

General Assembly 1 (GA1)

Reforming the United Nations Security Council



Research Report

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Fake news

Forum:	<i>The First General Assembly</i>
Issue:	<i>Reforming the United Nations Security Council</i>
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Introduction

For 77 years, since the creation of the United Nations (UN) in 1945, the United Nations Security Council (UNSC or SC) has had the same structure and has become outdated. The current setup of the SC consists of “Permanent 5” member states, or P5, and 10 non-permanent member states which are elected on an overlapping 2-year term by the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA or GA). As the SC is today, the P5 members have the right to exercise a veto vote on any resolution. In light of recent weaponised conflicts, the current SC system, especially the use of the veto, has been questioned. Some of these conflicts in the SC result in a stalemate, and so the GA cannot discuss proposed solutions seeing that if not in the favour of a P5, the resolution will never make it past the SC.

These stalemates do nothing but slow the process of resolving the issues presented, which defeats the purpose of the UNSC.

Some of the previous attempts and efforts to resolve this issue have been discussed but never made it farther than the UNGA hall. They include an expansion of permanent members, a full change to the voting system, and more. In order to be effectively implemented, though, newer and more creative solutions should be explored. When a P5 member vetoes a resolution or a vote, it may be the only member that is opposed to the resolution or amendment. This is what leads to a stalemate in the SC when certain parties veto a resolution even though there is a near-unanimous vote in favour of it. In recent months, the UNGA has had to adopt the issue and debate the topic, before coming to a conclusive evaluation.

In order to pass a successful resolution in the GA1 regarding the UNSC, all stakeholders must be considered and balanced when drafting a resolution. Since in the GA there are no vetoes, a resolution will be passed by a simple majority vote (more votes in favour than votes against), and then will be sent to the UNSC¹ for further consultation. To construct an effective and constructive resolution, a firm understanding of the current system of voting and membership is necessary. However, if the GA1 wishes to amend the UN Charter, which is likely necessary, the House needs a $\frac{2}{3}$ majority (at least twice as many votes in favour as votes against) as well as approval from the UNSC, where the P5 will be able to veto the proposed amendment. Amendments to the UNSC’s Provisional Rules of Procedure can only be made by the UNSC, but the GA1 may request them to do so. Once again, the P5 is within its rights to veto any such resolution.

¹ The resolutions on this issue which are passed will be sent to the Security Council for further debate, amending and consultation. The Committee will receive a report on which resolutions were passed in the Security Council, and they will then be debated in the GA plenary at the end of the conference.

This report will outline the history of the UN and the UNGA, the UNSC, voting styles and systems, and membership systems.

Definition of Key Terms

Amendment:

In MUN, there are 2 main uses of this term. An amendment in a MUN environment refers to an edit or a suggestion made to a present clause or resolution. In non-ad-hoc committees (like the GA's), preambulatory clauses cannot be amended. An amendment can also refer to a clause. Within this category of amendments, there are a few different types. 1st degree, 2nd degree, 3rd degree, and friendly. In ad-hoc committees, submitting an amendment (to the first degree) refers to submitting a clause, a second-degree amendment is an edit to an original clause, and a 3rd-degree amendment is a revision to the proposed edit (which would be the 2nd-degree amendment)². Friendly amendment refers to any amendment that is minor to the extent that no voting is necessary, as long as the main sponsor of the resolution/amendment is okay with the change. Such suggestions usually pertain to grammar, spelling, or factual errors.

In general, it refers to any change to any treaty - such as a resolution or a charter. The change requires a vote by the involved states, with the required majority (two-thirds, simple, unanimous) depending on the council. The UNGA requires a simple majority, whereas the UNSC requires 9 votes in favour and concurring votes of the permanent members. Note that the minimum of 9 makes abstaining a de facto vote against and may be used by permanent members that do not wish to cast their veto.

Armed Conflict:

Usually, a war is a conflict between two parties which involves weaponry. These conflicts are disastrous in terms of damage and civilians are often affected by such wars. In armed conflict, military forces get involved and oftentimes other countries and alliances can involve themselves. During armed conflict, crimes against humanity are common, and they violate the Universal Declaration of Human Rights¹ along with the Rome Statute and the Geneva Conventions.

