**UNITED NATIONS**

**Q. Discuss the powers and functions of the UN General Assembly.**

The General Assembly is the main deliberative organ of the United Nations. It is composed of representatives of all 193 member states. Each member state has one vote even though each state can send five representatives to the Assembly. These representatives have to act in accordance with the instructions of their respective governments and are responsible to them. The General Assembly is more of a diplomatic conference than a legislative body. In the first session, the General Assembly elects a President for a period of twelve months. In addition, the Assembly also elects 21 Vice-Presidents and seven Chairmen for the seven Standing Committees.

Functions and powers of the General Assembly:

Under the UN Charter, the general Assembly performs varied and extensive functions:

1. To consider and make recommendations in the maintenance of international peace and security, disarmament etc
2. To discuss any question relating to international peace and security, except where a dispute or situation is currently being discussed by the Security Council.
3. To discuss and recommends on any question within the scope of the Charter or affecting the powers and functions of any organ of the United Nations.
4. To initiate studies and make recommendations to promote international political cooperation, development of international law, realization of human rights and fundamental freedoms etc.
5. To make recommendations for the peaceful settlement of any situation and origin, which might impair friendly relations among nations.
6. To receive and consider reports from the Security Council and other organs f the United Nations.
7. To consider and approve the United Nations budget and apportion the contributions among members.
8. To elect non-permanent members of the Security Council, Economic and Social Council, elected members of the Trusteeship Council. It also elects jointly with the Security Council, the judges of the International Court of Justice and also appoints the Secretary General on the recommendation of the Security Council.
9. The general Assembly also enjoys significant power with regard to amendment of the UN Charter. Amendments of the Charter are carried out by the General Assembly by two-thirds majority of its members.

The General Assembly adopted the “Uniting for Peace Resolution’ on 3rd November, 1950. By this Resolution, the General Assembly granted to itself, the power to deal with threats to the peace if the Security Council fails to act after a veto by permanent member. By virtue of this resolution, the position of the General Assembly has been greatly strengthened and has become the ultimate custodian of the collective security measures.

**Q. Describe the composition and functions of the UN Security Council.**

Composition

The UN Charter assigns to the Security Council primary responsibility for the maintenance of International peace and security. The Council has 15 members – five permanent members (China, France, Russia, the United Kingdom and the United States) and 10 non-permanent members elected by the General Assembly for two-year terms. The non-permanent members are chosen to achieve equitable regional representation, five members from Africa or Asia, one from Eastern Europe, two from Latin America and two from Western Europe or other areas.

Each member of the Council has one vote. Decisions on procedural matters are made by affirmative vote of at least nine of the members. Decisions on substantive matters require nine votes, including the concurring votes of all five permanent members. All the five permanent members have exercised the right of veto at one time or another. If a permanent member does not support a decision but does not wish to block it through a veto, it may abstain from voting.

Functions of the Security Council:

1. To maintain international peace and security in accordance with the principles and purposes of the United Nations.
2. To investigate any dispute or situation which might lead to international friction.
3. To recommend methods of adjusting such disputes or the terms of settlement.
4. To formulate plans for the establishment of a system to regulate armaments.
5. To determine the existence of a threat to the peace or act of aggression and to recommend what action should be taken.
6. To call on member states to apply economic sanctions and other measures not involving the use of force.
7. To take military action against an aggressor.
8. To recommend admission of new members and the term on which states may become parties to the Statute of the International Court of Justice.
9. To recommend to the General Assembly the appointment of the Secretary-General.
10. To elect the judges of the International Court of Justice together with the General Assembly.

The Security Council is organized to be able to function continuously. A representative of each of its members must be present at all times at the UN Headquarters. When a complaint concerning to a threat to peace is brought before it, the Council’s first action is usually to recommend that the parties try to reach agreement by peaceful means. In some cases, the Council itself undertakes investigation and meditation. It may appoint special representatives or request the Secretary-General to do so. In some cases, it may set forth principles for a peaceful settlement. When a dispute leads to fighting, the Council has issued many ceasefire directives which have been instrumental in preventing wider hostilities in many parts of the world.

**Q. Describe the composition and functions of the Economic and Social Council of the United Nations.**

The Economic and Social Council coordinates the economic and social work of the United Nations and its specialized agencies and institutions. The Economic and Social Council is one of the six principal organs of the United Nations and operates under the authority of the General Assembly.

