

Markscheme

May 2026

Global Politics

Higher level and standard level

Paper 2

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General marking guidance

Expect a range of approaches in student responses

Examination questions encourage independent thinking on the part of students. Expect a range of appropriate responses. Examiners should be aware that in some cases, students may take a different approach that, if appropriate, should be rewarded.

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

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

Marking accurate and relevant knowledge and examples

For some questions, there is no single “correct” answer. Examiners must be prepared to award full marks to answers which demonstrate accurate and relevant knowledge.

For example, bulleted lists in this markscheme indicate likely points that students may include in their answer: they are not exhaustive, and examiners should credit other valid points not listed.

Unless demanded by the question, explicit stand-alone definitions are not required: understanding of terms may sometimes be conveyed as effectively through the way they are woven into the response.

About extended responses

It should be recognized that, given time constraints, answers are not intended to reflect a fully polished extended response that addresses the full range of possible examples, issues and topics possible. Use the provided markbands in conjunction with the marking notes to award marks.

Markbands for paper 2

Marks	Description
0	The work does not reach a standard described by the descriptors below.
1–3	The response shows limited understanding of the demands of the question. • The arguments are poorly structured and unclear. • There is little relevant knowledge present. • The response is descriptive or is based in unsupported generalizations.
4–6	The response shows some understanding of the demands of the question. • The response is structured to an extent, but the organization lacks clarity or coherence. • There is limited justification of the claims presented. • Some relevant knowledge is present. • Some examples are mentioned but they are not developed or their relevance is unclear. • Diverse perspectives are not identified.
7–9	The response indicates an understanding of the demands of the question, but these are only partially addressed. • The response presents an adequate structure and organization. Arguments are clear and coherent. • Most of the main claims are justified. • Relevant and accurate knowledge is present. • Supporting examples are partly developed. • Diverse perspectives are identified, but not explored.
10–12	The demands of the question are understood and addressed. • The response is well structured and organized. Arguments are clear, coherent and well supported. • All of the main claims are justified. • The response demonstrates relevant and accurate knowledge. • Supporting examples are adequately developed. • Diverse perspectives are explored.
13–15	The demands of the question are understood and addressed, and possible implications are considered. • The response is well structured, balanced and effectively organized. Arguments are clear, coherent and compelling. • All of the main claims are justified and evaluated. • Relevant and accurate knowledge is used effectively throughout the response. • Supporting examples are effectively developed. • Diverse perspectives are explored and evaluated.

Section A

1. Evaluate the claim that civil society organizations are not effective in protecting human rights.

Responses are likely to begin by explaining key terms including human rights and civil society organizations. Students may define civil society organization (CSO) as any non-profit, voluntary citizens' group which is organized on a local, national or international level. These are driven by people with a common interest, and carry out different services and humanitarian functions, bringing citizens' concerns to governments, monitor policies, and encourage political participation at the community level and could include NGOs and other grassroots initiatives. Besides NGOs, there are human rights defenders, community groups, charity groups, advocacy groups, labour unions, religious groups/organizations, social movements, professional associations and others who are part of civil society fighting to protect human rights. Students may describe human rights as rights inherent to all human beings, regardless of race, sex, nationality, ethnicity, language, religion, or any other status. They should be able to provide benchmarks of effectiveness or ineffectiveness of civil society organizations and explain what protection of human rights would mean. Students should be able to explain to what extent they agree with the claim that civil society organizations are not effective in protecting human rights.

Arguments in favour of the claim that civil society organizations are not effective in protecting human rights may include:

- Civil society organizations which are dependent on finances from abroad may be rendered ineffective in protecting human rights. This could be because they do not necessarily always have the finances to put their plans into action. For example, in Ethiopia, many NGOs were forced to close due to a law which prevented them from receiving more than ten per cent of their funding from abroad. Similarly, according to Amnesty International, in Russia, the government has labelled NGOs who receive foreign funding as "foreign agents."
- Civil society organizations do not have the power to pass legislation unlike states, rendering them ineffective and limiting their ability to make significant contributions to the protection of human rights. They can only highlight human rights violations and raise awareness. For example, the Narmada Bachao Andolan in India was led by native tribes, farmers, environmentalists and human rights activists against the construction of dams on the river Narmada. Although this did not stop the construction of the Sardar Sarovar Dam but was able to raise awareness.
- Civil society organizations function only to the extent states allow them to. They also face other challenges such as the inability to enter certain countries or being banned for different reasons. Besides, there may be situations where civil society organizations have ostensibly been successful at the outset but have still been unable to achieve their goals. Eg following the social movement to overthrow Hosni Mubarak (2011) the military took over power in Egypt. This meant human rights were not necessarily effectively protected despite the overthrow of the regime. There are instances where CSOs are suppressed/prevented from operating by states. For example, according to 2023 ITUC Global Rights Index, 73% of countries impeded the registration of unions or banned them, including Belarus, Myanmar, Hong Kong, Central African Republics and Guatemala.
- Civil society organizations have had problems related to corruption, lack of transparency, financial irregularities, lack of structure, methods they use, may be confrontational (making them ineffective) jeopardizing the legitimacy of the CSO

making them ineffective in protecting human rights. For example, some prominent NGOs – such as Oxfam and Save the Children – have faced calls for accountability for serious human rights violations and criminal acts of their staff. Similarly, in 2024, Nicaragua banned 1,500 NGOs that included removal of legal status of religious groups such as Association of Salesian Women and the Saint Pio Foundation alleging that they failed to report their finances properly.

