

# IR Exam - Paper 1

Q1. Compare and contrast the concepts of nationalisation and globalisation. Which seems to dominate global politics today?

Answer

## 1. Introduction

The collision between nationalism and globalisation plays a central role in modern international relations. Nationalism emphasises the superiority of the nation-state, sovereignty, and cultural identity. On the other hand, globalisation promotes interconnectedness, economic integration, and transnational governance. The tension between both forces influences global politics in a contradictory way.

## 2. Conceptual Foundations

### i) Nationalism

Nationalism is a political ideology centred on the idea of a



distinct national identity with a focus on sovereignty of the nation-state. Proponents of nationalism advocate for self-determination and demand prioritising national interests above global/regional interests. Brexit (2016) is an example of nationalist aspirations which aimed to reclaim sovereignty from supranational entities like the European Union. IR theory of realism aligns with nationalism, as realism also emphasises sovereignty and state survival in an anarchic international system.

## ii) Globalisation

The phenomenon of globalisation refers to the increasing interconnectedness of states, economies, and cultures through free trade, communication, and international institutions. Globalisation directly challenges the superiority of the nation-state by promoting interdependence. An example is the facilitation of global trade through the World Trade Organisation (WTO) by reducing barriers and promoting economic integration. Liberalism supports globalisation



as it emphasises cooperation, interdependence, and international institutions.

### 3. Comparison of Nationalism and Globalisation

| Feature    | Nationalism                             | Globalisation                                 |
|------------|-----------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------|
| Focus      | Nation-state and Sovereignty            | Global interconnectedness                     |
| Identity   | Cultural, historical, protectionism     | Free trade and economic liberalisation        |
| Governance | National autonomy<br>Brexit, and Trumps | International Institutions<br>European Union, |
| Examples   | "America First" Policy                  | Belt and Road Initiative (BRI)                |

### 4. Contrasting Nationalism and Globalisation in Global Politics

#### 4.1 Sovereignty vs. Interdependence

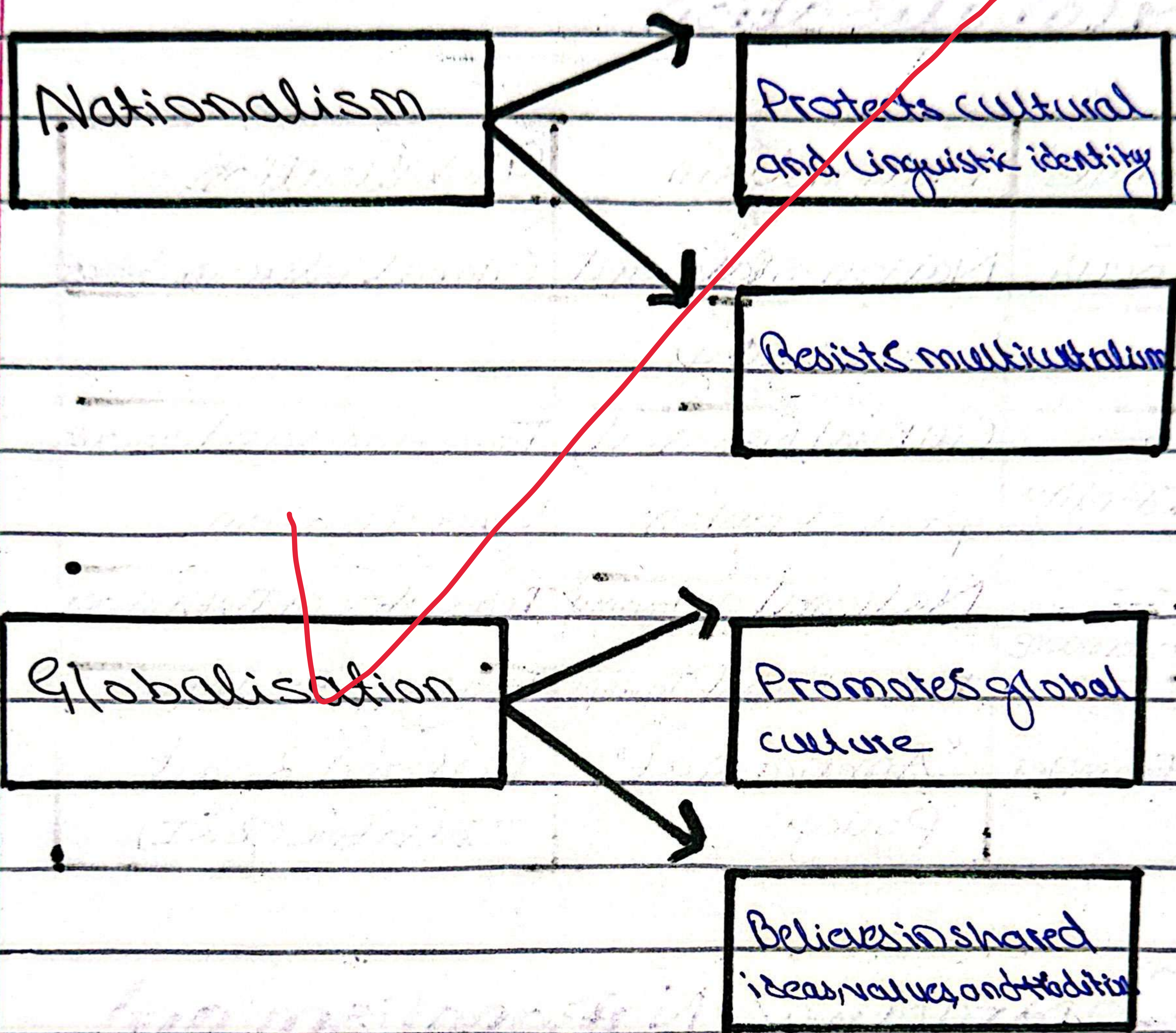
**Nationalism**: Regards sovereignty as inviolable. Advocates policies like tariffs to protect and prioritise domestic interests.

