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Development and India's Economic Multilateralism:

Where from?... Where To?

Arpita Anant

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DEVELOPMENT AND INDIA'S
ECONOMIC MULTILATERALISM:
WHERE FROM? ... WHERE TO?

ARPITA ANANT



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Arpita Anant

New Delhi

INTRODUCTION

Long years ago, we made a tryst with destiny, and now the time comes when we shall redeem our pledge, not wholly or in full measure, but very substantially... but as long as there are tears and suffering, so long our work will not be over. The future beckons to us... We have hard work ahead. There is no resting for any one of us till we redeem our pledge in full, till we make all the people of India what destiny intended them to be.

— Jawaharlal Nehru, 'Tryst with Destiny' Speech, 14 August 1947

INTRODUCTION

Among the post-colonial countries that started to integrate with the new world, the desire to get a fair deal to set right colonial exploitation was of utmost importance. India was no exception. Several colonies the world over had found great hope in multilateral institutions such as the League of Nations, underpinned as it was by the idea of self-determination. As its successor, the United Nations (UN) too was looked upon with similar expectations.¹ Concerns of development, therefore, have been at the core of India's economic.

In order to benefit from the world order emanating from the ruins of the Second World War, India participated in the Bretton Woods conferences that led to the establishment of the International Monetary Fund (IMF), the World Bank, and later, the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) set up in lieu of the International Trade Organisation. It sought to be on the governing board of these institutions; but given the size of its economy, it was not very influential.²

¹ Bimal Prasad, *The Making of India's Foreign Policy: The Indian National Congress and World Affairs, 1885-1947*, Vitasta Publications, New Delhi, 2013 [first edition 1960].

² Ibid.

It was also associated with other bodies that came to be a part of the World Bank later, namely the International Finance Corporation (IFC), the International Development Association (IDA), the Multilateral Investment Guarantee Agency (MIGA); and, as a borrower gained what it could from them.

From 1950–1978, the major components of India's foreign economic policy were trade, aid, investment, relations with international economic institutions, and relations with developing countries.³ Bilateral aid for development at the time of India's independence was to the tune of 3 per cent of India's GDP.⁴ Over these years, 93 per cent of the resources for growth were mobilised domestically, and only 7 per cent came from abroad. Benefits from trade were “sporadic, erratic and minimal”.⁵

On the trade front, post-independence, India started on the back foot due to the partition of the country which had divided the forces of production required for manufacturing among India and Pakistan. Pakistan got ownership of the raw materials, mainly cotton and sugar; while India got ownership of the factories producing them. India ran a negative balance of trade with Pakistan, and there was a shortfall in industrial production due to the shortage of raw materials.⁶ Machinery, food, and raw cotton accounted for 40 per cent of total imports while jute yarn and manufactures, and tea made up for 50 per cent of exports. Overall, India's balance of trade with Asia and Australia increased, and that with the Western countries declined. India's main food imports, though, came from the West and some from Australia, Burma and Thailand.⁷ Even in the case of trade, multilateral

³ Sumitra Chishti, “India's Foreign Economic Policy”, in Bimal Prasad, n.1, pp. 35–56, p. 41.

⁴ David C. Engerman, *The Price of Aid: The Economic Cold War in India*, Harvard University Press, Cambridge and London, 2018, p. 3.

⁵ Y. B. Chavan, *India's Foreign Policy*, Somaiya Publications Pvt. Ltd, Mumbai, 1979, p. 181.

⁶ K. P. Karunakaran, *India in World Affairs: August 1947 to January 1950*, Indian Council for World Affairs, OUP, 1952, p.332.

⁷ Ibid, p. 334.

arrangements were important. One of the earliest trade agreements India signed was a multilateral agreement between Japan, the five commonwealth countries, and all other colonies except Hong Kong. This was an agreement to help Japan rebuild its economy, with other countries receiving from Japan what they wanted. A third of India's requirement of spindles for producing yarn came from Japan through this mechanism facilitated by a multilateral agreement.⁸

This made the multilateral arena crucial for India. As argued by David Engerman in a recent study:

Development politics turned the quintessential nationalist pursuit, building a national economy, into an international enterprise. External assistance influenced the scale, scope and shape of Indian economic development in the decades after Independence in 1947.⁹

When the partition of the country resulted in a shortage of raw materials for domestic industry, exports could not be expanded. India had to rely on import substitution which, in turn, would be based on the vast resources and markets India had.¹⁰ They too were not given much importance until 1965. Then, since food imports had to be increased and aid was not forthcoming, there was a foreign exchange crisis. There was a shift from import management to export expansion. The IMF and World Bank helped India in this process, but recommended the devaluation of the rupee for promoting exports. There was also a lack of domestic demand due to less growth, and so the only way out was increasing exports. Finally, in 1976–77, there was surplus in merchandise trade, and India accumulated forex reserves of Rs. 49,000 million. In 1978, the restrictions on imports were relaxed, and exports were sought to be expanded further. As export assistance, the industrial sector got a

⁸ Ibid, pp. 337–338.

⁹ David Engerman, n.4, p.3. The author defines development politics as the competition for external aid and its entanglement with domestic politics.

¹⁰ Sumitra Chishti, n. 3, pp. 42–47.

package, including cash assistance, and the cash subsidy increased from Rs. 2,500 million in 1971 to Rs. 3,900 million in 1977. Though the rise in exports was mainly due to several external factors, the subsidy continued. Despite all this, the terms of trade were negative from 1970–71 to 1975–76 to the tune of Rs. 24, 600 million because of the reverse transfer of resources (natural resource export versus finished good import).

Thence began India's quest for access to developed country markets. The first issue was tariff concessions for its manufactured goods in developed countries without reciprocal concessions to products of those countries in India. This was achieved in the Kennedy Round of multilateral trade negotiations. The next issue was preferential treatment for exports from developing countries, which was gained at the second session of UNCTAD. As a result, the EEC and socialist countries of Europe gave preferential access for the decade 1970–1980. The USA too gave select access since 1975. India also started trading with socialist countries and gave them MFN status, though this was done bilaterally and along with not allowing the external convertibility of the rupee (against IMF and GATT rules).¹¹ It also took the lead in reducing Non-trade barriers (NTBs) in developed countries. Gradually, India and the socialist countries shifted to trade under the general multilateral system. Even so, the scope for exporting labour intensive goods was less because they were the main sectors that provided employment in Europe at that time. And, in capital intensive goods, India did have some expertise; but the developed countries were much ahead of the curve. In the trade negotiations, India was a bit slow in the beginning, moderately active in the Tokyo Round of negotiations, played an active role in Uruguay round, and a decisive 'high table' role in the Doha Round.¹²

¹¹ For an account of how India diversified its relations with the socialist bloc and other developing countries, see K. B. Lall, "India and the New International Economic Order", in Bimal Prasad, n.1. pp. 57–83, pp. 58–60.

¹² Lakshmi Puri, "India Rising: Strategic Issues in the International Trading System", in Atish Sinha and Madhup Mohta (eds.), *Indian Foreign Policy*, New Delhi, Academic Foundation/Foreign Service Institute, 2007, pp. 1055–1088, p. 1080.

FOCUS OF STUDY

India's association with the international economic order has been undulating. As a country that saw itself as the leader of the developing world or the South, India held that the World Bank and IMF, the GATT, and later, the World Trade Organisation were responsible for the crisis in global economic governance.¹³ While the former two are still not regarded as being representative enough, and their conditionalities make them highly unpopular, the WTO is regarded as fairly democratic and inclusive, but consequently, unwieldy.¹⁴ In the WTO, India's engagement as seen at the Doha Ministerial Summit was clearly an attempt to overcome the substantive imbalances in the commitments as well as the structures and processes of the WTO; and has therefore been characterised as "development multilateralism."¹⁵

Predictably, India has not been alone in this multilateralism. Several other developing countries had similar concerns regarding the international economic order, and came together with India in formal and informal coalitions of like-minded countries and non-groups.¹⁶ Historically, the coalitions were of non-aligned countries, or the G77.¹⁷

¹³ Amrita Narlikar, "Global Economic Governance", in Bhupinder S. Chimni and Siddharth Malavarappu (eds.), *International Relations: Perspectives for the Global South*, Pearson, Delhi, 2012, pp. 245–258.

¹⁴ Ibid. Moreover, the shift in focus from free trade to development in the first Doha Development Round launched in 2001, had stalled the negotiations.

¹⁵ Charalampos Efstathopoulos and Dominic Kelly, "India, Development Multilateralism, and the Doha Ministerial Conference", *Third World Quarterly*, Vol. 35, Issue 6, July 2014, pp.1066–1081.

¹⁶ Non-groups are issue-based informal coalitions. For the critical role played by India in a non-group that decided the institutional structure of the Human Rights Council, see Swashpawan Singh, "The Politics of Multilateralism", *Indian Foreign Affairs Journal*, Vol.5, No.4, October–December 2010, pp. 426– 438, pp. 431–435.

¹⁷ These coalitions sometimes worked across issue areas. In the Conference on Disarmament, India was together with other non-aligned and with neutral countries in the G 21; it was emboldened to ask the superpowers to observe restraint and work towards disarmament, and saw the multilateral domain

The G77, which was formed in 1964 to push for a new international economic order benefitting the “Third World”, endured even in more recent multilateral debates on climate change.¹⁸ India’s commitment to the G77, even at a time when the group had developed fissures in the late 1970s, was explicated by former Commerce Secretary K.B. Lall thus:

Fortunately, India has the requisite experience, skills, and resources to contribute to the unity and efficiency of the Group of 77, revitalise the movement towards a new order, and generate constructive discussions on practical programmes of cooperation among developing countries and in partnership with the advanced nations.¹⁹

India’s diplomacy for the reform of the Bretton Woods Institutions and the international trade regime has been celebrated as is its most notable contribution to international relations by practitioners like former Foreign Secretary, Shyam Saran.²⁰ However, academics like C. Raja Mohan have qualified the same efforts as part of a phase of

as a way of constraining the unilateralism of the superpowers. See, Shyam Saran, “India and Multilateralism: A Practitioner’s Perspective”, in Waheguru Pal Singh Sidhu, Pratap Bhanu Mehta, and Bruce Jones (eds.), *Shaping the Emerging World: India in the Multilateral Order*, The Brookings Institution/Foundation Books, First Indian Edition, 2014, pp. 43–56.

¹⁸ Navroz K. Dubash, “Of Maps and Compasses: India in Climate Change Negotiations”, in Waheguru Pal Singh Sidhu, Pratap Bhanu Mehta, and Bruce Jones (eds.), *Shaping the Emerging World: India in the Multilateral Order*, New Delhi: Cambridge University Press India/Foundation Books, 2014, pp. 261–279. In the run up to the Kyoto Protocol, India formed the Green Group of 72 countries which convinced the EU that the only way forward was to have differentiated responsibilities. In 2012, India with China formed the group of like-minded countries which included large Asian countries, reaffirming their support to the smaller countries and the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities.

¹⁹ K. B. Lall, n.11, p. 73.

²⁰ Shyam Saran, *The Evolving Role of Emerging Economies in Global Governance-An Indian Perspective*, at <http://ficci.in/EmergingEconomiesPaper-shyam-saran.pdf>, 7 June 2012, accessed 4 June 2016.

“dysfunctional multilateralism” and “blind third world solidarity” that had little impact on international finance and trade.²¹ There is some truth in both arguments. Undoubtedly, though, as attested by Nitin Desai, former Under Secretary General for Economic and Social Affairs at the UN, “(T)he development dialogue in the UN reflects a two-way relationship between country experiences and a global perspective on the forces shaping the world economy.”²²

The latest events in the realm of economic multilateralism in the United Nations are the Financing for Development (FFD) process and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) process. This study seeks to focus on India’s diplomacy on FFD and SDGs in the context of its long history of engaging with global economic governance through the United Nations. It begins by highlighting the significance of the multilateral for India, and concludes by highlighting the significance of India for the multilateral. It also highlights the policy implications deriving from these analyses.

In the process, it seeks answers to six specific questions:

1. What has India gained from the multilateral economic domain?
2. How has India engaged with the FFD and SDG processes?
3. What is the lineage of India’s economic multilateralism?

²¹ C. Raja Mohan, “The Changing Dynamics of India’s Multilateralism”, in Waheguru Pal Singh Sidhu, Pratap Bhanu Mehta, and Bruce Jones (eds.), *Shaping the Emerging World: India in the Multilateral Order*, The Brookings Institution/Foundation Books, First Indian Edition, 2014, pp. 25–41, p.29. The author argues that, from the mid-1960s to the late 1980s, the “idealistic multilateralism” of the earlier years gave way to “ideological multilateralism”. This was due to the radicalisation of the non-aligned movement (NAM) against the West. This was reflected in the NAM Summits, the UN General Assembly and subsequently, in the G77.

²² Nitin Desai, “Global Conferences: The Spirit of Internationalism”, in UNIC for India and Bhutan, *Seven Decades and Beyond: the India-UN Connect*, 2016, pp.140–141.

4. What are the continuities and changes in Indian economic diplomacy at the UN?
5. What is the significance of India's economic multilateralism for global economic governance?
6. Is there a need for India to conduct its multilateral economic diplomacy differently? If so, how?

This study is organised such that each chapter addresses these questions sequentially.

SIGNIFICANCE OF THE MULTILATERAL FOR INDIA

HISTORICAL SNIPPETS

While India adopted a pro-developing country position in the UN, its officials at the IMF and World Bank were very pragmatic.²³ From 1945 to 1970, India was the fifth largest shareholder and so, automatically, had an Executive Director in the IMF. Then, until 1972, it was given time to become a member of the G-24 and has since had an Executive Director elected to the IMF every two years.²⁴ India has had eight standby arrangements with the IMF to date, and seven of them were availed of from 1957 to 1976. It has also had access to an

²³ Sanjaya Baru, “The Economic Imperatives Shaping Indian Foreign Policy”, in David M. Malone, C. Raja Mohan, and Srinath Raghavan (eds.), *The Oxford Handbook of Indian Foreign Policy*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2015, pp. 327–338, p. 330.

²⁴ G-24, a chapter of G77, was set up to coordinate the activities of developing countries with the executive board of the IMF and Board of Governors of the World Bank. It has been provided secretariat services by the IMF since 1971. G-24 was active in 1970s and 1980s, but its influence waned in 1990s due to the realisation that technological developments of the kind offered by IFIs could help with national adjustment efforts only in combination with the opening up of economies. See also, A. Vasudevan, “International Financial Cooperation: India’s Interface with the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank”, in Ankush B. Sawant (ed.), *Sixty Years of India’s Contribution to the United Nations*, Mumbai/New Delhi, The Centre for International Strategic and Development, Studies/AuthorsPress, 2010, pp. 135–174, pp. 144–145.

Extended Fund Facility (EFF) from November 1981, but has used only SDR 3.9 billion of the allotted SDR 5 billion. In the first year of its working, India (and Mexico) borrowed the most that they could to pay for their imports, rather than for meeting the balance of payments disequilibrium, which was one of the main purposes of the IMF.²⁵ When the IMF introduced SDRs to provide more liquidity of funds, India tried very hard to link SDRs to additional development assistance but was not successful in doing so.²⁶

It was between 1969 and 1977 that India turned away from the IMF.²⁷ In fact, from 1971 to 1984, its positions on various issues relating to the IMF were typically those held by developing countries — that is, the G-24.²⁸ This was to be expected. The IMF had shifted its attention towards the developing countries after 1975, since much of its task of stabilising war-affected Europe had been completed by then. However, since the IMF focused on balance of payments and currency adjustments, its lending policies were not geared towards growth or development. A part of the problem was the small quantity of its loans, based on the limited overall funds available. Also, most IMF

²⁵ *India and the United Nations*, Report of a Study Group set up by the Indian Council of World Affairs, Manhattan Publishing Company, New York, 1957, p. 161. The report states that India's interaction with the ILO and the International Institute of Agriculture, the predecessor of the FAO, set up after the First World War, was quite evolved, pp. 158–159.

²⁶ G. V. Ramakrishna, *Two Score and Ten: My Experiences in Government*, Academic Foundation, New Delhi, 2004, p. 45. G. V. Ramakrishna was a DEA official dealing with the IMF and World Bank during those years.

²⁷ For the pressure from USA, the IMF and World Bank on India to devalue the Rupee before they could provide assistance to deal with the adverse balance of payments due to a huge food import bill, see, Sanjaya Baru, *India and the World: Essays in Geo-economics and Foreign Policy*, Academic Foundation, New Delhi, 2016, pp. 135–136.

²⁸ A. Vasudevan, n.24, p. 147.

projects failed in the initial years, since they were far too ambitious.²⁹ By the 1980s, India was being placed somewhere in the middle of the developed and developing countries. It was argued that India fit with sub-Saharan-Africa, Bangladesh, Nepal, and Afghanistan as far as per capita income was concerned, but with newly industrialised countries like Brazil, Korea, Taiwan as well as China as far as industrial development, scientific and technical achievements were concerned. So the country would have to be less strident about concessional assistance from the IFIs and the international capital market.³⁰ It would instead need to push for more of non-conditional assistance or simpler conditionality assistance in the IMF and the IBRD.³¹

Be that as it may, IMF programmes have been used thrice in India's post-independence history to tide over situations of crisis.³² The first was in 1966 when there was need for external assistance for import liberalisation. The second was in 1981 when the EFF arrangement was used to borrow SDRs over a three-year period to improve the country's balance of payments. And finally, there was a huge loan from the IMF that rescued India from a serious balance of payments crisis in July 1991, in the wake of which India's liberalisation commenced.³³

²⁹ Graham Bird, "The International Monetary Fund and Developing Countries: A Review of the Evidence and Policy Options", (1996) in Paul F. Diehl (ed.), *The Politics of Global Governance: International Organizations in an Interdependent World*, 2nd Edition, New Delhi, Viva Books Private Limited, 2005, pp. 277–312.

³⁰ S. V. Bokil and R. M. Hanovar, *New International Economic Order and Systemic Reforms: An Analysis of India's Negotiating Concerns*, Sterling Publishers Private Limited, New Delhi, 1988, pp.88, 109.

³¹ Ibid, p. 110.

³² V. Srinivas, "The Economic History of India: India and the International Monetary Fund, 1944-2017", Special Lecture at the National Archives of India, July 21, 2017, at <http://nationalarchives.nic.in/sites/default/files/new/THE%20ECONOMIC%20HISTORY%20OF%20INDIA.pdf>, accessed 14 August 2017.

³³ Ibid, p. 5.

However, it is argued that India's campaign for increased quotas in the IMF (and World Bank) has not been very strong since decisions for granting projects and support packages are based on "extensive staff evaluations" rather than political negotiations.³⁴

The World Bank or the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (IBRD) established the International Development Association (IDA) in 1949 based on the US experience of India's requirements of concessionary loans — grants and long-term low interest loans.³⁵ Dr. V. K. R. V. Rao played a critical role in this³⁶, but funding through it was very limited. John Mathai, the then Finance Minister of India, requested that the World Bank send a mission to India, and B.K. Nehru, India's first representative to the World Bank, approached the World Bank to fund nearly 15 projects and give an additional \$50 billion loan to correct the balance of payments situation India was in.³⁷ The World Bank mission visited the country in 1949, and recommended that India open up to private capital and focus on agriculture.³⁸ Pushed by economist Sudhir Sen, it funded the thermal power generation unit of the Damodar Valley Corporation to be located at Bokaro in Bihar.³⁹

³⁴ Nor has there been a strategic effort in placing Indian nationals in the IMF or World Bank cadre. Teresita C. Schaffer and Howard B. Schaffer, *India at the Global High Table: The Quest for Regional Primacy and Strategic Autonomy*, The Brookings Institution India, Harper Collins Publishers India, 2016, pp. 223–224.

³⁵ See, David C. Engerman, n. 4, p. 11. Engerman states that the US Technical Cooperation Administration, which was later replaced by USAID, as well as the Soviet Union's State Committee for Foreign Economic Connections too were formed based on these Superpowers' interactions with India.

³⁶ UNIC for India and Bhutan, n. 22, p. 159.

³⁷ David C. Engerman, n. 4, p. 33.

³⁸ Ibid.

³⁹ Ibid. Engerman provides several interesting instances of this nature based on his vast archival research.

The World Bank devised its own ways of lending for various countries, depending on its circumstances; in India (as in Turkey and Ethiopia) it gave loans to local lending institutions for general industrial development.⁴⁰ Among the early loans given by the World Bank were two loans to the government of India in 1949 for railway rehabilitation⁴¹ and agricultural machinery, and then in 1950 and 1953 to the Damodar Valley Project mentioned above. Among loans given to private companies for which the Government of India stood as a guarantor were the India Iron and Steel Company in 1952; to Tata Hydro, Andhra and Tata Power Companies in 1954; in 1955 to the Industrial Credit and Investment Corporation of India, equity capital for which was provided by British, US, and Indian investors, and finally to Tata Iron and Steel Company both in 1955.⁴²

The agreement for the setting up of the International Finance Corporation was finalised at the IBRD in 1954, and India signed the Articles of Agreement in October 1955 with a quota of US\$ 4.431 million. The Aid India Consortium was set up within the World Bank in 1958. In the intervening years, India had emphasised the need for such an institution that would lend money for private enterprise without government guarantees.⁴³ In the meetings of the Economic and Financial Committee, the Indian delegate even elaborated on amending the articles of the agreement to accept more members, make its profits taxable,

⁴⁰ Report of a Study Group set up by the Indian Council of World Affairs, n. 3, p. 171.

⁴¹ This was the first loan given by the West to Asia after the Marshall Plan was promulgated for the reconstruction of Europe. An amount was US\$ 34 million was given for Railway Reconstruction and Development. Robert McNamara's presidency of the World Bank saw a distinct increase in the World Bank's development assistance to India. See, G.V. Ramakrishna, n. 26, p. 41.

⁴² Report of a Study Group set up by the Indian Council of World Affairs, n. 25, pp. 174–175.

⁴³ Ibid, pp.178–179.

and invest in debentures rather than stocks directly, which would give voting rights to the private investor when the debentures were converted to stocks.⁴⁴

Till the 1980s, 40 per cent of IDA assistance came to India at concessional rates. India also pushed for the untying of aid⁴⁵, the flexible administration of aid, and local cost financing.⁴⁶ In the discussion on development finance, India sought to link the creation of Special Drawing Rights to IBRD loans, but was not successful.⁴⁷ Sardar Swaran Singh, as Finance Minister, played a highly “practical and constructive role” in ensuring multilateral financial and developmental assistance to India from IMF, IBRD, and the ADB.⁴⁸ The relationship between the World Bank and India, since the mid-90s, was focused on states that were lagging behind. But, in 2004, the focus shifted to states with low per capita incomes and low human development indices. The Central government was the preponderant partner in this relationship.⁴⁹ Even when India was on the verge of graduating from the IDA, the World Bank was considering the best way forward given the large number of poor people in India.⁵⁰

⁴⁴ Ibid, p. 181.

⁴⁵ The Scandinavian countries were the first to give untied aid, which allowed India to procure equipment from the cheapest source rather than from the donors. See, G. V. Ramakrishna, n. 26, p. 43.

⁴⁶ Report of a Study Group set up by the Indian Council of World Affairs, n. 25, p.115.

⁴⁷ S. N. Tawale, *India's Economic Diplomacy at the United Nations*, Meenakshi Prakashan, Delhi, 1975.

⁴⁸ J. N. Dixit, *Makers of India's Foreign Policy: Raja Ram Mohun Roy to Yashwant Sinha*, Harper Collins Publishers India/India Today Group, New Delhi, p. 165.

⁴⁹ Jason A. Kirk, *India and the World Bank: The Politics of Aid and Influence*, London, Anthem Press, 2012.

⁵⁰ Jason A. Kirk, “India and the International Financial Institutions”, in David M. Malone, C. Raja Mohan, and Srinath Raghavan (eds.), *The Oxford Handbook of Indian Foreign Policy*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2015, pp. 606–622.