- International civil society organizations may not be familiar with local and national cultures or may be open to political interference. They may also face issues such as language barriers. For example, according to a study, the information systems and accountability tools (developed in the UK) used by an international NGO in Bangladesh was developed by and was for English speakers and did not easily accommodate the Bangla script. Local workers in Bangladesh were forced to use an unfamiliar language.

Arguments against the claim that civil society organizations are not effective in protecting human rights may include:

- Civil society organizations work on the ground and are closely linked to grassroots level. They can offer some form of direct assistance to those whose human rights have been violated through humanitarian assistance, protection, or training to develop new skills. They may also help through the provision of legal advice. For example, Cambodia's Women's Crisis Centre is a local non-profit working to eliminate violence against women and operates shelters.
- Civil society organizations through their ability to spread awareness can put pressure on states and governments and ensure that human rights violations do not occur or stop. This could be done through collecting information, having campaigns, demonstrations, use of media etc. For example, Amnesty International and Red Cross whose reports are considered by the UN as part of the official process of monitoring governments that agree to be bound by international treaties. Similarly, Mwatana for Human Rights is a local Yemeni CSO, emerged as a key actor documenting abuses and advocating for accountability since 2015.
- Civil society organizations can work with states or supplement state efforts in protecting human rights. They help provide fundamental checks and balances and form one of the key bridges between governments and their people. For example, The Wellcome Trust charitable foundation works on research and advocacy supporting science to solve urgent health challenges. They work with governments, commercial organizations, and civil society to advocate for improvement in health.
- Civil society organizations play an important role alongside IGOs in addressing human rights issues. For instance, in the Human Rights Council, the participation of NGOs is clearly guaranteed in Res. 60/251: "[...] the participation of and consultation with observers, including [...] national human rights institutions, as well as non-governmental organizations, shall be based on arrangements, ...[...] and practices observed by the Commission on Human Rights, while ensuring the most effective contribution of these entities". For example, local NGO Hong Kong Human Rights Monitor.
- Civil society organizations encourage individuals to become active citizens. They provide opportunities for people to get involved in matters relating to human rights, fostering a sense of empowerment, and community engagement. For example, the BLM in the US pushed for dialogue and active engagement of people on the rights of a certain group.

Responses should demonstrate a clear understanding of how civil society organizations are not effective in protecting human rights. Responses should

contain references to specific contemporary real-world examples. Arguments in favour of the claim could note that civil society organizations – especially those that are functioning at the national or international level – may be limited in terms of their organizational and institutional capacity. This can hinder their ability to carry out their work effectively and independently. For example, in the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC states) at least 75 individuals are behind bars for exercising their right to freedom of expression, association or assembly. Arguments against the claim could highlight the fact that CSOs provide analysis and expertise, serve as early warning mechanisms and help monitor and implement international agreements, including Sustainable Development Goals that relate to human rights. NGOs can also step in where governments may fall short on many fronts related to human rights such as healthcare, education. For example, in Vietnam several important human rights campaigns launched by the Network of Vietnamese Bloggers (NVB) has targeted repressive legislation, advocating for greater guarantees for the right to access to information, and urged Vietnam to comply with its obligations under international human rights law. They can swiftly respond to emergencies and deliver aid to those in need, bridging critical gaps in services. Some may argue that there are different levels of organizations –some maybe more effective than others international have more funds, even work with IGOs, credibility, local ones more familiar with culture language etc.

Responses should include a conclusion on the degree to which the student agrees with the claim that civil society organizations are not effective in protecting human rights.

2. Examine the view that development and sustainability cannot be achieved at the same time.

Responses are likely to include definitions of development and sustainability. Development can be defined as a process which raises the level of well-being, standard of living and quality of life for a country. Varying perspectives and interpretations of development may be discussed, including political development, social and human development, institutional development and economic development, but clear links to sustainability must be established. Sustainability could be defined as any form of economic, social, environmental or political activity that incorporates environmental protection, social equity, inclusive and equitable progress, and no compromise in the needs of future generations to meet their own needs. Students may argue that there are differences in underlying priorities and timeframes between both. Traditionally economic development focuses on growth and infrastructure expansion, industrialisation, urbanisation and growth of GDP, resulting in harms to natural resources, ecosystems and social equality. Sustainability focuses on growth without compromising environmental, social and cultural well-being, the needs of future generations, renewable energy, conservation of natural resources, responsible consumption, social equity and lasting prosperity. Responses are likely to consider whether development and sustainability are inherently incompatible depending on how these terms are defined.

