

The United Nations logo, featuring a world map surrounded by olive branches, is rendered in blue on an orange background.

GATORMUN XXI

A blue silhouette of a gator is positioned horizontally across the lower half of the poster, set against a background that transitions from orange at the top to blue at the bottom.

**UNITED NATIONS
PLENARY 2024**

BACKGROUND GUIDE

SEBASTIAN GONZALES

RULES OF PROCEDURE



Quorum

A majority of voting members answering to the roll at each session shall constitute a quorum for that session. This means that half plus one of all voting members are present. Quorum will be assumed consistent unless questioned through a Point of Order. Delegates may request to be noted as “Present” or “Present and Voting.”

Motion to Suspend the Rules for the Purpose of a Moderated Caucus

This motion must include three specifications

- Length of the Caucus
- Speaking Time, and
- Reason for the Caucus

During a moderated caucus, delegates will be called on to speak by the Committee Director. Delegates will raise their placards to be recognized. Delegates must maintain the same degree of decorum throughout a Moderated Caucus as in formal debate. This motion requires a simple majority to pass.

Motion to Suspend the Rules for the Purpose of an Unmoderated Caucus

This motion must include the length of the Caucus. During an unmoderated caucus, delegates may get up from their seats and talk amongst themselves. This motion requires a simple majority to pass. The length of an unmoderated caucus in a Crisis committee should not exceed fifteen minutes.

Motion to Suspend the Meeting

This motion is in order if there is a scheduled break in debate to be observed. (ie. Lunch!) This motion requires a simple majority vote. The Committee Director may refuse to entertain this motion at their discretion.



Motion to Adjourn the Meeting

This motion is in order at the end of the last committee session. It signifies the closing of the committee until next year's conference.

Points of Order

Points of Order will only be recognized for the following items:

- To recognize errors in voting, tabulation, or procedure,
- To question relevance of debate to the current Topic or
- To question a quorum.

A Point of Order may interrupt a speaker if necessary and it is to be used sparingly.

Points of Inquiry

When there is no discussion on the floor, a delegate may direct a question to the Committee Director. Any question directed to another delegate may only be asked immediately after the delegate has finished speaking on a substantive matter. A delegate that declines to respond to a question after a formal speech forfeits any further questioning time.

Points of Personal Privilege

Points of personal privilege are used to request information or clarification and conduct all other business of the body except Motions or Points specifically mentioned in the Rules of Procedure. Please note: The Director may refuse to recognize Points of Order, Points of Inquiry or Points of Personal Privilege if the Committee Director believes the decorum and restraint inherent in the exercise has been violated, or if the point is deemed dilatory in nature.

Rights of Reply

At the Committee Director's discretion, any member nation or observer may be granted a Right of Reply to answer serious insults directed at the dignity of the delegate present. The Director has the ABSOLUTE AUTHORITY to accept or reject Rights of Reply, and the decision IS NOT SUBJECT TO APPEAL. Delegates who feel they are being treated unfairly may take their complaint to any member of the Secretariat.



Directives

Directives act as a replacement for Draft Resolutions when in Crisis committees, and are the actions that the body decides to take as a whole. Directives are not required to contain operative or preambulatory clauses. A directive should contain:

- The name(s) of the author(s),
- A title, and
- A number of signatories/sponsors signatures' necessary to introduce, determined by the Director.

A simple majority vote is required to introduce a directive, and multiple directives may be introduced at once. Press releases produced on behalf of the body must also be voted on as Directives.

Friendly Amendments

Friendly Amendments are any changes to a formally introduced Directive that all Sponsors agree to in writing. The Committee Director must approve the Friendly Amendment and confirm each Sponsor's agreement both verbally and in writing.

Unfriendly Amendments

Unfriendly Amendments are any substantive changes to a formally introduced Directive that are not agreed to by all of the Sponsors of the Directive. In order to introduce an Unfriendly Amendment, the Unfriendly Amendment must be the number equivalent to 1/3 of Quorum confirmed signatories. The Committee Director has the authority to discern between substantive and non-substantive Unfriendly amendment proposals.

Plagiarism

GatorMUN maintains a zero-tolerance policy in regards to plagiarism. Delegates found to have used the ideas of others without properly citing those individuals, organizations, or documents will have their credentials revoked for the duration of the GatorMUN conference. This is a very serious offense.



