talk examines recent global challenges and their implications for the two Global Compacts and their implementation process; it also discusses the state of global cooperation in general. A key argument is that the fate of the Compacts will depend on certain states and their willingness to step forward, revive and (re-)engage in global cooperation. Further, the relevance of international organizations will likely significantly increase, and must increase further, as much will also depend on IOM, UNHCR and others, and their contributions as much needed visionaries, intermediaries, and fixers of the global cooperation system.