Arguments in favour of the view that development and sustainability cannot be achieved at the same time may include:

- Experience of development has been associated with economic growth through industrialisation which has led to environmental degradation, depletion of natural resources, harmful greenhouse gas emissions, damage to biodiversity, water pollution, and poor living conditions, all on a global scale. It will be hard to change direction, such is the legacy of dependency on, for example, fossil fuels which currently supply around 80% of the world's energy. Thus, development has been at the expense of sustainability and cannot be achieved at the same time.
- Experience of development has been that it has not distributed its benefits equally, leading to economic and social inequalities. Yet sustainable development requires a reduction of inequalities between and within nations as stated in goal 10 of the SDGs. Changing course to ensure that all segments of society benefit would need fundamental changes in the political, economic, governance and social structures which dominate the world at present.
- Development and sustainability may be unable to advance at the same time because they have different time horizons. Development projects often focus on immediate gains while sustainability projects often depend on long-term effects on ecosystems and future generations. For example, European fish stocks have depleted rapidly through advances in technology, poor regulation and cooperation to meet immediate market demands. Recovery takes a minimum of 30 years during which time activity would have to be reduced or stopped, damaging coastal communities.
- As sustainability is a global issue, it needs addressing alongside global development. However, at present there are no global governance institutions with the reach to be able to overcome the competing interests which hamper sustainability. There is no one to stop countries and corporations prioritising short-term growth, jobs, and profits over long-term sustainability. Even when countries or corporations set sustainability goals, there is a lack of enforcement mechanisms to ensure compliance. For example, the UN Pact for the Future 2024 adopted to accelerate the 2030 SDGs including managing climate change,

inequality, and other pressing global issues is only a set of commitments without any enforcement mechanism.

- Social development, such as advances in workers' rights and working conditions, does not take place evenly alongside economic development. Economic growth often benefits a small elite leaving workers' rights behind through inadequate provision against exploitation of wages, working hours and safety conditions. The Rana Plaza collapse in Bangladesh in 2013 provides an example of this.

Arguments against the view that development and sustainability cannot be achieved at the same time may include:

- New ways of seeing human activity are emerging. For example, the circular economy, which emphasises the reduction of waste, reuse of resources, and decoupling economic growth from unsustainable resource consumption. Also, Kate Raworth's Doughnut Economy, which considers priorities at the planetary rather than nation-state or household level. Cities such as Amsterdam and Copenhagen have already taken these new perspectives on board in their urban planning.
- Some countries are already managing to prioritise conservation while achieving significant development. Costa Rica has achieved significant development while protecting its natural resources and reforesting large areas. In 2022, it ranked first in the world for cutting CO2 emissions thanks to 98% renewable electricity generation, 70% of which is from hydro. The European Union is attempting to integrate sustainability in its economic policies through its Green Deal.
- Green technologies have emerged, using abundant renewable energy resources such as wind, solar, and hydropower. Sweden and Denmark have shown that development and sustainability can coexist by investing heavily in renewable energy and sustainable urban planning while living standards rise. Norway generates 92% of its energy from renewables (2023) while 83% of investment in global electricity generation was in renewables in 2022. This shows that development can coexist with environmental stewardship.
- Sustainable economic growth creates new employment opportunities in sectors such as renewable energy, environmental management, and sustainable farming. This is particularly beneficial in developing countries with abundant labour much of which can remain in rural areas by practicing sustainable farming such as agroecology and permaculture. For example, The Philippines has adopted crop diversification, companion planting, minimal tillage and natural pest controls which rejuvenate land and secure food supply.
- The UN SDGs have provided a roadmap for countries to achieve inclusive development and poverty reduction while addressing sustainability challenges. This has indirectly stimulated companies like Lego and Patagonia to further their corporate social responsibility policies, and the emergence of smart cities like Singapore and Helsinki incorporating green spaces, energy-efficient buildings and low carbon infrastructure. South Korea improved its labour rights, democratic governance and social protections to match its economic progress.

Responses should demonstrate a clear understanding of how development and sustainability cannot be achieved at the same time. Responses should contain references to specific contemporary real-world examples. Arguments in favour of the claim could note that development and sustainability are not possible at the same time because the impact of development could have irreversible consequences. For example, deforestation in the Amazon where large scale agriculture, cattle ranching and logging have driven development, provided jobs and boosted exports for Brazil. However, these have also resulted in irreversible damages including massive losses of biodiversity, increased carbon emissions, contributed to climate change and threatened indigenous communities. According

to NASA, global warming is irreversible if any greenhouse gasses are added to the atmosphere, and sea level rise will continue even after CO₂ emissions cease. This means that no amount of sustainability accompanying development will reverse the damage already done.