Crisis Notes

A crisis note is an action taken by an individual in a Crisis committee. Crisis notes do not need to be introduced or voted on, and should be given to the Crisis Staff by sending the notes to a designated pickup point in each room. A crisis note should both be addressed to crisis and have the delegate's position on both the inside and outside of the note.

Motion to Enter Voting Procedure

Once this motion passes, and the committee enters Voting Procedure, no occupants of the committee room may exit the Committee Room, and no individual may enter the Committee Room from the outside. A member of the Dias will secure all doors.

- No talking, passing notes, or communicating of any kind will be tolerated during voting procedures.
- Each Directive will be read to the body and voted upon in the order which they were introduced. Any Proposed Unfriendly Amendments to each Directive will be read to the body and voted upon before the main body of the Directive as a whole is put to a vote.
- Delegates who requested to be noted as "Present and Voting" are unable to abstain during voting procedure. Abstentions will not be counted in the tallying of a majority. For example, 5 yes votes, 4 no votes, and 7 abstentions means that the Directive passes.
- The Committee will adopt Directives and Unfriendly Amendments to Directives if these documents pass with a simple majority. Specialized committees should refer to their background-guides or Committee Directors for information concerning specific voting procedures.

Roll Call Voting

A counted placard vote will be considered sufficient unless any delegate to the committee motions for a Roll Call Vote. If a Roll Call Vote is requested, the committee must comply. All delegates must vote: "For," "Against," "Abstain," or "Pass." During a Roll Call vote, any delegate who answers, "Pass," reserves his/her vote until the



Committee Director has exhausted the Roll. However, once the Committee Director returns to “Passing” Delegates, they must vote: “For” or “Against.”

Accepting by Acclamation

This motion may be stated when the Committee Director asks for points or motions. If a Roll Call Vote is requested, the motion to Accept by Acclamation is voided. If a delegate believes a Directive will pass without opposition, he or she may move to accept the Directive by acclamation. The motion passes unless a single delegate shows opposition. An abstention is not considered opposition. Should the motion fail, the committee will move directly into a Roll Call Vote.





History of the United Nations Security Council

The United Nations story begins during World War II, when the Allied Powers began to look towards the future of the planet after the war ended. In hindsight, the faults of the League of Nations looked more obvious than ever, and the League's inability to maintain international peace and security were mistakes that the world did not want to make again. In the early stages of the war, Allied leaders began to have preliminary discussions of a post-war order and soon came up with the "Four Policemen" doctrine. The United Nations Declaration was signed in 1942, with the United States, United Kingdom, Republic of China, and the Soviet Union taking the lead and many others signing on. The Four Policemen idea would be one that, while informal at first, would seep its way into the future UN structure.

The first lengthy discussions of what the UN would look like took place at the Dumbarton Oaks conference in

Washington in mid-1944. Like the League before it, it was proposed that the UN have a large assembly and a council, but quickly the hot-button issue became the structure of the Council, which would later

become known as the Security Council. A myriad of talking points were heavily contested when coming up with the Council, including who is on it, the structure of the veto, and what power it could have. The veto in particular proved to be a divisive point in all aspects except that it was essential to have on the council. The Soviets wished that the veto would be absolute, meaning that it could be used on any issue no matter what and could even prevent topics from being discussed at all. The British, on the other hand, believed that nations should not be able to veto in disputes that they were a



Fig. 1. "Conference on Security Organization for Peace." UN Historical Photo, 1944.

part of, which would create a conflict of interest. It was only later at the Yalta Conference in January 1945 that it was agreed that each of the five allied nations (now including France) could veto any resolution, but not procedural matters, meaning that they could not prevent a topic from being debated. As for the permanent members, the United States also pushed for Brazil to receive a permanent seat, but the others did not agree so it was dropped.

Later, at the San Francisco conference of April 1945, the veto faced more scrutiny from many of the smaller nations who were not present at Yalta. One particular challenge from the Australian delegation attempted to put more restrictions on the veto, but was thwarted by an American senator who said "You may go home from San Francisco, if you wish, and report that you have defeated the veto...But you can also say 'we tore up the charter'. At the end of the day, the pressure from the powerful nations was enough to keep the veto in place, and the Charter was completed and signed two months after the beginning of the conference. President Harry Truman spoke to the delegates afterwards, proclaiming that the UN must "keep the world free from the fear of war". Learning from the mistakes of the past when the League of Nations charter was not ratified, the US Senate passed the UN Charter with a vote of 89-2, and on October 24, 1945 all five major powers had signed the treaty, bringing the UN officially into existence.