**Globalisation**: Demands states to renounce some level of sovereignty for collective gains through trade agreements.



and global governance model.

## 4.2 Divergence in Identity and Culture



## 4.3 Economic Policies

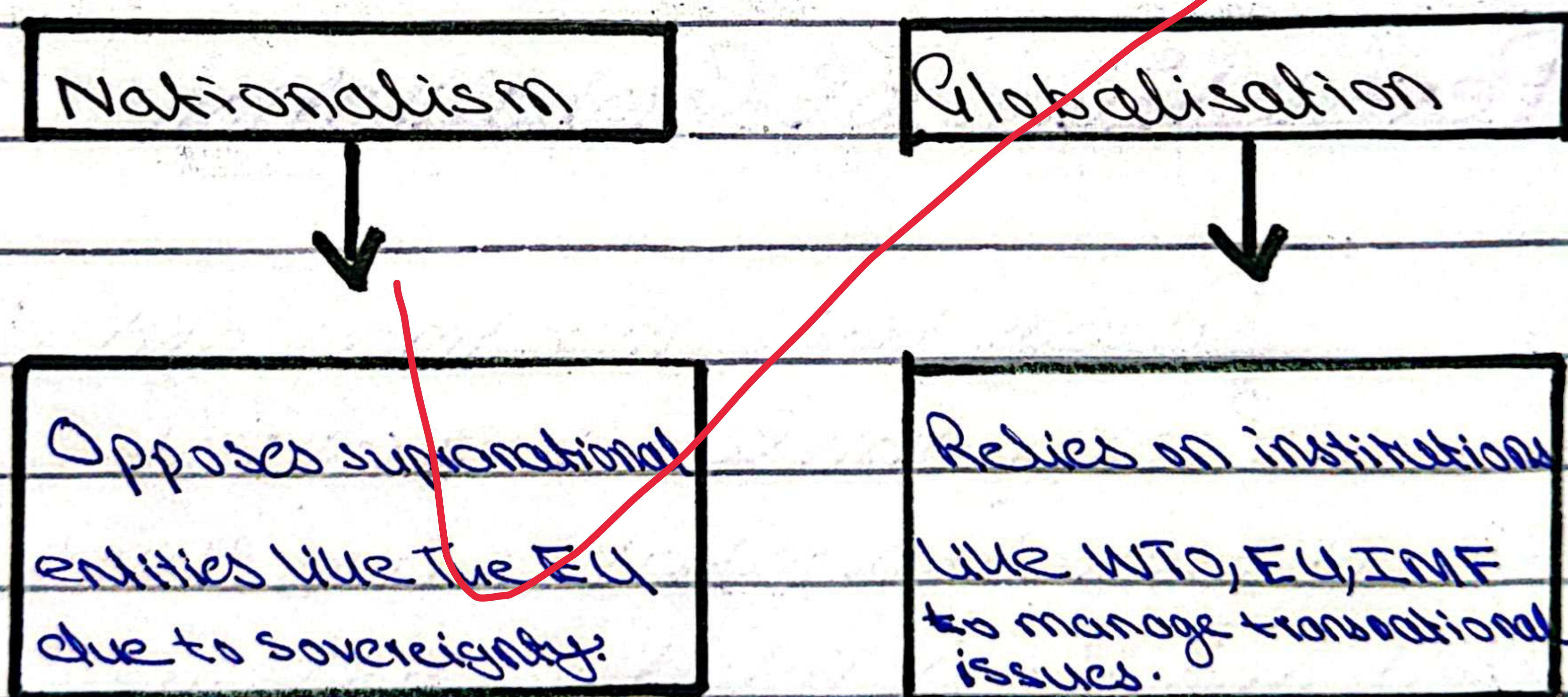
Nationalism believes in state survival and personal superiority. It advocates for protectionist policies to defend domestic industries from foreign competition. Trump's tariffs on Chinese goods to shield American industries reflects practical implementation of the thought. However, globalisation promotes



