

Markscheme

May 2025

Global Politics

Higher level and standard level

Paper 2

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The paper is marked using the generic markbands on the following page, and the paper specific markscheme that follows. The markscheme for this paper is the same for HL and SL.

Markbands for paper two

Marks	Level descriptor
0	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The work does not reach a standard described by the descriptors below.
1–5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The response reveals limited understanding of the demands of the question. • The response is poorly structured, or where there is a recognizable essay structure there is minimal focus on the task. • There is little relevant knowledge, and examples are either lacking or not relevant. • The response is mostly descriptive.
6–10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The response indicates some understanding of the demands of the question. • There is some evidence of an attempt to structure the response. • Some relevant knowledge is present, and some examples are mentioned but they are not developed or their relevance to arguments is not clear. • The response demonstrates limited understanding of the key concepts of the course. • There is limited justification of main points. • Counterclaims, or different views on the question are not considered.
11–15	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The demands of the question are understood and mostly addressed but the implications are not considered. • There is a clear attempt to structure the response. • The response is mostly based on relevant and accurate knowledge of global politics, and relevant examples are given and support arguments. • The response demonstrates some understanding of the key concepts of the course. • Many of the main points are justified and arguments are largely coherent. • Some counterclaims, or different views on the question are considered.
16–20	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The demands of the questions are understood and addressed, and most implications are considered. • The response is well-structured. • The response demonstrates relevant and accurate knowledge and understanding of global politics, and relevant examples are used in a way that strengthens arguments. • The response demonstrates a good grasp of the key concepts of the course. • All or nearly all of the main points are justified and arguments are coherent. • Counterclaims, or different views on the question are explored.
21–25	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A very well structured and balanced response that addresses the demands and implications of the question. • Comprehensive knowledge and in-depth understanding of global politics is applied in the response consistently and effectively, with examples integrated. • The response demonstrates a very good grasp of the key concepts of the course. • All of the main points are justified. Arguments are clear, coherent and compelling. • Counterclaims, or different views on the question are explored and evaluated.

The content listed indicates possible areas candidates might cover in their answers. They are **not** compulsory points. They are only a framework to help examiners in their assessment. Candidates may take a different approach, which if appropriate, should be rewarded. Examiners should not expect all of the points listed and should allow other valid points.

An understanding of, and an ability to work with, the key concepts of the course are particularly important in this paper. Whether or not the key concepts are explicitly mentioned in a question, students are expected to draw on their conceptual understanding of global politics and are invited to draw on any political concepts that are relevant to the arguments they put forward.

Power, sovereignty and international relations

1. Evaluate the view that non-state actors pose the biggest challenge to state sovereignty.

Responses should include a definition of non-state actors as organizations or individuals that are not states or not working in the interest of a state, but still play a significant role in international affairs. Responses should also include an understanding of the concept of state sovereignty as the state's autonomy, control of territory and ability to govern itself. It may be argued that non-state actors can challenge or support state sovereignty depending on the willingness of states to cooperate with or resist their influence in politics. Non-state actors may include non-governmental organizations, multinational corporations, trade unions, and influential individuals. Some intergovernmental organizations may also be relevant as growing interdependence challenges state sovereignty. Responses may also focus on the word 'biggest' in the question.

Arguments in favour of the claim that non-state actors pose the biggest challenge to state sovereignty may include:

- Multinational corporations can be very powerful and may push states to make policy decisions based on their interests, thus impacting state sovereignty. For example, they may use their lobbying power to press for reductions in corporate taxes or environmental regulations. States may come to depend on the employment and tax revenues offered by multinational corporations, so the threat of relocation of operations may cause states to feel compelled to offer incentives to stay, further undermining state sovereignty. For example, Apple used its relationship with Ireland to shift resources and avoid a huge US tax bill in 2011.
- Trade unions can challenge state sovereignty through labour strikes and protests to advocate for better working conditions and wages, challenging the state's ability to maintain order and stability. They can also lobby and campaign to influence labour rights, form alliances to advocate for international labour standards and pursue legal action against governments to challenge labour laws seen as unfair or discriminatory. For example, in 2022 the trade union Unite supported bus drivers in Merseyside in England in a 29-day strike which reversed real terms pay cut, with crucial support from local communities which donated money, food and drink to support the drivers.
- NGOs can challenge state sovereignty as they hold states to account if they fall short of expected standards. For example, Amnesty International and Human Rights Watch have established a worldwide reputation for mobilizing support for victims of human rights violations and criticizing states for their actions. Other examples are Greenpeace, which stages high-profile protests against governments and corporations to raise awareness of environmental issues such as deforestation, climate change and pollution.
- Terrorist organizations can challenge state sovereignty in various ways, such as taking over administrative control of a geographical area of the state, as has been seen with ISIS in Syria. As well, terrorist groups do not respect state boundaries and can cross borders to conduct acts of violence, as seen in Kenya in 2013, where gunmen from the Somali terrorist organization Al Shebab attacked the Westgate Mall.

