**2.31 The United Nations**

Even before the USA entered the second world war, President Roosevelt & Winston Churchill proposed (stelde voor) an international peacekeeping organisation.

Real step (determination to avoid such bloody conflict (50 million people killed in WW2) in the future) in 1945= 🡪 delegates from 51 countries met in San Francisco to sign ‘United Nations Charter’:

- Maintain international security and peace.

- Develop friendly relations among nations.

- Achieve international co-operation in solving problems.

- Trade as a centre for collaboration.

Representatives of all member countries all have one vote in the General Assembly.

The security council= real power in UN.

- 5 permanent and 10 non-permanent members.

- For a decision to be made: 9 countries have to agree 🡪 all 5 permanent and 9 from the non-permanent members 🡪 one permanent can veto a decision in fact: this made it difficult for the UN to act effectively during the cold war.

- Based in New York (since 1952).

- Head of Un= Secretary-General (cannot be a national of permanent members), nominated by Security council and chosen by General Assembly.

UN had **many agencies** who did their work, even when the Cold War hindered the role of the UN:

Judges settle in international Court of Justice: settle legal disputes.

World Health Organisation: improve the standard of health & health provision.

International Labour Organisation: improve working conditions worldwide

When the UN was set up, lots of nations wanted to co-operate. But, Soviet Union saw UN as an US-organisation and forbade American proposals (voorstellen/ideeën). In return, Americans forbade Soviet proposals. This meant that the UN couldn’t intervene (ingrijpen) in big flashpoints.

The work of the UN was easier since end of the Cold War. It had supervised (gecontroleerde) elections and peacekeeping operations. It also provided police forces where the local government was unable to.

**3.1 End of empires**

European countries (Britain, France, Portugal, Belgium and the Netherlands) controlled large empires. Britain was once so big that at any time of the day the sun was shining on some part.

At the beginning of 2nd WW, attitudes begun to change:

President Roosevelt (USA) and prime minister Winston Churchill (Britain) signed the **Atlantic Charter.** ‘Respect the right of all peoples to choose the form of government under which they will live’.

The Netherlands was one of the first countries to give support to Atlantic Charter, although they didn’t want to give independence to Indonesia in 1945.

European powers that supported Atlantic Charter were all democracies. Harsh rule helped stimulate the growth of nationalist movement in colonies.

Nationalist wanted their countries to be independent and for local people to run their own government. European response was to stamp them out or put them in prison.

2nd WW encouraged demand for independence. Lots of colonies in Asia were taken over by Japanese, so they showed that the powerful nations could be beaten. Image of invincibility (onoverwinnelijkheid) was gone. This made it hard for countries who wanted to retake lands without local opposition. People were no longer ready to accept European rule.

Many nationalists learned how to fight against returning colonial powers. European countries found it hard to resist the struggles for independence, because the idea of going to war was unpopular so it was hard to find troops and resources.

All over the world, colonies began to break away from European colonisers. Dutch finally accepted Indonesian independence in 1949. During 1950s, the French were defeated so new countries were set up.

In africa, most countries that were European colonies became independent in 1960s. They accepted that they had no right to restrict the freedom from them.

Liberia (1947) > Libya, Egypt, Sudan, Tunisia, Morocco, the Gold Coat and Guinea (1950) > 32 other colonies > 12 other colonies (1970).

Britain wanted to keep semi-colonial links with old colonies, just like the Netherlands and Suriname and the Antilles, Britain had that with Commonwealth (the UK and some of its former colonies).

**3.3 the cold war**

Communist Soviet Union and capitalist West (led by USA):

- During WW2= fought on same side/ they made agreements to work together after the war & joined the UN.

- After WW2= Political differences became more important. One year after war: they were talking of each other as enemies & for over 40 years so hostile (vijandig): historians call it the Cold war 🡪 war of words and propaganda, no direct fighting & many ‘hotspots’ where it looked like this war would lead to world war.

