**COURSE
GUIDE**

**INR 251
EVOLUTION OF MODERN INTERNATIONAL SYSTEM**

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INTRODUCTION

Welcome to *INR 251: Evolution of Modern International System*. This is a two-credit unit course available for students in the undergraduate French and International Studies programme. The course provides an opportunity for you to acquire a detailed knowledge and understanding of what the international system is, its structures and characteristics, its evolution from one stage to another and what shape it is likely to assume in the future. The international system has not been a static system, but one evolving from one stage to another. Thus, even though this course is not a history course, to understand the evolution of international system involves recourse to historical evidences. This means in this course we shall rely heavily on the history of world politics.

The course, equally, dives into an explanation of the term "system" and how it is justifiably applied to arena of global world politics. It also examines the origins of the international system, from the classical to the contemporary international system. Highlight is placed on basic approaches in understanding the working of the international system as exemplified by the realist and the idealist kaleidoscopic lenses. As well, watersheds in the history of the international system are explored. These include the Westphalian peace treaties that gave birth to the emergence of the "modern" state system, the transitional international system and the international system during the world wars, the Cold War and the post Cold War era.

This course guide provides you with the necessary information about the contents of the course and the materials you will need to be familiar with for a proper understanding of the subject matter. It is designed to help you to get the best of the course by enabling you to think productively about the principles underlying the issues you study and the projects you execute in the course of your study and thereafter. It also provides some guidance on the way to approach your tutor-marked assignments (TMA). You will of course receive on-the-spot guidance from your tutorial classes, which you are advised to approach with all seriousness.

Overall, this course guide will fill an important vacuum in the field of international studies, especially as it is interested in knowing and explaining why nations behave the way they do, as well as interpreting the relationship among nation-states in terms of alliances and confrontational relationship that colour inter-states' relations in the arena of international politics.

COURSE AIMS

The aims of this course are to:

- explicate the term "system" as applied to the international system
- present an overview of approaches in understanding the working of the international system
- trace the origins and/or history of the evolution of the modern international system
- identify the major features and characteristics of the international system
- discuss major issues in the contemporary international system.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

At the end of this course, you should be able to:

- define international system
- differentiate between classical international system, the transitional international system, the post World War II international system and the contemporary international system
- identify and explain various features of the international system, which include the actors, the notion of interest and anarchy, as well as polarisation
- explain how issues like globalisation, collective security and terrorism are imparting on the contemporary international system
- apply public administration approaches to real administration in public sectors
- identify and discuss alternative world order models which mankind can adopt in the reordering of the future international system.

WORKING THROUGH THE COURSE

It is advisable that you should carefully study each unit, beginning with this course guide, especially since this course provides an opportunity for you to understand the major approaches, in terms of theoretical assumptions in interpreting the working of the international system. It is also advisable that you should make a habit of noting down any question you might have for tutorials. In addition, you should endeavour to note some of the relevant knowledge that would help you as a future Nigerian policy maker in the area of international politics.

COURSE MATERIALS

1.   Course Guide
2.   Study Units
3.   Textbooks
4.   Assignment File
5.   Presentation Schedule.

STUDY UNITS

There are four modules in this course. Each module is made up of four units. Overall therefore, you will find a total of sixteen units in this course. Some units may be longer and/or more in depth than others, depending on the scope of the course that is in focus. The four modules in the course are as follows:

Module 1   Understanding the International System

Unit 1   The Definition of the International System
Unit 2   The Realist Approach in Understanding the International System
Unit 3   The Idealist Approach in Understanding the International System
Unit 4   The Idealist versus the Realist Approaches in Understanding the International System

Module 2   Evolution of the Modern International System

Unit 1   The Classical International System (1648-1789)
Unit 2   The Transitional International System (1789-1945)
Unit 3   The Post World War II International System (1945-1989)
Unit 4   The Contemporary International System (1989-Date)

Module 3   Characteristics of International System

Unit 1   The Actors in the International System
Unit 2   Anarchy in the International System
Unit 3   Interest and the Use of Power in the International System
Unit 4   Polarity in the International System

Module 4   Issues in the Contemporary International System

Unit 1   The Impact of Globalisation
Unit 2   Collective Security
Unit 3   Terrorism in the International System
Unit 4   The Future of the International System

Each module is preceded by a listing of the units contained in it, and a table of contents, an introduction, a list of objectives and the main content in turn precedes each unit, including Self-Assessment Exercises (SAEs). At the end of each unit, you will find one or more Tutor-Marked Assignments (TMAs) which you are expected to work on and submit for marking.

TEXTBOOKS AND REFERENCES

At the end of each unit there is a list of relevant reference materials which you may wish to consult as the need arises. The list is, however, not exhaustive and sacrosanct. You are encouraged to cultivate the habit of consulting as many relevant materials as you are able to within the time available.

ASSESSMENT

Two types of assessments are involved in the course: the SAEs and the TMA questions. Your answers to the SAEs are not meant to be submitted, even though important, they are also important since they give you an opportunity to assess your own understanding of the course content. The TMAs on the other hand are to be carefully answered and kept in your assignment file for submission and marking. This will form 30% of the total score in the course.

TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT

At the end of every unit, you will find a tutor-marked assignment which you should answer as instructed and put in your assignment file for submission. However, this course guide does not contain any tutor-marked assignment question. The tutor-marked assignment questions are provided from unit 1 of module 1 to unit 4 of module 4.

FINAL EXAMINATION AND GRADING

The final examination for INR 251 will take two hours and carry 70% of the total course grade. The examination questions will reflect the SAEs and TMAs that you have already worked on. It advised that you spend the time between the completion of the last unit and the examination in revising the entire course. You will certainly find it helpful to also review both your SAEs and TMAs before the examination.

COURSE MARKING SCHEME

The following table sets out how the actual course marking is broken down.

Assessment	Marks
Four assignments (the best four of all the assignments submitted for marking).	Four assignments, each marked out of 10%, but highest scoring three selected, thus totalling 30%
Final Examination	70% of overall course score
Total	**100% of course score**

COURSE OVERVIEW PRESENTATION SCHEME

Units	Title of Work	Week Activity	Assignment (End-of-Unit)
Course Guide			
Module 1	**Understanding the International System**		
Unit 1	Definition of the International System	Week 1	Assignment
Unit 2	The Realist approach in understanding the International System	Week 2	Assignment
Unit 3	The Idealist Approach in understanding the International System	Week 3	Assignment
Unit 4	The Great Debate (Idealist versus the Realist)	Week 4	TMA 1 to be submitted
Module 2	**The Origins/Evolution of the Modern International System**		
Unit 1	The classical International System (1648-1789)	Week 5	Assignment 1
Unit 2	The transitional International System (1789-1945)	Week 6	Assignment 1
Unit 3	The Post World War II International system (1945-1989)	Week 7	Assignment 1
Unit 4	The Contemporary International System (1989-date)	Week 8	TMA 2 to be submitted
Module 3	**Characteristics of the International System**		
Unit 1	The Actors in the International System	Week 9	Assignment 1
Unit 2	Anarchy in the International	Week 10	Assignment 1

Units	Title of Work	Week Activity	Assignment (End-of-Unit)
	System		
Unit 3	Interest and the Use of Power in the International System	Week 11	Assignment 1
Unit 4	Polarity in the International System	Week 12	TMA 3 to be submitted
Module 4	**Issues in the Contemporary International System**		
Unit 1	The Impact of Globalisation	Week 13	Assignment 1
Unit 2	Collective Security	Week 13	Assignment 1
Unit 3	Terrorism in the International System	Week 14	Assignment 1
Unit 4	The Future of the International System	Week 15	TMA 4 to be Submitted
	Revision	Week 16	
	Examination	Week 17	
	Total	**17 Weeks**	

WHAT YOU WILL LEARN IN THE COURSE

Evolution of modern international system provides you with the opportunity to gain an insight and an in-depth understanding of how the international system has grown to be where it is today. The first module provides you with the explanation of the international system as a global system, as well as the idealist and realist approaches to understanding the international system. The second module will provide you with an understanding of the origins/evolution of the international system from the classical to where it is in the present century. The third module will introduce you to some of the basic characteristics and features of the international system. This include explanation on the type of actors in the system, the notion of anarchy, interest of nations and the use of power, as well as the polarisation in the system. Module four provides you with the understanding of issues that have taken front role in discourse on the contemporary international system.

You would have to purchase textbooks and other materials recommended to enable you have a broader understanding of issues treated in the course. You would also need quality time in a study-friendly environment every week. For those who are computer-literate (which ideally you should be), you should be prepared to visit recommended websites. You should also cultivate the habit of visiting reputable physical libraries.

FACILITATORS, TUTORS AND TUTORIALS

There are 15 hours of tutorials provided in support of the course. You will be notified of the dates and location of these tutorials, together with the name and phone number of the tutor as soon as you are allocated a tutorial group. The tutor will mark and comment on your assignments, and keep a close watch on your progress. You should ensure to send your tutor-marked assignments promptly, and feel free to contact the tutor in case of any difficulty with your self-assessment exercise, tutor-marked assignment or the grading of an assignment. In any case, it is advised that you should endeavour to attend the tutorials regularly and punctually. Always take a list of such prepared questions to the tutorials and participate actively in the discussions.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, all the features of this course guide have been designed to facilitate learning in order that you achieve the aims and objectives of the course. They include the aims and objectives, course summary, course overview, self-assessment exercises and tutor-marked assignments. You should ensure that you make maximum use of them in your study to achieve maximum results.

SUMMARY

INR 251: Evolution of Modern International System is a two-credit unit course available for students in the undergraduate French and International Studies programme at the 200 level. The course provides an opportunity for you to acquire a detailed knowledge and understanding of what the international is, its structure and characteristics, its evolution from one stage to another and what shape it is likely to assume in the future. The course, equally, dives into an explanation of the term "system" and how it is justifiably applied to arena of global world politics. It also examines the origins of the international system, from the classical to the contemporary international system. Highlight is placed on basic approaches in understanding the working of the international as exemplified by the realist and the idealist kaleidoscopic lenses. As well, watersheds in the history of the international as well as system are explored. These include the Westphalian peace treaties that gave birth to the emergence of the "modern" state system, the transitional international system and the international system during the world wars, the Cold War and the post Cold War era.

I wish you wish success in this course and I hope that you will find it interesting and useful!

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MODULE 1   UNDERSTANDING THE INTERNATIONAL SYSTEM

Unit 1   The Definition of the International System
Unit 2   The Realist Approach in Understanding the International System
Unit 3   The Idealist Approach in Understanding the International System
Unit 4   The Idealist versus the Realist Approaches in Understanding the International System

UNIT 1   DEFINITION OF THE INTERNATIONAL SYSTEM

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4.0   Conclusion
5.0   Summary
6.0   Tutor-Marked Assignment
7.0   References/Further Reading

1.0   INTRODUCTION

The term "system" has gained great importance in the lexicology of political science and of international relations. The meaning of this term is said to be quite imprecise and vague. Yet, it is strange that the term system which has no agreed definition has not lost its popularity. Writing in 1960, James Roseau held that "of all the advances that have occurred in the study of international phenomenon, perhaps, none is more important than the ever-growing tendency to regard the world as an international system" (Rosaeu, 1960). It is important, therefore, that we should have a clear understanding of the concept 'system' as applied in the international system, in spite of the fact that there is no unanimity on the exact meaning and implications of the term. We need to understand it in a general context that is obtainable in the field of mechanical engineering and biological sciences so that it becomes

explicit why the term system is readily applied to the international arena of interaction among states and non-state actors.

2.0   OBJECTIVES

At the end of this unit, you should be able to:

- define a system
- explain what the international system is
- differentiate between the international system and systems in other fields of study
- differentiate between the international system and international society
- name some of the famous scholars in the field of international relations who have contributed to the development of the concept "system."

3.0   MAIN CONTENT

3.1   Understanding the Term "System"

Etymological evidence on the term 'system' has traced its origin to the Latin, then, Greek word "systēma", which means a "whole compounded of several parts or members". The term also has a long history in the field of political philosophy which can be traced back to Aristotle. It was used to connote "union." In the more ancient times, it was derived from the Greek verb *sunìstemi*, which means "uniting" or "putting together."

It was in the 19th century that the French physicist Nicolas Léonard Sadi Carnot first developed the concept of a "system" in the natural sciences in his study of thermodynamics. In 1824 Carnot studied the system which he called the *working substance*, and it had to do with a body of water vapor in steam engines to prove the system's ability to work when heat is applied to it. Ludwig von Bertalanffy, in 1945, introduced the concept to biological sciences, while Norbert Wiener and Ross Ashby pioneered the use of mathematics to study system (Fagen 1961:896).

In the present dispensation the concept of system refers to the fact of interaction components of an entity. *The Oxford English Dictionary* defines a system as (a) a set of or an assemblage of things connected, associated, or interdependent, so as to form a complex unit, or (b) a whole composed of parts in orderly arrangement, according to some scheme or plan. This definition presupposes that the units or parts connected together should experience a form of interaction. It is also assumed that the interaction can bring about interconnectivity among the

units or parts. A system, therefore, implies not only the inter-dependence of parts but also the acceptance of influence from environment and vice versa.

Definitions of a "system" may vary, but they all point to common salient facts. First, that a system has different parts which interact, inter-relate and are inter-dependent. Second, inter-dependence here means that when the properties of a component in a system change, all other components and the system as a whole would be affected. Third, a system is also viewed to have its boundary. This means there are some entities which are considered to be inside the system, while others are outside. The ones outside the system are regarded as the environment of the system.

Systems are classified in different ways. There are natural and human-made (designed) systems. Natural systems may not have an apparent objective but their outputs can be interpreted as purposes. Human-made systems are made with purposes that are achieved by the delivery of outputs. Their parts must be related, that is to say they must be designed to work as a coherent entity.

Other common characteristics of a system include:

- A system has structure: it contains parts (or components) that are directly or indirectly related to each other.
- A system has behaviour: it contains processes that transform inputs into outputs (material, energy or data).
- A system has interconnectivity: the parts and processes are connected by structural and/or behavioural relationships.
- All systems strive towards equilibrium or what is termed as haemostasis.

Furthermore, systems can also be classified into physical and abstract systems, as well as subsystems. Physical systems are tangible entities that may be static or dynamic in operation. Abstract systems, on the other hand, are intangible entities. On the other hand, a subsystem is a set of elements, which is a system itself, but a component of a larger system.

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE

Highlight the main characteristics of a system.

3.2   International System as a System

One major controversy that has trailed the understanding the concept of the international system bothered on the inadequacy of assigning the term "system" to the act of intermingling of states and non-state actors in the international arena. This inadequacy has stemmed from strict scientific notion of "system." This is because scientifically, mechanical or biological systems are natural and can be subjected to intrinsic scientific methodologies. But, the international system is considered to be artificial, thus, an abstraction which cannot be subjected to the scientific intrinsic methodologies.

The general concept of international system has its foundation in the works of system theorists in the field of international relations. Scholars in the field have developed basic framework to establish the basis on which the international arena can be regarded as a system. They regard nation-states as actors, always standing in interaction with each other making the whole world as an organised complexity. Spiro holds that the idea of international system is abstract, descriptive and theoretical. Nevertheless, it contributes a perspective in which international system constitutes an expression to stimulate thought about a certain generalised image (Spiro, 1999: 177).

David Easton and Gabriel Almond have used the system approach for the study of political system while Kenneth Waltz and Morton Kaplan have used it for the study of international system. One remarkable systemic work about the international system is done by Kenneth Waltz. Addressing the systemic nature of international political interaction, Waltz emphasises the structural factor. He explains that a system is made of a structure and units. The units are interactive and interdependent. He contends, further, that in international politics, sovereign states constitute the units, while the structure of international politics is an ordering principle that positions or arranges the sovereign states in the pecking order of ranking and alliances (Waltz, 1979).

Kaplan, even though, has not developed a precise definition of international system, his discussions on the nature of international system is said to be the most elaborate to bring the idea of system to bear on discussions on international politics among international actors. He regards the interactions in the international arena as a system of action, which he elaborates as follows: "A system of action is a set of variables so related, in contradistinction to its environment, that describable behavioural regularities characterise the internal relationships of the variables to each other and the external relationships of the set of individual variables to combinations of external variables" (Kaplan, 1957:242). Thus, according to Kaplan, international actions

take place between international actors. It is the interaction between actors that ultimately gives birth to the international system.

Some of the remarkable elements about Kaplan's work are located in his ability to describe the nature of an international system by identifying variables in the nature of the system and assigning values to these variables. He identifies the variables of the system to include:

a)   the essential rules of the system
b)   the transformation rules
c)   the actors classificatory variables
d)   capacity variables and the information variables.

Based on these variables he identifies six types of international systems, which include the following:

i)   the balance of power system
ii)   the loose bipolar system; the tight bipolar system
iii)   the universal system
iv)   the hierarchical system in its directive and non-directive forms, and
v)   the unit veto system.

Although Mortan Kaplan is the chief exponent of the system theory, there have been many others who have contributed to the system approach. They include Karl Deutsch, Charles Mc Cleland, J. David Singer, Kenneth Boulding, David Easton and Anatole Rapport. The interpretation given by all these scholars refers to the variables of the international system, which help in a proper understanding of the interaction process. They see a system as an assemblage of units, objects, or parts united by some form of regular interaction. In the 1950s, the behavioural revolution in the social sciences and growing acceptance of political realism in international relations led scholars to conceptualise international politics as a system, using the language of systems theory. McCleland, particularly, calls systems theory as a way of thinking having the proportion of a world view (McCleland, 1966). Thus, the international system can be taken as a system because nations live with one another. They live in an international environment and participate in that environment. The behaviour of nations in the system is a two-way activity of taking from and giving to the international environment. It is this process of exchange that makes it to be called a system.

3.3   Definition of International System

In defining international system, Stanley Hoffman regards it as a pattern of relations among the basic units of world politics, characterised by the scope of the objectives pursued by those units and of the task performed among them as well as by the means used to achieve those goals and perform these tasks (Hoffman,1965). On their part, Frederic S. Pearson and Martin Rochester define international system as "the general pattern of political, economic, social, geographical, and technological relationship that shape world affairs. Or more simply, as the general setting in which international relations occur at any time" (Pearson and Rochester, 1984). In an attempt to find an operational definition of the international system Dougherty and Pfaltzgraff maintain that "An international political system is a set of polities linked by a set of interactions (patterns of behaviour in the world politics complex)" (Dougherty and Pfaltzgraff, 1997: 175-185). This definition presupposes that political interaction among polities cannot just constitute an international system, unless the polities are identified as a sovereign.

From the foregoing discussions, we can, in lucid terms, say that international system is a lexicon among scholars of international relations to describe the network and complexities of the interactions among states and non-state actors in the international arena. Amidst the interactions they exert political, military, economic as well as cultural impact on one another. The exertion of impact on one another is carried out within laid down rules and norms of behaviour guiding the entire interaction process. The interaction can be of different forms such as direct governmental economic collaboration or diplomatic contacts. It can be direct non-governmental in areas like tourism, or indirect governmental as regard adoption of industrialisation. It may also be collaborative or conflicting.

In addition, international actors are in two categories. The first category is that of the national actors while the second is that of supranational actors. Nigeria, USA, India, China, etc. are the examples of national actors while the ECOWAS and NATO are examples of supranational actors. And as Kaplan maintains, as international action takes places between international actors, it is the interaction between these two types of actors that ultimately gives birth to the international system.

Furthermore, the international system has various smaller international systems at the lower scale working as sub-systems or dependent systems. Each sub-system or the dependent system affects the functioning of the bigger system and vice versa. Thus each system, in addition to being a system in itself, can be a sub-system of a larger or dominant system. Interaction may even differ in intensity. We may find

that the interaction between the actors of the West-European sub-system is of great intensity than between the actors of Africa.

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE

Define the international system.

3.4 Distinction between International System and International Society

In recent times, scholars of international relations have pushed further the debate about the concept of international system by bringing in the notion of international society to place side by side with the concept of international system, making the necessary contrast. In this regard, Hedley Bull has developed an argument to elaborate the distinction between international system and international society. For him, an international system is formed when two or more states have sufficient contact between them, and have sufficient impact on one another's decision to cause them behave as parts of a whole (Bull, 1977). This definition corresponds to the ones we have elucidated upon in the early part of our discussion.

On the other hand, he maintains that the international society is created when a number or group of states with common interest and values get together on the basis that they conceive themselves as been tied together by a common set of rules in their relationship with one another, and share in the working of common institutions. From this point of view, it can be extrapolated that in Bull's sense, an international society presupposes an international system, but an internal system may exist without an international society.

As a terminology, the term "international system" was commonly used among scholars in the era of Cold War. But in the post Cold War era, as a result of the accompanying rapid changes in the world structure, there came a decline in the frequency of the use of the term as it got substituted by other vogue terminologies like "international society." Nevertheless, that does not mean that the term "international system" has lost its meaning. The term still holds it validity in spite of the changes in real politics and academic fashions. What is actually happening is the two terms are or can be used interchangeably in discussions bothering on international politics.

4.0   CONCLUSION

International system remains a term among scholars of international relations to describe the network and complexities of the interactions among actors in the international arena. Even when substituted with the term "international society" it only points to the fact that there is need to assign a term to describe the interaction and interdependence among actors - they may be states or non-state actors - in the international arena.

5.0   SUMMARY

The term "system" has its origin from the Greek word "systēma", which means a "whole compounded of several parts or members." In the cause of its evolution over the years, the term has been used by academics and professionals of various disciplines. In international relations the term was introduced by system theorists like Morton Kaplan and Kenneth Waltz who seek to develop the framework to establish the basis on which politics in the international arena can be liken to a "system." It is generally agreed that the international system is characterised by interactive and interdependent relationship among the actors. In the present dispensation, the term "international system" has come to be substituted by the term "international society". Yet, that does not mean that term "international system" has lost its relevance. Rather, the two are used interchangeably.

6.0   TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT

1.   What is international system?
2.   Distinguish between "international system" and "international society."

7.0   REFERENCES/FURTHER READING

Bull, H. (1977). *The Anarchical Society: A Study of Order in World Politics*.   London: Macmillan.

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UNIT 2   UNDERSTANDING THE INTERNATIONAL SYSTEM: THE REALIST APPROACH

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               3.1.1   Neorealism or Structural Realism
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               3.1.4   Liberal Realism or the English School
4.0   Conclusion
5.0   Summary
6.0   Tutor-Marked Assignment
7.0   References/Further Reading

1.0   INTRODUCTION

The study of international system requires familiarity with some essential theories, concepts, notions, as well as basic assumptions that are intrinsically linked to the study of international politics. It is not just the terms and the jargon that are important; rather, it is the insight that they offer in explaining how the international system operates that makes them useful. Again, using the precise terminologies is also less important than grasping the essential, the underlying foundation of behaviour of actors that is so crucial to explaining the basis of the interactions that go on in the arena of international politics.

This unit introduces some of the basic theoretical approaches and the accompanying assumptions of such approaches regarding the international system, in order to make them accessible for comprehension in the study of international system. There exist several approaches and notions, accompanied by several assumptions as tools in understanding the working of the international system. In this unit our discussions shall revolve around the realists thinking, one of the most common approaches in interpreting the behaviour of actors in the international system. This includes some of the variegated versions of realism which have come about as the products of refinement in the thinking or paradigm shift among scholars in the field of International Studies. These refinement or paradigm shifts themselves have come about as result of the impact of world events which have defiled explanation based on the existing versions of realism. Thus, they called for modified versions of the existing paradigms of realism so as to grapple with events in the world system.

2.0   OBJECTIVES

At the end this unit you should be able to:

- define "realism" as a basis of understanding the international system
- enumerate the basic assumptions of the realist school of thought about the international system
- explain terms like classical realism, neorealism, classical neorealism.

3.0   MAIN CONTENT

3.1   The Realist's Approach

Realism as a formal discipline in international relations did not arrive until World War II, but its primary assumptions have been expressed in earlier thinkers and writers such Thucrdides, Niccolò Machiavelli, Cardinal Richelieu and others. Thucydides, an ancient Greek historian in his work, *History of the Peloponnesian War*, has espoused views that have been the basis of Realists' assumptions and is also cited as an intellectual of realpolitik. Niccolò Machiavelli, a Florentine political philosopher, wrote *Il Principe* (*The Prince*) in which he held that the sole aim of a prince (politician) was to seek power, regardless of religious or ethical considerations. Cardinal Richelieu, a French statesman acted in tandem with the spirit of realism as he destroyed domestic factionalism and guided France to a position of dominance in foreign affairs. Thomas Hobbes, an English philosopher wrote *Leviathan* in which he stated the "state of nature" was prone to a "war of all against all".

Realism, frequently referred to as the power theory in some quarters, is identified with scholars such as Hans Morgenthau, Henry Kissinger and Kenneth Waltz. In the thinking of the realists the international system is defined by anarchy. This is because there is no central authority to settle disputes among contending actors as it is in domestic political systems. Thus, in such anarchical situation, state power is the key. There is the belief that it is only through power that states can defend themselves and hope to survive. Realism believes power can be in variety of ways: militarily, economically and diplomatically. It also emphasises the possession of the coercive capacity as the ultimate determinant of international politics.

The world view of the Realists rests on the assumption that, first; survival is the principal goal of every state actor. And given the anarchy of the international system, states require to, constantly, ensure that they

have sufficient power to defend themselves and advance their interest that is required for survival. Second, Realists take states to be rational actors. This means that, given the goal of survival, states will act as best they can in order to maximise their likelihood of continuing to exist. Third, Realists believe that all states possess military capacity, and no state knows what its neighbours intend precisely. This presupposes that the word is dangerous and uncertain. Fourth, in such a world only countries with greater powers that can prevail. Thus, the international system is a system of power exercise. With time realism has undergone some refinement by scholars, resulting in various novel paradigms such as classical realism, liberal realism or the English school or rationalism, neorealism or structural realism and neoclassical realism.

3.1.1 Neorealism or Structural Realism

According to Powell Robert, neorealism or structural realism is a theory of international relations that was, first, outlined by Kenneth Waltz in his 1979 book *Theory of International Politics* (Robert 1994: 313-344). Neorealism can be considered as one of the most influential contemporary approaches to international relations. Neorealism is also considered as been derived from the classical realist tradition of E.H. Carr, Hans Morgenthau, and Reinhold Niebuhr. The major exception is that neorealism dismisses classical realism's use of concepts such as "human nature" to explain international politics.

Neorealist thinkers, instead, propose that structural constraints — that is to say not strategy, egoism, or motivation will determine behaviour in international relations. Thus, instead of focusing on human nature, its focus is predominantly on the anarchic structure of the international system. They see states as primary actors because there is no political monopoly on force existing above any sovereign. But while states remain the principal actors, greater attention is given to the forces above and below the states. The international system is seen as a structure acting on the state with individuals acting as agency of the state.

The principal assumption of the neorealist is that the nature of the international structure is defined by its ordering principle. That is to say the anarchy, and the distribution of capabilities, is measured by the number of great powers within the international system. The anarchic ordering principle of the international structure is decentralised, meaning there is no formal central authority. Every sovereign state is formally equal in this system. These states act according to the logic of self-help, meaning states seek their own interest and will not subordinate their interest to the interests of other states. States are assumed, at a minimum, to want to ensure their own survival as this is a prerequisite to pursue other goals. This driving force of survival is the primary factor

influencing their behaviour and in turn ensures states develop offensive military capabilities for foreign interventionism and as a means to increase their relative power. In summary, it is the nature of the environment that pushes states to garner power to ensure their survival in the system.

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE

What are the main assumptions of neorealism or structural realism?

3.1.2 Classical Realism

Classical realism's most important roots arguably date back to the fall of the medieval Roman Catholic realm. Medieval Europe entertained the idea of universalism as its competitors, the Byzantine Empire and the Islamic caliphates, but according to Bozeman, it never enjoyed the same ability to pursue it in practice (Bozeman, 1994). With this, Haslam maintains that gradually, therefore, universalism gave way to particularism, as scholars and observers promoted the shift by developing new doctrines of state interest (raison d'état) and balances of power in the explanation of behaviour in the international system (Haslam, 2002). In the early 20th century, scholars of the interwar generation picked up these concepts and insights and gave birth to the tradition of classical realism as a body of thought.

Prominent scholars of the interwar generation include Reinhold Niebuhr, Edward H. Carr, Georg Schwarzenberger, and Nicolas Spykman, and they would go on to inspire people like Hans Morgenthau, Raymond Aron, Stanley Hoffmann, Arnold Wolfers, George Kennan, Henry Kissinger, and others. Classical realists share an understanding of social reality as collective, which is to say that the group is the essence of social reality and of politics as a contentious struggle among these groups over values (Gilpin, 1986).

Political conflict is rooted in human affairs and more particularly human nature, according to classical realists. Reinhold Niebuhr believed that humans had a potential for 'evil', and with human kind's increasing grasp of science and control of society, the scope for human evil expanded. Reinhold Niebuhr claimed that "man's claim to goodness is absurdity if not blasphemy. Social groups such as nations and states may contain many ethical people but the glue of these groups — 'patriotism' — contains a 'paradox': it 'transmutes individual unselfishness into national egoism' (Niebuhr, 1932: 91). Hans Morgenthau sought to provide 'a theory of international politics' focused on the 'objective laws' of politics and rooted in 'human nature' (Morgenthau, 1993: 3–4). Morgenthau may have been less preoccupied by the 'evil' nature of man

compared to Niebuhr but he maintained that the desire for power was universal (Waltz, 1959: 34).

Niebuhr and Morgenthau thus created inextricable links between individuals and collectivities, partly because individuals live in groups (i.e., the essence of social reality), partly because groups' occasional warring is rooted in human nature. By implication, classical realism does not distinguish between the 'first' (the individual) and 'second' (the state) image in the assessment of why tragedy happens. Kenneth Waltz nevertheless built his criticism of prevailing international theories, thus including classical realism, on the notion of distinct images, and he associated classical realism with the first image (human nature) (Waltz, 1959). Classical realists find that revisionist states, which are those wrecking havoc in international politics, somehow emerge from human nature.

The basic assumptions of classical realism are that, first, the drive for power and the will to dominate are held to be fundamental aspects of human nature that inform state behaviour in the international system. Second, people are by nature narrowly selfish and ethically flawed, and cannot free themselves from the vicious fact that they are born to watch out for themselves. Third, of all the people's evil ways, none are more prevalent, inexorable, or dangerous than their instinctive lust for power and their desire to dominate others. Fourth, the possibility of eradicating the instinct for power is a utopian aspiration. Fifth, international politics is, as Thomas Hobbes put it, a struggle for power "a war of all against all." Lastly, the primary obligation of every state, the goal to which all other national objectives should be subordinated, is to promote its national interest and to acquire power for this purpose.