**Composition**

The Economic and Social Council at present consists of 54 members. Each year the General Assembly elects one-third members for a period of three years but the retiring members are eligible for immediate re-election. The term of the members begins from 1st January of the year following their election. The Council elects a President for one year from among its members. Usually the President is taken from a country which is not a great power. All the decisions of the Council are taken by simple majority with each member enjoying one vote.

The Economic and Social Council generally holds two-month long sessions each year, one in New York and the other in Geneva. The year-round work of the Council is carried out in its subsidiary bodies. The Council has five Regional Commissions, nine Functional Commissions, four Standing Committees and a number of standing expert bodies.

**Functions of the Economic and Social Council**

1. It can make or initiate studies and reports with respect to international economic, social, cultural, educational, health and related matters such as the problems of refugees, the world shortage of housing, the economic status of women etc. These studies and reports are very useful in handling the problems.
2. It serves as the central forum for the discussion of international economic and social issues of a global nature and also formulates policy recommendations on those issues addressed to member states and the United Nations.
3. It promotes respect for, and observance of human rights and fundamental freedoms for all.
4. It calls for international conferences and prepare draft conventions for submission to the General Assembly on matters falling within its competence.
5. It coordinates the working of the specialized agencies of the United Nations by means of consultations with and recommendations to them.
6. To consult with non-governmental organizations concerned on matters with which the Council deals.
7. To perform services approved by the Assembly, for members of the United Nations and upon request for the specialized agencies.

The Economic and Social Council plays a key role in developing the prerequisites of a stable world order.

**Q. Describe the composition and working of the International Court of Justice.**

The International Court of Justice is the principal judicial organ of the United Nations. It works according to a statute which forms an integral part of the UN Charter. The statute of the International Court of Justice is based on the statute of the Permanent Court of International Justice which was prepared by the League Council.

**Composition**

All the members of the United Nations are the members of The International Court of Justice. A State which is not a member of the UN can also become a party to the statute of The International Court of Justice upon the recommendations of the Security Council. The conditions for membership in each case are determined by the General Assembly. The Court consists of 15 judges elected by the General Assembly and the Security Council, voting independently. They are chosen on the basis of their qualifications and not on the basis of nationality, and case is taken to ensure that the principal legal systems of the world are represented. The Judges serve for a term of nine years and are eligible for re-election.

The Court elects its own President and Vice-President for a term of three years. In addition to this, the Court appoints Registrar and such other officers as may deem necessary. The Court takes all decisions by majority vote of the Judges present and voting. The President of the Curt does not exercise his vote, except in case of a tie. It may be noted that no party enjoys veto with regard to the decisions of the Court.

The International Court of Justice has its permanent seat at The Hague (Netherlands). However, it can meet elsewhere also. The Court is permanently in session, except during the period of vacations. Generally, the cases are heard by the full Court, but it can also form chambers composed of three or four Judges, deal with specific categories of cases such as labour cases and cases relating to transit and communications etc.

**Functions**

The International Court of Justice enjoys two types of powers –

1. Settlement of disputes: The Court hears all cases involving sovereign states which have accepted the statute of the Court. The other states can also take their disputes to the Court on fulfillment of conditions laid down by the Security Council. The UN Charter does not necessarily impose an obligation on the members to seek pacific settlement of international dispute which implies that the parties can make use of other judicial procedures for the settlement of their disputes.
2. Advisory Opinion: The International Court of Justice also enjoys advisory opinion to the General Assembly, the Security Council and other specialized agencies of the United Nations on legal questions. However, the Court does not render advisory opinion on its own and the advice of the Court is not binding on the organ or agency seeking it. In fact, the opinion given by the Court is more like an advice rather than a decision.

**Q. Discuss the organization and working of the UN Secretariat.**

The Secretariat is one of the six principal organs of the United Nations. It is organized along departmental lines, with each department or office having a distinct area of action and responsibility.

**Composition**

The Secretariat is headed by the Secretary-General. The current Secretary-General of the UN, and the ninth occupant of the post is Antonio Guterres of Portugal, who took office on 1st January 2017. The Secretary-General is a symbol of United Nation’s ideals and a spokesman for the interests of the world’s people, in particular the poor and the vulnerable. The Secretariat provides services to the legislative organs of the United Nations namely, the General Assembly, the Security Council, the economic and Social Council and the Trusteeship Council including their subsidiary bodies. It is located at the headquarters of the United Nations in New York.

