

Aggressive US and the Road Ahead

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Abstract

The joint attack by the US and Israel on Iran has led to serious consequences for the current international political and economic order. Some immediate consequences can be easily observed, but some of the consequences will be revealed by time. The most concerning part of the current scenario is that the US, which has been the initiator and protector of the current world order, is acting in disregard of the rules and norms which it once championed. This not only reveals the hypocrisy of the US, but it is also establishing a precedent which can lead to chaos and anarchy at the international level. The world immediately requires ways to counter the unilateral aggressiveness of the US, for the assurance of world peace and security. The world cannot be easily allowed to be exposed to the destructive consequences of the US trying to protect its position as the sole superpower, determining the world politics and economy. The current paper tries to explore the immediate and expected consequences of the US aggressiveness and the options available.

Keywords: unilateralism, aggression, hypocrisy, energy crisis, food crisis.

Introduction

The Israel-Iran war, or truly speaking US-Iran war, is not just another event. It has led to the surfacing of the major faultlines in the current world order. The US, which emerged as the saviour of the world from Axis powers during World War II, also emerged as the builder of the new world order after the war. Further, after the disintegration of the Soviet Union and decline of the communist ideology, the world looked more and more unipolar under the US leadership. But, what we are witnessing nowadays is the US trying to hold on to its position in the changing world order even if it requires utter disregard of international law and norms. The sharp rise of China and other major economic powers and their search for alternatives has threatened the supremacy of the US dollar. The current economic system is highly energy intensive and still highly dependent on non-renewable energy sources. The US is trying to get more and more hold of the major oil and gas reserves of the world to maintain the supremacy of the US dollar. "There is no precedent in modern history for what the world is witnessing today. A single leader-at the helm of the very superpower that designed and sustained the post-World War II international order-is now dismantling it with startling speed while mocking international law...Since returning to the White House, Donald Trump has cast aside longstanding norms of international law, authorised military strikes across multiple sovereign states, and weaponised economic interdependence against both allies and adversaries. His administration's actions-from the slow strangulation of Cuba through blockade-induced deprivation to a war on Iran that triggered worldwide turmoil-have put the international system into uncharted territory...Nowhere is this more evident than in his weaponisation of global interdependence. Trade, once treated as a stabilising force largely insulated from geopolitical rivalry, has been recast as an instrument of coercion. Tariffs are no longer economic tools; they are strategic weapons...By linking military protection to trade concessions and tribute payment, Trump has effectively transformed alliances into transactional arrangements- security for sale. The post-World War II idea of collective defence has been replaced with something closer to protection racketeering...Today's expansionist actions carry a different weight because they explicitly defy the legal and normative structure the US itself helped create." (Chellaney, 2026, p. 25-26)

In order to maintain its economic and political power, the US is not just disregarding international law and norms, but it is also moving out of the international organisations and other bilateral or multilateral commitments, as they are now seen as liabilities or hurdles to its economic and political supremacy. “At the same time, Trump's expansionism is hollowing out multilateralism- the connective tissue of the current international order. Just weeks before launching War on Iran, the US withdrew from 66 international organisations in one stroke, including the World Health Organisation (WHO), while imposing sanctions on International Criminal Court (ICC) officials...Trump's approach is more destabilising precisely because it represents an ‘insider’ threat. By walking away from the agreements such as Iran nuclear deal and Paris climate Accord, while openly entertaining territorial ambitions from Greenland to the Panama Canal, his administration has signalled that it no longer considers itself bound by rules the US once championed...What we are witnessing now is something unique: Trump, the arsonist of the US-designed international order, causing worldwide upheaval by pursuing an unabashedly expansionist agenda. Consequently, the “leader of the world”, as the US long described itself, has voluntarily abdicated that role to become its primary disruptor.” (Chellaney, 2026, p. 27)

In the current era of globalisation, the production and supply chains run throughout the world and even a slight disruption leads to ripples throughout the globe. This is exactly what happened as a consequence of the US-Iran war with the blockade of the Strait of Hormuz, which led to a major disruption in the global supply of oil and gas. Covid-19 also disrupted the global supply chains, but the current situation is unprecedented, as it is the result of deliberate disregard of the global economic interdependence by the US. “The global economy is more interconnected, and growth more fragile, than in previous decades. Supply chains operate on ‘just-in-time’ principles, leaving little buffer against disruption. When a critical node such as Persian Gulf is destabilised, the effects ripple rapidly across sectors and regions.” (Chellaney, 2026, p. 28)