Another multilateral institution under the aegis of UN to which India was affiliated was the Economic Commission for Asia and the Far East (ECAFE), which was set up under the ECOSOC. Its surveys indicated that India, like much of Asia, had a high density of population per square kilometre (at 345 per sq. km) and its per capita income was US\$ 43.⁵¹ Though it was essentially an advisory body to improve the condition of trade and industry in the region, Dr. P. S. Lokanathan of India was appointed its Executive Secretary.⁵² Two annual surveys of the region were produced in 1948–49. A bureau of Flood Control, a Committee on Trade and Industry, and sub-committees on travel and steel were set up during these years. It collaborated with the FAO to figure out ways of improving agricultural output in the region. The Institute for Training in Statistics to benefit the region was set up in Delhi.⁵³ It collaborated with the ILO to point out shortages in equipment, machines and basic tools as well as with the UNESCO to impart technical training in deficient areas.⁵⁴ It also began the process of making Asian economies complementary so as to increase intra-regional trade. India engaged with the ECAFE as it believed that the poverty of its neighbours affects India.⁵⁵ India attempted to make the ECAFE much more than a talk shop.⁵⁶

Bilateral aid has been another important source of assistance for India, but it was constrained due to several reasons. In the initial years, there was a clear preference for international assistance through the UN rather than bilateral aid.⁵⁷ Later too, bilateral foreign aid became increasingly conditional and tied to sourcing from the donor nation (with the only

⁵¹ K. P. Karunakaran, n. 6, p. 364.

⁵² *Ibid*, p. 366.

⁵³ *Ibid*, p.367.

⁵⁴ *Ibid*.

⁵⁵ *Ibid*, p.368.

⁵⁶ *Ibid*, pp.368-72.

⁵⁷ Report of a Study Group set up by the Indian Council of World Affairs, n. 25, p. 180.

flexibility coming in case of an EU donor, where the sourcing could be from any EU country.) European donors moved in the 1980s from economically viable projects to social sector projects. Many times there was a clog in the aid pipeline, with money committed but projects not taking off. Only by mid-1990s was there some move back from the social to the commercial, especially in case of Germany.⁵⁸ As a result, aid from multilateral international financial institutions — such as the World Bank, IMF, UNDP, Asian Development Bank — remained important for India.

CONTEMPORARY SIGNIFICANCE: A QUANTITATIVE ANALYSIS

The story of India's development, especially since the 1990s, is simultaneously the story of the reform of its economy and its greater entanglement with the international economic system. In fact, it is said that the IMF programme of 1991 “ensured India's integration into the global economy.”⁵⁹ Recent scholarship on the subject of India's liberalisation has characterised the Indian transformation as being much more than the primacy of geo-economics in geopolitics; it is rather a move from a geopolitical social to a geo-economic social in terms of how India is showcased in international relations.⁶⁰ Several changes preceded and followed the liberalisation in the 1990s in the political and economic spheres which “led to a greater alignment between India and the IFIs....”⁶¹

At this juncture, a quantitative analysis of the multilateral assistance received by India for the period 2005 to 2015 offers some interesting conclusions regarding the contemporary significance of the multilateral domain for India.

⁵⁸ Ibid, p. 122.

⁵⁹ V. Srinivas, n.32, p.19.

⁶⁰ Priya Chacko, “The New Geo-Economics of a “Rising” India: State Transformation and the Recasting of Foreign Policy”, *Journal of Contemporary Asia*, 2015, Vol. 45, No. 2, 326–344, at <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/00472336.2014.948902>.

⁶¹ Ibid, p. 335. This is along the lines argued by Jason Kirk.

Well into its years of liberalisation, India has received assistance from multilateral institutions.

Table 1: Multilateral Loans Receipts (Revised Estimates of Receipts)

In Crores of Rupees

Year	IBRD	IDA	IFAD	ADB	EEC (SAC)	OPEC	Total
2004–05	2967.06	5520.44	73.60	1929.49	-	-	10490.59
2005–06	2652.13	5311.58	87.44	2193.66	-	-	10244.81
2006–07	4037.38	4514.03	62.88	3586.51	-	-	12200.80
2007–08	4305.04	4033.09	101.35	5489.00	-	11.03	13939.51
2008–09	3194.26	5032.53	81.62	6016.19	-	13.50	14338.10
2009–10	3988.20	5569.29	66.34	4951.61	-	17.62	20471.60
2010–11	12743.63	4871.83	70.80	5754.29	-	0.95	23441.21
2011–12	3059.83	7576.47	149.24	4673.86	-	16.02	15474.84
2012–13	3071.86	5472.84	146.99	4933.28	-	20.82	13645.79
2013–14	3402.69	7007.81	184.66	4309.25	-	8.87	14913.28
2014–15	5634.81	8425.28	191.74	6561.66	-	54.50	20867.99
2015–16	6085.00	9136.00	332.00	7845.00		60.00	23458.00

Source: Prepared by the author using Ministry of Finance, Union Budgets 2004–2016.

Explanation:

1. Does not include bilateral grants made by these institutions through some countries.
2. From 2009–10 to 2014–15 the figures of actual receipts are provided under the head Capital Receipts/ External Debt. For 2015–16, only revised estimates are available till date.
3. Debt repayment figures have not been included.

During the last decade, the IBRD and the IDA, both of which are institutions of the World Bank, have been the highest sources of loans to India. Nearly comparable are the loans from the ADB. IFAD, which was set up in 1977 as a specialised UN agency for agricultural development, follows next, and the smallest contribution is by the OPEC.

The loan given by all multilateral agencies together has consistently been higher than that given by all bilateral donors put together.

Table 2: Multilateral Loan vs. Bilateral Loan

In Crores of Rupees

Year	Multilateral Loan	Bilateral Loan
2004-05	10490.59	5702.27
2005-06	10244.81	4295.77
2006-07	12200.80	3612.15
2007-08	13939.51	3463.09
2008-09	14338.10	5240.25
2009-10	20471.60	7294.33
2010-11	23441.21	7588.66
2011-12	15474.84	10950.78
2012-13	13645.79	9663.00
2013-14	14913.28	10701.91
2014-15	20867.99	12665.90
2015-16	23458.00	10870.00

Source: Prepared by the author using Ministry of Finance, Union Budgets 2004-2016.

Explanation:

1. From 2009-10 to 2014-15 the figures of actual receipts are provided under the head Capital Receipts/ External Debt. For the rest of the years, only revised estimates are available.
2. Debt repayment figures have not been included.

Table 3: Grants by Multilateral Agencies and International Bodies vs. Bilateral Grants and Commodity Assistance

In Crores of Rupees

Year	Grant by Agency		
	Multilateral Agency	International Bodies	Bilateral
2004-05	14.41	238.97	2810.82
2005-06	34.72	332.57	2218.31
2006-07	15.49	551.02	1902.45
2007-08	195.13	440.66	1455.39
2008-09	133.53	566.76	2047.72
2009-10	113.40	907.23	2074.97
2010-11	44.94	491.64	2089.84
2011-12	34.70	797.10	2041.65
2012-13	38.11	706.40	1414.35
2013-14	81.84	1772.39	1544.99
2014-15	102.41	715.10	624.33
2015-16	72.45	1738.50	695.41

Source: Prepared by the author using Ministry of Finance, Union Budgets, 2004–16.

Explanation:

1. Multilateral Institutions that have given grants are IDF, IBRD, IDA, ADB, and IFAD. Not all bodies have made a contribution in all years.
2. International Bodies that have given grants are FAO, UNFPA, UNDP, UNICEF, UNGDF, UNGFATM, UNUS AID, WHO, UPU, GEF. Not all bodies have made a contribution in all years.
3. From 2009-10 to 2014-15 the figures of actual receipts are provided under the head Non-Tax Revenue. For the rest of the years, only revised estimates are available.

In the case of grants and commodity assistance, however, bilateral sources have contributed more to the Indian kitty as compared to multilateral agencies and international bodies, mainly of the UN.

Multilateral agencies, thus, prefer granting loans to giving grants and commodity assistance.

Table 4: Net External Assistance (Loans) as Percentage of Total Capital Receipts

In Crores of Rupees

Year	Net External Assistance	Total Capital Receipts	Percentage
2004-05	9034	270368	3.34
2005-06	7514	160231	4.68
2006-07	7892	158306	4.98
2007-08	9970	184275	5.41
2008-09	11015	291101	3.7
2009-10	11308	453063	2.4
2010-11	23556	402427	5.8
2011-12	12449	568918	2.1
2012-13	7201	583387	1.2
2013-14	7292	563894	1.2
2014-15	12933	484448	2.6
2015-16	11485	557174	2.0

Source: Prepared by the author using Ministry of Finance, Union Budget, Receipts

Explanation:

1. Net External Assistance includes multilateral and bilateral loans less repayments.
2. Figures from 2008-09 until 2014-15 are actuals. The rest are revised estimates.

External loans, multilateral and bilateral put together, which are categorised as capital receipts, are a very miniscule portion of the aggregate capital receipts.

Table 5: External Grants as Percentage of Total Revenue Receipts
In Crores of Rupees

Year	External Grants	Total Revenue Receipts	Percentage
2004-05	3598	300904	1.19
2005-06	3019	348474	0.86
2006-07	2469	423331	0.58
2007-08	2091	525098	0.39
2008-09	2794	540259	0.51
2009-10	3141	572811	0.54
2010-11	2673	788471	0.33
2011-12	2962	751437	0.39
2012-13	2311	879232	0.26
2013-14	3618	1014724	0.35
2014-15	1600	1101471	0.14
2015-16	2937	1206084	0.24

Source: Prepared by the author using Ministry of Finance, Union Budget, Receipts

Explanation:

1. External Grants include multilateral and bilateral grants.
2. Figures from 2008-09 until 2014-15 are actuals. The rest are revised estimates.

External grants, both multilateral and bilateral put together, which are categorised as non-tax revenue of the total revenue receipts, are even more miniscule.

While details of the projects for which loans and grants were given are available, a qualitative analysis of these is not undertaken here given the

small size of the assistance, the impact of which would not have much aggregate value. There is no denying however, that to the extent that it has complemented domestic sources of revenue and contributed to development, it is valuable. What emerges clearly is that India's growth in contemporary times is driven by domestic sources of funding.

DISCURSIVE AND POLICY SIGNIFICANCE

Another way to look at the specific gains made from participating in the multilateral system is to look at the policy level and the discursive changes that it has brought about. Take for instance, the case of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). Development, that continued to be the domain of economists until the 1990s, became multidisciplinary, with the idea of human development included in it — an idea which was pushed by the United Nations.⁶² This meant that the focus of development now was squarely the people, not economic growth. This was reasserted in the Millennium Declaration, and sought to be realised through the adoption of the Millennium Development Goals.⁶³ The MDGs were a culmination of the global conferences of the 1990s, and their combined impact was felt “in the changing agenda of to the G7/G8 meetings, in the growing willingness of the World Bank and the IMF to align with the UN, and even in the Davos forum.”⁶⁴

India too was initially opposed to the imposition of MDGs that were based on OECD parameters; but it eventually realised their importance in helping to focus on poverty alleviation and related human

⁶² Vijay Nambiar, “The United Nations: Yesterday and Today”, in Surendra Kumar (ed.), *India and the World: Through the Eyes of Indian Diplomats*, Wisdom Tree, 2015, pp. 333–354, p. 334.

⁶³ Ibid, p. 341. For the engagement of civil society in development, see, Steve Tibbet, *Towards a People's Multilateralism: The United Nations, Development Networks and Civil Society*, UNDP, New York, cited in Note 8, p. 343.

⁶⁴ Nitin Desai, n.22, p.142.

development issues.⁶⁵ At the end of the 15-year period that was laid out for the achievement of the MDGs, a detailed report of achievement was published.⁶⁶

Table 6: MDGs and Targets: Summary of progress achieved by India

GOAL	TARGET	STATUS
MDG 1: ERADICATE EXTREME POVERTY AND HUNGER	TARGET 1: Halve, between 1990 and 2015, the proportion of people whose income is less than one dollar a day	On-track
	TARGET 2: Halve, between 1990 and 2015, the proportion of people who suffer from hunger	Slow or almost off-track
MDG 2: ACHIEVE UNIVERSAL PRIMARY EDUCATION	TARGET 3: Ensure that, by 2015, children everywhere, boys and girls alike, will be able to complete a full course of primary schooling	Moderately on-track
MDG 3: PROMOTE GENDER EQUALITY AND EMPOWER WOMEN	TARGET 4 : Eliminate gender disparity in primary and secondary education, preferably by 2005, and in all levels of education no later than 2015	On-track
MDG 4: REDUCE CHILD MORTALITY	TARGET 5 : Reduce by two-thirds, between 1990 and 2015, the Under- Five Morality Rate	Moderately on-track due to the sharp decline in recent years
MDG 5: IMPROVE MATERNAL HEALTH	TARGET 6 : Reduce by three quarters, between 1990 and 2015, the maternal mortality ratio	Slow or off-track

⁶⁵ Hardeep Singh Puri, “India and the Multilateral System”, in Surendra Kumar, n. 62, pp. 355–369, p. 363.

⁶⁶ Government of India/MOSPI, *Millennium Development Goals, India Country Report 2015*, http://mospi.nic.in/Mospi_New/upload/mdg_26feb15.pdf, New Delhi, 26 February 2015, p. 22, accessed 18 July 2016.

GOAL	TARGET	STATUS
MDG 6: COMBAT HIV/AIDS, MALARIA AND OTHER DISEASES	TARGET 7 : Have halted by 2015 and begun to reverse the spread of HIV/AIDS	On-track as trend reversal in HIV prevalence has been achieved
	TARGET 8: Have halted by 2015 and begun to reverse the incidence of malaria and other major diseases	Moderately on-track as trend reversal has been achieved for Annual Parasite Incidence of Malaria and for prevalence of TB
MDG 7: ENSURE ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY	TARGET 9: Integrate the principle of sustainable development into country policies and programmes and reverse the loss of environmental resources.	Moderately on-track
	TARGET 10: Halve, by 2015, the proportion of people without sustainable access to safe drinking water and basic sanitation	On-track for the indicator of drinking water but slow for the indicator of sanitation
	TARGET 11: By 2020, to have achieved a significant improvement in the lives of at least 100 million slum dwellers	The pattern not statistically discernible
MDG 8: DEVELOP A GLOBAL PARTNERSHIP FOR DEVELOPMENT	TARGET 18: In cooperation with the private sector, make available the benefits of new technologies, especially information and communications	On-track

Source: MOSPI, Millennium Development Goals, India Country Report, 2015.

While the balance sheet shows positives and negatives, more important from the perspective of this study is the fact that,

Close to a decade and a half since the inception of the MDGs, India's record on achievement of the goals is mixed. Impressive improvements have been made on some goals, but progress has lagged in others. Nevertheless, *the MDGs have helped reorient policy perspectives in India as governments, both at the Centre and in the states, now accord high priority to human development.*⁶⁷ (Italics mine)

A similar push seems to have already come about vis-à-vis the SDGs. This is not surprising because inputs from the Ministry of Policy and Statistical Information (MOPSI) had gone into the formulation of the specific goals that were to be a part of the Outcome Document at the SDG Summit. India was among the 28 members of the Inter-Agency and Expert Group on Sustainable Development Goal Indicators (IAEG-SDG) that had been created by the UN Statistical Division. In July 2015, a first draft of the goals and indicators was shared with all countries. In India, MOPSI took inputs from 41 concerned Ministries and Departments on the workability of the goals and related indicators.⁶⁸

With the purpose of the efficient implementation of policies for the achievement of the 17 SDG goals and 169 targets, as well as reporting on them, the NITI Aayog of India has been appointed as the nodal agency. On 8 June 2016, it identified the nodal ministries and departments for each of the goals.⁶⁹ Thus, given the SDG agenda, an immediate impact has been the involvement of 50 from among the

⁶⁷ *India and the MDGs: Towards a Sustainable Future for All*, UNESCAP/UN India, February 2015, at http://in.one.un.org/img/uploads/India_and_the_MDGs.pdf, accessed 18 July 2016.

⁶⁸ "Sustainable Development Goal and Associated Statistical Challenges", MOSPI, Chapter 45, [www.mospi.gov.in › default › files › statistical_year_book_india_2015](http://www.mospi.gov.in/default/files/statistical_year_book_india_2015), accessed 8 July 2019. The final list was readied by March 2017 after three more rounds of consultation.

⁶⁹ Niti Aayog, *Mapping of the Ministries for Goals and Targets*, at http://niti.gov.in/writereaddata/files/SDGsV20-Mapping080616-DG_0.pdf, accessed 18 July 2016.

52 Ministries of the Union Government in the SDG process. The only two Ministries that are not associated with the SDG process are the Ministry of Defence as well as the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology. The synergy coming from the combined efforts of the ministries has had a positive impact on the achievement of targets. According to India's Voluntary National Review of SDG implementation, notable progress has been made with respect to Goals 1, 2, 3, 5, 9, 14 and 17. Since the goals are all connected, some related progress has also been registered in the remaining goals.⁷⁰ (See Table 7 on page 34)

MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (MEA) AND MULTILATERALISM

In much of this quest, the MEA did not start out with a substantial role. This is because the thrust of post-Independence diplomacy was on the 'political' rather than the 'economic'. In fact, the MEA was not organised to handle economic diplomacy under Nehru. The heads of mission focused mainly on political work, while the little economic work that was there was handled by "commercial representatives" from the Finance or Commerce Ministries. As the importance of economic diplomacy rose, a super ambassador was appointed to Western Europe in the 1950s.⁷¹ It was after the oil crisis that India's missions were given a commercial role.⁷² Expectedly, their first job was to locate oil supplies, and to create markets for Indian goods.⁷³ A gradual evolution has taken place thereafter. The Economic Division (ED) in MEA, headed by Secretary (ER), has many a time had to claw its way into the domain of the Ministries of Finance, Commerce and Industry. The Secretary (ER) is now a board member of 20 top agencies,

⁷⁰ Arvind Panagariya, *Voluntary National Review India*, High-Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development New York, United States of America 19 July 2017, at https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/25549INDIA_VNR_PPT.pdf, accessed 8 July 2019.

⁷¹ "Streamlining Economic Diplomacy: A ten-point Plan", Document I, in I. P. Khosla (ed.), *Economic Diplomacy*, Association of Indian Diplomats in Association with India International Centre, Konark Publishers Private Limited, New Delhi, 2006, pp. 165–183, *Ibid*, p. 166.

⁷² Kishan S. Rana, *Inside Diplomacy*, Manas Publications, New Delhi, 2002, p. 98.

⁷³ *Ibid*, p. 299.

such as the EXIM Bank,⁷⁴ and the ED looks after G15 and ASEAN; and MER looks after UNCTAD and G77 matters. Among those who played a critical role in bringing the economy to the forefront was L. K. Jha who, as Principal Secretary to Prime Minister Lal Bahadur Shastri for just over a year, gave substantial economic content and technological orientation to India's foreign policy.⁷⁵ Again, Sardar Swaran Singh, as Minister for External Affairs, played an important role in making the Indian Foreign Service more specialised in economic diplomacy and developing regional expertise from 1970 to 1974.⁷⁶

Multilateral aid, an important source of funds for India, has been the domain of the Ministry of Finance (MoF), specifically the Department of Economic Affairs. The MEA only has a JS on deputation to MoF.⁷⁷ The result of the balance of payments crisis of 1990–91 was India moving from its preference for aid to a preference for trade and investment. With the change in India's economic condition in the 1990s, the issues of economic negotiations also changed to trade, investment, energy needs, and India's aid to other developing countries.⁷⁸ This has mainly involved the ministries of Finance, Commerce, and Agriculture which are much more focused on domestic constituencies.⁷⁹ This also came with business conclaves like FICCI and CII preferring capital outflows and inflows, and having a say in India's diplomacy.⁸⁰ In fact, the CII was a pioneer in building contacts with Indian missions to promote India Inc. It was followed by FICCI and ASSOCHAM.⁸¹

⁷⁴ Ibid, pp.138–140.

⁷⁵ J. N. Dixit, n. 46, p. 166.

⁷⁶ Ibid, p. 163.

⁷⁷ Ibid, p.121.

⁷⁸ Teresita C. Schaffer and Howard B. Schaffer, n. 34, p. 183. The authors argue that this has created some ambiguity regarding India's economic persona.

⁷⁹ Ibid.

⁸⁰ Sanjaya Baru, n. 27, pp. 91–92. The main features of this opening up are that the peoples' well-being as the core objective of foreign policy, the benefits of interdependence, increasing energy and high technology inflows, regional focus, and pursuing development while retaining the plural and secular ethos. See, pp. 94–95.

⁸¹ Kishan S. Rana, n. 72, pp. 123–124.

In this domain too, the MEA again attempted to do its bit. As the Minister of External Affairs in the NDA government, Yashwant Sinha, said in 2003, “[The] pursuit of economic interests lies at the heart of modern diplomacy”.⁸² Thus, a conscious effort was made to strengthen the missions to deal with issues of commerce. At that time, the emphasis was on Free Trade Agreements (FTAs) and Preferential Trade Agreements (PTAs) in the immediate neighbourhood, and the near abroad such as Africa and South East Asia. In the spurt of economic diplomacy in the UPA government, there is mention of the Trade and Economic Relations Committee set up by Prime Minister Manmohan Singh. Other initiatives that find mention are those with ASEAN, the BIMSTEC, Pakistan, China, US, Russia, EU, ITEC, and SCAAP.⁸³ Focus was also extended to other parts of Asia, including West and Central Asia as well as Latin America. Even so, well into the post liberalisation years, economic goals were not linked well with political and strategic goals.⁸⁴

FINDINGS

While the MEA did not start out as the nodal agency for helping with economic matters, it has gradually begun to assist with that role. In matters of the UN and the G77, which are the focus on this study, it is the lead Ministry. For post-independence India, the multilateral was significant for its requirements of assistance of various kinds. Post-liberalisation, multilateral trade has become more important than aid institutions. Although multilateral aid has been a very marginal resource for India’s development as compared with domestic sources of funding, the nature of projects has been such that it has touched the lives of marginalised people. The more significant impact in India has been discursive and policy related. The idea of human centric development has caught on like never before; and the impact of the multilateral in this respect cannot be understated.

⁸² Yashwant Sinha, “Economic Diplomacy in the Imperative”, Minister for External Affairs, Press Interview, 14 February 2003, Document IV, in I. P. Khosla, n. 71, pp. 191–194, p. 192.

⁸³ Akhsey Kumar, “The UPA Government’s Economic Diplomacy”, Document VI, 16 May 2005, in I. P. Khosla, n. 71, pp. 199–203.

⁸⁴ Association of Indian Diplomats, n. 71, p. 167.

Table 7: Sustainable Development Goals

Goal 1.	End poverty in all its forms everywhere
Goal 2.	End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture
Goal 3.	Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages
Goal 4.	Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all
Goal 5.	Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls
Goal 6.	Ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all
Goal 7.	Ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all
Goal 8.	Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all
Goal 9.	Build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialization and foster innovation
Goal 10.	Reduce inequality within and among countries
Goal 11.	Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable
Goal 12.	Ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns
Goal 13.	Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts
Goal 14.	Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development
Goal 15.	Protect, restore and promote sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, sustainably manage forests, combat desertification, and halt and reverse land degradation and halt biodiversity loss
Goal 16.	Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels
Goal 17.	Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalize the Global Partnership for Sustainable Development

Source: United Nations, A/Res/70/1, *Transforming Our World: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development*, 2015.

DEVELOPMENT-RELATED MULTILATERALISM AT THE UNITED NATIONS: TWO CASE STUDIES

The year 2015 was witness to two important multilateral events related to issues of development. These were the Third Financing for Development (FFD) conference that was held in Addis Ababa in June 2015, and the adoption of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in September 2015. The link between the two was established at the World Summit on Sustainable Development in Johannesburg in 2002, when the developing countries had been able to include everything on enhancing supportiveness between trade and environment that was accepted at the launch of the Doha round of trade negotiations in 2002 and the Monterrey conference on Financing for Development in 2002 as the plan of implementation for sustainable development.⁸⁵ In these parallel yet related processes, India participated in its own individual capacity; but also sometimes as a member of the G20, a group of top twenty developing countries formed in 1999; as a member of the Asia-Pacific troika on the SDGs (including Sri Lanka and Pakistan), and often as a member of the Group of 77 (G77), a coalition of developing countries formed nearly five decades earlier in 1964, in what was a very different era of international relations. What position did India take on these issues as a member of these groupings?