**Functions of the Secretariat**

The main functions of the secretariat include:

1. Production of reports and other documents containing information, research findings, policy suggestions etc., to facilitate deliberations and decision-making by other organs and their subsidiary bodies.
2. Provision of secretarial services to legislative organs and their subsidiary bodies.
3. Provision of editorial, translation and document reproduction services for the issuance of UN documents in different languages.
4. Conduct of studies and provisions of information that answers to the priority needs of the governments of member countries in meeting challenges in various fields.
5. Production of statistical publications, information bulletins and analytical work which the General Assembly has decided.
6. Organization of conferences, expert group meetings and seminars on topics of concern to the international community.
7. Provision of technical assistance to developing countries.
8. Undertaking service missions to countries, areas or locations as authorized by the General Assembly or the Security Council.
9. To arrange for dissemination of information on United Nations activities and decisions among the public.
10. Provision of programme planning, financial personnel, legal, management and general services which are essential for rational selection of work items and allocation of resources among them for effective, economic and efficient performance of the services and functions of the Secretariat.

While discharging the above functions, The Secretariat also gets involved in the policy formulation. The studies and reports prepared by the Secretariat serve as useful input for the government policy.

**Q. Discuss the historical development of the United Nations.**

The United Nations (UN) was the second multipurpose international organization established in the 20th century. The League of Nations was the first worldwide intergovernmental organization created as a result of the Paris Peace Conference that ended the First World War. It was founded on 10th January 1920 to promote international cooperation and to achieve peace and security. The League failed miserably in achieving its goal which was to prevent another world war from happening. The idea was for the League of Nations to prevent wars through disarmament, collective security and negotiation. It was also involved in other issues such as drug trafficking, arms trade and global health. However, the Second World War broke out within two decades of the establishment of the League of Nations. The League was eventually disbanded in 1946.

The League of Nations was succeeded by the United Nations. The UN has its Headquarter in New York and has regional offices in Geneva, Vienna and Nairobi. The name United Nations was coined by US President Franklin D. Roosevelt. It was first used in the Declaration by United Nations on 1st January 1942 during the Second World War, when representatives of 26 nations pledged their governments to continue fighting together against the Axis Powers.

The UN emerged after three major Conferences – the Dumbarton Oaks Conferences, the Yalta Conference and the San Francisco Conference. The first major step towards the formation of the UN was taken at the Dumbarton Oaks Conference (1944) in Washington DC. It was a meeting of the diplomatic experts of the Big Three powers (US, UK, Soviet Union) plus China. Although the four countries (US, UK, Soviet Union and China) agreed on general purpose, structure and function of a new world organization, the Conference ended due to continuing disagreement over membership and voting.

At the Yalta Conference, a meeting of the Big Three in a Crimean resort city in 1945, Roosevelt, Churchill and Stalin laid the basis for charter provisions delimiting the authority of the Security Council. The UN Conference on International Organizations (UNCIO) was held in San Francisco in 1945. The San Francisco Conference produced the final Charter of the UN on 26th June 1945, drawing from the Dumbarton Oaks proposals and with some modifications from the Yalta Conference. The San Francisco Conference was attended by representatives of 50 countries from all areas of the world.

The United Nations officially came into existence on 24th October 1945, when the Charter had been ratified by China, France, the Soviet Union, the United Kingdom, the United States and by a majority of other signatories. United Nations Day is celebrated on 24th October each year.

**Q. Discuss the major objectives and principles of the United Nations.**

The objectives of the United Nations are indicated in its Preamble and are laid down in Article 1 of the Charter. The Preamble shows that the Charter of the UN is born of the experiences of a devastating war and that it holds out hope of a lasting peace, based on recognition of fundamental human rights. The objectives of the UN according to Article 1 of the Charter are:

1. To maintain international peace and security.
2. To develop friendly relations among nations.
3. To achieve international cooperation in solving international problems of an economic, social, cultural or humanitarian character.
4. To be a centre for harmonizing the actions of nations to achieve the above ends.

The maintenance of international peace and security has been placed at the head of the list of the objectives of the United Nations because in the absence of peace and security none of its purposes can be realized. The principles of the UN have been outlined in Article 2 of the UN Charter. These principles include the following:

1. The organization is based on the principle of the sovereign equality of all members.
2. All members shall fulfill in good faith their obligations as set forth in the Charter.
3. The members shall settle their disputes by peaceful means.
4. All members shall refrain in their international relations from the threat or use of force against the territorial integrity or political independence of any state or in any other manner.
5. All members shall assist the United Nations in any action it takes in accordance with the Charter.
6. The organization shall see to it that non-members also act in accordance with the principles of the Charter.
7. The United Nations shall not intervene in matters which are essentially within the domestic jurisdiction of any state.

