

## **Department of Political Science**

### **International Organization**

#### **SEM IV (Hons.)**

#### **CC 10**

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### **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 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.

## Components

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.
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6 Main Committees: Draft resolutions can be prepared for the General Assembly by its six 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).

- Each Member State may be represented by one person on each Main

Committee and on any other committee that may be established upon which all Member States have the right to be represented.

- Member States may also assign advisers, technical advisers, experts or persons of similar status to these committees.
- 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

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.

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 five-year, renewable term.

- UN staff members are recruited internationally and locally, and work in duty stations and on peacekeeping missions all around the world.

Funds, Programmes, Specialized Agencies and Others

The UN system, also known unofficially as the "UN family", is made up of the UN itself (6 main organs) and many affiliated programmes, funds, and specialized agencies, all with their own membership, leadership, and budget.

## Funds and Programmes

- The United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), originally known as the United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund, was created by the United Nations General Assembly in 1946, to provide emergency food and healthcare to children and mothers in countries that had been devastated by World War II. In
  - 1950, UNICEF's mandate was extended to address the long-term needs of children and women in developing countries everywhere.
  - In 1953, it became a permanent part of the United Nations System, and the words "international" and "emergency" were dropped from the organization's name, though it retained the original acronym, "UNICEF".
  - Executive Board: A 36-member board establishes policies, approves programs and oversees administrative and financial plans. The members are government representatives who are elected by the United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC), usually for three-year terms.
  - UNICEF relies on contributions from governments and private donors.
  - UNICEF's Supply Division is based in Copenhagen (Denmark) and serves as the primary point of distribution for such essential items as vaccines, antiretroviral medicines for children and mothers with HIV, nutritional supplements, emergency shelters, family reunification, and educational supplies.
- UNFPA
  - The United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), formerly the United Nations Fund for Population Activities, is the United Nations sexual and reproductive health agency.
  - Its mission is to deliver a world where every pregnancy is wanted, 'every childbirth is safe' and every young person's potential is fulfilled. In 2018,
  - UNFPA launched efforts to achieve three transformative results, ambitions that promise to change the world for every man, woman and young person:
    - Ending unmet need for family planning
    - Ending preventable maternal death
    - Ending gender-based violence and harmful practices

- UNDP
  - The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) is the UN's global development network.
  - UNDP was established in 1965 by the General Assembly of the United Nations. It provides expert advice, training and grants support to developing countries, with increasing emphasis on assistance to the least developed countries. The UNDP Executive Board is made up of representatives from 36 countries around the world who serve on a rotating basis.
  - It is funded entirely by voluntary contributions from member nations.
  - UNDP is central to the United Nations Sustainable Development Group (UNSDG), a network that spans 165 countries and unites the 40 UN funds, programmes, specialized agencies and other bodies working to advance the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.
  
- UNEP
  - The United Nations Environment Programme (UN Environment) is a global environmental authority that sets the global environmental agenda, promotes the coherent implementation of the environmental dimension of sustainable development within the United Nations system.
  - It was founded by UN General Assembly as a result of the United Nations Conference on the Human Environment (Stockholm Conference) in June 1972.
  - UNEP and World Meteorological Organization (WMO) established Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) in 1988 to assess climate change based on the latest science.
  - Since its founding, the UNEP has played a key role for the development of multilateral environmental agreements (MEAs). The secretariats for the following nine MEAs are currently hosted by UNEP:
    - Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD)
    - Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES)
    - Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals (CMS)
    - Vienna Convention for the Protection of the Ozone Layer
    - Minamata Convention on Mercury
    - Basel Convention on the Control of Trans-boundary Movements of Hazardous Wastes and Their Disposal
    - Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants
    - Rotterdam Convention on the Prior Informed Consent Procedure for

## Certain Hazardous Chemicals and Pesticides in International Trade

- **UN-Habitat**
  - United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat) is the United Nations programme working towards a better urban future.
  - Its mission is to promote socially and environmentally sustainable human settlements development and the achievement of adequate shelter for all. It was
  - established in 1978 as an outcome of the First UN Conference on Human Settlements and Sustainable Urban Development (Habitat I) in Vancouver, Canada, in 1976.
  - 2<sup>nd</sup> United Nations Conference on Human Settlements (Habitat II) in Istanbul, Turkey, in 1996, set the twin goals of the Habitat Agenda:
    - Adequate shelter for all
      - Development of sustainable human settlements in an urbanizing world.
  - 3<sup>rd</sup> United Nations Conference on Housing and Sustainable Urban Development (Habitat III) was held in 2016 in Quito, Ecuador. It elaborated on Goal-11 of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG): "Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient, and sustainable."
- **WFP**
  - World Food Programme (WFP) is the leading humanitarian organization saving lives and changing lives, delivering food assistance in emergencies and working with communities to improve nutrition and build resilience.
  - The WFP was established in 1963 by the FAO (The Food and Agriculture Organization) and the United Nations General Assembly.

## UN Specialized Agencies

The UN specialized agencies are autonomous organizations working with the United Nations. All were brought into relationship with the UN through negotiated agreements.