Equality:

The notion that all people and parties are treated the same and receive the same rights or power regardless of ability, demographics, and/or any other features. It usually pertains to wealth, gender, or race. Political ideologies such as communism strive to provide equal conditions for everyone, regardless of circumstance.

General Assembly Hall:

The GA hall in the UN headquarters in New York is the permanent residence of the United Nations General Assembly. It is where resolutions are decidedly passed, whereafter they are ratified in the parliaments of Member States. The *plenary session* of the General Assembly is held there. It seats around 2,000 people, it is where the Secretariat and Presidency of all committees sit during ceremonial sessions. It is a principal and iconic room of the United Nations.

² Note some (ad-hoc) committees do not allow amendments to the 3rd degree and some (non-ad-hoc) committees do not allow amendments to the 2nd degree. Some committees do not allow friendly amendments.

Majority:

Refers to a fraction of opinion or statistics which is greater than half (50%) of the voting Member States. When discussing a majority vote in the UNGA, a simple majority is necessary to pass a *resolution* or amendment. The majority represents a greater percentage of same-opinionated parties and/or stakeholders.

Plenary:

In MUN, plenary sessions are led by the President of the General Assembly (PGA) and their Deputy resident. Chairs and Deputy chairs chair the subcommittees. Plenary sessions join subcommittees to discuss issues in each different subcommittee before being passed.

Reform:

In the given context regarding the UNSC, a reform would pertain to a change in the system- a notion which has been in the talks for a long time, without any successful alteration of the UNSC. Reforming the UNSC might involve changing the structure of voting and its purposes.

Stalemate:

A committee, council, or commission is brought to a stalemate when it is impossible to move forward and fulfil its tasks and obligations. This can happen with negating veto powers, a simple refusal to sign a treaty, or in any other position where two opposing parties have similar or identical powers and exercise them.

Veto:

A veto vote is exercised to override a majority vote of any kind. Currently, veto votes can only be requested by P5 members of the UNSC. The UNSC is also the only UN council that has veto votes.

Voting:

A democratic system where all those eligible can voice their opinions and have them consulted. The majority of aligned opinions usually are passed and implemented, especially in a body such as the UN. Voting is an essential part of any democracy.

Background Information

Following the Second World War, 51 nations, called Member Statesⁱⁱ created an international body formed (1945) to increase political and economic cooperation among its member countries. This body came to be known as the United Nations, which held its first session in San Francisco on International Organisation. The values and goals of the United Nations are maintaining international peace and security, developing friendly relations among nations and promoting social progress, better living standards and human rights, which they aim to achieve through their main bodies: the General Assembly, the Security Council, the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC), the Trusteeship Council, the International

51 original member states of the UN in 1945, Associated Press, the NY times



Court of Justice (ICJ), and the Secretariat. They are all located at the UN headquarters in New York, except for the ICJ, which is located in The Hague, in The Netherlands.

The UNGA is the main body of the United Nations. All resolutions discussed and passed in other committees, councils, and commissions are sent to the General Assembly plenary where they discuss them. It is made up of 6 main committees which cover a wide range of topics. Most other councils, commissions, and committees in the UN do not have subcommittees.

UNSC summary

The Security Council, which consists of 15 members, is the UN's most powerful organ. It has the authority to impose sanctions, as it did against North Korea over its nuclear arsenal and missiles, as well as to permit military intervention, as it did against Libya in 2011. According to analysts, it is also the most out-of-date aspect of the organisation. The P5 (Britain, China, France, Russia, and the United States) are nations that won World War II. The remaining ten members are elected for two-year terms, with seats reserved for various parts of the world. Attempts to include powers that have materialised since 1945, such as India, Japan, and Germany, as the permanent members have been thwarted. Competitors try to prevent each country from gaining a seat. Any member of the permanent five has the ability to veto any measure, and each has used this power to protect themselves or allies on numerous occasions. The United States has vetoed 16 UN Security Council resolutions since the end of the Cold War, many of which deal with Israeli-Palestinian considerations. Russia did so 22 times during that time period.

General Overview

The UNSC is a vital organ in the UN. For starters- the SC nominates candidates for Secretariat positions, which the GA consults and votes upon. The SC is also usually the council which takes immediate action with international armed conflicts. If and when the SC fails to draft effective resolutions, the General Assembly can call an emergency special session, where all of the delegates in the General Assembly gather to assure the UN serves its primary purpose, the maintenance of peace and security.

