

International Organization

Introduction

In contemporary global politics, international organizations play an enormous role. To most of the world, they symbolize the hope for international peace and security through global cooperation and mutual economic development. Examples of international organizations include the United Nations (UN), the World Bank (International Bank for Reconstruction and Development), the International Committee of the Red Cross and Greenpeace. Most international organizations operate at part of one or more international regimes. An international regime is a set of rules, standards and procedures that govern national behaviour in a particular area. Examples of international regimes include arms control, foreign trade, and Antarctic exploration. International organizations are often central to the functioning of an international regime giving structure and procedures to the "rules of the game" by which nations must play. For example, the World Trade Organization (WTO), the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA), and the

Meaning of International Organisation

International Organizations (IOs) are formal institutional structures which are created by multilateral agreement among nation-states. Their purpose is to foster international cooperation in areas such as: security, law, economic, social matters and diplomacy.

International organisation can be defined as an organisation having membership of more than two states. The organisation is usually founded upon a treaty, or a multilateral agreement, and consists of more than two states. Member states determine the way in which the organisation is run, vote within the organisation and provide its funding. The United Nations (UN) is a prime example of an international governmental organisation with almost universal membership.

In general, international organisation stands for membership group that operate across national borders for specific purposes. The idea of international organisation reflects the cooperative arrangement instituted among states, usually by a basic agreement, to perform some mutually advantageous functions implemented through periodic meetings and staff activities.

The Penguin Dictionary of International Relations defines international organisation as "formal institutional structures transcending national boundaries which are created by multilateral agreement among nation states. Their purpose is to foster international cooperation in areas such as security, law, economic and social matters and diplomacy."

International Organizations are subdivided between Intergovernmental Organizations (IGOs) and Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs);

Intergovernmental Organizations are entities created with sufficient organizational structure and autonomy to provide formal, ongoing, multilateral processes of decision making between



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states, along with the capacity to execute the collective of their member states.

NGOs are non-state voluntary organizations formed by individuals to achieve a common purpose, often oriented beyond themselves or to the public good.

United Nations Organisation

The Preamble to the Charter of the United Nations (signed on 26 June 1945 by 51 Countries)

"We the people of the United Nations determined to save succeeding generations from the scourge of war, which twice in our lifetime has brought untold sorrow to mankind, and to reaffirm faith in fundamental human rights, in the dignity and worth of the human person, in the equal rights of men and women and of nations large and small, and to establish conditions under which justice and respect for the obligations arising from treaties and other sources of international law can be maintained, and to promote social progress and better standards of life in larger freedom, and for these ends to practice tolerance and live together in peace with one another as good neighbours, and to unite our strength to maintain international peace and security, and to ensure, by the acceptance of principles and the institution of methods, that armed force shall not be used, save in the common interest, and to employ international machinery for the promotion of the economic and social advancement of all peoples, have resolved to combine our efforts to accomplish these aims. Accordingly, our respective Governments, through representatives assembled in the city of San Francisco, who have exhibited their full powers found to be in good and due form, have agreed to the present Charter of the United Nations and do hereby establish an international organization to be known as the United Nations."

Formation of United Nations Organisation

The world witnessed two devastating wars in the 20th century. The First World War broke out in 1914 and continued till 1918. Millions of people were killed, wounded, maimed, crippled and rendered homeless. The horror and tragedy of the First World War led to a universal desire for peace. It was felt that some international organization should be created to prevent future wars. Out of this desire was born the League of Nations. The primary aim of the League of Nations was to preserve peace and promote international cooperation.

The United Nations is an organization of sovereign States, which voluntarily join the UN to work for world peace. It formally came into being on 24 October 1945. At that time, it had 51 countries as Members. Currently, 193 countries are UN members; the most recent to join was South Sudan in July 2011. The UN is a forum, a meeting-place, for virtually all nations of the world. It provides them with the mechanism to help find solutions to disputes or problems, and to act on virtually any matter of concern to humanity. Though sometimes described as a "parliament of nations", the United Nations is neither a supra-State nor a government of governments. It does not have an army nor does it impose taxes. It depends on the political will of its Members to have its decisions implemented and relies on contributions of its Members to carry out its activities. The United Nations plays a central role in reducing international tensions,



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preventing conflicts and putting an end to fighting already under way. It deals with our environment, outer space, and the sea-bed. It has helped wipe out many diseases and expand food production. It cares for and protects refugees, expands literacy and responds quickly to natural disasters. It also protects and promotes rights of individuals by setting a global standard for human rights.

The League of Nations failed to maintain peace and the Second World War broke out in 1939. The outbreak of the Second World War revealed to the world the weaknesses of the League of Nations. It was felt that a much stronger international organisation should be created, if the world was to have peace. The Second World War which broke out in 1939 came to an end in 1945.