Some existed even before the First World War. Some were associated with the League of Nations. Others were created almost simultaneously with the UN. Others were created by the UN to meet emerging needs.

Articles 57 and 63 of UN Charter provides provision of creating specialised agencies.

- **FAO**
  - In 1945, Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) was created In Quebec City, Canada, by the first session of the newly created United Nations.
  - FAO is a specialized agency of the United Nations that leads international efforts to defeat hunger.
  -

FAO is also a source of knowledge and information, and helps developing countries in transition modernize and improve agriculture, forestry and fisheries practices, ensuring good nutrition and food security for all.

- **ICAO**

- Under Chicago Convention, the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) was established in 1944, as a UN specialized agency. It manages the administration and governance of the Convention on International Civil Aviation (Chicago Convention).
- It provides the principles and techniques of international air navigation and fosters the planning and development of international air transport to ensure safe and orderly growth.

- **IFAD**

- The International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) was established as an international financial institution in 1977 through United Nations General Assembly Resolution as one of the major outcomes of the 1974–World Food Conference.
- This conference was organized by the United Nations in response to the food crises of the early 1970s, when global food shortages were causing widespread famine and malnutrition, primarily in the Sahelian countries of Africa. It was realized that food insecurity and famine were not so much failures in food production but structural problems relating to poverty.

- **ILO**

- The International Labour Organization (ILO) is a United Nations agency whose mandate is to advance social justice and promote decent work by setting international labour standards.
- It sets international labour standards, promotes rights at work and encourages decent employment opportunities, the enhancement of social protection and the strengthening of dialogue on work-related issues.
- As an agency of the League of Nations, it was created in 1919, as part of the Treaty of Versailles that ended World War I.
- 9 International Labour Conventions and 10 Recommendations which dealt with hours of work in industry, unemployment, maternity protection, night work for women, minimum age, and night work for young persons in industry were adopted in less than two years (by 1922).
- By signing of the United Nation agreement whereby the ILO became the first United Nations specialized agency in 1946.
- The Organization won the Nobel Peace Prize on its 50th anniversary in 1969 for pursuing decent work and justice for workers.
- In 1980, the ILO played a major role in the emancipation of Poland from dictatorship by giving its full support to the legitimacy of the Solidarnosc Union,

based on respect for Convention No. 87 on freedom of association, which Poland had ratified in 1957.

- It emphasised that the future of work is not predetermined: Decent work for all is possible but societies have to make it happen. It is precisely with this imperative that the ILO established its Global Commission on the Future of Work as part of its initiative to mark its centenary in 2019.

Its job is to undertake an in-depth examination of the future of work that can provide the analytical basis for the delivery of social justice in the 21st century.

- IMF

UN Monetary and Financial Conference (1944, also called Bretton Woods Conference), Bretton Woods, New Hampshire, United States was held to regulate the international monetary and financial order after the conclusion of World War II.

It resulted in foundation of International Monetary Fund (IMF) in 1945.

- World Bank

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- IMO

The International Maritime Organization (IMO) – is the United Nations specialized agency with responsibility for the safety and security of shipping and the prevention of marine and atmospheric pollution by ships.

- ITU

- International Telecommunication Union (ITU) is a specialized agency of the United Nations (UN) that is responsible for issues that concern information and communication technologies (ICT). It is the oldest among all the specialised agencies of UN.
- It was founded in 1865 and based in Geneva, Switzerland. It works on the principle of international cooperation between governments (Member States) and the private sector (Sector Members, Associates and Academia).
- ITU is the premier global forum through which parties work towards consensus on a wide range of issues affecting the future direction of the ICT industry. It
- allocates global radio spectrum and satellite orbits, develop the technical standards that ensure networks and technologies seamlessly interconnect, and strive to improve access to ICTs to underserved communities worldwide.

- UNESCO

- United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) was founded in 1945 to develop the “intellectual and moral solidarity of mankind” as a means of building lasting peace. It is located in Paris (France).

- In this spirit, UNESCO develops educational tools to help people live as global citizens free of hate and intolerance.
- By promoting cultural heritage and the equal dignity of all cultures, UNESCO strengthens bonds among nations.
- **UNIDO**
  - United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) promotes industrial development for poverty reduction, inclusive globalisation and environmental sustainability.
- **WHO**
  - The World Health Organization (WHO) is the United Nations' specialized agency for health.
  - It was established in 1948, and is headquartered in Geneva, Switzerland. It is an inter-governmental organization and works in collaboration with its Member States usually through the Ministries of Health.
  - - The World Health Organization (WHO) is
    - responsible for providing leadership on global
    - health matters, shaping the health research
    - agenda, setting norms and standards, providing
    - evidence-based policy options, providing technical
    - support to countries, and monitoring and assessing health trends.
- **UNCTAD**
  - UNCTAD supports developing countries to access the benefits of a globalized economy more fairly and effectively. It helps to use trade, investment, finance, and technology as vehicles for inclusive and sustainable development.
- **UNODC**
  - United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) is a global leader in the fight against illicit drugs and international crime.
  - It was established in 1997 through a merger between the United Nations Drug Control Programme and the Centre for International Crime Prevention. UNODC
  - is mandated to assist Member States in their struggle against illicit drugs, crime and terrorism.
- **UNHCR**
  - The office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) was created in 1950, during the aftermath of the Second World War, to help millions of Europeans who had fled or lost their homes.