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Free trade agreements, and demands reduction in tariffs to create a integrated global market. Examples include North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) and Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership (CPTPP). Nationalism's economic policy approach aligns with realism while globalisation's approach illustrates liberalism. For realists, globalisation is secondary to national interests.

## 4.4 Governance and Institutions



## 5. Dominance in Contemporary Global Politics

### i) Rise of Nationalism

In recent years, populist movements have emerged. Nationalist



Leaders like Donald Trump and Narendra Modi have leveraged nationalist sentiments to consolidate power. Trump's "America First" policy prioritises domestic interests and under the policy he withdrew U.S. from multilateral agreements like The Paris Climate Agreement (2015). Moreover, nationalist policies have intensified regional tensions like The Russia-Ukraine conflict in 2022. The emerging regional tensions are based on the issues of territorial integrity and sovereignty.

## ii) Persistence of Globalisation

Global trade, investment, and economic integration remains resilient. Recent multilateral initiatives like China's Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) are focused on promoting interconnectedness and economic interdependency. Due to technological advancements, digital globalisation through platforms like Amazon, continue to grow, promoting further interdependence.



### iii) Recent Domination of Nationalism

While globalisation remains deeply entrenched in economic structures, nationalism appears to dominate recent political discourse. Although global interdependence remains a practical reality, the nationalist rhetoric is increasingly gaining ground. With the U.S adopting protectionist policies and threatening to leave multilateral institutions like the World Health Organisation (WHO), the world is slowly moving towards deglobalisation. The situation at present is a push-and-pull dynamic but the gradual move towards deglobalisation has arisen due to rise and recent dominance of nationalist discourse. This realist approach is depicted in recent conflicts within which state sovereignty and power politics remain the central themes, thereby proving dominance of nationalism in today's global politics.

You need to discuss this part under multiple headings  
Discuss your paper in tutorial

### 6. Conclusion

The interplay of nationalism and globalisation defines contemporary



global politics. While globalisation underpins the world's economic system, nationalism dominates political rhetoric within majority states and is now gradually influencing the economic sphere as well. The future trajectory of global politics depends on how states balance these competing forces to address global challenges while protecting national interests. The balance will shape the evolving international system and global politics in coming years.

Q2. Comment on the relevance of International Humanitarian Law in the Gaza crisis. Suggest different measures of pacific settlement to the dispute upon functionalist perspective?

