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THE LEAGUE OF NATIONS

Beginning of International Organizations

It is generally believed that the most of the International Organizations are 20th century phenomenon which started with the establishment of the **League of Nations in 1919**. This is mostly correct but the phenomenon actually started in late 19th century.

- ★ Some startling examples of a 19th century organization are the International Telecommunication Union (**ITU**), founded in **1865** (originally called the International Telegraph Union), and the Universal Postal Union, which dates back to 1874. Today, both of these organizations are part of the UN system.
- ★ The International Peace Conference held in The Hague in 1899 established the Permanent Court of Arbitration, which started its work in 1902. It was the first medium for settling international disputes between countries and a predecessor of the UN's International Court of Justice.

The carnage of World War I

The outbreak of World War I in August 1914 and the carnage that followed showed the limits of this mechanism by the Permanent Court of Arbitration. It also signalled the final end of an international system- the so-called **Concert of Europe**-that had saved the old Continent from the scourge of a major war since Napoleon's adventures a century earlier.

Between 1914 and 1918, Europe witnessed the worst killing spree of its already bloody history. Almost twenty million people perished in the World War-I. Empires (the Ottoman, the Austro-Hungarian, and,

temporarily, the Russian) collapsed during this period. New nations (such as Czechoslovakia Estonia, and Finland) were born. Radical revolutions were won (in Russia) and lost (in Germany). In short, a new world order emerged in these crucial years.

The utter devastation of the war led to support for the idea of an international organization. To many, an international organization with the power to settle disputes before they escalated into military conflicts appeared to be the answer.

The League of Nations-Beginnings

While the First World War was still underway, a number of governments and groups had already started developing plans to change the way international relations were carried out to try to prevent another such conflict.

United States President **Woodrow Wilson** and his adviser Colonel Edward M. House enthusiastically promoted the idea of the League as a means of avoiding any repetition of the bloodshed of the First World War, and the creation of the League was a centrepiece of **Wilson's Fourteen Points for Peace**. Specifically the final point stated: "*A general association of nations must be formed under specific covenants for the purpose of affording mutual guarantees of political independence and territorial integrity to great and small states alike.*"

Amid the carnage, in January 1918, President Woodrow Wilson outlined his idea of the League of Nations. But eventually, United States would fail to join the League of Nations; Wilson chaired the **1919 Versailles Peace Conference's** commission on the establishment of an international organization. Wilson, for one, had few reservations about the significance of the League.

In 1919, he made the following declaration in the joint session of the U.S. Congress:



"It is a definite guaranty of peace. It is a definite guaranty by word against aggression. It is a definite guaranty against the things which have just come near bringing the whole structure of civilization into ruin. Its purposes do not for a moment lie vague. Its purposes are declared, and its powers are unmistakable. It is not in contemplation that this should be merely a league to secure the peace of the world. It is a league which can be used for cooperation in any international matter."

The League of Nations (LON) was founded as a result of the **Paris Peace Conference** that ended the First World War. It was the first permanent international organization whose principal mission was to maintain world peace.

Its primary goals, as stated in its Covenant, included preventing war through **collective security and disarmament**, and settling international disputes through negotiation and arbitration. Other issues in this and related treaties included labour conditions, just treatment of native inhabitants, human and

drug trafficking, arms trade, global health, prisoners of war, and protection of minorities in Europe. At its greatest extent from 28 September 1934 to 23 February 1935, it had 58 members.



- ★ But the new League was given a devastating blow when the US Senate refused to ratify the Versailles Treaty. The country never joined the League, making the newly formed organization permanently handicapped.

Nevertheless, after being housed temporarily in London, the League commenced its operations in Geneva, Switzerland, in 1920. It soon scored some limited successes. In the early 1920s, the League settled territorial disputes between Finland and Sweden over the Aland Islands, between Germany and Poland over Upper Silesia, and between Iraq and Turkey over the city of Mosul. The League combated the international opium trade and alleviated refugee crises in Russia with some success.

The League of Nations acted as the umbrella organization for such agencies as the International Labor Organization (ILO) and the Permanent Court of International Justice (predecessor of today's International Court of Justice, ICJ). It also provided a model for the future United Nations.

Failure of League of Nations

But the League was a victor's organization. It was dominated by France and Great Britain, with Japan and Italy as the other two permanent members of the League Council (the rough equivalent to the UN Security Council and the highest authority on matters of international security). The twenty-eight founding members, represented in the General Assembly, were mostly from Europe and Latin America. Thus we see that League of Nations was an **expression of Eurocentric world** and this was also because of the fact that virtually all of Africa, Asia, and the Middle East were controlled by European imperial powers at that time.

- ★ The League of Nations is also known for having established the so-called **mandate system** to prepare the "natives" of the different regions for self-government and independence. The governments that received the mandates for example, Britain in Palestine and France in Lebanon and Syria-were granted broad authority regarding such preparations. They took their time. **Independence** for most European mandates would have to wait until after 1945 and would be accompanied by much violence, instability, and, in the long run, chronic insecurity.
- ★ Shortsighted though they were, the mandates were a time bomb that would explode only after the League had ceased to exist. It was the League's failure to prevent the outbreak of World War II that caused its demise.

The World War II & Failure of League

Although the absence of the United States was a significant factor in rendering the League of Nations ineffectual, the organization's importance was further minimized by the lack of respect it commanded among other great powers.

- ★ Germany and the Soviet Union were members, but only briefly: **Germany** joined in 1926, only to exit the League after the Nazis came to power in 1933.
- ★ In 1933 the Soviet Union entered the League. Six years later, after its attack on **Finland** in late 1939, the **USSR** became the only League member ever to be expelled.
- ★ By that time the League of Nations had seen the departure of two of its founding members.