Distinguishing the differences between the UNGA and the UNSC

The United Nations Security Council

The UNSC is an ad-hoc UN council, so the debate is structured using clauses (preambulatory and operative). Although debate time is longer, the resolutions created take less time in total. The SC is a double-delegated council, which means that there are two delegates representing each country. This is to decrease the chances of rash and unhelpful decisions, as both delegates must agree before making a statement or voting. This also means that casting a veto against a resolution has had a prior discussion and is usually not an impulse action.

The UNSC is called into session on both urgent and non-urgent matters, although the current affairs and more pressing issues are usually prioritised and can push away other topics being discussed. The SC is the first body of the UN that is consulted in emergency situations such as during a sudden outbreak of war, during a humanitarian crisis, etc. In the past, the UNSC has helped prevent the exacerbation of 'questions' of disputes such as the ones in Iran, Iraq, South-west Africa, Cyprus, the India-Pakistan conflict, and also the Israel vs. Palestine conflict. It draws its immediate attention to both global and civil unrest and conflict, which usually

involves territory of some sort. The Security Council has many functions in the UN and it is a vital organ for its functioning.

The United Nations General Assembly

The GA, unlike the SC, is a non-ad-hoc organ. Delegates (of member states) come prepared with prewritten resolutions, which are then debated on and reworked in debate. After the resolution has passed in the relevant subcommittee, the GA plenary session adopts and debates it. Since the GA is not usually used for urgent matters, the GA plenary is held annually around December.

In the case of an urgent situation in which the GA must be consulted, the SC can call for an emergency meeting with the vote of any 7 member states of the UNSC. The member state who called the motion to forward the said topics to the UNGA for an emergency plenary session will be thoroughly consulted in the GA during debate on the topic. This decision, along with other motions, votes and amendments, cannot be vetoed. Depending on the Rules of Procedure of the MUN conference, a veto might only be in order when a resolution as a whole is concerned. Emergency meetings usually have to do with the inability of the UNSC P5 member states to agree on a resolution and the use of the veto.

The General Assembly's Resolution 377A(V), "Uniting for Peace," adopted on 3 November 1950, states that an "emergency special session" can be called within 24 hours.

"Resolves that if the Security Council, because of lack of unanimity of the permanent members, fails to exercise its primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security in any case where there appears to be a threat to the peace, breach of the peace, or act of aggression, the General Assembly shall consider the matter immediately with a view to making appropriate recommendations to Members for collective measures, including in the case of a breach of the peace or act of aggression, the use of armed force when necessary, to maintain or restore international peace and security. If not in session at the time, the General Assembly may meet in an emergency special session within twenty-four hours of the request therefore. Such an emergency special session shall be called if requested by the Security Council on the vote of any seven members, or by a majority of the Members of the United Nations".

Passing a resolution in the United Nations



Plenary

"UN Logo", United Nations

In the GA plenary, all 6 subcommittees of the General Assembly come together to debate and discuss. Each GA should be made up of all 193 member states, so in the Plenary, there are at most 1158 delegates present; 6 for each of the 193 member states. In addition, there are 2 non-Member State observers who sometimes attend the General Assembly: the Holy See and

Palestine. They do not have voting rights, except for procedural matters, but may present their views, interests, and opinions in the session.

Voting, simple majority, 2/3 majority, and abstentions

A simple majority vote is when there are more votes in favour than votes against a proposal³. Most motions or decisions in which a vote is required can pass with a simple majority. A two-thirds majority is required when it comes to recommendations on peace and security, budgetary concerns, and the election, admission, suspension, or expulsion of members. Each member state of the house has one vote, except for observer states, which can only vote on procedural matters.

Member states also have the choice to abstain from a vote. Abstaining from a vote means that the member state does not wish to exercise any explicit opinion or vote on a decision. In the UNSC, it is also used to vote against a proposal when a P5 nation does not wish to cast its veto.

Why the veto was implemented

The issue of the veto was the most contentious topic at Dumbarton Oaks, and later in San Francisco. In technical terms, the veto is defined in Article 27 (3) of the UN Charter:

“An affirmative vote shall make decisions of the Security Council on all other matters of nine members, including the concurring votes of the permanent members...”