Soviet Union wanted ‘buffer zone’, friendly countries (Poland, Hungary, Romania etc.) between itself and the West. These ‘satellite states’ had their own government, but were communist and dominated by the Soviet Union.

- Politicians in the West were worried about the spread of Communism 🡪 the ‘domino theory’: when one country became communist, the neighbours would follow.

- China= a problem to both sides:

Communists won the Chinese civil war 🡪 blow to the west.

Didn’t want to be dominated by the Soviet union 🡪 West hoped for a war.

MAD in 1960= both Soviet Union and USA had nuclear missiles (raketten) in various places. When one side launched an attack 🡪 world-wide devastation.

- happily both sides didn’t want war, but both sides came involved in wars with conventional weapons (non-nuclear) in other countries 🡪 could have led to a nuclear war.

**3.4 Korea and Berlin**

**Korea**

When Japan was driven out of Korea in 1945: Soviet occupied the north (Democratic Republic of Korea / communist) & America occupied the south (capitalist south).

25 June 1950: North Korea invaded South Korea. UN send a force to support the South Koreans.

16 countries provide troops for UN (majority from USA) and were led by American general Douglas MacArthur. November 1950: UN troops had pushed the North Koreans back almost to Chinese border. But, Chinese didn’t want them so pushed back to South Korea. MacArthur launched a counter attack and drove Chinese out of South Korea, but President Truman didn’t want that so fired MacArthur.

Armistice in 1953 ended the war between North and South Korea. UN succeeded in saving South Korea from being overrun (overstromen), but there were stil a lot of dead Koreans. Also, Korea didn’t unite. The worst thing was that it had made the UN look like it was under the control of USA.

**Berlin**

Between 1949 and 1961, 2.5 million East Germans crossed from East to West Germany. Soviet Union built the Berlin wall and on 13 August 1961, they were officially separated. First, it was a simple barricade, later is was replaced by a substantial wall.

The wall achieved its purpose: the flood from East to West ended, so the Soviet Union could develop East Berlin as it wanted.

However, the wall also provided opponents of communism with propaganda. 86 people tried to cross the wall but died.

**3.5 The Cuban missile crises**

**14 Oktober 1962:** US spy plane found out that there were missiles on Cuba from the Soviet, which could carry nuclear warheads. This was the first time that the USA was in range of a nuclear attack.

After that, there was a debate about how the USA should react: a sea blockade was taken on 22 Oktober.

Both sides wanted to avoid nuclear war because they both didn’t want to look weaker than the other.

The Soviet denied that the missiles were nuclear, but the photo’s taken on 20 October disproved that. 19 Soviet ships were heading for Cuba, possibly with nuclear warheads.

**21 October:** the US said they would inspect ships coming to Cuba.

**22 October:** the USA announced a war, a nuclear war.

**24 October:** 16 of the ships turned back. Three sailed up to the blockade line. Crossing it could well start a war.

**26 October:** Soviet offered to withdraw the missiles, in return that USA would not invade.

**27 October:** Kennedy accepted the offer.

> Soviet Union agreed to remove its missiles and the ships went home.

US Secretary of Defence: ‘I thought I might never live to see another Saturday night’.

**3.6 Vietnam and Afghanistan**

**1954= French left Vietnam into 2 separate countries:**

1. **North Vietnam:**

- *Led by Ho Chi Minh.*

- *Communist.*

1. **South Vietnam:**

*- Anti-communist.*

*- led by Ngo Din Diem*= very unpopular: many South Vietnamese peasants joined/ supported the Vietcong (tried to overthrow his government) 🡪 North Vietnam gave help & USA were scarred that South Vietnam became communist (south east Asian version of domino theory) so sent help to South Vietnam.

In 1963: Americans replaced Diem with a government led by anti-communist army generals 🡪 but, Vietcong grew stronger & controlled almost half of Vietnam 🡪 in 1964: Americans changed policy and began to take direct military action= huge bombing campaign on North Vietnam & soon had over ½ million troops in South Vietnam.

