



9. The World since 1945 - I

The period between the end of the First World War (1918) and the beginning of the Second World War (1939) was a period of change in international relations. The League of Nations was created as an international organisation to establish peace and order in the world. However, the conflicts in Europe did not stop and eventually the world experienced yet another war.

It is after the Second World War that several important changes took place in world affairs that are relevant to the contemporary times. These changes became the foundation of the world order that was to emerge in the post second world war era. It saw the beginning of the era of 'Cold War'. This chapter presents an overview of the key events that have taken place in the world since 1945.

Effects of the Second World War

The changes that had begun in the inter war years took a more concrete shape in the aftermath of the Second World War. These changes now included the following:

- (i) **End of the primacy of Europe :** The world had been described as 'Eurocentric' because of the dominant position enjoyed by the main European powers in the 19th and the early 20th century. The Second World War had seen the defeat of the major European powers including Germany, France and Italy. United Kingdom witnessed severe devastation. On the other hand, the United States and Soviet Union emerged as new powers. With the European powers having lost
- their importance the world ceased to be 'Eurocentric'. The emergence of United States and Soviet Union as two important players in world affairs also diminished the importance of the European powers.
- (ii) **Division of Europe :** During the Second World War the Soviet forces occupied the area of Eastern Europe. The Western countries of United States, France and United Kingdom occupied the area of Western Europe. After the defeat of Germany and the end of the war, both sides wanted to retain their influence on the areas under their control. With the end of the war Europe was divided into East and West Europe.
- (iii) **Role of Ideology :** The Bolshevik revolution of 1917 had brought in a new factor in international relations: role of ideology. The revolution created the Soviet Union as a Socialist State. The East European states that were under the influence of the Soviet Union adopted the socialist ideology. The West European states that were under the American influence adopted the capitalist ideology. Now the division of Europe had a new dimension, that of ideology.
- (iv) **United Nations :** The establishment of the United Nations in 1945 was another important milestone. The objective was to use international organisations as a means to establish peace and security. The UN was to substitute the League of Nations as an international organisation.



- (v) **Rise of Asia** : Yet another important trend that one can see in the post Second World War era is the rise of anti-colonial or national liberation struggles in Asia and Africa. This eventually lead to countries of Asia and Africa attaining freedom from colonial rule.



Do you know ?

The main Organs of the United Nations (UN):

- (i) **General Assembly** : The General Assembly is the main deliberative, policymaking and representative organ of the UN. All the members of the UN are represented in the General Assembly.
- (ii) **Security Council** : The Security Council has primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security. It has 15 Members (5 permanent and 10 non-permanent members).
- (iii) **Economic and Social Council** : The Economic and Social Council is the principal body for coordination, policy review, policy dialogue and recommendations on economic, social and environmental issues, as well as implementation of internationally agreed development goals.
- (iv) **Trusteeship Council** : The Trusteeship Council was

established to provide international supervision for 11 Trust Territories. Steps were taken to prepare the Territories for self-government and independence. By 1994, all Trust Territories had attained self-government or independence. The Trusteeship Council suspended operation on 1 November 1994.

- (v) **International Court of Justice** : The International Court of Justice is the principal judicial organ of the United Nations. Its seat is at the Peace Palace in The Hague (Netherlands).
- (vi) **Secretariat** : The Secretariat comprises the Secretary-General and UN staff members, who carry out the day-to-day work of the UN. The Secretary-General is chief administrative officer of the Organisation. He is appointed by the General Assembly on the recommendation of the Security Council for a five-year term.

Find it.

- (1) Total membership of UN.
- (2) Permanent members of the Security Council.
- (3) Location of the Head Quarters of the UN.
- (4) Names and tenure of all the Secretary Generals of the UN.

Role of the United Nations

- (i) **Maintain International Peace and Security** : The United Nations came into being in 1945 with one central mission: the maintenance of international peace and security. The UN does this by working to prevent conflict; helping parties in conflict make peace; peacekeeping; and creating the conditions to allow peace to hold and flourish.
- (ii) **Protect Human Rights** : The promotion and protection of human rights is a key purpose and guiding principle of the UN. In 1948, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights was created.
- (iii) **Deliver Humanitarian Aid** : One of the purposes of the United Nations is “to achieve international co-operation in solving international problems of an economic, social, cultural or humanitarian character.”