Simply put, the veto power allows any permanent member to cast a negative vote to prevent the Council from passing a resolution.

The veto was intended to serve as an effective safeguard for the Permanent Five (P5). This is because permanent members could use the veto to protect their interests or the interests of an ally or proxy; they could do so whenever they felt the Council was invading their space. Although the veto has the potential to stall, it also serves a useful purpose. This function is known as the concert function. By instituting the veto, the UN effectively ensured that all of the Great Powers would participate. So, in San Francisco in 1945, the world was given a stark choice between "an organisation with great power privilege" and "no organisation at all." The veto gives permanent members the power to manage their interactions in terms of their interests. When they all agree, action can be taken. When they disagree, action can be blocked. Controversial areas are thus avoided, and the Great Powers are separated, effectively avoiding direct confrontation.

The P5

The powers that defeated the Nazi forces in Europe following the second world war were awarded permanent status in the UNSC. These five members are France, the United Kingdom, the United States, the People’s Republic of China, and the Russian Federation. In recent years, though, member states such as Brazil, India, Germany and Japan, have been proposing ideas to expand the P5 members and include themselves in it. The original reason that these P5 members existed was to ensure that priorly mal-intended actions taken by other countries would be kept in check, which is why Germany was not admitted to the P5. 77 years have passed, though,

³ Sometimes referred to as *50% plus one*. This is a common misconception, as it fails to account for an uneven number of parties attending a vote.

and many member states and parties believe that this selection has become outdated. Many propose that the economic powerhouses and largest countries in terms of population should be part of the P5. There are also countries and members that oppose the expansion and, in some cases, the existence of the P5. These countries include Italy, Pakistan, Spain, Canada, Mexico, Argentina, Turkey, South Korea, and Malta, and stand for the uniting for consensus.

Overview of stalemates caused by P5 vetoesⁱⁱⁱ

Russo-Ukrainian conflict

Russo-Ukrainian relations have been tense for decades since the dissolution of the Union of Socialist Soviet Republics (USSR). In 2014, Russia invaded and occupied Crimea, which has since been under a constant state of instability and conflict (8 years). More notably, the Russian invasion of Ukraine has been under great examination by the public since February 2022. This conflict has also been the subject of a General Assembly emergency plenary session. Ukraine, which has a military only a fraction of that of Russia, has been defending itself with struggle and loss.

The cause of the GA emergency plenary session being called on this issue earlier this year was that the UNSC failed to produce a passed resolution due to Russia's veto. The UNSC was consulted before the GA was, which is because of the purpose of the Security Council - to defend international peace and security by addressing critical conflicts, events, and actions. Later on, the situation became even more difficult when evidence suggested that certain other political figures and P5 member states were aware of the Kremlin's plans, and had advised them to delay an attack so as to not disrupt a major event.

Syria conflict

With numerous attempts to draft resolutions, the first time a veto was exercised on this topic in the UNSC was in early October of 2011 by two permanent members - the People's Republic of China and the Russian Federation. The resolution was drafted by France, Germany, Portugal, United Kingdom, and called for condemnation of the continued systematic human rights infringements and the use of power against civilians by the Syrian leaders, and voiced deep regret at the deaths of thousands of people including women and children. The resolution drafted requested a call to action from other member states to limit arms and ammunition which was exported to the region and even mentions article 41 of the UN charter:

"The Security Council may decide what measures not involving the use of armed force are to be employed to give effect to its decisions, and it may call upon the Members of the United Nations to employ such measures. These may include complete or partial interruption of economic relations and of rail, sea, air, postal, telegraphic, radio, and other means of communication, and the severance of diplomatic relations".

More recent attempts to resolve the issue have been constantly vetoed by Russia, usually accompanied by China. The most recent veto on this topic was on the 10th of July 2020⁴.

⁴ Most questions in the SC concerning the 'Middle East' refer to the Syrian or Yemen crisis

Israel-Palestine

The first time a vetoed resolution had to do with Palestine was 9 years into the establishment of the UN: 1954. It was drafted by Guyana, Pakistan, Panama and the United Republic of Tanzania, and outlines the need for Palestine to be autonomous, peaceful, and recognised as a member of the United Nations. This resolution was vetoed by Russia, and two years later, the United Kingdom and France vetoed a resolution written by the USA. It called for the refrain of intervention from foreign countries and requested the state of Israel to withdraw its forces from Palestinian territory. Since around the year 2000, the USA has been the most prevalent vetoer of resolutions to do with the Palestinian state, the most recent being on the 1st of June, 2018.