The UN Security Council got off to a rocky start, with outside geopolitical events placing a handicap on what the UNSC could accomplish. From the get-go, the Soviet delegations clashed with their former allies from the west, often ignoring the UN's decisions entirely when they did not agree with them. The first example of this is the Iran crisis of 1946, when Soviet troops refused to leave Iran after the UNSC and the United States put extreme pressure on them. While they did eventually leave, the crisis was the first instance of action that the Council took, and due to the USSR's ability to maneuver around them it was largely a failure. This problem is one that the UN Secretary-General Trygve Lie and his new organization would face frequently without its history.

A pivotal moment in the history of the UN Security Council, and of



UN action in the world at large, came during the Korean War of 1950. When the communists in mainland China established the People's Republic of China in 1949, the United Nations and many other states viewed the government as illegitimate and kept the Security Council seat with the Republic of China in Taiwan. The Soviet Union believed that the newly formed communist PRC government in Beijing deserved the Security Council seat, as did other communist nations around it, and due to frustration around the topic the USSR began to boycott UNSC meetings in January 1950. Around the same time, communist forces in North Korea crossed the 38th parallel and invaded South Korea, beginning the Korean War. After the South Koreans had been entirely overrun, the United States wished to intervene and called upon the UN for help. In June 1950, the UN Security Council adopted resolutions 83 and 84, creating a UN force to repel the North Koreans. This sort of aggressive action by the UN was only possible because, ironically, the Soviets who were boycotting the Council meetings were not present to veto them. Realizing their mistake, the Soviets returned to the Council meetings later that year, ready to use the veto in matters that came to the conflict in Korea.

However, a resolution that was passed later in 1950 would have an extreme impact on the future of the United Nations, especially in this timeline. The United States and its allies, well aware of the Soviet threat of vetoes, sought a way



to bypass the veto when necessary. The solution, credited to Secretary of State Dean Acheson, was United Nations General Assembly Resolution 377 A, also known as the "Uniting for Peace" resolution. Some of the important clauses include:

"Reaffirming the importance of the exercise by the Security Council of its primary responsibility for the maintenance of international



peace and security, and the duty of the permanent members to seek unanimity and to exercise restraint in the use of the veto," ...

"Conscious that failure of the Security Council to discharge its responsibilities on behalf of all the Member States... does not relieve Member States of their obligations or the United Nations of its responsibility under the Charter to maintain international peace and security,

"Recognizing in particular that such failure does not deprive the General Assembly of its rights or relieve it of its responsibilities under the Charter in regard to the maintenance of international peace and security,"

"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."

This monumental resolution, passed on November 3, 1950, gave the General Assembly the power to convene an "Emergency Special Session". If the Security Council decides with a majority in a procedural vote (which means no P5 vetoes), or a majority of all UN members give a request to the UN Secretary-General in these cases where the UNSC was unable to act on security issues due to a veto deadlock, the GA could take it into their own hands and "override" the veto of the Security Council. This was first introduced with the Soviet Union in mind during the Korean War, but its effects are still available today. Ironically, the first time it was invoked was not because of the Russians, but instead because of NATO members. During the Suez Canal crisis of 1956, the UN Security Council was unable to act due to France and the United Kingdom's discreet military actions in the region. In a procedural vote by the UNSC with



all members except the UK and France voting for, the first Emergency Special Session was convened, and the General Assembly called for an immediate cease-fire and created the UN Emergency Force (UNEF) to assist in the operation. Soon after, the crisis ended with peace, and the French and British would be much more cautious in their foreign interventions due to their power being curbed by a united show of force from the other member nations. Since that first session, Resolution 377 A has been enacted nine other times up until 2018, with most of them being single meetings of the UNGA that sometimes last multiple days. The most recent instance, on the question of Palestine, was opened in 1997 and has been revisited several times since with no solution.

