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Meaning of International Organizations

Basically international organizations are formed between sovereign states to cooperate on some commonly agreed issues. The agreed issues can range from low political issues such as for example cooperation in cultural affairs, tourism, health, education, science and technology to mid-level aspects like trade and commerce and to high level of politics such as security and the like. In all these areas of interaction between states there is a desire to cooperate in order to benefit from such cooperation without which development cannot be achieved.

In other words, for any benefit that countries would like to achieve there needs to be some kind of agreed methods by which they could get such benefits and the agreed method is to achieve by means of creating organizations that will help achieve those benefits. Therefore international organizations are created by a group of countries on any of the issues that they would like to cooperate and benefit. "institutions drawing membership from at least three states, having activities in several states, and whose members are held together by a formal agreement". Hence it is obvious that for an organization to come into existence three criteria is to be fulfilled:

- 1) members;
- 2) activities; and
- 3) formal agreement.

An international organization can be defined as 'an institutional agreement between members of an international system in order to achieve objectives according to systemic conditions, reflecting attributes, aspirations and concerns of its members'. International organizations generally have States as members, but often other entities can also apply for membership. They both make international law and are governed by it. They play a crucial role in facilitating international cooperation, managing conflicts, and addressing global challenges. An international organization is a group where countries work together, usually involving many nations. It has a stable set of member countries and has permanent bodies with specific powers to achieve shared goals. The first international organization with a permanent secretariat was the Central Commission for the Navigation of the Rhine, set up in 1815. The first organization dealing with a broad range of issues was the League of Nations, which was then followed by the United Nations after World War II.

Characteristics:

- **Formal Structure:** They have a defined organizational structure, including decision-making bodies, administrative units, and procedures.
- **Membership:** Membership typically consists of states (in IGOs) or private entities/individuals (in NGOs). For IGOs, membership is based on treaties or agreements among states. For NGOs, membership is based on voluntary participation.
- **Objectives:** They are created to achieve specific goals, such as maintaining peace, promoting economic development, addressing environmental issues, or advancing human rights.
- **Authority and Function:** They can have varying degrees of authority, ranging from advisory and facilitative roles to having binding resolutions or agreements for member states.

SCOPE OF INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS

The scope of international organizations refers to the range and extent of their activities, functions, and influence. It encompasses what they are designed to address and how they operate on a global or regional scale. International organizations encompass a broad and diverse range of entities designed to facilitate cooperation and address global challenges. These organizations operate on various levels, from intergovernmental organizations (IGOs) like the United Nations and NATO, which manage complex global issues and promote international collaboration, to international nongovernmental organizations (INGOs) such as Amnesty International and the Red Cross, which focus on specific causes and provide humanitarian aid. The scope of international organizations is vast, extending across diplomatic, economic, social, and environmental domains.

1. Political and Security Scope

- **Peacekeeping and Conflict Resolution:**

- **Role:** Manage and resolve conflicts between nations or within states.
- **Examples:**
 - United Nations (UN):** Deploys peacekeeping missions and mediates disputes through the Security Council.

African Union (AU): Engages in peacekeeping and conflict resolution in Africa.

- **Disarmament and Non-Proliferation:**

- **Role:** Promote arms control and non-proliferation agreements to reduce the risk of war.
- **Examples:**
 - United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs (UNODA):** Facilitates disarmament initiatives and treaties.

International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA): Monitors nuclear programs to prevent the spread of nuclear weapons.

2. Economic Scope

- **Trade and Commerce:**

- **Role:** Regulate and facilitate international trade agreements and dispute resolution.
- **Examples:**
 - World Trade Organization (WTO):** Oversees global trade rules and settles trade disputes between countries.

- **Economic Development:**

- **Role:** Promote economic growth and development, especially in developing countries.
- **Examples:**
 - International Monetary Fund (IMF):** Provides financial assistance and economic policy advice

World Bank: Offers financial and technical assistance for development projects.

3. Humanitarian and Social Scope

- **Human Rights Protection:**

- **Role:** Advocate for and protect human rights globally.

- **Examples:United Nations Human Rights Council (UNHRC):** Monitors and addresses human rights violations.

Amnesty International: Works on human rights advocacy and awareness.

- **Health and Welfare:**

- **Role:** Address global health issues and provide humanitarian aid.
- **Examples:World Health Organization (WHO):** Coordinates international health efforts and responds to health emergencies.

International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement: Provides disaster relief and emergency assistance.

4. Environmental Scope

- **Climate Change and Environmental Protection:**

- **Role:** Address global environmental issues and promote sustainable development.
- **Examples:United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP):** Coordinates environmental activities and promotes sustainability.

Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC): Assesses scientific information related to climate change.

5. Regional Scope

- **Regional Integration and Development:**

- **Role:** Promote economic and political integration within specific regions. Address regional issues and promote cooperation among neighboring states.
- **Examples:European Union (EU):** Facilitates political and economic integration among European countries.

Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN): Promotes economic, political, and security cooperation in Southeast Asia.

African Development Bank (AfDB): Supports economic development and regional integration in Africa.

6. Global Scope

- **Global Governance:**

- **Role:** Provide frameworks for international cooperation and address transnational issues.
- **Ex:United Nations (UN):** Offers a broad range of global governance functions, including security, development, and human rights.

THE IMPORTANCE OF INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS

The importance of international organizations lies in their ability to address issues that transcend national borders, promote global cooperation, and contribute to stability and development. There are fewer than 200 countries in the world, but there are about 300 intergovernmental organizations (IGOs), like the UN, NATO, and the European Union, as well as 5,800 international nongovernmental organizations (INGOs), such as Amnesty International and the Red Cross. These organizations play a key role in global politics and activities.

In today's connected world, countries need to work together more than ever to handle trade, communication, economic development, and world peace. Because countries face problems that cross borders and need to cooperate to solve them, they create and use international organizations. These organizations help countries work together and address shared issues. As global interactions and problems grow, these organizations are likely to become more diverse and important.

International organizations have shown their importance by enduring through major changes. For example, even after the end of the Cold War in 1991, NATO, which was initially formed to counter the Soviet threat, continued to exist. The World Trade Organization (WTO) also didn't make smaller trade agreements like NAFTA disappear. Instead, international organizations are growing as technology makes it easier to coordinate globally.

As countries become more interdependent, no single country can resolve global issues alone, and private groups can't rely only on their governments. Both countries and individuals will keep using international organizations to tackle global problems and protect their interests. As the world becomes more interconnected, the distinction between domestic and international issues blurs, making international organizations crucial tools for cooperation.

In an increasingly interconnected and interdependent world, international organizations have become pivotal in shaping global politics, economics, and social dynamics. These entities, which range from intergovernmental organizations (IGOs) like the United Nations (UN) and the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) to international nongovernmental organizations (INGOs) like Amnesty International and the Red Cross, play crucial roles in addressing complex global challenges that transcend national borders. Their importance is underscored by their ability to facilitate cooperation, address transnational issues, and adapt to shifting global dynamics.

Facilitating Cooperation Among Nations

One of the primary roles of international organizations is to provide a platform for cooperation among nations. In a world where no single country can independently solve global problems, these organizations offer a structured environment for dialogue and collaboration. For instance, the UN serves as a forum where member states can discuss and coordinate responses to issues such as climate change, international security, and human rights. By bringing together diverse nations, these organizations help mediate conflicts, foster diplomatic relations, and promote peaceful resolutions. Through their structured processes and regular meetings, international organizations enable countries to work collectively towards shared goals, reducing the likelihood of unilateral actions that could lead to conflict.

Addressing Transnational Issues

International organizations are essential for tackling issues that cross national boundaries. Problems such as pandemics, environmental degradation, and terrorism cannot be effectively addressed by individual countries alone. For example, the World Health Organization (WHO) plays a crucial role in coordinating international responses to health crises, such as the COVID-19 pandemic. Similarly, the International Criminal Court (ICC) addresses issues of international justice by prosecuting individuals for crimes such as genocide and war crimes. By addressing these global challenges, international organizations help manage risks and promote stability across nations. Their expertise and resources are vital for developing and implementing solutions that no single country could achieve independently.

Adapting to Shifting Global Dynamics

The importance of international organizations is further highlighted by their ability to adapt to changing global conditions. As the world evolves, new issues and challenges emerge, and international organizations must adjust their focus and strategies accordingly. The expansion of communication and information technologies, for instance, has transformed the way international organizations operate, making it easier to coordinate activities and share information globally. The creation of new organizations, such as the World Trade Organization (WTO) and the Paris Agreement on climate change, demonstrates how these entities can evolve to address contemporary issues. By remaining flexible and responsive, international organizations continue to play a critical role in managing global affairs and responding to emerging needs.

Promoting Global Stability and Security

International organizations contribute significantly to global stability and security. Through mechanisms like peacekeeping missions and arms control agreements, they help maintain order and prevent conflicts. NATO, for example, was established to provide collective security and deter aggression during the Cold War, and it continues to play a role in managing security challenges in the 21st century. The UN's peacekeeping operations aim to stabilize conflict zones and protect civilians, while disarmament treaties seek to reduce the proliferation of weapons. By fostering international cooperation and providing mechanisms for conflict resolution, international organizations contribute to a more secure and stable global environment.

Conclusion

In conclusion, international organizations are indispensable in the modern world. They facilitate cooperation among nations, address transnational issues, adapt to evolving global dynamics, and promote stability and security. As the world becomes more interconnected and complex, the role of these organizations will continue to grow in importance. By providing platforms for dialogue, coordinating responses to global challenges, and adapting to new circumstances, international organizations help navigate the complexities of a globalized world and contribute to a more cooperative and stable international community.

Kinds of International Organizations

There are different kinds of International Organizations today. One way of classifying them is along the purpose or functions they are supposed to perform. In this way, we can classify international organizations in four ways.

1.General or Multi-purpose International Organizations:

These are organizations that handle a wide range of functions, such as political, economic, security, cultural, social, trade, and health issues. They are not limited to any specific geographic area and can be formed by any group of countries, regardless of location.

There is no limit on the number of member nations; it can involve just a few countries or most of the world. What makes these organizations "general purpose" is their ability to perform many functions. Membership and geographic location do not define them.

Examples of such organizations include:

- **United Nations (UN):** Involves most countries worldwide and addresses various issues like peace, development, and human rights.
- **African Union (AU) and Organization of American States (OAS):** They handle multiple functions but have limited membership, with the AU focusing on African nations and the OAS on countries in the Americas.

2.Specialized or Functional International Organizations:

These organizations focus on specific tasks or functions. For example:

- **World Trade Organization (WTO)** focuses only on trade.
- **Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS)** focuses on economic activities.
- **North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO)** focuses on defense and security.
- **International Monetary Fund (IMF)** deals with monetary and economic issues.

The geographical area of these organizations doesn't matter. What's important is the specific function they perform, not who their members are. For example:

- **NATO** has members from Europe.
- **ECOWAS** is made up of West African countries.
- **IMF** and **WTO** have members from almost all over the world.

3.Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs):

According to the UN Economic and Social Council, an organization is considered a non-governmental organization (NGO) if it isn't created by a government agreement. NGOs are usually non-profit and formed by people or groups working together to pursue shared goals. They can sometimes have government representatives, but this type is called a Hybrid NGO, not a genuine NGO.

There are two main types of NGOs:

1. **Genuine International NGOs:** These organizations have only non-governmental members and bring together like-minded groups from multiple countries. Examples include:
 - **International Olympic Committee:** Manages the Olympics.
 - **World Council of Churches:** Focuses on Christian unity.
 - **International Red Cross Society:** Provides humanitarian aid.
 - **Salvation Army:** Offers social services and support.
2. **Hybrid International Organizations:** These have a mix of government and non-governmental members. If they are created by government agreements, they are considered Intergovernmental Organizations (IGOs). For example:
 - **International Labour Organization (ILO):** Includes government, trade union, and business representatives.
 - **International Council of Scientific Unions:** Includes scientific organizations, research councils, and governments.