Other basic assumptions of classical realism include the fact that the nature of the international system dictates that states acquire sufficient military capabilities to deter attack by potential enemies; and that states should never entrust the task of self-protection to international security organisations or international law and should resist efforts to regulate international conduct. In addition, if all states seek to maximise power, stability will result from maintaining a balance of power, lubricated by fluid alliance systems.

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE

Differentiate between neorealism and classical realism.

3.1.3 Neoclassical Realism

Neoclassical realism can be seen as the third generation of realists, coming after the classical authors of the first wave such as Thucydides, Machiavelli and Thomas Hobbes, as well as the neorealist Kenneth Waltz. The adherents of neoclassical realism argue that the ambition and scope of a state's behaviour in international politics is driven, first and foremost, by its place in the international system and specifically by its material power capabilities. It is based on this reasoning that they call themselves realists. They argue further, that they are neoclassical because they also take into account the fact that effect of the power capacities of a state is usually interfered with by the systemic variables. They buttress their position by establishing that relative material power is the basic parameter of a state's action in the international system by relying on Thucydides' formula which states that "the strong do what they can and the weak suffer what they must" (Strasser, 1996: 89).

Yet, the neoclassical realists go further to point out that there is no immediate evidence to maintain that, strictly speaking, material power is what determines states' behaviour. The argument is based on the fact that behaviour choices of a state are made by political leaders or elite class, so it is their perception of relative power that matters and not the quantity of relative physical resources available at their disposal. Finally, the neoclassical realists take into cognisance systemic pressures that would influence the choice of alternatives of the political leaders. This means that the influence of systemic factors may become more apparent in directing the choices of political leaders in the behaviour of their state in the international system.

In other words, neoclassical realism holds that the actions of a state in the international system can be explained by systemic variables such as the distribution of power capabilities among states; as well as cognitive variables such as the perception and misperception of systemic pressures, other states' intentions, or threats. Neoclassicism relies also on domestic variables such as state institutions, elites, and societal actors within society- affecting the power and freedom of action of the decision-makers in foreign policy.

The implication here is that, first, appropriate balancing occurs when a state correctly perceives another state's intentions and balances accordingly with such states. Second, inappropriate balancing or overbalancing will occur when a state incorrectly perceives another state as threatening, and uses too many resources than it needs to in order to balance. This causes an imbalance. Third, "underbalancing" can occur when a state fails to balance, out of either inefficiency or incorrectly perceiving a state as less of threat than it actually is. This causes an

imbalance. Fourth, nonbalancing occurs when a state avoids balancing. A state may choose to do this for a number of reasons, including an inability to balance. In sum, decision-makers' beliefs can strongly affect the state's foreign policy. Thus, correct or incorrect perceptions and beliefs of a state will produce the adjoining course of action, whether positively or negatively.

Neoclassical realists reject the assumption of traditional realism that states' sole aim is security. They maintain that, instead, states attempt to use their power to direct the international system towards their goals and preferences. They use tools at their disposal to gain control over their environment. Therefore, states that are more powerful will prosecute foreign policies that are more far-reaching.

In addition, while holding true to the neorealist concept of survival, neoclassical realism further adds that there is a link between economic strength of a state and its military or political influence. This can result in the rise and fall of great powers in the international system, in times of buoyant economy or in times of economic recession of such a great power.

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE

Differentiate between the different types of balancing that states adopt in perceiving other states' intentions and capacities.

3.1.4 Liberal Realism or the English School

This framework holds that the international system, while anarchical in structure, forms a "society of states" where common norms and interests allow for more order and stability than what might be expected in a strict realist view. Prominent English school writers include Hedley Bull's with his classic, *The Anarchical Society*. The liberal realists stand on the conviction that ideas, rather than simply material capabilities, shape the conduct of actors in the international system. The basic argument, according to Hedley (1977), is that states share a certain common interest, which is usually the "fear of unrestricted violence" that leads to the development of a certain set of "rules."

However, since these rules are not legally binding and there are no ordering institutions, it becomes most probably more appropriate to speak of norms. States that respect these basic rules form an international society. Chris Brown defines such a relationship as a "norm-governed relationship whose members accept that they have at least limited responsibilities towards one another and the society as a whole", (Brown, 2009: 48-52). Given this situation, liberal realism

maintains that states would follow their interests, but not at all costs as held by the traditional realists. This would entail moving with other members of the system than been against them.

4.0   CONCLUSION

In sum, it can be argued that since states will continue to exist as entities in the international system, the question of their security and survival will remain relevant issues of discussions in matters bothering on the international system. Power capability shall also remain indispensible state apparatus to guide against internal and external threats. Again, war will remain a recurring event in the system, in the name of security or national interest. Furthermore, cooperation among states is not permanent. When their national interest or security is endangered they give up cooperation. In the light of the above discussion, it can be concluded that realism was, is and will continue to be a relevant paradigm in understanding the international system.

5.0   SUMMARY

In this unit, we have tried to understand the nature of the international system from the realist point of view. We have noticed that there exist various perspectives of the realists understand of the international system. The major tenet in their understanding of the system is that, first and foremost, nation-states are the major actors in the anarchical nature of the international system; and there is no central government to regulate conflict among nation states. Thus, power becomes the key for the survival of a state in the arena of international politics. Realists believe is that there are no universal principles with which all states may guide their actions. Instead, a state must always be aware of the actions of the states around it and must use a pragmatic approach to resolve problems as they arise.

All other perspectives of realism: neorealism, classical realism, neoclassical realism and the liberal realism do not disagree with this fact. However, they try to refine the ideas of realism by adding some of the variables inherent in the nature of mankind or the nature of the system that impinge the anarchical nature on the system. This goes to prove that for the realists any understanding of the international system must emphasise the need for power to ensure survival in the system.

6.0   TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT

1.   What is realism as a basic theory for understanding the international system?
2.   Write short notes on the following:

a) Neorealism or structural realism
b) Classical realism
c) Neoclassical realism
d) The liberal realism or English school.

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UNIT 3 THE IDEALIST UNDERSTANDING OF INTERNATIONAL SYSTEM

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1.0   INTRODUCTION

Since the 1880s, there have been growing studies from major writers of the idealist tradition of thought in understanding international system. These writers include Sir Alfred Zimmern, Norman Angell, John Maynard Keynes, John A. Hobson, Leonard Woolf, Gilbert Murray, Florence Stawell, Philip Henry Kerr, 11th Marquess of Lothian, Arnold J. Toynbee, Lester Pearson and David Davies. Much of the writing of these scholars have contrasted these idealist writers with realism such as E.H. Carr, whose *The Twenty Years' Crisis* (1939) idealism is also marked by the prominent role played by international law and international organisations in its conception of policy formation.

Idealism proper was a relatively short-lived school of thought, and suffered a crisis of confidence following the failure of the League of Nations and the outbreak of World War II. However, subsequent theories of international relations would draw elements from Wilsonian idealism (from Woodrow Wilson) when constructing their world views. This unit will dwell on idealism as major paradigm in understanding the working of the international system. We shall also examine the variegated strands of idealism such as liberal idealism, neoliberal idealism, and neoconservatism which have been drawn from the core idealists' traditions to explain the international system.

2.0   OBJECTIVES

At the end this unit, you should be able to:

- define "idealism" as a basis for understanding the international system
- enumerate the basic assumptions of the idealist school of thought about the international system
- explain terms such as liberal idealism, neoliberal idealism and neoconservatism.

3.0   MAIN CONTENT

3.1   The Idealist's Approach

Idealism or the idealist school of thought can trace it modern heritage to the tenets of Woodrow Wilson, often referred to as the Wilsonian liberalism. The idealist thought frequently views human nature as a positive force. It is precisely the power politics of nation-states that is the problem. So, what is required is to find a way to reduce or eliminate altogether that particular form of interaction. The major assumption of the idealists is that there is a natural harmony of interests among nation-states, based on the inherent desire of most people to live in peace with one another. So, it is only when the corruptive influence of power politics, ideology, nationalism, evil leaders, and so on come to play that we see international politics and the entire international arena degenerate into conflict and wars. Thus, what is required is to prevent the rise and control of such corruptive influence.

To accomplish this, first and foremost, there is a need to encourage the growth of democracy as a form of government that gives maximum expression to the voice of the people. After all, if most people are inherently peace loving, then governments that express the desire of the people will be less warlike. Second, international institutions can be used to create forums in which nation-states can discuss their disagreements in ways that will reinforce cooperation, rather than the competitive dimensions of their relationship with one another.

For this reason, the idealists find great promise not only in institutions like the United Nations but also in the further development of international treaties and covenants and other common practices as basis for a system of international law. Such international institutions can be used to change the way states calculate their interests, hence they can encourage cooperation over conflict among states. This means, to a certain extent, the idealists believe in the creation of world government

that is an equivalence of domestic government to regulate and manage the behaviour of actors in the international system.

More often than not, the assumptions of the idealists have been portrayed as sounding "utopian", yet trends of development in the contemporary international system to resolve the world crisis seem to conform to the notion of institutionalism canvassed by the idealists. It is believed that the more states can be made to understand that their interests are effectively pursued within international institutions, and that all states can benefit from such interaction, the more they can be induced to behave cooperatively, rather than competitively. Most of the post World War II international trade and economic regimes (Bretton Woods, GATT and others) are based precisely on the idealists' philosophy.

Idealism proper was a relatively short-lived school of thought, and suffered a crisis of confidence following the failure of the League of Nations and the outbreak of World War II. However, subsequent theories of international relations would draw elements from Wilsonian idealism when constructing their view of the international system. These include liberal idealism, neoliberal idealism and the neoconservatism.

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE

Which world event led to the discrediting of the idealist school of thought in the international system?

3.1.1 Liberal Idealism

Liberal idealism is one of the main schools in understanding international system. Its roots lie in the broader liberal thought originating in the era of Enlightenment. Liberal idealism views history as the progressive advancement of human society. Heywood writes that liberal idealism is best viewed as, "humanity moving from dark to light, by virtue of reason. Reason emancipates humankind from the grip of the past ..." (Heywood, 2011: 31). Thus, liberal idealism believes that co-operation between states for the common goal of the advancement of humanity is the rational choice which would always be made.

The central issues that liberal idealism seeks to address are the problems of achieving lasting peace and cooperation in international relations, and the various methods that could contribute to their achievement. It might have been existing, but it became popular only after the end of the First World War. It manifested as a tempered version of Wilson's idealism in the wake of World War I. Cognisant of the failures of idealism to prevent renewed isolationism following World War I, and its inability to

manage the balance of power in Europe to prevent the outbreak of a new war liberal idealism took root. During this period it partook in the first great debate of intentional relations against realism, shaped postwar politics, and led to the creation of rudimentary international governance in the form of the League of Nations which would attempt to manage and prevent future conflicts between states (Carr, 1984). It would not be incorrect if we assert that even the modern day United Nations drew upon the successes and shortcomings of the League of Nations in its creation. Even international regimes such as the Bretton Woods system, and General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT), were calculated both to maintain a balance of power as well as regularise cooperation between nations.

The basic assumptions of the liberal idealists can be summarised as follows:

a)   Human nature is essentially good or altruistic: People are capable of mutual aid and collaboration through reason and ethically inspired education.

b)   The fundamental human concern for others' welfare makes progress possible.

c)   Bad human behaviour, such as violence, is the product not of flawed people but of evil institutions that encourage people to act selfishly and to harm others.

d)   War and international anarchy are not inevitable and war's frequency can be reduced by strengthening the institutional arrangements that encourage its disappearance.

e)   War is a global problem requiring collective or multilateral, rather than national efforts to control it.

f)   Reforms must be inspired by a compassionate ethical concern for the welfare and security of all people, and this humanitarian motive requires the inclusion of morality in statecraft.

g)   International society must reorganise itself in order to eliminate the institutions that make war likely, and states must reform their political systems so that self-determination and democratic governance within states can help pacify relations among states.

The foregoing proves that the major dividing line between the realists and the liberal idealists is that while the former see conflict as the norm in international affairs, the latter are more hopeful about the prospects for peace and international cooperation. Again, while realists seek to explain international politics by examining state-to-state relations within an anarchical system of mutual distrust and suspicion, the liberal idealists consider other international actors that present themselves as institutions within the states as actors.

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE

Itemise the basic assumptions of liberal idealism.

3.1.2 Neoliberal Idealism

The neoliberal idealism, also known as "complex integration" or "neoliberal institutionalism" is an upshot of the idealists' world view of explaining the international system, and is credited to Robert O. Keohane and Joseph S. Nye as its precursors. Neoliberalism, is considered as a comprehensive challenge to realism and neoliberalism as the basis of explaining the international system (Graham and Newnham 1998: 29). Ordinarily, both theories consider the international system as anarchic; recognise state and its interests as the central subject of analysis. But while neoliberalism does not denying the postulations of neorealism, it has some argument against neorealism. It accuses neorealism of exaggerating the importance and effect of the anarchy as well as underestimating "the varieties of cooperative behaviour possible within ... a decentralised system" (Graham Evans and Jeffrey Newnham: 29).

The neoliberal idealists focus on the institution-building, regime creation and the search for 'absolute' rather than 'relative' gains as mitigating strategies in a quasi-anarchic system. They also favour a mixed-actor model of the international system which includes international organisations, transnational organisations, non-governmental organisations, multinational corporations and many other non-state players. Keohane and Nye (1977) refer to these phenomena as a complex interdependence and argue that neorealism has failed to capture these complexities of international behaviour and, in particular, distorts the reality by ignoring the institutions, processes, rules and norms that provide a measure of governance in a formally anarchic environment (Keohane and Nye, 1989: 23).

In sum, neoliberals contend that interaction in the international system has greatly expanded in the twentieth century, particularly in the non-military dimension. Therefore, theories that concentrate on military and diplomacy issues alone are bound to be one-sided and incapable of dealing with the realities of the international system.

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE

Explain neoliberal idealism.

3.1.3 Neoconservatism

It is widely believed that neoconservatism is the product of a specific group of policy strategists tagged as "special interest" or "faction". This special interest group includes individuals who hold or have held positions in government. Neoconservatives are also found in the academy (Halper and Clarke, 2004: 32). The neoconservative faction consists of intellectuals and elitists who tend to be of Jewish or Catholic background, many of whom seem to have lapsed to secular humanism. The group has also been identified as "unipolarism", and "democratic globalism" (Dorrien, 2004: 1-5).

Neoconservatism drew from liberalism its intense focus on the promotion of "universal values", in this case democracy, human rights, free trade, women's rights and minority protections. However, it differs in that it is less wedded to the importance of preserving international institutions and treaties while pursuing assertive or aggressive stances which it deems morally worthy. Neoconservatism agrees to the use force or the threat of force, unilaterally if necessary, to push for its goals.

The major doctrinally position of neoconservatives is that first, they see or depict the world of international politics as a struggle between good and evil. Second, it is specifically about the relation between Moscow and Washington in the late twentieth century and between the United States as the centre of democratic societies and rogue nations in the early twenty-first century. Third, neoconservative assert that statesmen should make a clear distinction between friends and enemies, since it was a mistake, especially for the United States to not count the Soviet Union as an enemy; and finally, for a great power, the "national interest" is not a geographical term, but also an ideological one. Fourth, barring extraordinary events, the United States should always feel obliged to defend, if possible, a democratic nation under attack from nondemocratic forces, external or internal.

That is why; Irving Kristol argues that it was in the national interest of the United States to come to the defense of France and Britain in World War II. It is for the same reason that it feels it necessary to defend Israel today, when its survival is threatened. No complicated geopolitical calculations of national interest are necessary. It also supports the supposition that if democracy and the rule of law are established in troubled countries around the world, they will cease to be threats. The promotion of democracy is not left to economic development and political engagement; if necessary, it is provided through military force (Irving Kristol, 2003).

We could as well add that other common themes of neoconservatism include: a belief that the human condition is defined as a choice between good and evil and that the former (themselves) should have the political character to confront the latter; a willingness to use military power; and a primary focus on the Middle East and global Islam as the principal theatre for American overseas interests.

The implications of these doctrinally ideas are that neoconservatives analyse international issues in absolute moral categories; focus on the "unipolar" power of the United States, seeing the "use of force as the first, not the last option" of foreign policy. They are hostile toward nonmilitary multilateral institutions and instinctively antagonistic toward international treaties and agreements (Stefan Halper and Jonathan Clarke, 2004: 32). Halper and Clarke conclude that based on the above beliefs and approaches, neoconservatives tend to find themselves in confrontational postures with the Muslim world, with some US' allies, with the need for cooperation in the United Nations, and with those within their country who disagree with them and their objectives. Thus, for them, when it comes to dealing with tyrannical regimes the United States should seek not coexistence but transformation of such regimes.

It is easy to identify this projection of neoconservative global intent as a blueprint for what was to become later known as the *Bush Doctrine*. The principal aim of American foreign policy has been to bring about a change of regime in hostile nations - in Baghdad and Belgrade, in Pyongyang and Beijing and wherever tyrannical governments acquire the military power to threaten their neighbours, the United States and her allies.

4.0   CONCLUSION

Idealism will continue to find great promise not only in institutions like United Nations but also in the further development of international treaties and covenants, as well as common practices, as the bases for formulation and enforcement of international law. Such arrangement can help change the way states calculate their interest, hence more cooperation among states will be encourage against conflicts and confrontation.

5.0   SUMMARY

In this unit, we have looked at idealism as another framework at the disposal of scholars to explain or understand the working of international system. The idealist's approach, just like the realist, has several perspectives which include liberal idealism, neoliberal idealism,

and neoconservatism. Idealists believe strongly in the affective power of ideas, with the expectation that it is possible to base a political system primarily on morality, and that the baser and more selfish impulses of humans can be muted in order to build national and international norms of behaviour that foment peace, prosperity, cooperation, and justice. Idealism then is not only heavily reformist, but the tradition has often attracted those who feel that idealistic principles are the "next-step" in the evolution of the human character.

6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT

1. Explain idealism as the basis of appreciating the international system.
2. Write short notes on liberal idealism as a paradigm to explain the workings of the international system.
3. Differentiate between neoliberal idealism and neoconservatism in the study of the international system.

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UNIT 4   THE GREAT DEBATE: THE IDEALISTS VERSUS THE REALISTS

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1.0   INTRODUCTION

An approach to understanding international system is not just an intellectual enterprise, but one which has practical consequences. It influences our thinking and political practice. It is a common fact that the field of international relations has experienced what is commonly described as great debates between opposing groups of scholars or paradigm shift in understanding what actually informs the behaviour of actors in the international arena. The first great debate is part of the larger story that the field has constructed about its own disciplinary history.

Paradigm shifts, which create debates, are not just an intellectual exposure of the limitations of dominant way of thinking, but they emerge and get energised by the transformations in the history of world politics. Thus, paradigmatic revolutions constitute responses to changes in international behaviour that erode faith in the usefulness of a prevailing paradigm, consequently, provoking alternative approaches. There are fashions in everything. As such, the understanding of international system is no exception. The struggle among contending approaches about the international system will continue to present great debates as result of the continuous changing international environment.
The widespread belief that the field's history has been characterised by a number of successive great debates is so pervasive and dominant that one can say there is no other better established means of telling the history of the discipline than by presenting the phases in the intellectual postulations of scholars of the field as a series great debates.

2.0   OBJECTIVES

At end of this unit, you should be able to:

- define what is meant as Great Debates in international studies
- define the context of the first Great Debate
- explain the disagreement among scholars as regards the international system from Thucydides era to the post Cold War era.

3.0   MAIN CONTENT

3.1   Background to the Debate

The realists and the idealists' trends or thinking had existed before they came to be developed as coherent terms in world political discourse in the field of international relations. From the Peloponnesian War, through European poleis to ultimately nation states, realist trends can be observed before the term existed. Similarly, the evolution of idealist thinking, from the Enlightenment onwards, expressed itself in calls for a better, more cooperative world before finding practical application – if little success – after the Great War. Writers like Thucydides, in his work, *History of the Peloponnesian War*, have shown interest in developing an understanding of human nature to explain behaviour in world crises. Some analysts of his work have long hailed him as the father of the realist political model of international relations, due to the numerous messages implicit in the *History of the Peloponnesian War* that seem to favour the idea that morality and justice do not have a place in political decisions, rather, political decisions are governed more by the basic needs of security and wealth inherent in human nature. Thus, Thucydides became the first to describe international relations through realists' lenses as been anarchic, immoral and views that interstate politics lack regulation and justice. His realism has had a timeless impact on the way contemporary analysts perceive international system. All later realists, from Thomas Hobbes to Machiavelli and Henry Kissinger, owe an intellectual debt to Thucydides.

In the 20th century realism has drawn its description and assumptions on the international system from the allied experience with Wilhelmina and Nazi Germany, Imperial Japan and the Soviet Union. In the immediate aftermath of the Second World War, Hans J. Morgenthau was credited with having systematised classical realism. His *Politics Among Nations* became the standard textbook, and continued to be reprinted after his death.

Although Thucydides clearly believes that realism is the true motivator of political decisions, he is not a die-hard realist. In his same work he has, also, shown high interest in the role of ethics and morals in politics. He acknowledges that considerations of justice cannot be ignored if a political entity wishes to maintain its power in the long run. Writing on *History of the Peloponnesian War,* Korab-Karpowicz (2012) argues that the most compelling argument on behalf of Thucydides' complex political views is that, as reflected in the overarching theme of the *History*, an empire that is unchecked by morals and moderation becomes drunk with desire for more power and will inevitably fail.

The best indicator of Thucydides' views on morality is found, first, in his description of the social disintegration during the Corcyran civil war as indicated in chapter three of the work. Thucydides condemns the "atrocities" of the civil war and directly attributes it to man's noble nature being defeated by greed and the struggle for power. Second, in the *History,* one can identify in the speech of the Melians elements of the idealistic or liberal world view: the belief that nations have the right to exercise political independence, that they have mutual obligations to one another and will carry out such obligations, and that a war of aggression is unjust. In the "Melian dialogue", the Melians employ idealistic arguments; the choice is between war and subjection. They are courageous and love their country. They do not wish to lose their freedom, and in spite of the fact that they are militarily weaker than the Athenians, they are prepared to defend themselves. They base their arguments on an appeal to justice, which they associate with fairness, and regard the Athenians as unjust.

The "Melian Dialogue," which is one of the most frequently commented-upon parts of Thucydides' *History*, presents the classic debate between the idealist and realist views in which each side represents one extreme of the spectrum. It is here that the Athenians and Melians use all the arguments that realists and idealists have been using ever since, living us with the question: Can international politics be based on a moral order derived from the principles of justice, or will it forever remain the arena of conflicting national interests and power?

3.2   The Context of the Great Debate

In international relations, the "Great Debates" refer to a series of disagreements between international relations scholars. In this unit our focus is on the "First Great Debate" also known as the "Realist-Idealist Great Debate". Suffice to mention that other Great Debates went on the field such as the "Second Great Debate" which was a dispute between "scientific IR" scholars who sought to refine scientific methods of inquiry in international relations theory and those who insisted on a

more historicist/interpretative approach to international relations theory. The debate is termed "realists versus behaviourists" or "traditionalism versus scientism". The inter-paradigm debate is considered to be a great debate and is therefore referred to as the "Third Great Debate". The inter-paradigm debate was a debate between liberalism, realism and radical international relations theories. The debate has also been described as being between realism, institutionalism and structuralism. The "Fourth Great Debate" was a debate between positivist theories and post-positivist theories of international relations. Confusingly, it is often described in the literature as "The Third Great Debate" by those who reject the description of the inter-paradigm debate as a Great Debate. This debate is concerned with the underlying epistemology of international relations scholarship and is also described as a debate between "rationalists" and "reflectivists". The debate was started by Robert Keohane in an International Studies Association debate in 1988 and can be considered an epistemological debate, about how we can know 'things' rather than an ontological one, that is to say a debate about what we can claim to know.

The chronicle of the disciplinary history of Internal Relations in terms of a series of great debates begins with the story of the first great debate between "idealists" (or "utopians") and "realists" in the 1930s and 1940s. This debate highlights idealist-realist dichotomy. It provides evidence of the actual academic controversy that took place after the World War II between rival idealist and realist scholars. The general framework in the First Great Debate narrative has become an integral element of the discipline, such that today, over eighty years after the first great debate allegedly occurred, the first great debate continues to occupy a central place in the field's historical consciousness.

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE

What do you understand as the Great Debates in international relations?

3.3   The Events of World War I and Idealism

While politics in the international system continued to be conducted within the realm of the realists approach as enunciated in the thesis of Thucydides, Hobbes and Machiavelli, the World War I broke up. The World War I, also known as the First World War, was a global war centred in Europe that began on 28 July 1914 and lasted until 11 November 1918. From the time of its occurrence until the approach of World War II in 1939, it was called, simply the World War or the Great War, and thereafter the First World War or World War I. In America it was initially called the European War. More than 9 million combatants

were killed: a scale of death impacted by industrial advancements, geographic stalemate and reliance on human wave attacks.

The war drew in all the world's economic great powers, which were assembled in two opposing alliances: the Allies (based on the Triple Entente of the United Kingdom, France and the Russian Empire) and the Central Powers of Germany and Austria-Hungary. Although Italy had also been a member of the Triple Alliance alongside Germany and Austria-Hungary, it did not join the Central Powers, as Austria-Hungary had taken the offensive against the terms of the alliance. These alliances were both reorganised and expanded as more nations entered the war: Italy, Japan and the United States joined the Allies, and the Ottoman Empire and Bulgaria the Central Powers. Ultimately, more than 70 million military personnel, including 60 million Europeans, were mobilised in this Great War in the history of the world. By the end of the war, four major imperial powers, the German, Russian, Austro-Hungarian and Ottoman empires, ceased to exist. The successor states of the former two lost substantial territory, while the latter two were dismantled. The map of Europe was redrawn, with several independent nations restored or created. It was the fifth-deadliest conflict in world history, paving the way for major political changes, including revolutions in many of the nations involved, as well as scholarly understanding of politics in the international arena.

After the war, the League of Nations was formed with the aim of preventing any repetition of such an appalling conflict. It was formed at the backdrop of the strong believe that it is possible to base a political system primarily on morality, and that the baser and more selfish impulses of humans can be muted in order to build national and international norms of behaviour that foment peace, prosperity, cooperation, and justice. The League of Nations is said to be based on moral principles and the convictions of Woodrow Wilson. Link finds that Wilson from his earliest days had imbibed the beliefs of his denomination - in the omnipotence of God, the morality of the Universe, a system of rewards and punishments and the notion that nations, as well as man, transgressed the laws of God at their peril, in the righteous duty of mankind to make the world a safe place (Link, 1956: 524-541).

The League of Nations was an intergovernmental organisation founded as a result of the Paris Peace Conference that ended the First World War. It was the first international organisation whose principal mission was to maintain world peace. Its primary goals, as stated in its Covenant, included preventing wars through collective security and disarmament, and settling international disputes through negotiation and arbitration. The thinking behind the League represented a fundamental shift from the realists understanding of the preceding hundred years.

The situational realities of the League proved that it lacked its own armed force and depended on the Great Powers to enforce its resolutions, keep to its economic sanctions, or provide an army when needed. However, the Great Powers were often reluctant to do so. Sanctions could hurt League members, so they were reluctant to comply with them. Its two most important members, Britain and France, were reluctant to use sanctions and even more reluctant to resort to military action on behalf of the League. When, during the Second Italo-Abyssinian War, the League accused Italian soldiers of targeting Red Cross medical tents, Benito Mussolini responded that "the league is very well when sparrows shout, but no good at all when eagles fall out" (Farhang, 2008: 2).

The league lasted for 27 years, but after a number of notable successes and some early failures in the 1920s, the league ultimately proved incapable of preventing aggression by the Axis powers in the 1930s. Germany withdrew from the league, as did Japan, Italy, Spain and others. The outbreak and escalation of World War II showed that the league had failed its primary purpose, which was to prevent any future world war. For the fact that it could not make powerful countries obey its rulings, it became evidently clear that, devoid application of force, collective security that would rely basically on pacifism approach of the league could not grapple with actors aggression in the international arena.

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE

To what extent did the League of Nations live up to the expectations of its founding fathers?

3.4 The End of World War II, the Cold War and the Rebirth of the Realists Postulations

It is a fact that each shift in world view paradigm is a product of a new historical experience. The rebirth of the realist paradigm in understanding, organising and explaining politics in the international system after the World War II was obviously influenced not only by argument, but by an insight into events that had unfolded at that particular time. The failure of the idealist paradigm to anticipate and prevent World War II gave way for the rebirth of realism as a new paradigm after 1945.

While it is agreed that realists are just as interested as idealists in conflict management, realists are less optimistic about the effectiveness of international law and organisation and about the extent of international cooperation that is possible. Realists focus on military

strategy, the elements of national power, and the nature of national interests more so than international law and organisation. From World War II they learned that the way to prevent future wars was a "balance of power" capable of deterring would-be aggressors or on a "concert of powers" willing to police the world. This paradigm would prevail throughout the years of the Cold War.

To understand the preponderance of the realist ideals in the Cold-War era one has to examine the events that happened during this period. First, the era had the world divided along two ideologies: the capitalist and the communist bloc, with two prominent enemy nations: the United States of America (USA) leading the capitalist bloc, and Union of Soviet Socialist Republic leading the socialist bloc. Second, the two enemy nations, also known as the two superpowers, engaged each other in intense struggle for power that ranged from making alliances to waging wars. They played havoc with conflict in different parts of the world. They used all types of weapons propaganda, diplomacy, arms and other tactics to malign each other. Thus, within this period, whatever happened (peace, proxy wars) between the relations of USA and USSR could be very eloquently explained through the kaleidoscopic lenses of the realists thinking.

While it endured, the Cold War seemed to have confirmed and validated many of the principles and predictions that the realists emphasised prior to and in the wake of the World War II, and invalidated the principles that idealists advocated after World War I. Realism found a hospitable home in which to flourish during the conflict-ridden fifty year system between 1939 to 1989, when lust for power, appetite for imperial expansion, struggle for hegemony, a superpower arms race and obsession with national interest were in strong evidence.

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE

Explain how the end of the Cold War led to the rebirth of idealism.

3.5   The Events in the Post-Cold War Era

The end of the Cold War in 1989 marked another end of a world war, fortunately, this time without bullets and bloodshed, and has ushered in another seismic shifts in the manner one can describe the international system. Nevertheless, one thing is certain: the strict sense of the application of power politics has become unpopular; hence what the world is witnessing is a novel fashion of world politics that realism had ignored. Instead, the world is witnessing new fashions that are not just increasingly applicable, appropriate and consistent with the tenets portrayed by Woodrow Wilson's idealism. These ideals read as if they

were items lifted from Wilson's "fourteen points" speech that was presented to the US Senate on January 22, 1917.