The international community relies on the UN to coordinate humanitarian relief operations in times of natural and man-made disasters.

- (iv) **Promote Sustainable Development** : The global understanding of development has changed over the years. The UN seeks to promote sustainable development, that is, development that promotes prosperity and economic opportunity, greater social well-being, and protection of the environment.
- (v) **Uphold International Law** : The development of and respect for international law has been a key part of the work of the Organisation. This work is carried out in many ways - by courts, tribunals, multilateral treaties and by the Security Council.



Do you know ?

The name ‘United Nations’ was coined by United States President Franklin D. Roosevelt. It was first used in the Declaration by United Nations of 1 January 1942, during the Second World War. In 1945, representatives of 50 countries met in San Francisco at the United Nations Conference on International Organisation to draw up the United Nations Charter. India was a founding member of the United Nations. It joined the UN in October 1945.

Find out!

UN Peace Keeping is an important activity conducted for the maintenance of peace and security. In which countries did India send its armed forces for UN Peace Keeping activity?

Cold War

The division of Europe between East and West Europe led to tensions between the United States and the Soviet Union. It is this confrontation between United States and Soviet Union in Europe that gave rise to the Cold War. The term cold war has been used to describe the nature of relations between the United States and the Soviet Union. This confrontation had several dimensions:

(i) **Political** : One was the aspect of struggle for political influence over the areas under the control of the two countries. Areas under Soviet influence included East Germany, Poland, Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Romania, Bulgaria and Albania. Areas under United States influence included Netherlands, Denmark, Belgium, West Germany, France, Italy, Spain, Greece and United Kingdom. Finland was forced to opt for neutrality to ensure that both the United States and the Soviet Union did not clash in the region.

(ii) **Ideological** : Eastern Europe adopted socialist ideology under the influence of the Soviet Union and followed a socialist form of government. Western Europe adopted capitalist ideology under the leadership of the United States. These countries had democratic governments.

(iii) **Economic**: East European countries with socialist governments followed the socialist economic system. This meant that the government or the public sector would play a dominant role in the economic system. West European countries that followed the democratic system of government



Do you know ?

Division of Berlin : When the Second World War ended the Soviets had control over East Germany while the United States, United Kingdom and France had control over West Germany. This was the division of Germany. The city of Berlin that was the capital of Germany was also

divided between East and West Berlin. East Berlin was under Soviet influence while West Berlin was under American, British and French control. The city of Berlin lies inside the territory of East Germany. Thus, West Berlin was surrounded by East Germany from all sides.



Map showing location of Berlin

had a capitalist form of economy. Here the private sector played a dominant role in the economic system.

(iv) Security: Military alliances were created in Europe to protect these countries. The North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) was created in 1949 as a military alliance to defend West European countries and the United States from the threat of invasion from the Soviet Union and East Europe. Warsaw Pact was created in 1955 to defend East European countries and the Soviet Union from the threat from Western Europe and the United States.

While there was no actual war between the United States and the Soviet Union, there existed a continuous state of tension between the two countries. The term cold war is used to describe this situation: a state of tension but no actual war. Thus, the two adversaries were preparing for a possible war that did not take place.

Now we would look at some of the major events and trends that have taken place since 1945. This is a brief survey of events and trends.

Phases of Cold War

Phase: 1945 to 1949/50 (Formative years)

This is the formative phase when cold war takes shape. The focus is on the division of Europe on the basis of political, ideological, economic and military aspects. The political division was based on the influence and control over the areas of East and West Europe; ideological differences in goals and aspirations of these countries; the economic

division on economic policies and military division on the creation of military alliances. This division of the world in two groups or blocs is sometimes called the East-West division. The East represented the countries of the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe and the West represented the countries of Western Europe and the United States.



Do you know?

Iron Curtain : The former British Prime Minister Winston Churchill during his visit to the United States in 1946 gave a speech at the Westminster College in Fulton where he described the situation in Europe as “From Stettin in the Baltic to Trieste in the Adriatic, an iron curtain has descended across the continent.”. This speech was the first clear expression of the division of Europe between the West and the East.

