A

ASSIGNMENT TWO

Diploma in Humanitarian Diplomacy

**QUESTION 1**

a) Humanitarian as analyzed in a related HPG Working Paper, although the term dates from the nineteenth century, ‘a historical investigation of the term “humanitarian” is made problematic by the fact that it was only in the last decade of the twentieth century that it came into wide and frequent circulation’ (Davies, 2012: 1). In effect, the understanding of ‘humanitarian’ that became dominant in the 1990s has sought to define ‘humanitarianism’ as ‘the impartial, independent, and neutral provision of relief to those in immediate danger of harm’ (Barnett, 2005: 724; 733). In contrast, this Working Paper eschews restrictive definitions, preferring an approach that allows for the great variety of forms that the humanitarian gesture has taken.

b) Neo-Humanitarianism is [[1]](#footnote-1)characterized by the embodedness of humanitarianism within rather than at the margins of contemporary conflict. It is distinguished by the explicit manipulation of humanitarianism for political or military gain on the ground in a conflict or as a substitute for political and military action.

c) Decolonization [[2]](#footnote-2) is a technical and rather undramatic term for one of the most dramatic processes in modern history: the disappearance of empire as a political form, and the end of racial hierarchy as a widely accepted political ideology and structuring principle of world order. One can pin down this historical process by using a dual definition that, instead of keeping the process chronologically vague, anchors it unequivocally in the history of the twentieth century. Accordingly, decolonization is (1) the simultaneous dissolution of several intercontinental empires and the creation of nation- states throughout the global South within a short time span of roughly three postwar decades (1945– 75), linked with (2) the historically unique and, in all likelihood, irreversible de-legitimization of any kind of political rule that is experienced as a relationship of subjugation to a power elite considered by a broad majority of the population as alien occupants.

Decolonization designates a specific world- historical moment, yet it also stands for a many- faceted process that played out in each region and country shaking off colonial rule. Alternative attempts at a definition accentuate this second dimension. The historian and sinologist Prasenjit Duara, for example, puts less emphasis on the breakdown of empires and more on local power shifts in specific colonies when he defines decolonization as “the process whereby colonial powers transferred institutional and legal control over their territories and dependencies to indigenously based, formally sovereign, nation- states.” He, too, adds a normative aspect: the replacement of political orders was embedded in a global shift in values. This dissolution signifies a counter project to imperialism in the name of “moral justice and political solidarity.” [[3]](#footnote-3)Decolonization is the process of revealing and dismantling colonialist power in all its forms. This includes dismantling the hidden aspects of those institutional and cultural forces that had maintained the colonialist power and that remain even after political independence is achieved.

**QUESTION 2**

Humanitarian diplomacy is rooted in the history of humanitarian action going back to the nineteenth century, and draws its raison d’être from the efforts made by humanitarian aid workers internationally, but also nationally and locally, to be allowed access to victims at all times. However, unlike with traditional diplomacy and international negotiation, there is as yet no body of literature or specific manual dedicated to humanitarian diplomacy. The concept of humanitarian diplomacy encompasses the activities carried out by humanitarian organizations to obtain the space from political and military authorities within which to function with integrity. These activities comprise such efforts as arranging for the presence of humanitarian organizations in a given country, negotiating access to civilian populations in need of assistance and protection, monitoring assistance programmes, promoting respect for international law and norms, supporting indigenous individuals and institutions, and engaging in advocacy at a variety of levels in support of humanitarian objectives.

[[4]](#footnote-4)The United Nations promotes respect for the law and protection of human rights in many ways, including the [10 human rights treaty bodies](https://www.ohchr.org/en/hrbodies/Pages/HumanRightsBodies.aspx), which are committees of independent experts that monitor the implementation of the core international human rights treaties, including the Convention on the Rights of the Child. Under the United Nations Human Rights Council, the [Universal Periodic Review](https://www.ohchr.org/EN/HRBodies/UPR/Pages/UPRMain.aspx) is a review of the human rights records of all Member States. This State-driven process provides an opportunity for each State to declare what actions they have taken to improve the human rights situations in their countries and to fulfil their human rights obligations.  The United Nations also has an [Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights](https://www.ohchr.org/EN/pages/home.aspx) that is mandated to promote and protect the enjoyment and full realization by all people of human rights. The United Nations may also appoint experts (sometimes called special rapporteurs, representatives or independent experts) to address a specific human rights issue or particular country. These experts may conduct studies, visit specific countries, interview victims, make specific appeals and submit reports and recommendations.