In accordance with the first principle of sovereign equality of all states, members have been accorded equal representation in the General Assembly and are entitled to equality of votes. But the preponderant role of the Big Five in the Security Council arising out of their veto power compromises the principle of sovereign equality of all states. Secondly, the UN has not fully lived up to their obligations set forth in the Charter and their commitment has merely proved to be a pious wish. With regard to the third principle, though the members have made use of instruments like negotiation, enquiry, mediations and judicial settlement for the settlement of their disputes, they have also made use of regional agencies or arrangements for the protection of their interests. According to the fourth principle, members have been refrained from the use of force against territorial integrity or political independence of other states. The members also followed the fifth principle and showed readiness to assist the UN in any action it proposed to take in accordance with the Charter. With regard to the sixth principle, the UN has also tried to ensure that the non-members act in accordance with the principles of the UN Charter. Finally, the principle that the UN shall not intervene in matters which fall within the domestic jurisdiction of a state, has seriously restricted the authority of the UN. It is difficult to determine when a particular issue failing within the jurisdiction of the state may cease to be a matter of national concern alone and assume international dimensions.

**Q. Critically examine the causes for the failure of the League of Nations.**

The League of Nations was the first worldwide intergovernmental organization created as a result of the Paris Peace Conference that ended the First World War. It was founded on 10th January 1920 to promote international cooperation and to achieve peace and security. The League failed miserably in achieving its goal which was to prevent another world war from happening. The idea was for the League of Nations to prevent wars through disarmament, collective security and negotiation. It was also involved in other issues such as drug trafficking, arms trade and global health. However, the Second World War broke out within two decades of the establishment of the League of Nations. The League was eventually disbanded in 1946.

The main causes for the failure of the League of Nations are as follows:

1. The League of Nations was looked upon as a mere instrument for the maintenance of status quo. This was due to the fact that the League was made a part of the peace treaties concluded at the end of the First World War which gave rise to several suspicions in the minds of the vanquished powers and even the neutral states.
2. The American Senate refused to ratify the Treaty of Versailles which the senators feared would mean abandonment of the time-honoured US principle of non-involvement in European affairs. The failure of the U.S. to join the League of Nations also rendered the League ineffective because other big members like England became quite lukewarm in their support to the League.
3. The lack of universal character also rendered the League ineffective. Germany, Russia, Austria and Turkey were kept out of the League at the time of its establishment. They were subsequently admitted as members of the League, but at no time all the major powers were members of the League.
4. The various member states looked upon the League of Nations as a convenient tool for the promotion of their interests rather than a forum for international cooperation. For instance, France wanted to use the League to keep Germany weak, and Britain wanted to use the League for preservation of balance of power.
5. The organizational defects of the League of Nations also contributed to the failure of the League. The Covenant accepted war as a normal method for settlement of international disputes by permitting to resort to defensive war. Also, the Covenant accorded equal status to all the member states irrespective of their size and resources, which was naturally resented by the big powers. They were not willing to assume major responsibility for the resolution of the conflict.
6. Narrow nationalistic interests encouraged the people of different countries to support even undesirable activities of their national governments. Big powers supported their governments in their aggression, without realizing that it posed a serious threat to world peace. This naturally rendered the League of Nations less effective.
7. The economic depression of the 1930s also contributed to failure of the League. It not only caused serious financial difficulties for the League but also encouraged the states like Japan and Germany to resort to programme of militarism. This resulted in piling of armaments which ultimate jeopardized world peace and contributed to the collapse of the League of Nations.

Above all, it has been argued that the League failed because it was ahead of time. The states were not willing to compromise with their sovereignty and still considered that national interests were paramount. Though the League of Nations became the casualty of the Second World War, but the ideals which it sought and the method it devised have become an essential part of the political thinking of the civilized world.

**Unit III**

**Q. Examine the purpose and functions of the UNESCO.**

The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) is a specialized agency of the United Nations based in Paris. Its main purpose is to contribute to peace and security by promoting international collaboration through educational, scientific and cultural reforms. It was formed on 4th November 1946. It is headed by the Director General and the current Director General of the UNESCO is Audrey Azoulay. UNESCO has 193 member states and 11 associate members.