4.Multinational Corporations (MNCs):

Multinational Corporations (MNCs) are businesses that operate in multiple countries around the world and are mainly focused on making a profit. They aren't always considered international organizations, but some are set up through agreements between different countries, like the Scandinavian Airline System.

MNCs play a significant role in international politics and can't be ignored. Sometimes, several MNCs may come together to form an international non-governmental organization (NGO) for specific purposes, such as representing their interests, promoting their industry, or educating others.

Examples include:

- **International Chamber of Shipping:** Represents shipping companies.
- **Oil Companies International Marine Forum:** Focuses on the marine interests of oil companies.

5.Security and Military Alliances:

These organizations are formed to provide mutual defense and enhance military cooperation among member countries. They often focus on collective security, meaning that an attack on one member is considered an attack on all, prompting a joint response.

Examples:

NATO (North Atlantic Treaty Organization):To provide collective defense against aggression. NATO members agree to mutual defense in response to an attack against any member state. It also engages in crisis management and cooperative security.

Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO):Provides collective security and mutual defense among member states, focusing on regional security threats and military cooperation.

6.Trade Organizations:

These organizations are designed to facilitate international trade, regulate trade practices, and promote economic cooperation among member countries. They work to create fair trade conditions and resolve trade disputes.

Examples:

World Trade Organization (WTO):To regulate international trade and ensure that trade flows as smoothly, predictably, and freely as possible. It oversees trade agreements, provides a forum for negotiations, and resolves trade disputes between countries.

Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC):To coordinate and unify the petroleum policies of member countries to ensure the stabilization of oil markets and secure a steady income for oil-producing nations.

7. Humanitarian and Relief Organizations:

These organizations are dedicated to providing aid and support in emergencies, such as natural disasters, conflicts, and crises. They focus on delivering humanitarian assistance, alleviating suffering, and supporting recovery efforts.

Examples:

World Food Programme (WFP):provide food assistance to people affected by hunger and emergencies, including natural disasters and conflicts.

United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR):Purpose: To protect and support refugees and displaced persons worldwide. It works to ensure that refugees are treated with dignity and that their rights are upheld.

Origins of League of Nations

The Origins of the League of Nations was found in the Fourteen Points laid down by US President Woodrow Wilson which envisioned an organisation that would solve a dispute between members.

The League was approved and ratified by the [Treaty of Versailles](#) at the Versailles Conference on 28 April 1919. The first formal session of the League was held in Geneva in 1920. Though the League had no armed force of its own, economic sanctions and the imposition of a kind of quarantine of the offending state was considered a deterrent against aggression. The League of Nations was the first international organization whose main goal was to keep world peace. It was created on January 10, 1920, after World War I ended, through the Paris Peace Conference. The League stopped functioning on April 18, 1946, and many of its parts became part of the United Nations (UN). The League was a model for how global governance works today and had a big impact on the modern world

In practice, the League spoke with anything but a collective voice. Germany and the [Soviet Union](#) were both excluded and the United States refused to ratify the Versailles Treaty and never joined the League. The isolationist elements in the US Government felt that America would lose its autonomy should it become involved in international politics.

The League of Nations consisted of a council made up of four permanent powers – Britain, France, Italy and Japan – and four others chosen at intervals from the remaining member states. The first four were Belgium, Brazil, Spain and Greece, but Brazil became the first state to leave the League when it forced Italy to withdraw from its unilateral occupation of Corfu in 1923, was scored against one of the organization's own principal council members.

STRUCTURE OF THE LEAGUE OF NATIONS

The League of Nations had a large and complex structure. Its main organs were the Assembly and the Council, which made decisions on the League's rules, membership, and other bodies. They also directed the League's work and handled its budget.

- **The Assembly**

Each member country could send one to three delegates to the Assembly, which met every year in September. The Assembly would start by reviewing the past year's work and planning for the future. Discussions could cover any international issue, except political ones being dealt with by the Council. Assembly decisions had to be unanimous, meaning every country had to agree, but in practice, disagreements were rare. If a country disagreed, it usually voted against a proposal in committee but didn't block it in the full Assembly.

The Assembly handled important issues like admitting new members, revising old treaties, and managing the League's budget. It was successful because it allowed both large and small countries to participate equally.

- **The Council**

The Council was originally supposed to have five permanent members (the United States, Great Britain, France, Italy, and Japan) and four non-permanent members. But since the United States never joined, the Council added more non-permanent members, increasing their number to nine by 1926. The Council was a smaller, more powerful body that handled urgent political issues, disputes, and conflicts between countries. The Council met several times a year and could hold special sessions when needed.

The Council mainly dealt with political issues and disputes between countries, from border conflicts to minority rights. Council decisions also had to be unanimous, but countries involved in a dispute couldn't vote on it. The Council preferred compromise and took a long time to make decisions, but it rarely reached a deadlock.

- **The Secretariat**

The Secretariat, led by Sir Eric Drummond, managed the League's day-to-day work. Staff came from different countries and were expected to work independently, without favoring their own nations. Although the Secretariat was efficient, the League constantly struggled with a tight budget, with its members, especially the richest ones, pushing for reduced spending.

- **Auxiliary Institutions**

Beyond the main bodies, the League had many smaller organizations, which fell into two main categories:

1. **Legal and Political Bodies:** These helped the League with conflict prevention and resolution. They included the Permanent Court of International Justice, the Permanent Mandates Commission, and committees focused on military and disarmament issues.
2. **Social and Economic Bodies:** These worked on improving international cooperation in areas like health, labor, finance, and communication. Some also focused on humanitarian issues like drug control, protecting women and children, abolishing slavery, and helping refugees.

Working of League of Nations

- **Collective Security:**
 - The League aimed to prevent wars by promoting the idea of collective security, where member nations agreed to defend each other if any one country was attacked.
 - If a country threatened peace, the League could call for **negotiations** or **arbitration** to settle disputes peacefully.
- **Disarmament:**
 - The League encouraged countries to reduce their weapons to lower the risk of war.
 - However, many countries, especially the big powers, were reluctant to give up their military strength, so progress on disarmament was slow.
- **Sanctions:**
 - If a country acted aggressively or violated international law, the League could impose economic sanctions (penalties like trade restrictions) to pressure them to stop.
 - However, the League didn't have its own military force to enforce decisions, and many countries were hesitant to support sanctions because they could hurt their own economies.
- **Humanitarian Efforts:** The League worked to address social issues such as:
 - Improving labor conditions
 - Fighting human and drug trafficking
 - Protecting minority rights
 - Helping refugees and prisoners of war
 - Promoting global health through its Health Organization.
- **Legal and Political Bodies:**
 - The **Permanent Court of International Justice** was created to settle legal disputes between countries.
 - The **Mandates Commission** oversaw territories taken from countries defeated in World War I, ensuring they were governed responsibly.

SUCCESSES OF LEAGUE OF NATIONS

1. Resolving Territorial Disputes:

- **Aaland Islands (1921):** A dispute between Finland and Sweden over the Aaland Islands was peacefully resolved by the League. The islands were given to Finland, but they were granted autonomy and protections for the Swedish-speaking population. Both countries accepted the League's decision.
- **Upper Silesia (1921):** The League successfully mediated a dispute between Germany and Poland over the Upper Silesia region, an industrial area. A plebiscite (vote) was held, and the League divided the territory between the two countries, helping to avoid conflict.
- **Memel (1923):** The League managed to resolve tensions over the port city of Memel (now Klaipėda in Lithuania), which was claimed by both Lithuania and the Allied Powers. The League negotiated an agreement that made the city an autonomous region under Lithuanian control.

2. Humanitarian Work:

- **Refugee Crisis:** The League, led by Fridtjof Nansen (a Norwegian humanitarian), helped repatriate around 500,000 prisoners of war and assisted millions of refugees after World War I. The **Nansen Passport**, introduced by the League, became a crucial document for stateless people, helping refugees secure legal status and travel.
- **Health and Disease Control:** The League's Health Organization worked on global health issues, including combating epidemics like typhus and malaria. It also laid the groundwork for future international cooperation on health, which later evolved into the World Health Organization (WHO).
- **Abolition of Slavery:** The League made efforts to combat human trafficking and slavery, particularly in Africa. Its Slavery Commission worked to reduce the practice of slavery worldwide.

3. Protection of Minorities:

- The League established treaties to protect minority groups in Eastern Europe and other regions after World War I. For example, it set up the **Minorities Commission** to protect ethnic and religious minorities in newly formed states.

4. Mandate System:

- The League set up a **Mandates Commission** to oversee territories taken from Germany and the Ottoman Empire after World War I. These areas were administered by victorious Allied nations but under international supervision. The mandate system was meant to prepare these territories for independence, and the League ensured that the welfare of local populations was prioritized.

5. Economic and Financial Assistance:

- **Austria and Hungary (1922–1923):** The League helped Austria and Hungary rebuild their economies after World War I. The League provided financial support and created economic plans to stabilize their currencies and finances, helping to prevent political instability.
- **Economic Cooperation:** The League promoted economic cooperation among nations and worked to stabilize economies, especially in Central and Eastern Europe. It also helped in organizing international agreements on trade, transport, and communication.

6. Disarmament Efforts:

- Although the League struggled with disarmament overall, it did manage to negotiate some agreements on arms reduction. For example, it organized the **World Disarmament Conference** in 1932. While the conference did not achieve lasting results, it highlighted the importance of arms reduction in international relations.

7. International Labour Organization (ILO):

- The ILO was created as part of the League to improve labor conditions globally. It played a key role in setting international labor standards, promoting workers' rights, and addressing issues like child labor and working hours. The ILO survived the League's collapse and is still active today as part of the United Nations.

8. Social and Legal Reforms:

- The League also focused on several social and humanitarian reforms, including:
 - **Combating the drug trade:** It worked to reduce the illegal drug trade through international agreements.
 - **Child welfare and women's rights:** The League promoted better conditions for children and women, addressing issues like child labor and the trafficking of women.

1. Failure to Prevent Aggression:

- **Manchuria Crisis (1931):** Japan invaded Manchuria, a region in China, and established a puppet state. China appealed to the League for help, but the League's response was slow and ineffective. It took over a year to investigate, and by the time the League condemned Japan's actions, Japan simply withdrew from the League. The League's inability to take meaningful action encouraged other aggressive nations.
- **Abyssinia (Ethiopia) Crisis (1935):** Italy, under Mussolini, invaded Abyssinia (modern-day Ethiopia) in 1935. The League condemned the invasion and imposed sanctions, but the sanctions were weak and did not include critical resources like oil and steel. Britain and France, two leading League members, were more interested in keeping Mussolini as an ally against Nazi Germany than in stopping the invasion. Eventually, Italy conquered Abyssinia, and the League was powerless to stop it.
- **Spanish Civil War (1936-1939):** The League failed to intervene in the Spanish Civil War, despite the involvement of fascist powers like Germany and Italy. Its inaction allowed fascist forces to help Francisco Franco overthrow the Spanish government, further weakening the League's credibility.

2. Lack of Participation by Major Powers:

- **United States Never Joined:** Although U.S. President Woodrow Wilson was a key figure in creating the League, the U.S. Senate refused to join, fearing that membership would drag the country into future European conflicts. The absence of the U.S., one of the world's most powerful nations, significantly weakened the League's influence and ability to enforce decisions.
- **Germany and Japan Withdrew:** Germany left the League in 1933, shortly after Adolf Hitler came to power. Japan followed shortly after its condemnation over the Manchurian invasion. Both countries' exits marked a significant decline in the League's credibility.
- **Italy Withdrew:** Italy left the League in 1937 after its invasion of Abyssinia. This further demonstrated the League's inability to maintain the cooperation of major world powers.