⁸⁵ Kevin R. Ray, “World Summit on Sustainable Development: Accomplishments and New Directions”, *The International and Comparative Law Quarterly*, Vol. 52, No.1, January 2003, pp. 256–268.

INDIA IN THE FINANCING FOR DEVELOPMENT PROCESS

The origin of the idea of financing for development was in the time of Secretary General Boutros Boutros Ghali who, through this idea, attempted to make the connection between democracy, good governance, stability, and development.⁸⁶ T. P Sreenivasan, who served as Indian High Commissioner to Kenya and simultaneously as Permanent Representative to the UN Office in Nairobi (1995–97), was appointed as chairman of the FFD working group. He recounts that, at the time, the developing world preferred aid from the rich countries. The developed countries, on the other hand, preferred to give emergency assistance but did not want to pledge money for long term development needs multilaterally. Thus, in the years leading to the Monterrey Conference in 2002, there was clear divide between the developed countries and the G77, of which India was an active member, with the latter wanting to broaden the agenda to include development finance, like ODA plus participation in the governance of international financial institutions and the management of financial crises.⁸⁷

The process of reaching a consensus started in June 1997, when the General Assembly adopted the agenda for development. At this juncture, the G77 wanted an increase in the number of FDI receivers as well as corporate social and environmental responsibilities. It also wanted timelines for doubling ODA to reach the MDGs, eliminate tied aid, and increase grants. Finally, the G77 pushed for immediate debt relief for the poorest countries and for improving the Heavily Indebted Poor Countries (HIPC) initiative (1996) of the IMF and World

⁸⁶ T. P. Sreenivasan, *Words, Words, Words: Adventures in Diplomacy*, Pearson Longman, Delhi, 2008, p. 108.

⁸⁷ Jacques Fomerand, “North-South Issues at the 2002 Monterrey Conference on Finance for Development: Plus C, A Change...?”, in James P. Muldoon Jr., Joann Fagot Aviel, Richard Reitano, and Earl Sullivan (eds.), *Multilateral Diplomacy and the United Nations Today*, second edition, Westview Press, Boulder, Colorado, 2005, pp. 253–269, p. 260.

Bank; the elimination of trade barriers and subsidies in developed countries; better distribution of the costs of financial crisis; UN role in governing international finance; greater coordination in tax matters — though not necessarily through the formation of a new International Tax Organisation (ITO) as per the Report of the High-Level Panel on FFD headed by Ernesto Zedillo.⁸⁸ The European Union (EU), on the other hand, argued that the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) guidelines for MNCs and the Global UN Compact were adequate to ensure responsible behaviour of private actors. It preferred shared responsibility, with involvement of civil-society organisations and the use of World Bank's poverty reduction papers to increase domestic responsibility for poverty reduction without changing existing ODA targets. The EU also pitched for ECOSOC follow ups of existing mechanisms and programmes rather than the creation of new institutions for it. The USA bid for the efficient use of existing resources.⁸⁹

Against this backdrop, the First Financing for Development conference was held in Monterrey, Mexico in March 2002. The Monterrey Consensus (MC) thus arrived at identified the various areas of focus for addressing issues relating to the financing of development. These were - mobilising domestic financial resources; mobilising international financial resources (like FDI and other private flows); making international trade an engine for development; increasing international financial and technical cooperation for development, external debt management; and addressing systemic issues of coherence of financial, monetary and trade systems.⁹⁰ India's position as a part of the G77

⁸⁸ Ibid, p. 263.

⁸⁹ Ibid, p. 261.

⁹⁰ *Financing for Development: The Monterrey Consensus of the International Conference on Financing for Development*, United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs, 2003, at <http://www.un.org/esa/ffd/monterrey/MonterreyConsensus.pdf>, accessed 5 May 2016.

coalition was focused on poverty alleviation and improved human development.⁹¹ India's position as part of the G20 (which India presided over in 2002) focused on the reform of international financial institutions, and providing financial stability for development.⁹² Thus, as a member of the two groupings, G77 and G20, India's emphasis was different.

Six years later, in 2008, the Second FFD Review Conference was held in Doha; it coincided with the financial crisis. The Doha Declaration adopted in December 2008 added to the agenda linkages with new issues such as environment and climate change; commodity pricing, especially of food and energy; post conflict reconstruction and development; and access to development finance in times of global crises.⁹³ It identified two mechanisms aimed at building macroeconomic coherence by linking the finance and trade regimes — the Enhanced Integrated Framework (EIF) and Aid for Trade (AfT) initiatives, which mostly focused on trade facilitation as the means of fulfilling the Monterrey Consensus.⁹⁴

⁹¹ Venezuela, (On behalf of the Group of 77 and China), Statement by His Excellency Mr. Hugo Chávez Frías, President of the Republic of Venezuela, at the International Conference on Financing for Development, Monterrey, Mexico, 21 March 2002, at <http://www.un.org/ffd/statements/venezuelaE.htm>, accessed 5 May 2016.

⁹² Group of 20, Statement by Mr. Arun Shourie, Chairman, at the International Conference on Financing for Development, Monterrey, Mexico, 18 March 2002, at <http://www.un.org/ffd/statements/groupof20E.htm>, accessed 5 March 2016.

⁹³ UNGA, A/RES/63/239, Doha Declaration on Financing for Development: Outcome document of the Follow-up International Conference on Financing for Development to Review the Implementation of the Monterrey Consensus, 19 March 2009.

⁹⁴ Steven Bernstein, "Grand Compromises in Global Governance", *Government and Opposition*, Vol. 47, No. 3, 2012, pp. 368–394, p. 387.

At the Review Conference, India's Minister for External Affairs, E. Ahmed, urged that the focus of the conference should be on achieving the commitments made since the economic crisis was taking its toll on the developing countries. It was important to shore up the Official Development Assistance (ODA), and increase funding from the World Bank, the International Finance Corporation (IFC), and regional development banks to develop infrastructure in developing countries.⁹⁵ The G77 renewed its call for the reform of global economic governance which it felt was responsible for the 2008 financial crisis.⁹⁶ By then, India was also part of the Leading Group, a grouping of 66 countries, developed and developing, together with UN agencies, private philanthropic foundations, and NGOs. This was critical in the final adoption of Article 51 of the Doha Declaration on innovative finance, which emphasised that innovative finance could not be a substitute for Official Development Assistance (ODA).⁹⁷

As mandated in the last paragraph of the Doha Declaration in 2013, the G77 brought up the need for the Third FFD Conference to be held in 2015 so that it would go hand-in-hand with the SDG process.⁹⁸ As a member of the G77, India emphasised the linkage between the

⁹⁵ PMI, Statement by E. Ahmed, Minister of State for External Affairs, at the Plenary Session of the Follow-up International Conference on Financing for Development to Review the Implementation of the Monterrey Consensus at Doha, 30 November 2008.

⁹⁶ G77, Statement by H.E. John W. Ashe, Permanent Representative of Antigua and Barbuda to the United Nations, on Behalf of the Group of 77 and China, at the Follow-Up International Conference on Financing for Development to Review the Implementation of the Monterrey Consensus, Doha, Qatar, 1 December 2008, at <http://www.g77.org/statement/getstatement.php?Id=08120,1>, accessed 18 July 2016.

⁹⁷ The leading group was formed in Paris in 2006. See, Leading Group for Innovative Finance in Development, at <http://www.leadinggroup.org/rubrique173.html>, accessed 18 July 2016.

⁹⁸ A/68/627, Summary by the President of the General Assembly of the Sixth High-level Dialogue on Financing for Development, UNGA, New York, 7–8 October 2013, 29 November 2013, Para.11.

SDGs and FFD; the need for more ODA; support for the Intergovernmental Expert Committee on Sustainable Development set up in June 2013; building over the Millennium Development Goal template for technology transfer, market access, debt servicing and capacity building; the reform of global economic governance; leveraging private capital while maintaining the primacy of public capital, and maintaining the flexibility of South-South cooperation.⁹⁹ On its own, it also spelt out what it desired of the FFD — that the FFD give to developing countries the kind of support India had given to 48 African and Group of Latin American and Caribbean Countries (GRULAC) as a part of South-South cooperation.¹⁰⁰

In September 2014, the General Assembly adopted a resolution for working towards a multilateral legal mechanism for debt restructuring.¹⁰¹ This too was based on the draft resolution put forward by the G77 nations. In that session, India emphasised the importance of this in the context of Monterrey Consensus (2002), and its importance for the

⁹⁹ PMI, Statement by Mr. M. Krishnaswamy, Member of Parliament & Member of the Indian Delegation, on Agenda Item 18: “Follow-Up to and Implementation of the Outcome of the 2002 International Conference on Financing for Development and the 2008 Review Conference” & Agenda Item 17 (b): “International Financial System and Development” at the Second Committee of the 68 Session of the United Nations General Assembly, 16 October 2013. For a critical view of India’s international development assistance, see Rohan Mukherjee, “India’s International Development Programme”, in David M. Malone, C. Raja Mohan and Srinath Raghavan (eds.), *The Oxford Handbook of Indian Foreign Policy*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2015, pp. 173–187. The author argues that India’s aid has always been given where its military and economic interests lie.

¹⁰⁰ PMI, India and United Nations/Development, Economic and Environmental issues: Sustainable Development Goals, Post 2015, Development Agenda & South-South Cooperation, October 2014.

¹⁰¹ UNGA, A/RES/68/304, “Towards the establishment of a multilateral legal framework for sovereign debt restructuring processes”, 9 September 2014.

SDGs and FFD.¹⁰² Later, during a discussion of the report of the Intergovernmental Committee of Experts on Sustainable Development Financing in December 2014, India hoped that the report of the Committee — though meant for the FFD process — would take into account the SDGs that have been formulated.¹⁰³

In a discussion on the zero-draft of the FFD outcome document in April 2015,¹⁰⁴ India appreciated the efforts made to suggest more avenues for financing for development. It was, however, critical of the attempted move away from the structure of the Monterrey and Doha conferences; the over emphasis on South-South cooperation; prescriptions regarding national policies which had no space for discussion in a forum for enhancing international cooperation; and expressed hesitation in accepting the FFD as the sole pillar of the means of implementation of the SDGs.¹⁰⁵ At the intergovernmental negotiations for the preparation of the Addis Ababa Conference — which also took place in April 2015 after the second round of intergovernmental negotiations for the post-2015 development agenda — the G77 affirmed their commitment to the Open Working Group draft on SDGs since it had adopted the means of implementation as a stand-alone goal, and as a part of each of the 17 goals. They said that the FFD and SDG were separate tracks, but the FFD could complement the SDG means of implementation. Given the increasing

¹⁰² PMI, Statement by H. E. Bhagwant S. Bishnoi, Deputy Permanent Representative of India to the United Nations, 68th Session of General Assembly, 107th Plenary Session, Item 14 — Action on Draft Resolution A/68/L.57/Rev.1., September 2014.

¹⁰³ PMI, Statement by Mayank Joshi, First Secretary, on the Agenda Items 13 (a) and 115: Report of the Intergovernmental Committee of Experts on Sustainable Development Financing (ICESDF) at the United Nations General Assembly, 8 December 2014.

¹⁰⁴ The Draft was circulated by the President of General Assembly on 16 March 2015.

¹⁰⁵ PMI, 2nd Drafting Session for the 3rd Financing for Development Conference Intervention by Amit Narang, Counsellor, 13 April 2015.

role of private sector in development, they called for greater private sector engagement with the FFD and SDG processes.¹⁰⁶

In the meeting of the joint session to consider the Technology Facilitation Mechanism (TFM) and other issues related to science and innovation, a suggestion that came out of the Rio+20 conference in 2012, the G77 said that the work of the Inter-Agency committee set up by the UN on this as well as the structured dialogue which suggested the setting up of an online platform for this are positive steps. They requested a proposal of TFM in the zero-draft of the SDGs.¹⁰⁷ In a discussion on the relationship between the SDGs and the FFD, they opposed a discussion on key deliverables, and emphasised the need for a holistic consideration of the SDGs means of implementation. They recognised the primacy of North-South cooperation, with South-South and triangular cooperation playing a complementary role at best.¹⁰⁸

Come June 2015, India participated in the informal discussion on the agreement on international cooperation on tax matters. India accepted that the issue was central to FFD, in addition to that of the ODA. Here it aligned with the G77 and some OECD countries in asking for the setting up of an intergovernmental body of the UN for tax

¹⁰⁶ G77, Statement on behalf of the Group of 77 and China by H. E. Ambassador Kingsley Mamabolo, Permanent Representative of The Republic of South Africa to the United Nations, Chair of the Group of 77, at the Joint Meeting of the FFD and the Post-2015 Development Agenda, New York, 21 April 2015.

¹⁰⁷ G77, Intervention on behalf of the Group of 77 and China by Ambassador Kingsley Mamabolo, Permanent Representative of South Africa to the United Nations, Chair of the Group of 77, to the Joint Session between FFD and Post-2015 Processes to consider the Technology Facilitation Mechanism and Other Science, Technology and Innovation Issues, New York, 2 April 2015.

¹⁰⁸ Statement on behalf of the Group of 77 and China by Mr Thembela Ngculu, Counsellor for Sustainable Development, on the relationship between the FFD and Post-2015 Processes (Global Partnership and Possible Key Deliverables), New York, 23 April 2015.

cooperation. Such a body, it argued, must be inclusive and universal, since the existing body — the Global Forum which includes developing countries — only implements norms set by the OECD. It argued that developing countries must have a role in developing the norms too, and that this does not contravene the role of the G20. India pushed the case for the proposed body being intergovernmental, rather than strengthening the existing body of experts as argued by the EU.¹⁰⁹ At the FFD Conference (13–16 July 2015), India participated in the 5th of the 6 multi-stakeholder roundtables which focused on linking the FFD with the SDGs, more specifically on the importance of global partnership.¹¹⁰

With inputs from India, as well as all the other countries and stakeholders, the third FFD conference finally resulted in the adoption of the Addis Ababa Outcome Document on 25 July 2015.¹¹¹

INDIA IN THE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS' PROCESS

The trajectory of the sustainable development goals begins with the Stockholm Conference on Human Environment of 1972, and joins the FFD process in 2015. In reverse chronological, it has been depicted by the SDG Knowledge Platform of the UN as below.¹¹²

¹⁰⁹ PMI, Interventions by Amit Narang, Counsellor, on International Cooperation on Tax matters and South Cooperation during the 3rd Informal session of Intergovernmental Negotiations on 3rd International Conference on Financing for Development, 9–10 June 2015.

¹¹⁰ Third International Conference on Financing for Development, Round table 5: Global Partnership and Three Dimensions of Sustainable Development, A/CONF.227/CRP.6, Addis Ababa, 13–16 July 2015. Also see, PMI, Statement by H.E. Mr. Jayant Sinha, Hon'ble Minister of State for Finance, at the Plenary Meeting of the 3rd International Conference on Financing for Development in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, 15 July 2015.

¹¹¹ General Assembly, *Addis Ababa Action Agenda*, A/RES/69/313, 17 August 2015.

¹¹² United Nations, Sustainable Development Knowledge Platform, *Main Milestones*, <https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/intergovernmental>, accessed 23 February 2016.

Figure 1: Main Milestones

2015
Addis Ababa Action Agenda
Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction
Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development Paris Agreement
2013
High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development
2012
United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development, RIO +20: The Future We Want
2010
Five-year review of the Mauritius Strategy of Implementation: MSI+5
2005
BPOA+10: Mauritius Strategy of Implementation
2002
World Summit on Sustainable (WSSD) Rio+10: Johannesburg Plan of Implementation
1999
Barbados Programme of Action (BPOA)+5
1997
UNGASS -19: Earth Summit +5
1994
Barbados Programme of Action (BPOA)
1993
Start of CSD
1992
United Nations Conference on Environment and Development: Agenda 21
1987
Our Common Future
1972
United Nations Conference on the Human Environment (Stockholm Conference) Creation of UNEP

Source: United Nations, Sustainable Development Knowledge Platform.

India has been engaged with the global debate on sustainability since the very beginning. The linkage between issues of environment and development — made in the landmark statement of Prime Minister Indira Gandhi on poverty being the greatest polluter at the launch of the United National Environment Programme in 1972 — has been the cornerstone of India's multilateralism on the issue of sustainability. For the most part, its association with the various sustainable development and climate change summits has been through the G77, though it did partner with a new coalition of Brazil, South Africa and China (BASIC) in the Copenhagen conference of 2009.¹¹³ There has also been some continuity between officials involved with the climate change negotiations and those engaged with the SDG process. In fact, Shekhar Dasgupta, Additional Secretary for UN matters in MEA, who was the Vice President of the Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee on Climate Change, also played an influential role in the Rio Summit.¹¹⁴ He was succeeded by T. P. Sreenivasan, who had authored the “Berlin draft” — or the “green draft” as it was popularly known — as head of the G77.¹¹⁵ But, the G77 draft did not have support from the OPEC and small island groups, as it did not list any commitments for the developing countries. For, as pointed out by Kishan S. Rana, “... [the] majority of developing countries have found the environmental issues too diffused and technical to cast them in a North South mould”.¹¹⁶

Over the years, India has stood for common but differentiated responsibilities, though it was not the originator of the idea. It has also

¹¹³ Navroz K. Dubash, n. 18. For details on how the BASIC negotiated with the developed countries at Copenhagen, see Shyam Saran, *How India Sees the World: Kautilya to the 21st Century*, Juggernaut Books, New Delhi, 2017, pp. 240–257. Saran concludes that this was the beginning of the unravelling of the UNFCCC and its Kyoto Protocol that called for common but differentiated binding reductions from countries.

¹¹⁴ T. P. Sreenivasan, n. 86, p.110.

¹¹⁵ Ibid. The draft had been prepared with help from WWF and other NGOs.

¹¹⁶ Kishan S. Rana, n. 72, p. 224.

been a vocal supporter of the Global Environment Facility for supporting sustainable development initiatives in developing countries. The adoption of Sustainable Development Goals in 2015 was preceded by two years of debate on various aspects of the issue that came out of the Rio+20 Conference in 2012 organised by the Commission on Sustainable Development. There were three main processes of discussion — an Open Working Group on Sustainable Development, a High-Level Political Forum, and Intergovernmental Negotiations.

Open Working Group on Sustainable Development

In March 2013 at the 1st Open Working Group (OWG) Meeting, India endorsed the G77 idea of adoption of the SDGs that had been endorsed at the Rio+20 Conference. As a member of the G77's Asia-Pacific troika along with Pakistan and Sri Lanka, it suggested that the economic, environmental, and social goals be identified first before dwelling on its linkages, lay emphasis on the importance of the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities, the need to go beyond ODAs to provide additional finance for sustainable development, the greater onus of developed countries, and the need for UN as well as systemic financial reform and stability.¹¹⁷ In its individual capacity, at a meeting in April 2013, India made the case for going beyond the MDG goal of overcoming extreme poverty to also addressing larger poverty; having a stand-alone goal on poverty eradication with all its linkages spelt out; not making linkages with other issues; focus on agriculture and rural development for faster and inclusive growth; the importance of access to energy; and goals for developed countries in terms of reducing their consumption.¹¹⁸

¹¹⁷ PMI, Statement by Ambassador Manjeev Singh Puri, Acting Permanent Representative, on behalf of the Asia-Pacific troika of India, Pakistan and Sri Lanka, at the First Meeting of the Open Working Group on Sustainable Development Goals, at the United Nations General Assembly, 14 March 2013.

¹¹⁸ PMI, Statement by Ambassador Manjeev Singh Puri, Deputy Permanent Representative, at the Open Working Group on Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), Session on Poverty Eradication, 19 April, 2013.

At the 4th meeting of the OWG also, as part of the troika, India focused on issues of employment; education and skill development; the mainstreaming of youth in the development agenda; focus on health and population dynamics in addition to the systemic changes required for them.¹¹⁹

At the 9th Open Working Group discussion on the post-2015 development agenda in March 2014, supporting the comprehensive focus areas document arrived at through the OWG process, India made 10 specific points on the post-2015 development agenda, paraphrased below.

1. The emphasis on eradication of poverty in all its forms in the document, and the importance of ODA and global partnership for it.
2. The importance of inclusive economic growth, infrastructure, industrialization, employment generation, and universal access to modern energy services for poverty eradication and development. Along with the economic pillar, the social pillar, encompassing food security and nutrition, health, education, water and sanitation and gender equality, must receive priority. In all this, there was need to address systemic issues addressing inter-country disparities.
3. As called for by the G77, the need to mainstream and integrate the means of implementation across each goal, have a stand-alone goal on global partnership for the development of the provision of enhanced financial and technological support and capacity building to developing countries to enable them to reach the MDG-plus goals.

¹¹⁹ PMI, Statement by India on behalf of the Asia-Pacific Troika of India, Sri Lanka, at the Fourth Meeting of the Open Working Group on Sustainable Development Goals [Discussion on: Health and population dynamics, Employment and decent work for all, social protection, youth and education], New York, 17 June 2013.

4. The need for developed countries to spell out concrete commitments and deliverables to arrive at a universal SDG framework, unlike MDGs.
5. The basis of the targets set should be differentiation as embodied in the principle of CBDR, since universality is synonymous with differentiation.
6. The narrative accompanying the final report of the OWG must not be renegotiated. It must be drawn from the outcome document of the Rio+20 Conference on Sustainable Development, and must clearly reference the principle of CBDR as reaffirmed in the context of international cooperation on sustainable development.
7. The multiple objectives under environment could be usefully integrated under one holistic goal on the sustainable management of natural eco-systems to integrate deliverables on various issues such as oceans, forests, and biodiversity.
8. Every deliverable goal on climate change must scrupulously adhere to the principles and provisions of the UNFCCC, in particular the principles of equity and common but differentiated responsibilities.
9. Need for a standalone goal on sustainable consumption and lifestyles.
10. Address the abiding democratic deficit in the institutions of global governance. Institutions responsible for global peace and security must be fully reflective of contemporary realities.¹²⁰

¹²⁰ PMI, Statement delivered by Mr. Tanmay Lal, Joint Secretary (UNES), Ministry of External Affairs, India, Ninth Session of the OWG on SDGs, 3–5 March 2014.

At the High Level Meeting of the General Assembly in May 2014 on full employment and decent work as a means of poverty eradication, it was pointed out that unfair trade practices were resulting in loss of work for farmers in developing countries, and this called for a systemic reform of trade, finance, and investment rules. There was also a need for rules to facilitate the movement of high-end skilled workers from developing to developed countries and the policy space to pursue national paths to industrialisation in the interest of inclusive growth.¹²¹

Later, India was an active participant in the four structured dialogues that were held on the Technology Facilitation Mechanism (TFM). These dwelt on the issue of development, transfer and dissemination of clean and environmentally sustainable technology. At the third of these dialogues in June 2014, India identified the areas in which developing countries would require assistance as:

- (a) Identification of appropriate technologies to scale-up efforts, and accelerate sustainable development objectives
- (b) Identification of specific international cooperation needs, including piloting of business models, technology adaptation, etc.
- (c) Support collaborative R&D projects
- (d) Support early demonstration projects
- (e) Support policy adoption and sharing of best practices for coordinated technology-financing business model implementation

¹²¹ PMI, Statement by H. E. Ambassador Asoke K. Mukerji, Permanent Representative, at the High-Level Meeting of the General Assembly on Achieving Poverty Eradication through Full Employment and Decent Work for All in the Post-2015 Development Agenda, 23 May 2014.