- In 1954, UNHCR won the Nobel Peace Prize for its groundbreaking work in Europe.
  - The start of the 21<sup>st</sup> century has seen UNHCR help with major refugee crises in Africa, the Middle East and Asia.
  - It also uses its expertise to help many internally displaced by conflict and expanded its role in helping stateless people.
- ESCAP
    - United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) is the main economic and social development centre of the UN in the region, headquartered in Bangkok (Thailand) in 1947.
    - It responds to the development needs and priorities of the region through its convening authority, economic and social analysis, normative standard-setting and technical assistance.

## UN Contribution to World

### Peace and Security

Maintaining Peace and Security: By sending peacekeeping and observer missions to the world's trouble spots over the past six decades, the United Nations has been able to restore calm, allowing many countries to recover from conflict.

- Preventing Nuclear Proliferation: For over the five decades, the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) has served as the world's nuclear inspector. IAEA experts work to verify that safeguarded nuclear material is used only for peaceful purposes. To date, the Agency has safeguards agreements with more than 180 States.
- Supporting Disarmament: UN treaties are the legal backbone of disarmament efforts:
  - the Chemical Weapons Convention-1997 has been ratified by 190 States,
  - the Mine-Ban Convention-1997 by 162, and the Arms Trade Treaty-2014 by 69.
  - At the local level, UN peacekeepers often work to implement disarmament agreements between warring parties.
- Preventing genocide: The United Nations brought about the first-ever treaty to combat genocide—acts committed with the intent to destroy a national, ethnical, racial or religious group.
 

The 1948 Genocide Convention has been ratified by 146 States, which commits to prevent and punish actions of genocide in war and in peacetime. The UN tribunals for Yugoslavia and Rwanda, as well as UN-supported courts in Cambodia, have put would-be genocide perpetrators on notice that such crimes would no longer be tolerated.

## Economic Development

Promoting Development: Since 2000, promoting living standards and human skills and potential throughout the world have been guided by the Millennium Development Goals.

- The UN Development Programme (UNDP) supports more than 4,800 projects to reduce poverty, promote good governance, address crises and preserve the environment.
- The UN Children's Fund (UNICEF) works in more than 150 countries, primarily on child protection, immunization, girls' education and emergency aid. The UN
- Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) helps developing countries make the most of their trade opportunities.
- The World Bank provides developing countries with loans and grants, and has supported more than 12,000 projects in more than 170 countries since 1947. Alleviating
- Rural Poverty: The International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) provides low-interest loans and grants to very poor rural people.
- Focusing on African Development: Africa continues to be a high priority for the United Nations. The continent receives 36 per cent of UN system expenditures for development, the largest share among the world's regions. All UN agencies have special programmes to benefit Africa.
- Promoting Women's Well-being: UN Women is the UN organization dedicated to gender equality and the empowerment of women.
- Fighting Hunger: The Food and Agriculture Organization of the UN (FAO) leads global efforts to defeat hunger. FAO also helps developing countries to modernize and improve agriculture, forestry and fisheries practices in ways that conserve natural resources and improve nutrition.
- Commitment in Support of Children: UNICEF has pioneered to provide vaccines and other aid desperately needed by children caught in armed conflict. The

Convention on the Rights of the Child-1989 has become law in nearly all countries. ●

Tourism: The World Tourism Organization is the UN agency responsible for the promotion of responsible, sustainable and universally accessible tourism.

Its Global Code of Ethics for Tourism seeks to maximize the benefits of tourism while minimizing its negative impact.

- Global Think Tank: The United Nations is at the forefront of research that seeks solutions to global problems.
  - The UN Population Division is a leading source of information and research on global population trends, producing up-to-date demographic estimates and projections.
  - The UN Statistics Division is the hub of the global statistical system, compiling and disseminating global economic, demographic, social, gender, environment and energy statistics.

- The United Nations Development Programme's annual Human Development Report provides independent, empirically grounded analyses of major development issues, trends and policies, including the groundbreaking Human Development Index.
- The United Nations World Economic and Social Survey, the World Bank's World Development Report, the International Monetary Fund's World Economic Outlook and other studies help policymakers to make informed decisions.

## Social Development

Preserving Historic, Cultural, Architectural and Natural Sites: The UNESCO has helped 137 countries to protect ancient monuments and historic, cultural and natural sites.

It has negotiated international conventions to preserve cultural property, cultural diversity and outstanding cultural and natural sites. More than 1,000 such sites have been designated as having exceptional universal value - as World Heritage Sites.