- Criminal organizations and networks offer a growing threat to state sovereignty through cyberattacks on government infrastructure such as power grids, government websites, or state healthcare provision. These attacks may originate in criminal gangs, hackers or rival state agencies. For example, in November 2023, Denmark’s power grid was accessed by Russian hackers who attacked 22 Danish power companies.

Arguments against of the claim that non-state actors pose the biggest challenge to state sovereignty may include:

- Factors other than non-state actors have challenged state sovereignty and can be considered a bigger threat. For example, globalization has improved communication, co-ordination and mobility of people and ideas. While it offers opportunities for growth and development, it also erodes borders and exposes states to external shocks beyond their control, such as the 2008 financial crisis.
- A potentially bigger threat to state sovereignty than non-state actors is interdependence. Many countries have joined trade blocs, sacrificing economic sovereignty for the greater benefits of integration. The strongest example is the European Union, in which countries have chosen to sacrifice fiscal and trade autonomy to a considerable extent.
- Some non-state actors have declined in power and influence over the years. Trade union power has been eroded by labour market deregulation, changing employment patterns (temporary and ‘gig’ economy jobs) and technological changes that allow employers to control workers more closely. In the OECD countries the ratio of union members to the total workforce fell from 36.5% in 1980 to 15.8% in 2019.
- Global public health emergencies such as pandemics ignore national borders and require a coordinated international response. While nations retain control of their healthcare systems, co-operation with other states and international organizations (such as the WHO and the pharmaceutical companies during Covid-19), limits state sovereignty.
- Environmental challenges such as climate change and pollution also ignore national boundaries, leaving countries to address issues originating outside their borders. Co-ordinated efforts at international level will be required to deal with increasing temperatures and sea level rise, potentially limiting state sovereignty over environmental policies and resource exploitation.

Responses should contain references to specific contemporary real-world examples. It may be argued that non-state actors are often more intent on supporting specific interests than challenging state sovereignty, for example, multinational corporations are more motivated by profit and shareholder rewards, trade unions in supporting their members and the interests of labour and NGOs their specific missions. An NGO which indirectly challenges state sovereignty is Médecins Sans Frontières, a medical humanitarian organization whose main intention is to help in disaster and conflict zones often in areas where governments are unwilling or hostile to co-operation. A possible conclusion is that non-state actors do not pose the biggest challenge to state sovereignty because they frequently cooperate with states and contribute significantly to state policy agendas and global governance. Or it may be argued that the line between state and non-state actors is blurred by hybrid actors or actions such as state sponsored cyber-attacks or private military contractors such as the Wagner Group in Ukraine. Students might

note that some intergovernmental organizations act more like NSAs. For example, the International Criminal Court operates independently of state authority and prosecutes individuals for war crimes, genocide and crimes against humanity, its jurisdiction sometimes conflicting with state sovereignty. Some states reject its authority. These and any other valid approaches or examples should be evaluated positively.

Responses should include a conclusion on the degree to which the student agrees with the claim that non-state actors pose the biggest challenge to state sovereignty.

2. Examine the claim that the United Nations (UN) has been ineffective in sustaining peace.

Responses are likely to include a discussion about the United Nations and are likely to include a brief description of role and functions of an international organization. They may define an international organization as an institution in which members are together by a formal agreement and which carry out activities in many states. They may then discuss the primary function and impact of the UN and its different organs such as the Security Council and General Assembly and highlight its main function as the preservation of peace. Candidates are also likely to include an understanding of peace and its types. They may define negative peace as the absence of active conflict and positive peace as a more lasting peace that is “built on sustainable investments in economic development and institutions as well as societal attitudes that foster peace.” This can be used to “gauge the resilience of a society, or its ability to absorb shocks without falling or relapsing into conflict.” They may determine the ineffectiveness of the UN based on factors such as many ongoing conflicts that continue to impact a vast population or the inability of the UN to take punitive and decisive action on conflicts due to structural constraints. Candidates could then proceed to argue to what extent they agree with the claim that the UN has been ineffective in maintaining international peace.

Arguments in favour of the claim that the UN has been ineffective in sustaining peace may include:

- There is an unequal distribution of power within the UN Security Council and more powerful states especially those possessing veto power of the permanent members have an unfair advantage in agenda setting and impact effectiveness by not permitting actions that may need to be taken for maintaining peace and security. For instance, in 2022 Russia and China vetoed a US-drafted United Nations Security Council resolution to strengthen sanctions on North Korea. The US claims this will fuel North Korea’s nuclear weapons capable missile system and impact peace and security.
- The inability of the UN to enforce resolutions and decisions because it does not have its own military troops, forces and arms has also limited its ability to maintain peace. It depends on contributions from member states. In 2023 there were 12 peacekeeping missions costing over \$5bn.
- Lack of enforceability of decisions is also crippling and negatively impacts its effectiveness in maintaining peace as states are not worried about taking actions countering peace. For example, Russia vetoed a Security Council resolution which described its attempts to unlawfully annex four regions of Ukraine as “a threat to international peace and security”, demanding that the decision be immediately and unconditionally reversed in 2022. The UN did apply sanctions but has been unable to stop the war.
- The UN has also been plagued by issues such as the lack of funding. For instance, the US, UN’s largest donor cut down UN funding that impacted several UN programs. In fact, even some big powers have delayed payments. This has limited the effectiveness of the UN in maintaining peace. In fact, in 2023, delegates of the Committee in Administrative and Budgetary department urged each other to build on their momentum as they considered the Secretariat’s \$6.8 billion budget for 11 peacekeeping operations and worked to agree on a financing device for peacebuilding

activities. Even efforts to build positive peace suffers. For example, the United Nations announced in 2019 that it is being forced to close several humanitarian programmes in Yemen because money pledged by member states to pay for them has “failed to materialize”.

