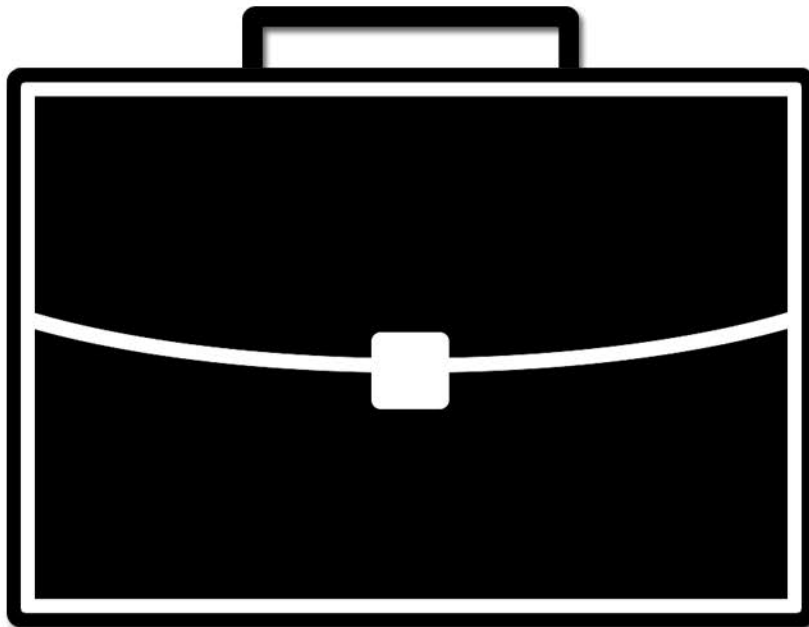


# Champion Briefs

April 2024

Public Forum Brief



**Resolved: The United Nations should abolish permanent membership on its Security Council.**

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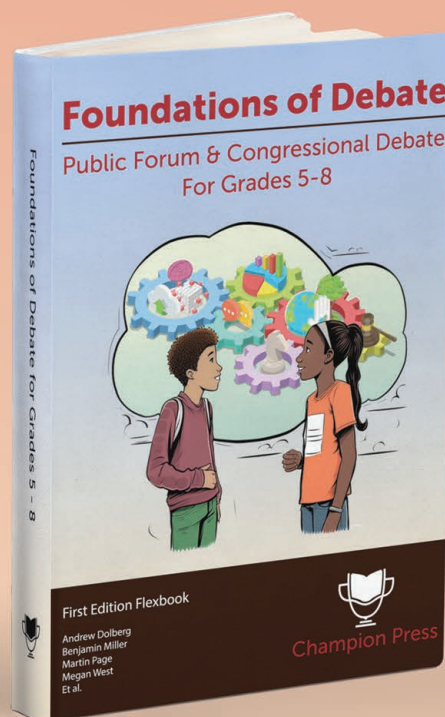
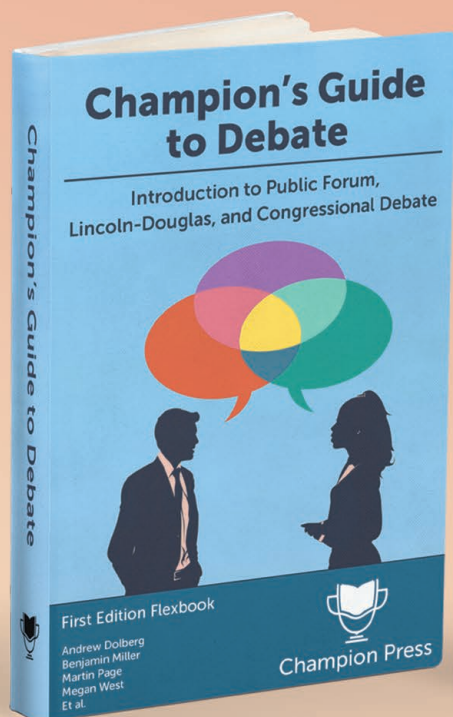
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These seven statements, while simple, represent the complex notion of what it means to advance students' understanding of the world around them, as is the purpose of educators.

## **Letter from the Editor**

The United Nations occupies a special place in the popular imagination. It simultaneously embodies our hope for diplomacy and cooperation and our frustration with deadlocks and power politics. The United Nations is the product of world wars and countless hours of negotiation and imagination. It is especially relevant in an age where problems seem inextricably global: climate change, human rights, and transnational economic crises. The April topic asks debaters to join the ranks of those who came before them to consider how the United Nations can solve important global issues and think of better designs for the institution.

The United Nations has been involved in some of the world's most important debates and crises since its founding. The international organization has played an important role in the Korean War, the development of human rights, and the organization of international aid programs. The UN has consistently advocated for fundamental rights such as freedom of speech, equality, and protection from discrimination. It has also established mechanisms like the Human Rights Council to monitor and address violations. UNICEF, the World Food Programme (WFP), and the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) are just a few examples of specialized agencies that deliver aid on the ground.

At the same time, the world has changed dramatically since the UN was founded at the end of World War II. The international community understands the importance of different perspectives, and the balance of power has become more diffused. To continue the UN's legacy into the 21<sup>st</sup> century, we must envision how it can be reformed. Best of luck to all the debaters competing this month!

Jakob Takashi Urda  
Editor-in-Chief

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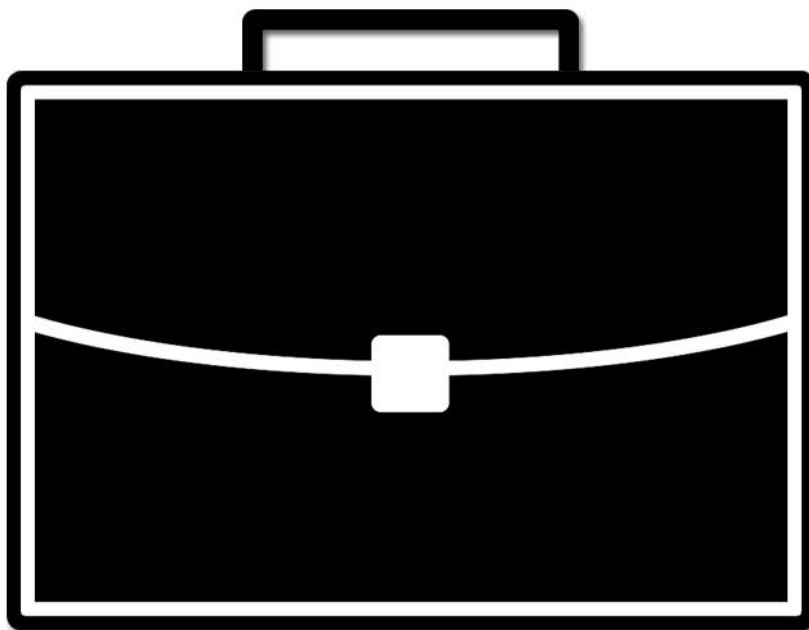
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# Champion Briefs

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Topic Analyses

## **Topic Analysis By Jakob Takashi Urda**

***Resolved: The United Nations should abolish permanent membership on its Security Council.***

### **Introduction**

The April topic takes us into the exciting world of international relations. The United Nations is the most visible international organization, and it embodies the ideals of global cooperation and diplomacy. The United Nations is a forum for negotiations over climate change, national security, and other important aspects of global public policy. Therefore, debaters must learn about this institution and understand how it works. To that end, the April topic asks us about one of the organization's most hotly contested and crucial aspects—the United Nations Security Council.

This topic will challenge debaters to balance the wide array of interests and values at stake in global public policy. The topic does not specify an actor, like "the United States" or "Germany," whose national interests should predominate. Therefore, the most successful teams will find a solution that works for most United Nations members. They must consider the different concerns that countries will have and consider the multifaceted perspectives in such a pluralistic institution. This will require a detailed weighing of important issues for many countries. The best debaters will do this with thoughtfulness and empathy for the different interests at stake.

### **Background**

The United Nations was established after the Second World War in 1945. It initially consisted of 51 countries. The organization was created to foster international peace and preserve friendly relations between nations. The United Nations has evolved over the years and expanded its membership. Today, 193 countries are UN members. The organization has taken on a vast portfolio of issues ranging from human rights to environmental justice. The United Nations is guided by the purposes, principles, and rules laid out in its founding charter.

The United Nations General Assembly is one of the main organs of the United Nations. It is the main deliberative, policymaking, and representative body of the United Nations. It is composed of all 193 Member States, each of which has one vote. Decisions on important questions, such as those on peace and security, the budget, and the election of the nonpermanent members of the Security Council, are made by a two-thirds majority of the members present and voting. Other questions are decided by a simple majority.

The United Nations Security Council (UNSC) is one of the main organs of the United Nations. Its primary responsibility is to maintain international peace and security. The Security Council has power under Chapter VI of the UN Charter, which authorizes them to call on parties to seek solutions via negotiation. They also have power under Chapter VII to impose sanctions to authorize the use of force. The UNSC has played a key role in resolving many international disputes, including the Korean War, the Cuban Missile Crisis, and the Gulf War. The UNSC has also been involved in peacekeeping operations in many countries, including Cambodia, Mozambique, and El Salvador.

The UNSC has 15 members and five permanent members. The permanent members are China, France, Russia, the United Kingdom, and the United States. These members possess their seats by virtue of their status as the largest victor nations in the aftermath of World War II. The nonpermanent members are elected by the General Assembly for two-year terms. It should be noted that any of the five permanent members of the Security Council can use their veto power to block a resolution passed by the General Assembly. Since the Security Council's inception, Russia has used the veto the most, having blocked 155 resolutions. In comparison, the United States has used the veto 90 times. The most recent time the US exercised veto power was on December 8th, 2023, when it vetoed a resolution that called for a cease-fire in the conflict between Israel and Hamas, as it did not include any condemnation of Hamas for its attacks.

The UNSC's exclusive membership has faced significant backlash, particularly from developing nations who argue that its structure does not accurately represent the current geopolitical landscape. The Council's expansion from six to ten elected members in 1965 and the replacement of the Republic of China (Taiwan) with the People's Republic of China as a permanent member in 1971 has left its composition unchanged ever since. Many countries, such as Brazil, Germany, India, Japan, Nigeria, and South Africa, have sought to enlarge the Security Council or secure permanent seats for themselves. Some proposals for reform include transforming France's seat into a European Union seat. Britain announced its support for Germany receiving a permanent seat. In early 2023, China, France, and Germany called for two permanent seats for Africa on the Security Council. The failure to secure reform has led some countries to seek to diversify their diplomatic efforts through increased involvement with

coalitions outside of the United Nations, such as the Group of Twenty (G20), a bloc of many of the world's largest economies.

### **Strategy Considerations**

The most important question for debaters to resolve before going into a round is what they believe will replace permanent membership on the UN Security Council. This will determine the incentives that shape UN member nations' conduct. The resolution does not specify a specific design for the UN Security Council post-resolution. Therefore, it is up to the debaters to imagine the most likely manifestation of the resolution. They must paint a plausible picture of how the resolution would be implemented. Then, they must explain how the resulting design of the new security council will produce different outcomes from the status quo.

Here are some of the questions that arise from the resolution: If the UN abolishes permanent membership of the Security Council, would it expand seats among the nonpermanent members? Would nonpermanent members get access to the veto power, or would the veto power be removed? If the UN did not expand nonpermanent membership, who would break the tie in the event of a five-to-five vote?

One important question is whether the UN would change the equitable geographical groups used for Security Council nonpermanent member elections. Article V of the UN Charter requires that Security Council nonpermanent members be considered for by an "equitable geographic distribution." By General Assembly resolution, this has been interpreted to mean the African Group has three seats; the Asia-Pacific Group, two; the Eastern European Group,

one; the Latin American and Caribbean Group, two; and the Western European and Others Groups (WEOG), two. This balance reflects the current permanent membership in the UNSC. If permanent membership were abolished, the UN might also be pressured to change its geographic groupings.

### **Affirmative Arguments**

The affirmative arguments mostly concern the inequitable nature of the current permanent membership of the Security Council. Affirmative teams will argue that the five permanent members no longer represent the key voices over international affairs. They will contend that granting the permanent members veto authority is unfairly counter-majoritarian and silences voices from the global south. This has a distorting effect on global public policy and security issues. To this end, affirmative teams will make two types of arguments: they will highlight the shifting composition of global power and provide examples of vetoes by the Security Council members that have stymied global public policy.

The current members of the Security Council are the countries that were the most militarily powerful at the end of World War II. Affirmative teams will argue that this balance of power has shifted, and the Security Council must change to reflect these new realities. Countries like France, the United Kingdom, and Russia are no longer as economically dominant as they were during the 1940s. France and the United Kingdom are also no longer as militarily dominant as they were during that period. Even within Europe, Germany is larger than France. In the ensuing decades, other regions of the world have become more involved on the global scene. Economies like Brazil, India, and Japan have grown tremendously. The world has come to



realize the importance of non-Western perspectives. All of these reasons militate against the ossified composition of the permanent membership of the Security Council.

The second argument that affirmative teams will make is that the permanent membership is unfairly counter-majoritarian. If most countries want to pass UN resolutions about climate change, why should the United States be able to veto it? The affirmative team will argue that the veto power unfairly insulates the permanent five Security Council members from accountability and allows them to protect their allies from reprisals. The affirmative teams can point to numerous examples of high-profile resolutions being vetoed because they conflict with the national interests of permanent members.

### **Negative Arguments**

Negative teams will argue that if permanent membership is removed, the current permanent members will undermine the UN in other ways. They should point out that while a more majoritarian system is good in theory, it presents practical problems that may undermine the stability and workability of the United Nations. They may even paint the specter of countries withdrawing from the United Nations.

The idea of removing permanent membership from the United Nations has been a highly debated topic. While some may argue that a more majoritarian system would be fairer and more democratic, others believe that it could lead to practical problems that may undermine the stability and workability of the United Nations. Negative teams often point out that without permanent membership, the current permanent members would find other ways to undermine the UN's authority and power. They may even suggest that this could lead to

countries withdrawing from the United Nations altogether, further weakening its effectiveness.

Therefore, while the idea of a more majoritarian system is ideal in theory, it may not be

practical in reality and could potentially do more harm than good.

This topic promises to be interesting and reward debaters who can engage in erudite public policy analysis. Good luck!

### **About Jakob Takashi Urda**

Jakob grew up in Brooklyn, New York. He graduated from the University of Chicago with a BA in Political Science and is currently seeking a Juris Doctorate from the Georgetown University Law Center. Jakob debated for Stuyvesant High School where he won Blake, GMU, Ridge, Scarsdale, Columbia, the NCFL national championship, and amassed 11 bids. He coached the winners of the NCFL national tournament, Harvard, and Blake.

