ASSIGNMENT

**IRD 416: Logic of World Order.**

***Topic:* What is the position of the developing countries in the present World Order?**

**OBAYEMI, David – 16/SMS09/057**

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Department of International Relations and Diplomacy

College of Social and Management Sciences

*Submitted to:*

**Dr. OSONDU-OTI, Adaora**

Lecturer-in-Charge

**BACKGROUND INTRODUCTION**

The concept “world order” is a new concept in the realm of international relations. The concept of world order is a politico-philosophical concept, related to the nature and objectives of human life, which is observed and analyzed in the context of international relations. As a segment of international relations, world order deals with “the maintenance of peace in the world and to the establishment of a condition in which wars do not pose a threat to the survival of civilization and mankind.” It is a particular structure that manages the world’s stability, informed by a number of legal, political and socio-economic factors (Wiktionary, 2020). Hedley Bull gives a more scholarly definition of the concept, defining world order as “patterns or dispositions of human activity that sustain the elementary or primary goals of social life among mankind as a whole.”

In addition, world order is an analysis of inalienable and indispensable aspects of human life in the global context, as it is a product of ideas and ideologies pertaining to different aspects of life- politics, economic, commerce, ecology and culture. Moreover, it can be defined as the totality of norms, procedures and institutional entities shaping and patterning international society at any point of time. Put simply, it has a goal, a structural arrangement and a belief system all of which are linked with views on human nature, and refers to the “world of our making.” Scientific and technological development and increased sphere of human interaction has widened the scope of world order and more inclusive and comprehensive than the sphere of international order. The basic unit of study under international order is nation states whereas world order focuses on the ideas and ideologies governing human life. International order focuses on study of activities, distribution of power, structures, functioning and nature of international political system, from political and military perspective, whereas world order focuses on political as well as economic, social, cultural and other aspects of human activities. Also, the geographical units of study under international order is basically activities of two nations, sub-regional, regional and continental level, but world order examines not only sub regional, regional and continental level, but multi-continental and global perspective also.

Furthermore, a multi-dimensional definition of world order on the basis of the study of international relations and world affairs focuses on the manner in which mankind can significantly reduce the likelihood of international violence and create minimally acceptable conditions of worldwide economic well-being, social justice, ecological stability, and participation in decision-making processes. Hence the concept of world order not only deals with the issues of international relations, but also focuses on the problems between man and man, and between man and nature. Also, concentrating on the problems of human society, it seeks the solution of problems of war and violence, unequal distribution and concentration of economic wealth, social injustice, environmental imbalance and alienation of human being from themselves, society and mankind. Therefore world order can be considered as a system of geo-polity based socio-historical entities, identifiable as international or world actors and their inter-relationships in the complex social and natural environment of world.

Throughout human history however, it is important to note that, world order has rarely been built upon peace and justice. History provides abundant examples of strong-arm order imposed on sprawling empires evident in the reign of empires such as Roman empires, Egyptian Empires, Ottoman Empires and even the British Empire etc. and only a few examples exist of non-violent order through global understanding and peaceful cooperation such as the Post-Cold War Order also known as the present world order or globalized order. This is because the end of the Cold War, made possible by the progressive and enlightened leadership of Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev, many positive developments were recorded of which the United Nations played a central part in that positive change, showing the awe-inspiring progress in a decade that can come about through concerted international effort. Nevertheless, in all of that positive change and development, developing countries within this present order have been relegated to the background. This is because in the formulation and development of the institutions and establishments sustaining the present world order such as the United Nations (UN), the World Trade Organization (WTO) and other institutions of international financial management (e.g. the World Bank), many countries in the developing world, (better known as Third World Countries) were still under subjugation and since then have been disadvantaged when it came to determining their fate on the global stage ever since. Thus, it is against this backdrop that this paper seeks to interrogate the position of the developing countries in the present World Order.

**THE HISTORY AND DEVELOPMENT OF WORLD ORDER**

World order as a system of relations and ideas about the foundations that should underpin the relations between states and generally in the world, started to form in the 16th century when diplomatic relations were established alongside the system of ‘great powers’ in Europe. Also, the prototype of legal principles of international relation system emerged as a result of the 1648 Peace of Westphalia which finished the devastating Thirty Years war in Central Europe. The Thirty Years war was the legacy of the sixteenth-century European tradition of religious wars. But at the same time, it introduced two new foreign policy principles, which later would be actively employed by the politicians, namely the maintenance of the international ‘balance of power’ through supporting the weaker coalition against the stronger one, and the priority of national interests over other ones (such as religious or ideological). For example, France under Cardinal Richelieu, formulated and actively implemented both these approaches (Kissinger, 1994). As a result, although being a catholic state, France supported the weaker coalition of the Protestant states in their war against Habsburg Empire that strove for the world supremacy. At that time it was the diminished Habsburgs and disunited Germany which Richelieu (and later Louis XIV) considered as France's major national objective which would allow control over tiny German principalities. Given the fact that Richelieu was a Catholic cardinal, it was a bold step which had made foreign policy even more cynical than before. Since that time one observes a trend when the foreign policy started to develop according to certain stratagems and principles.

Furthermore deliberate foreign policy of some states such as France, and later Britain, aimed at creating a number of military-political alliances which enabled them to maintain and control the balance of power in their favor. However, the balance between powers changed often due to a number of factors, including internal rebellions, fall of dynasties, different population growth rates, territory, wealth, industry, and commerce among others. Also, the balance of power could be significantly although irregularly disrupted by a changing ideological paradigm since ideology significantly changed the perception of legitimacy of government and its actions, it also inevitably led to the exacerbation of international relations and wars between ideological enemies. The results of such violations manifested in the Reformation of the 16th and 17th centuries, religious wars and later in the division of Europe into the Protestants and Catholics.

