Norwegian Ministry
of Foreign Affairs

Meld. St. 27 (2018–2019) Report to the Storting (white paper)

Norway's Role and Interests in Multilateral Cooperation

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Recommendation from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, dated 14 June 2019,
Approved by the Council of State on the same date.
(Solberg Government)

1 Summary

International cooperation is crucial to Norway's security, economy and prosperity. Until recently, it has been easier to take such cooperation for granted, but now we see that states are less inclined to turn to multilateral organisations to solve common challenges through compromise and cooperation. At the same time, the world is facing major global challenges that no state can solve alone. A key goal for Norwegian foreign policy over the coming years is therefore to support binding international cooperation and the multilateral system, enabling us to strengthen our ability to address common challenges and safeguard national and global interests.

The multilateral system is a network of agreements and organisations established by the states. The system as we know it today mainly evolved after World War II, and includes organisations such as the United Nations (UN), the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the European Union (EU). The word multilateral has traditionally been used to describe cooperation where three or more states participate.

The multilateral system has multiple functions. It is an arena where states can promote their interests and seek peaceful solutions to conflict. It is also a system through which states can meet and cooperate on common challenges, and is the source of new standards and rules for international cooperation and important global agreements, such as the Paris Agreement on climate change and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. The multilateral organisations also compile and share facts and analyses that states can use to solve both national and international problems.

The liberal world order has been crucial to the development of the multilateral system. It rests on a set of common rules and values, such as individual rights and liberties, rule of law and democracy. This world order is now under increasing pressure. At the same time, certain influential countries have chosen to place less importance on multilateral cooperation than before. Emerging powers play a greater role and bring new content to international cooperation – content that is not necessarily in line with the values on which the liberal world order is based. This changes the multilateral system and what it comprises.

The multilateral system, in the form and with the content that have served Norway so well, currently faces six major challenges. Firstly, the global balance of power is shifting. The conditions for international cooperation are altered when the US and European powers become relatively weaker in the global context, and the economic centre of gravity shifts to the east. There is reason

to assume that the strategic rivalry between the world's major powers, first and foremost between the US and China, will have impact on international cooperation going forward and have consequences for the multilateral system.

Secondly, multilateral cooperation is challenged when major states choose to solve their problems bilaterally, or at worst, unilaterally, rather than as part of a larger community. This can lead to relations between states becoming more fragmented and less predictable, and will primarily serve to benefit the states that have the power and capacity to impose their viewpoints. Countries of Norway's size will find it more difficult to safeguard their interests.

Thirdly, liberal values, standards and rights are under pressure, both globally and on our doorstep. A growing number of countries are working actively to prevent progress in civil and political human rights. Consequently, the multilateral system's ability to compel states to respect fundamental human rights is challenged.

Fourthly, greater inequality within countries amplifies discontent with and distrust of globalisation and the institutions facilitating it. Many critics of globalisation consider the multilateral system to be a threat to national sovereignty rather than a forum where national governments can solve problems together. This can undermine its legitimacy and increase political pressure against participating in and funding the system.

The fifth challenge for the multilateral system is the lack of efficiency and representativeness. Trust in international cooperation depends on it being relevant, legitimate and productive. This trust diminishes when international organisations are viewed as incapable of acting, inefficient or unrepresentative. Reforms that ensure greater legitimacy and better results are therefore essential to the organisations' relevance and sometimes even to their survival. The solution to these challenges is not to tear down the system that states have carefully developed, but to reform it from within.

The sixth challenge is that the world faces a wealth of new and urgent problems that we need to solve together, but that the multilateral system is not currently set up to handle. Transnational security threats such as terrorism and digital attacks are a danger to individuals, societies and states. Climate change and cross-border threats to health can only be handled through stronger international engagement. A multitude of new challenges indicate that we need more, not less, cooperation across national borders.

The current situation is challenging for Norway because we have based our prosperity and much of our international influence on the multilateral system. Norway's multilateral work is an extension of its national priorities, and international cooperation is vital to safeguarding Norwegian interests in many areas. Multilateral institutions like the UN have played a key role in developing the rules-based international system between states. Smaller countries like Norway particularly rely on there being a set of rules that all nations must follow.

Norwegian security is dependent on international cooperation that takes place within organisations such as NATO and the UN, and with the EU. Our NATO membership is crucial to balancing Norway's asymmetric relationship with Russia – it contributes to predictability and underpins neighbourly relations that are also characterised by dialogue and cooperation. Collective defence is also more cost effective than national or bilateral solutions, although it cannot substitute a strong national defence. Norwegian interests in combating international terror and crime are also best safeguarded within a multilateral framework.

As an open and relatively small economy, Norway depends on open, free and well-functioning markets. An economic system with few barriers to trade and foreign direct investment serves the country well. The EEA Agreement and Norway's membership in the World Trade Organization (WTO) are of particular importance to the Norwegian economy. More broadly, Norway is dependent on an international legal framework that safeguards access to and use of Norway's natural resources on our continental shelf and in our marine areas. Rules that ensure open markets, free flow of capital and the possibility of investing in other countries are important factors in the management of our collective savings account, the Government Pension Fund Global.

The multilateral system also plays a crucial role in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals. We will not be able to solve the problems related to climate change and environmental degradation without global cooperation. International organisations play an important role in combating poverty and providing humanitarian assistance and protection to those in need. International financial institutions such as the World Bank are important channels for the provision of results-oriented Norwegian aid. It is in Norway's interest and in line with our values to save lives and improve other people's living conditions.

In all, this report's review of the multilateral system's importance to Norwegian interests shows that multilateral agreements, international law, rules and regulations are crucial to safeguarding the needs of Norwegian society. Many of our most important bilateral relations also benefit from cooperation and agreements negotiated in multilateral forums. Preventing the erosion of the international law and multilateral systems of governance is therefore defined as Norway's primary foreign policy interest.

Norway has a number of tools at its disposal to promote Norwegian and common interests in the multilateral system, including international political and financial contributions, partnerships, police and military contributions, candidacies, board memberships and the recruitment of Norwegians to international organisations. In an ever changing landscape, the Norwegian government representatives must consider in each specific case which tools and methods have best effect.

The challenges facing the multilateral system mean that we must adapt our efforts and prioritise where and how we engage. Over the next years, Norway's priorities must be to defend its room for manoeuvre in foreign policy, be a driver for reforms that make the institutions more effective and representative, seek even closer ties with like-minded European states, cooperate more on issues of common interest with countries that differ from us, strengthen the Norwegian public administration's work on multilateral issues, and ensure sufficient resources and relevant expertise for multilateral efforts.

Norway is not merely a member of organisations like the UN, NATO, the IMF, the World Bank and WTO, but has played a role in establishing them. We have not passively observed the growth of the rules-based world order, but have actively helped build it. Now we must defend and further develop what we have helped create.

2 Introduction

2.1 The report's purpose and structure

The liberal world order that emerged after World War II has played a crucial role in developing Norway's security, prosperity and economy. Today, this order and many of the multilateral organisations that support it are under great pressure. This pressure comes both from emerging powers and from states that have played key roles in developing and defending the liberal world order. Shifting power relations could erode or immobilise certain multilateral organisations. In this situation, Norway must redouble its efforts in protecting the current rules-based world order as well as reconsider its priorities and working methods to ensure that our interests are safeguarded. We must also continue our efforts to strengthen and reform the system so that it remains viable in the future.

Ten years ago, a white paper describing the main features of Norwegian foreign policy was presented to the Storting.[1] The world has changed a great deal since then, and these changes are reflected in a number of recent reports to the Storting on different aspects of Norway's foreign policy. Now it is time to update Norwegian multilateral policy as well.

The purpose of this report (hereinafter referred to as the white paper) is to clarify Norwegian interests in multilateral cooperation and to present proposals for how Norway can best use its resources. The changes in the multilateral system are substantial and are unfolding quickly. Therefore, care must be taken when discussing how international cooperation will develop over time. This is the reason why this white paper has a five-year perspective.

The content of the white paper has been discussed over the past year at a series of open meetings held across the country. The private sector, civil society, and expert communities in Norway and abroad have provided input, and consultations have been held with the governments of several countries. The content of this white paper is based on the above input.

Part 1 of the white paper describes what the multilateral system is and the challenges it faces. Part 2 highlights Norwegian interests in multilateral cooperation, how the current challenges to the system can affect us, and what Norway should prioritise over the next few years. The white paper demonstrates how and why international cooperation is crucial to Norway's national security, welfare and economy. It also describes how Norway can best work to ensure that the multilateral system continues to serve our national and common interests and what working methods we must use to succeed in reforming and strengthening the system.

The agreement on the 2030 Agenda with the 17 Sustainable Development Goals constitutes a common framework for solving the most important challenges facing humanity. The goals are therefore reflected throughout this white paper. The Sustainable Development Goals apply to all countries, at both the national and international level, and show how nations are mutually dependent on one another, in addition to how policy areas are interlinked. Coordinated efforts in areas of mutual dependency are necessary to achieve the goals. The changes in the global balance of power mean that the traditional division of countries into developing and industrial countries is becoming less and less relevant. Development policy is an integrated and important part of our foreign policy, and the Sustainable Development Goals underpin Norway's involvement in the multilateral system.

It is not possible to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals without effective multilateral cooperation, nor solve challenges such as climate change, marine pollution, irregular migration or new security threats. This does not mean that multilateral cooperation is the answer to everything. Some problems are best solved by means of direct dialogue with one other country. Nor does it mean that multilateral cooperation does not come at a price. Finding solutions

[1] Report No 15 to the Storting (2008—2009). Interests, responsibilities and opportunities. The main features of Norwegian foreign policy.

together with others means that we must accept compromises and make commitments over and above our own direct interests.

We must take our share of the responsibility to support an international order that has served our country so well. In these challenging times, Norway must contribute to ensuring that the content of international cooperation reflects our values and interests. Major initiatives enacted by the Norwegian Government, such as those relating to the oceans, global health, education and humanitarian work, as well as the candidacy for the UN Security Council, do just this. The white paper also presents a number of other proposals on how we can defend and improve the multilateral system, taking Norwegian interests and values as our point of departure.

2.2 Scope of the white paper

This white paper shows the breadth of Norway's international cooperation rather than the depth. It highlights how we must adapt to a changed environment on the one hand, and attempt to influence it on the other. It builds on policy already adopted by the Government, including previous white papers to the Storting on global security challenges in foreign policy, private sector development in Norwegian development cooperation, globalisation and trade, education for development, human rights, oceans, development policy in light of the Sustainable Development Goals, Norwegian foreign and security policy choices, as well as strategies for cooperation with the EU and for Norwegian humanitarian policy.

The white paper takes a realist approach to multilateralism. Norwegian foreign policy must be based on the world as it is, and not on how we would like it to be. The purpose of foreign policy, including our multilateral efforts, is to safeguard Norwegian interests internationally.

In this white paper, Norwegian interests are defined as factors that are crucial to the economy, security and prosperity of Norwegian nationals, be it directly or indirectly. Norwegian interests include both our national interests, such as safeguarding the integrity of our territory and a strong national economy, and our interests in ensuring rules-based and predictable cooperation between states. In many contexts, global interests also constitute Norwegian interests. Norwegian interests are thus not limited to only our own direct national interests. It is, for example, in Norway's interest that the multilateral system contributes to solving common challenges, supporting international law, states' security and sovereignty, ensuring respect for human rights and attaining the Sustainable Development Goals.

The discussion of key Norwegian interests in international cooperation is organised by topic rather than by organisation, since our interests and international efforts cut across individual organisations and are presented in several forums simultaneously.

The white paper devotes most attention to international organisations of which Norway is a member or with which it has an institutionalised collaboration. It is through these that the Norwegian Government has the greatest opportunity to influence the agenda and promote our policy. Non-governmental organisations and the private sector, among other parties, also constitute key partners in many types of international cooperation, such as the work on achieving the Sustainable Development Goals. The Norwegian Government is often in close dialogue with such partners when preparing and implementing multilateral policy. The conclusions of this white paper will therefore also be relevant to the Government's cooperation with these parties.

Part I
The origins, roles and challenges of the multilateral system

3 Definitions and historical background

The word multilateral has traditionally been used to describe cooperation between three or more states, in contrast to bilateral cooperation which only involves two.

States have often chosen to establish intergovernmental or supranational organisations mandated with organising and further developing such international cooperation. Multilateral cooperation can be based on internationally binding agreements between states or on various non-binding arrangements. This framework of binding and non-binding modes of multilateral cooperation constitutes the multilateral system as defined in this white paper. All states are free to choose whether to participate in multilateral arrangements. Regional cooperation, such as in the EU, constitutes an important part of the multilateral system.

The parties engaged in the multilateral system have traditionally comprised states and the intergovernmental and supranational organisations they have established. Over the past decades, other participants have gained greater influence, such as international non-governmental organisations (NGOs). Such organisations do not constitute part of the multilateral system, but seek to influence the states' and organisations' conduct within the system. The same is true of private actors such as multinational corporations, philanthropists and foundations.

International law is the legal system that governs the relationship between states and between states and international organisations. The primary sources of international law are international treaties and customary international law. International law does not have a central legislator or police authority, and enforcement is therefore the responsibility of the states themselves. In the cases where a court of law has been established, the system relies on the state accepting the court's authority, either in general terms or in relation to the specific case.

3.1 The emergence of multilateral agreements and international organisations

States have entered into agreements with each other since time immemorial. The earliest agreements often concerned war and peace, borders, trade and navigation. Later came agreements on shared resources such as rivers. As states have gradually developed ties, and globalisation has made it necessary to find solutions that cannot only be agreed between two states, international organisations have emerged. Such organisations can be global, supported by multilateral agreements, or regional, with agreements that are binding upon the states in the specific region.

After the Napoleonic Wars (1800–1815), attempts were made to resolve major European conflicts through conferences or congresses at which state representatives met to find mutually acceptable solutions. This was a continuation of the great European peace conferences of the 1600s and 1700s, with representatives assembling for long periods not only to discuss post-war settlement but also a wealth of other problems, and to establish rules for future peaceful coexistence.

The Congress of Vienna in 1815 was the first conference that led to the establishment of an international intergovernmental organisation in modern times, and sought to resolve conflicts concerning freedom of navigation on the River Rhine. Towards the end of the 1850s, several conferences of this kind were organised, and more and more states participated, including from outside Europe. This led to treaties that were eventually endorsed by a large number of states. In this way, the conferences became important arenas for the development of international law, as well as the development of European law that also influenced other parts of the world. Since the European states were in the majority and the major European powers had the greatest influence on the outcomes, values evolved on the continent and European legal traditions governed the content of the agreements.

Many major international organisations were established in the latter part of the 1800s. Globali-

sation as a consequence of the industrial revolution was an important factor in this context. The International Telecommunication Union (ITU) was the first to emerge in 1865, followed by the Universal Postal Union (UPU) in 1874. The foundation for the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO) were also laid during this period. Outside Europe, the Pan-American Union, the precursor to the Organization of American States (OAS), was formed in 1890 as an organisation for cooperation between the Latin American countries and the US.

In all, it is estimated that between 30 and 50 intergovernmental organisations were established in the period 1815–1914. The organisations and the agreements they developed herald the start of the multilateral system as we know it today. Many of the original organisations are still operative. Sweden and Norway participated in several of the above-mentioned conferences, joined the ITU and UPU, and ratified the conventions relevant to us.

The drawback of the conference system was that each time a new problem arose, a new conference, ideally in a new place, had to be convened. The breakdown of the London Conference on the Balkans (1912–1913) and World War I led to the understanding that another form of organisation was necessary. The solution was a more permanent forum where small and large states could meet. This was the basis for the establishment of the League of Nations, precursor to the United Nations.

3.2 The development of new intergovernmental organisations and rules of law in the interwar years

The League of Nations was the first attempt to form a worldwide alliance of states with a view to ensuring peace and security, and to develop international cooperation between people and societies. The league was established in 1920 and dissolved in 1946, following the establishment of the UN. Norway was a member of the League of Nations from the start, but not all states participated. This was one of the organisation's weaknesses. The US was not a member, even though President Woodrow Wilson was one of its main advocates. Germany, Japan and Italy withdrew from the league and the Soviet Union was excluded in the 1930s. At the most, 58 states were members of the League of Nations, and because the colonial powers still controlled large parts of Africa and Asia, the organisation covered a large part of the world.

The league had a general assembly and a security council, both of which are precursors to those found in the UN today. In contrast to the very earliest international organisations, the League of Nations had responsibility for a number of sectors.

In addition to its work on peace and security, the league also played a role in developing new international law. Over 30 agreements were negotiated under the League of Nations, including the agreement on the Åland Islands and the agreement on Turkey's national borders following the partitioning of the Ottoman Empire (the Treaty of Lausanne).

The International Labour Organization (ILO) was also founded as a result of the Treaty of Versailles, acknowledging that the major social conflicts of the era could not be solved by individual states alone but required international solutions. The ILO was established in 1919 and had negotiated six international conventions on working conditions within its first year. Today, that figure is 186.

The establishment of intergovernmental organisations continued to gain momentum in the interwar years.

3.3 The development of the present multilateral system after WWII

The first decades after World War II saw an immense growth in the number of international organisations and pertaining conventions.

The United Nations (UN) was founded in 1945 to protect coming generations from the scourge of war. 50 countries, including Norway, took part in the negotiations and signing of the UN Charter. The UN Charter is the foundational treaty of the United Nations, an intergovernmental organisation. The UN Charter articulates a commitment to uphold the human rights of citizens and outlines a broad set of core rights and duties on states, such as the prohibition on the use of force and the right of self-defence.

The founders of the UN were cognizant of the failures of the League of Nations and committed to making the UN a global and more robust organisation. The organisation currently has 193 member states, meaning that nearly all states of the world are members. The UN's guiding principle is that all members are sovereign states and thus of equal stature, with the same rights and obligations. Each state therefore has one vote in the General Assembly. According to the UN Charter, the states have a duty of loyalty to the UN and

Figure 3.1 Norway's Permanent Representative to the UN, Ambassador Arne Sunde (left), participates in a UN Security Council meeting on September 6, 1950, where the Council voted on a US-initiated resolution asking all states to refrain from supporting Korean communists. The first UN Secretary General, Norwegian Trygve Lie, in the middle.

Source: Scanpix/AP

must assist the organisation in the measures it decides to implement. It is also stipulated that the states' obligations pursuant to the UN Charter take precedence over their obligations under other treaties. The UN Security Council can make decisions that are binding on member states, including coercive measures intended to maintain international peace and security. France, China, Russia, the UK and the US have permanent seats and right of veto on the UN Security Council. In addition, the General Assembly elects ten members that sit on the Security Council for a period of two years.

Developing international law and promoting respect for international law have been a main purpose of the UN since its inception. Numerous treaties have been negotiated under the UN umbrella, such as the Convention of the Law of the Sea and various international human rights treaties. The UN also plays a major role in maintaining peace and security through international political efforts and peacekeeping operations. The UN agencies, funds and programmes invest significant efforts in promoting human rights, and social and economic development.

A number of economic organisations were also established during the post-war era. The Bretton Woods institutions – the World Bank and IMF – were set up at a meeting of 43 countries in Bretton Woods, New Hampshire, USA in July 1944. The intention was for the Bretton Woods group to become a trio that included the International Trade Organization (ITO). These plans encountered opposition from the US, however, and were eventually replaced by the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT). The idea was revived with the establishment of the World Trade Organization (WTO) in 1995. These organisations play a major role in the stability and development of the global economy. Many regional development banks have been added to the multilateral system, including the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB), the African Development Bank (AfDB) and the Asian Development Bank (ADB).

The Organization for European Economic Co-operation (OEEC) was established in 1948 by 16 Western European countries. Its purpose was to administer Marshall Aid from the US to rebuild Western Europe after World War II. By encouraging individual governments to recognise their mutual dependency, a close and successful cooperation was achieved that, in turn, led to the US and Canada endorsing what became the OEEC's direct successor at the global level – the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD). The Convention on the OECD entered into force in 1961. Japan joined the OECD in 1964 and numerous other countries have since followed suit. The OECD currently has 36 member states. It also has extensive cooperation with non-member states, including the five key partners Brazil, India, Indonesia, China and South Africa.

The objective of avoiding the horrors of war was also a core consideration when six European countries joined forces to establish the European Coal and Steel Community (ECSC) in 1951. The collaboration, which had supranational elements, intended to make war and conflict not only unthinkable, but practically impossible. It was extended and elaborated in the Treaty of Rome signed in 1957 and a number of other treaties leading up to the Treaty on European Union in 1993, most recently updated by the Treaty of Lisbon in 2007. The establishment of the Internal Market in 1993 was a milestone in European economic development. The EU played a key role in stabilising the continent after the fall of the Berlin Wall by extending the cooperation to the Baltic and central European countries, and developing close ties with neighbouring European countries.

The EU member states are closely integrated through common rules that apply to the Internal Market and in justice and home affairs, and they cooperate closely on foreign and security policy. EU institutions have been given competence in a number of areas. In certain fields, the EU has exclusive competence to adopt legislation and to monitor that it is upheld, for instance as regards trade policy and monetary policy (for the Euro countries). In other fields, such as social policy, competition policy, and agricultural and fisheries policy, competences are shared between the EU and its member states. In areas such as health and some areas of industrial policy, the EU is authorised to support and coordinate the actions of member states, without harmonising them. The European Court of Justice ensures that member states and EU institutions comply with EU law, and that EU law takes precedence over national law.

Together with the United Kingdom, Denmark, Sweden, Austria, Switzerland and Portugal, Norway was among the founding members of the European Free Trade Association (EFTA) in 1960. From its very beginning, the EFTA cooperation, similarly to the incipient EU cooperation, was aimed at strengthening the economic ties between its member states through free trade, and thereby contributing to the broader economic integration in Western Europe, although without the supranational elements included in the EU treaties. Iceland, Finland and finally Liechtenstein joined EFTA at a later stage.

Norway voted against membership of the European Communities (EC) in 1972 and the EU in 1994, but is a part of European cooperation through the EEA Agreement, the Schengen Agreement and over 100 other agreements we have entered into with the EU. The importance of European cooperation to Norwegian interests is discussed in Chapter 6.

NATO was also formed after World War II. The alliance was established through the North Atlantic Treaty, which entered into force in 1949. It came as a reaction to the threat from the Soviet Union and became an important framework for collective defence in Europe, and for the United States' security guarantee in relation to its European allies. Norway was one of the founders of the alliance, along with 11 other countries in Europe and North America. Like the EU, NATO has also grown in the post-war period, particularly after the end of the Cold War, and the alliance currently comprises 29 member states and is expected to hit the 30 mark in the course of 2019. After the dissolution of the Soviet Union, the expansion of NATO has played a significant role in European stability and in providing security to the new member states in the East. The core provision of the North Atlantic Treaty is Article 5, which states that the Parties agree that an armed attack against one or more of them in Europe or North America shall be considered an attack against them all. Collective defence and deterrence have gained renewed importance in recent years as a result of shifts in Europe's security policy challenges. The importance of NATO to Norway will be discussed later in the white paper.

The international cooperation developed under the Antarctic Treaty also sprung from the desire to find solutions to prevent new global conflicts. In 1959, 12 countries, including Norway and the six other states with territorial claims in the

area, agreed to dedicate the continent to peace and science. Environmental protection was added as a third cornerstone at a later date. Today, over 40 states participate in this unique international cooperation, which has ensured that a whole continent has been kept out of the shifting cycles of global politics for 60 years.

In addition to the organisations mentioned above, a number of other international cooperation bodies were established in the post-war era. Norway was one of the founders of the Council of Europe in 1949. The organisation was assigned the important task of protecting human rights, democracy and rule of law principles in Europe. This is based on the belief that democratic states that respect human rights are more stable, both within their own national borders and in relation to other states. New member states joined the organisation after the fall of the Berlin Wall. It now comprises 47 countries and is the only pan-European organisation.

The development of stronger ties between the Nordic countries also became an important part in Norway's participation in international collaborative structures during this period. The Nordic Council was founded in 1952. The Helsinki Treaty, which came to form the formal basis for the parliamentary cooperation in the Nordic countries, was signed in 1962, while the Nordic Council of Ministers was established in 1971 as a formal framework for intergovernmental cooperation. The Nordic countries currently comprise one of the world's most integrated regions.

The Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) is an arena where Norway and 56 other countries cooperate on security, conflict deterrence, human rights and other common challenges based on values and principles negotiated and further developed from the mid-1970s and up to the present.

It is difficult to estimate the number of intergovernmental organisations that are currently active, but the figure has greatly increased, with more organisations being founded every year. The multilateral system has become more and more complex and fragmented over time, and this trend continues.

3.4 The liberal world order

A world order is an arrangement of power and authority that provides a framework for cooperation and policy at the global level. The term «the liberal world order» describes the order that was primarily developed in the decades after World War II, but that has roots all the way back to the Peace of Westphalia in 1648, the Congress of Vienna in 1815, as well as the League of Nations in the interwar years.

In its post-war form, the liberal world order rests on a set of common rules and liberal values, such as individual rights and liberties, rule of law, democracy, and open, market-based economies and free trade. To create a rules-based international system where right prevails over might, the multilateral system was reinforced by a range of institutions. Organisations and forums such as the UN, the World Bank, GATT and IMF were founded to maintain the rules and facilitate peaceful cooperation between sovereign states.

The liberal world order has never been global. The world order was originally built on the values and norms that had evolved in Europe. After World War II, it was the US that had the power to sustain this world order. American political, economic and military power have supported the rules-based system, with a network of alliances with countries in both Europe and other parts of the world. Towards the end of the 20th century, an increasing number of states, from different regions of the world, became actively involved in further developing the liberal world order.

The liberal world order and the multilateral system thereby encompass many common elements, but are not the same. Although many of the multilateral system's key institutions were established to underpin the liberal world order, the content of the cooperation is determined at all times by the power dynamics between and the values of participating states.

It is important to distinguish between the erosion of multilateral forms of cooperation and changes to the content of this cooperation. Certain governments that currently challenge the liberal world order also declare themselves defenders of multilateral cooperation. In some areas, multilateral cooperation is stronger than ever, despite the fact that the content is not necessarily in line with the values on which the liberal world order is based. When other values and norms take precedence in multilateral cooperation, the multilateral system changes.

4 The functions of the multilateral system

The multilateral system is valuable in many ways: As the developer of common norms and rules, as the system that initiates and implements these, as a dispute settlement mechanism and monitoring body, as an idea and knowledge producer, and as an arena and platform. In most areas of society, one or more international organisations have been founded to fulfil these functions.

Support for multilateral arrangements is based on the acknowledgement that many problems can only be solved, or can be solved better and more efficiently, through multilateral cooperation rather than bilaterally or single-handedly. The system produces global public goods for the world's population, such as better health, security and knowledge. It also plays a number of more specific roles within the individual sectors.

4.1 Rule and norm developer

Developing common rules and norms is perhaps the most important of the multilateral system's tasks. Over the years, several thousand agreements have been developed that cover most aspects of intergovernmental cooperation, globally and regionally.