- (f) Possible establishment of counterpart national agencies to coordinate technological, financing and institutional requirements, and
- (g) Human and institutional capacity building.¹²²

In the fourth dialogue held in July 2014, on the subject of the structure and modalities of the proposed TFM, India made clear its preference for one of the options regarding the setting up of an Advanced Research Project Agency for Sustainable Development (ARPA-SD), a suggestion that was made by two Indian academics, Ambuj Sagar and Arun Majumdar, at the structured dialogues on TFM that would combine technology development, product development partnerships, and innovation prizes.¹²³

In the plenary of the 69th General Assembly in October 2014, the link of SDGs with energy consumption was emphasised. It was argued that countries with higher HDI (above 0.9), have higher energy consumptions too, and if India's HDI goes up from 0.5 to 0.9, its consumption of energy would become fourfold.¹²⁴ It also indicated that over emphasis in the report on climate finance must be balanced

¹²² PMI, Statement by H. E. Ambassador Asoke K Mukerji, Permanent Representative, at the 3rd Structured Dialogue on "Possible arrangements for a facilitation mechanism to promote the development, transfer and dissemination of clean and environmentally sound technologies", 4 June 2014.

¹²³ PMI, Statement by Mr. Amit Narang, Counsellor, Permanent Mission of India to the United Nations 4th Structured Dialogue on Possible arrangements for a facilitation mechanism to promote the development, transfer and dissemination of clean and environmentally sound technologies, 23 July 2014.

¹²⁴ PMI, Statement made by Mr. Amit Narang Counsellor, on Agenda Item 19, at the Second Committee of the 69th the United Nations General Assembly, 15 October 2014.

with focus on the social and economic pillars of the SDGs since there was a separate track to deal with climate finance.¹²⁵

HIGH LEVEL POLITICAL FORUM

At the inauguration of the High-Level Political Forum (HLPF) for SDGs in September 2013, the Minister of External Affairs, Salman Khurshid, cited the stark figures on the skewed balance of energy consumption by the billion poorest (1 per cent) and richest (66 per cent).¹²⁶ Attempting to bring the ECOSOC at the core of SDG formulation and implementation of the post-2015 development agenda, the statement of the G77 raised this issue at the first round of HLPF meetings in June-July 2014.¹²⁷

In later discussions, the importance of involving the youth in this process was emphasised as also the centrality of the principle of Common but Differentiated Responsibilities (CBDR) in fulfilling the goals set forth.¹²⁸ In 2015, the G77 commented on the lack of focus on capacity building

¹²⁵ PMI, Statement by Mr. Mayank Joshi, First Secretary, on the Agenda Items 13 (a) and 115: Report of the Intergovernmental Committee of Experts on Sustainable Development Financing (ICESDF) at the United Nations General Assembly, 8 December 2014.

¹²⁶ PMI, Statement by Mr. Salman Khurshid, Minister of External Affairs, at the Inaugural Meeting of the High-Level Political Forum (HLPF), Building the Future We Want: from Rio+20 to the post-2015 Development Agenda”, 24 September 2013.

¹²⁷ G77, Statement on Behalf of the Group of 77 and China by Julio Mollinedo Claros, Minister Counselor of The Permanent Mission of the Plurinational State of Bolivia to the United Nations, at the 2014 High Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development under auspices of ECOSOC, New York, 30 June 2014.

¹²⁸ G77, Statement on Behalf of the Group of 77 and China by Julio Mollinedo Claros, Minister Counselor of The Permanent Mission of The Plurinational State of Bolivia to the United Nations, at the 2014 High Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development under auspices of ECOSOC, New York, 7 July 2014.

of developing countries at the HLPF, as also of any discussion of the TFM.¹²⁹ The issue of diverse needs with regard to capacity building of least developed countries, landlocked developing countries, small island developing states and middle income countries was also raised.¹³⁰ In its individual capacity, at the HLPF in 2015, India emphasised the importance of respecting national plans in the review of the implementation for the SDGs.¹³¹

INTERGOVERNMENTAL NEGOTIATIONS

At the intergovernmental negotiations, India participated in its individual capacity. In the final run up to the SDG Summit, at the first Intergovernmental Negotiation in 2015, India cautioned against the Synthesis Report of the Secretary General that was produced in December 2014, which clubbed issues into six pillars, fearing that the integration and inter-linkages of the OWG document would be lost. It also wished for a move away from the MDG model of dealing with symptoms to addressing issues of development and growth.¹³²

¹²⁹ G77, Statement on behalf of the Group of 77 and China by the Representative of the Republic of South Africa at the High-Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development, 26 June 2015.

¹³⁰ G77, Remarks on Behalf of The Group Of 77 And China by The Permanent Representative of South Africa to the United Nations, Ambassador Kingsley Mamabolo, at the General Debate of the High-Level Political Forum, New York, 7 July 2015.

¹³¹ PMI, Statement by H. E. Ambassador Asoke K. Mukerji, Permanent Representative of India to the United Nations, at the Ministerial Meeting of the High Level Political Forum Under the auspices of the ECOSOC, “strengthening Integration, Implementation and Review — The HLPF post-2015”, and Annual Ministerial Review (AMR) of the ECOSOC, “Managing the Transition between Millennium Development Goals to the Sustainable Development Goals: What it Will Take”, 8 July 2015.

¹³² PMI, Statement by Ambassador Asoke K. Mukerji, Permanent Representative of India to the United Nations, at the 1st Session of Intergovernmental Negotiations on Post-2015 Development Agenda, New York, 19 January 2015.

At the third session of the negotiation relating to the statistical aspect of the development of SDG indicators, India objected to the introduction of some indicators that had nothing to do with the overall political consensus on the SDGs. It also raised an objection to the overemphasis on environmental indicators.¹³³ At the fourth session, India endorsed the idea of a Technology Facilitation Mechanism stating it was now a mandate of the Rio+20 Conference, and endorsed by 22 UN organisations.¹³⁴ India's Permanent Representative argued that the world has not changed much and glaring international inequalities persist. To quote:

A mention was made ...by more than one delegation as to how it is only about 30 odd countries who would still classify as traditional donors. But, to take this very example, it is also true that the 30 odd rich countries of the world, while accounting for only 17% of the global population, still account for over 60% of the global GDP, more than 50% of the global electricity consumption, and nearly 40% of global CO₂ emissions.¹³⁵

Engaging with members of the civil society on the same issue, India's representative pointed out that the mistrust regarding technology facilitation was largely unwarranted, and that it was not an issue merely of the BRICs. Rather, it was an outcome of a long two-year discussion in which all stakeholders and countries were involved. It was clarified that fears regarding intellectual property rights were exaggerated, as

¹³³ PMI, Statement by Ms. Sunita Singh, Director (Sustainable Development & International Cooperation), Ministry of Environment, Forests & Climate Change, Government of India, on the issue of development of Indicators at the 3rd Session of Intergovernmental Negotiations on the Post-2015 Development Agenda, 23–27 March 2015, 23 March 2015.

¹³⁴ PMI, Statement delivered by Ambassador Asoke Kumar Mukerji, Permanent Representative of India to the UN on Technology facilitation mechanism, and other science, technology and innovation issues, 4th Session of Intergovernmental Negotiations on Post-2015 Development Agenda, Joint Session between FFD and Post-2015 processes, 22 April 2015.

¹³⁵ Ibid.

also those regarding leaving everything to the private sector. As a successful example of public-private partnership, the coming together of the Gates Foundation and the Serum Institute of India in the production of the not-so-profitable meningitis vaccine for use in Africa was highlighted.¹³⁶ India endorsed the involvement of the private sector in both the FFD and SDG processes.¹³⁷

India's emphasis was on investment for poverty eradication, policy space for countries to develop their own plans, giving equal importance to social and environmental goals of the SDG, technology and innovation transfers, and the effective review and monitoring of progress made.¹³⁸ In the last session of Intergovernmental negotiations in August 2015, India appreciated the fact that the SDGs had brought into the development debate a discussion on energy that the MDGs had entirely missed.¹³⁹

¹³⁶ PMI, Intervention by Mr. Amit Narang, Counselor, Permanent Mission of India to the UN as a panelist, Post-2015 Side Event on 'Rethinking Technology in the Post-2015 Development Agenda: Technology Assessment, Facilitation Mechanism and Non-Financial Means of Implementation', organized by UNCTAD, UN-NGLS, Women's Major Group, Global Forest Coalition, Tebtebba Foundation and ETC Group, New York, 22 April 2015.

¹³⁷ PMI, Statement by H. E. Asoke Mukerji, Permanent Representative at the Plenary meeting of the General Assembly to transmit the outcome document, "Transforming Our World: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development" to the 70th General Assembly for Adoption at the UN Summit, 1 September 2015.

¹³⁸ Third International Conference on Financing for Development, Round table 5: Global Partnership and three dimensions of sustainable development, A/CONF.227/CRP.6, Addis Ababa, 13–16, July 2015. Also see, PMI, Statement by H. E. Jayant Sinha, Hon'ble Minister of State for Finance, at the Plenary Meeting of the 3rd International Conference on Financing for Development in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, 15 July 2015.

¹³⁹ PMI, Statement by Mr. Amit Narang, Counselor, on the adoption of the Outcome Document of the 'Agenda 2030 for Sustainable Development', at the Final Session of Intergovernmental Negotiations on Post-2015 Development Agenda, 2 August 2015.

With inputs from India and all the other countries and stakeholders, the UN Sustainable Development Goals were finally adopted on 25 September 2015.

FINDINGS

The highlights of India's position on the issues of financing for development and sustainable development goals emerge clearly from the interventions made by India's representatives in the lead up to the adoption of the final documents.

On FFD, India's position as part of the G77 coalition was its focus on poverty alleviation and improved human development. India's position as part of the G20, which India presided over in 2002, focused on reform of the international financial institutions and providing financial stability for development. There was a notable difference in what India was able to put forth as part of the G77 and what it was able to bargain for as part of the G20. As part of the Leading Group of 66 countries — developed and developing — along with other actors during the Doha Review Conference of 2008, it ensured that the ODA was not compromised on vis-à-vis the new modality of innovative finance that was being conceived of. Thus, on this issue, it was indeed possible for India to transcend the North-South divide.

In its individual capacity and as part of G77, India opposed the attempt to make FFD the only source of funding for the SDGs, and ensured that means of implementation of the SDGs found a place as a stand-alone goal. On TFM and the related issues of science and innovation, India pushed for the link between FFD and SDGs. It also attempted to retain the focus on poverty eradication and the importance of a global partnership for it.

On the SDGs, India participated mainly through the G77's Asia-Pacific troika, along with Pakistan and Sri Lanka. In this, notable was the attempt to bring the ECOSOC to the core of the SDG formulation and implementation post-2015 development agenda — though in its individual capacity, it placed much more emphasis on going beyond the MDG goal of overcoming extreme poverty to attempting poverty eradication with all its linkages spelt out. It wished for a move away from the MDG model of dealing with symptoms to addressing issues

of development and growth. It also urged for focus on agriculture and rural development for faster and inclusive growth, the importance of access to energy, and goals for developed countries to reduce their consumption levels to save energy. Indian academics presented a model for the TFM in the form of the Advanced Research Project Agency for Sustainable Development (ARPA-SD). India emphasised the importance of respecting national plans in the review of implementation for the SDGs.

ISSUES IN THE LINEAGE OF INDIA'S ECONOMIC MULTILATERALISM

India was partially integrated into the worldwide colonial economic network of Britain, mainly as an exporter of raw material. During the Imperial economic conference in 1923, C. A. Innes, who represented India, argued that trade-related preferences in place at the time "...normally benefitted countries which exported manufactures, not those exporting raw materials, which usually entered other countries free or with minimal duties."¹⁴⁰ Also, since preferences were based on reciprocity, two-thirds of Indian trade that was not within the Empire in 1930 would not get any imperial reciprocity. In the League of Nations, India was known for its annual struggle for developing economies in the League's budget. William Meyer, the Indian High Commissioner in London and leader of the first delegation to the League's Assembly, "...began the precedent of economy-mindedness and linked it to a demand for reduction in India's contribution to the League budgets" because India received very little benefits from the League, though they were the highest among the non-permanent members.¹⁴¹ When economic issues became more important than social issues in the League, Indian representatives spoke for the industrially backward countries. In the International Labour Organisation (ILO),

¹⁴⁰ Charles H. Heimsath and Surjit Mansingh, *A Diplomatic History of Modern India*, Allied Publishers, Bombay, pp. 12–13. By 1931, England dropped the gold standard and created the sterling area, so at the Imperial Conference in 1932, India could not argue against preferences. New rules were enacted to govern Indo-British Trade in 1939 and continued till 1947, and were modified to conform to GATT.

¹⁴¹ *Ibid.*, p. 16.

India was given a place on the board among the eight industrialised countries at a time when the USA, Switzerland, and Poland were not, given the large number of industrial labour force, including transport and maritime labour.¹⁴² Post-independence, this “diplomacy of economic equalisation”¹⁴³ continued. It can broadly be divided into three categories:

- Interjecting development into institutional mandates
- Strengthening the developmental role of the UN
- Linking development with new issues on the agenda

INTERJECTING DEVELOPMENT INTO INSTITUTIONAL MANDATES

In the formative years of the United Nations and the lead up to the Bretton Woods Conference in July 1944, Indian representatives made a case for the International Monetary Fund to settle the sterling debts of developed countries vis-à-vis developing countries that had accrued due to their contribution to the war effort.¹⁴⁴ This, however, was rejected by the USA as well as Britain. India also tried to make the development of backward countries as one of the objectives of the Fund, which too was not accepted. As the fifth largest quota holder in the IMF, India was on the Executive Board of the IMF, and participated in the Board of Governors’ annual meetings. At the eighth meeting of the Board in 1954, India was very critical of the increase in the ‘scale of charges’ for the use of IMF resources.¹⁴⁵

Similarly, in the case of the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (IBRD) or the World Bank, in the Draft Article 1 on the purpose of the bank where the emphasis was on the investment of

¹⁴² Ibid, pp.18–20.

¹⁴³ Ibid, pp. 516–523.

¹⁴⁴ S. N. Tawale, n. 47, pp. 32–34.

¹⁴⁵ Report of the Study Group of the Indian Council for World Affairs, n. 25, p. 166.

private capital in the development of productive sources, India tried to insert the requirement of investment in development, thus suggesting the need for non-private capital for investment in social and economic infrastructure.¹⁴⁶ This found a place in the revised Article 1 (1) of the IBRD, thus putting the concerns of underdeveloped countries at the core of the IBRD's agenda. Also, the word 'development' in IBRD was inserted by India's representative.¹⁴⁷

However, India had limited power to influence outcomes, and these international financial institutions carried out their tasks of surveillance, financial assistance, and technical assistance in the manner desired by the fund providers.¹⁴⁸ The G-10 of industrialised countries, on the contrary, had a great deal of say in the 1960s and 1970s in the establishment of the General Agreement to Borrow; the establishment of the Special Drawing Rights (SDRs); the setting up of the Committee of 20 to look into the reform of the international monetary system; the establishment of processes leading to gold sales and the setting up of the trust fund; and the institutionalisation of the Interim Committee at the IMF (IMFC), as well as the Development Committee (DC) at the World Bank. By the mid-1980s, the G-7 took on this role.¹⁴⁹

Trade was yet another issue of critical importance in the multilateral realm. In 1947, the United Nations Conference on Trade and Employment (UNCTE) for setting up the International Trade Organisation (ITO) was held in Havana.¹⁵⁰ The preparatory meetings

¹⁴⁶ Ibid, pp. 35–37.

¹⁴⁷ Anand P. Mavalankar, "India and Development Issues in the United Nations", in Nawaz B. Mody and B.N. Mehrish (eds.) *India's Role in the United Nations: 50th Anniversary of United Nations 1945–1995*, Bombay, Allied Publishers Limited, 1995, pp. 98–128, p. 99

¹⁴⁸ A. Vasudevan, n. 24.

¹⁴⁹ Ibid, p. 144.

¹⁵⁰ K. P. Karunakaran, n. 6, pp. 344–345. India also played a key role in the pre-Havana meetings to place restrictions on investments in some fledgling industries that had been set up during the Second World War, with ITO approval and reservations that would benefit national shipping, insurance, and banking enterprises. See, pp. 350–351.

for it were held from April to September 1947, and it was here that India was able to get recognition for the development of the underdeveloped world as a means of expanding world trade and employment, thus providing a perspective on the future ITO. The delegation of independent India, in accordance with the Lokanathan Sub-Committee that was set up to consider these issues, felt that there ought to be a connection between trade and employment.¹⁵¹ It was argued that trade must allow for quantitative restrictions, and ensure that employment generated must be of good quality, which required the assistance of the developed countries. However, the ITO was never formed as the USA and the UK did not ratify its Charter. Instead, the General Agreement on Trade and Tariffs (GATT) was set up in 1947 with a fairly limited mandate, in which growth was included over time.¹⁵²

In June 1948, India joined the GATT.¹⁵³ At the conference of contracting parties of the GATT, India not only negotiated for concessions for itself but also for inclusion in GATT of special provisions that could give latitude to under developed countries to pursue their programmes for development.¹⁵⁴ These were expressly pushed for by the Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FICCI)¹⁵⁵ in order to use quantitative restrictions and assist the development of particular industries as well as to allow for flexible bound rates of tariffs when so required by a new industry.¹⁵⁶

By 1960s, the focus of the global south, encouraged by the Socialist bloc and radicals in the western world, was on redistribution rather

¹⁵¹ S. N. Tawale, n. 47, p. 132.

¹⁵² Paul Kennedy, *The Parliament of Man: The Past, Present and Future of the United Nations*, New York, Random House, 2006, p. 120.

¹⁵³ Ibid, p.132.

¹⁵⁴ Report of the Study Group of ICWA, n. 25, pp. 184–85.

¹⁵⁵ Ibid, pp. 186–187.

¹⁵⁶ Ibid, p.188.

than growth.¹⁵⁷ Along with Brazil, Ethiopia and Yugoslavia, India tabled a “particularised” general subject resolution for an international conference on trade and development, whose focus would only be the least developed countries (LDCs), and whose programme would be decided by a conference committee, and thus prompted the prospect of East-West confrontation from derailing the conference. Thus, their proposal emphasised adaptation of the GATT rather than doing away with it. The conference committee received a Soviet draft proposal for the conference agenda to focus on forming a new international trade organisation, and another by 28 LDCs, including India, which focused on the expansion of trade rather than the institutional mechanism for it, though there was a reference to it in the preamble. India had believed in engaging with the GATT constructively all along, unlike some LDCs. The proposal later got the support of 35 countries.

After signing on to the GATT and the Protocol on Provisional Application of GATT in 1948, a bill was passed in February 1949 to amend the Indian Tariff Act of 1934 to put in place the concessions agreed to by India.¹⁵⁸ India participated actively in the first three tariff conferences, but dropped out of the fourth since it had nothing new or more to offer.¹⁵⁹ As has been said, India’s activism in the GATT (and UNCTAD) helped “the conceptual mainstreaming of [the] development dimension” in the multilateral trading system.¹⁶⁰ Also, while the developed countries tried to reduce the economic power of the UN, India tried to enhance it through the development decades.¹⁶¹ Intellectuals from the South India articulated the need for multilateral compacts to implement adjustment programmes to deal with

¹⁵⁷ Paul Kennedy, n. 152, p. 125.

¹⁵⁸ Report of the Study Group of ICWA, n. 25, p. 183. The concessions were of three types: reduction in existing duties; commitment to not increase duties in the future; and reducing or eliminating preferences given to other countries.

¹⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, p.184.

¹⁶⁰ Lakshmi Puri, n. 12, p. 1081.

¹⁶¹ Muchkund Dubey, “Reform of the UN System and India”, in Atish Sinha and Madhup Mohta, n.12, pp. 139–191.

indebtedness, the assurance of export markets, and the provision of adequate finance.¹⁶² The details of India's activism on GATT and UNCTAD since early days to the present will be disassembled in a later section that looks specifically at how the attempt was made to link development with new issues that came up on the agenda.

For now, a brief fast-forward to 1999 when post the currency crises in Mexico and East Asia, the G20 was formed as a mechanism for discussions among finance ministries of the world's top twenty economies, including India. This presented another opportunity for India to influence the mandate of the institutions. G20 members are part of the IMF Committee at the IMF and the Development Committee at the World Bank. Post the 2008-09 financial crisis, the G20 became an important forum to bring about financial stability, and the Financial Stability Board came to include emerging economies.¹⁶³ Over the years, the G20 has taken more issues on board — an evidence of “incrementalism”.¹⁶⁴ At the Seoul Summit in November 2010, the G20 adopted the “Development Consensus for Shared Growth”. As a part of this grouping, India called for a focus on infrastructure to increase domestic demand and imports in emerging economies. The G20 tightened the rules for the regulation of the financial institutions, the shadow banking system, and the systemically important financial institutions (SIFIs). It also addressed the issue of global imbalances by setting up the G2 Mutual Assessment Process (MAP) for identifying strategically important economies running imbalances — exporters with surpluses, and importers with deficit due to lack of savings and leveraged consumption.¹⁶⁵ The Cannes Summit of 2011 identified 29 SIFIs for closer scrutiny, and decided to focus on issues of food security

¹⁶² Arjun Sengupta, “Multilateral Economic Pacts Supporting Economic Reforms”, in The South Centre, *Facing the Challenge: Responses to the Report of the South Commission*, London/Geneva, Zed Books/South Centre, 1993, pp. 299–304.

¹⁶³ Parthasarathi Shome, “Introduction”, in Parthasarathi Shome (ed.) *The G20 Macroeconomic Agenda: India and the Emerging Economies*, Delhi, Cambridge University Press, 2014, pp. 3–15.

¹⁶⁴ *Ibid*, p.10.

¹⁶⁵ *Ibid*, p. 12.

and infrastructure finance within the developmental priorities. To give just one more example, the 2012 Mexico Summit decided to focus on commodity price volatility, food insecurity, and the greening of growth.

STRENGTHENING THE DEVELOPMENTAL ROLE OF THE UN

Once the international financial institutions were in place, the San Francisco Conference in April-June 1945 was held to discuss political matters, and the setting up of the ECOSOC to ensure that the working of the IMF and World Bank, with their budgets in control of the richest, would still be geared to achieving the goals of the Charter—that is, as a coordinator.¹⁶⁶ Many more developing countries attended this conference as compared to the Bretton Woods Conference of 1944.¹⁶⁷ However, since this Conference ended up being more political, the Indian delegation did not contribute much. The nature of the delegation also affected their participation; the Indian representatives were handpicked by the British. At this Conference, Australia took the lead to present some proposals for strengthening the role of ECOSOC.¹⁶⁸ However, independent India was very keen to join and strengthen the ECOSOC. India's Ramaswami Mudaliar became the first chairperson of ECOSOC. In the meanwhile, the UN Sub-Committee on Economic Development was set up as a result of the General Assembly resolution of India, along with Chile, Cuba, Lebanon, Peru, and Venezuela, which looked at both these issues. In 1947, the Sub-Committee on Economic Development, headed by V. K. R. V. Rao, made a request for a UN agency for Economic Development pointing out the weaknesses of private foreign capital, inter-governmental finance, and international finance provided by the World Bank.¹⁶⁹ Rao's analysis of the phenomenon of national income from a developing country perspective is regarded as the first step in looking

¹⁶⁶ S. N. Tawale, n. 47, p. 116.

¹⁶⁷ Ibid.

¹⁶⁸ Ibid.

¹⁶⁹ Ibid, p. 112.

at GNP growth from the perspective of development.¹⁷⁰ Parallely, in the 1950s, a very important aspect of the UN's economic work was being done by the UN Statistical Commission which sought to make available development related data from countries to the UN. India's P. C. Mahalanobis worked with its head, Richard Stone, and recommended new ways of sampling and preparing national accounts.¹⁷¹

Around the same time, in the wake of the nationalisation of the Anglo-Iranian Oil Company in 1951, and to further the norm of economic self-determination of states and peoples, India was party to developing the concept of permanent sovereignty over natural resources in 1952, which eventually (from 1966) became accepted as international law.¹⁷² This happened gradually, when it had come to be believed among developed countries that development in the less developed parts of the world would take place with technical assistance in agriculture, medicine, education, and training rather than with the offering of capital resources.¹⁷³ As a result, in the period from 1946–59, there was the establishment of the Economic Programme of Technical Assistance (EPTA) and Special Projects Fund (SPF).¹⁷⁴ In the case of EPTA, India wanted to link technical assistance to capital flows (which was later a part of the Chilean draft that was put across as an alternative to the US draft); but this did not come about.¹⁷⁵ In the case of the SPF, which was set up in December 1957 based on a US proposal, India led a parallel effort for a UN Capital Development Fund for building

¹⁷⁰ S. L. Rao, "Economic Ideas of VKRV Rao", *Economic and Political Weekly*, Vol. 34, No. 37, 11–17 September 1999, pp. 2642–2644, p. 2644.