- UN's inability to prevent or respond effectively to human rights abuses and genocides is another significant concern. The Rohingya crisis in Myanmar is a contemporary example. Despite extensive evidence of ethnic cleansing and mass atrocities, the UN has struggled to hold the Myanmar government accountable. This failure raises questions about the UN's ability to protect vulnerable populations and uphold its fundamental principles.
- The UN General Assembly of which all states are members is a platform for deliberation amongst member states, has a deliberative function and can make recommendations. However, its role and effectiveness has not been robust and formidable. It is often perceived to be a ‘talking shop’. Resolutions of the General Assembly are not legally binding and members states are not bound to follow them. This impacts the UN's effectiveness in maintaining peace.

Arguments against the claim that the UN has been ineffective in sustaining peace may include:

- The UN has helped bring down the number of inter-state and intra-state wars and conflicts simply because it has become a forum and platform for dialogue, mediation and negotiation amongst states. The UN General Assembly is perhaps the most significant organ where members deliberate, express views and try to reach consensus on different issues.
- The UN has been effective in solving many conflict situations through peacekeeping operations and collective security. Several peacekeeping missions are a testimony of this contribution towards the maintenance of peace. For example, Liberia (2003-18), Timor-Leste (2006-12) and Sierra-Leone (1999-2005) are success stories of peacekeeping.
- Resolutions adopted by the Security Council acting under Chapter VII of the Charter, are considered binding, in accordance with Article 25 of the Charter. Chapter VII of the Charter embodies the Charter Collective Security System in conjunction with Art. 24 of the Charter which confers primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security upon the Security Council. The Security Council's decision to authorize the use peacekeepers in Haiti in 2023 was justified in Resolution 2699.
- The UN serves as a platform for diplomatic negotiations and conflict resolution. The Iran Nuclear Deal, formally known as the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA), is a contemporary example of the UN's effectiveness in diplomacy. Negotiated with Iran by the P5+1 countries (the permanent members of the UN Security Council plus Germany), this agreement successfully curtailed Iran's nuclear program and reduced the potential for armed conflict in the region.
- There is a normative angle to the UN's contribution to peace and security in the world, for example, the signing of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty.

Arguments in favour of the claim could note that the UN has been ineffective in maintaining peace due to its inability to take decisive action, lack of funding and veto power of permanent members. Conversely, students may conclude

that the UN has been effective and has made the world more stable and peaceful after it came into existence. Responses should make some reference to specific examples where the UN has been effective such as peacekeeping and humanitarian missions in Haiti, Kosovo and Timor-Leste. Other examples could include the universal instruments against international terrorism adopted by the member states under the UN Global Counter Terrorism Strategy. On the contrary, the UN has not been able to take appropriate remedial measures in countries such as Myanmar facing the Rohingya crisis due to what has been attributed to systemic and structural limitations and lack of coordination and agreement amongst different UN organs. Some responses might examine the difference between positive and negative peace and show how and why the UN is more effective at maintaining one form of peace over the other. Finally, students may argue that in a realist world, sovereign states hold the key to upholding peace and organizations such as the UN are not powerful or capable enough to maintain peace in the world. These and any other valid approaches or examples should be evaluated positively.

Responses should include a conclusion on the degree to which the students agrees with the claim that the UN limits has been ineffective in maintaining international peace.

Human rights

3. “Human rights can only be successfully protected at the national level.”
Discuss this claim.

Responses are likely to start by introducing a definition of human rights. Human rights are basic claims and entitlements that, many argue, one should be able to exercise by virtue of being a human being. Candidates may also define protection of human rights and give some examples at a national level and at other levels of analysis. This could explore the ways in which laws, treaties and governments uphold human rights and stop violations. Candidates could show understanding of the term national in levels of analysis, referring to events and trends that have an impact limited by the geographical boundaries of a particular influence on human rights. They may give examples of national courts and police, national human rights legislation and transnational ones. Candidates may highlight the links in the question to, exploring the tension between nation-state and intergovernmental actors. Finally, candidates may provide benchmarks for success in the protection of human rights and how this can be determined.