Answer

## 1. Introduction

The Gaza crisis which started on October 7, 2023 has seen recurrent armed conflict between Israel and



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Palestine. The crisis highlights the need for compliance to International Humanitarian Law (IHL) to protect civilians and to ensure accountability for violations. IHL is based on the Geneva Conventions, particularly the Fourth Geneva Convention of 1949. IHL governs conduct during armed conflict, emphasising the protection of non-combatants and the principles of proportionality.

## 2. Relevance of International Humanitarian Law (IHL) in the Gaza Crisis

### i) Overview of IHL

IHL aims to limit the effects of armed conflict by protecting those who are not participating in hostilities and restrict the means, methods, and intensity of warfare.

Key Principles

→ Distinction: Differentiating between civilians and combatants

→ Proportionality: Avoid excessive harm to civilians relative to strength

→ Necessity: Use level of force necessary

→ Humanity: Ensure humane treatment of prisoners and wounded



## ii) Application of IHL to the Gaza Crisis

The Gaza crisis indicates serious violations of IHL.

a) Civilians as victims: Extensive civilian casualties resulted from airstrikes and shelling, targeting populated areas. As of December 2024, approximately 46,000 people have died (41% of them were children).

b) Disproportionate Use of Force: Israel's response to Hamas rocket attacks are criticised for their disproportionality. The attacks have caused excessive civilian harm indicating a direct violation of IHL. Moreover, indiscriminate or denying populated areas to pressurise Hamas is also illegal.

iii) Targeting of Humanitarian Facilities: Israel's attacks have targeted schools, hospitals, and UN shelters at multiple occasions. Continuous attacks on humanitarian facilities have made them completely dysfunctional. These attacks are in violation of IHL's principle of distinction.

iii) Lack of Accountability and Challenges  
The inability to enforce IHL



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effectively due to lack of enforcement mechanisms exacerbates the crisis. The International Criminal Court (ICC) has faced severe political obstacles in prosecuting potential war crimes. Moreover, disagreements over the legitimacy of actions taken by both parties due to polarized narratives has hindered consensus on accountability.

### 3. Measures for Pacific Settlement of The Gaza Crisis Based on the Functionalist Perspective

#### i) Functionalist Perspective in IR

Functionalism focuses on cooperation in non-political areas such as trade, health, and education. Non-political cooperation is emphasised upon to build trust and interdependence between conflicting parties. The goal is to utilize this collaboration as a road to achieve political cooperation over time.

#### ii) Functionalist Measures for Gaza Crisis



## a) Confidence-Building Measures (CBMs)

Joint mechanisms should be established to monitor ceasefire. A neutral third-party observer from organisations like the UN or the European Union should be made part of the mechanism. These steps build trust among conflicting parties, provide room for negotiation, and allow peace to be achieved over time.

## b) Humanitarian Cooperation

Promoting collaboration in humanitarian aid delivery would ensure both parties respect the safe passage of relief supplies and IHL principles. UN-mediated programs should be launched that rebuild the infrastructure while ensuring aid reaches affected civilians without political interference and undue pressure tactics.

## c) Economic Cooperation

Economic interdependence between



Israel and Gaza should be encouraged. Trade routes should be reopened and industrial zones should be created to share mutual economic benefits. The rebuilding of Gaza Industrial Estate should be focused upon with international cooperation to promote employment opportunities and economic stability in Gaza.

#### d) Education and Cultural Exchanges

Programs which connect youth from Israel and Gaza should be launched. Interaction would allow understanding to develop which would reduce hostility and clear misconceptions. People-to-people initiatives supported by UNESCO should be utilized to create mutual understanding.