The states of the world would not have been able to arrive at common global goals like the Sustainable Development Goals without multilateral mechanisms. The set of rules developed under the WTO have led to increased international trade and value creation. The ILO has contributed to improving labour standards. States have agreed on guidelines for handling infectious disease outbreaks through the World Health Organization (WHO). The WHO can also set professional norms and standards for international and national use. The EU acquis today covers almost all areas of society, from trade and labour market standards to the environment, greenhouse gas emissions and national border control. A great number of these European rules apply to Norway through the EEA Agreement, the Schengen Agreement and a number of other agreements entered into with the EU.

Multilateral agreements and instruments can take many forms, and with different mechanisms to ensure compliance. Some agreements establish courts, such as the European Convention on Human Rights, which established the European Court of Human Rights. Other agreements impose legally binding obligations without procedures through which other countries can address violations or invoke sanctions. There are also instruments that are politically binding without being legally binding under public international law. The 2030 agenda with the Sustainable Development Goals is only politically binding.

The multilateral system also plays a role in developing international norms, which constitute rules of action based on expected conduct rather than rules of law or agreements. The UN system, the OECD, the multilateral development banks and IMF are examples of important socio-economic standard setters. A single resolution in the UN General Assembly cannot change the world, but the sum of resolutions can be of substantial normative significance.

4.2 Initiator and implementer

The multilateral system facilitates the joint implementation of tasks by member states. This could be specific tasks, such as when the International Maritime Organization (IMO) determines regulations for ships and crews, and approves sailing routes, the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) runs refugee camps, or the UN Development Programme (UNDP) implements development projects. In their most advanced form, the organisations can be assigned responsibility for whole policy areas, such as when the EU has been authorised to pursue a common trade policy on behalf of member states, or coordinate the member states' implementation of international climate agreements.

Many organisations have the authority to make decisions that bind member states. With a few exceptions, the UN decision-making bodies generally have voting rules that entail majority

decisions. Consensus is often sought to avoid voting processes and to ensure that as many states as possible support the decision. Working in accordance with the consensus principle often means that decisions take more time, but this also means that they have broader support, thereby ensuring greater compliance. There are also organisations that can make supranational decisions with direct effect in the member states' legal systems. The EU is the prime example of this.

The UN Security Council has a unique position because it can make decisions that are binding on all UN member states, and approve the use of military force and other measures as sanctions.

4.3 Dispute settlement mechanism and monitoring body

The multilateral system also functions as a dispute settlement mechanism for states. Before World War II, disputes between states were resolved by arbitration or by the Permanent Court of International Justice, which was established in connection with the League of Nations. After WWII, the International Court of Justice (ICJ) in The Hague was established as one of the principal UN bodies, with authority to rule on disputes between states that agree to it hearing the case.

The establishment of a dedicated court interpreting European Union law (then Community law) and applying it equally to all member states was an idea that spawned from the establishment of the European Coal and Steel Community, the precursor to the EU. We have subsequently seen the emergence of more courts and dispute settlement mechanisms related to specific areas or individual conventions. The best known of these include the WTO's Dispute Settlement Body, the International Tribunal for the Law of the Sea (ITLOS), the European Court of Human rights, and the International Criminal Court (ICC).

Within the framework of international organisations, supervisory bodies have also been established that, through reports and country visits, consider how states meet their obligations and provide advice and guidance to the states. Such supervisory bodies are common in the area of human rights. Examples are the UN Human Rights Treaty Bodies and special procedures of the Human Rights Council, and the Council of Europe Commissioner for Human Rights. The hearings in the UN Human Rights Council under the Universal Periodic Review (UPR) scheme institutionalise dialogue on the human rights situations in different countries.

4.4 Idea and knowledge producer

Multilateral institutions can contribute knowledge and ideas that are valuable to both the organisation's own work and to member states. High-quality data and analyses contribute to a common international reference framework, as well as forming the basis for well-informed national decisions. The OECD's statistical and analytical work is an example of this, as is Eurostat in the EU. The IMF is also important for the production of statistics. The World Meteorological Organization (WMO) is responsible for coordinating information and activity between countries and regions, thus providing information about the state of the atmosphere and the most precise weather forecasts available. The UN Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) produces statistics and provides a knowledge base for food production and the global nutritional status.

Another example is the UN Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, which aims to provide all countries with the best possible scientific basis for understanding climate change and its potential effects on people, the environment and society at large. The World Bank and the regional development banks also possess vast amounts of empirical knowledge on what does and does not work in the fight against poverty. Reports from these organisations form the basis for international and national debates on how policy can be improved. Data collection also contributes to valuable monitoring and evaluation functions.

Multilateral institutions are important arenas for the expert communities of member states working within the institution's area of responsibility, both to present common solutions and to discuss what constitutes good policy. An example here is the many expert groups that have been established to advise the European Commission during the process of preparing new regulations. The EEA Agreement ensures that Norwegian experts can take part in relevant groups. Similar processes take place in the Council of Europe, where Norway actively participates.

4.5 Meeting place and platform

The multilateral system constitutes a meeting place for the states of the world and other interna-

tional parties. Many multilateral forums function as institutionalised arenas for dialogue between states. Both official meetings and informal dialogue are important elements of addressing intergovernmental disputes and finding good common solutions.

Multilateral forums also function as an arena for carving out new policy and as a platform for communicating political messages. A good example is the UN General Assembly's high-level week, where every autumn, all governments of member states are given an opportunity to present their own opinions and listen to those of other states. In the EU, such sharing of opinions between member states takes place on a daily basis at all levels. The multilateral system also functions as an arena for dialogue between states and civil society, the private sector, expert communities and other relevant parties. Platforms, events and fixed cooperation structures provide opportunities for civil society, expert communities and other parties to influence national authorities.

5 Challenges to the multilateral system

The world is facing major global challenges that no state is able to solve alone. At the same time, states are less inclined to turn to multilateral organisations to solve common challenges through compromise and cooperation. A recent example is how the UN Security Council, the international community's preeminent body for international peace and security, has handled the situation in Syria. Here, states have proclaimed their own standpoints rather than working together to find solutions.

We also seen this tendency in other organisations at the global level, such as in the WTO, and at the regional level, for example in OSCE. The EU, and to some extent NATO, also experience more severe internal conflicts. Multilateral cooperation is weakened when states choose to act alone. It undermines the international community's ability to find joint solutions, and the smallest and weakest states will be the first to feel the impact.

Fatigue, increased polarisation and inadequate funding affect much of the multilateral system today. Increased pressure can revitalise multilateral institutions if it mobilises the system's defenders, but the more multilateral cooperation is neglected, the harder it is to maintain well-functioning organisations and the will to reform.

It is therefore important to emphasise that significant parts of the extensive network of institutions that make up the present multilateral system still function well and continue to safeguard Norwegian interests. For example, this is true for organisations working in the fields of humanitarian assistance, copyright, economics and security, but also a number of other areas.

This chapter discusses some of the main challenges the multilateral system faces today: changes in the balance of power; growing bilateralisation; values, norms and rights under pressure; criticism against economic globalisation; a lack of representativeness, efficiency and results; in addition to new challenges that need to be addressed.

5.1 Changes in the balance of power

The multilateral system has been in a constant state of change since its establishment. The changes we are seeing now, however, are more fundamental and are unfolding faster than previously. This is not least due to changes in the global balance of power.

The US and the EU remain major economic powers, but the growth rates in China, India and other emerging economies, which far exceeds growth in Europe and the US, are shifting the economic centre of gravity eastwards. This is changing the global balance of power. The trend is reinforced by the fact that the military balance of power is also shifting. The power of the US and Europe is weakening relative to other great powers and actors because others now possess a greater ability and willingness to play an international role. This changes the conditions for international cooperation.

Bigger political differences and more rivalry in and between states make it more difficult than before to find good multilateral solutions. There is no longer one unrivalled global power, and therefore no dependable 'centre' to navigate by in a world with multiple poles. This creates more unpredictability between states and tension in the multilateral system. At the same time, it is more challenging to deal with the growing international footprints of authoritarian states when the unity between the US and important European states is challenged by internal disagreement.

The situation that the multilateral system is currently facing has not suddenly arisen, but is rather the result of shifts in global power over time. Because of this, there is disagreement regarding the extent to which traditional developing countries, including countries such as China, India and Brazil, should take on more commitments in step with their economic growth, or still be allowed to retain the privileges they have enjoyed in line with smaller or poorer developing countries. This applies in particular to the trading system and climate agreements, where the requirements for developing countries have been

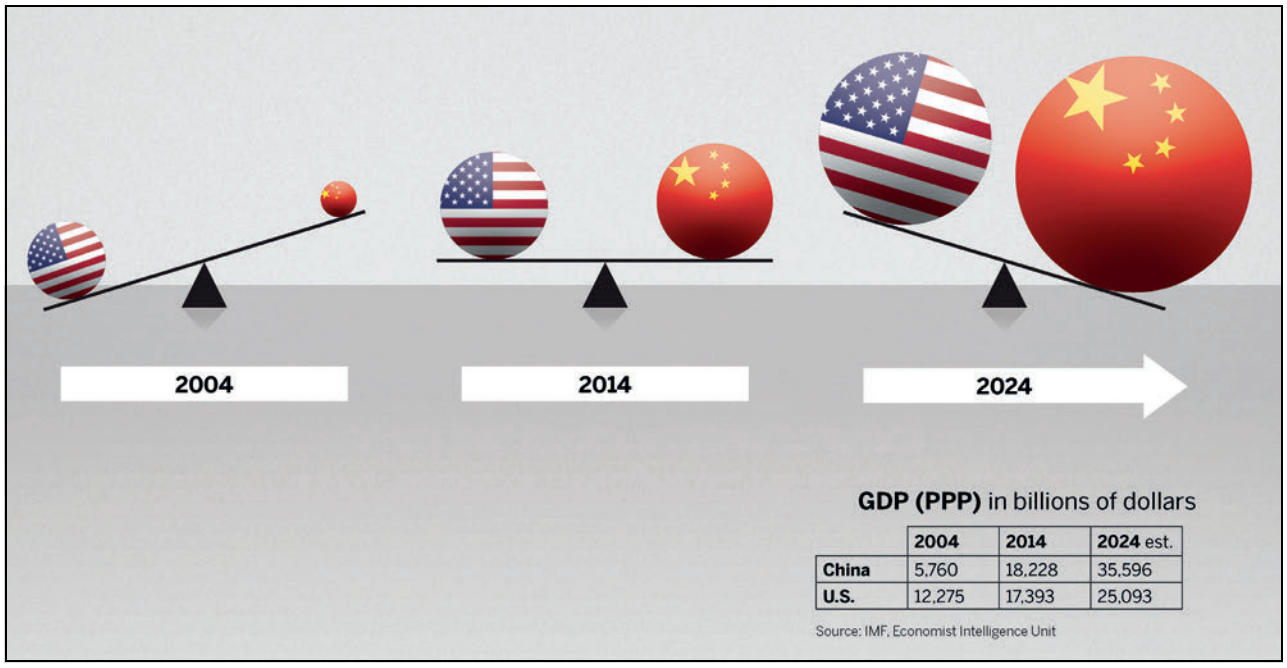

Figure 5.1 Who's rebalancing whom? China's economic power relative to the US.

Source: Allison, Graham T. Destined for War: Can America and China Escape Thucydides's Trap?. 2017, p. 9. Designer: Andrew Facini

more lenient than for wealthier countries. The US in particular, but also the EU, as well as Norway and other countries, argue that China should no longer be able to use its status as a developing country to avoid taking on greater commitments.

Historically, the US, as the world's biggest economy, has contributed by far the most to funding the multilateral system. The economic development in China and other emerging economies means that these states must cover a greater share of the costs. This is the case in the UN, among other organisations, where new estimates of states' mandatory contributions puts China as the second biggest contributor in the period 2019–2021. Increasingly, emerging economies are also expected to pay more in voluntary contributions. China in particular is showing a greater willingness to shoulder this responsibility. Increased financial support from emerging powers also gives them greater possibilities to set the agenda for and influence the organisations' work.

The conflict between the traditional industrial countries and what are now emerging economies is also about the latter's position in the world not being sufficiently reflected in the multilateral structures. Countries in Africa and Latin America, for example, do not have permanent seats on the UN Security Council, which reduces their willingness to take on commitments on behalf of institutions that are perceived as still being dominated by European countries and North America.

The changes in US–China power relations have resulted in a strategic rivalry between the two great powers. This rivalry has negative consequences for the multilateral system, which has been particularly visible in the area of trade. The crisis in the WTO is closely related to the ongoing economic conflict between the two states. A temporary solution to the trade conflict will not change the underlying causes of the strategic rivalry between the US and China. This rivalry could be long-lasting and plays out in a number of international arenas.

China has accounted for half of global growth since the financial crisis in 2009. The prolonged belief that economic growth and engagement policy towards China would lead to a market economy and democratisation, has been replaced in many countries, and particularly in the US, by frustration over what many feel is a lack of Chinese compliance with economic rules of the game and a fear of being outcompeted. Many American politicians wish to level the playing field, both economically and militarily. China is conducting a major military build-up, with particular focus on naval defence, and in 2018 surpassed the US as having the world's largest navy with over 300 ships. It will take long time before the Chinese fleet can measure up against the US military force

because of the US' military technological advantage, but China is challenging the US in an increasing number of strategic areas, such as long-range precision weapons, nuclear weapons and space-based defence systems.

While China previously tended to avoid the costs related to international leadership, today its ambitions for wielding power in multilateral institutions is growing. This inspires other emerging economies that also wish to convert their economic and military importance into multilateral influence. This power struggle, which is both understandable and unavoidable given the shifting global balance of power, must be resolved to secure the future of the multilateral system.

China has generally chosen to work within established institutions such as the UN, the World Bank, the IMF and the WTO. Although the new Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB) was established on China's initiative and as a potential rival to established institutions, it operates in accordance with multilateral principles and has to date worked closely with the World Bank and the Asian Development Bank (ADB). China's Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) is a new structure for cooperation between China and a number of other countries and organisations to promote connectivity in the broad sense – infrastructure, trade, communication and energy cooperation. BRI offers China significant influence through a number of economic commitments and close bilateral ties to other states.

China and other emerging powers use their weight to advance values and norms in the multilateral system that are different to those on which the liberal world order is based. This manifests itself in different ways, for example in votes or in the choice of words and terms used in texts negotiated between the states. An example is the growing debate in the UN on the concepts 'win-win' and 'mutually beneficial cooperation,' which China increasingly promotes in resolution texts. These apparently unifying concepts have been the subject of debate because they emphasise cooperation between states, at the expense of the state's obligations to comply with rights.

It is difficult to see how it is possible to make any substantial progress in global cooperation if the US and China cannot work together. If pressed to take sides in cases where the interests of the US and China conflict, the rivalry between the two states can also restrict the room for manoeuvre for other states and the possibilities for finding solutions in the multilateral system.

Russia remains a key political and military power in the international system and has once again played a greater international role in recent years, including in multilateral forums. Russia takes a clear national perspective in its work in the UN Security Council, and is sceptical to relinquish any national decision-making powers. The country sees the multilateral system as an arena where the great powers can cooperate on areas of common interest, but is reluctant to recognise the institutions' right to limit the room for manoeuvre of nation states.

Russia's attitude towards the Security Council's handling of the war in Syria is an example of this, where it has issued a number of vetoes and complicated the council's work. Its vetoes have primarily concerned sanctions and investigations on the use of chemical weapons, rather than the use of military force by the international community. Russia also challenges the multilateral human rights architecture, including by attempting to undermine the UN Human Rights Council's influence. At the same time, multilateral work is a high priority for Russia and it spends considerable resources on it. When common ground can be found with this country, it may persuade many other countries to follow suit.

Regional powers such as India, Indonesia, South Africa, Brazil, Turkey and Mexico have also emerged as important players in the multilateral system. The influence of emerging powers, however, is undermined by the lack of agreement between them. China and Russia, for example, are often acting in concert in the UN and other organisations, but do not share a common vision of what a new world order should look like. If there was more agreement and coordination among regional powers, the changes in the content of the multilateral system could have been even greater than what we see today.

The G20[1] is an example of a new concept that has sought to encompass shifting power relations in the international system. The group was established in 1999 as a forum for ministers of finance and central bank directors, but was upgraded to the head of government and head of state level in 2008 to find solutions to the financial crisis. Although the G20 is not formally a decision-making body, it has become an important agenda setter, also in relation to issues like climate and

[1] Argentina, Australia, Brazil, Canada, France, India, Indonesia, Italy, Japan, China, Mexico, Russia, Saudi Arabia, the UK, South Africa, South Korea, Turkey, Germany, the US and the EU.

energy matters. The G20 does not have its own secretariat other than the resources that are provided by the participants, but uses global institutions like the IMF, the World Bank, the OECD and the WTO as its suppliers.

The shifting centre of power eastwards and to some extent southwards, has demonstrated the need for European countries that share the same liberal and democratic values to stand together to promote their interests and values in the multilateral system. The EU plays a key role in this respect. No EU member states, which are all small or medium-sized in the global context, have enough political influence to meet the challenges from the east and south on their own.

Well-functioning multilateralism is crucial to the EU, which itself is based on binding cooperation and respect for common rules and institutions. The EU is therefore among the most vocal defenders of the multilateral system and is a valuable partner for Norway, the UN and other regional organisations. In recent years, the EU has made considerable efforts to protect international agreements from which the US has withdrawn or threatened to withdraw. Given the changing global power relations, the EU's role as an international actor and defender of liberal values is more important than ever.

However, the EU's ability to play a role in the multilateral system depends on internal concord. Such concord cannot be taken for granted in a union comprising 28 member states. The greatest challenge is that the governments of certain member states have recently sown doubts about the basic principles of the cooperation, such as the rule of law principles, the value of an active civil society, and respect for common decisions and institutions. If such attitudes gain momentum and take root in core member states, the EU will become substantially weaker, also in the international arena. It will become more difficult for the EU to oppose unwanted policy from other countries when internal disagreement in Europe is more prominent.

NATO has implemented major reforms since 2014, and is one of few multilateral organisations that is more capable of fulfilling its duties now than just a few years ago. Shifting power relations that affect NATO are primarily Russia's growing ability and willingness to use military force, and to some degree, the shifting US-China power relations. Russia's use of force in breach of international law has undermined security in Europe and cooperation in the OSCE, the Council of Europe and the NATO-Russia Council. However, it has also made NATO more relevant, and created stronger ties among member states and greater willingness to prioritise collective defence and deterrence. This is playing out at the same time as the US is strengthening its military presence in Europe. However, we cannot ignore the fact that current challenges in the transatlantic dialogue also surface in the context of NATO.

Russia's behaviour also challenges European states' right to decide their own foreign policy, including which alliances they choose to join. This is in conflict with the basic principles of international cooperation to which Russia is also committed, such as those set out in the Helsinki Final Act and the Founding Act of the NATO-Russia Council. In 2017, Montenegro became a new member of the alliance while North Macedonia is expected to join in 2019. NATO has also reinforced its practical cooperation with Bosnia Herzegovina, Ukraine and Georgia.

Power is not only shifting between states, but also from states to other actors. Multinational corporations and non-governmental organisations also possess great influence that can be used to affect matters in the multilateral system of states and organisations. This increases the relevance of new models for international cooperation. Overall, these models can make it easier to reach agreement on important, but difficult questions, particularly with states that are keen to maintain their independence in policymaking. Transferring power to private parties at the expense of multilateral forums, however, can pose a challenge to the representativeness and legitimacy of the initiatives taken.

5.2 Greater preference for bilateralism

The multilateral system is challenged when powerful states choose to solve common problems bilaterally, or at worst unilaterally, rather than multilaterally. Such strategies undermine the negotiating position of small states and generally entail higher costs compared with solutions reached through multilateral cooperation within established institutions. A greater prevalence of bilateral deals can also lead to less predictable and more fragmented relations between states. This is true for trade and security policy, for example, where bilateralism can entail less transparent processes and might prevailing over right.

More bilateralism in international relations will lead to small and medium-sized states in particular having less influence and room for

manoeuvre. While multilateral organisations often ensure that all member states have a voice, bilateralism mainly serves the states that have the power and capacity to impose their will in their relations with other states. More bilateralism in international politics is therefore a particular concern for small countries such as Norway, which will find it more challenging to defend its interests.

There are a number of reasons why states turn away from multilateral forums and rather choose to solve matters directly with other countries or unilaterally. In multilateral organisations, decisions often require consensus among all members and can therefore be lengthy processes. This, in turn, weakens the organisations' room for manoeuvre and undermines nations' trust in and support for them. For example, trust in the UN diminishes when the organisation does not adequately succeed in maintaining international peace and security. Another important trend is that populist tendencies within countries reduce governments' willingness and ability to make the necessary compromises, on which multilateral agreements rely. Populism and nationalism have become impactful political trends in Europe, the US and a number of other areas, and can lead to greater opposition to international cooperation.

The strategic rivalry between China and the US also plays out as a competition over the provision of various benefits to individual states in exchange for bilateral partnerships, military bases, economic investments and loans. The BRI is an example of this, which uses economic diplomacy to strengthen China's bilateral relations. Although the BRI may appear to be a multilateral initiative, it is in reality a number of bilateral agreements in which China has extensive control and is able to use its economic power as a lever.

Russia is to a greater degree than China a regional actor, but has ambitions beyond this. The clearest indication of Russia's level of ambition was its invasion and annexation of Crimea in 2014 and the subsequent destabilisation of Ukraine. This was a clear violation of international law and posed a major challenge to the security architecture in Europe. After the invasion, tensions increased between Russia and Western states, including in Russia's relationship with organisations such as NATO and the EU. Today, like in the past, Russia prioritises its relations with important capitals such as Washington, Berlin and Paris, above multilateral forums like NATO and the EU.

Bilateral and regional strategies are particularly on the rise in the area of trade policy. According to trade theory, trade agreements encompassing as many economies as possible will provide the greatest welfare gains. It has nonetheless been difficult to reach agreement in the WTO over the past 15 years on new trade agreements that encompass all members, because of diverging interests. Due to these and other disagreements, states and regional groups have chosen instead to negotiate new bilateral and regional trade agreements. This trend is further strengthened under the sitting US administration, which is of the view that the US can achieve the best results by using its national influence in bilateral negotiations. In 2017, the US withdrew from the Trans-Pacific Partnership Agreement (TPP), and the 11 other states in the group instead entered into a separate trade agreement without the US.

The current US administration appears to a greater degree to see international negotiations as zero-sum games, where some win while others lose. In the past, the US has been more willing to give other states gains to conclude international agreements that benefit the international community as a whole. An example of this is the Paris Agreement, which the US has announced it will leave. Trade cooperation in the WTO is another example. Considerations are now more transactional than has previously been the case in Washington, D.C. The current approach is that what the US pays and the commitments it makes must be in line with what it gets in return, including in the short term. If cooperation does not deliver sufficient returns, the US shows a clear willingness to look elsewhere. National room for manoeuvre and immediate results take precedence over support for a rules-based world order, even though the benefits from such an order will be greater over time, including for the US. This zero-sum approach provides incentives for giving preference to bilateral relations.

Historically speaking, the US' attitude towards international cooperation has swung like a pendulum between isolationism on the one hand, to a willingness to carry the multilateral system on the other. The current tendency towards withdrawal precedes the sitting administration. The pressure from American voters to reduce the US's international involvement has increased over the past three decades, and is expected to continue in the years ahead. All of the previous three presidents have advocated a more limited American role abroad. There is bipartisan agreement in Congress on the need for better burden-sharing in international organisations, and on the need to 'win' the strategic competition with China. The US

view of and approach to China has fundamentally changed in recent years.

A crucial question in the years ahead will be how to prevent one or more of the great powers withdrawing from or blocking the work of important multilateral organisations, and the organisations imploding as a result. It is therefore important to take the great powers' concerns about the shortcomings of the multilateral system seriously.

At the same time, it is cause for concern that certain influential countries place less weight on multilateral cooperation than previously. In particular, there appears to be less willingness to enter into binding agreements. While there is progress in areas where the states agree on general policy goals, such as the 2030 Agenda with the Sustainable Development Goals, few intergovernmental agreements are entered into at present that entail limitations to national sovereignty. This is a problem because solving challenges in areas such as climate change and environmental degradation, security and trade requires states to compromise and take on commitments.

5.3 Values, norms and rights under pressure

The liberal world order has been crucial to the development of the multilateral system's rules and institutions after World War II. This has put pressure on states to respect the rule of law, individual liberties, human rights and democracy. When the substance of the multilateral system changes and becomes less liberal, the system's normative role will also change. It will, for example, be more difficult for the UN to promote human rights internationally if illiberal states succeed in weakening the formulation of such rights in the resolutions adopted by the UN. Today, we see that more states are less concerned about receiving criticism than previously, and that they can violate established norms and commitments under international law, including in the area of human rights, without political cost.

More people than ever get their social and economic rights fulfilled. In 2015, around a billion fewer people lived in extreme poverty than in 1990.[2] At the same time, however, there have been setbacks and deterioration of civil and political rights in many countries. The *Freedom in the World 2019* report by Freedom House showed that the very cornerstones of democracy, such as free and fair elections, minority rights, freedom of the press, and the rule of law, have been undermined in many states. The report found that 68 countries suffered net declines in political rights and civil liberties during 2018, while only 50 countries registered gains. The global trend has been negative every year for the past 13 years.[3]

Pressure is mounting from many corners. Authoritarian states demonstrate greater confidence than previously in international organisations such as the UN. They do not accept what they refer to as definitions of and standards for democracy and human rights dictated by the West – even when they stem from agreements they themselves took part in negotiating. These states often see multilateral mechanisms as restricting national control and imposing a policy of supranational, unwanted demands. They place high priority on the principles of sovereignty and non-interference in matters of internal affairs. It is more important to many of these states that the multilateral system contributes to development, prosperity, stability and peace at the national level rather than stipulating normative standards.

When states rank human rights, with the claim that economic and social rights should take priority over political and civil rights, this challenges and complicates the work of multilateral institutions such as the UN Human Rights Council. China in particular argues that economic development must come before other considerations, and has succeeded in promoting this view, among other things by funding and promoting certain Sustainable Development Goals.

We are also increasingly seeing an artificial contrast being created between territorial security and human rights. In addition, the states have different views of what constitutes human rights violations, how valuable it is to hold the authorities accountable for such violations, and to what extent bringing the parties to justice can contribute toward stability and sustainable development.

When illiberal and authoritarian states become more active in the multilateral system, liberal, democratic states face a dilemma. Should they support multilateralism because of its intrinsic value, even if the results from multilateral processes would weaken established rights and are not in accordance with the democracies' liberal foundations? Or should states stand by their values even if it means greater polarisation, inability to act or the deterioration of important institu-

[2] The World Bank (2019). Poverty

[3] Freedom House (2019). Democracy in Retreat. Freedom in the World 2019

tions? If the development continues in the same direction as today, this dilemma will become increasingly difficult to handle.

