



DISARMAMENT

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Introduction:

- Disarmament is one of those phenomena of international politics which are regarded as solutions to international problems.
- There is an argument that armament race is causing war and hence war can be checked only by disarmament.
- Generally disarmament indicates the idea of limitation, control or reduction of armaments.
- Disarmament may also mean anything from a simple limitation to complete abolition of arms.
- Disarmament may be unilateral or multilateral, general or local, total or partial, controlled or uncontrolled.

Definitions of disarmament:

- Disarmament is a “process of creating conditions which make it difficult or impossible for nations to break or endanger the peace and not as a bargaining process to reduce the cost of preparing for war.” – Cohen.
- “Disarmament is the reduction or elimination of certain or all armaments for the purpose of ending armament race.” – Morgenthau.

Need for disarmament:

- Need for disarmaments has been emphasized on various grounds such as –
 - I. It is argued that **armaments are the basic cause of all rivalries among the states.** Every state increases its arms and ammunitions on the ground of greater security leading to armament race paving the way for fear and suspicion in international politics which ultimately leads to war.

Need for disarmament

2. Disarmament is also promoted and defended on economic and humanitarian grounds. Developed countries use a huge amount of money on armaments which could be profitably used for improving the standard of life of poor people in underdeveloped countries.
 - “Every gun that is made, every warship launched, every rocket fired, signifies in the final sense, a theft from those who are hungry and are not fed, those who are cold and not clothed” –Eisenhower.

Need for disarmaments ...

- Thus, the goal of disarmament is
- in the first place, to remove the threat of future devastating wars & the extension of human civilization and
- secondly, to reallocate resources used for military purposes to peaceful, constructive and developmental purposes.

Kinds of disarmament:

- Disarmament may be of various types, like
 1. General & Comprehensive,
 2. Local and General
 3. Qualitative & Quantitative, etc.

I. General & Comprehensive:

- **General disarmament** is the one in which all or most of the great powers participate but not with a commitment to do away with all types of weapons.
- On the other hand **Comprehensive disarmament** involves the control or prohibition of all categories of armaments.
- This is a total disarmament, a world free of weapons of destruction & annihilation.
- It also means the absence of armies, weapons, military training institutes and ministries of defence.

2. Local & General:

- When the process of disarmament involves few or some nations, it is said to be local e.g. the Rush- Bagot agreement between US & Canada, 1817.
- General disarmament relates to efforts made by international organizations like the UN involving the whole world in the programme of reducing, limiting or eliminating arms.

3. Qualitative and Quantitative:

- **Qualitative disarmament** is concerned with the reduction or elimination of only certain types of arms e.g. NPT.
- **Quantitative disarmament**, on the other hand, aims at an over all reduction of armaments of most or all types. It does not regulate the invention or use of any future arms technology.

Problems of Disarmament:

- Some of the hurdles or problems in achieving disarmament are the following –
 1. Problem of security & fear,
 2. Lack of mutual trust,
 3. Absence of alternative to arms,
 4. Pressure of arms industry,
 5. National interest,
 6. Problem of qualitative/quantitative control,
 7. Not practicable, etc.

I. Problem of security & fear:

- The problem of disarmament is closely linked to the problem of security.
- Nations whether big or small join the arms race due to the fear of insecurity.
- Many states feel that disarmament deprive states of their means of security.
- Thus, the concept of security & insecurity poses a problem to effective disarmament.

2. Lack of mutual trust:

- Disarmament faces problem as there is the lack of trust between nations.
- Usually suspicion regarding the intentions of arms control hinders the talks towards disarmaments.
- If there were perfect trust between nations, arms would be unnecessary and disarmament would not be a problem (Sleicher).
- Thus, lack of mutual trust among nations causing difficulties in the realization of effective disarmament agreement.

3. Absence of alternative to arms:

- States require armaments in order to achieve a number of objectives.
- Since there is no substitute to the possession of arms, disarmaments becomes difficult.

4. Pressure of arms industry:

- The pressure of arms industry has an impact on the policy of a country pertaining to disarmament.
- The nations producing weapons earn huge profits and bestow political favors by supplying modern weapons.
- USA & Western Europe are the major producers & third world countries are its major buyers.
- Since the manufacture and sale of armaments are commercially profitable nations discourage disarmaments.

5. National Interest:

- Disarmament talks and conferences are a farce as majority of nations want to take much and give little as security is dear and fear is strong.
- Every nation is concerned with its national interest which is closely intervened with security.

6. Problem of qualitative or qualitative control:

- It is always difficult to determine whether the nation –states are equal in armaments or superior to another as there are different types of weapons.
- The agreement on ratio of strength causes a political problem as well as a technical one.
- Thus, carrying on arms negotiations and political negotiations simultaneously requires great skill & efficient diplomacy.
- The question of standards of allocation of the types and quantities of different armaments to be allotted also causes many problems.

7. Not Practicable:

- Many nations believe that the military preparedness really enhances its sense of security rather by adopting disarmament.
- Peace through disarmaments is an utopian dream.
- There is no historical evidence to prove the fact that a disarmed world would be a peaceful world.
- Opponents of disarmament argue that weapons are not the causes but rather results of conflictive relationship.

Conclusion:

- The history of attempt at disarmament is a story of many failures and few successes (Morgenthau).
- The issue of disarmament cannot be simplified in the present day world where mutual distrust prevails.
- In fact the problem of disarmament is not the problem of disarmament, but it is really the problem of the organization of the world community.
- The disarmament strategy is built upon three pillars – security, survival & development.