3. Inability to Enforce Decisions:

- **No Military Power:** The League did not have its own military force and depended on member nations to enforce its decisions. However, the major powers were often reluctant to commit their military forces, especially when their own interests were not directly involved. The League's reliance on economic sanctions was also ineffective, as countries like Japan and Italy found ways around them, and the League was unable to compel stronger action from its members.
- **Failure to Stop Rearmament:** The League was unable to stop the rearmament of countries like Germany in the 1930s, which violated the Treaty of Versailles. This

rearmament directly contributed to the outbreak of World War II, and the League was powerless to intervene.

4. Failure in Disarmament: The League held a disarmament conference (1932-1934) to encourage countries to reduce their weapons. However, the conference failed as countries, particularly Germany, insisted on the right to rearm. Major powers were unwilling to disarm due to concerns about national security, and the conference ended in failure. This failure led to the militarization of Europe in the 1930s, further undermining the League's mission to prevent war.

5. Ineffectiveness in Preventing World War II:

- **Rise of Dictatorships:** The League was unable to stop the rise of aggressive dictatorships in Germany, Italy, and Japan. These regimes pursued expansionist policies, leading to the collapse of the international peace framework the League was meant to uphold.
- **Munich Agreement (1938):** When Adolf Hitler demanded the Sudetenland, a region of Czechoslovakia, Britain and France, both League members, chose to negotiate with Hitler rather than take firm action. This led to the **Munich Agreement**, which allowed Germany to annex the Sudetenland without League involvement. The League was sidelined, and appeasement encouraged further Nazi aggression.

7. Weakness of Collective Security:

- The idea of **collective security**, where countries would work together to prevent aggression, failed in practice. Major powers, especially Britain and France, were more focused on their own interests and were unwilling to enforce League decisions, particularly when it meant confronting strong nations like Germany, Italy, or Japan.
- Smaller countries lacked the military strength to enforce collective security on their own, making the League powerless without the backing of the big powers.

UNITED NATIONS

Introduction:

The United Nations (UN) is an international organization founded in 1945. It is currently made up of 193 Member States. Its mission and work guided by the purposes and principles contained in its founding Charter and implemented by its various organs and specialised agencies. Its activities include maintaining international peace and security, protecting human rights, delivering humanitarian aid, promoting sustainable development and upholding international law.

History of UN Foundation:

- In 1899, the International Peace Conference was held in The Hague to elaborate instruments for settling crises peacefully, preventing wars and codifying rules of warfare.
- It adopted the Convention for the Pacific Settlement of International Disputes and established the Permanent Court of Arbitration, which began work in 1902. This court was the forerunner of UN International Court of Justice.
- The forerunner of the United Nations was the League of Nations, an organization conceived in circumstances of the First World War, and established in 1919 under the Treaty of Versailles "to promote international cooperation and to achieve peace and security." The International Labour Organization (ILO) was also created in 1919 under the Treaty of Versailles as an affiliated agency of the League.
- The name "United Nations", coined by United States President Franklin D. Roosevelt. A document called The Declaration by United Nations was signed in 1942 by 26 nations, pledging their Governments to continue fighting together against the Axis Powers (Rome-Berlin-Tokyo Axis) and bound them against making a separate 1/28 peace.
- United Nations Conference on International Organization (1945) Conference held in San Francisco (USA), was attended by representatives of 50 countries and signed the United Nations Charter. The UN Charter of 1945 is the foundational treaty of the United Nations, as an inter-governmental organization.

STRUCTURE AND WORKING OF UN

The main organs of the UN are

1. the General Assembly,
2. the Security Council,
3. the Economic and Social Council,
4. the Trusteeship Council, 5. the International Court of Justice,
6. and the UN Secretariat.

All the 6 were established in 1945 when the UN was founded.

1.General Assembly:

- The General Assembly is the main deliberative, policymaking and representative organ of the UN.
- All 193 Member States of the UN are represented in the General Assembly, making it the only UN body with universal representation.
- Each year, in September, the full UN membership meets in the General Assembly Hall in New York for the annual General Assembly session, and general debate, which many heads of state attend and address.
- Decisions on important questions, such as those on peace and security, admission of new members and budgetary matters, require a two-thirds majority of the General Assembly.
- Decisions on other questions are by simple majority.
- The President of the General Assembly is elected each year by assembly to serve a one-year term of office.
- 6 Main Committees: (1) First Committee (Disarmament and International Security), (2) Second Committee (Economic and Financial), (3) Third Committee (Social, Humanitarian, and Cultural), (4) Fourth Committee (Special Political and Decolonization), (5) Fifth Committee (Administrative and Budgetary), (6) Sixth Committee (Legal).
- Other Committees:

General Committee: It meets periodically throughout each session to review the progress of the General Assembly and its committees and to make recommendations for furthering such progress. It is composed of the President of the General Assembly and 21 Vice-Presidents of the Assembly and the Chairmen of the six Main Committees. The five permanent members of the Security Council serve as Vice-Presidents, as well.

Credentials Committee: It is mandated to examine the credentials of representatives of Member States and to report to the General Assembly.

2.Security Council :

- It has primary responsibility, under the UN Charter, for the maintenance of international peace and security.
- The Security Council is made up of fifteen member states, consisting of five permanent members—China, France, Russia, the United Kingdom, and the United States—and ten non-permanent members elected for two-year terms by the General Assembly on a regional basis.
- "Veto power" refers to the power of the permanent member to veto (Reject) any resolution of Security Council.
- The unconditional veto possessed by the five governments has been seen as the most undemocratic character of the UN.
- Critics also claim that veto power is the main cause for international inaction on war crimes and crimes against humanity. However, the United States refused to join the United Nations in 1945 unless it was given a veto. The absence of the United States from the League of Nations contributed to its ineffectiveness. Supporters of the veto power regard it as a promoter of international stability, a check against military interventions, and a critical safeguard against U.S. domination.

3.Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC):

- It is the principal body for coordination, policy review, policy dialogue and recommendations on economic, social and environmental issues, as well as implementation of internationally agreed development goals.
- It has 54 Members, elected by the General Assembly for overlapping three-year terms. It is the United Nations' central platform for reflection, debate, and innovative thinking on sustainable development.
- Each year, ECOSOC structures its work around an annual theme of global importance 3/28 to sustainable development. This ensures focused attention, among ECOSOC's array of partners, and throughout the UN development system.
- It coordinates the work of the 14 UN specialized agencies, ten functional commissions and five regional commissions, receives reports from nine UN funds and programmes and issues policy recommendations to the UN system and to Member States.

4.Trusteeship Council:

- It was established in 1945 by the UN Charter, under Chapter XIII.
- Trust territory is a non-self-governing territory placed under an administrative authority by the Trusteeship Council of the United Nations.
- A League of Nations mandate was a legal status for certain territories transferred from the control of one country to another following World War I, or the legal instruments that contained the internationally agreed-upon terms for administering the territory on behalf of the League of Nations.

- United Nations trust territories were the successors of the remaining League of Nations mandates, and came into being when the League of Nations ceased to exist in 1946.
- It had to provide international supervision for 11 Trust Territories that had been placed under the administration of seven Member States, and ensure that adequate steps were taken to prepare the Territories for self-government and independence.
- By 1994, all Trust Territories had attained self-government or independence. The Trusteeship Council suspended operation on 1 November 1994.

5. International Court of Justice (ICJ):

- The International Court of Justice is the principal judicial organ of the United Nations. 6/28 It was established in June 1945 by the Charter of the United Nations and began work in April 1946.
- The ICJ is the successor of the Permanent Court of International Justice (PCIJ), which was established by the League of Nations in 1920.

6. Secretariat:

- The Secretariat comprises the Secretary-General and tens of thousands of international UN staff members who carry out the day-to-day work of the UN as mandated by the General Assembly and the Organization's other principal organs.
- The Secretary-General is chief administrative officer of the Organization, appointed by the General Assembly on the recommendation of the Security Council for a fiveyear, renewable term.
- UN staff members are recruited internationally and locally, and work in duty stations and on peacekeeping missions all around the world.

Successes of the UN:

A) One of the greatest achievements of the UN is its role in the field of decolonization. It gave inspiration to millions of Africans and Asians, who were under colonial rule, to claim the right of self-determination and independence. When the UN was founded in 1945, 80 of the present UN members were colonies. The UN helped many of them, having 750 million people, to achieve independence. With this development the International Relations have been democratized.

B) The UN has an impressive record of resolving many international conflicts. U.N. peacekeepers have, since 1945, undertaken over 60 field missions and negotiated 172 peaceful settlements that ended regional conflicts.

C) One of the most significant achievements of the UN is the creation of a comprehensive body of human rights law – a universal and internationally protected code to which all nations can subscribe and all people aspire. It has defined a broad range of internationally accepted rights, including civil, political, economic, cultural and social rights. It has International Bill of Human Rights (consisting of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, 1948, and the two International Covenants on civil and political, economic, social and cultural rights, 1966). Besides the International Bill of Rights, it has adopted nearly 80 human rights treaties or declarations. It has also established mechanisms to promote and protect these rights and to assist states in carrying out their responsibilities.

D) More international law has been created through the UN in last seven decades than in the entire previous history of humankind. It has made major contributions towards expanding the rule of law among nations through the codification of international law.

E) Today the UN provides food and assistance to 80 million people in 80 countries, supplies vaccine to millions of children and helps save 3 million lives a year, and assists and protects 67.7 million people fleeing war, famine and persecution. It fights extreme poverty, helping improve the lives of more than one billion people. It supports maternal health, helping over 1 million women a month overcome pregnancy risks.

F) It works with 195 nations to keep the global temperature rise below 2°C. UN keeps peace with 104,000 peacekeepers in 14 operations around the world.

H) It tackles the global water crisis affecting over 2 billion people worldwide.

I) It coordinates US \$24.7 billion appeal for the humanitarian needs of 145 million people.

J) It uses diplomacy to prevent conflict; assists some 50 countries a year with their elections.

K) UN's success can be gauged from the fact that 12 Nobel Peace Prize have been awarded to it, its specialized agencies, programmes and staff. This included an award in 1988 to the UN Peacekeeping Forces in 2001 to the UN and its secretary-general, Kofi Annan. In 2020, Nobel Peace Prize was awarded to World Food Program, a UN special agency that fights hunger around the world.

L) The UN has made progress with its eight Millennium Development Goals, which has been followed by 17 Sustainable Development Goals to enhance social, environmental and economic progress by 2030.

M) Along similar lines, the UN's International Court of Justice has resolved major international disputes, but the UN's veto powers have limited its effectiveness at critical times.

Shortcomings of the UN:

The UN is not without shortcomings. Following UN failures should be noted.

A) In 1970, when the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) was signed by 190 nations, all five superpowers owned nuclear weapons. Later, despite the NPT and Partial Test Ban Treaty, several countries – North Korea, Israel, Pakistan, and India – developed nuclear weapons. This revealed the UN's inability to enforce regulations on offending nations as well as promote the goal of universal nuclear disarmament.

B) The International Criminal Court, established in 2002, has prosecuted several war criminals – but it has been criticized for prosecuting only African leaders while Western powers too have committed war crimes.

C) Dag Hammarskjöld, Secretary-General from 1953-1961, said that the “UN was not created to take mankind to heaven, but to save humanity from hell.” The UN has solved many violent conflicts, prevented wars, and saved millions of lives but it also faced disappointments.

