# International Security in the Post-Covid World

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**Abstract:**

The spread of the Coronavirus and its biological, political, economic, and global concerns, which have affected massive interactions and exchanges, indicate that threats to public health are part of the security dilemma; And the need for an accurate understanding of it today goes beyond academic debates and scientific books and articles. These threats, whether artificial or in the form of biological weapons, as well as random and surprising, can give new formulation to collective life, decisions and policies. The pervasiveness of the Corona crisis in the world, in addition to theories of international relations, has also posed new challenges to the security of the international system. On the one hand, part of the knowledge in the field of public health has reached the field of humanities and specifically international relations; On the other hand, the debate within the paradigm of the field over the concept of international security, globalization, and its future has reached its peak. The question of international relations thinkers about what the post-Covid world order will be like and what kind of security it requires different answers depending on their theoretical approach. It seems that the current state of the world has led to different views and different answers due to the uncertainty of conditions, effects, approaches, and perspectives. This difference of opinion is not only due to differences in the way they look at human nature and the nature of society and their approach to international politics and security; Rather, the issue is a bit more ambiguous, and the coordinates of the current situation and its paradoxical nature provide evidence to various schools of thought with different views on international relations and the system that governs it. This article tries to examine international security in the post-corona world.

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## Introduction

The outbreak of coronary heart disease was a widespread and unprecedented crisis in the world. As UN Secretary-General Anthony Guterres puts it; The corona outbreak is the biggest crisis since World War II. As a rule, a crisis of this magnitude will have a huge impact on the social, political, and economic structure of societies and even the structures of the international system. Corona has affected international order. Signs of it are already being seen in the world. In some European countries involved in the corona, such as Italy and Spain, nationalist ideas have been revived. The people of these countries strongly criticize the performance of the European Union and appreciate the support of a country like Russia. This trend has even affected the concepts and views of national and global security, and many believe that approaches to security should be reconsidered. Especially that countries today are forced to face and respond to threats and challenges that have previously had security in the literature and have no place.

Non-traditional security threats pose serious threats and challenges to the development, survival, and well-being of human beings and governments. Accordingly, non-traditional security threats are inherently civilian and transnational, spreading rapidly as a result of globalization and the communications revolution. In this sense, non-traditional threats are more dangerous than traditional threats because in the first place these threats threaten government institutions and civilian populations, and their origin is non-governmental human beings and natural factors. Thus, threats may be the result of specific actions of individuals and social groups rather than government actions; Accordingly, the occurrence of non-traditional threats is unpredictable, and the increase and mobility, and expansion of people's activities intensify the intensity of their rapid spread and proliferation in the world. Also, the indirect effects of these things can cause huge economic losses to the region or the whole world.

One of the main areas of these non-traditional and new threats is environmental threats. An increasing number of non-traditional environmental threats such as the following are among the developments and threats of the past two decades. Drug trafficking, biological terrorism, climate change, transboundary environmental erosion, resource depletion, natural disasters, infectious diseases, uncontrolled migration, food shortages, intensified storms and floods resulting from human dynamics, and global warming are among these threats. These threats have arisen at various national and international levels and have never existed in human history; In such a way that they have had worrying consequences for specific countries or the international community (Kaviani Rad, 2011: p. 89).

Of course, in the context of the current situation in the contemporary world, depending on the individuals and groups, what is their theoretical approach, we will face different answers. From a realistic point of view, the world faces a serious challenge to the global governance of Corona and the international order. The difficulty of overcoming this crisis for different countries, the increase in the number of helpless and weakened governments, the deterioration of Sino-US relations, the weakening of the European integration process, the improvement of the global health situation, and the weakening of the desire for globalization; And ultimately the formation of all kinds of insecurity will be the effects of the Covid crisis. On the other hand, the globalization of this crisis has

shown that in times of health and emergency crises, transparency between governments and respect for all countries' international health laws is essential. We live in a converging world and rely on each other. Therefore, cooperation with each other, especially in the field of security, is a necessity, and isolation and unilateral decisions will fail in the long run. This difference of view will be based on the perception of Copenhagen security theory in the context of a broader view of our security.

