

# International Politics

## International Organizations

---

### United Nations

Hilary Term

Dr Vahid Nick Pay



# Framing the argument

- State versus non state actors
- Definition of International Organizations
- Brief history of IOs
- Conception and Structure of IOs
- Types of IOs
- The United Nations
- Other IOs



# Framing Questions

- -What are the International Organizations?
- -Do we need international organizations in international politics?
- -What type of influence do IOs exert in international relations and what are their limits?
- -How do international organizations differ from states?
- -How are international organizations and global governance linked?
- -How does the United Nations try to maintain international order?
- -How these organizations have advanced or retreated, as affected by internal challenges and geopolitical pressures
- -An overview of the few of prominent IOs



## States vs Non-State (from last term)

- State is the only entity with sovereignty
- State has power, What is power?
- Can raise tax, can employ military apparatus
- Monopoly of the use of coercive force
- Non-state actors
- Nongovernmental Organizations NGOs
- Transnational Corporations TNCs
- International Organizations denotes intergovernmental entities



# Key concepts in the study of IOs

- IR historically studied relations among states only, now the focus is on Global Governance
- Concept of Governance without Government
- Global Governance and International Organizations
- Realist versus liberal views on IOs, independent actors or tools at the service of powerful states?
- Organizations of more than two supporting states
- Promoting individuals' well-being or states' foreign policy?
- IOs are characterized by rules that seek to regulate the relations amongst member states and by a formal structure to implement these rules
- Permanent secretariat for tasks related to the common purpose



# Background

- Apolitical IOs have a long history but modern political IOs were created following Napoleonic Wars (1803–1815)
- Congress of Vienna 1815, European states endorsed principles of multilateralism and diplomacy to prevent future wars
- EU states met 30 times in the following century to resolve political dispute this is called Concert of Europe
- Tsar Nicholas II of Russia in 1899 and 1907 invited states to come together to devise rules for the conduct of war these were called the Hague Convention (Hague System)
- The innovative aspect of these was that all states were invited not just powerful states
- Hague System was important also the procedural aspects of international meetings: electing chairs, organising committees, holding roll calls
- In order to address disputes among states the Permanent Court of Arbitration was established
- All this eventually led to the creation of the League of Nations after WWI



# Multilateralism

- Multilateralism refers to arrangements among three or more states
- The purposes of multilateralism are usually peaceful, and over extended periods
- Multilateralism can help governments improve their standing, influence, security, or economic advantage
- Robert Keohane & Joseph Nye: *Theory of complex interdependence* as an alternative to realism: increasing importance of non-state actors. Later mutated to modified structural realism or neoliberal institutionalism



# Preconditions for creating IOs

- Formal versus informal multilateralism, creating permanent structures with rules and procedures
- G7 and G20 compared to UN and NATO
- Preconditions for inter-state agreements are:
  - The existence of sovereign states
  - Substantial contacts among them
  - Awareness of problems resulting from their coexistence
  - Agreement on the need to regulate inter-state relations by establishing IOs



# Cooperative problem-solving

- IOs as instruments, arenas or actors?
- States pursuing their objective, debate forums, empowerment through pooled sovereignty
- IOs as instruments, they are mechanisms through which states pursue their own interests
- As arenas, they facilitate debate and information exchange, serving as permanent institutions of conference diplomacy
- As actors, they enable states to take concerted action, which requires some measure of pooled sovereignty

# Creating IOs

---

- **Methods of creating IOs:**

- I. Treaty
- II. Emanation, pre-existing IO created other IO(s)

More common by emanation, in 2014, 920 IOs created by emanation compared with 273 by treaty



# IO Types

- Hybrid IOs: a complex of public-private multi-actor governance at the global level
- ISO which is technically and NGO but comprise of national standard bodies (public or private)
- Membership: Inclusive Versus Exclusive IOs
- Exclusive IOs are mainly military ones , UN Vs NATO, EU Inclusive or Exclusive?
- Regional IOs could be inclusive too as long as they do not operate against other regions
- Inclusive IOs could have several different scopes, security, finance, aviation, standards etc.
- Competence: whether their responsibilities are issue-specific or comprehensive
- Function: whether they are program organizations or operational organizations
- Decision-making authority: whether they are examples of intergovernmentalism or supranationalism