### 2.3 Institutional Solution Efforts

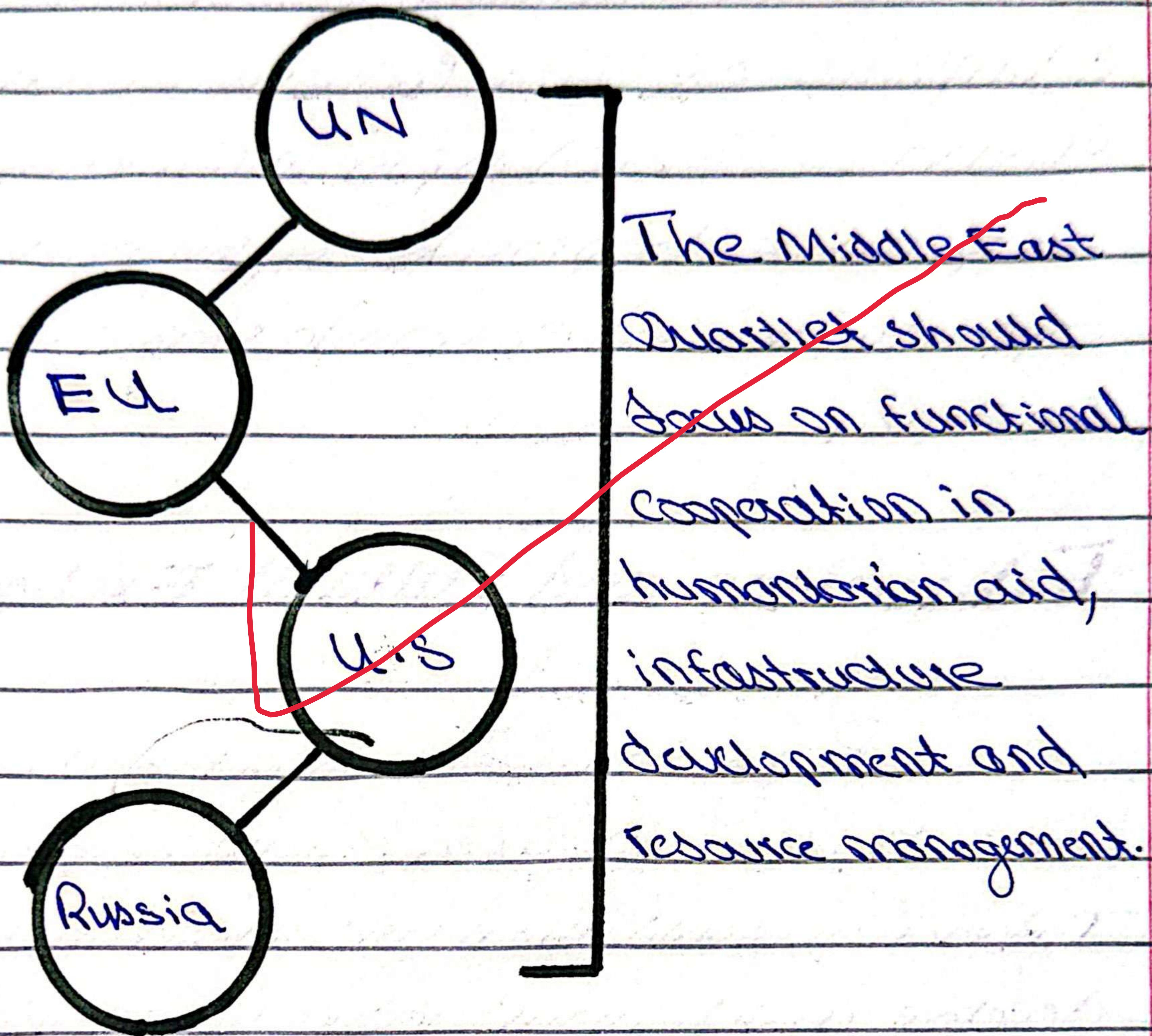
#### i) Strengthening UNRWA

Funding for United Nations Relief and Works Commission along with operational capacity should be enhanced. This would allow the agency to address



immediate humanitarian needs in Gaza.

## ii) Revive The Quartet



## 3. Conclusion

The relevance of IHL in the Gaza crisis lies in its ability to reduce the human cost, while holding those who have violated IHL, accountable. As per the functionalist approach, measures such as humanitarian cooperation, economic interdependence and educational exchanges offer pathways to de-escalation and pacific settlements. Their potential to build trust and promote stability should be realised in the Gaza crisis.



Q3. The protectionist model of the international political economy is about to resurface in global politics. Explain the concept and principles of protectionism and comment on the statement based on prospective war scenarios.

