

VICTORIA JUNIOR COLLEGE

Preliminary Examinations

HISTORY 8814/01 & 9731/01

Date: 15 September 2014

Duration: 3 hours

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READ THESE INSTRUCTIONS FIRST

Write your name, index number and class on all the work you hand in.

Write in dark blue or black pen on both sides of the paper, but start your answer for each question on a fresh piece of paper.

You may use a soft pencil for any diagrams, graphs or rough working.

Do not use staples, paper clips, highlighters, glue and/or correction fluid.

Answer FOUR questions in total. One from Section A and three from Section B.

At the end of the examination, fasten and submit the answer scripts for Section A and Section B separately. Attach the cover page to the front of Section B.

All questions in this paper carry equal marks.

You are advised to spend no more than 45 minutes answering each question.

You are reminded of the need for good English and legible handwriting in your answers.

Section A: The Political Effectiveness of the United Nations, 1945-2000

You must answer Question 1.

THE UNITED NATIONS AND BIG POWER INTERESTS

1 Read the sources and then answer the question.

When answering **Question 1** candidates are advised to pay particular attention to the interpretation and evaluation of the sources both individually and as a group.

Source A

As chairman of the Security Council, I have been sent a letter by the Cuban delegate to the UN ... demanding an urgent convocation of the Council to discuss the USA's aggressive actions and its blockade of Cuba as acts of war.

During the examination of the issue in the Council, we will declare our objections to the misleading American formulation of it... we will point out that the USA's aggressions against Cuba cannot be evaluated as anything other than a provocation pushing the world to the verge of nuclear war. We will demand a condemnation of the USA aggressions, the immediate cessation of the blockade they have declared and all infractions of maritime freedom; and an immediate end to all forms of intervention in the domestic affairs of the Republic of Cuba.

... In coordination with the Cuban delegation, we will introduce a draft resolution that includes the above-mentioned points.

We will of course vote against the American draft resolution.

Telegram from the Soviet representative at the UN Security Council, Valerian Zorin, to the USSR's Foreign Ministry, 23 October 1962.

Source B

The veto powers of the Big Five constitute the very essence of the United Nations. The international organisation is not democratic. Its members do not have equal rights. The five countries which reaped the fruits of victory in World War II were accorded special privileges. Indeed, the structure of the international organisation charged with maintaining world order was based on the premise that what is considered legal is only what is acceptable to these five privileged members concomitantly... Nowhere are the workings of the system more graphically illustrated than in the Arab-Israeli conflict, where we have seen countless resolutions passed by the General Assembly condemning this or that aspect of Israeli policy only to be nullified by a US veto.

The veto system was established initially to protect the interests of the founding members of the United Nations... For peace and security to be upheld and bipolarity sustained, no resolution unacceptable to any of the Big Five could be allowed to pass. Granted, this was a small price to pay for peaceful coexistence. But there is no logic in continuing to apply this type of veto system after the collapse of the bipolar world order.

Opinion piece from the Cairo Al-Ahram, a widely circulating Egyptian newspaper published in July 1999.

Source C

It is only through multilateral institutions that states can hold each other to account. And that makes it very important to organise those institutions in a fair and democratic way, giving the poor and the weak some influence over the actions of the rich and the strong. ... [That] applies to the UN Security Council, whose membership still reflects the reality of 1945, not of today's world. That is why I have continued to press for Security Council reform. ... The Security Council is not just another stage on which to act out national interests. It is the management committee, if you will, of our fledgling collective security system.

As President Truman said, 'The responsibility of the great states is to serve and not dominate the peoples of the world.' He showed what can be achieved when the US assumes that responsibility. And still today, none of our global institutions can accomplish much when the US remains aloof. But when it is fully engaged, the sky is the limit.

Kofi Annan, in his final speech as UN Secretary General, in Missouri, USA, 2006.

Source D

The *realpolitik* of big power rivalry cannot be wished away for that indeed has been the human condition for most of history. But we can confine that rivalry and, by a combination of pressures, prevent any power from pushing its claim excessively. In this, international institutions like the UN play a civilising role. International institutions cannot stop big power rivalry but can channel it, and ensure that the common interests of the human family are not completely disregarded. For this reason, the smaller countries have a strong vested interest in seeing international institutions strengthened. The reform of the UN taking into account the changes in the world since the end of the Second World War is an absolute necessity.

Speech by Singapore's Minister of Foreign Affairs at the United Nations General Assembly, September 2008.

Source E

In the UN's first decade and a half the General Assembly may not have enjoyed avid media attention but comment on it was benign. Those, of course, were the years when there was so comfortable an American-led majority that a young Burmese delegate named U Thant observed that 'it was like a one-party system'. But when the 'new majority' arrived, the General Assembly became a 'useless talking shop', and has been so dismissed in orthodox Western comment ever since.

I could expend my entire time discussing the merits – and the real problems – of the General Assembly; but to illustrate with one example, this 'useless talking shop' has adopted some 70 detailed instruments of Human Rights – an achievement that would be regarded as truly extraordinary if it had been made by one legislature in one relatively homogeneous country. And over two-thirds of these Conventions, Covenants, Protocols, and Declarations on Human Rights have been adopted under the 'irresponsible' Third World majority.

Erskine Childers, former UN civil servant, at a symposium to commemorate the United Nation's 50th anniversary, 1994.

Now answer the following question.

How far do Sources A-E support the view that big power interests have prevented the United Nations from achieving its goals?

Section B

You must answer **three** questions from this section.

- 2** To what extent did the USSR's obsession with security cause the outbreak of the Cold War in Europe?
- 3** 'The end of the Cold War was a triumph of Reagan's policies.' How far do you agree with this view?
- 4** Assess the view that the USA's provision of aid was most important for the growth of the international economy in the period 1945 to 1971.
- 5** How far do you agree that rural reforms laid the foundation for China's economic miracle in the post-Mao era?
- 6** 'The rise of religious fundamentalism was the primary reason for the failure to resolve the conflict over Kashmir.' Discuss.