[[5]](#footnote-5)The UN Commission on Human Rights, Made up of fifty-three member states elected by [ECOSOC](http://hrlibrary.umn.edu/edumat/hreduseries/hereandnow/Part-5/6_glossary.htm#Anchor-Economic-31975) the UN Commission on Human Rights initiates studies and fact-finding missions and discusses specific human rights issues. It has responsibility for initiating and drafting human rights declarations and conventions. [ECOSOC](http://hrlibrary.umn.edu/edumat/hreduseries/hereandnow/Part-5/6_glossary.htm#Anchor-Economic-31975) also supervises [intergovernmental organizations (IGOs)](http://hrlibrary.umn.edu/edumat/hreduseries/hereandnow/Part-5/6_glossary.htm#Anchor-Intergovernmental-9590), which are specialized agencies that function independently with their own charter, budget, and staff but are affiliated with the UN by special agreements. [IGOs](http://hrlibrary.umn.edu/edumat/hreduseries/hereandnow/Part-5/6_glossary.htm#Anchor-Intergovernmental-9590) report to the [ECOSOC](http://hrlibrary.umn.edu/edumat/hreduseries/hereandnow/Part-5/6_glossary.htm#Anchor-Economic-31975) and may be asked to review reports from certain UN bodies that are relevant to their area of focus.

Some intergovernmental organizations that work to protect human rights include:

[International Labor Organization (ILO)](http://hrlibrary.umn.edu/edumat/hreduseries/hereandnow/Part-5/6_glossary.htm#Anchor-International-46407) – Develops international labor standards and provides technical assistance training to governments. United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF) – Works with other UN bodies, governments, and nongovernmental organizations to provide community-based services in primary healthcare, basic education, and safe water and sanitation for children in developing countries. Human rights are fundamental to its programming. United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM) – Promotes economic and political empowerment of women in developing countries, working to ensure their participation in development planning and practices, as well as their human rights. United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) – Pursues intellectual cooperation in education, science, culture, and communications and promotes development through social, cultural, and economic projects. World Health Organization (WHO) conducts immunization campaigns, promotes and coordinates research, and provides technical assistance to countries that are improving their health systems.

**[[6]](#footnote-6)United Nations Successes and Failures in Human Rights**

The issue regarding human rights’ violations became prominent for the first time after the Second World War. After the war the foundation of the United Nations acted as an impetus towards the initial development of the framework regarding the Human Rights. Further progress was made in 1946 when the ECOSOC set up a Commission on Human Rights and later a Sub-Commission on the Promotion and Protection of Human Rights was formed. (Rittberger & Zangl, 2006) This was the beginning of the UN Human Rights regime. The Commission on Human Rights was established and entrusted with promoting respect for human rights on a global scale.

It was also entrusted with fostering worldwide cooperation in human rights, responding to human rights violations in specific countries, and helping respective countries in building their capacity in regards to human rights. In principle, its mandate of building capacity and fostering cooperation was uncontroversial. This though was not the case in practice. Its mandate was controversial because it was required to monitor and hold its members accountable. By the end of its regime, the commission was dogged with controversies that resulted in a rancorous debate among member states.