- Taking the lead on global issues:
  - The first United Nations conference on the environment (Stockholm, 1972) helped to alert world public opinion on the dangers faced by our planet, triggering action by governments.
  - The first world conference on women (Mexico City, 1985) put women's right, equality and progress on the global agenda.
  - Other landmark events include the first international conference on human rights (Teheran, 1968), the first world population conference (Bucharest, 1974) and the first world climate conference (Geneva, 1979).
  - Those events brought together experts and policymakers, as well as activists, from around the world, prompting sustained global action.
  - Regular follow-up conferences have helped to sustain the momentum.

## Human Rights

UN General Assembly adopted the Universal Declaration of Human Rights in 1948. It has helped to enact dozens of legally binding agreements on political, civil, economic, social and cultural rights.

UN human rights bodies have focused world attention on cases of torture, disappearance, arbitrary detention and other violations.

- Fostering Democracy: The UN promotes and strengthens democratic institutions and practices around the world, including by helping people in many countries to participate in free and fair elections.
  - In the 1990s, the UN organized or observed landmark elections in Cambodia, El Salvador, South Africa, Mozambique and Timor-Leste.

- More recently, the UN has provided crucial assistance in elections in Afghanistan, Burundi, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Iraq, Nepal, Sierra Leone and Sudan.
- Ending Apartheid in South Africa: By imposing measures ranging from an arms embargo to a convention against segregated sporting events, the United Nations was a major factor in bringing about the downfall of the apartheid system.
  - In 1994, elections in which all South Africans were allowed to participate on an equal basis led to the establishment of a multiracial Government.
- Promoting Women's Rights: The 1979 UN Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, ratified by 189 countries, has helped to promote the rights of women worldwide.

## Environment

Climate change is a global problem that demands a global solution. The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), which brings together 2,000 leading climate change scientists, issues comprehensive scientific assessments every five or six years.

- IPCC was established in 1988 under the auspices of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and the World Meteorological Organization for the purpose of assessing “the scientific, technical and socioeconomic information relevant for the understanding of the risk of human-induced climate change.
- UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) provides foundation for UN members to negotiate agreements to reduce emissions that contribute to climate change and help countries adapt to its effects. (UNFCCC-1992 is an international environmental treaty adopted and opened for signature at the Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro (Brazil) in 1992.)
- Global Environment Facility, which brings together 10 UN agencies, funds projects in developing countries.
- Protecting the Ozone Layer: The UNEP and the World Meteorological Organization (WMO) have been instrumental in highlighting the damage caused to Earth's ozone layer.
  - Vienna Convention for the Protection of the Ozone Layer-1985 provided the framework necessary to create regulatory measures for international reductions in the production of chlorofluorocarbons. Convention provided foundation for Montreal protocol.
  - The Montreal Protocol-1987 is an international environmental agreement with universal ratification to protect the earth’s ozone layer by eliminating use of ozone depleting substances (ODS) such as chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs) and halons.

Kigali amendment (to the Montreal Protocol)-2016: was adopted to

phase down production and consumption of hydrofluorocarbons (HFCs) worldwide.

- **Banning Toxic Chemicals:** The Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants-2001 seeks to rid the world of some of the most dangerous chemicals ever created.

## International Law

**Prosecuting War Criminals:** By prosecuting and convicting war criminals, the UN tribunals established for the former Yugoslavia and for Rwanda have helped to expand international humanitarian and international criminal law dealing with genocide and other violations of international law.

The International Criminal Court is an independent permanent court that investigates and prosecutes persons accused of the most serious international crimes—genocide, crimes against humanity and war crimes—if national authorities are unwilling or unable to do so.

- **Helping to Resolve Major International Disputes:** By delivering judgments and advisory opinions, the International Court of Justice (ICJ) has helped to settle international disputes involving territorial questions, maritime boundaries, diplomatic relations, State responsibility, the treatment of aliens and the use of force, among others.
- **Stability and Order in the World's Oceans:**
  - The 1982 UN Convention on the Law of the Sea, which has gained nearly universal acceptance, provides the legal framework for all activities in the oceans and seas.
  - It also includes mechanisms for settling disputes.
- **Combating International Crime:** The UN Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) works with countries and organizations to counter transnational organized crime by providing legal and technical assistance to fight corruption, money-laundering, drug trafficking and smuggling of migrants, as well as by strengthening criminal justice systems.
  - It has played a key role in brokering and implementing relevant international Treaties, such as the UN Convention against Corruption-2005 and the UN Convention against Transnational Organized Crime-2003.
  - It works to reduce the supply of and demand for illicit drugs under the three main UN conventions on drug control:
    - the Single Convention on Narcotic Drugs of 1954 (amended 1972),
    - the Convention on Psychotropic Substances-1971,
    - and the United Nations Convention against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances-1988
- **Encouraging Creativity and Innovation:** The World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO) promotes the protection of intellectual property rights and

ensures that all countries are in a position to harness the benefits of an effective intellectual property system.

## Humanitarian Affairs

Assisting refugees: Refugees fleeing persecution, violence and war have received aid from the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR).