One more important factor to note is that Palestine is not a UN member state, although it is recognised as an observer state. The Israel-Palestine conflict has previously caused a stalemate and a significant controversy in the UNSC, such to the point where two GA emergency special sessions were called, in 1982 and 1997. The motion was set by Senegal and Qatar respectively.

Major Parties Involved

P5 members:

People's Republic of China

China has, on many occasions (17 times), used its veto power to block resolutions which weren't in its economic or political favour. China is one of the UN member states who would not be in favour of the Security Council reform, especially if it would involve the scrapping of P5 or veto. Many Less Economically Developed Countries (LEDCs) are dependent on China for their economic and political stability. China therefore often 'protects' said countries in order to keep their dependency, which benefits the Chinese economy. Some of these countries include Cuba, Peru, Paraguay, and Venezuela. China's other interests in maintaining relations with Latin countries include their hefty loans to these countries, which reach 62 billion USD.

The delegates assigned to China should do in-depth research on the nature of China's veto uses and the general politics and international relations which are concerned with the relevant vetoes. They should also research ties with Japan and India, and should not make great compromises if they affect its economy.

French Republic

France, out of all the P5 members, has cast the least amount of vetoes (16). It is unclear their stance regarding an SC reform, although speculations say that they would oppose it. France is generally speaking a relatively neutral member state in the UNSC and voices a veto on topics specifically related to situations in Africa and political tensions there. It has also vetoed certain resolutions pertaining to French territory. So far, France has not caused any stalemates in the UNSC or been a cause for a UNGA emergency special session.

Delegates representing France should investigate France's specific ties with countries in Africa. They should be open to compromise but think strategically about the French territories.

Russian Federation

⁵Casting 120 vetoes since gaining P5 status in 1945, Russia has by far vetoed the most out of all P5 member states. Russia has no qualms about vetoing anything which is not in its greatest interest and usually works closely with China when debating in the UNSC. Their relationship is mostly diplomatic and is in the best interest of both parties. Part of the reason that Russia casts plenty of vetoes is also because of the previous status of the USSR, which sparked a lot of debate in the UN. Russia is oftentimes directly involved in conflicts which are discussed.

The Russian delegation should research its ties with other non-permanent members who are still omnipresent in the UN, such as Cuba, India, South Korea, and DPRK. Russia should not make a lot of compromises in debate and should vocally state its interests for/against any proposed solution.

United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland

The United Kingdom (England, Scotland, Wales, and Northern Ireland) has been a great military power for centuries. Serving particularly important in the Nazi defeat of WWII, the United Kingdom stays a big stakeholder in world affairs. The UK has exercised a veto 29 times, usually on topics to do with Southern Rhodesia and Palestine.

2 years after the creation of the UN, in 1947, the UK lost its greatest asset, India. It was referred to as the jewel in the crown of Britain and was the UK's pride for almost 90 years. Since the start of the British empire, around a quarter of the world, today has at some point been part of this empire. Independence from the British is the most widely celebrated holiday in the world.

Delegates assigned to the UK should continue reading about British colonial history and its relations with the parties involved in vetoed resolutions. They should be lenient with compromise but still, stand their ground.

United States of America

The United States of America is regarded as the world's most developed nation. They have such a large influence on world politics and economics and are China's biggest rival in almost all regards. The US is home to some of the world's largest corporations and companies such as Microsoft, Google, Apple, and countless others, which are mostly settled in Silicon Valley. The USA has a lot of power over global economies, just as it is reliant on global economies. They have used a veto 82 times in its permanency, which oftentimes has to do with issues such as Palestine, the infiltration of the DPRK, and many others. The US often involves itself in various conflicts and frequently tips the scales in a war.

Delegates of the USA should feel free to involve themselves in other countries and alliances to turn things in their favour. They should research US relations with the world and their specific opinions on reform.