D) In Rwanda, over 800,000 were massacred in 100 days. In 1995, Bosnian Serb forces overran the “safe zone” of Srebrenica and massacred 8,000 Muslim men and boys. In Darfur, an estimated 300,000 Sudanese civilians were killed. In Nigeria, Boko Haram has killed over 13,000 people.

E) A recent report by “Body Count” revealed that “in addition to one million deaths in Iraq, an estimated 220,000 people have been killed in Afghanistan and 80,000 in Pakistan as a result of US foreign policy”.

F) In recent years, Israel attacked homes, schools, hospitals, and U.N. shelters in Gaza killing 2,200 Palestinians. Condemning that action, Navi Pillay, former UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, said that “Israel was deliberately defying international law in its military offensive in Gaza and that world powers should hold it accountable for possible war crimes.” The UN Security Council (SC) has failed as the United States vetoes any action against Israel.

G) The Arab Spring in the Middle East caused thousands of deaths and regime changes in Tunisia, Egypt, Libya and Yemen. Libya is devastated with over 40,000 deaths, and the civil war in Syria has killed over 220,000 people. These wars have displaced over 50 million people. Now, ISIS has infiltrated these countries causing gruesome killings, human rights abuses, and war crimes, at an unprecedented rate. These catastrophic events might have been prevented if the Member States of the UN had the ability to resolutely act in a timely manner

H) During the last 75 years, geopolitics has changed drastically that call for reform of the UN – to meet global needs and challenges of the 21st century.

I) Member States accuse the Security Council of being arrogant, secretive and undemocratic but the veto powers resist change. Meanwhile, violations of the UN Charter by powerful countries continue to erode the effectiveness of the United Nations.

UNESCO

United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) is a specialized agency of the [United Nations \(UN\)](#). It seeks to **build peace through international cooperation in Education, the Sciences and Culture.**

- It is also a member of the **United Nations Sustainable Development Group (UNSDG)**, a coalition of UN agencies and organizations aimed at fulfilling the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).
- UNESCO's **Headquarters** are located in **Paris** and the Organization has more than 50 field offices around the world.
- It has **193 Members and 11 Associate Members** (As of April 2020) and is governed by the General Conference and the Executive Board.

History Behind the Establishment of UNESCO?

- In 1942, during the Second World War, the governments of the European countries, which were confronting Germany and its allies, met in the United Kingdom for the **Conference of Allied Ministers of Education (CAME)**. Upon the proposal of CAME, a United Nations Conference for the establishment of an educational and cultural organization was convened in London in November 1945.
- At the end of the conference, UNESCO **was founded on 16 November 1945**. The **first session** of the General Conference of UNESCO was held in **Paris** during November-December of 1946.

What are the Objectives?

- UNESCO focuses on a set of objectives such as:
 - Attaining quality education for all and lifelong learning
 - Mobilizing science knowledge and policy for sustainable development
 - Addressing emerging social and ethical challenges
 - Fostering cultural diversity, intercultural dialogue and a culture of peace
 - Building inclusive knowledge societies through information and communication
 - Focuses on global priority areas - **"Africa" and "Gender Equality"**.

What are the Areas of Specialization of UNESCO?

Education Transforms Lives

- Education transforms lives and is at the heart of UNESCO's mission to build peace, eradicate poverty and drive sustainable development.
- The Organization is the **only United Nations agency** with a mandate to cover all aspects of education.
- It has been entrusted to **lead the Global Education 2030 Agenda** through Sustainable Development Goal - 4.

Protecting Our Heritage and Fostering Creativity

- It is becoming a fact that no development can be sustainable without a strong culture component. UNESCO has adopted a **three-pronged approach** to make culture takes its rightful place in development strategies and processes:
 - **Spearheads worldwide advocacy** for culture and development.
 - **Engages with the international community** to set clear policies and legal frameworks
 - Works on the ground to **support governments and local stakeholders** to safeguard heritage, strengthen creative industries and encourage cultural pluralism.

Science for a Sustainable Future

- Science equips us to find solutions to today's acute economic, social and environmental challenges and to achieving sustainable development and greener societies.
- UNESCO works to assist countries to invest in **Science, Technology and Innovation (STI)**, to develop national science policies, to reform their science systems and to build capacity to monitor and evaluate performance through STI indicators..
- Also, UNESCO works with its member states to foster informed decisions about the use of science and technology, in particular in the field of bioethics.

Communication and Information

- UNESCO **advances freedom of expression** and the safety of journalists, combats online hate speech, as well as disinformation and misinformation through awareness raising initiatives.
- It also **supports universal access to information and knowledge** through promoting Open Solutions, including Open Educational Resources, access for marginalized people, and multilingualism in Cyberspace.

Africa

- UNESCO is attentive to **54 African countries** with a stronger and better-targeted strategy.
- The adoption of the **African Union Agenda 2063** and the **2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development** paving the ground for the African Economic Community and the African Renaissance.

Gender Equality

- UNESCO holds that **women and men must enjoy equal opportunities**, choices, capabilities, power and knowledge as equal citizens.
- Equipping girls and boys, women and men with the knowledge, values, attitudes and skills to tackle gender disparities is a precondition to building a sustainable future for all.

What are Some of the Important Initiatives of UNESCO?

World Heritage Convention and List

- The Convention defines the kind of natural or cultural sites (World Heritage Sites) which can be considered for inscription on the **World Heritage List**.
- The States Parties of convention are **encouraged to integrate the protection of the cultural and natural heritage into regional planning programmes**, set up staff and services at their sites, undertake scientific and technical conservation research.
- Globally there are 1154 World Heritage sites in the 167 countries. Meanwhile, India has 40 [World Heritage Sites](#) that include 30 Cultural properties, 7 Natural properties and 1 mixed site.
 - Harappan city of [Dholavira](#) in Gujarat as India's [40th world heritage site](#).
 - [Ramappa Temple \(Telangana\)](#) was India's 39th World Heritage Site.

Man and the Biosphere (MAB) Programme

- It is an **intergovernmental scientific programme** that aims to establish a scientific basis for enhancing the relationship between people and their environments.
- The **World Network of Biosphere Reserves** currently counts 701 sites in 124 countries all over the world, including 21 transboundary sites.
- India has [18 Biosphere reserves](#) out of which **12 have been recognized internationally under MAB program**

World Water Assessment Programme (WWAP)

- The growing global water crisis threatens the security, stability and environmental sustainability of developing nations.
 - The programme focuses on assessing the developing situation of freshwater throughout the world.
- It also coordinates the work of 31 UN-Water members and partners in the **World Water Development Report (WWDR)**.

(UNICEF)

- **United Nations Children's Fund** is a special program of the **United Nations (UN)** devoted to aiding national efforts to improve the health, nutrition, education, and general welfare of children.
- **UNICEF** was created in **1946** as International Children's Emergency Fund (ICEF) by UN relief Rehabilitation Administration to help children affected by World War II. UNICEF became a **permanent part** of the **United Nations in 1953**.
- The name was shortened to **United Nations Children Fund** but it is still referred to as UNICEF.
- It is **mandated by the United Nations General Assembly** to advocate for the protection of children's rights, to help meet their basic needs and to expand their opportunities to reach their full potential.
- UNICEF is guided by the **Convention on the Rights of the Child, 1989**.
- It strives to establish **children's rights** as enduring **ethical principles** and **international standards** of behaviour towards children.
- **Headquarters:** New York City.
- It works in over 190 countries and territories with **7 regional offices**.

What is the Work of UNICEF includes?

- After 1950, the UNICEF directed its efforts toward general programs for the improvement of children's welfare, particularly in **less-developed countries** and in various emergency situations.
- It eventually expanded its scope to the struggle of women, especially mothers, in the developing world. For example, it launched its '**Women in Development Programme**' in 1980.
- In 1982, UNICEF commenced a new **children's health program** that focused on **monitoring growth, oral rehydration therapy, advocating breastfeeding and immunization**.
- The work of the UNICEF includes:
 - Child Development and Nutrition,
 - Child Protection,
 - Education,
 - Child Environment,
 - Polio Eradication,
 - Reproductive and Child Health,
 - Children and AIDS,
 - Social Policy, Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation,
 - Advocacy and Partnership,
 - Emergency Preparedness and Response.

- UNICEF **mobilizes political** will and material resources to help countries, particularly developing countries.
- UNICEF is committed to ensuring special protection for the most disadvantaged children — victims of war, disasters, extreme poverty, all forms of violence and exploitation, especially those with disabilities.

How the Funding is done?

- The **national committees are an integral part of UNICEF's global organization** and a unique feature of UNICEF. Serving as the public face and dedicated voice of UNICEF, the National Committees work tirelessly to raise funds from the private sector, promote children's rights and secure worldwide visibility for children threatened by poverty, disasters, armed conflict, abuse and exploitation.
- UNICEF is funded exclusively by **voluntary contributions**, and the **National Committees** collectively raise around one-third of UNICEF's annual income. This comes through contributions from corporations, civil society organizations and more than 6 million individual donors worldwide.
- It also **rallies many different partners** – including the media, national and local government officials, NGOs, specialists such as doctors and lawyers, corporations, schools, young people and the general public – on issues related to children's rights.

UNICEF and India: What is the Scenario?

- UNICEF **began its work in India in 1949** with three staff members and established an office in Delhi three years later. Currently, it advocates for the rights of India's children in 16 states.
- **Nodal Ministries:** Ministry of Women and Child Development. Work done by UNICEF in India includes:
 - **Census support, 2011:** Gender issues were mainstreamed into the training and communication strategy for the 2011 Census.
 - **Polio Campaign, 2012:** Polio cases in India fell from 559 in 2008 to zero cases in 2012.
 - **Reduction in MMR, 2013:** UNICEF's support to the **National Health Mission (NHM)** and the **Reproductive and Child Health programme** resulted in increased access to institutional and community-based maternal, neonatal and child health services. This contributed to a reduction in the **Maternal Mortality Rate (MMR)** to **130** (2014-16), and the **Infant Mortality Rate (IMR)** to **34** (2016).
 - **Maternal and Child Nutrition, 2013:** The **Ministry of Women and Child Development (MWCD)** successfully launched a nationwide communication campaign on **Maternal and Child Nutrition** with UNICEF Ambassador promoting nutrition for children.
 - **India Newborn Action Plan, 2014:** This is first of this kind in the region, builds upon the existing commitments for newborn under **Call to Action, the RMNCH+A (Reproductive, Maternal, Newborn, Child Health + Adolescent)**.

UNDP

The UNDP stands for United Nations Development Program. It is a UN agency entrusted with assisting nations in eradicating poverty and achieving long-term economic and human development. It is the largest UN development organisation, with offices in 170 countries. UNDP headquarter is in New York City. The United Nations Development Programme emphasises building local capacity to achieve long-term self-sufficiency and prosperity. It manages the investment, technical training, and technology development initiatives and provides professionals to assist in developing legal and political institutions and the expansion of the private sector. The UNDP is supported entirely by voluntary donations from UN member states and operates in 170 countries.

The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the worldwide development network of the United Nations, is the world's most significant multilateral source of development aid. The Expanded Programme of Technical Assistance and the United Nations Special Fund were merged in 1965. The two institutions were fully integrated into the UNDP in 1971. The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) is an executive body of the United Nations General Assembly. After the Secretary and the Deputy Secretary-General, the UNDP Administrator is the third highest-ranking member of the UN.