Arguments in favour of the view that human rights can only be protected successfully at the national level may include:

- The government is the only actor with the power to successfully protect human rights through national laws. An example of this could be the upholding of civil rights such as the right to vote, housing, minimum wage, paid holidays. Civil rights can only be truly enforced by a national government protecting the rights of individuals, for example in the United States.
- It is the primary responsibility of a government to uphold its citizens’ human rights. Governments that fail to protect human rights should be held to account by their citizens. Examples include Bahrain and Egypt following the Arab Spring in 2011, and Belarus in 2022.
- Equality rights such as race, gender and sexual orientation can only be upheld by national legislation such as equality and employment acts, for example Iran in 2022.
- Interference in national affairs from international actors enforcing human rights can bring cultural imperialism. Often outside actors have vested interests and cultural bias, not respecting local traditional practices, for example, Iraq in 2003.
- Cultural relativism argues that human rights are not universally defined and accepted across all countries and cultures. Each country has its own legal and cultural context; attempting to enforce a one-size-fits-all universal standard for human rights can lead to resistance and non-compliance in countries with differing values and legal systems. Therefore, addressing human rights at the national level allows for adaptation to local contexts and norms.

Arguments against the view that human rights can only be protected successfully at the national level may include:

- The Responsibility to Protect (R2P) principle (2007) demands the UN to intervene transnationally when human rights are not being protected on a mass scale in a nation, for example the NATO-led UN intervention in Libya in 2011 and Liberia in 2003
- Failed states are unable to protect human rights at a national level. Citizens of failed or fragile states need the protection of human rights to come from international actors such as the UN. Examples include the civil war in Yemen since 2012.
- The importance of international courts and treaties to enforce human rights: courts like the ICC are needed to hold national leaders to account when they fail to protect individuals' rights, for example Charles Taylor in Liberia.
- Following a liberal perspective, international and regional treaties and human rights law provide the ultimate protection of rights. These treaties set obligations for nations to uphold rights and they can only work on an international or regional level. For example, the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union supersedes national legislation in European Union countries.
- NGOs play a vital role in holding governments to account. They can only do this with freedom from outside of oppressive nations and at a transnational level. For example, Human Rights Watch and Amnesty International have the freedom to lobby and influence states from outside their borders.

Responses should contain references to specific examples. For example, Norway and Sweden are nations with strong civil rights upheld by national laws. Examples of failed and fragile states could be Libya, Afghanistan, and Somalia. These states need the enforcement of human rights at an international level. Examples of cultural relativism and human rights could be explored through examples such as Saudi Arabia and religious freedom and women's rights. Responses may highlight Liberal international actors protecting human rights on an international level such as international courts. Students may mention the work of NGOs in protecting human rights, through advocacy, reporting, and monitoring, such as Amnesty International or Human Rights Watch. The question emphasises the role of national governments in enforcing human rights. Good responses will draw a balanced response, recognising the importance of the role both national and international actors play in enforcing human rights. These and any other valid approaches or examples should be evaluated positively.

Responses should include a conclusion on the degree to which the student agrees with the view that human rights can only be protected successfully at the national level.

4. Evaluate the view that universal human rights are always limited by inequality.

Responses are likely to include a definition of human rights and inequality. Human rights are basic claims and entitlements that, many argue, one should be able to exercise simply by virtue of being a human being. The principle of universality is that all are equally entitled to human rights. Inequality refers to a situation where equality between people or groups of people is not realized with consequent potential compromises of justice and liberty. Inequality often manifests itself through unequal access to resources. Examples of inequality may be given in the introduction such as race, age, disability, and gender. Responses may give examples of how human rights are limited by inequality through prejudice, discrimination, and a lack of justice on certain issues. Responses may focus on the 'always' as a strong qualifier in the question, and whether an agreement on universality is essential for equality to be achieved.

Arguments in favour of the claim that universal human rights are always limited by inequality may include:

- The treatment of refugees and migrants often reflects systemic inequalities which are associated with violations of human rights, for example the detention of asylum seekers in Europe or unequal employment rights while awaiting judgement of their status. Human trafficking and exploitation may also befall refugees and migrants, signifying a further loss of rights.
- Inequalities based on race, gender, sexual orientation, religion, disability or ethnicity can result in discrimination and marginalization. This may prevent the exercise of rights, leading to injustices and disparities. Examples of gender inequality might include child marriages in India, Pakistan and Bangladesh, or restricted access to education for women and girls in Afghanistan.
- Economic inequality poses significant barriers to the realization of economic and social rights, such as the right to work, education and an adequate standard of living. An example is the lack of these rights for people in Favelas in Brazil. People who are disadvantaged economically may struggle to access necessities and services, impeding their ability to fully enjoy their human rights.
- Inequality may be perpetuated by legal and political systems, such as barriers to participation in the political process, unequal representation in decision making bodies and discriminatory laws. An example of discriminatory laws can be found in the 73 countries which (as of 2018) criminalized same-sex relationships, violating rights to privacy with long-term stigmatization.
- Inequalities in awareness of and advocacy for human rights can affect marginalized groups leaving them neglected and making it more difficult to address injustices. An example is the Rohingya people before 2017, whose plight only became apparent once they began migrating to Bangladesh. In developed countries, modern slavery cases persist, often involving marginalized groups suffering long term deprivation of rights. The 2018 Global Slavery Index showed that 403,000 people were living in modern slavery in the US.