# Why are IOs Important?

- First: they are very enduring once established

---

- Second: they affect how states respond to complex issues affecting regional and international stability  
**Technical Expertise** and **moral authority** is crucial here
- Third: their activities increasingly affect all aspect of individuals' lives, reaching down into domestic political processes in ways they never have before (**globalization**)



# Why States Create IOs? I

- Liberalism: it is in the interests of people within states to have IOs to advance their interests internationally
- IOs as natural results of realities of complex interdependence and Awareness of mutual vulnerabilities: Keohane and Nye (1977)
- Realism: states use IOs as one of the tools in their diplomatic tool-box – states create IOs in order to determine the rules that others must then follow. IOs as appendages of the state system
- power politics operates in and through international organizations
- The relationship between international organizations and power politics is also reflected in debate between neorealists and neoliberals over whether states are primarily concerned with ‘relative’ gains or ‘absolute’ gains



## Why States Create IOs? II

- Social Constructivism: how and why do IO's emerge and behave?  
When and how do IOs take up international norms and spread them throughout the international system?
- Critical Theorists: pay attention to how economic ideas are formulated within IOs, and how this shapes the internal IO policy making process
- Marxist/Gramscian: demonstrate how powerful states and elites use IOs to maintain their privileged position in the international order
- Marxists: privileged, materially powerful actors are able to shape IO policies in ways that suit their own interests not just through establishing the rules of IO's



# How can we analyse IO behaviour?

- federalism, functionalism and neofunctionalism approaches
- Federalism: territorial distribution of power through which sovereignty is shared between central (national or international) bodies and peripheral ones
- War and conflict is caused by sovereign states pursuing self interests in a context of anarchy, hence to avoid war part of this sovereignty must be transferred and shared
- Functionalism: the formation of IOs is an incremental process that stems from the fact that a growing range of government functions can be performed more effectively through collective action than by individual states
- growing interdependence in economic and other areas, 'form follows functions': form represents institutional structures and 'functions' denotes the key activities of government
- Neofunctionalism: how international cooperation tends to broaden and deepen through a process of spillover, ex: regional integration in EU



# The United Nations

- Charter Signed in 1945, composed of two distinct provisions: *organization* and set of *rules*
- Currently 193 member out of 195 countries, which countries not member?
- 6 main organs: General Assembly, Security Council, Trusteeship Council, ICJ, Economic and Social Council, Secretariat
- Several other specialized Orgs. Such as WTO, IMF and ILO, these are independent and only report their activities to the UN
- UN itself has several direct subsidiaries, UN Women, Pop. Fund



UN principal  
organs

General Assembly

Security Council

Economic and Social Council

International Court of Justice

Secretariat

Trusteeship Council

IAEA ILO IMF IMO OPCW ITU UNESCO UNIDO UPU WHO WIPO WMO WB WTO (1) WTO (2)  
ICAO FAO CTBTO



# UN Structure

- Financial contribution is proportional to GDP
- US is the biggest contributor 22 percent of UN budget, based on agreement, if the percentage was calculated it would have been higher
- Republicans esp. Trump has consistently denounced this as unfair
- Two way to influence budget, through advisory budget committee and through keeping the peacekeeping budget separate
- France and Soviet Union in the past have cut their budget contribution in protest against policies such as interventions in Middle East & Africa



# General Assembly

- GA decisions are only in form of recommendations with limited legal statue, why countries comply?
- States use GA as a rhetorical tool in debates for political ends
- Political impact is very strong, ex. Universal Declaration of Human Rights
- Ex. In 1975 “Zionism is a form of Racism” strong political impact
- GA has tried to go beyond mere “recommendations” for example against Apartheid or in the Israel-Palestine conflict but this GA authority is secondary or subsidiary in limited matters such as “Uniting for Peace”



# UN Compared to The League of Nations

- Paris Peace Conference of 1919, inspired by US President Woodrow Wilson's Fourteen Points
- LoN had little effective power, could only make recommendations not binding resolutions and these recommendations had to be unanimous
- Any country was free to reject recommendations
- No mechanism in the League to coordinate military or economic actions against miscreant states
- US was not a member to the LoN, why?
- UN incorporated the SC and also the privileges of the great power (Veto)
- UN charter emphasised the importance of economic and social advancement as economic causes were regarded as a cause of conflict following 1930s recession
- Still UN torn between questions international order or justice (individuals)



