Group of Twenty (G20)

Advanced Committee

Chair: John Ramos III

Introduction

The G20 is the primary forum for international economic cooperation among the world's leading developed and emerging economies. It was formed in 1999, amidst the Asian Financial Crisis, to coordinate macroeconomic policy and financial responses among member states.

US Military Bases and State Terrorism

Up to this point in history, around 1,000 military bases dispersed across more than 80 nations have been built and run by several different branches of the American militia. The primary issue that arises in this scenario is that their foreign bases are prone to attacks by the US itself when sending soldiers overseas to engage in warfare. Innocent civilians in neighboring towns and cities are often displaced or killed by these attacks. This has led to a negative public reception of the country's method to keep peace in line. Naturally, the US wishes to absolutely minimize the quantity of casualties while also maintaining close proximities to the eye of whichever conflict they are taking part in. The United States maintains a network of military bases globally, which serve various purposes such as strategic positioning, regional security, training, and logistical support for military operations. These bases are often located in allied countries or regions where the US has geopolitical interests. State terrorism generally refers to

acts of violence, coercion, or intimidation carried out by a state or its agents against civilians or non-combatants for political purposes. These acts can include extrajudicial killings, torture, forced disappearances, and other human rights violations.

History/Case Study: Violation of US Foreign Policy

Throughout the Cold War, the US and its Western allies fought against the Soviet Union and its Eastern allies for over four decades. During that time, the US set up several client states overseas, which are similar to the military bases we see today. By the start of the 1970s, the sponsoring and deployment of state terrorism surpassed even that of the Soviet Union, their main enemy throughout the war. The American government justified their actions to contain the threat of communism on a global scale. However, many historians and authors stated that the government intended to buttress the broader use of neoliberalism throughout much of the Southern Hemisphere. Countries in this region, such as South Africa, Australia, and Argentina, have received upwards of 50 million USD in security, improving relations between those countries. However, this is a direct violation of Foreign Policy, which states many principles and ideas about how the US aims to assist in creating a more safe, prosperous, and democratic world.

The United States provided money, material, and operational support to the Contras. On November 1, the Director of the CIA, William Casey, met with the Chief of Staff of the Argentine military; the two purportedly agreed that Argentina would oversee the Contras and the United States would provide money and weapons. In late 1981, President Reagan authorized the U.S. to support the contras by giving them “money, arms, and equipment” through Argentina,

with the potential for "the occasional direct involvement of the United States in supporting individual operations." As a result, according to Kornbluh, "the frequency and destructiveness of the Contras' attacks increased rapidly." So, too, did their numbers. Toward the end of 1982, the Contras (who operated out of Honduras) were conducting attacks deep inside Nicaragua. Through this, the U.S. violated international law by supporting the contras in their rebellion against the Nicaraguan government and by mining Nicaragua's harbors.

Current Situation: Latest Developments

US military bases remain active in various conflict zones, such as the Middle East and Africa, where they support counterterrorism efforts, provide logistical support, and conduct training missions. The firepower from these warships is a deterrent, but it is also to help protect the 45,000 U.S. service members and contractors that are stationed in the Middle East. Most are in Kuwait, but thousands are in Qatar, Bahrain, Iraq, Saudi Arabia, and the United Arab Emirates. The Pentagon has also deployed 1,200 troops to the Middle East, though not to Israel, since the war began. On Oct. 26, the Defense Department announced it was sending 900 troops, primarily for air defense, to the region. Another 300 troops, mostly ordnance disposal, communications, and other support, were announced on Oct. 31.

U.S. military operations as part of the Global War on Terrorism (GWOT) began on October 7, 2001, and continue today. The military component is just one aspect of this endeavor, which also involves diplomatic, intelligence, law enforcement, and financial efforts to defeat terrorists around the world. There are approximately 19,000 U.S. military personnel in and around

