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## UNIT 14 LIBERAL INTERNATIONALISM

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### 14.1 INTRODUCTION

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The liberal internationalist perspective of Canadian foreign policy emerged during the Second World War, and had reached its peak during the 'golden age' of Canadian foreign policy in the 1940s to 1960s period. It declined somewhat in the 1970s, when Prime Minister Eliot Pierre Trudeau sought to base foreign policy on the perceived 'national interests' of Canada, only to return to the liberal internationalist moorings. The decade of the 1980s was marked by the problems of deficit and debt and Canada had to restructure its economy. In view of its declining economic competitiveness and position in the global economy, Canada had also to negotiate free trade agreements with US. Integration with the US economy have had its own far-reaching implications for Canadian sovereignty, culture and even identity. In view of closer economic ties with US, and the growing influence of domestic business and Canada-based US multinationals on Canadian foreign policy, critics began describing it as the end of Canadian liberal internationalism. Liberal internationalism, and all that goes with it, has however shown remarkable persistence; and the framework rebounded with strength in the second half of the 1990s to manifest itself in the 'new' diplomacy of human security. During post-9/11 terrorist events in US, liberal internationalism eclipsed, perhaps for a while. Be that as it may, an ideological and political contestation is on over a liberal internationalist foreign policy for Canada.

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### 14.2 ROOTS OF LIBERAL INTERNATIONALISM

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Canadian statesmen and practitioners of diplomacy in the 1940s and 1950s including importantly Lester Pearson, John Holmes, Hume Wrong and Escott Reid contributed to the evolution and development of the liberal internationalist perspective for Canada. From their writings and speeches and actual policy conduct, some of the central themes that liberal internationalism encompasses include functionalism, middle powermanship, and benevolent internationalism or volunteerism. More than others, it was Lester Pearson who,

as minister of external affairs (1948-57) and as prime minister (1963-68), shaped the internationalist framework for Canadian foreign policy. Like Pt. Jawaharlal Nehru, **independent** India's first prime minister, **Pearson** was committed to building a new and better world order; and, for him, Canada's own political security and economic prosperity lay in a rule-based multilateral order. In practical terms, it has meant support for the UN system including the principle of collective security, participation in the peace-keeping, participation in NATO and strong ties with Canada's Western allies, and building of closer relations with developing countries through **official** development assistance programmes. In brief, by championing liberal internationalist norms and values, Canada sees itself as a good international citizen. Why did liberal internationalism emerge in the first place? Of the many answers, the one most preferred is that it emerges out of Canada's own political culture.

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## 14.3 CANADIAN MIDDLE POWERMANSHIP

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In the liberal internationalist view, Canada is seen as a middle power. though there are challenges involved in defining Canadian middle powermanship. Still, it is undeniable that the framework is found useful in understanding the Canadian foreign policy and Canada's role in the international system over the past half a century. It is perhaps for this reason that Canada has persisted **with** its self image as a middle power, notwithstanding the end of cold war, closer integration with the US economy under the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA), and post-9111 accentuation of US uni-polarity, **In** other words, the middle **power framework** has enabled Canada to have its own understanding of the international power hierarchy; and a set of **functions** and roles for itself that are commensurate with its capabilities and skills.

### 14.3.1 Evolution of the Canadian Middle Powermanship

Long before the end of the Second World War, Canadian statesmen and diplomats had begun using the term 'middle' power, 'medium' power and '**intermediate**' power to describe Canada in the international power hierarchy. However, when the Second World War ended, Canada **found** to its dismay that the so-called 'great' powers had created only a two-fold division between the great powers and the rest. The great powers had arrogated to themselves all powers; including at the level of UN Security Council where the **permanent** five powers had arrogated to themselves the 'veto' power. In the first place, such a division between the 'great' and **the others** was simply arbitrary. Further, lumping together all 'others' as one category neither conveyed the important differences that existed among the 'others'; nor it took into **account** the important contributions that some of them such as Canada had made and would make to the maintenance of international peace and security. For Canada, it was simply difficult to accept its relegation to the category of the 'others'; for, in all respect, it was close to being a great power. At the end of Second World War, Canada was the third largest economy of the world, and had vast reserves of uranium and nuclear know-how. It was a continental-sized country that had committed a million troops to the Allied cause, and had contributed substantial sums towards the reconstruction of European economies, while trebling its own national debt. Under the circumstances, Canadian statesmen had argued that Canada, on the basis of its power attributes and its contribution during the War, deserved a 'different status'. May be, Canada was not as powerful as Soviet Union or Great Britain; but neither was it so weak as to be bracketed with Panama and El Salvador. In addressing the British Commonwealth countries in 1944, Canadian

prime minister Mackenzie King had said: "We expect some recognition of the considerable difference between Canada and Panama." To Mackenzie King, Canada was a 'medium' power, And being a medium or middle power, Canada deserved a different and a distinct place in the international system.

