India ! UNSC ! P-5 !

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Important Topics for UPSC IAS Prelims and Mains Exam 2020 Part-2
The United Nations (UN) is an intergovernmental organization responsible for maintaining international peace and security, developing friendly relations among nations, achieving international cooperation, and being a center for harmonizing the actions of nations. It is the largest, most familiar, most internationally represented and most powerful intergovernmental organization in the world. The UN is headquartered on international territory in New York City; other main offices are in Geneva, Nairobi, Vienna and The Hague.

The UN was established after World War II with the aim of preventing future wars, succeeding the ineffective League of Nations. On 25 April 1945, 50 governments met in San Francisco for a conference and started drafting the UN Charter, which was adopted on 25 June 1945 and took effect on 24 October 1945, when
the UN began operations. Pursuant to the Charter, the organization's objectives include maintaining international peace and security, protecting human rights, delivering humanitarian aid, promoting sustainable development, and upholding international law. At its founding, the UN had 51 member states; this number grew to 193 in 2011, representing the vast majority of the world's sovereign states.

The organization's mission to preserve world peace was complicated in its early decades by the Cold War between the United States and Soviet Union and their respective allies. Its missions have consisted primarily of unarmed military observers and lightly armed troops with primarily monitoring, reporting and confidence-building roles. UN membership grew significantly following widespread decolonization beginning in the 1960s. Since then, 80 former colonies have gained independence, including 11 trust territories that had been monitored by the Trusteeship Council. By the 1970s, the UN's budget for economic and social development programmes far outstripped its spending on peacekeeping. After the end of the
Cold War, the UN shifted and expanded its field operations, undertaking a wide variety of complex tasks.

The UN has six principal organs: the General Assembly; the Security Council; the Economic and Social Council; the Trusteeship Council; the International Court of Justice; and the UN Secretariat. The UN System includes a multitude of specialized agencies, such as the World Bank Group, the World Health Organization, the World Food Programme, UNESCO, and UNICEF. Additionally, non-governmental organizations may be granted consultative status with ECOSOC and other agencies to participate in the UN's work. The UN's chief administrative officer is the Secretary-General, currently Portuguese politician and diplomat Antonio Guterres since 1 January 2017. The organization is financed by assessed and voluntary contributions from its member states.

The UN, its officers, and its agencies have won many Nobel Peace Prizes, though other evaluations of its effectiveness have been
mixed. Some commentators believe the organization to be an important force for peace and human development, while others have called it ineffective, biased, or corrupt.

**Background**

In the century prior to the UN's creation, several international treaty organizations such as the International Committee of the Red Cross was formed to ensure protection and assistance for victims of armed conflict and strife. In 1914, a political assassination in Sarajevo set off a chain of events that led to the outbreak of World War I. As more and more young men were sent down into the trenches, influential voices in the United States and Britain began calling for the establishment of a permanent international body to maintain peace in the postwar world. President Woodrow Wilson became a vocal advocate of this concept, and in 1918 he included a sketch of the international body in his 14-point proposal to end the war. In November 1918, the Central Powers agreed to an armistice
to halt the killing in World War I. Two months later, the Allies met with Germany and Austria-Hungary at Versailles to hammer out formal peace terms. President Wilson wanted peace, but the United Kingdom and France disagreed, forcing harsh war reparations on their former enemies. The League of Nations was approved, and in the summer of 1919 Wilson presented the Treaty of Versailles and the Covenant of the League of Nations to the US Senate for ratification. On 10 January 1920, the League of Nations formally comes into being when the Covenant of the League of Nations, ratified by 42 nations in 1919, takes effect. However, at some point the League became ineffective when it failed to act against the Japanese invasion of Manchuria as in February 1933, 40 nations voted for Japan to withdraw from Manchuria but Japan voted against it and walked out of the League instead of withdrawing from Manchuria. It also failed against the Second Italo-Ethiopian War despite trying to talk to Benito Mussolini as he used the time to send an army to Africa, so the League had a plan for Mussolini to just take a part of Ethiopia, but he ignored the League and invaded Ethiopia, the League tried putting sanctions on Italy, but Italy had already conquered Ethiopia and the League had failed. After Italy
conquered Ethiopia, Italy and other nations left the league. But all of them realized that it had failed and they began to re-arm as fast as possible. During 1938, Britain and France tried negotiating directly with Hitler but this failed in 1939 when Hitler invaded Czechoslovakia. When war broke out in 1939, the League closed down and its headquarters in Geneva remained empty throughout the war. Although the United States never joined the League, the country did support its economic and social missions through the work of private philanthropies and by sending representatives to committees.