The Atlantic charter. Even before the end of the war, in August 1941, the U.S. President, Franklin Roosevelt, and the British Prime Minister, Winston Churchill, met on a battleship, 'the Cruiser', in the mid-Atlantic and drew up the Atlantic Charter which was released on 14 August, 1941.

The Charter had the following objectives:

1. To maintain international peace and security;
2. To encourage international cooperation in the spheres of social, economic and cultural developments;
3. To develop friendly relations among nations on principles of equal rights and self-determination;
4. To recognise the fundamental rights of all people.

United Nations declaration or the Washington declaration:

On 1 January, 1942, representatives of 26 Allied countries met in Washington and signed a Declaration of United Nations. The signatories endorsed the principles of the Atlantic Charter. This was the first time that the term 'United Nations' was used.

The UN Charter finally emerged after three major conferences—the Dumbarton Oaks Conference (1944), the Yalta Conference (1945) and the San Francisco Conference (1945). At the Dumbarton Oaks Conference the representatives of four major powers (Britain, the United States, the Soviet Union and China) agreed on proposals for the aims, structure and functioning of the United Nations. They voted for an Assembly, a Security Council, a Secretariat and an International Court. The Yalta Conference decided on the voting procedure to be followed by the Security Council.

Membership of the United Nations was to be opened to all peace-loving states. Representatives of fifty nations met at San Francisco to sign the Atlantic Charter. Poland signed it later and became one of the original 51 member states. The United Nations officially came into existence



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on 24 October, 1945. The Charter had been ratified by the five big powers Britain, China, France, the Soviet Union, and the United States and by a majority of the other signatories. The 24th of October is celebrated as United Nations Day. Today, the organization has 192 members.

The headquarters of the United Nations is located in New York, USA. The organization has six official languages- English, French, Spanish, Russian, Chinese and Arabic. Its flag bears its emblem, a map of the world encircled by two bent olive branches.

Aims of the United Nations:

The objectives of the United Nations, according to its Charter, are:

1. To maintain international peace and security.
2. To develop friendly relations among nations on the basis of equality and the principle of self-determination.
3. To foster worldwide cooperation in solving economic, social, cultural and humanitarian problems.
4. To promote human rights and fundamental freedom for the people of the world.
5. To serve as a centre where various nations can coordinate their activities towards the attainment of the objectives of the United Nations.
6. To save succeeding generations from the scourge of war.

The organs of the United Nations:

The UN has six principal organs to carry out its functions:

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. The Secretariat.

There are six main organs of the United Nations—the General Assembly, the Security Council, the Trusteeship Council, the Economic and Social Council, the International Court of Justice, and the Secretariat. The Court has its seat at The Hague, Netherlands. All other organs are based at United Nations Headquarters in New York. While Headquarters in New York serves as the principal nerve centre of the organization, several important activities are directed from



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offices located in centres around the world. Meetings and various UN bodies are often held away from Headquarters. The Economic and Social Council, for example, rotates its regular annual session between New York and Geneva, and special committees of the General Assembly have frequently held meetings in many countries around the world. Conferences on topics such as population, food, the environment and human rights have been held in different parts of the world.

1. The General Assembly: - The General Assembly is the main deliberative organ of the United Nations comprised of all Member States, each of which has one vote, no matter its size or influence. It may discuss any matter arising under the UN Charter. Decisions on international peace and security, admitting new Member States and the UN budget are decided by a two-thirds majority. Other matters are decided by a simple majority. In recent years, a special effort has been made to reach decisions through consensus, rather than a formal vote. General Assembly resolutions are only recommendations to the Member States, but as they represent the majority of the world's view, they carry heavy moral weight and often lead countries to join international agreements called treaties, conventions, and protocols, etc., and, ultimately, have a positive influence in the world. The Assembly's session lasts a year, starting in mid-September; the busy season, during which time most resolutions are adopted, is from September to December. Special sessions may be requested by the Assembly, at the request of the Security Council, or at the request of a majority of UN Members. At the beginning of each regular session in September, the Assembly holds a two-week general debate at which time heads of State present their views on a wide range of issues of concern to the international community, from war and terrorism to disease and poverty. Each year, the General Assembly elects a president who presides over these meetings as a neutral party that represents the United Nations. The work of the Assembly is also carried out by its six main committees, the Human Rights Council, other subsidiary bodies and the UN Secretariat. The six main committees of the General Assembly are: First Committee (Disarmament and International Security); Second Committee (Economic and Financial); Third Committee (Social, Humanitarian and Cultural); Fourth Committee (Special Political and Decolonization); Fifth Committee (Administrative and Budgetary); and Sixth Committee (Legal).