It is important to remember that while proclaiming itself as a middle power and seeking a role different from small countries in the international system, Canada was not guided by the conventional attributes of power such as territory, size of the economy, military preparedness etc. To be a middle power does not mean that Canada stood somewhere between the great powers and the small countries in terms of power and resources. What Canada was suggesting was that being a middle power, it had certain capabilities and resources which are suited for certain specific functions in the international system; and that in the international system, stature should be commensurate with the capabilities of a country to discharge certain responsibilities. In simple words, Canada was advocating the principle of **functionalism**. As a middle power, Canada had its own comparative advantage in terms of specific resources and capabilities; and using those resources and capabilities, it could make a difference in the working of international system. Moreover, Canada felt strongly that matters of international peace and security cannot and should not be left in the hands of the so-called great powers; for great powers often have the tendency to act arbitrarily. Middle powers like Canada may and do have their own specific resources and capabilities. These capabilities to fulfil specific responsibilities while, on one hand, distinguish them from small powers, they, on the other hand, also enable them to make a substantial contribution towards the maintenance of international peace and security. In fact, these specific capabilities and resources even distinguish them from the great powers. Referring to the design of the precursor UN Relief and Rehabilitation Agency (UNRRA), Mackenzie King had asserted that it "is not always the largest powers that have the greatest contribution to make to the work of these bodies..., representation on such bodies can often be determined on a functional basis and in our view this principle should be applied wherever it is feasible." What in reality, functionalism means is that the special role and functions that middle powers like Canada can and do perform should become the basis of their importance in the international system. It meant that international system is not the prerogative of the great powers; nor in fact the system can be left to their possible power plays. There are other important countries as well who have a role to play—though may be only occasionally—in the international system. In its logic, functionalism was a thrust towards making the international system multi-polar and broad-based.

If we read a little more closely, the principle of functionalism is really a very interesting one. It does not mean that self-perceived middle powers like Canada were demanding that they should be considered occasionally and on specific issues 'important' in the global affairs. There is something more to it. The principle of functionalism challenges the argument that structural power—military and/or economic—alone is the basis of the inter-state relations; and that states are engaged in a perpetual quest to **maximise** their powers—if necessary by resorting to force and war. It implied that the intrinsically anarchic inter-state relations could be gradually reformed along some rational principles; and that functionalist middle powers could gradually make cooperation as the basis of inter-state relations. What Canada was rejecting was that power is the basis of international relations. As a functionalist middle power, Canada had its own issue-specific strengths and skills, which are required for the maintenance of international peace and security. These issue-specific strengths and skills make Canada important for the great as well as the small powers.

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## 14.4 LIBERAL INTERNATIONALISM

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To explain in simple and few words, let us first say that Canada is a liberal internationalist middle power. But what does it mean in concrete terms? The fulsomeness of Canadian middle powermanship can be understood only in the context of Canadian liberal internationalism. As stated above, the idea is to make it a better world by promoting the norms of cooperation and rules-based behaviour among sovereign states. The functional middle power is a liberal internationalist middle power, promoting the norms of good international citizenship. To explain it in broad terms, Canadian liberal internationalism means, most importantly (i) support for multilateralism; (ii) peace-keeping; (iii) mediation between North and South and, to an extent, between East and West in the era of cold war; and (iv) a rule-based trading system.

- i) Multilateralism has meant strengthening the UN system and making the great powers bound by international legal norms and collective decisions of the international community. **Multilateralism** strengthens the process of democratic functioning and consensus-building; and in the long term, helps build strong international institutions and new rules and norms. Multilateralism curbs arbitrariness on the part of great powers; and allows small countries a voice in the international system. In simple words, as liberal internationalist middle power, Canada stands for a 'democratic' international order.

In the period of cold war, middle power liberal internationalism of Canada had focused a good deal on multilateralism. Given the power plays between the two super powers and alignment of most other great and medium powers with one or the other power bloc, it was felt that multilateralism is also in the long-term in national interest of Canada. Only in a peaceful multilateral order, middle powers like Canada could exercise independence in their foreign policy and influence the **course** of international relations. Also in a peaceful rule-based order lay their own **security** and the well-being of their people. As a result, Canada has, since the inception of UN, worked to build and strengthen the international institutions. We can say that Canada—and middle powers in general—have strong associational orientation and institution building capacity; and in fact this, to some extent, distinguishes Canada from both the great powers and the small countries.