There was a whole host of accusations ranging from double standards, politicization, to unprofessionalism. (Chauhan 2004) A Historical Dimension the UN General Assembly adopted the Universal Declaration of Human Rights in 1948. This was the basis and foundation of the framework later developed for the protection of human rights in later years. Originally composed of only eighteen members, the Human Rights Commission expanded to fifty three members. The discontent with the performance of the Human Rights commission grew in 1990s and early 2000s and it came under constant criticism for its inability to function effectively. (Alston 2006) Most of the recorded ‘achievements’ of the commission are in paper rather than in practice. This could be attributed to the fact that the Universal Declaration was a non-binding declaration, which means that none of the members of the United Nations were legally bounded, neither anybody of the United Nations has been given the legal right to bound, judge or sanction any legal action against the members of the United Nations. (Lasso) The Human Rights Commission prided itself in passing declarations and adopting international conventions that in the end were mere signatures from the member states. Such declarations and conventions include the Declaration on the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance adopted in 1992, and the Second Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights which came into force in 1991. The generalization and vagueness of the articles regarding human rights in the UN charter and the contradictory interpretation of these articles by many states has practically barred the UN to take any effective action in this regard.

There have been many cases where the human rights violations were deliberately ignored by the political powers like in Sudan, where the Arab militia virtually annihilated the ethnic African population, or in Chechnya, where the Western countries did not dared to intervene fearing that it will infuriate Russia, or in Tibet, where China is responsible for alleged human rights violations like genocide, racial discrimination etc. Since all the subject states in these situations either have direct influence in the Security Council in the form of Veto power or they are close allies with those who have it is near impossible in the current circumstances that they will be held responsible for the human rights violations they have committed in the above mentioned regions. (Landman 2006)

[[7]](#footnote-7)The United Nations was created to save succeeding generations from the scourge of war, protect human rights, maintain international peace and security, and uphold international law. Its 70-year history is marked with many successes, but also disappointments. We need to look at both sides so that we can make the U.N. more effective in the future. The U.N. 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.

The U.N. also fought for the liberation of countries that have been under colonial rule for over 450 years. Eighty nations and more than 750 million people have since been freed from colonialism.

The 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights empowered the U.N. to act as custodian for the protection of human rights, discrimination against women, children’s rights, torture, missing persons and arbitrary detention that was occurring in many countries. Moreover, the U.N. and its specialized agencies are engaged in enhancing all aspects of human life, including education, health, poverty reduction, the rights of women and children, and climate change.

As a result, the Nobel Peace Prize was awarded 12 times to the U.N., its specialized agencies, programmes and staff. This included an award in 1988 to the U.N. Peacekeeping Forces, and in 2001 to the U.N. and its secretary-general, Kofi Annan. The U.N. defined, codified and expanded the realm of international law, governing the legal responsibilities of States in their conduct with each other, and their treatment of individuals within State boundaries. More than 560 multilateral treaties on human rights, refugees, disarmament, trade, oceans, outer space, etc. encompassing all aspects of international affairs were negotiated by the U.N. The U.N. has made progress with its eight Millennium Development Goals, which will be followed by 17 Sustainable Development Goals to enhance social, environmental and economic progress by 2030. But it could not stop the United States from abandoning the Kyoto Protocol, ignoring the Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty, repudiating the Biological Weapons Convention, and repealing the Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty.

The U.N. is not without shortcomings. 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 U.N.’s inability to enforce regulations on offending nations.

Along similar lines, the U.N.’s International Court of Justice has resolved major international disputes, but the U.N.’s veto powers have limited its effectiveness at critical times. 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. Dag Hammarskjold, secretary-general from 1953-1961, said that the “U.N. was not created to take mankind to heaven, but to save humanity from hell.” The U.N. has solved many violent conflicts, prevented wars, and saved millions of lives but it also faced disappointments.

In Cambodia, a peacekeeping mission (1991–95) ended violence and established a democratic government, but well after Pol Pot’s Khmer Rouge (1975-79) had executed over 2.5 million people. 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.