## Theoretical Framework
## Copenhagen School and Extended Security in the International System

So far, various theories have been proposed to describe, explain and predict security issues; By presenting different assumptions and study frameworks on national security and international security, these theories have created new horizons in the field of security studies (Yazdan Fam, 2007: p. 725). The Copenhagen School is one of the theories of security in the contemporary period and the end of the Cold War; Which has tried to create new concepts and perspectives in the field of security studies that are significantly different from the traditional approach to security studies during the Cold War (Koozegar Kaleji, & et. Al. 2010: p. 34). Following the emergence of new security threats, the founders of the Copenhagen School of Security, including Barry Buzan, Elie Weaver, and Dovild, criticized what they called a simplistic conception of the concept of security; Contrary to the realists 'belief in security through the acquisition of power or the idealists' belief in security through peace; Now it is necessary to present a middle ground that includes both the concept of power and peace as the best definition for the concept of security (Buzan et al., 2007).

The Copenhagen School, unlike the traditionalists, who limit security to a particular sector; broadly argues that security is a special type of politics that can be divided into different sections (Koozegar Kaleji, & et. Al. 2010: p. 74). So, the first task of the school is to take the issue of security out of the narrow circle of traditionalist interpretations. Of course, the Copenhagen School's broad-mindedness does not mean that it seeks to completely abandon traditionalist arguments, but it does cover the traditionalist view by offering a way of leaving the security agenda open to a variety of threats. It should be noted that leaving the security agenda open to all kinds of threats does not mean inconsistency in the views of school experts; Rather, the school tries not to consider any threat or vulnerability as a security issue and to give the necessary coherence to the concept of security by carefully examining the issues and distinguishing between political and security issues. In other words, the school considers only issues, threats, and vulnerabilities as security, which is an existential threat to one the security issues in various sectors. To this end, and to identify existential threats, the school divides security into five sections: military, political, social, economic, and environmental. However, it does not consider each section as a separate unit without any connection with other sections, and this section is done only to manage the acceptance of the involved variables (Buzan et al., 2007: p. 34).

The Copenhagen School is the only approach based solely on security studies. It is also one of the first approaches to establishing an independent position for security studies, separating security studies from strategic studies and placing them under security studies. In general, five hypotheses can be identified as the main assumptions of the Copenhagen school; Extensive security instead

of tight security, development of levels of security analysis, security, the interaction of objective and subjective attitudes, and finally quantitative and qualitative methodology (Abdollah Khani, 2004: p. 133).

Accordingly, Buzan first questioned narrow security and extended one-dimensional security to five militaries, political, economic, social, and environmental sectors (Buzan et al., 2007). Nevertheless, the Copenhagen School considers military security to be one of the most important dimensions of security and believes that military security has a great impact on the three dimensions of government, namely its ideas, institutions, and material bases. And it can disrupt or even destroy the institutions and material bases of the state and suppress or destroy the thinking of the state. Another very important issue in this school is the concept of security (securitization). Building security is a process that puts some issues in the context of security, where it has not been before. Buzan and colleagues for this purpose draw a three-point spectrum including the following security issues; Nonpolitical issues (issues that the government does not deal with), political issues (which lead to decision making and allocation of resources by the government). In this area, two conditions for being a security issue that is; Security discourse - Maker and breaking existing rules and procedures.