Liberal values and fundamental rights and freedoms are not only being challenged globally, but also in our own region. The developments with regards to the rule of law, democracy and human rights seen in a number of European countries are troubling. A number of political leaders have exploited their majority power and introduced legislative amendments that challenge or violate international commitments. Civil society and the freedom of the press have been noticeably curtailed in certain countries. It will become more difficult for the EU to be a significant normative actor at the international level when its member states no longer see eye to eye on certain liberal values.

In the OSCE, the normative work is relatively stagnant. Attempts are being made to undermine commitments, norms and values, and to limit civil society's participation in the OSCE's human rights and democracy work. The OSCE's arms control work and confidence-building security policy measures also face severe challenges. The situation reflects the conflicts between countries at the regional and global levels. The OSCE is an arena for debate on international values and interests, where the dividing lines also run across the usual East–West division, characterised by polarisation and confrontation. The OSCE's practical work at the national level on promoting democracy, human rights, equality, security sector reform, and the prevention of violent extremism and terrorism is nonetheless still of great importance.

There has always been a certain spectrum of values among NATO's member states. However, the alliance has experience in maintaining cooperation, even in periods where certain states pursue a policy that, in some areas, is in violation of the alliance's common values. The effect of these differences on the alliance's practical policy has therefore been limited. Candidate countries are subject to the same strict requirements as previously, and despite the development, NATO has in recent years strengthened its work on ensuring that relevant UN standards are reflected in the alliance's operations, particularly in relation to women, peace and security, children in armed conflicts and civilian protection.

The US is one of the countries that has changed its policies, which in turn has added to the pressure in certain areas. It withdrew from the UN Human Rights Council in 2018, has harshly criticised the International Criminal Court and is no longer a like-minded country when it comes to women's sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR), as well as the rights of vulnerable groups. The latter is clearly demonstrated by the US proposal to remove or dilute references to sexual and reproductive health services and rights in resolutions under negotiation in, for example, the UN. Abortion and sexual orientation in particular are topics that the current administration does not wish to discuss. This makes it difficult to make progress in these areas at the international level.

However, the global picture is not solely negative. There are indications of progress in some areas. An increasing number of countries have ratified the UN's core human rights conventions. There has been positive development in countries such as India, Nepal and Japan in the area of sexual orientation and gender identity (LGBTI). There has also been progress in a number of countries with regards to the abolition of the death penalty, particularly in Africa. In addition, women's rights have improved in a number of Latin American countries. Although the general trend is negative, the conditions for civil society organisations have also improved in some countries.

However, the situation indicates that we are living in a period of time where protecting and safeguarding established norms and rights is as important and necessary as pushing for progress. What this means for Norway is discussed in Chapter 6.

5.4 Criticism against economic globalisation

Increasing inequality within countries is one of the causes of greater discontent with economic globalisation and distrust in the international institutions that have facilitated it, particularly in the rich parts of the world.

Economic globalisation contributes to higher growth and productivity through access to larger markets and technology, increased competition, specialisation and division of labour. It has been a major factor in reducing inequality between countries and in achieving a major global reduction in poverty over the past 30 years. Freer trade between countries gives consumers and companies access to a range of goods and services at lower prices, which benefits everyone. It also means that producers gain access to larger markets. The rules-based multilateral trade system

has formed the basis for this globalisation by facilitating more open, stable and predictable markets.

Globalisation increases the size of the economic pie that can be shared, but the gains are not automatically shared among all economic groups. Economic globalisation can also lead to increased inequality within countries, but the causation behind this is complex.

One explanation for this development is that the global supply of cheap, low-skilled labour has increased following the gradual integration of countries such as China and India into the global economy. Access to high-skilled labour has increased to a lesser degree. The changed composition of the labour force participating in the global economy has affected labour markets and the distribution of income in developed economies. Jobs for those with little education have been outsourced abroad, while higher labour migration has increased competition for the jobs that are left.

The OECD[4] presents figures showing that real wages in member states over the past 20 years have not kept pace with the growth in productivity. This means that workers are now left with a smaller share of the economic pie than previously, while the owners of capital take a greater share. Both the OECD and IMF[5] believe that technological change and globalisation explain most of the decline in the share allocated to wages in industrial countries post 1990. There is no agreement on which factor contributes the most to increased inequality, but evidence suggest that it is the introduction of new technology rather than trade in itself. Figures show that the richest pull ahead from both the middle class and the poorest in society. This contributes to increased inequality.

OECD numbers also indicate greater income inequality between workers today than previously. Automation has meant that the demand for labour with mid-range wage and education requirements has been undermined in a number of countries. The OECD[6] has also identified increased inequality of opportunity, including access to education.

The increase in international market concentration can also lead to a more uneven distribution of the gains from globalisation. The importance of technological development, globalisation and changed market conditions are described in more detail in the white paper on distribution and social sustainability.[7]

Ensuring that the gains from globalisation benefit the whole population, and that inequality is reduced, puts great demands on states' domestic economic policy. Much of the discontent with the effects of globalisation are caused by a lack of or poor distributive policies within states. This challenge cannot primarily be solved at the international level, but must be addressed by politicians in each country.

Increased inequality and the economic stagnation of the middle class can lead to populism and diminishing trust in the authorities, particularly if many feel excluded and are unable to achieve a better life through readjustment, education and political participation. This tendency is strengthened and underpinned by nationalist currents, with populist parties using identity politics to generate opposition to the types of binding international cooperation that are seen as restricting the sovereignty of nation states. History has also shown that increased inequality can in some cases lead to conflict.

Some political leaders use protectionism as a simple answer to a complex question, but this kind of policy entails higher costs for consumers and less prosperity to distribute. Nor does protectionism necessarily lead to better distribution. It can, however, lead to weaker demand and lower investment levels. In the long run, this can result in weaker growth in the country's economy. Historically speaking, increased international integration and trade between countries have been vital to growth in the global economy. If protectionist measures are adopted in several major markets, it can weaken the global economy.

Opposition to economic integration can also be linked to the issue of national sovereignty. Trade cooperation can mean that commitments made restrict states' freedom to decide rules by themselves. Determining the right balance between international commitments and national sovereignty can be a controversial matter.

The development described above can lead to a loss of legitimacy for international organisations among the groups of the population that see them as symbols of globalisation. Many critics of globalisation consider the multilateral system to be more of a threat to national sovereignty than a forum where national governments can solve problems together. The portrayal of international collective solutions as being forced on nation states reduces popular support for organisations

4 OECD (2018). Employment outlook 2018.

5 IMF (2017). World Economic Outlook.

6 OECD (2017). Making trade work for all.

7 Report No 13 to the Storting (2018–2019). Muligheter for alle – Fordeling og sosial bærekraft (in Norwegian only).

like the UN and the EU, and may diminish their normative power. Employees of international organisations are portrayed as global elites who are above national policy, despite the fact that they work under mandates from member governments. In the long term, this can lead to political pressure against participation in and funding of the multilateral system.

5.5 Lack of representativeness, efficiency and results

Trust in international cooperation is dependent on it being relevant, legitimate and productive. This trust diminishes when international organisations are perceived as incapable of acting, inefficient or unrepresentative. Without change and reform, many of the organisations we have today will not survive. Without attractive multilateral solutions, member states must address their needs in other ways, through forms of cooperation that may be more costly and less inclusive.

The emergence of the system of international organisations must be seen in conjunction with the need to solve concrete challenges as they have arisen. There has not been a 'master plan' for the development of multilateral cooperation. When new needs have arisen, a new organisation has often been established, rather than adapting existing organisations to solve new tasks. When states have found their views unsatisfactorily addressed in an organisation, they have established new mechanisms. This practice has gradually led to a range of organisations and mechanisms with overlapping mandates. Overall, the multilateral architecture has become more complex, more fragmented and less transparent, and in some areas, also less cost effective.

Often, organisations with overlapping mandates do not have the same member states, making it harder to reform and dismantle organisations that are outdated since the states' interests differ. Nonetheless, many of the major challenges we are currently facing, such as climate change and ensuring sustainable development, demand coordinated action across sectors on the part of the global community, at the national, regional and international levels. To achieve this, the multilateral system must be more coherent than is currently the case.

It is also a challenge, however, that the world is changing faster than international institutions are able to reform. States with reduced geopolitical importance are rarely willing to let go of their own institutional power obtained in another age. There is therefore an inherent inertia in the international institutions' ability to adapt to changed geopolitical power relations, since most institutions are governed on the basis of the consensus principle. Even in cases where member states agree on the need for reform, it can be difficult to agree on what form it should take. Reform therefore takes time, and the delay may cause the organisations to become less efficient and lose legitimacy.

The UN is an example in this context. Resolutions on budget and reform issues in the UN are adopted by consensus. The organisation therefore evolves slowly and only after major and prolonged international effort. This poses a major challenge since there is undoubtedly a major need for reform in the UN system. It has long been an issue, for example, to ensure that the various parts of the UN coordinate their efforts well. This applies not least at country level, where the UN operates. The problem relates to how the UN organisations, offices and peacekeeping forces are organised and funded. Extensive reform processes have now been initiated that address the UN development system, management and peace and security work. It is essential to the efficiency and relevance of the UN in the future that these reforms succeed.

States largely agree that reforms are needed in various parts of the multilateral system, but not on the solutions or how to go about reaching them. Norway and other countries share the US view that several multilateral organisations are ripe for reform. The solution, however, is not to tear down the system that the states have carefully built, but to reform it from within. The Government's approach to reform strategies in various multilateral organisations is discussed in Chapter 8.2.

For multilateral cooperation to maintain credibility, national implementation must also be improved. It is ultimately the member states that must comply with their commitments under multilateral agreements. Lack of compliance diminishes the multilateral system's relevance. It is also the case that no multilateral organisation or mechanism can be stronger or more dynamic than its member states are willing to make it, as exemplified by the UN Security Council.

5.6 New problems to be solved

The world is facing a range of new and complex problems that the multilateral system is not cur-

rently set up to handle. The UN Security Council and international humanitarian law were created at a time when wars were largely fought between states, rather than between states and non-state parties such as terrorist groups. Climate change is a complex issue and requires new forms of cooperation that also include stakeholders in areas other than climate and the environment, and cooperation between the private and public sector. Technological developments, such as artificial intelligence, also entail a need for common rules and standards. Developments are unfolding quickly and are difficult to regulate in the international organisations and with the forms of cooperation currently at our disposal. This section discusses some of the new problems that will challenge the global community's ability and willingness to cooperate going forward.

Transnational security challenges

Transnational security challenges are a threat to individuals, societies and states. International terrorism, organised crime, piracy and challenges in the digital space have to be met with international cooperation. The global community has a joint responsibility to strengthen and abide by relevant norms and rules to enhance global stability, safety and development.

The threat from non-state actors is increasing. Terrorist organisations, violent extremist groups and criminal networks are the most prominent actors, and constitute challenges that every state must address, regardless of its geographical and political position. It is difficult to implement response measures, not least in fragile states. Criminal networks thrive in areas with a weak rule of law and widespread corruption. Such networks prevent the development of democracy, good governance, business and tax regimes, and are an obstacle to sustainable economic growth. Another trend is that certain states use non-state parties to act as proxies to avoid being identified.

Illegal trade, human trafficking, illegal financial transactions and other crime generate large cash flows for terrorists, militias and rebel groups. Piracy is an example of organised crime that erodes political structures and has consequences for many countries. Efficient cooperation across national borders is essential to solving these challenges.

Development in digital space has changed the international community and human interaction in a short space of time and in ways we could barely imagine a few years ago. The internet has become the world's most important infrastructure and now constitutes the artery of the global flow of goods, services and information. At the same time, digital threats have become an integrated part of the global security challenges Norway and other countries face.

Digital attacks can in some cases confer as much damage as conventional military force. In conflict situations, conventional military force, digital attacks and a number of other instruments are increasingly used together in what is often referred to as 'hybrid threats'. The purpose is to achieve political or economic objectives, including to undermine political concord, decision-making capabilities and institutions.

Digital attacks, dissemination of disinformation and other tools are also used by states in peacetime, to sway elections and diminish trust in democracy and the rule of law in other countries. An example of this is the attempts to influence the American election in 2016. Norway and other countries see a need for closer international cooperation to reduce the threat level in digital space. The UN, NATO, the EU and OSCE are among the organisations currently discussing this matter.

Artificial intelligence will lead to major changes in areas such as health and transport and in the military sector. Rapid developments in this field have led to a technological race between the great powers. Their views on the security policy, legal and ethical implications of these developments vary, for example in relation to how artificial intelligence can be used in warfare. Finding multilateral solutions that regulate use of this technology may therefore prove to be particularly problematic.

Climate and environment

Problems related to climate change and environmental degradation constitute some of the clearest examples of an area where cooperation across national borders and sectors is necessary.

The solutions require coordinated efforts between actors working in the area of climate change and the environment, and actors and agreements in areas that may have a positive or negative effect on these, such as those relating to trade and the economy. There are clear links between climate and environmental status and global health.[8] Climate and environmental problems can also impact human rights such as the right to food and water. However, political and civil

[8] UN Environment (2019). Global Environment Outlook 6.

human rights can also contribute positively to improving climate and environmental policy.

The Kyoto Protocol and the Paris Agreement were important steps towards solving the problem of climate change. It will be essential that all parties endorse the implementation of the Paris Agreement and raise their ambitions in the coming years. However, it is challenging to reach agreement on international mechanisms and reductions in greenhouse gas emissions that require economic restructuring and policy changes.

Climate change may undermine the extensive global progress in combating poverty. There is also increased acceptance of climate change as a global security challenge. Global warming and its consequences are a direct threat to certain countries and can impact the underlying causes of conflict. Research on the consequences of climate change on security policy show a risk of more conflicts arising over scarce resources.

Migration and refugees

Regular migration may contribute to economic growth globally, reduce inequality between countries, and allow millions of people to work their way out of poverty. Norway, for example, has benefited greatly from the free movement of labour that has followed from the EEA Agreement. Migration can also be of benefit to individuals.

People moving for different reasons across state borders is nothing new. What is new is the great volume, speed and dramatic circumstances that surround migration today. Irregular migration in the form of illegal border crossings and residence is an extensive and increasing problem, not only in Europe and Africa, but also in other parts of the world. Persecution, war, conflict, oppression, poverty and states that do not provide basic services are among the reasons why people leave their country of origin, often combined with an expectation of protection and/or a better standard of living elsewhere. Climate change and population growth are likely to further increase migration pressure in the years ahead.

Few topics create more polarisation and political divide than migration, both with respect to individual countries and in international organisations. A recent example is the work on the Global Compact on Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration (GCM) within the framework of the UN. It is also evident in discussions in the EU, particularly on the development of a common asylum policy and a solidarity mechanism for sharing the burden when large numbers of asylum seekers arrive.

States must use the multilateral system to find solutions to the problems that cause irregular migration. This means addressing the root causes. The UN system alone has more than 20 specialised organisations, funds, programmes and units working on different aspects of migration. Better coordination is therefore essential.

Cross-border threats to health

The world is becoming more interconnected. We travel more, trade more and carry more infectious diseases with us in our luggage. International outbreaks of bird flu, SARS and foot and mouth disease have shown how vulnerable society is when faced with cross-border threats to health. However, countries at all stages of development are increasingly faced with the same health threats. Non-infectious diseases, for example, make up an increasing proportion of the disease burden in low and middle income countries. The reasons for this lie partly or completely outside the individual country's control.

To prevent and cope with challenges such as infectious disease outbreaks, antimicrobial resistance, aggressive marketing of unhealthy products like tobacco and alcohol, air pollution and poor access to medicines, it is necessary to strengthen international cooperation. This requires wide-reaching multilateral organisations that ensure good coordination between countries and between sectors.

Part II
Consequences of changes in the multilateral system for Norway

6 Norwegian interests in multilateral cooperation

Given the characteristics of our geography, economy and resources, Norway is particularly dependent on a well-functioning and well-regulated international community. Defending and strengthening international rule of law and multilateral cooperation is therefore a core priority for Norway. The multilateral system also provides many opportunities to promote our values. This chapter describes why the multilateral system is valuable to Norway in important thematic areas, with examples of how the Government works to safeguard our interest in these areas, as well as the challenges and opportunities we are facing.

6.1 International law

The international rules on which Norway's security, welfare and economy depend are largely developed within the multilateral system. Through active participation in multilateral cooperation, Norway can contribute to ensuring that the rules safeguard our interests as well as possible. The UN Convention on the Law of the Sea, for example, has made it possible for us to exploit natural resources on the Norwegian continental shelf in a long-term and predictable manner. International law means that states can often avoid bargaining, which less powerful states often stand to lose.

All of Norway's international interests, including the multilateral system itself, are affected by the rules of international law. The values and norms we defend, governed by our interests, are enshrined in international agreements. The mandates of the intergovernmental organisations we establish are set out in international agreements. The international agreements we are committed to, as well as customary international law, sets the framework for our actions and interests. When the UN Security Council adopts binding resolutions, they represent commitments under international law for us. International law therefore stipulates the legal framework for all topics included in this white paper.

As described in Chapter 5, the multilateral system is facing significant challenges. The values and norms underpinning the liberal world order are under pressure. This is significant because states may become more selective in relation to their commitments under international law, or interpret such law in new ways. Customary international law may also evolve in new directions.

Changed priorities can also lead to countries demanding changes to existing agreements and making it more difficult to enter into new ones. This represents a major challenge for Norway, which has been well served by the current agreements under international law.

Where we previously saw more and more states endorsing core international agreements and seeking admission to key organisations, we now see a tendency towards countries refusing to take on new commitments under international law, and even withdrawing from those they have already submitted to. This makes both the institutions and the agreements less effective and less relevant. More than before, we also see certain states violating their international obligations and blocking international dispute settlement because they fear conviction for their own violations of international law. Fortunately, this is still not a general trend, but the development is nonetheless troubling.

International law, like national law, is inherently dynamic. Norway must always work to ensure that international law is developed, maintained and interpreted in a manner that is in line with our strategic interests and values.

6.1.1 Human rights

It is in Norway's interest that the multilateral system helps to ensure that human rights are respected in all countries. Our values require us to endeavour to enable all people to live in freedom and security, regardless of where they are. It is also our belief that respecting human rights prevents conflict and promotes development. This makes the world more secure and stable. Promoting human rights, the principles of democracy and

the rule of law lie at the core of Norwegian foreign policy.

Human rights are fundamental rights that everyone is entitled to, regardless of their ethnicity, gender, religion or other status. The concept of human rights originated in the UN and the rights regulate the relationship between the state and the individual. The UN Universal Declaration of Human Rights from 1948 was followed by a range of legally binding conventions elaborating civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights. Separate mechanisms pertaining to the conventions were also established to guide and monitor the states' implementation of their human rights obligations under international law. These mechanisms aim to ensure that the human rights of all individuals are respected.

The Government will contribute to combating violence and oppression, and prioritise efforts in the field of civil and political rights, including freedom of expression, freedom of religion or belief, and the abolition of the death penalty. Particular attention is also paid to women and vulnerable groups such as children, religious minorities, indigenous peoples, persons with disabilities and sexual minorities. Growing pressure on human rights in many countries and on institutions in the multilateral system require us to work in new ways.

Human rights work is demanding and rife with dilemmas. Norway is a steadfast defender of human rights. We speak up against other countries that violate human rights. We work together with like-minded countries in multilateral forums or on our own, depending on what makes the most impact. In order to be heard, our reactions must be well-considered, and both intended and unintended consequences must be assessed. We are aware that human rights defenders may find it counter-productive or even dangerous to publicly receive support from countries in the West. We must avoid escalating an already difficult situation or putting human rights defenders at even greater risk in such situations. This may mean that our work should be conducted out of the public eye. At other times, we must publicly express our concerns. What matters is that it makes a difference.

Norway has taken on a leading role in multilateral forums to protect human rights defenders. In these cases, working methods and choice of partners must be carefully selected on the basis of the specific case and arena. By dissolving the formation of blocs, splitting traditional regional groups and seeking new partnerships across regions, Norway, as facilitator of the negotiations, has managed to secure broad support for and maintain agreed language in UN resolutions on human rights defenders. This was also the case in March 2019 when member states reached consensus on a strong resolution in support of environmental human rights defenders. In the same way, we seek new partners across regional groups also within other areas of rights, for example in the work on defending sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR).

The multilateral system has a number of mechanisms that are key to promoting and safeguarding human rights. The UN Human Rights Council and the third committee in the UN General Assembly are the most important political arenas for international human rights. Here, resolutions are adopted and political declarations are agreed upon in order to create new and confirm existing norms. Many of the legally binding conventions on human rights have evolved from resolutions adopted by the UN General Assembly. Norway was a member of the UN Human Rights Council from 2009 until 2012 and will, in consultation with the other Nordic countries, present its candidature once again for a three-year period in the 2020s.

The Universal Periodic Review (UPR) mechanism in the UN Human Rights Council is a unique mechanism to ensure that human rights obligations are complied with at the national level. In the UPR, Norway and other countries may address challenges relating to the implementation of human rights in other countries, and make recommendations. In the same way, other countries may make recommendations to Norway. All countries, regardless of size, are treated on equal terms.

The 2030 Agenda with the 17 Sustainable Development Goals has opened up new avenues to integrate human rights into global and national policies. Most of the Sustainable Development Goals are based on human rights. The fundamental principle of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development – to leave no one behind – strikes at the very core of the fundamental principles of human rights, namely non-discrimination and equal rights and dignity. By respecting human rights, states will also take a major step in implementing the Sustainable Development Goals.

The Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) is the secretariat for the global monitoring mechanisms, assists the states with technical and thematic advice, and provides direction to the international community's work on human rights. The OHCHR is Norway's most important partner in our international human

rights work. In 2018, Norway entered into a four-year agreement on financial and political support to the OHCHR.

In addition to the UN organisations, many other international organisations are also important partners in our common efforts to promote the implementation of and the respect for human rights, the rule of law and good governance, not least the Council of Europe and the OSCE, as well as the European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights (FRA).

Over the past 70 years, the Council of Europe has evolved to become the most prominent forum for development of regulations and standards in the area of human rights, democracy and the rule of law in Europe. More than 200 conventions, agreements and protocols have been negotiated within the Council. The most significant of these is the European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR), but there are also conventions in many other areas, such as the transfer of convicted criminals for the serving of their sentences, anti-corruption, cybercrime, human trafficking, violence against women, sexual exploitation of children and the prevention of terrorism. The organisation's mechanisms that monitor and follow up the conventions are very valuable.

The European Court of Human Rights (ECtHR) is a key instrument in the protection of individual human rights in Europe, and comes as a successful result of regional multilateral work. The court allows individuals to file complaints against states for violations of the ECHR. What makes the court unique is that all 47 member states of the Council of Europe have accepted being subject to the court's jurisdiction, and are thereby bound by the court's rulings. The court also supervises the states' implementation of its judgements. The convention and the court have been important to the lives of many individuals. Since its foundation, the court has heard more than 800,000 cases and delivered more than 20,000 judgements.

The OSCE is an important arena for Norway in order for us to promote democratic values and common multilateral rules. It has a wide range of tools, arenas and instruments at its disposal to ensure common values in key areas of foreign and security policy. Every year, the OSCE organises the Human Dimension Implementation Meeting, which is the largest human rights meeting in Europe, bringing together defenders of democracy and human rights from Central Asia to North America. The OSCE's Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR), the Representative on Freedom of the Media, and the High Commissioner for National Minorities also conduct important work at country level.

The EEA Grants are one of our best tools to promote democracy and stability in Europe. Civil society, good governance and fundamental rights are among the key sectors supported. The EU Agency for Fundamental Rights is an important partner. It will be important in the coming years to use the EEA Grants strategically to safeguard democracy and human rights in a number of the 15 recipient countries. Supporting civil society, the rule of law and freedom of expression are key in this context, as is working for the rights of the Roma people.

The International Labour Organisation (ILO) is the UN specialised agency for labour rights, tasked with the responsibility to ensure decent work. The ILO conventions have played a key role in regulating the Norwegian labour market. ILO supports tripartite cooperation in the labour market and promotes a social model endorsed by the Nordic countries. Globalisation, rapid technological development and climate and environmental challenges require major shifts in the international labour market, and the ILO helps put people at the centre of these processes.

The Aarhus Convention regarding access to environmental data, public participation in decision-making processes, and access to appeal and review by a court of law, helps to promote civil and political rights relating to the environment. 47 countries in Europe and Central Asia are parties to the convention, and it provides for the accession of other states too. In addition, it gives individuals and organisations the right to bring alleged violations of the convention to an independent committee. The committee considers the claims and makes recommendations for the meeting of the state parties to consider.

6.2 Security

Norway's security is reliant on a rules-based world order and binding multilateral cooperation, based on international law and our membership of the UN and NATO. Other ways of organising our security, such as non-alignment, neutrality or defence-related ties to European great powers, have historically not been sufficient for the defence of Norway, nor our sovereignty or political room for manoeuvre over time. Peace and stability are best secured through the broadest possible security policy cooperation. It is essential to

Figure 6.1 The aircraft carrier USS Harry S. Truman and the Norwegian corvette KNM Skudd during the NATO exercise Trident Juncture in October-November 2018. Norway has promoted a stronger engagement from NATO in Northern Europe, the establishment of a new command structure and a new maritime strategy.

Source: Sjøforsvaret

Norwegian interests that the multilateral organisations of which we are members function in a way that protects our national security.

The UN Security Council is the only international organ with a mandate to adopt legally binding resolutions on conflict settlement, peace operations, sanctions and use of force. Helping to ensure that the Security Council is able to solve these tasks as well as possible is in Norway's interests. It is also important that the Nordic countries are represented when the Council debates security policy challenges in our neighbouring areas, such as in Ukraine. This is one of the reasons for Norway's candidacy for the Security Council in the period 2021–22.

For many years, there has been a generally positive development in international law relating to awareness concerning the use of force. The International Criminal Court (ICC) was established based on broad acknowledgement of the principle that no one should be able to evade accountability for their actions in armed conflict. In a difficult period for international cooperation, it is important to Norway that the different elements of the European security architecture are upheld.

Not all parts of the multilateral cooperation on peace and security work as intended. Shifts in balance of power and more rivalry between the great powers have resulted in less willingness to cooperate on conflict resolution, as seen in the UN Security Council. One or more of the permanent members of the Security Council have direct or indirect interests in several of the most important agenda items, and can use their veto rights to prevent joint decisions. In recent years, the Council has been characterised by pointed arguments rather than the search for compromise.

However, the Security Council remains a key meeting place for the great powers. In cases where the permanent members' strategic interests are less prominent, the Security Council generally reaches agreement. In recent years, we have also seen that the elected members of the Security Council can play a constructive role in building bridges when the permanent five do not agree. Sweden's efforts in the Council in the period 2017–2018 demonstrated that a small coun-

try can achieve good results through active diplomacy underpinned by international law. These include gaining support for important resolutions on the provision of humanitarian aid across the border into Syria, and contributing to steps towards a potential solution to the conflict in Yemen.