- ii) Peace-keeping has remained a key manifestation of Canadian liberal internationalist foreign policy. International peace-keeping and mediation had become the attributes of Canadian foreign policy particularly in the 'golden era' of Pearsonian internationalism. In 1956, the secretary of state Lester **Pearson** had successfully led to the creation of UN Emergency Force (UNEF) during the Suez crisis, and since then Canada has prided itself on its 'expertise' in international peace-keeping and mediation. In fact, Lester **Pearson** had come very close to identifying the peace-keeping with Canadian middle powermanship. Peace-keeping—an issue-specific role—**did** allow Canada some influence and autonomy in international system. Importantly, its role during the Suez crisis also enabled it to emerge as a mediator in intra-bloc disputes, as US was apparently irked by the Anglo-French military adventure against Egypt. Since then, Canada has developed enormous reputation. The two countries **who** are engaged in some armed conflict generally find Canada as a reliable and a trustworthy **peace-**

keeper. Besides, Canada trains a large portion of its armed forces for peace-keeping operations. In fact, whenever the size of the Canadian armed forces are under discussion and when defence budget is being worked out, more defence outlay or the size of Canadian armed forces are justified in the name of their international peace-keeping responsibilities.

- iii) Liberal internationalism has also meant that Canada sees itself as a mediator, a 'go-between' promoting the spirit of dialogue and consensus between the developed North and the developing countries of the South. It has been a champion of official development assistance and other measures to bring about equity in relationship between the developed and the developing countries. Canada did not play any significant mediatory role in the East-West conflict during the cold war, since it was a member of the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO). However, during the tenure of prime minister of Eliot Pierre Trudeau, Canada had called for the end of cold war, and even entertained a mediatory role for itself. It is important to note that within NATO too, Canada has been engaged in working out differences between alliance partners; and, given the power asymmetry between US and other NATO countries, persuading US to work within the mandate of NATO rather than trying to act alone.
- iv) Canada is a resource export-dependent economy, which means that the domestic economic stability and prosperity depends on an orderly rule-based international trading system. It also means that Canada has been a strong votary of an international system based on the norms of free trade. In fact, as early as 1940, Canada had proposed the idea of an international trade organisation to regulate global trade.

#### 14.4.1 Grotian Perspective

It is interesting to note that by upholding liberal internationalism, the middle power Canada questions the 'Realist' assumption that power is the sole basis of international relations. In other words, a liberal internationalist view contrasts with the 'Realist' view of international relations. In place of power, Canada seeks to promote, what is called, the 'Grotian perspective' of international relations. It means that while the inter-state system is based on the pursuit of narrowly perceived 'national interest', it also entails a minimum commitment on the part of every sovereign state towards the maintenance of international order. In the era of cold war, it had meant that Canada championed all that is multilateral to ensure peace and security, inter- and intra-bloc dialogue and developmental assistance to the Third World. The 'Grotian perspective' was an effort to minimise, if not resolve, the tensions between the 'Realism' of bi-polar politics and the ethics of liberal internationalism. The important aspect of liberal internationalism is that it seeks to promote norms of ethical behaviour on the part of sovereign states. It insists that, very much like in individuals, mutual cooperation is an equally important attribute of state behaviour. Canada argues that over decades, may be centuries, there have evolved many international laws and norms that encourage mutuality and cooperation among the states; and this trend should be strengthened. It is important to remember that while 'Realism' is premised on the idea of state competing with each other to attain whatever be their interests and goals, liberal internationalism focuses on cooperation and inter-dependence. In the imagination of a liberal internationalist middle power, the world is inter-dependent and the cost of breaking or violating this inter-dependence could be very high, more so for the powerful and the developed states.

#### 14.4.2 Aspects of Liberal Internationalist Foreign Policy

In reality, however, Canadian pursuit of middle power liberal internationalism has never proved easy. There have been many limitations and drawbacks. In the 1950 and 1960s, Cold War and arms race between the two super powers were major complicating factors. Beginning with the Korean war, UN collective security system itself has been compromised many times; and UN Security Council resolutions became the bases of unilateral military action against other countries.

During the cold war, Canadian diplomacy had striven to check the unilateralist tendencies of the two super powers. For much of the Cold War period, Canadian effort was on how to maintain the **norm** of collective security and prevent super powers including importantly the US from becoming unilateral. The task was really **difficult** as Canada had close economic and trade **relations** besides having security and defence ties with US. In other words, Canada has promoted and practised liberal internationalism while at the same time taking care of its 'special relationship' with the US. Deepening integration with US economy apart, Canada had also become integrated into the US plans for continental defence as early as 1940s, when it had signed the Ogdensburg agreement. Such continental geo-strategic considerations had also made Canada establish with US the bilateral North American Aerospace Defence Command (**NORAD**) in 1958, and later the Defence Production Sharing Agreement (**DPSA**) which allowed the US access to strategic resources of Canada. In short, pursuit of middle power liberal internationalism had been fraught with many tensions and challenges. At the level of NATO too, Canada had to work to keep the security alliance multilateral and prevent its domination by the US.