The UNGA

The UNGA is thoroughly concerned with the veto and permanency concept. The emergency special session called by the SC would be nonexistent without the now-outdated system which includes veto and permanency. The UNGA, without a veto, would not need to intervene in SC stalemates should the veto be removed from the council. The UNGA has

⁵ Note that Russia has the world's largest stock of nuclear weapons, estimated at 6,257 units (1,458 active, 3039 available, 1,760 retired)

previously expressed favour of the scrapping of the veto, and would likely continue to be in favour of it. Many member states agree that the current SC system is nearly an anachronism and should be changed so that there are no vetoes. Many members, however, are in favour of an expanded permanent membership which would include countries such as Brazil, Germany, Japan, and India.

It is important to bear this in mind during debates on this topic.

The UNSC

Of course, the Security Council itself is an important stakeholder in this matter. There are many concerns within the SC which include a fear that the SC would become very similar to the GA1. Many members of the SC are in favour of the reform, much like the GA. The SC itself is the party of discussion, and their opinions are usually in favour of the council itself and its functions. The P5 members should be evaluated separately from the rest of the SC.

The current structure of the SC was fitting in the post-world war two timeframes, and times have moved since then. The UNSC wishes to remain a council that deals with urgent affairs and be the on-call council that they have been. The UNSC is not in favour of an expansion of members - permanent or not. A 15-member council is sufficient and functional as of the current standing, but the veto power has arguably slowed it down greatly.

Delegates should keep the interests of the UNSC and the UNGA in close consideration when drafting resolutions and discussing debates. Removing the UNSC as a whole is not a viable option.

The G4 countries who wish to expand permanency

Brazil

Brazil is the biggest and most populous country in South America. There is currently no permanent member of the UNSC who is from the continent of South America, and Brazil is agreed to be an optimal candidate for this function. Some drawbacks are its low economic development - it is classed as an LEDC, and has a somewhat unstable political status.

Germany

Germany is an economic powerhouse. It was denied by the UNSC for P5 membership because of the (then) recency of the second world war, in which German-native forces were the largest perpetrators. That was more than $\frac{3}{4}$ centuries ago, though, and in many eyes, Germany has redeemed itself. Many believe that Germany should establish permanency, in any function, regardless of reform outcomes.

India

The second most populous country in the world, and also the world's largest democracy, India is an extremely influential country in socio-politics. Also having one of the world's largest militaries, they have an important role on the world stage. During the creation of the UNSC, they were known as the British Raj and were not UN-recognised (as an administrative region, autonomous government, or independent nation). Since the system in which the SC operates, India has not gained permanency status, despite its large global presence.

Japan

Undoubtedly one of the world's most innovative and forward-moving nations, Japan's economy has grown exponentially since the Second World War and the creation of the

UN. After its reputation in WWII, most member states have questioned their reliability and responsibility if they were to be awarded a permanent status, much like with Germany. Similarly, that system and belief is outdated, and the permanency of Japan is one which would greatly affect the UNSC. Many are of the opinion that Japan should also gain permanency in the UNSC.

L.69⁶

The L.69 is a group of LEDCs from countries over Africa, Latin America, the Caribbean, Asia and the Pacific. These countries are in favour of the expansion of the UNSC - permanent and non-permanent members. They are of the belief that such an expansion would promote their own national stability, and identity, and would keep the topics discussed relevant, transparent, and more representative.

Timeline of Events

2 September 1945	End of WWII
24 October 1945	The creation of the United Nations (and thereby the UNSC)
15 August 1947	Indian independence from the British Raj
1-10 November 1956	1st UNGA emergency special session, as requested by the UNSC on the topic of the Middle East. [resolutions discussed]
4-10 November 1956	2nd UNGA emergency special session, as requested by the UNSC on the topic of Hungary. [resolutions discussed]
8-21 August 1958	3rd UNGA emergency special session, as requested by the UNSC on the topic of the Middle East. [resolutions discussed]
17-19 September 1960	4th UNGA emergency special session, as requested by the UNSC on the question of Congo. [resolutions discussed]
17 December 1963	The UNGA passes an amendment to the UN charter ^{ix} stating that there shall be 10 non-permanent members in the UNSC, as opposed to the original 6 non-permanent members, which would make 15 total member states rather than 11 (ratified 31 August 1965).
17-18 June 1967	5th UNGA emergency special session, as requested by the UNSC on the topic of the Middle East. [resolutions discussed]

⁶ Members of the L.69 include St. Lucia, St. Vincent and the Grenadines, India, Brazil, South Africa, Nigeria, Rwanda, Burundi, Papua New Guinea, Palau, Fiji, Ethiopia, Bhutan, Venezuela, Mongolia, Nicaragua, Bahamas and Seychelles. This bloc/group is led by the mission of India, which serves as the secretariat.

