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How federation is different from Confederation.
Explain.

Explaining Federation and Confederation

Although federation and confederation are derived from the same Latin root, yet they are quite different. They have different functions, structure and principles. According to Sir Ivor

Jennings, a distinguished constitutional scholar, describes federation as "a political entity characterized by division of powers between central government and its federating units, each of which, in relation to others, retains some degree of independence." On the other hand confederation is defined by **John A. Macdonald** as "A confederation is the union of two or more sovereign states, each recognizing the other and each having separate political interests, which by treaty or ^{other} contractual agreement agrees to vest the exercise of certain powers in a common authority." **German words** explain the difference between federation and confederation very clearly. A federation is

a **Bundes-staat** i.e.^a United State while confederation is a **Staatenbund** i.e. the union of states. For instance US is a federation while UN is confederation.

Illucidating the Difference between Federation and Confedera-tion

The federation is different from confederation in various aspects. The federation is a sovereign state while confederation is a league of sovereign states. In federation, no federati unit can work independently against the central or federal government while in a confederation, the member states can get separated from the confederation in case of disagreements over certain issues. In a federation, the federating units are less autonomous than the central government while in confederation the member states are more autonomous than main authoritd body. In federation, federating units cannot have individual army, currency or foreign policy; while confederation allows its member states to have their own army, currency and foreign policy. While the federation allows less degree of adaptation.

to local preferences, contrary to this, confederation allows a higher degree of adaptation to local preferences.

a- Federation is a Sovereign State While Confederation is a League of Sovereign States

Federation is a sovereign state in which powers are distributed between centre and federating units; where each federating unit works within its own sphere of influence that is granted by constitution. While confederation is a political union or league of sovereign states that agree to cooperate with one another on certain matters through a contract while retaining their individual sovereignty.

→ Comparison of US with UN: US is a federation as it is a sovereign state that is composed of 50 states that have delegated certain powers to central government. On the other hand, UN is a confederation that is an association of sovereign states with more limited central authority. The UN Charter upholds the principle of non-interference in the domestic affairs of member states.

b. Federation is based on Constitution While Confederation is based on Contract

In federation, the central government and the governments of federating units are ^{written} by constitution while confederating states form an alliance through an agreement. Thus, it is easy to maintain balance of power in federation because power of federating units can be increased or decreased by constitution only while it is really ^{difficult} to maintain balance of power among sovereign states that are loosely bound together by an agreement in a confederation.

→ Comparison of Pakistan with German Confederation
Pakistan is a federation in which the four provinces are bound closely with each other and with the centre through "Constitution of Pakistan". In order to increase the autonomy of Pakistan's four provinces 18th amendment was done in its constitution. This was done to maintain balance of power between centre and provinces. While German confederation was based on "German Federal Act" (Duetscher Bundesakte) that failed in

maintaining balance of power among states after Congress of Vienna.

c- Federation has central government while confederation has no central government

A federation has central government that has authority over matters that are of national importance. Thus, the military, defence matters and foreign relations will be under the control of central government. Moreover, the currency, tariffs, communication, criminal laws, marriage and divorce laws are also allocated to centre for the sake of unity and uniformity of legislation for the whole nation. On the other hand, confederati^{-on} has no central government since each sovereign state has its own military, foreign policy, currency and laws for its own state. In confederation, there are forums rather than authoritative bodies where they can discuss with one another over policies or issues.

→ Comparison of US' central government with UN's Security Council: US is federation that has its central government in Washington DC that is responsible for its defence and foreign policy. while the Security Council

of UN is a forum, not an authoritative body, where the sovereign states that are member states of UN can discuss issues here.

d- Federation has reduced chances of secession while Confederation has increased chances of secession

Sinceⁱⁿ federation the federating units are strongly bound with centre through constitution.

And this constitution is written, rigid and can be amended by supreme only

so it is really difficult for federating sovereign units to get separated from the state.

On the other hand, confederating units are loosely bound together through a mutual contract or agreement. So, they can easily get separated from confederation.