In that speech, Wilson dwelled on the march towards democracy with the belief that making the world safe for democracy would make the world fit and safe to live in. The manner in which countries over the world have embraced democracy has strengthened the confidence that democracy promotes peace. This exposes the fallacy of realism and support the validity of Wilson's idealism. Second, the economic underpinnings of world politics have received so much impetus. Specifically, more attention has been accorded to economic issues such as trade liberalisation as instrument for international peace. Third, the support for, adherence and advocacy of strengthening international law has grown visibly. Today, many nations voluntarily adhere to judgments of the International Court of Justice even in circumstance where compliance runs counter to their immediate self-interests; for example, Nigeria's compliance with the ICJ judgment over the ceding of Bakassi to Cameroon. Fourth, the role of international organisations as actors in international politics, especially in preservation of world peace has been on the increase. The United Nations and other international governmental organisations, as well as non-governmental organisations have become more potent in their capacity to preserve world peace. Fifth, arms control is no longer a mere slogan, but has gained more recognition as a viable path to collective security agenda in the international system.

Furthermore, responses to human repression have reinvigorated interest in concern about human rights. In the post Cold War era the entire world views with disgust the persecution of minority groups everywhere in the world. The United Nations has become a viable institutional approach for offering guarantee issues ranging from ethnic and religious conflicts to violation of minority rights in particular and human rights in general in a system where such violations pose a security to the entire international community. All issues mentioned amount to a rediscovery of approaches that idealism of Wilson had proposed after the World War I. Today, such approaches are been relied on to confront various strife and structural violence that have plagued the post - Cold War world.

4.0   CONCLUSION

There is a maxim that the more things change, the more they remain constant. At the outbreak of World War II, it appeared Wilson's views seemed to be at odds with the realities of his time. Yet, they were speaking directly to many of the realities of the post Cold-War international system. However, we must not rush into the conclusion that idealism is a triumph. The world would not remain where it is

today. Who knows what the next emerging world order might be? It would, therefore, be another utopian to ignore the reality of power in international relations, even though it is equally blind to rely on power alone. Thucydides, himself, appears to support neither the naive idealism of the Melians nor the cynicism of the Athenian realism.

5.0   SUMMARY

The field of International Relations experienced what is commonly described as great debates between opposing groups of scholars or paradigm shift in understanding what actually informs the behaviour of actors in politics in the international arena. Writers like Thucydides, have been hailed as the father of the realist political model of international relations. Although Thucydides clearly believed in realism, nevertheless, he also showed high interest in the role of ethics and morals in politics.

The "Great Debates" generally refer to a series of disagreements between international relations scholars. The first great debate between "idealists" (or "utopians") and "realists" in the 1930s and 1940s highlights idealist-realist dichotomy. The League of Nations, formed after the First World War, with the aim of preventing any repetition of such an appalling conflict is said to be based on moral principles and the convictions of Wilson's idealism.

The League lasted for 27 years, but after a number of notable successes and some early failures in the 1920s, it became evidently clear that, devoid of application of force, collective security that would rely basically on pacifism approach of the League could not grapple with actors' aggression in the international arena. As a result the League failed, hence it could not make powerful countries obey its rulings.

The failure of the idealists' paradigm to anticipate and prevent World War II gave way for the rebirth of realism as a new paradigm after 1945. This paradigm would prevail throughout the years of the Cold War. Nevertheless, the end of the Cold War in 1989 has marked another end of a world war, fortunately, this time without bullets and bloodshed, and has ushered in another seismic shifts in the manner one can describe the international system. Power politics has become unpopular. Instead, the world is witnessing new fashions that are increasingly applicable, appropriate and consistent with the tenets portrayed by Woodrow Wilson's idealism.

6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT

1. What was the main issue in the first great debate about the international system?
2. What was the prevailing world ideology in the post World War I era?
3. Discuss realism in the face of the Cold War.

7.0 REFERENCES/FURTHER READING

Link, A. S. (1956). "A Portrait of Wilson." *Virginia Quarterly Review.*

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MODULE 2   EVOLUTION OF THE MODERN INTERNATIONAL SYSTEM

Unit 1   The Classical International System (1648-1789)
Unit 2   The Transitional International System (1789-1945)
Unit 3   The Post World War II International System (1945-1989)
Unit 4   The Contemporary International System (1989-Date)

UNIT 1   THE CLASSICAL INTERNATIONAL SYSTEM (1648-1789)

CONTENTS

1.0   Introduction
2.0   Objectives
3.0   Main Content
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        3.2   The of Peace of Westphalia and the Birth of Nation-States
        3.3   Distribution of Power and Wealth among Nation-States
        3.4   Degree of Polarisation among Nation-States
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1.0   INTRODUCTION

Although this is not a history course, this unit would, nevertheless, rely on historical recounts to trace important trends over time, such as the thirty years wars that preceded the Westphalia Treaty and the emergence of the nation- state and the notion of sovereignty that have become the corner stone in the international state system, and the changes in the distribution of power among states. Our aim is not to provide a detailed chronology of event, but rather, to provide an insight into how certain aspects of the international system have changed significantly over the years while some have remained relatively constant. It is, in the words of Pearson and Rochester (1998), difficult for scholars to unanimously agree on how often international system has occurred and when one distinctive era has given way to another era.

This singular fact has created disagreement among scholars on where to start discussion about the evolution of the modern international system. For the purpose of this course we shall start our discussion of the evolution the modern international system by peeping into the past so as

to understand how the present has come about. For this reason, we shall look at the era in the history of the world politics that is referred to as a period of classical international system which was born out of the event of the Peace of Westphalia that brought to an end the thirty years' war. This is because this date is widely accepted as marking the birth of the international system characterised by the emergence of nation-states as the primary units of political entities on the globe that have become actors in the system.

2.0   OBJECTIVES

At the end of the unit, you should be able to:

- define the classical international system
- explain the pre-Westphalia world and the thirty years war
- discuss the concept of Peace of Westphalia and the birth of nation-states
- explain the distribution of power and wealth among nation-states in the classical international system.

3.0   MAIN CONTENT

3.1   The Pre-Westphalian World (The Thirty Years War)

Reading through the plethora of literature on the Thirty Years' War, you would observe that it is not easy to define its precise nature and its causes. However, it is no doubt that the Thirty Years War is one of the great conflicts of early modern European history. It consisted of a series of declared and undeclared wars which raged through the years 1618-1648 throughout central Europe, involving most of the countries of Europe. This was one of the longest and most destructive conflicts in European history, and one of the longest continuous wars in modern history.

During the Thirty Years War, there was on the one hand the House of the Habsburg which included Holy Roman Emperors Ferdinand II and Ferdinand III together with their Spanish cousin Philip IV. On the other hand was the House of Austria which included the Danish, Dutch and, above all, France and Sweden. It was between the Houses that the conflict would rage. In addition to its international dimensions the Thirty Years War was also a German civil war. The principalities which made up Germany took up arms for or against the Habsburgs or, most commonly, both at different times during the war's 30 years. Again, the Thirty Years War was, at least in part, a religious war among Catholics, Lutherans and Calvinists.

In terms of actors in the system, the pre Westphalia years had been markedly different in that the actors were the pope, monarchs, princes and potentates who were loosely connected in vague and often contradictory hierarchical orders. The sense in which the French king Louis XIV declared that 'l'étatc'est moi' (I am the state) was very much true of other monarchs who participated in an international system that was very much personalised.

By the end of the war, major consequences were recorded which includes the devastation of entire regions, denuded by the foraging armies. Famine and disease significantly decreased the population of the German states, Bohemia, the Low Countries, and Italy; most of the combatant powers were bankrupted. The War was ended with the treaties of Osnabrück and Münster, as was to be contained in the wider Peace of Westphalia.

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE

Who were the parties to the 30 years war in Europe?

3.2   The Peace of Westphalia and the Birth of Nation-States

No exact definition of borders can be given to territorial landmass of Westphalia because the name "Westphalia" was applied to several different entities in history. There is, however, a general consensus that Westphalia or Westphalia is a region in Germany which encompasses the cities of Arnsberg, Bielefeld, Osnabrück, Dortmund, Minden, and Münster. Westphalia is known for the 1648 Peace of Westphalia which ended the Thirty Years' War, as the two treaties were signed in Münster and Osnabrück.

The Peace of Westphalia is not a literal moment of political transformation but, rather, it symbolises a change. It was a series of peace treaties signed between May and October 1648 in Osnabrück and Münster. These treaties ended the Thirty Years' War (1618–1648) in the entire Holy Roman Empire, and the Eighty Years' War (1568–1648) between Spain and the Dutch Republic, with Spain formally recognising the independence of the Dutch Republic. It also involved Ferdinand III, of the House of Habsburg, the Kingdom of France, the Swedish Empire, the Dutch Republic, and sovereigns of the free imperial cities. Two major events came about as the result of the treaties. First, the signing of the Peace of Münster between the Dutch Republic and the Kingdom of Spain on 30 January 1648, officially ratified in Münster on 15 May 1648. Second, the signing of two complementary treaties on 24 October 1648, namely: The Treaty of Münster (Instrumentum Pacis Monasteriensis, IPM), concerning the Holy Roman Emperor and France

and their respective allies; and the Treaty of Osnabrück (Instrumentum Pacis Osnabrugensis, IPO), concerning the Holy Roman Emperor, the Empire and Sweden and their respective allies (Repgen, 1998).

Suffice to mention that the treaties resulting from the big diplomatic congress, ushered in a new system of political order in central Europe, later called Westphalian sovereignty. The Westphalian sovereignty was based upon the concept of a sovereign state governed by a sovereign and establishing a prejudice in international affairs against interference in another nation's domestic business. The treaty did not only signal the end of the perennial and destructive wars that had ravaged Europe, but it also represented the triumph of sovereignty over empire, of national rule over the personal writ of the Habsburgs. This means that the Peace of Westphalia symbolised putting one of the final and most decisive nails in the coffin of the medieval claim that all European states were subject to the spiritual leadership of the pope and the political leadership of the Holy Roman Emperor. The treaties' regulations also stood as a precursor to later large international treaties and thereby the development of international law in general.

It is important to bear in mind that from long historical evidence, nation-state is a relatively young institution in human affairs. Pearson and Rochester (1998), maintain that nation-states are less than 400 years old compared to, at least, 5,000 years of recorded human history. Before then human beings had been organised in other kinds of political units such as tribes, city-states and empires.

Bearing this in mind, the peace of Westphalia was a significant milestone in the emergence of the modern international system because it introduced key revolutionary and system changing features in the conduct of international affairs. In the first instance, it was only after 1648 that there appeared on the scene the modern state around which international contacts were to be built. Westphalia's contribution to the emergence of the modern system is perhaps best captured by the birth of the nation-state. The nation-states were assigned characteristics which include a single central government exercising sovereignty; a fixed population; and a defined territory. The nation-states are said to be sovereign because they constitute a government that had supreme decision-making authority within the boundaries of the territorial unit. It also would not acknowledge higher authority outside those boundaries. The sovereignty of nation-states also presupposes that internally the state could claim monopoly of used of legitimate legal force to compel their obedience. Externally, a state could also claim monopoly right to act on behalf of her people. Thus, when one examines the international system of the classical era, one would find a relatively small number of

actors involved in international politics such England, France and other European nation-states.

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE

Why is the peace of Westphalia regarded as a significant milestone in the emergence of the modern international system?

3.3   Distribution of Power and Wealth among Nation-states

In the classical international system, though there existed independent entities outside Europe, such as China, Japan and United States of America, international politics of that era was essentially European politics. Power in terms of military, and other related factors was roughly distributed evenly among the dominant European states, including England, France, Austria, Sweden, Spain, Turkey, Prussia and Russia.

The European states were not only similar in power capability but also in terms of wealth or economic strength. In an era when the economies of the dominant powers were largely feudal and agrarian, coupled with the fact that Industrial Revolution was not yet fully underway, all states had similar sources of wealth, making it difficult for one to discern the difference between them. We need to add that Power and wealth do go hand in hand. Thus, insofar as power is exercised mainly through military prowess, it means the military prowess would depend heavily on economic resources for support. As such, rulers, partly because the resources available at their disposal made them equal in wealth possession, could hardly embark on grand hegemonic ambitions or expansionist agenda against one another.

On the other hand, it was also the possibility that a given state might not be satisfied with its power or wealth position and could threaten the sovereignty of other states and upset the equilibrium by engaging in empire building. In the absence of any centralised political authority in the international system, order among states was to be maintained primarily through the "balance of power." Thus, "balance of power" was the main instrument for stability in international system. At the core of the "balance of power" strategy is the idea that states' security is enhanced when military capabilities are distributed among states such that no one state is strong enough to dominate all others. If one state gains inordinate power, the strategy predicts that it will take advantage of its strength and attack weaker states. This naturally provided an incentive for the states threatened to unite in a defensive coalition. There is the opposite of "balance of power" which is called "bandwagoning" which refers to alignment with the source of danger (Walt, 1987: 17).

With the strategy of "balance of power" in the system it was hoped that any aggressively minded state would be deterred by the prospects of coming up against a coalition of states having equal or superior power. In case the deterrence failed, and an attack occurred, the coalition of states would be expected to fight and defeat the aggressor. For this reason all the European monarchs did not just understand the "Rules of the Game" surrounding international politics in that era. They were conscious not to interfere in the internal affairs of another country in any way that might destabilise monarchical institutions. They also would not allow any one nation-state to achieve dominant power in the system.

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE

What do you understand as "Balance of Power?"

3.4   Degree of Polarisation among Nations

Polarisation in the international system is any of the various ways in which power is distributed within the system. It describes the nature of the international system at any given period of time. Polarity also refers to the number of blocs of states that exert power in the international system. The type of international system at any given period of the world history is completely dependent on the distribution of power and influence of states in a region or internationally.

To a great extent, polarisation in the classical international system was less complicated. The system was flexible in the sense that the European powers and other actors in the system did not fall into rigid armed camps at opposite poles, poised against each other. Rather, the actors were amendable to making and breaking alliances frequently as the situation warranted. For this reason, the classical international system, though not perfect, worked fairly effectively (Pearson and Rochester, 1998) as a means of maintaining systemic stability. Thus, the mutual security concern of the actors made it seemed as if they were working consciously to maintain stability in the system.

Pearson and Rochester also attributed the smooth operation of the balance of power mechanism and flexibility in the classical international system to two major factors. One is that decision-making was concentrated in hands of few rulers in the era. As such, decisions about making and breaking alliances would not suffer bottlenecks; hence there was no necessity of chains of consultations for approval of decisions before they would be implemented. Second, the classical international system did not witness ideological camps among the actors as it was in the Cold War era. Ideological cleavages could make some alliances impossible because of incompatibility among alliance partners. Such

incompatibilities could, thus, become an inhibition to the shifting of alliances or re-alliances for the maintenance of balance of power calculations.

3.5   Degree of Interdependence

"Interdependence" is a word that describes a relationship in which each member of the relationship is mutually relying on the other. This concept differs from a dependence relationship, where some members are dependent and some are not. In an interdependent relationship, participants may be emotionally, economically, ecologically and/or morally reliant on and responsible to each other. In terms of state relationship, an interdependent relationship can arise between two or more states. Interdependence can be a common ground between two states in meeting their aspirations.

The concept of interdependence became popularised in the field of international relations through the work of Richard N. Cooper. Robert Keohane and Joseph Nye have come to push it a step further and analyse how international politics is transformed by interdependence. They maintain that during interdependence, states and their fortunes are inextricably tied together. They also recognised the fact that various and complex transnational connections and interdependency between states and societies are increasing, while the use of military force and power balancing are decreasing, even though the two remain important.

For the fact that the classical international system was cosmopolitan and elitist oriented (Pearson and Rochester, 1998), the degree of interdependence among entities was not high. Whereas the elites of Europe traveled, mingled and discussed freely across national boundaries, the masses knew little about the world outside their towns and villages, and much less outside their national boundaries. The classical system was such that nation-states were fairly self-sufficient and self-contained economic unit, depending minimally on international commerce. The flow of cultural and other diffusion process was not yet developed. Again, the primitive communications technology kept one corner of the globe insulated from the development in the other corner such that there was little or no form of interaction.

The balance of power that kept the world mutual concern was also done in such a way that the primitive nature of the weapons of the era kept the allies apart and would not allow for coordinated military planning and training. They did not share the common bond to know that a fatal decision by one side could mean annihilation for both. In short, the classical international system was characterised by low degree of interdependence among states in terms of interconnectedness. However,

many of these conditions started changing towards the end of the eighteen century, ushering in a new era that created a new international system that gave more room for interdependence among nation-states.

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE

What do you understand by interdependence in the international system?

4.0   CONCLUSION

Form the fore going, it can be extrapolated that the classical international system was one that the masses, or let us say, individuals and corporate bodies were largely bystanders in the politics that was going on. They had no influence or vested interests in outcome of events. In cases of conflicts and wars, their lot in the outcome of such events would not likely change much no matter what the fate of their sovereign was or even who their sovereign would happen be.

5.0   SUMMARY

In this unit we have treated the classical international system which came about after the thirty years war and the signing of the Peace of Westphalia Treaty. We noted that the Thirty Years War was multi-dimensional. In terms of actors in the system, the pre Westphalia years had been markedly different in that the actors were the pope, monarchs, princes and potentates. The War was ended with the treaties of Osnabrück and Münster, as was to be contained in the wider Peace of Westphalia. The Peace of Westphalia is not a literal moment of political transformation but, rather, symbolises change. The treaties resulting from the big diplomatic congress, ushered in a new system of political order in Central Europe, later called Westphalian sovereignty. The Westphalian sovereignty was based upon the concept of a sovereign state governed by a sovereign and establishing a prejudice in international affairs against interference in another nation's domestic business.

Balance of power was the main instrument for stability in international system. To a great extent polarisation in the classical international system was less complicated, as it was flexible. For the fact that the classical international system was cosmopolitan and elitist oriented (Pearson and Rochester, 1998), the degree of interdependence among entities was not high. However, many of these conditions underwent fundamental change towards the end of the eighteen century, ushering in a new era that created a new international system with more room for interdependence among nation-states.

6.0   TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT

1.   Discuss the major features of the classical international system.
2.   Explain the concept of the Peace of Westphalia.

7.0   REFERENCES/FURTHER READING

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UNIT 2   THE   TRANSITIONAL   INTERNATIONAL SYSTEM (1789-1945)

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1.0   INTRODUCTION

The period which we intend to discuss in this unit is referred to as 'transitional' in the historical development of international system because of its retention of features of the preceding era and its foundational value in the emergence of some of the key features of the proceeding one. Its distinctiveness is therefore founded precisely on its constituting a bridge between the classical and post two World Wars era. We have noted in the preceding unit that nation-states were the core actors in the international system. This means the transitional international system retained and consolidated the state centric conception of the international political system. This era did not just consolidate the state-centric concept of international system, it also witnessed a proliferation of states within the system and aided the gradual incorporation of other actors, notably individuals into it.

2.0   OBJECTIVES

At the end of this unit, you should be able to:

•   identify the general context in which the transnational international system emerged
•   explain the actors in the transitional international system
•   explain the degree of polarisation, interdependence and distribution of wealth and power in the transitional international system.

3.0 MAIN CONTENT

3.1 The Emergence of the Transitional International System

Historically, the French Revolution was a major turning point in the evolution of the international system. The emergence of the transitional international system can be linked to the events of the revolution. The fact is that, even though the French Revolution had been preceded by the American Revolution and the Oliver Cromwell's constitutional movement in the 17th century England, the French Revolution had the most profound systemic redefinition of the international system in many ramifications. One, it was important because it occurred at the very heart of continental Europe and a nation-state that was a major power in the international system. Second, it was also based on universal values as its theoretical foundations were far from a localised resistance to authoritarianism, but an affirmation of the very essence of humanity expressed in the universal values such as freedom, equality, human right and democracy.

The transitional international system also emerged as a period that would lay the foundations of much of what exists in the contemporary system. It was built not just on old issues like stateism, sovereignty, international law and self determination, but it also created new issues like increased global communication, ideological conflicts, and population explosion. It was also confronted with horrors of the atomic bomb. In addition, even though it was still lop sided with most of the states being located in Europe, the transitional international system moved the international system from its status as been essentially crowded by European state to become a worldwide international system. The emergence of transitional international system was, as well, an emergence of the era of "nationalism." The emergence of Napoleon in France brought in the phenomenon of nationalism that strengthened the sociological and materialist base of the state and cemented its dominance as a factor in the international political system. The new nationalism was based on a firmer relationship between government and the people over which it presided. This, in essence, created a greater emotional bond between the two, and gave way to greater involvement of the masses in the political life of their various countries. The emergence of such militant nationalism in Napoleon's France had unintended consequence of inducing counter-nationalistic tendencies in many other states of Europe. Its utility in mobilising resources for the advancement of interests and the defense of territory became a major cause of its spread all over Europe in the Napoleonic period. The afore-mentioned situational realities became responsible for the emergence of new features in the international system which would transform the

system by giving it a new look that one would conveniently name it as the transitional international system.

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE

Explain how the French Revolution became a major factor in the emergence of the transitional international system.

3.2   The Actors in the Transitional International System

3.2.1 Nation-States

As mentioned earlier, the transitional international system created new issues in its emergence. One of these issues in the system was the proliferation of states within the system. The tendency of "nationalism" invariably led to the appearance of more states like the states in Latin America that gained independence from Spain in the early 19th century and the unification of culturally similar groups of erstwhile loose affiliation like the Confederation of German speaking and Italian speaking peoples that formed the modern states of Germany and Italy. In addition, even though nationalism led to the liberation of some peoples like the Romanians from Turkish rule in 1878, it also triggered off imperialism that resulted in the colonisation of Africa and other places.

The colonisation and the relationship that inevitably emerged between African states and their European colonisers set the context for Africa's later cooption into the international system. This means that the new states of Latin America, the Romanians as well as the co-opted nation-states of Africa would add up to increase the number of actors in the transitional international system. Apart from the increase in the nation-states actors within Europe, the scope of international system in this era expanded. This means that the actors in the system were no more limited to Europe, but were spread throughout the globe.

Suffice to add to that, Russia, as a semi-European state and a semi-powerful member of the international system throughout the nineteen century, even though beaten by Japan earlier in 1905, was able to take on special significance as a world actor after the Bolshevik Revolution of 1917 that created the Union of Soviet States Republic (USSR).

Another development was the incorporation of other factors in the politics of international system. It has been noted earlier noted that the new nationalism created a firmer relationship between government and the people over which it presided, as well as gave room for greater involvement of the masses in the international political life of their various countries. The implication is that leaders had to become more

sensitive to public opinion in the formulation of foreign policy in a way that their predecessors in the classical period could not. This aided the gradual consideration of public opinion as a major factor in the conduct of foreign policy of nation-state.

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE

Discuss the proliferation of nation-states as actors in the modern international system.

3.2.1 Non-State Actors

Again, the horrors of the two world wars within the era laid another foundation for another international order that emerged after 1945. Non-state actors like international and multinational organisations, for instance, became increasingly saddled with issues like economic exchange and the questions of war and peace. This was to mark the beginning of active involvement of individuals as citizens of nation-states and corporate bodies in the conduct of international politics. In particular, intergovernmental organisations (IGOs) appeared on the scene, ranging from the modest creation of the Central Commission for the Navigation of the Rhine in 1815 to the Universal Postal Union and International Telegraph, the League of Nations and ultimately the United Nations. Quite a number of such organisations were developed on regional and global basis.

A special category of non-state actors, the multinational corporations (MNCs) also became significant as actors in world affairs. These category of actors emerged as a result of the inability of state actors to deal with issues patterning to interstates commerce dominated by commercial enterprises that were expanding beyond national borders. Therefore, the IGOs and the MNCs became instruments for regulating and maintaining uniform rules and orderliness as regard economic activities in the international system. Thus, just as wars existed along side with interdependence, so was nationalism accompanied by the emergence of "trans-nationalism" as non-state actors grew and organised themselves across national binderies.

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE

Why are the multinational companies significant actors in the international system?

3.3   Distribution of Power and Wealth among Nation-States

The era of transitional international system was the period industrial revolution got fully under way creating wealth for some parts of the world and poverty for others. Even though the industrial revolution was essentially based in Europe, two highly industrialised non-European states, the United States (after it defeated Spain in 1898) and Japan (after it defeated Russia in 1905) also emerged to signal the first real challenge to European domination of the international political system.

In the real sense, industrialisation created wide disparities in living standards and of course power configurations among nation-states. With this development, the transitional international system saw a growing disparity in wealth between societies in the Northern Hemisphere and those in the Southern Hemisphere. Although, one would argue that the "rich-poor gap" had historically always existed within societies, the "rich-poor gap" that started to form among societies during the transitional era was unprecedented. The industrial revolution, while it bypassed the Southern half of the globe, it provided rapid income growth and improved living standard for all categories of citizens (the formerly rich and poor) of the Northern Hemisphere, while those of the South were practically untouched.

Furthermore, industrialisation did not only skew the distribution of wealth in favour of certain states but it, further, skewed the distribution of power in favour of same states. This is evident where the new economic technology was readily convertible into military advantage. Not just that, the transitional era, consequently, witnessed the emergence of two highly industrialised non-European states as major world powers. The United States, after defeating Spain in 1898 and Japan, with the defeat of Russia in 1905, became super forces to contend with in the international system.

Perhaps, the most salient feature about the distribution of power in the transitional system was the gradual passing of the domination of the system by European states. At a point, the European powers controlled eighty per cent of the entire territory of the globe. This represented the peak of the European-centred international system, as the European civilisation overshadowed the earth. However, the decline of the European domination started unfolding between 1900 and 1945 – the years of confusion in the world affairs. By the end of the confusion not only was the continental Europe eclipsed by USA and USSR, but other non-European power centres such as China were already looming on the horizon as well. On a general note, except for the states in the Southern Hemisphere, one can say that power and wealth was distributed fairly even among the several states in the transitional international system.

3.4   Degree of Polarisation among Nation-State

In the history of the evolution of the international system, the transitional period has witnessed extreme polarisation among nation-states. Apart from the emergence of non-European powers into main stream of world politics, which by implication augmented the number of actors, the transitional international system, for first the time, witnessed ideological conflict which was expressed in the rivalry between socialist and the capitalist political cum economic ideologies, as well as the rivalry between the forces of Napoleon's nationalism against the forces of the conservative monarchs across Europe. The ideological rivalry was to combine with the forces of nationalism to create an international system that produced hardened polarisation among nation-states.

As we have earlier noted in the section on the emergence of the transitional international system, the system was infested with nationalism which emanated from the French Revolution. While the army of Napoleon was seeking to export the ideals of the revolution across Europe, the armies of the conservative monarchs wanted to block the whirl wind of nationalism across Europe. This ended in polarising the international system between the forces of Napoleon's nationalism and the conservative monarchs.

In another dimension, Woodrow Wilson, as the president of USA and Lenin, as the Leader of the USSR got entangled in exchange of bitter diatribes in favour or against capitalism and communism. While the United States president pursued capitalism as best political economic policy, Lenin in USSR saw capitalism as evil in the course of devouring humanity. Vice-versa, while Lenin was imbued with the communist philosophy, the USA saw communism as tyrannical and a crime against humanity, as well as an affront on human freedom. To exacerbate the situation of world polarisation, while Benito Mussolini in Italy was propagating the spirit of National Socialism, Adolf Hitler was assiduously battling to conquer the world to establish the supremacy of fascism.

Though, arch rivalry ensued among states, the international system was fairly flexible (Pearson and Rochester, 1998: 57) as states were not prevented by the national rivalries nor ideological differences from keeping open options in their formations of alliances. So the international system was said to be multi-polar. The ideological conflicts never degenerated to open wars in the international plane. The battle lines in the few wars that were waged were not drawn clearly along ideological lines. For example, Britain, France and USA who were free democracies joined forces with the conservative Russia against another conservative regime of Germany and Austria in the World War II.

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE

What do you understand by multi-polarity in the international system?

3.5 Degree of Interdependence among Nation-States

The dilemma of improved technology during the transitional international system was two-plunged. On the one hand it plunged the system into two devastating world wars that were to sound the death knell of the transitional era. On the other, it also enthroned greater interdependence among states. The era of transitional international system witnessed the flourishing of interdependence among nation-states, especially in the area of the economy.

It is observed that, actually, economic interdependence among European states had started flourishing before the World War I. Some people even called that era as "the beautiful epoch of interdependence" (Pearson and Dorchester, 1998:59). Therefore, it would be rational to think that war among them could not be contemplated, lest it would totally disrupt their economies. Thus, when it happened, it only led to the paradoxical conclusion that war and economic interdependence could exist in the same system. In any case, this paradox had only proven that political impulse can be stronger than economic imperatives. In fact, in the interwar interval between 1919 and 1939, the economic interdependence among the industrialised states made the impact of the "Great Depression" to be felt worldwide, and also exacerbated the tension that resulted in the World War II.

4.0 CONCLUSION

A remarkable metamorphosis of the international system occurred in the era of the transitional international system that spanned from 1789 to 1945. It was out the shadows of this era that the contemporary international system would emerge. The system which began essentially as Eurocentric gradually expanded to become a world system. However, one obvious thing to note is that amidst all the changes, especially the interdependence, unevenness has remained preponderant. The gap between the states of the North and those in the South is even becoming more and more noticeable.

5.0 SUMMARY

The period 1789-1945 is referred to as 'transitional' in the historical development of international system because of its retention of features of the preceding era and its foundational value in the emergence of some of the key features of the proceeding one. The era came about as a result

of several factors such as the French Revolution and Napoleon's nationalism. This was an era of increased global communication, ideological conflicts, population explosion, as well as the horrors of the atomic bomb. In addition, the transitional international system moved the international system from its status as been essentially crowded by European states to become a worldwide international system.

One of the new issues in the system was that it witnessed a proliferation of states within the system; the cooption of colonised African states into the international system; the incorporation of other actors other than the nation-states in the politics of international system and the greater involvement of the masses in the international political life of their various countries. The implication is that leaders became more sensitive to public opinion in the formulation of foreign policy and non state actors like international and multinational organisations became saddled with issues like economic exchange and the questions of war and peace. Again, industrialisation created wide disparities in living standards and of course power configurations among nation-states. There emerged a growing disparity in wealth between societies in the Northern Hemisphere and those in the Southern Hemisphere. The world also witnessed extreme polarisation in the history of the evolution of the international system. Despite all this, the transitional international system enthroned greater interdependence among states. The era of transitional international system witnessed the flourishing of interdependence among nation-states, especially in the area of the economy.