The UN Charter Article 51 stipulates the states' right to individual and collective self-defence. This forms the basis for the North Atlantic Treaty's Article 5 on collective defence, which is the core of NATO and the keystone of Norwegian security. The US security guarantee is essential to the alliance's credibility and distinguishes NATO from other types of multilateral defence cooperation.

Norway's NATO membership is crucial to balancing the asymmetric relationship to Russia, and to supporting neighbourly relations characterised by stability and cooperation. Collective defence is significantly more cost effective than national or bilateral solutions. For Norway, the alliance also secures a more equal relationship to close allies than we could have achieved through bilateral agreements. NATO also provides a good framework for ensuring democratic control of military force. Through its open door policy, NATO has also been a significant driving force in democratic reforms in Europe since 1989.

Deterrence and defence in NATO have also gone hand in hand with measures to achieve openness, trust and disarmament in Europe. During the Cold War, a number of bilateral and multilateral agreements were established to help reduce military tension between the blocs. Prime examples are the Treaty on Conventional Armed Forces in Europe (CFE), the Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty (START) and the Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces Treaty (INF) on nuclear weapons, and the Open Skies agreement and Vienna Document on mutual right of inspection as confidence and security building measures, for example related to testing. These agreements are now under great pressure.

Since its inception in 1949, NATO has regularly needed to address differences of opinion and political divides between member states. This has not become less of a problem as the number of member states has gradually increased. To maintain allied unity, it is therefore crucial that NATO attends to its core tasks. This means finding a balance between how the alliance addresses new and traditional threats and challenges in different geographical areas. Allied unity also relies on the individual allies taking responsibility for their own security through the development of credible defence capabilities and civil and military contingency planning.

Norway has for a long time pointed to the need for NATO to focus more on core tasks related to collective defence. The adaptation of NATO's command structure, including a new maritime command for the North Atlantic and a new command to improve the movement of troops and equipment within Europe, entails a stronger NATO, not least in the North Atlantic, which is of great importance to us and enjoys broad support among the allies. The Government initiated and advocated the decisions taken by NATO at the summit in 2018 on a new command structure and its maritime dimension. Norway also emphasises participation in NATO operations that address challenges in other areas, such as in Afghanistan and through the training operations in Iraq.

Burden-sharing is essential to transatlantic solidarity. During the NATO summit in Wales in 2014, it was decided that the NATO countries should aim to increase their defence budgets towards two per cent of GDP within ten years. The trend of reduced defence spending in many countries has turned, and the allies' goal is to allocate 20 per cent of the defence budget to investments. It is also an objective that allied forces meet NATO's guidelines and are able to operate together effectively. The Government is following up the summit decision through the Long Term Defence Plan, and in recent years, our armed forces have been significantly strengthened. Burden-sharing will be an important issue in transatlantic relations for many years to come. This is nothing new. It has been a topic of discussion for at least the past 10–15 years. What is both new and challenging, however, is the way the US expresses its views on the matter.

Statements from the US on relations with allies has sown doubt among certain European allies on the strength of the transatlantic ties, and in Europe, certain countries have expressed that Europe must take more responsibility itself, without the US. Over time, sharp language between allies can diminish trust across the Atlantic. Trust is a fundamental element of the transatlantic partnership's mutual commitments. At the same time, the US is currently more involved in European defence, through both NATO and bilateral cooperation, than for many years, including in Norway.

The EU's role in foreign and security policy has been strengthened over the past decade. The organisation has among other things developed a global strategy and taken a number of initiatives

to improve cooperation on the development of defence capacities and military operation projects. Examples include greater cooperation on defence research, the development of defence capabilities and military mobility. The EU also has extensive cooperation in the areas of public safety, crisis management and contingency planning. Norway participates in this cooperation through both the EEA Agreement and bilateral agreements with a number of countries.

In recent years, there has been a major increase in security cooperation in smaller groups in Europe, including purely bilateral arrangements. The development has primarily been motivated by decreasing budgets, rising costs in the defence sector and the need to get more defence for your money. The trend can also be said to be a consequence of the growth of multilateral organisations like NATO. The fact that NATO will soon comprise 30 member states entails a need for smaller and more manageable cooperation groups between like-minded states in the same region.

Norway's most important bilateral defence cooperation is with the US. The main objective is to increase Norwegian and allied security by ensuring that the US and other allies are able to provide military reinforcements to Norway in the event of crisis or war. Joint exercises and training are key aspects of this, as are the prepositioning of US military stocks and US investments in infrastructure to receive allied reinforcements, in Norway.

Norway participates in European defence and security policy cooperation where it promotes our interests, while we also find it important that this shall not come at the expense of the collective defence obligations that are unique to NATO. We cooperate particularly closely with a number of European allies, such as the UK, Germany, France and the Netherlands on operational cooperation, the development of joint capabilities, and smaller forces with rapid reaction capacity. There have also been dynamic developments in the Nordic defence cooperation in recent years, particularly within the framework of NORDEFCO and in areas such as practical joint exercises and training.

It is essential that our bilateral cooperation complements multilateral security policy cooperation rather than undermining it. The multilateral system must contribute as much as possible to collective security in Europe, and we must avoid a renationalisation of security and defence policy.

The Arctic is a region characterised by stability and good international cooperation, based on international law. This is not a given, but the result of policy choices and targeted efforts on the part of the Arctic states. The work carried out under the Arctic Council and the Barents Cooperation is very important to Norway.

The Arctic Council is the only political cooperation mechanism between the eight Arctic states at the government level. The Council is mandated with contributing to sustainable development and protecting the Arctic environment. It has a twofold objective. Firstly, it fulfils the function as an arena for the countries in the region, and where the Nordic countries meet Russia, the US and Canada at the civil servant and political level for dialogue and cooperation on Arctic challenges. In this way, the Council contributes to confidence-building for peace and stability in the region. Secondly, it works within concrete fields at the expert level, particularly in the areas of the environment and sustainable development. Through its work, the Arctic Council helps to promote international cooperation on transnational challenges that no country is able to solve alone. Norway wishes to further develop the Arctic Council's ability and capacity to promote cooperation on common challenges in the Arctic region.

In an age characterised by tense relations between the West and Russia, the Barents Cooperation is an important arena for confidence-building, practical cooperation and constructive dialogue. The Barents Cooperation has received international attention and has been described as a unique peace project. Norway will take over as chair of the Barents Cooperation in October 2019 for two years. The Government will use the chairmanship to further develop this important transnational cooperation.

NATO, the Arctic Council and the Barents Cooperation are examples of how multilateral structures are also important to how we manage important bilateral interests.

Disarmament and non-proliferation

The Government has broad support in the Storting for its active disarmament and non-proliferation policy. The objective is a world without nuclear weapons. The Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) is the cornerstone of this work. There is no shortcut to disarmament and it must be balanced, mutual, irreversible and verifiable.

Several armament control agreements on conventional and nuclear weapons are under pressure. Russia's placement of ground-based intermediate-range missiles in Europe constitutes a violation of the Intermediate-Range Nuclear

Forces Treaty (INF) and has contributed to more tension and less predictability in Europe. Although the agreement is a bilateral one between the US and Russia, it is of major importance to European security. Over a number of years, the US has raised Russia's violations of the INF agreement in diplomatic talks, without Russia changing its conduct. Allies are united in their criticism of Russia's violation of the agreement. The US has reported that it will withdraw from the INF due to Russia's non-compliance. As a consequence, Russia has reported that it will withdraw from the agreement. A suspension of the INF agreement as a result of Russia's violation of the agreement will be negative for European security. It is also a challenge because the INF agreement is one of the few remaining disarmament control regimes we have.

Norway is making efforts to ensure that NATO is in regular dialogue with Russia. We have a common interest in preventing a new nuclear arms race. The continuation of New START (Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty) between the US and Russia after 2021 will be an important instrument in preventing this.

A number of countries have advocated disarmament through a ban on nuclear weapons under the auspices of the UN. NATO's members share the goal of a world without nuclear weapons, but do not consider a prohibition treaty to be an effective tool for nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation going forward. Nuclear weapons form part of NATO's deterrence policy. Norway could not ratify the Treaty without compromising its obligations as a NATO member. None of our allies supports the ban on nuclear weapons and none of the countries that have nuclear weapons supports the treaty. Such a ban on nuclear weapons would therefore not lead to the removal of nuclear warheads.

A review conference for the Non-Proliferation Treaty will take place in spring 2020. It is essential to protect this important agreement that is legally binding on member states. Norway will continue to promote disarmament together with like-minded states, and maintain close dialogue with other regional groups to counteract polarisation and build trust. The most constructive path in this sense is related to the verification of disarmament, an area where Norway has taken the international lead. On Norway's initiative, a group of governmental experts was established in 2016 on the basis of a UN resolution to assess how verification can promote disarmament. Norway chaired the group that comprised 25 countries, including seven nuclear armed states and countries that support the prohibition treaty. The group endorsed a final report in April 2019. The broad support for this work in the UN system that has now been achieved is a major step in the right direction. The group acknowledges that verification is crucial to nuclear disarmament and to achieve the goal of a world without nuclear weapons. This is one of the few topics in the area of nuclear disarmament on which countries work together constructively. The process helps to build trust in a polarised age. Norway will further develop this work during the UN General Assembly. We are also continuing our technical verification cooperation with countries including the UK, Sweden and the US. These efforts are supported by Norwegian expert communities.

In autumn 2019, Norway will join the Board of Governors of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), which is one of the most important arenas for preventing the proliferation of nuclear weapons and radioactive material. We are working to ensure that the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT) enters into force, and we support the important work on a prohibition on fissile material and a reduction of the current stocks. Norway is a driver for phasing out civilian use of highly enriched uranium, which can also be used in nuclear weapons. Disarmament and non-proliferation require patience and a long-term perspective, but this is the only way that we can achieve the goal of a world without nuclear weapons.

The multilateral cooperation on export control helps to operationalise the multilateral agreements that prohibit nuclear, chemical and biological weapons, and promotes accountability in relation to the provision of strategic goods and technology. However, many countries fall outside the multilateral regimes, and Norway is making active efforts to increase their scope and efficiency. In 2019–2020, Norway will chair The Hague Code of Conduct, HCOC, which is a multilateral mechanism to prevent the proliferation of ballistic-missile systems. Norway will work to strengthen the signatory states' implementation of and increase support for this mechanism.

Norway has also ratified the UN Arms Trade Treaty (ATT), which entered into force in 2014 and reached its target of 100 signatory states in 2018. The treaty is the first legally binding multilateral agreement that regulates international weapons trade. The ATT aims to prevent illegal arms trade and establish higher standards for international trade in conventional weapons.

Prevention and conflict resolution

The work on preventing, mitigating and resolving conflicts will require better and more effective international cooperation in the years to come. Norway plays a role in these efforts, including by facilitating peace negotiations and conflict resolution, which has long been a cornerstone of Norwegian foreign policy. The Oslo Agreement of 1993 between Israel and the PLO heralded the start of stronger Norwegian involvement in peace and reconciliation. A range of new processes were later added, including in Guatemala, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Colombia, the Philippines and Afghanistan. Expertise and networks were gradually developed, and successive Norwegian governments have been willing to take the political risk involved in the facilitator role. We take a long-term view and often work out of the public eye. Norway's broad involvement in peace and reconciliation has given us a unique position and experience that will be particularly valuable if we are elected to the UN Security Council.

Conflicts are becoming more complex and implementing peace agreements is becoming more challenging. The work is not only about stopping conflicts, but also about building peace. Processes that involve multiple parties have greater legitimacy and a better chance of culminating in lasting results. Gaining support for peace and reconciliation work in the UN, the international financial institutions and from our close international partners is therefore becoming more important in many situations. Research also shows that peace is more likely to be achieved when women have a strong influence on peace and reconciliation processes.[1]

Through our peace and reconciliation initiatives, we endorse a global order and the multilateral system, on the basis that conflicts must be solved politically and not through violence. When peace initiatives gain the support of the UN, the organisation's relevance is also strengthened, and where conflicts and crises are deterred or contained, the threat to the prevailing world order is also reduced. When we facilitate peace talks, we also help to protect international norms, whether this be international humanitarian law, human rights or the Security Council's resolutions on women, peace and security. Inclusive processes are important to the credibility of those involved, the legitimacy of the process and a sense of ownership among the people. It is crucial to individuals affected by conflict that their rights, needs and priorities are taken seriously. This is essential also for their families and local communities. Restoring norms and rights and healing the wounds after conflicts paves the way for more lasting peace, reconciliation and stability.

Digital threats

Digital attacks are becoming a challenge for more and more countries, including Norway. As one of the world's most digitalised countries, increased use and dependency on technology makes us vulnerable to digital threats.

The digital space has become an arena that highlights differences in security policy. Certain states use the internet for offensive purposes, such as espionage, undermining of political systems and influencing individuals, organisations and choices. The attacks can also be aimed at civil infrastructure and the business sector. On top of that, the digitalisation of society has opened for new types of crime, ranging from financial gain and sabotage to the encouragement of violent extremism.

Most states have now established national cyber security programmes to protect themselves against such threats. There is broad international agreement that general international law also applies to the digital space, but opinions vary on how and when international law is applicable. Certain countries have therefore conferred a need for new separate rules in this area. Norway, along with the allies and other closely related countries, is concerned that this approach could undermine the existing rule of law. We would therefore prefer discussions on how established norms and rules can be made applicable to the digital space. We must also ensure respect for freedom of speech and the protection of privacy in the digital space.

More international cooperation is needed to prevent content from terrorists and violent extremists being spread on the internet. The Government is involved in this work. The Prime Minister has among other things taken part in the French president's initiative in the area, together with selected heads of state and leading internet corporations.

The Government also finds it important to safeguard civil society's ability to continue being at the forefront of developing the internet and digital solutions. The internet as we know it today

[1] Paffenholz, Ross, Dixon, Schluchter and True (2016). Making Women Count - Not Just Counting Women. Published by Inclusive Peace and Transition Institute and UN Women.

has been created by contributions from a diversity of research communities, businesses and activists. States' intervention must ensure continued transparency and the free flow of information. We must therefore rethink how we can include such partners in the global dialogue on managing the digital space.

6.3 Economy

Without binding international agreements and cooperation, Norway would not have been as prosperous as it is today. We are dependent on trade with the rest of the world both to sell what we produce and to buy what we are less well equipped to produce ourselves. Without international regulations for investment, the framework conditions for the Government Pension Fund Global would have been less advantageous. In other words, maintaining the international economic and financial system and contributing to its well-being is a key interest for Norway.

Norway has an open and internationalised economy, with large natural resources that are in global demand, high-tech products, substantial exports of services and a large merchant fleet. Norway has greatly benefitted from open, free and well-functioning international markets governed by a set of common rules. Our products and services gain access to European and other markets through international agreements. We have therefore pursued open markets and free trade through both multilateral and bilateral agreements. The most important arenas for promoting Norway's economic interests globally are the WTO and the IMF, while the EEA cooperation is a key mechanism in Europe. The Free Trade Agreements with 28 countries through EFTA, and bilateral agreements between Norway and individual countries come in addition to this. The Government will make every effort to modernise existing agreements and enter into new Free Trade Agreements.

The Government Pension Fund Global (GPFG), which is among the world's largest sovereign wealth funds, is managed with a view to achieve the highest possible return within an acceptable level of risk. There is an expectation that good financial returns over time depend on well-functioning, open markets for goods and services and sustainable development. This is particularly true for a large, diversified and long-term investor who aims to achieve a return in line with global value creation.

Because our petroleum wealth is invested across the world, Norway's prosperity is affected by developments in international financial markets. By investing our wealth in other countries, Norway has become dependent on well-functioning international financial markets. Due to the size and geographical distribution of the investments, the fund may also be significant to our international relations and how Norway is perceived in other countries. However, there is broad political agreement that the GPFG is to be a financial investor and not a foreign policy tool.

A range of Norwegian companies also invest abroad. By participating in international trade, we strengthen the competitiveness and innovation capacity of the private sector, secure Norwegian jobs and contribute towards increasing the prosperity of Norwegians. This has also resulted in greater purchasing power for Norwegian households. Shifts in the global economy, the development in trade regulations, changes in international financial markets and the stability of international financial systems directly affect the private economy of Norwegians.

Respect for international law and stable international framework conditions for investing abroad and exporting our goods to other countries is important both to the Norwegian authorities and Norwegian businesses. Good governance and combating corruption are also essential factors. The multilateral system has an important task in supporting open markets and mitigating the risks involved in participating in the international economy. The system can also contribute to improving the climate for international investments and multinational corporations by developing international standards that mitigate or resolve challenges that can arise from the activities of multinational corporations. It is essential to Norway that the system succeeds in this.

At the same time, we expect Norwegian businesses to comply with a number of international standards, such as the OECD Due Diligence Guidance for Responsible Business Conduct, the UN Guiding Principles for Business and Human Rights and the UN Global Compact,[2] as well as performing due diligence to avoid adverse impacts on people, society and the environment.

[2] The UN Global Compact is currently the world's largest corporate social responsibility initiative, with more than 8,000 participants, including over 5,300 businesses from 130 countries. By endorsing the Global Compact, a business must endeavour to perform its work in line with ten principles in the areas of human rights, labour, the environment and anti-corruption.

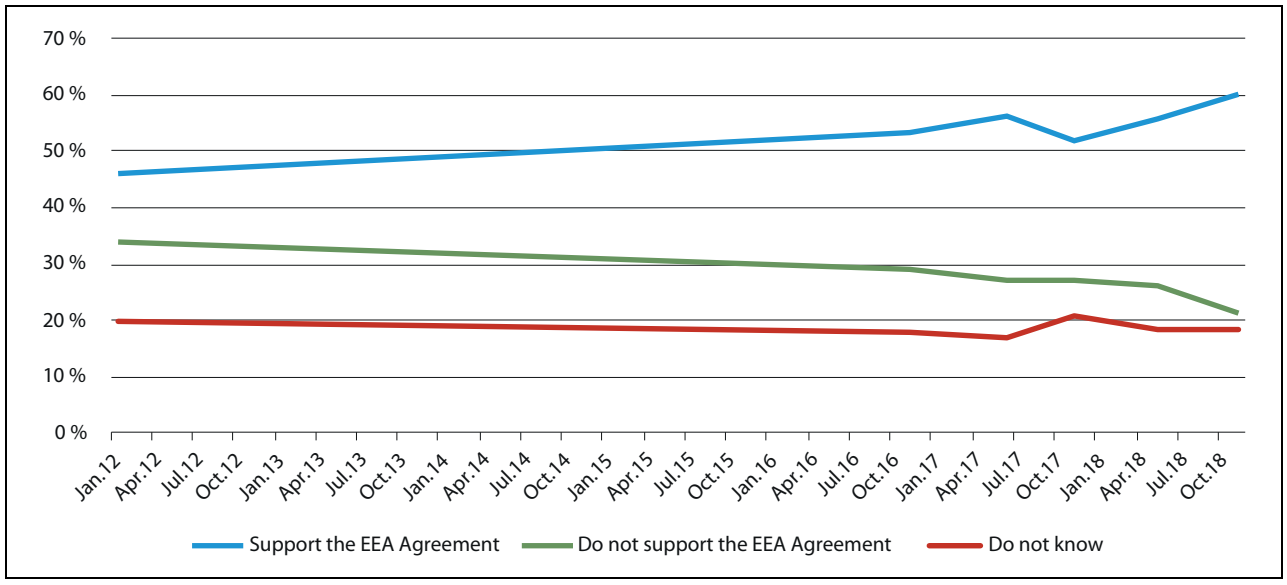

Figure 6.2 Support for the EEA Agreement in Norway, 2012–2018.

Source: Sentio

The Government has proposed strengthening European cooperation against work-related crime in an initiative presented to the European Commission. To achieve results in this area, it is important to improve cooperation with supervisory and regulatory authorities in other countries.

New technology, digitalisation and economic globalisation increasingly affect national states' framework conditions. The growing number of large international businesses that operate in many countries and across borders create challenges for individual countries' ability to develop and uphold domestic regulations. Taxation is a particularly complicated area because companies that operate in many countries can adapt in ways that enable them to pay as little tax as possible, and not necessarily pay to the countries in which the value creation occurs. This can give international companies a competitive advantage over local businesses. The funding of public welfare schemes can also be undermined by major tax revenue shortfalls. International cooperation, particularly within the OECD, is important to tackle these challenges and ensure that companies pay the right amount of tax and to the right countries. The OECD works alongside other institutions to promote coordination between countries and develop effective and fair tax systems.

The WTO's trade rules are the world's 'trade constitution'. These rules help to provide stable framework conditions for the 164 members that combined represent 98 per cent of global trade.[3] When Norway trades with the US, China, Brazil or India, it is done on the basis of the WTO rules. It is important to Norway that disputes that arise are settled in the WTO's dispute settlement system because this ensures that we can raise cases and be treated on a par with larger countries. Norway has used the WTO dispute settlement mechanism on several occasions when dealing with far more powerful counterparts. The EU's anti-dumping measure against Norwegian salmon in 2006 is an example of this. The EU measure was found to be unlawful, and the measure was subsequently revoked.

A more recent example is the case concerning the US imposing additional tariffs on steel and aluminium products in 2018, intended to protect American industry and justified on national security grounds. Norway, the EU and a number of other countries have found this to be in violation of the WTO rules and the case has subsequently been brought before the WTO. An efficient WTO that treats all countries equally is important to secure Norwegian interests and providing predictability for Norwegian businesses.

This is why it is a serious concern for Norway that the WTO is in its deepest crisis since its establishment in 1995. The members must address a number of difficult issues, such as the US criticism of the organisation, including its dispute settlement system, the fact that China's political-economic model is not sufficiently covered by the rules, unresolved negotiation issues in key areas like agriculture, new challenges related to

[3] WTO (2019). About the WTO

the digital economy, and the fundamental problem that a mutually acceptable balance of commitments between traditional industrial countries and emerging economies has not been found.

The fact that China does not operate in full compliance with market economy principles is not in line with the expectations of the other WTO members when China acceded to the WTO in 2001. China is subject to criticism from both the US and European countries for persistent state participation in the economy and for giving foreign businesses insufficient market access. The US and European countries also take a particularly critical view of China's demands regarding technology transfers in order for companies to gain market access to China. Many endorse this criticism. In this context, however, the main challenge for us is that the US chooses to work outside the multilateral rules and conduct bilateral negotiations with China rather than resolving the conflict within the WTO system, and that China to a certain extent responds by using the same tactics. There is also a risk that other countries may start to see the WTO rules as less binding and adopt their own protectionist measures. This development could undermine the WTO, making it unable to provide the necessary support to its members in the event of trade disputes. The economic consequences of standing alone in such conflicts may be great.

The EEA Agreement is, by far, Norway's most important and most extensive agreement. It establishes a single market encompassing more than 500 million people. The agreement covers all the EU states, as well as the EFTA countries Norway, Iceland and Liechtenstein, and provides a common framework for trade and economic ties. In the areas covered by the agreement, the EEA represents a single market, where EEA citizens and business in all EEA countries are to be treated as equals. The agreement enables us to influence the development of rules and regulations, which makes it important that we participate at an early stage of the process. The United States' imposition of steel and aluminium tariffs, as mentioned above, provides an example of how important the EEA Agreement is for Norwegian businesses. As part of its response to the US tariffs, the EU introduced safeguard measures concerning imports of a number of steel products. However, steel originating in the EEA/EFTA-states Norway, Iceland and Liechtenstein was exempted from the measures.

The IMF is central to international financial and macroeconomic cooperation. The institution's objective is to promote global monetary cooperation, strengthen financial stability, prevent economic imbalance and crises, and support international trade. Through this work, the IMF contributes to supporting global economic stability. This is important to Norway. The IMF is also an important discussion forum for the world's ministers of finance and central bank directors, and the Norwegian Minister of Finance and Central Bank Director participate on a regular basis. A key question that will be pertinent in the years to come is whether the international financial system works well enough, and whether the framework provides adequate protection in order to tackle major financial crises. If the current geopolitical situation results in central banks in the US, China and Europe being unwilling or unable to cooperate, a new financial crisis may have even greater consequences for the global economy than the crisis in 2008–2009.

The World Bank and the regional development banks are important for promoting economic growth. All of the development banks are obliged to work to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals. The World Bank Group is the most influential actor in development finance, issuing over 60 billion US dollars in loans and grants each year. The banks are important channels for Norwegian aid and for promoting our development policy priorities.

The OECD is another important arena for Norway and for international economic cooperation. The OECD's work contributes to common descriptions of reality, standards and political recommendations and declarations. This forms the basis for both using and further developing multilateral agreements. The standards cover a number of areas, including investments, tax, statistics, anti-corruption, corporate social responsibility and international development cooperation. For tax matters in particular, most countries in the world use the OECD's standards. The OECD also works actively on supporting national policy so that globalisation may benefit everyone. This policy support encompasses a number of areas including social policy, labour market policy, skills development, education policy, regional policy, investment priorities, cooperation between labour unions and employers' organisations, tax policy and competition policy.

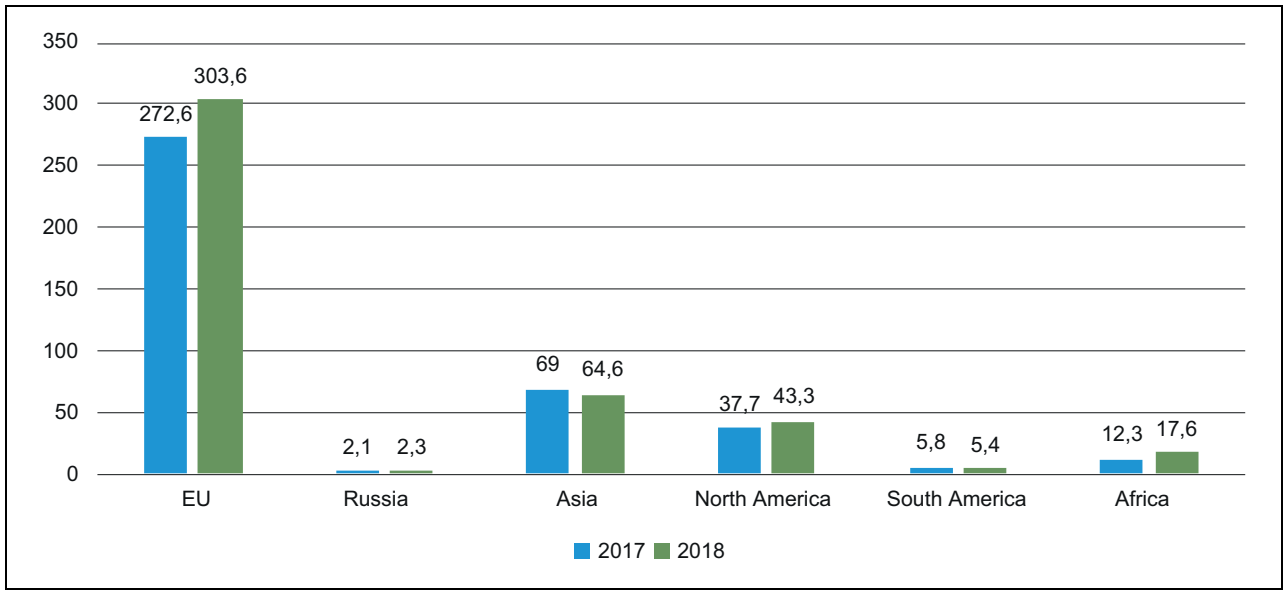

Figure 6.3 Two thirds of Norwegian mainland exports go to Europe (numbers in billion NOK).

