

India's Membership In The United States Security Council

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I. INTRODUCTION

The United Nations Security Council consists of 15 members with one vote each, who are primarily responsible for sustaining global peace and security. By virtue of the United Nations Charter, all Member States are bound to implement Council decisions. As the leading entity in recognizing peace threats or acts of aggression, the Council also prompts peaceful dispute resolution and settlement methods. The use of force or sanctions can be authorized by the Council to uphold global peace and security, if necessary.

Since the year 1994, India has been making attempts to gain a permanent membership in the Security Council, offering to take on the responsibilities associated with it. Back in the year 1979, India joined hands with other Non-Aligned countries, proposing a review of the Council's membership through an addition made to the agenda of the General Assembly. The changing global context caused a need for reflection on the vastly different world of the 1970s compared to the "post-World War II era" when the United Nations was established.

"The Security Council" is responsible for safeguarding peace and security, but the meanings of these terms have changed dramatically in recent times, as have the global power dynamics of the 21st century. It is vital that the Council adapts its approach to modern security concerns based on these ever-shifting power realities. Still, even if permanent members possess power, it is useless if they are unwilling to use it for peace and security. That is why India's situation must be assessed in the context of contemporary power shifts and new definitions of peace and security.

India has stepped up its campaign for a permanent seat on "the UN Security Council" in recent years. India's expanding economic and political influence, strategic position, huge and diversified population, and contributions to UN peacekeeping missions all lend support to its bid for a permanent seat. "The United States, the United Kingdom, France, Russia, and China" are just few of the countries that back India.

Some countries are opposed to India's bid for a permanent seat on the UNSC due to concerns about India's nuclear weapons programme and human rights record. Furthermore, UNSC reform is a complicated process that requires extensive negotiation between member states. However, India is unwavering in its pursuit of its goal of gaining a permanent seat on the UN Security Council, and it is actively working to gain the support of other nations.

Some information about "India's membership in the United Nations Security Council":

- In 1950, only three years after the United Nations was founded, India was admitted as a "non-permanent member of the UN Security Council". Seven additional times (1967-68, 1972-73, 1977-78, 1984-85, 1991-92, 2011-12, and 2021-22) since then, it has been elected to the UN Security Council.
- India's last term as a "non-permanent member of the UN Security Council" was in 2021-22, and during that time it worked to reform the Council and address issues such as counterterrorism, maritime security, peacekeeping, and UNSC reform. India's contributions to setting the Council's agenda were generally lauded, and the country was commended for its constructive demeanour.
- The current UNSC structure does not reflect the new global realities, and developing nations like India should have a stronger influence in global governance, which is why India is lobbying for a permanent seat. India claims it has a history of contributing to UN peacekeeping operations and taking the lead on problems such as climate change and global health, all of which contribute to a more secure and peaceful world.

II. HYPOTHESIS

India's membership in the "United Nations Security Council (UNSC)" would make the council more effective, strengthen global governance, and contribute to regional stability, even though China and Pakistan are against it and there are worries that it would make the council less effective.

III. LITERATURE REVIEW

India's foreign policy goal has been to become a regular member of the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) for a long time. This is because India wants to be seen as a major power and have a bigger say in how the world is run. Scholars have looked at India's bid from many different points of view, such as its history and geopolitics, its strategic goals, and how it might affect regional and global security.

1. Manoj Kumar Mishra in his paper "INDIA'S PERMANENT MEMBERSHIP OF THE U. N. SECURITY COUNCIL¹ : CHANGING POWER REALITIES AND NOTIONS OF SECURITY" talks about how Since 1994, when India declared in the General Assembly that it was willing to shoulder the burden of permanent membership in the Security Council, India has been actively campaigning for a seat on the Council. But before that, in 1979, India and other Non-Aligned members asked for a review of Council membership by inserting a new item onto the agenda of the General Assembly. It was then realised that the world in the 1970s was very different from the environment in which the United Nations was born immediately in the aftermath of World War II. The shifting balance of power in the twenty-first century has significantly reshaped the United Nations Security Council's initial mandate to maintain peace and security. The essay argues that the UN Security Council should deal with contemporary security challenges in light of the current balance of power. However, if the permanent members lack the will to use that power to safeguard peace and security, then that power is useless. Therefore, it is important to place India's situation within the broader context of shifting power dynamics and evolving conceptions of security.
2. Bidisha Biswas and Anish Goel in their paper "India in the Security Council: Time to Step Up²" mention that In its eighth year as a non-permanent, voting member of the "United Nations Security Council (UNSC)", India has a great opportunity to demonstrate its global impact and responsibility and strengthen its case for a permanent membership on the Council. India, however, needs to alter its domestic and international policies to prove it can be a global leader. The only country in Asia with the potential to compete economically and militarily with China, the greatest democracy, India is in a unique position to take the lead in advocating for a rules-based international order that benefits all nations. India, which has not exactly set the world on fire as an example of global leadership, must now defend Rohingya human rights and offer Bangladesh its unwavering support. India needs to demonstrate leadership in promoting democratic ideals and procedures if it wants to be taken seriously as a candidate for a permanent seat on the Security Council and equal the soft power demonstrated by Japan and Germany.
3. Manish Dabhade in his paper "India's Pursuit of United Nations Security Council Reforms"³ talks about India has been advocating for a permanent membership on the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) for almost two decades, stating that the present global governance framework is out of touch with 21st century reality. India is keen on joining the UN Security Council because it wants a bigger voice in international policymaking, and because it has become an economic and military superpower that deserves representation there. Due to the P5's veto power, India's voice is often lost under the current Council makeup. With a view to expanding the Council's representation of developing nations, India has asked for an increase in both the number of permanent and non-permanent members. As regards the Council's decision-making procedures, India has advocated for more openness and accountability, as well as a reduction in the use of the veto power. India, as a member of the G4, has used diplomatic outreach and lobbying efforts to achieve its UNSC goals, among other bilateral and international methods. India's pursuit of a "permanent membership on the Security Council" is met with resistance from some of the current P5 members, notably China and the United States, which are hesitant to give up their power on the body. Finally, India's desire for a permanent seat on the UN Security Council underscores the country's desire to assume a more prominent position in global governance and help find solutions to the problems facing the international community. India has made strides towards its goals, but there is still work to be done before it can secure a permanent seat.