The UN Security Council has undergone a number of other changes since its inception. The most notable change to the UNSC came in the 1960's, an era of great change for the UN. Much of the continents of Africa and Asia gained their independence from colonial powers such as France and the United Kingdom, which had been reeling from crises the previous decade and began to lose control of their dominions. As dozens of new nations began to pop up, most of them were eager to join the UN, and membership greatly increased. This created a disproportionate number of UN members compared to total seats at the UNSC, and nations started to call for reform. In 1965, this was addressed by expanding the number of non-permanent members from six to ten, creating a fifteen-member council. In 1971, another groundbreaking change in the council occurred when the People's Republic of China was given the Republic of China (Taiwan)'s seat at the UNSC. Despite American resistance, the measure overwhelmingly had the support of third world nations, many of which were new, and signaled a new era in the Security Council and in the UN as a whole.

The UN in its early days was mostly crippled in what it could execute due to the restraints of the Cold War. The first examples of this were explained above, but this phenomenon continued well into the 1960s and 70s. The UN's effort to gain a significant military footprint was often overshadowed by its constituents, as was the case with the Military Staff Committee. Set up to organize UN forces and even plan UN bases, the MSC did not see much use after the early 50's



due to increasing political divides due to the Cold War. While the Suez Canal crisis and the ensuing UNEF was the first instance of UN peacekeepers being deployed, the use of peacekeepers was relatively limited in the decades to come. Some of the largest crises of this time period, like the Cuban Missile Crisis and the Vietnam conflict, were being dealt with either by direct negotiation between powers or through proxy wars that the UN had no control over. Realizing that some battles were above their pay grade, the UN began to focus on conflicts that did not directly coincide with the Cold War. The largest instances of this were the UN Operation in the Congo (UNOC) and the Temporary Executive Authority in West New Guinea, and albeit with mixed success they provided some of the only outlets for the UN to act with force on the



international stage. Eventually, the UN's ability to do this effectively slowly waned. Combining the increased presence of Third World nations and other UN failures like those in Kashmir and Vietnam resulted in the UN beginning to shift its focus from strictly peacekeeping to development and cultural exchange, and this was reflected in the budgetary changes by the 1970s.

With the end of the Cold War and its ideological battlegrounds, the United Nations Security Council was provided many more opportunities to maintain world peace than ever before. Peacekeeping missions were much more frequent, the peacekeeping budget increased tenfold, and the amount of UNSC resolutions passed more doubled over the next ten years after the collapse of the Soviet Union. The UNSC began to take more initiative in attempting to solve the world's problems, even going as far as condemning the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait in 1991 on the same day it happened. However, the UN's efforts to solve crises were not always as successful as they hoped, particularly in the 1990s and onward.

The UN mission in Bosnia was widely regarded as a failure, including the infamous Srebrenica massacre that took place in a UNSC-designated “safe area”. Other notable mishaps include the failure to act during the Rwandan genocide of 1994 due to UNSC gridlock, and the subversion of the UNSC by American military forces when they invaded Iraq in 2003 without explicit UNSC approval. However, the UN also began to combine its efforts with the operations of other countries or organizations, such as the cooperation with NATO in Afghanistan and the British Marines in Sierra Leone.

Further reform of the United Nations Security Council was first brought to the table by Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali in 1992. With his “Agenda for Peace”, Boutros-Ghali wanted to change the United Nations, which he believed was outdated and anachronistic, to reflect the vastly different world it existed in. Around this time, the many regional powers around the world began to question the fairness of the Security Council setup, and began to voice their opinions. Germany and Japan, the former Axis powers just 50 years earlier, were now paying the second and third largest shares of the UN budget, only behind the United States. Along with regional powers Brazil and India, these four nations became known as the G4 nations and campaigned to attain additional permanent Security Council seats with a veto power. However, other powers in the G4’s respective regions and other middle powers, such as Italy, South Korea, Pakistan, and Argentina, among others, are hesitant to give out more permanent seats to the UNSC without a decisive consensus amongst UN members. This caucus within the UN is therefore known as the “Uniting for Consensus” group. African nations also began to express interest in gaining a permanent seat for their group. The Power 5 countries expressed varying opinions on who should gain a seat, with the US, UK, and France being more supportive of the G4 position while China and Russia are sympathetic only to increased representation for developing countries outside of the West. Various Secretary-Generals, like Boutros-Ghali and later Kofi Annan, have attempted to increase the membership on the Security Council, but often with little effect.