Besides, oil extraction in the Niger delta has been a major driver of Nigeria's economy, generating huge revenues and foreign exchange through exports. But it has led to severe environmental degradation, oil spills which have polluted large areas, destroyed mangroves and harmed local fisheries. It has also caused huge social and economic inequalities as profits were concentrated in the hands of local elites and corporations while local communities faced poverty, health issues and displacement.

Arguments against the claim could highlight the fact that development with sustainability incorporated at the same time are possible. For example, Denmark's wind turbine industry, which has become a global leader in creating jobs and economic growth with companies like Vestas exporting the technology worldwide. 40% of Denmark's energy comes from wind turbines reducing reliance on fossil fuels, fostering energy security and supporting climate crisis mitigation. Similarly, Kenya has invested heavily in geothermal energy, for example the Olkaria Geothermal power station has become a leader in Africa's renewable energy sector, providing a low-carbon, reliable source of electricity while reducing dependence on fossil fuels and supporting job creation and regional development. South Korea's Green New Deal is an ambitious plan incorporating smart grids and electric vehicle infrastructure and renewable energy with the aim of transitioning to a low carbon economy and creating green jobs.

Students may challenge the question by arguing that sustainability is of paramount importance and that development versus sustainability is therefore an irrelevant dichotomy.

Responses should include a conclusion on the degree to which the student agrees that development and sustainability cannot be achieved at the same time.

3. To what extent is positive peace compatible with violence?

Responses are likely to include a definition of the concept of peace, in particular in its positive conception. Positive peace can be defined as the presence of attitudes, institutions and structures that create and sustain peaceful societies. Responses should also demonstrate a clear understanding of the concept of violence, which is often defined as physical or psychological harm afflicted upon another being. In the context of global politics, it could be seen as anything someone does that prevents others from reaching their full potential. This broader definition would encompass unequal distribution of power that excludes entire groups from accessing resources essential for improved living standards or well-being, and discriminatory practices that exclude entire groups of people from accessing certain resources. Students may differentiate between different types of violence (e.g. direct, structural and cultural). Students should provide a conceptualization of what is meant by compatible. Students are expected to consider the merits or otherwise of the view that positive peace is compatible with violence.

Arguments in favour of the claim that positive peace is compatible with violence may include:

- Violence can be employed to enforce international norms, such as preventing ethnic cleansing, thereby laying the groundwork for positive peace. The doctrine of R2P sanctions the use of violence to prevent gross violations of human rights. For example, the UN R2P intervention in Côte d'Ivoire in 2011. The UN-authorized military intervention successfully halted mass atrocities removed an illegitimate leader and prevented a broader civil war.
- Violence can be a necessary tool to dismantle deeply entrenched systems of oppression that prevent the achievement of positive peace. The Arab Spring saw violent uprisings that aimed to overthrow authoritarian regimes, leading to more inclusive political structures in some countries example Tunisia.
- Violence may be essential in protecting vulnerable populations from genocidal threats, thus creating conditions where positive peace can eventually take root. The Kurdish forces in Rojava used violence to defend their communities against ISIS, aiming to establish a more just and egalitarian society (2014–2019).
- Certain forms of violence might be considered compatible with positive peace as they coexist in a given society. For example, in countries like Canada violence against Indigenous groups persist while the society maintain itself in an overall condition of positive peace.
- A state may use violence in self-defense to protect its sovereignty and preserve the conditions necessary for positive peace. The government of Colombia up to 2023 used the military to preserve sovereignty against armed criminal groups.

Arguments against the claim that positive peace is compatible with violence may include:

- Violence is often used by states to suppress dissent and maintain oppressive systems, which are incompatible with positive peace. China's violent crackdown on protests in Hong Kong in 2019 is an example of how violence is used to stifle freedoms and sustain control.
- Violence often leads to cycles of retaliation, making it difficult to establish the trust and cooperation necessary for positive peace. For example, the ongoing violence between Israel and Palestine perpetuates enmity, preventing the achievement of even negative peace, let alone lasting peace.

- Violence can delegitimize peacebuilding efforts, leading to resistance and further conflict. The NATO intervention in Libya in 2011 created the possibility for a positive peace by helping to remove Gaddafi but then laid the ground for a power vacuum that has made such a peace an even more distant possibility.
- Violence can never be compatible with positive peace, understood as the absence of all forms of violence. Structural or cultural forms of violence such as income inequality might be compatible with negative peace, but not with positive peace. For example, the honor killing of a woman in Kohistan, Pakistan in 2023.
- Violence erodes social cohesion, making reconciliation, and long-term peacebuilding more difficult. It deepens societal divisions and fuels resentment, making it harder for groups to coexist peacefully. For example, ethnic violence in Myanmar against the Rohingya minority prevents meaningful reconciliation between the Rohingya and the Buddhist majority.