Source: Innovasjon Norge

6.4 Natural resources and the ocean

Multilateral agreements and comprehensive national legislation ensures that we have the rights to our natural resources, that we have the necessary authority to manage them well, and that we have market access to sell resources like fish, oil and gas internationally. It is therefore of great interest to Norway that the multilateral system is maintained in its current form. It is on this our prosperity is built. Sustainable management of the world's natural resources is also essential to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals.

Marine and coastal industries represent approximately two thirds of Norwegian exports, of which the petroleum industry is by far the biggest. Many of our strongest industry clusters and centres of excellence are related to the oceans. Norway is the world's second largest exporter of seafood (after China), measured in value,[4] and Norwegian oil and gas supply Europe and other markets with energy. The OECD estimates that the growth in marine industries (particularly aquaculture, wind power, fish processing and shipbuilding) can exceed the rest of the global economy towards 2030.[5] The Government has high ambitions for greater value creation in the marine and coastal industries and prioritises this in the WTO, in trade cooperation with the EU/EEA and in bilateral free trade agreements, including those negotiated within the framework of EFTA.

As the world population continues to grow, there is an increasing need for food, energy, medicines and minerals. Marine resources provide great possibilities for meeting these needs. However, there are major concerns about the effects of human activity, such as overfishing, pollution, and loss of biological diversity. On top of this comes climate change, more acidic and warmer oceans, and a rising sea level. Our resources and sea areas must be sustainably managed for the ocean to feed more and more people and be the source of a variety of commercial activities. Greenhouse gas emissions as well as pollution and waste must be brought under control, and the biological diversity must be protected. It will not be possible to achieve this without international cooperation. It is in Norway's interest that the multilateral system facilitates such cooperation effectively

The Law of the Sea provides the framework for states' ocean-related rights and obligations, and gives Norway sovereign rights to manage our natural resources. The UN Convention on the Law of the Sea of 1982 (UNCLOS) is the 'marine constitution' and the overriding international legal framework for all activity in the ocean. The Convention on the Law of the Sea sets out the principles of 200-nautical-mile exclusive economic zones, where the coastal state has sovereign rights to exploit the natural resources both on the seabed and in the marine areas above it. These rights also

4 FAO (2018). The state of world fisheries and aquaculture 2018. Meeting the sustainable development goals.

5 OECD (2016). The Ocean Economy in 2030.

apply to the exploitation of resources on the continental shelf beyond the 200-nautical-mile zone.

The International Court of Justice (ICJ) in The Hague and the International Tribunal for the Law of the Sea (ITLOS) in Hamburg have played important roles in clarifying disputes between states relating to the Law of the Sea. Norway has been party to two such cases in The Hague that clarified fisheries rights with the UK and maritime delimitation between Greenland and Jan Mayen. Strengthening and developing the Law of the Sea as the basis for resource exploitation and ocean management is a core interest for Norway.

The international community has developed relevant new regulations in pace with new needs. The UN is currently working on a binding international agreement under the Convention on the Law of the Sea relating to the conservation and sustainable use of the ocean and marine resources outside national jurisdiction, i.e. outside the coastal states' economic zones and continental shelves. Norway is working to achieve an agreement that builds on the existing law of the sea and that contributes to achieving a good balance between conservation and sustainable use of marine resources.

Ocean management takes place on several levels. National zones and continental shelves are the responsibility of coastal states, while the Convention on the Law of the Sea obliges states to cooperate on management also in areas outside national jurisdiction. Rules for global shipping are developed and followed up by the International Maritime Organization (IMO), while extraction of minerals outside national jurisdiction are managed by the International Seabed Authority (ISA).

International cooperation on fisheries management generally takes place at the national, bilateral and regional levels, where the resources and knowledge about them is located and where the challenges must be addressed. The joint Norwegian-Russian Fisheries Commission and the North East Atlantic Fisheries Commission (NEAFC) are examples of good regional multilateral cooperation on fisheries management in our neighbourhood.

Although fish stocks in our part of the world are generally in good condition, nearly a third of the world's commercially viable fish stocks are overfished, often through unlawful, unreported or unregulated fishing (UUU fishing). The amount of plastic and other forms of pollution in the oceans is increasing. Threats to marine life are global, but to a great extent originate on land. Clean and healthy oceans therefore require both national measures and binding multilateral cooperation.

Ocean currents play a role in creating environmental challenges in the Arctic that originate in other areas. The Convention for the Protection of the Marine Environment of the North-East Atlantic (OSPAR) is a core forum for cooperation on the protection of the marine environment against pollution. OSPAR and NEAFC cooperate on area-based management and protection, and pertaining measures. The further development of comprehensive ecosystem-based management methods is also central to the work under the Arctic Council and the Commission for the Conservation of Antarctic Marine Living Resources (CCAMLR), which manages fisheries resources in the marine areas around the Antarctic.

Science-based knowledge is essential to sustainable development of the world's oceans. The Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission (IOC) is the UN body for ocean science. Norway is an active member of this commission, which, among other things, promotes international cooperation, coordinates research programmes and contributes to capacity building. The UN General Assembly has charged IOC with responsibility for planning and coordinating the UN Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development (2021–2030).

We share our experience of marine management with developing countries and emerging economies. Norway has managed the Nansen Programme for more than 40 years in cooperation with the UN Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), which conducts research in the ocean outside a number of coastal states. The issue of the oceans is an important part of Norway's various international relations, including in our growing cooperation with regional organisations like the African Union (AU), the Caribbean Community and Common Market (CARICOM) and Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN). Our experience from petroleum management, including in relation to the environment, is shared with a number of countries through the Oil for Development programme. To secure sustainable food from the ocean as the population continues to grow, Norway has taken the initiative to establish an international action network on food from the ocean and inland water.

It is important to Norway that decision makers have sufficient knowledge about the possibilities and challenges related to the ocean. The Government under the Solberg administration therefore took the initiative in 2018 to establish the High-

level Panel for a Sustainable Ocean Economy. The purpose of the panel is to create international understanding for the fact that sustainable use of the oceans and a good environmental status leads to high value creation. The panel collaborates with researchers, business and industry and governments, and will present an action plan in 2020 for clean, healthy and productive oceans. The panel will support and reinforce existing and new initiatives in individual countries, regionally and in multilateral organisations. In autumn 2019, Norway will host the Our Ocean conference. The Government places emphasis on both the conference and the UN's upcoming ocean conference as arenas for advancing common efforts for the ocean on the part of states, businesses and organisations.

Strain on marine resources, severe environmental challenges and the need to see different impact factors in context mean that multilateral actors must become better at working together. The Convention on the Law of the Sea and other relevant conventions constitute a good legal framework for sustainable commercial maritime activity. Challenges relating to the oceans are addressed in many of the UN's special organisations, funds and programmes as well as in other international organisations. To reach the target of protecting the ocean and coastal areas, while also securing sustainable exploitation of marine resources and a more comprehensive ocean management, we are entirely dependent on better cooperation and coordination between different actors.

The multilateral system has also established common norms and rules for managing other types of natural resources. Genetic resources for food and agriculture is one such area, where the FAO contributes with knowledge development, status overviews and normative work. A separate legally binding treaty for plant genetic resources contributes to plant breeding, which produces new varieties that are better adapted to withstand diseases, pests and climate change. Norwegian agriculture depends on plant genetic resources from other countries. Norway's most important global initiative for the diversity of resources is the establishment and operation of the Svalbard Global Seed Vault.

6.5 Climate and environmental issues

Global climate and environmental problems affect our welfare, economy and security. It is important, also to Norway, that the three Sustainable Development Goals on limiting climate change and protecting life below water and on land are achieved. Climate and environmental issues are global concerns that require both local and global action. The multilateral system enables states and other actors to work together to take care of our planet.

Transformational change of society is needed in order to limit global warming. The world's energy systems must be changed, we must use resources more efficiently and we must bind carbon in ecosystems, particularly in the world's forests. In the autumn of 2018, the UN Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) published a report showing that global warming of 1.5°C will lead to significantly less risk for people and nature than an increase of 2°C. The report demonstrates the need for a rapid reduction in greenhouse gas emissions. Significant emission reductions before 2030 offers a greater chance of limiting global warming to a maximum of 1.5°C.

The multilateral system can help to find solutions through knowledge exchange and common frameworks for the sustainable use of nature, technological developments and investment in a global green shift. The multilateral development banks play a crucial role in mobilising private capital. Public funding alone is not sufficient to meet the challenge.

The Paris Agreement, which entered into force in 2016, is the first agreement on climate establishing legally binding commitments on all parties. Along with the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change from 1994, the Paris Agreement is a robust framework for international cooperation on climate change. All parties to the Paris Agreement have committed to reporting a nationally determined contribution every five years, intended to limit greenhouse gas emissions. Over time, the contributions will ensure that the agreement's temperature target is reached. The goal is to keep global warming well under 2°C and strive to limit the temperature increase to 1.5°C.

The Climate Convention along with the Paris Agreement and efforts in other parts of the UN system and the multilateral development banks constitute three pillars of the multilateral efforts to combat climate change.

Preserving the rainforests and other natural ecosystems is an important part of the solution to climate problems. The world's forests and the soil below them store carbon to prevent its release into the atmosphere. Environmental agreements like the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), the Convention Concerning the Protection of

Figure 6.4 After a proposal from Norway, it was agreed in May 2019 to tighten control of the international plastic waste trade and establish a partnership between governments, the private sector and organisations to improve the handling of plastic waste.

Source: Scanpix

World Cultural and Natural Heritage and the Ramsar Convention on Wetlands Conservation contribute to global efforts to protect natural ecosystems that are important for carbon storage. Varied natural ecosystems with a large number of species will adapt better to a changed climate and can provide protection against effects of climate change such as rising sea levels, floods and drought.

Sustainable forest management forms part of Sustainable Development Goal 15 on terrestrial ecosystems, but is also key to achieving other SDGs. Norway is working to achieve strong and binding international cooperation in order to solve transnational challenges in forest policy, and to ensure sustainable management of forests across the world. We have therefore participated in the UN's work on sustainable forest management for a number of years. This work is organised under the UN Forum on Forests (UNFF). Norway also takes part in cooperation under the auspices of the UN Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE), Forest Europe and the FAO's European Forestry Commission (EFC).

The multilateral system plays a key role in developing international regulations for environmental protection. The spread of environmental pollutants is an example of a global problem that needs global regulation. Norway is actively engaged in work being carried out under a number of conventions[6] and in the UN Environment Assembly (UNEA). We are also engaged in negotiations on new global targets for nature that will be endorsed by the parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity in China in 2020. The convention requires all member states to work together to protect the biological diversity of our planet. Global cooperation under the International Maritime Organization plays an essential role in green shipping. The cooperation through the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) is

6 Regjeringen.no (2014). International climate and environmental agreements

important in efforts to reduce noise and emissions from international air traffic.

Multilateral cooperation and regulations in areas other than climate change and the environment, such as trade and investments, are also significant to environmental protection and combating climate change. Sustainable solutions in the private sector constitute a substantial part of the answer to climate challenges as well.

Norway and the EU share common regulations and are subject to the same commitments in important areas of climate and environmental policy. The EU is also our closest partner when it comes to using international instruments to achieve emissions reductions. Norway has set the same targets as the EU, which is to cut emissions by at least 40 per cent compared to 1990 levels, by 2030. Norway, Iceland and the EU wish to work together to achieve these targets. As per agreement, Norway is subject to the EU climate regulations from 2021 to 2030. It is important for Norway to influence EU policy development because a major part of the EU climate and environmental policy becomes Norwegian legislation through the EEA Agreement. The EU also influences the development in other countries by setting requirements in trade agreements. Norway, through the EEA Grants, helps a number of European countries to meet their national and international climate and environmental commitments.

Norway faces a number of challenges in the work on promoting climate and environmental issues through the multilateral system. It was, for example, cooperation between China and the US that made it possible to reach agreement on the Paris Agreement. Therefore, the current situation in which the two great powers are not cooperating as well, is of concern in regards to the chances of further progress. At the federal level, the US is less concerned about climate and environmental issues than previously, although several American states have increased their involvement.[7] It becomes more difficult to implement measures that can affect national economic interests when populism and protectionism influence policy in countries that have previously led the way in climate and environmental issues.

At the same time, the multilateral system provides good opportunities to promote our priorities in climate and environmental matters, particularly when combined with bilateral efforts. Marine pollution is an example of this. At the UN Environment Assembly in 2017, Norway won support for a global long-term agreement on stopping all plastic pollution of the oceans, and in 2019, we gained acceptance for continuing the intergovernmental process on strengthening the global framework for combating marine pollution. The purpose is to ensure common rules for all countries to implement this ambition. The Government has established a development programme for combating marine pollution. We have also initiated a new multi-donor fund in the World Bank (PROBLUE) to secure capital to implement plastic pollution programmes. In addition, we are working with individual countries in many parts of the world to achieve the same goal.

Development cooperation on climate and the environment is a core element of achieving green economic growth in developing countries. One of the Government's key priorities is Norway's International Climate and Forest Initiative (NICFI). Norway contributes significantly to emissions reductions efforts by stopping and reversing deforestation in developing countries (REDD+). We support this work both bilaterally and through the UN's climate and forest programme (UN-REDD) and a number of funds in the World Bank. The Government also plans to increase Norwegian funding to climate projects in developing countries through the Green Climate Fund.

Renewable energy is another priority area for Norwegian development assistance related to climate and the environment. More than 60 per cent of greenhouse gas emissions relate to the use of energy. According to the international energy bureaus, we must double our energy efficiency and replace most fossil fuel with renewable energy if we are to reach the Paris Agreement targets. The Government will therefore spearhead an international effort to promote energy efficiency, develop renewable energy and phase out coal in developing countries.

Norwegian energy related development assistance combines bilateral and multilateral instruments with an emphasis on advancing private investments and exploiting Norwegian technological expertise. Total Norwegian development assistance for renewable energy was doubled in the period 2017–2019 and is provided through multilateral development banks, the World Bank's private sector arm (the International Finance Corporation, IFC), bilateral cooperation and international partnerships. The Government will focus its energy aid towards helping to achieve the Sustainable Development Goal on ensuring access to

[7] In 2017, Norway signed a declaration of intent with California on strengthening cooperation on climate policy.

energy for all, and to reducing greenhouse gas emissions.

A third of the World Bank Group's loans currently go to clean energy, emission reductions and climate adaptation. Such financing helps poor countries, which are often hit the hardest by climate change, to adapt and handle the consequences of a warmer planet, as well as contributing to sustainable economic growth in these countries.

Norway uses all the tools at its disposal to promote our climate and environmental policy in multilateral forums, from political negotiations on agreements and following up these agreements, to funding concrete development projects. We have played a leading role during the international climate negotiations, REDD+ and climate funding, biological diversity, genetic resources and shipping, and against chemicals and marine pollution. We conduct an overall assessment of when to take on additional responsibilities in international political processes. The Government strategically uses aid funding, for example to combat marine pollution and in the field of climate financing. The EEA Grants are also strategically used to strengthen the implementation of EU climate and environmental policy. In addition, we use board participation in multilateral funds and development banks to advance our climate and environmental policy.

The sites on the World Heritage List, under UNESCO's World Heritage Convention, constitute the world's most important natural and cultural heritage. Norway wishes to help developing countries become capable of safeguarding their own heritage in order to exploit its potential. Thus, as part of Norway's membership of the World Heritage Committee (2017–2021), we provide more assistance to improve management and secure world heritage globally, with a particular focus on natural heritage in Africa.

Cooperating with strategically important countries is a precondition for success in our multilateral climate and environmental work. The Nordic countries already cooperate closely in the area of climate change and also discuss how Nordic leadership on climate issues can be strengthened. The EU and like-minded countries remain core partners, but less traditional groupings spanning the old developing and industrial nation divide have become more and more significant. Examples are the international High Level Panel for a Sustainable Ocean Economy and the Cartagena Dialogue, where countries from both the North and South worked together to make progress in international climate negotiations. In 2020, a new global framework for biological diversity will be adopted in Beijing. In the process leading up to this, Norway seeks cooperation with countries such as China, India and Myanmar, and tries to bridge divides between different regional groups.

The expertise possessed by Norwegian experts is essential to our political influence in international climate and environmental work. Going forward, we must ensure that we have the capacity and expertise available to contribute to international processes that are relevant to our interests. Funding the knowledge base for international negotiations is also valuable. Our expertise means that Norway is in demand as a partner. This gives us a stronger voice than our geographical size would indicate.

6.6 International poverty reduction

The Government's main development policy goal is to combat poverty and promote economic development and welfare in developing countries. Striving to reduce misery and suffering in the world is both in line with our fundamental values and in our own interest. Social and economic development in other countries makes the world more stable and is positive for the Norwegian economy, and our security and prosperity. Failing to combat poverty can set the stage for conflict and force millions of people to flee.

The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development requires parties to see the Sustainable Development Goals in context, and requires that multilateral organisations work more closely together. The ambitious goal is to leave no one behind. Although living conditions have improved for many over the past decades, we face major challenges in the years ahead. To reach the Sustainable Development Goals by 2030, population growth must be slowed and economic growth in the least developed countries must generate more jobs. Since more and more of the world's poor live in middle-income countries, it is also necessary to improve the economic distribution within these countries. The multilateral system plays a key role in international efforts to combat poverty, particularly in terms of the establishment and follow-up of international norms and standards, funding and protection of global public goods.

Development assistance is a tool that can support national authorities' efforts to spur development in their own countries, but it is the countries' own resource base, resource mobilisation and national policies that are most important to reduc-

ing poverty. International actors such as the UNDP and the World Bank assist member states in developing policy and building national systems and expertise. To make our development cooperation more oriented towards poverty alleviation, the Government will increase the share of Norwegian development assistance allocated to the least developed countries (LDC), particularly in sub-Saharan Africa, towards 2021. The national authorities' own efforts and political ownership of their own development are preconditions for receiving Norwegian support. Ensuring that no one is left behind requires extra support to vulnerable groups and people at risk. For this reason, the Government places particular focus on women and vulnerable groups such as children, religious minorities, indigenous peoples, sexual minorities and the functionally impaired.

The UN system, the World Bank, the regional development banks and other multilateral organisations are important as arenas for our international policy work and as channels for Norwegian development assistance. Multilateral and bilateral channels for political influence and development financing play different roles and are intended to complement one another. The multilateral organisations have greater resources, broader expertise and a more extensive presence than Norway can attain bilaterally. Due to their global presence, the organisations can contribute towards accomplishing the goal of leaving no one behind. The UN has the legitimacy to develop international norms and standards and to support member states in implementing international agreements and frameworks, as well as follow-up and reporting. Norway can also help mobilise resources from other actors through the multilateral system. Using multilateral channels can reduce transaction costs for developing countries that receive assistance and ease the burden on our own system. In addition, the UN organisations and the multilateral development banks generally have better access to conflict areas than Norway.

That said, we face a number of challenges when we use the multilateral system, both in our work on combating poverty, and more generally. Many of the multilateral organisations have modernised and streamlined in recent years, while some still do not operate satisfactorily. In some cases, it is necessary to set stricter requirements relating to transparency, internal control mechanisms, documentation of results, coordination, implementation of reforms, efforts to combat sexual harassment, and support for Norwegian priorities in the organisations we fund. A persistent lack of willingness to improve constitutes grounds for Norway to reduce or withdraw its support. Therefore, we need better dissemination of results from the organisations, as well as improved coordination within the public administration. The new digital results portal for Norwegian development assistance will also include multilateral programmes.

We must strengthen our follow-up of the UN organisations and the multilateral banks on the country level, and ensure cohesion between this and the work of the governing bodies of individual organisations. The Foreign Service must strengthen and systematise its efforts to obtain information about the UN and the banks' work in individual countries. This information is crucial when Norwegian representatives participate in decision-making forums. As a major UN donor, Norway will expect the UN to keep Norwegian embassies informed about its work and involved in relevant processes. The reforms adopted by the UN development system are the most extensive to date and must be closely followed up. This will require greater capacity and expertise both in the ministries and the Foreign Service.

Norway's work on influencing international political processes may have greater impact on international efforts to combat poverty than the development assistance we provide. Combating poverty is not only a question of financing, it is also about appropriate policy and the development of national institutions and systems that ensure implementation capacity. To reduce the number of people living in poverty, we need international rules and trade policies that safeguard poorer countries' and people's interests. A minor achievement in a board room can make a major difference in the world.

Good governance is essential to advancing economic growth, which in turn makes it easier to combat poverty. Good governance consists of many elements, including fundamental political and civil rights, such as democracy, freedom of association, freedom of speech, an effective and non-corrupt state administration, good infrastructure and a solid education system, rule of law, protection of property rights and well-functioning markets. To achieve the Sustainable Development Goals on time, it is particularly important that Norwegian development assistance is used as a catalyst to stimulate as much private investment as possible and create jobs on a large scale. Significant improvements in these areas, as well as public-private cooperation is necessary to the Sustainable Development Goals. The international com-

munity must use the billions in development assistance in a way that mobilises many times as much financing for development, both from private businesses and through national resource mobilisation. Significant parts of the financing from private sources will be loans, in combination with aid, especially in the poorest countries. To avoid new and severe debt problems, which once again threaten many poor countries following massive debt relief since the turn of the century, it is vital to insist on responsible borrowing and lending practices. Greater transparency in the public sector's direct and indirect financial obligations is a condition for success, as is systems that the countries themselves must have in place to provide sufficient overview.

Illicit financial flows constitute a major threat to the income base of most states, but is a particularly grave problem for poor countries. It is often money from corruption, tax evasion and other criminal activities that is taken out of the country. Financial flows are hard to measure, but studies show that developing countries may lose as much as USD 1,000 billion a year, which can translate into USD 300 billion in lost tax revenue. This is twice the amount of all international development assistance. These resources could have been used for business development, investments, schools, roads and hospitals.

The fight against corruption, tax evasion and illicit financial flows is crucial to enable poor countries to fund their own development. The problem of illicit financial flows must be solved through international cooperation for controlling financial flows, and by strengthening national legislation and monitoring to prevent corruption and tax evasion. But preventing money from unlawfully being transported to safe havens with low tax rates and high degrees of secrecy is an international challenge. International cooperation on the investigation of illicit financial flows is essential, as is international cooperation to gain a better view into tax havens and sharing information on the identity of the real owners of assets and companies. The UN, including the UN Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), and the EU, OECD, G7, Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative (EITI), IMF, World Bank and regional development banks are examples of international forums that make valuable contributions to combating corruption, tax evasion and illicit financial flows.

The Government will take part in international efforts to combat illicit financial flows and tax evasion, the black market economy and corruption. The Government will use Norway's presidency of the UN Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) in 2019–2020 to promote financing for development, including the fight against corruption, tax evasion and illicit financial flows. The Government will support international efforts and work to promote transparency in the flow and movement of capital between countries. The Government supports international efforts for more effective and just taxation of global companies.

It is the poorest people who are hardest hit by climate change. Food shortages and failing crops are also increasingly causing instability, conflict and migration. This is why the Government will increase development assistance for food security and adaption of agriculture to climate change, and present an action plan for sustainable food systems that connects food security, trade, food production and nutrition as interrelated issues. This increased funding will be channelled through the World Bank, the UN system and the Green Climate Fund, among others.

We will not achieve the Sustainable Development Goals by 2030 without incorporating technological progress and digital innovation. The government therefore launched a digital strategy for development policy in 2018, and will develop a white paper on the same topic. The Government expects our multilateral partners to make more use of digital tools. We will require a strategy on active use of digitalisation in the initiatives we support, with the goal of reaching more people in a more targeted and efficient manner, and improve monitoring and evaluation. In 2019, Norway will enter into a new digitalisation partnership with the World Bank. Norway has also participated in the UN Secretary-General's High-level panel on digital cooperation.

A number of multilateral organisations must prioritise their comparative advantage more clearly. The division of tasks between the organisations must be improved. The UN plays a unique role as a standard setter and in supporting member states in implementing these standards, and should therefore prioritise this area of work. The guiding principle for which organisation does what should be that the task is performed by the organisation that has the best chance of effectively and efficiently delivering results. Multilateral channels are often the best choice, but not always. The goal must be to achieve the best possible results and maximizing poverty reduction.

6.7 Combating terrorism and crime

Terrorism and organised crime affect people's lives around the world. This also includes Norwegian citizens. New security threats make entirely new demands of our foreign, defence and security policy. International cooperation is often essential to meeting these challenges. Norwegian interests in combating terrorism and crime are often best addressed within multilateral frameworks, and particularly within processes originating in the UN, but the regional cooperation with the EU and the Council of Europe is also of great importance.

Security and development are closely interlinked since economic and social development are conditions for long-term stability. The Government has therefore used foreign, security and development policy instruments, expertise and experience to contribute to international stability and prevent radicalism, violent extremism, organised crime, piracy and digital threats. The importance of close cooperation with both close and new partners is ever growing.

Global security challenges are complex and transnational in nature and origin, and demand international cooperation in order to be analysed, prevented and combatted. The Schengen Agreement requires Norway to contribute to and use information exchange systems. These systems are essential instruments for the national police, border control and customs authorities. Norway's participation in Europol and Eurojust are of major importance to the Norwegian police's ability to obtain the right information at the right time, and to fighting cross-border crime.

At the global level, international legal rules and norms set the framework and affect how countries can and should work together. Resolutions from the UN Security Council[8], conventions on crime and terrorism from the UN and the Council of Europe, as well as resolutions endorsed by the Commission on Narcotic Drugs and the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice Commission are examples here. These constitute guiding principles for member states and inform the work of the UN Counter-Terrorism Committee Executive Directorate (CTED), the UN Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) and the Council of Europe Committee on Counter-Terrorism (CDCT). Important work is also conducted by the Financial Action Task Force (FATF) relating to combating money laundering, the financing of terrorism and the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction.

However, this is still not enough. Follow-up and implementation require political will, often in addition to the upgrading of equipment, knowledge and national legislation. Even in cases where international cooperation on, for example, capacity building is limited to two or a small number of states, the cooperation often takes place in line with values developed by many other countries together.

In the worst case scenario, states that are unable to cope with international terrorism and organised crime can become 'black holes' that pull other countries with them into instability and conflict. Criminal activities can sometimes have gained a foothold at high levels of both state and non-state actors. In cases where actors in criminal networks, the business sector and the public sector work together, it becomes even more difficult to eradicate the basic problems. This is why we must cooperate with both large and small countries on these challenges. In addition, we need close cooperation between different organisations like the UN, the EU and NATO in order to combat terrorism effectively.