The United Nations Security Council reached a tipping point in 2022



when Russia invaded Ukraine. Most countries in the world rallied around Ukraine, but the UNSC failed to adopt resolutions condemning Russia's actions and ordering the withdrawal of Russian troops from Ukrainian territory because of Russia's veto power as a Power 5 country. As a result of this crisis and decades of calls for reform, the General Assembly decided to hold a Plenary during its sixty-third session.

Current UN Security Council Structure and Powers

The UN Charter in 1945 created the UN with six main organs, one of which is the Security Council. Often seen as the most prestigious and important organ, the UNSC is tasked with maintaining international peace and security and being the highest level of international cooperation when tackling security issues. According to the UN Charter, the UN Security Council has the ability:

- to maintain international peace and security in accordance with the principles and purposes of the United Nations;
- to investigate any dispute or situation which might lead to international friction;
- to recommend methods of adjusting such disputes or the terms of settlement;
- to formulate plans for the establishment of a system to regulate armaments;
- to determine the existence of a threat to the peace or act of aggression and to recommend what action should be taken;
- to call on Members to apply economic sanctions and other measures not involving the use of force to prevent or stop aggression;
- to take military action against an aggressor;
- to recommend the admission of new Members;
- to exercise the trusteeship functions of the United Nations in "strategic areas";
- to recommend to the General Assembly the appointment of the Secretary-General and, together with the Assembly, to elect the Judges of the International Court of Justice.

The Security Council, upon receiving news of a threat to peace,



always seeks that peaceful measures are the first choice to solving crises. Oftentimes they will set up an investigation or attempt to mediate the conflict, appoint special envoys, or call upon the Secretary-General to use his office and influence to help the situation. In many cases, however, this is not successful and the conflict turns violent outside of the UNSC's control. In these instances, the UNSC will work to issue a cease-fire or even dispatch a peacekeeping force to break up the hostile forces and create peace in the area. Sometimes, the Council takes extra measures to enforce its will, such as economic sanctions, blockades, or even military involvement, but this is much less common due to many obstructions that come with UNSC procedure and policy.

The Security Council has also created a number of subsidiary organs to perform its tasks, and has the power to create more if it desires. There are several types of subsidiary organs, the main ones of which include:

- **Peacekeeping Operations:** involve the use of military and civilian personnel to not only end any conflict in the region but also restore security, political stability, the rule of law, protect human rights, and reintroduce refugees and former combatants. Often times, these operations last years and call upon support from local nations as well as the international community.
- **Political Missions:** Oftentimes, Political Missions work in tandem with peacekeeping operations or right before or right after them. Run by the Department of Political Affairs, these missions work to facilitate peace agreements, transition conflict areas to long-term peacebuilding agendas, and do many other tasks involved in the UN peace process.
- **International Courts and Tribunals:** As seen with the ICTY (Yugoslavia) and ICTR (Rwanda), the UN Security Council has the ability to set up judicial bodies to operate in former conflict zones. First inspired by the Nuremburg and Tokyo trials, these institutions bring justice to devastated communities where there were gross violations of international humanitarian law, such as mass murder, genocide, rape, destruction of property, and other war crimes. Consisting of an international judiciary, these courts look to restore a sense of normalcy to war-torn



areas and deliver some sort of path to reconstruction, a vital part of the peacebuilding process.

- **Advisory Organs:** These bodies, in conjunction with the UN, are intergovernmental in nature and seek to assist UN efforts by bringing together many international actors. One notable example is the Peacebuilding Commission, which aids UN efforts to build sustainable peace conditions in areas emerging from conflict.

TOPIC 1: MEMBERSHIP AND MEMBER POWERS



Perhaps the most contentious topic when referencing UN Security Council reform is that of membership. Because the Security Council has 15 members and five of those never change, many countries don't get a seat at the round table in the Security Council chamber. There have been calls to increase the number of total seats or keep them the same. Another hot-button issue is whether some new countries should be made permanent members, expanding the P5. Some regions feel that they are underrepresented, while others call for effectiveness to be the main factor in representation. There is even a large debate on how the election of new rotating members to the council should be structured.

