

## Quadrant II - Notes

**Paper Code: POD 102**

**Module Name: India's Foreign Policy Determinants (Internal & External)**

**Module No: 01**

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Professor Charles B. Marshall defines foreign policy as “the course of action undertaken by authority of a state and intended to affect situations beyond the span of its jurisdiction”.

George Modelski defined foreign policy as “the system of activities evolved by communities for changing the behaviour of other states and for adjusting their own activities to the international environment”.

The determinants of Foreign Policy include both internal and external factors. Among the internal factors the important ones include the following

1. **Geography:** This is the most stable determinant of foreign policy. This includes the size of the territory, topography, location relative to sea and landmass relative to other nations and control strategic places. The sub factors under geography include the following:
  - (i) Size it refers to the total landmass that a state controls or exercises its sovereign authority on. More important than size is the geo-strategic location of the state that influences its policy.
  - (ii) Climate: Extremes of climate make functioning and development of a modern industrial society difficult.
  - (iii) Topography is yet another important geographical feature affecting foreign policy decisions. Wind, rainfall, temperature and consequently, soil conditions are influenced by the position of the land, sea and mountain.
  - (iv) Natural resources of a state improve its bargaining capacity internationally. Huge possession of resources does not add up to one's strength but the utilisation of the particular product does.

2. **History and Culture:** The historical and cultural traditions provide the basic guidelines for formulating basic foreign policy objectives. The experiences of

the past have influenced the objectives of countries in determining their present goals of foreign policy.

**3. Economic development:** The economic performance of a state in terms of GNP provides the key to understanding the state's ability to utilise its natural and human resources which, in turn, influences its foreign policy choices.

**4. National Interest:** National interest whether political, economic or military, changes with changing needs of time and circumstances either in the domestic front or internationally.

**5. National Character and National Morale:** National character is an important input of foreign policy. It finds expression in international relations through the perceptions, reactions and behaviour patterns of decision-makers.

**6. Political structure:** The political structure of a state and the nature of the ruling elite to great extent influence the formulation of foreign policy of a state. Sudden change in the government of a state is also a source of changes in the course of foreign policy.

**7. Social structure:** A strong cohesive society provides chances for a strong foreign policy. A society with tensions along religious factors or societies with unequal distribution of wealth have strong possibility of pursuing a weak policy due to lack of cohesion and cooperation among various groups.

**8. Ideology:** It plays an important role in the conduct of foreign policies of states. Ideological principles are used by states or group of states, to advance national interests through justifying or disguising their policies and deeds in the struggle for power.

**9. Public Opinion:** In a democratic state it is impossible for the government to ignore the importance of public opinion. Public opinion sets the limit for the domestic as well as foreign policies.

**10 Press:** It plays a vital role in the formulation of foreign policy. The press contributes by supplying factual information on the basis of which people take decisions and understand the developments in their country.

The external determinants of foreign policy include the following points:

- 1. International Regimes and Organisations:** The foreign policies of states have to operate taking into consideration the external environment. The first factor that influences the making of foreign policy is the

presence of international laws, international organisation, treaties and trading blocs.

2. **World Public Opinion:** World public opinion has come to play a crucial role in constraining foreign policy choices. Increased awareness and people to people contact have facilitates the generation of world public opinion on varied issues of foreign policy.
3. **Foreign Policies of Other States:** The formulation and operation of foreign policy of a particular state has to take into consideration the behaviour of other states that can also influence them.
4. **Alliances:** Alliances concluded by various states also greatly influence the foreign policy. The States parties to alliance have to respond to the requests and demands of their allies and refrain from formulating policies which are offensive.