Vietcong avoided battles with the Americans; Americans much better equipped. They only fought guerrilla war= came out of jungle 🡪 sabotaged things or carried out ambushes 🡪 quickly returned to the jungle. (Local peasants were happy to hide Vietcong 🡪 Americans could not tell the difference between the Vietcong & Peasants).

Soldiers in Vietnam (average 19 years old) found the war frustrating and sometimes lost control; at the village of My lai, US soldiers killed 190 men, women and children.

The huge loss of life and atrocaties led to demonstrations in USA 🡪 1970: President Nixon introduced ‘Vietnamisation’= they pulled back their own forces and trained South Vietnamese forces to carry on the fight 🡪 1973: the last US troops left Vietnam 🡪 1974: war restarted without USA troops 🡪 1975: communist troops over-ran South-Vietnam🡪

**1976: South- and North Vietnam were reunited as a single communist country led by Ho Chi Minh.**

**Soviet Union:** liked the American difficulties in Vietnam, but they had also difficulties in fighting a war they could not win with Afghanistan:

1. Muslim fighters wanted to take control of the country & set up a Muslim state.
2. Soviet Union scared that large Muslim population living near the Afghan border would join the Afghans.
3. December 1980: Soviet troops entered Afghanistan: to set up more pro-Soviet and anti-Muslim regime & to overthrew existing communist government.
4. Widespread condemnation 🡪 western countries boycotted Moscow Olympics/ USA cut trade/ China & USA supported *Mujahedeen.*
5. Soviet-Union found it could not defeat the *Mujahedeen* in Afghanistan’s difficult, mountainous terrain.
6. 1989: President Gorbachev had accepted defeat and took back Soviet troops.

The war: costs 20.000 Soviet lives, costs billions of roubles, brought the Soviet economy close to collapse & 3 million Afghan refugees left the country for Pakistan or Iran.

**3.9 The EEC**

WW2 give a huge push to the idea of economic co-operation between European nations:

1. US gave aid to Europe under the *Marshall plan* (whole aid plan) to avoid another war.
2. 1949: 10 countries (Netherlands/ Belgium/ Luxembourg/ Italy/ France/ UK/ Ireland/ Norway/ Sweden/ Denmark 🡪 Germany was not invited) set up Council of Europe to encourage closer co-operation and a move to unity (eenheid).
3. 9 may 1950: French foreign Minister Robert Schuman proposed a plan for moving towards a united Europe.

- Start with making sure that France and Germany were both part of it.

- First step: unite their coal and steel industries

- 1952: Netherlands/ Belgium/ Luxembourg/ Italy/ West Germany/ France 🡪 European Coal and Steel Community.

1. 1957: The Treaty of Rome widened their co-operation even more, based on economic unity 🡪 set up the ‘*four freedoms’* between these country’s= free movement of goods, people, services & capital 🡪 **European Economic Community (EEC).**
2. EEC slowly expanded their focus to the coal and steal to other areas of the economy.

- All decisions and new members had to be agreed by all members.

1. EEC wanted a bigger European community in theory, but in practice it was hard to reach agreement:

- 1961: UK, Ireland & Denmark wanted to join 🡪 turned down.

- 1967: they re-applied with Norway 🡪 debate about admitting them took years.

1. 1970: there were still only 6 member states, but things were about to change.

**3.10 The EU since 1970**

1970: more countries joined EEC

1993: EEC became EU

2008: 27 member countries (2 were waiting to join)

Growth means it’s difficult to get unanimous agreement, so from 1966; majority voting system. Some members ‘opt out’ (terugtrekken).

EU tried to extend levels of political unity:

* introducing new European currency, the euro (2003)
* introducing ‘European’ passports (1985)
* new constitution: replace all previous laws and set out a new, streamlined system of running the EU (2005)

Countries chose different ways of deciding on the proposed constitution;

* in some countries, de government decided
* France & the Netherlands, they held a referenda, so that everyone could vote

In the Netherlands, 61.6% of the people voted against it for different reasons:

They blamed the EU for broader problems within the Netherlands (rising prices or immigration), they said it was easy for immigrants to move around within the EU communities.