Responses should demonstrate a clear understanding of to what extent positive peace is compatible with violence. Responses should contain references to specific contemporary real-world examples. Arguments in favour of the claim could note that violence exists in many states that live in a context of positive peace (e.g. Norway, Canada) or even that violence is somehow conducive to positive peace when used to re-establish the conditions for positive peace to flourish. Students might argue that states often use violence abroad with the declared intention of preserving positive peace domestically and promoting it abroad. For example, military interventions in Central African Republic aimed at preventing genocide and stabilizing the region as an attempt to promote the conditions for positive peace to exist. Arguments against the claim that violence is compatible with positive peace might include references to the fact that violence can hinder or even reverse the progress towards positive peace for example the ongoing conflict between the Mexican government and drug cartels. Similarly, violence can devastate social and economic infrastructure, setting back the conditions necessary for positive peace by decades. For example, the Syrian Civil War has destroyed infrastructure, making reconstruction and peacebuilding incredibly challenging. Finally, students may problematize the concept of positive peace itself or suggest that the judgment changes depending on what kind of violence is being considered – direct, structural or cultural – and on whether we are considering violence within a state or between states.

Responses should include a conclusion on the degree to which the student agrees with the claim that positive peace is compatible with violence.

Section B

4. “The enforcement of the responsibility to protect (R2P) commitment faces overwhelming challenges due to the role of sovereignty in global politics.” Discuss this claim.

Responses are likely to include a definition of Responsibility to Protect (R2P) as an international norm that seeks to ensure that the international community acts to prevent egregious human rights violations (genocide, war crimes, ethnic cleansing, and crimes against humanity). Students should also demonstrate an understanding of sovereignty as the full right and power of a state over itself, without any interference from outside sources or bodies. They may also refer to internal (total authority within one’s own territory) and external (ability of state to act independently to face external actors/forces) sovereignty. ‘Overwhelming challenges’ could be conceptualised in terms of how sovereignty undermines the enforcement of the R2P doctrine, making it difficult to protect populations from mass atrocities. Students may also outline the conceptual conflict between the enforcement of R2P and the traditional notion of state sovereignty, setting the stage for an analysis of how this tension impacts the practical application of R2P. Students should be able to discuss to what extent they agree with the claim that the enforcement of the R2P commitment faces overwhelming challenges due to the role of sovereignty in global politics.

Arguments in favour of the claim that the enforcement of the Responsibility to Protect (R2P) doctrine faces overwhelming challenges due to the fundamental role of sovereignty in global politics may include:

- R2P is often perceived as selectively enforced based on Western interests, which can be seen as a new form of imperialism, thus facing resistance on the grounds of sovereignty. For instance, criticisms of the selective nature of interventions in Libya versus the lack of intervention in Yemen highlight inconsistencies that undermine the legitimacy of R2P.
- The application of R2P can lead to legal and ethical dilemmas where the line between ‘protecting’ and violating sovereignty becomes blurred. This has also led to P5 members blocking attempts at the application of R2P. For instance, China and Russia vetoed the usage of R2P in Syria. They vowed to never again allow the United Nations to violate the sovereignty member country after humanitarian intervention in Libya evolved into a regime-change operation. The enforcement of R2P often falters due to lack of political will among powerful states to intervene, primarily due to national interest considerations. The protection of sovereignty is tied to national interest. For example, the international community’s hesitant response to the Syrian civil war reflects concerns over national sovereignty and the geopolitical interests of major powers like Russia and the United States.
- Powerful states use the veto power in UN Security Council where permanent members often block interventions and decide on R2P interventions. They could prioritize political alliances over humanitarian needs, as seen in Darfur (2003–2005, 2023–), where China and Russia’s strategic interests delayed and weakened international responses to mass atrocities, undermining the R2P framework.
- Interventions under R2P can exacerbate conflicts or lead to long-term instability in the region, demonstrating the challenges of enforcing the doctrine without infringing on sovereignty. For example, the aftermath of the Libyan intervention

led to political instability and ongoing conflict, showing the risks of undermining state sovereignty and weakening appetites for R2P.