- UNHCR seeks long-term or "durable" solutions by helping refugees repatriate to their homelands, if conditions warrant, or by helping them to integrate in their countries of asylum or to resettle in third countries.
- Refugees, asylum-seekers and internally displaced persons, mostly women and children, are receiving food, shelter, medical aid, education, and repatriation assistance from the UN.
- Aiding Palestinian Refugees: UN Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA), a relief and human development agency, has assisted four generations of Palestinian refugees with education, health care, social services, microfinance and emergency aid.
- Reducing the Effects of Natural Disasters: The World Meteorological Organization (WMO) has helped to spare millions of people from the calamitous effects of natural and man-made disasters.
  - Its early warning system, which includes thousands of surface monitors, as well as satellites, has made it possible to predict with greater accuracy weather-
    - related disasters,
    - has provided information on the dispersal of oil spills and chemical and nuclear leaks and has predicted long-term droughts.
- Providing Food to the Neediest: The World Food Programme (WFP) is fighting hunger worldwide, delivering food assistance in emergencies and working with communities to improve nutrition and build resilience.

## Health

Promoting Reproductive and Maternal Health: United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) is promoting the right of individuals to make their own decisions on the number and spacing of their children through voluntary family planning programmes.

- Responding to HIV/AIDS: United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS) coordinates global action against an epidemic that affects some 35 million people.
- Wiping Out Polio: Poliomyelitis has been eliminated from all but three countries—Afghanistan, Nigeria and Pakistan—as a result of the Global Polio Eradication Initiative.
- Eradicating Smallpox: A 13-year effort by the World Health Organization (WHO) resulted in smallpox being declared officially eradicated from the planet in 1980.
- Fighting Tropical Diseases:
  -

WHO programme - African Programme for Onchocerciasis Control reduced levels of river blindness (onchocerciasis) in 10 West African countries while opening up 25 million hectares of fertile land to farming.

- Guinea-worm disease is on the verge of being eradicated.
- Schistosomiasis and sleeping sickness are now under control. Halting
- the Spread of Epidemics
- Some of the more prominent diseases for which WHO is leading the global response for some of the more prominent diseases including Ebola, meningitis, yellow fever, cholera and influenza, including avian influenza.

## UN & India

### UN Contribution to India

United Nations agencies, offices, programmes and funds working in India comprise one of the largest UN field networks anywhere in the world.

The Asian and Pacific Centre for Transfer of Technology (APCTT):

APCTT founded in 1977 at New Delhi, is a Regional Institute of United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (UNESCAP) with a geographic focus of the entire Asia-Pacific region.

- Centre has focused on three specific areas of activity: technology information; technology transfer; and innovation management.
- Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO):
  - When FAO began its India operations in 1948, its priority was to transform India's food and farm sectors through technical inputs and support for policy development.
  - Over the years, FAO's contribution has extended to issues such as access to food, nutrition, livelihoods, rural development and sustainable agriculture. With
  - the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), much of FAO's focus in India will be on sustainable agricultural practices.
- International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD):
  - IFAD and the Government of India have achieved significant results investing in the commercialization of smallholding-agriculture and building small farmers' capacity to increase incomes from market opportunities.
  - IFAD-supported projects have also provided women with access to financial services, such as by linking women's self-help groups with commercial banks.
- International Labour Organization (ILO):

The first ILO Office in India started in 1928. There are 43 ILO conventions and 1 protocol ratified by India.

## International Organization for Migration (IOM)

IOM assisted Indian citizens who were among the thousands of people displaced by the Persian Gulf War (1990s).

In 2001, IOM's prompt and effective assistance during the Gujarat earthquake planted the seed of IOM operations in India as a humanitarian agency.

In 2007, recognizing India as a major labour-sending and labour-receiving country and its importance as a remittance-receiving country, IOM began working with migrants on safe and legal migration, warning them of the risks associated with irregular migration.

- UNESCO - Mahatma Gandhi Institute of Education for Peace and Sustainable Development (MGIEP):
  - MGIEP is an integral part of UNESCO, established with generous support from the Government of India in 2012 in New Delhi.
  - The Institute's global mandate is to transform education policies and practices by developing innovative teaching and learning methods. It works for
  - Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 4.7 – “education for building peaceful and sustainable societies across the world”.
  - A project 'Rethinking Schooling' was launched by UNESCO-MGIEP with the UNESCO Asia and Pacific Regional Bureau for Education in 2016-17. The
  - first review of SDGs (4.7) by MGIEP, was released in Rethinking Schooling for the 21<sup>st</sup> century.
- United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UNWomen):
  - In India, UN-Women's five priority areas are:
    - ending violence against women and girls,
    - expanding women's leadership and participation,
    - making gender equality central to national development planning and budgeting,
    - enhancing women's economic empowerment, and engaging women as global peace-builders and negotiators. UN Women
  - advocates for greater participation of women in politics and decision-making, and works with planning bodies such as NITI Aayog to ensure that policies and budgets reflect the needs of women.
- Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS): Its mission is to help prevent new HIV infections, care for people living with HIV and mitigate the impact of the epidemic.
- United Nations Development Programme (UNDP):
  - In the 1950s and 1960s, UNDP helped establish institutions of major national importance, including space centres and nuclear research laboratories. Over
  - the last decade, UNDP has focused on building the resilience of people faced

with the risks of natural disasters and climate change, and of minorities to various forms of discrimination.