The main objective of UNESCO is to contribute peace and security in the world by promoting collaboration among nations through education, science, culture and communication in order to further universal respect for justice, for the rule of law, and for the human rights and fundamental freedoms which are affirmed for the people of the world, without distinction of race, sex, language or religion by the Charter of the United Nations. In support of this objective, UNESCO’s principal functions are:

1. To promote intellectual co-operation and mutual understanding of people through all means of mass communication.
2. To give fresh impulse to popular education and to the spread of culture.
3. To maintain, increase and diffuse knowledge.
4. To encourage scientific research and training.
5. To apply sciences to ensure human development and the rational management of natural resources.
6. To provide a platform for dialogue and participation of members of the Forum to promote and strengthen the processes of democratization, the rule of law and respect for human rights in Africa and the Arab region.
7. To help strengthen Arab-African relations and promote cooperation at the legislative, institutional, business, academic and civil society organizations levels.
8. To establish and strengthen existing research networks, undertake research and studies, disseminate the findings, organize dialogues and debates, and formulate policy recommendations, strategies and plans of action in the fields of democracy and human rights.
9. To encourage policy-makers to promote the participation of women in political, legislative, social, economic and cultural processes.
10. To promote youth participation in political, legislative, social, economic and cultural processes.

**Q. Describe the role and functions of the UNICEF.**

The United Nations International Children’s Emergency Fund (UNICEF) was created by the United nations General Assembly on 11th December 1946, to provide emergency food and healthcare to children and mothers in countries that had been devastated by World War II. The main objective of UNICEF is to look after children’s welfare especially in developing countries by providing people with low cost community based services in maternal and child-health, nutrition and immunization, etc. It provides services in primary healthcare, nutrition, basic education, sanitation and women’s development in developing countries. The main functions of UNICEF are broadly divided into the following categories:

1. UNICEF works for the protection of children in respect of their survival, health, and well-being. This is done in cooperation with individuals, civic groups, government and the private sector.
2. It provides funds for training the personnel, including health and sanitation workers, teachers and nutritionists. Universal Child Immunizations against preventable diseases by 1990 was one of the leading goals of UNICEF.
3. It provides technical supplies, equipment and other aids, ranging from paper for textbooks, equipments and medicines to health clinics, pipes and pumps for bringing clean water to villages.
4. It assists governments to plan, develop and extend community-based services in the fields of maternal and child health, nutrition, clean water and sanitation.
5. It provides help to children and mothers in emergencies arising from natural calamities, civil strifes and epidemics.
6. It makes effort to prevent diseases like T.B. malaria, eye diseases, skin diseases etc.
7. As the sole agency for children, it speaks on behalf of children and upholds the Convention on the Rights of the Child and works for its implementation.
8. It provides basic education infrastructure to the world. It also promotes gender equality through education for girls.
9. It helps in increasing child survival rate in the developing world, it also protects and advocates the rights of children.
10. It protects children from any form of abuse.

UNICEF was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in the year 1965 and also the Indira Gandhi Prize for peace in 1989. The main aim of the organization is to provide proper health care and food to children and women of the world.

**Q. Critically examine the purposes and functions of the ILO.**

The International Labour Organization (ILO) is a United Nations agency whose mandate is to advance social justice and promote decent work by setting international labour standards. It was the first specialized agency of the UN and was formed on 29th October 1919. The ILO has 187 member states. It is a tripartite structure having representatives from the government, employers and employees to openly debate and create labour standards. The ILO is dedicated to improve labour conditions and living standards throughout the world. The main purpose and functions of the ILO are:

1. It helps in the development and promotion of standards for national legislation to protect and improve working conditions and standards of living.
2. It provides technical assistance in social policy and administration and in workforce training.
3. It fosters cooperative organizations and rural industries.
4. It compiles labour statistics and conducts research on the social problems of international competition, unemployment, labour and industrial relations and technological change.
5. It helps to protect the rights of international migrants and organized labour.
6. It helps in the creation of coordinated policies and programs for solving social and labour issues.
7. It assists the member states in solving social and labour problems.
8. It protects human rights suvh as the right to work, freedom of association, collective negotiations, protection against forced labour etc.
9. It conducts research and publishes works on social and labour issues.

