International Relations · GS - II

What are the main functions of the United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC)? Explain different functional commissions attached to it.

EXAM YEAR	PAPER	SUBJECT
2017	GS - II	International Relations

MARKS	WORD LIMIT
10	~150 words

Answer Hint

UN coordination; sustainable development; international cooperation; specialised commissions; policy recommendations; social and economic governance

Model Answer

Introduction

The United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) is one of the six principal organs of the United Nations. It coordinates economic, social and development-related work and promotes international cooperation.

Main Functions of ECOSOC

- **Policy coordination:** Provides a forum for discussing global economic, social and environmental issues.
- **Development agenda:** Supports implementation and review of internationally agreed development goals.
- **Research and recommendations:** Conducts studies and makes recommendations to the UN General Assembly, Member States and relevant institutions.
- **Coordination:** Coordinates with UN specialised agencies, funds and programmes.
- **Civil society participation:** Provides consultative arrangements through which eligible non-governmental organisations contribute to UN deliberations.
- **International conferences:** Organises forums and reviews to promote cooperation on development challenges.

Functional Commissions

ECOSOC's functional commissions address specific global policy areas. These include:

- **Statistical Commission:** Develops international statistical standards and promotes comparable data.
- **Commission on Population and Development:** Reviews population trends and development implications.
- **Commission for Social Development:** Addresses poverty, social inclusion and social development.
- **Commission on the Status of Women:** Promotes gender equality and women's empowerment.
- **Commission on Narcotic Drugs:** Coordinates international drug-control policy.
- **Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice:** Promotes cooperation on crime prevention and criminal justice.
- **Commission on Science and Technology for Development:** Advises on science, technology and development.
- **United Nations Forum on Forests:** Promotes sustainable forest management.

Conclusion

ECOSOC links economic and social policymaking with international cooperation. Its commissions provide specialised expertise and help translate global commitments into coordinated action.

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