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”. Last year, Israel attacked homes, schools, hospitals, and U.N. shelters in Gaza killing 2,200 Palestinians. Condemning that action, Navi Pillay, U.N. 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 U.N. Security Council (SC) has failed as the United States vetoes any action against Israel. 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 U.N. had the ability to resolutely act in a timely manner. But the U.N. is not a world government, and it does not have a standing army of peace-keepers ready for deployment. And, it is the Member States that make decisions at the U.N. These setbacks clearly reflect the shortcomings of the U.N. Security Council, and its veto powers that allow some members’ own interests to be placed ahead of the need to end a raging conflict. Navi Pillay, addressing the Security Council, said that “short-term geopolitical considerations and national interest, narrowly defined, have repeatedly taken precedence over intolerable human suffering and grave breaches of – and long-term threats to – international peace and security.” During the last 70 years, geopolitics have changed drastically that call for reform of the U.N. – to meet global needs and challenges of the 21st century. Member States accuse the Security Council of being arrogant, secretive and undemocratic but the veto powers resist change. Meanwhile, violations of the U.N. Charter by powerful countries continue to erode the effectiveness of the United Nations. However, as mandated by its Charter, the U.N. has prevented another World War. The U.N. has made impressive and unprecedented progress in all aspects of human development, bringing great benefits to millions of people around the world.

Some protagonists of humanitarian diplomacy claim that true humanitarian diplomacy is conducted only at high levels of representation and centralized decision-making, in national capitals and at the headquarters of international and regional organizations. At the international level, a global architecture of governance for dealing with humanitarian crises is coordinated by the United Nations (Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, OCHA). Participants include the main humanitarian organizations (Caritas, Red Cross and Red Crescent National Societies, MSF, Oxfam, World Vision, etc.) and the national development aid agencies, which generally comprise a disaster relief division. The major humanitarian organizations also have representative offices at the headquarters of the United Nations, the European Union, and other regional organizations. Some have permanent consultative status with the United Nations and take part in various sector competency clusters concerned with humanitarian affairs. At this level of national and international interaction, the relevant agencies engage in humanitarian diplomacy and second some of their staff on an ad hoc or long-term basis to serve as their representatives and conduct crisis negotiations.

On 7 March 2011, the UN Security Council adopted Resolution 1973 on Libya. This resolution was the first concrete step taken by the international community since the beginning of the uprising against the Gadhafi regime. Apart from the immediate cease-fire requested by the Security Council, Resolution 1973 also established a no-fly zone, which was accompanied by different economic sanctions. These sanctions reinforced those undertaken in Resolution 1970. Article 9 of Resolution 1970 states that ‘all Member States shall immediately take the necessary measures to prevent the direct or indirect supply, sale or transfer to the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya . . . of arms and related materiel of all types’. Such sanctions are likely to amplify the difficulties faced in the field by humanitarian workers. In an interview in summer 2011, Boris Michel indicated that, although not incompatible with humanitarian principles, sanctions have contributed to shortages in the health sector and other vital services. Under such circumstances, the concept of humanitarian diplomacy may require an even more necessary but highly delicate co-ordination between political and military decision makers, and humanitarian staff in the field.

Humanitarian diplomacy is not only about gaining access to those affected by armed conflicts, but also about maintaining and assuring the effectiveness of this access. The Libyan ‘humanitarian’ intervention under a very rare UN Security Council resolution indicates that the universal organization itself may adopt certain decisions without anticipating their consequences on the respect of fundamental humanitarian principles. Humanitarian diplomacy was created to fill the gaps, and may be used more frequently in the future under similar circumstances.