Since the 1960s, the number of representatives on the Security Council at one time has remained steady at 15. Many countries, particularly those who do not get regularly elected to the Security Council or those who are permanent members, feel that such a small number does not allow for enough voices when discussing issues. There have been several plans in the past to increase the number of total seats on the Council, such as the one presented by former Secretary-General Kofi Annan in 2005. Annan gave two options, both to increase the number of members to 24, one involving more permanent members, and the other with more non-permanent members and a new class of members serving four year appointments as opposed to two. While neither gained traction in actual policymaking, the ideas still remain options when it comes to discussing reform today. One of the main arguments for adding new members is that smaller countries often do not have their voices heard on the council, especially if they are from under-represented regions, which will be touched on later. Giving more seats on the council would provide an opportunity for more countries to voice their opinion on issues that are important to global security. Additionally, there have been voices who call for countries that are particularly relevant to crises that the UN is addressing to be given a seat on the council, either temporarily or



otherwise. For instance, if there is a crisis going on in sub-Saharan Africa, the country in question should be able to sit on the Security Council for all of the discussions about said crisis.

While some wish to expand the number of total seats on the Security Council, others wish to also expand the number of permanent members. As the world grows more multipolar and away from the Cold War order, many argue that the permanent members no longer reflect the most stable and powerful nations on the planet, and that the permanent member ranks should be reconsidered. Several rising nations seek to be promoted to new member status, such as Brazil, Germany, India, and Japan, known as the Group of Four (G4). All regional leaders and rising economic and military powers, they believe their promotion would help the UNSC better represent global trends and politics in the Security Council chamber. There is, however, a group known as Uniting for Consensus that wishes to keep the permanent 5 in place as is and reform the UN in other ways, mainly because the UC group consists of other middle powers in the regions of the G4. While much of the talk has been focused around adding permanent members, there are people who believe that the UK and France should maybe even have their P5 status revoked. No longer colonial powers and trending towards isolationism, many feel that they are not deserving of the permanent status, although that would need the UK and France's approval, which is unlikely to happen. Other options for the permanent member status include spots for the African continent and the Arab world, as well as for large regional organizations like the European Union, African Union, and ASEAN.

The question of permanent members is closely tied to the power of veto. Since it was negotiated before the signing of the UN Charter, many smaller countries have voiced their concerns over the veto. According to the Charter, any of the permanent five members (US, UK, France, USSR/Russia, and China) may veto any substantive matters discussed in the Security Council, even if the measure receives the required nine votes to pass. The key word in this definition is substantive, meaning actual UN policy or actions, and this means that no procedural matters may be vetoed and motions cannot be shut down before they are at least discussed in the

Council chamber. The P5 can also veto the election of a candidate for Secretary-General, such as the United States did in the 1990s to the re-election of Boutros Boutros-Ghali. Abstentions or absences are not counted as vetoes, which is why the USSR's absence in 1950 was able to get the UN involved in Korea. However, to amend the United Nations Charter, such as with any reform that this committee makes, all 5 nations must actively agree to the amendments, meaning abstentions or no's would prevent such reform.

The veto has gone through periods of being used sparingly and frequently by the various P5 members. Between its founding and 2018, the veto was used over 250 times, and since then it has been used semi-frequently as well. The USSR conducted the majority of the vetoes before 1965, but since then it has been a mixed proportion. Each power often used or uses its veto power when it relates to certain situations that are important to it, such as the Russians vetoing actions in neighboring countries, the United States vetoing actions pointed against Israel, and the British and French used it to protect some colonial interests. In recent years up to 2040, all of the countries have begun to use the veto more frequently, as it to hold on to the power in the UN system compared to other rising nations.

The veto has attracted worldwide criticism on a number of fronts. For one, the veto has been described as the most undemocratic aspect of the entire UN, as one nation can single handedly derail UN action, while other nations would need a majority of some kind. The US' repeated defense of Israel and Russia's frequent defense of its own military escapades often supersedes supermajorities in the Security Council, which often frustrates the rest of the world. Some say that the UN veto has been the main reason for the UN's frequent inactivity in times of international crisis like genocide or human rights failures. Some even say that the UNSC has been ineffective at protecting the population of every country but those of the P5 members, as often self-interest fuels political indecision from the Council. The "responsibility to protect civilian populations," has often come into conflict with state sovereignty, and thanks to the UNSC's preference of the latter, non-interference has been the



status quo, often to the detriment of civilians in danger worldwide.

