

GROWING IRRELEVANCE OF MULTI-LATERAL ORGANISATIONS

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ABSTRACT

Collapsing of multi-lateral agencies is not a new concept per say and we can find the examples of such in our history. One of the famous collapses of international cooperation was the collapse of league of nations, which failed or somehow became a reason to what exactly it was made to prevent. Such collapse made proof that multi-lateral agencies come with a ticking time bomb which just need a major world event to happen and the role of such agencies in the event, decides the future fate of the agencies, whether it be relevant or not in the future.

This paper on length discuss about the reasons about why the multi-lateral agencies such as UNESCO, who are failing and why its member states are quitting out of it. This paper talks about the authority of the united nations and how it is slowly assuming the role of “pleader in chief”. This paper further talks about the ongoing pandemic and its future effect on the fate of who once it is over.

Keyword: United Nations, Multi-Lateral Agencies, Who, UNESCO, Irrelevance.

INTRODUCTION

“The League of Nations is the greatest humbug in history. They cannot even protect a little nation like Armenia. They do nothing but pass useless Resolutions”

-DAVID LLYOD GEORGEⁱ

Multi-lateral organizations are such organizations which secure their funding from various member states and exhaust the same working on projects of various types which in the end could help the humanity at large. Multilateralism provides the membership to various countries and invite them to collaborate and sponsor their projects.

Multilateralism work towards binding the powerful nations into coming together in an organization and contributing just and fair, in order for the developing or poor countries to thrive. It discourages the notion of unilateralism and encourages the member states to come together and work for the greater good.

Lately multi-lateral agencies have been facing various challenges with rapid changing dynamics of the world and it has now become the question of their survival. For ex; the *UNESCO* which was co-Founded by the United States after the World War II, has become so inefficient and bias in the eyes of world that its founding member United States along with Israel withdrew from it officially in 2019 after filing a notice in Oct 2017ⁱⁱ.

Now the ongoing pandemic, has introduced yet another major factor which might affect the fate of some various and big organizations of the United Nations such as WHO and the member parties are continuously blaming the organization on its biasness towards China and inability to prevent the global pandemic which has claimed the lives of hundreds of thousands of people. The question arises here is that if the organizations such as WHO are so ineffective, then why would member states continue paying them and supporting them financially. This is one of the main reasons why United States stopped the funding of WHOⁱⁱⁱ.

NEED OF MULTI-LATERAL ORGANIZATIONS

There seems to be a high need of multi-lateral organization for developing or poor countries as such organizations provides them the collective support from the bigger economies which contribute in their growth whether economical, infrastructural etc. Key factors for need of Multi-Lateral Organizations;

- 1) *Influence* – Due to so many countries actively taking participation in the projects of a multi-lateral organization and having membership of the same. The Multi-lateral organization enjoys a great deal of influence over the shaping of the world, such as For example the control over leadership role in formulating the policies by *African Development Bank* as a multi-lateral organization between African governments^{iv}.
- 2) *Scale* – Multi-lateral organizations have far stretched reach and scale programme which provide the kind of help which will be far-fetched for an individual country or a person. For ex, a person can't do enough for world hunger but World Food programme is distributing 15 billion rations per year^v, such huge amount is nearly impossible for a single country or bilateral organization to donate.
- 3) *Drafting Global Policy and Standards* – As there are numerous countries which are member to the multi-lateral organizations, it has a wide array of say into the policy making of global leader. For example, creation of International Health Regulations 2005 by World Health Organization.

As all the major global players keep on focusing on their personal development and growth, Multi-lateral organizations are considered as unifying forces which fades the difference between nationalities and encourages one to work solely for human good.

HISTORY OF LEAGUE OF NATIONS AND ITS DEATH

League of nation was the world's diplomatic group, initiated by then *President Woodrow Wilson* of United States in hope to not repeat the horrors of World War I and solve any or all conflicts on the table, rather than in bloodbath of the battlefield. The proposal of League of

Nations got the support in the Europe but the Congress of United States, refused to ratify the treaty because it would undercut United States' scrutiny in International matters^{vi}.