**QUESTION 3**

Humanitarian food assistance aims to ensure the consumption of sufficient, safe and nutritious food in anticipation of, during, and in the aftermath of a humanitarian crisis, when food consumption would otherwise be insufficient or inadequate to avert excessive mortality, emergency rates of acute malnutrition,8 or detrimental coping mechanisms. This includes ensuring food availability, access to nutritious food, proper nutrition awareness, and appropriate feeding practices. Food assistance may involve the direct provision of food, but may utilize a wider range of tools, including the transfer or provision of relevant services, inputs or commodities, cash or vouchers, skills or knowledge. Humanitarian food assistance can also be used to protect and strengthen the livelihoods of a crisis-affected population, to prevent or reverse negative coping mechanisms (such as the sale of productive assets, or the accumulation of debts) that could engender either short-term or longer-term harmful consequences for their livelihood base, their food-security status or their nutritional status. Adequate food consumption may not in itself ensure adequate nutrition. Poor health may inhibit the digestion and utilization of nutrients leading to malnutrition. Therefore, complementary interventions, including those that ensure safe food preparation (e.g. provision of cooking fuel), or access to potable water, hygiene and health services, may also be required, alongside direct food assistance, to prevent or treat malnutrition. At the conceptual level there has been an important shift over the last 15 years from the use of in-kind commodity food aid as a default response to emergency food needs, towards consideration of a broader set of humanitarian food assistance tools tailored to tackling the diverse causes and symptoms of transient food insecurity. In line with the main objectives of EU humanitarian aid as laid out in Council Regulation (EC) No 1257/96 of 20 June 1996 concerning Humanitarian Aid, the principal objective of humanitarian food assistance is to save and preserve life, to protect livelihoods, and to increase resilience, for populations facing on-going or firmly forecasted9 food crises, or recovering from them. This is to be achieved through the specific objectives of humanitarian food assistance, as follows; 1) to safeguard the availability of, access to, and consumption of adequate, safe and nutritious food for populations affected by ongoing, firmly forecasted, or recent humanitarian crises so as to avoid excessive mortality,10 acute malnutrition, or other life-threatening effects and consequences; 2) to protect livelihoods threatened by recent, ongoing, or imminent crises, minimise damage to food production and marketing systems, and establish conditions to promote the rehabilitation and restoration of self-reliance; and 3) to strengthen the capacities of the international humanitarian aid system, to enhance efficiency and effectiveness in the delivery of food assistance.

[[8]](#footnote-8)At its First Regular Session of 2009, the Secretariat was asked to prepare a document on WFP’s role in the humanitarian system, in particular as it has evolved since the Humanitarian Response Review was commissioned in 2005.This document is intended to provide the information requested and to give an opportunity for the Secretariat to seek the Board’s support for WFP engagement in humanitarian reform, particularly with respect to further development of the cluster system. Following recommendations made by the Humanitarian Response Review and with the aim of improving the humanitarian system’s ability to respond to all humanitarian crises, the Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC) undertook humanitarian reforms in 2005 and 2006 that address these three areas: improved humanitarian response capacity, leadership accountability and predictability in sectors/areas of response through the cluster approach; adequate, timely and flexible humanitarian financing; and improved humanitarian coordination and leadership through the Humanitarian Coordinator (HC) system. The Global Humanitarian Platform (GHP) was created in 2006 to cultivate more effective partnerships between United Nations and non-United Nations humanitarian actors.

The cluster approach or system is one of the most important humanitarian reforms. It was created to address gaps in the immediate response to humanitarian crises, aiming to improve the accountability of leadership and predictability in the delivery of assistance in situations where the population has been internally displaced. The cluster approach is based on a two-tier system. At the global level, clusters focus on developing standards and normative guidance, building capacity to improve response, and the provision of operational support through preparedness and advocacy activities. At the country level, clusters seek to support a coherent and effective humanitarian response, limit overlap and facilitate the prioritization of available resources amongst all humanitarian actors contributing to a specific area of need.