6.0   TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT

1.   Discuss the transitional international system.
2.   What are the main differences between the transnational international system and classical international system?
3.   Write short notes on the actors in the transitional international system.

7.0   REFERENCES/FURTHER READING

Pearson, F. & Rochester, M.J. (1997). *International Relations: The Global Conditions in the Twenty-First Century.* New York: The McGraw-Hill Companies, Inc.

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UNIT 3   THE POST WORLD WAR II INTERNATIONAL SYSTEM (1945-1989)

CONTENTS

1.0   INTRODUCTION

There is a general consensus among scholars of international relations that the World War II of 1945, during which the atomic bombs were dropped by the United States in the towns of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, ushered in another face in the history of politics among nations. To this effect, compared to the preceding era in the system, there is no doubt that this era was remarkable in permutations. The post World War II, built on the ashes of the World War II was inherent with several issues which would be a cause for rethink among world leaders or create more complications in the system. It is doubtless to say that the world was to face newer structures as a result of the collapse created by the World War II. In this unit, we shall discuss the salient features of the postwar system as seen in issues such as the "superpowers" and "bipolarity." We shall also discuss the fissures in the postwar system, as well as the cracks and the final collapse of the postwar system. This discussion would help us understand how the international system has fared in the postwar era, noting the elements of continuity from the preceding era and the major changes that have affected world politics even today.

2.0   OBJECTIVES

At the end of this unit, you should be able to:

- explain the postwar international system
- define what is meant by "superpowers"

- define bipolarity in the international system
- explain the factors that were responsible for the collapse of the postwar international system.

3.0   MAIN CONTENT

3.1   The Distinctive Features of the Postwar International System

The end of World War II marked a decisive shift in the global system. After the war, only two great world powers remained: the United States and the Soviet Union. Although some other important states existed, almost all states were understood within the context of their relations with the two superpowers. This global system was called bipolar because the system centred on two superpowers. It is the notions of superpowers and that of bipolarity that we shall discuss here.

3.1.1 Superpowers

The invention of the atomic bomb and several other weapons of mass killing whose effects were seen in 1945, during the World War II, had tremendous consequences on international politics. This brought about two developments that were unprecedented in the history of world politics that made the postwar international system completely different from the previous ones. The first impact to be noted at the end of the World War II was the emergence of two states among the states in the world as the dominant powers in the international system. The USA and USSR came to tagged as "superpowers" so as to differentiate them from the other powerful nations.

A superpower is a state with a dominant position in the international system which has the ability to influence events and its own interests and project power on a worldwide scale to protect those interests. A superpower is traditionally considered to be a step higher than a great power. Alice Lyman Miller defines a superpower as "a country that has the capacity to project dominating power and influence anywhere in the world, and sometimes, in more than one region of the globe at a time, and so may plausibly attain the status of global hegemony." This term was, first, applied to the Great British Empire, the United States of America and the Soviet Union. Following World War II, the British Empire's superpower status was transferred to the United States. The United States and the Soviet Union (USSR) came to be generally regarded as the two superpowers, and confronted each other in the Cold War.

However, France and Britain were not categorised under the term "superpower." Rather, they were tagged as "second tier powers." This was so because France and Britain suffered economic setbacks as a result of the World War II. Germany and Japan who suffered military defeat, and China who had not yet developed an industrial base, were regarded as the Bottom tier of states.

What was fascinating and distinguishing about USA and USSR from the rest of nation-states was the intimidating nuclear arsenal possessed by the two states during and after the World War II. Nevertheless, it is asserted that the USSR was not able to attain nuclear equality with the USA until 1970s. Actually, it has been established that USA was said to have enjoyed monopoly of atomic technology until 1949, when USSR acquired her first atomic weapon to square up with USA. By then, USA was to have already acclaimed, military superiority in the international system (Pearson and Dorchester, 1997: 607). Thus, of the two superpowers USA was to be regarded in the international system as "first among equals." By 1950 it was said to have assumed hegemony in economic terms, with the largest military spending, financial reserves, as well as industrial production.

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE

Define the term "superpowers."

3.1.2 Bipolarity

Polarity in international relations is any of the various ways in which power is distributed within the international system. This term describes the nature of the international system at any given period of time. One generally distinguishes four types of systems: Unipolarity, Bipolarity, Tripolarity, and Multipolarity, for four or more centres of power. The type of system is completely dependent on the distribution of power and influence of states in a region or internationally. Bipolarity, on the other hand, is the distribution of power in which two states have the majority of economic, military, and cultural influence internationally or regionally. Often, spheres of influence would develop.

The Aftermath of World War II was the beginning of a new era. It was defined by the decline of the old great powers and the rise of new world powers. This development made the international system to witness novel alignment configuration, making the world to be extremely polarised. The world witnessed the East-West conflict and the Cold War which was organised between the competing ideologies cum superpowers. One bloc, referred to as the West, included the USA and other economically developed capitalist democracies of Western

Europe, as well as Japan Canada, Australia, and New Zealand. The other bloc, referred to as the East, consisted of USSR as well as the developed communist states of Eastern Europe and the Communist China. There was a great struggle between the two blocs to dominate the world. This system was labeled as "bipolar."

The intricacies of the bipolar system between the United States and USSR were that the entire Cold War was not just about them, but it was about the independence and safety of those not involved as well. In effect, European countries were often used as gambling chips, and third world countries were often targets for consumption by either democracy or communism. The USA and USSR organised the world blocs of opposing alliances. The members of each bloc became closely linked militarily and economically. The members of each bloc of alliance were military and economically dependent either on the USA or USSR. These members complied rigidly to the policies outlined by the leader of such a bloc. The other states in the system tended, also, to move towards any of the two poles.

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE

What is bipolarity?

3.1.3 The Nonaligned States in the Postwar System

In the postwar international system characterised by bipolarity, almost all the nation-states of the world were intricately linked to one bloc or the other. For example, a lot of states in Asia and Africa were already colonial territories of the Western bloc, while Latin American nation-states were commandeered by USA. USSR, on her part formed alliances with several countries outside Europe. In the midst of all these alliances, countries like Yugoslavia, India and Egypt remained neutral. As events took their course, even though power distribution never changed, the alignment patterns among states gave rise to another form of polarisation which is known as "tripolarity." The "tri-polarity" was as a result of proliferation of newly independence states from the African continent and Asia. Many of the newly independent states were to be found mostly in the Southern Hemisphere. Even though these states did not form alliance between themselves, their position in the existing polarity was seen as creating a third "pole", hence, they chose to be "nonaligned" in the face of the East-West confrontation.

The posture of the non-aligned states in the system was, no doubt, to become a force to be reckoned with the international system as they met in Indonesia and called for an end to colonialism. The end of colonialism also created other waves in the scheme of things in the

international system; the large mass and the population that was, before 1945, under colonialism achieved self-government. The number of nation-states in the system doubled, as well as introducing diversified cultures in the system. This was a factor that could cause a dramatic change in world affairs.

With the new states in the international system, USA and USSR tried to recruit them into their respective camps. Their efforts did not yield much, because, as Pearson and Dorchester (1997) point out, the two superpowers tended to jeopardise one another efforts in the recruitment exercise. In addition, the nationalists' traits of the new states resisted the superpowers from cajoling or coercing them into their various camps. The general hatred the new states harbored against colonial rule was a major driving force to put off the new states as regard the influence of the superpowers. The growth of the nonaligned states was a major factor that would combine with other factors to endanger the power structure and the alliance structure of the international system, leading to its final collapse.

3.2   The Collapse of the Postwar System

3.2.1 Fissures in Bipolarity and Alliances

It has been observed that the very existence of nuclear weapons which brought the notion of "superpowers" and "bipolarity" in the international system at the onset of the postwar era, again, interacted with other issues, as time went on, to bring a diffusion of power and the disintegration of alliances in the system and its ultimate collapse. The disintegration started as a minor disagreement to crystallise to a major one. On the western side, for instance, USA took side with USSR over the Suez Crisis of 1956 against her very allies – Britain and France. USA admonished France and Britain for their military action against Egypt and asked for their withdrawal from the Egyptian territory. This led to strained relation and suspicion of the commitment of the USA to the alliance.

At the same time, the Eastern block was also to witness its crisis following the Hungarian Revolution. The Hungarian Revolution threatened to remove Hungry from the influence of USSR but the revolt was forestalled and Hungary was forced to remain in the sphere of the Soviet influence. This singular act, according to Ghita Ionesco (1965), created doubt among members of the Eastern bloc alliance regarding the true nature of the Soviet fraternity towards them.

Finally, by 1956, the USSR called for of the mutual "peaceful coexistence" between the Superpowers because it became mindful of the

devastation that could be caused by the escalation of the confrontation between the two blocs. USSR was able to anticipate the deadly result that any nuclear confrontation between United States and USSR could cause the entire humanity on the face of the globe. By the 1960s observers had prophesied the end of the Cold War because it became obvious that rapprochement between the blocs could be attained as nations were growing more and more and less concerned military aggression in world politics. The result was the gradual loosening of ties within the blocs. France under De Gaule was the first to loosen ties with her allies as De Gaule proclaimed that France was not to have permanent enemies but permanent interests. As if that was not enough, Turkey and Greece, two members of the Western alliance, went to war against Cyprus. In the communist axis, Nicolae Ceausescu of Romania and Mao Tse-Tsug in China and other Communist party leaders in Europe, and as members of the Eastern bloc, started calling for "polycentrism" in place of a single party line. By early 1970s, it became clear that there was more intra-bloc fighting than inter-bloc fighting.

The cracks in the alliances was also manifesting in the "superpower" status itself. By 1970 more states were able to acquire nuclear weapons. So the "superpowers club" expanded, neutralising the monopoly of USA and USSR in this realm. In addition, as more states acquired nuclear weapons, the more they realised that the nuclear arsenal that had conferred superpowers status on USA and USSR was, after all, proving unusable. To this effect, the world began to question the relevance of the nuclear arsenal to the day-to-day exercise of power in the international system. Moreover, the USA which was unchallengeably leading the stockpiling of nuclear weapons was humiliated by two small Asian countries- North Korea during the Pueblo incident in 1968 and Vietnam, during the Indochina War that ended in 1972.

In addition, at a point in time, it was no more the military might, but rather economic strength of the USSR and USA that gave them their superiority in the world system. Even then, the economy of other countries was also improving. For example, Germany and Japan had revived their economy and were fast learning how to explore economic situation to their advantage. Furthermore, oil also became a major instrument in bargains in the international arena. The oil embargo during the Yom Kippur War in 1973- 1974 can better illustrate this. The industrialised nations became more and more dependent on oil. Incidentally, it is the less developed countries that possess over 80 per cent of the world oil supplies to the world. Any cut in the supply of oil to the industrialised nations in the west could spell doom; since the powers of the oil producing states waxed stronger.

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE

What do you understand as tripolarity?

3.2.2 The Collapse of the Postwar System

The collapse of the postwar international system became imminent in the late 1970s when the superpower status of USA and USSR became tarnished and also thrown into scrutiny by two events in1979. First, the Soviet experienced a disgrace in Afghanistan. Ten thousand of the Soviet troops were defeated in Afghanistan in their bid to support a Marxist regime against Muslim rebels who wanted to oust the Marxist regime. The Soviet troops were defeated there. To worsen matters, in the process, the Soviet regime itself was toppled back at home. Meanwhile, the USA had her frustration when fifty-two of their Embassy personnel in Tehran were held hostage by the militant Islamic regime of Iran. The USA suffered much humiliation in a manner that was unprecedented. The two events led to a confirmation of the inadequacies of military might in calculations in international system.

In another dimension, one would say that up to an extent the history of the international system was dominated by the discussions on bipolarity and superpower. Nevertheless, the oil embargo episode and other events showed that other sets of issues could not only compete for attention in the international system, but that fluid and complicated alignments could be on such issues. For example, the North-South confrontation, pitting the rich against the poor, came to take on greater importance in the postwar system than the East-West axis of conflict. In the events, the "Group of 77" less developed states came to make strident demands for a "New International Economic Order," using their large numbers in the United Nations General Assembly to push through a "Charter on Economic Right and Duties of States" and other measures designed to give them more economic and political clout. This was to continue to fester and remain a major source of tension in the international system.
Besides, other issues such as ecology, trade, and women's right, started competing for attention in the international system. Such issues have nothing to do with East-West or North-South dimensions to them. They are global issues that involve all states. Even the battle line between the East-West became less cut-clear, as the two got entangled in collaborations over issues as seen in the provision of cheap loans and technology to Moscow for construction natural gas pipelines linking Siberia and Western Europe. Again, intra-West squabbles over trade agreement came to overshadow East-West conflicts.

By 1989, there was attenuation in the ideological differences and rival alliances in the blocs as states in East bloc quitted the bloc and even

applied for entry into the European Community which at first was regarded as western affairs. More to that, the Soviet government abandoned the Warsaw Pact and expressed her desire to be part of a "common European bloc." These were obvious indications for lost of will to continue with strident East-West rivalry. And sooner than later, the events described in this section came together to put a closure on the postwar international system.

4.0   CONCLUSION

The Cold War ended suddenly and surprisingly. A great geopolitical and ideological struggle between the United States and the Soviet Union ceased. One historical era was closed and another opened. But it was an historical turning point unlike others in the past. The old bipolar order collapsed peacefully without war between the great powers. Moreover, unlike past postwar moments, the global system – or at least the dominant core of that system led by the United States – was not overturned. Quite the contrary, the world that the United States and its allies created after World War II remained intact. The end of the Cold War simply consolidated and expanded that order. The Soviet bloc – estranged from the West for half a century – collapsed and began a slow process of integration into that order. As such, the end of the Cold War was not the beginning of a New World Order, but the last in the completion of an old one. But if the end of the Cold War began as a consolidation of the US-led postwar order, deeper and more profound shifts – not immediately apparent – were also set in motion. The globalisation of the world economy and the growing market orientation of the developing world were forces for change. The nature of the "security problem" in the global system also changed.

5.0   SUMMARY

The World War II of 1945, during which the atomic bombs were dropped by the United States in the towns of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, ushered in another face in the history of politics among nations. It marked a decisive shift in the global system. After the war, only two great world powers remained: the United States and the Soviet Union. The global system was regarded as bipolar because the system centred on two superpowers. The United States and the Soviet Union (USSR) came to be generally regarded as the two superpowers, and confronted each other in the Cold War. France and Britain were not categorised under the term "superpower." Rather, they were tagged as "second tier powers," because they suffered Economic setbacks as a result of the World War II. Germany and Japan who suffered military defeat, and China who had not yet developed industrial wise, were regarded as the Bottom tier of states.

The international system witnessed novel alignment configuration, making the world extremely polarised. The world witnessed the East-West conflict and the Cold War which was organised between the competing ideologies cum superpowers.

In the midst of all these alliances countries like Yugoslavia, India and Egypt remained neutral. To this effect, as events took their course, even though power distribution never changed, the alignment patterns among states gave rise to another form of polarisation which could be dubbed as "tri-polarity."

Other issues, as time went on, came to bring a diffusion of power and the disintegration of alliances in the system and its ultimate collapse. By 1956, the USSR called for of the mutual "peaceful coexistence" between superpowers. It became obvious that rapprochement between the blocs could be attained as nations were growing more and less concerned with military aggression in world politics. It was rather the economic strength of USSR and USA that gave them their superiority in the world system. Oil also became a major instrument in bargains in the international arena.

The collapse of the postwar international system became imminent in the late 1970s when the superpower status of USA and USSR became tarnished. These were obvious indications for lost of will to continue with strident East-West rivalry. And sooner or later, the events described in this section came together to put a closure on the postwar international system.

6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT

1.   Write short notes on:
   (a)   Bipolarity in the postwar international system.
   (b)   The concept superpowers in the postwar international system.
2.   Explain the concept of "nonalignment" in the postwar international system.
3.   What were the major factors that led to the collapse of the postwar international system?

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UNIT 4   THE   CONTEMPORARY   INTERNATIONAL SYSTEM (1989-DATE)

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1.0   INTRODUCTION

The international system has undergone unfamiliar and difficult straits. It has passed through three stages and it is moving into another. As we have seen in the preceding sections, the history of the international system seem to be constantly in transition influx, unfolding one critical moment to another to provide the watershed to mark the break from one era to another. Just as 1945 was such a moment, we can also agree that 1989 which saw an end to the Cold War is another turning point in the development of the system, ushering in the post Cold War era. As a sequel, the 1990s became a period for scholars to engage their mind with analyses as regard lessons that could be learnt from the Cold War era and what could be in the offing for the "New World Order."

The question here is whether the contemporary system will experience more transformation that will take the world back to the old structures that characterised the system between 1648 and 1945, or whether we are in an era that will bring a profound transformation in the very fabric of the Westphalian state system itself? In this unit, we shall attempt an overview of the system, identifying the major factors for its emergence. In addition, we shall try to identify features of the preceding era that are persisting through it, as well the features that we might say are new developments in the system.

2.0   OBJECTIVES

At the end of this unit, you should be able to:

- identify the conditions that had led to the emergence of the contemporary international system
- explain the distribution of power and wealth in the contemporary international system
- explain the interdependence among states in the post-Cold War international system.

3.0   MAIN CONTENT

3.1   Emergence of the Contemporary International System

The emergence of the post Cold-War international system has been facilitated by so many factors or events, which we may not be able to treat them here exhaustively. Nevertheless, we shall treat a few of them, not in the order of their importance, but rather, how they readily come to our mind. These factors and issues include the collapse of the Berlin Wall, the disintegration of the USSR in 1989, the reunification of two Germany; the disintegration of Czechoslovakia into two and of Yugoslavia into five new states.

To start with, the disintegration of USSR who was considered as one of the pole leaders of the Cold War era came with enormous changes in the system in which we had been living since 1945. The collapse was not a spontaneous process, but rather a conscious effort by the Communist Party and government apparatchiks to dismantle the country. The collapse was also ascribed as the struggle between the Communists and the Democrats. The process of the disintegration took place against the backdrop of complete public apathy.

One fundamental thing is that the disintegration has the impetus of determining the character and tone of the international system in various ways. One impact of the collapse is the serious restructuring of Eurasia axis and increase in the number of states in the system as a result of the appearance of 15 new states out of the former Soviet Union. The declarations of 15 new sovereignty and independence of the states in the former Republic was significant as all the former republics, including Russia, required foreign recognition of their 1991 borders, as well as the legitimacy of their leaders. All of these states instantly announced their intention to develop a partnership with the United States who was leading the West pole.

Closely linked to the above is that the world has experienced an expansion in the geopolitical sphere of the West. The previous Eastern European states which were not considered part of the West have now, not only begun to be considered so, but also practically institutionalised themselves as parts of Western alliances. They have become members of the European Union and NATO.

Again, if we look at the main geopolitical consequences of the collapse of the Soviet Union, the first thing we should note is that the previous world that was divided between blocs became almost one. The borders that were previously impassable became passable. The world became a single informational, economic and political system. Bipolar confrontation became a thing of the past. Consequently, there emerged a uni-polar period in global politics. The United States became the sole superpower in the world which, in principle, that could resolve any problems as it saw fit. This period witnessed a sharp rise in America's presence in the world and not only in the regions where the Soviet Union ceased to exist, like in Eastern Europe and the former republics of the Soviet Union, but as well as other regions across the globe.

In another dimension, the collapse of the Berlin Wall has also attracted with much attention because of its significance in the Cold War era. The Berlin Wall which separated the two Germany was considered to be the symbol of Cold War era. The fall of the Berlin Wall and the unification of the Eastern and Western Germany in 1989 provided another watershed in the East-West relations. The fall of the Wall was a declaration of détente in the NATO Alliance and Warsaw Pact adversary. It brought an alteration in the ordering principles of the international system in the Cold-War era. Besides, several other alterations of same magnitude such as the disintegration of Czechoslovakia and Yugoslavia occurred. All the issues enumerated here combined to create a new world arrangement which we rightly refer to as another phase in the sociopolitical and economic order we are now living with.

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE

Highlight the factors that led to the emergence of the contemporary international system.

3.2   Distribution of Power

One the major features of the post Cold War international system that represented a clear break from the patterns that had characterised the postwar system is the distribution of power. The Yugoslav crisis presented a situation in which it became difficult to still talk of power

ranking among nations. This is because in the mist of the crisis, neither the USA nor USSR could marshal their powers to resolve the crisis. If USSR would be said to be a house in shambles, USA was also facing the decline of her hegemony due to the cost of military spending on peace operations worldwide. So, it will be right to say that both the superpowers were into economic quagmire.

Nevertheless, it will also be appropriate to state that the position of the USA in the hierarchy of States in the post Cold-War era appears to be superior to the status it enjoyed during the Cold-War. This is premised on the fact that her major rival in that era, USSR, got disorganised. As such, the latter could not pose any challenge to the USA of been a clear hegemon. Some analysts, based on this, have seen the international system to be uni-polar, with the USA been capable, to a certain extent, in dealing with threats to international system through its own unilateral action. For example, the United States has visibly enhanced its influence in the Middle East since the end of the Cold War. The invasion of Kuwait by Iraq in August 1990 and the following Gulf Crisis, in a way, created an opportunity for the Unites States to exercise its hegemonic power in the Middle East. In the following years, in the absence of a counter-power, the influence of the United States increased further. With the military operation to Afghanistan and the invasion of Iraq after the September 11, 2001 attacks, the United States is seen as perpetuating its dominance in the region.

In addition, power has become diffused as a group of less developed countries like Qatar and the United Arab Emirate, even though, they do not possess nuclear arsenal, were able to exploit their oil production capacity to assert their position in the international system. These are countries that, in the past, were regarded as "tiny" and "statelets." What is striking about power in the contemporary system is that countries find themselves in possession of nonmilitary resources that in the past did not translate directly into power. Today, such nonmilitary resources can provide considerable leverage in world politics. The contemporary era seemed to mark an acceleration of a process where traditional military resources are eclipsed by non-military resources such as oil and food, while the value of military resources is being increasingly devalued.

Moreover, several other states were also able to join the "nuclear club," which had hitherto consisted of USA and USSR and few of their allies only. On the one hand there were few of USA allies like China, France and Britain. On the other hand, there was USSR and few of her allies like Ukraine and Kazakhstan. Other non-aligned states like India, Iran, Iraq and Pakistan also joined the group of nations in possession of nuclear weapons. Besides, one can still talk of "middle powers" like

Brazil Argentina, Indonesia and several others – playing a preponderant role in the international system.

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE

How has the distribution of power in the post Cold War deviated from the Cold War era?

3.3   Distribution of Wealth

The contemporary international system is not only stratified in terms of power distribution but also in terms wealth. It is quite explicit that the wide 'rich-poor' gap between developed and developing nations during the post-World War II era has become exacerbated in the post-Cold War era. The technologically advanced nations are using technology to advance their economies while the nations that are technologically backward are become more marginalised in the global system.

The world of this era is highly stratified into several classifications: backward states include a variety of states such as all the states on the African continent that have not developed the technology to enhance their development. There exist also less developed states which include the newly rich OPEC nations like Saudi Arabia who are still in many ways economically underdeveloped and politically fragile. We can also mention the newly industrialised nations who are also referred to as "upper middle-income" and in some cases as "high-income." In this group, we have nations such as Brazil, Mexico and South Korea. The developed countries themselves range from the highly developed and wealthiest market economies such as USA, Japan and most members of the European Union to the less wealthy economies of Eastern Europe currently seeking to make a difficult transition from the Communist system to the market-oriented, capitalist economy.

The real economic difference among nations, to this effect, is shown more in areas like standard of living, infant mortality rate, short life expectancy as well as even distribution of wealth in societies. The industrialised nations tend to have high standard of living, low infant mortality rate and longer life expectancy than the developing nations. Regardless of these indices, it is quite clear that the contemporary international system is divided into "haves" and "have-nots" or the rich and the poor.

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE

What is the nature of the distribution of wealth in the contemporary international system?

3.4   Polarity in the Contemporary International System

In the section on the Cold War era, we have seen how complex the world became polarised. However, as the Cold War wane down, the East-West axis of the polarisation started experiencing some level of détente and rapprochement among the principal actors of the conflict. With détente at the end of Cold War all the sentiments, revulsions and the rivalries had, in the words of Pearson and Dorchester (1997), have squeezed into a Pandora's Box. The end of the Cold War has come to set free the tension that was inherent in it to go and explode elsewhere. Again, the collapse of the Berlin wall, to some, signified the end of history rivalry in the international system, leaving capitalism to triumph completely over communism. This means that a resurrection of the East-West confrontation is unlikely to occur again in the international system. This disintegration provided the fact that one super power is left standing up in the world, at moment which is the USA. The international system of 21st century can be seen as a single pole, but a hegemonic consequence does not follow this situation yet.

However, it is still possible to believe that the world could be polarised in a similar manner, as the so called Pandora's Box could actually explode in the same international system. This is, particularly, in the situation where there still exist some orthodox Marxist regimes in countries like Cuba and elsewhere. China also, officially, remains a communist state. Even the capitalist reforms in the former Soviet Republic are yet to prove successful. In addition, in some states of the Eastern Europe, the former communist party has regained powers through popular elections. The case of the disintegration of Yugoslavia is an illustration. The crisis of Yugoslavia which has been between the Moslem and the Serb-Croat, is a conflict that demonstrated that the polarisation tendencies of the Cold War era can be replaced by a far more complex alignment pattern, with many sources of the conflict and cross-cutting cleavages found in the post-Cold War international system. In another dimension, even though the East-West conflict might have disappeared, the world in the post-Cold War era is witnessing another era of a clash of civilisations based on competing cultural values. The central focus of the clash in the world as we are seen, in the real sense, is between the West and several Islamic states in the Middle East axis. The Islamic group, through the 2001 terrorist attacks against the World Trade Centre, can be seen as an opposing pole. That means the present polarisation is between Islam as opposed to Christianity and the Eastern civilisation as opposed to Western civilisation. Many of the Islamic militants are strongly committed to the direct use of violence in pursuing their mission.

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE

To what extent is the post Cold War era witnessing a clash of civilisation?

3.5 Interdependence in the Contemporary International System

We must start our discussion here with the concept of "globalisation." In lucid term "globalisation" refers to the emergence of an international network that has resulted in increased interdependence among nation across the world, through a rapid increase in cross-border movement of goods, services, technology. Globalisation, a phenomenon in the post-Cold War era, can be identified as major issue that has accelerated interdependence among states in the international system in the past few decades. Almost all aspects of the modern society have been influenced by it in some way. Baylis, John and Smith, Steve (2001) see globalisation as intensifying cross-border interactions and interdependence between countries, bringing about major changes in the international system. Borders are increasingly falling into irrelevance as even the most isolated states are not so isolated anymore.

Various Intergovernmental Organisations (IGOs) have played important roles in the process of globalisation, which has, in turn, increased the patterns of interdependence among countries. Before the age of globalisation, states were only looking at the international system through their national interests. They were concerned more with their own safety than global security and were looking for ways to deal with problems at a domestic rather than international level. Nowadays, since the issues and difficulties which states have to face are becoming more global than national, states are no longer able to protect their citizens and deal with problems by their own means, unless they take collective action together, counting on one another. To this effect, non-states actors, especially the IGOs are in the forefront. By joining these, states give up some of their sovereignty to a body governed by the collective will and decisions of its member-states.

It is not only the IGOs with individual states as members which has increased the interdependence of among states. Intergovernmental Organisations (IGOs) from different countries have had a similar impact on states over the course of interdependence. Examples of such trans-border connections organs include the Assembly of European Regions or the European Union's Committee of the Regions. This organisation has since been influencing the respective countries of their member-regions. In this way, states have also become more interdependent, not specifically by their own actions, but due to their constituent regions

forming part of such regional organisations. Even more directly, states have become more interdependent through the opening of national borders and the implementation of free-trade. Private sector institutions are another development which has been enhancing interconnectedness of states in the modern international system. Bodies like the International Federation of Stock Exchange have by their decisions and actions taken concerning issues such as credit rates and food prices significantly influenced many countries all over the world and the global economy as a whole.

One more important factor which has been of cardinal importance in augmenting the interdependence of states is the fusion of national capital markets and the emergence of an integrated global economy. Since states now no longer have sole control over their economies, they rely and depend on the collective governance of bodies like the International Monetary Fund (IMF) or the World Bank in order to regulate the international financial market.

Overall, interdependence has changed the international system significantly, making states to be far more dependent on one another and interconnected. The world is not a place of many different and separate countries anymore, but these states form almost one entity on many different levels. Isolated problems do not arise anymore and thus the solutions for these have to be found in collective action rather than individual responses. And by doing so, this has simultaneously brought states closer together and made them more dependent on each other.

4.0 CONCLUSION

The post Cold War international system has been marked by a seeming contradiction: on the one hand, fragmentation; on the other, growing globalisation. On the level of the relations among states, the new system is based on major power cooperation. The international system contains at least five major powers poles – the United States, Europe, Russia, Japan, and China. There appears to be no serious challenger to these powers. That means the world politics in the near future will largely be shaped by the above-mentioned major powers. Among major powers, the United States will continue to be the greatest hegemonic power in the short run, but its military and economic power will gradually decline. In the long run, some growing states or integrations will likely to get close to the United States' power. Hence, the international system will possibly gain a multipolar character in the future, though it may take some decades to reach that point.

5.0 SUMMARY

The emergence of the post Cold-War international system has been facilitated by so many factors or events including the collapse of the Berlin Wall and the disintegration of the USSR in 1989; the disintegration of Czechoslovakia into two and of Yugoslavia into five new states. Distribution of power among nations in the contemporary international system occurred in a manner that is difficult to still talk of power ranking among nations. Nevertheless, it will also be appropriate to state that the position of the USA in the hierarchy of States in the post Cold-War era appears to be superior to the status it enjoyed during the Cold-War. In addition, power has become diffused as a group of less developed countries like Qatar and the United Arab Emirate were able to exploit their oil production capacity to assert their position in the international system. Moreover, several other states have also joined the "nuclear club." The contemporary international system is not only stratified in terms of power distribution but also in terms of wealth.

Although, the Cold War wane down, the East-West axis of the polarisation started experiencing some level of détente and rapprochement among the principal actors of the conflict. However, it is still possible to believe that the world could be polarised in a similar manner. The world in the post-Cold War era is witnessing another era of clash of civilisations based on competing cultural values. The central focus of the clash in the world appears to be between the West and several Islamic states in the Middle East axis.

6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT

1. What are major factors that have led to the emergence of the post-Cold War international system?
2. Discuss the distribution of power and wealth in the post-Cold War international system.
3. To what extent is it correct to refer to the post Cold War international system as an era of interdependence.