Arguments against the claim that the enforcement of the Responsibility to Protect (R2P) doctrine faces overwhelming challenges due to the fundamental role of sovereignty in global politics may include:

- R2P has been successfully applied to prevent or mitigate atrocities, showing that sovereignty can be appropriately overridden in some cases. For example, the UN-sanctioned intervention in Ivory Coast (2011) helped prevent a worsening of the civil conflict and was widely regarded as a legitimate and successful application of R2P.
- Regional organizations often support R2P interventions, which can alleviate sovereignty concerns by demonstrating regional acceptance. For example, the Arab League's endorsement of NATO's intervention in Libya (2011) and the African Union's endorsement of the UN-sanctioned intervention in the Ivory Coast (2011) shows regional support for overriding sovereignty in extreme cases.
- R2P also focuses on building state capacities to prevent atrocities, which respects and strengthens sovereignty rather than undermining it, example, R2P initiatives in Kenya have helped prevent electoral violence, supporting sovereignty through strengthening internal mechanisms.
- The evolving concept of contingent or responsible sovereignty means that in cases of severe human rights violations, the humanitarian imperatives of R2P are argued to rightfully override sovereignty concerns. For example, widespread reports of human rights abuses, including arbitrary executions, rapes, and the use of child soldiers in Mali in 2013 led to a UN-sanctioned intervention. This intervention was justified under the R2P doctrine, aimed at protecting civilians from further atrocities and helping to restore Mali's territorial integrity.
- The enforcement of R2P faces overwhelming challenges not just from sovereignty but also from power dynamics, where powerful states or alliances dictate outcomes (e.g., NATO in Libya); legitimacy, as interventions succeed only when seen as acceptable by regional actors (e.g., South Sudan); and interdependence, where global security concerns complicate national interests (e.g., the Yazidi genocide in Iraq).

Responses should clearly assess how the Responsibility to Protect (R2P) doctrine's application interacts with the foundational principle of state sovereignty. Students should include references to specific examples to support their evaluation of the claim in the question. Arguments in favor of the claim could highlight the successful application of R2P, as seen in Ivory Coast (2011), where international intervention helped prevent mass atrocities and restore democracy, showing that global norms can sometimes justifiably override state sovereignty for the greater good.

Arguments against the claim might note how sovereignty and national interests complicate R2P, as seen in Syria and Myanmar, where geopolitical rivalries and prioritization of national interests have limited intervention despite severe human rights abuses. The selective enforcement of R2P, such as in Libya, where intervention led to regime change, further undermines its legitimacy and raises concerns about Western imperialism. Additionally, students may argue that while R2P is a doctrine founded on noble principles aimed at preventing some of the worst human rights violations, its application is heavily contingent on international politics, the balance of power, and the prevailing global norms concerning sovereignty and intervention. As such, the future relevance and effectiveness of R2P may depend significantly on evolving international attitudes towards sovereignty and collective action in the face of mass atrocities. Finally, students could argue that there is no tension in the first place between the R2P doctrine and

sovereignty, since the latter has always entailed a responsibility to protect. Any other valid approach should be evaluated positively.

Responses should include a conclusion on the degree to which the student believes that the enforcement of the Responsibility to Protect (R2P) doctrine faces overwhelming challenges due to the fundamental role of sovereignty in global politics.

5. Discuss how development is hindered when marginalized people lack rights.

Responses are likely to include a definition of development and demonstrate some understanding that it is a multifaceted and contested term. Development can be defined as a sustained increase in the standard of living and well-being of a society. Students may make more specific references to political, social/human, institutional, environmental or economic development as different dimensions of development. Rights can be seen as legally recognised entitlements and freedoms, often protected by international agreements, laws, and norms, that individuals and groups possess and are entitled to enjoy. Marginalized people could be defined as people living within a society who are treated differently and unfairly by the wider society. Marginalization can occur due to various factors such as ethnicity, race, religion, cultural identity, gender, age, race, sexuality, nationality, etc and can cause vulnerability. Marginalized groups are vulnerable; however, some vulnerable people do not necessarily belong to marginalized groups. The claim that the absence of rights for marginalized people negatively impacts development could be evaluated with respect to the contested meanings of development. Students should be able to discuss to what extent they agree with the claim that development is hindered when marginalized people lack rights.

Arguments in favour of the view that development is hindered when marginalized people lack rights may include:

- States that actively promote the discrimination of marginalized people can face international backlash and suffer negative economic consequences which severely impact economic development. For example, in Myanmar the treatment of the Rohingya minority has led to sanctions being imposed by the EU, the UK, the US and others.
- Discrimination against women results in them being less educated and less likely to participate in the workforce or public life hindering the state's economic, social and political development. For example, according to the 2020 UN Gender Inequality Index only 21% of women in Pakistan are employed and are therefore unable to contribute to economic development.
- Discrimination against marginalized people often dehumanizes them in the eyes of other members of society, leading to violence which is detrimental to social development. For example, Romani people are one of Europe's largest ethnic minorities and they face limited access to quality education, healthcare and housing. According to the European Union 20% of Roma people in Europe have experienced hate-motivated harassment while the figure jumps to 40% in Italy.
- It is widely acknowledged that Indigenous communities have a long history of living sustainably without negatively impacting the environment, yet their rights are often denied, and voices are not heard. For example, indigenous peoples in Canada publicly protested about the creation of a new pipeline across their lands in British Columbia and voiced concerns about the continued environmental impact of fossil fuels but the pipeline has been approved by the government.
- When religious groups are denied rights, this can cause deep social divisions which can erupt into violence and violent conflict which restricts any kind of development. According to the NGO "Minority Rights Group" in Ethiopia the government has resorted to brutal violence in response to clashes in the marginalized Oromia region.