These problems have aggravated after the end of cold war, when US has so often either bypassed UN or used the Security Council to stamp its decisions to 'sanction and intervene against some country.

All in all, the middle power liberal internationalism has meant that Canada play the role of a reformer of international system. Though it is not a shortcoming, it has meant **that** Canada is not so much a critic as a problem solver in international politics. Canada has expended lots of its energies in resolving difficulties in the working of the international system and keeping it on multilateral course. Its contribution to international peace and security has been more of a practical nature rather than an intellectual type. Here, it is interesting to know the important difference between Canadian liberal internationalism and the Non-Aligned Movement. Both the liberal internationalism and the Non-Aligned Movement had stood for multilateralism, peace-keeping, norms of cooperation and interdependence. It was the similar worldview which, though emanated from different sources, had brought prime minister Lester **Pearson** and Indian prime **minister** Jawaharlal **Nehru** close to each other and had laid the foundation of a strong Canada-India-relationship in the 1950s and 1960s. The similarities however end here. Canada could never appreciate the concept and movement of Non-Aligned **countries**. Being a **Western** alliance partner, it considered Non-Alignment, somewhat erroneously, a position of 'equi-distance', hence 'unethical' in the divide between 'democracy' and 'communism'. The point to remember here is that Canada had practiced its liberal internationalism while remaining an active member of NATO; and hence this had placed a limitation on its commitment to liberal **internationalism**; and Non-Aligned countries including India did not appreciate this aspect **Canadian** foreign policy.

Another aspect which is extremely important to know is that Canada has promoted these liberal internationalist norms and values through its own distinctive style of 'quiet diplomacy'. Canada's expertise has been in working behind the scenes, work out compromise formulas and bring out factual and technical details on a problem to convince two warring countries understand and appreciate Canadian point of view. Unlike **great** powers which always have it, and small powers which invariably do not, a large middle power thus champions some particular issue backed with considerable resources—material and technical. Mediation, **peace-keeping**, consensus-building and strengthening of norms of multilateral functioning, all demand that Canada actually spend its own considerable and varied resources to remain a liberal internationalist middle power. On economic issues, for instance the conference on laws of sea, the highly technical data presented by **Canada**—which many coastal developing countries were incapable of marshalling—came in support of demands of these countries. Canada could indulge in 'quiet diplomacy' because it has the reputation and skills and resources to indulge in protracted negotiations behind the scene to bring about a compromise and a consensus on contentious issues.

**Canada** always has had a 'confined approach' to its mediatory and 'quiet diplomatic' activities. Canadian statesmen have always been cognizant of the need to maintain the balance between capability and commitment. To maintain its credibility in international affairs, middle power diplomacy demanded that Canada's reach ought not to exceed its grasp. The idea is to back its commitment with requisite resources. This has lent a practicable dimension to liberal internationalism. In this sense, liberal internationalism is not some moralistic rhetoric or idealistic exhortation.

There have also been some negative aspects of middle power liberal internationalism. These negative roles have mostly been the result of the fact that international politics has remained based on structural power; and great powers have always tried to have their way in the international system. The middle power Canada lacks structural military and economic power to right the every wrong, especially when great powers are determined to go arbitrary and use their brute military power. Generally in the case of an armed conflict or intervention, Canadian liberal internationalism has shown limitations and helplessness. Some times, domestic interests have also prevailed over its liberal internationalist commitments. For instance, Canada has overlooked violation of human rights in China in view of its own large economic and commercial interests in that country.

However, it does not mean that in a situation of armed conflict or when great powers are out to use force, middle powers are always helpless. They are not. When required, Canadian middle powermanship has risen to the occasion. The government of John Diefenbaker had broken openly with US on the question of Cuban missile crisis of October 1962, and had chartered an independent foreign policy on a host of other issues. The Liberal government of Lester **Pearson** fully **underwrote** US policy in **Vietnam** but also worked behind the scene to restrain US **from** searching for a military solution to the Vietnam imbroglio. And when 'quiet diplomacy' failed, **Pearson** did not **hesitate** in going public in his criticism; and suggested that a pause in bombing might have elicited a more flexible response from Hanoi.

Middle power liberal internationalism, notwithstanding varied criticisms, has enabled Canada to remain constructively engaged in international affairs. At the least, Canada has not faced the kind of prolonged marginalisation that several other self-perceived middle

powers, e.g. Brazil and Denmark have experienced in international affairs; or, a rapid decline in its international standing, similar to what has happened to Belgium.