- ★ Then, a time came when the League of Nations criticized the Japan's occupation of Manchuria. So Japan left the club in 1933.
- ★ In 1935-36 Italy was equally dismissive of its membership obligations after its successful attack and occupation of Ethiopia, one of the three African members of the League (the others were Liberia and South Africa).

The question is- What was the reason that LON failed so many aggressive actions by the member countries? We should here note that the global economic crisis of the 1930s & the Great Depression certainly curbed the enthusiasm of others-France and Britain in particular-to risk lives and resources to fight distant wars that did not have an immediate bearing on their national security. Thus, they turned to appeasement, a policy that ultimately failed.

During the 1938 Munich Conference, Britain and France acquiesced in the dismantlement of Czechoslovakia by agreeing to the addition of the Sudetenland to Hitler's Reich. If that act had been justified by the existence of a large German-speaking population in the ceded parts of Czechoslovakia, there might have been no excuse for Germany's later occupation of the remainder of Czechoslovakia. When Germany finally attacked Poland in September 1939, after concluding a sinister pact with the Soviet Union a month earlier, the high hopes placed upon the League only two decades earlier were completely crushed. Then, the League of Nations was further handicapped by its inability to apply sufficient pressure in clear-cut cases of aggression.

According to its covenant, the League could introduce verbal or economic sanctions against an aggressor and, if these methods failed, intervene militarily. In theory these steps were logical and reasonable. But while verbal sanctions could not deter an aggressor that was determined and strong, economic sanctions required international collaboration. As the League had no authority beyond its limited membership, a country suffering from the pressure of economic sanctions could still trade with non-members. Especially during the international economic crisis of the 1930s, willing trading partners were not hard to find. Because the League had no army of its own, military intervention required member countries to furnish the necessary troops. In practice this meant French or British troops, but neither country was interested in getting involved in potentially costly conflicts in Africa or Asia.

When the League expelled the Soviet Union in 1939, it was almost clear that League had failed in its overall objective. It had not become, as Wilson had hoped, a "definite guaranty for peace. The onset of World War II made it even more evident that some form of international organization was needed to safeguard against yet another descent to Armageddon in the future. One goal was paramount: a repetition of the League experience could not be allowed.

UNITED NATIONS

United Nations: The beginnings

The term "United Nations" was first officially used on 1 January 1942, when 26 governments signed the Atlantic Charter, pledging to continue the war effort.

So, the first "**Declaration by United Nations**" dates back to **January 1, 1942**, when representatives of twenty-six nations pledged their governments to continue fighting together to defeat the Axis powers and to obtain a "just" peace.

Thus, unlike the League, the **UN started off as an alliance** that **came into being** soon after the **American entry** to the war, following the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor and Germany's declaration of war on the **United States in December 1941**. World War II became a truly global conflict, pitting the so-called Grand Alliance (headed by the United States, Great Britain, and the Soviet Union) against the Axis powers (Germany, Italy, and Japan).

The estimated civilian and military death tolls in the deadly WWII ran as high as 72 million. The deeper impact of the war on global and national economies, as well as on political structures around the globe, was profound. European empires collapsed either during or as a result of the war.

The United States and the Soviet Union emerged as the strongest nations on earth. Germany and Japan were occupied and militarily emasculated. In sum, the world was transformed and now there was a bipolar world order emerging very slowly. But the UN was created, in part, to manage the transformation of the World during the 1940s.

The main allies of the World War II are also known as **Big Three**. The big three included the Soviet Union, the United States, and the United Kingdom. The First World War II conference between these Big Three was the **Tehran Conference** that was held from November 28 to December 1, **1943**. **It was codenamed Eureka**. After this conference, the **Yalta Conference** followed on February 4 to 11, **1945** at Yalta in Crimea. So it was known as **Crimea Conference and was codenamed the Argonaut Conference**. *The participants of these conference were **Winston Churchill, Franklin D. Roosevelt and Joseph Stalin***. It was this conference in which the **reorganization of Europe** after the war was to be decided. Germany was made to accept that it would undergo demilitarization and denazification.

In the Yalta Conference, it was also decided that fight against the Empire of Japan to be concluded within 90 days after the defeat of Germany. The important conference after the Yalta Conference was the **Potsdam Conference**, which was held from July to August **1945**. In this conference, **Clement Attlee** was there as PM in waiting and as soon as the Labour Party's got victory over the Conservatives, Attlee had replaced Churchill as Prime Minister of England. From US side, it was President **Henry S Truman** to participate in the conference. The major outcome of this conference was the **"Potsdam Declaration"** which asked **Japan to Surrender**.

As mentioned above, akin to the League of Nations, **UN was an initiative of the American president**. This time it was **Franklin D. Roosevelt**, whose administration pushed for the creation of the UN during the last years of the war. In **August 1944** delegates from China, the Soviet Union, the United Kingdom, and the United States met at **Dumbarton Oaks**, a private estate in Washington, D.C., to draw up the **basic blueprint** for the new international organization. This was known as the **Dumbarton Oaks conference**. It was held from August 21, **1944** through October 7, 1944 at Washington DC and in this conference the text of the UN Charter was discussed. By October the outline for the UN Charter was ready. After the surrender of Germany in April of the following year (and the death of Roosevelt in the same month), the charter was signed in San Francisco

on June 26, 1945. Japan was put on its knee by Atomic Bombs. It is said that Truman was not aware of the bombs prior to death of Roosevelt. President Truman ordered the dropping of an atomic bomb on Hiroshima on August 6, 1945. On **October 24, 1945**, with the Pacific war also concluded, the United Nations officially came into existence.