The UNDP is based in New York City and is fully supported by voluntary contributions from member countries. In 166 countries, the organisation operates national offices where it works with local governments to address development concerns and build local expertise. UNDP offers developing nations professional advice, training, and financial funding, focusing on the least developed countries. UNDP works on poverty reduction, HIV/AIDS, democratic governance, energy and environment, and crisis prevention and recovery to achieve the MDGs and support global development. In all of its activities, the UNDP promotes the preservation of human rights and women's empowerment. UNDP also produces an annual Human Development Report to track and assess development progress. In addition, UNDP releases regional, national, and local Human Development Reports in addition to a global report.

Functions of UNDP:

UNDP connects and manages global and national efforts to help host countries accomplish their goals and national development priorities. UNDP focuses on five major developmental issues:

1. **Democratic governance:** UNDP aids national democratic transitions by providing policy advice and technical assistance, strengthening institutional and individual capacity within countries, educating and advocating for democratic reforms among populations, promoting negotiation and talk, and sharing successful experiences from other nations and locations. UNDP also assists existing democratic institutions by expanding the conversation, strengthening national debate, and achieving national governance programme consensus.

2. **Reduction of poverty:** UNDP assists nations in developing poverty-fighting strategies by increasing access to economic opportunities and resources, integrating poverty programmes with more significant aims and policies, and ensuring that the poor have a stronger voice. At the macro level, UNDP strives to regulate trade, stimulate debt relief and foreign investment, and guarantee that the poorest of the poor benefit from globalisation.
3. **Prevention and recovery from crises:** UNDP aim to decrease the risk of armed conflicts and natural catastrophes and encourage early recovery following concerns. UNDP helps local governments analyse needs, build capacity, coordinate planning, and define policy and standards through its national offices.
4. **Environment and Energy:** Because environmental deterioration and a lack of access to clean, cheap energy services disproportionately harm the poor, UNDP works to solve environmental concerns to strengthen developing nations' ability to grow sustainably. UNDP assists nations in building their ability to handle global ecological problems by offering creative policy advice and connecting partners via environmentally sensitive development programmes that help impoverished people create long-term livelihoods.
5. **Human Rights and HIV/AIDS:** Human rights breaches and unequal gender relations, according to the UNDP, continue to drive the growth of the HIV epidemic. UNDP assists countries put HIV/AIDS at the focus of national development and poverty reduction strategies. It aids in developing a national capacity to mobilise all levels of government and civil society to respond to the pandemic in a coordinated and effective manner while also protecting the rights of individuals living with AIDS.

UNEP

United Nations Environment Programme was founded in 1972 following the historic UN Conference on the Human Environment. The *UNEP promotes global alliance and cooperation on environmental concerns*, directs the United Nations bodies, and encourages the worldwide scientific society to formulate policies for several of the United Nations' environmental programmes by way of its scientific consultative commissions. UNEP is designed to keep an eye on environmental conditions, use knowledge to guide governmental decisions, and coordinate solutions to global environmental problems. It is an international organization that promotes the effective implementation of the environmental component of the United Nations Sustainable Development Plan. An Executive Director is in charge of the UNEP, which has its **headquarters in Nairobi**.

The increasing pollution counts during the decades of the 1960s & 1970s have urged this international governance to ponder over developing some laws and guidelines for environmental concerns with the support of the [ILO](#) and WHO.

These environmental concerns were also adopted in 1972 at the UN Conference. This Conference is popularly also named **Stockholm Conference 1972**. The Conference later led to the implementation of the Stockholm Declaration.

Objectives of UNEP

- **Climate Change:** UNEP has improved the capability of many nations in integrating [climate change](#) solutions with its guidance in alteration, mitigation, technology, and funding. UNEP is also contemplating its efforts to diminish the evolution of a low-carbon society, intensify public mindfulness, and boost climate science's insights.
- **Post-war and Disaster Management:** UNEP executes environmental assessments in countries affected due to natural disasters or environmental crises and offers them recommendations and suggestions on putting legitimate and official frameworks in the nation to improvise environmental management. The *Post-Conflict & Disaster Management Section deals with environmental evaluations after wars*.
- **Ecosystem Management:** The UNEP also simplifies the [ecosystem](#), its management, and refurbishment with techniques consistent with enduring and sustainable development. Additionally, these methods urge the utilization of ecosystem facilities.
- **Environmental Governance:** UNEP supports and motivates various national governments to develop, implement and reinforce the procedure, strategies, and plans vital for attaining sustainable development and normalizing environmental inspections in development design.
- **Harmful Substances:** UNEP puts excellent efforts into minimizing the unpleasant or destructive effects of hazardous chemicals and harmful wastes on the environment and humans.
- **Efficiency and Defensible Utilization and Production of Resources:** The UNEP also emphasizes regional and global ideas to ensure that environmental resources are engendered, handled, and utilized sustainably and in eco-friendly ways.

Major Initiatives by United Nations Environment Programme

The major program initiatives taken up by the UNEP are:

- **Emission Gap Report:** The *UNEP Emissions Gap Report is in its thirteenth edition for 2022*. The discrepancy between projected emissions in 2030 and those required to meet the 1.5°C and 2°C targets of the Paris Agreement is evaluated. In 2020, the average global per-person GHG emissions were 6.3 tonnes of CO₂ equivalent (tCO₂e). **At 2.4 tCO₂e**, India still falls well short of the global average.
- **Global Environment Outlook:** Periodically released by the UNEP, the Global Environment Outlook (GEO) series of publications examines the status and future direction of the global environment. The **seventh and most recent GEO 7** was held in October 2022 as part of the UNEP's environmental assessment.
- **Frontiers:** "*Noise, Blazes and Mismatches*" is the title of UNEP's **2022 Annual Frontiers Report**. In order to solve the triple planetary crises of climate change, pollution, and biodiversity loss, the Frontiers report examines and proposes solutions to three environmental issues: wildfires, urban noise pollution, and phenological shifts.

India and UNEP

India has retained a faithful and strong relationship with the United Nations Environment Programme since its commencement. The GOI's Ministry for Environment, Forests, and Climate Change was the nodal group for our country's contacts with the UNEP.

India has accomplished many projects with it, and several projects are functioning well between India and UNEP.

- The UNEP has acknowledged India's schemes and programs in the environment sector for the [International Solar Alliance](#) and other initiatives. The current PM, Narendra Modi, was bestowed by UNEP with the honor of being the **Champions of Earth**.
- The country's High Commissioner for Kenya permanently stands for India in UNEP.
- India annually contributes around 100,000 USD to the UNEP.
- India enlisted in the Climate and Clean Air Coalition in 2019, whose secretariat is held by the UNEP.

European Union

European Union is a group of 28 countries that operate as a cohesive economic and political block. 19 of these countries use EURO as their official currency. 9 EU members (Bulgaria, Croatia, Czech Republic, Denmark, Hungary, Poland, Romania, Sweden, and the United Kingdom) do not use the euro. The EU grew out of a desire to form a single European political entity to end centuries of warfare among European countries that culminated with World War II and decimated much of the continent. The EU has developed an internal single market through a standardised system of laws that apply in all member states in matters, where members have agreed to act as one.

History:

- After World War II, European integration was seen as a cure to the excessive nationalism which had devastated the continent.
- In 1952, **European Coal and Steel Community (ECSC)** was founded under Treaty of Paris (1951) by 6 countries called Six (Belgium, France, Germany, Italy, Luxembourg and the Netherlands) to renounce part of their sovereignty by placing their coal and steel production in a common market, under it.
- **European Atomic Energy Community (EAEC or Euratom)** is an international organisation established by the Euratom Treaty (1957) with the original purpose of creating a specialist market for nuclear power in Europe, by developing nuclear energy and distributing it to its member states while selling the surplus to nonmember states.
- **European Economic Community (EEC)** was created by the Treaty of Rome (1957). The Community's initial aim was to bring about economic integration, including a common market and customs union, among its founding members (Six).
- **Merger Treaty (1965, Brussels)** in which an agreement was reached to merge the three communities (ECSC, EAEC, and EEC) under a single set of institutions, creating the European Communities (ECs). The ECs initially expanded in 1973 when Denmark, Ireland, the United Kingdom became members. Greece joined in 1981, Portugal and Spain following in 1986.
- **Schengen Agreement (1985)** paved the way for the creation of open borders without passport controls between most member states. It was effective in 1995.
- **Single European Act (1986)**: enacted by the European Community that committed its member countries to a timetable for their economic merger and the establishment of a single European currency and common foreign and domestic policies.
- **The Maastricht Treaty-1992** (also called the Treaty on European Union) was signed on 7 February 1992 by the members of the European Community in Maastricht, Netherlands to further European integration.

*European Communities (ECSC, EAEC, and EEC) incorporated as European Union. European citizenship was created, allowing citizens to reside in and move freely between Member States.

*A common foreign and security policy was established.

*Closer cooperation between police and the judiciary in criminal matters was agreed.

*It paved the way for the creation of a single European currency – the euro. It was the culmination of several decades of debate on increasing economic cooperation in Europe.

*It established the European Central Bank (ECB).

- A **monetary union** was established in 1999 and came into full force in 2002 and is composed of 19 EU member states which use the euro currency. In 2002, Treaty of Paris (1951) expired & ECSC ceased to exist and its activities fully absorbed by the European Economic Community (EEC).

Goals :

- Promote peace, values and the well-being of all citizens of EU.
- Offer freedom, security and justice without internal borders.
- Sustainable development based on balanced economic growth and price stability, a highly competitive market economy with full employment and social progress, and environmental protection.
- Combat social exclusion and discrimination Promote scientific and technological progress.
- Enhance economic, social and territorial cohesion and solidarity among EU countries.
- Respect its rich cultural and linguistic diversity .
- Establish an economic and monetary union whose currency is euro.

Governance:

European Parliament: It is the only parliamentary institution of the European Union (EU) that is directly elected by EU citizens aged 18 years or older. Together with the Council of the European Union, it exercises the legislative function of the EU. European Parliament does not possess as much legislative power as its member countries' parliaments do.

Council of the European Union:It is part of the essentially bicameral EU legislature (the other legislative body being the European Parliament) and represents the executive governments (Minister) of the EU's member states .In the Council, government ministers from each EU country meet to discuss, amend and adopt laws, and coordinate policies. The ministers have the authority to commit their governments to the actions agreed on in the meetings.

European Council: It is a collective body that defines the European Union's overall political direction and priorities. It comprises of the heads of state or government of the EU member states, along with the President of the European Council and the President of the European Commission

The Court of Justice of the European Union (CJEU):It interprets EU law to make sure it is applied in the same way in all EU countries, and settles legal disputes between national governments and EU institutions. It can also be approached by individuals, companies or organisations to take action against an EU institution, if they feel their rights are infringed under EU system. Each judge and advocate general is appointed jointly by national governments (member country). It is located in Luxembourg.

The European Central Bank (ECB): It is the central bank for the euro and administers monetary policy within the Euro zone, which comprises 19 member states of the European Union.

Functions:

- EU's law and regulation is meant to create a cohesive economic entity of its countries, so that goods can flow freely across the borders of its member nations, without tariffs, with the ease of one currency, and the creation of one enlarged labour pool, which creates a more efficient distribution and use of labour
- There is a pooling of financial resources, so that member nations can be "bailed out" or lent money for investment.
- Trade
- Humanitarian aid
- Diplomacy and security

European Union and India:

- The European Union work closely with India to promote peace, generate employment, boost economic growth, and enhance sustainable development.
- At the 2017 European Union-India Summit, leaders reiterated their intention to strengthen cooperation on implementing the 2030 Agenda for sustainable development and agreed to explore the continuation of the European Union-India development dialogue.
- The European Union is the largest trading partner, accounting for 85 billion euros (95 billion USD) worth of trade in 2017, ahead of China and the USA.
- The EU's share of foreign investment inflows to India has more than doubled from 8% to 18% in the last decade, making the EU the largest foreign investor in India.
- Since 2007, there has been a free trade agreement between the EU and India.