Security discourses include efficient security actors and actors. Security actors are individuals or groups who secure issues by stating that something is existentially threatened. Efficient actors only influence security decisions. Security actors usually include leaders, governments, parties, and the like, and are as efficient actors as a security think tank. Of course, it should be noted that in terms of representatives of this school, the factor of building security is to avoid placing all types

of spoken action as a security phenomenon. Therefore, it should be security phenomena and issues that are possible to put within the framework of the concept of existential threats and, in other words, has the merits of the assignment to such a concept. (Abdollah Khani, 2006: p. 496)

## Post-corona world, closed or convergent world

The ability of Covid-19 to spread rapidly from person to person and thus infect all countries of the world in a short period reminds us of one thing; This crisis is global and no country can exempt itself from its consequences. Such a virus could have spread far less powerfully in the past centuries, and it certainly would not have become such a crisis for the whole world.

The present age has provided the conditions for the widespread prevalence of Covid-19 due to the intertwined relations of countries, supply chains, the expansion of tourism, and the like. The connection of global cohesion can lead to the situation that by overtaking extremist right-wing ideologies in the world, world relations will take a big step backward and on the opposite side of globalization; So that the rapid spread of this virus to different parts of the world will be a burden on globalization. (Niblett, 2020)

Another concern that has occupied the minds of various thinkers in the face of the Corona crisis is the form that governments will take in the post-Corona world. Many governments have resorted to measures in response to the Corona crisis that previously did not even think they would be accepted by the community, let alone demanded by the community. There are curfews, closures of public facilities, widespread quarantine, and many more. Concerned about the lack of return of some governments to its extent and its

former has led to describing the post-corona world as less open, less freed, and less flourishing. (Walt, 2020)

The world will enter a new era with a year of the pandemic. Many political systems may collapse, including systems that are less consistent with today's conditions, and those that feel more powerful than others, such as the United States. Despite the slogans that tramped, like the "first of America" and that everything belongs to the United States, the poles of wealth and power will probably disappear. It may even face new rebellions in the event of a continuation of the Corona crisis, and these riots may create new political systems, and the ruling political systems of today's world will change and put their place in new forms of power. This can even transform the concept of security in the international system.

The strengthening of nationalism, the inhibition of globalization, and some of the concepts within the framework of international relations will be disrupted, and power tools such as land, population, underground resources, wealth, and technology may change. From now on, the disease gives Neda to continue to make these changes better day by day. By examining the situation of Europe, we see a kind of technology with all technology, wealth, and resorts that have been present in modern civilization and today's civilization. Shortly, this situation can continue in the United States more intensely (Bigdeli, 2020: p. 65).

Of course, in front of another group of experts, they believe in other experts and believe that the world will be more consistent after the Covid -19. The need for political and security cooperation in the management of epidemic crises, natural disasters, and climate change is the driving force behind this interconnectedness. This was evident in the

last matches of Group 7 and Group 20. Member states called for more political cooperation to combat the corona epidemic (Shamara, 2020).

The disease seems to be fueling a kind of nationalism in the Western camp in the short term. But as they go through this step, they will revise their macro strategies and conclude that they must revive the West International System; in the long run, these governments, especially Western governments, come out of their lacquer and form a new internationalism that is, incidentally, pragmatic and supportive. Before the Second World War in the economic crisis, which occurred in the 1930s and 40s, Roosevelt and European countries performed such a practice (Sharifi, 2020: p. 45).

Thus, it can be concluded that the corona weakens the bipolar view of the world and poses challenges to international security. People and governments come to the conclusion that the corona was a great experiment and that globalization was once effective in the economy and easily pushed capital across borders; Now these funds are left in different countries and behind the borders, and in times of crisis, it could not reach the people and help their health. As a result, the question arises do regional and global convergences help effectively in times of danger? On the other hand, it is possible to strengthen the universal view of world issues, including security, that is, to distance ourselves from polarization and regional classifications (Faraji Rad, 2020: p. 5).

Of course, in contrast to the view that believes in the spread of nationalism and the weakening of the process of globalization and regionalism. Another group believes that the corona will strengthen the global view of security and international institutions. The group says: "At a time when criticism of in-

ternational institutions, especially the United Nations, has become a pervasive trend and there is a kind of distrust of this organization and its affiliated institutions; The Coronavirus has demonstrated the benefits of forming the United Nations and its affiliated institutions, proving that multilateralism in the world is still essential to maintaining international security and peace.