- United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP): In December 2011, a new South and South-West Asia office of ESCAP was inaugurated in New Delhi to serve 10 countries in the sub-region. As it moves up the development ladder, India has been sharing its experience and capabilities with fellow developing countries in the region and beyond, using ESCAP's platform for this purpose.
- UNESCO
  - In India, UNESCO has provided technical support to several premier educational institutions.
  - As part of its World Heritage programme, it has recognized 27 cultural heritage sites in India, such as the Taj Mahal and the Rock Shelters of Bhimbetka in Madhya Pradesh.
  - UNESCO has also played a pioneering role in the development of community radio in India, having helped to formulate the Community Radio Policy of 2002.
- United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA)
  - Currently, UNFPA is placing greater emphasis on policy development and advocacy reflecting India's middle-income status.
  - It raises awareness about demographic shifts towards older populations and about the need to harness the opportunities and address the challenges of population ageing.
- United Nations Commission on Human Settlements (UN-Habitat)
  - UN-Habitat promotes socially and environmentally sustainable towns and cities with the goal of providing adequate shelter for all.
  - UN-Habitat's initiatives in India include supporting government projects on sanitation coverage in urban areas, urban water supply and environmental improvement, and supporting organizations that empower women's group and youth groups to fight social exclusion.
  - UN-Habitat "World Cities Report 2016"
    - As per Census 2011, 377 million Indians comprising 31.1% of the total population lived in urban areas.
    - This is estimated to have risen to 420 million in 2015.
  - UN-Habitat-New Urban agenda (NUA)-2017 addresses Goal-11 of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG): "Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient, and sustainable.
  - India launched the Atal Mission for Rejuvenation and Urban Transformation

(Amrut), Smart Cities, Hriday (National Heritage City Development and Augmentation Yojana), and Swachh Bharat prominently allied to the goals of the UN-Habitat-NUA.

- United Nation Children’s Fund (UNICEF)

- In 1954, UNICEF signed an agreement with the Government of India to fund the Aarey and Anand milk processing plants. In return, free and subsidised milk would be provided to needy children in the area.

- Within a decade, India had thirteen UNICEF assisted milk processing plants.

- Today, India has become the world’s largest producer of milk. Polio Campaign-2012: The Government, in partnership with UNICEF, the World Health Organization (WHO), the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, Rotary International and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention contributed to almost universal awareness of the need to vaccinate all children under five against polio.

- As a result of these efforts, India was removed from the list of endemic countries in 2014.

- It is also supporting nationwide campaigns on maternal and child nutrition and the reduction of neonatal mortality and stillbirth rates to single digits by 2030.

- United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO):

- The programme, Integrated Approach Programme on Sustainable Cities 2017 funded by the Global Environment Facility and co-implemented by the World Bank and UNIDO.

- World Food Programme (WFP)

- WFP is working to improve the efficiency, accountability and transparency of India’s own subsidized food distribution system, which brings supplies of wheat, rice, sugar and kerosene oil to around 800 million poor people across the country.

- World Health Organization (WHO)

- India became a party to the WHO Constitution on 12 January 1948.

- The WHO Country Office for India is headquartered in Delhi with countrywide presence.

- It has also been instrumental in the country’s transition from hospital-based to community-based care and the resultant increase in health posts and centres focusing on primary care.

- The WHO Country Cooperation Strategy – India (2012-2017) has been jointly developed by the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare (MoH&FW) and the WHO Country Office for India (WCO).

- United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR)
  - India has a long tradition of receiving refugees that goes back centuries.
  - UNHCR's support to India dates back to 1969-1975 when it coordinated aid to Tibetan refugees as well as refugees from then East Pakistan.
  - UNHCR's urban operation is based in New Delhi with a smaller presence in Chennai that helps Sri Lankan refugees in Tamil Nadu voluntarily repatriate back to Sri Lanka.
  - In the absence of a national legal framework for refugees, UNHCR conducts refugee status determination under its mandate for asylum seekers who approach the Office.
  - The two largest groups of refugees recognized by UNHCR are Afghans and Myanmar nationals, but people from countries as diverse as Somalia and Iraq have also sought help from the Office.
- United Nations Military Observer Group in India and Pakistan (UNMOGIP)
  - Under the scheme of partition provided by the Indian Independence Act of 1947, Kashmir was free to accede to India or Pakistan. Its accession to India became a matter of dispute between the two countries and fighting broke out later that year.
  - In January 1948, the Security Council adopted resolution 39, establishing the United Nations Commission for India and Pakistan (UNCIP) to investigate and mediate the dispute.
  - The first team of unarmed military observers, which eventually formed the nucleus of the United Nations Military Observer Group in India and Pakistan (UNMOGIP), arrived in the mission area in January 1949 to supervise, in the State of Jammu and Kashmir, the ceasefire between India and Pakistan and to assist the Military Adviser to UNCIP.
  - At the end of 1971, hostilities broke out again between India and Pakistan. UNMOGIP started along the borders of East Pakistan and were related to the movement for independence, which had developed in that region and which ultimately led to the creation of Bangladesh.
  - The last report of the Secretary-General to the Security Council on UNMOGIP was published in 1972.
  - Since 1972, India has adopted a non-recognition policy towards third parties in their bilateral exchanges with Pakistan over the question regarding the state of Jammu and Kashmir.
    - The military authorities of Pakistan have continued to lodge alleged ceasefire violations complaints with UNMOGIP.
    - The military authorities of India have lodged no complaints since January 1972 limiting the activities of the UN observers on the Indian-administered side of the Line of Control, though they continue to provide necessary security, transport and other services to UNMOGIP.