Answer

### 1. Introduction

The resurgence of protectionism in global politics is reshaping the international political economy. Recent trade wars, especially between U.S and China and unilateral economic policies are becoming prominent. Protectionism, commonly promoted by nationalists, is a policy measure to shield domestic industries from foreign competition. The measures undertaken under this approach include tariffs, quotas, and other restrictive measures.

### 2. Concept and Principles of Protectionism



Protectionism is an economic policy aimed at safeguarding a country's domestic industries by restricting or discouraging imports and promoting local production. It contrasts with liberal principle of free trade which advocates for minimal government intervention in trade.

## 2.1 Principles of Protectionism

- Tariffs: imposing taxes on imported goods
- Quotas: limiting quantity of <sup>imported</sup> goods
- Subsidies: Providing financial support to domestic industry to enhance their competitiveness.
- Regulatory Barriers: Using standards of multiple domains to restrict or discourage imports.
- Currency Manipulation: Devaluing national currency to make exports cheaper and imports more expensive.

## 2.2 Historical Utilisation of Protectionism

In the 16-18th centuries, mercantilist policies were adapted to promote exports



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to accumulate wealth. Protectionist policies reemerged in the 1930s after Great Depression. However, post-WW2, liberalisation has dominated. The establishment of GATT (later WTO) promoted free trade, reducing protectionist policies.

### 3. Protectionism in the Modern Global Economy

#### i) Resurgence of Protectionism

Protectionism has gained prominence again in recent years due to multiple reasons:

Economic Nationalism promoted by leaders like Donald Trump and Narendra Modi to prioritise domestic industries. Common slogans to reflect the idea include: "America First" and "Make in India".

Globalisation backlash due to job losses, growing inequality, and weakened economic growth due to globalisation.

Covid-19 Pandemic caused disruptions to global supply chains, highlighting need for self-reliance.



## ii) Trade Wars as a Manifestation of Protectionism

Trade wars include tariffs and other trade barriers between countries, often increasing economic tensions. The U.S.-China trade war between led to \$350bn worth tariffs imposed on Chinese goods. In return, China also imposed tariffs on products from the U.S. The dispute between U.S and China has negatively impacted global trade and supply chains. U.S aims to achieve economic self reliance, protection of domestic jobs, and national security through the trade war with China.

## 4. Prospective Trade War Scenarios

### i) U.S.-China Rivalry

The U.S.-China trade war illustrates modern protectionism. Both nations have been imposing tariffs and are engaging in technological decoupling. U.S has been adopting a realist approach as it has looked towards protectionism to safeguard national interests and to ensure its own



Survival. The U.S. restricting Chinese access to 5G technologies and advanced semiconductors indicates U.S. intentions of protecting its technology sector to maintain strategic dominance over China. Moreover, both countries are relocating industries to reduce economic dependency on each other, again reflecting a realist approach. The U.S.-China strategy also portrays shift of U.S. liberal policy of utilizing international institutions to reduce conflict.

## ii) EU's Strategic Autonomy

European Union's shift in policies to reduce dependencies on external powers in the technology and defense sector reflect a gradual move towards protectionism. At present, EU is focused on being more self-sufficient and while its current policies are not explicitly protectionist, the shift is likely to impact trade relations with global partners.

## iii) Increasing India-China Economic Competition

In recent years, India has managed



to achieve significant economic prominence. Following border tensions with China, India imposed restrictions on Chinese investments and goods, reflecting a protectionist tilt. Moreover, India has become more aligned with the U.S. in the past few years and it is likely that India would utilize protectionist policies to strengthen its domestic industries and potentially weaken Chinese economy which is heavily reliant on exports.

Kindly make use of IR jargons and use multiple scholars name to create a difference between IR and current affairs paper

## 5. Conclusion

The resurgence of protectionism reflects the evolving dynamics of the international political economy, where states have started to prioritise realist principles like sovereignty over globalisation. The emerging trade wars may safeguard domestic industries and protect national security as U.S. portrays it, but it would result in higher consumer prices and slower economic growth. The likelihood of heightened tensions between U.S.-China and more severe regional competition is high. As global politics shift, the balance between realist tool of protectionism versus liberal principle of free trade would define future of the international system.