Within the framework of international institutional order, international states have reciprocal rights and responsibilities. In a crisis such as the emergence of the corona phenomenon, which is not limited to a specific geography and has particularly affected one of the world's largest economies, the need for cooperation, multilateralism, and the strengthening of regional and international cooperation is felt more and more. Reciprocal rights and responsibilities in this crisis were also seen between the World Health Organization and China, between the Health Organization and other countries, and between China and other countries.

In the meantime, it must be acknowledged that the World Health Organization has played one of the most important roles in counteracting the corona phenomenon. The organization has an important responsibility in internationally controlling infectious diseases by declaring a public health emergency of international importance (PHEIC) and subsequently announcing specific travel restrictions. Although many countries have reportedly imposed restrictions on travelers from China before the World Health Organization (WHO) announced the coronavirus, the announcement would give the issue a global and formal dimension.

However, the use of these tools will be fruitless except with a mindset that dictates the need for international cooperation and presence in the global information network,

and it does not matter if it is China, the United States, or any other actor who does not accept this; And it is essential that the view that actors are committed to their international obligations be clear (Akbari, 2020: p. 76).

Under these circumstances, a movement may emerge from transnational and national, that is, each region has a state for itself, and they can control the situation, depending on what Corona will look like. The process that has taken place in the globalization has shaped infrastructure, and so the world is not ready to return to the eighteenth century, as public areas, individualism, individual freedoms, and so on.

Human beings are no longer ready for this return because individualism and networks have grown so much and in general there is no readiness to return to the conditions in which national governments can be strict in the social and individualistic spheres (Najafzadeh, 2020: p. 4).

Based on the idea that there is a strong interest in internationalists, they call on the world to recognize the fact that the "nation-state" and the principle of national sovereignty are incapable of solving global problems and ensuring international security. The crises are not limited to national borders, and in our day, coughing on one side of the world can load catastrophic on the other side of the world.

These types of thinkers are also available for documenting their theories, indicating that no country can solve the crises alone and establish complete security. Trumpism now faces many problems at the outset, and economic and commercial neoliberalism, by creating catastrophic dangers to the environment and the planet, has shown that it cannot cure pain and solve human problems. Nuclear weapons and long-range missiles also have no effective power, and in the face of an in-

visible demon called Corona, their only art is to occupy weapons depots and tanks without having any use in their pockets.

This view hopes that global multilateralism will eventually overcome unilateralism, narrowing the propositions of international cooperation and coexistence to extremist nationalism; finally, this crisis will lead to the application of patriarchal methods in governing rather than to greater authoritarianism. They are optimistic that the Corona crisis will serve as a serious warning to the world to seek a coordinated response to more complex problems and prevent greater catastrophes (Sanaei, 2020: p. 85).

Considering the totality of views on the effects of the Corona crisis on the future of the international political system; The number of theories that predict the change of the international system and the increase of national self-reliance and the strengthening of nationalism in the face of globalization trends seems to be increasing. According to this view, even in the economic field, the desire to make small economic cartels and chain companies smaller are in the form of theories being proposed.

**Coronavirus, China-US dispute, and international security**

One of the major effects of the coronavirus is the internationally competitive competition that exists today between different political systems and beyond between opposing political ideologies over how to manage and emerge victorious from this crisis. Which model of government and governance model can best manage Corona is a very important issue and plays a decisive role in the post-corona international system? Noam Chomsky believes that after the Coronavirus, we will see two types of political order and governance model; One is the strengthening of au-

thoritarian and extremist authoritarian states, and the other is real democratic states that are accountable to the people (not necessarily liberal democracies) whose legitimacy and popular responsibility will increase.