Quick Facts about United Nations

★ United Nations Charter signed	: 26 June 1945
★ Entry into force of Charter	: 24 October 1945
★ Headquarters	: International territory in New York City, USA
★ Official languages	: Arabic, Chinese, English, French, Russian, Spanish
★ Number of Members	: 193
★ Secretary-General	: Ban Ki-moon
★ Deputy Secretary-General	: Asha-Rose Migiro
★ General Assembly President	: Nassir Abdulaziz Al-Nasser
★ Security Council President	: Vitaly Churkin

Basic Issues of the UN Charter

The basic issue with which the drafters of the UN Charter dealt was in essence unchanged from the one Wilson and his European counterparts had faced in 1918-19. They wanted to create an organization that would, indeed, be a definite guaranty of peace. There was plenty of scepticism, understandably so given the fate of the League's lofty goals. And, as earlier, the basic dilemmas and conundrums had not changed: How to **balance national sovereignty and international idealism**? How to reconcile the imbalances between countries over power and influence, over resources and commitments? How, in other words, could one draft a charter that would recognize and effectively deal with the sheer fact that some countries were, in effect, more equal than others? How could one make sure that some countries would not simply walk out-as Japan had done in the 1930s-when it did not like the decisions of the UN?

Four major principles on which UN was established

'*We the peoples of the United Nations*,' begins the United Nations Charter. It goes on to list four principal aims for the global organization. First, the UN was to **safeguard peace and security** in order "to save succeeding generations from the scourge of war." Second, it was "to reaffirm **faith in fundamental human rights**." Third, the UN was to uphold **respect for international law**. And fourth, the new organization pledged "to promote social progress and better standards of life." In the summer of 1945, the founders of the United Nations thus vowed to make the world a better place.

Principles mentioned in UN Charter

- ❖ The organization is based on the **sovereign equality** of all its members
- ❖ All members, in order to ensure to all of them the rights and benefits resulting from membership, shall fulfil in good faith the obligations assumed by them in the accordance with the present charter.
- ❖ All members shall **settle their inter-national disputes by peaceful means** in such as manner that international peace and security and justice are into endangered.

- ❖ All members shall refrain in their international relations from the threat or use of force against the territorial integrity or political independence of any state, or in any other manner inconsistent with the purposes of the United Nations.
- ❖ All members shall give the United Nations every assistance in any action it takes in accordance with the present Charter, and shall refrain from giving assistance to any state against which the United Nations is taking preventive or enforcement action.
- ❖ The Organization shall ensure that states which are not members of the United Nations act in accordance with these principles as far as may be necessary for the maintenance of international peace and security.
- ❖ Nothing contained in the present Charter authorizes the United Nations to intervene in matters which are essentially within the domestic jurisdiction of any state, nor shall such matters be referred to the Organization for settlement under the present Charter.

The simple mechanism-Veto Power

The men who drafted the UN Charter addressed this issue with a simple mechanism: the veto power. In other words, the Charter gave superior powers to five of the founding members of the UN—China, France, Great Britain, the United States, and the USSR—that allowed them to prevent any decisions that they viewed inimical to their interests from being made. They became the Permanent Five of the UN Security Council, countries that would have both a seat in the most important body of the new organization as long as it existed. This strategy, it was thought, would provide the key countries, with an incentive to remain part of the UN. It also provided them with the means of neutralizing the world organization. Though its founders were keenly aware of the failures of the League of Nations, most of its ideals and many structural elements were at the core of the UN Charter. Most evidently, the UN Charter and the League Covenant cited the promotion of international security and the peaceful settlement of disputes as key goals. But the UN Charter was different in some important aspects.

Headquarters of United Nations

The headquarters of the United Nations is located in the **Turtle Bay** neighbourhood of Manhattan, on spacious grounds overlooking the East River in a complex in New York City.

- ✍ The complex has served as the official headquarters of the United Nations since its completion in 1952. Thus Turtle Bay is also sometimes called UN.

The United Nations has three additional, subsidiary, regional headquarters or headquarters districts. These are located in Geneva (Switzerland), Vienna (Austria), and Nairobi (Kenya). These adjunct offices help represent UN interests, facilitate diplomatic activities, and enjoy certain extraterritorial privileges, but only the main headquarters in New York contains the seats of the principal organs of the UN, including the General Assembly and Security Council.

All 15 of the United Nations' specialized agencies are located outside New York at these other headquarters or in other cities.

✎ The lead architect for the headquarters building was the real estate firm of Wallace Harrison.

UN as a Legal Personality

Please note that United Nations is NOT a State. Shortly after its establishment the UN sought recognition as an international legal person due to the case of Reparations for Injuries Suffered in the Service of the United Nations with the advisory opinion delivered by the International Court of Justice (ICJ). The question arose whether the United Nations, as an organisation, had "the capacity to bring an international claim against a government regarding injuries that the organisation alleged had been caused by that state." The Court stated: *the Organization was intended to exercise and enjoy, and is in fact exercising and enjoying functions and rights, which can only be explained on the basis of the possession of a large measure of international personality and the capacity to operate upon an international plane .*

Thus, UNO is an international person. legal personality and rights and duties are NOT the same as those of a State. Being a Legal Person, UNO is a subject of international law and capable of possessing international rights and duties, and that it has capacity to maintain its rights by bringing international claims.

United Nations System

United Nations had six principal organs previously.

- General Assembly (the main deliberative assembly);
- Security Council (for deciding certain resolutions for peace and security);
- Economic and Social Council (for assisting in promoting international economic and social cooperation and development);
- Secretariat (for providing studies, information, and facilities needed by the UN);
- International Court of Justice (the primary judicial organ);
- United Nations Trusteeship Council

However today, United Nations' system is based on five principal organs. The 6th organ Trusteeship Council suspended operations in 1994, upon the independence of Palau, the last remaining UN trustee territory.