Afghanistan. Troops currently in Afghanistan represent the sixth major troop rotation in Operation Enduring Freedom (OEF) since the United States became involved in the fall of 2001. U.S. and Afghan forces continued offensive operations against insurgents after Afghan parliamentary elections, and on September 23, coalition ground forces, backed by helicopter gunships, killed 14 suspected Taliban fighters in Uruzgan province. On September 24, a U.S. Army CH-47 Chinook helicopter was shot down by insurgents in southern Zabul province, killing all five crew members. On October 8, a U.S. soldier patrolling in Helmand province stepped on a land mine and became the 200th U.S. service member killed in Afghanistan since the U.S. invaded in 2001. 27 On October 11, in Helmand province, insurgents ambushed a convoy of 150 Afghan police officers, killing 19 officers. There are indications that the United States may seek permanent military bases in Afghanistan. The United States is upgrading military facilities in Afghanistan—primarily at the airbases of Bagram and Kandahar, which are currently being equipped with new runways. At Bagram Airbase, the United States hopes to have a new 11,800-foot runway built by March 2006, along with a hospital and facilities to accommodate 1,000 service members. At Kandahar airbase, U.S. forces are expanding and widening the damaged 7,900-foot runway for both military and civilian air traffic. Afghan leaders are said to be seeking a “long-term strategic partnership” with the United States and other friendly countries to avoid a strategic disengagement by the international community like the West’s 1990s disengagement that helped to bring the Taliban to power. Senior U.S. military and government officials have acknowledged that bases, and perhaps pre-positioned U.S. military

equipment, are a possibility, but note that there are numerous regional sensitivities to such a plan. Some believe that the importance of these bases in Afghanistan was emphasized when Uzbekistan evicted the U.S. military from a key airbase in July 2005—a base that had been used to ship troops, equipment, and supplies to forces in Afghanistan.

Problems that a Resolution Should Address

Possible solutions to mitigate the issues surrounding US military bases and accusations of state terrorism involve a comprehensive reassessment of foreign policy objectives and military strategies. This could entail a shift towards diplomatic solutions, multilateral cooperation, and conflict prevention measures rather than relying solely on military interventions. Enhanced transparency and accountability mechanisms should be implemented to ensure that US military operations adhere to international law and human rights standards. Furthermore, efforts to address root causes of terrorism, such as poverty, political grievances, and social marginalization, should be prioritized through development aid and diplomacy. Additionally, fostering dialogue and cooperation with affected countries and communities can help build trust and address underlying grievances, ultimately contributing to long-term stability and security.

Questions to Consider:

1. Through literature published over decades, has the world’s view of the US's military strategies changed?

2. Can you relocate bases to be further away from towns and cities in foreign countries?
3. Should the US update or change its military plan to allocate for the safety of cross-fire civilians?
4. Can US foreign policy be ratified to keep up with a fast-evolving environment?

Key Terms:

State terrorism is a form of terrorism carried out by a state against other states or their own citizens.

Neoliberalism is a political approach favoring free market capitalism and the reduction of government spending.

Militia: All branches of a country's military arsenal; in this case, the Navy, Coast Guard, US Army, etc.

Capacity Building and Space Technology Transfer

Introduction

Space exploration has been a rapidly growing economic field in recent years, especially with the announcement of SpaceX's intentions to colonize Mars. Outer space provides humanity with information that cannot be obtained on Earth and is something that will be of high importance in the near future. However, the problem arises when countries and other companies that wish to develop their infrastructure are often hampered by others who are already well developed in that sector. Some countries utilize so much more technology that the balance between equal distribution is tipped, which can potentially lead to an economic crisis, global war, and yet another space race to prove superiority. Naturally, the world wishes for all countries to be able to develop their space technology without problems or hindrance. Capacity-building is the process of developing and strengthening the skills, instincts, abilities, processes, and resources that organizations and communities need to survive, adapt, and thrive in a fast-changing world. In this context, space technology transfer is the commercialization of space technologies for use on Earth.

Case Study: Future Plans for Space Travel

With more and more refined technology being put out every year, the human race is keener on exploring the boundaries beyond our planet. An example of this is Malaysia, which, after founding its own space program in 1988, plans on developing an ecosystem on our lunar neighbor. The problem arises from Malaysia's lower GDP compared to other countries, which already have their programs well developed and therefore lack somewhat of the available infrastructure. Another example of this is Russia, which has a vast history of pioneering space

technology. While the finances needed are not a pressing issue, Russia's complicated geographical location far north and even into the Arctic Circle has been a problem. Astronomers and physicists have been praising equatorial nations as the ideal location to launch spacecraft. This is coupled with their most recent lunar module crashing into the moon's surface. The uneven distribution of technology has resulted in the country launching its craft inefficiently into space.