## **Topic Analysis By Rachel Mauchline**

***Resolved: The United Nations should abolish permanent membership on its Security Council.***

### **Introduction**

We've made it, folks. We've got a topic that is not from the context of (exclusively) the United States. The great thing is that either topic you voted for this month met that criterion, whether it be the UN or the Republic of Korea. It's interesting to examine the vote outcome, with 71% of coaches voting for this topic but only 48% of students voting for this option. This topic allows students to examine the role that the UN Security Council plays when it comes to international security and collaboration. This is uniquely important to consider outside of the context of debate, especially with the growing number of security concerns that are happening throughout the world. Debate is always a very impact-heavy activity, but this topic allows an examination of how real organizations attempt to create proposals and initiatives. The UN Security Council is an attempt to multilaterally work together to resolve international conflicts, concerns, and situations. This topic is an opportunity to examine the pros and cons of such a council, along with the role of permanent membership. While this topic analysis and brief provide a strong preview as you prepare for the month of April, I do have a reading recommendation that I would highly recommend to those who are planning to debate on this topic. The Council of Foreign Relations<sup>1</sup> has an article that provides a holistic examination of the UN Security Council. It's a background article that is constantly updated as needed.

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.cfr.org/backgrounder/un-security-council>

Based on current conflicts around the world, the April resolution examines how the idea of permanent membership, especially with the P5 and the UNSC being in place since WW2, impacts the ability to protect countries throughout the entire world. As we approach tournaments such as the UKTOC and Last Chance NSDA Qualifier, it will be interesting to see how teams are able to adjust their strategy based on who the judge is at the back of the room. The structure of the UN Security Council is different from that of the March topic with NCAA athletes. Individuals will not just have a default understanding of how the Security Council operates. Instead, teams in the debate will need to have some preliminary understanding, especially in more lay-driven cases they construct. I would urge teams to not make the debate too much of a history lesson but instead embed the history within the warranting on both sides of the debate.

### **Strategy Considerations**

With the April topic being high stakes for many students with state and national tournaments that are near the conclusion of the season, strategy is important for success on this topic. While lots of individuals will put a lot of stress on their performance this month, I would encourage individuals to remember that debate is about fun before anything else. You should enjoy your process of preparing for tournaments. The first step to that is having a full and holistic understanding of the topic to the best knowledge possible. This topic will require individuals to read about the interworkings of the UN since its development in 1945. The world has changed drastically since then, and in 2024, the question can be asked: Is a system that was created nearly 80 years ago still a strong one to resolve geopolitical conflicts and protect

international security? This central question will shape the strategy that both sides will take throughout this debate.

The most key term within the resolution is that of 'abolish permanent membership.' This is simply because it is the action of the resolution. It is important that while an examination of the UN and the UNSC can impact the debate, the resolution is about the questioning of permanent membership on the council. The more basic interpretation of this phrase is that by voting for the pro, no member of the Security Council will be permanent. All countries will be non-permanent members. This structure of the UNSC currently has members elected by the UN General Assembly with two-year terms and various geographic memberships. The P5 are the five members of the UN Security Council who are currently permanent members. These countries are currently:

- China
- France
- Russia
- United Kingdom
- United States

Being a permanent member of the UN Security Council allows these countries to have veto power. This power can completely stop resolutions from the UNSC, even if a majority of votes from the 15 members is present. This can shut down proposed actions and impact many potential solutions to conflicts. The veto is also not a figurative concept that could be used, but one that has been used and potentially overused by some of the P5 in their own interests rather than that of the globe. Russia, both now and previously as the Soviet Union, has utilized

the veto 155 times. The United States has utilized the veto 90 times. China is more of a middle-of-the-pack country when it comes to using the veto power. France and the United Kingdom have not used their veto power since 1989. It's interesting how the veto power can shape the actions and decisions of the UNSC overall. Abolishing such power would eliminate the opportunity for these countries to have such control over the world, especially when actions of the veto might be for their own interests and not in line with the entire purpose of the UN or the UNSC in general. However, without permanent membership, there is the question of constant instability on the UNSC. With the current structure of two-year terms, there is limited consistency.

This leads to the interesting concept that I am sure some teams may choose to delve into when it comes to how "abolishing permanent membership" could lead to some additional actions. These actions are most likely extra topical in nature, such as changing the process of member selection or a rotating system of permanent membership. I am curious if these approaches will be successful in execution. The literature in my research that discusses the UNSC does discuss possible reforms, so I am sure there is some room for argumentation there, but I would be cautious about framing them as advocacies or counter-advocacies and drifting too far from the core of the resolution.

The other strategic question that I think is important to consider is about the selection of these permanent members. Is the issue with permanent membership related to the idea of the veto or instead about the countries that currently have the power? Should countries that have permanent membership have certain criteria to meet with their stance on specific worldly issues? I think these are all interesting questions that both teams can use in cross or in the

narratives that they create for their own benefit. It also means that both positions for teams on this topic need to be clear on what their stance is. When creating cases on this topic, teams should use examples of how the veto has been used and the implications that it has had on the mission of the UNSC and the UN in general. This will allow the debate to be more realistic in nature rather than focusing on the hypothetical about what the veto COULD do, but rather how it has impacted the world overall. This also helps provide more clarity to the topic for individuals without knowledge of the topic by default.

### **Affirmative Arguments**

The central thesis that most pro teams will consider for their argumentation is that of efficiency. The UNSC was developed with a specific goal in mind in the wake of WW2: to provide stability and peace to the world. The current structure of permanent membership has allowed the veto to have control over the well-being of specific groups and countries around the world. It's the narrative that five countries, and truly just 1 with a veto, can control the prospect of the international community. You can create a metaphor that uses this logic in a way a judge would find compelling. The pro can stand by the fact that this structure of membership is out of date and creates a council that is ineffective in achieving its overall purpose.

The first argument that can be considered is that of effectiveness. Foreign Policy <sup>2</sup>wrote in 2020 about how the effectiveness of the UN in general was really brought to light in 2020

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<sup>2</sup> <https://foreignpolicy.com/2020/09/17/decolonizing-united-nations-means-abolish-permanent-five-security-council/>

with the COVID-19 pandemic, as well as the 60th anniversary of its creation. Now, four years later, there are growing questions being raised about how the UNSC can act around the world. As the P5 countries can veto decisions for so many, the UNSC is not able to achieve its goals. Teams can engage in this argumentation with examples but can also consider the growing geopolitical situations that the UNSC is not doing enough of. This allows a laundry list of impacts to be considered and then weighed against the prospective con arguments.

Another pro argument to consider is the diversity of the council. A structure that is 'permanent' in nature provides little opportunity for other countries to come into the fold, even those that need more representation or have a perspective that is not currently in the P5. The countries selected 75 years ago are not the same ones that encompass the world or other countries that need to be at the table for decisions. There are many specific countries that teams can isolate as important actors to be at the table, such as India, that would provide insight the current P5 doesn't have. Teams would have the ability to explain why the diversity of the council solves back the XYZ conflict.

### **Negative Arguments**

The con on this topic is the notion of the status quo on their side. This system has been in place since 1945 and has not changed. Why is that? It's simple: change is hard. This narrative will assist con teams in how they construct their response to the notion that the system is broken with the P5. The current structure of the P5 is one that is very much a quid pro quo relationship.



Thus, the first argument to consider is the amount of support the P5 provides the UN in support of missions and initiatives. This support comes in the biggest sum of money. If the P5 countries are not given the ability to veto, it would not be shocking for those countries to stop funneling projects into the UN. This would, in turn, lead to bigger concerns on the world scale. If there isn't money to complete projects that are vital to the peace and security of countries, then what happens? The impacts of these could take the pro scenarios and magnify them greatly. The impact story could also be about how funding makes the problems of the pro inherently worse, which means even if the pro is correct, voting con is the best option to save the most lives, etc.

The second argument I would be interested in seeing on this topic for the con is the potential backlash that comes from a change. P5 countries with the ability to veto have been able to have control but also abide by the expectations of being members of the UNSC. If that membership isn't guaranteed, would those countries still act for the greater good on the UN mission? This is a question that con teams could very easily say no to. The conflicts currently happening throughout the world are a testament to how P5 countries could backlash against the reform and act in their own interest more than a veto could have caused.

Overall, this topic is one that will be interesting to judge. Good luck to all the debaters on this topic, especially those ending their debate season or even their debate careers on this great topic.

## **Topic Analysis By Yair Fraifeld**

***Resolved: The United Nations should abolish permanent membership on its Security Council.***

### **Introduction**

The United Nations Security Council (UNSC) is one of the most pivotal structures within the global governance framework, and it is tasked with maintaining international peace and security. The Security Council comprises five members (the United States, the United Kingdom, France, Russia, and China), and each has a veto power, which can be used to block the adoption of resolutions. This arrangement was designed to ensure the involvement of the major powers in global peacekeeping efforts following World War II. However, the contemporary relevance and fairness of the permanent membership and its associated veto power have become subjects of intense debate, leading to calls for reform.

The debate on whether or not the UN should abolish permanent membership of the Security Council is a contentious one. Abolishing permanent membership challenges the foundational structure of the UNSC and invites a reconsideration of what it means to have power and representation in international affairs. As debaters delve into this complex issue, they are tasked with understanding historical context, legal considerations, and changes to geopolitics. The debate asks debaters to weigh the principles of sovereignty, equality among nations, and the practicalities of international diplomacy against the rapid changes that are occurring in today's world. It also challenges future generations to envision a more inclusive, democratic, and effective framework for maintaining international peace and security.

### **Strategy Considerations**

Debating the topic of whether the United Nations should abolish permanent membership on its Security Council requires a deep dive into how the UN works and why some countries have more power than others. First, understanding that the UNSC has five countries (the US, the UK, France, Russia, and China) with special status, meaning they can veto or block decisions, is key. These countries have held onto this power since World War II, but the world has changed a lot since then. Some people argue this system is outdated and unfair, making this topic super relevant and interesting for debate. When arguing for abolishing permanent membership, you could focus on how the current system doesn't reflect today's global power dynamics. Importantly, you will want to have a few examples in your back pocket of times that the UNSC has not acted in a way that is positive for geopolitics. You might argue that it's unfair for only five countries to have so much control, which can stop the UN from acting quickly on important issues. This side of the debate can push for a more modern and democratic UN that represents the world more fairly.

On the other hand, if you're arguing against abolishing permanent membership, you could say that these five countries play a crucial role in keeping global peace and that their veto power prevents hasty decisions that could lead to conflict. You might also worry about what would happen if we change the system—how do we decide who gets power and ensure it's fair? This side of the debate needs to consider how important stability and experience are in making global decisions. Discuss how the veto power can actually prevent rash decisions that might escalate conflicts. However, be prepared to address criticisms of the current system being outdated or unfair. Your strategy should balance acknowledging the system's flaws while

emphasizing the risks of drastic changes. Debating this topic lets you explore big ideas about fairness, power, and how the world should be governed.

### **Affirmative Arguments**

A few arguments in favor of abolishing permanent membership in the UNSC are that it would enhance democratic representation, reduce paralysis in decision-making by veto, and promote equitable geopolitical influence. Teams may argue that abolishing permanent membership on the UNSC would enhance the democratic representation within the organization, aligning it more closely with contemporary global dynamics. They might contend that the UNSC currently reflects the post-World War II power balance rather than today's geopolitics, including the emergence of new economic and political powers that deserve representation on the UNSC. By removing permanent memberships, the UNSC could rotate its members more equitably among the UN's member states, allowing for a more representative and fair distribution of voice and power. This change could lead to a more legitimate and credible UN, as decisions would be seen as reflecting the broader international community's interests rather than those of a select few. It would encourage greater cooperation, potentially leading to more effective and universally accepted conflict resolution and peacekeeping efforts.

Next, teams may argue that abolishing permanent membership and its associated veto power would lead to more timely and decisive action in international crises. The veto power has sometimes led to a deadlock on critical issues, preventing the UN from responding effectively to international crises, humanitarian emergencies, and security threats. This paralysis undermines the UN's primary purpose: maintaining international peace and security.

By eliminating permanent memberships and the veto, the UNSC could adopt a more democratic and majority-based decision-making process. Without the constant threat of a veto, the UNSC could act more swiftly and decisively in crisis situations. This would enable more efficient responses to global challenges, from conflict resolution to humanitarian aid delivery, enhancing the UN's ability to fulfill its peacekeeping and security missions.

Finally, many teams will argue that the elimination of permanent membership would lead to a more equitable distribution of geopolitical influence, better reflecting the modern international order and promoting global equity. The current system disproportionately concentrates power in the hands of the five permanent members. This imbalance perpetuates a sense of injustice and inequality, as it denies emerging powers and regions their place and influence in global decision-making processes. By abolishing permanent memberships, the UN could look to alternative forms of implementation to better promote equitable distribution of geopolitical influence. A more equitable system would not only correct historical imbalances but also foster a sense of global solidarity and mutual respect. It could lead to more balanced and fair international policies, reduce geopolitical tensions, and encourage a more cooperative approach to solving global problems. This shift would ultimately contribute to a more stable and peaceful world order, with all nations feeling they have a stake in decisions.

### **Negative Arguments**

Teams on the Con will likely argue that the UNSC currently ensures global stability through experienced leadership, the UNSC prevents gridlock through the veto, and that the UNSC does, indeed, reflect the realities of geopolitics today. The argument that the UNSC

ensures global stability comes from the fact that the United States, the United Kingdom, France, Russia, and China are not only among the largest contributors to the UN's budget but also possess significant military, diplomatic, and economic resources crucial for peacekeeping and conflict resolution efforts. Their permanent status allows for continuity and consistency in leadership, drawing on decades of diplomatic experience and the practical realities of international relations. This setup ensures that those with the most at stake in global stability and the resources to play a central role in maintaining it. The presence of experienced powers on the UNSC helps prevent conflicts from escalating and ensures more effective responses to global crises. Removing the permanent members could lead to a loss of vital support for peacekeeping missions, undermining global stability and security.

The argument that the UNSC prevents gridlock through the veto comes from the idea that making hasty decisions could lead to international gridlock or exacerbate conflicts. Therefore, the argument follows that the veto power acts as a check within the UN system, ensuring that any action taken by the UNSC has the backing of all major powers, thereby preventing unilateral decisions that could lead to major international disputes. By preventing rushed or poorly considered decisions, the veto power contributes to a more stable international environment. It ensures that the actions of the UNSC are measured, well-thought-out, and less likely to lead to unintended consequences that could escalate conflicts or create new ones.

Finally, teams may argue that the current UNSC aligns with the truth of how international power dynamics work in today's world. The UNSC recognizes the roles of those nations most capable of shaping global outcomes. Acknowledging and leveraging the influence

of the five permanent council members contribute to more realistic and effective governance at the international level. Their involvement ensures that the UNSC's decisions are enforceable and respected, enhancing the overall efficacy of the United Nations in fulfilling its mission. Stripping these nations of their permanent status could lead to a disconnect between the Council's decisions and the geopolitical realities, potentially rendering the UN ineffective in addressing global challenges.