7.0 REFERENCES/FURTHER READING

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MODULE 3   FEATURES OF THE INTERNATIONAL SYSTEM

Unit 1   The Actors in the International System
Unit 2   Anarchy in the International System
Unit 3   Interest and the Use of Power in the International System
Unit 4   Polarity in the International System

UNIT 1   THE ACTORS IN THE INTERNATIONAL SYSTEM

CONTENTS

1.0   INTRODUCTION

The issue of actors in the international system is central to a nuanced understanding of the characteristics of the system. An actor is anyone who may play a role within a given social system. Individuals are the primary actors within all human societies. Some would argue that individuals are the only actors. Ultimately, all decisions are made by individuals. But, human beings belong to social groups and they form various kinds of associations. Social groupings and organised groups have leaders who speak for the group. These leaders have more power and influence than do the ordinary members of the group or association. What we call the state or the nation-state is a complex organisation; and, an international system made up of states is even more complex. An international actor refers to any social structure, which is able to act and influence the global or international system.

In the past nation-states were considered the only actors in the international system. In the present dispensation not everyone agrees

with this premise, as there is growing evidence that sub-states, transnational actors and other forces are becoming, increasingly, important in determining the course of action in the international system, and in many cases challenging the cohesiveness and effectiveness of national governments. However, it is abundantly clear that nation-states appear unlikely to surrender their preeminent position in the international system. In this unit we shall examine nation-states and non-state actors' behaviours as they help shape the international system.

2.0   OBJECTIVES

At the end of this unit, you should be able to:

- identify the actors in the international system
- define state as an actor in international system
- enumerate the non-state actors in the international system.

3.0   MAIN CONTENT

3.1   State Actors

3.1.1 Understanding State Actors

In our daily conversations we use the terms "nation," "state," and "country" interchangeably to refer to those entities that are distinguished by thick boundary lines on the world map. We might have been interchanging these terms because we believe they are synonyms. But technically speaking, these terms are not synonyms. Technically speaking, a "state" refers to a legal-political entity. The term "nation" refers to a cultural or social entity and "country" refers to a geographical entity. In defining a "state" and "nation," the distinction is not merely technical as it has real importance for students of international relations. When we say that a "state" refers to a legal-political entity, we mean an entity that has a sovereign government exercising supreme authority over a relatively fixed population within well-defined territorial boundaries and acknowledging no higher authority outside those boundaries (Pearson and Rochester, 1997). This sovereignty is expressed in their ability to exercise preeminent control over their people and policies within their territorial boundaries. The sovereignty encourages a state to feel free to exercise control over its people without interference from external forces such as other states.

There are several territorial units considered as states. Such entities have international legal status which enables them to enter into treaties, join intergovernmental organisations such as the United Nations, and can also exchange ambassadors, as well as engage in other official

international transactions. In international law, a state is regarded as a legal person, with the capacity to sue and be sued.

Actually, it is "states" that are the main reference points we see on a world map. Suffice to add that, some states such as the United States of America, Japan, Britain, Nigeria are obviously well known, other states like Palau and Nauru are not well known. No matter how tiny or inconspicuous a state may be, its sovereignty gives it formal equality with other states in the world.

A "nation," on its part, is conceptually and legally different from a state. When one talks of a "nation" we are referring to a cultural or social entity, made of a group of people having some sense of shared historical experiences which are rooted in a common language, ethnicity or other cultural characteristics, as well as shared identity. The term "nation" is the human aspect of a country. A nation may constitute part of a state. For example, Tivs, Hausas, Yorubas or Igbos constitutes distinctive nations within the state called Nigeria. The term "nation" can also be coterminous with state such as the United States. The society of the United States of America, actually, is made of many nationality groups like the Irish-Americans, the Polish-Americans and several others. However, over time, these groups have become assimilated into one American society and have come to identify themselves as "Americans." A "nation" may also spill over several states as we see the Palestinians in the state of Israel, the state of Lebanon, the state of Jordan and several other states. The Palestinians in Israel do not see themselves as Israelis; the Palestinians in Jordan do not see themselves as Jordanians neither do those in Lebanon consider themselves as Lebanese. Similarly, the Kurds in Iran and Iraq states do not identify themselves as Iranians or Iraqis. The situation in the cases cited here is that these states are plagued by culturally diverse populations who, from time to time, have been agitating to break away and form their independent statehood. In contrast, there are also cases of one-ness of the "state" and "nation" such as in France and Switzerland. France has various groups and political cleavages accompanied by many violent vociferous quarrels, among her people, over political institutions of the state. Yet, they generally regard themselves as one - Frenchmen. They do not think of seceding to form another state.

In the seventeenth and eighteenth century, it was the state that created the one-ness of the nation. That is to say that it was the state that had the central political authority and forged a sense of national identity among a group of people who happened to find themselves living within the same geographical boundaries, but never thought of themselves as one people such as "French" or "English." This was in contrast in the nineteenth and twentieth century where nations created states. That is, a

group of people sharing common linguistic and other cultural bonds eventually united into a single state. The loose confederation of the German-speaking territories forming Germany in 1870 provides a good example. Another good example is the various Italian-speaking territories who came together to form Italy.

The pattern after World War II was similar to the one of seventeenth and eighteenth centuries where many of the societies in Africa and Asia that gained independence from colonial powers by 1945 became states. These states have boundaries that do not correspond to any natural cultural groupings but, rather, artificial mapmaking. These states had to face the task of getting divers and often historically hostile tribal units to identify with the new state in which there were situated.

In the face of the foregoing one may have to ask what a "nation-state" as a term connotes. Pearson and Dorchester (1997), explain that the term "nation-state" does not add any other meaning to the term "state". Rather, the term "nation-state" is used by scholars as synonym of "state." Its usage connotes the fact that over the years there has been the persistent impulse to achieve congruence between state and national boundaries so as to make "state" and "nation" mean one thing in the minds of people.

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE

Differentiate between a state and a nation.

3.1.2 How States Work in the International System

One of the most common images of the international system is that it is a system in which each state has the attributes of persons. As such, during the classical international system, what states do and the relation among them used to be the focus of attention in discussing the international system. A state is usually controlled by a government in which people do assume authoritative positions and act legally on its behalf. The people of a state define who has authoritative status to act on behalf of the state. The authority of a state is in the hands of the leader – president or monarch - who can, according to his domestic status and power, and by international law, speak and write, promise and threaten, and make or break commitments on behalf of his state.

Apart from that, each state has a complex of authorities who are the aids of the leader. They act in its behalf. They include diplomats and statesmen, trade and custom officials, soldiers, legislative leaders, cabinet members, and prime ministers. In the name of a state the complex authorities formulate policies and present to other countries as

though it were the general will of the state. In this effect, all states are organisations led by the elite who influence its goals, foreign policies to achieve these goals, and an establishment to articulate these policies.

States enter into a system of international rules, procedures, and norms governing the behaviour between officials representing different states. They do structure and frame people's behaviour. They give meaningful, causal understanding to diverse human behaviours and simplify our apperception of them. Similarly, states enter into treaties and make war. Thus, a violent clash between several thousand men on Damansky (or Chenpao) Island on the River Ussuri in March 15, 1969, becomes understandable as a border clash between Soviet and Chinese frontier guards, as a manifestation of the Sino-Soviet conflict.

3. 2 Non-State Actors

Traditionally, international politics focuses on relationship among states in the system. However, since the end of the World War II, other forces have become influential in the international arena; these are called non-state actors. Non-state actors have become important players, with key roles in the ordering of events in the international system. Some of the non-state actors are created by states, while some emerge autonomously. They include the intergovernmental organisations, the non-governmental organisations, the multinational corporations and even individuals. The proliferation of the non-state actors has greatly contributed to the complexities of the international system. Non-state actors have been linking people across international borders in a variety of ways such as occupation, religion, personal and many others issues. In this manner, states interactions in the international arena are no more just bilateral ones in which states deal with each other on a one-on-one basis. Instead, many issues are dealt with on multilateral basis. Moreover, states are no more the primary channels for international interactions. Individuals and groups often bypass states' apparatus to work with each other. There are different types of non-states actors, four of which are discussed here.

3.2.1 Inter-Governmental Organisations (IGOs)

Intergovernmental organisations (IGOs) are international actors with only states as their members, and the decision-making authority lies with the member-states. They are supranational, in that states give up their sovereignty when they consent to abide by any agreement they enter into by joining the organisation. Moreover, intergovernmental organisations transcend state borders and can have a major impact on the government and transnational actors within states. As a result, overtime, intergovernmental organisations can develop independent power bases and identities separate from those of the founding states. IGOs include

bodies such as the United Nations, regional organisations such as the European Union and ECOWAS. Other functional organisations include the North American Free Trade Association (NAFTA), the General Agreement on Trade and Tariffs (GATT) or the Word Bank and the International Monetary Fund (IMF). These are IGOs concerned basically with the area of trade and economy.

IGOs do not replacement for government, as they do not govern. They try to contend with and help to administer complex interrelations and global economic, political and social challenges byfacilitating cooperation with other actors, particularly government. To this end, their work extends beyond the traditional boundaries of governmental sovereignty. IGOs do not only bring opportunities for their member states but also exert influence and impose limits on members' policies and the way in which those policies are made.

Even though, abiding to the commitments of an intergovernmental organisation by member states is based on voluntarily compliance, intergovernmental organisation has the habit of international cooperation. States become socialised through regular involvement in multilateral relationship and policy coordination. Additionally, states may come to feel that they want to maintain a reputation of law-abiding behaviour in the international realm. Finally, domestic groups that support the principles and norms of the intergovernmental organisation that they work with may reinforce the custom of cooperation.

IGOs as instrument of creating and sustaining international interdependence and cooperation have made the world more interconnected. To this effect, government of nation-states and societies are discovering that many problems and issues need to be addressed and redressed on the global and regional level, rather than on national level. Thus, states have increasingly sought to work through IGOs to achieve cooperation on a variety of issues.

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE

Do you consider IGOs as a replacement of state actors? Give reasons.

3.2.2 Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs)

Non-governmental organisations have a history dating back to at least 1839. According to Richard (2007), they were important in the anti-slavery movement and the movement for women's suffrage, and reached a peak at the time of the World Disarmament Conference. However, the phrase "non-governmental organisation" only came into popular use with the establishment of the United Nations Organisation in 1945,

(Vakil, 1997). NGOs are difficult to define and classify. Apart from that the term non-governmental organisations is not used consistently.

According to the UN, any kind of private organisation that is independent from government control can be termed an non-governmental organisation, provided it is not for profit, non-criminal and not simply an opposition political party. In a strict sense, the term refers to organisations that are not a part of a government and are not conventional for-profit businesses. In cases in which NGOs are funded totally or partially by governments, the non-governmental organisation maintains its non-governmental status by excluding government representatives from membership in the organisation. In the United States, non-governmental organisations are typically nonprofit organisations. The term is usually applied only to organisations that pursue wider social aims that have political aspects, but are not openly political organisations such as political parties.

One characteristic these diverse organisations share is that their non-profit status means they are not hindered by short-term financial objectives. Accordingly, they are able to devote themselves to issues which occur across longer time horizons, such as climate change, malaria prevention or a global ban on landmines. Apart from non-governmental organisations, there are many alternative or overlapping terms in use, including: third sector organisation (TSO), non-profit organisation (NPO), voluntary organisation (VO), civil society organisation (CSO), grassroots organisation (GO), social movement organisation (SMO), private voluntary organisation (PVO), self-help organisation (SHO) and non-state actors (NSAs).

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE

List 10 types of NGOs.

3.2.3 The Multinational Corporations (MNCS) and Transnational Corporations (TNCS)

Another group of non-state actors in the international system is called multinational corporations (MNCs). A corporation, according to Christopher (2013), is regarded as multinational when it is registered in more than one country or has operations in more than one country. Usually, it is a large corporation which both produces and sells goods or services in various countries. It can also be referred to as an international corporation. Traditionally, MNCs are companies with a particular national-home base followed by subsidiaries all over the world. A transnational corporation (TNC) differs from a traditional multinational corporation in that it does not identify itself with one national home.

TNCs spread out their operations in many countries sustaining high levels of local responsiveness. An example of a TNC is Nestlé, which employs senior executives in many countries and try to make decisions from a global perspective rather than from one centralised headquarter. MNCs and TNCs are global actors directed by self-interests to execute commercial activities for profit in more than one country. It is estimated that the MNCs and TNCs control two third of the world trade. MNCs and TNCs, in the present dispensation of technological advancement, have taken advantage of technology, especially in the area of communication, to become truly global in nature. With a corporate headquarter, sometimes, in one single country, they have been able to spread their tentacles all over the world. Production of their goods and services does not need to be done at the headquarters of the organisation. Much of the impact of the activities of MNCs and TNCs are felt in the area of international commerce. With enormous wealth, their impact on the global economy is immense. They have become instruments of modernisation, fast spreading new goods and services across the globe. In addition, they are involved in the establishment of hospitals, schools and other valuable infrastructures in the developing countries.

3.2.4 The Cross-National Organisations

There is the non-state group, which is involved in international relations or whose organisation is cross-national. Here, I have in mind multinational corporations (having foreign subsidiaries), companies with foreign investments, religious organisations like the Catholic Church, associations like the International Political Science Association, political groups like the Palestine Liberation Organisation, and terrorists like the Che Guevera Internationalist Brigade. Like states, groups are integrated authoritative structures and legal status. They may have a legal identity within domestic law (as does the corporation or church), or within domestic law be extralegal (as the Palestine Liberation Organisation), or illegal (as are terrorist organisations). In any case, each group has internal law or norms which establish its hierarchy and command structure, and specify who can legally (by group law) represent and commit the group in international relations. The same analysis of the state as an actor applies to this group: the actions of group-authorities form a pattern within a direction given by the group hierarchy and policies.

4.0   CONCLUSION

In spite of the existence of the non-state actors, the state still provides coherence to the complex international system, which in international law takes precedence over (and can command) all other organisations, at least within its boundaries. Indeed, for totalitarian states, the

international relations of all their groups and people are integrated into state policy and rigidly controlled, including the actions of their citizens representing international organisations. Suffice to add that, while these other actors can be very important in the international system, much of their impact still lies in how much they affect the behaviour of nation-state. As such, in the final analysis it all it is still the nation-state that steer the international system.

5.0   SUMMARY

An international actor refers to any social structure, which is able to act and influence the global or international system. In the past, nation-states were considered the only actors in the international system. In the present dispensation, not everyone agrees with this premise, as there is growing evidence that sub-states, transnational actors and other forces are becoming, increasingly important in determining the course of action in the international system, and in many cases challenging the cohesiveness and effectiveness of national governments.

One of the most common images of the international system is that it is a system in which each state has the attributes of persons. A state is a society controlled by a government in which people do assume authoritative positions and act legally on its behalf. They do enter into a system of international rules, procedures, and norms governing the behaviour between officials representing different states. Traditionally, international politics focuses on relationship among states in the system. However, since the end of World War II, other forces have become influential in the international arena. These are called non-state actors. They include intergovernmental organisations, non-governmental organisations, multinational corporations and even individuals. The proliferation of non-state actors has greatly contributed to the complexities of the international system.

6.0   TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT

1.   Explain who an actor in the international system is.
2.   Define "nation-states" as actors in the international system.
3.   Write short notes on (a) inter-governmental organisations (b) non-governmental organisations (c) the transnational and multinational corporations

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UNIT 2   ANARCHY   IN   THE   INTERNATIONAL SYSTEM

CONTENTS

1.0   Introduction
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1.0   INTRODUCTION

A meaningful discussion about the nature of the international system needs to proceed from the concept of anarchy as a fundamental condition of the international system. It is a fundamental fact that the international system is a collection of independent nation-states who seems to be law onto itself. A states' behaviour in pursuing its interests and relations with other states respectively is what underlie the notion that the international system is ruled by anarchy. This simply means that there is no hierarchical global authority which can establish and maintain regulations to create order in international affairs. Thus, the anarchical condition exist because sovereign states as the most important player in world politics are autonomous and independent, hence, in international political arena each state presumably will behave based on its whims and caprices. In this unit we shall, first, attempt an explanation of the notion of anarchy in the international system by exploring the origin of the term. Second, we shall discuss the basic theoretical assumptions or schools of thought about the anarchical nature of international system

2.0   OBJECTIVES

At the end of this unit, you should be able to:

•   define what anarchy as a concept in international system
•   explain why the international system is said to be anarchical
•   explain the basic schools of thought as regard the anarchical condition of the international system.

3.0 MAIN CONTENT

3.1.1 What is Anarchy?

Literally the word "anarchy", according to *The Internet Encyclopedia of International Relations,* means "without a leader." The word combines the Greek prefix "an-" meaning without, with the Indo-European root *arkh* meaning "begin" or "take the lead". It is adapted from the ancient Greek (ἀναρχία-anarchia) meaning "absence of a leader". In common usage "anarchy" has come to signify both the absence of a ruler and the disorder that is bound up with the absence of a ruler. *The Cambridge English Dictionary* defines anarchy, as "a situation in which there is no organisation and control, especially in society because there is no effective government." In an anarchical system, the basic motive of states behaviour is survival. In order to survive, states need to accumulate power in terms of actual power (military strength).

The term anarchy can have different meanings. However, we will only focus on one definition. Anarchy in the context of the international system implies there are no higher authorities, and because nation states are considered by many as the primary actors in international relations, an anarchical world would be one where there is no higher authority than that of the state (Bull, 1995). The state exists as a full sovereign of its people and territory, and which enjoys the ultimate power of being completely self-determined. By taking into account Waltz's structure of the international system, there are three elements that define it; its "ordering principle," "the character of the units" that compose it, and "the distribution of capabilities" between these units. For the neorealist, two of these elements never change. Neorealism considers the international system to be permanently anarchic because of the absence of a superior authority, and believes that all the units, or states, are "functionally alike" (Elman in Williams, 2008: 18).

To some extent, states retain the same rights, the principal one being the right to do as they wish because no institution has the capacity or power to control their actions. Therefore, no order is established in this system because all actors can do whatever they want, because nothing prevents them. Nonetheless, even though states have the same rights it does not mean they have the same capabilities. The distribution of power in the international system is far from a "perfect equilibrium" (Walzer, 2006: 77). Distinct states have different powers, and the significance of these powers shift from one to another. Capabilities are not constant in the system, only the gains and "losses of power" are (ibid). States exist in a hostile global environment because nothing will hinder the possible aggression of a powerful state, and the future of a state is never certain as its power can wane.

In a nut shell one can say in the field of international studies anarchy is the concept that the world system is leaderless, whereby, there is no universal sovereign or worldwide government. The anarchical condition, thus, exist because sovereign states as the most important player in world politics are autonomous and independent. Thus, in international politics, each state presumably will behave based on its interests. States behaviour in pursuing their own interests and their relations to other states respectively shape international politics.

Anarchy is widely accepted as the starting point for studies on the international system. While some political scientists use the term "anarchy" to signify a world in chaos, in disorder, or in conflict, others view it simply as a reflection of the order of the international system — independent states with no central authority above them. The concept of anarchy is the foundation for realist school of thought in the field of international relations. This makes it imperative for us to re-examine this school of thought in our effort to explicate the anarchical nature of international system.

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE

What do you understand as anarchy in the international system?

3.1.2 Supportive Schools of Thought about Anarchy

The realist school of thought asserts that states are the main power players in international politics. Realists respond to the anarchic world system by assuming a "self-help" doctrine which presents states as entities that believe they can rely on no one else but themselves for security (Elman, 2008: 15-27). The basic motive of a state's behaviour is survival, which is seen in terms of competition, holding that the increased security of one state will necessarily lead to a decrease in security of others. Thus, states are forced to constantly take into account that others might have more power than them or are planning to gain more power and are so forced to do the same. It is believed that this is the basis of anarchy in the system.

According to the classic realist thinker Niccolò Machiavelli, the desire for more power in the international system is rooted in the flawed nature of humanity, which extends itself into the political world, and leads states to continuously struggle to increase their capabilities. Another traditional realist thinker, Hans Morgenthau, claimed "international politics is struggle for power" elaborating that "the struggle for power is universal in time and space" (Morgenthau, 1978: 4-15). The kernel of the realist belief is the conviction that power must be defined in military terms. It asserts that stronger military power will lead states to their

ultimate goal of being hegemony. This means international anarchy is born out of competition and conflict among states and inhibits their willingness to cooperate even when they share common interests. Thus, realists see no reason to believe that states can ever trust each other, and must rely on themselves (the self-help doctrine) in the anarchic world system. In a nut shell, realism view states ruthlessness as a consequence of the prevalent power struggle in international system. Within this condition, the daily life in international system is always characterise by competition among states with the possibility of war in the background. While classical realists such as Machiavelli and Morgenthau attributed power politics as the cause of anarchy, neorealists emphasise anarchy as the cause of the competition in the international system. This idea was first advanced by Kenneth Waltz, in his neorealist text, *Man, the State and War*, and expanded on in his *Theory of International Politics*. For Waltz, the absence of a higher authority than states in the international system is the basis of anarchy. This means that states can only rely on themselves for their own survival, requiring vigilance and constant preparation for conflict. In *Man, the State, and War*, Waltz describes anarchy as a condition of possibility or a "permissive" cause of war. He argues that it is anarchy that breads wars because there is nothing to prevent them (Waltz, 1954).

Similarly, American political scientist, John Herz, argues that international anarchy assures the centrality of the struggle for power even in the absence of aggression or similar factors. He emphasises that a state's interests and actions are determined by the anarchical structure of the international system itself (Donnelly, 2000: 12). This shows that the anarchical international system dictates states to put security as their main interest because other states tend to look for opportunities to take advantage of each other by any means, including military force.

3.1.3 Anarchy in the International System

Realism in its entire ramification has established that the international system is anarchic, and the self-interested state is the starting point for discussing the characteristics of the international system. This position has presented a gloomy picture of the system, with no hope for entrenching order in the system. However, unlike realism, liberalist school of thought argues that the anarchy in the international system can be regulated. It maintains that institutions can be used to mitigate anarchy's constraining effects on interstate cooperation. This is where the two schools of thought diverge.

While liberalist acknowledges that the international system is anarchic, it contends that this anarchy can be regulated with various tools. Most importantly: liberal democratisation, liberal economic interdependence

and liberal institutionalism (Dunne, 1997:150). The basic liberal goal is a completely interdependent world. Liberalist thinking asserts that the existence and spread of free trade reduces the likelihood of conflict, as "economically interdependent states are reluctant to become involved in militarised disputes out of fear that conflict disrupts trade and foreign investment and thus induces costs on the opponents." Furthermore, they contend that it is not in any country's interest to go to war with a state with which its private economic agents maintain an extensive exchange of goods and capital (Russett, 2000).

Thus, for liberals, there is hope for world peace even under anarchy, if states seek common ground, forming alliances and institutions for policing the world powers. Realists tend to believe that power is gained through war or the threat of military action, and assert that due to this power-grabbing system, there is no such thing as lasting alliances or peace. Liberal thought however, attributes more power to common institutions than to states, and takes into account the individual attributes that states possess, allowing for the idea of lasting alliances based on common beliefs and ideas. Rather than focusing solely on the military survival of states, liberals believe that common ideas can lead states into interdependence, and so remove allies as threats to sovereignty. Liberalism emphasises that the real power for states comes from mutually held ideas like religion, language, economies, and political systems that will lead states to form alliances and become interdependent.

Neoliberalism, the process of implementing liberalism's political ideology, also seeks to counter the neorealist claim that institutions are unable to "mitigate anarchy's constraining effects on inter-state cooperation". Rather, it argues that even in an anarchic system of states, cooperation can emerge through the building of norms, regimes, and institutions. Neoliberal thought contends that the "importance and effect" of the anarchic nature of the international system has been exaggerated, and asserts that nation-states are, or at least should be, concerned first and foremost with absolute gains rather than relative gains to other nation-states.

For example, realists and neorealists assume that security is a competitive and relative concept, whereby the "gain of security for any one state means the loss of security for another". However, neoliberals argue that states should recognise that security can be cooperative or collective, whereby states can increase their security without decreasing the security of others, or recognising that the security of other states can in fact be valuable to themselves. Therefore, while both neoliberal and neorealist theories consider the state and its interests as the central subject of analysis, the neoliberal argument is focused on what it

perceives as the neorealists' underestimation of the varieties of cooperative behaviour possible within a decentralised international system.

The question that comes to mind is, why does war still occur if the international system promotes cooperation between states with the aim of ultimately creating peace? There are many answers, but we will only focus on a few. First, it could be a problem related to the economy and how it is managed at the national level. Liberals, especially advocates of commercial liberalism, will argue that by liberalising trade, conflicts are less likely to happen, as it offers a "degree of economic freedom" that cannot be neglected, because if governments are too involved in the "economic sphere," then conflicts will emerge in the political sphere (Navari, 2008). Second, it can also be that international institutions are quite liberal and they are the ones promoting peace. Hence, in correlation with the democratic peace theory, non-liberal states will more likely "distrust non-liberal states." Wars occur because, for instance, a liberal state will try to free another state from a non-democratic regime (ibid, 36-38). Third, it can be argued that globalisation is an integrated process of our world system today, but this increased interconnectedness brings many problems that make it very vulnerable to war and coercion (Ibid, 36). Therefore, we can see that even a system that tries to enhance cooperation and peace is not without defaults that can cause wars.

4.0   CONCLUSION

Scholars generally agree that the international system is anarchic, in the sense that there is no overarching power to control nation states and their actions. Yet, this anarchical feature can be reduced by increased cooperation between states, and the establishment of international organisations. However, anarchy is not the only cause of war. In being part of a structure, the nation state does not really have a choice when it comes to war, and war is just another tragic outcome of global politics. Nonetheless, states are rational actors in international relations, so their interests greatly influence their behaviour. If states go to war it is because they strive for power, are self-interested, and pay particular importance to their security. Finally, because of the creation of supranational organisations that aim to promote peace by strengthening cooperation between states, new causes of war have appeared. The spread of capitalism and liberalism has encouraged states to free other states, and the development of new global processes, such as globalisation, have increased links between individuals, which has increased the risks of conflict through arms traffic, terrorism amongst others. As the global system evolves, the causes do as well, and current states now face new important issues.

5.0   SUMMARY

In common usage, "anarchy" has come to signify both the absence of a ruler and the disorder that is bound up with the absence of a ruler. When applied to the international system, "anarchy" implies there are no higher authorities, and because nation states are considered by many as primary actors in international relations, an anarchical world would be one where there is no higher authority than that of the state. Anarchy is widely accepted as the starting point for schools of thought bordering on the international system.

The classical realists maintain that international anarchy is born out of competition and conflict among states and inhibits their willingness to cooperate even when they share common interests. Thus, realists see no reason to believe that states can ever trust each other, and must rely on themselves (the self-help doctrine) in the anarchic world system. On their part, neorealists emphasise anarchy as the cause of competition in the international system. The absence of a higher authority than states in the international system is the basis of anarchy. This means that states can only rely on themselves for their own survival, requiring vigilance and constant preparation for conflict. Yet, the liberalist school of thought argues that the anarchy in the international system can be regulated. It maintains that institutions can be used to mitigate anarchy's constraining effects on interstate cooperation.

Lastly, neoliberalism contends that institutions are able to mitigate anarchy's constraining effects on inter-state cooperation. Neoliberalism argues that even in an anarchic system of states, cooperation can emerge through the building of norms, regimes, and institutions.

6.0   TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT

1.   Discuss the term anarchy as applied to the international system.
2.   Discuss the major schools of in unraveling the nature and character of the anarchical state in the international system.

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UNIT 3 INTEREST AND THE USE OF POWER IN THE INTERNATIONAL SYSTEM

CONTENTS

1.0   INTRODUCTION

The concept of national interest as a major discourse in understanding the international system is stressed by the realist school of thought, which looks at nation-state as the major actors in international politics. In this vein, most explanations about the system begin with the notion that nation-states have basic, fundamental interests that underlie their behaviour. These interests are often referred to as "national interests." What exactly are those interests and how are they determined are matters of considerable controversy. In this unit, we shall focus on what national interest entails and how it affects the behaviour of nation-states in the international system.

2.0   OBJECTIVES

At the end of the unit you should be able to:

- define "national interest"
- discuss the basic assumptions of various schools of thought about national interest
- explain the concept and attributes of power in the international system.

3.0 MAIN CONTENT

3.1 What is National Interest?

National interest has been defined in various ways by several scholars in the field of International Relations. According to Marchall (1994),

"interest" refers to whatever contributes to the general well-being or fulfillment of the aspirations of an individual. Thomas Hobbes on the other hand, equates interest with self-preservation, which is the underlying motivation of all human actions in relationship with other human beings. When linked to states' actions, national interest is a state's action in relation to other states where it seeks to gain advantage or benefits to itself.

The national interest, often referred to by the French expression raison d'État (reason of the state), is a country's goals and ambitions whether economic, military, or cultural. The practice of pursuance of national interest was first seen as being employed by France under the direction of its Chief Minister Cardinal Richelieu in the "Thirty Years' War" when it intervened on the Protestant side, despite its own Catholicism, to block the increasing power of the Holy Roman Emperor. At Richelieu's prompting, Jean de Silhon defended the concept of reason of state as a mean between what conscience permits and affairs require (Thuau, 1966). The notion of national interest soon came to dominate European politics that became fiercely competitive over the next centuries. The first thinker of the realist school to advocate for the primacy of the national interest is usually considered to be Niccolò Machiavelli. Today, the concept of national interest has become an important one in international relations where its pursuit is the foundation of the realist school.

In its barest meaning, "national interest" is made of goals and ambitions states seek to pursue, achieve and protect in the course of their interaction in the international system. The interest could be expressed in economic, military, or cultural terms. One other thing we need to mention is that all states have core or vital interests. The most readily seen and agreed upon are the basic survival interests of a state, which are composed of protection of its territory, its people and its sovereignty. The behaviour of actors in the international system is rooted in the pursuit, protection and promotion of its interest. So if one can accurately identify the interest of an actor in the system, one would be able to understand better the behaviour of such an actor vis-à-vis other actors in the system. Historical evidence has shown that states and their people have willingly risk much, including death and destruction in order to protect and promote their interests. It is generally agreed that a nation's foreign policy geared towards pursuing the national interest is the foundation of the realist school of international relations states now openly embark on wars purely out of national interest as the justification of the aggression against a fellow state in the international system. To engage in a war rulers need to justify their aggression action in this context.

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE

What is national interest?