Another model would be a return to restored welfare states. Because neoliberal governments have been widely criticized for failing to intervene in public health care - for the economic inefficiency and profitability of capitalism - which has clearly shown its negative effects and inefficiency in the Corona crisis. We see a clear example of welfare states today in the Scandinavian countries. Hence, some argue that the neoliberal order should be redefined and replaced by a reformed form of the welfare state. That is, responsible governments should come to power that has a greater role in the public arena, especially for health services and public health and welfare (Dehghani Firoozabadi, 2020: p. 123).

This period, like the post-World War II period, will push US foreign policy into a greater engagement. However, the ambiguity in US global leadership will play a decisive role in the debate over an isolated America or an interactive America in the post-Corona era. The Sino-US geopolitical rivalry will certainly intensify. Throughout his presidency, Trump emphasized the issue of tariffs on China, which led to a trade war. In January 2020, China and the United States agreed to reduce the trade war, but Covid-19 renewed the Sino-US strategic rivalry. China has an authoritarian regime.

In the coming years, China's damaged international image in the world after Quaid-19 will not be easily restored. Covid-19 will shake the confidence of the United States and the Western world, especially the G7 industrialized nations. To reduce its over-reliance on China, the virus will drive them to supply

chain management, leading them to develop countries with manufacturing capabilities in Asia, Africa, and Latin America instead of China. In this regard, India, as the only country comparable to China in terms of production, is vital. Modi's government is focused on the manufacturing sector with "Made in India" plans. (Sharma, 2020) If the Chinese themselves were the source of the disease, they were able to free themselves very soon. India has also been very successful in its policies. Thus, new powers that are on the verge of becoming new powers may dominate today and the forms of civilization may change. The religious geography of the world may even be affected by shifts in power and wealth and these geographical changes. (Bigdeli, 2020: p. 67)

In this situation, the United States will have two options to respond to this situation. First, they have to compete fiercely with China to maintain their hegemony in the international system. The competition is called "zero-sum competition". Second, to conclude that without entering into such competition, they will focus on their domestic prosperity and growth, in which case they will have to enter into some form of cooperation with China and accept its power. The second view seems wiser, but it does not necessarily mean that Americans will take this approach.

"History will be written by the conquerors of Covid's disease" and there is intense competition over which government, with what nature and form of government, is more efficient and stronger; the result is that authoritarian and populist states are stronger or, conversely, democratic states will remain stronger. The Chinese are trying to show that the kind of government they have is much more effective in dealing with crises. We seem to be witnessing a narrative war in which the Americans tried to show that the confronta-

tion between South Korea, Taiwan, and Japan against the Quaid 19 was stronger and more efficient and that they considered it a successful model; And many accusations are made against China, including secrecy and deception of the world (Sharifi, 2020: p. 4).

## The Fate of Mass Security in Europe

There are three different and conflicting views on what and how the Corona crisis will affect the fate and future of the European Union; A pessimistic and radical view that believes in the collapse of Europe. Those who believe in this approach believe that the Corona crisis by strengthening the authority and powers of the national government will revive political nationalism and economic mercantilism in Europe. As a result, this crisis and how it will be managed will accelerate the process of leaving the EU, which began with the election; And every political unit on this continent seeks its security in strengthening its national security. They argue that signs of this situation are now evident in Europe. Today, Italian officials are talking about the possibility of considering the country's exit plan from the European Union.

In contrast, there is an optimistic view that believes; The Corona crisis will not only lead to the collapse of the EU but, on the contrary, will strengthen European convergence and cooperation within the EU. Especially now that the security of the countries of this union in its various dimensions requires cooperation. Since the EU does not have the necessary institutions and mechanisms for the collective management of the corona, such mechanisms will be created after the corona. This crisis will lead to the transfer of more powers in the field of health security by national governments to EU institutions, which will strengthen and deepen European transnationalism. Accordingly, Europeanists such as

Habermas emphasize the need to avoid nationalism and unilateralism in dealing with this crisis and its collective management. Habermas, for example, recommends the establishment of a joint corona fund in the European Union.