In addition, the French Revolution in the late 18th century caused a new ideological crisis which undermined the sanctity of monarchy and aristocracy. This was followed by a quarter-of-a-century-long chain of endless wars, coalitions, the triumph and fall of Napoleon's Empire and subsequently, the restoration of monarchies. Another new ideological turn began after the First World War as a result of the deep crisis of the world order, and after the Second World War the ideological gap between socialism and capitalism became a determining factor for the new world order. First, there were only two strong powers, the United States of America (USA) and the Soviet Union (USSR), in other words, the world became bipolar with two military blocks (NATO and the Warsaw Treaty Organization). The military core of this balance was nuclear equations and deterrence strategy. Subsequently, with the collapse of the socialist bloc and the Soviet Union in 1989/1990, the previous bipolar world was destroyed leading to the establishment of a unipolar world led by the United States of America. Obviously, the ideas about the new world order that began to develop right in the late 1980s and early 1990s, often reflected the belief in the absolute domination of the Western economies, institutions and ideas.

**POSITION OF DEVELOPING COUNTRIES IN THE PRESENT WORLD ORDER**

Despite the present state of unipolarity in the present world order with the United States of America having global preponderance, it is important to note that the world balance has shifted once again. This shift was caused by countries' uneven economic and technological development. Moreover, over the last three or four decades, globalization has been constantly and significantly affecting the changes in the world order. Consequently, all these eventually resulted in the shift of the balance of economic power towards the developing world. One of the main reasons was the so-called ‘deindustrialization’ which meant a transition of a significant part of production, economy and technology from developed to developing countries. The result has been the Western countries' weakening economic growth and their diminishing role in the global arena, while the rest of the world especially developing countries increases the influence. Thus, during the two decades starting from 1991, at the background of weakening Europe and continuing stagnation in Japan it could be observed the rise of economic giants in Asia like China and India, as well as the emergence of a number of rapidly developing states from Mexico to Malaysia and Ethiopia, which preserve their growth rates, although with some difficulties and some of whom are likely to take the leading positions in the world in the quite nearest future.

Nevertheless, another group belong to the class of developing countries who despite their legal status as sovereign entities in the international socio-economic and political order, these newly emerging independent countries, born since the period immediately after the Second World War suddenly found themselves integrated into an international system they had no voice in shaping but whose organization and operation they view as a barrier to overcoming the overwhelming political, economic and social problems that beset them at home. The international system seems structured to prevent their rise above the underdog status. This dilemma represents the source of the North-South dichotomy and conflict, a struggle by states of the South who are at the bottom of the international hierarchy to improve their position in the International pecking order against a resisting North who has shaped the Order in favor of their politics and economies.

As products of colonial domination and exploitation, developing countries in Africa did not need any lessons to gain awareness of the constraints which the structure of domination imposed on the development capacity of newly free countries. They know what it means to exist in an international order where they literally have no status and therefore can exert no influence on the international economic system. Consequently, African States along with newly independent states in Asia vigorously campaign for a new and just economic order. Within the context of the African Union, one of the most important intercontinental integration organizations, African States remain vociferous and unrelenting in expressing common positions on issues vis-à-vis the industrialized countries that would modify their extant colonial economic practice that undermined their economic performance. However, while Africa’s participation in the area is active, the approach of advocacy and appeal is problematic because it cedes the power to change economic order to its chief beneficiaries. A typical illustration of this, historically speaking, was the so-called Washington Consensus or IMF “prescriptions” which turned out to be perhaps the greatest factor that undermined Africa’s takeoff in the early 1980s. In the Nigerian case, for example, the harshly iniquitous IMF conditionalities undermined industrialization projects, unrealistically devalued the national currency and halted growth. By the time the flaws and contradictions of the imposition became manifest in much of Africa, considerable damage had been done to their economies, setting back their growth and development by decades.

However, it is not all doom and gloom. In fact, looking ahead, a major enabling factor further brightening the prospects for Africa is the integrating and uniting role that is increasingly being played by the African Union and the sub-regional economic organizations, such as ECOWAS, IGAD, SADC etc. These institutions, aside from vigorously articulating common positions on global economic issues, are becoming more and more focused and united in defending political stability and resolving internal conflicts. There are ongoing efforts by IGAD (Intergovernmental Authority for Development) countries to resolve the conflict in South Sudan as well as the recent establishment of a Multinational Joint Task Force to tackle the Boko Haram terrorist challenge in northeastern Nigeria by the Governments of Nigeria, Niger, Cameroon, Chad and Benin. These efforts reflect a collective response to conflict resolution which bodes well not only for the countries concerned, but for the continent as a whole.

In conclusion, although the developing countries of Africa and Asia have a marginalized position in the present world order, if Africa’s new socioeconomic strides are accompanied by serious ideological reprogramming into the pathway of self-reliance and self-respect, African states and people will then be able to play even more robust and respectable roles in global affairs. They have to work nationally and continentally to accomplish this reachable status and move from being observers to autonomous shapers of global affairs. Although this would require a kind of leadership supported by a people that refuse to be second best and that stands up for Africa’s shared interests. Furthermore, Asia, the more realistic advocates of the new and just world economic order have embarked on radical economic self-transformation which has seen many of them, especially such countries as China, Indonesia, Malaysia, Singapore, India and Pakistan, move from poverty to relative prosperity, growth and development within a relatively short period of time. For these Asian States also, given the fact that the participation, effectiveness and success of every country or region in global affairs are partly a function of its economic power and capacity and military power, these new realities would in no distant time, confer a new status of dignity, power and influence in Asian and global affairs.

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