Arguments against the view that development is hindered when marginalized people lack rights may include:

- Many states that are widely accepted as economically developed contain marginalized people who do not experience equal rights. For example, China has experienced a steady increase in its GDP as well as improvements in healthcare, transportation and education over the past 20 years despite widespread discrimination against many ethnic minorities including the Uyghur.
- The absence of rights amongst marginalized people can motivate people to join social movements, which can lead to positive changes and social development. For example, the right to marriage was denied to the LGBTQIA+ community in Thailand until 2024 with the creation of the Thai Marriage Equality Act. This act came into being after the parliament held extensive sessions with organized civil society movements and activists advocating for change.
- The absence of rights of a marginalized group can encourage actors such as Intergovernmental Organizations (IGOs) and NGOs to become involved and work collaboratively with states to contribute toward positive development. For example, Indigenous peoples' rights in Canada and Australia have improved due in part to their eventual acceptance of UNDRIP, thereby furthering Canada's social development.
- The exploitation of the labour of marginalized groups can significantly contribute to economic development. Due to the Kafala Sponsorship system, many foreign workers face poor living and working conditions in Qatar, yet the World Bank predicts that Qatar's economy will be the fastest growing in the (Gulf Cooperation Council) GCC in 2023 and 2024.
- In some political senses, development is unhindered by the lack of rights of marginalized peoples. Authoritarian or elite-controlled governments have the power to impose pro-development policies without opposition, protests or democratic restraints. Examples would be forcible displacement and seizures of land, forests or water bodies without legal resistance or compensation. Examples are the Gambella Land Grab in Ethiopia where the Anuak people were forcibly displaced to make way for international agribusiness, and the Rohingya minority in Myanmar whose land was repurposed for military use.

Responses should contain reference to specific examples. Students may argue that some types of development (for example, political, social/human, institutional, environmental or economic) support the claim while others do not. Arguments in support of the claim state that the UN Sustainable Development Goal 10 specifically addresses the concern that inequality within a state is an obstacle to development, and marginalized peoples' lack of rights can be seen as a dimension of inequality. South Sudan is considered to be the least developed state, according to the 2023 Human Development Index and has widespread inequality among women and multiple ethnic and linguistic groups. A further example supporting the claim that development is hindered when marginalized people lack rights is the increased and absolute oppression of women in Afghanistan by the Taliban and how this is negatively impacting social, political and economic development. Arguments against the claim could state that some states considered to be highly developed contain marginalized groups who lack rights. For example, the United States is considered to be highly economically developed but people of colour are more likely to face police violence and have disproportionately high rates of imprisonment. Students may also refer to the intersectionality of people who belong to more than one marginalized group and the impact this may have on development.

Responses should include a conclusion on the degree to which the student agrees with the claim that development is hindered when marginalized people lack rights.

6. To what extent are non-violent conflicts an obstacle to sustainable development?

Responses should include an understanding of what constitutes nonviolent conflicts. Non-violence is the practice of advocating one's own or others' rights without physically or psychologically harming the opponent. Examples of nonviolent conflicts include protests, civil disobedience movements and disputes, boycotts, strikes, demonstrations, and political movements. Responses should also include an understanding of violent conflicts as a form of contrast to nonviolent conflicts. Unlike violent conflict, nonviolent conflicts do not involve the use of physical force but can still inflict harm. Responses should include an understanding of sustainable development, which is defined as development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their needs. Responses could also include an explanation of the concept of development, as a sustained increase in the standard of living and well-being of a level of social organization. An understanding that this is a contested and multifaceted concept which encompasses varying perspectives and interpretations including political development, social and human development, institutional development and economic development could be made. Students should be able to explain to what extent they agree that non-violent conflicts are an obstacle to sustainable development.