Arguments against the claim that universal human rights are always limited by inequality may include:

- Despite the persistence of inequality, universal human rights are enshrined in international law and upheld by various legal mechanisms and institutions, for example, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (ratified at least in part by all 193 members of the UN) and NGOs such as Human Rights Watch.
- Social movements and NGO activism have led to significant progress in highlighting and advancing human rights and combatting inequality. For example, Black Lives Matter, LGBTQ+ pressure groups, and Amnesty International, which claims to be a movement of over 10 million people in 150 countries.
- Regardless of inequality, authoritarian regimes and undemocratic governments may directly restrict freedoms of expression, assembly, and association, limiting individuals' ability to advocate for their rights and participate in political processes. Locally, this can be a more powerful influence than inequality. Examples are North Korea, Myanmar and Turkmenistan, where access is denied to human rights organization as is access to the world wide web.
- Again, locally, conflict zones and areas of political instability can experience widespread human rights violations including arbitrary detention, forced displacement and denial of aid. The UN has identified six grave violations of children's human rights by parties to conflict that can amount to war crimes: recruiting, killing or maiming children, committing sexual violence or abducting children, and attacking schools and hospitals. UNICEF reports that from 2005-22 there were 315,000 grave violations in 30 conflict situations across Africa, Asia, the Middle East and Latin America.
- It can be argued from recent experiences that limitations on universal human rights which are stronger than inequality are imminent. Examples include climate change, pandemics and forced migrations, while advances in technology which are beneficial in many ways can be used for the surveillance and control of populations, infringing their rights to privacy and freedom of expression.

Responses should contain references to specific examples. It might be argued that inequality always leads to human rights violations, and that the phrasing of the first Sustainable Development Goal "End Poverty in all its forms everywhere" is a recognition of this. Or it might be argued that countries which have the lowest levels of inequality in the developed world have good records of protecting human rights. For example, Iceland with gender equality, Canada with protection of minority rights. Equally, countries with poor records on human rights are the most lacking in equality, such as Yemen and Afghanistan with gender inequality. It could also be argued that equality and universal human rights are both 'nice to have' conditions but are completely overwhelmed by civil unrest and wars, as in Yemen and the Central African Republic, or by the survival of traditional cultural values such as FGM in Sudan and Somalia. Responses might refer to cultural relativism: advocates of universal human rights stress the importance of promoting and protecting human rights across all cultures, but a cultural relativist perspective stresses the importance of respecting the cultural context in which human rights are being considered. Thus, it could be argued that universal human rights are

sometimes limited by cultural relativism. These and any other valid approaches or examples should be evaluated positively.

Responses should include a conclusion on the degree to which the student agrees with the view that universal human rights are always limited by inequality.

Development

5. To what extent does globalization always foster development?

Responses should define globalization as the process by which the world's local, national and regional economies, societies and cultures are becoming increasingly integrated and connected thanks in part to a reduction in barriers and borders facilitated by developments in transportation and communication. Development can be defined a process which raises the level of well-being, standard of living and quality of life. However, candidates are likely to include more than one definition of development recognizing that there are multiple and contested meanings of development; sustainable development and development of well-being could be discussed as well as economic, political, social and human. The role of Intergovernmental Organizations (IGOs), Multinational Corporations (MNCs), informal forums, global social movements and trade unions, could be discussed. The relationship between globalization and development should be evaluated and whether it is helpful must be addressed. Responses may focus on the 'always' as a strong qualifier in the question.

Arguments in favour of the claim that globalization always fosters development may include:

- Economic development and growth can be improved with a reduction in trade barriers which is commonly associated with globalization. Trade can potentially allow consumers to enjoy a greater variety of more affordable goods and services, technology and knowledge. This can lead to more exposure to larger markets for exporting as well as attracting FDI, all of which can further development. An example of this can be seen in Vietnam.
- Globalization can be seen when states and non-state actors collaborate to tackle extreme poverty. This has led to significant reductions in extreme poverty and has improved the well-being of many people. An example of this could be demonstrated by the success of the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation in cooperation with the United Nations Millennium Development Goals in reducing extreme poverty, reducing maternal and child mortality and improvements in gender equality.
- Membership in an IGO, which could be seen as an element of globalization, provides an opportunity for states to collectively address global issues such as climate change which can help environmental development. IGOs can work collaboratively to assist states with development by providing assistance with policies, loans and technical assistance. An example could be the annual United Nations Conventions on Climate Change (COP).
- Globalization as shown by increased travel and communication and cultural exchanges has led to a stronger sense of a global community and a greater awareness and sense of responsibility toward societies lacking economic and social development. An example could be social media providing a global platform for environmental movements promoting sustainable development, such as Fridays for Future.