**How does a country become a Member of the United Nations?**

Membership in the Organization, in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations, “is open to all peace-loving States that accept the obligations contained in the United Nations Charter and, in the judgment of the Organization, are able to carry out these obligations”. States are admitted to membership in the United Nations by decision of the General Assembly upon the recommendation of the Security Council.
How does a new State or Government obtain recognition by the United Nations?

The recognition of a new State or Government is an act that only other States and Governments may grant or withhold. It generally implies readiness to assume diplomatic relations. The United Nations is neither a State nor a Government, and therefore does not possess any authority to recognize either a State or a Government. As an organization of independent States, it may admit a new State to its membership or accept the credentials of the representatives of a new Government.

The procedure is briefly as follows:

The State submits an application to the Secretary-General and a letter formally stating that it accepts the obligations under the Charter.
The Security Council considers the application. Any recommendation for admission must receive the affirmative votes of 9 of the 15 members of the Council, provided that none of its five permanent members — China, France, the Russian Federation, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and the United States of America — have voted against the application.

If the Council recommends admission, the recommendation is presented to the General Assembly for consideration. A two-thirds majority vote is necessary in the Assembly for admission of a new State.

Membership becomes effective the date the resolution for admission is adopted.

At each session, the General Assembly considers the credentials of all representatives of Member States participating in that session. During such consideration, which routinely takes place first in the nine-member Credentials Committee but can also arise at other times, the issue can be raised whether a particular representative has been accredited by the Government actually in power. This issue is ultimately decided by a majority vote in the Assembly. It
should be noted that the normal change of Governments, as through a democratic election, does not raise any issues concerning the credentials of the representative of the State concerned.

**Current Members**

The Council is composed of 15 Members:

**Five permanent members**: China, France, Russian Federation, the United Kingdom, and the United States, and **ten non-permanent members** elected for two-year terms by the General Assembly (with end of term year):

Belgium (2020)

Dominican Republic (2020)

Estonia (2021)

Germany (2020)

Indonesia (2020)
Niger (2021)

Saint Vincent and the Grenadines (2021)

South Africa (2020)

Tunisia (2021)

Viet Nam (2021)

Non-Council Member States;

More than 50 United Nations Member States have never been Members of the Security Council.

A State which is a Member of the United Nations but not of the Security Council may participate, without a vote, in its discussions when the Council considers that country's interests are affected. Both Members and non-members of the United Nations, if they are parties to a dispute being considered by the Council, may be invited to take part, without a vote, in the Council's discussions; the Council sets the conditions for participation by a non-member State.
Why isn’t India a permanent member of the UN Security Council?

At the time the United Nations was formed, it simply wasn’t an independent nation, nor was it anywhere near powerful or influential enough even if it had been. The point of having permanent membership on the UN Security Council is to give the Security Council some sort of foundation that provided for both the ability to act and the ability to maintain order. While there is no requirement for a permanent member of the Security Council nuclear weapons, there is a requirement, albeit an implicit one, that the permanent members are to a certain extent strong (in a militaristic sense), economically vibrant, and capable of displays international influence. During the 1940's India would not have met any of these criteria.
The UNSC, even with five permanent members, manages to pass resolutions on very few important things. Having a sixth country will only worsen the problem.

Why will the five countries want to share power with the sixth? The privilege is like a dinner table with a cake. One additional member means less space and less cake for all.

The permanent members have a veto power over all the decisions of the UNSC. What does this imply? This ensures that no big decision is taken which will make a powerful country unhappy. This veto power serves well to the five members as it helps them protect their interests. **China uses its veto power and opposes India.**

**Why should India be on UN Security Council?**

The current P5 were among the strongest nations at the time of the creation of the UNSC. Germany and Japan were in shambles, and much of the world was still colonized. It made sense for nations like the US and USSR to become permanent members, as well as their major allies. However, the UN is a global organization, and it needs
to have diversity that reflects the globe, in its most powerful body. This isn’t just to appear to be a more diverse body. The more different countries you have, the more perspectives you see brought to the table.

India is a major player on the world stage currently. It’s strategically located, and has warm relations with most of the P5. India could bring perspectives to the table that would differ greatly from those of the Western countries, China and Russia. That is because the issues India faces are different from the issues these nations face, and a fresh perspective would be refreshing to say the least.

India has a GDP of about 2 Trillion dollars and has been on an upward curve as far as the economy goes ever since the early 1990s. It’s also one of the fastest growing major economies of the world, and has even overtaken China in the rate of growth of the economy per year. It’s the 3rd largest economy in the world in terms of Purchasing Power Parity (PPP). There’s also the elephant in the
room: the elephant that consists of 1.2 billion people. India could give representation to a vast number of these people.