Various ideas for veto reform have floated around for decades, now more than ever with the ongoing crises. Some believe that the veto power should be removed altogether, and that the UNSC should resort to majority decisions of some kind on all matters. The biggest advocates of removing the veto claim that it often slows down or stops any progress on solving certain crises, due to a personal interest of a P5 member. The veto has often also taken the shape of a cover for allies, even when the interests of the P5 members don't always directly correlate. Additionally, some resolutions do not even make it to the Council chamber because of the "pocket veto": knowledge that a P5 member will vote down a resolution before it is even introduced. The veto has often caused the UNSC to adopt resolutions that are sometimes out of character or even borderline unlawful, due to a veto being threatened on another important piece of legislation in the council.

However, some also believe that keeping the veto or modifying it is essential to the survival of the Security Council. The veto awards the P5 nations an important leadership role in the council, and it has been used before to not only benefit the national interest of the P5 but also the global interest. There is also the possibility that one of the P5 members would be forced to sign a resolution that goes directly against its own interests or safety, which is not an interesting proposition to the most powerful states. Modifying the veto is also a viable option to some, including limiting it to certain explicitly national issues relating to the P5 nations, requiring a consensus of groups of nations before the veto can be used, increasing or decreasing countries with veto power, disallowing it on issues such as genocide or explicit harm to a large number of civilians, open warfare, and other hot-button issues where global safety takes precedence over national interest.

Another important membership question is that of regional representation, which many feel is disproportionate to the world demographics. Currently, the UN Security Council is divided amongst a set of world regions that are more indicative of the post-World War II order, when many countries were still colonies and



and others were under more exerted influence of global powers. In a more multipolar world, such as that of 2040, many have been calling for change to this outdated system. The present system divides the UNSC into five groups: The African Group with three seats, the Asia-Pacific group with three seats (one permanent), the Latin America and Caribbean group (GRULAC) with two seats, the Eastern European Group with two seats (one permanent), and the West European and Others group with five seats (three permanent). Additionally, by tradition one of the seats in either the African group or the Asia-Pacific group is a nation from the Arab world. Many feel that, since the developing world has risen considerably in recent times, they are under-represented on the Security Council and do not have enough sway to impact decisions made in their backyard. However, the developing countries often claim that this power structure reflects the effectiveness aspect of policymaking, and that placing an emphasis on countries that can carry out UNSC actions is the most important part of representation. Additionally, there has been considerable debate on how to amend this structure. While some call for re-shaped regional groups, others may call for the removal of them entirely and a transition to another type of election strategy. The increased presence of regional supranational organizations, like the European Union, African Union, and ASEAN also brings into question whether these organizations themselves should have seats on the council as well, or at least be represented more heavily in some way.

The final important issue when it comes to membership is how these non-permanent countries are elected to the Security Council. Currently, the ten nonpermanent members are elected by the General Assembly to two-year terms starting on January 1 of the given year, and require a 2/3 percentage of votes in the General Assembly to be elected. Currently, the elections are on an alternating system with five members being elected each year: even numbered years contain elections for two African seats and one seat for Eastern Europe, Asia-Pacific, and GRULAC, while odd year elections are for two Western Europe seats, and one each from Asia-Pacific, GRULAC, and Africa. There are no at-large seats, and the regional seats must often be decided in backroom deals within and between regional groups, sometimes resulting in massive standoffs.



In 1979, for instance, a dispute over the GRULAC seat between Cuba and Colombia took 154 rounds of voting, only for Mexico to be a compromise choice. In the 2017-18 West European term, Italy and the Netherlands agreed to split their term, which has opened another solution to deadlocks, but often there is still much squabbling within regional blocs that can degrade relations between countries. Oftentimes certain countries are elected to the UNSC more often than others, with the G4 nations (Germany, India, Japan, Brazil) being notable examples, but even then many countries including the G4 can go decades without being on the Security Council, and some have never been elected at all. Many around the world look to see an election system that both increases representation on the council and diversity of representation.



TOPIC 2: WORKING AND IMPLEMENTATION METHODS



One of the aspects of UN reform that doesn't get a lot of press time but is equally important to membership is its working methods, or how the Security Council goes about its day-to-day business. The UNSC has often been seen on a high pedestal and unapproachable to other UN members and the international community, which has both hampered support and effectiveness within and outside of the institution. If the working methods were to be improved, the Security Council could potentially become much more effective and communicate much better with individual UN members.