Find out.

Who are the members of the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO)?

In Asia there were some significant developments:

- (i) India became independent in 1947. This was a success of Asian anticolonial struggle.
- (ii) In 1949 China became a communist country under the leadership of Mao Zedong. In 1950 it signed a military alliance with the Soviet Union.



Division of Europe after World War II



Military Alliances: NATO and Warsaw Pact

Phase: 1949/50 to 1959 (Cold war in Asia)

China's becoming communist was the beginning of a change in the politics of Asia. 1950 saw the beginning of the Korean War. It started with the attack by North Korea on South Korea. The latter approached the United Nations for help. The United Nations sent in armed forces to defend South Korea. The war lasted from 1950 to 1953. The war ended in a stalemate and Korea was divided between North Korea and South Korea.

Find out.

Did India participate in the Korean War? What was the nature of Indian participation?

A series of military alliances were made in Asia. These alliances included the following:

- ANZUS : (1952) Australia, New Zealand and US
- South East Asia Treaty Organisation (SEATO) : (1954) Thailand, Philippines, Australia, New Zealand, France, UK, US
- Central Treaty Organisation (CENTO) : (1955) Turkey, Iraq (Iraq withdrew in 1958), Iran (Iran withdrew in 1979) and Pakistan.
- The Soviet Union and China also signed a military alliance in 1950.
- In Europe, the Soviet Union created the military alliance called Warsaw Pact in 1955. Its members were Albania (Albania withdrew in 1968), Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia, East Germany, Hungary, Poland and Romania.

The 1950s saw a change in the leadership in the Soviet Union. Joseph

Stalin died in 1953 and was succeeded by Nikita Khrushchev. Khrushchev brought in some changes in Soviet Union's policies. He brought in the policy of 'Peaceful Co-existence'. This policy meant that the Soviet socialist system and the American capitalist system could and would have to coexist. The main reason for this change was that both the United States and the Soviet Union had nuclear weapons. There was a fear that in case a nuclear war takes place the entire world would be destroyed. Therefore, there was no alternative to co-existence.

This phase also saw the growth of regionalism in Asia and Africa. India had hosted the first Asian Relations Conference in Delhi in 1947 to promote a sense of regionalism. The Asian Relations Conference brought together many leaders of the independence movements in Asia. Representatives of 25 Asian countries participated at the conference. The objectives of the conference were: (i) to bring together the leading men and women of Asia on a common platform to study the problems of common concern to the people of the continent; (ii) to focus attention on social, economic and cultural problems of the different countries of Asia; and (iii) to foster mutual contact and understanding. This conference is looked at as the beginning of the attempt to create a sense of regionalism in Asia.



Do you know ?

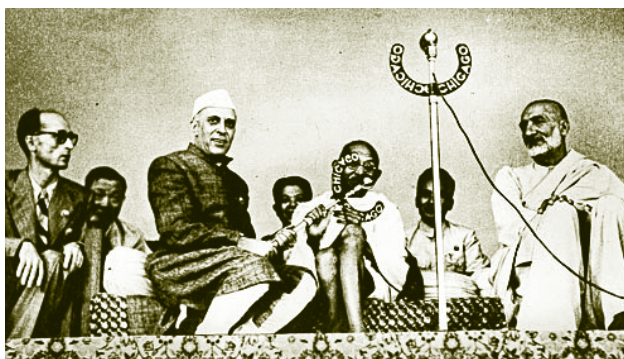
What is Regionalism?

Regional organisations are created by countries from a particular geographic region. They form groups to promote their national interest in a cooperative manner. They try to

establish their independent identity. This process of regional level cooperation is also called regionalism. While geographic linkages are important, sometimes some functional issues become the basis of regional cooperation. These can be in areas like transport and communication, energy, health, etc. The process of regionalism usually begins with a political dialogue amongst the participants. Such a dialogue may lead to the creation of an organisation. Organisations like the European Union (EU), Association of South East Asian Nations (ASEAN) or South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) are examples of such regional groupings.



