1. US Withdrawing From 66 International Organisations – International Relations

The US has withdrawn from 66 international organizations, including 31 UN entities and 35 non-UN bodies. The entities include climate/energy/science forums such as the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), the International Renewable Energy Agency (IRENA), and the International Solar Alliance (ISA). It also names development/governance and rights-related entities such as UN Women, UNFPA (UN Population Fund), UNCTAD, and UN-Habitat, along with multiple UN offices linked to peacebuilding and protection of children in conflict.

The United States Withdrawing from Multilateral Institutions

Sovereignty and Policy Autonomy Concerns - The U.S. political establishment, particularly conservative and nationalist constituencies, perceives binding international agreements as constraints on domestic legislative and executive authority. Institutions dealing with climate change, human rights, trade, and health are often seen as infringing upon U.S. regulatory freedom and federal–state policy space. There is resistance to external monitoring, dispute settlement mechanisms, and compliance review processes that may override or challenge domestic decisions.

Perceived Institutional Bias and Politicisation - U.S. policymakers frequently allege that multilateral bodies suffer from bureaucratic inefficiency, agenda capture, and ideological bias. Claims include disproportionate criticism of U.S. allies, leniency toward strategic rivals, and politicised decision-making in bodies such as the UN Human Rights Council or UNESCO. These perceptions are amplified by domestic narratives portraying international institutions as unaccountable and misaligned with U.S. strategic interests.

Domestic Political Economy and Electoral Incentives - Multilateral commitments are often framed as high-cost, low-visibility expenditures with minimal short-term electoral payoff. Rising fiscal pressures, populist sentiments, and "America First" narratives encourage retrenchment from global public goods provision. International cooperation is increasingly viewed through a transactional lens rather than as a long-term investment in global stability.

Burden-Sharing and Free-Rider Arguments - The U.S. argues that it disproportionately finances international organisations relative to the benefits received. There is frustration that emerging economies and middle-income countries do not shoulder commensurate financial or operational responsibilities. This narrative resonates domestically, reinforcing demands for cost-cutting and conditional engagement.

Strategic Reorientation toward Bilateralism and Minilateralism - The U.S. increasingly prefers bilateral deals and minilateral groupings (e.g., Quad, AUKUS, IPEF) where it can exercise greater agenda-setting power. Universal multilateral institutions are viewed as slow, consensus-bound, and vulnerable to obstruction by rival states. Minilateralism is seen as more agile, interest-aligned, and strategically controllable.

Strategic Competition with Rival Powers - Withdrawal also reflects concerns that platforms like the UN, WHO, or climate forums allow rivals—especially China—to expand influence, shape norms, and project leadership. Rather than contest influence from within, segments of U.S. policymaking favour disengagement or parallel institution-building. This represents a shift from liberal institutionalism toward selective, power-based engagement.

Potential Global Impacts

Climate Governance and Environmental Action Setbacks - U.S. withdrawal weakens collective momentum on emissions reduction, climate finance, and technology transfer. It provides political cover for other countries to dilute commitments, delay net-zero timelines, or reduce contributions to climate funds. Global mitigation and adaptation efforts suffer due to loss of finance, innovation leadership, and diplomatic pressure.

Fragmentation of Multilateralism - Repeated exits accelerate the erosion of rules-based global governance and encourage competitive institutionalism. Power rivalries intensify as countries gravitate toward regional blocs, ad-hoc coalitions, and protectionist arrangements. The universality and legitimacy of global institutions are undermined.

Development and Humanitarian Financing Slowdown - U.S. funding reductions deepen existing resource gaps in health, education, nutrition, and food security programs. Fragile and conflict-affected states are disproportionately impacted, slowing progress on the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Humanitarian response capacity weakens amid rising global crises.

Global Peace and Security Risks - Reduced U.S. engagement with peacebuilding and post-conflict recovery mechanisms limits their operational effectiveness. Regions such as Sub-Saharan Africa, the Caribbean, and parts of West Asia face heightened risks of conflict relapse. Preventive diplomacy, mediation, and institution-building efforts lose a key supporter.

Weakening of International Norms and Legal Compliance - U.S. exits normalise selective adherence to international law and treaty obligations. Other states may adopt similar approaches, eroding norm internalisation and compliance culture. This weakens accountability mechanisms and global legal coherence.

Leadership Vacuum and Norm-Shaping Opportunities for Others

1. Reduced U.S. presence creates space for other major powers to influence agenda-setting, standards, and institutional design.
2. Competing governance models—less transparent or less rights-based—may gain traction.
3. The balance of normative leadership shifts away from liberal internationalism.

Way Ahead

For the United Nations and Multilateral System - Diversify funding sources by expanding assessed contributions and engaging new donor coalitions, including middle-income countries and philanthropies. Reduce donor concentration risks by redesigning programs for financial resilience and modular implementation. Strengthen coalitions of "core contributors" committed to preserving essential mandates regardless of individual exits. Improve transparency, efficiency, and outcome-based delivery to rebuild trust and legitimacy.

For India - Treat U.S. withdrawal as both a strategic risk and a diplomatic opportunity. Risks include reduced predictability in climate finance, technology transfer, and institutional support in bodies such as ISA and IRENA. Opportunities lie in expanding India's leadership as a convenor and bridge-builder between the Global North and South. India can mobilise alternative coalitions, scale ISA-like platforms, and push climate–development synergies in forums where U.S. absence increases negotiating space. This aligns with India's aspiration to shape global governance reforms and enhance its role as a responsible global stakeholder.

Source- https-//www.newsonair.gov.in/us-withdraws-from-over-60-global-organizations-including-several-un-bodies-and-international-solar-alliance/#-~-text=After%20signing%2C%20Trump%20said%20he,and%20Non%2DUnited%20Nations%20organisations