



# MIDWEST MODEL UNITED NATIONS

## *United Nations Security Council*

### **Mandate of The United Nations Security Council**

#### **Introduction**

In the aftermath of World War II, the United Nations (UN) framework was negotiated and created by the allied nations to develop a more representative international system.<sup>1</sup> As one of the five main organs, the UN Security Council is the primary body for addressing matters of global peace and security.<sup>2</sup> Unlike other UN bodies, such as the General Assembly, measures decided by the Security Council are legally binding under international law, meaning that Member States of the UN agree to carry out the Council's decisions, as mandated by Article 25 of the Charter of the United Nations (UN Charter).<sup>3</sup> If the UN Security Council cannot agree, then it may issue a non-binding resolution agreed by some, but not all of its permanent voting members.<sup>4</sup> Functions and powers entrusted to the Security Council include, but are not limited to: authorizing peacekeeping operations in Member States that will have them; sanctions against Member States in breach of international peace and security; investigating disputes or situations which might lead to international friction; and offering methods of negotiation and conflict de-escalation.<sup>5</sup>

#### **Membership**

The Security Council is comprised of 15 Member States including the five permanent members: China, France, the Russian Federation, the United Kingdom, and the United States.<sup>6</sup> Often referred to as the permanent five (P5), they have the authority to veto any substantive decisions.<sup>7</sup> The other ten Member States serve two-year rotating terms and are elected by the General Assembly.<sup>8</sup> The current 10 rotating members are Algeria, Ecuador, Guyana, Japan, Malta, Mozambique, Sierra Leone, Slovenia, South Korea, and Switzerland.<sup>9</sup> The P5 can veto the final passage of any resolution with a no vote.<sup>10</sup> There has been controversy and debate in recent years over the need for veto

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<sup>1</sup> United Nations. "United Nations Charter, Chapter V: The Security Council." 1945.

<sup>2</sup> United Nations. "United Nations Charter, Chapter V: The Security Council." 1945.

<sup>3</sup> United Nations. "United Nations Charter, Chapter V: The Security Council." 1945.

<sup>4</sup> United Nations Security Council. "Functions and Powers".

<sup>5</sup> United Nations Security Council. "Functions and Powers".

<sup>6</sup> Publantz et al. "Encyclopedia of the United Nations, Second Edition." 2008.

<sup>7</sup> Publantz et al. "Encyclopedia of the United Nations, Second Edition." 2008.

<sup>8</sup> Publantz et al. "Encyclopedia of the United Nations, Second Edition." 2008.

<sup>9</sup> Publantz et al. "Encyclopedia of the United Nations, Second Edition." 2008.

<sup>10</sup> Publantz et al. "Encyclopedia of the United Nations, Second Edition." 2008.

power reform and more regional representation from its historical start.<sup>11</sup> The UN Security originally consisted of the P5 of which the Republic of China represented China, and the Russian Federation represented by the Soviet Union, of which neither holds those seats anymore after being replaced by The People's Republic of China in 1971, and The Russian Federation in 1991, respectively.<sup>12</sup> There were originally only 6 rotating members on a two-year term that was amended to the modern 10 rotating members in 1965.<sup>13</sup> Since the 1950s there have been many debates concerning how to apportion membership among regional groups.<sup>13</sup> In recent years, some Member States have called for Security Council reform, specifically expanding representation in the P5 to include underrepresented regions such as Africa and removing the veto power of the permanent members.<sup>14</sup>

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<sup>11</sup> Publantz et al. "Encyclopedia of the United Nations, Second Edition." 2008.

<sup>12</sup> Publantz et al. "Encyclopedia of the United Nations, Second Edition." 2008. <sup>13</sup>

Britannica. "The United Nations Security Council". Encyclopedia Britannica.

<sup>13</sup> Ibid.

<sup>14</sup> United Nations Department of Global Communications. "Member States Call for Removing Veto Power, Expanding Security Council to Include New Permanent Seats, as General Assembly Debates Reform Plans for 15-Member Organ." 2018.

## **Reporting**

To assist in performing its functions, the Security Council can create subsidiary bodies such as committees and working groups regarding procedural and substantive matters. Examples include the Counter-Terrorism Committee, the Non-Proliferation Committee, and the Sanctions Committee. Article 29 of the UN Charter sets out that the Subsidiary Organs, Commissions, and Investigative bodies that are created will report to the Security Council regularly to facilitate the implementation of its mandate<sup>15</sup>. Under Article 24 of the UN Charter, the Security Council submits an annual report, to the General Assembly. Additionally, Article 99 of the UN Charter allows the Secretary-General to make reports of any matter on which in his opinion may threaten the maintenance of international peace and security. The Security Council can also establish international courts and tribunals for war criminals. Two examples include Yugoslavia and Rwanda. Both Yugoslavia and Rwanda had internal strife that led to systemic genocide and caused mass casualties of the ethnic populations the Bosnians in Yugoslavia and Tutsi in Rwanda. Following the deployment of UN Peacekeepers in then Yugoslavia, and Rwanda, two international tribunals were established to bring the guilty parties to justice. The International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia (ICTY) and the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda (ICTR) were both created under the UN Security mandate. Both tribunals are now defunct as of 2017 and 2015 respectively<sup>16</sup> as mentioned the Security Council has a large variety of reporting bodies that can create for a variety of problems that might arise in the international community that can last indefinitely or by a targeted deadline.

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<sup>15</sup> United Nations Security Council. "Subsidiary Organs Branch".

<sup>16</sup> United Nations. "UN Documentation: International Law." Dag Hammarskjold Library.

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