- 10-14 January 1980 6th UNGA emergency special session, as requested by the UNSC on the situation in Afghanistan and its implications for international peace and security. [[resolutions discussed](#), [meeting records](#)]
- 1980s Reform of the UNSC first circulates in the UN/public
- 22-29 July 1980; 20-28 April 1982; 25-26 June 1982; 16-19 August 1982 and 24 September 1982 7th UNGA emergency special session, as requested by the non-permanent member state of Senegal in the UNSC on the question of Palestine. [[resolutions discussed](#), [meeting records](#)]
- 13-14 September 1981 8th UNGA emergency special session, as requested by the non-permanent member state of Zimbabwe in the UNSC on the question of Namibia. [[resolutions discussed](#), [meeting records](#)]
- 29 January to 5 February 1982 9th UNGA emergency special session, as requested by the UNSC on the situation in the occupied Arab territories. [[resolutions](#), [meeting records](#)]
- 1989 End of the Cold War
- 1991 Dissolution of the USSR, tensions between Russia and Ukraine remain
- 10 January 1997 P5 member China vetoes draft resolutions S/1997/18 and S/PV.3730 on the topic of Central America: efforts towards peace
- 2003 The UNSCs retaliation to the situation regarding the Iraq war sparked much dispute regarding a reform
- September 2003 Kofi Annan, the Secretary-General of the UN established a High-Level Panel to evaluate prospective dangers to peace and security and make proposals for cogent collaborative action
- September 2004 Japan, Brazil, Germany and India pitched a G4 group after meeting on the boundaries of the UN General Assembly in New York.
- July 2005 The G4 submitted a draft resolution on Security Council Reform and pursued a way to work with other members
- August 2006 The L.69 is tabled in the UN
- February 28 2014 Russia, for the first time vetoes on the agenda item letter dated 28 February 2014 from the Permanent Representative of Ukraine to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council, which would be the first of 3
- 2014 Russian forces gain control over Crimea

April 1997- 13 June 2018	10th UNGA emergency special session, as requested by the permanent member state of Qatar in the UNSC on the topic of illegal Israeli actions in occupied East Jerusalem and the rest of the Occupied Palestinian Territory. [details]
27 February 2022-8 February 2022	11th UNGA emergency special session, as called for by the UN secretary-general on the situation in Ukraine. It had to do with a letter dated 28 February 2014 from the Permanent Representative of Ukraine to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council, [details]
February 2022	Russia vetoes (S/2014/136) which deals with the Russian invasion of Ukraine
February 2022-	UNSC veto and permanence system thoroughly questioned in the eyes of the general public and the media

Past Attempts to Solve the Issue

For 40 years, there have been several meetings and sessions regarding the reform of the UNSC. 4 main permanent members of the UN wish to expand themselves into the P5 to make it a P9 (Brazil, Germany, India and Japan). The L.69 would be in favour of this. Many contradictions to this proposal have been made by many countries such as Italy, Canada, and Denmark. Up until now, there have been no successful resolutions or proposals to revise the UNSC.

Outline of past attempts

The 2005 Annan plan:

Plan A calls for creating six new permanent members, plus three new non-permanent members for a total of 24 seats in the council.

Plan B calls for creating eight new seats in a new class of members, who would serve for four years, subject to renewal, plus one nonpermanent seat, also for a total of 24.

There have been countless other attempts to revise the current system. The last time that the Security Council structure was changed was in 1963, which expanded the non-permanent seats in the Council. Many following attempts have been proposed and even passed, although none have been implemented. They have been drafted by members of the G4, the L.69, and the Union for Consensus (UfC).