3.2 Schools of Thought about National Interest

Despite it wide range of usage in international relations, different scholars have various perception of the concept of national interest based on their understanding of the subject matter. The contention lies in determining what actually constitutes a state's national interest and who determines the national interest of a state. Is it the leadership or citizens of a state that determine it? Hans Morgenthau (1998) states that the national interest of a nation lies in the aim of a nation-state to promote its image, prestige and respect at home and abroad. Chandra, cited in Ake (1982), has identified what constitutes national interest to include: national security, political independence, and territorial integrity, promotion of economic well-being of the nation and world peace. The kernel of the above perception is the ardent desire by nations to secure and maintain political independence, and secure its territory from incursion by other nations. Viewed from this perspective, national interest encompasses the various strategies employed by states in their interaction in the international arena in order to ensure their self-preservation. This emphasises quite clearly the threat to a nation within the international system. It also highlights defending its interests within the anarchic international system where dangers abound and the interests of the nation are always at risk.

Suffice to add that, the onus of formatting and controlling the national interest of a state lies with the leadership of the state while the citizens are directly affected either positively or negatively by the derivable of national interest. Other writers concede that national interest is subjectively interpreted by the government of the day. In this version, national interest is similar to the politician's rhetorical usage of the term, or say, the national interest is merely what the politician says the national interest is.

Furthermore, national interest, whether aspirational or operational, is divided into core/vital and peripheral/non-vital interests. Core or vital interests constitute the things which a country is willing to defend, such as territory, ideology (religious, political, economic), and its citizens. Peripheral or non-vital are interests which a state is willing to compromise. For example, in the German annexation of the Sudetenland in 1938 (a part of Czechoslovakia) under the Munich Agreement, Czechoslovakia was willing to relinquish territory which was considered ethnically German in order to preserve its own integrity and sovereignty. In addition, sometimes, two or more states can have the same national

interest. For example, two states might both want to foster peace and economic trade. And states with diametrically opposing national interests might try to resolve their differences through negotiation or even war.

3.3 The Attributes of Power in the International System

Most interactions in the international system are political and have ramifications for politics; hence all definitions of politics revolve around power. Thus, it is not surprising that power has become prominent in discussions about interactions among states in the international system from Thucydides to the present day. The long history of discussions about the role of power in politics, however, has not produced agreement on the definition and nature of power. Hans Morgenthau (1967) suggests that the concept of political power poses one of the most difficult and controversial problems in international studies. Kenneth N. Waltz (1986) notes that while power is the key concept in international studies, its proper definition remains a matter of controversy.

There is, however, a general consensus among scholar`s of international studies on the necessity to address the role of power in the politics among nations in the international system. The consensus starts from distinguishing the various attributes of power such as power as control, power as influence, power as coercion, power as influence, power as force, and so on. It is possible to identify a common element underlying the various attributes of power. Robert, H. Darl (1957) suggests that one basic notion that runs through all the attributes of power is the ability to cause an effect: that is to say the ability of "A" to cause "B" to do what ordinarily "B" would not do. In the same vein, Arnold Wolfers (1962), contends that power is the ability to move others or make them do what one desires, as well as restraining others from doing what one does not want them to do through the use of threat or infliction of deprivation. Hans Morgenthau sums it up as the ability to control the mind and actions and others.

In the anarchical international system, states can only maintain their interest through the acquisition and use of power. In essence, it is by force that a state can get its wishes to prevail despite the antagonism from other nations. The assumption is that survival is the principal interest of every state in the situation where the most menacing threat every state faces is foreign invasion and occupation by a stronger state. In such situations, states are well informed that it is only through power that they can defend themselves and hope to survive. The anarchy of the international system requires that states constantly ensure that they have sufficient power to defend themselves and advance the material interest necessary for their survival. In other words, states as rational actors

would maximise the chances of their continued existence by constantly calculating the power available at their disposal, hence no state knows the quantity of power at the disposal of a fellow state, as well as what the fellow state intends to do with such power. This is the basic assertion of the realist school of thought which views the international arena as a dangerous and an uncertain place to exist in.

Thus, discussions about the character of the international system have overriding emphasis on anarchy and the use of power. The conduct of politics in the international system becomes only effective when it is backed up by the use of power or threat of it without consideration to the question of right or justice. It presupposes a situation in which, irrespective of the right or wrong of a case, a nation may obtain what it wants and other nations may just have to accept what they must. This explicitly defines the actions of the United States of America in the Gulf crisis in 1990 to 1991. The United States got what it wanted and Iraq had to accept what it must.

The power of nation-states can be measured from different perspectives. John Stroessinger (1962), in his work, *The might of nations: World Politics in Our Time*, suggests that power of nations can be measured or evaluated in subtle psychological effects approach or in relational terms. Based on this relation, power exists between one nation and another when the two are knitted together in an unequal manner. For, example, in the relationship between Nigeria and Niger Republic it is obvious that given the large population of Nigeria, the size of her army and the better economy when put side by side with Niger Republic it becomes clear that the relationship between the two is marked by unequalled power situation.

From the psychological point of view, a nation's power status may depend, on a considerable manner, on what other nations in the international system feel about her power or what such a nation projects about its power in the international system. In this case, Nigeria can be seen as a regional power in the West African sub-region, or cannot be ignored in the affairs of the continent of Africa, since it has always put herself in forefront of African affairs. It can be argued from the psychological perspective that every nation is presumed to be powerful. The real difference in the powers of nations lies in the degree of power exercised by one nation in relation to other.

To sum it up, it is imperative to point out that the issue of power expressed in terms of military power in the international system has been overemphasised by scholars in the field of international relations. Consequently, the role of nonmilitary forms of power such as the economic statecraft has been grossly underestimated. It is instructive to

note that there are a lot of powers at the disposal of actors in the international system that have nothing to do with force, yet, they bring considerable rewards in the pursuance of nations goals in the so-called anarchical international system.

4.0 CONCLUSION

The existence of many states in the international system portends a permanent struggle for the maintenance of political independence, territorial integrity, economic interest, national prestige, as well as the promotion of world peace. States, like, individuals, appear naturally selfish because their inherent desire to pursue their interest in competition with other states. The efforts towards the achievement of national interest over the years have made the international system an arena of survival struggles. This call for concerted efforts by the leadership of various nation-states to make decisions that would enhance their interest in the system. National interest, therefore, becomes a conflicting issue because some interests are not actually for the nation but personal or self-centred. Especially, where wide consultations or due considerations are not made to determine meaningful outcome or prospects for enhanced development and improved living standard.

However, in spite of the embedded conflict surrounding the concept of national interest, the fact still remains that all nations, irrespective of their geographical locations, size or population, economic status, ideological orientation or culture, have some form of interests or the other that are coined as national interest.

Power on the other hand is a determinant in the pursuance of national interest. In the event where there is shift of emphasis on the aspect of military force as the key element of power, with more focus on economic and social issues, all nations of the world will have to develop their economies to properly integrate themselves in the international system as a measure of survival in the system.

5.0 SUMMARY

In this unit, we have seen that national interest has been defined in various ways by several scholars in the field of international relations. In its barest meaning, "national interest" is made of goals and ambitions states seek to pursue, achieve and protect in the course of their interaction in the international system. The interest could be expressed in economic, military, or cultural terms. One other thing we need to mention is that all states have core or vital interests. The most readily seen and agreed upon are the basic survival interests of a state, which are composed of protection of its territory, its people and its sovereignty.

The behaviour of actors in the international system is rooted in the pursuit, protection and promotion of its interest.

Historical evidence has shown that states and their people have willingly risk much, including death and destruction in order to protect and promote their interests. The onus of formulating and controlling national interest of a state lies with the leadership of the state while the citizens of the state are directly affected either positively or negatively by national interest. Other writers concede that national interest is subjectively interpreted by the government of the day. As regard power, all definitions of politics revolve around power. Thus, it is not surprising that power has become prominent in discussions about interactions among states in the international system from Thucydides to the present day.

There is a need, at this juncture, to add that the issue of power expressed in terms of military power in the international system has been overemphasised by scholars in the field of international relations. Consequently, the role of non-military forms of power such as the economic statecraft has been grossly underestimated, whereas there are a lot of such powers that have nothing to with force but yet, they bring considerable rewards in the pursuance of nations goals in the so called anarchical international system.

6.0   TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT

1.   Define the term "national interest."
2.   Explain the concept of "power" and its basic attributes.

7.0   REFERENCES/FURTHER READING

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UNIT 4   POLARITY IN THE INTERNATIONAL SYSTEM

CONTENTS

1.0   Introduction
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1.0   INTRODUCTION

Polarity in international studies refers to the distribution of power among nations within the international system. It describes the nature of the international system at any given period of time. Polarity also refers to the number of blocs of states that exert power in the international system. The type of international system at any given period of the world history is completely dependent on the distribution of power and the influence of states in a region or internationally. There are three types of systems: unipolarity, bipolarity, and multipolarity. The type of system is completely dependent on the distribution of power and influence of states in a region or world. We shall study the three types of polarity in this unit.

2.0   OBJECTIVES

At the end of this unit, you should be able to:

- explain what is meant by in the international system
- enumerate the various forms of polarity that the international system can assume
- explain what is meant as a hegemony in the international system
- identify the type of polarity that can be found in the international system.

3.0　MAIN CONTENT

3.1　The Multipolar System

Multipolarity in international politics describes the distribution of power in which more than two nation-states have nearly equal amounts of military, cultural, and economic influence in the world system. This system tends to have many shifting alliances until one of two things happen. Either a balance of power is struck, and neither side wants to attack the other, or one side will attack the other because it either fears the potential of the new alliance, or it feels that it can defeat the other side. One of the major implications of an international system with a multipolar system is that international decisions will often be made for strategic reasons to maintain a balance of power rather than out of ideological or historical reasons. The 'Concert of Europe,' a period from after the Napoleonic Wars to the Crimean War, was an example of peaceful multipolarity. The international system in the era of World War I, World War II and the Thirty Years War are also examples of multipolarity.

In addition, multipolarity can be used to describe the relationship between the three Great Powers of the Cold War: the Peoples Republic of China, the Soviet Union and the United States. The period of the Cold War also witnessed the Sino-Soviet split and ended with the fall of the Berlin Wallin 1989. The Cold War era also had the Non-Aligned Movement as another power. It is for this reason that one can argue that the depiction of the Cold War as a pure bipolar system instead of a multipolar system is a simplification of the actual much more complex situation. The international system in nineteenth century can be described as multipolar, with power being shared among a number of influential actors.

Today, to buttress the claim that the world has been basically multipolar, even during the Cold War era there were two main assumptions. One camp holds that the USA and USSR in the Cold War were, in fact, superpowers but argues that due to the complex economic interdependencies on the international scale and the creation of a global village, the concept of one or more states gaining enough power to claim superpower status is unrealistic. The rival view is that throughout the Cold War, neither the USA nor the USSR were superpowers, but were actually dependent on the smaller states in their spheres of influence. While the US has a great deal of economic clout and has influenced the culture of many nations, their dependency on foreign investors and reliance on foreign trade created a mutual economic dependency between the developed and developing nations.

According to those who believe the world is multipolar, this interdependency means that the US cannot be called a superpower as it is not self-sufficient and relies on the global community to sustain its people's quality of life. These interdependencies also apply to diplomacy. Considering the complex state of world affairs and the military might of some developing nations, it has become increasingly difficult to engage in foreign policy if it is not supported by other nations. The diplomatic and economic factors that bind the global village together have created a state in which no nation or union can dominate the others.

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE

What are the distinctive features of multipolarity?

3.2   The Bi-Polar System

Bipolarity in international politics describes the distribution of power in which two states have the majority of economic, military, and cultural influence internationally or regionally. The two major powers dominating the system either stay alone or are leaders of the opposing coalitions and maintain spheres of influence. For example, in the Cold War, most Western and democratic states would fall under the influence of the USA, while most Communist states would fall under the influence of the USSR. After this, the two powers will normally maneuver for the support of the unclaimed areas. The dichotomy between United States and the Soviet Union during the peak of the Cold War; and the Great Britain and France during the colonial era are examples of bi-polar system.

The bipolar system can be said to extend to much larger systems, such as alliances or organisations, which would not be considered nation-states, but would still have power concentrated in two primary groups. In both World Wars, much of the world, and especially Europe, the United States and Japan had been divided into two respective spheres - one case being the Axis and Allies of World War II (1939-1945) - and the division of power between the Central Powers and Allied Powers during World War I (1914-1918).

In the bipolar system, alliances tend to be long term; based on relatively permanent, not shifting, interests and states do not move from one alliance to another just to outbalance the power of the other alliance. The relations within alliances are hierarchical but there is often also the tension. Bipolar system collapses because of one of the following reasons: either other states arise from the dependence on one of the

superpowers and multipolar system is created or one of two poles collapses which often leads to creation of unipolar system.

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE

What do you understand as bipolarity?

The Uni-Polar System
Unipolarity in international politics describes the distribution of power in which there is one state with most of the cultural, economic, and military influence. This is also called a hegemony or hyperpower. In the unipolar system, the world is dominated by one actor and the relationships are hierarchical. Although one state is a hegemon, it does not mean that it has absolute control over everything. Power of the hegemon still remains relative and its economic, political or social power does not transform into the ability to control all parts of the world, as was seen in the case of the Vietnam or recent Iraq war.

There are certain characteristics that are endemic in a unipolar system. Nuno P. Monteiro, an Assistant Professor of Political Science at Yale University, argues that, first, a unipolarity is an interstate system and not an empire. Monteiro (2011) who cites Robert Jervis of Columbia University to support his claim, argues that "unipolarity implies the existence of many juridically equal non-states, something that an empire denies" (Jervis, 2009: 188-231). Monteiro illustrates this point further through Daniel Nexon and Thomas Wright, who state that "in empires, inter-societal divide-and-rule practices replace interstate balance-of-power dynamics (Nexon, and Wright 2007: 253–271).

Second, Unipolarity is anarchical. Anarchy results from the incomplete power preponderance of the unipole. Citing Kenneth Waltz, Monteiro (2011), argues that a great power cannot "exert a positive control everywhere in the world" (Waltz, 1964: 881–909). Therefore, relatively weaker countries have the freedom to pursue policy preferences independent of the unipole. The power projection limitation of the unipole is a distinguishing characteristic between unipolar and hegemonic systems. And thirdly, unipolar systems possess only one great power and face no competition. If a competitor emerges, the international system is no longer unipolar. Kenneth Waltz maintains that the United States is the only "pole" to possess global interests.

William Wohlforth (2012), believes unipolarity is peaceful because it "favours the absence of war among great powers and comparatively low levels of competition for prestige or security for two reasons: first, the leading state's power advantage removes the problem of hegemonic rivalry from world politics, and reduces the salience and stakes of

balance of power politics among the major states." This idea is based on hegemonic stability theory and balance of power theory. Hegemonic stability theory stipulates that "powerful states foster international orders that are stable until differential growth in power produces a dissatisfied state with the capability to challenge the dominant state for leadership. The clearer and larger the concentration of power in the leading state, the more peaceful the international order associated with it will be." Balance of power theory stipulates that as long as the international system remains unipolar, balance of power theory creates peace. "Therefore one pole is best, and security competition among the great powers should be minimal." Unipolarity generates few incentives for security and prestige competition among great powers (Wohlforth, 2012:5-23).

The problem with a unipolar system is that there are always states that do not accept the hegemon and will challenge him. For instance, since the end of the Cold War, some theorists have used the term hegemon to describe the United States. However, other realist theorists such as John Mearsheimer argue that the United States is not a global hegemon, since it cannot impose dominance over the whole world and because in the modern world states depend on foreign investors, resources from other countries, foreign trade and this creates an economic interdependency between states. Also other states like Japan or China, and the European Union are more and more considered to be emerging superpowers. In addition, many states do not accept the American hegemony and this causes the conflicts and hostility between them and USA. For example, Russia as a former superpower does not like the idea that the USA should be the only superpower. Also France and now the EU have been challenging the USA power for many decades. Many other states do not even like the fact that the USA intervenes in many global issues.

Nevertheless, the fact remains that the post-Cold War international system is unipolar, with USA as the hegemon for various reasons. First, the United States' defense spending is "close to half of all global military expenditures. Second, it has a blue-water navy superior to all others combined. Third, it has a chance at a splendid nuclear first strike over its erstwhile foe, Russia. Fourth, it has a defense research and development budget that is 80 percent of the total defense expenditures of its most obvious future competitor, China. Lastly, it has unmatched global power-projection capabilities" (Monteiro, 2011: 9–40).

The United States is the only country in the early 21st century that possesses the ability to project military power on a global scale, providing full command of the global commons. With no viable challenger on the horizon in the short term, the current distribution of power overwhelmingly favours the United States, making the world

order it set out to construct in 1945 more robust. So, even if it is opposed that the USA is not a whole world hegemon, it has been conveniently acting as one. The question that remains for scholars of international studies is how long this "unipolar moment" will last?

4.0   CONCLUSION

At the moment scholars of international relations to grapple with the question of the kind of polarity will follow after the US dominance. Will the international system evolve into a universal type of system where there is no state or group of states that dominate? That would be a system that is not a hierarchical order, where all states work together to maintain a balance of power and security for everybody. For now, it can right be said that this kind of system is never envisaged because there would always be, either one or more states that are more powerful than the others and the less powerful would either cooperate or compete with the more powerful ones.

Again, the world is ever changing and it has now become common knowledge that the great story of our time is the growth of countries like, Brazil, Russia, India, China, South Africa (BRICS) and many others that are being perceived as having the potential of reshaping the world. Globalisation might have been on the agenda for a number of years but it is only in the last few decades that it has become so apparent. The major challenge of our time is, thus, to ask ourselves what does it mean to effectively live in a truly global era without the dominance of the USA as the hegemon. From the look of events, there is the obvious indication that for many years to come, the US will remain the largest single aggregation of power. It will also remain a major source of culture, information and innovation. At the same time it is a dawning reality that US primacy is meanwhile being challenged in other realms, such as military effectiveness and diplomacy. We should look at this emerging scenario with some optimism, in the sense that, although non-polarity might prove to be difficult and dangerous, encouraging a greater degree of global integration will help promote stability.

5.0   SUMMARY

Polarity in international studies is a description of the distribution of power among nations within the international system. This describes the nature of the international system at any given period of time. There are three types of systems: Multipolarity, bipolarity, and unipolarity. Multipolarity describes a distribution of power in which more than two nation-states have nearly equal amounts of military, cultural, and economic influence in the world system. The international system in

nineteenth century can be described as multipolar, with power being shared among number of influential actors.

Bipolarity describes the distribution of power in which two states have the majority of economic, military, and cultural influence internationally or regionally. The two major powers dominating the system either stay alone or are leaders of the opposing coalitions and maintain spheres of influence.

Lastly, unipolarity in international politics describes a distribution of power in which there is one state with most of the cultural, economic, and military influence. This is also called a hegemony or hyperpower. In the unipolar system, the world is dominated by one actor and the relationships are hierarchical. Although one state is a hegemon, it does it mean that it has absolute control over everything. Power of the hegemon still remains relative and its economic, political or social power does not transform into the ability to control all parts of the world. Problem with the unipolar system is that there are always states that do not accept the hegemon and will challenge him. Nevertheless, the fact remains that the post-Cold War international system is unipolar, with the USA as the hegemon. So, even if it is opposed that the USA is not a whole world hegemon, it has been conveniently acting as one.

6.0   TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT

1.   What is polarity?
2.   Write short notes on the following:
     (a)   Multipolarity
     (b)   Bipolarity
     (c)   Unipolarity.

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**MODULE 4   ISSUES   IN   THE   CONTEMPORARY
                 INTERNATIONAL SYSTEM**

Unit 1   Impact of Globalisation
Unit 2   Collective Security
Unit 3   The Threat of Terrorism
Unit 4   The Future of the International System

UNIT 1   IMPACT OF GLOBALISATION

CONTENTS

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        The Impact of Globalisation on the International System
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1.0   INTRODUCTION

Globalisation has been a major topic in the study of International Relations for the past few decades. Almost all aspects of the modern day society have been influenced by it in some way. It has brought about major change in the international system. Globalisation allows us to comprehend the change of relationships between individual states from a more or less side by side existence towards their integration in an international system in which they are more dependent on each other like never before, and where events happening outside their territory are far more likely to have an effect on them than they would have had a about century ago. In this Unit we will discuss the different ways in which states have become more dependent on each other and how globalisation has brought about this change in the international system.

2.0   OBJECTIVES

At the end of this unit, you should be able to:

- define the concept of globalisation
- explain how globalisation has impacted on the international system
- critic globalisation as it affects the developing nations.

3.0   MAIN CONTENT

3.1   What is Globalisation?

According to the *Online Etymology Dictionary* the term "globalisation" is derived from the word *globalise*, which refers to the emergence of an international network of social and economic systems. According to the *Oxford English Dictionary Online,* one of the earliest known usages of the term as a noun was in a 1930 publication entitled, *Towards New Education*, where the concept denoted a holistic view of human experience in education. By the 1960s, this concept became a vogue term among economists and other social scientists. It then reached the mainstream press in the last half of the 1980s. Since its inception, the concept of globalisation has inspired competing definitions and interpretations, due to its complexity. Research projects, articles, and discussions have been written on the subject, focusing on varied implications and repercussions in ordering the world. In 2000, the International Monetary Fund (IMF) identified four basic aspects of globalisation: trade and transactions; capital and investment movements; migration and movement of people; and the dissemination of knowledge.

Roland Robertson, a professor of Sociology at University of Aberdeen, an early writer in the field, defined globalisation in 1992 as the compression of the world and the intensification of the consciousness of the world as a whole (Robertson, 1992). Sociologists Martin Albrow and Elizabeth King define globalisation as "... all those processes by which the peoples of the world are incorporated into a single world society" (Albrow, and King 1990: 8). In *The Consequences of Modernity*, Anthony Giddens uses the following definition: "Globalisation can thus be defined as the intensification of worldwide social relations which link distant localities in such a way that local happenings are shaped by events occurring many miles away and vice versa" (Giddens, 1991: 64). Economist Takis Fotopoulos defined "economic globalisation" as the opening and deregulation of commodity, capital and labour markets that led toward present neoliberal globalisation. He used "political globalisation" to refer to the emergence of a transnational elite and a

phasing out of the nation-state. "Cultural globalisation", he contended, refers to the worldwide homogenisation of culture. Some of his other usages included "ideological globalisation", "technological globalisation" and "social globalisation" (Fotopoulos, 2001: 7).

For our working definition in this unit, globalisation can be said to refer to the process of international integration arising from the interchange of world views, products, ideas, and other aspects of culture. It can also be taken to refer to those spatial-temporal processes of change which underpin a transformation in the organisation of human affairs by linking together and expanding human activity across regions and continents. Advances in transportation and telecommunications infrastructure, including the rise of the telegraph and its posterity the Internet, are major factors in globalisation, generating further interdependence of economic and cultural activities.

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE

In your words, define globalisation.

3.2   The Major Aspects of Globalisation

There are distinct aspects of globalisation that you need to know in order to have a deeper understanding of this course. The four of these include economic globalisation, global health global natural environment and global workforce.

3.2.1 Economic Globalisation

Economic globalisation is defined as the increasing economic interdependence of national economies across the world through a rapid increase in cross-border movement of goods, service, technology and capital. The growth of international trade is a fundamental component of economic globalisation. With improvements in transportation and communication, international businesses have grown rapidly. International business arrangements have led to the formation of multinational corporations (MNCs), companies that have a worldwide approach to markets and production or one with operations in more than one country. In addition, establishment of free trade areas has become an essential feature of modern governments to handle preferential trading arrangements with foreign and multinational entities. These include free ports endowed with favourable customs regulations. Free-trade agreements have established among states the elimination of tariffs and import quotas. With such agreements, people are also free to move between the countries; as such agreements are usually accompanied by open border policy. The European Union, for example, a confederation

of 27 member states, provides both a free trade area and an open border policy.

3.2.2 Global Health

Global health is the health of populations in a global context that transcends the perspectives and concerns of individual nations. Health problems that transcend national borders or have a global political and economic impact are emphasised. Global health has been defined as 'the area of study, research and practice that places a priority on improving health and achieving equity in health for all people worldwide' (Koplan, 2009: 373). Thus, global health is about worldwide improvement of health, reduction of disparities, and protection against global threats that disregard national borders. The application of these principles to the domain of mental health is called Global Mental Health (Patel V, 2010: 303). The major international agency for health is the World Health Organisation (WHO). Other important agencies with impact on global health activities include The United Nations International Children Education Fund (UNICEF), World Food Programme (WFP), United Nations University International Institute for Global Health, and the World Bank. A major initiative for improved global health is the United Nations Millennium Declaration and the globally endorsed Millennium Development Goals.

According to Daulaire (1999), international travel has helped to spread some of the deadliest infectious diseases. Modern modes of transportation allow more people and products to travel around the world at a faster pace, but they also open the airways to the transcontinental movement of infectious disease vectors. One example of this occurring is the HIV/AIDS. Another is the Chagas disease. Due to immigration, approximately 500,000 people in the United States are believed to be infected with Chagas disease. In 2006, the tuberculosis (TB) rate among foreign-born persons in the United States was 9.5 times that of US - born persons. Starting in Asia, the Black Death killed at least one-third of Europe's population in the 14th century. Even worse devastation was inflicted on the American supercontinent by European arrivals. About ninety percent of the populations of the civilisations of the "New World" such as the Aztec, Maya, and Inca were killed by small pox brought by European colonisers.

3.2.3 Global Natural Environment

The natural environment, according to Johnson, *et al.* (1997), encompasses all living and non-living things occurring naturally on Earth or some region thereof. It is an environment that encompasses the interaction of all living species. The natural environment is contrasted

with the built environment, which comprises the areas and components that are strongly influenced by humans. It is difficult to find absolutely natural environments; it is common that the naturalness varies in a continuum, from ideally one hundred percent natural in one extreme to zero percent natural in the other. More precisely, we can consider the different aspects or components of an environment and see that their degree of naturalness is not uniform but, instead, there exists a coupled human–environment system. Human challenges to the natural environment, such as climate change, cross-boundary water and air pollution, over-fishing of the ocean, and the spread of invasive species require at least transnational and, often, global solutions. Since factories in developing countries increased global output and experienced less environmental regulation, globally there have been substantial increases in pollution and its impact on water resources. The northern hemisphere has been the leading producer of carbon monoxide and sulfur oxides. Global traffic, production, and consumption are causing increased global levels of air pollutants.

The time between distances is shrinking between continents and countries due to globalisation, causing developing and developed countries to find new ways to solve problems on a global rather than regional scale. Agencies like the United Nations have now become the global regulators of pollution. Action has been taken by the United Nations to monitor and reduce atmospheric pollutants through the Kyoto Protocol, the UN Clean Air Initiative, and studies of air pollution and public policy.

3.2.4 Global Workforce

Global workforce refers to the international labour pool of workers, including those employed by multinational companies and connected through a global system of networking and production, immigrant workers, transient migrant workers, telecommuting workers, and those in contingent work and other precarious employment. The global workforce, or international labour pool, reflects a new international division of labour that has been emerging since the late 1970s in the wake of other forces of globalisation. Torres (2013), maintains that as of 2012, the global labour pool consisted of approximately 3 billion workers, around 200 million unemployed. The global economic factors driving the rise of MNCs – namely, cross-border movement of goods, services, technology and capital – are changing ways of thinking about labour and the structure of today's workforce. With roots in the social processes surrounding the shift to standardisation and industrialisation, post-industrial society in the Western world has been accompanied by industrialisation in other parts of the world, particularly in Asia. As industrialisation takes hold worldwide and more cultures move away

from traditional practices in respect to work and labour, the ways in which employers think about and utilise labour are changing.

The global workforce is competitive and has been described as "a war for talent." (Marin, Dalia and Theirry Verdier 2012: 209–223). This competitiveness is due, in part, to communications technologies that assist companies to attain multinational status. Communication technologies also allow companies to find workers without limiting their search locally, a process known as global labour arbitrage. An example of this war for talent is the phenomenon of foreign executives appointed into headquarters positions of local organisations.

Furthermore, many countries have some form of guest worker programme with policies similar to those found in the US that permit US employers to sponsor non-US citizens as labourers for approximately three years, to be deported afterwards if they have not yet obtained a green card. As of 2009, over 1,000,000 guest workers resided in the USA. The largest programme, the H-1B Visa, has 650,000 workers and the second-largest, the L-1 Visa, has 350,000. Many other United States visas exist for guest workers as well, including the H-2A Visa, which allows farmers to bring in an unlimited number of agricultural guest workers.

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE

To what extent is the global workforce a distinctive aspect of globalisation?

3.3   **Impact of Globalisation on the International System**

Globalisation has changed the international system quite significantly in so far as it made states far more interdependent and interconnected. The world is not a place of many different and separate countries anymore, but these states form almost one entity on many different levels. Problems do not arise isolated anymore and thus the solutions for these now also have to be found in collective action rather than individual responses. Intergovernmental Organisations, private sector bodies and global financial institutions – the products of globalisation – have taken the leading role in trying to solve these global problems and in creating a global market and economy. And by doing so, they have simultaneously brought states closer together and more dependent on each other.

A very important role in the process of globalisation has been played by the various Intergovernmental Organisations (IGOs) which gained increasing significance through the process of globalisation. Before the age of globalisation, states were looking to promote their national

interests. They were concerned more with their own safety than global security and they were looking for ways to deal with problems at a domestic rather than international level. Nowadays, since the issues and difficulties which states have to face are becoming more global than national, states are no longer able to protect their citizens and deal with problems by their own means, unless they take collective action together with other states in IGOs. By joining these, states give up some of their sovereignty to a body governed by the collective will and decisions of its member-states. This joined sovereignty had not existed before and it sometimes implies that states have to comply with the majority decision and are thus affected by it, even though it might not have been the initial desire of the individual state. Sometimes, they have to sacrifice their national interests in order to reach international rather than national aims. This demonstrates how member-states of the NATO are dependent on each other and affected by what happens in the other member-states.

3.4   A Critique of Globalisation

Reactions to the processes contributing to globalisation have varied widely. Philosophical differences regarding the costs and benefits of globalisation have given rise to a broad-range of ideologies and social movements. Proponents of economic growth, expansion and development, in general, view globalisation as desirable and necessary to the well-being of human society. In general, corporate businesses, particularly in the area of finance, see globalisation as a positive force in the world. Many economists cite statistics that seem to support such positive impact. In the words of Jeffrey Sachs, economic liberals and neoliberals generally argue that higher degrees of political and economic freedom in the form of free trade in the developed world are ends in themselves, producing higher levels of overall material wealth. Between them, globalisation is seen as the beneficial spread of liberty and capitalism (Sachs, 2005).