¹⁷¹ UNIC for India and Bhutan, n. 22, p. 147.

¹⁷² V. S. Mani, "India's Contribution to the Development of International Law over the past half Century: Some Reflections", in Surjit Mansingh (ed.), *Nehru's Foreign Policy: Fifty Years On*, Mosaic Books in collaboration with India International Centre, pp. 69–99, p. 83.

¹⁷³ Paul Kennedy, n. 152, p. 121.

¹⁷⁴ S. N. Tawale, n, 47, p. 70.

¹⁷⁵ Ibid, p. 76.

economic and social infrastructure.¹⁷⁶ To this end, India (with Argentina, Ceylon, Chile, Egypt, Greece, Indonesia Mexico, the Netherlands, Venezuela and Yugoslavia) submitted a draft for setting up a Special UN Fund for Economic Development (SUNFED) to the 2nd Committee of the General Assembly. The USA suggested that this fund be linked to the existing technical assistance programme rather than being a new fund since it would make it easier for them to provide the technical training required for development.¹⁷⁷

Meanwhile, another idea of a UN Peace Fund for Reconstruction and Development that India's B. N. Rau had proposed in the First Committee dealing with issues of disarmament was taken note of by those discussing development issues. Rau had suggested that the money saved by not investing in armaments could be used to set up the peace fund. While the Fund itself was not set up, the USA and its supporters said that they would take up this responsibility after some level of disarmament, and India made the point that peace itself was at stake if the underdeveloped countries did not develop.¹⁷⁸ So, the link between disarmament and development made by India in the 5th session was now a link pushed by the USA, except to postpone giving funds for a UN Agency for development. India then tried to break the link in the 9–11th sessions of the Assembly.¹⁷⁹ Over time, despite support from some developed countries and the Soviet Union in the post–1953 (Stalin) years, the proposal did not move forward. India's support for the idea remained until much later when Y. B. Chavan, as Defence Minister, argued that even a five per cent reduction in the military budgets of developed countries could facilitate the transfer of much needed resources, and open vast opportunities for development for two-thirds of mankind.¹⁸⁰

¹⁷⁶ Ibid, p. 83.

¹⁷⁷ Ibid, p. 187.

¹⁷⁸ Ibid, p. 122.

¹⁷⁹ Ross N. Berkes and Mohinder S. Bedi, *The Diplomacy of India: Indian Foreign Policy in the United Nations*, Stanford University Press/Oxford University Press, Stanford, California and London, 1958, p. 199.

¹⁸⁰ Y. B. Chavan, n. 5, p. 170.

Despite early attempts at the politicisation of ECOSOC (especially EPTA) by the Soviet Union as a means of furthering US colonialism,¹⁸¹ ECOSOC's role increased as it established the Advisory Committee on the Application of Science and Technology to Development, the Committee on Developmental Planning in 1966 and, 1967 onwards, several intra-UN bodies started reporting to ECOSOC.¹⁸² Its role increased also with the setting up of IDA, IFC, and the regional development banks.¹⁸³ The Afro-Asian bloc in the UN — B. N. Rau was instrumental in creating — lobbied together for revising the UN Charter to increase the membership of ECOSOC from 18 to 27 in 1963.¹⁸⁴ Gradually, however, many of India's initiatives, collectively with the G77, took away the sheen from the ECOSOC. Responding to an argument by the UN Secretary General Boutros Boutros Ghali, former Indian Prime Minister P. V. Narasimha Rao explained the choice of the General Assembly for activism by the developing world. He said it was because any procedures developed needed to be applied with 'flexibility' and 'inventiveness' which the Assembly allows.¹⁸⁵

On another front, together with 25 other nations, India pushed for merging the EPTA and SPF. In 1965, they were merged to create the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), again under the General Assembly. The idea was to bring the focus back on the country

¹⁸¹ Walter R. Sharpe, *The United Nations Economic and Social Council*, Columbia University Press, New York and London, 1969, pp. 82–89.

¹⁸² Ibid, p. 204. In 1947, the number of UN bodies reporting to ECOSOC was 22; by 1967, it had gone up to 38. (The author draws this from a table on p. 25.)

¹⁸³ Ibid, p. 205.

¹⁸⁴ Michael Brecher, *India and World Politics: Krishna Menon's View of the World*, Oxford University Press, London, 1968, p. 308. For the role of Afro-Asian nations, along with Latin American countries in this effort, see, D. N. Sharma, *Afro-Asian Group in the UN*, Chaitanya Publishing House, Allahabad, 1969, pp. 310–319.

¹⁸⁵ "P.V. Narasimha Rao's Address at the Meeting of Ministers of Group of 77 at the UN", in *India's views on the New International Economic Order: January 1980 to October 1981*, (publisher details missing), pp. 16-22, p. 20.

as a whole rather than on isolated projects as the World Bank did.¹⁸⁶ Through this was widened the idea of technical cooperation. India also put forth the idea of ‘Consensus on Country Programming’ to define the pre-investment work, which was favoured over the British proposal of capacity study.¹⁸⁷ This was made a pre-requisite to the Extended Programme of Technical Cooperation which, until 1973–74, was based on the criteria of what can or cannot be given. Eventually, the UNDP supported India in strengthening technical capacity on human development analysis, integrating human development in planning at the national, state, and district levels, and supporting the preparation of human development reports.¹⁸⁸

Having pushed for the setting up of the UNDP, India was in its Governing Council from 1967 until 1978, and again from 1981 until 1986. As a result, it has been the largest recipient of UNDP aid, and the largest contributor to UNDP.¹⁸⁹ From 2003, India again took the lead in critiquing the UNDP for projects and their management which reflected the thinking of the donor countries rather than requirements of the developing ones.¹⁹⁰ To change this, in 2006, along with Brazil and South Africa, the IBSA Fund was set up to work as a part of the South-South Cooperation Unit, now the UN Office of South-South Cooperation and through the UNDP.¹⁹¹ The initial annual pledging of US\$ 3 million by each country was institutionalised in 2015 to become

¹⁸⁶ Paul Kennedy, n. 152, p. 126.

¹⁸⁷ Anand P. Mavalankar, n. 147, pp. 117–118.

¹⁸⁸ UNIC for India and Bhutan, n. 22, p. 151. Data collection on human indices at the national, state and district levels have since been undertaken by the National Sample Survey Organisation (NSSO) as per UN requirements.

¹⁸⁹ Anand P. Mavalankar, n. 147, pp. 117–118.

¹⁹⁰ Carolina Milhorange and Folashade Soule-Kohndou, “South-South Cooperation and Change in International Organizations”, *Global Governance*, 23, 2017, 461–481, p. 465.

¹⁹¹ A precedent of this engagement was former Prime Minister Manmohan Singh’s tenure as Secretary General of the South Commission. His idea of asymmetric trade liberalisation was for the benefit of smaller countries, especially the LDCs, most of whom are in Africa. Later, the idea became popular as one element of the Gujral Doctrine. See also, Sanjaya Baru, n. 27, p. 117 and 121.

assessed contribution. Projects supported by it bear a clear imprint of South-South priorities, and are beginning to attract other donors too.¹⁹²

India was also associated with the creation of the United Nations Industrial Development Organisation (UNIDO), which was established as a separate entity by the G77 through a resolution of the General Assembly in 1966 as a part of the UN Secretariat in New York; in 1967 it moved to Vienna.¹⁹³ Its “Guidelines for Project Evaluation” filled an important gap in the UN system of assistance to developing countries. Developed countries, and important developing countries like Saudi Arabia and Kuwait, rejected the G77’s demand made at UNIDO’s Delhi meeting that US\$ 300 billion be given to reach the ambitious Lima target of relocating 25 per cent industrial production to the LDCs by 2000.¹⁹⁴

To further spur the norm of equity in international economic relations in 1970, India took the lead in the adoption of the Declaration of Friendly Relations among Nations.¹⁹⁵ K. Krishna Rao (from the MEA’s Law and Treaties Division) played a key role in drafting this declaration.¹⁹⁶ The Declaration outlined seven principles: prohibition of the threat of use of force; non-intervention; the peaceful settlement of international disputes; international cooperation; equal rights and self-determination; sovereign equality; and good faith fulfilment of international relations. These were meant to complement the new economic order being envisaged by the developing countries in the 1970s.

¹⁹² Carolina Milhorange and Folashade Soule-Kohndou, n.190.

¹⁹³ S. Nanjundan, “United Nations and Eighty Countries: An Autobiographical Experience”, October 2004, (Publication missing), p. 255.

¹⁹⁴ Bharat Wariavwalla, “Rich-Poor Relationship: Fragile Interdependence”, in Ramashray Roy (ed.) *Politics of International Economic Relations*, CSDS, New Delhi/ICRIER, New Delhi, Ajanta Publications, New Delhi, 1982, pp. 39–55, p. 46.

¹⁹⁵ V. S. Mani, n. 172.

¹⁹⁶ Ibid, pp. 90–91.

The second development decade in the 1970s sought to implement the International Development Strategy with financial resources of 1 per cent of GNP for developing countries, of which 0.7 per cent was to be given in the form of ODA.¹⁹⁷ In 1969, for the first time, the Partners in Development report of an International Commission headed by Lester Pearson proposed the idea that developed countries were partners of developing countries in their quest for development. It also proposed the idea of ODA to be 0.7 per cent of the GNP which could be given bilaterally, or through the World Bank, the IMF or the UNDP.¹⁹⁸ 0.7 per cent was based on the calculation that, in order to reach 6 per cent growth rate of GDP during the Second Development Decade, developing countries needed 1 per cent of the GNI of developed countries, of which 30 per cent would come from private sources, and 0.7 per cent would be ODA.¹⁹⁹ Professor D. R. Gadgil and V. K. R. V. Rao worked to calculate the amount that was due as ODA as 1 per cent of GNP. Diplomatically, Muchkund Dubey played a role in this too during the first development decade.²⁰⁰

In April-May 1974, a conference of the General Assembly coined the term NIEO and, in December 1974, the Charter of Economic Rights and Duties of States was adopted which placed restrictions on foreign capital invested, and little compensation in case of government takeover of the project invested in. The Indian colonial experience of the East India Company was one of the drivers of the adoption of this instrument.²⁰¹ NIEO was as much about political economy as the monetary institutions of the Bretton Woods and the law of the sea.²⁰²

¹⁹⁷ C. V. Narasimhan, *The United Nations: An Inside View*, UNITAR/Vikas Publishing House Pvt. Ltd, New Delhi, 1989, p. 154.

¹⁹⁸ *Ibid*, p. 151.

¹⁹⁹ Henk-Jan Brinkman, "International Economic Diplomacy at the United Nations", in James P. Muldoon Jr., Joann Fagot Aviel, Richard Reitano, and Earl Sullivan, n. 87, pp. 118–135, p. 123.

²⁰⁰ UNIC for India and Bhutan, n.22, p. 162.

²⁰¹ C. V. Narasimhan, n. 197, p. 157.

²⁰² Ernst B. Haas, "Why collaborate? Issue-Linkages and International Regimes", *World Politics*, Vol. 32, No. 3, April 1980, pp. 357–405, p. 362.

In the words of Y. B. Chavan, who was the Indian Minister for Finance at the time of the adoption of the Charter, the Charter was important because

(T) he success of the UN Organisation will be related to the extent to which it succeeds in creating a new world order, which is not only free from war but free from want.²⁰³

Realising the need for addressing developing country concerns — especially in the aftermath of the oil crisis which had demonstrated the importance of the power of resources — a Committee on International Economic Cooperation with 27 members, (19 developing, 7 developed), and the European Community (10 developed countries excluding socialist ones) was set up, and worked briefly from 1975 until 1977.²⁰⁴ India was in full support of its recommendation for the setting up of four new commissions in the UN: on raw material; development; energy; and financial affairs.²⁰⁵ In 1975, a consensus document was arrived at, and was to serve as the basis for implementing plans of NIEO. A Committee of the Whole (COW) was then set up to push through the NIEO proposal at the General Assembly's session in 1980 to reform the IMF and the World Bank.

As was succinctly put by Y. B. Chavan:

while the responsibility for development rests with national governments, [the] responsibility for changes in global structures rests with those who control the overwhelming share of international trade, investment, industry and technology.²⁰⁶

This, however, did not materialise as developed countries denied even to the General Assembly the power to suggest any changes to these existing institutions that had rules for the change laid down in their respective charters. When the Brandt Commission was set up to revive

²⁰³ Y. B. Chavan, n. 5, pp. 174–175.

²⁰⁴ C. V. Narasimhan, n. 197.

²⁰⁵ Y. B. Chavan, n. 5, p. 182.

²⁰⁶ *Ibid*, p. 190.

the Lester Pearson's report *Partners in Development* (1969), India joined the other volunteers — Netherlands (mainly), Sweden, Japan, Republic of Korea, and the UK — to share its expenses.²⁰⁷ Although the report of the Brandt Commission was more practical than the NIEO document, the implementation of NIEO did not work out at the Cancun Summit of 1981. However, with the weak position of the developing countries in the 1980s, developed countries pushed through reforms as increasing the share of voluntary contributions for important programmes of the UN, and others “to curtail the negotiations role of the principal economic bodies of the UN.”²⁰⁸

LINKING DEVELOPMENT WITH NEW ISSUES ON THE AGENDA

Trade

Nearly a decade or so of experience with the *ad hoc* trade arrangements put in place through GATT had revealed the limitations of its developmental aspirations. It was when the UK was attempting to join the EEC in 1962, and India was thinking of protecting her commercial interests, that the thought dawned that the solution to the bilateral problem could come through a change in commercial relations at a global level between the developing and developed countries.²⁰⁹ This resulted in the first articulation by India of the need for the preferential treatment of goods from developing countries in the markets of industrial nations. The G77, a coalition of developing countries was formed²¹⁰ which, eventually, was able to push for the creation of the

²⁰⁷ C. V. Narasimhan, n.197, pp. 159–160.

²⁰⁸ Muchkund Dubey, n. 161, p. 181, pp.174–175, pp.188–189. The Nordic UN Project of 1991 was notable among developed country initiatives. The needy countries had to accept this for want of funds.

²⁰⁹ K. B. Lall, n.11, p. 58.

²¹⁰ G77 has tried to reach consensus first at regional sub-group level, then among sub-groups, and then with other blocs. See, James P. Muldoon, Jr., “The Challenges of Global Economy for Multilateral Diplomacy”, in James P. Muldoon, Jr., Joann Fagot Aviel, Richard Reitano and Earl Sullivan, n. 87, pp. 109–117, p. 112. The author in turn draws from the analysis of Keith

United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) as a Standing Committee of the General Assembly in 1964, thereby formally linking trade and development.²¹¹ As K. B. Lall, an Indian diplomat who was part of the negotiations on the UNCTAD Final Act adopted in 1964, has attested, the Final Act was a consensus document and was accepted by all industrial countries. Surprisingly, many developing countries were dismayed at what they felt were huge compromises that had been made.²¹²

During the UNCTAD I in 1964, the G77 were successful in pushing the developed countries to add Part IV to the GATT, which spoke of the link between trade and development as well as differential treatment for developing countries, allowing them to not-reciprocate tariff reductions made by developed countries.²¹³ In the UNCTAD, India supported the enlargement of the SPF, which did not happen. In 1966, with 40 other countries, India tabled a General Assembly Resolution for the setting up of the Capital Development Fund. The Fund was set up, but did not receive funding from the developed countries.²¹⁴

Hamilton and Richard Langhorne. Moving to actual negotiations, the G77 tabled the first draft of a resolution in a formal meeting, followed by reactions from other countries or groups. But the real negotiations take place in “informal” meetings or “informal informals”. See, Henk-Jan Brinkman, n.199, pp. 118–135, pp.119–120. G77 bargained and voted as a group in the Law of the Sea Conferences, the 1972 Conference on the Environment, and in the 1974 World Food Conference. See, Marc Williams, *Third World Cooperation: The Group of 77 in UNCTAD*, Pinter Publishers/St. Martin’s Press, London/New York, 1991, p. 7.

²¹¹ Ibid. Raul Prebisch, its founder director, preferred the UNCTAD to be a part of the General Assembly rather than a specialised agency since that way it could exert pressure on the developed countries to bring about changes. See, C. V. Narasimhan, n.197, p. 198.

²¹² K. B. Lall, “An Engine for Peaceful Change”, in U.S. Bajpai (ed.), *Forty Years of the United Nations*, Lancer International, in association with the India International Centre, 1985, pp. 58–66, pp. 60–61.

²¹³ T. N. Srinivasan and Suresh D. Tendulkar, *Reintegrating India in the World Economy*, Institute of International Economics/OUP, New Delhi, 2003, p. 81.

²¹⁴ Ibid, p.128.

Moreover, despite the consensus during the setting up of the UNCTAD, the industrial countries did not change domestic policy to conform to national commitments; thus the enthusiasm for development cooperation petered out.²¹⁵

In UNCTAD II in 1968 in New Delhi, the basic principles of preferential market access and treatment for developing countries were pushed for acceptance by India. These, later in 1979, led to the adoption of the Enabling Clause (EC), permitting developing countries to derogate from the Most Favoured Nation (MFN) principle and grant differential and more favourable treatment to developing countries (DMFT). With the Generalised System of Preferences (GSP), the principles of non-reciprocity, non-discrimination, generalised and unconditional nature with regard to manufactured and semi-manufactured goods from developing countries were also instituted, and India benefitted from them.²¹⁶ India favoured the GSP because of its stage of development where it did not require product specific preferences — unlike some mono-product economies of Africa and the Caribbean.²¹⁷ India's argument on the integrated programme of commodities was that the programme should have five elements applicable to developing countries: namely, stocking mechanisms; a common financing fund; a system of multilateral commitments; a liberal compensatory finance mechanism; and a new approach towards processing and diversification. And, the UNCTAD would enable UNCTAD IV to work out the technical details.²¹⁸ In the UNCTAD, India was a voice of moderation, attempting to find a balance among

²¹⁵ K. B. Lall, n. 212.

²¹⁶ Jagdish N. Bhagwati, "Rethinking Global Negotiations" in *Rethinking Global Negotiations: A Statement on North-South Economic Strategy*, Current Policy Papers, No.1, 1992, International Economics Research Centre, Columbia University, pp. 11–20.

²¹⁷ Muchkund Dubey, "The Main Forces at Work", in Arthur S. Lall (ed.), *Multilateral Negotiation and Mediation*, International Peace Academy, Pergamon Press, New York, 1985, pp. 154–176, p.165.

²¹⁸ Y. B. Chavan, n. 5, p. 192.

the developed and more radicalised developing countries, given its own interests.²¹⁹ On the issue of invisibles such as shipping charges, India, both a shipper and liner, favoured the reduction of charges as well as support for the increased tonnage of developing countries. India's enthusiasm with UNCTAD, however, waned as its forex reserves dipped to US\$ 1 billion by the 1980s. At around the same time, there was a clear recognition in the Tokyo round of multilateral trade negotiations that India is not among the most-needy countries.²²⁰ Also, despite the interventions of the UNCTAD and ECOSOC, trade continued to be largely regulated by the rules of *laissez faire*.

In the Uruguay Round that began in Punta Del Este in July 1986, India was part of the G10, a coalition of the inward-looking economies of Brazil, Argentina, Cuba, Egypt, Nicaragua, Nigeria, Peru, Tanzania, and Yugoslavia that opposed the “deep integration” which went beyond border measures to bring about changes in domestic legislation in the interest of the liberalisation of trade.²²¹ They continued to favour state intervention and import substitution, more liberalisation of textile and agriculture, and the non-inclusion of services and intellectual property in the new round of trade negotiations. Others, mainly the Southeast Asian, East Asian, Latin American, and some African countries had started seeing merit in the GATT system and, therefore, worked with the developed countries in formulating the Punta Del Este declaration. Being outnumbered, India and the others had to fall in line.²²²

However, at the end of the Uruguay Round in 1994, owing to its own compulsions, India had become a party to the Trade-related Intellectual Property Rights (TRIPS), Trade-related Investment Measures (TRIMS), General Agreement on Trade in Services (GATS), and the Dispute Settlement Mechanism (DSM) to be set up, the phasing out of the Multi-Fiber Agreement (MFA), the reduction of tariff barriers — all

²¹⁹ T. N. Srinivasan and Suresh D. Tendulkar, n. 213.

²²⁰ Stephen Haggard, *Developing Nations and the Politics of Global Integration*, The Brookings Institution, Washington D.C., 1995, p.39.

²²¹ *Ibid*, p. 43.

²²² *Ibid*, pp. 42–45.

of which except four plurilateral agreements were under the single undertaking rule and had to be accepted as a package.²²³ When TRIPS had to be agreed upon under duress, developing countries like India bargained for the removal of quotas in textiles and clothing.²²⁴ While this was agreed upon, the existing quotas were to continue for 10 more years. In the Uruguay Round of trade negotiations, India was able to hold up the linking of TRIPS to issues of public health (the production of generic drugs). In the Singapore Ministerial in 1996, India also opposed the making of the linkage between labour standards and trade, arguing that this matter was already in the purview of the International Labour Organisation and need not be made an issue in trade negotiations.²²⁵ Meanwhile, in 1995, in the midst of the Uruguay Round, the WTO was born. The shift from GATT to WTO entailed a move away from focusing on reducing border barriers to prioritising the adoption of domestic regulations for free trade.

India was not in favour of launching a new round of trade negotiations before adapting to the changes agreed to in the Uruguay Round.²²⁶ Yet, the Doha round began with concerns regarding the environment and labour standards becoming a part of the trade negotiations. India entered the Doha round of negotiations proposing the idea of 'inclusive globalisation', having played with the idea at the Asia-Africa and NAM Summits in 2005–06.²²⁷ In the Doha Round, India was able to secure the TRIPS and Public Health Declaration in 2000, and amendments to it in 2005–06 to secure a waiver from TRIPS rules for the health sector. This amendment to TRIPS was ratified by 54 countries by 2010. India

²²³ Ibid, p. 89.

²²⁴ Pradeep S. Mehta and Bipul Chatterjee, "India in the International Trading System", in David M. Malone, C. Raja Mohan, and Srinath Raghavan, n. 23, pp. 636–649, p. 641.

²²⁵ Interview with Jayant Dasgupta, Former Ambassador of India to the WTO, New Delhi, 20 June 2016.

²²⁶ For the obstructive role of India in the initiation of this round, see Teresita C. Schaffer and Howard B. Schaffer, n. 34, p. 234.

²²⁷ Sanjaya Baru, n. 27, pp. 124–126.

and others also opposed the inclusion of new issues in the Doha Round — competition, investment, transparency in government procurement and trade facilitation. The reason given was that they were not part of the development agenda. It formed an alliance called the Like-Minded Group (LMG) to prevent this inclusion, and mobilised the support for this in G77 and SAARC.²²⁸

UNCTAD, that had earlier influenced trade negotiations of GATT, also continued to discuss issues regarding creation of a ‘fair’ trade regime under the WTO. In UNCTAD’s thirteenth round in 2013, the deal on trade facilitation was signed, while the other issues, such as transfer of technology, had to be dropped from the Doha agenda in deference to the preference of the USA.²²⁹

Through the Doha Round, in the Cancun Ministerial of 2003 and the Hong Kong Ministerial of 2005, India called for end to agricultural subsidies in the developed countries. India had a history of avoiding linkages in agriculture. The Doha Round, however, was dealing with this contentious issue as well. Having failed to work with the EU on the issue of agricultural subsidies, it started working with developing countries like Brazil, South Africa and, in a limited manner, with China.²³⁰ It also coalesced with a larger group of developing countries, as in case of the LMG. Both groups helped in floating negotiating proposals. India was also in the breakfast group of 6–7 countries. India mainly wanted to retain the right to increase agricultural trade barriers if required. By July 2008, since there was no special safeguard mechanism for developing countries, no deal could be reached in Geneva.²³¹

²²⁸ Charalampos Efstathopoulos and Dominic Kelly, n. 15. For India’s defensive attitude to the trade regime since 1990s, see Sanjaya Baru, n. 27, pp. 140–148.