African Union

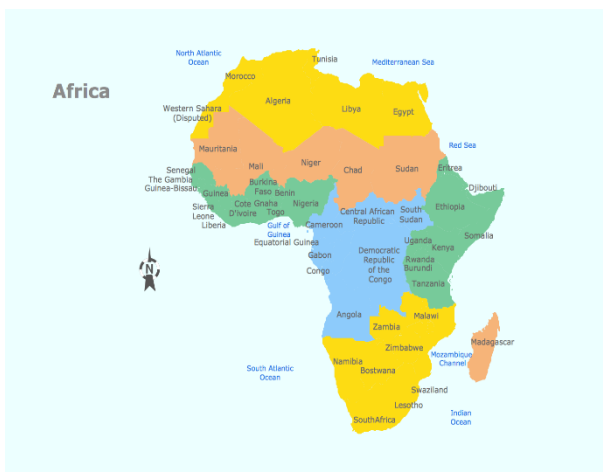
Introduction

African Union is a continental organization which has all independent countries of Africa as its members. It is the largest of such type of organization and dealing with a wide range of political, economic and socio-cultural activities. The African continent was colonized by European powers and subjected to several years of discrimination. With the end of Second World War and the rise of nationalist feelings and uprisings all over the world African states also demanded independence from colonial rule and thereafter attained independence one by one in different years. The Organization itself was committed to fight against colonial rule and all forms of discrimination. Africa is a large continent and has been facing several inter-related problems and conflicts. To deal with such issues African Union was conceived to bring about cooperation to achieve common goals and it started with the formation of Organization of African Union (OAU) in 1963. This lesson will deal with all such issues in some great detail including the structure and functions of OAU and later the transformation of African Union (AU) and discuss the success and failures.

The African Union

The African Union (AU) is a continental wide regional organization comprising of all 54 countries as its members. It was founded in Durban, South Africa in July 2002 replacing the Organization of African Unity (OAU), which was formed in 1963 during the Cold War years.

The aim of OAU was to remove the vestiges of colonialism and apartheid and to promote unity and solidarity among African countries. The head quarters is located in Addis Ababa, the capital city of Ethiopia.



The formation of OAU was a general reaction to the European enslavement, imperialist attitude and the colonial subjugation of African countries between the 16th and early 20th centuries. In the late 1950s under the initiative of Kwame Nkrumah, the President of Ghana a pan-African forum for independence from colonial rule began to take shape based on continental unity. Despite differences among African leaders as to how to create such a pan-African unity they agreed to cooperate and opted for a loose, continent wide organization of African states.

Three general principles guided the OAU. They were:

- 1) all states are sovereign equals
- 2) states agreed not to interfere in the domestic affairs of members
- 3) territorial borders were sacrosanct meaning should be protected and promoted with no room for alteration in the status quo.

The basic objectives of the OAU were:

- To promote the unity and solidarity of the African States;
- To coordinate and intensify their cooperation and efforts to achieve a better life for the peoples of Africa;
- To defend their sovereignty, their territorial integrity and independence;
- To eradicate all forms of colonialism from Africa; and
- To promote international cooperation, having due regard to the Charter of the United Nations and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

Transformation from OAU to AU

The OAU lasted for 39 years. There were several drawbacks in the organization and its functioning. It was successful in political issues such as decolonization etc., but not in economic and security issues which continued to persist. The OAU was zealous of the sovereign rights of individual member countries and hence the institution as such did not have much powers. Also, economic problems persisted and so was security – inter-state conflicts in particular. Besides, the OAU had no power to deal with the conflicts in Somalia, Liberia, Mozambique, Angola, the Sahara, Chad, Rwanda etc.,

Besides, financial contribution from among the member states for the functioning of the day to day affairs of the organization was inadequate. It was dependent on the political willingness of member states to cooperate

as the organization operated based on consensus decision making which it was unable to achieve for most of the issues. The decisions of the Assembly of Heads of State were only recommendations and not enforced actions. Also no institution to enforce decisions was created by OAU. It adhered to non-interference in internal affairs which was a bottle neck to many problems. Africa is prone to several internal crisis and civil wars as movements and oppositions to government frequently arise. In dealing with such internal crisis, the OAU as a continent wide organization did not have the mandate to discuss and deliberate on it. And therefore there was a need to refocus attention from decolonization issues that was so long taken up by OAU towards increased cooperation and integration of African states and other pertinent issues.

Subsequently, in July 1999 the OAU assembly decided to convene an extraordinary session to complete the process of economic and political integration in the continent. Since then four Summit Meetings were held in different places leading to the launching of the new African Union. The Summit Meetings were:

- 1) Sirte session in Libya in 1999 decided to establish the African Union
- 2) The Lome Summit in Togo in 2000 adopted the Constitutive Act of the Union
- 3) The Lusaka Summit in Zambia in 2001 drew the road map for the implementation of the AU
- 4) The Durban Summit in South Africa in 2002 launched the AU and convened the 1st Assembly of the Heads of States of African Union.

Objectives of AU

The objectives of AU are as follows:

- Achieve greater unity and solidarity between African countries and their the people
- Defend the sovereignty, territorial integrity and independence of its Member States;
- Accelerate the political and socio-economic integration of the continent;
- Promote and defend African common positions on issues of interest to the continent and its peoples;
- Encourage international cooperation
- Promote peace, security, and stability on the continent
- Promote democratic principles and institutions and good governance
- Promote and protect human and people's rights in accordance with the African Charter on Human and People's Rights
- Promote cooperation in all fields of human activity to raise the living standards of African people's

South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC)

The South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) was established with the signing of the **SAARC Charter in Dhaka on 8 December 1985**.

The idea of regional cooperation in South Asia was first raised in November 1980. After consultations, the foreign secretaries of the seven founding countries—Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan, and Sri Lanka—**met for the first time in Colombo in April 1981**.

SAARC comprises **3% of the world's area, 21% of the world's population** and **3.8% (US\$2.9 trillion) of the global economy**.

Afghanistan became the newest member of SAARC at the 13th annual summit in 2005.

The **Headquarters and Secretariat** of the Association are at **Kathmandu, Nepal**.

What are its Principles?

- Cooperation within the framework of the SAARC shall be based on Respect for the principles of **sovereign equality, territorial integrity, political independence, non-interference** in the internal affairs of other States and mutual benefit.

Who are the Members of SAARC?

- SAARC comprises of **eight member States**:
Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan, Sri Lanka
- There are currently **nine Observers** to SAARC, namely:
Australia, China, The European Union, Iran, Japan, The Republic of Korea, Mauritius, Myanmar, The United States of America.

What are the Areas of Cooperation?

- Human Resource Development and Tourism
- Agriculture and Rural Development
- Environment, Natural Disasters and Biotechnology
- Economic, Trade and Finance
- Social Affairs
- Information and Poverty Alleviation
- Energy, Transport, Science and Technology
- Education, Security and Culture and Others

What are the Objectives of the SAARC?

- To **promote the welfare** of the people of South Asia and to improve their quality of life.
- To **accelerate economic growth**, social progress and cultural development in the region and to provide all individuals the opportunity to live in dignity and to realize their full potentials.
- To **promote and strengthen collective self-reliance** among the countries of South Asia.
- To **contribute to mutual trust**, understanding and appreciation of one another's problems..
- To **promote active collaboration** and mutual assistance in the economic, social, cultural, technical and scientific fields.
- To **strengthen cooperation with other developing countries**.
- To **strengthen cooperation among themselves in international forums** on matters of common interests, and
- To cooperate with international and regional organizations with similar aims and purposes.

What are the Principal Organs of the Cooperation?

- **Meeting of Heads of State or Government.**
 - Meetings are held at the Summit level, usually on an annual basis.
- **Standing Committee of Foreign Secretaries.**
 - The Committee provides overall monitoring and coordination, determines priorities, mobilizes resources, and approves projects and financing.
- **Secretariat**
 - The SAARC Secretariat was established in Kathmandu on 16 January 1987. Its role is **to coordinate and monitor the implementation of SAARC** activities, service the meetings of the association and serve as a channel of communication between SAARC and other international organizations.
 - The Secretariat comprises the **secretary-general, seven directors, and the general services staff**. The secretary-general is **appointed by the Council of Ministers** on the principle of rotation, for a non-renewable tenure of three years.

What are SAARC's Specialised Bodies?

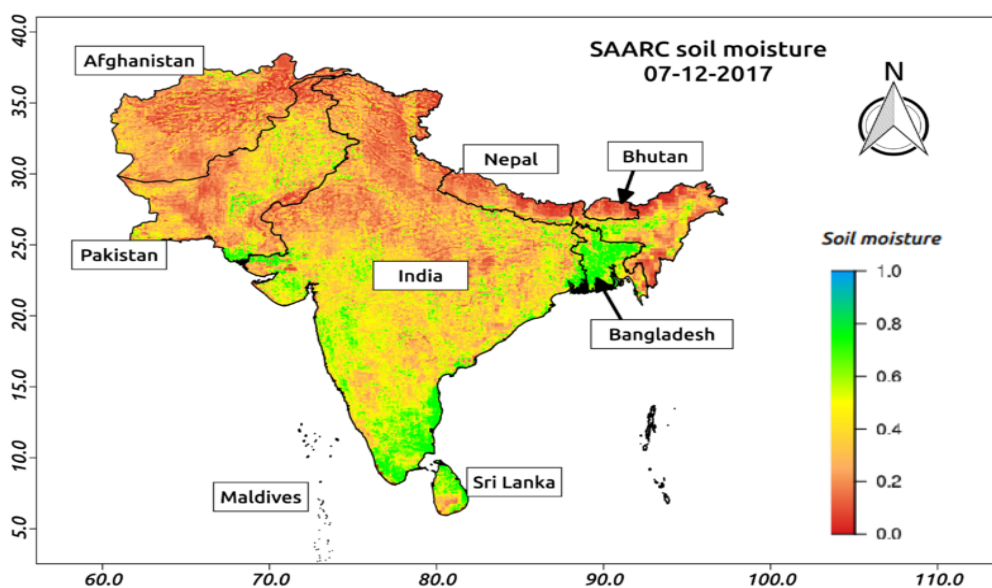
- **SAARC Development Fund (SDF):**
 - Its primary objective is funding of project-based collaboration in social sectors such as poverty alleviation, development, etc. SDF is governed by a Board consisting of

representatives from the Ministry of Finance of the Member States. The Governing Council of SDF (Finance Ministers of MSs) oversees the functioning of the Board.

- **South Asian University** is an international university, located in India. Degrees and Certificates awarded by the SAU are at par with the respective Degrees and Certificates awarded by the National Universities/ Institutions.
- **SAARC Arbitration Council** It is an **inter-governmental body** having its office in **Pakistan** is mandated to provide a legal framework/forum within the region for fair and efficient settlement of commercial, industrial, trade, banking, investment and such other disputes, as may be referred to it by the member states and their people.

What are its Achievements?