League of Nations faded away when the Japan walked out of the league and withdrew, after attacking China and the league of nations could do nothing but watch. When Hitler's Germany attacked and took over one of the member nation Austria without even a formal protest^{vii}. When the large countries such as Denmark, Norway, Luxembourg, Belgium, France, Netherlands fell in the hands of Hitler, the only member in the area left were Switzerland and to play it safe, Switzerland started to dismantle the offices of the League as it didn't want to be seen as hosting the allied organizations in Germany controlled Europe and thus the league swiftly faded away.^{viii}

HISTORY OF UNITED NATIONS

The term United Nations was coined during the World War II, one of the main reasons for the creation of United Nations was as same the reason behind creation of League of Nations, the only difference being, this time they knew where they went wrong.

United Nations was created in San Francisco were 50 member countries drew up the United Nations Charter^{ix}, here also the main motive was to build a Multi-lateral organization to ensure peace and stability in the world. United Nations tries to work just like any state and has three organs such as;

- 1) United Nations General Assembly (Legislative branch)
- 2) United Nations Security Council (Executive branch)
- 3) International Court of Justice (Judicial Branch)

The question which remains is that did United Nations proven to be successful? Did it helped in creation of a better peaceful world or even put a foot forward to it? We can compare both the United Nations and League of Nations to find out the answer for the same.

After League of Nations got established in 1918 and the World War II happened just after 21 years. Whereas it has been 75 years since the creation of United Nations and their hasn't been any major global war among the nations. But UN played a little part in it as the honour of

Deterrence of World War III goes to Nuclear bombs. United Nations was there when the Cold War was initiated between Soviet Union and United States, which carried on for almost four decades and the world slept near the doomsday clock with ever threat of Nuclear war initiating at any given time.

HAS UNITED NATIONS ASSUMED THE ROLE OF PLEADER IN CHIEF?

United Nations having no sovereignty over any part of the world, having no military of its own, having no resources of its own, having no real and compulsory jurisdiction over any country, works on the pleasure of its member states. United Nations is one of the finest examples of International law and International law is considered to be a weak law because it lacks the authority of a sovereign, hence most of the times in the important matters, United Nations couldn't do anything but assume the role of Pleader in Chief and such weakness can be observed by the failures of the United Nations in preventing human rights or genocides etc.,

In totality, there are around twelve time, the United Nations have proven nothing but the mere Pleader

- a) *Israel – Palestine conflict* – This conflict is one of the oldest conflicts which the United Nations has failed since its creation, way back in 1948. The United Nations Director General voted in favour of partition of Israel in order for creation of Palestine but the Israel refused to recognize the state of Palestine and in the war of 1967, seized the Palestine and refused to left ever since^x creating huge number of refugees. This conflict led the United Nations to move to Security Council and direct the Israel to withdraw its forces^{xi} but there were no significant steps taken and the issue of Palestine still persists.
- b) *Kashmir dispute* – Kashmir is considered as of the greatest test for United Nations of the category that whether it can maintain peace and stability^{xii} as it's a disputed territory with claims from two most hostile and nuclear armed countries and one wrong step in Kashmir can trigger World War III in mere minutes. United Nations has maintained its continuous presence in the area^{xiii} but there has been no definite solution till date and the conditions in Kashmir are same as they were^{xiv}.