Global security challenges fall both politically and strategically under the work of the UN Security Council on protecting international peace and security. When a global threat appears, Norway must seek cooperation with the Council's permanent and non-permanent members. The significance of this close interaction will be further enhanced in the event of Norway's membership in the UN Security Council.

6.8 Migration, asylum and resettlement

Norway has a sovereign right to regulate its national immigration and refugee policy. The Government pursues a restrictive and responsible immigration policy characterised by rule of law and within the framework of international commitments. Considering cases in accordance with the rule of law is essential to ensuring that those who have a right to protection in fact are protected, while those without this right are returned without delay. Achieving the targets for the Government's immigration policy is not possible without international cooperation.

There is an established distinction between regular and irregular migration. Regular migration to Norway is legal, desirable and necessary to

[8] Resolution 1373 (2001), 2178 (2014) and 2368 (2017).

fulfil the labour requirements of the economy, but it must be based on labour market needs. The EEA Agreement and its provisions on the free movement of workers and self-employed persons has largely helped meet our labour needs, particularly after the EU enlargement in 2004 and 2007.

Irregular migration, however, refers to people entering the country without being subjected to official border controls or staying in Norway without permission, such as persons who remain in the country after a visa or residence permit has expired. Irregular migration has become a greater challenge over time as conflicts, population growth and a lack of progress in developing countries have made more people leave their countries of origin. This has led to growing migration pressure on richer countries. This can only be handled through better cooperation between the countries and regions involved.

The multilateral cooperation most relevant to Norway on freedom of movement and combating irregular migration takes place in Europe through the EEA Agreement, the Schengen Agreement and the Dublin Regulation. The Government supports and actively contributes to European measures intended to ensure that migration is controlled and regulated, and reduce the number of migrants without need of protection or other legal grounds for residence. This is described in more detail in the Government's EU strategy. To deal with the migration pressure on Europe, there is a greater need to cooperate with countries outside Europe's borders. Norway has therefore prioritised participation in and funding of interregional cooperation processes, such as the Valletta Action Plan and the EU Trust Fund.

Norway also promotes its migration policy interests at the global level. Cooperation on migration at this level has traditionally been fragmented and underdeveloped, due to strong conflicts of interest between countries of origin and destination. This has changed through the recognition of migration as one of the greatest challenges of this century. Migration is part of the 2030 Agenda and the follow-up of the Paris Agreement. In 2016, the UN member states adopted a declaration on refugees and migrants, and in 2018, the first resolution under the auspices of the UN concerning all aspects of international migration was adopted. The Global Compact on Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration (GCM) sets out 23 overriding objectives for cooperation on safe, orderly and regular migration in accordance with Sub-goal 10.7 of the Sustainable Development Goals. GCM discusses the causes of migration and the development opportunities that migration provides, but also the challenges of irregular migration, including human trafficking, migrant smuggling, human rights violations and orderly and dignified return home. The Global Compact's strength lies in the fact that it encompasses countries of origin, transit countries and destination countries.

The GCM is not binding under international law, and it stipulates countries' independent right to decide their own immigration policy. An important factor in Norway's endorsement of the Global Compact was that it can contribute to international migration taking place in a lawful manner and in orderly forms. However, it was important to Norway to clarify our understanding of certain parts of the Global Compact through an explanation of vote. The Global Compact provides common ground for the political work on how to better manage migration, including bringing the flow of irregular migration under control. The Global Compact clearly states that all states have a duty to readmit their own citizens.

The International Organization for Migration (IOM) has been mandated with improving the coordination of international contributions in connection with the implementation of GCM. This provides new possibilities, but also requires new funding. Since it was founded in 1951, the IOM has been a project-oriented organisation without a normative mandate. IOM will have to develop an apparatus for information collection, planning, coordination, guidance, policy development and strategy. For this, it needs to secure access to far more non-earmarked funding. Some countries, including Norway, Sweden, Denmark and the UK, have started to provide this core funding.

The multilateral system also plays a key role in the work related to refugees. The UN Refugee Convention and the multilateral refugee system are important to both the treatment of asylum seekers who come to Norway and to the international management of refugee situations. In connection with the refugee and migration crisis in 2015, the Storting requested the Government to initiate a review of international conventions on refugees and migration in order to better adapt them to the refugee situation of our time. This was based on uncertainty about whether the multilateral system provided adequate and effective solutions in a more globalised world, or limited the options for implementing necessary national and regional measures. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Ministry of Justice and Public Security conducted a review and the Government concluded that, in general, states have significant

room for manoeuvre under international law within key conventions when it comes to the choice of tools and measures intended to make us better equipped to handle large waves of migration.

Norway will be at the forefront of finding good solutions for the world's refugees, both by providing support to neighbouring areas and by receiving resettlement refugees. Norway uses the multilateral system for resettling refugees as part of the annual quota for refugees. UNHCR and IOM are key partners for providing selection and transport assistance to refugees offered resettlement in Norway. Resettlement can be crucial to individual refugees who are given international protection. It is also an important Norwegian contribution to burden and responsibility sharing with the biggest refugee hosting countries.

Close to two thirds of refugees do not cross international borders and become internally displaced persons. Over many years, Norway has played an active role in improving protection for this group. Internally displaced persons are often among the most vulnerable in the world, yet the group does not receive the same attention, support or protection as refugees. Internal displacement generally lasts for many years and is a notable obstacle to social and economic development, and to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals. Together with other countries, Norway has asked the UN Secretary-General to appoint a high-level panel on internally displaced persons. The purpose it to identify more effective and long-term strategies to help the internally displaced and affected populations, and to mobilise more support for this work.

6.9 Health

The health of the Norwegian population is affected by factors outside Norway. Infectious diseases know no national borders and international cooperation is therefore necessary to protect Norwegian citizens. Hence, it is in Norway's interest that the health systems in other countries work well so that fewer people fall sick, more people receive treatment and disease does not spread and reach Norway. The purpose of Norway's international health cooperation is to effectively prevent and combat disease, both in Norway and in other parts of the world. The Sustainable Development Goal relating to good health and well-being is also a high priority in Norwegian development cooperation. Enabling people to live healthy and productive lives is a condition for sustainable development. Health is also a priority area in our humanitarian assistance.

The multilateral system develops global health standards, generates shared knowledge, and provides health related assistance to developing countries. It is also an important channel for Norwegian development assistance. The World Health Organization (WHO) is the leading and coordinating body in international health cooperation. The organisation develops norms, regulations and tools for international health initiatives. It helps countries to improve their health contingency plans and leads the work on fighting outbreaks of infectious diseases across national borders. The WHO is also key to developing good health systems in developing countries. Over 75 per cent of its budget is made up of earmarked, voluntary contributions from member states and other donors. The fact that the WHO is so dependent on voluntary, earmarked contributions is a challenge for the governance, transparency and management of the organisation. Norway will continue to follow up on this challenge.

Cooperation with the EU is also key to safeguarding Norwegian interests relating to health. Norway takes part in the work on improving European contingency planning for infectious diseases. We also cooperate on improving public health in our neighbourhood and elsewhere in Europe. The EEA Grants also contribute towards improving prevention measures and reducing inequality in health in Europe.

Gavi, the Vaccine Alliance, and The Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria (GFATM) are important tools in Norway's international health work. The funds have significant resources and market power. The use of such funds as channels for development assistance is further discussed in Chapter 7.4.

There are three main challenges in the multilateral work to improve global health. The first challenge is that certain issues have become very politicised, meaning that well-documented knowledge and accrued rights are becoming subordinate to political considerations. This limits the chances for progress in multilateral forums like the UN. For example, it is currently necessary to defend the progress made on sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR), which is now under pressure from states like Russia, the Vatican, Iran, Saudi Arabia, Bahrain and the US. Similarly, the work against tobacco, alcohol and unhealthy eating habits is under pressure from

countries that have strong economic interests in these areas.

Another challenge is making progress in areas that place great demands on national ownership and governance in developing countries. A good example is the work to promote universal health coverage, which depends on ability to expand primary health services. To succeed in these efforts, the multilateral system and national authorities must cooperate well, and developing countries must take greater responsibility for financing. This often requires reorganising the way the multilateral organisations work.

In many cases, the question of universal health coverage has been politicised due to disagreement on what role the state should play in securing health services for its citizens. The US, among others, is strongly opposed to language that obliges states to proving universal health coverage (Sustainable Development Goal 3.8). The opposition represents a threat to the global agreement attained in an area that is vital to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals.

A third challenge is ensuring coordinated efforts in the sectors that influence public health. Currently, the world is furthest away from attaining the Sustainable Development Goals that require action in several sectors simultaneously. Reducing harmful pollution requires initiatives relating to transport and energy, and progress in the education sector is needed to ensure enough health workers. Measures in the agricultural, trade, nutrition, research and health sectors are necessary to prevent antibiotic resistance. In many cases, the multilateral organisations are poorly equipped to stimulate action across sector boundaries at the country level. Cooperation must also improve at the international level.

New initiatives and the establishment of new financing mechanisms have led to more fragmentation in the multilateral health architecture. This makes it even more essential that all parts of the system pull together. To contribute to better coordination between the various international organisations, Prime Minister Solberg together with the German Chancellor and the President of Ghana took the initiative to develop an intersectoral action plan for Sustainable Development Goal number 3 on good health and well-being. The plans for follow-up will be presented at a summit meeting during the UN General Assembly in 2019. Similar initiatives may be required in other fields to ensure a well-composed and optimally functional multilateral architecture.

Norway must continue to contribute to innovation in the multilateral system. The Global Financing Facility for Women, Children and Adolescents (GFF) is a good example of the results of Norwegian innovation and political leadership. The GFF is a multilateral initiative that works across sectors and involves both public and private institutions. Another example is the Coalition for Epidemic Preparedness Innovation (CEPI), which will develop vaccines against known and unknown viruses to prevent pandemics.

Norway will continue to take a lead in efforts to solve new cross-border health challenges. Meeting the challenges requires evidence-based decisions that contribute to strengthening health systems, particularly in developing countries, and that are well-coordinated across sectors. Norway must continue to combine political leadership, expertise, funding, a long-term perspective and innovation to enable the multilateral system to assist all countries in achieving the Sustainable Development Goal relating to good health and well-being by 2030. Success in the area of health is important both in itself and for reaching the other Sustainable Development Goals. By contributing to improving international health cooperation, we also protect the health of our own population.

International cooperation is also essential to ensure that the food in Norway is safe to eat. Norway's international work relating to food includes food safety, consumer protection, animal and fish health, animal welfare and plant health. Food, animals, plants, feed and input goods are increasingly traded in the international market. Goods that are sources of infection or pollution that originate in one production area can easily spread to many countries. Food and drink are the most important sources of a range of infectious diseases and of the intake of many harmful substances. Infectious diseases that spread through food and drinking water are a major health problem. Antibiotic resistance, which poses a threat to public health, animal health and the environment, is also spread by international food and animal trade.

The EEA Agreement and other international agreements that set out regulations, standards, norms, monitoring and cooperation are important in the area of food. In the UN system, Codex Alimentarius is an important arena for standard setting and Norway has been an active participant from the start. The food standards are intended to protect consumer health and ensure fair practices in international food trade.

6.10 Education

There is still a long way to go to reach the Sustainable Development Goal on education. Quality education for all is crucial to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals by 2030. At present, 262 million children and adolescents do not attend school, and 617 million, or 58 per cent of all children and adolescents, do not have basic reading and mathematics skills. A mere 18 per cent of children and adolescents in low income countries complete upper secondary school.[9] This is why Norway is at the forefront of efforts to lift education further up the global agenda.

The multilateral system is an important channel for Norwegian education related development assistance, which has more than doubled since 2013. In 2017, 61 per cent of Norwegian aid for education was channelled through multilateral organisations. The organisations work with the authorities of partner countries on the development and follow-up of education plans, contribute to knowledge and statistics on education, and provide education services.

The most important multilateral organisations that Norway supports in the field of education include the UN Children's Fund (UNICEF), the UN Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), the Global Partnership for Education (GPE) and the Education Cannot Wait fund (ECW).

UNICEF is the organisation that receives the most Norwegian funding for education. UNICEF helps provide quality education to marginalised children and adolescents. The organisation places particular emphasis on girls, and has a growing focus on education in humanitarian situations.

Another major recipient of Norwegian education related development assistance is UNESCO, which is the only international organisation that encompasses the entire field of education. The organisation has a normative mandate and holds overall responsibility for global efforts on achieving Sustainable Development Goal 4 on education.

The GPE supports the development and implementation of education sector plans in developing countries. The ECW works to mobilise political will and financing for education in emergencies and protracted crises. The fund also endeavours to make humanitarian and development actors work together on shared objectives for education. Norway was an initiator of the ECW. The World Bank hosts the GPE and a number of trust funds related to education. The bank is also a source for significant amounts of education financing through its ordinary loan operations.

Norway also has much to gain from multilateral cooperation on education, particularly within the EEA, the Council of Europe, the Nordic Council of Ministers, OECD and UNESCO. UNESCO's normative work is of great value to Norway. A future global convention on mutual approval of higher education will make it easier for students educated in Norway to have their education approved across the world.

One of the most important programmes for Norway is the EU education programme Erasmus+, which is the largest of its kind in the world. Erasmus+ ensures that pupils, students, graduates and employees at education and training institutions can go on exchanges in Europe and the rest of the world. The programme facilitates strategic partnerships between institutions in different countries and capacity-building projects outside the EEA. The EEA Agreement enables Norway to participate in Erasmus+ on a par with EU member states. Nordplus is a Nordic-Baltic education programme that provides funding to different types of educational cooperation in the Nordic and Baltic countries. The programme is the Nordic Council of Ministers' largest education programme relating to lifelong learning.

Multilateral cooperation also plays an important role in Norwegian research. More and more research conducted in Norway is based on cross-border cooperation. An increasing share of funding for research is distributed through international competitive mechanisms. International research cooperation connects Norway to knowledge development in the rest of the world. The EU is a particularly important partner. Participation in the EU Framework Programmes for Research and Technological Development is one of the most important mechanisms in the internationalisation of Norwegian research. The EEA Grants support this EU programme and facilitate exchanges, research and institutional cooperation between researchers and research institutions in Norway and recipient countries in Central and Southern Europe. Norway also cooperates closely with the other Nordic countries. The ministers of education and research in the Nordic countries meet in the Nordic Council of Ministers for Education and Research. NordForsk finances Nordic research cooperation, conducts analyses and provides guidance on Nordic research policy.

[9] UNESCO (2018). Global education monitoring report 2019: Migration, displacement and education – Building bridges, not walls.

Culture and the media

Norway's participation in international arts and culture is growing. The Ministry of Culture prioritises international cultural cooperation though multilateral organisations like the Nordic Council, the Council of Europe, the EU and UNESCO. Norway participates in the EU programme for the cultural and creative sectors, Creative Europe 2014–2020. The objective of the programme is twofold: to promote European cultural and linguistic diversity and cultural heritage, and to strengthen the competitiveness of the cultural and creative sectors. Creative actors from Norway also participate in projects with countries in Southern and Central Europe, funded by EEA Grants.

The goal of the Government's development cooperation relating to culture and the arts is to help create a strong and independent cultural sector in developing countries. In particular, the efforts aim at promoting cultural rights and protecting cultural heritage, including initiatives against the illicit trade in art and artefacts. Norway actively participates in the international cooperation to reduce criminal activity in the cultural sector. This effort originated in the 1970 UNESCO Convention on the Means of Prohibiting and Preventing the Illicit Import, Export and Transfer of Ownership of Cultural Property and the 1955 UNIDROIT Convention on Stolen or Illegally Exported Cultural Objects.

The Government's development cooperation relating to culture and the arts is based on UNESCO's cultural conventions and the Sustainable Development Goals. The initiatives underpin the Government's freedom of speech strategy, emphasising freedom of artistic expression. Through the 2005 UNESCO Convention for the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions, Norway is obliged to improve the conditions for a free and independent cultural sector nationally and internationally, and ensure that artistic and cultural expressions can be created and communicated. UNESCO's World Heritage Convention and the 2003 Convention on Safeguarding of Intangible Cultural Heritage provides a framework for Norway's contribution to the protection of cultural heritage in developing countries.

6.11 Humanitarian efforts

The main goal of Norway's humanitarian efforts is to save lives, alleviate suffering and protect human dignity in humanitarian crises, regardless of gender, religion, ethnicity or political affiliation. The efforts are based on the humanitarian principles of humanity, neutrality, impartiality and independence. In conflict countries, Norway works to implement international humanitarian law, including the protection of civilians. The humanitarian principles and international humanitarian law are the cornerstones of international cooperation, which Norway also benefits from safeguarding and strengthening, because it makes the world a safer place and supports the values in which we believe. As a leading donor country and political actor in the humanitarian area, it is also in our interest that the total resources available are used more efficiently, enabling as many people as possible to receive the protection and humanitarian assistance they need.

The past decade has seen a steep rise in humanitarian needs, primarily because armed conflicts last longer, affect more people and are more closely connected to poverty and climate change. The humanitarian landscape is changing rapidly. In 2018, the Government launched a new humanitarian strategy that sets out the priorities for Norway's efforts in this area for the period 2019–2023.[10] The strategy outlines three main priority areas.

Firstly, increased protection for those affected by armed conflict and other humanitarian crises, with particular emphasis on combating sexual and gender-based violence, including towards boys and men, protecting children and youth, and protecting civilians against landmines and other explosives. Secondly, innovative solutions and reforms that contribute to achieving the best possible results and closing the gap between the growing humanitarian needs and the available resources. Thirdly, an integrated approach, where good coordination between humanitarian response, development cooperation and peacebuilding help to reduce humanitarian needs in the long term.

These priority areas require both political and operational international cooperation. With the emergence of new countries and actors with resources and influence, it is important to work to achieve broader ownership of the multilateral humanitarian cooperation. This involves initiating dialogue with actors other than our traditional partners on the principles that form the basis for

[10] Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs (2018). Norway's Humanitarian Strategy. An effective and integrated approach.

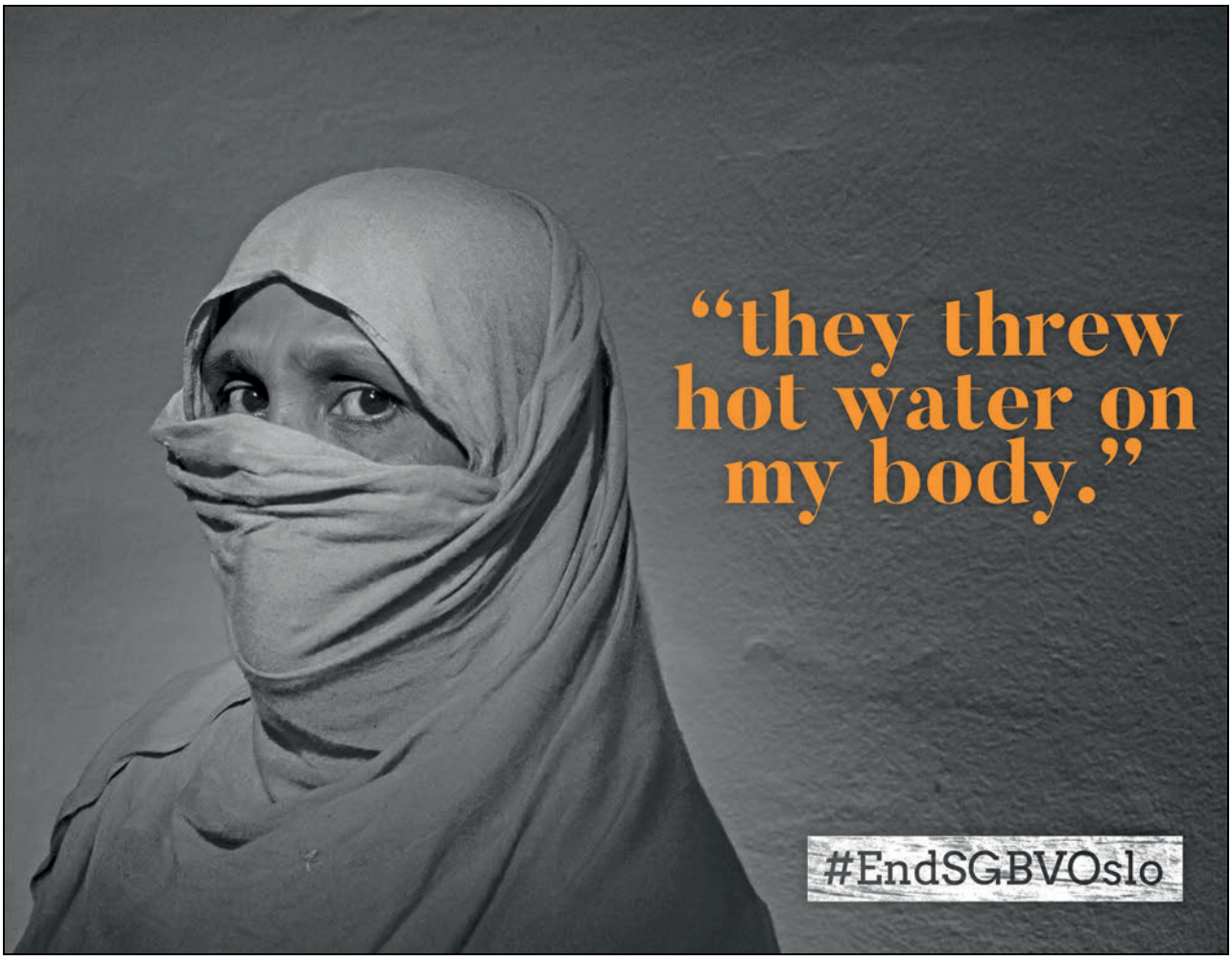

Figure 6.5 Norway takes a lead in the international efforts against sexual and gender based violence in conflict. The conference 'Ending Sexual and Gender Based Violence in Humanitarian Crises' took place in Oslo in May 2019.

Source: UNFPA Bangladesh/Allison Joyce

humanitarian efforts, and on funding and results. The humanitarian sector must also involve and take responsibility for the affected populations in a more meaningful manner. Only in this way will international humanitarian efforts achieve the necessary legitimacy to gain access and security at the local level.

In order to improve the protection of civilians in armed conflicts, humanitarian law must be respected. Norway endeavours to achieve this in the UN and other international forums. Protection must also be implemented through concrete measures to prevent military attacks on civilians, the use of weapons that have unacceptable humanitarian consequences, and other violence related to conflict and attacks on women and men in crisis and conflict situations. Norway addresses this by using active humanitarian diplomacy and support to, among others, the UN and the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement's work in armed conflicts and other humanitarian crises. Norway has also taken concrete initiatives to ensure increased protection of schools and education through the Safe Schools Declaration, protection of health workers, and protection against mines and other explosives.

Closing the gap between the increasing humanitarian needs and the resources available requires innovation, new sources of funding and more efficient working methods. Partnerships between humanitarian organisations and the private sector are important elements of advancing innovative solutions and making use of new technology, of which cash-based humanitarian assistance is one example. The available resources must also be used more efficiently. The multilateral cooperation relating to the Grand Bargain declaration, which was signed at the World

Humanitarian Summit in 2016 with the aim to improve efficiency, innovation and coordination of humanitarian work, contributes to this.

Multilateral cooperation is crucial to achieving positive interaction between humanitarian efforts and long-term development. We must take a holistic view to find ways out of the many protracted and complex crises. This requires development organisations to engage more in countries affected by crises. Norway follows this up in the form of financial and political support to the World Bank's work in fragile states and regions, and in protracted refugee situations.

The Government has responded to the increased needs by increasing the humanitarian budget by close to 65 per cent in the period 2013–2019. A large share of these funds are channelled through multilateral institutions such as the UN. Much of the UN funding then goes through non-state organisations that ensure protection and assistance to those in need. Local and national organisations often play an important role.

Refugee situations often necessitates that humanitarian and development actors work together to achieve the best possible results. Around 85 per cent of the world's refugees are in developing countries, and their displacement often last for over 15 years. It will be necessary to continue to provide humanitarian assistance to those who need it the most, but combined with development assistance that supports long-term local measures that alleviate the host countries' burdens in areas like education, health and livelihoods. The Global Compact on Refugees, to which the UN General Assembly gave its support with an overwhelming majority in 2018, sets out a number of areas where such synergies are essential. The compact will form the basis for international assistance for and protection of refugees going forward, particularly for the work of UNHCR and the UN system.

Refugees are a global responsibility, but many regions and individual countries contribute less to the solutions than what is reasonable. It is in Norway's interest that more states share the burden and responsibility for protecting and assisting refugees. Norway played an active role in developing the Global Compact on Refugees, which aims to improve international responsibility-sharing. Norway also supports the UNHCR's work and mandate. Furthermore, Norway has invested in long-term partnerships with UNHCR and the other humanitarian organisations, including through financial contributions and policy development. This has made Norway more credible and influential in the international dialogue on solutions for refugee situations.

7 Norway's instruments in multilateral cooperation

Norway has a number of tools at its disposal to promote both Norwegian and common interests in the multilateral system. In an ever changing landscape, those representing the Norwegian government must consider in each specific case which instruments work best. A combination of different instruments often has to be used in order to achieve the objectives of Norwegian foreign policy. This chapter looks at some of the instruments Norway has at its disposal.

7.1 International political efforts, diplomatic contributions and partnerships

In certain cases and situations, Norway has comparative advantages it can use to influence the outcome of multilateral processes and achieve results. The fact that Norway is neither a great power, nor a former colonial power, often makes it easier for us to build partnerships and find solutions across regional groups in multilateral forums. We also have special expertise on many issues of importance to Norway, such as the oceans and natural resource management, or where we have been involved for a long period of time, like the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Norway has also gained extensive experience of cooperation between public authorities and civil society. Norway should become involved when potential initiatives are in our interests, when our involvement is requested and we have a comparative advantage as an actor, and where we have an opportunity to influence the outcome.

Political and diplomatic efforts

Norway makes considerable efforts internationally by engaging in multilateral work with political and diplomatic resources. We take a clear stance on issues that are important to us, and we engage in finding solutions to the problems the world currently faces. Norway's efforts take many forms – as a clear and competent negotiation partner, as an important contributor to policy development in fields like peace and reconciliation, education, gender equality, health and the environment, and poverty alleviation. As a defender of the multilateral system, Norway strives to make sure that we have common norms and rules that ensure a minimum of predictability in the world. Our multilateral work is an extension of our national priorities. This enables us to move international processes forward.

Norwegian politicians frequently participate in multilateral forums. The fact that ministers and other political representatives actively participate in multilateral forums helps draw attention to Norway's political priorities. The many meetings that take place between our politicians and political leaders of other countries in the margins of multilateral events can also play a vital role in promoting interests and issues that are important to Norway.