Arguments against the claim that globalization always fosters development may include:

- In a more globalized world, states may seek help from organizations such as the International Monetary Fund (IMF) or The World Bank to aid in their development process. IMF loans often come with requirements which some argue hamper social development including austerity measures such as raising taxes, cutting pensions and privatizing industries. For example, the Greek banking crisis of 2009 and austerity measures. Because of the interconnectedness of financial institutions, other countries such as Cyprus were severely affected, with many losing their life savings.
- The global economy includes millions of low paid workers which has contributed to a decline in the middle class in many middle-income countries. In this way globalization can increase inequality within and between countries. This can lead to social unrest which hinders development. For example, the US has suffered a decline in the middle class over the past few decades which has been attributed to factories moving to countries with lower minimum wages. This has not only affected the economic development of the middle class but, some would argue, the political development of the United States.
- Some global MNCs have been accused of being complicit in doing business with companies that employ child workers and/or provide unsafe work environments for very low pay. For example, Unilever, Procter and Gamble and Nestle are all powerful MNCs that Amnesty International has accused of buying palm oil from Indonesian companies where children as young as 8 years old are employed and workers are subject to harassment and toxic working conditions.
- Globalization can threaten traditional ways of life which could potentially have negative impacts on the environment. For example, the Canadian gold mining company Kinross operates 3 projects on the indigenous land of the Colla in Chile.
- Globalization makes individual countries more vulnerable to global economic shocks such as the 2008 financial crisis, and to dependency on particular foreign markets, e.g. Australia with mineral exports.

Responses should contain references to specific examples. For example, in arguing that globalization is always helpful to development, candidates might refer to overall improvements seen at the global level which have been helped by the reduction of barriers to the sharing of knowledge and medical expertise. Globally, infant and child mortality has declined significantly and, according to the World Health Organization, maternal mortality has declined by 34% globally from 2000-2020. These improvements can be effectively linked to globalization and the work of IGOs, NGOs and better access to information about preventative measures which improve the health and well-being of populations. When considering the helpfulness of globalization at the local or national level there may be more examples that refute the idea that globalization is always helpful. Candidates may argue that the helpfulness of globalization depends on the definition and pathways of development being explored and the perspectives of the actors and stakeholders involved. These and any other valid approaches or examples should be evaluated positively.

Responses should include a conclusion on the degree to which the student agrees that globalization always fosters development.

6. Examine the claim that some measures of development are more useful than others.

More than one way of measuring development should be considered, and these could potentially include GNI, GINI, HDI, Happy Planet Index etc. Responses should include more than one definition of development recognizing that there are multiple and contested meanings of development. Sustainable development and development of well-being could be discussed as well as economic, social and human. Within the context of this question candidates are likely to define measurements of development as “useful” if they provide information which is helpful. The usefulness of any measurement of development should be explored within the context of the type of development being discussed. A comparison between different measurements and their usefulness may be explored. It is possible that some candidates will provide only one definition of development and attempt to evaluate the reliability of the measurements of development based on their own merits using real world examples as evidence.

Arguments in favour of the claim that some ways of measuring development are more useful than others may include:

- Measuring numbers and data, it could be argued, are less subjective than other measurements of development and therefore more reliable. When measuring economic development, GDP (gross domestic product) or GNI (gross national income) per capita are the most widely known and commonly used measurements. The World Bank, The International Monetary Fund and most media outlets use them extensively when assessing the economic development of countries because they give an easy-to-understand monetary value to all goods and services produced within a country and divide this by the population.
- It can be argued that the Gini Coefficient (GINI) is very useful as it can be used to measure how equal or unequal societies are by looking at how the income measured by GDP and GNI per capita is distributed. The adjustment of income inequality using the GINI coefficient provides the UN development Program and other actors with useful data which can be useful when measuring many types of development including economic, social, sustainable etc. thereby demonstrating great usefulness. The GINI Coefficient is also used extensively by The World Bank and IMF when assessing economic development.
- If considering human development, measurements of well-being and freedoms are more useful because human development refers to the process of improving people’s freedoms and opportunities. For example, The Human Development Index (HDI) measures years of schooling and life expectancy amongst other factors to determine the human development of a country. This measurement is calculated by the UNDP and this association may legitimize the usefulness of this method. Another method of measuring human development which candidates may mention could be the World Bank Development Dime which compiles vast amounts of data and is perceived as useful.
- Reputable institutions exist to accurately and reliably measure development. For example, OECD, a unique forum where the governments of 37 democracies collaborate to develop policy standards to measure and promote sustainable growth and development. Another example of an institutional measurement could be the World Bank which collects and

analyses vast amounts of data used to formulate policies aimed at reducing extreme poverty leading to a fairer distribution of income. As these measurements directly inform and change policies, it can be argued they have great usefulness.