Arguments in favour of the claim that nonviolent conflicts are an obstacle to sustainable development may include:

- Nonviolent conflicts through the form of repeated civil disobedience can lead to economic instability, providing an obstacle to sustainable development. For example, Lebanon has been suffering an ongoing financial crisis since 2019, the banking crisis has led to an imposition of withdrawal limits. Depositors have resorted to civil disobedience in the form of sit-ins and protests to recover their frozen money. These forms of nonviolence have further destabilized the economy and essential services, causing difficulties in achieving sustainable development.
- Nonviolent conflicts, such as strikes and protests, can lead to political distractions by causing the diversion of state resources like policing, mediation, governmental time etc. away from contributing to programs promoting sustainable development. For example, the reaction of the US government during the Black Lives Matter protests focused on policing and surveillance which diverted state resources away from sustainable development initiatives that could have addressed racial and economic disparities. In 2021, total corrections expenditure was estimated to be around \$81bn USD annually in the US.
- Nonviolent conflicts can sometimes exacerbate existent social divisions or create new ones, affecting sustainable development. For example, the Hong Kong protests (2019) exacerbated divisions within Hong Kong society between pro-democracy activists and pro-China supporters. For example, the nonviolent independence movement in Catalonia (2017), has created deep political and social divides, further hindering regional cooperation on broader development projects like green energy initiatives and infrastructure improvements. These protests and movements undermined investor confidence, affecting economic development, thereby hurting sustainable development.
- Nonviolent conflicts, similar to protests and blockades, can delay the passing of critical legislation and policies that are essential for sustainable development. For example, in Chile (2019) large-scale protests against social and economic inequality forced the government to focus on political and constitutional reforms, slowing down efforts to implement policies aimed at sustainable development.

- Nonviolent conflicts similar to protests and disputes over land can delay environmental progress by hindering initiatives aimed at addressing climate change and or the protection of natural resources, which are key components of sustainable development. For example, in 2021, the Norwegian Supreme Court ruled that the Fosen wind farm violated the Norwegian constitution which recognizes the right of the country's indigenous population to practice their culture and maintain their way of life, further impacting the construction of Europe's largest wind farm. Similarly, for example, land legislation in Brazil remains a deeply contentious issue, with ongoing protests reflecting the struggles of marginalized communities for access to land, social justice, and environmental protection. The complex interplay between agribusiness interests, Indigenous rights, and social movements continues to shape the landscape of land reform and legislation in Brazil. The outcomes of these struggles are crucial for addressing historical injustices and promoting sustainable development in the country.

Arguments against the claim that nonviolent conflicts are an obstacle to sustainable development may include:

- Nonviolent conflicts often shed light on critical national, social, and economic issues. Through public support, governments might be pressured to enact programs that support sustainable development. For example, nonviolent negotiations between the Colombian government and FARC (2016) led to land reform policies to promote economic and social opportunities in areas heavily affected by the drug trade.
- Nonviolent conflicts can attract international attention and support, which can lead to increased resources and advocacy for sustainable development on the state level. For example, Greta Thunberg has played a key role in mobilizing global environmental action and addressing climate change initiatives.
- Nonviolent conflicts often amplify the voices of marginalized or underrepresented groups, bringing their concerns to the forefront. Addressing these concerns can lead to more inclusive strategies, which are essential for sustainability. For example, the Standing Rock nonviolent protests (2016) against the Dakota Access Pipeline in the U.S, led by Indigenous groups brought global attention to environmental justice and Indigenous rights. This highlighted the importance of water protection for long-term ecological sustainability, which is vital for sustainable development.
- Nonviolent conflicts such as boycotts alter a change in behaviour of companies. For example, due to consumer pressure with a more focus on the environment, Coca-Cola (2021) announced its goal of making its bottles with 100% recycled and or renewable material by 2030. Ex. The BDS movement (2005 ongoing) encouraging individuals and institutions to withdraw financial support from companies that are complicit in the illegal Israeli occupation of Palestinian lands continue to alter companies' behavior to avoid financial loss.
- Nonviolent conflicts can foster dialogue and lead to democratic reforms, which are essential for long term sustainable political development. For example, the Power movement in Armenia/Velvet Revolution (2018), which ousted the long-term Prime Minister Serzh Sargsyan, resulted in democratic reforms that strengthened both political accountability and transparency, promoting a more stable and sustainable political system. Hence, nonviolent conflicts are easier to resolve and to reach solutions and not act as an obstacle towards sustainable development.

Responses should include an understanding of the different types of nonviolent conflicts. Candidates can also note that some conflicts are very difficult to identify as either violent and/or non-violent. Responses should be supported by using

relevant real-world examples. Examples of nonviolent conflicts transitioning into violent ones could also be made. For example, the Indian Farmers' Protests of 2020 occurred when Indian farmers conducted several sit-ins and protests due to newly enacted agricultural laws that would undermine their livelihoods. This form of civil disobedience became violent and affected major transportation points as it blocked several major highways. Responses should take a clear stance as to whether nonviolent conflicts are an obstacle to achieving sustainable development or not. Arguments can also be made illustrating how nonviolent conflicts can have no impact on sustainable development in contrast to violent conflicts. Responses should include an understanding of sustainable development on either the economic, social and or political level.

Responses should include a conclusion on the degree to which the student agrees with the claim that nonviolent conflicts are an obstacle to sustainable development.