Jagdish Bhagwati, a former adviser to the UN on globalisation, holds that, although there are obvious problems with overly rapid development, globalisation is a very positive force that lifts countries out of poverty by causing a virtuous economic cycle associated with faster economic growth (Bhagwati, 2005). Economist Paul Krugman is another staunch supporter of globalisation and free trade with a record of disagreeing with many critics of globalisation. He argues that many of who pick holes with globalisation lack a basic understanding of comparative advantage and its importance in today's world.

However, antagonists view globalisation as detrimental to social well-being on a global or local scale. This includes those who question either the social or natural sustainability of long-term and continuous

economic expansion; the social structural inequality caused by these processes, and the colonial, imperialistic, or hegemonic ethnocentrism, cultural assimilation and cultural appropriation that underlie such processes (Sen, 1970). Other critiques of globalisation generally stem from discussions surrounding the impact of such processes on the planet as well as the human costs. They challenge directly traditional metrics, such as GDP, and a "multitude of interconnected fatal consequences such as social disintegration, breakdown of democracy, more rapid and extensive deterioration of the environment, the spread of new diseases, increasing poverty and alienation" (Fritjof, 2002), which they claim are the unintended consequences of globalisation.

Criticisms of globalisation have arisen from church groups, national liberation factions, unionists, intellectuals, artists, protectionists, anarchists amongst others. Some critics argue that globalisation harms the diversity of cultures. As a dominating country's culture is introduced into a receiving country through globalisation, it can become a threat to the diversity of local culture. Some argue that globalisation may ultimately lead to Westernisation or Americanisation of culture, where the dominating cultural concepts of economically and politically powerful Western countries spread and cause harm on local cultures.

Other opponents of globalisation see the phenomenon as a promotion of corporatist interests (Lee, 2007). They also claim that the increasing autonomy and strength of corporate entities shapes the political policy of countries. They advocate global institutions and policies that they believe better address the moral claims of poor and working classes as well as environmental concerns. They also argue that unrestricted free trade benefits only those with more financial leverage (i.e. the rich) at the expense of the poor. The anti-globalisation groups are aware of the unequal power and respect among nations in terms of international trade between the developed and underdeveloped countries of the world. They maintain that while it is true that free trade encourages globalisation among countries, some countries who advocate this very phenomenon turn to protect their economy.

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE

What are the arguments made for and against globalisation?

4.0   CONCLUSION

Overall, this unit has demonstrated, that globalisation has changed the international system quite significantly in so far as it has made states far more interdependent and interconnected. The world is not a place of many different and separate countries anymore, but these states form

almost one entity on many different levels. Problems do not arise isolated anymore and thus the solutions for these now also have to be found in collective action rather than individual responses. Intergovernmental Organisations, private sector bodies and global financial institutions – the products of globalisation – have taken the leading role in trying to solve these global problems and in creating a global market and economy. And by doing so, they have simultaneously brought states closer together and more dependent on each other.

5.0   SUMMARY

Globalisation refers to the process of international integration arising from the interchange of world views, products, ideas, and other aspects of culture. Economic globalisation is the increasing economic interdependence of national economies across the world through a rapid increase in cross-border movement of goods, service, technology and capital. Global health on its part, refers to health of populations in a global context that transcends the perspectives and concerns of individual nations. Nowadays, a number of health problems transcend national borders. Similarly, human challenges to the natural environment, such as climate change, cross-boundary water and air pollution, over-fishing of the ocean, and the spread of invasive species require at least transnational and, often, global solutions.

The global workforce, or international labour pool, reflects a new international division of labour that has been emerging since the late 1970s in the wake of other forces of globalisation. The global workforce is competitive and has been described as "a war for talent." Many countries have some form of guest worker programme.

Globalisation has changed the international system quite significantly in so far as it has made states far more interdependent and interconnected. The world is not a place of many different and separate countries anymore, but these states form almost one entity on many different levels.

Arguments have been made for and against globalisation. Proponents of economic growth, expansion and development, in general, view globalising processes as desirable and necessary to the well-being of human society. However, antagonists view globalising processes as detrimental to social well-being on a global or local scale. This includes those who question either the social or natural sustainability of long-term and continuous economic expansion, the social structural inequality caused by these processes, and the colonial, imperialistic, or hegemonic ethnocentrism, cultural assimilation and cultural appropriation that underlie such processes.

6.0   TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT

1.   What is "globalisation?"
2.   Discuss the major facets of life affected by globalisation.
3.   What are the major strength and weaknesses globalisation?

7.0   REFERENCES/FURTHER READING

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UNIT 2   COLLECTIVE SECURITY SYSTEM IN THE MODERN INTERNATIONAL SYSTEM

CONTENTS

1.0   INTRODUCTION

The concept of collective has been credited with averting wars. As globalisation took the central stage in the international system as a result of the ever increasing interaction and technological advancement, collective security became a major world agenda in handling existing and future challenges to global peace and security arising from the aggressive behaviour of nations towards one another. Today, the system of collective security approach in the world affairs has contributed immensely to ensure international peace, security and justice. Instances where the United Nations has stood to defend countries such as South Korea and Kuwait from aggression by North Korea and Iraq respectively are indicators of this. It is, however, true that collective security also faces challenges when it comes to its application and the perceptions around its application. The central purpose of this unit is to provide an insight into understanding the concept of collective peace, dwelling on major assumptions about the concept, as well as understanding the instruments for pursuing collective peace and the challenges emanating thereof.

2.0   OBJECTIVES

At the end of this unit, you should be able to:

- define collective security
- explain the major assumption of the notion of collective peace in the international system
- trace the evolution of collective security
- enumerate the challenges facing the application of collective peace.

3.0   MAIN CONTENT

3.1   What is Collective Security?

Miller (1999) states that several factors have made the task of defining the concept of collective security difficult. This is because the concept has kept evolving, making its definition also to be fluid and varied. He adds that the difficulty in the definition has become more complicated because of the existence of several organs operating in the system. Miller maintains that some of the organs are established to protect their member states from the attack of non-members. These, according to him are collective defense organs. He cites NATO as an example.

In seeking to establish a conceptual clarification about collective security, Onyemaechi Eke maintains that collective security is an idealist thinking which hinges on the prevention of hostilities by the formation of an overwhelming military force by member states to deter aggression or, by implication, to launch a reprisal attack capable of defeating the recalcitrant member (Eke, 2007). According to him, collective security connotes the institutionalisation of a global police force against the abuse of order and breaches, which can lead to insecurity in the international system. It is an arrangement in which states cooperate to provide security for all by the action of all against any state within the group which might challenge the existing order by using force.

Van Dyke (1957) sees collective security as a system in which a number of states are bound to engage in collective efforts on behalf of each other's individual security. Chaturvedi (2006), collective security is an arrangement arrived at by some nations to protect their vital interest, safety or integrity, against a probable threat or menace over a particular period, by means of combining their powers. Lastly, Shwarzenberger (1951), defines collective security as a machinery for joint action in order to prevent or counter any attack against an international order. The term implies collective measures for dealing with threats to peace.

From the definitions given by the mentioned scholars, collective security in the international system can be seen as a plan for maintaining peace through an organisation of sovereign states, whose members pledge themselves to defend each other against attack. The concept is best seen as security for individual nations through collective means. That is to say that by membership in an international organisation made up of all or most of the states of the world who have pledged to defend each other from attack.

Collective security, in another way, is the acceptance of the fact that war is a reality as well as recognising the relevance of power in international politics; its arrangement ensures that there should be a measure to use overwhelming force to frustrate any attempt by any state to change the status quo of the international system by use of force. The status quo here implies the world order of independent sovereign states. This contrasts with self-help strategies of engaging in war for purely immediate national interest. The collective security organisation not only gives cheaper security, but also may be the only practicable means of security for smaller nations against more powerful threatening neighbours.

The term "collective security" has also been cited as the guiding principle for the establishment of the League of Nations and the United Nations which sees aggression as a crime against humanity. By employing a system of collective security, aggression or war would no longer be the concern of any individual nation, but would be the concern of all nations. The United Nations hopes to dissuade any member state from acting in a manner likely to threaten peace, thereby avoiding any conflict.

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE

Define collective security.

3.2 The Major Principles and Assumptions of Collective Security System

The system of collective security is believed to be successful if the following assumptions are realised. First, according to Palmer and Perkings (2007), for a collective security to be successful it must be strong enough to cope with aggression from any power or combination of powers, and it must be invoked if and as aggression occurs. Thus, collective security involves the willingness to apply sanctions as and when necessary and even to go to war. Collective security will never work unless all the nations that take part in it are prepared simultaneously to threaten with sanctions and to fight, if necessary, an

aggressor. It must, therefore, be open to those states which are willing to accept this obligation in good faith.

Rourke and Boyer (1998) assert that collective security system is based on four basic principles: first, all countries foreswear the use of force except in self-defense; second, all agree that peace is indivisible, an attack on one is an attack on all; third, all pledge to unite to halt an aggression and restore peace; fourth, all agree to supply whatever material or personnel resources that are necessary to form a collective security force associated with the United Nations or some Intergovernmental Organisations to defeat aggressors and restore peace. Thus, the basic idea behind collective security system is that an attack on one is an attack on all. Any state contemplating aggression would face the sure prospect of struggle, not simply with the prospective victim, but with all other members of the system, who would make the necessary sacrifice to save the state under attack.

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE

What are the major assumptions of collective security system?

3.3 The Evolution of Collective Security in the International System

The concept of collective security as one of the most promising approaches for peace and a valuable device for power management on an international scale has long history of development, albeit in different forms. As such, it is not a new creation in the international system. Cardinal Richelieu, as the chief advisor of the king and the prime minister of France during the reign of Louis XIII, proposed a scheme of collective security in 1629. Later, it was his principles that were partially reflected in the 1648 Peace of Westphalia. In the eighteenth century many other proposals were made for collective security arrangements, especially in Europe.

In another dimension, the concept of a peaceful community of nations was outlined by Immanuel Kant in 1795 in his work *Perpetual Peace: A Philosophical Sketch*. Kant, specifically, outlined the idea of a league of nations that would control conflict and promote peace between states. He argues for the establishment of a peaceful world community not in a sense that there be a global government but in the hope that each state would declare itself as a free state that respects its citizens and welcomes foreign visitors as fellow rational beings. His key argument is that a union of free states would promote peaceful society worldwide: therefore, in his view, there can be a perpetual peace shaped by the international community rather than by a world government. Bahá'u'lláh

(1817–1892), the founder of the Bahá'í Faith, prescribed collective security as a means to establish world peace in his writings during the 19th century.

The treaties of Westphalia that were signed in 1648 to end the wars among the European states were made in order to avert the recurrence of wars that were evident prior to the signing of the treaties. Wars are seldom simple affairs, but the Thirty Years' War of the European states were even more complex than most, prompting endless scholarly debates about its causes and the motives of the major protagonists. In 1618, over half a century of festering religious, dynastic, and strategic tensions erupted into civil war in the Holy Roman Empire, subsequently engulfing the entire European continent in thirty years of exhausting and utterly devastating warfare. The signing of the treaties was an attempt to stop future wars by proposing the recognition of territorial integrity and sovereignty of states and equal recognition of religions.

The League of Nations that was established following the end of the First World War (WWI) and the United Nations that was established at the end of the Second World War (WWII) were basically intended to prevent subsequent wars in the world. At the twilight of the World War I, many thought and hoped that the states of the world would make the League of Nations a collective security system that would maintain international peace and security. They had the same thought and hope after the World War II as the United Nations was established. Thus, the treaties that were signed after the two major world wars tried to come up with permanent organs that were mandated to safeguard peace and security in the international system. The principles upon which these organs were formed were that of collective security.

3.4 The Relevance of the Collective Security System

In the international system, the United Nations has become the major custodian of international security, peace and stability of the world. Based on the principle of collective security in the world system the United Nations has created the Security Council as a special organ to conduct the policing of the entire world. The Security organ is duly authorised in the UN Charter to deal with issues of peace and security. For several years now, there is the collective understanding that the international community has the responsibility to protect where a state is unable or unwilling to protect its citizens from violations such as genocide, ethnic cleansing, and several other crimes against humanity. It is the responsibility to protect that gives credence to the Security Council's intervention. As the principal collective security organ, the Security Council bears the responsibility most especially when the intervention involves military actions.

Similarly, regional and sub-regional arrangements such as the efforts of NATO, the African Union force and ECOMOG complement the international efforts of the Security Council. These regional efforts have adopted the principle of collective security that allows for the intervention in the internal affairs of their member states.

Since the end of World War II, there has been a decline in the number of inter-state conflict, and it the exercise of the powers vested in the Security Council of the United Nations and other regional arrangements that has contributed to this decline (Kupchan and Kupchan, 1995). In this vein, the collective security paradigm has transformed the international system from its anarchic character to a platform of dialogue and negotiation of issues. The use of sanctions by the collective security organs in pursuing their mandate against so-called rogue states has characterised the working of security organs.

The Security Council was able to effectively sanction Iraq's aggressive behaviour in the invasion of Kuwait and thereafter. Particularly, under the Bush regime the US government presented its attack against Iraq as a war that was justified by the Resolutions passed by the Security Council on Iraq. President Bush claimed that the contents of Resolution 678, 687 and 1441 (Mandel, 2004: 33) were sufficient grounds to declare war on Iraq.

Again, following the September 11 terrorist attack on the United States, the Security Council made it clear that it is highly against terrorism and is ready to use measures that would contain the threat posed by terrorism to global peace and security. The UN Security Council passed two unanimous Resolutions: Resolution 1368 and Resolution 1373. The two Resolutions condemned the terrorist attacks as well as recognised the right of states to self and collective defense. Based on this the Bush administration in the US declared war on terrorism, calling for a crusade against all that was deemed as terrorists, including Al-Qaeda, a group identified as being responsible for the attack under the leadership of Osama Bin Ladin and the Taliban regime of Afghanistan which was alleged, according to intelligence sources, to have given sanctuary to the group. The US government justified their assault on Afghanistan as an act of self-defense which was taken in accordance with the spirit of the Security Council to maintain international security.

 Libya was, first, sanctioned for her subversive activities including its alleged masterminding of the Lockerbie bombing of 1988, in which 270 people perished in an Aircraft. Again, on the 26[th]February 2011, a week after Gaddafi violently suppressed peaceful demonstration in the opposition stronghold of Benghazi and vowed to crush the rebellion that was taking root in the East of Libya, the United Nations Security

Council passed Resolution 1970, which condemned the regime's action and called for an immediate end to civilian attacks. Furthermore, on 17th March 2011, the Security Council adopted a second resolution – Resolution 1973 - in response to Libyan crisis. This Resolution authorised the imposition of no-fly zone over Libya and the use of "all necessary measures" to protect Libyan civilians from Gaddafi's regime. The Resolution 1973 was later, to provide the justification for NATO's bombardment of Libya and the provision of military assistance to the rebels which culminated in the ousting and execution of Colonel Gaddafi.

Apart from the peace efforts expressed in military outings, the world collective security has been pursued through the instrumental world justice via in the International Criminal Court. There has been several attempts to ensure justice through the establishment of international criminal tribunals as an independent entity for ensuring the retributions of war criminals. In the case of the former Yugoslavia, Rwanda, Sierra Leone and Liberia *ad hoc* tribunals were established with the support of the Security Council with the responsibility for crimes and ensuring that the perpetrators are brought to justice. The Security Council also referred the Darfur crisis in Sudan to the attention of the ICC prosecutor. All these are indicative of the international desire of the collective security system to safeguard peace and security of the world through international justice.

3.5 The Challenges of Collective Security System

3.5.1 The Threat of Unilateral Actions by Powerful Nations

The collective security system has faced several challenges in its effort to achieve its mandate in the international system. One of the major challenges of collective security system is the increasing tendency of powerful states to resort to unilateral actions. This is especially true of the United States of America. First, the military action against Afghanistan by the USA was not, in any way, authorised by Security Council. It was basically a unilateral decision on the side of USA. At the point the superpower was contemplating the attack, there were many nations who cautioned her of the likely repercussions of such attack with religious connotations may be taken as an attack on Islam. This caution was, however, ignored and USA went ahead to prosecute the war in Afghanistan.

Second, the military action in Iraq is also an illustration of the unilateral action on the side of USA. At the beginning of 2003 the United State sought the support of the Security Council for an evasion of Iraq, but the Council was not convinced that there were sufficient and reasonable

grounds to authorise the USA and its allies to take military actions against Iraq. Despite the position of the United Nations, USA and her allies went ahead and attacked Iraq. In the real sense, the attack on Iraq can be said to be, in itself, an act of aggression.

In Libya, the intervention of the International Criminal Court (ICC) in the events of 2011 in the country has also been viewed with suspicion as the Court had not previously intervened, in a similar manner, in situations that were on going in Tunisia, Egypt and Syria. In addition, the bombardment of Libya by NATO was also questionable, since no such military actions were authorised by any of the Resolutions of the UN Security Council. As such it will be right to say that the actions of NATO were aimed at bringing down the regime of Gaddafi in Libya. In other words, such actions were illegal and at variance with the spirit of UN Charter.

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE

Identify three unilateral actions of the USA that undermines the spirit of collective security?

3.5.2 Double Standards

Generally, international organisations such as the United Nations are usually accused of double standards in the discharge of their functions in the international community. The double standard here involves favouring strong nations and disfavouring the weak in different situations. The best example to demonstrate the double standards inherent in the collective security system is epitomised in the performances of the International Criminal Court (ICC). For example, the ICC has opened cases of abuse of human right and violence against civilian populations perpetrated by insurgent groups in Democratic Republic of Congo, Uganda, Sudan and the Central African Republic. A close observation has shown that the performances of the ICC to treat cases in the mentioned countries are quite negligible. This is because the ICC has not been able to compel any of the perpetrators of the crimes to appear before it. In addition, the indictment of rebels or perpetrators of these crimes has made the situation to escalate as the rebels have intensified their attacks on civilians (Allen, 2006: 24). This raises doubt in the performances of the ICC in the examples cited.

In the same vein, the same violence cited above are been committed in other nations such as Palestine, Georgia, Colombia and Syria, but the ICC has turned a blind eye to these nations. One may then ask why ICC would be involved elsewhere, yet, shy away in another region where the same crimes are committed. The only reliable explanation is the one that

underlies the idea of double standard by powerful nations. The fact is that in many instances the ICC is only interested in prosecuting cases against countries that are unfriendly to the super powers, while ignoring cases against the super powers and their allies.

3.5.3 Lack of the Real Sense of Oneness as an International Community

In rhetoric, the world is professed to be one international community. But this axiom is more of lip service as there is no real sense of oneness in the international system. There are many instances that events in the world pose a challenge to this cliché. We can agree that there exist divers interests in the international system. Sometimes, there is a point of convergence among these divers interest, but at other times, such interests are diametrically opposed and compete against one another. There are also obvious differences in the military and economic capabilities among nations in the international system. As such, differences in interests open the way to rivalry and dominance among nations. Furthermore, given the fact that nations have no room about morality or fairness in pursuance of their interests, it becomes difficult to address, practice or even enforce the spirit of oneness among nations with divers interests. It is based on this that the unity of purpose among nations as regard collective security becomes an issue of debate patterning to the "real collectivity" of nations.

4.0   CONCLUSION

In order to have a collective security system that is built on effectiveness and fairness, the Security Council of the United Nations needs to undergo basic prerequisites restructuring that must have all nations and cultures of the world represented. For convenience, ten percent of the countries of each continent should have a seat at the council. Second, the idea of a permanent seat and veto powers enjoyed by powerful nations should be completely abolished, while the countries in each continent should rotate the seats available among themselves based on agreed tenure regime as would be agreed. Third, there should be a stand by institution that has all the facilities required to maintain international peace and security. The human resources of the standby force should be contributed by the member states of the United Nations. The organ should also be led by a world acclaimed professionals who are international public servant of the United Nations. Such an arrangement, it is likely, would enhance the common interest of the entire world.

5.0　SUMMARY

From the definitions given by scholars, collective security in the international system can be seen as a plan for maintaining peace through the organisation of sovereign states, whose members pledge themselves to defend each other against attack. The concept is best seen as a security for individual nations through collective means. That is to say that this entails membership in an international organisation made up of all or most of the states of the world who have pledged to defend each other from attack.

Collective security connotes the institutionalisation of a global police force against the abuse of order and breaches, which can lead to insecurity in the international system. We can argue further that it is an arrangement in which states cooperate to provide security for all by the action of all against any state within the group which might challenge the existing order by using force. Thus, collective security that has been cited as the guiding principle for the establishment of the League of Nations and the United Nations which sees aggression is a crime against humanity.

The concept of collective security as one of the most promising approaches for peace and a valuable device for power management on an international scale has long history of development, albeit in different forms. In the international system, the United Nations has become the major custodian of international security, peace and stability of the world system. Based on the principle of collective security in the world system, the United Nations has created the Security Council as a special organ to conduct the policing of the entire world. Suffice to add that the collective security system has faced several challenges in its bit to achieve its mandate in the international system. They include unilateral actions, double standards and lack of the real sense of oneness among states in the international system.

6.0　TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT

1.　Define the concept of "collective security" system.
2.　What are the major chances of the "collective security" system.

7.0　REFERENCES/FURTHER READING

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UNIT 3   THE THREAT OF TERRORISM

CONTENTS

1.0   INTRODUCTION

The definition of "terrorism" has generated great debate because of the complexities involved in every attempt to conceptualise term. This is because in some cases, a group that is elsewhere regarded as "freedom fighters" by its supporters is considered as terrorists by its opponents. For example, the Irish Republican Army (IRA), called its members "freedom fighters", but the British government them a terrorist group. Again, the concept is often employed by state authorities to delegitimise the opponents of that particular state's authorities, so as to legitimise the state's use of armed force against such opponents. Incidentally, such use of force by the state may also be described as "state terrorism" by opponents of the state. Thus, the entire usage of the term has a controversial history, with freedom fighters such as Nelson Mandela at one point was branded a terrorist. This put together has greatly compounded the difficulty of providing a precise definition of the term. In this unit, we shall look at the various definitions and means attached to the term, not with the aim of arriving at a precise definition, but instead to gain a broader insight into what the term connotes in various circumstances.

2.0   OBJECTIVES

At the end of this unit, you should be able to:

- define terrorism
- enumerate the basic characteristics of terrorism
- explain some of the reasons for the prevalence of terrorism in the international system.

3.0   MAIN CONTENT

3.1   Etymology

To trace the etymology of the term "terrorism," we shall rely on the *Online Etymology Dictionary* of 1979. According to this dictionary, the word terrorism emanates from the French word *terrorisme* which, in turn, according to Kim Campbell (2001) is derived from the Latin verb *terreō* meaning "I frighten". The term was employed in 105 BC to describe the panic and state of emergency in Rome in response to the approach of warriors of the Cimbritribe. Subsequently, the Jacobins employed the term when imposing a Reign of Terror during the French Revolution. They employed the term to describe, specifically, state of terrorism, as practiced by the French government during the 1793-1794. After the Jacobins lost power, the word "terrorist" became a term of abuse. Initially, "terrorism" originally referred to acts committed by a government. Currently, it is, however, used to refer to the killing of innocent people for political purposes in such a way as to create a media spectacle (Mackey, 2009). Arnold (2011), maintains that this meaning can be traced back to Sergey Nechayev, who founded the Russian terrorist group called "People's Retribution" in 1869.Sergey described himself as a "terrorist." Today, out of all the human acts that have menaced mankind globally, terrorism can be counted as the major threat to global peace, stability and security.

3.2   What is Terrorism?

As we have indicated in the introduction of this unit, the definition of terrorism has generated several controversies. This is because various governments and organisations offer different   In addition; the international community herself has never been able to coined a universally agreed, legally applied definition of the concept. These difficulties arise from the fact that the term "terrorism" is viewed from various kaleidoscopic lenses. Angus Martyn (2002), in his address to the Australian Parliament, titled "The Right of Self-Defence under International Law- the Response to the Terrorist Attacks of 11 September" stated that the international community has never succeeded

in developing an accepted comprehensive definition of terrorism. Even during the United Nations attempts in the 1970s and 1980s to define the term failed because differences of opinion between various members about the use of violence in the context of conflicts over national liberation and self-determination.

These divergences have made it impossible for the United Nations to conclude a Comprehensive Convention on International Terrorism that incorporates a single, all-encompassing, legally binding, criminal law definition of terrorism. The international community has adopted a series of sectorial conventions that define and criminalise various types of activities regarded as terrorist acts. Rather, the United Nations General Assembly, since 1994 has repeatedly condemned terrorist acts using the following political description of terrorism in its Resolution 49/60: "Criminal acts intended or calculated to provoke a state of terror in the general public, a group of persons or particular persons for political purposes are in any circumstance unjustifiable, whatever the considerations of a political, philosophical, ideological, racial, ethnic, religious or any other nature that may be invoked to justify them" (NUGA, 1994).

In November 2004, a United Nations Secretary General report described terrorism as any act "intended to cause death or serious bodily harm to civilians or non-combatants with the purpose of intimidating a population or compelling a government or an international organisation to do or abstain from doing any act".

In addition, Bruce Hoffman (2006) has noted that it is not only individual agencies within the same governmental apparatus that cannot agree on a single definition of terrorism. Experts and other long-established scholars in the field are equally incapable of reaching a consensus. In the first edition of his magisterial survey, 'Political Terrorism: A Research Guide,' Alex Schmid devoted more than a hundred pages to examining more than a hundred different definitions of terrorism in an effort to discover a broadly acceptable, reasonably comprehensive explication of the word. Four years later, in a second edition, Schimd was no closer to the goal of his quest, conceding in the first sentence of the revised volume that the search for an adequate definition is still on.

In any case, Bruce Hoffman believes it is possible to identify some key characteristics of terrorism. He proposes that by distinguishing terrorists from other types of criminals, and terrorism from other forms of crime, we come to appreciate that terrorism is ineluctably political in aims and motives; violent or, equally important, threatens violence; designed to have far-reaching psychological repercussions beyond the immediate

victim or target; conducted by an organisation with an identifiable chain of command or conspiratorial cell structure whose members wear no uniform or identifying insignia; and perpetrated by a sub-national group or non-state entity (Hoffman, 2006: 41).

A definition proposed by Carsten Bockstette (2008) in *George C. Marshall Centre Occasional Paper Series* entitled "Jihadist Terrorist Use of Strategic Communication Management Techniques" underlines the psychological and tactical aspects of terrorism. Here terrorism is defined as political violence in an asymmetrical conflict that is designed to induce terror and psychic fear (sometimes indiscriminate) through the violent victimisation and destruction of noncombatant targets (sometimes iconic symbols). Such acts are meant to send a message from an illicit clandestine organisation. The definition expatiates, further, that the purpose of terrorism is to exploit the media in order to achieve maximum attainable publicity as an amplifying force multiplier in order to influence the targeted audience(s) in order to reach short- and midterm political goals and/or desired long-term end states.

Walter Laqueur, of the Centre for Strategic and International Studies, noted that "the only general characteristic of terrorism generally agreed upon is that terrorism involves violence and the threat of violence". There are arguments that this criterion alone does not produce a useful definition, since, it includes many violent acts not usually considered terrorism. Such acts include war, riot, organised crime, or even a simple assault. Yet, on one hand, property destruction that does not endanger life is not usually considered a violent crime, but on the other hand, Ronald Bailey (2009) states that   some have described property destruction by the "Earth Liberation Front" and Daniel Schorn (2006) has described property destruction by the "Animal Liberation Front" as violence and acts of terrorism.

Khan, Ali (1987) in his work "A Theory of International Terrorism" published in *Social Science Research Network,* maintains that among the various definitions of terrorism, there are several that do not recognise the possibility of legitimate use of violence by civilians against an invader in an occupied country. He states that other definitions would label as terrorist groups only the resistance movements that oppose an invader with violent acts that indiscriminately kill or harm civilians and non-combatants, thus making a distinction between lawful and unlawful use of violence. According to Ali Khan, such a distinction lies ultimately in a political judgment.

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE

Define terrorism in your words.

3.3   Perspectives on Terrorism

The terms "terrorism" and "terrorist" carry strong connotations. In the negative, these terms are often used as political labels, to condemn violence or the threat of violence by certain actors as immoral, indiscriminate, and unjustified or to condemn an entire segment of a population. Those labeled "terrorists" by their opponents rarely identify themselves as such, and typically use other terms or terms specific to their situation, such as separatist, freedom fighter, liberator, revolutionary, vigilante, militant, paramilitary, guerrilla, rebel, patriot, or any similar-meaning word in other languages and cultures. Jihadi, mujaheddin, and fedayeen are similar Arabic words which have entered the English lexicon. It is common for both parties in a conflict to describe each other as terrorists.

On the question of whether particular terrorist acts, such as killing civilians, can be justified as the lesser evil in a particular circumstance, philosophers have expressed different views: while, according to David Rodin, utilitarian philosophers can (in theory) conceive of cases in which the evil of terrorism is outweighed by the good which could not be achieved in a less morally costly way, in practice the "harmful effects of undermining the convention of non-combatant immunity is thought to outweigh the goods that may be achieved by particular acts of terrorism" (Rodin, (2006). Among the non-utilitarian philosophers, Peter Steinfels (March 1, 2003), identifies Michael Walzer who argued that terrorism can be morally justified in only one specific case, when a nation or community faces the extreme threat of complete destruction and the only way it can preserve itself is by intentionally targeting non-combatants, then it is morally entitled to do so.

Again, Bruce Hoffman, in his book *Inside Terrorism* offers an explanation of why the term *terrorism* has become distorted: On one point, at least, everyone agrees: *terrorism* is a pejorative term. It is a word with intrinsically negative connotations that is generally applied to one's enemies and opponents, or to those with whom one disagrees and would otherwise prefer to ignore. 'What is called terrorism,' Brian Jenkins has written, 'thus seems to depend on one's point of view. The use of the term implies a moral judgment; and if one party can successfully attach the label *terrorist* to its opponent, then it has indirectly persuaded others to adopt its moral viewpoint.' Hence, the decision to call someone or label some organisation *terrorist* becomes almost unavoidably subjective, depending largely on whether one sympathises with or opposes the person/group/cause concerned. If one identifies with the victim of the violence, for example, then the act is terrorism. If, however, one identifies with the perpetrator, the violent act

is regarded in a more sympathetic, if not positive (or, at the worst, an ambivalent) light; and it is not terrorism (Hoffman, 1998: 32).

The negative connotations of the word can be summed up in the aphorism, "One man's terrorist is another man's freedom fighter". This is exemplified when a group using irregular military methods is an ally of a state against a mutual enemy, but later falls out with the state and starts to use those methods against its former ally. Dr Chris Clark (2007), states that during World War II, the Malayan People's Anti-Japanese Army was allied with the British, but during the Malayan Emergency, members of its successor (the Malayan Races Liberation Army), were branded "terrorists" by the British. Ronald Reagan and others in the American administration frequently called the Afghan Mujahideen as "freedom fighters" during their war against the Soviet Union, yet twenty years later, when a new generation of Afghan men were fighting against what they perceived to be a regime installed by foreign powers, their attacks were labeled "terrorism" by George W. Bush.