Q4. 'Supra-national actors' seem to be playing a decisive role in global politics and IR. Comment on the statement while clearly explaining the concept and types of the term.

Answer

## 1. Introduction

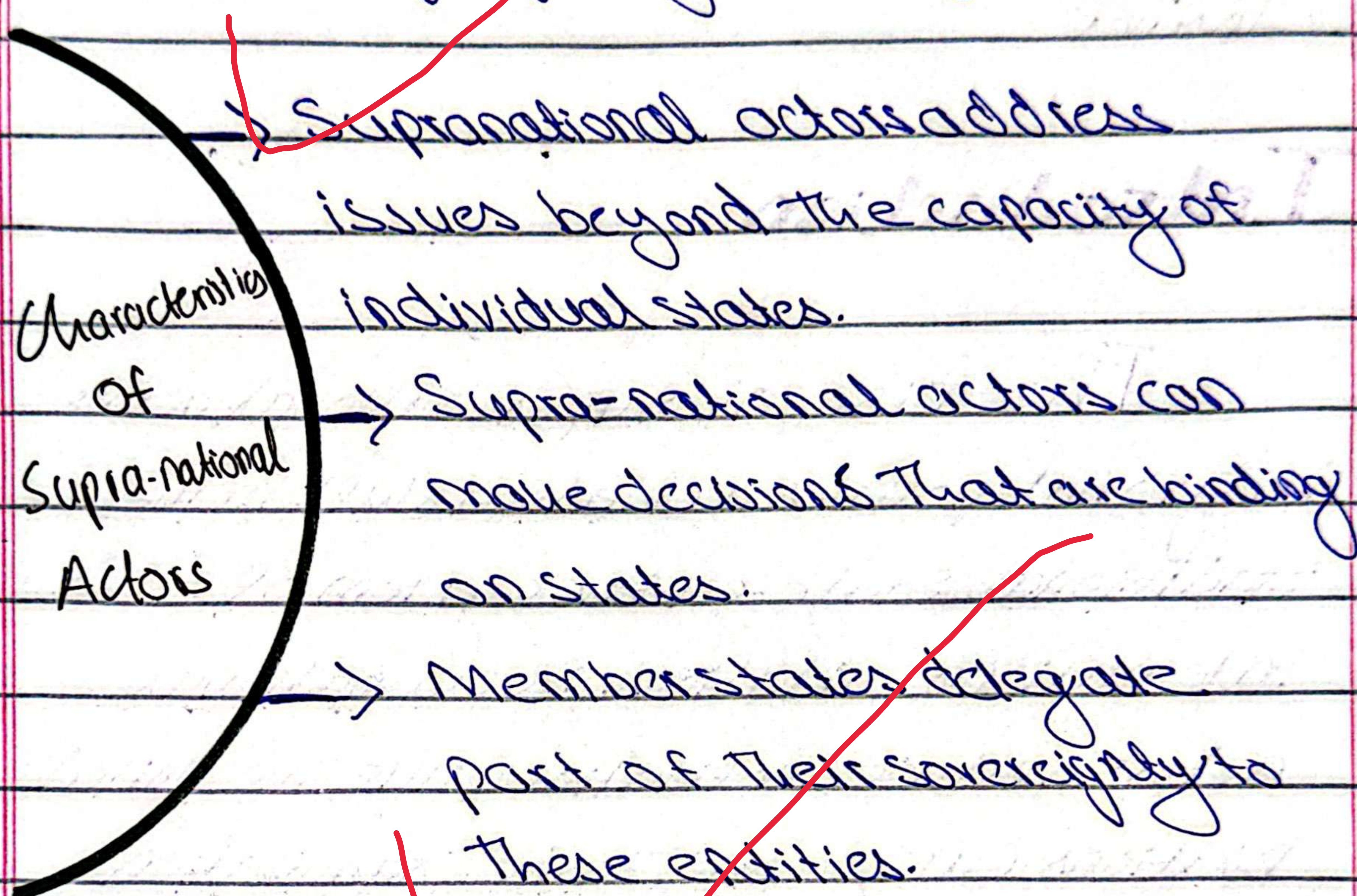
The rise of supra-national actors in global politics reflects a shift in the traditional state-centric system of international relations. Supra-national actors include institutions like the United Nations (UN), World Trade Organisation (WTO), and European Union (EU). These actors go beyond national boundaries and influence global decision-making and international order. The growing role of these actors challenges the dominance of sovereign states and has increased the complexities of modern governance in a globalised world.