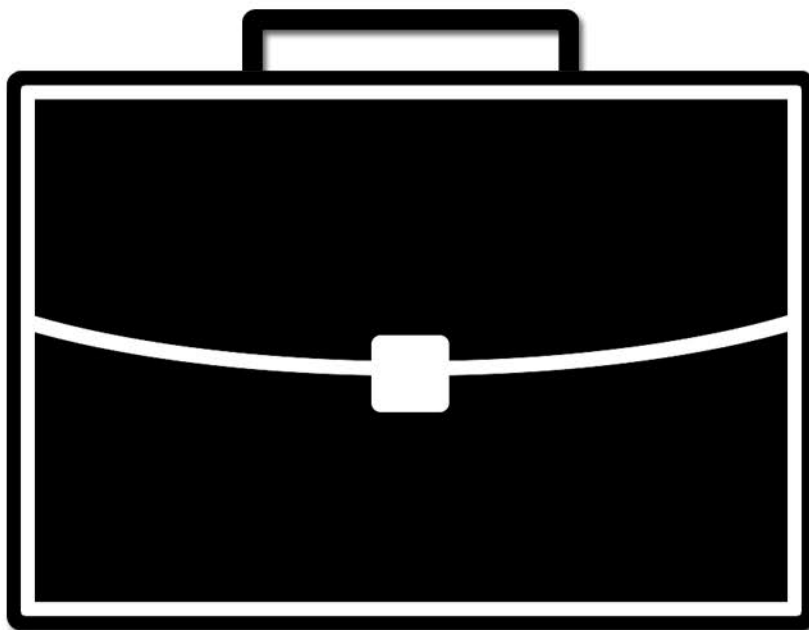
### **Conclusion**

The debate on whether to remove permanent seats from the UNSC is really about how we can make this important group work better for everyone in the world. Some people think getting rid of these permanent spots will make the Council fairer and more up-to-date, giving a chance for more countries to have their say and help solve global problems faster. However, others argue that the countries with permanent seats are very important for keeping the world safe because they have a lot of resources and experience. They worry that without these permanent members, the Council might not make decisions as effectively, which could lead to more problems. Ultimately, debaters will be tasked to use examples and think of unique ways to respond to teams' arguments, sometimes also responding to their examples directly.

# Champion Briefs

April 2024

Public Forum Brief



General  
Information



**General Information**

***Resolved: The United Nations should abolish permanent membership on its Security Council.***

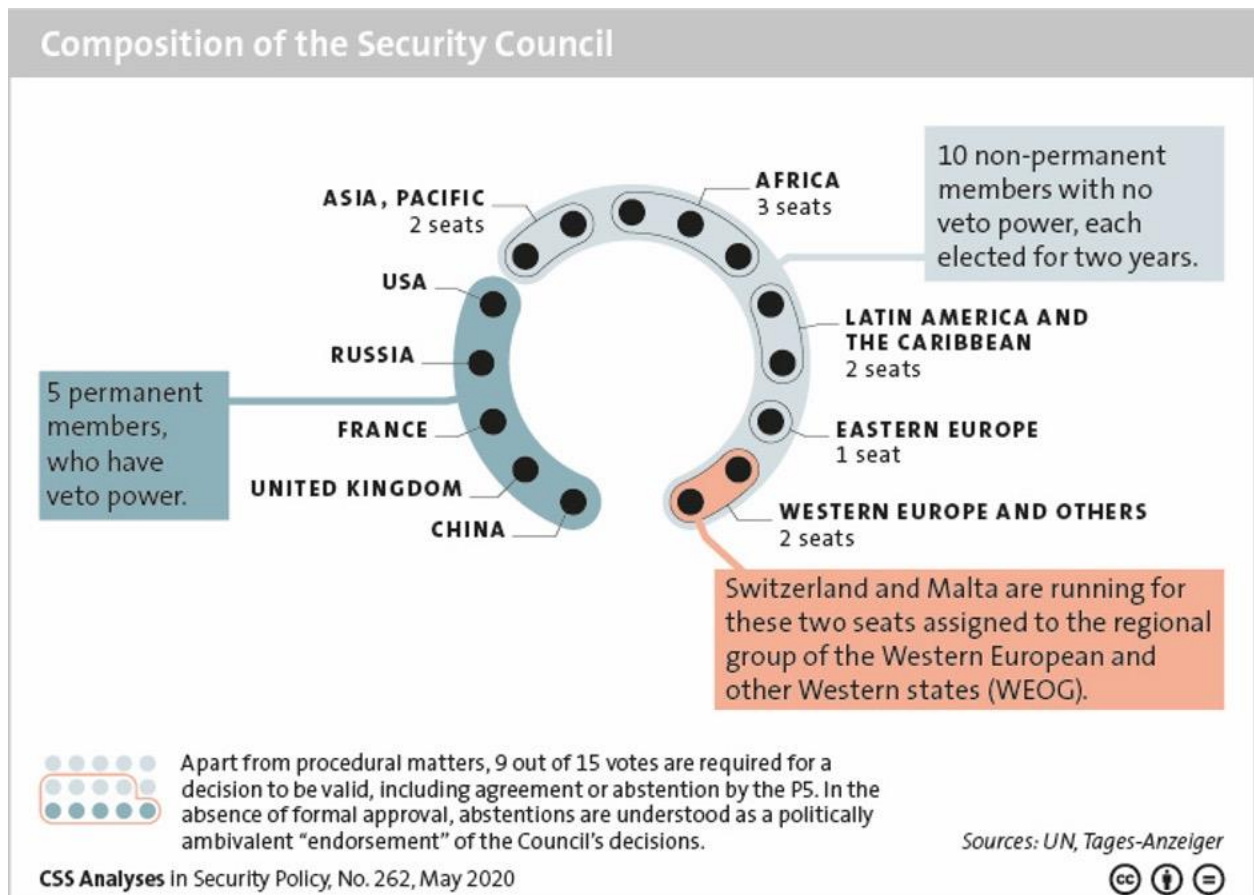
**Foreword:** We at Champion Briefs feel that having deep knowledge about a topic is just as valuable as formulating the right arguments. Having general background knowledge about the topic area helps debaters form more coherent arguments from their breadth of knowledge. As such, we have compiled general information on the key concepts and general areas that we feel will best suit you for in- and out-of-round use. Any strong strategy or argument must be built from a strong foundation of information; we hope that you will utilize this section to help build that foundation.

### **What is the United Nations?**

The United Nations (UN) is a global organization with the aim of maintaining international peace and security, promoting international cooperation, developing friendly relations among nations, and serving as a center for harmonizing the actions of nations. It is the largest international organization in the world, headquartered in New York City, with other offices in Geneva, Nairobi, Vienna, and The Hague.

The UN was established after World War II to prevent future world wars and replaced the ineffective League of Nations. The UN Charter was adopted on 25 June 1945, and the UN began operations on 24 October 1945. Its objectives, as defined by its charter, include maintaining international peace and security, upholding international law, protecting human rights, delivering humanitarian aid, and promoting sustainable development.

The UN's early decades were complicated by Cold War tensions between the US and Soviet Union and their respective allies. However, its mission expanded significantly following widespread decolonization in the 1960s, and after the end of the Cold War in 1991, the UN shifted and expanded its field operations, undertaking a variety of complex tasks.



### **What is the UN Security Council?**

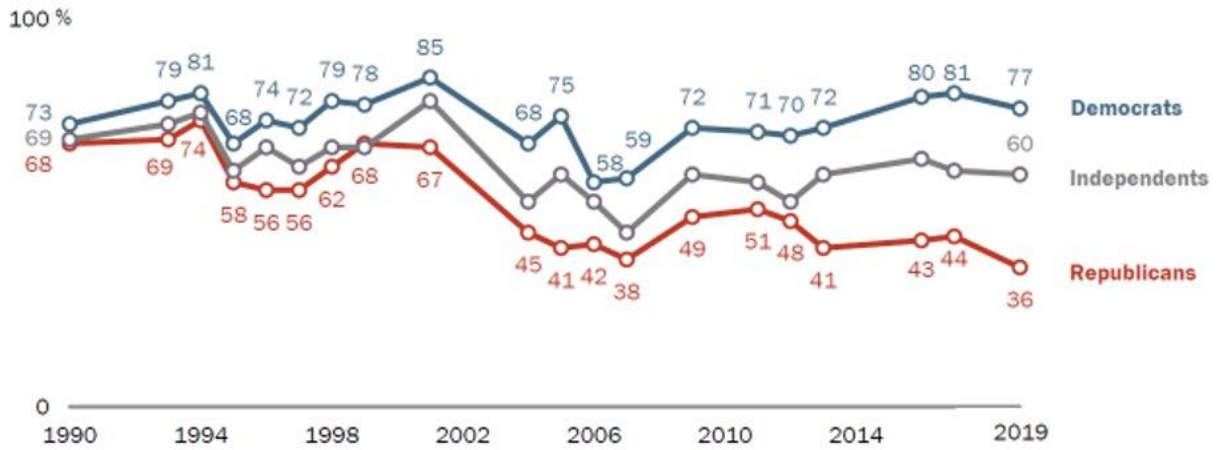
The Security Council has primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security. It has 15 Members, and each Member has one vote. Under the Charter of the United Nations, all Member States are obligated to comply with Council decisions.

The Security Council takes the lead in determining the existence of a threat to the peace or act of aggression. It calls upon the parties to a dispute to settle it by peaceful means and recommends methods of adjustment or terms of settlement. In some cases, the Security Council can resort to imposing sanctions or even authorize the use of force to maintain or restore international peace and security.

The Security Council is composed of fifteen members, out of which five are permanent, namely China, France, Russia, the United Kingdom, and the United States. These five great powers were the victors of World War II or their successor states. The permanent members hold the authority to veto any substantial Security Council resolution, including those related to the admission of new member states to the United Nations or economic sanctions. However, this veto right does not apply to any General Assembly or emergency special sessions of the General Assembly. The remaining ten members are elected based on a regional basis for a duration of two years. The presidency of the council rotates monthly amongst its members.

**Partisan gap on views of the UN have widened over time in the U.S.**

% among \_\_\_ who say they have a favorable view of the United Nations



Source: Pew Research Center surveys 1990-2003, 2005 and 2017. Spring 2019 Global Attitudes Survey. Q8e.

PEW RESEARCH CENTER

### How has the veto power been exercised?

One of the most significant differences between permanent and non-permanent members of the UN Security Council is the veto. According to Article 27(3) of the Charter, all important decisions made by the Council require the agreement of the permanent members. The veto power is regularly discussed during the annual working methods debates and is one of the most commonly raised topics during Council working methods discussions.

The permanent members of the United Nations use the veto power to defend their national interests, uphold their foreign policy principles, or to promote a specific issue that is particularly important to their state. The first veto was cast by the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR) on 16th February 1946, on a draft resolution related to the withdrawal of foreign troops from Lebanon and Syria. Since then, the veto has been used 293 times.

In the early years of the United Nations, the Soviet Union cast most of the vetoes. They used a considerable number of these to block the admission of new member states. Over the years, the USSR and later Russia cast a total of 120 vetoes, which is close to half of all vetoes. The United States cast its first of 82 vetoes to date on March 17th, 1970. By that point, the USSR had already cast 107 vetoes. Since 1970, the US has used the veto far more than any other permanent member. They have mostly used it to block decisions that they believe are harmful to Israel's interests. The United Kingdom has used the veto 29 times, with the first instance occurring on October 30th, 1956, during the Suez crisis. France applied the veto for the first time on June 26th, 1946, regarding the Spanish Question. They have cast a total of 16 vetoes. China has used the veto 16 times. The Republic of China (ROC) cast the first veto on December 14th, 1955, and the remaining 13 were cast by the People's Republic of China after it succeeded ROC as a permanent member on October 25<sup>th</sup>, 1971.

### Which Countries Contribute the Most Peacekeepers?

Number of UN personnel contributed



Note: Personnel data is for peacekeepers that were actively deployed as of November 30, 2023.

Source: United Nations.

COUNCIL *on*  
FOREIGN  
RELATIONS

**What is the relationship between the Security Council and military force?**

According to the UN charter, military force can only be used in self-defense or with authorization from the Security Council. However, countries and coalitions have often used force outside of these contexts.

One of the key questions is how the Security Council should approach humanitarian intervention—the authorization to deploy military force in order to secure human rights. The emergence of the Responsibility to Protect (R2P) doctrine in the early 2000s appeared to justify the use of force outside Security Council authorization by qualifying the principle of noninterference in sovereign affairs. The doctrine adopted by the UN General Assembly in 2005 states that it is the responsibility of states to protect their populations from crimes against humanity. The international community has a duty to use peaceful means to protect endangered populations. In cases where a state fails to fulfill its responsibilities, collective coercive measures should be taken.

The idea of humanitarian intervention being legitimate with the support of regional organizations or "coalitions of the willing" has been advocated by successive U.S. administrations. However, in 2008, UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon contradicted this stance by stating that "The responsibility to protect" does not change, but rather reinforces, the legal responsibilities of Member States to avoid using force, except in compliance with the Charter. The issue of humanitarian intervention has been a topic of debate in recent years. This debate was revived before the NATO-led Libya intervention in 2011 and during the ongoing Syrian civil war. Russian officials have sometimes claimed that the invasion of Ukraine was necessary for humanitarian reasons. However, Western analysts argue that this war is a violation of international law.



### Russia Uses the Veto More Than Other P5 Countries

Vetoes of UN Security Council resolutions

Country ▾	Since 1991 dissolution of USSR	Before dissolution of USSR
United States	21	69
United Kingdom	0	32
Russia/USSR	35	120
France	0	18
China	17	3

Source: United Nations.

COUNCIL *on*  
FOREIGN  
RELATIONS

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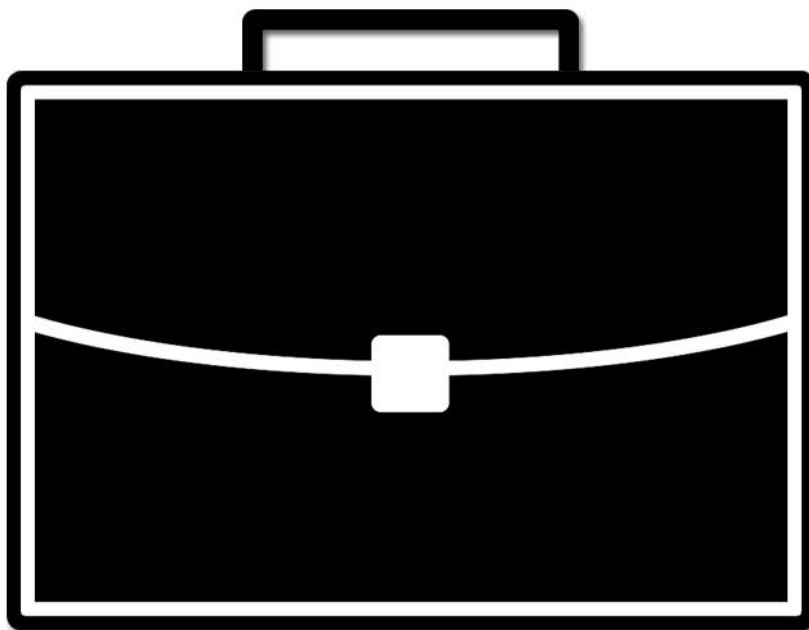
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# Champion Briefs

April 2024

Public Forum Brief



Pro Arguments

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**PRO: Permanent Membership Is Undemocratic.**

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**Argument:** Permanent members are not democratically elected and so inherently illegitimate compared to the elected members.