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1. Manoj Kumar Mishra, "INDIA'S PERMANENT MEMBERSHIP OF THE U. N. SECURITY COUNCIL", JSTOR (2006), <https://www.jstor.org/stable/41856221?seq=2>
 2. Bidisha Biswas and Anish Goel, "India in the Security Council: Time to Step Up", THE DIPLOMAT (Dec 29, 2020), <https://thediplomat.com/2020/12/india-in-the-security-council-time-to-step-up/>
 3. Manish Dabhade, "India's Pursuit of United Nations Security Council Reforms", TAYLOR FRANCIS (2022), <https://www.taylorfrancis.com/chapters/edit/10.4324/9781003272540-5/india-pursuit-united-nations-security-council-reforms-manish-dabhade>

4. In the article "India and the UN Security Council: An Ambiguous Tale"⁴, the authors Rohan Mukherjee and David M Malone discuss about how India was unable to continue the previously designed strategy of displaying responsible diplomacy in the leagues of the great powers during its last tenure on the United Nations Security Council in 2011-12. This strategy aimed to make the body a more credible and representative institution while also showcasing India's ability to play a role in the leagues of the big powers. This article delves into India's efforts to attain its goals and explores the modern limits that limit the nation's capacity to exert a greater level of influence inside the United Nations. In addition to this, it provides a rough outline of what a different Indian strategy at the UN may look like.

IV. ANALYSIS

India's position on the expansion of the UN Security Council is reflective of the broader demand from many developing countries to have a greater say in global decision-making. As a rapidly developing country with a large population and growing economic and military capabilities, India has been advocating for greater representation on the world stage, including at the UN.

India's push for the expansion of both permanent and non-permanent categories of the Security Council is aimed at ensuring that the decision-making body reflects the contemporary geo-political realities of the world. This would involve increasing the number of permanent members to better represent different regions and giving non-permanent members more say in the decision-making process.

Like many other developing countries, India thinks the current make-up of the Security Council is out-of-date and unfairly represents the interests of the global community as a whole. They claim the "five permanent members of the Security Council", who have the power to veto decisions, do not accurately reflect the global balance of power.

There are some noteworthy trends to consider when examining current global power dynamics and their future direction. Despite facing some obstacles to its authority in recent times, the United States continues to be the strongest nation in terms of both military and economic might. In the realm of economic might, China is quickly gaining on the United States, and it's no secret that they're making a considerable effort to beef up their military prowess. As a result, the balance of global power could be in for a major shake-up in the near future.

As the text notes, regional powers like Japan, Germany, and India are on the rise and could become major players in global politics. Their substantial military and economic strengths make them formidable contenders, but whether they can wield these assets to gain more political clout remains to be seen.

As the economy becomes more globalized, it's demographic makeup that will have the most impact on the power a nation has. The need for immigrant labour is a big part of this, but there are many other factors to consider. Population growth and size, for example, can have a huge impact on a country's military and economic strength.

Economic power is gaining significance in dictating a nation's overall influence and power globally. This is because of the increasing relevance of economic matters in global politics and the ability of economic might to demonstrate military power, as witnessed in the Persian Gulf crisis discussed in the text. It is also noteworthy to mention the rising importance of economic power in modern times. Evolving continuously, the current power dynamics are a web of complexity and versatility. The importance of economic and military supremacy is undoubtable in shaping a country's influence and prowess overall, while the significance of demographic elements is also expected to surge.