The General Assembly, The General Assembly is the largest organ of the UN. All members of the UN are members of the General Assembly. Each state can send up to five representatives but is entitled to one vote in the Assembly. This ensures that all the member states have equal status. The General Assembly meets once a year for three months. But special sessions may be held during times of crisis. At the beginning of every session, the Assembly elects a new President. The functions of the General Assembly are as follows:

1. It can discuss any matter affecting international peace and security.
2. It makes recommendations for peaceful settlements of disputes.
3. It passes the budget of the UN.



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4. It elects the non-permanent members of the Security Council.
5. It also elects the members of the Economic and Social Council and the Trusteeship Council.
6. It admits new members to the UN on the recommendation of the Security Council.
7. The Security Council and the General Assembly elect the members of the International Court of Justice.
8. In recent years the General Assembly has increased its power through a resolution called Uniting for Peace Resolution. The General Assembly can make recommendations for "collective measures, including the use of armed forces", in case the Security Council is unable to take a decision during a crisis.
9. Decisions are taken in the General Assembly by a simple majority vote. In some important cases a two-thirds majority vote is required for taking a decision.

2. The Security Council:- The Security Council has a primary responsibility under the UN Charter to maintain international peace and security. Unlike the General Assembly, the Security Council does not hold regular meetings. It can be convened at any time, whenever international peace is threatened. In fact, it meets almost every day. Member States are obligated to carry out its decisions, which are legally binding. When a threat to peace is brought before the Council, it usually first asks the parties to reach agreement by peaceful means. If fighting breaks out, however, the Council tries to secure a ceasefire through negotiation, the establishment of sanctions, or by authorizing the use of force, carried out by willing Member States. The Council may also decide to establish peacekeeping operations to promote lasting peace. The Council has 15 members, including 5 permanent members: China, France, the Russian Federation, the United Kingdom, and the United States. At the end of World War II, these five countries played key roles in the establishment of the United Nations. The creators of the UN Charter conceived that they would continue to play important roles in the maintenance of international peace and security. The other 10 rotating members are elected by the General Assembly on the basis of geographical representation for two-year terms. To pass a resolution in the Security Council, 9 out of the 15 members of the Council must vote "yes", but if any of the 5 permanent members votes "no" – often referred to as a veto – the resolution does not pass. The Council also makes recommendations to the General Assembly on the appointment of a new Secretary-General and on the admission of new members to the UN. Many countries want to expand the membership of the Council to include new permanent and non-permanent members. These proposals are currently being discussed by the Member States of the United Nations.

The Security Council has the basic responsibility of maintaining peace and security in the world. The Security Council meets once a month but in the event of an emergency, a meeting may be held whenever required. Functions of the Security Council:



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1. To maintain international peace and security in the world.
2. To investigate international disputes and recommend appropriate methods of settling them.
3. To call on member states to apply economic sanctions against the aggressor and thus to put pressure on the guilty state to stop aggression.
4. The Security Council may take military action against the aggressor, if required.

3. The International Court of Justice :- The International Court of Justice (ICJ) is the UN's main judicial organ, located in The Hague, Netherlands. Established in 1945, the ICJ, or "World Court" assumed its functions in 1946. The Court settles legal disputes only between nations and not between individuals, in accordance with international law. If a country does not wish to take part in a proceeding, it does not have to do so, unless required by special treaty provisions. Once a country accepts the Court's jurisdiction, it must comply with its decision. Since 1946, the International Court of Justice has considered over 150 cases and issued numerous judgments on international disputes brought to it by states involving economic rights, environmental protection, rights of passage, the non-use of force, non-interference in the internal affairs of states, diplomatic relations, hostage-taking, the right of asylum and nationality. It has also issued advisory opinions in response to requests by a range of United Nations organizations. All judgments passed by the Court are final and without appeal. It is presided over by 15 judges elected for 9-year terms, each from a different nation, both by the General Assembly and the Security Council. No two judges can be from the same country. Elections take place every three years for one-third of the seats, and retiring judges may be re-elected. The Members of the Court do not represent their governments but are independent magistrates. It takes a majority of nine judges to make a decision. The seat of the International Court of Justice is at The Hague in the Netherlands. The offices of the Court occupy the "Peace Palace", which was constructed by the Carnegie Foundation, a private non-profit organization, to serve as the headquarters of the Permanent Court of International Justice, the predecessor of the present Court. The UN makes an annual contribution to the Foundation for the use of the building.

The International Court of Justice, located in The Hague, Netherlands, is the principal judicial organ of the United Nations. The Court consists of 15 Judges from different countries elected by the General Assembly and the Security Council. They are elected for a nine-year term. No two judges can be citizens of the same country. Functions of the International Court of Justice:

- (1) To settle disputes brought to it by member nations.
- (2) To provide legal advice to any organ of the UN on request.