- United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC)
  - UNODC has worked in India over the last 25 years to address drug trafficking in the context of a constantly evolving drug market, involving an increasing number of drugs and psychoactive substances.
  - It also works with the government to address human trafficking, and the prevention, treatment and care of persons who use drugs and live with HIV.
- United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD)
  - Invest India, the country's investment promotion body, has won United Nations (UN) Award for excellence in promoting investments in sustainable development-2018.
    - The awards are given annually by UNCTAD since 2002 as part of its investment promotion and facilitation.
  - India's consistently strong voice for the developing world has made it a major player with UNCTAD, spanning a multiplicity of economic reforms.

#### India's contribution to UN

India was one of the original members of the League of Nations. As a signatory of the Treaty of Versailles-1919, India was granted automatic entry to the League of Nations.

India was represented by her Secretary of State, Edwin Samuel Montagu; the Maharaja of Bikaner Sir Ganga Singh; Satyendra Prasanno Sinha, Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for India.

- India was among the original members of the United Nations that signed the Declaration by United Nations at Washington, D.C. in 1944. This declaration became the basis of the United Nations (UN), which was formalized in the United Nations Charter signed by 50 countries in 1945.
- By 1946, India had started raising concerns regarding colonialism, apartheid and racial discrimination.
- India was among the most outspoken critics of apartheid and racial discrimination (discriminatory treatment of Indians in the Union of South Africa) in South Africa, being the first country to have raised the issue in the UN in 1946.
- India took an active part in Drafting of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights 1948.
- Its experience with the UN had not always been positive. On Kashmir issue, Nehru's faith in the UN and adherence to its principles proved costly as UN that was packed with pro-Pakistani partisan powers.
- Vijaya Lakshmi Pandit was elected the first woman President of the UN General Assembly in 1953.
- India's status as a founding member of the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) and the Group of 77 (G-77) cemented its position within the UN system as a leading advocate of the concerns and aspirations of developing countries and the creation of a more equitable international economic and political order.

- It involved in conflict with China (1962), two wars (1965, 1971) with Pakistan and entered a period of political instability, economic stagnation, food shortages and near-famine conditions.

India's role diminished in the UN which came both as a result of its image and a deliberate decision by the post-Nehru political leadership to adopt a low profile at the UN and speak only on vital Indian interests.

- India has been a member of the UN Security Council for seven terms (a total of 14 years), with the most recent being the 2011–12 term.
- India is a member of G4 (Brazil, Germany, India and Japan), a group of nations who back each other in seeking a permanent seat on the Security Council and advocate in favour of the reformation of the UNSC.

The Russian Federation, United States, United Kingdom and France support India and the other G4 countries gaining permanent seats.

- India is also part of the G-77.
  - The Group of 77 (G-77) was established on 15 June 1964 by seventy-seven developing countries signatories of the “Joint Declaration of the SeventySeven Developing Countries”.
  - It is designed to promote its members' collective economic interests and create an enhanced joint negotiating capacity in the United Nations.
  - Because of the historical significance, the name G-77 has been kept despite the group's growth to include more than 130 countries.
- UN peacekeeping missions: From protecting civilians, disarming ex-combatants and helping countries transition from conflict to peace, India has served the cause of peace.
  - At present (2019), India is the third largest troop contributor with 6593 personnel deployed with UN Peacekeeping Missions (Lebanon, Congo, Sudan and South Sudan, Golan Heights, Ivory Coast, Haiti, Liberia).
  - India has suffered the highest number of fatalities (164 out of close to 3,800 personnel) among countries that have sent forces to the United Nations peacekeeping mission since 1948.
- Mahatma Gandhi has had a lasting influence on the United Nations. His ideals of non-violence deeply influenced the United Nations at the time of its inception. In 2007, the United Nations declared 2<sup>nd</sup> October, Mahatma's Gandhi's birthday, as the International day of non-violence.
- In 2014, the UN General Assembly adopted a resolution commemorating 21 June as the International Yoga Day.

It recognises the holistic benefits of this timeless practice and its inherent compatibility with the principles and values of the United Nations.

- Plea for International Equality Day: In 2016, with focus on combating inequalities to achieve Sustainable Development Goals, B. R. Ambedkar's birth anniversary was

observed at the United Nations for the first time. India has made a plea to declare April 14 as International Equality Day.

