



Mains Practice Question

Q. “If the global community has to come out stronger in the face of any crisis, there is a need to establish a multilateral global order.” Critically examine. (250 words)

24 Apr, 2020 GS Paper 2 International Relations

Approach

- In the introduction write what you understand by the term ‘multilateral global order’.
- Elaborate briefly the roles and the significance of multilateral global order especially in tackling crises.
- Examine the challenges related to present multilateral global order.
- Finally, give a way forward to increase inclusivity and sustainability of such a multilateral order.

Introduction

Multilateral global order or multilateralism refers to a set of **governing arrangements of fundamental rules, principles, and institutions** among nations. The United Nations (UN) is an example of a multilateral international institution which aims at making a sustainable and inclusive multilateral global order.

Body

Significance of multilateral global order especially in the present day situation :

- **Multilateral global order as facilitating cooperation**
 - Issues such as counterterrorism, combating infectious disease (eg. Covid-19 pandemic, SARS, Swine flu), poverty alleviation, and climate change can be tackled effectively only with an orderly multilateral system.
- **Multilateral global order as supporting conflict prevention**
 - Multilateral global order through multilateral institutions (like the UN) is a significant force in conflict prevention especially among the major powers.
 - Multilateral fora on many occasions have served as tools to assist key states in de-escalating and containing spiraling crises.
- **Multilateral global order to achieve common goals**
 - An orderly global order is significant in making a rules-based free trade system, multilateral cooperation and international law to solve truly global problems, such as the nonproliferation of weapons of mass destruction and working for the spread of democracy across the globe.

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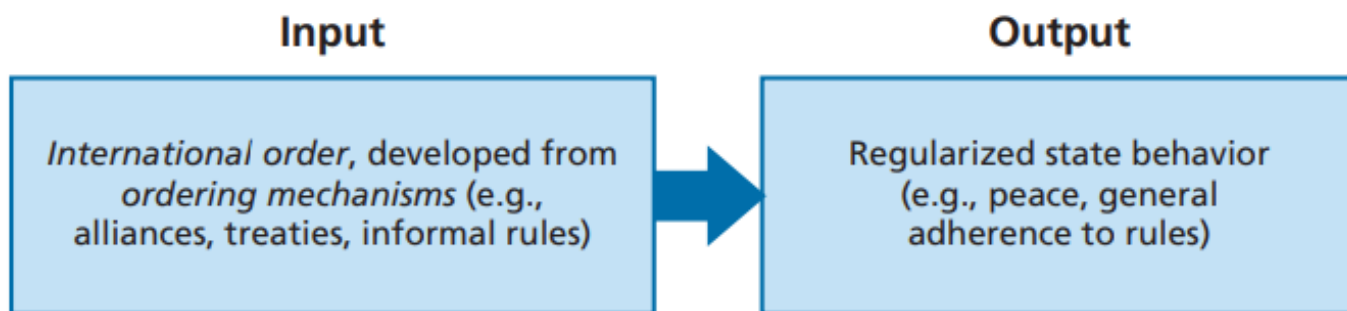


Fig: Schematic understanding of the role of Multilateral global order

Challenges related to present multilateral global order

- **Increasing unilateralism and protectionism:** The 'America First policy' of the USA and its decision to not be a part of the Paris Agreement, BREXIT etc. are some of the many examples of protectionism in the present day which creates challenges to the multilateral global order.
- **Exclusive and unsustainable multilateral institutions:**
 - The current composition of the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) does not represent contemporary realities, the permanent members (P-5) of UNSC use the veto power just to serve the strategic interest of themselves and their allies.
 - In World Trade Organisation (WTO), the advanced countries are determined to promote the kind of corporate-friendly rules that align with their own economic interests.
- **Interference in the functioning of global bodies by influential countries:** WHO is mandated to control the spread of contagious diseases, frame public health programmes, and formulate standards on nutrition and hygiene.
 - However, interference in the functioning of WHO has been observed at many occasions. Eg. Under pressure from the US government, WHO is alleged to adopt an approach that favours interests of US pharma companies.

Conclusion

Achieving a sustainable and inclusive global order is the need of the hour so that it's benefits can reach even to the poor people of the poorest countries. Rules of multilateralism that should be adopted to reach at an orderly and inclusive global order are:

- The multilateral global order should be inter-national and state-led, based on **principles of sovereign equality and national self-determination**.
- Such an order should promote **economic openness and interdependence** between most countries worldwide
- The order should be constructed around a set of **widely agreed-upon rules and principles**, enshrined in and premised on general respect for international law.
- The relations among the nations should be based on generalized principles of conduct, involving 'non-discrimination' and 'indivisibility'.