The reckless behaviour of the US has contributed to shortage and consequent rise in price of oil and gas. Countries of the world have responded by increasing the amount of biofuel production, so that the unavailability and rising prices of oil and gas can be countered. But this so-called solution can lead to dangerous consequences as more and more agricultural land is engaged in the production of biofuels, there is more and more shortage of land for food crops production, which will lead to shortage of food crops and consequent increase in prices. This ‘food versus fuel’ scenario can lead to further widening of the gap between the rich and the poor, as it will become more and more difficult for the poor population of the world to satisfy one of the basic needs of life, when on the other hand required resources are diverted to satisfy comforts and luxuries of the well-off population of the world. This economic injustice can be highly detrimental to the political stability of the world. Though both fuel and food are required to sustain life, food is irreplaceable. May good sense prevail and this fact enlighten and guide the policy makers. “The most consequential, and least understood, dimension of the energy crises lies in its transmission to the global food system...Modern agriculture is fundamentally energy-intensive. Natural gas is the key input for nitrogen fertilisers, which underpin global crop yields. Oil powers tractors, irrigation systems and transport networks. Food, in effect, is energy transformed into calories. When energy systems are disrupted, food systems inevitably follow...The consequences will not be immediate, but they are inevitable...The first stage of this global crisis was the input shock: rising costs and declining availability of fertiliser and fuel. The second stage is set to be the production shock: lower yields as under-fertilised crops produce less. The third stage will be consumption shock: for rising food prices and the declining access, particularly for low-income populations...Exacerbating this dynamic is a policy-driven feedback loop that further tightens food supply. As oil prices rise, biofuels become more economically attractive. Governments have responded by expanding mandates for ethanol and biodiesel

in an effort to stabilise domestic energy costs. But this carries an international cost: crops that could be used for food are instead diverted into fuel production...The result is self reinforcing cycle: higher energy prices drive biofuel production, which tightens food supply, which raises food prices, which in turn exacerbates the humanitarian impact of Trump's adventurism.” (Chellaney, 2026, p. 28-29)

The reckless behaviour of the US in the present has unveiled its hypocrisy in which it tried to project itself as the protector of democracy, humanitarianism, world peace and other such high ideals, when it was just trying to promote its national interests. And now, when the mask is off, the world faces the bitter reality of world politics. It's not surprising in this context that we are witnessing a rush for armament. Especially in Europe, fear and apprehension is rising after the weakening of the collective security system led by the US. The vulnerability of countries like Cuba, Venezuela and Iran to US aggressiveness and expansionism has put the world on its toes, to the extent that a pacific country like Japan is also seriously exploring the possibility of rearmament. “Trump's reckless war triggered a chain reaction that is undermining the economic and energy security of the world at large, while also delivering a political shock through a flagrant disregard of international law...The war revealed that power, when exercised without regard for global interdependence or realities on the ground, can produce outcomes that are not only unintended but deeply destabilising for the entire world...Trump's expansionist agenda is not just breaking International norms; it is also exposing the longstanding hypocrisy of US foreign policy in consistently invoking a “rules based international order” when, in reality, the rules were always flexible and adjusted whenever American interests required it. His renewed threats to annex Greenland and his proposal to incorporate Canada as America's 51st state have further unravelled the US rationale for raging proxy war against Russia- that the Russian invasion of Ukraine violated a core international principle that borders cannot be changed by force...In terms of global impact, the Ukraine conflict pales in comparison to the US-Israeli war of aggression, which has dimmed the economic growth prospects of many countries, including India which was the world's fastest-growing major economy until Trump decided to attack Iran.” (Chellaney, 2026, p. 29-32)

Conclusion

Though it's an established reality that the world is susceptible to continuous change and uncertainty, but it is also true that human reason can be positively employed to make the world a better place to live. The realist assumption is often validated that the struggle of power is the eternal fact of international politics, but it should also be remembered that power cannot be allowed to be left untamed, as it may prove to be detrimental to international peace in security. Therefore, in the present world scenario, it becomes important to counter the aggressiveness of the US as it may destroy whatever rule-based international order the world is governed under. The horrific experiences of the first and the second world wars highlight the fact that any type of international order is better than an anarchic situation. The rise of globalisation and the consequent economic interdependence of the world have led to a more or less peaceful world, but when statements and facts of the US are threatening the era of economic interdependence, what the world can witness in the coming years is a sharp rise in nationalism and arms race. Keeping the fact in mind that the powers of the world possess nuclear capabilities, the possibility of a catastrophic World War III cannot be denied. The leaders of the world should unite to counter the aggressive and expansionist agenda of the US if we want to avoid the catastrophic consequences emerging out of the current world scenario. “In the post World War II period, few world leaders have caused as much global upheaval as Trump in such a compressed timeframe- about 14 months. In terms of the erosion of international norms, the cascade of globe-spanning consequences unleashed and the volatility of world markets, he is playing the central role in fueling global instability and undermining

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international peace and security. And he still has nearly 34 months left in his current term.” (Chellaney, 2026, p. 32)

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