# International Relations · GS - II

**Examine the tension between state sovereignty and international human-rights scrutiny in contemporary international relations. How can countries balance legitimate external criticism with the principle of non-interference in domestic affairs?**

| EXAM YEAR | PAPER | SUBJECT |
|---|---|---|
| DAILY PRACTICE 14/11/2026 | GS - II | International Relations |

| MARKS | WORD LIMIT |
|---|---|
| 10 | ~150 words |

## Answer Hint

**Westphalian sovereignty, UN Charter, human-rights treaties, non-interference, Universal Periodic Review, international accountability, diplomatic engagement, selective criticism, judicial independence, multilateral institutions.**

## Model Answer

### Introduction

State sovereignty and international human-rights protection are two important principles of contemporary international relations. Their interaction often generates diplomatic disagreements over external scrutiny of domestic institutions.

### Sovereignty and Human-Rights Obligations

The UN Charter recognises sovereign equality and restricts intervention in matters essentially within domestic jurisdiction. However, sovereignty does not exempt states from obligations arising from international human-rights treaties they have accepted. Mechanisms such as the UN Human Rights Council's Universal Periodic Review facilitate international scrutiny through dialogue and recommendations.

### Challenges in External Scrutiny

Unilateral assessments by foreign institutions may raise concerns about selectivity, political bias and inadequate understanding of domestic legal contexts. Conversely, rejecting all external criticism can weaken international accountability and cooperation.

### Way Forward

Countries should strengthen independent judicial institutions, transparent legal procedures and domestic human-rights commissions. External scrutiny should rely on credible evidence, consistent standards and constructive multilateral engagement rather than political pressure.

### Conclusion

Respect for sovereignty and international accountability are not necessarily contradictory. A balanced, rules-based approach can protect domestic institutional autonomy while advancing universal human-rights principles.

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