The major complain was that people felt the EU didn’t listen to the views of ordinary citizens.

France voted against the constitution as well and it was abandoned.

**3.11 The fall of communism**

**1985**: Mikhail Gorbachev became leader of Soviet Union.

Country with huge problems, state was spending more than it earned.

Huge and slow bureaucratic systems, that became more important than common sense or efficiency > economy was failing.

There was little quality control in factories, so people had no incentive to product good work. Drunkennes and absenteeism were major problems.

**1987**: Gorbachev introduced a series of reforms: Perestroika (restructuring) & glasnost (openness). He thought this would help reform in the Soviet Union.

Gorbachev was trying to change the Soviet Union. He travelled through the whole country convincing people that the changes were necessary. Everyone agreed.

Difficult to implement (uitvoeren) perestroika and glasnost. It was difficult to know were begin. People expected to see improvement very quickly. Opposition from the bureaucracy slowed things down even more.

There would be first some short-term problems before there was long-term improvement.

Wage cuts, price rises and unemployment, shortages of food and goods > people lose confidence and there came unrest. Protestors went further and there were riots across the country against Gorbachev.

**1991**: Gorbachev was arrested. His opponents declared a state of emergency and sent the army. Mayor of Moscow, Boris Yeltsin, was able to stop the army take-over. Gorbachev resigned and Yeltsin became the new leader of the Soviet Union, now called the Russian Federation 🡪 domino theory again.

**3.18 Israel and Palestine**

*A disputed land*

The lands of Israel and Palestine: inhabited by many different groups 🡪 sometimes Jews, Christians or Muslims claimed ownership of the whole or part of religion.

1900: Palestine was part of Islamic Ottoman Empire, ruled from Constantinople; both arabs and Jews lived there:

1. Jews 🡪 many Jews (=Zionists) wanted a Jewish homeland, Britain agreed to look favourably on it.

2. Palestinian Arabs🡪 Britain promised them (in order to win allies in ww1) independence.

When the war ended, Britain got Palestine from the League of Nations, to administer under a mandate. Britain couldn’t keep the promises 🡪 He declared that Palestine was a Arab state, but also allowed Jews to emigrate there (neither of the groups were satisfied).

*A flood of emigration*

1930’s: Jewish population from 11% to 30%, because they fled from Nazi persecution 🡪 Arabs were scared that Britain would break their promise & set up a Jewish state in ‘their’ country 🡪 British put limits on Jewish emigration to stop the rebels from Arabs 🡪 Jewish people really wanted a homeland (after holocaust) 🡪 still opposition from Arabs & Jews 🡪 British hand control of Palestine back to the UN.

*The UN decides*

1947: UN wanted to divide Palestine in:

1. Jewish Israel= set up in 1948, along the lines suggested by the UN.

2. Arab Palestine= refused 🡪

- Went to war with the help of other Arab nations.

- 1949: war ended; the Israelis extended their borders.

- Villages of Palestinians had fled or been driven out Israel 🡪 started living in camps outside Palestine, thinking that they could go back one day when their homeland was freed from Israeli rule.

- Almost 50 years later: the camps were still there= both sides have suffered from fighting / both didn’t want to leave their homes 🡪 they tried a lot to make peace.

- 1988: Palestine declared independence, not all countries accept this (they say its borders are still to be decided).

*The issue of trust*

A big problem of making peace was: hate and mistrust had grown between the Arabs & Jews over the years. There are people who want to make an end on the troubles, but thousands more who do not.

Since 2000:

- 1000 Israelis killed in terror and suicide attacks by Palestinians.

- Over 3500 Palestinians killed in ‘defence’ operations by Israelis.

Since 2003: Israelis have been building ‘security wall’ in the West Bank to stop terrorist attacks🡪 International Court of Justice said it was illegal= encloses some Palestinian land/ cuts towns in half, sometimes blocking front doors/ Palestinians cut off from work, medical and other services 🡪 Israelis won’t stop building, because they say that the attacks have decreased since the building of the wall.