→ **Comparison of India with New England Confederation:** India is a federation where federating units are strongly bound together through constitution; due to which despite the growing tensions in Indian Union where Dravidian Deccan, the Nagas, Sikhs and Kashmiris are agitating for secession, India has yet not get disintegrated. On the other hand, New England confederation got disintegrated.

due to limited authority of central authority ^{-ve} body to enforce decisions.

e. Federation does not allow federating units to have Individual Army While Confederation allows confederating units to have individual army

A federation does not allow federating units to have their own military; in fact defence is the responsibility of centre not the responsibility of federating units. That's why federating units cannot have their own army. On the other hand, confederation allows confederating units to have their individual army. Because in confederation each member state has to protect the sovereignty of its own state due to which it needs its own military. Even, sovereign states can also form confederation for defense purposes against external threats.

→ Comparison of Pakistan with Archaen League
Since Pakistan is a federation so there is only single military force of Pakistan to protect all four provinces and centre (Islamabad). While Archaen League was a confederation that was formed for

defensive purpose against external threat and each Greek city was having its own army and control over it.

f. Federation ensures equal representation of each federating unit in Decision Making Process While confederation does not ensure equal representation of each confederating unit in decision-making

Since the authority of each federating unit is granted by constitution thus it is inevitable to give equal representation to each federating unit in decision-making process. On the other hand, the ^{equal} representation of each confederating unit in confederation

unit in decision-making is guaranteed by an agreement. That's why confederation does not ensure equal representation of each confederating unit in decision-making process.

→ Comparison of ^{equal} importance of 37 states of US in its decision-making WITH unequal importance of member states of UN in its decision making: Since US is a federation that gives equal importance to all 37 states

since this authority is given to 37 states by US' constitution. That's why in US for any amendment in constitution, the bill of amendment has to be passed by each parliament of 37 states other than the centre. On the other hand, in UN it is only US who is the most influential player in all decision-making processes. Its clear example is Israel-Hamas war in which UN has not taken any serious step against Israel just because of US' support for Israel in UN. -rt

g- Federation doesnot allow its federating units to have individual foreign policy
While Confederation allows its confederating units to have individual foreign policy

In federation, it is only federal government that designs foreign policy for the entire state and that has to be followed by all provincial or local government of federal state. On the other hand, in confederation all confederating units are allowed to have their own foreign policy. Unlike federation, in confederation all

member states decides about their defence, currency, foreign relations on their own. While in federation, the national interests are considered at centre only. It is only federal government that makes policies for the defence, finance and foreign relations of state.

→ Comparison of Pakistan with UN

In Pakistan, it is only central government that makes foreign policy for state which is prepared under the leadership of Prime Minister. Not even a single province of Pakistan is allowed to have its individual foreign policy. While in UN all 193 member states have their individual foreign policy.

h- Federation allows less degree of adaptation to local preferences While confederation allows a higher degree of adaptation to local preferences

Unlike confederation, federation allows less degree of adaptation to local preferences. While the best governance is that where local preferences are considered as the most important part of their governance

structure. This fact is stated in colorful words by Pope John Paul II as : In the orchestra of governance, let the decisions be played by the instruments closest to the people.
(Pope John Paul II, Centesimus Annus, 1991)

→ Comparison of acceptance to cultural and linguistic diversity in Modern Swiss Confederation With Pakistan

The confederal structure of Modern Swiss Confederation accommodates the cultural and linguistic diversity that leads towards social harmony. While West Pakistan was separated from Pakistan mainly due to language barrier. Even till today, Pakistan is suffering from lack of national unity due to cultural and linguistic differences between four provinces of Pakistan.

Concluding Thoughts

The federation and confederation have different structures, rules and dynamics but both aim at creating balance of power. Federation, characterized by a strong central authority and pooling

of sovereignty among constituent states, foster unity and stability through common institutions and foreign policy. Conversely, confederation emphasizes the autonomy of member states often resulting in a loose alliance with weak central authority that relies on voluntary cooperation. Understanding these different political structures can play a key role in achieving balance of power within the state or among different sovereign states.
