

International and Regional Organizations

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Introduction

The world has witnessed tremendous growth of various organizations in recent years. These organizations have been vital in championing interests of members in various jurisdictions they are found. We have two types of these organizations; international and regional. There is no big difference between them.

In fact, a regional organization is an international organization because it draws global membership and has an element of geopolitical feature that in operation it surpass a single state. Membership in a regional organization is determined by a demarcation or a boundary. In most cases, a regional organization is formed to promote political, cooperation and economic integration among member states within specific geopolitical boundary.

On the other hand, an international organization possesses elements of global membership and has a wider scope and presence. An international organization is further classified into two categories, that is, intergovernmental and nongovernmental organizations.

In this paper, the writer discusses the international and regional organizations by illustrating their similarities and differences. Further, the writer gives an overview of the post-Cold War and how it contributed to the world economy. And finally, the writer gives a case study of the US as a country practicing open economy and free trade and describes the US international political economy over the years.

International and Regional Organizations

An international organization is an institution drawing membership from at least three countries, having activities in many countries and whose members are bound together by an official agreement. International organizations are further divided into two groups; nongovernmental, for example Amnesty International, and intergovernmental, for instance, the European Union.

Moreover, the proliferation of international organizations has increased due to the fact that countries are calling for a stronger sense of interdependence and cooperation in solving global challenges. The largest universal organizations, taking an appreciable and essential part in the process of globalization are:

- (1) The United Nations Organization (UN) and:
- (2) The U.N. specialized agencies: World Meteorological Organization (WMO), World Health Organization (WHO), World Intellectual Property Organization, World Postal Union, United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund (UNICEF), International Development Association (IDA), International Maritime Organization (IMO), International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO), International Labor Organization (ILO), International Finance Corporation, International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (IBRD), International Monetary Fund (IMF), International

Telecommunications Union (ITU), International Court of Justice (ICJ), International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD), United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO), Food and Agricultural Organization of the United Nations (FAO), and United Nations Development Program;

- (3) United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO); and
- (4) Autonomous organizations under the aegis of the U.N.: World Trade Organization (WTO), United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED), International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA).

The most well known international regional organizations are: the Asian Development Bank (ADB), the Association of South-East Asia Nations (ASEAN), the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC), the African Development Bank (AfDB), the Baltic Assembly, The GUUAM (Georgia, Uzbekistan, Ukraine, Azerbaijan, Moldova), The European Union (EU), the European Investment Bank (EIB), the Eurasian Economic Community, the Latin American Integration Association (LAIA), the Latin American Economic System (LAES), the League of Arab States, the International Association of Philosophy Professors (AIPhP), the MERCOSUR (the Southern Common Market), the Organization of American States (OAS).

Regional organizations are independent bodies whose memberships are drawn from states sharing the same values and missions (Oman, 1994). Similarly, they have some aspects of global membership and their operations involves some elements of geopolitical aspects that span beyond a single nation state (Fawcett, 2004).

Some of these regional bodies include; the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), East African Community (EAC), Association of South Asian Nations Free Trade Area (AFTA) and North America Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) among others (Gaddis, 1990).

Similarities and differences of International and Regional Organizations

International and regional organization have some common similarities. They are both established to further a common goal. For example, if the goal of formation is to enhance the rule of law, both organizations work towards realizing this goal by developing standards and strengthening the rule of law among member states at both regional and global levels.

Also, both organizations are in the lead in promoting development. For instance, they assist member states to access grants which enables them to enhance development in their individual states (Gill, 1988). They encourage multilateral and bilateral trade by eliminating trade barriers and coming up with fair rules that minimize monopoly in international and regional trade.

Membership in both organizations is voluntary. The organizations do not compel states to be signatories; individual states have an option of being a member or not. For instance, some states have voluntarily refused to join the International Criminal Court (ICC). Besides, member states can decide to withdraw their membership to the organization at will if proper withdrawal procedures are followed.

International and regional organizations aim at promoting peace. For instance, international organizations have been promoting peace throughout the world by disrupting terrorism networks and deploying peacekeeping troops in war torn countries.

For example, currently, international organizations are helping countries such as the Afghanistan to attain peace. Regional organizations have a similar goal. They are actively involved in promoting peace within their borders and assisting neighboring countries ravaged by war .

Both organizations aim at promoting cooperation in various aspects such as politics, culture and social cohesion among others. Oman (1994) points out that because these organizations are established with a common goal, they cooperate so as to realize a common goal.

Despite close similarities between the two organizations, their jurisdiction differs. For instance, international organizations are global based whereas regional organizations are based on geopolitical elements that span beyond a single nation state.

Conclusion

International and regional organizations are closely related. They are organizations formed with an aim of accomplishing a common goal, enhance economic development and promote cooperation between member states among others.

The post-cold war led to the rise of the US as a superpower thus playing a significant role in global matters such as military, economic and political activities. Similarly, it contributed to the rise of China as an emerging economic superpower. On the other hand, Japan adopted a different economic framework to redeem its glory and Soviet Union was weakened economically.

The major problem in the post-cold war was a shift to consumerism. Most nations led by the US did not place emphasis on saving but supported consumption. This aspect compelled nations such as the US to seek financial aid from international financial institutions to enable it further its activities.

Over the years, the US has endeavored to support free and open trade across the world. It has been steadfast in supporting world trading organizations such as the WTO and International Monetary Fund (IMF). Similarly, it has consistently supported regional blocs in the Americas and devised favorable regulations to promote trade among its partners.

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