## 2. Concept of Supra-National Actors

Supra-national actors are institutions



that operate above the national level. These actors exercise authority and influence over individual states. Moreover, supra-national actors often have binding decision-making power over member states, highlighting its significance.



Liberalism explains the rise of supra-national actors through growing need for cooperation and interdependence in a complex global system.

### 3. Types of Supra-National Actors

#### i) Global Organisations

Global institutions focus on international governance and multilateral



Cooperation.

UN

Addresses Peace and security

WTO

Overses global trade rules

From a constructivist lens, global organisations shape norms and identities, such as human rights.

ii) Regional Organisations

Regional institutions integrate political, economic, and social frameworks within a specific geographical area.

EU

Supra-national body with its own parliament and monetary policy

AEC

Promotes economic integration in Southeast Asia

Neoliberal institutionalism emphasises how regional organisations counter anarchy



by promoting interdependence and cooperation.

### iii) Judicial Bodies

Supra-national courts provide legal oversight on issues that go beyond national jurisdiction.

ICJ

Resolves disputes between states.

ICC

Prosecutes individuals for war crimes.

## 4. The Decisive Role of Supra-national Actors in Global Politics

### i) Addressing Global Challenges

Supra-national actors play a key role in tackling issues like climate change, pandemics, and terrorism. For example, the Paris Climate Agreement (2015), facilitated by UN Framework <sup>convention</sup> on Climate Change (UNFCCC), binds states on reducing emissions as per set targets. Liberalism views cooperation as essential for collective



Problem-solving through these institutions.

## ii) Facilitating Global Trade

Institutions like the WTO and IMF ensure a stable global economic order. For example, WTO has a dispute resolution mechanism which addresses trade conflicts, such as U.S.-China trade war. Neorealism views the role of these actors as important in managing economic cooperation but with the belief that they operate within state interests.

## iii) Promoting Peace and Security

Supra-national actors play an important role in mediating conflicts, enforcing peace, and deploying peacekeeping forces. The UN's role in conflict resolution has been massive since its inception. Realists argue that UN has limited enforcement powers and thus is not important. However, liberal view which highlights UN's role in reducing conflicts such as Pakistan-India potential conflicts since 1999, has been significant.



#### iv) Setting Norms and Standards

Supra-national actors have played a major role in establishing global norms, influencing state behaviour and public opinion. For example, WHO played a crucial role during the Covid-19 pandemic, emphasizing global health coordination and debunking misinformation. Constructivists support the idea that supra-national organisations have played a role in shaping global norms.

#### v) Enhancing Regional Integration

Regional supra-national actors like ASEAN have strengthened economic, social, and political integration of specific regions. For example, the European Union has a single integrated market and a common currency. Through the integration, regional stability is promoted and economic prosperity is achieved. Functionalism explains how technical cooperation in areas like trade and energy allow deeper political integration over time.



## 5. Conclusion

Improve the understanding of the concept

Supra-national actors play a decisive role in global politics by addressing transnational challenges, promoting cooperation, and setting global norms. While realists argue that the rise of supra-national organizations has led to serious sovereignty concerns and power imbalances, it is to be argued that power is no longer a zero-sum game. The liberal thought promotes these supra-national actors and they represent the current reality and future of the evolving international order.

General Instructions for attaining good marks in International Relations

Add IR theories and approaches as much as you can

use IR jargons to differentiate it from Current affairs paper

try reflecting IR concepts or words in your heading

no need to apply all theories in one question but one or two that may justify your arguments

Justify your arguments with at least 8-9 headings

Add current developments as an examples to support arguments

add IR philosophers e.g. Morgenthau, Mearcheimer etc and their philosophies

add graphs charts and critical analysis for bonus marks

each question has 2 or 3 parts, give equal weightage to all parts