**Warrant:** The Security Council is unrepresentative of the world's population and ideals

Patrick, Stewart et. al. "UN Security Council Reform: What the World Thinks." *Carnegie Endowment for International Peace*, June 28, 2023, <https://carnegieendowment.org/2023/06/28/un-security-council-reform-what-world-thinks-pub-90032>. Accessed March 8, 2024.

Compounding these frustrations about membership, each of the P5 countries retains a veto permitting it to unilaterally block Security Council resolutions inimical to its national interests (as Russia has done with respect to Ukraine). The result is frequent council paralysis, exacerbated by deepening geopolitical rivalry between Western democracies and authoritarian China and Russia. **To a growing proportion of the world's governments and citizens, the council today is both feckless and unjust, dominated by irresponsible and unrepresentative powers inclined to abuse their position rather than safeguard the peace. Restoring the council's effectiveness and legitimacy, critics contend, requires updating its anachronistic composition and unfair decisionmaking rules to better reflect ongoing shifts in global power and emerging centers of moral authority.** Unfortunately, UN members are divided over the shape of any reform, not least whether it should focus on enhancing the council's capability or its representativeness. Thanks to this diplomatic deadlock, the Security Council is trapped in amber.

**Warrant:** African nations have been denied a permanent seat on the security council for decades

Wasike, Andrew. "Kenya's president calls UN Security Council 'undemocratic, dysfunctional.'" *Anadolu Agency*, September 22, 2023, <https://www.aa.com.tr/en/africa/kenya-s-president-calls-un-security-council-undemocratic-dysfunctional-/2998462>. Accessed March 8, 2024.

Ruto told world leaders that the world is headed in a most undesirable direction, noting that multilateralism has been failed by abuse of trust, negligence and impunity by the international community. **Over the years, African nations have emphasized the importance of equitable representation on the international stage, underlining the need for the Council to better reflect the diverse voices and perspectives of the African continent and the broader global community. Africa has steadfastly championed its demand for a permanent seat within the UN Security Council, a cause that has been tirelessly pursued since 2005.**

**Warrant:** Attempts at reforming the system without abolishing permanent membership have gone unanswered

Xie, John. "Biden's Call to Expand UNSC Membership Likely to Go Unheeded." *VOA*, September 21, 2023, <https://www.voanews.com/a/biden-s-call-to-expand-unsc-membership-likely-to-go-unheeded-/7279316.html>. Accessed March 8, 2024.

Ungar said that while Biden expressed support for Security Council expansion, he did not make specific suggestions. **"The process of choosing who would join will be almost impossible to manage," Elliott Abrams, senior fellow for Middle Eastern studies at the Council on Foreign Relations, told VOA in an email. "Enlarging the UNSC will make it more unwieldy and even less able than it is now to reach decisions." A survey of major strategists around the world released in July by the Atlantic Council, a Washington-based think tank, found that 64% of respondents believed that the Security Council**

**would not add any new permanent members in the next 10 years.** The survey found that if a new country were to be added it would most likely be India, Japan or Brazil.

**Impact:** Democracy is key to protecting human rights

Melhem, Dina. "Democracy and human rights are two sides of the same coin."

*Westminster Foundation for Democracy*, December 10, 2019,

<https://www.wfd.org/commentary/democracy-and-human-rights-are-two-sides-same-coin>. Accessed March 8, 2024.

Despite progress in the global fight for human rights, the world today continues to suffer from civil wars, the widespread use of torture, human trafficking, inequalities and exclusion, environmental degradation, the rise of terrorism and the recurrence of abominable crimes. In the face of such challenges, we must remember that the path to the fulfilment of human rights intersects with many others. **The paths to democracy and the rule of law, to peace, to sustainable development, and to equality and an end to discrimination, all point the way to tackling the biggest current threats to democracy, including the rise of populism and increasing attempts to close political space. In any work that aims to strengthen democratic practices it is important to recall the synergy between them. Above all, a human rights approach to democracy support is critical.**

**Impact:** Democracy is key to a thriving global economy

Dizikes, Peter. "Study: Democracy fosters economic growth." *MIT News*, March 7, 2019,

<https://news.mit.edu/2019/study-democracy-fosters-economic-growth-acemoglu-0307>. Accessed March 8, 2024.

**But a new study co-authored by an MIT economist shows that when it comes to growth, democracy significantly increases development. Indeed, countries switching to**

democratic rule experience a 20 percent increase in GDP over a 25-year period, compared to what would have happened had they remained authoritarian states, the researchers report. “I don’t find it surprising that it should be a big effect, because this is a big event, and nondemocracies, dictatorships, are messed up in many dimensions,” says Daron Acemoglu, an MIT economist and co-author of the new paper about the study. Overall, Acemoglu notes, democracies employ broad-based investment, especially in health and human capital, which is lacking in authoritarian states.

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**PRO: Permanent Member's Veto Power Is Undemocratic.**

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**Argument:** The veto power is countermajoritarian because it allows the few to countermand the will of the many.

**Warrant:** Permanent member's use of veto power nullifies majority rule

Christopher, Fiemotongha et. al. "The UN Security Council Permanent Membership: The Troubling Trend of Expansion and Hegemony." *Open Journal of Political Science*, vol. 11, no. 2, <https://www.scirp.org/journal/paperinformation?paperid=108678>. Accessed March 8, 2024.

**The UN charter, empowers the permanent members to apply their "veto" power in every substantive matter, which means that in every real and important matter, (aside procedural matters) the decision of the permanent members will prevail, in such a way that, all five permanent members must support a matter, for it to scale through, otherwise one contrary vote from a permanent member on a substantive issue, nullifies the whole process.** Thus, the Security Council members collectively have the power to block any substantive recommendation of the general Assembly by their veto, while any of the five permanent members can block any substantive decision of the Security Council by her veto. Consequently, the United Nations collective security system can only work if there is full agreement among members (Edmund, 2006).

**Warrant:** Permanent members have blocked attempts at reform of the veto process

Christopher, Fiemotongha et. al. "The UN Security Council Permanent Membership: The Troubling Trend of Expansion and Hegemony." *Open Journal of Political Science*,



vol. 11, no. 2, <https://www.scirp.org/journal/paperinformation?paperid=108678>.  
Accessed March 8, 2024.

The veto power provision contradicts the sovereign equality provision and is incompatible with the ethics of democracy, championed by the west as the best form of government. Though several scholarly arguments have been put forward either for expansion or replacement, of the permanent members, **the provision is undemocratic and negates the essence of democracy. The clandestine motive of the veto power provision was made known by the then US Secretary of state hull, when he asserted that the veto principle was incorporated into it primarily on account of the united states, and with respect to the proposed security council that “our government would not remain there a day without retaining its veto power”** (hull in Obi & Ozor, 2009).

**Warrant:** Even the threat of a veto is enough to threaten majority rule

Wouters, Jan and Tom Ruys. “Security Council Reform: A New Veto for a New Century?”  
*Royal Institute for International Relations*, August 2005,  
<https://aei.pitt.edu/8980/1/ep9.pdf>. Accessed March 8, 2024.

Permanent members have not only exerted their prerogatives to shield friendly States from condemnation or economic sanctions, they have also used it to stall peacekeeping or peace enforcement operations. It was already mentioned that China temporarily impeded the continuation of UN peacekeeping missions in order to penalise UN Member States maintaining close relations with Taiwan. **More importantly, the threat of permanent members to use the veto (the ‘hidden’ veto) is partly responsible for some of the most tragic failures in the sixty-year history of the United Nations. The most obvious example relates to the 1994 Rwandan genocide, which lasted for four months and left 800,000 people dead. When the Security Council considered the possibility of intervening to halt the massacres, two permanent members, France and the United**

**States (the latter partially motivated by the loss of 18 soldiers in Somalia in 1993) blocked the establishment of a robust intervention force.** The two countries moreover used their hidden veto to weaken the definition of the crisis under international law, carefully avoiding the term ‘genocide’.

**Impact:** Democracy is key to protecting human rights

Melhem, Dina. “Democracy and human rights are two sides of the same coin.”

*Westminster Foundation for Democracy*, December 10, 2019,

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**Impact:** Democracy is key to a thriving global economy

Dizikes, Peter. “Study: Democracy fosters economic growth.” *MIT News*, March 7, 2019,

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But a new study co-authored by an MIT economist shows that when it comes to growth, democracy significantly increases development. Indeed, countries switching to democratic rule experience a 20 percent increase in GDP over a 25-year period, compared to what would have happened had they remained authoritarian states, the researchers report. “I don’t find it surprising that it should be a big effect, because this is a big event, and nondemocracies, dictatorships, are messed up in many dimensions,” says Daron Acemoglu, an MIT economist and co-author of the new paper about the study. Overall, Acemoglu notes, democracies employ broad-based investment, especially in health and human capital, which is lacking in authoritarian states.

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**PRO: Permanent Membership Erodes UNSC Credibility.**

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**Argument:** The permanent membership makes the UNSC seem unrepresentative and detached from ordinary affairs.

**Warrant:** Vetoes leading to inaction have hurt the Security Council's credibility among the rest of the UN

Tekin, Esra. "UN Security Council's authority, credibility severely undermined: UN chief." *Anadolu Agency*, <https://www.aa.com.tr/en/middle-east/un-security-councils-authority-credibility-severely-undermined-un-chief/3078707>. Accessed March 8, 2024.

**United Nations Secretary-General Antonio Guterres said on Sunday that the credibility and authority of the UN Security Council suffered significant damage over the Gaza conflict. "The delay comes at a cost, the council's authority and credibility were severely undermined and the resolution is not being implemented," Guterres said about the previously passed UN resolution calling for more humanitarian aid. Speaking at the Doha Forum held in Qatar, Guterres criticized the UN Security Council's "resounding silence" over the Gaza conflict. "The horrific attacks by Hamas on Oct. 7, followed by the relentless Israeli bombardment of Gaza were met by a resounding silence from the Council. After more than one month, the Council finally passed the resolution, which I welcome," he said, but regretted that the resolution is not being implemented.**

**Warrant:** Use of veto power has prevented action in a wide variety of previous conflicts

Wouters, Jan and Tom Ruys. "Security Council Reform: A New Veto for a New Century?" Royal Institute for International Relations, August 2005, <https://aei.pitt.edu/8980/1/ep9.pdf>. Accessed March 8, 2024.

Permanent members have not only exerted their prerogatives to shield friendly States from condemnation or economic sanctions, they have also used it to stall peacekeeping or peace enforcement operations. It was already mentioned that China temporarily impeded the continuation of UN peacekeeping missions in order to penalise UN Member States maintaining close relations with Taiwan. **More importantly, the threat of permanent members to use the veto (the 'hidden' veto) is partly responsible for some of the most tragic failures in the sixty-year history of the United Nations. The most obvious example relates to the 1994 Rwandan genocide, which lasted for four months and left 800,000 people dead. When the Security Council considered the possibility of intervening to halt the massacres, two permanent members, France and the United States (the latter partially motivated by the loss of 18 soldiers in Somalia in 1993) blocked the establishment of a robust intervention force.** The two countries moreover used their hidden veto to weaken the definition of the crisis under international law, carefully avoiding the term 'genocide'.

**Warrant:** The Security Council has not learned lessons from those previous failures

Keating, Colin. "Rwanda: the Political Failure of the UN Security Council." *Journal of International Peacekeeping*, vol. 22, no. 1, <https://doi.org/10.1163/18754112-0220104003>. Accessed March 8, 2024.

But my experience, from involvement in New Zealand's most recent term on the Security Council, in 2015–16, suggests that the Security Council has still not internalised all the necessary lessons. **Looking at the situation in 2019, I find it difficult to escape the conclusion that much of what should have been learned by the Security Council from**

the Rwanda tragedy is either absent or eroding. There is increasing pressure, primarily from Russia and China, but also more recently the US as well, to roll back some of the thematic agenda. The overall deterioration in the state of global relations over the past decade is also a contributing factor to this conclusion. Current tensions between the major powers seem to be undermining the implementation of the lessons from the past and putting at risk the improvements in peacekeeping achieved over the past two decades.

**Impact:** Low security council credibility harms global perceptions of the United Nations

“Credibility and relevance of UN on the line over Security Council reform, warns Assembly President.” *UN News*, November 17, 2022, <https://news.un.org/en/story/2022/11/1130767>. Accessed March 8, 2024.

“During High-Level Week, one-third of world leaders underscored the urgent need to reform the Council – more than double the number in 2021. They are looking to the General Assembly to lead on change. **“We should admit that this is about the credibility and the relevance of the United Nations.” He told ambassadors that the Assembly needed to decide to go either go through the motions, or “swing into action”. “You simply must answer this call. The General Assembly is, quite literally, the only UN body with a mandate to seek a solution to the question of Security Council reform. I count on you, the Member States, to drive the transformation now urgently needed.”**

**Impact:** Inaction in Rwanda resulted in hundreds of thousands of preventable deaths

“Rwanda genocide of 1994.” *Encyclopedia Britannica*, January 24, 2024, <https://www.britannica.com/event/Rwanda-genocide-of-1994>. Accessed March 8, 2024.

Rwanda genocide of 1994, planned campaign of mass murder in Rwanda that occurred over the course of some 100 days in April–July 1994. The genocide was conceived by extremist elements of Rwanda’s majority Hutu population who planned to kill the minority Tutsi population and anyone who opposed those genocidal intentions. **It is estimated that some 200,000 Hutu, spurred on by propaganda from various media outlets, participated in the genocide. More than 800,000 civilians—primarily Tutsi, but also moderate Hutu—were killed during the campaign. As many as 2,000,000 Rwandans fled the country during or immediately after the genocide.**

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**PRO: China's Permanent Membership Harms Global Security.**

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**Argument:** China uses its power to push antidemocratic agenda items and stymie progress.

**Warrant:** China uses its permanent member status to force other Asian nations out of the Security Council

Sim, Dewey. "Why China, the only permanent Asian member of the UN Security Council, wants it to stay that way." *South China Morning Post*, January 21, 2024, <https://www.scmp.com/news/china/diplomacy/article/3249135/why-china-only-permanent-asian-member-un-security-council-wants-it-stay-way>. Accessed March 8, 2024.