²²⁹ Interview with Jayant Dasgupta, n. 225.

²³⁰ Teresita C. Schaffer and Howard B. Schaffer, n. 34, p. 235.

²³¹ *Ibid*, p. 237. US-EU negotiations on agriculture subsidy also failed to produce any agreement.

Then, at the WTO ministerial meeting in Bali in 2013, it was decided that a Trade Facilitation Agreement (TFA) for simplifying procedures for handling trade at borders (not limited to agriculture) would be attempted. It was agreed that there would be 4-year phase clause that would enable developing countries to hold more than 10 per cent of their produce in agriculture stockpiles, and that negotiations on the TFA would continue. However, with the change in government in 2014, India held up the TFA for the agriculture stockholding agreement. India was alone in the WTO on this decision.²³² In July 2014, India put forth a new proposal as part of the G33, to exempt the developing countries from WTO restrictions.

The Bali Ministerial of 2013 also arrived at a decision on public stock holding for ensuring food security.²³³ On the issue of services, India has been keen to liberalise Mode 1 — that is, cross border supply, and Mode 4 — that is, the movement of natural persons.²³⁴ To cite a final issue, in the WTO negotiations on environmental goods and services launched in 2014, an attempt was made (mainly by the USA) to remove trade and non-trade barriers for environment-friendly goods and services which are dual use, and largely being produced by developed countries. Only 18 products in the single-use category being produced by developing countries were to be allowed reciprocal zero-duty access to developed country markets. This too was not acceptable to India.²³⁵

ENVIRONMENT

For the first time, the Biosphere Conference of 1968 merged the environmental and development priorities of the developing as well as developed countries, and was a precursor to the UN Conference on Human Environment which led to the establishment of the United

²³² Ibid, pp. 238–239.

²³³ Pradeep S. Mehta and Bipul Chatterji, n. 224, p. 642. India is a member of these two issue groups on agriculture — food stocks and subsidies.

²³⁴ Ibid, p. 643.

²³⁵ Interview with Jayant Dasgupta, n. 225.

Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) by the GA Resolution 2997 (XXVII) in December 1972.²³⁶

Much like the tangential efforts made by India to evolve global norms — like the Charter of Rights and Duties or the Declaration of Friendly Relations among Nations mentioned earlier that would enable the ushering of the fair world order — India also contributed to the idea of the common heritage of mankind in 1967, and the related idea of the global commons. These later acquired significance in relation to the protection of the environment.²³⁷

The Stockholm conference legitimised environmental concerns and institutionalised the UNEP. It was meant to catalyse, coordinate, and stimulate action within the UN system, not to execute and finance it, unlike the World Health Organisation, the International Labour Organisation, and the World Meteorological Organisation. The Conference proposed action through 109 recommendations in 6 areas: human settlements and health; terrestrial ecosystem, land, water, and desertification (conservation); environment and development, trade, economics and transfer of technology; oceans; energy; natural disasters²³⁸ — and the priority areas were environment and development. The multilateral environment regime rolled off with the environmental crisis in the West, triggering the Stockholm conference of 1972.

In this discussion of “technocratic solutions to reduce [the] environmental side effects of development”,²³⁹ the developing countries

²³⁶ Sandhya Thakur, “The United Nations and Human Environment Protection: India’s Role”, in Nawaz B. Mody and B. N. Mehrish, n. 147, pp. 129–157, p. 131.

²³⁷ V. S. Mani, n. 172, pp. 84–85.

²³⁸ Sandhya Thakur, n. 236, p. 134.

²³⁹ Rohan D’Souza, “Sustainable Development”, in Bhupinder S. Chimni and Siddharth Malavarappu, n.13, pp. 180–194. At the domestic level in India, the linkage between environment and development — that is, sustainability — was first made in India by the Centre for Science and Energy (CSE) which led the movement criticising development as being detrimental to the environment. It represented the “development as orthodoxy” school in India.

were mostly on the other side of the debate as they expressed their concern regarding environmental concerns stalling their development.²⁴⁰ The UNEP and the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) brought out the World Conservation Strategy in 1980 which, for the first time, spoke of eco-development or sustainable development. The Brundtland Report of 1987 reversed the logic of the earlier report, and said that more development would bring about environmental conservation. Since governments, both in the developed and developing world, were more comfortable with this framing which allowed market forces with profit motives to work unhindered, this thinking continued to inform the environment discourse at the international level. In the Secretariat of the Brundtland Commission to draft the report “Our Common Future”, Nitin Desai “drafted” the texts on sustainable development that became the major theme of the report — and perhaps the most important contribution to the report. In doing so, he “drew on the idea about sustainable development that had gone into India’s Sixth Five Year plan”, in the drafting of which he had been involved.”²⁴¹

India’s concerns as highlighted during the conference revolved around two sets of issue linkages: poverty-population-environment, and development-environment.²⁴² Since the early days, India pointed a finger at the consumption habits of the developed world as being more responsible for environmental degradation than the poverty of the South.²⁴³ It also called for the need to transfer energy efficient technology to the South.²⁴⁴ There was also the issue of who should pay the costs

It grew in the aftermath of the Chipko movement, first started in March 1974. It was portrayed as a movement of the poor by some; while others argued that there was a much more complex mix of actors.

²⁴⁰ Ibid.

²⁴¹ Nitin Desai, n. 22, p. 141.

²⁴² Sandhya Thakur, n. 236, p. 140.

²⁴³ Ibid, p. 141.

²⁴⁴ Ibid, p. 143.

and, after long deliberation, the Global Environment Facility was set up in 1990 in Paris by the developed countries to help the poorer countries curb environmental problems, and buy environment friendly technologies.²⁴⁵

The UN Conference on Development and Environment (UNCED), or the Rio Summit of 1992, brought out Agenda 21, in which was mooted the idea of a Sustainable Development Commission as a functional commission of the ECOSOC to coordinate Chapter 38 of Agenda 21. It called for greater cooperation between environmental and developmental programmes.²⁴⁶ Yet, Agenda 21 was formulated by Northern governments and large transnational corporations (TNCs) who co-opted environmental movements all over the world.²⁴⁷ Issues on agenda were also Northern and elitist — global warming, population growth, and species extinction — and the people’s view of the environment, both in the North and South, were ignored. This 1990s idea of sustainable development placed development over environment, and said that environment was to be used by business interests for growth. This meant a greater role for GATT, WTO, IMF and World Bank-led development.²⁴⁸

²⁴⁵ Ibid, p. 144. However, GEF only funds projects that have a global impact; most developing country projects have local impacts.

²⁴⁶ Mark Imber, “Too Many Cooks: The Post-Rio Reform of the UN”, *International Affairs*, Vol. 69, No.1, January 1993, pp. 55–70, p. 56. As envisaged, it would supplant the role of the ECOSOC, while also taking away from the UNEP and UNDP. “The 13 programmes receive shares of the budget as follows: 1. Atmosphere 4.0 %; 2. Water 5.0%; 3. Terrestrial ecosystems 17.5 % (of which desertification would receive 9 %); 4. Oceans 10.3 %; 5. Lithosphere 0.9 %; 6. Human settlements 1.9 %; 7. Human health/welfare 2.2%; 8. Energy, industry and transport 6.3 %; 9. Peace and security 0.6 %; 10. Environmental assessment 21.8%; 11. Environmental management 5.7 %; 12. Environmental awareness; 6%; 13. Technical and regional cooperation 0.6 %.” p. 62.

²⁴⁷ Timothy Doyle, “Sustainable Development and Agenda 21: The Secular Bible of Global Free Markets and Pluralist Democracy”, *Third World Quarterly*, Vol.19, No.4, 1998, pp. 771–786.

²⁴⁸ Ibid.

Incidentally, the Agenda 21 contained many provisions related to trade that were relevant for India and developing countries.²⁴⁹ These measures related to protectionism and commodity trading. Agenda 21 asserted that greater trading will benefit developing countries.²⁵⁰ India had earlier raised objections regarding GATT's Article 20 regarding the settling of disputes relating to environment (given the experience of the Dolphin/Tuna dispute involving the USA). India also had concerns regarding non-trade barriers and harmonisation of product standards. At the Rio Summit of 1992, two considerations shaped India's policy: the North to pay for the sustainable development of the South and joint research and development for better technology, the assessment costs of which developed countries would bear. India stalled the North's move to intervene in the preservation of national forest resources.²⁵¹

Another issue of importance that received attention in Agenda 21 of the Earth Summit was that of environmentally sound technology (EST) which was defined as "total systems incorporating know-how, procedures, goods and services, and equipment, apart from organisational and managerial procedures."²⁵² Subsequently, the UNCTAD ad hoc group on the interrelationship between Investment

²⁴⁹ R. S. Pathak, "International Trade and Environmental Development: A View from India", *Indiana Journal of Global Legal Studies*, Vol.1, No. 2, Spring 1994, pp. 325–341.

²⁵⁰ For a critique of the neoliberal principles underlying this form of environmentalism, see M. Shamsul Haque, "The Fate of Sustainable Development Under Neoliberal Regimes in Developing Countries", *International Political Science Review*, Vol. 20, No.2, 1999, pp. 197–218; M. R. Auer, "Who participates in Global Environmental Governance: Partial Answers from International Relations Theory", *Policy Sciences*, Vol. 33, No. 2, 2000, pp. 155–180; A. K. Ramakrishnan, "The Global and the Local: A Critical International Perspective on the Politics of Sustainable Development", *Indian Journal of International Politics*, Vol. 62, No.1, March 2001, pp. 92–104.

²⁵¹ Sandhya Thakur, n. 236, p. 145.

²⁵² A. N. Achanta, P. Dadhich, P. Ghosh and L. Noronha, "The transfer of Environmentally Sound Technology with Special Reference to India", in Veena Jha, Grant Hewison and Maree Underhill (eds.) *Trade, Environment and Sustainable Development: A South Asian Perspective*, UNCTAD/UNDP, 1997, pp.185–201, p. 187.

and Technology identified EST as an important area of work, and identified related issues of the transfer of such technology to developing countries, financial schemes to assist with the transfer, development, and improvement of the technologies, the implications of EST for international competitiveness, and the exchange of experiences in the use of EST.²⁵³

In the aftermath of the Rio conference of 1992, the Vice President of India, K. R. Narayanan delivered the Andrew Sharman Lecture at the Royal Society for the Encouragement of Arts, Manufactures and Commerce said (May 1993):

The 1972 Stockholm meeting which the late Indira Gandhi was the only Head of Government to attend was called the UN Conference on Human Environment, whereas the Rio Conference 20 years later was called the UN Conference on Environment and Development. It was Mrs Gandhi who fired the first salvo for development by declaring that poverty was the greatest polluter and, unless it was banished through national and international action, it was futile to talk about protecting the planet from environmental disaster.²⁵⁴

Chandrashekhara Dasgupta, a senior official of the MEA along with officials from the Ministry of Environment and Forests (MOEF), who negotiated for India in 1991 during the adoption of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), has continued to be associated with climate change negotiations since then, and has clearly explicated India's posture on climate change. As penned by him, Malta took the initiative of putting climate change on the agenda of the UN, and brought it up in the Second Committee of the UN dealing

²⁵³ Ibid, p. 187.

²⁵⁴ K. R. Narayanan, "The Greening of Development: Problems and Prospects", *RSA Journal*, Vol. 141, No. 5444, November 1993, pp. 782–790. He said that rather than commercialising forests, India is importing timber and pulp to the tune of US\$ 300 million a year for its requirements. See, p. 785.

with economic issues in 1988.²⁵⁵ The Indian non-paper prepared by Dasgupta placed the onus of emission reduction on developed countries by 2000 AD, and to keep emissions to 1990 levels, along with technological and financial support on concessionary and preferential terms to developing countries for combating climate change.²⁵⁶ It was received well by most developing countries, including China — the principle of equity was of utmost priority.²⁵⁷ The pledge and review proposal of Japan was supported by the EC. But this was rejected by developing countries (G77), and NGOs alike.²⁵⁸ G77 and China came together nicely. The principles section was proposed by China and was agreed to by G77. However, there were other differences, and so they could not arrive at a consensus text.²⁵⁹ Then, a like-minded group of 43 countries was formed, including India.

The developed countries wanted a review of the progress of developing countries. It was felt that this would amount to an obligation if the review was ‘international’. However, it was believed that only Indian authorities could review India’s nationally determined targets, and while this could be reported to an international body, their doing the review was not acceptable.²⁶⁰ Since the review would cover all sectors based on coal and petroleum, it would extend to power, transport, industry, agriculture, forestry, and land.²⁶¹ Another consideration that went against the suggestion of an international review was that, with limited finance being provided, there would also be a huge financial burden to meet

²⁵⁵ Chandrashekhhar Dasgupta, “Negotiating the Framework Convention on Climate Change”, in K. V. Rajan (ed.), *The Ambassador’s Club: The Indian Diplomat at Large*, HarperCollins Publishers India/India Today Group, New Delhi, 2012, pp. 61–84, p. 61.

²⁵⁶ Chandrasekhhar Dasgupta, p. 67.

²⁵⁷ Ibid, p.68.

²⁵⁸ Ibid, p.72.

²⁵⁹ Ibid, p.73.

²⁶⁰ Ibid, p. 76.

²⁶¹ Ibid, p. 78.

any self-declared targets. Justifying India's position and objecting to "eco labelling as a kind of green imperialism", a former Environment Minister, Kamal Nath said:

[Rio 1992 translated the] poetry of environmental protection into the practicality of sustainable development ... (L)etting the WTO DSM to develop norms of environmental protection on a case by case basis is a retrograde way of functioning ... present trade relations are so skewed and the imbalances so glaring, that without the structural correction of these imbalances, any linkage between trade and the environment is very likely to work to the detriment of the poorer countries ... in the absence of appropriate pricing, developing countries are being forced to overexploit their natural resources, with liberal trade policies only hastening the process ... how can a developing country that seeks voluntarily to move even further along the path of environmental protection expect to have comparative advantage in trade if it continues to be unduly exposed to the risks of environmental under-pricing?... India cannot accept forest conservation schemes ... this is because forests in India are a community resource with hundreds of millions of people depending on them for fuel, fodder, medicines and fruits.²⁶²

For over two decades, the bottom line for India in the climate change negotiations has been to avoid binding commitments on carbon emissions and compelling developed countries to reduce their emissions and bear the cost of adaptation and mitigation.²⁶³ India has a two-pronged strategy in the negotiations — being with G77, and also coalescing with larger developing countries; therefore the formation

²⁶² Kamal Nath, "Trade, Environment and Sustainable Development", in Veena Jha, Grant Hewison and Maree Underhill, n. 251, pp. 15–20, pp. 15–18. For more on sustainable development and its links to trade, see Guljit K. Arora and Arunabh Talwar, *Sustainable Development in India: An Interdisciplinary Perspective*, Research and Publishing House/Human Development Research Centre, New Delhi, 2005.

²⁶³ Teresita C. Shaffer and Howard B. Schaffer, n. 34, p. 227.

of BASIC and LMDCs with 20–25 countries. These coalitions were present in the 2015 climate change negotiations.²⁶⁴ Oil exporting countries had issues with binding commitments for their developed country clients, therefore India got into smaller groups.²⁶⁵ In 2009, Jairam Ramesh introduced the phrase ‘nationally appropriate mitigation action’, though no consensus could be reached on adopting it at the Copenhagen conference.²⁶⁶ At Lima in 2014, India reverted to its earlier position under Prakash Javadekar. The Lima Declaration of 2014 used the phrase ‘common but differentiated responsibilities’. However, the fissures in the G77 group were visible, and many developing countries were beginning to accept the need for them to limit their emissions.²⁶⁷

FINDINGS

The lineage of India’s economic multilateralism consists of three prominent and related elements. The first is the interjection of development into institutional mandates. At the time when the Bretton Woods Institutions were being formed, India was on the verge of independence. With limited influence, India interjected to ensure that the IMF and the World Bank as the main monetary and financial institutions devised programmes in such a manner as would benefit developing countries. The second feature of India’s multilateralism was actions to strengthen the developmental role of the UN. This was important because the IMF and the World Bank functioned rather autonomously, unfettered by the majoritarianism of the UN system. That system itself needed to be spruced up to have more say on the global economic order, and influence the institutions outside of it. Thus, empowering the ECOSOC, and then gradually the setting up of newer forums like the UNCTAD, UNIDO and UNDP through activism in the General Assembly became important.

²⁶⁴ Ibid, p. 228.

²⁶⁵ Ibid, p. 229.

²⁶⁶ Ibid, pp. 231–232.

²⁶⁷ Ibid, p. 230.

Linking development with new issues as they came up on the agenda of the UN is the third feature of India's economic multilateralism. This has entailed some innovative thinking in terms of linking issues like care for environment, technological support for it, and development. Finally, and perhaps most notably, over these decades, India has been party to creating an enabling normative ambience through the adoption of new international instruments on various aspects that were tangentially related to the economic realm. Prominent among them were the concept of permanent sovereignty over natural resources (1952) which later came to be accepted as a principle of international law (1966), the idea of the common heritage of mankind (1967), the Declaration of Friendly Relations among Nations (1970), and the Charter of Economic Rights and Duties of States (1974).

Does this exact lineage extend to contemporary times?

CONTINUITIES AND CHANGES IN INDIA'S ECONOMIC MULTILATERALISM

A survey of the lineage of India's economic multilateralism demonstrates that several features of India's FFD and SDG multilateralism have indeed come down from history. In fact, the broad contours of India's economic multilateralism remain the same.²⁶⁸

Two continuities are worth noting. First, all the three features of the lineage, namely setting institutional mandates of the Bretton Woods Institutions; strengthening the developmental role of the UN; and making the evolving regimes developing country-friendly continue to characterise India's multilateralism. But, the first one (that is, the setting of mandates) is now being attempted more indirectly through the other two elements rather than independently as, over time, the original mandates have already been reformed to adapt to the changing nature of the international political economy and more contemporary requirements. Second, the generic set of issues remains the same. The emphasis, thus, continues to be on financing and technology for sustainable development. Underlying these is also a continuing tendency of Indian negotiators to preserve the policy space for the state in economic matters.²⁶⁹

²⁶⁸ A similar conclusion has been arrived at in the context of India's policy on nuclear non-proliferation and climate change. See, Manjari Chatterjee Miller & Kate Sullivan de' Estrada, "Continuity and Change in Indian Grand Strategy: The Cases of Nuclear Non-proliferation and Climate Change", *India Review*, Vol. 17, No.1, 2018, pp. 33–54.

²⁶⁹ Interview with Ambassador Mohan Kumar, Chairperson RIS, New Delhi, 1 April 2019.

What has changed partly, yet significantly, is the acceptance that sustainability is as important as development. This has meant that the concern for environment that was hitherto cast as an issue whose resolution would come mainly with changes in the developed countries, would now be integral to the developmental trajectory of India. Second, importantly, there is a clear recognition of the importance of staying engaged with the multilateral processes since they often impinge on national policy options.²⁷⁰ Such alacrity has always been a feature of the Ministry of Finance's approach to economic multilateralism.²⁷¹ In the words of a Ministry of Finance official, "We are engaged because this is the blueprint".²⁷² Third, there is also evidence of some convergence in the manner in which India is using certain basic ideas across various issue areas. These are the ideas of inclusive international economic governance, North-South cooperation, the means of implementation — technological and financial— and the principle of common but differentiated responsibility.

Another partial but significant change is in the coalitions of which India is a part. Thus, while India continues to be a part of the G77 coalition, it has also become a part of other coalitions that have emerged in the course of the emergence of an economically multi polar world. In the two case-studies above, India participated as a member of the G77 (1964), the G20 (1999), the Leading Group (2006), and the Asia-Pacific troika. India's membership of the Leading Group and the G20 — the two coalitions that transcend the North-South divide not just in their membership but in their approach to global economic governance — seems to point to an acceptance of some developing country concerns by the developed countries. It is hard to say whether India is the only influential factor in these groups since many of the them also have other emerging countries as well as China, the latter being a formidable

²⁷⁰ Interaction with senior Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) official, New Delhi, 13 July 2016.

²⁷¹ Interview with Sanjaya Baru, Centre for Policy Research, New Delhi, 23 June 2016.

²⁷² Interaction with Ministry of Finance official, New Delhi, 12 July 2016.

economic power with the ability to influence outcomes. There are two other changes of importance, though outside the scope of the present study: first, India's association with new international financial institutions such as the Financial Stability Board and the Financial Action Task Force (FATF)²⁷³ and second, India's emergence as a multilateral donor.²⁷⁴

The persistence of some issues on the agenda of India's multilateralism is due to the incremental progress that has come about as a result of global negotiations. In fact, it is felt in some quarters in the policy community in India that global conferences of the kind studied here do not yield much.²⁷⁵ Such thinking, however, is understandable, since the declarations adopted at such conferences are aspirational and prescriptive in comparison with multilateral negotiations in functional organisations, such as the WTO.²⁷⁶

First, rarely does one come across gains being made without some compromise. Thus, for instance, when the link between trade and development and a clause on preferential treatment were added into the new Part IV of GATT to accommodate the demand of the developing countries in 1964, it reduced their capacity to challenge GATT's inconsistent measures such as the MFA adopted by developed countries. The Generalised System of Preferences was also used by developed countries to pick and choose countries they would accord the preference to, and link it to, non-trade related issues.²⁷⁷ In the case

²⁷³ Devesh Kapur, "International Financial Institutions and Arrangements", in Waheguru Pal Singh Sidhu, Pratap Bhanu Mehta and Bruce Jones (eds.), *Shaping the Emerging World: India in the Multilateral Order*, The Brookings Institution/Foundation Books, First Indian Edition, 2014, pp. 237–259.

²⁷⁴ Interaction with Milindo Chakrabarti, RIS, New Delhi, 16 July 2016. For a critical perspective, see Rohan Mukherji, n. 99.

²⁷⁵ Interview with Jayant Dasgupta, n. 225; interaction with senior MEA official, n. 270.

²⁷⁶ Email interview with Ambassador Asoke Mukherji, Permanent Representative during the SDG and FFD conferences of 2015, Permanent Mission of India to the UN, New York, , 25 August 2016.

²⁷⁷ T. N. Srinivasan and S. Tendulkar, n. 213, pp. 104–105.

of the FFD conference, it is widely believed that the declaration largely reflects developed country views on financing, with a minor mention of developing country concerns of a common but differentiated responsibility.²⁷⁸

Second, if developing countries make linkages of some issues that are in their interest, the developed countries will also do so, leading to half-way successes. Several instances may be cited. UNCTAD was created in 1964 and, as desired by the developing countries, came to symbolise the link between trade and development. For their part, the developed countries made the linkage between technical assistance and the special projects funds to limit their contribution to the development of developing countries. However, finally, since the bargaining power of the developing countries is limited, they were unable to compel the developed countries to give in.²⁷⁹ Another instance is the adoption by the General Assembly of a resolution that was pushed by India (based on the 1930s Fabian Socialist figure) that 1 per cent of the gross national income (GNI) of a developed country should be granted as ODA; the actual ODA figure agreed to was .35 per cent of GNI only.²⁸⁰ Then again, the developed countries did not contribute to the Capital Development Fund that was created, and so, it was stillborn. Similar is the case of the UN Conference on Science and Technology in 1979 after which the General Assembly voted to create a UN Interim Fund for Science and Technology for Development, with voluntary contributions of a least US\$ 250 million for 1980–81. The money came; but it was a reallocation of existing aid commitments.²⁸¹ On

²⁷⁸ Interview with N. Chandramohan, Senior Economic Journalist and Business Analyst, New Delhi, 22 June 2016.

²⁷⁹ Susan Strange, “The Poverty of Multilateral Economic Diplomacy”, in G.R. Berridge and A. Jennings, *Diplomacy at the UN*, London, Macmillan, 1985, pp. 109–129.

²⁸⁰ Anand P. Mavalankar, n. 147.

