

5.Rule Of Law- International Relation

UN chief warns 'law of the jungle' is replacing rule of law,The UN Secretary-General has warned that the Rule of Law, a pillar of global peace, is threatened by states selectively applying international law (an "à la carte" approach) and violating the UN Charter. Upholding international law is crucial for protecting the sovereignty of smaller nations and providing guardrails for powerful ones, requiring renewed commitment to independent courts like the ICJ and peaceful dispute resolution.

Rule of Law as a Cornerstone

The United Nations Secretary-General has emphasized that the Rule of Law is fundamental to maintaining global peace and security. However, current geopolitical trends indicate a worrying erosion of these principles.

Observations on Current Violations

Systemic Violations- There is a rising trend of violations against the UN Charter and established international law. Specific examples of these transgressions include Illegal Use of Force Aggressive military actions that lack legal justification.

Attacks on Infrastructure- Deliberate targeting of civilian infrastructure.

Human Rights Abuses- Widespread violations of fundamental human rights.

Humanitarian Denial- The blocking or denial of life-saving humanitarian aid (e.g., situations observed in Gaza and Ukraine).

The "À la Carte" Approach-Selective Adherence- States are increasingly treating international law like an "à la carte menu," picking and choosing which laws to follow based on convenience.

Consequences- This selectivity sets dangerous precedents that encourage impunity and significantly erode trust among nations.

About International Law

Definition- It defines the legal responsibilities of States in their conduct with one another, as well as their treatment of individuals within their own state boundaries.

Origin- The term 'International Law' was first coined by the philosopher Jeremy Bentham.

Scope (Global Commons)- Beyond state-to-state relations, it regulates shared global resources and domains, including,The Environment and Sustainable Development,International Waters,Outer Space,Global Communications and World Trade.

Significance of International Law

The value of international law differs based on a nation's power dynamics but is mutually beneficial-

Perspective	Significance
For Smaller / Less-Powerful Countries	It acts as a shield, promising equal treatment, sovereignty, dignity, and justice against potential coercion by stronger states.
For Powerful Countries	It serves as 'guardrails,' defining acceptable conduct, especially during times of disagreement, division, or conflict, preventing total chaos.

Priorities for Action

To uphold the Rule of Law, the following actions are prioritized-

Upholding the UN Charter- All countries must honour their commitments under the UN Charter. This specifically includes safeguarding human rights and respecting the sovereign equality of States.

Peaceful Dispute Settlement- Nations should actively utilize diplomatic tools such as negotiation, mediation, and judicial settlement. This should be supported by stronger partnerships with regional organizations.

Reliance on Independent Courts- There must be greater reliance on and support for independent judicial bodies, particularly.The International Court of Justice (ICJ).Mechanisms of international criminal justice.

Main UN Bodies Upholding International Law

Different bodies within the UN system have distinct roles in interpreting and enforcing international law-

UN Body	Role & Authority
UN Security Council (UNSC)	It is the only body with Charter-mandated authority to adopt decisions that are binding on all Member States. It has the unique power to authorize the use of force under international law to maintain peace.
International Court of Justice (ICJ)	The principal judicial organ that settles legal disputes submitted to it by States parties. It operates strictly in accordance with international law.
UN General Assembly (UNGA)	Its role is to make recommendations to promote the development and codification of international law. The Sixth Committee- Serves as the primary forum for considering legal questions within the General Assembly.

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