One example of political efforts in which Norway has exploited its comparative advantage is the work on women, peace and security. When the Security Council adopted Resolution 1325 in 2000, it was the first time the UN's supreme body for peace and security recognised that men and women could be differentially impacted by war and conflict, and that women must participate in peace and security processes if lasting peace is to be achieved. However, Norway started calling attention to the need to increase the proportion of women in UN peacekeeping operations and at the peace negotiation table already in the 1990s. We developed deep and broad partnerships with non-governmental organisations in the field early on, and Norwegian research communities contributed to raising the level of knowledge significantly in the area. We were therefore able to move this issue forward on many multilateral arenas, in close cooperation with like-minded states and civil society. Our efforts have been long-term and consistent, and we have followed up politically and financially. This is crucial in order to make a difference.

Norwegians are regularly considered when candidates are sought to important international offices. Accepting such assignments increases

Figure 7.1 Ambassador Mari Skåre gives a statement on behalf of the Nordic countries during the UN Security Council's open meeting on women, peace and security in October 2018.

Source: UN Photo/Evan Schneider.

Norway's opportunities to influence processes that are of great importance to us, while it is also signals that we take responsibility for supporting and further developing the multilateral organisations. When such assignments come to an end, Norway also benefits in other contexts from the expertise gained by our representatives.

Norway can also contribute by offering to host important meetings and conferences. This attracts positive attention and the opportunity to address issues that are important to us. It also generates more knowledge domestically about important international issues.

Partnerships

Norway relies on cooperation with other countries to win support for Norwegian proposals and perspectives in multilateral organisations. When the system comes under pressure, including from our traditional allies, it necessitates fresh thinking and new partners. If Norway is to be able to improve and defend key institutions like the UN and the WTO, we need partnerships with countries from all regions of the world. Broad partnerships entail greater representativeness, legitimacy and effectiveness. The need to develop new partnerships will be discussed in more detail in Chapter 8.

A good example of a new alliance is the so-called Ottawa Group, where Norway cooperates with 12 other members and groups to defend and modernise the WTO. In addition to countries that traditionally cooperate in the WTO, Brazil, Chile, Kenya, Mexico, and Singapore, among others, also participate. Another example is the UN70 Group, where Norway worked together with Colombia, Ethiopia, Ghana, Indonesia, Jordan, New Zealand and Mexico on proposals for UN reform. The work culminated in a number of recommendations to the UN Secretary-General on how the reform agenda should be taken forward.

Groups of friends

Another example of international political initiatives are what are known as groups of friends, where engaged and like-minded countries come together to coordinate and strengthen international efforts on a topic, a situation or a diplomatic process. Groups of friends can also be valuable forums for strengthening the dialogue with countries we do not otherwise cooperate closely with, but that are important to processes Norway wishes to influence.

One example is the UN Group of Friends on Preventing Violent Extremism, which was established by Norway and Jordan in 2017. The Group is the first of its kind, with members from around

40 countries. Its purpose is to draw attention to the underlying causes of violent extremism and to reach consensus on a joint UN policy. The Group of Friends provides Norway with the opportunity to raise relevant security policy issues and influence policy development in the UN. Norway's role as chair of the Group of Friends gives us the opportunity to promote Norwegian priorities in an area that has traditionally been regarded a domain of greater powers.

7.2 Norwegian candidacies, chairmanships and board memberships

Positions confer influence. To influence multilateral organisations, it is vital to have a place at the table when important decisions are made. Membership of important governing bodies and acceptance of rotating assignments are therefore of great significance. Deploying human resources is one of the tools Norway uses in multilateral work. However, these efforts must be adapted to the resources available to us. Norway cannot be present everywhere. We must prioritise the candidacies, chairmanships and board memberships that are vital to Norwegian interests.

Membership of the UN Security Council is one of the most important tools in the diplomatic toolbox. Norway has been a member of the Security Council four times, most recently from 2001 to 2002, and stands for election for the period 2021–2022. Norway's candidacy aims to promote both national and global interests. A seat on the Security Council provides a good opportunity to support the UN, international law and the wider multilateral system, which is vital to Norway's security and sovereignty. Furthermore, as a member of the Security Council, we can contribute to prevent conflicts, bring an end to wars and resolve challenging situations. Norway's aim is to contribute to dealing effectively with the conflicts on the Council's agenda through creative, active and pragmatic diplomacy. A seat on the Council will also enable us to strengthen our ties with other countries in and outside of the Security Council.

To resolve conflicts that create poverty and humanitarian needs is at the core of our interests as a major donor and a supporter of the UN, peace and development. This enables us to underpin our investments in sustainable development and reduce human suffering. Norway also has broad experience from peace and reconciliation efforts. Norway would bring capacity and expertise to the Security Council, which can contribute to peace. If we want the Security Council to be more transparent and inclusive, and work better than it does today, we must take on responsibility, propose solutions and seek to influence the other members. In turbulent times, the Government believes that Norway should have a seat at the table when international decisions are made on peace and security.

From July 2019 until July 2020, Norway will be president of the UN Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC). ECOSOC is the key UN body for development policy formulation, and it will be the first time since 1956 that Norway holds this office. We prioritise the assignment in light of our commitment to the UN and the Sustainable Development Goals. Devoting resources to leading the ECOSOC is a means of strengthening a key part of the multilateral system that is of major importance to the UN's operational activities at country level. States with high credibility, capacity and relevant knowledge have to take responsibility through these kinds of assignments when multilateral cooperation is under pressure.

Other examples of how Norway uses this instrument to promote Norwegian points of view and contribute to a well-functioning multilateral system are; membership of the World Heritage Committee under UNESCO's Convention Concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage from 2017 to 2021 and presidency of the Fifth Session of the UN Environment Assembly in 2021. Norway also holds the presidency of the Mine Ban Treaty, for the third time, from 2018 to 2019. It is a priority for Norway to strengthen the protection of civilians from landmines. The ambition for the Norwegian presidency is to bring renewed political attention and momentum to the global efforts against landmines.

7.3 Recruitment to international organisations

Another way to influence international organisations is by encouraging the recruitment of Norwegian candidates, particularly to leading positions. This also generates useful expertise for Norway. Norway is under-represented in most international organisations in relation to our size and financial contributions. The Government is set to develop a new strategy for recruiting Norwegians to international organisations, the goal of which is to increase recruitment at all levels. It is impor-

tant to recruit Norwegians at lower levels as well, since the top positions often require experience from within the system. The efforts must concentrate on organisations and positions of particular interest to Norway.

7.4 Financial contributions

Financial contributions to the multilateral system are a crucial tool for achieving Norwegian foreign policy and development policy goals. The multilateral organisations are particularly important channels for Norwegian development assistance because of their comparative advantages, as described in Chapter 6. By using multilateral channels, we also help ensure that the system is maintained and functions well.

In 2017, 54 per cent of the Norwegian development assistance was channelled through multilateral organisations, which is an increase from 43 per cent in 2016. The amount increased from NOK 16 billion in 2016 to NOK 18.4 billion in 2017. In 2017, 51 per cent of multilateral aid went to UN organisations, 17 per cent through the World Bank and 7 per cent through the regional development banks.[1]

Norway's financial support helps to increase our influence worldwide. The contributions help to ensure access to important political bodies. They also provide greater influence over how the multilateral organisations work. In order to gain optimal effect of the financial instruments, human resources must be deployed accordingly to influence the priorities of the organisations and the direction of their work through participation in governing bodies and other follow-up. Financial contributions alone will not enable Norway to reach its development policy goals.

The timing of when to provide financial support is also an important factor. Many countries have extensive bureaucratic procedures, and resources are not readily available. In Norway, funds can often be released relatively promptly. This makes Norway a partner that is able to engage swiftly in critical phases of new initiatives. By pledging support early on, and thus encouraging other countries to follow suit, Norway can also affect the total level of funding made available to specific initiatives.

The distribution of our financial support between core contributions and earmarked support is of great importance to the organisations. Recommendations on good multilateral donorship imply increased core funding and multi-annual commitments. Generally speaking, augmenting core funding would enhance the capability of the organisations to plan and implement joint priorities. Core funding is also a precondition for their ability to adapt the work to emerging needs, and it enables them to commit to collaborating with other organisations. Organisations that receive limited core funding struggle to fulfil the normative functions derived from their core mandate. Tightly earmarked funding can also lead to increased fragmentation and higher administrative costs for the organisations, and is not always in line with the priorities Norway has agreed to in governing bodies.

The political platform for the Norwegian Government ('Granavolden-plattformen'), states that Norwegian development assistance should be untied, effective and results-oriented. The Government will shift its funding to the UN system and the World Bank towards more core funding. Subject to Parliamentary approval, multi-annual indicative funding will be provided to UN organisations, to enable them to plan for the long term. We will also intensify our efforts to evaluate the results and request the organisations to enhance the visibility of core contributions from Norway and other donors.

To ensure that Norwegian development assistance produces the best possible results, and that the multilateral organisations are strengthened and improved, Norway follows up evaluations and result reports in the governing bodies of the organisations and in bilateral annual consultations. Norway actively participates in MOPAN (Multilateral Organisations Performance Assessment Network), which assesses the effectiveness of multilateral humanitarian and development organisations. We regard MOPAN as the most important provider of assessments of multilateral organisations, along with our internal assessments of the issues on the agenda of the governing bodies. We use the reports from the MOPAN assessments in our dialogue with the organisations, and the reports should increasingly be taken into consideration when allocating funding.

Pooled funding and trust funds

Pooled funds are important channels for Norwegian development assistance. In 2017, 55 per cent of Norwegian aid to multilateral organisations was earmarked. Of this, 61 per cent was earmarked for specific regions or countries and 39 per cent for

[1] Norad (2018). Norwegian development aid in 2017.

global funding mechanisms. A broad array of funds have been set up. They serve various purposes and have different advantages and disadvantages.

Joint funds managed by the UN covers collaboration among UN organisations to achieve common goals. This type of fund ensures, among other things, better interaction, and supports the reform of the UN development system, including strengthening the role of the leader of the UN country team (resident coordinator). The Joint Fund for the 2030 Agenda is a good example of this. The joint funds may have very specific objectives, like the Ebola fund, or they can have a wide-ranging scope to support the UN's work at country level, like the UN Peacebuilding Fund and various kinds of country funds. The joint funds have a governance structure that enables Norway to participate in discussions on progress and priorities. In 2017, Norway was the second largest contributor to joint UN funds. This provides visibility and gives us a strong voice.

Norway also provides funding to a number of humanitarian funds managed by the UN. Norway is one of the biggest donors to the UN Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF), and, in 2018, signed a four-year agreement to ensure more predictable funding. CERF is an important channel that enables timely assistance to people affected by acute humanitarian crises, and much-needed support for underfunded emergencies. With CERF funds, responders are able to initiate relief efforts without having to wait for donors to provide funding. Norway is also one of the largest contributors to the humanitarian country funds that help ensure effective responses and good coordination. They are also important channels for strengthening local and national capacity in humanitarian crises.

Thematic multi-donor trust funds in the World Bank and the regional development banks are used, among other things, to test innovative funding mechanisms, and provide support to underfunded or politically sensitive issues. To Norway, this type of funding represents a way to substantiate our arguments in institutions where we are otherwise a small player. Norway has, for example, a stake of under one per cent of the shares in the World Bank, but is nonetheless a crucial donor to a number of trust funds.

Norway also funds thematic global funds that channel funding to specific initiatives. At the request of donor countries, a number of these are managed by the World Bank. Thematic global funds have several advantages. They enable increased efforts in priority areas, and can mobilise a great amount of both public and private resources. Such funds also contribute to political visibility, particularly where Norway is a major donor. Several of the funds have produced good results. Gavi, the Vaccine Alliance, for example, has saved more than 10 million lives since it was established in 2000.[2]

Nevertheless, we have to be aware that using thematic funds entails earmarking, which may in some instances contribute to fragmentation. Achieving the Sustainable Development Goals requires coherent thinking and work across thematic areas. It also requires individual organisations to cooperate and coordinate their efforts effectively. In some thematic areas, where numerous funds and other actors currently operate, we may have to examine whether the multilateral architecture is adequately constructed or should be simplified.

Before Norway decides to provide support to new funds, we should assess whether our goals might be achieved equally well through already established joint funds, soft thematic earmarking or core contributions, combined with political pressure and engagement in the governing bodies of existing organisations and funds. The needs of countries and the abilities of organisations and funds to deliver results will always be decisive to the channels we choose. Good multilateral donorship means refraining from contributing to fragmentation, overlapping work and creating new coordination needs. To achieve the Sustainable Development Goals, it is crucial to think systemically and to mobilise national ownership. Our multilateral partners must be organised in such a way that they can respond accordingly.

The Government will conduct a review of the use of funds as a channel for Norwegian development assistance, in order to identify suitable, effective funding mechanisms. The overall aim is coherent efforts that produce the best possible results in each country and low transaction costs for developing countries.

EEA Grants

Through the EEA Grants for the 2014–2021 period, Norway contributes around NOK 26 billion to 15 EU member states.[3] The EEA Grants

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2 Gavi (2019). Facts and figures

3 Poland, Romania, Hungary, Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, Lithuania, Greece, Slovakia, Croatia, Portugal, Latvia, Estonia, Slovenia, Cyprus and Malta

are Norway's contribution to reduce economic and social disparities in the EEA. The financial contribution is also an important means of strengthening our ties to the beneficiary countries. Since 2004, funding has been provided through two grant schemes. One of these schemes is funded by Norway alone (Norway Grants), while the other scheme (EEA Grants) also includes contributions from Iceland and Liechtenstein. The size of the contributions is agreed upon in negotiations between the EEA/EFTA states and the EU.

7.5 Contributions from the Norwegian Armed Forces and the Police

Contributions from the Armed Forces and the Police are other important instruments Norway uses to support multilateral cooperation. The main purpose of Norwegian participation in international operations is to promote international stability and security, and thus also our own security. This type of participation in international operations must have a basis in international law. These efforts are an expression of our solidarity with the international community, and ensure that we meet our obligations as a member of the UN and NATO. Conflicts are often solved through a combination of diplomatic and military means, including ways that enable diplomacy to succeed without having to resort to military means.

Norway contributes to international missions through the UN, NATO, the OSCE, the EU and coalitions depending on our specific advantages and needs and what best serves the mission. Peace operations comprise military and civilian elements to a varying extent. We endeavour to increase the proportion of women in international operations, including in leading positions.

Norway has considerable capacity to contribute to security sector reform and civilian crisis management, through police advisers, correctional service personnel and experts from the upper ranks of the chain of justice and government administration. Civilian task forces like Norcap, GenCap, ProCap and Nordem have personnel with wide-ranging expertise and different nationalities who can be deployed at short notice.

Within the NATO framework, Norway participates in, among other things, the Resolute Support Mission in Afghanistan by providing staff officers and special forces from the Norwegian Armed Forces who are involved in developing the capacity of the Afghan Special Police Force. Since its establishment in 2017, Norway has contributed to NATO's Enhanced Forward Presence in Lithuania with Germany as the lead nation. This is a concrete expression of solidarity with allies that feel particularly challenged by Russia.

Within the UN framework, our contribution to the UN operation MINUSMA in Mali is the main focus of Norwegian military efforts. Norway has taken the initiative for a transport aircraft rotation scheme between a number of countries, which enables personnel and materiel to be transported efficiently and safely to different parts of Mali. As Norway runs the camp, other countries can take over the responsibility for freight aircraft every six months without having to set up and take down camp facilities each time. This rotation scheme has been highlighted by the UN as a model for future UN contributions. This enables Norway, together with close allies and partner countries, to contribute to renewing and reinforcing the UN's operative capability. This is essential to the UN being able to meet demanding mandates where protecting the civilian population is the key focus. Norway also provides military personnel to the UN mission in South Sudan (UNMISS) and to the UN Truce Supervision Organisation (UNTSO) in the Middle East.

Within the OSCE framework, Norway provides seconded personnel as observers to the special surveillance force in Ukraine, and to the OSCE's various institutions, missions and election observation teams. Norway helps maintain the relevance of conventional disarmament control regimes by implementing and facilitating inspections, observations and evaluation visits.

Norway also participates in coalitions with partners outside these frameworks, such as in Operation Inherent Resolve in Iraq, the US-led operation affiliated to the anti-ISIL coalition and capacity building activities in the Sahel.

The Norwegian police participate in international peace operations, often under the UN, in countries that require support to re-establish a normal infrastructure in the wake of war and conflict. The Norwegian police deployed in international peace operations help to develop the capacity of the police at a local and national level, counter violations of human rights and protect civilians, including against sexual abuse. Up to one per cent of the Norwegian police force can be deployed in peacekeeping operations. The Norwegian police participate in UN missions in Colombia, Mali and South Sudan. In South Sudan, Norway also contributes with a small number of correctional service personnel. In Mali, Norway is

establishing a specialized police team to assist the Mali Police Force in the field of criminal investigation. This will strengthen the government's ability to fight organized crime and terrorism. Norway provides civilian experts as support for the UN mission in DR Congo.

Within the framework of the EU, Norway has contributed to a number of civilian and military crisis management operations. The Norwegian police also participate in the European cooperation on border control, under the agency Frontex, through the Schengen Agreement. From 2015 to 2017, Norway contributed a vessel to Frontex operations in the Mediterranean. This was the first contribution of its kind, as the vessel was hired from a civilian shipowner, staffed with personnel from the Norwegian police, the armed forces, and a civilian crew, under the command of Frontex in close cooperation with the Italian authorities.

7.6 Representation and presence

As of April 2019, the Norwegian foreign service comprises the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA), 81 embassies, seven permanent delegations to multilateral organisations, nine general consulates and two other diplomatic representations. Approximately 2,500 people are affiliated with the service, including around 90 special envoys from other ministries and institutions in Norway. When Norway engages in issues at stake in the UN, NATO, or in relation to the EU and other organisations, the work does not merely involve the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the delegations, but also embassies, relevant ministries and their subsidiary agencies.

The ministries safeguard Norwegian interests in a number of multilateral organisations within their designated areas of responsibility. The Ministry of Finance, for example, represents Norway in the IMF. The Ministry of Climate and Environment leads the Norwegian delegation to the annual meeting of the parties under the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change. The Ministry of Transport is Norway's voice in the International Telecommunication Union. The Ministry of Justice and Public Security leads the Norwegian delegation to the Financial Action Task Force and represents Norway in the Schengen cooperation. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Ministry of Justice and Public Security and the Ministry of Children and Families jointly represent Norway during meetings of the Hague Conference on Private International Law (HCCH). Altogether, this provides Norway a wide scope for obtaining information and influencing multilateral processes from different angles. It also emphasises the need for international expertise throughout the government administration.

7.7 Research and knowledge

Another tool Norway uses in its multilateral work is the production and funding of research and knowledge bases for international negotiations, and the participation of Norwegian experts in various standing committees. This tool has been particularly important in our work on the High North and resource issues, and in international negotiations on climate and environment agreements. A common knowledge base leads to better decisions being made in multilateral forums. It is also easier to reach agreement on problems and solutions when everyone involved has the same perception of reality. Norway should therefore prioritise using this tool in issues that affect Norwegian interests.

Long-term funding of research on foreign policy is a prerequisite for producing relevant, high-quality knowledge, strengthening Norwegian expert communities and being better equipped to deal with unforeseen events. It also increases predictability and competence building in research communities, both in Norway and internationally. When a situation requires the rapid delivery of research-based knowledge on given issues, this is addressed by means of procurements under existing framework agreements that the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA) and Norad have with the research communities, or by announcing a call for applications in line with the applicable rules on procurement. The Government will continue to prioritise using Norwegian research as a tool in international cooperation.

8 What Norway can do

A realist approach to international cooperation presupposes an acknowledgment of the actual power relations between states. As a small country, Norway is not in a position to affect the great powers' approach to multilateral cooperation. Nor can we take over their role when they withdraw from or choose to give less priority to certain organisations. However, in some situations, we can play an important role due to our significant international engagement, the knowledge and expertise we have developed in certain policy areas, and our financial resources.

As a small country, we have everything to gain from a well-organised world based on strong and predictable multilateral cooperation. A review of the importance of the multilateral system to Norwegian interests, as conducted in this white paper, shows why preventing the erosion of international law and multilateral systems of governance should be considered Norway's primary foreign policy interest. We must focus on binding multilateral cooperation to safeguard the Norwegian population's security and prosperity, whilst rethinking and taking a realist approach to our freedom of manoeuvre in foreign policy. The UN, NATO, the World Bank, the IMF and the WTO are not merely examples of organisations of which we are members, but that we took part in founding. Far from being a passive observer of the development of the rules-based world order, Norway has actively helped establishing it. Now we must defend and further develop what we have participated in creating.

There is more we can do over and above our current efforts. Our starting point must be a realistic understanding of the multilateral interests and priorities of other countries, and thereby our room for manoeuvre. Norwegian efforts over the next few years need to be aimed at promoting our interests and values within the different institutions, often in cooperation with like-minded countries. We must prioritise the issues of uttermost importance to Norway and make full use of our resources where we are able to influence and reform the institutions in line with our interests.

At the same time, it is also important to safeguard the essential qualities of the multilateral system, and its effectiveness and legitimacy. Narrow interest maximisation on the part of member states, without taking the systemic qualities into account, will rapidly undermine the system and the services on which we depend. Multilateralism will not survive if reduced to maximising narrow self-interests. We must give the institutions the freedom and leeway to develop their comparative advantages as multilateral actors. When national and systemic considerations come into conflict, Norway must strive for a balanced policy. The multilateral system is an arena for promoting Norwegian interests, but it also has intrinsic value.

Thus far, Norway has been one of the strongest advocates for international cooperation in general, and strong and effective multilateralism in particular, and should remain so. Our strategies and instruments must be adapted to a more polarised and demanding situation in world politics. At the same time, it is in Norway's interest to be a recognisable, predictable, knowledgeable, and creative supporter of multilateral cooperation. Norway should aim to be among the countries that others look to in search for answers to questions that must be resolved through international cooperation.

The current situation requires prioritising where to get involved. Norway does not have the capacity to participate in every forum or contribute on all international issues. The Government will therefore prioritise employing resources to initiatives and areas where Norway has a particular advantage and can add value, where Norway's efforts stand a real chance to succeed, and where the initiative directly or indirectly promotes our national and global interests.

We must to a greater extent prioritise the channels and measures that deliver the best results. This requires a willingness to critically assess initiatives in relation to one another. In the UN, the Government will direct Norwegian efforts and financial commitments towards the parts of the system that deliver solid results in an

efficient manner and work in accordance with Norwegian priorities.

The following sections argue that Norway should prioritise to defend our room for manoeuvre in foreign policy, support reforms that make the institutions more effective and representative, cooperate more on issues we have in common with countries that are different from us, think and act more European, and strengthen the multilateral work of the Norwegian public administration.

8.1 Defending our room for manoeuvre in foreign policy

Norway's room for manoeuvre in foreign policy has always been a function of our ability to enter into strategic collaborations and alliances. When the global balance of power shifts, the room for manoeuvre for Norwegian foreign policy changes as well. The rivalry between the US and China, in particular, may lead to greater pressure on Norway to choose sides, including in situations where this does not necessarily serve our best interests. Underpinning and defending Norwegian independence and room for manoeuvre in foreign policy in general, and in multilateral forums in particular, will be a core task in the coming years.

Going forward, we must put more emphasis on thoroughly substantiating Norway's positions and explaining our fundamental interests and strategies. Norway must be clearly recognisable as an actor with a realist approach to international relations. It seems like in the world of today, and for the foreseeable future, clear and unambiguous articulation of national interests is the only approach understood by other states, and that will define the terms of multilateral cooperation.

In foreign policy turmoil, Norway's strength comes from being a clear and predictable actor in international relations and nurturing close partnerships with like-minded countries. This will also help us to handle the current pressure against the Norwegian room for manoeuvre in foreign policy. There is a growing need to stay close to the EU and like-minded European countries when one or more of the great powers attempt to make us change direction.

Defending our values internationally becomes more demanding in those instances when Norway and the US do not pull in the same direction, as described in Chapter 6. Knowing that the US would defend a range of positions and perspectives of importance to Norway and other like-minded countries, we previously had more leeway to take on specialised initiatives. Now that we need to take far more responsibility ourselves for defending fundamental values, norms and rights, we will have less time and capacity for other matters.

Although the current situation is challenging, we still believe that the best way to maintain our credibility is to stand by our values in a clear and consistent manner at all time. At the same time, in the current situation it is even more important than before that we raise sensitive questions in a way that is perceived as constructive. In order to be heard and taken seriously, our reactions must be carefully calibrated. Both intentional and unintentional effects must be considered. Quiet diplomacy on sensitive issues, including support for individuals and groups with whom the authorities of another country have a challenging relationship, will in many cases lead to better results than vocal protests.

To secure support for our policies, we must develop partnerships across regions, on a case-by-case basis and on overarching policy areas. We will return to this point in the section on new partnerships. Broad and effective partnerships with other countries and actors may prevent the largest and most powerful states from setting all the terms for multilateral cooperation. If we follow this course of action, we will be able to expand our room for manoeuvre in foreign policy.

Norway's credibility as an international partner and supporter of multilateralism is one of our comparative advantages. This credibility enables us to be taken into account, which in itself provides room for manoeuvre. We must maintain and build on this credibility by consistently supporting multilateral solutions, evidence-based arguments, technical expertise, and partnerships with like-minded states, civil society and the private sector.

The room for manoeuvre of civil society groups and their partners is also under pressure. A strong and independent civil society is crucial to both democracy and solid multilateral solutions. This is why we must continue to use our influence to ensure real civil society participation in political processes in partner countries and in multilateral forums, in line with the principles of the Sustainable Development Goals and the human rights.

Navigating increasingly troubled waters is demanding, and Norway will face a number of dilemmas in the years to come. Simple solutions are rare. Difficult choices will have to be made, and they must be thoroughly explained, both to

other countries and to the general public and interest groups in Norway.

8.2 Strengthening organisations through reform

Due to Norway's dependence on rules-based international cooperation, it is essential that we contribute towards reforming the organisations that are most important to us. A realist approach to multilateralism means requiring multilateral institutions to be relevant and effective. This must be done in a way that does not sow doubts about the fundamental principles of cooperation. Reopening key agreements would be very risky, as we are unlikely to agree upon equally strong commitments today. Key agreements must be defended, whilst we ensure that the organisations deliver better results and use their resources more effectively.

The UN Security Council needs reforms. Norway strives for a more representative Security Council that better reflects the world of today, with more representation for developing countries in the form of both permanent and non-permanent seats. This includes both permanent and non-permanent seats for the African countries. The possibilities of such reform are nonetheless slim, as long as the Security Council's permanent members and a sufficient number of UN member states believe they will not gain from change.

It is also important to reform the Security Council's working methods. Norway supports measures that increase transparency and the involvement of non-members in the Council's work. We also support initiatives to prevent permanent members from using their veto power to block decisions to deter or stop genocide, war crimes or crimes against humanity. A seat on the Security Council in the period 2021–2022 will give Norway an opportunity to promote greater influence for the ten elected members. The elected members have played a more important role in the Security Council's work in recent years. The ten elected states now work more closely together than before and challenge established practices that favour the permanent members.