As part of the overall reform efforts, WFP has also contributed to inter-agency activities to streamline and consolidate agency needs assessments. Since 2006, WFP has joined a multi-agency effort to elaborate the Integrated Food Security Phase Classification (IPC) initially developed by FAO in Somalia. The IPC is working towards a standardized way of classifying the severity of the food security situation at national and sub-national levels using a set of reference indicators and thresholds and consensus-based analysis. WFP is represented on the IPC steering committee and in the technical working group, and has appointed a dedicated focal point to continue to improve the methodology and support country teams. The IPC is used in 15 countries, mostly in the Horn of Africa and Central Africa. Two WFP vulnerability analysis and mapping staff are members of the reference group coordinated by OCHA to develop a tool to better consolidate needs assessments and other humanitarian information across clusters and sectors (a “humanitarian dashboard”). This initiative builds on the IPC approach and aims to offer a single framework to quickly consolidate humanitarian needs assessments and other information across sectors and in a consistent and easily accessible format. If successful, it could provide a boost to humanitarian decision-making and action. However, WFP anticipates difficulties in collecting data comparable in terms of geographical and population coverage and within and across sectors; and in defining severity levels. This points to the need to continue WFP/EB.1/2010/5-C 13 enhancing governments’ and agencies’ capacities to conduct sectoral assessments and, when appropriate, to collaborate in joint multi-agency and multi-sector needs assessments. Progress made by WFP in recent years in food security analysis, and the guidance it has recently produced, enable WFP to provide important inputs to inter-agency activities. These include the work WFP does in development of guidance for PDNAs and PCNAs. In the field, WFP staff have provided inputs to the PCNA in the Gaza Strip in early 2009, have participated in the Georgia PCNA (September 2008), the recent Namibia PDNA (June 2009) and in the PCNA in Pakistan (August/September 2009). WFP has also collaborated on the revision of guidance on joint assessment missions for refugee situations with UNHCR and on crop and food supply assessment missions (CFSAMs) together with FAO. For instance, a joint assessment mission was conducted in Namibia in July 2009 and CFSAMs in Madagascar and Zimbabwe in June 2009.

**QUESTION 4**

[[9]](#footnote-9)The Bretton Woods Institutions are the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (IMF). They were set up at a meeting of 43 countries in Bretton Woods, New Hampshire, USA in July 1944. Their aims were to help rebuild the shattered postwar economy and to promote international economic cooperation. The original Bretton Woods agreement also included plans for an International Trade Organization (ITO) but these lay dormant until the World Trade Organization (WTO) was created in the early 1990s.

The creation of the World Bank and the IMF came at the end of the Second World War. They were based on the ideas of a trio of key experts – US Treasury Secretary Henry Morganthau, his chief economic advisor Harry Dexter White, and British economist John Maynard Keynes. They wanted to establish a postwar economic order based on notions of consensual decision-making and cooperation in the realm of trade and economic relations. It was felt by leaders of the Allied countries, particularly the US and Britain, that a multilateral framework was needed to overcome the destabilizing effects of the previous global economic depression and trade battles. In his opening speech at the Bretton Woods conference, Henry Morganthau said the “bewilderment and bitterness” resulting from the Depression became “the breeders of fascism, and finally, of war”. Proponents of the new institutions felt that global economic interaction was necessary to maintain international peace and security. The institutions would facilitate, in Morganthau’s words, “[the] creation of a dynamic world community in which the peoples of every nation will be able to realise their potentialities in peace.” The IMF would create a stable climate for international trade by harmonizing its members’ monetary policies, and maintaining exchange stability. It would be able to provide temporary financial assistance to countries encountering difficulties with their balance of payments. The World Bank, on the other hand, would serve to improve the capacity of countries to trade by lending money to war-ravaged and impoverished countries for reconstruction and development projects.

[[10]](#footnote-10)The World Bank and its sister organization, the International Monetary Fund, were created at Bretton Woods New Hampshire in 1944. Together they are referred to as the Bretton Woods Institutions or BWIs.

The World Bank, originally created primarily to finance the reconstruction of war-torn Europe, the World Bank has become the primary financier of development projects in the Third World. It has also become the Third World's largest creditor. Together the countries of the Third World owe the World Bank more than US$160 billion. The World Bank is currently the largest multi-national lending and technical agency dealing with Third World development. As the world’s leading development agency, the World Bank has a wide-ranging mandate, from consolidating loans for large-scale development projects to providing structural adjustment loans and sectoral adjustment loans to developing countries experiencing balance of payments problems. In the 1970s, under the presidency of Robert McNamara, the World Bank grew dramatically in size and scope. In the 1980s, in large part owing to the debt crisis, the Bank increasingly served as a debt-management institution, lending in some cases as much as 50% of a developing country's portfolio toward structural and/or sectoral adjustment lending. The primary feature of this kind of lending was to restore a troubled economy's debt servicing capacity by urging indebted countries to adopt major economic reforms known as [structural adjustment programmes](https://www.chebucto.ns.ca/Current/P7/bwi/cccsap.html) (SAPs). The World Bank's failure to achieve its primary mission of poverty alleviation is now acknowledged at the most senior levels of the Bank itself, as well as by the Canadian Auditor General. Evidence of project and portfolio failures have led to increasing calls for a comprehensive review of the World Bank and the IMF, the most recent call coming from the countries of the G-7 in the communique from their 1994 Naples summit. The fundamental reform of the Bretton Woods Institutions (BWIs) is urgently needed.