UN Involvement, Relevant Resolutions, Treaties and Events

- UN Charter
- UN General Assembly resolution “Open-ended Working Group” discusses membership in the Security Council; December 1993 (A/RES/48/26)
- 377A(V) on Emergency special sessions

- Amendment to the UN charter to revise the structure of UNSC membership ([A/RES/1991](#))
- Amendment to the UNSC rules of procedure regarding the membership elections ([A/520/Rev.19](#))

Possible Solutions

When creating solutions for this issue, the UNSC will have to be reformed in such a manner that it does not act as a second GA1 or similarly resemble the GA1. Keeping it ad-hoc is a way in which this can be distinguished. The UNSC should act as in-between crisis committees and non-ad-hoc committees. It should focus on important issues in the world, and pass short-term crisis legislation while keeping an eye on long-term issues. Member rotation can be experimented with, although scrapping permanent members as a whole would be tricky.

Taking some of the aforementioned conflicts into consideration, such controversy and villainization of a P5 member distorts the dynamics in a council with permanency status and veto, and thereby causes blocks in many solutions to disputes because they are not in favour of a P5 member state. It would therefore be ill-advised to expand the P5 privileges to other member states, as it would be a catalyst for more disagreements and stalemates. Removing the P5 would likely result in better outcomes in the UNSC, as the need for global powers to have their best interests is becoming less and less prevalent. In an ever-globalising world, taking only 5-9 points of view into importance is outdated⁷ and should not be implemented. Each member state should (as in the GA) have one vote and no veto.

Keeping a certain amount of stability in the member states which serve in the UNSC is important so that relevant perspectives stay considered. A way in which this can be achieved is by dividing the UNSC similarly to the GA. Since most complications and disputes are kept somewhat subdued, unless, in extreme circumstances, the UNSC should specialise in urgent matters, as opposed to non-urgent conflicts, which the GA1 focuses on.

Another possibility which can be explored is to divide the UNSC into sub-councils based on geographic location. These sub-councils may or may not have permanency. Members would need to be elected into each sub-council, and when a resolution is passed, it will go to the main UNSC organ. This solution would have to be logistically investigated further to ensure that it remains a council for urgent and pressing matters.

Alternatively, a whole new council could be formed which would be like the UNSC, but without permanency. The purpose of this council would need to be further thought through. It would resemble something like a crisis committee, and so would be working in real-time with conflicts. Another solution would be to dissolve the UNSC and replace it with a newer, more up-to-date system, although this new system could more easily be implemented into the current UNSC.

Still, it must be considered that the UNSC was also established as a crisis council, tasked

⁷ Under article 31 of the UN Charter and article 37 of the Provisional Rules of Procedure of the Security Council, Member States may be invited to participate in the debate, though without a vote. This allowed Ukraine, for example, to attend the debates about the 2022 Russian invasion of Ukraine, even though they were not members of the Council.

with defending international peace and security. The council is already arguably slow in its response, therefore, it might not be beneficial to add even more diplomatic complexity.

Also note that decisions in the UNSC are not made by a (simple) majority vote, but by at least 9 votes in favour (and no vetoes). This means that when expanding the UNSC, a new vote threshold should also be debated. Additionally, it might be considered an undesirable situation if the P5 get expanded to a P9, with a vote threshold of 9, as this would allow the P9 to pass resolutions expanding their power - so long as they stay within the UN Charter, that is - which would open the door to, for example, the equivalent of a filibuster by amendment of the Council's Provisional Rules of Procedure.

A relatively easy and influential solution would be to reaffirm a few provisions from the UN Charter that have mostly gone unnoticed. For example, it states any party to a dispute shall abstain from voting in the UNSC. This provision does not get enforced, mostly to the benefit of the P5, even though it is already in the Charter itself. One could argue that the mere enforcement of a provision that has already been agreed upon by all Member States should not constitute a significant diplomatic hurdle.

For all the aforementioned possible solutions it must be considered that any change to the UN Charter, which has provisions on the UNSC, its tasks and its voting system, requires a $\frac{2}{3}$ majority in the GA, and approval from the council itself. This means that any attempted change of the voting system requires approval from the entire P5, which is unlikely to happen, seeing as changing the status quo is hardly beneficial for them. For that reason, it is necessary to find constructive solutions that are not solely based on the voting system.

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Appendices

- i. [Universal Declaration of Human Rights](#)
- ii. [UN brief history](#)
- iii. [UNSC full veto history](#)
- iv. [Original UN Charter of 1945 \(prior to subsequent amendments\)](#)