Arguments against the claim that some ways of measuring development are more useful than others may include:

- Development is a contested term but can be seen as a sustained increase in the standard of living and well-being of a social organization. Many consider “development” to encompass many factors including increased income; better access to goods and services, improvement in education, healthcare and public funding, well-functioning institutions, decreased inequality, reduced unemployment and poverty. There is no measurement of development that can successfully and reliably measure all these factors. Using several different measurements provides a more comprehensive picture and none is more reliable than the next.
- GDP per capita does not give an indication of wealth distribution. Poverty and deprivation can still occur in a country with a relatively high GDP so it could be argued that even when measuring economic growth GDP does not give the full economic development picture. An example could be South Africa whose GINI coefficient shows the most extreme inequality in Africa despite being the sixth richest African country in GDP per capita.
- In compiling data and information, it can be argued that most methods of measuring development are not always reliable. All are tainted by inaccuracies which include non-reporting or unreliable reporting countries, different measuring techniques, and conversion to a common currency. For example, the GDP/GNI per capita does not record informal or unrecorded economic activity. The Happy Planet Index has been criticized for placing too much emphasis on the ecological footprint data which places responsibility with individuals rather than corporate actors. The GINI Coefficient has faced criticism that it vastly underestimates income inequality as it relies on household surveys to gather data. Therefore, the usefulness of all methods can be questioned.
- Countries may score near the top of economic development using GDP or GNI per capita and then score very poorly using other ways including sustainable development. An example of this is Qatar which has a high GNI per capita but was ranked 152nd out of 152 countries measured on The Happy Planet Index (2019) primarily because of its poor ecological footprint. This kind of discrepancy in conclusions reached about level of development is an indication of the lack of usefulness of any one measurement.

Responses should contain references to specific examples of measurements of development and definition(s) of development. All development measures are essentially describing the past and although they give a general view of the state of development, well-being is experienced at the community or individual level, and this is difficult to measure. Arguments in favour of the claim that some ways of measuring development are more useful than others may refer to debates regarding the best ways to measure development and whether more complex ways which combine data on life expectancy, education etc are more useful. The United Nations Development Agency uses the HDI as it sees that it provides the best criteria for assessing the human development of a country and acknowledges GNI per capita has limitations.

An example can be seen in Equatorial Guinea which due to oil and natural gas revenue has a moderately high GNI per capita but scores very poorly on the HDI as life expectancy, educational opportunities and gender equality are limited. These and any other valid approaches or examples should be evaluated positively.

Responses should include a conclusion on the degree to which the student agrees with the view that some ways of measuring development are more useful than others.

Peace and conflict

7. Examine the claim that conflicts between states are less violent than conflicts within states.

Responses should demonstrate an understanding of the key terms violence and conflict.

The latter can be broadly defined as the dynamic process of actual or perceived opposition between individuals or groups. This could be opposition over positions, interests or values. While references to different manifestations of conflict are likely (e.g., intrastate war; interstate war; violent protest; demonstration), responses should be focused on the chosen examples of conflicts between states (i.e. interstate conflicts) and within states (i.e. intrastate conflicts). Both violent and non-violent conflicts are equally valid as examples, insofar as the focus of the question is on the intensity and scope of violence within these conflicts. Violence is often defined as physical or psychological force afflicted upon another being. Students are expected to assess the level of violence in a conflict with reference to some kind of criteria (e.g. casualty count; geographic scope; intensity of violence; duration; conflict dynamics; third-parties involvement; etc.).

Arguments that support of the claim that conflicts between states are less violent than conflicts within states may include:

- Unlike most intrastate conflicts, conflicts between states are often constrained by international norms, treaties, and agreements. These international legal frameworks promote peaceful resolution and limit the scope for extreme violence, for example, border disputes between India and China have not escalated into a full-scale war due to both countries' adherence to international norms and their bilateral agreements.
- States typically have established diplomatic channels and mechanisms for conflict resolution, which can help prevent the escalation of violence between states. International organizations like the United Nations often mediate in interstate conflicts, for example, the 2015 Iran nuclear deal was a diplomatic effort involving multiple states to prevent Iran from developing nuclear weapons, showcasing the effectiveness of diplomacy in managing conflicts between states.
- Many states have economic ties that can act as a deterrent to violence. Trade relations, mutual investments, and shared economic interests can make states more reluctant to engage in violent conflicts, for example, within the EU.
- The concept of mutually assured destruction (MAD) in nuclear-armed states can discourage direct military conflict. The fear of catastrophic consequences often serves as a deterrent to violence.
- The presence of international organizations, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), and transnational actors can exert pressure on states to resolve their disputes peacefully. These actors promote global governance and conflict resolution, for example, the ICJ case decided in 2018 between Nicaragua and Costa Rica.

Arguments against the claim that conflicts between states are less violent than conflicts within states may include:

- States often possess more substantial military capabilities than non-state actors, making conflicts between states potentially more lethal. Advanced weaponry, technological asymmetry, precision warfare and organized armed forces can lead to higher casualty counts, for example, in the Afghanistan War from 2003 or US drone strikes in Pakistan.
- Conflicts between states can escalate through proxy wars, where external powers support opposing sides in an intrastate conflict. This can intensify violence within the state, for example, in the Yemeni Civil War.
- Conflicts between states often revolve around territorial disputes, which can be deeply ingrained and difficult to resolve. These disputes can lead to prolonged violence, for example, India and Pakistan over Kashmir.
- While intrastate conflicts can be highly destructive, interstate conflicts can also have a significant impact on civilians, including forced displacement, infrastructure damage, and economic hardships, for example, the Ukraine-Russia conflict has led to the suffering of civilians on both sides due to violence and displacement.
- Interstate conflicts can create regional and global instability that can last for years, as has been seen in the Syrian Civil War and subsequent refugee crisis.