Venue of the Asian Relations Conference, Delhi



Jawaharlal Nehru with Mahatma Gandhi and Khan Abdul Gafar Khan at the Asian Relations Conference

This was followed up by the Bandung conference of 1955 in Indonesia. This was the first Afro-Asian conference that sought to broad base the concept of regionalism to include the countries of Africa. The conference had 24 participating countries besides the sponsoring countries, namely Burma (now, Myanmar), Ceylon (now, Sri Lanka), India, Indonesia and Pakistan. The main purposes of the conference were:

- (i) To promote goodwill and cooperation
- (ii) To consider social, economic and cultural problems and problems of special interest to Asian and African people.
- (iii) To view the position of Asia and Africa in the world today and the contribution they can make to world peace.

The Bandung Conference was a historic event. It tried to spread the concept of regionalism to Asia and Africa.



Venue of the Afro-Asian Conference, Bandung

In Western Europe, regionalism was to take a new form. It used the logic of economic cooperation. It started with the creation of the European Coal and Steel Community in 1951.

The European Union (EU) was set up with the aim of uniting European countries

economically and politically in order to secure lasting peace. The process of this regional integration was to take a new leap forward in the form of the efforts at European integration through the creation of the European Parliament and the European Community.

In 1959 President Dwight Eisenhower of the United States and Prime Minister Nikita Khrushchev of the Soviet Union met at Camp David in the United States. This was the first serious attempt at

seeking a dialogue between the two cold war rivals.



President Dwight Eisenhower of the US and Prime Minister Nikita Khrushchev of the Soviet Union at Camp David (1959)



Do you know ?

In international relations the word Summit Meeting is used only when the Heads of State or Heads of Government meet to discuss issues relating to their countries.

Camp David Summit is important as it was a turning point in the history of cold war. Let us see the changes that happened after 1959 in the next chapter.

Please see the following websites for further information:

(1) World After World War II

COEP History Club COEP (College of Engineering Pune) History Club arranged the last lecture of its eighth lecture series on the topic of “World After World War II”.

[https://www.youtube.com/results?search_query=shrikant+paranjpeThe World after World War II \(in Marathi\)](https://www.youtube.com/results?search_query=shrikant+paranjpeThe+World+after+World+War+II+(in+Marathi))

(2) UN Peacekeeping

UN Peacekeeping is the largest and most visible representation of the United Nations. It is a collective investment in global peace, security, and stability.

<https://peacekeeping.un.org/en/india>



Exercise

1. (A) Choose the correct alternative and complete the following statements.

1. In 1949, China became a communist country under the leadership of
(Khrushchev, Mao Zedong, Joseph Stalin, Ho Chi Minh)

2. The principle of peaceful co-existence was put forth by
(Eisenhower, Joseph Stalin, Khrushchev, Jawaharlal Nehru)

(B) State the appropriate concept for the given statement.

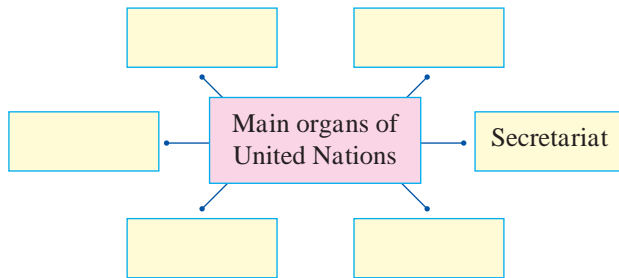
1. Period of dominance of European powers.

2. Conflict between America and Soviet Union.

(C) Find the odd word in the given set.

1. Hungary, Romania, Bulgaria, France
2. Italy, Poland, Spain, Greece

2. (A) Complete the concept map.



(B) Observe the given map and answer the following questions.

See map of Division of Europe after World War II.

(i) Name two East European countries under the influence of Soviet Union.

(ii) Name two West European countries under the influence of United States.

3. State whether the following statements are true or false with reasons.

1. After the Bolshevik Revolution, Soviet Russia became a capitalist nation.
2. The Bandung Conference brought cold war in Asia.

4. Answer the following.

1. Explain the term regionalism.
2. Discuss the role of United Nations.

5. Answer the following in detail with reference to the given points.

1. Elaborate the dimensions of Cold War.
(a) political (b) ideological
(c) economic (d) security

Activity :

Make a list of various regional organisations in the world.