As for China, Gowan said its "absolute red line" would be if Japan won a permanent seat on the Security Council, a scenario that "really worries" Beijing. "Obviously, China has an interest in remaining the only Asian power with a permanent seat on the council, and keeping India out too." The P5 members of the Security Council are granted powers to veto UN resolutions, with 10 others nations elected on a rotating basis. Gowan said that China had previously used its blocking power to support Pakistan over the Kashmir conflict with India. "If [China] has to deal with India as an equal at the UN, it would reduce its influence over Asian-related diplomacy," he said.

**Warrant:** China has used its veto power in line with Russia, not the United States

Fung, Courtney J. and Shing-hon Lam. "Mixed report card: China's influence at the United Nations." *Lowy Institute*, December 18, 2022, <https://www.lowyinstitute.org/publications/mixed-report-card-china-s-influence-united-nations#heading-7006>. Accessed March 8, 2024.



Figure 9 shows the number of UN Security Council vetoed resolutions by permanent members in the immediate post-Cold War period through to the present. Vetoed resolutions are classified into different regional focuses based on their agenda items listed on the UN website. France and the United Kingdom did not exercise their veto during the period at all. China did not veto any UN Security Council resolutions between 2000 and 2006. **China began to veto together with Russia in 2007, rejecting what it saw as unnecessary intervention in the domestic affairs of Myanmar, Zimbabwe, Venezuela, the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea (North Korea), and most frequently Syria.**

**Warrant:** China and Russia have blocked aid to Gaza

Nichols, Michelle. “Russia, China veto US push for UN action on Israel, Gaza.” *Reuters*, October 25, 2023, <https://www.reuters.com/world/un-security-council-vote-rival-us-russian-plans-israel-gaza-action-2023-10-25/>. Accessed March 8, 2024.

**Russia and China on Wednesday vetoed a U.S. push for the United Nations Security Council to act on the Israel-Hamas conflict by calling for pauses in fighting to allow humanitarian aid access, the protection of civilians and a stop to arming Hamas and other militants in the Gaza Strip.** The United States put forward a draft resolution on Saturday as global outcry grew over a worsening humanitarian crisis and mounting civilian death toll in Gaza. It made the move just days after it vetoed a humanitarian focused draft from Brazil, arguing more time was needed for U.S.-led diplomacy.

**Impact:** China is perceived as a major threat to global security

Davis Jr., Elliott. “Survey: Russia Rates Highest as a Threat to the World, Half See U.S. as a Global Danger.” *US News*, September 7, 2023, <https://www.usnews.com/news/best-countries/articles/2023-09-07/russia-rates->

highest-as-threat-to-the-world-half-see-u-s-as-global-danger. Accessed March 8, 2024.

**Over 70% of global citizens see Russia as a threat to the world after more than a year of the country's war with Ukraine, even as support appears to be waning slightly for the invaded nation, according to findings from the 2023 U.S. News Best Countries survey. A similar share of survey respondents agreed to some extent with the same sentiment about China, while half consider the United States a threat, underscoring global tensions and highlighting how perceptions of three of the world's influential powers can vary by individual nation.**

**Impact:** China is a major threat to global security

Alton, David. "The threat from China is no fairytale." *GIS*, January 5, 2024, <https://www.gisreportsonline.com/r/threat-from-china/>. Accessed March 8, 2024,

**President Xi has placed himself at the head of an axis, accompanied by President Putin, North Korean leader Kim Jong-un and Iran's Ayatollah Ali Khamenei. They are every bit as dangerous as the axis that confronted World War II allies. President Xi says his pact with President Putin has "no limits." It would be a mistake to see this alliance of dictators, theocrats, authoritarians and jihadists as separate threats. Their ideological differences will be parked temporarily as they use one another to pursue their shared hatred of the free world and its democracies.**

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**PRO: Russia's Permanent Membership Harms Global Security.**

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**Argument:** Russia uses its power to push antidemocratic agenda items and stymie progress.

**Warrant:** Russia took charge of the Security Council shortly after invading Ukraine, a sovereign nation

Macias, Amanda. "‘A bad joke’: Ukraine cries foul as Russia takes the reins of the UN Security Council." *CNBC*, April 3, 2023, <https://www.cnbc.com/2023/04/03/a-bad-joke-russia-takes-the-reins-of-the-un-security-council-to-ukrainian-outcry.html>. Accessed March 8, 2024.

Last week, Ukraine's top diplomat panned Russia's upcoming chairmanship of the United Nations Security Council and called the situation "a bad joke." **"Frankly speaking, you cannot imagine a worse joke for April Fools' Day. The country that systematically violated all fundamental rules of international security is presiding over a body whose only mission is to protect international security," Ukrainian Foreign Minister Dmytro Kuleba told a Chatham House event via video link from Kyiv.** "I don't think Russia will be able to change the balance inside the Security Council during its presidency. It will try to abuse its rights of the presidency to push for its own narratives, but I doubt they will be able to secure the sufficient number of votes to make the council adopt decisions on matters related specifically to Ukraine."

**Warrant:** Russia has used their power to veto action on Ukraine

Nichols, Michelle and Humerya Pamuk. "Russia vetoes U.N. Security Action on Ukraine as China abstains." *Reuters*, February 25, 2022,

<https://www.reuters.com/world/russia-vetoes-un-security-action-ukraine-china-abstains-2022-02-25/>. Accessed March 8, 2024.

**Russia vetoed a draft U.N. Security Council resolution on Friday that would have deplored Moscow's invasion of Ukraine, while China abstained from the vote - a move Western countries view as a win for showing Russia's international isolation. The United Arab Emirates and India also abstained from the vote on the U.S.-drafted text. The remaining 11 council members voted in favor.** The draft resolution is now expected to be taken up by the 193-member U.N. General Assembly. "We are united behind Ukraine and its people, despite a reckless, irresponsible permanent member of the Security Council abusing its power to attack its neighbor and subvert the U.N. and our international system," U.S. Ambassador Linda Thomas-Greenfield said after Russia cast its veto.

**Warrant:** Russia is not removable because they are a permanent member of the Security Council

Paige, Tamsin Phillipa. "Stripping Russia's veto power on the Security Council is all but impossible. Perhaps we should expect less from the UN instead." *The Conversation*, September 20, 2023, <https://theconversation.com/stripping-russias-veto-power-on-the-security-council-is-all-but-impossible-perhaps-we-should-expect-less-from-the-un-instead-213985>. Accessed March 8, 2024.

Article 2(1) of the UN Charter says the UN is based on the principle of sovereign equality. This, in principle, should mean all nations are equal under international law. In reality, even when just considering the rest of the UN Charter, it is clear this is not the case. **Yes, all nations in the UN General Assembly have one vote and all those votes have equal weight, but this is somewhat insignificant because the work of the General Assembly isn't legally binding. The only UN body that has the power to make binding**

international law is the Security Council. And this only happens when it is acting under Chapter VII of the UN Charter for the maintenance of international peace and security. In order for a resolution to pass in the Security Council, it must have the support of at least nine members – and, critically, no opposing vote from a member of the P5. This is what is meant by the P5 veto power.

**Impact:** Russia is perceived as a major threat to global security

Davis Jr., Elliott. “Survey: Russia Rates Highest as a Threat to the World, Half See U.S. as a Global Danger.” *US News*, September 7, 2023, <https://www.usnews.com/news/best-countries/articles/2023-09-07/russia-rates-highest-as-threat-to-the-world-half-see-u-s-as-global-danger>. Accessed March 8, 2024.

**Over 70% of global citizens see Russia as a threat to the world after more than a year of the country’s war with Ukraine, even as support appears to be waning slightly for the invaded nation, according to findings from the 2023 U.S. News Best Countries survey. A similar share of survey respondents agreed to some extent with the same sentiment about China, while half consider the United States a threat, underscoring global tensions and highlighting how perceptions of three of the world’s influential powers can vary by individual nation.**

**Impact:** Russia consistently threatens the use of nuclear weapons

Soldatikin, Vladimir and Andrew Osborn. “Putin warns West of risk of nuclear war, says Moscow can strike Western targets.” *Reuters*, February 29, 2024, <https://www.reuters.com/world/europe/putin-warns-west-risk-nuclear-war-says-moscow-can-strike-western-targets-2024-02-29/>. Accessed March 8, 2024.

He prefaced his nuclear warning with a specific reference to an idea, floated by French President Emmanuel Macron on Monday, of European NATO members sending ground troops to Ukraine - a suggestion that was quickly rejected by the United States, Germany, Britain and others. **"(Western nations) must realise that we also have weapons that can hit targets on their territory. All this really threatens a conflict with the use of nuclear weapons and the destruction of civilisation. Don't they get that?!"** said Putin. Speaking ahead of a March 15-17 presidential election when he is certain to be re-elected for another six-year term, he lauded what he said was Russia's vastly modernised nuclear arsenal, the largest in the world. **"Strategic nuclear forces are in a state of full readiness,"** he said, noting that new-generation hypersonic nuclear weapons he first spoke about in 2018 had either been deployed or were at a stage where development and testing were being completed.

## PRO: Permanent Membership Is Inflexibly Withheld From Deserving Nations.

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**Argument:** Permanent membership allocation entrenches post WW2 global hierarchies while ignoring changes to global power dynamics.

**Warrant:** Permanent membership no longer has the legitimacy of representing a larger population and percentage of nation-states.

Ryder, Hannah et al. "Decolonizing the United Nations Means Abolishing the Permanent Five." *Foreign Policy*, 17 Sep. 2020.  
<https://foreignpolicy.com/2020/09/17/decolonizing-united-nations-means-abolish-permanent-five-security-council/>.

The roots of the U.N. are deeply colonial. **Back in 1945 four out of the five members of the P5 were colonial states. Over the 75 years of the U.N.'s existence, 80 former colonies have gained independence, from India to Kenya, to Nigeria and Kazakhstan. This has meant a significant shift in population terms. In 1945 the P5—China, the United States, the United Kingdom, France, and Russia—accounted for 10 percent of member states and over 50 percent of the world's population, within their empires. Now, the P5 account for 26 percent of the world's population, and just 3 percent of the U.N. member states.** Even with the 10 additional nonpermanent members of the Security Council—who have to compete to be elected to sit on the council for two years, which costs millions of dollars in lobbying—Security Council seats are distinctly Eurocentric. As our research shows, the Western European and Others Group and the Eastern European Group combined represent just 17.1 percent of the global population, but they have held 47 percent of Security Council seats.

**Warrant:** Despite Germany's prominent role in the contemporary global legal order, Germany is excluded from permanent membership.

Hasselbach, Christoph. "UN Security Council: Should Germany be a permanent member?" DW, 18 Sep. 2023. <https://www.dw.com/en/un-security-council-should-germany-be-a-permanent-member/a-66825582>.

The dual membership ended with German reunification on October 3, 1990, and unified Germany has been a UN member ever since. The prerogatives of the victorious Western powers ceased to apply. Since then, **Germany has significantly expanded its involvement in the UN. It is one of its largest contributors, has participated in numerous peace missions and is an important UN host country: The International Tribunal for the Law of the Sea is in Hamburg and several UN organizations have their headquarters in Bonn. On the basis of this strong commitment and on Germany's economic and political weight, Berlin has been trying for many years to get a permanent seat with veto power, on the UN Security Council, the organization's highest decision-making body. So far, only the US, China, Russia, the United Kingdom and France belong to this exclusive circle. Germany's argument, like that of the other aspirants to a permanent seat, is that the composition of the Council still reflects the geopolitical situation shortly after World War II, and not present-day realities.**

Henning Hoff, a member of the German Council on Foreign Relations and executive editor of foreign affairs magazine *Internationale Politik Quarterly*, calls the bid for a permanent seat the "holy grail of German foreign policy," but sees the chances as "very, very slim." That's because **existing members don't want to share their privileged position with newcomers. At times, the German government has tried to call for a permanent seat for the entire European Union instead. But since this would have meant that the United Kingdom (still an EU member at the time) and France would have had to give up their respective seats, this too came to nothing.** The **German government** is caught in a dilemma, Hoff says. "On the one hand, the most important



instrument that German foreign policy **has is to rely strongly on the UN to establish something like world governance; on the other hand**, you see that **the structure of the United Nations is actually in need of reform**, but there is no prospect of that happening."

**Warrant:** Permanent members exclude rivals like India that should reasonably have permanent membership.

ET Online. "A seat for India at the world's most powerful table: What Biden's backing means." The Economic Times, 09 Sep. 2023.

<https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/india/a-seat-for-india-at-the-worlds-most-powerful-table-what-bidens-backing-means/articleshow/103530389.cms>.

A few days ago, **India reiterated its call for the expansion of the UNSC in both permanent and non-permanent categories to better represent the diverse geographical and developmental makeup of the UN**. Ruchira Kamboj, India's Permanent Representative to the UN, emphasised the need for an updated UNSC to align with contemporary geopolitical realities. Kamboj urged countries to openly support a time-bound pathway for reform through established processes. Yesterday, **UN chief Antonio Guterres said it is for the members and not him to decide on India's UNSC membership. But he also made a strong pitch for immediate reforms to the UNSC, saying "our multilateral institutions reflect a bygone age"**. Earlier, **BRICS leaders, in a joint statement at the 15th BRICS Summit in Johannesburg, called for comprehensive reform of the UNSC and supported the three legitimate aspirations of emerging and developing countries from Africa, Asia and Latin America, including Brazil, India and South Africa. India's China problem. China is the only country among five permanent members (P5) of UNSC which is opposing India's entry into the highest body of the UN. Ironically, India had supported China's candidature as a permanent**

member of the UNSC. Each of the P5 countries wields veto in the UNSC so that every resolution must include each of the members. China has supported reforms in the UNSC. It believes there should be more representation for developing countries, especially the small and medium countries, but it avoids a direct response to India and other countries' call for the UNSC expansion and their inclusion. Support from other permanent members does not amount to anything since **China can veto India's candidacy**. China has in the past called for evolving a "package solution" that is acceptable to all to reform the top organ of the global body. "As for India's bid for permanent membership to the UNSC, I can reiterate China's principled position on this issue. China supports UNSC reforms in a manner that increases the authority and efficacy of the UNSC, increases the representation and voice of developing countries so that small and medium-sized countries have a greater opportunity to participate in the decision making of the UNSC," Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesman had said two years. "It should be done through the widest possible democratic consultation and seek a package solution that takes into account the interests and concerns of all parties," he said.

**Impact:** Ignoring changes to global hierarchies arbitrarily will further decline of global support for UN.

Trithart, Albert & Olivia Case. "Do People Trust the UN? A Look at the Data." The Global Observatory, 22 Feb. 2023. <https://theglobalobservatory.org/2023/02/do-people-trust-the-un-a-look-at-the-data>.