In its first decade, the ILO was primarily concerned with legislative and research efforts, with defining and promoting proper minimum standards of labour legislation for adoption by member states. During the worldwide economic depression of the 1930s the ILO sought ways to combat widespread unemployment. The ILO membership has been expanded to include poorer and less developed countries, it has addressed itself to new issues, including the social problems created by the liberalization of international trade, the problem of child labour, and the relationship between working conditions and the environment. While the liberalization of international trade and globalization reduce poverty, but reduction in poverty alone does not mean that social justice is being served. The main problem with globalization is that a small controlling minority can become very powerful while taking advantage of the market economy. Social justice policies are the only check we have to help ensure that people are treated fairly and with dignity. The ILO is undoubtedly the most influential and effective organization in the world advancing the cause of social justice.

**Q. Describe the functions and role of the UNDP.**

The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) is the United Nations’s global development network. It was formed in 1965 and has its headquarter in New York. UNDP advocates for change and connects countries to knowledge, experience resources to help people build a better life for themselves. It provides expert advice, training and grants support to developing countries, with emphasis on assistance to the least developed countries. It promotes technical and investment cooperation among nations. UNDP focuses on poverty reduction, HIV/AIDS, democratic governance, energy and environment, social development, crisis prevention and recovery. It also encourages the protection of human rights and the empowerment of women in all of its programmes. UNDP focuses primarily on five developmental challenges:

1. Democratic governance: UNDP supports national democratic transitions by providing policy advice and technical support, improving institutional and individual capacity within countries, educating populations about democratic reforms.
2. Poverty reduction: UNDP helps countries develop strategies to combat poverty by expanding access to economic opportunities and resources. It works at the macro level to reform trade, encourage debt relief and foreign investment and ensure the poorest of the poor to benefit from globalization.
3. Crisis prevention and recovery: UNDP works to reduce the risk of armed conflicts or disasters, and promote early recovery after crises have occurred. It works through its country offices to support local government in needs assessment, capacity development etc. Recovery programs include disarmament, demobilization and reintegration of ex-combatants and displaced persons and restoration of basic services.
4. Environment and Energy: UNDP seeks to address environmental issues in order to improve developing countries abilities to develop sustainably. It works with countries to strengthen their capacity to address global environmental issues. It focuses on effective water governance, sustainable energy services, conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity etc.
5. Human rights and HIV/AIDS: UNDP believes that human rights violations and unfair gender relations continue to increase the spread of HIV epidemic. It helps countries to put HIV/AIDS at the centre of national development. It builds national capacity to mobilize all levels of government and civil society for a coordinated and effective response to the disease and protect the rights of people living with AIDS, women and vulnerable populations.

UNDP plays a significant role in the field of development. The UNDP is funded entirely by voluntary contributions from member nations. The organization operates in 177 countries, where it works with local governments to meet development challenges and develop local capacity. UNDP works internationally to help countries achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG). It also works with nations on their own solutions to global and national development challenges. However UNDP offers to help only if the different nations request it to do so.

**Describe the functions and role of UNEP.**

The United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) is an agency of the UN. It coordinates and assists developing countries in implementing environmentally sound policies and practices. It was founded by Maurice Strong in 1972. It helps in the formulation of guideline and treaties on issues such as the international trade in potentially harmful chemicals, trans-boundary air pollution and contamination of international waterways. The main functions of the UNEP are:

1. It promotes international cooperation on environmental issues and provides guidance to UN organizations.
2. It encourages the international scientific community to participate in formulating policy for many of the UN environmental projects.
3. It encourage participation y the private sector to promote the sustainable use of the world’s natural resources.
4. The most widely recognized activities of the UNEP is Earthwatch, which is an international monitoring system designed to facilitate the exchange of environmental information among governments.
5. It initiates negotiations on reducing ozone-depleting chemicals and provides technical assistance for a variety of international conferences to deal with ozone depletion.
6. It helps in assessing global, regional and national environmental conditions and trends.
7. It develops international and national environmental agreements and legal instruments.
8. It strengthens institutions for the management of the environment.
9. It integrates the economic development and environmental protection.
10. It facilitates the transfer of knowledge and technology for sustainable development.
11. It encourages new partnerships and approaches within civil society and the private sector.

The UNEP is mandated to coordinate the development of environmental policy consensus by keeping the global environment under review and bringing emerging issues to the attention of governments and the international community for action. To realize its mandate, UNEP works with many partners such as UN entities, international organizations, national governments, non-governmental organizations (NGO’s) etc. Its mission is to provide leadership and encourage partnership in caring for the environment by inspiring, informing and enabling nations and people to improve their quality of life without compromising that of future generations.