Responses should contain references to specific examples. Responses should include the candidate's conclusion regarding whether conflicts between states are less violent than conflicts within states. Students might discuss how the characteristics and prevalence of intrastate wars make them more violent than interstate wars. Students might suggest that other factors, besides the intrastate or interstate nature of the conflict, influence the level of violence of said conflicts. For instance, the type of conflict (e.g. territorial, ideological, religious, identity disputes) and population density. They might also highlight that every conflict presents an evolution, for which intrastate conflicts can turn into interstate conflicts or evolve into internationalized civil conflicts. Students who recognize and elaborate on this should be rewarded. Any other valid approach should be considered. These and any other valid approaches or examples should be evaluated positively.

Responses should include a conclusion on the degree to which the student agrees that conflicts between states are less violent than conflicts within states.

8. Discuss the claim that the goal of parties involved in a conflict is to increase their liberty.

Responses should demonstrate an understanding of the key term conflict, which could be broadly defined as the dynamic process of actual or perceived opposition between individuals or groups. This could be opposition over positions, interests or values. Students might explicitly distinguish between non-violent and violent conflicts as well as refer to different manifestations of conflict (e.g., intrastate war; interstate war; violent protest; demonstrations). All of these are to be considered valid examples of conflict. With reference to the chosen examples of conflict, candidates are expected to focus on whether the goal of all the parties involved is to increase their liberty. Students should demonstrate an understanding of the key term liberty, which usually refers to having freedom and autonomy. It is often divided into positive and negative liberty, with negative liberty defined as individuals having the freedom from external coercion and positive liberty defined as individuals having the autonomy to carry out their own rational will. The key concept of liberty can also be applied to states and their ability to act in an autonomous and independent way in their external conduct.

Arguments in favour of the claim that the goal of parties involved in a conflict is to increase their liberty may include:

- Many conflicts involve groups seeking independence from a dominant authority, which can be seen as a pursuit of liberty. For example, the Kurdish conflict in the Middle East involves Kurdish groups seeking autonomy and freedom from external control, such as in the case of the Kurdish population in Syria striving for self-governance. The Catalan independence movement in Spain seeks to establish an independent state to exercise more autonomy and freedom over its affairs.
- Manifestations of non-violent conflicts in the form of demonstrations and civil disobedience often aim to increase liberty by securing equal rights and freedoms for marginalized groups, for example, Black Lives Matter.
- Protests and uprisings often aim to achieve political reforms that enhance individual liberties. The 2019 Sudanese Revolution aimed to overthrow the authoritarian regime of Omar al-Bashir.
- International conflicts, such as humanitarian interventions, can be seen as efforts to increase the liberty of the intervening parties by promoting justice and human rights. For example, NATO intervention in Libya in 2011.
- Conflicts like the Arab Spring were rooted in a collective desire for greater civil and political liberties, especially in Tunisia and Egypt.

Arguments against the claim that the goal of parties involved in a conflict is to increase their liberty may include:

- Some conflicts are driven by the desire to secure strategic assets and territorial control, or to expand territory, rather than increase liberty, for example, Russian annexation of Crimea in 2014.
- Conflicts over valuable resources, like oil or minerals, may not prioritize liberty but economic gain. Conflicts driven by resource scarcity or competition may prioritize access to resources over liberty, for example, in the Democratic Republic of Congo.
- In power struggles within states or factions, the goal may be consolidating power rather than increasing liberty. The internal conflict within the Taliban

in Afghanistan has often involved power struggles, undermining individual liberties within the group.

- Ideological conflicts carried out by religious or extremist movements often prioritize imposing their beliefs over individual liberty, for example, ISIS in Syria or Boko Haram in Nigeria.
- In international conflicts great powers often have the goal of upholding a certain geopolitical status and asserting dominance rather than advancing their liberty. This may involve geopolitical power plays and influence rather than promoting liberty, for example, US vs China.

Responses should contain references to specific examples. Responses should include a conclusion on the degree to which the student agrees with that claim that the goal of parties involved in a conflict is to increase their liberty. Students might suggest that conflict dynamics can vary significantly, and the goals of parties involved may differ accordingly. Strong responses will recognise that while liberty—defined as freedom or autonomy—is a central goal in many conflicts, especially those involving self-determination, civil rights, or resistance to oppression, it is not universally applicable. Other motives such as material interests, territorial control, ideology, and power often play a greater role, particularly in state-led or elite-driven conflicts. Effective responses may also note that the goals of parties involved in conflict are not always unified or transparent. For example, parties may mask ambitions for power in the language of liberty. Russia claimed its military operation was a “liberation” of Russian-speaking populations in eastern Ukraine and a defence against NATO expansion — framing the war as a protection of national and cultural liberty. These and any other valid approaches or examples should be evaluated positively.

Responses should include a conclusion on the degree to which the student agrees that the goal of parties involved in a conflict is to increase their liberty.