- ★ Four of the five principal organs are located at the main United Nations Headquarters located on international territory in New York City.
- ★ The International Court of Justice is located in The Hague, while other major agencies are based in the UN offices at Geneva, Vienna, and Nairobi. Other UN institutions are located throughout the world.
- ★ Other prominent UN System agencies include the World Health Organization (WHO), the World Food Programme (WFP) and United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF).

Languages of the United Nations

The six official languages of the United Nations, used in intergovernmental meetings and documents, are Arabic, Chinese, English, French, Russian, and Spanish. There are also two working languages in the secretariat viz. English and French. *Four of the official languages are the national languages of the permanent*

members of the Security Council (the United Kingdom and the United States share English as a de facto official language); Spanish and Arabic are the languages of the two largest blocs of official languages outside of the permanent members (Spanish being official in 20 countries, Arabic in 26). Five of the official languages were chosen when the UN was founded; Arabic was added later in 1973. The United Nations Editorial Manual states that the standard for English language documents is British usage and Oxford spelling, the Chinese writing standard is Simplified Chinese. This replaced Traditional Chinese in 1971 when the UN representation of China was changed from the Republic of China to the People's Republic of China.

Documents of United Nations

United Nations documents have a symbol, which serves as a unique identifier. Each symbol is composed of letters and numbers, which indicates the organ to which the document is being submitted or the organ that is issuing the document. For example, all UNGA documents start with A/. All language versions of a document carry the same symbol.

UN General Assembly (UNGA)

This is the main deliberative assembly of the United Nations. It is composed of all members of United Nations. It meets in regular yearly sessions under a president elected from among the member states. Over a two-week period at the start of each session, all members have the opportunity to address the assembly. Traditionally, the Secretary-General makes the first statement, followed by the president of the assembly. The first session was convened on 10 January 1946 in the Westminster Central Hall in London and included representatives of 51 nations.


Voting and Resolutions at UNGA

- ★ When the General Assembly votes on important questions, a two-thirds majority of those present and voting is required. Examples of important questions include: recommendations on peace and security; election of members to organs; admission, suspension, and expulsion of members; and, budgetary matters.
- ★ All other questions are decided by majority vote.
- ★ Each member country has one vote. Apart from approval of budgetary matters, resolutions are not binding on the members.
- ★ The Assembly may make recommendations on any matters within the scope of the UN, except matters of peace and security that are under Security Council consideration.

United Nations Security Council (UNCA)

The Security Council is charged with maintaining peace and security among countries.

- ✍ Please note that while other organs of the United Nations can only make 'recommendations' to member governments, the Security Council has the power to make binding decisions that member governments have agreed to carry out, under the terms of Charter Article 25.
- ✍ The decisions of the Council are known as United Nations Security Council resolutions.
- ✍ Thus while the UNGA resolutions are generally non-binding, UNCA resolutions are binding as well as non-binding. This has been discussed in this module.

The Security Council is made up of 15 member states, consisting of 5 permanent members—China, France, Russia, the United Kingdom and the United States—and 10 non-permanent members, currently Bosnia and Herzegovina, Brazil, Colombia, Gabon, Germany, India, Lebanon, Nigeria, Portugal, South Africa. The five permanent members hold veto power *over substantive but not procedural resolutions* allowing a permanent member to block adoption but *not to block the debate of a resolution unacceptable* to it. The ten temporary seats are held for two-year terms with member states voted in by the General Assembly on a regional basis. The presidency of the Security Council is rotated alphabetically each month. 

United Nations Secretariat

The United Nations Secretariat is headed by the Secretary-General, assisted by a staff of international civil servants worldwide.

- ✎ It provides studies, information, and facilities needed by United Nations bodies for their meetings. It also carries out tasks as directed by the UN Security Council, the UN General Assembly, the UN Economic and Social Council, and other UN bodies. The United Nations Charter provides that the staff be chosen by application of the "highest standards of efficiency, competence, and integrity," with due regard for the importance of recruiting on a wide geographical basis.

The Secretary-General's duties include helping resolve international disputes, administering peacekeeping operations, organizing international conferences, gathering information on the implementation of Security Council decisions, and consulting with member governments regarding various initiatives.

Secretary-General of the United Nations

The UN's most visible public figure is the Secretary-General, currently Ban Ki-moon of South Korea, who is in the office since 2007. He replaced Kofi Annan and was re-elected for a second term recently. The second term would end in 2016.

Secretary-General acts as the de facto spokesperson and leader of the UN. Envisioned by Franklin D. Roosevelt as a "world moderator", the position is defined in the UN Charter as the organization's "chief administrative officer", but the Charter also states that the Secretary-General can bring to the Security Council's attention "any matter which in his opinion may threaten the maintenance of international peace and security", giving the position greater scope for action on the world stage. The position has evolved into a dual role of an administrator of the UN organization, and a diplomat and mediator addressing disputes between member states and finding consensus to global issues.

Appointment of Secretary General

The Secretary-General is appointed by the General Assembly, after being recommended by the Security Council, where the permanent members have veto power. The General Assembly can theoretically override the Security Council's recommendation if a majority vote is not achieved, although this has not happened so far. There are no specific criteria for the post, but over the years, it has become accepted that the post shall be held for one or two terms of five years, that the post shall be appointed on the basis of geographical rotation, and that the Secretary-General shall not originate from one of the five permanent Security Council member states.

International Court of Justice

The International Court of Justice (ICJ), located in The Hague, Netherlands, is the primary judicial organ of the United Nations. Established in 1945 by the United Nations Charter, the Court began work in 1946 as the successor to the Permanent Court of International Justice.

- ✎ The Statute of the International Court of Justice, similar to that of its predecessor, is the main constitutional document constituting and regulating the Court.
- ✎ It is based in the Peace Palace in The Hague, Netherlands, sharing the building with The Hague Academy of International Law, a private centre for the study of international law.
- ✎ Several of the Court's current judges are either alumni or former faculty members of the Academy.
- ✎ Its purpose is to adjudicate disputes among states. The court has heard cases related to war crimes, illegal state interference and ethnic cleansing, among others, and continues to hear cases.