**Q. Discuss the contributions of the World Health Organization for the improvement of international health condition.**

The World Health Organization (WHO) is a specialized agency of the UN that is concerned with international global health. It was established on 7th April 1948 and it is celebrate every year as World Health Day. It works across six regions with 194 member states. WHO strive to combat diseases – communicable diseases like influenza and HIV, non-communicable diseases like cancer and heart disease. The primary role of WHO is to direct and coordinate international health within the UN system. The main areas of work are health systems, health through the life-course, non-communicable and communicable diseases, preparedness, surveillance and response and corporate services. WHO officials periodically review and update the organization’s leadership priorities. Over the period 2014-2019, WHO’s leadership priorities are aimed at:

1. Assisting countries that seek progress toward universal health coverage.
2. Helping countries establish their capacity to adhere to international Health Regulations.
3. Increasing access to essential and high-quality medical products.
4. Addressing the role of social, economic and environmental factors in public health.
5. Coordinating responses to non-communicable diseases.
6. Promoting public health and well-being in keeping with the Sustainable Development Goals, set forth by the UN.

The work encompassed by these priorities is spread across a number of health-related areas. It keeps member countries informed of the latest developments in cancer research, drug development, disease prevention, control of drug addiction, vaccine use and health hazards of chemicals and other substances.

For the improvement of international health conditions, WHO has been undertaken several measures such as the control of epidemic and endemic diseases by promoting mass campaigns involving nationwide vaccination programs, instruction in the use of antibiotics and insecticides, the improvement of laboratory and clinical facilities for early diagnosis and prevention, assistance in providing pure-water supplies and sanitation systems, and health education for people living in rural communities. These campaigns have had some success against AIDS, Tuberculosis, Malaria and a variety of other diseases. In May 1980 smallpox was globally eradicated, a feat due largely to the efforts of WHO.

WHO encourages the strengthening and expansion of public health administrations of member nations. The organization on request, provides technical advice to governments in the preparation of long-term national health plans, sends out international teams of experts to conduct field surveys and demonstration projects, set up local health centres and offers aid in the development of national training institutions for medical and nursing personnel.

**Unit IV**

**Q. Describe the role of the United Nations in keeping International Peace.**

**Or**

**Examine the peacekeeping activities of the UN.**

The United Nations was establishes in 1945 to save the succeeding generations from the scourge of war and one of its main purpose is to maintain peace and security. The Charter of the UN gives Security Council primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security. In fulfilling this responsibility, the Security Council may adopt a range of measures, including the establishment of UN peacekeeping operation, whenever there is a threat to the peace in a region.

The different activities of the UN in keeping International peace are:

1. **Conflict Prevention and Peacekeeping**: The UN uses the political tools of preventive diplomacy and mediation to help nations prevent and resolve conflicts peacefully. United Nations envoys are dispatched to areas of tension around the world to assist in defusing crises and negotiated settlements to conflicts. The UN Secretary General may exercise his office to facilitate the resolution of the conflict and to prevent international disputes from arising, escalating or spreading. The work of the UN to foster credible elections around the world also contributes in the promotion of peace and prevention of conflict.
2. **Peacekeeping:** The experience of the past has also led the UN to focus as never before on peace-building efforts to reduce a country’s risk of lapsing or relapsing into conflict by strengthening national capacities for conflict management and to lay the foundations for sustainable peace and development. The most difficult challenge for global peace is building lasting peace in war-torn societies. The UN established the Peacebuilding Commission in 2005 to better anticipate and respond to the challenges of peacekeeping.
3. **Disarmament:** Since the birth of the UN the goals of disarmament and arms limitation have been deemed central to the maintenance of international peace and security. These goals aim from reducing and eventually eliminating nuclear weapons, destroying chemical weapons and strengthening the prohibition against biological weapons. These efforts are supported by a number of UN instruments. The Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) came into force in 1970. The Chemical Weapons Convention entered into force in 1997, the Biological Weapons Convention in 1975. The Comprehensive Nuclear Test-Ban Treaty was adopted in 1996, however it has not yet entered into force.
4. **Women, Peace and Security:** Women remain a minority of combatants and perpetrators of war but they have been increasingly suffering the greatest harm. The UN Security Council recognized that including women and gender perspectives in decision making can strengthen prospects for sustainable peace with the adoption of Resolution 1325 on women, peace and security. The Resolution specifically address the situation of women in armed conflict and calls for their participation at all levels of decision making on conflict resolution and peace-building.
5. **Counter Terrorism:** To counter the scourge of terrorism has been on the agenda of the UN for decades. 18 universal instruments against international terrorism have been elaborated within the framework of the UN system relating to specific terrorist activities. A global strategy to counter terrorism was agreed in September 2006 which marks the first time that all member states of the UN have agreed to a common strategic and operational framework to fight terrorism.
6. **Organized crime:** Transnational organized crime takes many forms from trafficking in drugs, firearms and money laundering and corruption. The United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) is the guardian of the UN Convention against Transnational Organized Crime and the three supplementary Protocols on – Trafficking in persons, Smuggling of migrants and trafficking of Firearms.