Unlike in the case of Germany and Japan, Canadian middle powermanship has been constrained by domestic political complexion and narrow focus on trade matters. The government of Elliot Pierre Trudeau had acknowledged openly the defining limitations of middle power diplomacy; more so in the changed domestic and international circumstances of the 1970s'. But as he sought to make Canada move away from liberal internationalism and base his foreign policy on narrowly perceived 'national interest', his government could hardly define as to what constituted Canadian national interest. His 'third option' was nearly a failure in the face of ~~hard~~ economic realities of Canada-US bilateral relationship and the structural limitations of a resource export-dependent economy in **diversifying** its relations. Trudeau had also become critical of Canada's commitment within NATO and expressed his intentions to remain "equi-distant" **from** the two super powers. Towards the end of his tenure, he also took the initiatives to end the Cold ~~war~~, civilise East-West dialogue, and favoured the nuclear arms control and universal disarmament. All these initiatives however did not produce any tangible benefits for Canada. In the end, Trudeau had to return to the middle power liberal internationalism, championing multilateralism, mediation and peace-keeping etc.

In sum, liberal internationalism has guided the foreign policy goals of middle power Canada, though the super power politics had kept it confined during the era of cold war. It must however be conceded that the greatest contribution of liberal internationalism lay in strengthening the **norms** of multilateralism, peace-keeping, mediation and **consensus-building**. One may wonder, why liberal internationalist middle power perception has persisted for so long in Canada. By championing liberal internationalist norms, Canada has remained actively engaged in international **affairs** and ward off its marginalisation. Canada has performed a wide array of roles and tasks based on its capabilities; and some of these tasks and roles make it an ideal typical middle power.

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## 14.5 LIBERAL INTERNATIONALISM, ECONOMIC REGIONALISM AND GLOBALISATION

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In the 1980s, Canadian economy was faced with domestic problems of debt and deficit. At the external level, it faced the problem of declining competitiveness of its exports and position in the **international** economy. This necessitated both economic **restructuring** and a change in external economic relations, most importantly in the form of free trade agreements with US. From an economic perspective, middle power liberal internationalism had often been criticised as idealistic; and a position that did not convey the hard realities of **Canada-US** relationship. Thus when economic factors began dictating its foreign policy to a great deal, many wrote off Canadian liberal internationalism.

More appropriate to say however would be that as Canada sought closer integration with the **US** economy and opened further its economy to integration with the global trade and investment, it had to readjust its middle power liberal internationalism to the exigencies of regionalisation and globalisation. Besides in the 1990s, the end of cold war had produced new challenges and some new opportunities for its professed commitment to a rule-based **multilateral** order.



Andrew Cooper, Richard A. Higgott and Kim Richard Nossal have developed an interesting concept of 'relocation' of middle powermanship in the context of economic globalisation and regionalisation. Restructuring of global economy and deepening of interdependence, in their view, have necessitated the 'relocation' of middle power category. 'Relocation' means that middle powers have some new opportunities to create equitable, issue-specific international trade regimes under globalisation. It is true that structural power of states remains important on 'high' issues of international peace and security; at the same time, however, other issues related to economy and environment have become very important under globalisation. The rise in importance of 'second' (economic) and 'third' (social and environmental) category of issues means that Canada—and other middle powers like Australia—have to adjust and expand their liberal internationalism to the changing economic and social realities. In international economic, social and environmental matters, middle powers have considerable 'entrepreneurial' skills and 'technical' resources. Using these varied skills and resources, they can and, in fact, are beginning to provide new forms of leadership progressively as 'catalyst', 'facilitator' and 'manager' of issue-specific coalitions of countries, cutting across North-South and rich-poor divide. By working for the creation of issue-specific regimes particularly in the **economic/trade** and **social/environmental** arenas, **Canada** has the opportunity as never before to shape the evolving international order along democratic and equitable lines. One example that comes to mind in this context is the Cairns group of agricultural exporting countries which Canada and other 'like-minded' countries have created with a view to pressure the developed economies to establish a fair trading system in agricultural products.

In the era of cold war, there was too much focus on aspects of politics and military security. However, with globalisation, issues of economic and environmental security have become equally important. Besides, globalisation means that inter-dependence between states is becoming deeper; and all the **countries—developed** and developing, strong and **weak—**are likely to suffer more in case inter-dependence breaks down. In other words, economic globalisation process has opened up opportunities for the formation of lateral coalitions among 'like-minded' countries on specific economic and trade-related issues. Such lateral coalitions, cutting across the traditional East-West and North-South divides are a potential source of leadership for middle powers like Canada.