International Criminal Court

- ✎ The International Criminal Court (ICC), it came into being on 1 July 2002 with the entering into force of the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court which was adopted on 17 July 1998. It is the first permanent international court charged with trying those who commit the most serious crimes under international law, including war crimes, genocide, crimes against humanity and the crime of aggression (although it cannot exercise jurisdiction over this crime prior to 2017).
- ✎ The ICC is functionally independent of the UN in terms of personnel and financing, but some meetings of the ICC governing body, the Assembly of the States Parties to the Rome Statute, are held at the United Nations.
- ✎ There is a "relationship agreement" between the ICC and the UN that governs how the two institutions regard each other legally.

United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC)

The Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) assists the General Assembly in promoting international economic and social cooperation and development.

- ✎ ECOSOC has 54 members, all of which are elected by the General Assembly for a three-year term. The president is elected for a one-year term and chosen amongst the small or middle powers represented on ECOSOC.

ECOSOC meets once a year in July for a four-week session. Since 1998, it has held another meeting each April with finance ministers heading key committees of the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (IMF).

- ✎ Viewed separate from the specialized bodies it coordinates, ECOSOC's functions include information gathering, advising member nations, and making recommendations. In addition, ECOSOC is well-positioned to provide policy coherence and coordinate the overlapping functions of the UN's subsidiary bodies and it is in these roles that it is most active.

Specialized institutions of United Nations

Many UN organizations and agencies exist to work on particular issues. Some of the most well-known agencies are the International Atomic Energy Agency, the Food and Agriculture Organization, UNESCO (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization), the World Bank and the World Health Organization. It is through these agencies that the UN performs most of its humanitarian work. Examples include mass vaccination programmes (through the WHO), the avoidance of famine and malnutrition (through the work of the WFP) and the protection of vulnerable and displaced people (for example, by the UNHCR). The United Nations Charter stipulates that each primary organ of the UN can establish various specialized agencies to fulfil its duties.

The following table lists the UN specialized institutions

No	Acronyms	Agency	Headquarters	Current Head	Established in
1	FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization	Rome, Italy	Jacques Diouf	1945
2	IAEA	International Atomic Energy Agency	Vienna, Austria	Yukiya Amano	1957
3	ICAO	International Civil Aviation Organization	Montreal, Canada	Raymond Benjamin	1947
4	IFAD	International Fund for Agricultural Development	Rome, Italy	Kanayo F. Nwanze	1977
5	ILO	International Labour Organization	Geneva, Switzerland	Juan Somavía	1946 (1919)
6	IMO	International Maritime Organization	London, United Kingdom	Efthimios E. Mitropoulos	1948
7	IMF	International Monetary Fund	Washington, D.C., USA	Christine Lagarde	1945 (1944)
8	ITU	International Telecommunication Union	Geneva, Switzerland	Hamadoun Touré	1947 (1865)
9	UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization	Paris, France	Irina Bokova	1946
10	UNIDO	United Nations Industrial Development Organization	Vienna, Austria	Kandeh Yumkella	1967
11	UPU	Universal Postal Union	Bern, Switzerland	Edouard Dayan	1947 (1874)
12	WB	World Bank	Washington, D.C., USA	Robert B. Zoellick	1945 (1944)
13	WFP	World Food Programme	Rome, Italy	Josette Sheeran	1963
14	WHO	World Health Organization	Geneva, Switzerland	Margaret Chan	1948
15	WIPO	World Intellectual Property Organization	Geneva, Switzerland	Francis Gurry	1974
16	WMO	World Meteorological Organization	Geneva, Switzerland	Alexander Bedritsky	1950 (1873)
17	UNWTO	World Tourism Organization	Madrid, Spain	Taleb Rifai	1974

Members of United Nations

- ✍ With the addition of South Sudan on 14 July 2011, there are currently 193 United Nations member states, including all fully recognized independent states apart from Vatican City.
- ✍ The Holy See, which holds sovereignty over the state of Vatican City, is a permanent observer in United Nations.
- ✍ Antarctica has no government; political control of Western Sahara is in dispute; and the territories administered by the Republic of China (Taiwan) and Kosovo are considered by the UN to be provinces of the People's Republic of China and Republic of Serbia, respectively.

UNITED NATIONS SECURITY COUNCIL

United Nations Security Council (UNSC) is a principal organ of the United Nations and is charged with the maintenance of international peace and security. UN Security Council Chamber in New York is also known as the *Norwegian Room*. ⇐

Powers of UNSC

The Powers of the UNSC are outlined in the United Nations Charter. These include:

- ★ Establishment of **peacekeeping** operations
- ★ Establishment of international **sanctions**
- ★ The authorization of **military** action.

The powers of UNSC are exercised through **United Nations Security Council resolutions**, which are **enforceable in nature, comprising both legally binding and legally non-binding nature.**

Permanent Members or P5 Countries

Basic structure of the UNSC is set out in **Chapter V** of the UN Charter. There are 15 members of the Security Council, consisting of five veto-wielding permanent members (China, France, Russia, the United Kingdom, and the United States) and 10 elected non-permanent members with two-year terms.

- ★ Security Council members **must always be present** at UN headquarters in New York so that the Security Council can meet at any time. This requirement of the United Nations Charter was adopted to **address a weakness of the League of Nations since that organization was often unable to respond quickly to a crisis.**

The Security Council's five permanent members have the power to veto any **substantive resolution**. They are known as P5 Countries. Out of them US, UK and France are the main victorious powers of World War II.