- c) *Cambodia conflict*- Cambodia faced several horrors from 1975 to 1979, such as genocides, state ordered executions and around 2 million people lost their lives in order for Cambodian Dictator to make their race, a master race^{xv}. United Nations launched its peacekeeping mission in the state and tried to restore the democracy in the country, but as of today, the man who was running the country before the arrival of the United Nations, continues to do so^{xvi} clearly show the inefficiency of the United Nations.
- d) *Somalia Civil War* – Somalia was run by Dictator in 1991 who got caught in Civil war and flee the country, which caused the power struggle between two warlords^{xvii} which resulted in death of thousands of Somali citizens. United Nations sent its Peacekeeping force led by United States in 1992, which officially ended in 1994 when US pulled its forces out of Somalia. United Nations also accepted its failure in 2001 when it pulled all its international efforts^{xviii}.
- e) *Rwandan Civil War* – Rwanda faced a Civil war in 1990 and United Nations intervened in 1993 by sending some 2500 peacekeeping officers, in order to enforce the Arusha Agreement between the two parties of the war, but the UN Peacekeeping officers were kidnapped and murdered. In addition to that, UN peacekeeping became a mere spectator of the ongoing genocide^{xix}. Finally, in 1999, UN pulled its peacekeeping forces out of Rwanda, when the citizens needed it most. An important report which was commissioned by Secretary General Kofi Annan clearly stated that the mission was doomed to fail from the starting as the UN Security Council didn't fully support the forces^{xx}. Further pulling of the troops amid such massive killings was considered as disgrace as the report also stated, "*The manner in which the troops left, including attempts to pretend to the refugees that they were not in fact leaving, was disgraceful*"^{xxi}.
- f) *Srebrenica Massacre* – Srebrenica was invaded in 1992 shortly after declaring its independence by Army of the Bosnia and Herzeovina with the help of Serbian Government, it was one of the biggest conflicts in Europe after the World War's. On the recommendation of Secretary General, Security Council approved the United Nations Protections force UNPROFOR and deployed it in Srebrenica in order for protecting the civilians^{xxii} and certain safe areas were created and even those areas were not considerable safe as by July of 1995, those safe areas fall too and UNPROFOR failed to defend the civilians which led to the deaths of thousands of men^{xxiii}.

- g) *Darfur Conflict* – Insurrection against the Sudanese government started in 2003 but before United Nations, African Union intervened and tried maintaining the cease-fire but despite all this by 2007, there was a huge loss of life which led to the intervention of United Nations through Security Council. The United Nations authorized a joint operation between United Nations and African Union in 2007^{xxiv} but didn't started deploying troops till 2008. It is reported that thousands of lives have been lost and 1.5 million people displaced and yet UNAMID (United Nations African Mission in Darfur) could not even save civilians^{xxv}.
- h) *Invasion of Iraq* – Iraq is a sovereign territory but United States invaded the Iraq under mere assumption that Iraq is manufacturing Weapons of Mass Destruction^{xxvi} but the United States was proven wrong when it couldn't find any program of nuclear weapon. This war consumed thousands of lives and billions of dollars and United Nations couldn't interfere because of United States but merely legitimized the operation of United States for a better public relation and helped in installation of a new democratic government^{xxvii}.
- i) *Civil war of Syria* – Syrian civil war is one of the biggest ongoing manslaughter of the modern times with death toll of up to 380,000 lives^{xxviii}. United Nations has failed miserably in providing peace and stability in the region. In 2017, a member of United Nation's Commission of Inquiry on Syria Miss Carla del Ponte resigned from the office which followed a long line of resignation as due to frustration on the meaningless or negative progress and the mental toll of seeing such huge loss of life. She did however mention the culprit behind the meaningless progress of United Nations in Syria and that is Security Council^{xxix}.
- j) *South Sudan Conflict* – Sudan has been facing civil war since 1962, one civil war after another between North Sudan and South Sudan^{xxx}, the country has been chaos ever since. United Nations through Security council authorized UNMISS (United Nations Mission in South Sudan) and established a new country of South Sudan^{xxxi} but the population of the country is still not getting any benefits as the leaders of civil war is to make a unity government and the hope of development in the country is far-fetched. Citizens have high expectations from United Nations to interfere but UNMISS does not have no either mandate or resources to undertake the development of infrastructure that will provide peace dividend^{xxxii}.

