

The International Journal of Development and Conflict

Calls for Papers for the Special Issue on

Development and Conflict in a World of Heightened Uncertainties

Introduction to the Theme

After the collapse of the Soviet Union, the world moved towards what seemed like a more rules and global institution-based way of dealing with international trade, finance, and economic relations. The WTO, and its coverage of services, investment, and IPR seemed promising, and developing countries, especially those emergent, began to painstakingly build on the promise of a more orderly and fair system of international economic relations. Nevertheless, for some nations, the vicissitudes of conflict with powerful nations resulted in the curtailment of their options, as economic sanctions to settle political differences emerged.

The consolidation of Russia as a political and military power, only continued the cold war closer to Russian boundaries, with now a much economically weaker Russia. Vast movements of migrants into the rich countries fueled by differences in wage rates and living conditions, and especially by conflict in the source countries, but also shrinkage in the domestic labor force in the destination countries, and the increasing tradability of services, have now created “nationalistic” reactions in these countries.

But perhaps, the most important force has been the rise of China. Rich western nations had gained immensely from the rise of the East Asian Tigers earlier, and that continued with China. Falling prices of the imports from these dynamic economies allowed advanced Europe and the US to achieve low inflation, and the so-called “Great Moderation”. And the current account surpluses helped maintain capital inflows to support much consumption growth based on imports. Even then, East Asia and China gained through high growth that used underemployed labor. But that “compact”, which was in many ways a continuation of the win-win aspect that the Bretton Woods agreements engendered, gave way with the Global Financial Crisis. Contemporary conflict alters development trajectories, since that puts sustained pressure on state capacity. The fiscal and administrative attention is also redirected towards short-term counter measures. These developments could widen structural inequalities since access to jobs, markets, technology, and public services could become more uneven, both within and across regions.

The WTO’s rules and multilateralism have been hit hard. While macroeconomic responses by the US, China, India and belatedly by Europe, prevented the world from falling into a deep depression, the destruction of the rules-based system was bound to keep conflict alive, and in myriad ways. Ironically, the stated goal of America to keep the country at the center of the world, is itself undermined by American actions

in the global arena! The dollar's pivotal role in the global economy is on the decline, with no real replacement in sight. The rapid shift out from US debt holdings by global central banks, is bound to short the decline of the US in global economic matters. Policy makers, diplomats and scholars have frequently commented on these developments that relate to the collapse of multilateral order, rise of techno-economic concentration and emergence of new conflict vectors

Global commons issues, most notably emissions, had begun to be addressed through painstakingly put through agreements. And these have now all but collapsed. Restrictions on trade in products and services embodying high technology, energy, and critical minerals have compounded the potential for conflict.

The emergence of industries with vast consumer side scale and scope economies creates double-sided natural monopolies like Google, MS, Amazon, Meta, X, and so on, which have the character of being "winner takes all". Their span over the whole world, except possibly China with its great state capacity, has created another point of tussle. Regulation, based on the understanding of producer side sub-additivity of costs underlying the traditional natural monopoly, has proven inadequate, when it is the new consumer side super-additivity of benefits that is the driver of these industries. Even as the challenge posed by these industries was just beginning to be understood, AI has emerged, which now would be the most important pressure for change in productive entities, affecting organizational structure and processes, jobs, governance, modes of communication, and knowledge, and life itself. Indeed, the sharp distinction between labor and capital that had been drawn by over 150 of capitalism, was being eroded by the emergence of platform workers, and now AI could overhaul the very categories that describe our work and life. The scope to create winners and losers in the short run even if the economy and technology is or can be win-win in the longer run, only amplifies the scope for conflict.

The Questions and Issues

International conflict resolution through dialogue and institutional mechanisms, which at best had weak foundations, now stands exposed and orphaned. Uncertainties have heightened. What are the implications for development, especially for countries still far from their economic transition? What new alliances are likely? What would the shifts in international economic relations be? How would the great asymmetries in labor force growth be addressed? Would conflict within and between countries be heightened? How would states steer themselves in a world without leadership? How does conflict reshape state capacity and fiscal priorities for development? And what are the effects of shocks emanating from conflicts, on poverty, inequality, growth, and social formations?

The International Journal of Development and Conflict (IJDC)

The IJDC invites academic as well as practice-oriented papers that cover the issues and problems of the contemporary world riddled by conflict, contestation, uncertainty and decline of institutional mechanisms for dispute resolution. The themes of interest for the special edition include issues relating to development,

impact and conflict, particularly in the intersection of development and conflict, under one or more aspects of the unfolding contexts.

The Contexts for the Issue

- Global economy and conflict. The impacts of the Global Financial Crisis, and the Pandemic. Decline of rules based global engagements. Impacts on trade, investment and cross border technology flows. The decline of multilateralism. The potential for conflict therein. The prospects for newer blocks and alliances. South-South conflict and cooperation
- Development in the disorderly world without leadership, and weakened institutions. Expected changes in reserve currency and the impact on macroeconomic policies. Development policies in a fracturing world.
- State capacity and development in a highly uncertain environment. Pressures for internal conflict
- Climate change, resulting economic stress, the prospects for restitution today.
- Migration. Migration from collapsing economies. Alienation. Victims of conflict and changing world order. Workers under fracturing labor markets.
- Challenges for States and enterprises in resource contests and in an increasingly “nationalistic” orientation.
- Revolutionary technologies, winner takes all kind of industries, global monopolies, and issues on national sovereignty. The problem of cross-border regulation.

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Papers

This special issue seeks contributions from scholars in development studies, political economy, economics, and related fields. The journal particularly encourages submissions from scholars and policy practitioners working at the intersections of development, conflict, economics and institutional change.

Original research articles, theoretically grounded papers, comparative analyses, policy-oriented studies may be sent to

IJDC Editors email: editor@ijdc.online

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2. Full paper submission deadline: April 30 2026
3. Notification of final decision: May 20 2026
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