Over the past decade, the World Bank has come under increasing criticism from a wide range of groups in the North and South. Environmental groups argue that many World Bank projects have had a disastrous effect on the environment. The World Bank often finances large infrastructure projects, including dams, open pit mines, and road construction. In case after case these projects

have been proven economically unsound, have destroyed pristine rainforests, rivers and estuaries, and have uprooted the livelihoods of millions of Third World citizens who are affected by them. World Bank-funded development projects have forcibly resettled 2.5 million people since 1986 alone, and will likely uproot another 2.5 million by the year 2000. Other groups have been critical of the World Bank's policies of structural adjustment designed to assist countries in correcting their balance of payments or debt problems. These programmes have exacted an unacceptable toll on the poor and the environment increasingly, these groups have joined together in the **50 Years is Enough Campaign** to call for the fundamental reform of the World Bank.

The record of the World Bank in financing environmentally and socially destructive projects, as well as failed adjustment programs insensitive to local realities, is also a serious problem. These failures were brought to the fore in a recent World Bank review of its projects. The Wapenhans Report cited a significant deterioration in the overall quality of project lending. Another internal independent report on the IDA-funded India's Sardar Sarovar dam project noted that the Bank systematically failed to live up to its own environmental guidelines in evaluating and implementing the project. The IMF's original mandate sets forth three main objectives:

To promote international monetary cooperation;

To facilitate the expansion of international trade;

To promote exchange rate stability.

The IMF achieves these objectives by advising member countries on their economic policies and by providing conditional assistance to member countries experiencing balance of payments problems. The IMF often escapes close scrutiny by groups who tend to focus their advocacy efforts on the World Bank. Yet, the IMF has played a very significant, if not more important, role in exacerbating the impoverishment of developing countries. Critics argue that the IMF has strayed far from its original mandate of providing member countries with funds to alleviate short-term balance of payments crises and stabilizing exchange-rates. The IMF is increasingly under attack for its inappropriate role in exacerbating the economic crisis in Africa during the 1980s and for the fiasco surrounding Mexico's recent collapse.

The IMF played a significant role during the 1980s in "bailing out the commercial banks." By providing IMF credits to developing countries, essentially to service commercial debt, the IMF took upon itself the role of "gatekeeper" for creditors, forcing highly indebted countries to adopt SAPs as a condition not only for receiving IMF credits, but as the "stamp of approval" debtor countries needed as a condition for receiving further grants and aid from all donor sources. By disbursing funds to developing countries in the 1980s to service commercial debt, an most recently to Mexico, the IMF essentially postponed the debt crisis by providing short term funds on very hard terms for what was essentially a structural problem of insolvency which required long-term solutions. It is widely believed that the IMF financed the "recovery" with the wrong resources and the wrong approach. Consequently, the IMF is now in the position of extracting large net transfers of resources, especially from those countries which can least afford it.

It is now more important than ever to undertake a fundamental review of the policies and practices of the Bretton Woods Institutions, including projects and programmes, and include a full financial, social and ecological risk assessment. This review should be broadly based, including other industrialized countries, the nations of the developing world, and non-governmental organizations (NGOs).