²⁸¹ Michael G. Schechter, *United Nations Global Conferences*, Routledge, London and New York, 2009, p. 75.

matters of trade, the developed countries stopped associating with the UNCTAD after the 1980s when the limits of commodity cartels were realised. At the WTO, they made the linkage between labour and environmental standards and trade. And, despite strong developing country fervour, the Doha Development Round — so termed by the developing countries to emphasise the centrality of development in this round of trade negotiations — ended with few positive results. What is more, it prompted the developed countries to envisage newer arrangements, like the Trans-Pacific Partnership, with like-minded countries. It is, therefore, apparent that, as explained by Ambassador Mohan Kumar, “the continuities and changes in India’s diplomacy have less to do with tactics and more to do with the extent of reform and economic development.”²⁸²

CONTEXTUALISING AND EXPLAINING TRENDS

World order in the aftermath of World War II was the palimpsest on which various actor roles were predicated. Undoubtedly, the language related to development in the UN Charter was “fragile and ambiguous.”²⁸³ Moreover, as explained by John Ruggie, the Bretton Woods Institutions held together an “economic regime based on preferences of the hegemon, market rationality, and maximum scope to market forces rather than constraining them.”²⁸⁴ At the core of the regime, therefore, was the ideology and economic theories of the regime making states.²⁸⁵ India remained at odds with this ideology for political and economic reasons. In the 1970s, the developing countries gave a call for a New International Economic Order, which combined

²⁸² Interview with Ambassador Mohan Kumar, n. 269.

²⁸³ Noted economist Kenneth Dadize, cited in Paul Kennedy, n. 152, Chapter 4, “Economic Agendas, North and South”, pp. 113–142, p. 115.

²⁸⁴ John Gerrard Ruggie, “Another Round, Another Requiem? Prospects for Global Negotiations”, in Jagdish N. Bhagwati and John Gerard Ruggie, (eds.) *Power, Passions and Purpose: Prospects for North-South Negotiations*, The MIT Press, Cambridge, Massachusetts, 1984, pp. 33–47, p. 35.

²⁸⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 36.

the principle of the national regulation of economies with that of the restructuring of the economic order. Developing countries that formed the G77 were followers of Raul Prebisch's idea of the national regulation of international economic exchange²⁸⁶ and the morality of sovereign equality.²⁸⁷ In doing so, they also rejected critiques of the GATT by development economists of the North, such as Eugene Rostow, Gunnar Myrdal, and Gottfried Haberler.²⁸⁸

Difficulties that present themselves due to the nature of the issue at hand must also be borne in mind while laying out the overall context. In a system made up of nation-states with sovereign rights over territories, matters that require transcending national considerations are hard to deal with multilaterally. In the context of the present study, concerns relating to the environment present such difficulties. Early on, explaining the difficulty of arriving at a consensus for creating a law of the sea regime, Ernst Haas has said, “(I) he vision of ecological holism is not yet the political equivalent of monetary theory.”²⁸⁹ Getting to consensus, therefore, is not easy.

Another stumbling block is the fact that the priority of the regime on sustainable development has been shifting overtime. The Brundtland Commission's report, *Our Common Future*, spoke of intergenerational equity, but in a neoliberal framework, with no constraints on consumption. At Rio in 1992, the norm was about the symbiotic relationship between environment and development; At Rio +10 in

²⁸⁶ Craig N. Murphy, “What the Third World Wants: An Interpretation of the Development and Meaning of the New International Economic Order Ideology”, Reprinted from ISQ, Vol. 287, No. 1, 1983 in Paul F. Diehl n. 29. pp. 261–276, p. 266.

²⁸⁷ Ibid, p.267.

²⁸⁸ Ibid, p.266. Rostow analysed cultural characteristics that came in the way of development; Myrdal highlighted the domestic impediments to development; and Haberler explained the exceptions to free trade that made it unfair for the developing countries.

²⁸⁹ Ernst B. Haas, “Why collaborate? Issue-Linkages and International Regimes”, *World Politics*, Vol. 32, No. 3, April 1980, pp. 357–405, p. 367.

2002, it was about justice for developing countries and their development and, by 2012, the focus shifted further to economic development though it was supposed to be “green economy”. The shift eventually was away from poverty alleviation, and this made the developing countries wary of the concept.²⁹⁰ Moreover, the process of definition of the norm of sustainable development from 1992–2012 has been so long drawn out that the norm itself has not been able to restrain state behaviour.²⁹¹ In similar vein, others have argued that,

While there have been some serious efforts to integrate the concept of sustainable development into policy, especially in UN institutions, the ambiguity and lack of precision has contributed to the limited implementation of the integration of environmental and social concerns into core policies and practices of the key financial and trade institutions with greater legal, financial and political weight in development policy.²⁹²

The present predicament, therefore, is a result of the cumulative effect of several factors. These can be broadly categorised under the heads of perceptions, structures, and linkages.

PERCEPTIONS

First, there has been a fundamental divergence in the perceptions of the developing and developed countries; such that what were regarded as revolutionary initiatives outside of the ambit of ECOSOC by the developing countries (UNCTAD, UNIDO and the UN Capital

²⁹⁰ Steven Bernstein, “Grand Compromises in Global Governance”, *Government and Opposition*, Vol. 47, No. 3, 2012, pp. 368–394, p. 387.

²⁹¹ Jennifer Hadden and Lucia A. Seybert, “What is in a Norm? Mapping the Norm Definition Process in the Debate on Sustainable Development”, *Global Governance*, 22, 2016, pp. 249–268.

²⁹² Steven Bernstein, n. 290, p. 388.

Development Fund) were regarded as attempts to weaken the UN system by the developed countries.²⁹³

This happened once the African countries had joined the UN as they found the ECOSOC membership quite restrictive as compared to the majorities they enjoyed in the General Assembly, and the UNCTAD increasingly took over the work of ECOSOC.²⁹⁴

In the North, such initiatives were also seen as being based on not fully rational negotiations, with developing countries seeking to maximise benefits rather than change the rules of the regime.²⁹⁵ As argued by Ernst Haas, there was no consensus among members about what NIEO was, and what was to be achieved.²⁹⁶ This was an issue area because there were issue linkages;²⁹⁷ but it was fragmented or tactical and “not connected by any intellectual coherence”, but only to get additional bargaining leverage and to hold the coalition together to achieve a social goal. Such initiatives were also described as displaying a tendency to ‘particularise general subjects’, sometimes to the point of absurdity.²⁹⁸

Arriving at the Monterrey Consensus in 2002 was, therefore, very significant because it not only reflected the developed country idea of an increasing reliance on domestic resources, sound internal policies,

²⁹³ Johan Kaufmann, “A Methodological Summary”, in Arthur S. Lall, n. 217, pp. 133–153, pp.148–149. The UNCTAD, UNIDO, UNEP and WFC were all viewed as institutions representing confrontational politics of the developing world.

²⁹⁴ Walter R. Sharpe, n. 181, p. 206, p. 224. The limited membership of ECOSOC also made GATT and IMF more substantive, p. 90.

²⁹⁵ Ernst B. Haas, n. 289, p. 375.

²⁹⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 370.

²⁹⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 366–367.

²⁹⁸ Ross N. Berkes, n. 179, pp. 141–147. This is a tendency that was witnessed in discussions on security and non-security matters.

better management of resources to attract investment but also developing country concerns regarding the need for protection against import surges, the adverse impacts of trade liberalisation, trade distorting subsidies and the abuse of anti-dumping measures.²⁹⁹ It represented a rare convergence in development thinking that represented a swerve away from the Washington Consensus, and pushed the Bretton Woods Institutions to focus more on poverty reduction.³⁰⁰ The UN Global Compact (as it was called) built bridges with academia, the NGOs, and the private sector; it was a sign of pragmatism of the UN and of the BWIs who seconded senior level staff to serve with UN officials in the FFD secretariat, and jointly authored the publication of *Better World for All*.³⁰¹ It started to speak of global partnership or compact and systemic economic issues.³⁰²

STRUCTURES

Second, structural factors, defined in the context of this study as the economic and technological differential reflected in the North-South hiatus, and differences within each group deriving from national interests, have impeded the roaring successes of developing country agendas. The purpose of the North-South dialogues ranged from general discussion on broad and specific issues for making non-binding recommendations to governments or international organisations as in the General Assembly, the ECOSOC and the UNCTAD General Conference; to making decisions binding on governments, such as an international instrument for ratification, including decisions on budget allocations for the purpose of development; to making decisions to give guidance or instructions for the functioning of transnational corporations, UNCTAD's Code of Conduct on the Transfer of Technology; and guidance to the Secretariat of an IGO or UNDP,

²⁹⁹ Jacques Fomerand, n. 87, p. 264.

³⁰⁰ Ibid, p. 265.

³⁰¹ Ibid, p. 266.

³⁰² Henk-Jan Brinkman, n. 199, pp. 133–135.

and UNICEF guidance for the administration of the programme run by the government; and negotiating and drafting a treaty or a formal international instrument, such as Codes of Conduct and the UN Convention on Laws of Seas (UNCLOS).³⁰³

However, dialogue has not meant agreement because, to paraphrase K. B. Lall, at the UNCTAD, Group B (developed country group) consensus is based on the minimum acceptable, whereas the G 77 consensus is based on the maximum that needs to be gotten from developed countries, and bridging that gap is impossible.³⁰⁴ Moreover, from a perceptive analysis of North-South relations in the period 1945–1986, Jagdish Bhagwati concluded that it has never been possible for the South to bargain with the North from a position of strength.³⁰⁵ Also, as explained by John Ruggie, interdependence among the developed and developing countries was not capable of changing North-South relations because:

- Developed countries have gained something but also lost something (jobs) in the process; therefore they are not likely to go forward whole hog.
- OPEC and NICs are exceptions in the South; the dependence of the North on them may not replicate in other cases.
- Specific problems of debt restructuring will bring about some changes in IMF, but not global restructuring.
- The international political order is not constituted by interdependence; the Marshal plan worked because it was in USA's strategic interest, and not because it was mutually beneficial.³⁰⁶

³⁰³ Johan Kaufmann, n. 293, pp.134–135.

³⁰⁴ K. B. Lall, n. 11, pp. 76–77.

³⁰⁵ Jagdish N. Bhagwati, “Rethinking Global Negotiations”, in Jagdish N. Bhagwati and John Gerard Ruggie, n. 284, pp. 21–31, p. 28.

³⁰⁶ John Gerrard Ruggie, n. 284, pp. 43–44.

It is also well acknowledged that "...the fate of the UN world conferences is largely a consequence of the fact that they mirror the world better than do most other institutions."³⁰⁷ Global conferences of the UN have limited impact. Their ability to translate ideas into actions and create a certain world order depends on the distribution of ideational and material power as much as on institutional characteristics (norm entrepreneurs, who attend the conference, quality of preparatory work, etc.). The North-South dialogues, nevertheless, have had two limited impacts: first, normatively, they have reinforced the idea of structural deficit; and second, they resulted in the creation of development bureaucracies in industrialised countries to deal with these negotiations.³⁰⁸

The endurance of coalitions such as the G77, and India's continued membership of it, is partly attributable to the fact that its membership of 134 countries makes it possible to get a simple, or two-thirds, majority in the General Assembly and the ECOSOC voting.³⁰⁹ This can, to a large extent, be explained by the common issues affecting the group.³¹⁰ Thus, for instance, the basic similarity of being producers of primary goods, buyers of manufactured goods, and the difference in their price brought the diverse countries of Asia, Africa and Latin America together.³¹¹ More recently, it has been argued that whereas rising powers stay with developing country coalitions, they do not challenge every global norm. For instance, India and Brazil stood together in the WTO, but did not suggest any major changes to the regulatory norms of Basel I and II.³¹²

³⁰⁷ Michael G. Schechter, n. 281, p. 203.

³⁰⁸ John Gerrard Ruggie, n. 284, pp. 40–41.

³⁰⁹ Email Interview with Ambassador Asoke Mukherji, n. 276.

³¹⁰ Interaction with Ministry of Finance official, n. 272.

³¹¹ For case studies of 16 such countries, see Bimal Chakraborty, *The United Nations and the Third World: Shifting Paradigms*, New Delhi, Tata McGraw-Hill Publishing Company Limited, 1996.

³¹² Miles Kahler, "Rising Powers and Global Governance: Negotiating Change", *International Affairs*, Vol. 89, No. 3, May 2013, pp. 711–729, p. 716.

This, though, is not entirely true. While developing countries do not give up older affiliations, they do simultaneously participate in other groups. This is partly explained by limitations of the G77. On the basis of a study of group negotiations at UNCTAD, it has become evident that only general statements can be formulated, and not policies — for the diversity of the G77 prevents this.³¹³ So at the UNCTAD initially, nothing was done about the debt crisis since it affected only the Latin American countries. For the rest of the countries, issues of aid mattered more. Also, extreme views were voiced as the scope for compromising on the groups' solidarity was minimal. Again, the experience of UNCTAD in bringing in the Generalised System of Preferences (GSP) was that individual countries negotiated the actual terms and conditions with countries with whom they traded. Also, in the case of the integrated commodities agreement, the developed and the developing countries with similar commodities came together rather than groups.

It is here that national interest — the second enduring structural feature mentioned above — comes into play. The way each country associates with multilateral processes is instrumental. In the words of Muchkund Dubey,

The extent of the involvement with the cycle of a particular country depends upon its perceived national interest in the idea constituting the focus on negotiations; its perception of its stake in the wider regional and global objectives sought to be achieved through the negotiation; and the general alertness, intelligence, and effectiveness of its debate.³¹⁴

The power of national interest was such that linkages between issues — such as debt relief, technology transfer, and commodities — remained prominent only “in the organizational mind of the UNCTAD than in the foreign ministries of the member states”, and so some

³¹³ Thomas G. Weiss, *Multilateral Development Diplomacy in UNCTAD: The Lessons of Group Negotiations*, 1964–84, Macmillan, London, 1986, p. 6.

³¹⁴ Muchkund Dubey, n. 217, p. 155.

agreement did come about, “but not one that adds up to a new regime.”³¹⁵ In the words of K. P. Saksena, who was among the doyens of the study of the United Nations in India, the UN has survived not because it has served the interests of the world community, but because “it has served the national interests of all member states, though not to the same degree.”³¹⁶

National interest also gives rise to some counterintuitive realities. One among them is that though the setting of the United Nations is multilateral, bilateral issues and relations play a dominant role.³¹⁷ Another is that the fundamental reasons for difficulty in implementing NIEO were the divergences in national realities of the developed, not the developing, world which reflected in their support for differing principles for restructuring the world order and actions for it.³¹⁸

Between 1971–74, there developed a schism in the G77 between those who held on to the idea that the North owed something to the South as a payback for colonialism in Africa, Asia and NAM, and others who didn't, mainly Latin Americans.³¹⁹ It is the former group that pushed for the adoption of a Charter of Economic Rights and Duties of States. Over time, such divergence of interests made it increasingly difficult to work through the G77, and it became impossible “to settle everything at one go in one conference.”³²⁰ Differences among the oil-producing developing countries and non-oil producing ones came to a head with the rise in the prices of oil in 1979. The foreign debt of importing countries went up from 74 billion to 321 billion dollars

³¹⁵ Ernst Haas, n. 289.

³¹⁶ K. P. Saksena, “India and Diplomacy in the United Nations”, in Bimal Prasad, n. 1, pp. 421–448, pp. 428–429.

³¹⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 428.

³¹⁸ Ramashray Roy, “World Order Dreams and National Realities”, in Ramashray Roy, n. 194, pp. 19–38, p. 36.

³¹⁹ Craig Murphy, n. 286, p. 269.

³²⁰ L. K. Jha, “Self Sufficiency or Cooperation?” in U. S. Bajpai, n. 212, p. 75–80, pp. 76–77.

from 1971–1978.³²¹ So much so that, at UNCTAD V in Manila 1979, Algeria proposed that energy be included among other issues to be negotiated as part of the North-South dialogue.³²²

Coping with the price rise was also an issue at the NAM ministerial at Colombo in June 1979. In August 1979, a consultative group meeting between 9 OPEC and oil importing non-aligned countries was held, where oil was referred to as an essential commodity in short supply. Discussions were held on making oil available on rebate to developing countries, and using the OPEC Fund to help developing countries; but no agreement could be reached. Later, at the Havana Summit of NAM in 1979, it was accepted that while no rebates could be granted, the Georgetown recommendations adopted earlier that did affect the interests of the OPEC would be accepted.³²³ Yet, the USA and OPEC resistance obstructed a North-South compromise on this issue.

In the aftermath of the oil crisis, when the differences among the G77 came to the fore, India, which was

...unused to putting its national concerns in the forefront of its international attitudes and activities “made (o) nly muted efforts ... at the bilateral, regional, and international levels to overcome special difficulties that faced the NODCs and the MSACs. A low profile was prudently maintained on the “stage” as well as in the lobbies. This was the only contribution India could make for the unity of the Group of 77.³²⁴

Given its significance, even in 1984–85, as head of the MEA’s Policy Planning Committee, G. Parthasarathi worked to strengthen India’s leadership in G77.³²⁵

³²¹ Bharat Wariavwalla, “Rich-Poor Relationship: Fragile Interdependence”, in Ramashray Roy, n. 194, p. 48.

³²² Muchkund Dubey, “A Third-World Perspective”, in Jagdish N. Bhagwati and John Gerard Ruggie, n. 284, pp. 65–86, p. 66.

³²³ Ibid, pp. 66–68.

³²⁴ K. B. Lall, n. 11, p. 72.

³²⁵ J. N. Dixit, n. 48, p.197. He also advocated for a new information order under UNESCO.

All the initiatives of the 1960s — namely the UNTAD, UNDP and UNIDO — were products of the first Development Decade which “...was a system of mutual and reinforcing responsibility”.³²⁶ In 1969, the Partners in Development report of an International Commission (headed by Lester Pearson) proposed, for the first time, the idea that developed countries were partners of developing countries in their quest for development. It also proposed the idea of ODA to be 0.7 per cent of the GNP and which could be given bilaterally or through WB, IMF or UNDP.³²⁷ 0.7 per cent was based on the calculation that, in order to reach 6 per cent growth rate of GDP during the Second Development Decade, developing countries needed 1 per cent of the GNI of developed countries, of which 30 per cent would come from private sources, and 0.7 per cent would be ODA.³²⁸

The partial success of the efforts of developing countries came about, but from outside the UNCTAD ambit, and when structural divides were blurred. The Multi Fibre Agreement (MFA), for instance, brought together exporters and importers of textiles. Another example was the Paris Conference or the CIEC dialogue, which went on for 18 months in Paris since the developed and developing countries had “unrealistic expectations” regarding issues of development aid and debt relief; but the Netherlands, Scandinavian countries, and Canada were sympathetic to the LDCs while USA, Germany, and Japan were not.³²⁹ At UNCTAD IV, some like-minded countries of the North, namely, Norway, Netherlands, Sweden, Denmark, and the UK, took the initiative to launch the integrated commodities programme that was an issue of importance for the countries of the South.³³⁰ The UNIDO, too, really came into its own in the mid-1980s when, as an

³²⁶ C. V. Narasimhan, n. 197, p. 144, p. 149.

³²⁷ Ibid, p. 151.

³²⁸ Henk-Jan Brinkman, n. 199, p. 123.

³²⁹ Bharat Wariavwala, n. 194, p. 47.

³³⁰ Johan Kauffman, n. 293, p. 137.

autonomous institution, it included developed countries in its decision-making.³³¹

In some instances, pressure exerted in one area had spin-offs in other areas; so the struggle for the Capital Development Fund led to a Special Fund within the UN and the IDA in the World Bank. Similarly, pressure in UNCTAD for a supplementary financing facility led to an improvement in the Compensatory Finance Facility (CFF) in the IMF, and led to the establishment of the Extended Fund Facility (EFF).³³²

An important aspect of the economic structure was the technological gap between the developing and developed countries. Dependence on the developed world for technology has always been a source of tension in North-South relations. The persistence of technology transfer as an issue can be explained by the technology-lag between the developed and developing countries. However, more fundamentally, the lag itself continues due to constant investment in innovation that results in continually shifting goal posts, some very fast, others more slowly. Thus, while UNIDO pushed for the relocation of industrial capacities to the developing world, the arrival of micro-electronics, computer-aided design and manufacture, and robotics in developed countries took away the comparative advantage developing countries had in labour-intensive industries such as textiles, leather and garments, due to low cost of labour. So, it had to shift focus from the redeployment of industry to technology development.³³³ But, as argued by an eminent scholar Rajni Kothari, while technology is a panacea for

³³¹ S. Nanjundan, n. 193, p. 266. UNIDO's performance from 1985–88 improved because it became an organisation for all, with 2/3rd majority of the PBC membership, that is, 27 members allowed to clear the programme and the budget. It had 15 developed countries-western countries; 3 developed socialist countries; and the rest developing, unlike the simple majority vote in GA which meant the G77 had full say.

³³² Muchkund Dubey, n. 217, p. 171.

³³³ S. Nanjundan, n.193, p. 266, p. 276–77. It also shifted focus to human resource development, development and transfer of technology, industrial rehabilitation, small and medium scale industries, environment and energy, and technical assistance rather than technical cooperation.

several problems that developing countries face, it is not a solution to all problems.³³⁴

There were other instances of shifting goal posts as well. The value of UNIDO and UNCTAD reduced after the failure of North-South Dialogue, and the rise of the MNCs and a commercial private sector in the USA that became a prominent force in industrialisation the world over.³³⁵ During the mid-1960–70s, other developments further reduced the significance of the UN institutions. The developed countries shifted focus from bilateral aid to aid through multilateral consortiums such as the OECD, the Commonwealth Aid Programme, and the North-South (Paris) Conference. The developing countries too made a shift from wanting resources and capital from abroad for development to building their own capacities — human, capital, and physical. Therefore, UNIDO, the Non-aligned Conferences, and G77 shifted their focus to creating a positive international environment for trade, access to capital, and technology.³³⁶

Also, when UNDP was made the lead agency for the implementation of technical cooperation projects, UNIDO's importance declined further. UNDP's execution of technical cooperation projects through national agencies rather than UNIDO since 1984 is what caused the UNIDO role to go down since it was the lead agency in technical cooperation.³³⁷ UNDP's success came about due to the fact that it was a voluntarily funded organisation through an annual pledging conference, with the highest funder, usually the USA, as its Administrator.³³⁸ The

³³⁴ Rajni Kothari, "A Politics of the South", *The South Centre*, n. 162, pp. 84–94. Kothari laments that little heed has been paid to the "technological fixation" of the South which, according to some, has propelled the faulty belief that development was something that was to be achieved by the elites, and not the masses, and would only create a North within the South.

³³⁵ Ibid.

³³⁶ S. Nanjundan, n.193, p. 258.

³³⁷ Ibid, p.281.

³³⁸ C. V. Narasimhan, n. 197, p. 198.

revolving natural resource fund administered by UNDP was set up in 1973 and the Capital Development Fund that was set up to complement the pre-investment help from UNDP also reached 70 billion dollars by 1978.³³⁹

LINKAGES

There is also a third factor that is at play; the making of linkages among issues during negotiations. Such linking results in the formation of issue-areas or regimes. They render the realisation of global partnerships envisaged under the SDGs difficult to achieve.

A value-laden understanding of issue areas came into vogue by the end of the millennium. Thus, David Leebron says,

...issue areas are best defined by both the normative and the descriptive aspects. Issue areas are, thus, areas of regulation or negotiation that are substantively very closely related in the sense that they ought to be dealt with in a single regulatory context and are, in fact, widely seen as requiring such bundling because of this substantive relationship.³⁴⁰

As mentioned earlier, by 1980, Ernst Haas had concluded that NIEO had turned into a regime with fragmented and unstable issue linkages due to the inability of the 'sceptics' (developing countries) and 'eclectics' (developed countries) to come to an agreement on its innate value.³⁴¹ For instance, when the UNCTAD Common Fund was being created based on this G77 position, the issue that divided the G77 or Group A from the developed countries in Group B was whether it is equity that should be maximised, or efficiency. Due to the uncertainty of the effects of interlinkages, the emphasis of the developing countries was always on the redistribution of resources

³³⁹ Ibid, p. 166.