- **Free Trade Area (FTA):** SAARC is comparatively a new organization in the global arena. The member countries have established a **Free Trade Area (FTA)** which will increase their internal trade and lessen the trade gap of some states considerably.
- **SAPTA: South Asia Preferential Trading Agreement** for promoting trade amongst the member countries came into effect in 1995.
- **SAFTA: A Free Trade Agreement** confined to goods, but excluding all services like information technology. Agreement was signed to reduce customs duties of all traded goods to zero by the year 2016.
- **SAARC Agreement on Trade in Services (SATIS):** SATIS is following the GATS-plus 'positive list' approach for trade in services liberalization.
- **SAARC University:** Establish a SAARC university in India, a food bank and also an energy reserve in Pakistan



South Asian Free Trade Area (SAFTA)

- The South Asian Free Trade Area (SAFTA) is a free trade agreement reached between the members of the South Asian Association of Regional Cooperation (SAARC) on January 6, 2004.
- South Asian Free Trade Area is an important topic in the International Relations segment of the [UPSC Mains Exam](#).
- The South Asian Free Trade Area was signed in 2004 and came in to effect on January 1st 2006. The members of [SAARC](#) signed the agreement in order to promote and sustain mutual trade and economic cooperation within the region.
- SAFTA required the developing countries in South Asia (India, Pakistan and Sri Lanka) to bring their duties down to 20 per cent in the first phase of the two-year period ending in 2007.
- While the least developing countries (LDC) consisting of Nepal, Bhutan, Bangladesh, Afghanistan and the Maldives had an additional three years to reduce tariffs

The basic principles regarding SAFTA are as follows:

1. Reciprocity and mutuality of advantages in order to benefit equally by considering the level of economic trade, industrial development and trade and tariff systems
2. Negotiation of tariff reform which will be implemented in successive stages through periodic reviews.
3. Recognition of the special needs of the Least Developed countries and agreement on concrete preferential measures in their favour
4. Inclusion of all products, manufactures and commodities in their raw forms

The purpose of the SAFTA is to encourage and elevate common contract among countries such as medium and long-term contracts. Contracts involving trade operated by states, supply and import assurance in respect of specific products etc.

The objective of the South Asian Free Trade Area:

The primary objective of the agreement is to promote competition in the region while providing proper benefits to the countries involved. The agreement will benefit the people of South Asia by bringing transparency and integrity among the nations by reducing tariff and trade barriers. Ultimately it establishes a robust framework for regional cooperation

The instruments to help fulfil these objectives are as follows:

1. Trade Liberalisation Programme
2. Rules of origin
3. Institutional Arrangements
4. Consultations and Dispute Settlement Procedures
5. Safeguard Measures
6. Any other instrument that may be agreed upon.

Benefits and Concerns regarding SAFTA:

- The South Asian Free Trade Area agreement could boost foreign investment in SAARC Nations provided such investments don't harm the domestic industries of member-nations.
- The [World Bank](#) in its reports has shown that nations who have been involved in Free Trade Agreements have had higher instances of economic growth compared to countries that were not.
- The [European Union](#) trade bloc, for instance, led to the formation of the single European market and substantial restructuring of industry on a pan-European basis. The EU also enabled member-countries to exploit economies of scale, scope and specialisation.
- The underlying concern is that certain items can be rerouted through the nations involved in SAFTA. One example is the Palm Oil trade in which India had restricted its import from Malaysia. But Malaysia's had apparently circumvented this loophole by rerouting their trade through other member nations of SAARC.

World Bank

The World Bank Group is an international partnership that includes 189 countries and 5 institutions. They work towards reducing poverty and spreading prosperity. It was formed with International Monetary Fund in the 1944 Bretton Woods Conference. The five development institutions of the World Bank Group include

1. International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (IBRD)
2. International Finance Corporation (IFC)
3. International Centre for the Settlement of Investment Disputes (ICSID)
4. International Development Association (IDA)
5. Multilateral Guarantee Agency (MIGA)

World Bank Group History :

The Bretton Woods Conference happened in 1944, and it led to the establishment of IMF and IBRD.

- The main objective of IBRD was to use loans to help the countries to rebuild that had been impacted by World War II.
- With time, the focus shifted to development, roads, infrastructure, and other projects. And over time, other institutions arose, and five institutions, including IFC, MIGA, IBRD, IDA and ICSID, came to be known as the World Bank Group.
- Currently, the World Bank is focused on various activities with the help of these institutions.
- Now, major importance has been placed on the development of underdeveloped countries.
- World Bank Group has become a leading provider of knowledge and finance for developing countries.
- Now, the five institutions work to reduce poverty and boost long-term development.

World Bank Membership:

- To become a member of the World Bank Group, the country needs to be a member of the IMF first.
- Before joining the IDA, IFC or MIGA, the country needs to join IBRD first
- To become a member of ICSID, a country needs to satisfy the following requirements:
 - a. IBRD Membership
 - b. Signatory to the International Court of Justice's Statute

c. ICSID Administrative Council invitation by two-thirds of its members.

Functions of World Bank:

The World Bank Group was established after World War II with the objective of rebuilding the countries damaged due to the war.

- With time, it encouraged the development of lower and middle-income countries and improved the standard of living there.
- It also focused on encouraging long-term capital investment.
- World Bank Group promote investment in developing countries. It offered financial support, expertise and technical assistance.

1. International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (IBRD)- World Bank Group:

IBRD is a global development cooperative, and it was founded as one of the Bretton Woods Institutions in 1944. There are 189 members of the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development.

- IBRD is the largest development bank in the world, which was established to help the post-World War II reconstruction. After everything got back on track, IBRD changed its focus to other areas.
- Currently, IBRD is focusing on helping countries with low and middle income. It aims to reduce poverty, deal with regional concerns, and boost sustainable growth.
- IBRD is one of the 5 institutions under the World Bank Group, and it invests in various sectors and also offers technical assistance.
- 60% of IBRD's portfolio is concentrated in middle and low-income countries.
- India borrowed money from IBRD in 1949 for the railway project. Since 1960 IBRD has helped India with funding. India has become the largest IBRD client of the World Bank.

2. International Development Association (IDA) –

World Bank IDA was founded in 1960 to help the poorest countries in the world and to complement IBRD. The main motive of IDA was to reduce poverty through interest-free loans. The mechanism of IDA enhanced economic growth, quality of life, and reduced inequality. The World Bank includes IBRD and IDA.

3.Multilateral Investment Guarantee Agency (MIGA)- World Bank

MIGA was established in 1988. The objective of MIGA was to promote foreign direct investment in developing countries. • Multilateral Investment Guarantee Agency lowers poverty and enhances the quality of life. • Just like its name, MIGA guarantees to protect investments against non-commercial risks. • Political risk insurance products by MIGA offer coverage against -Losses due to terrorism, war and civil disturbance. -Breach of contract -Expropriation by the government -Losses due to inability to legally convert local currency to hard currency.

4.International Finance Corporation (IFC)- World Bank

The International Finance Corporation is the sister organization of the World Bank. IFC is majorly focused on the private sector in developing countries.

- It is the largest global development organization.
- IFS supports growth in developing countries by funding investments, raising money, and also providing commercial advisory services.
- IFC is involved with the private sector to increase entrepreneurship and boost business growth.

5.International Centre for Settlement of Investment Disputes (ICSID)- World Bank

ICSID is an international organization that deals with the resolution of investment disputes. One of the major functions of ICSID is to settle disputes between governments and investors. In addition, it also settles disputes between states. However, India is not a member of ICSID because it thinks that this organization is biased towards developed countries only

WTO

The World Trade Organization, also known as WTO, is a Global organization that deals directly with making rules and regulations among the Nations with respect to trading. It was constituted on the 1st of January 1995. India also joined the WTO in 1995 and is a founding member of the World Trade Organization. WTO is headquartered in Geneva, Switzerland, and it consists of 164 countries, where 160 are [United Nations](#) countries, along with the EU, Hong Kong, Macau, and Taiwan.

Apart from this, WTO also acts as a forum that negotiates the trading agreement and settles down trading disputes among countries by providing support and a full feeling of the needs of developing countries

The main and prime focus of the World Trade Organization is to provide benefits to all the traders in the world. WTO has a body called the Ministerial Conference, which is the highest decision-making body. This conference consists of all the member states and holds a meeting twice a year. All members of the WTO are involved in the Ministerial Conference, and they can take decisions on all matters covered under any multilateral trade agreements.

History of World Trade Organization (WTO)

The World Trade Organization was established on 1st January 1995, but its working dates back to about 50 years ago. Before the WTO, GATT was in existence in 1948, which was replaced by it.

- According to the General Agreement, a body named GATT (General Agreement on Tariff and Trade) was formed, which underwent evolution over the years of rounds of negotiations.
- This GATT witnessed its last conference in 1994, which started in 1986. This last round was called the Uruguay Round.
- A year later, the WTO was formed in 1995. Where the GATT, only dealt with trading, the World Trade Organisation focused on goods trading along with services and intellectual properties.

Why WTO replaced GATT?

There are various reasons why WTP replaced GATT (General Agreement of Tariffs and Trade), an international trade agreement signed in 1947) with the World Trade Organization:

- In addition to legal problems, a number of factors contributed to the failure of GATT including the legal problems, specifically in the [agriculture](#) and textile areas.
- For example, in the GATT framework, the United States could not convince China and Japan to open up their markets to our goods and services.
- Furthermore, the GATT excluded the services and intellectual property rights, and there was no International mechanism to resolve such trade-related disputes.
- Therefore, GATT started to face very serious problems and eventually converted to the World Trade Organization. Hence it can also be said that the WTO is a new form of the existing GATT that exhausted its purpose and was not capable enough to intermediate the Global economic consequences and achieve the industrial interest of countries

Governance Structure of WTO

The Governance of WTO is composed of many higher delegations. Authorities include the representatives of all the WTO country members who meet at least after every 2 years and take major decisions related to the multilateral trading system and make agreements. The governance structure of WTO is-

- The Ministerial Council
- General Council
- Goods Council
- Intellectual Property Council
- Services Council

Ministerial Conference of World Trade Organization(WTO)

WTO has held its 12th Ministerial Conference at its Headquarters in Geneva, Switzerland. It was held between 12-17 June 2022. This Conference was attended by ministers present from all over the world(member countries) and discussed the functioning of this multilateral trading system and taking actions regarding the future work of the World Trade Organization. This conference was chaired by Timur Suleimenov, who is the Deputy Chief of staff of the Kazakhstan President. Earlier this conference was supposed to be held in 2020 but got postponed due to the covid-19 but it concluded successfully on 17 June 2022.

Objectives of the WTO

WTO aims to reduce barriers to trade and promote economic growth and development among its member countries. Let's explore the major objectives of WTO below.

- To limit the trading barriers by negotiating. This results in a reduction in the prices of goods and services, which in turn results in a reduction in the cost of living.
- Stimulating [economic growth and development](#), and employment opportunities
- Limit the cost of international business activities.
- To promote the concept of [good governance](#).
- To reduce the trade disputes among the countries.
- Collaborating with leading financial institutions to boost economic management.

Principles of World Trade Organization

WTO has 5 principles that are designed to promote free and open trade among member countries, while also ensuring that trade is conducted in a manner that benefits all parties involved. The following are the principles of WTO:

- **Trade Without Discrimination:**As per the WTO agreement, no countries can discriminate against each other or grant some special favors to any country. The WTO keeps all the members on the same page. Also, the product imported and locally made goods should be given equal treatment at least even when those goods enter the foreign trade market.
- **Free Trade Through Negotiations:**There can be many barriers to free trade, like duties or tariffs, Bans, or Quotas which may affect effective trading. WTO also keeps on discussing such issues over time to reduce the fitness in business and marketing and make it relaxed and free trade.
- **Predictability Through Binding and Transparency:**Whenever any country opens a market for services or goods gets bound under the World Trade Organization. The terrace binding for goods is mostly the ceilings on the rates of custom tariffs. At times some countries track imports below the bound rate, and this problem is most common in developing countries.
- **Promoting Fair Competition:**In the fields of agriculture, intellectual properties, and services provided, there are many agreements of WTO that provide fair competition. As a result of it, the government procurement agreement competition rule applied to more than thousands of governments in all countries.
- **Encouraging Development and Economic Reform:**Development is facilitated by the WTO system. In contrast to this, the developing countries name time and flexibility as they take a slow time to implement the agreement made by the WTO systems. In addition to these agreements, these agreements inherit the GATTs former provisions that provide special assistance and trade concessions.