The principal element of Canadian middle powermanship at the international economic level, as noted earlier, had been its support for a multilateral trading system. In the past, this has been constrained by Canada's own dependence on the US for investment, technology and access to the market. Multilateralism was no doubt often used to offset the excessive dependence—both economic and political—on US. When Canada opted for trade agreements—first the bilateral Canada-US Free Trade Agreement (C-USFTA) in 1989 and subsequently North American Free Trade Agreement (**NAFTA**) in 1994, it was largely to bring some stability and predictability in its own bilateral relations with US. No doubt, it meant some retreat **from** economic multilateralism. However, in Canadian perception, bilateral free trade agreements also meant that Canada made US abandon its arbitrariness in trade matters and, beginning at the bilateral level with Canada, should return to multilateral trade negotiations. With bilateralism gaining institutional shape, more opportunities had also opened to middle power Canada to indulge in **autonomous** trade regime-building activities. In a reversal of past perception and policy, Canada had begun using **bilateralism** to reinforce **multilateralism**.

In 1990, Canada revived its proposal for an International Trade Organisation (ITO). Finally with the setting up of WTO, Canada has taken the 'high road' on a number of critically important issues including, for instance, the call for an internationally agreed definition of subsidies, an **improved** discipline on the issue of counter-duties, and a dispute settlement mechanism that draws from the C-USFTA experience. With profound changes in the international finance, Canada has also called for reforming the Bretton Woods institutions. Multilateral financial institutions need to deal better with the external debt crisis and financial shocks experienced by the developing countries. It has called for improved surveillance and effective financial support measures by international financial and trade institutions including not only IMF and World Bank but also OECD and WTO. To prevent the recurrence of currency crisis, it has suggested ways and means to ensure stability in the exchange markets and immediate assistance to countries with serious balance of payments situations. In principle, it has also supported the rescheduling of the debt of the most-poor indebted countries. Along with like-minded countries, it has also taken the initiative for the creation of issue-specific trade regimes. It has been an important member, for instance, of the Cairns Group of Fair Trading countries in agricultural products. In short, under globalisation, liberal internationalism has taken more and more of economic dimension.

Since the 1990s, Canada's middle power liberal internationalism has manifested itself in many new ways. With four per cent share in global trade, Canada is the largest of the small and the smallest of the big traders. In its view, rule of law i.e. principles and structures of governance, is the first prerequisite of liberalising and globalising economies. WTO is a first major step in this direction. Transparent governance and rules call for the creation of issue-specific international economic and trade regimes. As markets get bigger and borderless, rules for the market are beyond any one single state or corporate business; even more so, as international and domestic factors become more closely intertwined. Yet another task therefore is the political management of diverse international regimes. Ideas matter more than the structural power especially in framing the rules for reciprocal bargains. Middle powers like Canada have comparative advantage in providing technical, intellectual and entrepreneurial leadership in the creation and management of trading regimes. Besides, the Canadian position on trade issues generally falls **somewhere** in the middle of free trade and state protectionism. Canada belongs to many coalitions within WTO because large and small countries alike often make common cause with Canada. It is a resource intensive economy with major interest in trade in services; and this make it come closer to both developing and developed economies on specific issues. A good example of 'quiet diplomacy' is Canadian participation in a large number of the so-called 'invisible' groups within WTO. In the Singapore, Seattle, Doha and Cancun ministerial conferences of WTO, Canada has actively organised informal discussions, prepared technical papers for consultations and has been involved in behind-the-scene diplomacy narrowing down differences among countries. This is 'helpful fixing'; a familiar track for Canada albeit on trade-related issues. The small size for Canada of most other markets—with its own trade so heavily concentrated with US—has enabled the country to adopt a detached approach; and that makes Canada worthy of trust of both developed and developing countries. A transparent rule-based system ensures the opportunity of equal treatment and protection to all. 'Rules are the equalisers' in international trade; therefore, Canada—with its common law heritage—must help WTO write transparent rules. WTO has an incomplete institutional and legal architecture; and this is where Canada has comparative advantage in proposing norms of dispute settlement, definition of subsidies and discriminatory trade practice, and

preparing country analyses of trade policies, etc. The WTO lacks implementing powers and also economic analyses capacity. Both are with the member countries. Canada has considerable technical know-how in building specific trade-related data and facilitating implementation of programmes and policies. 'Implement and look forward' to a new round of negotiations sum up the Canadian approach within WTO. Apart from such a long-range view and commitment to multilateralism, strengthening of WTO is also deemed necessary to offset the post-NAFTA prospects of 'deepening dependence on the US.

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## 14.6 LIBERAL INTERNATIONALISM AND HUMAN SECURITY AGENDA

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Many had feared that the free trade agreement with US will bring an end to Canada's liberal internationalist commitments. It did not. On the contrary, the liberal internationalist aspect that Canada must work for the establishment of a multilateral trading system came to the fore. Besides, it goes to the credit of Brian Mulroney that Canada did not make a **full-scale** retreat from liberal internationalism as far as political issues were concerned. In the second half of the 1990s, Canada's middle power liberal internationalism resurged. With Lloyd Axworthy as foreign minister, Canada took up the cause of human security and made it the 'new template' of Canadian foreign policy. Human security agenda is the way the age-old liberal internationalism has responded to the post-cold war challenges and threats to international peace and security.