**Q. Discuss the major proposals for reforms of the UN.**

**Or**

**What are the proposals for reforms in the United Nations?**

Since the establishment of the United Nations (UN) in 1945 there have been many proposals, studies and discussions around the question of reform. There are both political and legal aspects to the process of reform. Some proposals may require amendment of the Charter while other measures may be taken by the organs of the UN without Charter amendment.

Proposals for UN Reforms: UN reform is very broad topic. There have been numerous initiatives to reform the UN. These ranges from summits of heads of state, panels of experts, reform efforts by UN Secretary General.

1. **Secretary General Boutros Boutros-Ghali’s Reform agenda (1992-1996):** in 1992 Secretary General Boutros Boutros Ghali introduced his UN reform ideas which included a reorganization of the secretariat. Boutros Ghali also made important reform proposals in the areas of peacekeeping and was most through in his approach to UN Finance.
2. **Secretary General Kofi Annan’s Reform Agenda (1997**-**2006):** n 1997 and 2002 Secretary General Kofi Annan announced his plans to reform the United Nations. His reform brought some modern management into the UN’s bureaucracy, but critics charge that the reforms also made the UN more conservative and less democratic by shaping it to a neoliberal, security-driven US agenda.
3. **Secretary General Ban Ki Moon’s Reform Agenda (2007**-**2008):** Ban Ki moon has shown great persistence when it comes to the issues of climate change, Darfur and UN Reform. In 2008 Ban focused partly on the problem of water in the world, urging the UN to address the matter before it causes calamities of war. He emphasized the urgent need for UN management reform. He talked about speeding up the UN’s recruitment process and improving the selection of top managers. He also emphasized the needs of ‘bottom billion’ the poorest in the world calling for a strengthened role of the UN in development issues and also stresses the importance of human rights. His plans to restructure the Department of Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO) have been supported by the US and Russia but have not received similar welcome from developing countries who fear that the restructure could endanger peacekeeping troops.
4. **High**-**level panels:** Security Generals of the UN have in the past appointed High Level Panels to promote new thinking and to jump-start UN reform action by governments.
5. **Millennium Summit and its Follow**-**Up:** In 2000, over 150 heads of state from around the world met at the UN Millennium Summit to discuss opportunities for strengthening the UN in the new century. World leaders adopted the Millennium Declaration and resolved to meet the Millennium Development Goals.
6. **Secretary General Antonio Reform Agenda 2018:** The current Secretary General Antonio Guterres’s reform plan faces significant normative, financial and political challenges. In March 2018, UN Secretary General Antonio Guterres submitted an ambitious blueprint for the consideration of the UN General Assembly to restructure the organization’s peace and security pillar. This plan has four main goals – 1) to prioritize prevention and sustaining peace 2) to enhance the effectiveness and coherence of peacekeeping operations and special political missions 3) to make the pillar coherent, nimble and effective 4) to align the peace and security pillar more closely with the development and human rights pillars to create greater coherence and cross-pillar coordination.
7. **Security Council Reform:** There are several proposed plans to change the permanent membership of the UN Security Council, which reflects the power structure of the world as it was in 1945. These proposal plans were made notably by the G4 nations, Uniting for consensus group and by former Secretary General Kofi Annan.
8. **UN Secretariat Transparency Reform:** There have been calls for reforming the UN demand to make the UN administration of the UN Secretariat more transparent and more efficient, including the direct election of the Secretary General by the people.
9. **Democracy Reform:** Another frequent demand is that the UN to become more democratic and a key institution of world democracy. A direct democracy would require a presidential election of the UN Secretary General by direct votes of the citizens of the democratic countries, UN General Assembly and the International Court of Justice. Others have proposed a combination of both direct and indirect democracy.
10. **Human Rights Reform:** On 15th March 2006, the UN General Assembly voted in favor of establishing a new United Nations Human Rights Council (UNHRC), the successor to the United Nations Commission on Human Rights with the resolution receiving approval from 170 members.