**India: Statement by the Mission to the UN**

Reform and improvements are an intrinsic part of any organization which has to serve the needs of a changing environment. The United Nations is no exception. India supports a strengthened and revitalized United Nations with its various organs functioning within their mandates in accordance with the UN Charter. India supports an enhanced role for the United Nations in development and development cooperation dialogue. India firmly believes that development should be central to UN's agenda and be pursued in its own right. It is an indispensable prerequisite to the maintenance of international peace and security.

India has actively participated in all reforms and restructuring exercises that could enhance the capacity of the UN in the fulfilment of its primary tasks. India actively supported the
establishment of UNICEF on a permanent basis, the creation of the UN Development Programme, establishment of UNEP and restructuring of the UN in the economic and social fields. It was also represented in the High Level Expert Group established by the UN Secretary-General in the mid-nineties on the financing of the UN. It participated constructively in the discussions on the Agenda for Peace and the Agenda for Development. India was also one of the co-chairs of the Working Group on Strengthening of the United Nations.

India has been supportive of the UN Secretary-General Mr. Kofi Annan's reform proposals. While some of these have been agreed and implemented, discussions continue on others. An important proposal is the holding of the Millennium Assembly. India believes that the Millennium Assembly must identify concrete goals for the promotion of development cooperation and disarmament and must also provide the United Nations with the required resources to effectively tackle these challenges.
India shares the concerns for improving efficiency, avoidance of duplication, and the minimization of waste in the functioning of the entire UN system. While efforts for these objectives need to be intensified, India believes that the Member States should pay their contributions unconditionally, in full and on time, as delays in payments have caused an unprecedented financial crisis in the UN system. Contributions of the Member States should have, as their fundamental underpinning, the capacity to pay principle. Financial reforms hold the key to the future of the world body. Without sufficient resources, the UN's activities and role would suffer.

The United Nations as a universal forum should have as its guiding principles transparency, non-discrimination, consensus, and equal respect for the dignity of all individuals, societies and nations. Be it world trade, environment and development, resolution of the global debt crisis, or economic assistance for the poorest members of the world community, these values have to be the touchstone of global initiatives and actions.
The composition of the Security Council has remained largely static, while the UN General Assembly membership has expanded considerably. This has undermined the representative character of the Council. An expanded Council, which is more representative, will also enjoy greater political authority and legitimacy.

In 1965, the membership of the Security Council was expanded from 11 to 15. There was no change in the number of permanent members. Since then, the size of the Council has remained frozen. Even more dramatic than the increase in the number of Member States of the UN, is the change in composition of the General Assembly. The overwhelming majority of the UN General Assembly members today are developing countries. They are also, most often the objects of the Council's actions. They must have a role in shaping those decisions which affect them. The present composition of the Security Council, particularly the permanent members' category, is weighted heavily in favour of industrialized countries. This imbalance must be redressed in an expansion of the Council,
by enhancing the representation of developing countries in both permanent and non-permanent members' categories.

Activities of the Security Council have greatly expanded in the past few years. The success of Security Council's actions depends upon political support of the international community. Any package for restructuring of the Security Council should, therefore, be broad-based. In particular, adequate presence of developing countries is needed in the Security Council. Nations of the world must feel that their stakes in global peace and prosperity are factored into the UN's decision making.

Any expansion of permanent members' category must be based on an agreed criteria, rather than be a pre-determined selection. There must be an inclusive approach based on transparent consultations. India supports expansion of both permanent and non-permanent members' category. The latter is the only avenue for the vast
The majority of Member States to serve on the Security Council. Reform and expansion must be an integral part of a common package.

PM Modi to inaugurate 'Gandhi Solar Park' - India's gift to the UN Headquarters

At a contribution of about one million dollars, India has gifted solar panels that have been installed on the roof of the UN Headquarters here, one panel each for every 193 UN Member State.

In a first of its kind symbolic effort by India at the UN, Prime Minister Narendra Modi will inaugurate a 50KW 'Gandhi Solar Park' next week during his visit to the world organisation, a gesture that highlights India's willingness to go beyond the talk on climate change.

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PM Modi will remotely inaugurate the solar park at the UN Headquarters and the 'Gandhi Peace Garden' during a special commemorative event on September 24, 2019 marking Gandhi’s 150th birth anniversary. On the occasion, a special UN Postage on Gandhi’s 150 years will also be released.

The 'Gandhi Peace Garden' is an innovative initiative under which the Consulate General of India in New York, Long Island-based NGO Shanti Fund and the State University of New York - Old Westbury have entered into an agreement to plant 150 trees.