While liberal internationalism had hitherto confined itself to the states, encouraging cooperation and inter-dependence among sovereign states, under human security agenda, the task of liberal internationalism expanded from the states so as to cover the security of individuals and the communities. It was argued that in post-cold war, there are greater and numerous threats to the security of the individual; and these threats come in many **forms**—**ethnic** wars, religious fundamentalism, racial intolerance, terrorism, and trafficking in drugs, arms, and human beings. Moreover, some times, even states have become a threat to the safety of individuals and communities by indulging in ethnic cleansing, encouraging cross-border terrorism etc. Thus, building a democratic state that values human life and respects minority rights has itself become a goal of liberal internationalism. Therefore, liberal internationalism, whose ultimate goal has always been safety and well-being of the individual, must transcend the goal of state security and address itself to the ultimate objective viz. safety and well-being of the individuals and communities.

The ethical and humanitarian **norms** respecting freedom and guaranteeing the safety of individuals and communities were always present in the international system. However, in the era of sovereign states, the primary focus of international system had always been on the respect and guarantee of state sovereignty. Further, it was assumed that individual freedom and safety is within and by the state. But the end of cold war has thrown up many new challenges; besides, the process of economic globalisation is calling upon states to relinquish some of their sovereignty. In an increasingly inter-dependent world, the meaning of state sovereignty has changed. Many of the new threats and challenges to the freedom and safety of individuals and communities in fact constitute a threat to regional and international peace and security. For instance, the ethnic war in Rwanda which led to the killing of several hundred **thousands** innocent unarmed civilians cannot be considered as **an** internal matter of a sovereign state. It had larger humanitarian implications and is spilled

into the **neighbouring** states as refugees and victims of civil war poured across borders. International community could not have sat idle and watch the genocide going on. This was the case where a state had 'failed'. But even where the states have not failed, it has become necessary that liberal internationalism address directly the safety and well being of individuals and collectivities rather than seek to promote them through the medium of sovereign states. Such are the exigencies of economic globalisation process and the post-cold war disorderliness in many parts of the world.

^11 this calls for redefining the concept of inviolable and immutable 'sovereignty' of states. States must abide by and uphold the body of law which is called the 'humanitarian in **national** law', which has evolved gradually over the past more than one century. 'Sovereignty' of state and 'freedom' of the individuals ~~are~~ are not contradictory to each other. In an inter-dependent world, all it means is that 'freedom' of the individual is no more confined to the jurisdiction of 'sovereign' states. It does not mean that 'sovereignty' of the state must be displaced or violated. It only means that sovereignty is not the ultimate goal in itself; and that sovereignty of states should be so reformed that it begins respecting individual freedom. In brief, what is called for is the reconstitution of state sovereignty. If it is not reconstituted, many of the threats of today **cannot** be met; besides, some of the states may themselves become a source of threat to the safety and well being of individuals and communities. Threats such as terrorism, **ethnic** violence, religious fundamentalism, racial bigotry, and **trafficking** in drugs, arms and human beings pose a direct threat to the well being and safety of individuals and communities; and they all require concerted international action. Some times, states themselves are promoting and practicing policies of cross-border terrorism, ethnic **cleansing** etc. Moreover, these threats are often trans-national in their origin and character; and states alone cannot tackle them. Further, the **question** of individual freedom cannot be tackled within the confines of sovereign states; and there are international norms and institutions that are dealing with them.

In short, the ethical and superior goal of liberal internationalism had always been individual freedom and well-being. Over the past three centuries or so, these **goals** were being promoted and pursued within and through the medium of states. But given the new kinds of threats and challenges, which pose a great threat to individual than to the state, liberal internationalism is calling for direct action for the safety of individuals and communities.

~~At~~ the same time, the old concern of liberal internationalism viz. how to regulate inter-state relation to make the world peaceful and orderly is also being debated afresh in the wake of the momentous changes that we are witnessing, more particularly since the 1990s. These changes pertain to the process of economic globalisation, revolution in information technology and communication and new cosmopolitan cultural and ethical values such as concern for human rights, environment, etc.