Expanding the Security Council would be a challenging task, as it would require a change to the UN Charter, which requires the agreement of two-thirds of the General Assembly and all five permanent members of the Security Council. However, India's push for greater representation is part of a broader global trend towards greater democratization and inclusivity in international decision-making, and it is likely to continue to be an important issue on the global agenda. Evolving continuously, the current power dynamics are a web of complexity and versatility. The importance of economic and military supremacy is undoubtable in shaping a country's influence and prowess overall, while the significance of demographic elements is also expected to surge.

Several factors have contributed to India's pursuit of a permanent seat on the UN Security Council (UNSC). India, one of the UN's founding states, has been involved in every specialized agency and organ within the organization. Moreover, India has acted as a non-permanent member on eight separate occasions, making considerable contributions to several UN bodies and missions. With an unwavering foreign policy aimed at bolstering the UN and fostering global tranquillity, India stands as a strong candidate for permanent representation on the UNSC. India has a rich history, culture, and experience, all of which lend credence to its claim to permanent membership.

4. Rohan Mukherjee and David M Malone, "India and the UN Security Council: An Ambiguous Tale", JSTOR (July 20, 2013), <https://www.jstor.org/stable/23528511>

In the past few decades, India has garnered global recognition for its leadership in South Asia. With the second largest population and military in the world, as well as the fastest-growing economy, India is also the largest democracy. It meets all the necessary criteria for permanent membership and attests to its impeccable standing in the world.

The fact that no members of the Security Council hail from the Indian Ocean region lends credence to India's case. Significant wars, local tensions, ethnic tensions, territorial disputes, and threats to peace can all be found in this region, which is home to a third of the world's people and several states. India, being the region's largest economy and a notable leader among developing countries, might play a role in addressing these problems, which are now receiving little attention.

India is one of the oldest serving countries in the world, having participated in peacekeeping missions for almost six decades with a total of 180,000 troops. India has also formed and presided over other anti-terrorism bodies, including the "Counter Terrorism Committee, the Libya Sanctions Committee, and the Taliban Sanctions Committee". India's desire and goal of guaranteeing world peace, collaboration, and harmony makes it the sole nuclear weapon state that insists on absolute elimination of nuclear weapons.

India has set its sights on full membership, but there are many obstacles in its path. Many countries, especially the G4's neighbours in the region, are opposed to the idea of permanent membership because they believe it would lead to the UNSC ignoring the millions of Muslims living in those countries. India's contributions to the United Nations have been far lower than those of other countries seeking a permanent seat on the council. To make matters more difficult, amending the UN Charter to increase India's representation on the UN Security Council would require the support of all five permanent members and two-thirds of the UN General Assembly. The UN Security Council is also sluggish to act and resistant to change, further impeding India's efforts to seize power.

Since it's highly unlikely that the P5 will agree on a power-sharing plan, and since China has repeatedly used its veto power to block India's attempts to become a permanent member, the situation is dangerous. India's low Human Development Index score and long-standing rivalry with Pakistan over the Kashmir issue are also working against the country's chances of gaining permanent membership, as is the fact that it has refused to sign the "Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty and the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty".

India's chances of securing a permanent membership on the UN Security Council in the future remain high despite these modern hurdles and the current UN Charter and organisation. For at least the next 40 years, India must work to increase its power, influence, and wealth in order to secure a permanent seat on the "United Nations Security Council". Therefore, India must face and conquer such obstacles if it is to improve its global standing and boost its chances of gaining a permanent seat on the United Nations Security Council.

V. CONCLUSION

India is seeking permanent membership in the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) as it seeks to assert its growing influence and leadership role on the international stage. Its size, economy, purchasing power, military, and participation in UN initiatives, institutions, and peacekeeping missions all lend credence to its bid for permanent membership. A more democratic and representative UN Security Council, better able to handle the needs of developing states, would result from India's membership.

Security concerns, opposition from China, and India's slow rate of growth all work against the country's aspirations. Moreover, UNSC reform is complex and time-consuming, so real change is unlikely. India's representation of the Indian Ocean area and participation in global decision-making will benefit from its admission as a permanent member. It would counterbalance Western influence and advance developing-world priorities. India's influence and ability to negotiate would increase with a permanent seat.

India needs to coordinate with other candidates like Germany, Japan, and Brazil and cast its votes together. It is essential for India to acquire global power status that it mobilise international support and establish economic, diplomatic, and military strength while meeting sustainable growth and human development targets. India must carefully prepare and play an effective role as a "non-permanent member of the UN Security Council" in light of the present COVID-19 situation, which has impacted the Indian economy and healthcare system. Keeping global crises under control might elevate India's status from responsible stakeholder to global rulemaker. India, in order to become a permanent member of the UN Security Council, must strengthen its economic, military, scientific, and political capacities while overcoming current obstacles.

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