

CONFERENCE, 03 JUNE 2025

European University Cyprus, 9:30-17:30



THE INTERNATIONAL SYSTEM IN A FAST-CHANGING WORLD:

Building a Community with a Shared Future for Mankind

Organised by:

- Research Institute Promitheas
- Institute of European Studies of Chinese Academy of Social Sciences
- Centre of China Studies Between the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences and European University Cyprus

Supported by:

- Embassy of the People's Republic of China in the Republic of Cyprus
- Foundation for Parliamentarism, House of Representatives
- Panteion University of Social and Political Sciences
- China-CEE Institute

INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE

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The global order is at a turning point. The decline of US-led unipolarity has given rise to multipolarity, where multiple centers of power—especially in the Global South—are reshaping international relations. This shift is opening possibilities for a new, more equitable and cooperative world order.

Amidst this transformation, China has put forward the concept of a Global Community of Shared Future, a vision that challenges traditional hegemonic models by promoting mutual respect, cooperation, and common prosperity.

To address these critical questions, the Research Institute Promitheas and the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences (CASS) co-organise an international conference in Cyprus. This event brings together scholars and experts from China, Cyprus, and Europe to analyze the transition to multipolarity, the implications for global peace, security, and economic stability, how this approach can be beneficial for southern European countries, especially Cyprus; a country that is divided since the Turkish occupation of 1974.

CONFERENCE PROGRAM

OPENING

TUESDAY, 3 June 2025

9:00 Participants Registration

WELCOME ADDRESS

9:30 Menelaos Menelaou
President of the Board of Directors of the Research Institute Promitheas

9:35 Ambassador Liu Yantao
Ambassador of the People's Republic of China to Cyprus

9:40 Dionysos Alexiou
Executive Director, Foundation of Parliamentarism of the House of Representatives of the Republic of Cyprus

INTRODUCTORY SPEECH

9:45 Theodoros Rousopoulos
President of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe
Multilateralism, the European perspective.

KEY-NOTE SPEECH

10:00 Feng Zhongping
Director of the Institute of European Studies, Chinese Academy of Social Sciences
China and Europe need to jointly uphold multilateralism.

Abstract

The world has entered a multipolar era. Multipolarization and multilateralism are two sides of the same coin. Addressing global challenges such as climate change also requires international multilateral cooperation. However, multilateralism is facing serious threats. Geopolitical conflicts, competition among major powers, and especially the “America First” policy of the Trump administration in the United States have impacted multilateralism. As the world's second and third largest economies, China and Europe need to resolutely oppose unilateralism and protectionism and jointly safeguard international multilateralism.

SESSION 1

UNDERSTANDING MULTILATERALISM and GLOBAL DEVELOPMENTS

Moderator: Katerina Neophytou (Research Institute Promitheas)

10:30 Kong Tianping
Research Fellow, Institute of European Studies, CASS
China's Role and Vision in the Changing International Order

Abstract

We are living in turbulent times, and we are witnessing dramatic changes in the international order. Bloody wars and conflicts, brutal geopolitical rivalry, rising economic nationalism have made the world more insecure and unstable. Although multipolarity is the order of the day, the road to a multipolar world is bound to be bumpy. China has always been a builder of world peace, a contributor to global development, a defender of international order and a provider of public goods. China's vision is to build a community with a shared future for mankind, to build an open, inclusive, clean, and beautiful world that enjoys lasting peace, universal security, and common prosperity.

10:45 Zenonas Tziarras
Lecturer, Department of Turkish and Middle Eastern Studies,
University of Cyprus
The Eastern Mediterranean in a Multipolar World

Abstract

The Eastern Mediterranean is emerging as a strategic crossroads in an increasingly multipolar world. This presentation explores the region's evolving geopolitical dynamics, shaped by critical events, shifting alliances, geopolitical competition, and the growing influence regional and extra-regional powers. The talk will highlight how global power fragmentation and diffusion is reshaping traditional Western dominance as well as drives the West's survival mode in the Eastern Mediterranean. The presentation aims to offer insights into the region's future trajectory and its broader implications for international order, conflict resolution, and cooperative frameworks in a complex and contested global landscape.

11:00 Stavros Mavroudeas
Professor of Political Economy at the Department of Social Policy,
Panteion University

De-globalisation, Multipolarity and the Return of the Theory of Imperialism

Abstract

The globalization hypothesis (i.e. the argument that modern capitalism has once and for all discarded the nation state and became a truly unified 'global village') was overwhelmingly popular since the 1990s. This was coupled with the expansion of a multifaceted theoretical trend that rejected previous analytical tools and purported that it ushered new ones, tailor-made to the new 'globalisation era'. Especially within Political Economy, the globalization discourse rejected the theory of Imperialism (that emphasized antagonisms and the role of the national economy) for a theory of global interconnectedness (emphasizing co-operation and deterritorialization). However, the course of events of the real world radically diverged from the stylized beliefs of the globalization discourse. Particularly, before and increasingly after the 2008 capitalist crisis, antagonisms along national lines and military conflicts proliferated. De-globalisation and multipolarity are nowadays the focal points of debates in international political economy. These developments signify the necessity for a return to the classical Marxist theory of Imperialism as the appropriate analytical framework to grasp the political economy of the international system.