4. The Trusteeship Council :-The Trusteeship Council was assigned under the UN Charter to supervise the administration of 11 Trust Territories—former colonies or dependent territories—which were placed under the International Trusteeship System. The system was



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created at the end of the World War II to promote the advancement of the inhabitants of those dependent Territories and their progressive development towards self-governance or independence. Since the creation of the Trusteeship Council, more than 70 colonial Territories, including all 11 Trust Territories, have attained independence with the help of the United Nations. The last Trust Territory to become independent was Palau in 1994, and, as a result, the Council decided formally to suspend its operation and to meet as and when occasion might require. The Trusteeship Council is comprised of the permanent members of the Security Council—China, France, the Russian Federation, the United Kingdom and the United States. Each member has one vote, and decisions are made by a simple majority.

5. The Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) :-The Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) is the central body for coordinating the economic and social work of the United Nations and the UN System. The Council has 54 members which are chosen for equal geographical representation and serve a three-year term. Voting in the Council is by simple majority; each member has one vote. As much as 70 per cent of the work of the UN system is devoted to promoting higher standards of living, full employment, and conditions of economic and social progress and development. The Council recommends and directs activities aimed at promoting economic growth of developing countries, supporting human rights and fostering world cooperation to fight poverty and under-development. To meet specific needs, the General Assembly has set up a number of specialized agencies such as the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), the World Health Organization (WHO) and the UN Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), and programmes such as the UN Development Programme (UNDP), the UN Children's Fund (UNICEF) and the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR). The work of these agencies and programmes is coordinated by ECOSOC.

The Economic and Social Council consists of 54 members elected by the General Assembly for a three-year term. The ECOSOC discusses major economic and social issues. It is mainly concerned with the management of the UN's social, economic, cultural and humanitarian activities. Its main functions are as follows:

1. To promote economic and social progress.
2. To solve problems relating to health, illiteracy, unemployment, etc.
3. To coordinate the functions of the agencies of the UN like the International Monetary Fund (IMF), the International Labour Organization (ILO), the Food and Agricultural Organization (FAO), the World Health Organization (WHO), the United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), the United Nations International Children's Fund (UNICEF), etc.

6. The Secretariat :-The Secretariat is made up of an international staff working at UN Headquarters in New York, as well as UN offices in Geneva, Vienna, Nairobi and other locations. It consists of departments and offices with a total staff of 16,000 drawn from most Member



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States. They carry out the day-to-day work of the Organization. Their duties are as varied as the problems dealt with by the United Nations. These range from administering peacekeeping operations, mediating international disputes, surveying social and economic trends, laying the ground work for international agreements to organizing international conferences. The Secretariat is responsible for servicing the other organs of the United Nations and administering the programmes and policies laid down by them. The Secretariat is headed by the Secretary-General, who is appointed by the General Assembly on the recommendation of the Security Council for a 5-year term and is responsible for implementing decisions taken by various organs of the United Nations. As the chief administrative officer of the Organization, the Secretary-General directs the work of staff known as "international civil servants". Unlike diplomats, who represent a particular country and its interests, international civil servants work for all 193 Member States and take their orders not from governments, but from the Secretary-General. They are independent from political and other forms of interference and place the interests of the Organization above their own. The Secretary-General may bring to the attention of the Security Council any matter which, in his opinion, may threaten international peace and security. He can use his "good offices" to prevent conflicts or promote peaceful settlements of disputes between countries. The Secretary-General may also act on his own initiative to deal with humanitarian or other problems of special importance. There have been 9 Secretaries-General since the founding of the UN:

- I. Sir Gladwyn Jebb, Secretaries-General (Yorkshire, England) 1945-1946,
- II. Trygve Lie (Norway), 1946- 1952;
- III. Dag Hammarskjöld (Sweden), 1953-1961;
- IV. U Thant (Burma, now Myanmar), 1961-1971;
- V. Kurt Waldheim (Austria), 1972-1981;
- VI. Javier Pérez de Cuéllar (Peru), 1982-1991;
- VII. Boutros Boutros-Ghali (Egypt), 1992-1996;
- VIII. Kofi Annan (Ghana), 1997-2006;
- IX. Ban Ki-moon (Republic of Korea), 2007-2016.
- X. Antonio Gutteres (Lisbon, Portugal) 2017- present,

The Secretariat is the principal administrative department of the UN. It is headed by the Secretary-General appointed by the General Assembly on the recommendation of the Security Council for a term of five years. He can be re-elected. The staff of the Secretariat is appointed by the Secretary-General. They are chosen from among the 192 member countries. The Secretary-General holds a key position in the administration of the affairs of the UN. He



organised conferences, oversees peace-keeping operations, drafts reports on economic and social trends, prepares studies on human rights, mediates in international disputes and prepares budget estimates. It is to be noted that the United Nations can achieve success only if the member states cooperate with it. All member countries must abide by the policies and programmes of the United Nations, if the latter is to succeed as a peace-keeping organisation.



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