- ★ The China's seat was originally filled by the Republic of China, but due to the stalemate of the Chinese Civil War in 1949, there have been two states claiming to represent China since then, and both officially claim each other's territory. In 1971, the People's Republic of China was awarded China's seat in the United Nations by UN General Assembly Resolution 2758, and the Republic of China (Taiwan) soon lost membership in all UN organizations.
- ★ Russia, being the legal successor state to the Soviet Union after the latter's collapse in 1991, acquired the originally-Soviet seat, including the Soviet Union's former representation in the Security Council.

Please note that **five permanent members** of the Security Council are also **the only countries recognized as nuclear-weapon states (NWS) under the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty.** However, membership of the UN Security Council is not dependent on nuclear weapons status.

Non-permanent Members of UNSC

The 10 Non-permanent members of UNSC are elected by the United Nations General Assembly for two-year terms starting on 1 January, with five replaced each year.

To be approved, a candidate **must be receive at least 2/3 of all votes cast for that seat**, which **can result in deadlock** if there are two roughly evenly matched candidates; in 1979, a standoff between Cuba and Colombia only ended after three months and 154 rounds of voting, when both withdrew in favor of Mexico as a compromise candidate.

How the Non-members participate in activities of UNSC?

A country which is member of the UN, but neither permanent nor non-permanent member of the Security Council, may participate in Security Council discussions in matters by which the Council agrees that the

country's interests are particularly affected. In recent years, the Council has allowed many countries to take part in its discussions. Non-members are routinely invited to take part when they are parties to disputes being considered.

How President of the UNSC is selected?

The Presidency rotates monthly in alphabetical order of the Security Council member nations' names in English. This means that a President of UNSC is elected for a month's period. The monthly rotation takes place in alphabetical order of the member states' official United Nations names in English. From India B N Rau served as the President of the United Nations Security Council in 1950.

- ★ In December 1972, Samar Sen served as president of UNSC. In September 1977, Rikhi Jaipal, in 1985 Natarajan Krishnan, in October 1991 Chinmaya Rajaninath Gharekhan and in 2011 Hardeep Singh Puri have served the same role.

Veto Power of the P5 Nations

Under Article 27 of the UN Charter, Security Council decisions on all substantive matters require the affirmative votes of nine members. A negative vote, or veto, also known as the rule of "great power unanimity", by a permanent member prevents adoption of a proposal, even if it has received the required number of affirmative votes (9). Abstention is not regarded as a veto despite the wording of the Charter. Since the Security Council's inception, China (ROC/PRC) has used its veto 6 times; France 18 times; Russia/USSR 123 times; the United Kingdom 32 times; and the United States 82 times. Please note that procedural matters are not subject to a veto, so the veto cannot be used to avoid discussion of an issue. The same holds for certain decisions that directly regard permanent members.

How UNSC works?

The chapter VI & VII of the UN Charter deals with the mechanism of working of the UNSC. The UN Charter authorizes the Security Council to take action on behalf of the members, and to make decisions and recommendations.

- ★ Please note that the Charter mentions neither binding nor non-binding resolutions. Please read the following carefully.

Under Chapter VI, which is titled "Pacific Settlement of Disputes", the UNSC may investigate any dispute, or any situation which might lead to international friction or give rise to a dispute. If the UNSC determines that the situation might endanger international peace and security, it would first recommend appropriate procedures or methods of adjustment. These recommendations are not binding on UN members.

Under Chapter VII which titles "Action with Respect to Threats to the Peace, Breaches of the Peace, and Acts of Aggression" if it determines that there is threats to the peace, breaches of the peace, or acts of aggression, then Council is not limited to recommendations but may take action, including the use of armed force "to maintain or restore international peace and security". This was the legal basis for UN armed action in Korea in 1950 during the Korean War and the use of coalition forces in Iraq and Kuwait in 1991 and Libya in 2011. Decisions taken under Chapter Seven, such as economic sanctions, are binding on UN members. The

UNSC may also call upon other member nations to completely or partially interrupt economic relations as well as sea, air, postal, and radio communications, or to sever diplomatic relations.

- ★ Thus, Security Council Resolutions are **legally binding** if they are made **under Chapter VII** (Action with Respect to Threats to the Peace, Breaches of the Peace, and Acts of Aggression) of the Charter.

However, there is a general agreement among legal scholars outside the organization that resolutions made under Chapter VI (Pacific Settlement of Disputes) are not legally binding. This is **because they have no enforcement mechanism**, except self-help, they may not be legally binding. However it (binding or non-binding nature) has been always a subject of discussion. In one document, UNSC said explicitly that no UNSC resolution is Non-enforceable.

Reforms in the United Nations Security Council

There are **5 issues** pertaining to the reforms in the United Nations Security Council. They are as follows:

- ⇒ Categories of membership
- ⇒ The question of the veto held by the five permanent members
- ⇒ Regional representation
- ⇒ The size of an enlarged Council and its working methods
- ⇒ Security Council-General Assembly relationship.

We should note that **reforms** in the United Nations security council require the votes of at least **two-thirds of UN member states** and that of **all the permanent members of the UNSC**, enjoying the veto right.

Why reforms are demanded for UNSC?

The original design of the United Nations was a response to the desire to prevent any more wars like those that occurred in the first half of the 20th century. To a large extent they **reflected the situation at that time** and in the domain of peace and security, **the victors of the World War II obtained a privileged position** within the institutional design of the United Nations. The design of the UN system has a number of shortcomings, looking at the **plethora of changes in the world order in last 60 years**. The **retracted number** of permanent members of the Security Council and the UN body with binding authority **weakens** the chances of the UN having **greater legitimacy and enforcement capacity**, in particular with regard to its role in **maintaining world peace and security**.