- k) *Yemen Civil War* – The war between North and South Yemen has been going on since 1969 when communist bloc launched war against democratic government, the dispute came to halt in 1990 but the dream of unity faded away again in 1994^{xxxiii}. United Nations failed to take action for a long time and finally passed a resolution in October of 2011 which was a call for peaceful transition of power^{xxxiv}. Despite the claims of United Nations in supporting a Yemeni-led process, UNSC Resolution 2014^{xxxv} gave very little consideration to the important issues such as economic and social aspects as they are far more important for the people of Yemen.
- l) *Rohingya Refugee Crisis* – As Myanmar's military launched a genocide on the ethnic minority community of Rohingya's, approximately 600,000 refugees fled to neighbour country of Bangladesh^{xxxvi} but after entertaining a million refugees, Bangladesh stopped taking refugees fleeing and the boats of the refugees are drifting in the deep seas while denying access to port on Malaysia as well as Bangladesh and having nowhere to turn to and becoming victims of human traffickers^{xxxvii}. In order to deal with the issue, the sum of US\$920.5 million was requested but only 17% of the requested fund has been provided till date^{xxxviii} and the United Nations has failed to address the issue and done nothing for the welfare of refugees.

WILL COVID-19 MAKE THE COUNTRIES TO THINK THEIR ROLES IN SUPPORTING AND FUNDING MULTI-LATERAL ORGANIZATIONS?

As of 15th May 2020, Coronavirus has infected more than 4.5 million people worldwide, while claiming the lives of more than 303,586 people, it has been proven as one of the biggest natural calamity since Spanish flu pandemic, in order to deal with such pandemics, the global organization (World Health Organization) which has been founded only to provide a global strategy and fighting front against whether epidemics or pandemics has failed disastrously^{xxxix}. Coronavirus which originated in China^{xl} has spread across the world making the virus global which resulted in shutting down of not only public places but entire countries which will harm global economy and push the world into recession^{xli}. States, and even subnational states, are now facing themselves in fierce competition in order to acquire the medical stocks which are

scarce nowadays, as the critical supply chains have been hugely disrupted due to the result of restrictions being imposed by government in order to curb the spread of covid-19. The World Health Organization which is the centrepiece of global health governance has been rendered ineffective to prevent the major world pandemic despite getting early warning to as far back as November^{xlii} when first case was reported, with US President Donald Trump now moving to withdraw all American funding to the WHO on 14 April 2020^{xliii}.

This raises the question on the future of WHO as if the multi-lateral which is being operated solely for the prevention of acts like Covid-19, then how did the virus spread at such exponential ratio as ineffectively of a multi-lateral organization encourages a member state to withdraw from the organization, such as when United States and Israel withdrew from UNESCO^{xliv}. Spread of covid-19 raises a doubt on the functioning of World health organization as why would member states donate millions or hundreds of millions of dollars^{xlv} to them if they are ineffective against the pandemic and provide no definite solution against it.

There is a slight possibility that if the World Health Organization failed to prove its vital role in fighting the pandemic or even helping in preventing the spread to much larger population, the member states can perhaps stop its donation to the organization or even withdrew from it completely and would such withdrawal make us more vulnerable to the next pandemic?

CONCLUSION

Multi-lateral organizations such as United Nations and its bodies such as World Health Organization, Security Council works solely upon the discretion and generosity of its member states or perhaps on the balance of superior powers of the world. The failure of World Health organization to revert the coronavirus pandemic, the failure of United Nations Security Council to safeguard numerous of lives and take strict actions against the countries or individuals for the act of terror or dictators just because of provision of *Power of Veto* which provides an arbitrary power to a single country which effects the fate of the world at large, For ex; United Nations still cannot pass resolution against the Dictator of North Korea even after the horrendous crimes being committed by him, just because China Veto's every decision against North Korea.

Even the decision given in Kulbhushan Jadhav case^{xlvi}, where the resident of India was captured in Pakistan and order of execution has been passed. The International Court of Justice was only be able to provide him legal visitation rights and wasn't able to secure his safe release.

This paper enumerates the failures of Multi-lateral organizations of United Nations and its bodies which is following the failures of its predecessors i.e. League of Nations. Although the United Nations did prevent World War III from happening, but does the credit for that goes to United Nations or the concept of Mutually assured Destruction which came into light after the creation of Atom bomb.

This paper raises the question, “*Does Multi-lateral organizations are always doomed to fail?*”. Is the main reason behind the failure of Multi-lateral organizations are the weakness of International law?

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