³⁴⁰ David W. Leebron, Linkages, *The American Journal of International Law*, Vol. 96, No. 1, January 2002, pp. 5–27.

³⁴¹ Ernst Haas, n. 289, p.396.

... ranging from such immediate matters as aid and debt relief to the long-range considerations of technology transfer, commodity price stability, and nonreciprocal tariff treatment. The intellectual justification for the package was worked out by the UNCTAD economists in a series of studies that were widely challenged by economists in the developed countries.³⁴²

Linkages can also be viewed differently by different sets of countries. Thus, for instance, the linkages made between technology transfers, industrialization, and export-led growth as well as between unregulated multinational corporations and technology transfers by the UNCTAD were regarded as coherent by economists of developed countries, but they argued that the relationship between them is not “exactly as presented by UNCTAD.”³⁴³

Issue linkages in the context of the transfer of technology are even trickier. Here, as in the case of industrial development, the substantive link between issues of technological and economic development depends on whether the development strategy is export-led, import-substituting, or self-reliant.³⁴⁴ Technology is closely linked to foreign investment of public and private as well as national and multi-national finance, with effects on employment, trade, and the balance of payments. So, these issues are now substantively linked to the negotiation of technology transfer. Globally, the only binding arrangement in existence is the law dealing with industrial and intellectual property, patents, and trademarks under the aegis of the World Industrial Property Organization (WIPO). It covers just over half of the UN membership, and “protects only about 10 percent of technology actually transferred by placing restrictions on licensees and purchasers of patents.”³⁴⁵ Yet, it is often criticised as a restrictive regime.

³⁴² Ibid, p. 373.

³⁴³ Ibid, p. 374.

³⁴⁴ Ibid, p. 398.

³⁴⁵ Ibid, p. 402.

Issue linkages in multilateral trade negotiations have their own role to play. Such linkages, it has been explained, allow for side-payments and thereby facilitate agreements.³⁴⁶ The GATT — which was only a temporary measure to deal with issues of trade and tariffs — contained no issue linkages per se. But, the ITO Charter did mention issues of commodity agreements, competition policy, and aspects of development and investment.³⁴⁷ However, there have been different negotiating groups for different issues in the GATT, and linkages were made within the issue for the most part, and some cross-issue linkages came at the end of the negotiating rounds since the positions on issue areas had emerged clearly by then. At that point in time, high level actors make linkages not for gains but for balancing gains and compromises — that is, building reciprocity. Such balancing is easier in tariff rather than non-tariff negotiations because, in the case of the latter, the effects are difficult to quantify.³⁴⁸ It is also easier to give exemptions to particular industries in tariff negotiations when compared with non-tariff negotiations. Cross issue linkages are avoided by negotiators since they may harm one or another domestic constituency. These, however, are easier in case of non-tariff categories since here negotiations are more transparent. The WTO did make the linkage between environment and trade in a nuanced way so as not to prevent agreement.³⁴⁹

Based on a quantitative analyses of the Tokyo and Kennedy Round of negotiations, it has been suggested that proposals that respect proportionality win over those that attempt maximising gains across a number of actors.³⁵⁰ Based on qualitative analysis, it has been proved

³⁴⁶ Bernard M. Hoekman, “Determining the Need for Issue Linkages in Multilateral Trade Negotiations”, *International Organization*, Vol. 43, No. 4, Autumn 1989, pp. 693–714.

³⁴⁷ David Leebron, n. 340, p. 9.

³⁴⁸ Bernard M. Hoekman, n. 346, p. 696.

³⁴⁹ David Leebron, n. 340, p. 26.

³⁵⁰ Bernard M. Hoekman, n. 346, p. 700.

that domestic constituents who are likely to be harmed in the case of trade liberalisation prevent cross-issue linkages as they have more clout.³⁵¹ Linkages, it is believed, have usually helped the liberalisation of agricultural trade.³⁵² During the Uruguay Round, Japan's strong opposition to the Dunkel Draft gradually withered away, and linkages were made between the industry and agriculture sectors. The rice-opening agreement moved Japan away from the ban on rice import to the protection of rice growers by providing guarantees for "the purchase of five per cent of domestic consumption as imports, with provisions for a gradual increase and tariffication plan."³⁵³ Similar linkages with industry and the services sectors convinced France in 1986 to agree to a revision of the EU's Common Agriculture Policy for the conclusion of the Uruguay Round.³⁵⁴

Findings

There are more continuities than changes in India's economic multilateralism. The continuities have to do with the persistence of inequities in the international economic order, partly attributable to post-World War II Bretton Woods system and the gradual pace of their change. The changes are attributable to limitations of coalition politics and, more importantly, to India's changing position in the international economic hierarchy. There are three other sets of factors that have an impact in the overall context of the liberal ideological underpinnings of the global economic order, and the shifting meanings of sustainable development. The first is the difference in perceptions of the developing and developed world regarding what is desired of the system of global economic governance. Second are the structural

³⁵¹ Ibid, p. 714.

³⁵² Christina L. Davis, International Institutions and Issue Linkage: Building Support for Agricultural Trade Liberalization, *The American Political Science Review*, Vol. 98, No. 1, February 2004, pp. 153–169.

³⁵³ Ibid, p. 164.

³⁵⁴ Ibid, p. 165.

aspects — such as the north-south divide and national interests — that create differences within the South and/or the North, thereby making it difficult to arrive at a consensus. Third, there are linkages between issues of development, finance, and technology that make it difficult to realise the global partnerships that are needed for the achievement of various developmental goals.

An understanding of India's participation in the FFD and SDG process in the context of its lineage of multilateralism brings us to the last stage of analysing the significance of India's economic multilateralism, and suggesting the policy implications of this research.

SIGNIFICANCE AND POLICY IMPLICATIONS

While India's participation in the multilateral arena has been seen above, its significance needs to be underscored. It is difficult to attribute success or change in the multilateral system to any one actor, more so when, as is the case of India, a considerable portion of its contribution is through coalitions whose internal dynamics are not in the open domain.³⁵⁵ Yet, it is useful to evaluate its value. In the context of the FFD and SDGs processes, it is possible to point to some specific contributions of India to the discourse on global economic governance. Indian interventions in the debate on SDGs led to the adoption of specific indicators and the indicators of national review frameworks. Moreover, ideas related to the use of information and communication technology for development, for bridging the digital divides between countries and between genders, and for the empowerment of women were all Indian ideas.³⁵⁶ In the parallel FFD process, India was successful in ensuring the adoption of the Technology Facilitation Mechanism.³⁵⁷ It emerges from the foregoing analysis that India's economic multilateralism, both generally and as evidenced in the SDG and FFD processes, continues to be a corrective to the discourse on global economic governance of the selectively reflexive liberal order.

³⁵⁵ The website of the G77, for example, does not provide any details of discussion on issues and the perspectives of member states.

³⁵⁶ Email interview with Ambassador Asoke Mukherji, n. 276.

³⁵⁷ Aman Y. Thakker, "India at the United Nations: An Analysis of Indian Multilateral Strategies on International Security and Development", ORF Occasional Paper, 148, March 2018, at <https://www.orfonline.org/research/india-at-the-united-nations-an-analysis-of-indian-multilateral-strategies-on-international-security-and-development/>, accessed 13 July 2018.

SIGNIFICANCE OF INDIA'S FFD MULTILATERALISM

The significance of India's FFD multilateralism lies in the fact that it came in tandem with the efforts in the aftermath of the financial crisis of 2008 for strengthening the UN's role in global economic governance among the various quarters outside of the G77. While the G77 only called for the strengthening of the UN mechanism, others pointed out ways of improving the UN itself, and getting it to work with other actors in development cooperation. Prominent among them, though not including India, is the Global Governance Group (3G), which has been advocating greater transparency in the G20.³⁵⁸

The 3G called for a troika of the UN, the Bretton Woods Institutions, and G20 for the better management of global economic governance. The EU also emphasised better coordination among the three, while urging the UN to transcend the artificial North-South divide and promote deliberations in the current context of the rise of private and regional actors in global economic governance, rising South-South and triangular cooperation, and the role of newer institutions, such as the Financial Stability Board and the Bank of International Settlements.³⁵⁹ The focus of discussion in subsequent years was the relationship between the G20 and the UN system,³⁶⁰ with several G20 countries —

³⁵⁸ The group consists of the following countries: Commonwealth of the Bahamas, the Kingdom of Bahrain, Barbados, Botswana, Brunei Darussalam, Chile, Costa Rica, Guatemala, Jamaica, Kuwait, the Principality of Liechtenstein, Malaysia, the Principality of Monaco, New Zealand, Panama, Peru, the Republic of the Philippines, the State of Qatar, the Republic of Rwanda, the Republic of San Marino, the Republic of Senegal, the Republic of Singapore, the Republic of Slovenia, Switzerland, the United Arab Emirates, Uruguay, and the Socialist Republic of Viet Nam. For its position on G20 reform, see, UNGA/A/65/395, Letter dated 27 September 2010 from the Permanent Representative of Singapore to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General, September 28, 2010.

³⁵⁹ European Union, EU Initial Views on "The Role of UN in Global Economic Governance and Development", 18 May 2011.

³⁶⁰ UNGA, Thematic Debate, 67th Session of the UN General Assembly, *The UN in Global Economic Governance*, Concept Note, 15 April 2013.

Australia and Russia, to name a few — reiterating their commitment to reaching out to the non-G20 members.

Thus, perhaps for the first time since the setting up of the UN, there is considerable support for a greater role of the UN in global economic governance even among the developed countries. The positions of the G77 and the G20 seem to vary a bit since the G77 seems to still insist on strengthening the UN role all by itself, while others, including the G20, seem to favour a working together of other groupings and agencies.

The significance of what took place in the 3rd FFD Conference in 2015 lies in the fact that in 2012, the General Assembly adopted a resolution on United Nations in Global Governance that had largely to do with reinstating the UN in a prominent way in global economic governance in the aftermath of the global financial crisis.³⁶¹ The resolution was based on the Secretary General's report on "Global Economic Governance and Development" submitted earlier in 2011, that established a clear linkage between the crisis and faulty global economic governance.³⁶²

At the present, in the juncture of the global debate on financing for development, India straddles both groups, G77 and G20. Notably, as part of the latter, India is a member of the Financial Stability Board, an institution whose importance cannot be understated in the age of interlinked national economies.

SIGNIFICANCE OF INDIA'S SDG MULTILATERALISM

As in the case of FFD, India's SDG multilateralism seen in this manner, seems to be a seamless progression from its position on issues of

³⁶¹ UNGA, A/RES/66/256, *United Nations in Global Governance*, 15 May 2012. The first resolution was adopted on 8 December 2010.

³⁶² UNGA, Report of the Secretary General, *Global Economic Governance and Development*, A/65/506, 10 October 2011.

sustainable development individually as well as a part of the G77. However, the significance of India's SDG multilateralism today is that, globally, it reinforces the thinking of several development finance institutions.

The World Bank has contributed its bit in furthering the norms of sustainable development.³⁶³ The World Bank's carbon investment fund was created in 1996. In 1997, it set up the Prototype Carbon Fund. In 1999, the Prototype Carbon Fund (PCF) was linked to trade emissions of the GHGs under the Kyoto Protocol through partnerships, apart from lending. The furore over the Narmada project in India led to the Bank focussing more on compliance and increased monitoring. After 2001, it began mainstreaming environment into its core and non-core areas. The vice presidency of environmental and sustainable development (ESSD) created in 1996 was merged with Finance, the Private Sector, and the Infrastructure vice presidency in 2006 to create a Sustainable Development vice presidency.³⁶⁴ Other Multilateral Development Banks followed, and so the norm was diffused; though the World Bank itself had difficulties with compliance and mainstreaming. Similar attempts have been made by the International Finance Corporation (IFC), the private project funding arm of the Bank.

In 2013, the World Bank Group published a study on what for it would be viable means of funding the SDGs.³⁶⁵ The study highlights the importance of ODA from the developed world, financing from emerging economies and private sources in addition to new sources such as diaspora bonds. However, to the extent that the World Bank study is seen as part of the developed country discourse on development finance, there are some important differences of opinion between India

³⁶³ Susan Park, "The World Bank Group: Championing Sustainable Development Norms", *Global Governance*, Vol. 13, No. 4, October-December 2007, pp. 535–556.

³⁶⁴ *Ibid*, p. 543.

³⁶⁵ The World Bank Group, *Financing for Development Post-2015*, Washington D. C., October 2013.

and the World Bank study. First, there is issue of linking climate finance to development finance. India has argued that climate finance was part of the climate change regime and must be kept separate from development finance. India's reason is very clear. The GEF is a financing mechanism for five multilateral conventions related to the environment: the Minamata Convention on Mercury; the Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants (POPs); the United Nations Convention on Biological Diversity (UNCBD); the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD); and the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC).³⁶⁶ And, while it has inadvertently contributed to several of the SDGs,³⁶⁷ there are several other requirements of development that it is not equipped to finance.

Second, there is the issue of increasing the quantum of development finance from emerging economies. Here, again, India was critical to introducing the framework of CBDR in the discourse on sustainable development finance. As mentioned earlier, it also took the lead in making the case for nationalisation of the SDG targets, and developing local monitoring mechanism for them to fix the accountability for achieving these goals on national governments rather than the nebulous “international community”.³⁶⁸

Third, India has attempted to change the conceptual underpinnings of the debate on sustainable development. As was perceptively pointed out by Mukul Sanwal, an Indian representative engaged with the

³⁶⁶ Global Environment Facility, *Behind the Numbers in 2015: A Closer Look at GEF Achievements*, at http://beta.thegef.org/sites/default/files/publications/GEF_numbers2015_CRA_bl2_web_1.pdf, 11 November 2015, accessed 18 July 2016.

³⁶⁷ Global Environment Facility, *GEF and the Sustainable Development Goals*, at <https://www.thegef.org/gef/sites/thegef.org/files/publication/SDG%20new%20boilerLR.pdf>, (date of publication not known), accessed 18 July 2016.

³⁶⁸ UN/DESA, *Post 2015 Bulletin India*, at <http://in.one.un.org/img/uploads/Post%202015%20Bulletin%20India%20Issue%201%20May.pdf>, 1 May 2015, accessed 18 July 2016.

multilateral debate on sustainable development, there are three conceptual problems in the debate on sustainable development.³⁶⁹ First is its focus on the global level- GDP, global regimes and global markets, rather than at the national level. Second, its focus on production patterns rather than consumption patterns. Third, the focus on greenhouse gases (GHGs) which are a symptom rather than on the cause of unsustainability, which is energy-intensive development. It sought to bring these to bear on the SDGs.

Thus, at this juncture of the global debate on SDGs, India, through its individual and collective multilateralism, continues to play critical role in attempting to develop more inclusive global norms at the interface of sustainability, development, and financing.

POLICY IMPLICATIONS

While the MEA did not start out as the nodal agency for helping with economic matters, it has gradually begun to assist with that role. In matters of the UN and the G77, which are the focus on this study, it is the lead Ministry. The policy implications of this study, therefore, are mainly for the MEA's consideration.

Positioned amid the developed and the developing world in terms of levels of development, and no longer ideologically at odds with the liberal economic order, India could advance a pragmatic way forward on global economic governance. It is, therefore, important for the MEA to develop a powerful middle-of-the-road narrative that would suggest ways in which liberal economic norms not only overcome inequality, but also respect sustainability.

In doing so, lessons of the past must not be forgotten. The move away from the ECOSOC to the General Assembly that had once been perceived as “the tyranny of the majority”, has been reversed,

³⁶⁹ Mukul Sanwal, “Sustainable Development Perspective of Climate Change”, *Economic and Political Weekly*, Vol. 43, No. 17, April 12–18, 2008, pp. 49–53.

with the G77 agreeing to ECOSOC being the nodal agency in the UN system for the implementation of FFD and SDG schemes. It is time, therefore, for the MEA to improve its liaison with the ECOSOC rather than work through the General Assembly. One foreseeable challenge in this is the affiliation of civil society organisations with the ECOSOC, and their involvement in the SDG and FFD processes. It is, therefore, something that the MEA needs to gear up to contend with. Zealous guarding of the policy space of the sovereign state on economic matters as has been practiced by India may require a change. One way of doing this would be increased interaction with the MOSPI which is the nodal agency for the implementation of the SDGs, and has tie ups with other Ministries which have more interactions with domestic civil society for implementing the SDGs. This may facilitate the MEA in developing the powerful narrative suggested above.

Since the creation of the BWIs, their distance from the UN, and their lack of developmental focus had troubled India. The FFD process has ensured a greater involvement of World Bank and IMF in the work of the UN, though the FFD itself is not the only source of funding. It is, therefore, important that there is greater interaction between the MEA and MoF on matters related to multilateral lending institutions to the extent that finances from them need to be garnered for the attainment of SDGs.

While this is easily postulated academically, and often articulated in forums for economic diplomacy, India is yet to become a perfect model of it. India's development partnerships with developing parts of the world are indeed based on this principle, although their working is a subject beyond the present study. More importantly, domestically, the downside of globalisation stares out starkly. An important aspect of the FFD process is about the shoring up of domestic resources to meet developmental needs. India has committed to this and, indeed, there is greater dignity in doing so rather than in relying on external assistance.

CONCLUSION

This study began with Jawaharlal Nehru's oft quoted speech on India's tryst with destiny that was delivered to the policy makers of the country on the eve of independence. The speech exhorts policy makers to deliver the fruits of independence to the last man standing. The lineage of India's economic multilateralism, with its emphasis on setting institutional mandates of the Bretton Woods Institutions, strengthening the developmental role of the UN, making the evolving regimes friendly towards developing countries and using the existing system to its benefit, aimed to shore up external resources to fulfil this aim. The reason it was only partly successful in doing so was because it went against the grain of the liberal international economic order. India's participation in the G77, which was a coalition of developing countries that was focused on righting historical wrongs, and emancipating the periphery with the help of the centre had little chance of complete success. Yet, working through the UN system made it possible to a certain extent.

It is now possible to provide answers to the research questions raised at the outset.

1. What has India gained from the multilateral economic domain?

As revealed in Chapter 1, for post-independence India, the multilateral was significant for its requirements of assistance of various kinds. Post-liberalisation, multilateral trade has become more important than aid institutions. Although multilateral aid has been a very marginal resource for India's development as compared with domestic sources of funding, the nature of projects has been such that it has touched the lives of marginalised people. The more significant impact in India has been discursive and policy related. The idea of human centric development has caught on like never before, and the impact of the multilateral in this respect cannot be understated.

2. How has India engaged with the FFD and SDG processes?

As unveiled in Chapter 2, on FFD, India's position as part of the G77 coalition was its focus on poverty alleviation and improved human development. India's position as part of the G20, which India presided over in 2002, focussed on the reform of international financial institutions and providing financial stability for development. There was a notable difference in what India was able to put forth as part of the G77, and what it was able to bargain for as part of the G20. As a part of the Leading Group of 66 countries — developed and developing — along with other actors during the Doha Review Conference of 2008, it ensured that the ODA was not compromised on, vis-à-vis the new modality of innovative finance that was being conceived of. Thus, on this issue, it was indeed possible for India to transcend the North-South divide. In its individual capacity and as part of G77, India opposed the attempt to make the FFD the only source of funding for the SDGs, and ensured that the means of implementation of the SDGs found a place as a stand-alone goal. On TFM and the related issues of science and innovation, India pushed for the link between the FFD and SDGs. It also attempted to retain the focus on poverty eradication and the importance of a global partnership for it.

On the SDGs, India participated in the process mainly through the G77's Asia-Pacific troika, along with Pakistan and Sri Lanka. In this forum, the attempt to bring the ECOSOC at the core of the SDG formulation, and the implementation of the post-2015 development agenda was most notable. However, in its individual capacity, India placed much more emphasis on going beyond the MDG goal of overcoming extreme poverty to attempting poverty eradication, with all its linkages spelt out. It wished for a move away from the MDG model of dealing with symptoms to addressing issues of development and growth. It also urged for a focus on agriculture and rural development for faster and inclusive growth, on the importance of access to energy and goals for developed countries to reduce their consumption levels to save energy. Indian academics presented a model for the TFM in the form of the Advanced Research Project Agency for Sustainable

Development (ARPA-SD). India emphasised the importance of respecting national plans in the review of the implementation for the SDGs.

3. What is the lineage of India's economic multilateralism?

As brought out in Chapter III, the lineage of India's economic multilateralism consists of three prominent and related elements. The first is the interjection of development into institutional mandates. At the time when the Bretton Woods Institutions were being formed, India was on the verge of independence. With limited influence, India interjected to ensure that the IMF and the World Bank as the main monetary and financial institutions devised programmes in such a manner as would benefit developing countries. The second feature of the India's multilateralism was actions to strengthen the developmental role of the UN. This was important because the IMF and World Bank functioned rather autonomously, unfettered by the majoritarianism of the UN system. That system itself needed to be spruced up to have more say on the global economic order, and influence the institutions outside of it. Empowering the ECOSOC, and then gradually the setting up of newer forums like the UNCTAD, UNIDO, and UNDP through activism in the General Assembly thus became important.

Linking development with new issues as they came up on the agenda of the UN is the third feature of India's economic multilateralism. This has entailed some innovative thinking in terms of linking issues, like care for environment, technological support for it, and development. Finally, and perhaps most notably, over these decades, India has been party to creating an enabling normative ambience through the adoption of new international instruments on various aspects that were tangentially related to the economic realm. Prominent among them were the concept of permanent sovereignty over natural resources (1952) which later came to be accepted as a principle of international law (1966), the idea of common heritage of mankind (1967), the Declaration of Friendly Relations among Nations (1970), and the Charter of Economic Rights and Duties of States (1974).

4. What are the continuities and changes in Indian economic diplomacy at the UN?

As analysed in Chapter IV, there are more continuities than changes in India's economic multilateralism. The continuities have to do with the persistence of inequities in the international economic order, partly attributable to post-World War II Bretton Woods system and the gradual pace of their change. The changes are attributable to limitations of coalition politics and, more importantly, to India's changing position in the international economic hierarchy. There are three other sets of factors that have had an impact in the overall context of the liberal ideological underpinnings of the global economic order and the shifting meanings of sustainable development. The first is the difference in perceptions of the developing and developed world regarding what is desired of the system of global economic governance. Second are the structural aspects — such as the north-south divide and national interests — that create differences within the South and/or the North, thereby making it difficult to arrive at a consensus. Third, there are linkages between issues of development, finance, and technology that make it difficult to realise the global partnerships that are needed for the achievement of the various developmental goals.

5. What is the significance of India's economic multilateralism for global economic governance?

As concluded in chapter V, India's economic multilateralism, both generally and as evidenced in the SDG and FFD processes, continues to be a corrective to the discourse on global economic governance coming from bastions of the liberal order —although India's own progress has placed it amidst the developed and the developing world.

6. Is there a need for India to conduct its multilateral economic diplomacy differently? If so, how?

Yes. This is because being positioned amidst the developed and the developing world in terms of the levels of development, and no longer ideologically at odds with the liberal economic

order, gives India the scope to advance a powerful middle-of-the-road narrative that would suggest ways in which liberal economic norms not only overcome inequality, but also respect sustainability. It could perhaps be labelled NIEO 2.0.

In times when the impact of the lack of development in one part of the world is felt in the other parts in the form of recessions, large scale immigration, and sporadic acts of terrorism, the liberal multilateral order is waking up to the need for reaching out to the last man standing. It is time for countries like India to resuscitate the activism of the past, with the attendant linkages of development to technology and sustainability, not just in the realm of ideas, but also in practice.

The Financing for Development (FFD) process and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) process are some of the recent events in the realm of economic multilateralism in the United Nations (UN). India, on its part, has always engaged with the UN and global multilateral processes. This study seeks to focus on India's diplomacy on FFD and SDGs in the context of its long history of engaging with global economic governance through the UN. It begins by highlighting the significance of the multilateral for India, then moves on to a detailed discussion of the FDD and SDG processes, and finally to continuity and change in India's economic multilateral engagements. The monograph concludes by highlighting the significance of India for the multilateral and focussing on the policy implications deriving from these analyses.



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