Over time, some of the democratic deficiencies and imbalances of the system have been highlighted by the **corrosion of the original mandates** governing certain organizations. The **UNGA**, which was very active in the 1960s and 1970s, when the Security Council was paralysed due to rivalry between the superpowers, began to play an **increasingly minor role after the late 1980s** when, **with the end of the Cold War, the UNSC was reactivated**.

The war in Iraq and other **serious recent events** of worldwide concern have revealed the **divorce between certain decisions at the level of world politics** and the **opinion of citizens around the world**, as well as the inability of the nation states to find peaceful, collective and enduring solutions to the grave problems affecting all of us. The international institutions must substantially improve their capacity for conflict prevention and the maintenance of peace. This means that the organizations responsible for the domains of

peace and security should collect all viewpoints in a balanced fashion, accept them universally as legitimate, as well as being empowered to implement their decisions. Global justice should be empowered in order to contribute towards eradicating international impunity, not only with respect to criminal law, but also in the civil, economic, social and environmental spheres. To make all this possible, steps must be taken towards a worldwide juridical framework that would ensure the proper application of the present system of international treaties, reinforce the already-existing international institutions, and create the necessary institutions in other spheres with all the appropriate and necessary mechanisms.

An Agenda for Peace – By Boutros Ghali

Over the decades of existence of United Nations, the imbalance between the number of seats in the Security Council and the total number of member States has become evident and the only significant reform of the Security Council came to pass in 1965 after the ratification of two thirds of the membership, including the five permanent members of the Security Council (that have a veto right on Charter changes). The reform included an increase of the non-permanent membership from six to 10 members. With Boutros Boutros-Ghali elected as Secretary-General in 1992, the reform discussions of the UN Security Council were launched again as he started his new term with the first-ever summit of the Security Council and thereafter published "An Agenda for Peace". His motivation was to restructure the composition and anachronistic procedures of the UN organ recognizing the changed world.

The G4 Bloc

By 1992, Germany and Japan had become the second and third largest contributor to the United Nations and started to demand a permanent seat. Also Brazil (fifth largest country in terms of territory) and India (second largest country in terms of population) as the most powerful countries within their regional groups and key players within their regions saw themselves with a permanent seat. This group of four countries formed an interest group later known as the G4.

The Coffee Club

On the other hand their regional rivals were opposed to the G4 becoming permanent members with a veto power. They favoured the expansion of the non-permanent category of seats with members to be elected on a regional basis. Italy, Spain, Argentina, Canada, Mexico, South Korea and Pakistan started to form an interest group, known as the "Coffee Club" and later "Uniting for Consensus".

Simultaneously, the African Group started to demand two permanent seats for themselves, on the basis of historical injustices and the fact that a large part of the Council's agenda is concentrated on the continent. Those two seats would be permanent African seats that rotate between African countries chosen by the African group.

The existing permanent members, each holding the right of veto on Security Council reform, announced their positions reluctantly. The United States supported the permanent membership of Japan and India and a small number of additional non-permanent members. The United Kingdom and France essentially supported the G4 position, with the expansion of permanent and non-permanent members and the accession of German, Brazil, India and Japan to permanent member status, as well as an increase the

presence by African countries on the Council. China supported the stronger representation of developing countries, voicing support for the Republic of India. Russia, India's long time friend and ally has also endorsed the fast growing power's candidature to assume a seat of a permanent member on the Security Council.

In Larger Freedom- By Kofi Annan

On March 21, 2005, the then UN Secretary General Kofi Annan called on the UN to reach a consensus on expanding the council to 24 members, in a plan referred to as "**In Larger Freedom**". He gave two alternatives for implementation, but did not specify which proposal he preferred. The two options mentioned by Annan are referred to as Plan A and Plan B:

- ↳ Plan A calls for creating six new permanent members, plus three new nonpermanent 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.

India's stand

- ❖ India which joined the UN in 1945 is the **third largest and a regular constant contributor of troops** to United Nations Peacekeeping missions.
- ❖ India has been elected seven times to the UN Security Council. Most recently India has been elected to serve in UNSC from 2011 to 2012 as it had received 187 of the 190 total votes.
- ❖ India is one of the **main contributors to the UN regular budget**.
- ❖ The country currently has the world's second largest population and is the world's largest liberal democracy.
- ❖ It is also the world's tenth largest economy and fourth largest in terms of purchasing power parity
- ❖ Currently, India maintains the world's third largest active armed force and is a **nuclear weapon state**.
- ❖ India is perhaps the only candidate who's bid has been almost openly backed by all the P5 nations, with China, Russia, United States of America, United Kingdom and France, along with various other nations endorsing the countries aspirations.
- ❖ India was elected to the Security Council as a non-permanent member in 2011, with an overwhelming majority of 98% and only 3 out of the 190 countries voting did not vote for India.
- ❖ India's bid for permanent member of UNSC is backed by permanent members namely France, Russia, United Kingdom and United States, although the United States initially opposed India's candidacy on grounds of nuclear proliferation, as India has acquired nuclear weapons and not signed the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty.
- ❖ On April 15, 2011, China officially expressed its support for an increased Indian role at the United Nations, without explicitly endorsing India's Security Council ambitions. More than 50 other countries have explicitly and openly supported India for UNSC permanent seat.
- ❖ **Organisations** that also support India's candidacy for permanent member of UNSC are - **United Arab Emirates** and the **African Union**. Pakistan opposes India's candidacy.

UNITED NATIONS GENERAL ASSEMBLY

United Nations General Assembly is the **main deliberative organ** of the UN and is composed of the **representatives of all member states**. Its current head is Abdulaziz Al-Nasser and current Deputy President is Mohammad Khazaei.

- ★ UNGA is the only principal organ of UN system in which all member nations have equal representation.
- ★ Its composition, functions, powers, voting, and procedures are set out in **Chapter IV** of the United Nations Charter.