Norway supports and actively contributes to the implementation of the UN Secretary-General's reforms of the UN system. Reforming the UN development system is a key element of this. The overriding goal of the development reform is to achieve better results in developing countries. The Quadrennial Comprehensive Policy Review (QCPR) resolution from 2016 decides that the UN country teams will assist developing countries in their implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in a more coherent, integrated and efficient manner. In line with the 2018 resolution on the UN Secretary-General's proposal for further reform, the cooperation between the various UN organisations in individual countries will be strengthened through a new and independent position as UN Resident Coordinator. This position is now separate from the UNDP, which has previously administrated the scheme.

Extensive reform requires major changes to the way the UN development system is funded. Norway actively follows up the reform resolutions. A Funding Compact between the UN development system and member states has also been established. Member states agree to provide more flexible and predictable funding, while the UN development system agrees to greater transparency, more cooperation and greater effectiveness. Norway has reintroduced multi-year indicative pledges for core funding of the UN organisations. The Government also wishes to explore the possibility of further increasing our core contributions. Steps are also being taken to increase funding through the UN Joint Fund for the 2030 Agenda, which facilitates cooperation between organisations. More flexible funding means that the share of funding that goes to strictly earmarked project support will be reduced. Norway will follow up the decision on a 1 per cent levy on strictly earmarked project funding. The levy is one of the sources for funding for the resident coordinator system. The system must receive sufficient funding if the reforms are to succeed.

Knowledge is a prerequisite for influencing how the UN organisations work. To gain influence, we must work on three fronts simultaneously – in intergovernmental forums such as the UN Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) and the General Assembly, in the governing bodies of the individual UN organisations and in selected countries. Norway has to enter into partnerships with other member states, not least outside the group of Western countries in the UN, to gain influence in intergovernmental forums and governing bodies. The Government particularly wants to keep track of how the reforms are implemented on the ground. The country teams carry the values of the UN Charter and are expected to advance international norms and standards.

Compared to the needs, the UN's financial resources are very limited. The UN cannot do everything in every country. The Government will

Figure 8.1 Norway is an active supporter of UN reform. Above, the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Ine Eriksen Søreide, gives a statement in the UN General Assembly. UN Secretary-General António Guterres (left) is among the listeners.
Source: Ingrid Kvammen Ekker, UD

continue to encourage the UN to take a differentiated approach to which functions should be performed in different types of country contexts. The Government wishes to see the three pillars of the UN (peace and security, development and human rights) work better together, and that the development reform is linked to the reform in the UN's peace and security work in countries where peace operations and political missions take place. The goal is a common strategic framework for all UN entities present. It is also important to ensure good coordination with humanitarian efforts, without being at the expense of the humanitarian organisations' independence, flexibility and speed – factors that are crucial to securing access to those most at risk and to being capable of expanding operations in acute crisis situations.

It is also important to address factors that can diminish credibility and trust in the UN system. The lack of prosecution for crimes and abuses committed by UN employees, including in peacekeeping operations, has been a problem for a long time. In principle, UN personnel enjoy diplomatic immunity in the service, but are subject to the national laws and regulations of their home country. Unfortunately, we have seen that the home countries of UN personnel have failed to adequately follow up cases where their citizens have been accused of committing criminal acts while in UN service. This puts trust in the organisation at risk.

In recent years, Norway and a number of other member states have spearheaded an initiative that seeks to put the matter of impunity on the agenda in the UN. Efforts are being made to establish better reporting mechanisms on such cases. Norway supports that home states should be required to report to the UN on what they have done to follow up accusations of criminal acts committed by their citizens in UN service. Norway, together with the other Nordic countries, has also proposed that the UN should name states that do not follow up such accusations. This could lead to create greater transparency and compel national follow-up. Norway also supports the proposal of developing a new convention on this issue, but acknowledges that the multilateral

negotiation climate currently is not ripe for this work.

Norway has zero tolerance for sexual exploitation and abuse and sexual harassment in the organisations we fund. We expect our partners to have guidelines in place to prevent and deal with such cases. Our representatives raise this matter in governing body meetings and in other relevant forums. Prime Minister Solberg also participates in the UN Secretary-General's Circle of Leadership, which works on the prevention of and response to sexual exploitation and abuse in UN operations. Norway will continue to hold our partners accountable in the wake of the #metoo campaign to ensure that reported cases are followed up and that whistleblowers are protected.

NATO remains the only organisation in Europe that has real collective defence obligations and defence capabilities. Changes in the global balance of power have made NATO more relevant. The alliance and member states have also succeeded in implementing necessary reforms to address its core tasks under new security policy framework conditions. Norway has long advocated strengthening NATO's collective defence capacity. This has led to adaption of the command structure, making it more suitable for leading large-scale joint operations. NATO has not least re-established a command in Norfolk with special responsibility for allied reinforcement across the Atlantic.

As conferred in the white paper Setting the Course for Norwegian Foreign and Security Policy (Report No 36 to the Storting (2016–2017), 'If NATO is to remain strong and united, it is essential that it is able to deal with the security challenges facing its members through credible deterrence and defence. The military capacity, political will and ability to adapt the Alliance to the changing security environment are vital.' Norway's willingness to participate in joint defence measures at home and abroad is one aspect of this, as is contributing to better burden-sharing by working to fulfil NATO's 2 per cent target. The measures described in Chapter 8 of the above-mentioned white paper will continue to form the framework for the Government's work in this field.

The Council of Europe has implemented major reforms in recent years, including in the European Court of Human Rights. The court considers more complaints than ever and has more than halved its backlog. The organisation has also strengthened its presence in the member states where this is necessary. The Council of Europe will continue to reform in order to promote human rights, democracy and rule of law principles as effectively as possible, and contribute to handling new technological challenges. Key questions in this respect are the organisation's funding, the improvement of monitoring mechanisms and how they work together. It is also necessary to improve cooperation between the organisations' main bodies and consider how the secretariat can be modernised.

The Council of Europe's greatest challenge in the years to come will be to keep the member states united, protect the institutions and counter setbacks in the area of human rights. In April 2014, the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe (PACE) decided to revoke some of Russia's rights related to participation in the assembly in response to Russia's annexation of Crimea and the destabilisation of eastern Ukraine. This has led to a difficult situation between Russia and the Council of Europe. In response, Russia has withheld mandatory economic contributions to the Council since 2017. If an agreement is not reached on Russia's participation in the Council of Europe, a persistent divide between the countries can undermine the purpose of the organisation. If Russia continues to withhold its financial contributions, the Council's capacity to conduct its core tasks will be reduced. The Government will work to ensure that all member states remain in the organisation and that it remains pan-European.

Reform is also a key aspect of our work on international trade. Our main priority is protecting the WTO's rules-based multilateral trade system, which requires modernisation of the organisation. In response to the acute crisis, a number of initiatives have been taken to reform the system in which Norway plays an active role. The Government will prioritise the modernisation of the WTO and will make political, substantive and diplomatic contributions to the reform work.

Norway has a credible voice in the debate on trade and development, both by virtue of our global development cooperation and the inclusive role we have played in the WTO in Geneva. Norway has therefore taken a leading role in the efforts to focus on the development dimension of the reform work and the importance of a trading system that supports sustainable economic development.

Norway's role as defender of the WTO will be essential in our reactions to the trade conflict between the US and China. On the one hand, we must be able to reproach the US for blocking appointments to the WTO appeal body and for implementing trade restrictions on dubious

grounds, as we have done by establishing a dispute settlement panel in the case of additional duties on steel and aluminium. On the other hand, we must be able to actively contribute to filling the gaps in the regulations and ensure that they are complied with, in order to capture the aspects of China's political-economic model that are problematic from a trade policy perspective. Like most countries, including China, we strongly advocate that the WTO is given space to do the job it has been assigned, and that it is actively used as a forum for settling trade conflicts. Like the US, we believe that certain parts of the WTO must be reformed, but we emphasise that the solution is to strengthen, not weaken, the organisation.

It is difficult to reach consensus on new multilateral agreements in the WTO. If new agreements of this kind are not concluded, members are likely to increasingly gather in smaller groups for plurilateral cooperation; that is, forming coalitions that negotiate agreements among themselves. Norway supports plurilateral initiatives that can generate progress and dynamism in the multilateral trading system, but multilateral solutions remain a clear first choice. Where plurilateral cooperation appears to be the only plausible way, it is in Norway's and the trading system's interest that the cooperation remains under the WTO umbrella. It is also important that the initiatives are open to everyone.

Reform and renewal is also a necessity in many other international organisations. The Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) has contributed to stability, confidence-building and peace in our part of the world for many years. The political situation in the OSCE reflects the general state of the multilateral landscape, with increasing polarisation and confrontation. The climate in the OSCE is presently not ripe for new initiatives or changes. The OSCE's normative work is relatively stagnant, while existing commitments, norms and values are more frequently challenged. The most important battle in the OSCE at the moment is to safeguard, protect and consolidate what has already been achieved and contribute to ensuring that the OSCE's practical work at country level on preventing conflict, promoting political, social and economic development, including women's equality and participation, actually continues. The Government will therefore prioritise strengthening the OSCE's field activities.

The world is changing and this has consequences for development policy. The 2030 Agenda defines which targets need to be reached. The OECD's Development Assistance Committee (DAC) is a forum for traditional development aid donors. The committee approves which financial flows can be classified as official development assistance (ODA).

To be able to report a contribution as ODA, according to the ODA regulations, the primary purpose of a measure or activity must be economic development and prosperity in developing countries. Necessary efforts to generate global benefits cannot be categorised as ODA today. Efforts at the global and regional levels can still mean a lot for development and poverty reduction. This applies, for example, to normative work in areas such as trade and human rights, as well as climate related initiatives.

The Government's policy is that Norwegian aid must be based on the DAC regulations. The ODA framework is not static, and have been adjusted several times. There is currently debate in the DAC on how official development assistance that promotes the Sustainable Development Goals can be defined and reported going forward. The Government will contribute to constructive development of the ODA regulations in order to meet the needs of developing countries and help to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals.

In coming years, Norway must be prepared to make difficult choices in regards to which organisations we will defend and strengthen, and which will be given lower priority. Norway is likely to benefit from giving lower priority to or withdrawing from involvement in certain multilateral organisations that do not deliver adequate results. Most organisations do not have procedures for dissolution. Even if their mandates become obsolete, or their work is taken over by other institutions, it would still be difficult to completely change or dismantle an organisation entirely. In some cases, it will therefore be more productive for Norway to withdraw financial support and political engagement, or its membership, than to insist on dismantling the organisations in question.

Now is the time to protect the organisations that already have been established rather than initiating new ones. We must prioritise to defend and improve those of the existing multilateral institutions that are most important to our security and prosperity, and reward the ones that deliver the best results. Norway must contribute to reform where it is possible to make progress, but be careful in situations where initiating reform processes could lead to setbacks. We have nothing to gain

from reopening agreements and conventions that are unlikely to have been adopted today.

8.3 Strengthening close partnerships and entering into new ones

The Government is working to continue and strengthen Norway's broad cooperation with the US, both bilaterally and in multilateral forums. Although much is in a state of flux, both globally and in US politics, the basic preconditions for our close relationship with the US remain intact. Continued American engagement in multilateral organisations is in Norway's interest.

To counter the pressure against multilateralism, we need more vigorous cooperation and partnership-building with our Nordic neighbours and like-minded countries in Europe. Today, Europe – in various constellations like the EU, groups of European countries and the Nordic countries – is the world's strongest advocate for liberal values and multilateralism. Therefore, we should intensify our efforts to deepen our relationships and our cooperation with like-minded European countries and the EU. In other words, our thinking and our actions must take a more European approach. The fact that Norway is not a member of the EU entails limitations, but we nonetheless have many possibilities to support the EU's role as the most prominent advocate of multilateralism – financially, politically and in terms of security. Investing in our relationship with the EU and ensuring that the EU perceives us as a staunch supporter is in Norway's interest. This does not mean replacing the cornerstones of Norway's foreign and security policy, but supplementing and reinforcing these through increased dialogue with other like-minded countries in certain policy areas.

The Nordic countries share fundamental values and perspectives on the world and depend on a rules-based world order. In an unpredictable world, where liberal values are under pressure, Nordic cooperation becomes even more essential. A clear Nordic voice in the European debate can serve both Europe and the Nordic countries, not least in matters of democracy and rule of law. Continuing and further developing the Nordic cooperation also gives us greater influence in multilateral forums.

Given the current situation in the multilateral system, Norway should explore the possibility of forging closer ties to other liberal democracies. Certain countries, such as Germany and France, have advocated various alliances and partnerships between democratic countries that are supporters of multilateralism. The inclusion of countries from the South across different regions in these initiatives will be important. It is also crucial that these initiatives avoid establishing new, competing organisations, but rather create platforms for cooperation within existing organisations.

At the same time as we continue and strengthen our collaboration with the US, the EU and like-minded European countries, it is necessary to seek new partners in order to succeed in defending our interests and promoting multilateral cooperation. Our old alliances stand firm. However, it is also vital to forge new partnerships with countries that we have not cooperated as closely with in the past. We must choose new partners on a case-by-case basis, dependent on which countries share our interests in the issue at stake. Partnerships across different continents and regions are necessary to ensure legitimacy, representativeness and influence in our multilateral work.

In the next few years, Norway will initiate and develop new partnerships in the UN and other multilateral organisations based on common values and shared interests rather than the level of economic development and geography. We must improve our ability to cooperate with countries outside of the groups we traditionally define as like-minded. Therefore, Norway must continue to develop ties with countries in Asia, Oceania, Africa and Latin America. Through long-term political involvement and development cooperation, Norway has significant political capital in many of these countries. This platform may be utilised to support stronger bilateral relations and closer multilateral cooperation.

In addition to continuing the cooperation on multilateral issues with our current partners, the Government will forge closer ties with a select group of countries, designated 'multipartner countries', such as Mexico, Argentina, Ghana, Angola, Ethiopia, Jordan, Indonesia, South Korea and Australia. It is valuable for Norway to seek closer cooperation with these countries in particular, as they are genuinely engaged in defending and improving the multilateral system and have the capacity to follow up. Norway is represented in all of these countries with embassies and can continue to build on our existing cooperation.

We must also seek opportunities for enhanced dialogue with the largest and most influential countries in the South. In the autumn of 2018, the Government launched an India strategy, with increased cooperation with India in the multilat-

eral system an important objective. India is the world's largest democracy, the world's fifth largest economy, and will in just a few years be the most populous country. The country is a strong advocate of international law and thus a valuable partner in efforts to defend multilateral cooperation.

As described earlier, China's increased influence in multilateral forums poses new challenges. However, it also generates new opportunities for cooperation. Norway should grasp the opportunity for closer dialogue and exchange of best practises, both at the national and capital city level. In Norway's dialogue with China, our common interests in advancing multilateral cooperation should be a key agenda item. The fact that China describes itself as a multilateralist also provides opportunities to hold the country accountable for its compliance with international rules and standards. China has become a considerable international aid donor. It will be important for Norway and other major donors to try to influence China's development policy in the direction of established international norms and standards, in order to contribute towards tackling global challenges.

Africa and Europe are neighbours. Developments in Africa have direct consequences for Europe and Norway. The African Union (AU) is the continent's main political arena and forum for cooperation on common goals and strategies to promote peace, security and sustainable development. Increasingly, the AU is also Africa's voice in international forums and thus an important part of the multilateral architecture. The Government will therefore seek to strengthen Norway's strategic cooperation with the AU. In the autumn of 2018, the Government appointed an ambassador to the AU, and established a permanent Norwegian delegation to the AU. At the same time, a new three-year cooperation agreement was signed. The agreement's objective is to strengthen the political dialogue and contribute to a more systematic and comprehensive approach to operative cooperation in the following priority areas: peace and security, democracy and good governance, sustainable development, and job creation.

The Government will also strengthen the dialogue with African countries on multilateral issues through a new Nordic-African initiative. The purpose of the initiative is to build alliances in support of multilateral cooperation and a rules-based world order. Through structured dialogue, Norway aims to identify new areas for Nordic-African cooperation within the framework of the multilateral system. We also work closely with Germany under the G20 initiative Compact with Africa to cooperate with selected African countries. In sum, these forward-looking measures strengthen Norway's multilateral partnerships.

The UN and the AU are intensifying their cooperation. Norway actively supports the partnership, for example through funding the UN Office to the AU and the AU Permanent Observer to the UN. In the spring of 2019, Norway launched a Group of Friends for the cooperation between the UN and AU, in Addis Ababa. The Group of Friends will help to strengthen the member states' support for the partnership between the UN and the AU.

The Government will also strengthen the dialogue and cooperation with ASEAN, which is an important driver for peace, stability and economic growth in Southeast Asia. ASEAN has significantly increased its influence over the recent years, and the organisation is key to regional cooperation on security, trade, climate, the environment and other challenges. The countries of ASEAN collectively comprise the seventh-largest economy in the world, and its members rank among Norway's most important trading partners.

Norway entered into a sector dialogue partnership with ASEAN in 2015, which has provided access to the most important arena for regional integration and development in Southeast Asia. With ASEAN's ambition to establish a common internal market, the partnership may present new opportunities for Norwegian businesses and investments in the region. ASEAN values Norway's involvement, both when it comes to project cooperation and political dialogue. Equally appreciated, is Norway's appointment of an ambassador to ASEAN. Norway and ASEAN have agreed to prioritise cooperation on climate issues, the environment, energy, marine and maritime issues, trade and business development, integration, peace, reconciliation and security, human rights, and education.

The Asia Europe Meeting (ASEM) is another important arena for political dialogue between Europe and Asia. The forum comprises 30 European and 21 Asian countries. The objective is greater synergy and closer dialogue between Europe and Asia through political dialogue, economic cooperation and cultural exchange. Summit meetings on the level of heads of state and governments are organised biannually, while meetings between ministers of foreign affairs are held in the intermediate years. Sector minister meetings and meetings on a technical expert level are

held as well. A parliamentarian branch of the cooperation has also been established.

In the next few years, we will also need to forge relations with countries that diverge from us on important political issues, including values. This does not imply an abandonment of our own values, but that we will seek cooperation with these countries whilst confidently and openly communicating our values. Norway's guest membership under Germany's presidency of G20 in 2017 provided useful experience in this respect. In this informal, yet powerful, global forum, the world's 20 biggest countries engage in a constant dialogue, despite their profound differences. To establish close contact with every G20 presidency is important to Norway.

In sum, the measures described in this section will give Norway a stronger position in the multilateral system, and a greater opportunity to advance national and common interests. In the coming years, Norwegian representatives should prioritise visits to and consultations with countries that are crucial partners to us in the struggle to defend and improve international cooperation.

Going forward, Norway should promote partnerships with civil society on multilateral issues even more actively. Civil society organisations contribute to the development of norms and standards, and make important contributions to mobilising necessary political support in order to turn the spotlight on issues both in and outside of multilateral forums. The Mine Ban Treaty, the Convention on Cluster Munitions, and the Safe Schools Declaration are examples of processes where non-state actors have been great partners in tripartite cooperation with states and international organisations. It has proved to be an effective model when it has been difficult to generate progress in intergovernmental organisations. What these initiatives have in common, is that they have enabled the adoption of political obligations and/or legally binding rules without universal endorsement. When a majority of member states have agreed on these obligations and rules, it has led to compliance also from states that have not ratified the conventions or other legal frameworks. This approach may become even more relevant in the future.

Cooperation with business and other private sector actors must also be emphasised in the years to come. Most of the major challenges we face require active participation from the private sector. While governments and multilateral organisations can develop norms and regulations, practical solutions are often found in the business sector, which also has the financial resources to pursue them. Improved sharing of best practises and cooperation between the public and private sector, both on a national and international level, is thus essential to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals and other overarching objectives of multilateral cooperation.

8.4 Working more effectively together

Given the challenges we are facing in international cooperation, it is necessary to improve the ability of the Norwegian government administration to promote specific issues in multiple international organisations at the same time. If we are able to ensure better coordination and cooperation among all parts of the government administration, including between ministries and with subordinate agencies, we will be more successful in advancing Norwegian interests and initiatives.

Good tools and processes for sharing information are a prerequisite for enabling government entities to share information efficiently. The Government will work to ensure better coordination of Norwegian positions and concordance of priorities. Official Norwegian standpoints in important policy areas must be well known to everyone representing Norway in multilateral forums.

Better coordination is essential both because more and more areas of policy are internationalised, and because working on cross-cutting issues requires better coordination between government entities. When Norway instigates multiple initiatives relating to the same cause, as we do for example in our ocean campaign, we must also ensure that the initiatives support rather than complicate multilateral efforts.

In 2018, the Government established a forum for policy coherence ('Samstemthetsforumet'), which aims to ensure that Norwegian policies in different areas such as trade, migration, investments, climate and the environment, health and security work in parallel with development policy. The forum is led by the MFA at the political level, and is composed of representatives of the ministries responsible for following up the SDGs, as well as labour unions and employers' organisations researchers, NGOs and businesses. The forum provides an opportunity to discuss dilemmas in the interface between development policy and other Norwegian policies.

All foreign service missions must be utilised to strengthen Norway's multilateral work. Norwegian embassies have to be involved more in multi-

lateral initiatives and processes. All missions must take greater responsibility for discussing multilateral issues with the authorities in their host countries, promoting Norwegian multilateral priorities, obtaining information and building coalitions. The Ministry in Oslo needs to be even better at maximising the strengths of Norway's missions abroad. In order to develop new partnerships for multilateral efforts, we must build on the relationships we have as a development partner. In addition, we have to work systematically to improve the tripartite cooperation between the foreign service missions, the Ministry and Norway's permanent missions to different multilateral organisations.

Cooperation with civil society partners and the private sector helps us develop solid and representative policy positions and strengthens our international influence. Succeeding with this type of cooperation will become even more important going forward. Norway's international initiatives have a greater chance of winning support if they are advanced not only by government entities, but also by other actors. Closer cooperation with the private sector is important, particularly in our efforts to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals. The lessons learned from 'the Norwegian model' can also be used to improve the multilateral organisations' cooperation with civil society and the private sector.

8.5 Ensuring sufficient resources and the right expertise

The availability of sufficient resources in the government administration is key to succeeding in our efforts to advance and defend Norway's interests in the multilateral system. Much of the multilateral work takes place between summits and behind the scenes, such as when Norwegian representatives from different ministries negotiate resolutions and agreements, build networks, search for common ground and ensure that Norway's voice is heard in the organisations' governing bodies. In order to be listened to in international negotiations and contribute to effective international agreements, it is essential that the Norwegian civil service has high quality expertise and sufficient capacity. This requires significant resources, but a world without well-functioning international cooperation, to which Norway makes a significant contribution, would cost us a great deal more.

The fact that Norway is not a member of the EU and thus cannot take advantage of the European External Action Service (EEAS), as many of our neighbours do, entails higher requirements for our own foreign service. The UK has decided to strengthen its foreign service when it leaves the EU, because a country's foreign service is its front line internationally. Looking ahead, it is equally vital to Norway that we are well represented outside our borders, to ensure that we are able to safeguard Norwegian interests.

Cooperation and coordination require resources. To achieve the goal of making the government administration work more coherently, the different ministries and foreign service missions must have enough human resources to have time to coordinate their work. In addition, sufficient expertise on multilateral work must be available in all relevant parts of the ministries and the foreign service missions.

If our development assistance is to produce the best possible results, we must ensure that the government administration has the capacity necessary to follow up Norwegian funds channelled through multilateral organisations. The goal is to improve efficiency, and achieve significantly better coordination between Norway's substantial multilateral contributions and our development cooperation at the country level. Our capacity to follow up the different types of trust funds we support must also be strengthened.

Development assistance on its own is not sufficient to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals. It is equally important that Norway has the capacity and expertise necessary for our representatives to be able to contribute to the development of international rules and regulations. The Government will therefore dedicate more resources to contributing in key political processes in the multilateral organisations.

Research-based knowledge is key to good policy-making. As a follow-up to this white paper, the Government will initiate a new collaboration with relevant research communities to produce more research-based knowledge about how the multilateral system is changing, its consequences for Norway over time, and what we can do in the longer term to safeguard Norwegian interests and values.

8.6 The Government will

– work to strengthen multilateral cooperation, international law and compliance therewith,

and seek their further development in accordance with Norwegian strategic interests and values
- strengthen and develop the Law of the Sea as the basis for sustainable use of resources and ocean management
- prioritise to contribute towards reforming the multilateral organisations that matter the most to Norway, including the UN, NATO and the WTO, in order to make the organisations more effective, efficient and relevant
- work actively in multilateral forums to promote transatlantic and European security
- contribute to maintaining and further developing transatlantic relations through fairer burden-sharing and wide-ranging efforts against threats the alliance faces, by deepening the cooperation within NATO, strengthening bilateral ties to selected allies and participating in security cooperation in Europe that supports NATO's work
- safeguard the EEA Agreement in order to ensure equal rights and opportunities in the Internal Market for Norwegian businesses and industry, as well as jobs and prosperity; make use of the available opportunities to take part in the development of EEA legislation and ensure that EEA Grants continue to contribute towards social and economic development as well as democracy and human rights
- strengthen Norway's partnership with the US, like-minded European countries and the EU, both in multilateral forums and through other forms of cooperation
- build new partnerships with countries across regions and with regional organisations to strengthen the multilateral system and advance our interests
- endeavour to be elected as a member of the UN Security Council for the period 2021–2022. If elected, Norway will promote international law, including human rights and international humanitarian law. Norway will be a constructive problem solver and find common solutions to help the Security Council to more effectively handle situations that challenge peace and security
- complete the presidencies of the UN's Economic and Social Council (2019–2020), the Mine Ban Treaty (2018–2019) and the Fifth Session of the UN Environment Assembly (2021), as well as membership of the World Heritage Committee (2017–2021) in a manner that strengthens multilateral cooperation, and present our candidacy for the UN Human Rights Council
- focus on efforts to increase the support for civil and political rights, including freedom of expression, freedom of religion or belief, and the abolition of the death penalty
- work through the multilateral system to strengthen the humanitarian response and ensure a more integrated approach in line with the priorities set out in Norway's Humanitarian Strategy
- contribute to greater coherence between humanitarian efforts, prevention and long-term development cooperation
- ensure that Norway's financial contributions to multilateral organisations promote better inter-agency coordination and cooperation, efficiency and the best possible results, by, among other things, making multi-annual indicative commitments and shifting contributions towards more core funding
- allocate adequate resources and expertise for political work to promote national and common interests in multilateral forums
- promote better coordination of multilateral efforts in all parts of the government administration, including between and within the ministries
- launch a new strategy for recruiting Norwegian nationals to international organisations, with the aim of increasing the number of Norwegian staff at all levels

9 Economic and administrative consequences

It is assumed that the measures and policy set out in this white paper will be within applicable budgetary limits. Any increased allocations required to meet new challenges and requirements relating to our foreign policy will be submitted in connection with the ordinary budget process.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs

r e c o m m e n d s :

that the recommendation from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs on Norway's Role and Interests in International Cooperation, dated 14 June 2010, be submitted to the Storting.

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