11:15 DISCUSSION

INTERSESSION SPEECH

Forging Effective Participation of Countries from the Global South in International Organizations:

A Practitioner's Perspective on the Evolving New Multilateral Diplomacy' Environment

11:30 Ambassador Amr Aljowaily
Director for Civil and Diaspora Organizations, the African Union Commission,
Visiting Faculty, Multilateral Diplomacy Program, UNITAR and DIPLO Foundation

Abstract

Multilateral diplomacy practices within international organizations, and particularly the United Nations, have been evolving steadily. The impact has not necessarily been in favor of developing countries, and their negotiating coalitions from the Global South, who were more at ease with the traditional, mainly intergovernmental, form of multilateral diplomacy. This evolution necessitates an adjustment, if not a more transformative redefinition, of the promotion and protection of the

interests of the Global South in such forums through setting concrete goals that would consider the change in the nature and activities of international organizations. As countries of the Global South redesign their interests to adjust to the evolving practices of international organizations within the 'new multilateral diplomacy', they need to develop a comprehensive, yet feasible and practical, strategy that trickles down from the stage of general objectives to the level of specific goals, which in turn should be translated into concrete tangible proposals, including specific activities. For the strategy to be effective and comprehensive, would need to be developed at four levels and components: conceptual and doctrinal framework, substantive and contentive vision, as well programmatic activities and administrative/institutional structures, all within an overall coherent and interlinked framework.

Keywords: Global South, Multilateral Diplomacy, International Organizations, Multistakeholderism, Strategic Goals.

SESSION 2

THE POLITICAL LANDSCAPE IN A MULTILATERAL WORLD: CHALLENGES & OPPORTUNITIES

Moderator: Prof. Kostas Gouliamos (Deputy President of the BoD of the Research Institute Promitheas)

11:50 He Zhigao
Director and Associate Research Fellow of Department of European Politics,
Institute of European Studies, CASS
China and the EU in a Multipolar world

Abstract

Multipolarity is the key words for the current international society, which is not only embodied in the transform of material power, but also refers to the evolution of normative structure. As two vital forces in international society, especially embedded in the US-China-Europe trilateral relationship, the EU and China concentrated on maintaining the stability of the global economic system, upheld multilateralism, and delivered public goods in the interest of the international community. Amid the changing global power structure and norms pattern, co-evolution might be the backbone of China-EU relationship.

12:05 Evangelos Kalpadakis
Career diplomat of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Hellenic Republic.
Coordinator of the Alexis Tsipras Institute

The EU as a Force of Peace and Stability in the new Multipolar World

Abstract

In an increasingly multipolar world of multiple crises, it is more important than ever for the EU to become not just a force of deterrence, but also a force of peace and stability in terms of strengthening multilateral diplomacy and conflict resolution on the basis of international law, in its own neighborhood. This means learning from past mistakes of western military initiatives, building institutional capacities, strengthening its strategic autonomy in relation to the US while retaining transatlantic dialogue, as well as developing a new strategic perspective in relation to Ukraine, the Eastern Mediterranean and the Western Balkans.

12:20 Sylvie Matelly
Director of the Institut Jacques Delors

Leveraging a Transforming Global Order: The EU's Strategic Opportunity in a Multipolar Era

Abstract

In a rapidly evolving geopolitical landscape, Europe's economy faces significant challenges, as highlighted by recent Draghi-Letta reports. Nonetheless, the European Union can seize this moment to boost growth through robust multilateral frameworks and targeted reforms. By reaffirming its commitment to rule-based governance and exploring balanced engagement strategies with China, the EU can foster new trade, investment, and technological partnerships. This presentation will highlight how strategic autonomy and principled leadership can enable Europe to overcome economic headwinds, strengthen its global standing, and actively shape an inclusive, cooperative future in our interconnected world.

12:40 DISCUSSION

13:00 LUNCH BREAK (light meal will be served)

SESSION 3

GLOBAL ECONOMIC GOVERNANCE AND SUSTAINABLE GLOBAL DEVELOPMENT IN AN ERA OF GEOPOLITICAL TRANSFORMATION

Moderator: Han Meng (Deputy Director of department of Central and Eastern Europe,
Institute of European Studies, Chinese Academy of Social Sciences)

14:00 Tian Huifang

Senior Research Fellow, Research Director of China-CEE institute, CASS
Multilateralism and global economic recovery

Abstract

The global economy stands at a new crossroads with both opportunities and challenges. The rapid development of technologies such as artificial intelligence, automation, and green energy is reshaping the global economic landscape. In 2025, these technologies may enter the stage of large-scale commercialization and become an important driving force for economic growth. In addition, the trend of localization and diversification of supply chains is changing the traditional international trade model, and regional economic integration (such as RCEP and CPTPP) may promote further trade growth. However, issues such as the Russia-Ukraine conflict, China-US relations, climate change and energy transformation may continue to affect the global supply chain, energy prices, and trade patterns. In particular, Trump's tariff policies seem to trigger economic recession and market turmoil, and the global South has to bear a heavy burden. In such a complex international situation, only international cooperation and development innovation can resist the impact of protectionism, enhance the economic resilience of developing economies, and achieve stable growth of the global economy.

