

## The State and Development: The Paradox of Developmental States

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### ABSTRACT

*Since the Industrial Revolution, human well-being has been dramatically improved. There are, needless to say, significant and serious gaps in this improvement, if we look globally. But, on balance and using a large number of measures, we must conclude that international development over the last 200-plus years has been phenomenal. This progress has resulted from the individual and collective efforts of humans- as embodied in the private sector. However, institutions, and especially those that are manifested as the state, facilitate the efforts of the private sector. It is an axiom that public institutions are necessary for civilization. In a society that has successfully developed, these public institutions must be pro-development, and can hence be referred to as a developmental state. Importantly, these developmental states expand their activities over time, and inevitably become international developmental states. Paradoxically, those very same public institutions that enable progress have, always and everywhere, the propensity to behave in ways contrary to facilitating progress, becoming anti-developmental. This paper outlines first the successes of the developmental states, and then the inescapable proclivity for developmental states to become anti-developmental, highlighting the inevitable consequential dilemma of how to pursue and achieve the following twin goals: filling in the gaps of global development, and, correcting the tendency for developmental states to become anti-developmental.*

**Keywords:** The State, International development, Capacity/freedom, Developmental state