But a more pessimistic picture emerges from the 2017–2022 World Value Survey and European Value Survey (WVS/EVS), which cover around 90 countries and territories from every geographic region. Here, net confidence [1] in the UN was positive in only around half of the countries and territories surveyed, with many displaying remarkably low levels of confidence. (It bears mentioning that, apart from differing

geographic samples, these surveys vary in whether they ask about trust, confidence, or favorability, which could play some role in explaining differences in results.) How have these perceptions of the UN shifted over time? **Data from the WVS/EVS, which covers a longer time frame and more countries than other multi-country surveys, shows a slight overall decline in confidence in the UN since the mid-1990s.** This decline in support for the UN parallels a broader decline in support for international organizations more generally.

**Analysis:** The link between the warrants and the specific impact described is difficult to defend, but a broader argument about fairness to these countries and their potential to withdraw from systems unfairly tilted against them should work analytically within the round.

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**PRO: Permanent Membership For The Uk And France Is Arbitrary.**

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**Argument:** There is no longer any justification for giving the UK and France permanent membership.

**Warrant:** France and the UK do not demonstrate significant geopolitical strength to warrant permanent membership.

Martin, Ian. "The Key to Security Council Reform Is Fewer Permanent Members, Not More." PassBlue, 26 Feb. 2024. <https://www.passblue.com/2024/02/26/the-key-to-security-council-reform-is-fewer-permanent-members-not-more/>.

Thus no region has agreed on future permanent membership from its respective group, and there is strong opposition from other states in their region to each of the proposed G4 permanent members. Support for the G4's proposal from France and Britain, coupled with the Biden administration's supporting an increase in permanent as well as nonpermanent seats, helps their bilateral relations with the relevant aspirants, while not risking a serious challenge to Western over-representation. The only conceivable path to reform is some version of Annan's Option B, therefore. It would enable the G4 and their regional rivals, the major African countries and other middle or rising powers, such as Indonesia and Türkiye, to compete for four-year renewable terms and to remain Council members as long as they commanded support in the General Assembly. **But as long as France and Britain remain permanent members, how can India be expected to accept only nonpermanent status, or Africa to accept exclusion from permanent membership? When the overwhelming view of member states is that France and Britain are no longer geopolitically qualified to be two of five permanent members, why shouldn't they have to compete for the four-year renewable terms too?** None of the permanent members can prevent the adoption of a resolution to amend the Charter

in the General Assembly, where the veto does not operate. Under Article 108 of the Charter, they can only subsequently block its ratification through their legislatures.

**Warrant:** The French will not sacrifice their permanent membership status to allow for an EU seat, making it overrepresented over the entire European Union.

France 24. "Germany Calls for France to Give Its UN Security Council Seat to the EU."

France 24, 28 Nov. 2018. <https://www.france24.com/en/20181128-paris-france-german-proposal-un-eu-macron-merkel-security-council-nations>.

In a wide-ranging speech on the future of Europe, **Scholz said that giving the European Union a spot on the Security Council would allow the bloc to speak "with one voice" on the global stage. "We could perhaps imagine that in the medium term the French seat becomes an EU seat," said Scholz, who is also Germany's vice-chancellor. "I realise this will take some convincing in Paris, but it would be a bold and smart goal.**" To lessen the pain of losing the powerful seat, **France could become the permanent EU ambassador to the United Nations, he added. But the suggestion was immediately shot down by the French ambassador to the United States, Gérard Araud.** "It's legally impossible because it would run counter to the Charter of the United Nations. Changing it would be politically impossible," Araud tweeted. "This is an absolutely scandalous idea for the French mission here at the UN", reported FRANCE 24's correspondent in New York City, Jessica Le Masurier. "It would run counter to the charter of the UN (...) a bloc cannot take a Security Council seat, only individual states rather than organisations can hold a Security Council seat," she added.

**Impact:** Fear of power grabs by the EU will further alienate France from European allies.

Wright, Oliver. "Europ scepticism on the rise across Europe as analysis finds increasing opposition to the EU in France, Germany and Spain." The Independent, 08 Jun.

2016. <https://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/europe/euroscepticism-on-the-rise-across-europe-as-analysis-finds-increasing-opposition-to-the-eu-in-france-germany-and-spain-a7069766.html>.

**More than 60 per cent of French voters now have an unfavourable view of the European Union while almost half the electorate in Germany, Spain and the Netherlands have also become Eurosceptic, new research reveals. An analysis by the respected American think-tank the Pew Research Centre found a marked drop in support for the EU across seven major European countries. Opposition to the EU now runs at 60 per cent in France, 71 per cent in Greece, both higher than the 48 per cent opposition in the UK.** The study highlights the huge task faced by Brussels in restoring confidence in the organisation after the financial crisis and its handling of the influx of refugees from Syria and North Africa. **In 2004, 69 per cent of French voters and 58 per cent of German voters backed the EU – while not a single country reported a net negative rating. The research also reveals that not a single European country wants more powers to be handed to the EU while a growing number of voters want powers repatriated.** Roughly two-thirds of Greeks (68 per cent) and British (65 per cent) want some EU power returned to Athens and London. Pluralities in Sweden (47 per cent), the Netherlands (44 per cent), Germany (43 per cent) and Italy (39 per cent) also want to curtail EU power. But interestingly, as shown in the chart below - created for The Independent by statistics agency Statista - the vast majority of voters in most other European countries, with the exception of France, do not want Britain to vote for Brexit. However 32 per cent of French voters believe Britain departure would be a good thing for the EU. The report authors said their research showed the British were not the only ones with doubts about the European Union.

**Impact:** EU collective action is necessary to fight climate change.

European Council & Council of the European Union. "Climate Change: What the EU is Doing." Consilium, 3 Jan. 2024.

<https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/policies/climate-change/>.

**In July 2021, the European climate law – a key element of the European Green Deal – entered into force, one month after the Council had adopted it. EU countries are now legally obliged to reach both the 2030 and 2050 climate goals.** The climate law sets the framework for action to be taken by the EU and the member states to progressively reduce emissions and ultimately reach climate neutrality in the EU by 2050. **Also in June 2021, the Council approved conclusions endorsing the new EU strategy on adaptation to climate change presented by the European Commission. The strategy outlines a long-term vision for the EU to become by 2050 a climate-resilient society that is fully adapted to the unavoidable impacts of climate change. Another key part of the EU's work towards climate neutrality is the 'Fit for 55' package. A set of proposals for revision of existing legislation and new initiatives, it is the EU's key plan for turning climate goals into EU law.** The package includes rules on: energy transport emissions trading and reductions land use and forestry. **While emissions are rising in some sectors, such as international aviation and transport, other sectors have reduced their emissions enormously since 1990, with energy industries leading the way with a decrease of 47%. By 2020, the EU had already achieved a 30% reduction compared to 1990 levels.**

**Analysis:** This is a good argument to show how permanent membership privileges are arbitrary and how it sows division within Europe. It is hard to link Britain to the EU now, but talking about its geopolitical insignificance can still support arguments from fairness, even if climate change is hard to discuss.

## PRO: US Permanent Membership Prevents Passage Of Effective Resolutions.

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**Argument:** US permanent membership prevents the passage of resolutions carrying broad support internationally.

**Warrant:** The United States vetoes significant Security Council resolutions that would promote humanitarian protections in the Israel-Hamas War and limit Israeli aggression against neighboring countries.

O'Dell, Hope. "How the US has used its power in the UN to support Israel for decades." Bluemarle, 22 Feb. 2024. <https://globalaffairs.org/bluemarle/how-us-has-used-its-power-un-support-israel-decades>.

**In addition to vetoing the Dec. 8 cease-fire resolution, the U.S. vetoed an Oct. 18 resolution calling for "humanitarian pauses." The latter vote happened during President Joe Biden's trip to Israel, and the U.S. delegate on the Security Council said the council needed to let U.S. diplomacy "play out."** The delegate expressed disappointment that the resolution draft didn't condone Israel's right to self-defense. Russia and China also vetoed an Oct. 25 resolution backed by the U.S. The resolution demanded the immediate release of the hostages taken by Hamas and called for "all measures" to be taken to allow humanitarian aid into Gaza, including humanitarian pauses. The Chinese representative on the council said they vetoed it because the resolution didn't call for a cease-fire, a sentiment Russia reflected in a cease-fire resolution it brought to the council after China and Russia vetoed the U.S. resolution. How has the U.S. used its veto power to support Israel? **The U.S. has vetoed resolutions critical of Israel more than any other council member – 45 times as of December 18, 2023, according to an analysis by Blue Marble. The U.S. has vetoed 89**



Security Council resolutions in total since 1945, meaning slightly over half of its vetoes have been used on resolutions critical of Israel. Of the vetoed resolutions, 33 pertained to the Israeli occupation of Palestinian territories or the country's treatment of the Palestinian people. The first time the U.S. used its veto to support Israel was in September of 1972, when it vetoed a resolution that called on Israel to cease its aggression in Lebanon. This was the second time the U.S. had ever used its Security Council veto; the first was on a resolution regarding Southern Rhodesia. After that, the U.S. used its veto to halt resolutions critical of Israel frequently. Between 1982 and 1990, the U.S. used its veto in support of Israel 21 times – nearly half of the U.S.'s total vetoes in support of Israel. The vetoed resolutions criticized Israel's aggression in Lebanon and its occupation of Palestinian territories. Since 2001, the U.S. has used its veto in support of Israel 14 times.

**Warrant:** The international community broadly agrees that a ceasefire is appropriate.

Zhou, Li. "The growing global support for a Gaza ceasefire, explained." Vox, 14 Dec. 2023. <https://www.vox.com/politics/2023/12/14/24001352/gaza-ceasefire-united-nations-israel-palestine>.

The international community is increasingly turning against Israel's ongoing military onslaught in Gaza, in large part due to a growing civilian death toll and humanitarian crisis. That's putting new pressure on Israel's government and its closest ally, the US, which is supplying and backing the Israeli offensive. This change has been evident in the last few weeks as global support for a ceasefire has grown, and as US public opinion has also moved in that direction. A UN vote this week highlighted the shift: 153 countries in the body's General Assembly, the overwhelming majority, voted in favor of an immediate humanitarian ceasefire. That's an uptick from October, when 121 countries in the General Assembly similarly backed a humanitarian truce. Notably, US allies Canada, Australia, and Japan were among the countries that voted in the

affirmative this week after abstaining in October. The US, meanwhile, was one of a handful of countries to oppose the ceasefire resolution, while some of its other allies, including Germany and the United Kingdom, abstained. “As this continues over the next few weeks, you’re going to see even greater distance between the US and its allies, and the US and Israel increasingly isolated,” says Osamah Khalil, the chair of international relations at Syracuse University.

**Impact:** Deadlocking in the UN Security Council over humanitarian injustice leads to inter-state violence that undermines international order.

Partlett, William. “Does It Matter That Strikes Against Syria Violate International Law?” Pursuit, 16 Apr. 2018. <https://pursuit.unimelb.edu.au/articles/does-it-matter-that-strikes-against-syria-violate-international-law>.

**Despite this clear illegality, many of the richest and most powerful countries in the world have supported the attack.** This includes all members of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), as well as Israel and Japan. **Most have voiced this support by arguing that, with a deadlocked UN Security Council, the only effective way to deter the future use of chemical weapons is through the limited use of force that punishes a state for using such weapons against its citizens.** Australian Prime Minister Malcolm Turnbull praised the attacks, stating that “the Assad regime must not be allowed to commit such crimes with impunity.” But this is not a legal argument, and according to some legal experts, the language has the flavour of armed reprisals which is clearly unlawful. **All that is left really of this argument is that the attacks are “illegal but legitimate.” But if “illegal but legitimate” becomes an accepted principle, then the Charter’s limits, at least on the use of force, become meaningless.**

**Impact:** Humanitarian interventions allow global superpowers to continue Cold War opportunism and invalidations of sovereignty in the developing world.

Chomsky, Noam. "Humanitarian Imperialism: The New Doctrine of Imperial Right." *Monthly Review*, 1 Sep. 2008. <https://theanarchistlibrary.org/library/noam-chomsky-humanitarian-imperialism>.

**Both the Panel and the World Summit endorsed the position of the non-Western world, which had firmly rejected "the so-called 'right' of humanitarian intervention" in the Declaration of the South Summit in 2000, surely with the recent NATO bombing of Serbia in mind. This was the highest-level meeting ever held by the former non-aligned movement, accounting for 80 percent of the world's population. It was almost entirely ignored, and the rare and brief references to their conclusions about humanitarian intervention elicited near hysteria. Thus Cambridge University international relations lecturer Brendan Simms, writing in the Times Higher Education Supplement (May 25, 2001), was infuriated by such "bizarre and uncritical reverence for the pronouncements of the so-called 'South Summit G-77'—in Havana!—an improvident rabble in whose ranks murderers, torturers and robbers are conspicuously represented"—so different from the civilized folk who have been their benefactors for the past centuries and can scarcely control their fury when there is a brief allusion, without comment, to the perception of the world by the traditional victims, a perception since strongly endorsed by the high-level UN Panel and the UN World Summit in explicit contradiction to the self-serving pronouncements of apologists for Western resort to violence.**

**Analysis:** Do not get led into a debate about Israel and Palestine. Use this as an opportunity to talk about why the US should not be able to stop global support for humanitarian relief efforts and why it is important to sort these out within a multi-lateral forum.

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## PRO: Permanent Membership Abolition Would Increase African Representation.

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**Argument:** Permanent membership locks African nations out of meaningful representation in the UN.

**Warrant:** Africa has no permanent voice on the Security Council.

Yade, Rama. "Make Way for Wakanda: The UN Security Council Needs an African Seat."

Atlantic Council, 24 Sep. 2021.

<https://www.atlanticcouncil.org/blogs/africasource/make-way-for-wakanda-the-un-security-council-needs-an-african-seat/>.

**In this seventy-sixth session of the United Nations General Assembly, Africans represent the largest group, with 28 percent of the votes, ahead of Asia with 27 percent, and well above the Americas at 17 percent, and Western Europe at 15 percent. Yet everyone knows that Africa does not decide anything. The real decision-making body is the Security Council, and its five permanent members are China, Russia, France, Great Britain, and the United States. The founding of this prestigious council was based on the results of World War II, where global superpowers were defined based on hard power. What about the African people? Weren't they involved in the victory over Hitler's Germany? The French launched the Resistance from Brazzaville, and numerous African countries served in the war. They deserve their seat at the victory banquet. Besides, the United Nations Security Council still functions on a conventional framework, which was written back in 1945, before the majority of African countries had gained independence from their colonizers—which is another fault to correct. This gap is all the less bearable because the African continent has dealt with issues threatening peace and security for centuries. Africa even was home to one**

**of the world's first human-rights charters: the Manden Charter, launched by the great Sundiata Keita, founder of the Mali Empire, long before the English Bill of Rights (1689) and France's Declaration of the Rights of Man and of the Citizen (1789), and perhaps even before the Magna Carta (1215).**

**Warrant:** Current politics will not allow the appointment of new permanent members.

Xie, John. "Biden's Call to Expand UNSC Membership Likely to Go Unheeded." Voice of America News, 21 Sep. 2023. <https://www.voanews.com/a/biden-s-call-to-expand-unsc-membership-likely-to-go-unheeded-/7279316.html>.