14:15 Charis Polycarpou
Economist, Member of the Political Bureau, Head of Economic Studies
Bureau of AKEL
*Cyprus and the European Union at the crossroads
of the international economic order*

Abstract

The Trump administration's imposition of increased tariffs has signalled a new aggressive shift in US economic and trade policy—a decision that affects not only economic relations but goes beyond. Cyprus, as a member of the European Union, is facing a set of challenges. How will Cyprus and the EU react? What are the main elements of a possible reaction/negotiation and will this reaction move to other areas than trade policy? What are the benefits of a unilateral versus multilateral approach for Cyprus?

14:30 Vanda Sequeira
Ambassador of Portugal to Cyprus
*Portugal and Cyprus in a Changing Global Economic Order:
Small States, Shared Ambitions*

Abstract

As the global economic order transitions toward multipolarity, small states like Portugal and Cyprus face both constraints and opportunities. Often overlooked in global governance debates, these countries have nonetheless demonstrated that principled multilateralism, regional cooperation, and strategic diplomacy can amplify their influence. This intervention reflects on Portugal's approach—rooted in its global historical ties and active engagement in multilateral fora—and draws parallels with Cyprus's efforts to assert its agency at the crossroads of Europe and the Eastern Mediterranean. It will explore how both countries contribute to more inclusive, sustainable, and cooperative forms of global economic governance, by fostering dialogue across regions, institutions, and political traditions. In doing so, the presentation highlights the value of small-state perspectives in shaping meaningful responses to today's complex global challenges.

14:45 DISCUSSION

15:00 COFFEE BREAK

SESSION 4

DIALOGUE AMONG CIVILIZATIONS FROM THE PERSPECTIVE OF MULTILATERALISM

Moderator: Sotiroula Yiasemi (PhD, Translation Studies, Project Manager at the Research Institute Promitheas)

15:15 Zhang Jinling
Director and Research Fellow of Department of European Society and Culture, Institute of European Studies, Chinese Academy of Social Sciences
The Global Civilization Initiative and the building of an international order based on multi-polarity

Abstract

Building an international order based on multi-polarity is conducive for each member of the international Community to express fully its own position and claims, to facilitate in-depth dialogue and mutual learning among different countries, and to maintain the world peace and prosperity. The “Global Civilization Initiative” proposed by President Xi Jinping in 2023 calls for jointly advocating the respect for the diversity of civilizations, the promotion of the common values of humanity, the importance of inheritance and innovation of civilizations, and the international people-to-people exchanges and cooperation, which puts forward a strong theoretical framework and an operational action plan for the development of the international order on the basis of multipolarity.

15:30 David Pestieau
Political Director of the Workers’ Party of Belgium (PVDA-PTB) and Head of PVDA-PTB Studies Department
Bolstering multilateralism for human progress and cultural equality: Cyprus’ and China’s engagement

Abstract

We analyze a “tilting” world order, marked by the rise of Asia and the decline of United States and European Union, with technological shifts creating new resource battles and the threat of a new cold war. We address the danger of the significant rearmament program in Germany and Europe—benefiting arms producers and diverting funds from public services—driven by war hysteria. We explore the opportunities for broad mobilizations of the working class and peoples around the world, in both the Global North and the Global South, focused on peace and social justice, with the perspective of a socialist future.

- 15:45** Prof. Kostas Gouliamos
Member of BoD Promitheas, Director of EUC Center of Chinese Studies
*Bolstering multilateralism for human progress and cultural equality:
Cyprus' and China's engagement*

Abstract

In a complex world of both extended crisis and perpetual turbulence, the presentation aims to explore and discuss the Chinese “Global Civilisation Initiative” as a cultural engagement to build and strengthen (I) a multipolar world, (II) a global community of common destiny and (III) mutual learning types to advance the progress of human civilisations.

- 16:00** DISCUSSION

INTERSESSION SPEECH Prospects for the world economy and geopolitics in the year 2050

Introducing Prof. Sachs | Prof. Stavros Malas (Professor of Genetics and Development, President of The Cyprus Institute)

- 16:15** Prof. Jeffrey Sachs
Director of the Center for Sustainable Development at Columbia University,
Economics professor, bestselling author, innovative educator and global leader
in sustainable development.

Abstract

The world economy is rapidly evolving under the dynamics of economic convergence, climate change, and technological advance. I will discuss the prospects for the world in 2050 based on plausible dynamics of economic and geopolitical change. We will live in a multipolar and multilateral world, not one dominated by the US, or China, or any other single region.

CLOSING SESSION Conclusive Remarks

- 16:45** Feng Zhongping
Director of the Institute of European Studies, Chinese Academy of Social Sciences
- 17:00** Menelaos Menelaou
President of the Bod of the Research Institute Promitheas

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03 June 2025

European University Cyprus
Old Building
Room 116

OPENING SESSION:

Tuesday 3 June 9:30

Working language:
English

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