In the same vein, a leading terrorism researcher Professor Martin Rudner, director of the Canadian Centre of Intelligence and Security Studies at Ottawa's Carleton University, defines "terrorist acts" as attacks against civilians for political or other ideological goals, and said that some groups, when involved in a "liberation" struggle, have been called "terrorists" by the Western governments or media. Later, these same persons, as leaders of the liberated nations, are called "statesmen" by similar organisations. Two examples of this phenomenon are the Nobel Peace Prize laureates Menachem Begin and Nelson Mandela. WikiLeaks whistle blower Julian Assange has been called a "terrorist" by Sarah Palin and Joe Biden.

Sometimes, states which are close allies, for reasons of history, culture and politics, can disagree over whether or not members of a certain organisation are terrorists. For instance, for many years, some branches of the United States government refused to label members of the Provisional Irish Republican Army (IRA) as terrorists while the IRA was using methods against one of the United States' closest allies (the United Kingdom) which the UK branded as terrorism. For these and other reasons, media outlets wishing to preserve a reputation for impartiality try to be careful in their use of the term.

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE

To what extent is the aphorism "one man's terrorist is another man's freedom fighter" true?

3.4   Characteristics of Terrorism

There are basic characteristics that mark operations of terrorism. Hoffman (2003) states that, first, terrorist attacks are usually carried out in such a way as to maximise the severity and length of the psychological impact. Each act of terrorism is a "performance" devised to have an impact on many large audiences. Second, terrorists also attack national symbols, to show power and to attempt to shake the foundation of the country or society they are opposed to. This may negatively affect a government, while increasing the prestige of the given terrorist organisation and/or ideology behind a terrorist act (Juergensmeyer, 2000:125–135). Third, terrorist acts frequently have a political purpose. Their attacks are like letter-writing or protesting, which is used by activists when they believe that no other means will cause the kind of change they desire. The change is desired so badly that failure to achieve change is seen as a worse outcome than the deaths of civilians. Juergensmeyer (2000) explains that this is often where the inter-relationship between terrorism and religion occurs. When a political struggle is integrated into the framework of a religious or "cosmic" struggle, such as the control over an ancestral homeland or holy site such as Israel and Jerusalem, failing in the political goal becomes equated with spiritual failure, which, for the highly committed, is worse than their own death or the deaths of innocent civilians.

It is also important to note that in the thinking of Juergensmeyer, Very often, the victims of terrorism are targeted not because they are threats, but because they are specific symbols, tools, animals or corrupt beings that tie into a specific view of the world that the terrorists possess. Their suffering accomplishes the terrorists' goals of instilling fear, getting their message out to an audience or otherwise satisfying the demands of their often radical religious and political agendas.

3.5   Reasons for Terrorist Acts

They are many reasons why people or groups engage in terrorism.

3.5.1 Political Motives

Liberation struggles, agitation for self-rule and autonomy, resistance against imposition of a particular form of government, secession of a territory to form a new sovereign state or become part of a different state as well as opposition to a domestic government or occupying army have been cited as some of the major reasons for which terrorist acts can be carried out. National liberation is historically among the most potent reasons that extremist groups turn to violence to achieve their aims.

There are many of these groups. They include the ETA, the IRA, and the PKK.

ETA stands for Euskadi Ta Askatasuna or EuskalHerria in Basque country. It spans the border between France and Spain. It has an autonomous culture and language, whose roots are believed to extend to the Paleolithic period. This area was relatively self-governing until around the turn of the 19th century. ETA is an offspring of the Basque nationalist movement more broadly and, like the non-violent nationalist political parties, believes that the Basque are a distinct nation and should have a sovereign state identity or, at least, an autonomous status. The ETA (Basque) ETA wants an independent French state in the Basque region.

There is also the IRA– the Irish Republican Army. The emergence of the Irish Republican Army has its roots in Ireland's 20th century quest for national independence from Great Britain. In 1801, the Anglican (English Protestant) United Kingdom of Great Britain merged with Roman Catholic Ireland. For the next hundred years, Catholic Irish Nationalists opposed Protestant Irish Unionists. The IRA began its terrorist attacks on the British army and police following a summer of violent rioting between Catholics and Protestants in Northern Ireland. For the next generations, the IRA would carry out bombings, assassinations and other terrorist attacks against British and Irish Unionist targets.

The PKK (Partiya Karkeran Kurdistan) has assumed a number of names since its founding, but resumed using the name PKK in April, 2005. The Kurds, who are not Turkish, found themselves, their language and their culture marginalised or forcefully suppressed following Turkey's establishment in 1924. As the largest minority in Turkey their earliest objective, in the 1970s, was the creation of an independent home for the Kurds. At first they envisioned to achieve this through Marxist revolution in Turkey.

In the early 20th century, terrorists justified violence in the name of anarchism, socialism and communism. Socialism was becoming a dominant way for many people to explain the political and economic injustice they saw developing in capitalist societies, and for defining a solution. Millions of people expressed their commitment to a socialist future without violence, but a small number of people in the world thought violence was necessary.

3.5.2 Economic Reasons

Gary Becker, a professor at the University of Chicago Business School, has argued that there is a connection between wealth and terrorism, based on the observation that "nations or regions that are experiencing rapid growth appear to have lower incidences of terrorism." Becker posits that political activism, including violent activity, is less appealing to individuals when their economic opportunities expand. So, even if it were the case that poverty does not directly cause terrorism, it could still be true that economic growth reduces terrorism. Furthermore, economic deprivation of a population where there is dominance of a territory and its resources by a particular ethnic group create conditions for misdistribution as well as spur terrorism.

3.5.3 Religious Fanatism

Religious terrorism is terrorism performed by groups or individuals, the motivation of which is typically rooted in faith-based tenets. Peter Rose (2003), in an article titled "Disciples of religious terrorism share one faith", in *Christian Science Monitor* argued that terrorist acts throughout the centuries have been performed on religious grounds with the hope to either spread or enforce a system of belief, viewpoint or opinion. Religious terrorism does not in itself necessarily define a specific religious standpoint nor view, but instead usually defines an individual or a group view or interpretation of that belief system's teachings. Jamaat al-Fuqra is an Islamic terror organisation whose goal, according to the Centre for Peace and Security, is to "purify Islam through violence." Put simply, this group of radical Islamic men believes that they are commanded by God to proliferate their religion. Furthermore, violence is the only acceptable way to deal with differing beliefs.

Al Shabaab is another radical Islamic group with strongholds in Pakistan and the United Kingdom. Various small scale bombings have been traced back to this group. Hamas is another Islamic group operating in Palestine, and they are responsible for hundreds of rocket and mortar attacks on Israel. The Al-Qaeda operatives are based in Pakistani and Saudi Arabia.

In Nigeria a famous Islamic fundamentalist by name Mohammed Marwa, also known as Maitatsine, was at the height of his notoriety during the 1970s and 1980s. Mohammed refused to believe Muhammad was the Prophet and instigated riots in the country which resulted in the deaths of thousands of people. Some analysts view Boko Haram as an extension of the Maitatsine riots. Boko Haram itself is another religious terrorist group. The term "Boko Haram" comes from the Hausa word *boko* figuratively meaning "western education" (literally "alphabet",

from English "book") and the Arabic word *haram* figuratively meaning "sin" (literally, "forbidden"). The name, loosely translated from Hausa, means "western education is forbidden". The group earned this name by its strong opposition to anything Western, which it sees as corrupting Muslims. In a 2009 BBC interview, Mohammed Yusuf, then leader of the group, stated his belief that the fact of a spherical earth is contrary to Islamic teaching and should be rejected, along with Darwinian evolution and the fact of rain originating from water evaporated by the sun. Before his death, Yusuf reiterated the group's objective of changing the current education system and rejecting democracy. The growing frequency and geographical range of attacks attributed to Boko Haram have led some political and religious leaders in the north to the conclusion that the group has now expanded beyond its original religious composition to include not only Islamic militants, but criminal elements and disgruntled politicians as well. For instance, the Borno State Governor Kashim Shettima said of Boko Haram that it has become a franchise that anyone can buy into. The group has also forcibly converted non-Muslims to Islam.

3.6   Perpetrators of Terrorism

Terrorist attacks are manifest in various forms and are perpetrated by various groups. To an extent, the form of the attack determines the type of the perpetrator. The attacks are also driven by the intention and capacity of the perpetrator. In fact, in terrorism, the intention of the terrorist is very fundamental to determining the type and perpetrator of the act. Thus, individuals, groups and even governments have been found engaging in terrorist activities. Let us explain briefly the various perpetrators of terrorism.

3.6.1 Individuals

In most cases, acts of terrorism are carried out individually. It takes an individual to take the difficult decision of committing a suicide bombing or any other act of violence that terrorism becomes visible. Most local and international terrorist acts start with one person who will subsequently become the leader when he is able form a group. Even, then, their activities are usually carried out by individuals. Al-Qaeda, for example started with Bin Laden to develop into a group. The Lockerbie bombing of December 1988 was committed by two individuals. Ahmed khalfanGhailani, a Tanzanian, was alleged to have carried out the bombing of the US embassy in East Africa in 1998. Muhammad Abdul Mutallab was alone when he attempted the bombing of a US Airplane in 2009. However, it is certain that the individual does not operate in isolation. He is usually connected to highly organised hierarchical group of individuals.

3.6.2 Groups

This is what we also call organised terrorism. It refers to the increasing capacity of global terrorists to acquire more members, greater geographic reach, wider influence and impacts. Al-Qaeda, for example, has its major goal to bring together other militants groups under its control. From Afghanistan the group has been able to acquire allies in the Arabian Peninsula. With this network it becomes difficult to completely wipe out the group from the face of the earth. The most common image of terrorism is that it is carried out by small and secretive cells, highly motivated to serve a particular cause and many of the most deadly operations in recent times, such as the September 11 attacks, the London underground bombing, and the 2002 Bali bombing were planned and carried out by a close clique, composed of close friends, family members and other strong social networks. These groups benefited from the free flow of information and efficient telecommunications to succeed where others had failed.

Boko Haram in Nigeria is a group which exerts influence in the northeastern Nigerian states of Borno, Adamawa, Kaduna, Bauchi, Yobe and Kano. *Al Jazeera* news on 24 December 2011 affirmed that this group is divided into three factions with a splinter group known as Ansaru. The group's main leader is Abubakar Shekau. Its weapons expert, second-in-command and arms manufacturer was Momodu Bama. According to one US military commander, Boko Haram is likely linked to Al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM), but there is no documented evidence of material international support running between them.

3.6.3 The State

State terrorism has been used to refer to terrorist acts by governmental agents or forces. This involves the use of state resources employed by a state's foreign policies, such as using its military to directly perform acts of terrorism. A professor of Political Science, Michael Stohl in an article titled "The Superpowers and International Terror" cites the examples that include Germany's bombing of London and the US atomic destruction of Hiroshima and Nagasaki during World War II. He argues that "the use of terror tactics is common in international relations and the state has been and remains a more likely employer of terrorism within the international system than insurgents" (Stohl, 1984). A state can sponsor terrorism by funding or harboring a terrorist organisation. Opinions as to which acts of violence by states consist of state-sponsored terrorism vary widely. When states provide funding for groups considered by some to be terrorist they rarely acknowledge them as such.

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE

Give examples of the perpetrators of terrorism in the international system.

3.7   The War against Terrorism in the International System

In 1984, the Reagan Administration used the term "war against terrorism" as part of an effort to pass legislation that was designed to freeze assets of terrorist groups and marshal the forces of government against them. Silver, Alexandra in an article in titled "How America Became a Surveillance State" quotes author Shane Harris as asserting that the use of this term by the Reagan administration was a reaction to the 1983 Beirut barracks bombing. On 16 September 2001, at Camp David, President George W. Bush used the phrase *war on terrorism* in an unscripted and controversial comment when, in reaction to 11 September 2001 bombing of the World Trade Centre, he said, "This crusade – this war on terrorism – is going to take a while, ..." (Kenneth, 2001).

Because the actions involved in the "war on terrorism" are diffuse, and the criteria for inclusion are unclear, political theorist Richard Jackson has argued that "the 'war on terrorism' therefore, is simultaneously a set of actual practices - wars, covert operations, agencies, and institutions - and an accompanying series of assumptions, beliefs, justifications, and narratives - it is an entire language or discourse" (Jackson, 2005: 8). Critics of the term have argued that the term is been used to justify unilateral preventive war, human rights abuses and other violations of international law (Borhan and Muhammad, 2008: 379–397).

Following the bombings of the US embassies in Kenya and Tanzania, the then US President Bill Clinton launched Operation Infinite Reach, a bombing campaign in Sudan and Afghanistan against targets the US asserted were associated with World Islamic Front for Jihad Against Jews and Crusaders (WIFJAJC). The Authorisation for Use of Military Force against Terrorists or "AUMF" was made a law on September 14, 2001, to authorise the use of United States Armed Forces against those responsible for the attacks on September 11, 2001. It authorised the President to use all necessary and appropriate force against those nations, organisations, or persons he determines planned, authorised, committed, or aided the terrorist attacks that occurred on September 11, 2001, or harbored such organisations or persons, in order to prevent any future acts of international terrorism against the United States by such nations, organisations or persons.

Operation Active Endeavour, a naval operation of NATO, started in October 2001 in response to the September 11 attacks. It operates in the Mediterranean and is designed to prevent the movement of militants or weapons of mass destruction and to enhance the security of shipping in general. The operation has also assisted Greece with its prevention of illegal immigration. In the same dimension, Operation Enduring Freedom is the official name used by the Bush administration for the War in Afghanistan, together with three smaller military actions, under the umbrella of the Global War on Terror. These global operations are intended to seek out and destroy any al-Qaeda fighters or affiliates.

In October 2001, US forces (with UK and coalition allies) invaded Afghanistan to oust the Taliban regime. On 7 October 2001, the official invasion began with British and US forces conducting airstrike campaigns over enemy targets. Kabul, the capital city of Afghanistan, fell by mid-November. The remaining al-Qaeda and Taliban remnants fell back to the rugged mountains of eastern Afghanistan, mainly Tora Bora. In December, Coalition Forces (the US and its allies) fought within that region. It is believed that Osama bin Laden escaped into Pakistan during the battle. In March 2002, the US and other NATO and non-NATO forces launched Operation Anaconda with the goal of destroying any remaining al-Qaeda and Taliban forces in the Shah-i-Kot Valley and Arma Mountains of Afghanistan. The Taliban suffered heavy casualties and evacuated the region.

The Taliban regrouped in western Pakistan and began to unleash an insurgent-style offensive against Coalition Forces in the late 2002. Throughout southern and eastern Afghanistan, firefights broke out between the surging Taliban and Coalition Forces. Coalition Forces responded with a series of military offensives and an increase in the amount of troops in Afghanistan. In February 2010, Coalition Forces launched Operation Moshtarak in southern Afghanistan along with other military offensives in the hopes that they would destroy the Taliban insurgency once and for all. Presently, peace talks are also underway between Taliban affiliated fighters and Coalition Forces. The United States and other NATO and non-NATO forces are planning to withdraw from Afghanistan by the end of 2014.

The United States has also conducted a series of military strikes on al-Qaeda militants in Yemen since the War on Terror began. Yemen has a weak central government and a powerful tribal system that leaves large lawless areas open for militant training and operations. Al-Qaida has a strong presence in the country. MacLeod Hugh is quoted in *The Guardian,* London 28 December 2009, as asserting that the US, in an effort to support Yemeni counter-terrorism efforts, has increased their military aid package to Yemen from less than $11 million in 2006 to

more than $70 million in 2009, as well as providing up to $121 million for development over the next three years (Hugh, 2009).

In addition to military efforts abroad, in the aftermath of 9/11 the Bush Administration increased domestic efforts to prevent future attacks. Various government bureaucracies which handled security and military functions were reorganised. A new cabinet level agency called the United States Department of Homeland Security was created in November 2002 to lead and coordinate the largest reorganisation of the US federal government since the consolidation of the armed forces into the Department of Defense.

The Justice Department launched the National Security Entry-Exit Registration System for certain male non-citizens in the US, requiring them to register in person at offices of the immigration and naturalisation service.

The USA PATRIOT Act of October 2001 dramatically reduces restrictions on law enforcement agencies' ability to search telephone, e-mail communications, medical, financial, and other records; eases restrictions on foreign intelligence gathering within the United States; expands the Secretary of the Treasury's authority to regulate financial transactions, particularly those involving foreign individuals and entities; and broadens the discretion of law enforcement and immigration authorities in detaining and deporting immigrants suspected of terrorism-related acts. The act also expanded the definition of terrorism to include domestic terrorism, thus enlarging the number of activities to which the USA PATRIOT Act's expanded law enforcement powers could be applied. A new Terrorist Finance Tracking Programme monitored the movements of terrorists' financial resources. This was discontinued after being revealed by The New York Times newspaper. Telecommunication usage by known and suspected terrorists was studied through the NSA electronic surveillance programme. The Patriot Act is still in effect.

4.0   CONCLUSION

Criticism against the War on Terror addresses the issues, morality, efficiency, economics, and other questions surrounding the global response to terror made against the phrase itself, calling it a misnomer. The notion of a "war" against "terrorism" has proven highly contentious, with critics charging that it has been exploited by participating governments to pursue long-standing policy, military objectives, reduction of civil liberties, and infringement upon human rights. It is argued that the term war is not appropriate in this context (as in War on

Drugs), since there is no identifiable enemy, and that it is unlikely that international terrorism can be brought to an end by military means.

Other critics, such as Francis Fukuyama, note that "terrorism" is not an enemy, but a tactic; calling it a "war on terror", obscures differences between conflicts such as anti-occupation insurgents and international mujahideen. With a military presence in Iraq and Afghanistan and its associated collateral damage Williams (2003), maintains that this increases resentment and terrorist threats against the West. There is also a perceived US hypocrisy, media induced hysteria. Williams argues that differences in foreign and security policy have damaged America's image in most of the world.

5.0   SUMMARY

The definition of "terrorism" has generated great debate because of the complexities involved in every attempt to conceptualise term. The entire usage of the term has a controversial history, with freedom fighters such as Nelson Mandela at one point was branded a terrorist. This has greatly compounded the difficulty of providing a precise definition of the term. Terrorism emanates from the French word *terrorisme* which, in turn, according to Kim Campbell (2001) is derived from the Latin verb *terreō* meaning "I frighten." Various governments and organisations offer different definitions of terrorism based on their peculiarity.

There are basic characteristics that mark terrorism. First, terrorist attacks are usually carried out in such a way as to maximise the severity and length of the psychological impact. Each act of terrorism is a "performance" devised to have an impact on many large audiences. Second, terrorists also attack national symbols, to show power and to attempt to shake the foundation of the country or society they are opposed to. This may negatively affect a government, while increasing the prestige of the given terrorist organisation and/or ideology behind a terrorist act. Third, terrorist acts frequently have a political purpose. Their attacks are like letter-writing or protesting, which is used by activists when they believe that no other means will cause the kind of change they desire.

There are various reasons for terrorist acts, which include religious, political and socio-political motives. Terrorist acts are perpetrated by individuals, groups and even a government or a state. The USA has been the major crusader in the war against terrorism in the international system.

6.0   TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT

1.   Explain what you understand by the term "terrorism"
2.   What are the basic characteristics of terrorism?
3.   Discuss three reasons for acts of terrorism in the international system.
4.   Who do you think are the major perpetrators of terrorism?

7.0   REFERENCES/FURTHER READING

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UNIT 4   THE FUTURE OF THE INTERNATIONAL SYSTEM

CONTENTS

1.0   INTRODUCTION

In thinking about the future of the international system it is only wise to think in terms of alternative world order models in which mankind would organise itself politically. Scholars have been engaged in conceiving various models of alternative world order as well as choosing the best among these models (Pearson and Rochester, 1998). This is done in the hope that the direction the word is heading would coincide with the direction of any of the conjectured models. It is no doubt that the future is difficult to predict because most of the times, what comes to pass hardly coincides with what we wish it should be. This is because human effort has a limit to which it can alter the existing course and shape the future. In this unit, we shall examine a number of alternative world models, assessing the likelihood of the world resembling any of these models in the future international system.

2.0   OBJECTIVES

At the end of this unit, you should be able to:

- explain what world government order models are
- define regionalism.

3.0   MAIN CONTENT

3.1   The Continuation of the Contemporary Nation-State System

In this course work, we have spent our energy describing the contemporary international system. We have shown that the dominant feature of the contemporary system is the preponderance of nation-states engaged in competitive relationship. We also acknowledged that IGOs and several other non-state actors live side-by-side with the nation-states in the conduct of world affairs. This calls our attention to the chain of relationship in which some issues such as the economy, which concerns all the actors and military-security issues which are the exclusive concern of nation-states.

It might seem that events which occur in our century are fast changing the system on a daily basis so it is impossible to think that the future international system would be one that resembles the present. However, one possibility is that the world, in the future, may still look much as it is today. It is possible that the present order may well last into the next century, at least in its basic characteristics. That means one would expect that nation-states would still be the major actors in world politics, even though technological development is continually undermining their sovereignty. The relationship among the nation-states would also be either coloured by increased interdependence among them or reduced interdependence and exacerbate tensions among them.

In addition, it is most likely that the world would continue to be overwhelmed by the social-economic, ideological and political dominance of the US-centred world in which the promises of an entirely peaceful world order through the unipolarity dreams of the USA is getting more and more deluding. The problem with the unipolar system is that there are always states that do not accept the hegemon and will challenge him. Thus, even if the USA is acclaimed as a hegemon, it will not be unanimously accepted by the entire world and it cannot impose its dominance over the whole world. Again, the international system in the future may continue to live with instability, wars and political violence as well as acts of terrorism. To this effect, even the non-state actors will unavoidably get drawn into crescendo of these crises.

This future system would correspond with the realist approach to understanding the international system with the conceptualisation of the international arena as a chain of forces that can only be checked, rather, by the well known mechanism of balance of power than the hegemony of the USA and her allies. The implication here is that the future world order will witness power diffusion where the major feature will be that

of loose polar system characterised by emergence of new power centres from the erstwhile developing nations of Asia and Africa. In fact critical scholars like Chantal Mouffe (2007) and Danilo Zolo (2007) have already argued separately in *the international political thought of Carl Schmitt* for a multi-polar world order in the context of their critic of the American uni-polar and imperial project.

3.2   Regionalism

Another possible world order in the future may take the form of regional units which will be an alternative to the nation-state system. Countries like Switzerland and Belgium developed regional confederated forms of government centuries ago to bring diverse groups together to peacefully form stable and effective societies that continue to respect internal linguistic and ethnic diversity. The Netherlands established the world's first federation by creating the United Provinces in 1581 by signing of the Oath of Abjuration. The United States established the world's second federation with the replacement of the Articles of Confederation by the Federal Constitution of 1787, which has since been emulated by dozens of countries.

 In this order, instead of having numerous nation-states, the world may be divided into five or six regions-state, or what may in other words be regarded as continental-states. This means the world would have entities like the "United States of Europe," "the United States of Africa," and so on. This prediction had greeted the creation of the European Community in the 1950s. At the creation of the EU many people predicted that the EU might become a model not only leading to the emergence of United States of Europe but may also serve as a model for similar integration movements in other parts of the world. European Union has attempted to unite a large group of widely diverse, formerly hostile, nations spread over a large geographical area. The EU's lead is being followed by the African Union, the Association of Southeast Asian Nations and the South American Community of Nations. These multinational associations are at different stages of development, but they are all growing, both in coverage and in extent of economic and political integration.

There is the strong belief that the regions of the word will learn from their failures, improve on them and put up better efforts to achieve regional integration. This has been witnessed in the ability of the European region to save the EU from collapse. The EU today has scored significant expansion. Presently, regionalism has become a significant phenomenon in the international system, with regional organisations growing far more rapidly than global organisations. It is, thus, not inconceivable that in the future, because of mutual security concerns and

economic interdependence, national units might merge into larger regional socio-economic and political communities.

The argument regarding the possibility of regional government is that it would be a better world than the current one, with more centralised political system in which agreements would have to be reached among only a few actors rather than many. So, it would probably be a more manageable world in many respects. In addition, such a world order would be particularly effective in dealing with problems that are regional rather than global in scope.

Others, however, have argued that the regional unit would just remain a replica of the nation-state system, with the same propensity for conflict and with far more complex military powers to execute the pursuance of their national interest. That means that in the future system of regional government conflicts which today are confined to a localised area on the world map would be magnified to cover a larger area of the globe. In addition, as it is difficult for many national leaders today to sustain national unity and patriotism among their people, loyalty to a regional government would be even more difficult to maintain.

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE

What is regionalism?

3.3   World Government

The world government is, yet, another possible model of the international system in the future. The world government would be a political system in which one central set of institutions would preside over all human beings and political units in the world. Several variation of this model have been contemplated. According to Pearson and Dorchester (1998) the most ambitious proposal is, first, the call for nation-states surrendering total sovereignty to a supreme global authority that would rule directly over all citizens of the world. A second model of the world government is the one designed along the line of a federated system. In this model, nation-states would share power and authority with a central government. Under this arrangement, the world government would delegate specific powers in certain area. This would resemble the model used by the founding fathers of the USA in creating their nation in 1787.

A third possible model would be that of a confederation of nations. Here, the central government would enjoy some degree of limited powers and authority, but the major powers would be retained by the constituent nation-states. Still, Pearson and Dorchester (1998) have

outlined another model of the world government which would include the creation of several separate global authorities in different functional areas, along the lines of the International Seabed Authority proposed by the UNCLOS III.

Already, various model constitutions have been drafted over the years to sketch out what the world government would look like, especial in the area of separation of powers between the executive, the legislative and the judicially organ. Beres and Targ (1974) have identified the plan by Clark and Sohn as the one most discussed in their book *World Peace Peace through World La.* In this plan, the remarkable point lies in the formation of a permanent world police with a monopoly on the legitimate use of force.

With a highly empowered world police one can imagine that the world government would maximise world peace. Under such arrangement, criminals who ferment trouble or commit crime in one part of the world and run to take refuge in another part of the world have no hiding place again. International criminals in the world would have escaped been brought to justice because the world system does not have the police with enough jurisdiction to chase them to their hideout, especially when the harboring country refuses to surrender such international criminals.

3.4   The *Polis* Government

The term *polis* refers to the ancient Greek city-states, which were composed of smaller human communities. They were not like other primordial ancient city-states like Tyre or Sidon, which were ruled by a king or a small oligarchy, but rather a political entity ruled by its body of citizens. In the Sparta system, for example, the *polis* was established as a network of villages. Regionalism and World government models which we have treated in the preceding sections are based on centralised global system. However, it is also possible to have a system model that is based on increased decentralisation like the Greek city states that were been referred to as the *polis*. This would create a system which revolves around smaller or fragmented units than the current nation-states. The world is made of thousands of ethnic groups, speaking different languages. With the polis model, each of these ethnic groups would form its own state.

As unlikely as this model may seem, it gained some ground in the 1990s with ethnic unrests in places like Rwanda, Angola, Liberia and Sierra Leone as well as the breakups in Yugoslavia and the USSR. Pearson and Dorchester (1998) state that such smaller units might be based not on common ethnicity but on special needs of the local population. James N. Rosenau (1995) in his article "Governance in the Twenty-first Century"

and Saskia Sassen (1991) in his work, *The Global City* have observed that activities of certain cities and "natural" economic zones can be best described as subtle and nascent forms of transnational system that are outside nation-states' sponsorship, but instead from other types of actors. Examples of such include development as result of the cooperation pact in 1988 Lyon in France, Milan in Italy, Stuttgart in Germany and Barcelona in Spain. This development which attracted huge investment and enjoyed a prosperity that is described as a resurrection of city-states actions is capable of transforming Europe's political and economic landscape, diminishing the influence of national government and redrawing the continent's map for twenty-first century. In a similar dimension, Seyom Brown has talked about economic activities in which major sectors of the economy engage in activities beyond their national borders, with a high degree of coordination for the advancement of the region which the sector has found itself. He cites the case of the economic activities linking parts of countries clustered in the San Diego and Tijuana, as well as the "growth triangle" linking Singapore and the nearby islands of Indonesia (Seyom Brown, 1993: 154-155).

But as we have noted earlier, although, an international system order made up of sub-national local entities or transnational micro-regions as the dominant political units may seem conceivable, it appears it will not work as a world government. As such, a world organised in communes seems utopian. And as a utopian model, one may ask if it could be an improvement of the existing system or an improvement on any of the alternative models mentioned here.

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE

To what extent is the likelihood of a return to the *polis* government utopian as a model for future international system?

4.0   CONCLUSION

There is no doubt that technology is and will continue to change our lives in many ways that will go far beyond what we are witnessing in the twenty-first century. With the improvement in the human conditions will also come new, unforeseeable problems. So, while thinking about the future of the international system, anticipating new problems, we cannot rule out the persistence of older, familiar problems on the global agenda. As we discuss alternative world order models, bearing in mind their potential drawbacks, we must also be conscious of the fact that there are no obvious solutions to human predicaments that can said to be ideally perfect and realistically attainable. It may be that the present system,

with some tinkering here and there, could be the best of all possible worlds.

5.0   SUMMARY

Scholars have conceived various models of alternative world order as well as how such models may, indeed, operate. One possibility is that the world, in the future, may still look much as it is today. It is possible that the present order may well last into the next century, at least in its basic characteristics. That means one would expect that nation-states would still be the major actors in world politics, even though technological development is continually undermining their sovereignty. Another possible world order in the future may take the form of regional units which will be an alternative to the nation-state system. In this order, instead of having the numerous nation-states the world may be divided into five or six regions-state, or what may in other words be regarded as continental-states.

Yet, another possible model of the international system in the future is the world government. The world government would be a political system in which one central set of institutions would preside over all human beings and political units on the planet. Several variation of this model has been contemplated. It is also possible to have a system model that is based on increased decentralisation like the Greek city states that were referred to as the *polis*. This would create a system which revolves around smaller or fragmented units than the current nation-states.

6.0   TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT

1.   Discuss the alternative world models that you can think of.
2.   "The present world order might be the best system." Discuss.

7.0   REFERENCES/FURTHER READING

Otto, C. & Rosenau (Eds). (1989). *Global Changes and Theoretical Challenges: Approaches to World Politics for the 1990s*. Lexington, Mass.: Lexington Books.

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