Confrontations between the U.S., China and Russia often paralyze the Security Council. The three, along with Britain and France have permanent seats on the council, and any one of them can veto a resolution. There are 10 non-permanent members elected by the United Nations General Assembly for two-year terms, with five replaced each year. The non-permanent members lack veto power. **Biden called for the council's expansion last year when he addressed the General Assembly. "The current increased competition makes countries even more sensitive to the zero-sum nature of those decisions ... and there's so little solidarity and trust right now," said Stewart Patrick,** senior fellow and director of the Global Order and Institutions Program at the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace. Patrick told VOA Mandarin in a phone interview that **the deepening of frictions between the U.S. and China and between the U.S. and Russia have increasingly intruded on the ability of the council to address other matters such as climate change.** But Patrick said there is "renewed momentum" on "the desire to reform the composition and perhaps the rules of the U.N. Security Council to make it more representative, but also more effective." The declaration that came out after the BRICS summit in August included a line that supported calls for Brazil, India and South Africa to play "a greater role in international affairs, in particular in the United Nations, including its Security Council." All three nations belong to the bloc, which also includes

China and Russia. Maya Ungar, U.N. project officer at the International Crisis Group who monitors the Security Council, told VOA Mandarin the BRICS declaration is "quite significant because it's the first time that [the bloc] has put out a statement bringing that much support ..." Other groups of U.N. member states are advocating for particular types of reforms. The G4 group of Brazil, Germany, India and Japan have been campaigning for permanent council seats for years. **Patrick said the G4 countries have regional rivals that object to their permanent memberships. Pakistan opposes India, South Korea and Indonesia have objections to Japan, and Argentina and Mexico have concerns about Brazil.** "Each of the aspirants has regional rivals and they have their own coalition called the Uniting for Consensus Coalition," he said. "And what they are attempting to do is to offer an alternative plan for council expansion."

**Warrant:** Appointing diverse agency heads is not sufficient to improve representation.

Ryder, Hannah et al. "Decolonizing the United Nations Means Abolishing the Permanent Five." *Foreign Policy*, 17 Sep. 2020.  
<https://foreignpolicy.com/2020/09/17/decolonizing-united-nations-means-abolish-permanent-five-security-council/>.

This poorly distributed allocation is reflected in other parts of the U.N.—in particular the secretary-general position itself. **Since 1945, four out of the nine secretaries-general have been white European men. There has never been a Muslim secretary-general. U.N. leaders have sought to address this by diversifying heads of agencies or undersecretaries-general, but individuals are not the answer. Take COVID-19. Despite an Ethiopian head of the WHO, who might be expected to advocate for the poorest countries in the world, the only resolution the P5-led Security Council has unanimously adopted referring to COVID-19 this year is resolution 2532—supporting a call made by the secretary-general in March for a global cease-fire to focus on efforts to fight COVID-19. This is important but hardly influential, and it's largely irrelevant to**

the thousands of people who have since died prematurely due to lax COVID-19 responses and lack of international finance to manage the impacts of required lockdowns in the poorest countries. Instead, African leaders have turned closer to the African Union's Africa Centres for Disease Control and Prevention for COVID-19 advice, and to the unrepresentative yet powerful G-20 and IMF for financial support, not the U.N.

**Impact:** Including African countries in the Security Council could help deal with a variety of problems facing many developing nations.

UN News. "Africa Must Have Due Representation in Security Council, Ministers Tell UN Debate." Africa Renewal, 29 Sep. 2012.  
<https://www.un.org/africarenewal/news/africa-must-have-due-representation-security-council-ministers-tell-un-debate>.

At present, the Council has 15 members, five of whom are permanent – China, France, Russia, United Kingdom and United States – and which have the right of veto. In his statement, **Mr. Medelci also highlighted the need for economic development** as an essential pillar for ensuring lasting stability. "We firmly maintain that **development, peace and security are indivisible and that UN strategies**, in particular those of the Security Council aimed at a lasting peace, **must be devised in full harmony with policies for socio-economic development,**" he said. **Reciting a litany of problems facing developing countries, from unemployment and the rise in food prices to an economic slowdown stemming from the global economic crisis, he appealed to the developed world to live up to its commitments.** In his address to the General Debate, Mauritania's Foreign Minister, Hamadi Ould Baba Ould Hamadi, reaffirmed his country's support for UN reform, in particular by expanding the Council to include a permanent seat for Africa and another for the Arab group. "**We ask the rich countries and the donor organizations to honour their pledge to make contributions, however insignificant, to**

finance development, above all for the least developed countries, so as to achieve acceptable levels of access to public services to guarantee civil peace, stability and the social cohesion of these countries in order to safeguard world peace,” he said. The two ministers also voiced alarm at new threats of terrorism and the situation in Mali, where Islamic militants have seized control of the north, imposing strict Sharia law and sending more than 260,000 refugees fleeing into neighbouring countries, more than 110,000 of them in Mauritania. **“The Mali crisis is a test and a challenge confronting the international community,”** he said. **“Today, with this crisis, violent obscurantist religious fundamentalism, trafficking in drugs and humans and irredentist demands are implanted right in the heart of Africa.”** Chad’s Foreign Minister, **Moussa Faki Mahamat**, in his remarks to the Assembly, **called on the Security Council to quickly adopt a resolution authorizing international military intervention in northern Mali, as sought by the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS).** He added, **“How long can the world stand by in the face of this gangrene which risks spreading throughout the whole of the Sahel region and of which Mali is only the epicentre?”** The ministers are among of scores of world leaders and other high-level officials presenting their views and comments on issues of individual, national and international relevance at the Assembly’s General Debate, which ends on 1 October.

**Analysis:** This is a good argument that is also slightly hard to impact. It is easy to anticipate that the abolition of permanent membership would increase the number of spots which African states could fight for. It is important to watch out for arguments that African Union is sufficient: there are many reasons to disagree with that, but you should be able to point to specific needs that can only be met through the UN, i.e., climate change.



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## PRO: Permanent Members Have Disproportionate Power Over Elected Members.

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**Argument:** The Security Council's undemocratic and inefficient structuring makes elected members' influence significantly less than permanent members' influence.

**Warrant:** Permanent members can procedurally outmaneuver elected members with greater resources, and the veto is an additional weapon in their arsenal.

Langmore, John & Jeremy Farrall. "Can Elected Members Make a Difference in the UN Security Council? Australia's Experience in 2013-2014." *Global Governance* 22, 2016. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/44861181>.

**Elected members face various constraints in their attempts to influence out-comes. The greatest constraint, of course, is the fact that they must pursue their objectives on the Security Council without the veto trump card that enables the P5 to exercise substantial control over the direction of Council decisionmak-ing at critical moments. Moreover, few elected members have institutional memory of participating on the Council, rendering them vulnerable to proce-dural out-maneuvering by the P5. On top of this, many E10 delegations have limited human and financial resources to support their activities on the Coun-cil. Nevertheless, barely two months after election, new members are thrown in the Council's deep end and expected to swim.**

**Warrant:** Cooperation among permanent members and similar material advantages allow for domination of elected members.

Johnstone, Ian. "The Security Council as Legislature" in *The UN Security Council and the Politics of International Authority*, edited by Bruce Cronin & Ian Hurd, 2008, p. 87-88.

**The SC can be conceived as a four-tier deliberative setting. The top tier is the five permanent members of the Council, who have equal voting power and engage in deliberations on relatively free and equal terms. Differences in material power have a profound impact on the ability of each of the P5 to influence debates, but to the extent that political struggle among them takes place based on deliberations, it is more evenly matched.** Deliberation The Security Council as legislature<sup>87</sup> reduces without eliminating disparities in material power (Gutmann and Thompson 2004: 133).**The second tier is the SC as a whole. Non-permanent members are formally equal in the sense that sovereign equality is a basic principle of the charter, each has one vote and, under Article 24, they count equally as representatives of the international community and—at least notionally—are expected to speak for all in the collective interest. Their votes count for much less than the P5, because they lack veto power, but any member of the P5 that wants to pass a resolution must solicit their support, sometimes competing with other P5 members soliciting votes for a differently worded resolution.**The competition is often crass, as it is in any law-making body, but is typically characterized by appeals (both sincere and strategic) to impartial reasons, principles, and collective interests. They contribute to the deliberative process by setting the parameters of the more equal deliberations among the P5. While the debates occur against a backdrop of bargaining and with a view to voting (and in full consciousness of which SC members wield the most material and bargaining power), outcomes that cannot somehow be justified in principled terms are harder to push through.

**Warrant:** Sovereign inequality runs counter to the mission of the UN and international law.

Krish, Nico. "International Law in Times of Hegemony: Unequal Power and the Shaping of the International Legal Order." *The European Journal of International Law*, vol. 16 no. 3, 2005. <http://www.ejil.org/pdfs/16/3/301.pdf>.

**Hegemony and international law are often regarded as irreconcilable: international law is widely assumed to depend on a balance of power and to be eschewed by hegemony in favour of political tools.** This corresponds to an often idealized contrast between international law and international politics, one reflecting reason and justice, the other brute power. Realists and critical legal scholars have long sought to counter this idealization, but often by merely reducing international law to power. This article seeks to go beyond these positions by analysing the multiple ways in which dominant states interact with international law. Drawing on international relations theory, it develops a model of this interaction and illustrates it with historical examples, taken mainly from Spanish, British and American phases of dominance. The typical pattern observed is one of instrumentalization and withdrawal, coupled with attempts at reshaping international law in a more hierarchical way and at replacing it with domestic legal tools that better accommodate formal hierarchies. The resulting picture should provide a starting point for critique and help us better understand why international law is simultaneously instrumental and resistant to the pursuit of power. **International law is important for powerful states as a source of legitimacy, but in order to provide legitimacy, it needs to distance itself from power and has to resist its mere translation into law. International law then occupies an always precarious, but eventually secure position between the demands of the powerful and the ideals of justice held in international society.**

**Impact:** Inequality in accountability for P5 members discourages total compliance with international law.

Hafner-Burton, Emilie et. al. "No False Promises: How the Prospect of Non-Compliance Affects Elite Preferences for International Cooperation." *International Studies Quarterly*, 2017. <https://ehb.ucsd.edu/pdfs/nf.pdf>.

**Why would leaders engage in international cooperation if they believe that their own government might default from their commitments? Some suggest that when leaders do so, they are essentially trying to profit from false promises—from making international commitments that they likely cannot, or will not, actually fulfill. In contrast, others expect that fears of such noncompliance will deter leaders from engaging in international cooperation. Moreover, some theories suggest that the design of cooperative agreements themselves should affect how leaders respond to these possibilities. That is, leaders should be more concerned about the prospect of their country's non-compliance with agreements that impose, through formal means, sizeable costs on recalcitrant states. We describe the results of an experimental survey conducted on 95 high-level policy elites in the United States that allows us to examine the causal dynamics that underlie this debate. We focus on one key institutional design feature—formal enforcement—and preferences for international cooperation under different perceptions of risk about future compliance. We provide the first elite-level evidence that, as the prospect of defection rises, actual policymakers become less willing to join international agreements. However, contrary to what many theories of international institutions would predict, the presence of a formal enforcement mechanism fails to explain their aversion to cooperation. Elites dislike making false promises even when their commitments are not formally enforceable. By measuring these elites' patience (along with other traits), we tentatively suggest that this aversion may be linked to decision-makers' own perceptions of the future—elites who have lower discount rates are particularly sensitive to the prospect of not honoring commitments.**

**Analysis:** Try to guard the link between sovereign inequality and a lack of accountability to access the impact. General appeals to fairness will also work.



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## PRO: Permanent Membership Is Unrepresentative.

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**Argument:** The permanent members of the UNSC are unrepresentative of the rest of the United Nations and the world as a whole. For instance, there is not an African country as a permanent member. The unrepresentative makeup of the UNSC harms the UN's overall legitimacy and effectiveness.

**Claim:** The permanent members of the Security Council result in underrepresentation and inequality.

Fitzgerald, Amber. "Security Council Reform: Creating a More Representative Body of the Entire U.N. Membership", *Pace International Law Review*, Sep 2000, <https://digitalcommons.pace.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1231&context=pilr>.

**According to the United Nations Charter ("Charter"), the Security Council of the United Nations ("Security Council") is designed to act on behalf of the entire U.N. membership.** Article 24 of the Charter provides, "In order to ensure prompt and effective action by the United Nations, its Members confer on the Security Council primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security, and agree that in carrying out its duties under this responsibility the Security Council acts on their behalf." **2 Despite this mandate, at the turn of the century, the Security Council remains unrepresentative of the U.N. membership.** The Charter also provides that "[t]he Organization is based on the principle of the sovereign equality of all its Member States and equal rights should be afforded to nations large and small."**3 This fundamental principle of equality for all Member States has never been adopted in practice. The reality is that due to the disparity in power created by the Security Council, Member States are far from being equal.**

**Warrant:** Percentage wise, the permanent members of the UNSC are unrepresentative of the global population.

Ryder, Hannah, Anna Baisch and Ovigwe Eguegu. “Decolonizing the United Nations Means Abolishing the Permanent Five”, Foreign Policy, 17 Sep 2020, <https://foreignpolicy.com/2020/09/17/decolonizing-united-nations-means-abolish-permanent-five-security-council/>.

**The roots of the U.N. are deeply colonial. Back in 1945 four out of the five members of the P5 were colonial states.** Over the 75 years of the U.N.’s existence, 80 former colonies have gained independence, from India to Kenya, to Nigeria and Kazakhstan. This has meant a significant shift in population terms. **In 1945 the P5—China, the United States, the United Kingdom, France, and Russia—accounted for 10 percent of member states and over 50 percent of the world’s population, within their empires.** Now, the P5 account for 26 percent of the world’s population, and just 3 percent of the U.N. member states. Even with the 10 additional nonpermanent members of the Security Council—who have to compete to be elected to sit on the council for two years, which costs millions of dollars in lobbying—Security Council seats are distinctly Eurocentric. As our research shows, the Western European and Others Group and the Eastern European Group combined represent just 17.1 percent of the global population, but they have held 47 percent of Security Council seats. And within these groups, the big countries almost always win. Japan has spent 22 years on the Security Council. Brazil 20 years. Within African countries, only Nigeria, with 10 years, comes close.

**Warrant:** The UNSC lacks religious and geographical representation, harming its ability to solve global problems effectively.