# UN mandate

- To **safeguard peace and security** in order ‘to save succeeding generations from the scourge of war’
- To **‘reaffirm faith in fundamental human rights’**
- To uphold **respect for international law**
- To **‘promote social progress and better standards of life’**.
- All other inter-state treaties will be subordinate to the UN charter
- Importance of the UN charter: All members should refrain from threat or actual use of force against any state. (Art. 2)
- Principle of sovereign equality among members (Art. 2.1)
- Each member state speaks at annual meeting for equal time
- All gifts to UN art collection will be treated with the same respect
- UN can not intervene in domestic issues unless with permission from the concerned state (Art. 2.7)
- Kosovo (1999), Afghanistan (2001), Darfur (2003) , Iraq War (2003), Libya (2011), etc. are just some example of this questions being posed



# Security Council

- 5 permanent and 10 non-permanent members
- UN Members automatically accept the authority of SC
- Two main rules of SC: UN member agree to accept all SC resolutions and offer joint assistance to carry out SC resolutions
- Not important if a country is member of SC or not or if it gives consent to its resolutions or not, it still has to comply with them
- Countries can only bring their security concerns to the SC and are also entitled to be present when an SC resolution is about them
- For every resolution at least 9 members should approve, 5 permanent plus 4 from non-permanent
- Great Power veto right created by the UK, USA and Soviet Union
- Demonstrate the mind-set of the creators of the SC, a council for struggle of power
- Non-permanent members: 5 Africa and Asia, 1 Eastern Europe, 2 Latin America and Caribbean, 2 from Western Europe and "Others"

# Permanent Vs non-permanent memberships

- The concept of permanent/ non-permanent members can be traced back to the establishment of the League of Nations after 1919 the end of WWI
- Treaty of Versailles between the Allied Powers (the British Empire, France, Italy, Japan, and the United States of America) and Germany.
- The constitutional document of the League, namely the Covenant assigned the primary role in dealing with the world peace to the Council of the League of Nations, also known as the League Council. Article 4 of the Covenant.
- the Council would be comprised of nine members, that is five representing the Allied Powers mentioned above, and four to be selected by the Assembly of the League of Nations. the first category was later referred to as permanent members
- The Covenant also authorized the Assembly to change the number of both permanent and non-permanent members
- In contrast to this, the composition of the contemporary Security Council cannot be changed without amending the UN Charter.



# Influence of elected members

- There is a claim that only P5 are the real decision making powers at UNSC
- This is true to a certain degree though. The E10 countries do have a considerable power
- This is exercised through the below channels:
  - (i) legitimacy dynamics: P5 simply need the E10 to maintain the authority of the UNSC. Without this authority, it would be impossible to convince all states to respect the Council and abide by its decisions.
  - (ii) diplomatic capacities and competences : Number of diplomatic missions, and diplomatic resources together with individual competences, knowledge, linguistic skills etc.
  - (iii) favourable conditions: ex. as timing, political context as well as the Council's composition in a given year
  - (iv) formal and informal mechanisms of influence : ex. a rotating monthly presidency giving the power to formulate the UNSC agenda; penholdership function ; informal Arria-formula meetings



---

Break

# States Versus IO – Case Study

## UK and EU in row over bloc's diplomatic status

By James Landale  
Diplomatic correspondent

8 hours ago



# Debate Questions 1

- What is the theory behind the notion of governance without government?
- What are the salient points of the Keohane's theory of complex interdependence?
- Why are international organizations created?
- What challenges confront the UN and how should it respond to them?
- What constraints and opportunities are there for international organizations to achieve their mandates?
- What distinguishes non-governmental organizations from other actors in international politics?
- Do NGOs contribute to more democratic policy-making at the international levels as some suggest or to lack of transparency as others argue?



## Debate Questions 2

- Does the United Nations succeed in reconciling traditions of great politics and traditions of universalism?
- What are the UN's biggest success and challenges in its efforts to prevent and resolve conflict and to promote sustainable development?
- Are international organizations merely mechanisms for pursuing state interests by other means?
- Is a hegemonic power necessary for the creation of International organizations?
- To what extent are the International Organizations ideational constructs?
- Does the UN primarily reflect the interests of the most powerful states?
- Why has the UN been successful than the League of Nations?
- What are some barriers to the UN Security Council reform?
- How effective has the UN in discharging its economic and social responsibilities?
- Does increased UN activity been undermine the sovereignty of states?
- Has the UN outlived its usefulness?