Powers of UNGA

Its powers are

1. To **oversee the budget** of the United Nations
2. **Appoint** the non-permanent members to the Security Council
3. Receive **reports** from other parts of the United Nations
4. Make **recommendations** in the form of General Assembly Resolutions.

The General Assembly meets under its president or Secretary-General in regular yearly sessions the main part of which lasts from September to December and resumed part from January until all issues are addressed. It can also reconvene for special and emergency special sessions.

Members of UNGA

The members are 193, of which more than two-thirds are developing countries. Because of their numbers, **developing countries** are often **able to determine the agenda of the** Assembly (using coordinating groups like the **G77**), the character of its debates, and the nature of its decisions. For many developing countries, the UN is the source of much of their diplomatic influence and the principal outlet for their foreign relations initiatives.

UNGA Resolutions

Except approval of budgetary matters, including adoption of a scale of assessment, Assembly resolutions are not binding on the members. The Assembly may make recommendations on any matters within the scope of the UN, except matters of peace and security under Security Council consideration. The **one state, one vote** power structure theoretically **allows states comprising just eight percent of the world population to pass a resolution by a two-thirds vote**. This has been a **subject of concern** for many countries.

The **resolutions are put forth by sponsoring states**. These are generally statements symbolizing the sense of the international community about an array of world issues. Most General Assembly resolutions are not enforceable as a legal or practical matter, **because the General Assembly lacks enforcement powers** with respect to most issues. The General Assembly has **authority to make final decisions** in some areas such as the United Nations budget.

- ★ A United Nations General Assembly Resolution is voted on by all member states of the United Nations in the General Assembly.

- ★ General Assembly resolutions usually require a simple majority (50% of all votes plus one) to pass. However, if the General Assembly determines that the issue is an "important question" by a simple majority vote, then a two-thirds majority is required; "important questions" are those that deal significantly with maintenance of international peace and security, admission of new members to the United Nations, suspension of the rights and privileges of membership, expulsion of members, operation of the trusteeship system, or budgetary questions.
- ★ General Assembly resolutions are generally non-binding towards member states, internal resolutions may be binding on the operation of the General Assembly itself, for example with regard to budgetary and procedural matters.

Numbering of UNGA Resolutions

- ★ From the First to the Thirtieth General Assembly sessions, all General Assembly resolutions were numbered consecutively, with the resolution number followed by the session number in Roman numbers (for example, Resolution 1514 (XV), which was the 1514th numbered resolution adopted by the Assembly, and was adopted at the Fifteenth Regular Session (1960)).
- ★ Beginning in the Thirty-First Session, resolutions are numbered by individual session (for example Resolution 41/10 represents the 10th resolution adopted at the Forty-First Session).

United Nations Parliamentary Assembly

United Nations Parliamentary Assembly, or United Nations People's Assembly (UNPA), is a proposed addition to the United Nations System that eventually could allow for direct election of UN parliament members by citizens all over the world.

BUDGET OF THE UNITED NATIONS

The General Assembly also approves the budget of the United Nations, and decides how much money each member state must pay to run the organization.

- ★ Please note that there are two sources of funds for the United Nations and its agencies. One is **assessed contribution** and another is **voluntary contribution**.
- ★ **Assessed contributions** are payments made as part of the obligations that nations undertake when signing treaties. At the UN, assessments on member states finance the UN regular budget and peacekeeping operations, based on each country's ability to pay.
- ★ **Voluntary contributions** are left to the discretion of each individual member state. These voluntary contributions make up more than half of total UN funding, and finance most of the United Nations' humanitarian relief and development agencies, including the UN Children's Fund (UNICEF), the World Food Programme (WFP), and the UN Development Program (UNDP).

The Budget of United Nations can be studied under 4 heads viz. Regular Budget, Peacekeeping Budget, Voluntary Contributions and Arrears.

Regular Budget of United Nations

The UN's regular budget finances the General Assembly, the Security Council, the Economic and Social Council, the International Court of Justice, and the Secretariat as well as the UN's special political missions,



the largest of which are the UN Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA) and the UN Assistance Mission in Iraq (UNAMI).

- ★ All UN members are assessed a contribution to the regular budget largely based on per capita income, with a floor of .001 percent to make sure that even the poorest countries contribute something.
- ★ The UN is structured not to rely too heavily on any one member for its funds, so no state's dues are allowed to exceed 22 percent of the UN's regular budget; the United States is the only country to have hit that ceiling.
- ★ The top 15 contributing nations supply about 84 percent of the regular budget.

Peacekeeping Budget of United Nations

The UN's peacekeeping budget finances the UN's 14 peacekeeping missions with more than 100,000 peacekeepers serving throughout the world. The UN funds its peacekeeping budget with assessments on member states similar to those made for the regular budget but with greater discounts for poorer nations.

- ★ The five permanent members of the Security Council (the U.S., the United Kingdom, France, Russia, and China) make up the difference; they each have veto rights to decide on or suspend any peacekeeping operation.
- ★ While the five members pay a higher rate, the vast majority of peacekeepers come from developing countries such as India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Nepal, and Ghana.

Voluntary Contributions

★ Voluntary contributions are entirely up to the individual country to decide whether or not, and how much, to contribute. These contributions finance most of the United Nations' humanitarian relief and development agencies. The activities these organizations undertake are U.S. national security investments that would be difficult, if not impossible, for the United States to undertake alone.

Arrears

Arrears are a chronic problem for the United Nations. Many poorer nations cannot afford their full assessment. Other countries, notably the United States in past years, have delayed or withheld payments for reasons unrelated to their ability to pay. Under the UN Charter, member states that are two years in arrears at the UN can lose their vote in the General Assembly. Timely payment of dues is crucial because shortfalls in the UN's budget can cripple peacekeeping missions and delay humanitarian aid, with costs measured in lives and human suffering.

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