WTO and India

India has been a member of the former GATT since 1948 and an active member of the World Trade Organizationsince 1995. Being a developing nation, India has contributed much in the trading field to WTO, especially by raising its own concerns as well as its fellow developing nations.

- At the 2001 conference in Doha, Qatar, India was seen as the most outspoken advocate among all the countries. India has signed many agreements with the WTO, whose implications can be seen in the Indian economy. These agreements are-
- Reducing tariff and non-tariff barriers- In this agreement, the total reduction of tariffs on manufactured and finished goods.
- TRIMS- It stands for Trade-Related Investments Measures. This measure restricts the host country from being Biased toward internal trade and unbiased toward foreign trade in their countries.
- TRIPS- It stands for Trade-Related Intellectual Property Rights. It aims to recognize and protect the legal rights of the original creator of intangibles.
- AOA- It means Agreement on Agriculture, which deals with the reduction of subsidies and giving market access to agricultural products.

Significance of World Trade Organization

The existence of the WTO is of great significance to all global trading systems. It significantly enforces the rules and regulations for trading. WTO's primary function is to ensure that trade flows as smoothly, predictably, and freely as possible, while also providing a forum for its members to negotiate and resolve trade disputes. Because of the WTO, the import and export business has seen a great level of transparency and smoothness. This allows the consumer to have a vast variety of topics.

Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD)

- The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) is an international, intergovernmental economic organization of 38 countries with market economies that work with each other, as well as with more than 70 non-member economies to promote economic growth, prosperity, and sustainable development.
- The organisation's headquarters is at the Paris, France.
- OECD provides its members with a forum in which governments can work together to share experiences and seek solutions to common problems.
- Most members in the organisation are high-income economies with a very high Human Development Index (HDI) and are regarded as developed countries.
- The OECD member states collectively comprised 42.8% of global GDP (Int \$54.2 trillion) at purchasing power parity (PPP) in 2017.
- This corporation is known as a statistical agency, as it publishes comparable statistics on a wide number of subjects.

History of OECD:

- OECD originated in 1948, as the Organisation for European Economic Co-operation (OEEC). OEEC was renamed as the OECD in 1961 when the USA and Canada joined to reflect a broader membership.
- It was reformed in subsequent years as OECD by the Convention on the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development.
- It is an official Permanent observer of the United Nations and is referred to as a think-tank or as a monitoring group.

Economic Co-operation and Development Objectives:

- The objectives of the Cooperation include fostering economic development and cooperation and fighting poverty through the promotion of economic stability.
- It also ensures that the environmental impact of growth and social development is always considered.
- To promote policies that will improve the economic and social well-being of people around the world.
- To provide a forum of countries describing themselves as committed to democracy and the market economy.
- To provide a forum in which governments can work together to share experiences and seek solutions to common problems.
- Over the years, it has raised the standards of living in multiple countries. It has also contributed to the expansion of world trade.

OECD Functions and Responsibilities

- The OECD plays an integral role in promoting economic stability on a global scale. The OECD publishes and updates a model tax convention that serves as a template for allocating taxation rights between countries.
- It is responsible for publishing economic reports, statistical databases, analyses, and forecasts on the outlook for economic growth worldwide.
- The group analyzes the impact of social issues on economic growth and makes recommendations to extend forethoughts to the environmental concerns associated with economic development too.
- The organization endeavours to eliminate bribery and other forms of financial crimes worldwide.
- It also maintains a “blacklist” of nations that are considered uncooperative tax havens.
- It also took efforts to eradicate tax avoidance by profitable corporations and in the G-20 countries. It also encourages the G-20 countries to promote tax reforms.

OECD Composition:

The OECD comprises Member Countries, Substantive Committees, and the OECD Secretariat.

Member Countries:



OECD currently has 38 member nations and the Member Countries are each represented by a delegation led by their ambassadors.

OECD is funded by its member countries. National contributions are based on a formula that takes into account the size of each member's economy. Countries may also make voluntary contributions to financially support outputs in the OECD program of work.

Substantive Committees:

- Representatives of member and observer countries meet in specialized committees on specific policy areas, such as economics, trade, science, employment, education or financial markets.
- There are about 200 committees, working groups and expert groups. Committees discuss policies and review progress in the given policy area.

OECD Secretariat:

- OECD Secretariat is led by the Secretary-General and provides support to Standing and Substantive Committees. It is organized into Directorates.
- The European Commission participates in the work of the OECD alongside the EU member states.
- Exchanges between governments benefit from the information, analysis, and preparation of the OECD Secretariat.
- The secretariat collects data, monitors trends, and analyses and forecasts economic developments.

India and OECD:

- India is not a member of the OECD. But India has had a cooperation programme with it since 1997.
- India became the 27th member of the organisation's Development Centre.
- The OECD Council at the Ministerial level adopted a resolution on 16 May 2007 to strengthen cooperation with India, as well as with Brazil, China, Indonesia and South Africa, through a programme of enhanced engagement, defining these countries as **Key Partners** of the organisation.
- As a Key Partner, India is included in the analysis and statistical databases of the organisation.
- Its participation in the bodies and fora is encouraged as a means of allowing Indian policymakers to benefit from the OECD's technical expertise and analytical capacity.

IMF

The International Monetary Fund is an **organization of 190 member countries**, each of which has representation on the IMF's executive board in proportion to its financial importance, so that the most powerful countries in the global economy have the most voting power.

What are the Objectives of IMF?

- Foster global monetary cooperation
- Secure financial stability
- Facilitate international trade
- Promote high employment and sustainable economic growth
- And reduce poverty around the world
- Macro-economic growth
- Policy advise & financing for developing countries,
- Promotion of exchange rate stability, and an international payment system

What is the History of IMF?

- The IMF, also known as the Fund, was conceived at a **UN conference in Bretton Woods**, New Hampshire, United States, in July **1944**.
- The 44 countries at that conference sought to build a framework for economic cooperation to avoid a repetition of the competitive devaluations that had contributed to the Great Depression of the 1930s.
- **Countries were not eligible for membership** in the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (IBRD) **unless they were members of the IMF**.
- IMF, as per **Bretton Woods agreement** to encourage international financial cooperation, introduced a system of convertible currencies at fixed exchange rates, and replaced gold with the U.S. dollar (gold at \$35 per ounce) for official reserve.
 - After the **Bretton Woods system** (system of fixed exchange rates) **collapsed in the 1971**, the IMF has promoted the **system of floating exchange rates**. Countries are free to choose their exchange arrangement, meaning that market forces determine the value of currencies relative to one another. **This system continues to be in place today**.
- The IMF played a central role in helping the countries of the former Soviet bloc transition from central planning to market-driven economies.

- **Global Economic Crisis (2008):** IMF undertook major initiatives to strengthen surveillance to respond to a more globalized and interconnected world.
 - These initiatives included revamping the legal framework for surveillance to cover spill-overs (when economic policies in one country can affect others), deepening analysis of risks and financial systems, stepping up assessments of members' external positions, and responding more promptly to concerns of the members.

What are the Functions of IMF?

- **Provides Financial Assistance:** To provide **financial assistance to member countries** with balance of payments problems, the IMF lends money to replenish international reserves, stabilize currencies and strengthen conditions for economic growth. Countries must embark on structural adjustment policies monitored by the IMF.
- **IMF Surveillance:** It oversees the international monetary system and monitors the economic and financial policies of its 190 member countries.
 - As part of this process, which takes place both at the global level and in individual countries, the IMF **highlights possible risks to stability** and advises on needed policy adjustments.
- **Capacity Development:** It provides technical assistance and training to central banks, finance ministries, tax authorities, and other economic institutions.
 - This helps countries raise public revenues, modernize banking systems, develop strong legal frameworks, improve governance, and enhance the reporting of macroeconomic and financial data. It also helps countries to make progress towards the **Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)**.

What is the Governance Setup of IMF?

- **Board of Governors:** It consists of one governor and one alternate governor for each member country. Each member country appoints its two governors.
 - It is responsible for electing or appointing executive directors to the Executive Board.
 - Approving quota increases, Special Drawing Right allocations,
 - Admittance of new members, compulsory withdrawal of member,
 - Amendments to the Articles of Agreement and By-Laws.
 - Boards of Governors of the IMF Group normally meet once a year to discuss the work of their respective institutions.

- **Ministerial Committees:** The Board of Governors is advised by two ministerial committees,
 - **International Monetary and Financial Committee (IMFC):** IMFC has 24 members, drawn from the pool of 190 governors, and represents all member countries.
 - It discusses the management of the international monetary and financial system.
 - It also discusses proposals by the Executive Board to **amend the Articles of Agreement**.
 - And any other matters of **common concern affecting the global economy**.
 - **Development Committee:** is a joint committee (25 members from Board of Governors of **IMF & World Bank**), tasked with advising the Boards of Governors of the IMF and the World Bank on issues related to economic development in emerging market and developing countries.
- **Executive Board:** It is 24-member Executive Board elected by the Board of Governors.
 - **It conducts the daily business of the IMF** and exercises the powers delegated to it by the Board of Governors & powers conferred on it by the Articles of Agreement.
 - It discusses all aspects of the Fund's work, from the IMF staff's annual health checks of member countries' economies to policy issues relevant to the global economy.
 - The Board normally makes decisions based on consensus, but sometimes formal votes are taken.
 - **Votes** of each member equal the sum of its basic votes (equally distributed among all members) and **quota-based votes**. A member's quota determines its voting power.
- **IMF Members:** Any other state, **whether or not a member of the UN**, may become a member of the IMF in accordance with IMF Articles of Agreement and terms prescribed by the Board of Governors.

IMF and India: What is the Scenario?

- India is a **founder member** of the IMF.
- International regulation by IMF in the field of money has certainly contributed towards expansion of international trade. India has, to that extent, benefitted from these fruitful results.
- **Post-partition period**, India had serious balance of payments deficits, particularly with the dollar and other hard currency countries. It was the IMF that came to her rescue.
- The Fund granted India loans to meet the financial difficulties arising out of the Indo-Pak conflict of 1965 and 1971.
- India had to borrow from the Fund in the wake of the steep rise in the prices of its imports, food, fuel and fertilizers.

- India wanted large foreign capital for her various river projects, land reclamation schemes and for the development of communications. Since private foreign capital was not forthcoming, the only practicable method of obtaining the necessary capital was to borrow from the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (i.e. World Bank).
- India has availed of the **services of specialists of the IMF** for the purpose of assessing the state of the Indian economy. In this way India has had the benefit of independent scrutiny and advice.
- The balance of payments position of India having gone utterly out of gear on account of the oil price escalation since October 1973, the IMF has started making available oil facility by setting up a special fund for the purpose.
- **Early 1990s** when **foreign exchange reserves – for two weeks’ imports** as against the generally accepted '**safe minimum reserves**' of **three month equivalent** — position were terribly unsatisfactory.
 - Government of India's immediate response was to secure an emergency loan of \$2.2 billion from the International Monetary Fund by pledging 67 tons of India's gold reserves as collateral security.
 - India promised IMF to launch several structural reforms (like devaluation of Indian currency, reduction in budgetary and fiscal deficit, cut in government expenditure and subsidy, import liberalisation, industrial policy reforms, trade policy reforms, banking reforms, financial sector reforms, privatization of public sector enterprises, etc.) in the coming years.
- The foreign reserves started picking up with the onset of the liberalisation policies.
- **The Finance Minister** of India is the **ex-officio Governor on the Board of Governors** of the IMF. **RBI Governor is the Alternate Governor at the IMF.**