In the United States context, NASA is implementing the President's Space Policy Directive-1 to "lead an innovative and sustainable program of exploration with commercial and international partners to enable human expansion across the solar system." NASA stands on the verge of commercializing low-Earth orbit. These experiences and partnerships will enable NASA to go back to the Moon in 2024—this time to stay. NASA's backbone for deep space exploration is the biggest rocket ever built, the Space Launch System (SLS), the Orion spacecraft, and the Gateway lunar command module. With its partners, NASA will use the Gateway lunar command module orbiting the Moon as a staging point for missions that allow astronauts to explore more parts of the lunar surface than ever before. However, NASA's work has many benefits that are closer to home for Earth and its citizens. Earth science research will continue with new technologies that will help understand Earth as a system and its responses to natural or human-induced changes. Scientists utilize satellites, airborne missions, and ground-based observations to gather data about the ongoing natural and man-made changes to Earth's land, water, and air to help improve the quality of life around the world. SpaceX is also working to get other Starship vehicles ready,

in keeping with the company's development philosophy, which prioritizes frequent test flights and rapid iteration. Starlink currently consists of about 5320 operational spacecraft, according to astrophysicist and satellite tracker Jonathan McDowell. But SpaceX has permission to deploy a total of 12,000 Starlink satellites in low Earth orbit (LEO), and the company has applied for approval for another 30,000 on top of that. The company launched three crewed missions to the International Space Station (ISS) in 2023—ttwo for NASA and one for Axiom Space, a Houston-based company that aims to get its own outpost up and running in LEO a few years from now. SpaceX will send five astronaut missions skyward this year if all goes according to plan. The Crew-8 and Crew-9 flights for NASA are scheduled to lift off in February and August, respectively. Axiom's Ax-3 mission will launch on Jan. 17, and Ax-4 is targeted for no earlier than October. And, in April, SpaceX plans to launch Polaris Dawn, a free-flying mission to LEO that will feature the first-ever spacewalk by a private astronaut.

Current Situation: Latest Developments

While thousands of products and services have been brought to market through space technology transfer, there is still an immense opportunity to fill the innovation gap. The world needs the vision and talent of entrepreneurs to craft, refine, and apply space technologies to solve challenges on Earth. More than 1200 patents at Nasa alone are available for commercialization. NASA’s Technology Transfer Program maintains a portfolio of patents with commercial potential and makes them available through a patent licensing program. Standard commercial, evaluation,

and startup licenses are available on exclusive, partially exclusive, or non-exclusive terms negotiated with NASA during the application process. Among the NASA patents currently available are:

- Robonaut 2, a highly dexterous humanoid robot with nearly 50 patented and patent-pending technologies that could revolutionize multiple industries
- A system that detects high stress in interviews and text
- An invention that uses laser beams for optical data transmission from satellites
- A technology that uses combinations of plants and fungi to remediate contaminated soils.
- A stronger plug for friction pulls plug welding.
- A new process for fabricating superconducting circuitry on both sides of an ultra-thin silicon wafer.
- A capability for meeting big data demands for Climate Analytics-as-a-Service (CAaaS)
- A novel multi-junction PV solar cell that enables higher efficiencies

Space agencies around the world have similar programs. The European Space Agency's Technology Transfer Programme Office (TTPO) has transferred more than 200 space technologies to non-space sectors. The resulting products range from life-saving healthcare innovations and mine tunnel crack detection systems to cooling suits for race car drivers.

The Japan Aerospace Exploration Agency (JAXA) also operates a robust program to introduce aerospace technology to other industries.

Problems a Resolution Should Address

The reinforcement of industrial and strategic autonomy to the benefit of, and benefiting from, the space sector, including as it relates to critical materials and critical technologies, requires investment in capacitation and technology transfer. Technology transfer in the space sector serves multiple purposes, including facilitating commercialization through the transfer of space technologies to the private sector, collaboration between different organizations and sectors, spin-off technologies that enable the creation of applications in non-space industries, and the sharing of knowledge and expertise between organizations. Capacitation and technology transfer help ensure a continuous exchange of knowledge, skills, and technologies, fostering progress and enabling the exploration and utilization of space for various purposes. Moreover, space-faring nations can enter into technology transfer agreements with developing countries to share knowledge, expertise, and technologies in space-related fields. These agreements can facilitate the transfer of satellite technologies, ground station equipment, and data processing techniques to support local space programs and applications.

Questions to consider:

1. Do supranational organizations already have a strategic advantage in infrastructure development?
2. What are the challenges in achieving equal distribution?
3. Can large corporations expand their research and development internationally?

Key Terms:

A space race is a race between two or more nations to achieve a certain extraterrestrial objective.

GDP is the total value of all the assets within a country, including imports and exports.

SpaceX is one of the spacecraft manufacturers founded in 2002 by Elon Musk.

NASA (National Aeronautics and Space Administration) is an independent agency of the U.S. federal government responsible for the civil space program, aeronautics research, and space research.

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