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Q2(a)

"It is not enough to talk about peace, one must believe in it; and it is not enough to believe in it, one must act upon it." In the present context, the major weapon industries of the developed nations are adversely influencing continuation of number of wars for their own self-interest, all around the world. What are the ethical considerations of the powerful nations in today's international arena to stop continuation of ongoing conflicts?

UPSC Civil Services Mains 2024 · GS IV · 10 marks · Ethics and Human Interface

Ethics and Human Interface: Essence, determinants and consequences of Ethics in-human actions; dimensions of ethics; ethics - in private and public relationships. Human Values - lessons from the lives and teachings of great leaders, reformers and administrators; role of family, society and educational institutions in inculcating values.

Core demand of the question

- (a) Read the peace quote as talk, belief and work; name the weapons-industry conflict of interest; list ethical duties of powerful nations to stop wars
- (b) Treat climate harm as greed in the name of development; say how to protect **life** and rebalance society and environment

Revision summary

The peace quote moves from speech to belief to costly work; a weapons industry that earns from continuation of war sits against that work.

Powerful nations owe a duty not to sell into atrocity, to own civilian harm, and to prefer reconstruction when a settlement exists.

Climate change is largely luxury and extractive greed billed as development.

Protection of **life** needs real carbon budgets, just transition, commons care and honest files, not posters.

- **Equilibrium is dignity without vanity:** livelihood with a living river.

Introduction

The paper gives a **peace sentence** and a **heat sentence**. **Part (a) is Eleanor Roosevelt's ladder: talk, believe, act** - set against **weapon factories that earn when a war does not end**. **Part (b) is the same greed in another dress: development that cooks the poor first**. A civil servant of a nuclear, warming republic cannot treat these as foreign-affairs essays only.

Body

(a) Peace: talk, belief, work - and the arms trade

Talk is a UN speech. **Belief** is a budget that does not rise when a ceasefire is possible. **Work** is mediation, humanitarian corridors, and **stopping the shipment**. The quote is a rebuke to **performative peace**.

The ethical wound of **developed-nation weapon industries** is a **conflict of interest at civilisational scale**. If profit needs **continuation** of a war, the firm has an incentive against Roosevelt's third step. Eisenhower named the **military-industrial complex**. Today's theatres - **Ukraine, Gaza, Sudan, the Red Sea** - are not identical, but they share **civilian harm** and **supply chains**. Just-war ethics (jus ad bellum: just cause, last resort, right authority; jus in bello: distinction, proportionality) does not vanish because a factory is legal at home.

Ethical considerations of powerful nations. Do not sell into atrocity (Arms Trade Treaty spirit, even where ratification is thin). **Own the civilian dead** your platforms enable. **Stop using a poor country's soil as a proxy board. Keep nuclear taboo. Fund reconstruction more than munitions** when a political settlement exists. **Climate and food are also peace: a grain blockade is a weapon. Gandhi rejected the means-ends split**; a democracy that lectures on human rights while **invoicing both sides** fails **integrity**. India's own dharma here is not sainthood. It is **strategic autonomy without becoming a merchant of chaos**, and **voice for the UN Charter's ban on aggressive force** (Article 2(4)) without **empty talk**.

Powerful nations stop conflicts when **their interest is rewritten** to include **reputation, refugee costs, and a livable planet**. Ethics is the argument that **self-interest honestly counted** already includes those. Work, not a summit photograph, is the test.

(b) Global warming, greed, and equilibrium

The stem is harsh and mostly fair. **Luxury emissions** and **extractive growth** are not the same as a landless labourer's cooking fire, yet both sit under "development" in a lazy speech. IPCC science is not a moral opinion: **habitats collapse, heat kills, and the unborn cannot vote**. Leopold's **land ethic**, Buddhist **ahimsa** toward future beings, and **intergenerational justice** (**Rawls's savings principle, in a climate key**) all say the same thing: **the atmosphere is a commons**, not a dump.

How to put an end to the spiral is not a sermon to "want less" while a coal plant has no substitute. It is a **stack of duties**. **State**: carbon budgets that are real, a just transition for mine belts, **CBDR** so the poor are not asked to freeze first, **LiFE** as habit not only a logo, protect **commons and FRA forests**, price pollution, and **stop green theatre** in EIA. **Firm**: science-based targets, not net-zero posters over a rising 2023 curve. **Citizen**: waste, diet, and the vote. **Society-environment equilibrium** is **enough for dignity, not enough for vanity**: public transport over a fifth car, restoration of a river over a concrete "beauty". The Gita's **aparigraha-adjacent** restraint is public ethics here, not a private diet cult.

- **The civil servant's file is specific: a heat-action plan, a groundwater order, a plant that cannot drink a river dry, and an honest compensatory forest.** Equilibrium is **stewardship plus livelihood**, not a television fight between **job and tree**.

Flow diagram

Talk believe act -> Peace work
Weapon profit -> Conflict continues
Peace work -> Stop atrocity sales
Greed as development -> Heat extinction
Stewardship livelihood -> Society-environment balance

Conclusion

Peace is work, not a communique, and weapon profits that need a war to last fail that work. Climate harm is greed wearing a development badge; **life** is protected when States, firms and citizens cut luxury harm without making the poor pay first.

Facts & figures

Eleanor Roosevelt

The peace line is widely attributed to her: talk is not belief, and belief is not work.

Military-industrial complex

Eisenhower's warning that arms firms and the State can lock a country into perpetual preparation for war.

Arms Trade Treaty

A global instrument meant to restrict transfers that would be used in serious violations of humanitarian law.

UN Charter 2(4)

The ban on the threat or use of force against another State's territorial integrity or political independence, with narrow exceptions.

CBDR

Common but differentiated responsibilities: climate duty is shared, historical and capacity differences still matter.

LiFE

Lifestyle for Environment, India's public campaign to treat daily consumption as a climate duty, not only a factory duty.

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