International Relations · GS - II

The North American Aerospace Defense Command (NORAD) illustrates how bilateral defence arrangements can coexist with broader multilateral security commitments. Explain.

EXAM YEAR	PAPER	SUBJECT
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MARKS	WORD LIMIT
15	~250 words

Answer Hint

Binational defence cooperation, continental security, aerospace warning, maritime surveillance, NATO membership, strategic interdependence, institutional coordination, geopolitical tensions.

Model Answer

Introduction

NORAD is a binational defence organisation established by the United States and Canada in 1958. It demonstrates how neighbouring countries can institutionalise defence cooperation while simultaneously participating in wider security alliances such as NATO.

Bilateral Dimension

1. **Integrated command:** NORAD enables coordinated aerospace warning and control operations between the two countries.

2. **Continental security:** Joint surveillance and maritime warning strengthen the protection of North American territory.
3. **Operational interoperability:** Shared procedures, information and military coordination improve response to emerging threats.
4. **Strategic interdependence:** Geographic proximity and common security interests encourage sustained defence cooperation.

Coexistence with Multilateral Commitments

- Both countries are NATO members and participate in collective defence arrangements.
- NORAD addresses specific continental defence requirements, whereas NATO provides a broader transatlantic collective security framework.
- Bilateral mechanisms can complement multilateral institutions without replacing their commitments.

Emerging Challenges

Political disagreements, trade tensions, technological competition and changing threat perceptions can complicate defence cooperation. However, institutional mechanisms and shared operational interests provide continuity.

Conclusion

NORAD illustrates the importance of flexible, layered security architecture. Bilateral defence institutions can strengthen regional security while complementing broader multilateral commitments.

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