

Lesson 31

The United Nations Peace Activities

Summary -

The United Nations was created to work for peace in all parts of the world. In fact, peace is its topmost aim. United Nations is today the most important organisation dedicated to world peace. Many organs of the United Nations work for peace. The efforts of Security Council the General Assembly and the Secretary General are notable. There have been more than 300 wars after the Second World War, but after United Nations third world war has not occurred.

Types of Activities

Its organs work to prevent wars from happening	UN has passed several declaration & resolutions to stop wars & disagreements	They are not binding on member countries, yet they have moral weight	United Nations four activities which have made our world somewhat peaceful
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Mediation Activities - is an activity undertaken by a country or an organization or individual to help resolve a problem

- ✚ The mediator is not directly connected to the dispute or problem
- ✚ The mediator must be friendly and impartial with the quarrelling countries
- ✚ The mediation starts only when parties to a problem agree

- ✚ The mediator aims to bring parties face to face for talks or help them in identifying areas of agreement
- ✚ It is a painstaking and skilled job for which United Nations has gained much experience.

Binding Sanctions - In case countries ignore the advice of the United Nations and become a threat to world peace, the Security Council has the power to impose 'sanctions' against a threatening country or government.

- ✚ These 'non-military sanctions', when decided by the Security Council are to be compulsorily implemented by all member countries of the United Nations.
- ✚ 'Sanctions' are strong steps taken to isolate and punish a country that becomes a menace to peace.

Authorisation for military action

- ✚ United Nations is equipped with a standing army consisting of troops contributed by member countries.

- ✚ This army designed to fight aggressor countries under the control of the United Nations and its Secretary General - could not become a reality.
- ✚ The strong countries like United States and the then Soviet Union had serious disagreements on the matter.
- ✚ Hence, even after more than five decades of its existence, the United Nations does not have its own military force to take military action against an aggressor country.
- ✚ Because of this limitation UN could not take military action against invading countries independently/automatically.

Peacekeeping Activities

Peacekeeping is a remarkable contribution of the United Nations towards world peace

This important activity was not anticipated when the United Nations was founded. However, UN tried with this technique right from its early years

The first UN peacekeeping activity started in 1948 when UN dispatched a small team of military observers to ensure peace after the first Arab Israeli war

There have been so many peacekeeping operations dispatched by United Nations to restore or maintain peace in countries located in four continents -Africa, Asia, Europe and South America

Two such operations restored peace between India and Pakistan

Disarmament Activities -

- ✚ The production and stockpiling of weapons of mass destruction would ensure peace by deterring the opponent
- ✚ Far from securing peace these weapons have made the world a dangerous place to live in
- ✚ Nuclear and other dangerous weapons threaten the very survival of mankind
- ✚ Equally important disarmament offers the possibility of diverting huge funds from the arms production for improving the living conditions of the poor and needy people of the world
- ✚ The UN General Assembly convened three special sessions to focus world attention on the need for disarmament. Those sessions, mobilised world opinion to press reduction of nuclear and conventional weapons,
- ✚ UN efforts in disarmament led to banning of landmines and prohibition and destruction of existing stocks of chemical weapons under international supervision.
- ✚ UN also made progress in removing several lakhs of landmines in Asia and Africa, supervising elimination of existing stocks of chemical weapons.
- ✚ UN played its part in destruction of chemical and biological weapons of Iraq in 1990s.

Evaluate yourself –

1. Write down the four main aspects of the United Nations activities.
2. Write down about the importance of the United Nations as a mediator between the countries.
3. In today's scenario the peacemaking activities of UN plays an important role to maintain world peace, in this context write your views with suitable example.