## UN Challenges & Reforms

### UN Administrative & Financial-Resources Challenges

- Development Reform: Sustainable Development Goals (Agenda 2030) will require bold changes to the UN Development System (UNDS) for the emergence of a new generation of country teams, centred on a strategic UN Development Assistance Framework and led by an impartial, independent and empowered resident coordinator.
- Management Reform: To confront global challenges and to remain relevant in a fast-changing world, United Nations must empower managers and staff, simplify processes, increase accountability and transparency and improve on the delivery of our mandates.

There are concerns for improving efficiency, avoidance of duplication, and the minimization of waste in the functioning of the entire UN system.

- Financial Resources: Contributions of the Member States should have, as their fundamental underpinning, the capacity to pay principle.
  - The Member States should pay their contributions unconditionally, in full and on time, as delays in payments have caused an unprecedented financial crisis in the UN system.
  - Financial reforms hold the key to the future of the world body. Without sufficient resources, the UN's activities and role would suffer.

### Peace and Security issues

Threats to Peace and Security: The range of potential threats to peace and security

- that UN has to face, are following poverty, disease, and environmental breakdown (the threats to human security identified in the Millennium Development Goals), conflict between states,
  - violence and massive human rights violations within states, terrorism
  - threats from organized crime, and the proliferation of weapons - particularly
  - WMD, but also conventional.
- Terrorism: Nations that support groups that are widely linked to terrorism, such as Pakistan, are not held accountable specifically for these actions. To this date, the UN still does not have a clear definition of terrorism, and they have no plans to pursue one.
  - Nuclear Proliferation: In 1970, the nuclear non-proliferation treaty was signed by 190 nations. Despite this treaty, nuclear stockpiles remain high, and numerous nations continue to develop these devastating weapons. The failure of the nonproliferation

treaty details the ineffectiveness of the United Nations and their inability to enforce crucial rules and regulations on offending nations.

### Security Council reforms

Composition of Security Council: It has remained largely static, while the UN General Assembly membership has expanded considerably.

- In 1965, the membership of the Security Council was expanded from 11 to 15. There was no change in the number of permanent members. Since then, the size of the Council has remained frozen.
- This has undermined the representative character of the Council. An expanded Council, which is more representative, will also enjoy greater political authority and legitimacy.
- India has been calling for the reform of the UN Security Council along with Brazil, Germany and Japan (G-4). The four countries support each others' bids for the permanent seats in the top UN body.
- Any expansion of permanent members' category must be based on an agreed criteria, rather than be a pre-determined selection.
- UNSC Veto power: It is often observed that UN's effectiveness and responsiveness to international security threats depends on judiciously use of the UNSC veto. ○  
Veto Power: The five permanent members enjoy the luxury of veto power; when a permanent member vetoes a vote, the Council resolution cannot be adopted, regardless of international support. Even if the other fourteen nations vote yes, a single veto will beat this overwhelming show of support.
  - There are proposals on future of Veto power:
    - limiting the use of the veto to vital national security issues; requiring
    - agreement from multiple states before exercising the veto; abolishing
    - the veto entirely;
  - Any reform of the veto will be very difficult:  
Articles 108 and 109 of the United Nations Charter grant the P5 (5 permanent members) veto over any amendments to the Charter, requiring them to approve of any modifications to the UNSC veto power that they themselves hold.

### Non-Conventional Challenges

Since its creation, UN is working with goal of safeguarding peace, protecting human rights, establishing the framework for international justice and promoting economic and social progress. New challenges, such as climate change, refugees and population ageing are new fields it has to work.

- Climate Change: From shifting weather patterns that threaten food production, to rising sea levels that increase the risk of catastrophic flooding, the impacts of climate change

are global in scope and unprecedented in scale. Without drastic action today, adapting to these impacts in the future will be more difficult and costly.

- Growing population: The world population is projected to increase by more than one billion people within the next 15 years, reaching 8.5 billion in 2030, and to increase further to 9.7 billion in 2050 and 11.2 billion by 2100.

The world population growth rate must slow down significantly to avoid reaching unsustainable levels.

- Population Ageing: It is poised to become one of the most significant social transformations of the twenty-first century, with implications for nearly all sectors of society, including labour and financial markets, the demand for goods and services, such as housing, transportation and social protection, as well as family structures and intergenerational ties.
- Refugees: The world is witnessing the highest levels of displacement on record.
  - An unprecedented 65.6 million people around the world have been forced from home by conflict and persecution at the end of 2016.
  - Among them are nearly 22.5 million refugees, over half of whom are under the age of 18.
  - There are also 10 million stateless people, who have been denied a nationality and access to basic rights such as education, healthcare, employment and freedom of movement.

## Conclusion

Despite having many short-comings, UN has played a crucial role making this human society more civil, more peaceful & secure in comparison to time of its origin at 2<sup>nd</sup> World War.

- United Nations, being the world's largest democratic body of all nations, its responsibility towards humanity is very high in terms of building democratic society, economic development of people living in acute poverty, & preserving the Earth's Ecosystem in concern with Climate Change.

#Edited by Anirban Das

\*Source-Wikipedia