The third view in the form of realism is that the EU will see a kind of divergence. Vertical and horizontal convergence in Europe will weaken and the north-south divide in the EU will intensify. Because the southerners are now most affected by the coronavirus and have not received any help from the northerners. It will also deepen the East-West divide that exists in the Union, old and new Europe. Eastern countries will remain in this union because they have more benefits from joining the union; In contrast, in Western European countries, there will be a greater tendency to diverge. It is also envisaged that in the process of divergence, some of the powers and powers of national sovereignty that the members had delegated to the union would be taken back.

As a result, Europe will experience a kind of spill-back. Also, in the continuation of compensating for the democratic deficit in the European Union, it seems that the role of the people in determining their destiny in the form of holding referendums in the realization of divergences will increase (Dehghani Firoozabadi, 2020: p. 125).

However, the developments could harm other EU issues, including the free movement of people and the provision of services and goods and investment in the EU, and further, undermine the existing cohesion in the EU. The European Union has not yet adopted a specific policy to deal with the effects of the virus on the economies of its member states, and this has weakened the EU's public opinion. And the continuation of this issue can intensify the centrifugal force in this union,

especially in weaker circles such as Italy. Perhaps this is why the President of France, Emmanuel Macron, in an interview with the Italian media, declared that Paris stands by Rome, and tried to defend the unity between the European countries; "If we do not show solidarity, Italy, Spain and others will tell their European partners where you were when we were on the front lines," he said. I do not want this selfish and divided Europe.

If this crisis persists and the European Union does not take measures to deal with it and help the countries involved; he may persuade some leaders of EU member states to leave the union. Developments and the way the EU have acted in this regard will make the parties that oppose the EU, including the right-wing parties, more popular and influential in the public opinion of some European countries in the future. (Izadi, 2020: p. 87). If these developments take shape, each of the political units in the European Union may have a new look at their national security; And the rise of the Green Continent's insecure movements is not far-fetched.

## Conclusion

The crisis, even in the form of soft security threats such as Covid-19, has affected major markets, including global markets, including financial and energy markets, as a result of the adoption and implementation of precautionary measures to prevent the spread of that major economic activity. The initial reaction to the outbreak of the Coronavirus, followed by the closure of businesses and economic activities, was one of the effects that affected global economic, financial, and even human security; And the leaders of the countries have to take it seriously and effective measures to deal with this crisis. Countries that have so far been firmly perceived as playing a significant role in enhancing global security

have been unable to provide comprehensive security after the Corona crisis; this shows that the view of international security and its roles and functions has undergone a conceptual transformation.

The differences between the analysis of international relations experts and theorists on the global impact of Corona, especially in the field of security, indicate a lack of common understanding of new threats in the field of security, which has led to a kind of fragmentation in theoretical fields. Meanwhile, the efforts of countries to ensure their security traditionally are fading. Including the increase in military power and the development of nuclear arsenals, it has not had a beneficial effect on the development of the comprehensive security of their owners, but in the face of a seemingly insignificant virus, it has shown the fragility of the armed forces more than ever.

For the first time, the United States and Europe are facing a severe test that threatens their image since World War II. Perhaps due to the inability, fragmentation, and inability to reach a common and agreed solution, there is no clear sign of these other powers. This is while other countries such as China have entered the scene in the face of superpowers, and this issue can become a security challenge for the post-corona world.

The world in which we live is always undergoing very serious changes and changes that cannot be ignored. Although the globalization of communications is vital to humanity and has brought many collective benefits, it makes all countries vulnerable to threats (including pandemic diseases) and transcends national borders. Once upon a time, only important national threats and borders were under the control of governments, but in today's era, the world has entered an unknown era of threats that cannot be accurately predicted, so these transformations will shake the security of the future world. Accordingly, with a broad view of the issue of security, achieving comprehensive security in addition to global interaction, attention to various categories of security in the post-corona world has become more necessary than ever.

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