

SUBJECT PAPER: THEORY AND PRACTICE OF HUMAN RIGHTS

SUBJECT CODE: 18BPO51C

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CLASS: II M.A., POLITICAL SCIENCE

UNIT III

THE VIENNA DECLARATION AND PROGRAMME OF ACTION

The World Conference on Human Rights reaffirms that least developed countries committed to the process of democratization and economic reforms, many of which are in Africa, should be supported by the international community in order to succeed in their transition to democracy and economic development.

The Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action, also known as VDPA, is a human rights declaration adopted by consensus at the World Conference on Human Rights on 25 June 1993 in Vienna, Austria.

The Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations, which was agreed in 1961 and went into force in 1964, sets out how sovereign states can establish, maintain and, if need be, terminate diplomatic relations. It defines who is a diplomat and thus entitled to special privileges and immunities.

RIGHT TO DEVELOPMENT

The right to development is an inalienable human right by virtue of which every human person and all peoples are entitled to participate in, contribute to, and enjoy economic, social, cultural and political development, in which all human rights and fundamental freedoms can be fully realized.

A human rights approach to sustainable development emphasizes improving accountability systems, access to information on environmental issues, and the obligations of developed States to assist more vulnerable States, especially those affected by climate change.

The Declaration clearly states that development is a comprehensive process aiming to improve “the well-being of the entire population and of all individuals on the basis of their active, free and meaningful participation in development and in the fair distribution” of the resulting benefits.

Article 21 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) outlines some of the fundamental principles of democracy: the will of the people should be the basis of government authority, and everyone has the right to take part in the government “directly or through freely chosen ...

ENVIRONMENTAL RIGHTS

Environmental rights means any proclamation of a human right to environmental conditions of a specified quality. ... This relationship is increasingly recognised, as the right to a healthy environment is enshrined in over 100 constitutions.

Environmental rights mean access to the unspoiled natural resources that enable survival, including land, shelter, food, water and air. Many of these rights, particularly the political ones, are well-established and enshrined in various conventions and agreements.

All human beings depend on the environment in which we live. A safe, clean, healthy and sustainable environment is integral to the full enjoyment of a wide range of human rights, including the rights to life, health, food, water and sanitation. Without a healthy environment, we are unable to fulfil our aspirations.

Everyone has the right to a healthy and safe environment that will ensure their physical and mental health or well-being, including adequate water supply, sanitation and waste disposal as well as protection from all forms of environmental danger, such as pollution, ecological degradation or infection.

THREAT AND CHALLENGES TO HUMAN RIGHTS

TERRORISM

Terrorism indeed overshadows every aspects of economic, social, cultural and political life. While it bring instability and disrupts peace and coexistence environment, it directly endangers the lives of people and brings every types of violence in the society.

A UN panel, on March 17, 2005, described terrorism as any act "intended to cause death or serious bodily harm to civilians or non-combatants with the purpose of intimidating a population or compelling a government or an international organization to do or abstain from doing any act."

Terrorist acts can cause ripple effects through the economy that have negative impacts. The most obvious is the direct economic destruction of property and lives. Terrorism indirectly affects the economy by creating market uncertainty, xenophobia, loss of tourism, and increased insurance claims.

POVERTY

Poverty is a denial of human rights. ... The human rights-based approach to poverty reduction espouses the principles of universality and indivisibility, empowerment and transparency, accountability and participation.

Poverty erodes or nullifies economic and social rights such as the right to health, adequate housing, food and safe water, and the right to education. The same is true of civil and political rights, such as the right to a fair trial, political participation and security of the person.

Poverty is an assault on human dignity, but it can also reflect a violation of human rights when it is the direct consequence of government policy or is caused by the failure of governments to act.

Inequality is concerned with the full distribution of wellbeing; poverty is focused on the lower end of the distribution only – those who fall below a poverty line

DICTATORSHIP

Dictatorships are always build on the premise of economic stability and growth. With repeated difficult times, a country can become susceptible to an authoritarian personality under the right circumstances or by a hostile takeover.

Dictatorships and authoritarian governments are antithetical to democracy in every way, sooner or later, usually resulting in the violent overthrow of the authoritarian leader(s).

This unsustainability is usually due to increasingly intolerable repression of human rights that must be instituted in order to maintain control over the people.

In a dictatorship, the individuals rights are usually suppressed. Dictators often come to power in times of difficulty, such as massive unemployment, inflation, and unrest among the population.

ENVIRONMENTAL DEGRADATION

Human rights cannot be secured in a degraded or polluted environment. The fundamental right to life is threatened by soil degradation and deforestation and by exposures to toxic chemicals, hazardous wastes and contaminated drinking water.

Environmental degradation is the deterioration of the environment through depletion of resources such as air, water and soil; the destruction of ecosystems; habitat destruction; the extinction of wildlife; and pollution. ... When natural habitats are destroyed or natural resources are depleted, the environment is degraded.

Humans impact the physical environment in many ways: overpopulation, pollution, burning fossil fuels, and deforestation. Changes like these have triggered climate change, soil erosion, poor air quality, and undrinkable water.

1. Change the way you get around. ...
2. Be mindful of eating habits. ...
3. Grow your own food or buy it locally. ...
4. Embrace secondhand shopping. ...
5. Replace standard products with energy efficient versions. ...
6. Buy recycled products. ...
7. Spread the word. ...
8. Stop using plastic water bottles.

GLOBALIZATION

Globalization is leading to greater problems of state capacity to comply with human rights obligations, particularly economic, social, and cultural rights, such as trade union freedoms, the right to work, and the right to social security.

Transnational integration and increased mobility can simultaneously strengthen and diminish the protection of individual rights and the dignity of individuals. Globalized markets have facilitated more monitoring of social conditions but have also opened up more opportunities for economic exploitation.

- Globalization uses up finite resources more quickly. ...
- Globalization increases world carbon dioxide emissions. ...
- Globalization makes it virtually impossible for regulators in one country to foresee the worldwide implications of their actions. ...
- Globalization acts to increase world oil prices.