[[11]](#footnote-11)Criticism of the World Bank and the IMF encompasses a whole range of issues but they generally center around concern about the approaches adopted by the World Bank and the IMF in formulating their policies, and the way they are governed. This includes the social and economic impact these policies have on the population of countries who avail themselves of financial assistance from these two institutions, and accountability for these impacts. Critics of the World Bank and the IMF are concerned about the ‘conditionalities’ imposed on borrower countries. The World Bank and the IMF often attach loan conditionalities based on what is termed the ‘Washington Consensus’, focusing on liberalization—of trade, investment and the financial sector—, deregulation and privatization of nationalized industries. Often the conditionalities are attached without due regard for the borrower countries’ individual circumstances and the prescriptive recommendations by the World Bank and IMF fail to resolve the economic problems within the countries. IMF conditionalities may additionally result in the loss of a state’s authority to govern its own economy as national economic policies are predetermined under IMF packages. Issues of representation are raised as a consequence of the shift in the regulation of national economies from state governments to a Washington-based financial institution in which most developing countries hold little voting power. IMF packages have also been associated with negative social outcomes such as reduced investment in public health and education.

With the World Bank, there are concerns about the types of development projects funded. Many infrastructure projects financed by the World Bank Group have social and environmental implications for the populations in the affected areas and criticism has centered on the ethical issues of funding such projects. For example, World Bank-funded construction of hydroelectric dams in various countries has resulted in the displacement of indigenous peoples of the area. The World Bank’s role in the global climate change finance architecture has also caused much controversy. Civil society groups see the Bank as unfit for a role in climate finance because of the conditionalities and advisory services usually attached to its loans. The Bank’s undemocratic governance structure – which is dominated by industrialized countries – its privileging of the private sector and the controversy over the performance of World Bank-housed Climate Investment Funds have also been subject to criticism in debates around this issue. Moreover, the Bank’s role as a central player in climate change mitigation and adaptation efforts is in direct conflict with its carbon-intensive lending portfolio and continuing financial support for heavily polluting industries, which includes coal power.

There are also concerns that the World Bank working in partnership with the private sector may undermine the role of the state as the primary provider of essential goods and services, such as healthcare and education, resulting in the shortfall of such services in countries badly in need of them. As an increasing shift from public to private funding in development finance has been observed recently, the Bank’s private sector lending arm – the International Finance Corporation (IFC) – has also been criticized for its business model, the increasing use of financial intermediaries such as private equity funds and funding of companies associated with tax havens.

Critics of the World Bank and the IMF are also apprehensive about the role of the Bretton Woods institutions in shaping the development discourse through their research, training and publishing activities. As the World Bank and the IMF are regarded as experts in the field of financial regulation and economic development, their views and prescriptions may undermine or eliminate alternative perspectives on development.

There are also criticisms against the World Bank and IMF governance structures which are dominated by industrialized countries. Decisions are made and policies implemented by leading industrialized countries—the G7—because they represent the largest donors without much consultation with poor and developing countries. The following are suggestions for restructuring the Bretton Woods Institutions to help execute their mandate more effectively:

1. End structural adjustment agreements as presently constituted and participate in transparent policy dialogues resulting in reciprocal sustainable development commitments for countries in the north and the south;
2. Halt all funding for environmentally and socially destructive mega-projects and in future ensure that loans and credits emphasize soft-path lending for people-oriented sustainable development, focusing on poverty reduction;
3. Use the reserves and profits of the World Bank and IMF (including its gold reserves) to cancel or substantially reduce debts owed to them by the severely indebted low and middle income countries;
4. Set in place independent tribunals to arbitrate between creditors and debtors on appropriate conditionality for financing debt relief;
5. Democratize and decentralize decision-making rather than weighted voting based solely on the size of donations;
6. Increase transparency and access to information and carry out participatory evaluation;
7. Increase accountability and liability including taking responsibility for past miscalculations and imprudent policies and projects;
8. Address the growing magnitude and volatility of world currency markets, with the IMF playing a role in achieving monetary stability at the international level;
9. Assure regular and full reporting by the Canadian Executive Directors of the World Bank and IMF to the Canadian Parliament and full disclosure of Canada's voting record;
10. Set in place a truly independent Appeals Commission to oversee the operations of the World Bank and IMF with binding recommendations.

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