States, no more, are the **sole actors** in the international system. Though they are still the only legal entities ~~which are members~~ of the international community, there has also emerged a strong **international** civil society. Host of international non-governmental organisations (INGOs) are championing varieties of causes ~~ranging from~~ human rights to environmental conservation, and from gender-related issues to the **rights** of indigenous communities. The end of cold war and process of globalisation have facilitated the rise of these international civil society associations. These **NGOs and INGOs** are playing important roles ranging from advocating specific ~~causes to~~ **raising** funds and even implementing them. Through

their activities, they are pressing the international system to become more democratic, representative, transparent and accountable. In a sense, international civil society is restraining the sovereignty of states. Even the UN and other international **organisations** are incorporating international civil society groups in their activities; for instance for the spread of awareness and treatment against **HIV/AIDs**, environmental programmes, literacy campaigns and grass-roots level health schemes. The rise of international civil society does not mean that the state has **become** obsolete. States still remain the basic units of international system; and they are essential to maintain order and security, enter into treaties and agreements, and mobilise financial resources, etc. But what is required on the part of the state is to adjust themselves to these new realities, work in concertation with international civil society organisations, and uphold 'humanitarian law'.

Under the human security agenda of Canada, there emerged a new multilateralism that went outside the UN on issues such as the anti-personnel landmines ban treaty, initiatives to ban the use of child soldiers and small weapons, and setting up of an International Criminal Court. Canada advocated and succeeded in building a coalition of states—big and small, developed and **developing**—**and** international non-governmental organisations, and succeeded in 1997 in getting the international treaty banning the landmines signed. Two years later, it succeeded in getting the international criminal court set up again by **mobilising** international public opinion. Both these successes were notably accomplished without the support of the great powers. Since then Canada has also been advocating international conventions to ban the use and sale of small arms and use of children in internal warfare.

This is the new 'can-do' foreign policy of Canada. It is based on the realisation that 'high-minded' issues have become prominent in the aftermath of the cold war; and that Canada has a comparative advantage in championing these issues. It enjoys the support of international civil society organisations; it has the experience, knowledge, technical know-how and necessary financial resources to build coalitions of 'like-minded' countries on specific issues of environment, human security, women's rights etc. Moreover, the manner of conducting foreign policy and exercising leadership both have changed with the emergence of an international civil society. While the support of sovereign states is still required, support of NGOs and INGOs for a given cause have provided an expanded scope for Canadian leadership. Today, the middle power is poised, as perhaps never before, to transform the international system along democratic and humane lines. The partnership with actors of international civil society gives it new sources of influence in international politics.

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## **14.7 LIBERAL INTERNATIONALISM: POLITICAL CONTESTATION**

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While Canada championed the human security agenda in the second half of the 1990s, it had simultaneously followed the US lead in the first Gulf war of 1991, participated in the humanitarian interventions in Kosova and Serbia and joined international coalition in overthrowing the *Taliban* regime in Afghanistan. It had justified its participation on humanitarian grounds. On other occasions, many had **said that** Canada, since it is integrating with US economy, is following US as its 'deputy sheriff. Post-9/11, Canada had also to follow the US advice on border issues—immigration, refugees, and civil liberties. Many

critics actually saw these developments as the end of Canadian liberal internationalism. However, then came the Canada's reluctance to support US 'war on terrorism', signing of the Kyoto protocol much against the wishes US multinational corporations, and refusal to join the 'coalition of the willing' in the invasion of Iraq. Many have seen it as the retrieval of Canadian liberal internationalism and **affirmation** of its age-old middle powermanship. Be that as it may, one thing which is evident is that post-9111, there is an ideological and political struggle within Canada between those who are keen to retain the age-old liberal internationalism and those who want Canada to integrate **fully** with US economy, and play the role of 'deputy sheriff' sub-serving the US strategic objectives of domination and hegemony.

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## 14.8 SUMMARY

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Canada has been pursuing a foreign policy, particularly from the period of World Wars based on the ideals of building a new and better world order through rule-based multilateral process. This has come to be known as Liberal Internationalism. The basic tenets of liberal **internationalist** perspective for Canada had been functionalism, middle powermanship and benevolent internationalism or volunteerism. In pursuit of middle power liberal internationalism Canada has faced many limitations and drawbacks also. However Canada has promoted the liberal internationalist norms and values through its own distinctive style of quiet diplomacy. In the 1980s and 1990s it had to adjust its policies to the exigencies of regionalisation and globalisation. Principal element in this had been its support for a multilateral trading system. In the second half of the 1990s Canada also took up the cause of human security which meant to cover the security of **individuals** and the communities apart from that of State.' A basic limitation of Canada however has been its closeness and somewhat dependence on the U.S.A. and therefore following the U.S. perceptions in most situations. Yet within Canada there are debates and differences with regard to Canada's relationship with the U.S.A. In general, the policy of liberal internationalism has shown Canada as a peace loving country.

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## 14.9 EXERCISES

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- 1) Briefly examine the salient aspects of Canadian liberal internationalist middle powermanship.
- 2) Explain in detail the evolution of Canadian middle powermanship.
- 3) Explain liberal internationalism and the process of economic regionalisation and globalisation in Canada.
- 4) Write an essay on the human security **agenda** of Canada.