The Security Council has often been criticized for not being transparent enough, both within its own doors and outside of them. While Council transparency increased mightily in the years after the Cold War, many countries still feel as if they are on the outside looking in, even if most hearings are available for all UN members to observe. It has been observed that many UNSC decisions are often sorted out in private consultations between a handful of countries, many times the P5 members, before the session has even commenced. This backroom dealing has been prevalent in politics around the world, but many countries outside the UNSC are at minimum asking for the analytical details as to what went into each decision made by the Council. Additionally, many of the decision-making meetings of the Security Council are still closed to those not on the Council, which frustrates many observer members and other states. Ways to increase the transparency of Council decisions have been desired from many around the UN community, and they would go a long way to restoring faith in the institution.

Another flaw of the Security Council working methods is that there is not really a standardized, permanent working method process at all. The Security Council has the ability to change how its meetings operate as it goes along. These procedural rules, which often are unfamiliar to those not on the council, tend to be big hurdles to newly elected non-permanent members, hindering their ability to contribute to the body's decisions. While attempts have been made



to integrate new members before their terms begin and to establish a permanent system, none have been successful so far. Some even feel that the UN Secretariat makes it more difficult on purpose for new members, and that the Power 5 countries are given privileges that the other countries are not. Efforts to fix some of these problems and better integrate newly elected Council members to the body would increase the effectiveness of the UNSC during meetings and through policy decisions.

Another recurring problem with the UN Security Council is that at times it can appear as if it and the General Assembly are on two different planets when it comes to decision making and cooperation. The UNSC is required to submit an annual report to the GA Plenary about its activities, but often timesoftentimes this lacks important details like how decisions were reached and the motivations behind said decisions. Keeping the GA better informed on Security Council politics and decision making could make the cooperation between the two much easier and facilitate more interaction between the two during said decision-making processes. Additionally, often timesoftentimes the working relationship between the UNSC and the GA can be strained, due to varying individual interests in both bodies. Creating dual initiatives between the two could both bring Council resolutions to the general body, and make GA initiatives binding due to the weight that the UNSC's decisions have.

Once decisions are made and resolutions are passed, the Security Council has yet another obstacle in successfully implementing enforcing its measures. Whether that be within its own operations, dealing with external threats, or with countries that wish not to comply with UN demands, the Council must improve its reputation and accountability when attempting to put its resolutions into action.

One aspect of UN implementation that is questionable at best is the lack of correlation between decision making/implementation of Peacekeeping forces and the countries that contribute them. Despite the obvious power structure within the Security Council, many of the forces that they deploy do not come from the P5



countries or other non-permanent members, but instead from a coalition of nations that regularly send their troops under the UN flag. However, these nations often complain that they do not have enough of a say when their own troops are being used, a problem that has existed for decades on end. These Troop Contributing Countries, or TCCs, often feel left out of decision-making meetings, military strategy, or even political affairs disputes relating to the operation of which they are sending troops to. Making sure the TCCs and the Council are on the same page could go a long way to make sure that the operations are as successful as they can be.

Despite the UN being seen as the highest forum for international cooperation, there are plenty of other international organizations or non-state actors that could be consulted on global issues, but are not. Many look to regional organizations, such as the European Union, African Union, or Organization of American States to cooperate on a higher level with the United Nations and the Security Council in general. Whether it is a seat on some sort of body or increased consultation, regional organizations could offer a level of expertise that could be key to UN operations worldwide. Additionally, the growing role of non-governmental organizations (NGOs) in global affairs is outpacing the UN's relationship with them. The list of UN-affiliated NGOs is small compared to the many groups in the world who make a difference on a grassroots level, and the cooperation between the UN and these small groups could be a game-changer. Having UN support could bolster the effectiveness of NGOs, and having consultation from conflict and poverty-stricken areas could be of assistance to UN forces trying to help these regions. If the UN Security Council is to succeed in this new era, it must look to groups and organizations of all shapes and sizes to succeed and implement its plans.

Another important problem that the UN has is being able to strictly enforce its decisions. Many international agreements and Security Council resolutions often come with sanctions or other forms of punishment against those who do not comply, but in some cases these forms of retribution are not enforced as much as they should be, allowing countries or individuals to slip through the cracks and go unpunished. Many countries in the past have desired to sharpen



its sanction system to get countries to comply more accurately, but this often brings up the ever-important question of state sovereignty, which is almost consistently at odds with the UN's efforts. For the Security Council to be more effective, countries will have to put their faith in it by figuring out a way to make sanctions more effective, but also abiding by them if sanctions are placed on them.



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