

The end of the happy globalization

The pandemic, the war in Ukraine, the conflict in the Middle East and the American withdrawal from international organizations have precipitated the end of an era. The new world order that is taking shape is based on military force and economic sovereignty.

Russia's war in Ukraine had already accelerated the deglobalization movement. European citizens suddenly understand that their security depends on greater economic sovereignty.

Pandemic

The first stop was with the pandemic, Europeans, like many other countries, understand that they depend on the outside world for products that have become vital such as masks, gloves, semiconductors or vaccines. Countries with a strong pharmaceutical industry were the first to be able to manufacture the serum and thus protect their populations.

The war in Ukraine and the pandemic have, by their combined effects, hastened the end of an era. Tensions in logistics, energy, agricultural products, minerals and metals markets: after the pandemic, the war in Ukraine had already disrupted the fragile balances of a world that is now turning its back on globalization. The conflict in the Middle East will change our era. The war unleashed in Ukraine on February 24, 2022 and the new conflict in the Middle East constitute a human tragedy whose shadow will probably be long-lasting. The repercussions, difficult to anticipate, will be economic, social and diplomatic. The conflicts in Ukraine and the Middle East mark the end of the successful globalization of the last thirty years.

Fukuyama

The Berlin Wall and the Eastern bloc eventually fell, the USSR disappeared. We wanted to see the dawn of perpetual peace in a world where the camp of liberalism, democracy and the market economy would have definitively triumphed. What an illusion when you know a little about history! In 1992, just one year after the end of the USSR, Francis Fukuyama published one of the most famous books of the late twentieth century, "The End of History and the Last Man"; nothing would stop the great movement of pacification of the world: the countries of the South, China in the lead, were catching up, and had no other desire or horizon than to become Americans like everyone else.

But Fukuyama was wrong. Samuel Huntington, in 1996, with the publication of the second most famous book of the late twentieth century, returns to reality with "The Clash of Civilizations". Then it was September 11, 2001, which confirmed that there was a clash of civilizations. Happy globalization had been nothing but a pretty mirage.

On January 7, 2026, the United States announced its withdrawal from 66 international organizations, including 31 entities under the United Nations system. Trump's arrival as president of the United States is proof that Washington has abandoned the discourse of happy

globalization, because if it had served its interests well, it is no longer the useful instrument of its influence.

The conflict in the Middle East, if it drags on, should further weaken global growth that is already slowing down and, above all, encourage a resurgence of inflation. The world before no longer exists and will never exist again, a new world is being born, very different, where the balance of power and the use of military means will be the key elements of international relations. The illusion of the existence of an international community is recorded. The international organizations inherited from the Second World War will have to be reformed to avoid chaos.

To conclude, the social doctrine of the church can be an answer to help to reform the international organizations inherited from the Second World War and avoid chaos.

As Christians and Catholics, we must not only bear witness but also commit ourselves to supporting these international reforms.

PS: My intervention was based on my article « La fin de la globalisation heureuse » published on April 10, 2026 <https://www.tdg.ch/mondialisation-pourquoi-les-conflits-mondiaux-changent-la-donne-811448703571> .

The conclusion was only for my intervention at the conference.

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