Ağlarıcı, Merve Gül Aydoğan. "UNSC has serious inequalities in terms of representation: Expert", Anadolu Agency, 17 Jan 2022, <https://www.aa.com.tr/en/world/unsc-has-serious-inequalities-in-terms-of-representation-expert/2475782#>.

**Elaborating on the "inequalities in representation" as one of the basic issues at the UNSC, Pirincci said "in the case of religious representation, we do not see a Muslim country as a permanent member. In the case of geography, we do not see a permanent member from the African continent, which is home to 54 states...Beyond this injustice, the UN is no longer able to answer current issues." As the COVID-19 pandemic continues to affect the lives of millions globally, Pirincci said the UNSC was unable to include the issue on its main agenda within the first six months of the outbreak. Over 5.5 million people have lost their lives due to the coronavirus pandemic since it started in December 2019, according to US-based Johns Hopkins University. "On the other hand, regarding the issue of migration or irregular migration, the UN could not generate any effective solution. Another everlasting issue is the Palestinian matter. Even though the UNSC has adopted resolutions many times, such as Resolutions 242 and 338, it has not been successful in terms of the implementation of these resolutions," he said. He further listed the ongoing Syria crisis, as well as the Yemen crisis, saying the UNSC remains passive in taking steps towards a solution.**

**Warrant:** The UNSC has not kept pace with changing geopolitical dynamics, resulting in inequality.

United Nations. "Security Council Must Reflect Twenty-First Century Realities, Delegates Tell General Assembly, with Many Calling for Urgent Expansion of Permanent Seats", United Nations Meetings Coverage and Press Releases, 16 Nov 2020, <https://press.un.org/en/2020/ga12288.doc.htm>.



The representative of China echoed the historical injustice endured by African countries, further pointing to the lack of representation between nations of the North and South. Reform must focus on equality between big and small States, strong and weak, rich and poor, he added, pointing out that more than 60 countries have never held a Council seat. With entire regions still excluded from permanent membership, Barbados' delegate, speaking on behalf of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM), said the Council has not kept pace with the evolution of United Nations membership, raising concerns about its representativeness. The perpetuation of that status quo means the Council lacks the benefit of important perspectives and experiences in its work, she said, calling for a guaranteed presence for small island developing States and for that organ to adapt to new political realities.

**Impact:** Increasing representation in the UNSC would improve its effectiveness.

Winther, Bjarke Zinck. "Reforming the United Nations Security Council: Increasing Equality in the International Arena", Georgetown Journal of International Affairs, 9 Sep 2022, <https://gjia.georgetown.edu/2022/09/09/reforming-the-united-nations-security-council-increasing-equality-in-the-international-arena/>.

It is not a given that an increase in permanent membership enhances the Council's effectiveness. However, it would strengthen the body's legitimacy, leading to increased performance based on ensuing upsurge in support from more UN member states. The permanent presence of African countries would likely improve approaches to peace missions on the African continent and align Global North/Global South norms concerning global governance through the UN. In the final analysis, the combined agency of the AU and the G4 could permanently add four Global South countries on the Council (two African, Brazil, and India). This end will not come easy, but it is essential to keep "agitating for reform" and utilize the fact that advocacy for increased inclusion of Global South countries is an established norm in the debates.

**Impact:** The permanent members of the UNSC create paralyzing divisions; structural changes would increase effectiveness and inclusion.

United Nations. “With Violent Conflicts Increasing, Speakers Say Security Council Reforms Crucial to Ensure International Peace, Stability, as General Assembly Begins Debate”, United Nations Meetings Coverage and Press Releases, 16 Nov 2023, <https://press.un.org/en/2023/ga12562.doc.htm>.

**“Never before has this issue been more pressing, both contextually and practically,”** said Dennis Francis (Trinidad and Tobago), President of the Assembly, in his opening remarks. **At a moment of increased violence, the United Nations seems paralysed largely due to divisions within the Security Council, which is falling dangerously short of its mandate as the primary custodian for the maintenance of international peace and security. Without structural reform, the performance and legitimacy of the Council will continue to suffer and so will the credibility and relevance of the United Nations itself,** he said, **urging Member States to break through ingrained positions and take practical steps in support of effectiveness and inclusion.** The representative of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, speaking for the L.69 group of developing countries from Africa, Latin America and the Caribbean, Asia and the Pacific, said **overrepresentation of Western countries in the Council does not reflect the geopolitical diversity of the United Nations nor the geopolitical realities of the twenty-first century. “That it is no longer fit for purpose is now a stark reality,”** she said, adding that **reform is not only urgent but a precondition to international peace, stability and security.**

**Analysis:** The inherent truth of this argument makes it hard for the negative to respond: the permanent members do not represent the global population. Morally, this is a strong reason to abolish the permanent members and restructure the Security Council. Logically, the evidence above argues this will increase the effectiveness of the UN as a whole.



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## PRO: Permanent Membership Leads To Gridlock.

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**Argument:** The UNSC is increasingly gridlocked due to the contradictory interests and veto power of the permanent members. This harms its ability to negotiate diplomatic solutions and create peacekeeping initiatives. Ultimately, gridlock costs lives, which is especially relevant to the current wars in Ukraine and Gaza.

**Claim:** UNGA President announced that the Security Council is in a “concerning state of paralysis” at a crucial time in global affairs.

Press Trust of India. “UN Security Council caught in concerning state of paralysis: UNGA chief”, Business Standard, 14 Dec 2023, [https://www.business-standard.com/world-news/un-security-council-caught-in-concerning-state-of-paralysis-unga-chief-123121400142\\_1.html](https://www.business-standard.com/world-news/un-security-council-caught-in-concerning-state-of-paralysis-unga-chief-123121400142_1.html).

**The UN Security Council is caught in a “concerning state of paralysis” and aims to serve the predominance of Global North countries, UNGA President Dennis Francis has said, underlining the need for representation and equitable participation of developing nations in decision-making in a reformed Council. Underlining that reform is our collective task and responsibility, Francis said that as the President of the 78th session of the General Assembly, he believes that we need a Council that is more balanced, representative, responsive, democratic and transparent. As conflicts seem to be spreading across the globe, the Security Council whose primary responsibility is to maintain international peace and security, however, seems caught in a concerning state of paralysis, Francis said. With its unsatisfactory discharge of its crucial mandate, the Council is perceived as falling short of its mandate, consequently, compromising the credibility of the entire UN itself, he said.**

**Warrant:** The veto power of the permanent members has led to gridlock within the Security Council.

Mbombo, Jean-Marie Kasonga. "A Rework of the P5 as a Cornerstone for Peace Through Multilateralism", Georgetown Journal of International Affairs, 19 Dec 2022, <https://gjia.georgetown.edu/2022/12/19/a-rework-of-the-p5-as-a-cornerstone-for-peace-through-multilateralism/>.

**For five decades under the watch of the UNSC, the world sunk into the Cold War, transforming legitimate claims for self-determination into proxy wars in parts of Asia, Latin America, and Africa.** Although the dividing wall between the Eastern and Western blocs fell in 1989, the continuous contemporary use of veto power deepens the prevalent climate of mistrust among the winners of World War II. All the while, these powers top the list of exporters of weapons of mass destruction. The end of the Cold War made the politics of containment obsolete, but it left behind a world characterized by widespread insecurity and lack of peace. With the 1991 Operation Desert Storm during the Gulf War, the P5 for the first time unanimously endorsed peace enforcement, successfully pulling Kuwait from the jaws of invading Iraq. However, **the misuse of veto power has frequently resulted in gridlock that fuels violent conflicts worldwide. Put differently, each time one or more permanent members withdraws their support for collective actions in favor of peace and security, the bottom billions drift into protracted conflicts, from ex-Yugoslavia and Haiti to Liberia, Somalia, and Sierra Leone, to name but a few.**

**Warrant:** UNSC gridlock is at an all time high, war in Gaza proves.

Ofodile, Uche Ewelukwa. "Security Council Paralysis in Face of Gaza Crisis Highlights Imperative of UN Reform", Jurist, 24 Nov

2023, <https://www.jurist.org/commentary/2023/11/security-council-paralysis-in-face-of-gaza-crisis-highlights-imperative-of-un-reform/#>.

**On November 15, 2023, more than five weeks after Hamas' heinous October 7 attack on Israel, and after thousands of lives were lost, the Security Council, the United Nations body with the primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security, finally managed to pass a somewhat controversial resolution in response to the crisis. Largely as a result of the use of the permanent members' veto powers, since the October 7 attack, the Security Council had been unable to take decisive action – to unequivocally condemn the terrorist attack by Hamas, to call for a humanitarian pause or a ceasefire, or to do anything else. Four previous resolutions failed to pass the Security Council. An October 16 Russian-led resolution failed to garner the necessary votes and received negative votes from the United States (US), the United Kingdom (UK) and France. A Brazilian-drafted resolution was, on October 18, blocked by the United States. On October 25, two more resolutions (a Russian-led resolution and a U.S.-led resolution) also failed at the Security Council – the U.S. and the U.K. voted against the Russian resolution, while Russia and China voted against the U.S. resolution. While the Security Council dilly-dallied, Gaza burned, thousands of lives were lost, and the crisis escalated. The crisis in Gaza and the apparent inability of the Security Council to take meaningful action brings to the fore the urgent need for Security Council reform. The Security Council is a 15-member organ of the United Nations(UN) with five permanent members (China, France, Russia Federation, the United Kingdom, and the United States) and ten rotating members. Since it was created over 75 years ago, the basic structure of the Security Council has remained almost unchanged. Today, concerns about legitimacy, effectiveness, and representation are prompting renewed calls for Security Council reform. Unfortunately, much like the Security Council, talks of reforming the Security Council have gone nowhere. While almost every State that is a member of the UN agrees that reform is urgently needed,**

there is little agreement on the focus of reform and on the degree of reform that is needed.

**Warrant:** Permanent members have been the primary cause of gridlock as far back as 2018.

United Nations. “Paralysis Constricts Security Council Action in 2018, as Divisions among Permanent Membership Fuel Escalation of Global Tensions”, United Nations Meetings Coverage and Press Releases, 10 Jan 2019, <https://press.un.org/en/2019/sc13661.doc.htm>.

**The Security Council remained largely paralysed by expanding rifts and mounting tensions involving its permanent members in 2018**, a year characterized by the rise of nationalist movements and breaches of long-standing global norms that sparked questions about the very future of multilateralism. Over the course of the second-busiest year in its history, the 15-member Council convened a total of 275 public meetings, adopted 54 resolutions and issued 21 presidential statements. **It also failed to adopt a total of seven draft resolutions, three of them due to a permanent member’s exercise of its veto** and four owing to a lack of sufficient votes in their favour. Meanwhile, **a greater percentage of resolutions adopted in 2018 lacked the Council’s unanimous support than in the previous year. The Council’s five permanent members** — China, France, Russian Federation, United Kingdom and the United States — **remained gridlocked on several of the organ’s oldest agenda items, with fresh divisions also emerging over newer issues.** Against that backdrop, regional organizations such as the African Union took an increasingly prominent role in addressing their own challenges, raising new questions about the role and responsibilities of the United Nations in an evolving and more complex world.

**Impact:** Gridlock on the Security Council leads to inaction by the United Nations, costing millions of lives.

Mbombo, Jean-Marie Kasonga. "A Rework of the P5 as a Cornerstone for Peace Through Multilateralism", Georgetown Journal of International Affairs, 19 Dec 2022, <https://gjia.georgetown.edu/2022/12/19/a-rework-of-the-p5-as-a-cornerstone-for-peace-through-multilateralism/>.

Notably, **the 1994 genocide in Rwanda could have been avoided had the UNSC taken a decisive position.** Between 1996 and 2002, approximately six million people perished during the "African World War" in the Democratic Republic of Congo, but world leaders applied the "ostrich policy," pretending there was no threat to international peace and security. **The abuse of veto powers and a failure to provide vital support has led to many unjust wars affecting millions worldwide.** For instance, in the aftermath of the September 11 terrorist attacks, US troops invaded Afghanistan in November 2001 without the seal of approval from the Security Council. Similarly, nor did all P5 members support the preemptive war in Iraq that toppled the Saddam Hussein regime, the OTAN bombardment of Libya in 2011 that facilitated the capture of Kaddafi, or the Western support of the Free Syrian Army's actions against the regime of Bashar al-Assad. **It is worth mentioning that the UNSC holds the power to impose an arms embargo on sovereign states deemed untrustworthy, but it falls short of exposing the military capability of armed non-state actors that are engaged in endless wars against legitimate governments.** As an illustration, in a September 2022 interview with France24, the UN Secretary-General, Antonio Guterres described the terrorist group M23 operating in D.R. Congo as a modern army equipped with more sophisticated and advanced weapons than the UN Stabilization Mission, MONUSCO. Over the years, **such shortcomings of the UNSC have attracted an outpouring of suggestions intended to overhaul the highest decision-making body.**

**Analysis:** The gridlock argument is especially relevant due to the need for decisive UN action in current global conflicts, such as the war in Ukraine and the war in Gaza. The evidence is explicit



about the P5 as the cause of gridlock, citing the veto power as a reason for inaction. There is a strong case for the abolishment of the P5 allowing more swift action to be taken.

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**PRO: Permanent Members' Beliefs Are Outdated.**

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**Argument:** The makeup of the UNSC and P5 were decided after WW2, in 1945. The structure and members of the P5 still reflect the geopolitics of the world almost 80 years ago. Without modernization and changing the UNSC to represent current world dynamics, the UN will lose legitimacy and become completely ineffective.

**Claim:** The United Nations Security Council is hugely outdated.

Dempsey, Judy. "Judy Asks: Is the United Nations Still Fit for Purpose?", Carnegie Europe, 21 Sep 2023, <https://carnegieeurope.eu/strategieurope/90606>.

**The UN's most important institutional flaw is the outdated composition of the Security Council, which poses an existential threat to the long-term credibility and legitimacy of the world's premier organ for international peace and security.** It is past time for the UNSC to expand its permanent membership to include Japan, Germany, and India, as well as influential countries from Africa and Latin America. Such a change would be no silver bullet, of course, since it could complicate decision making on the Council. More fundamentally, it would not alter a structural reality inherent in the Charter and evident in the war in Ukraine: Each of the world's great powers will always insist on the right to veto enforcement action under Chapter 7 that it deems as contrary own vital interests.

**Warrant:** The makeup of the Security Council represents outdated thinking -- slows progress.

Anand, Anil. "It's Time to Reform the United Nations Security Council", Australian Institute of International Affairs, 11 Aug 2022,

<https://www.internationalaffairs.org.au/australianoutlook/its-time-to-reform-the-united-nations-security-council/>.

The exclusion of any African, Latin American, or Middle Eastern representation within the P5 has also diminished its legitimacy. **It is unlikely that someone setting up the UN today would give veto power and permanent membership to middle-ranking powers such as Britain and France but not to India, Japan, or Germany. On 28 June 2022 Loraine Sievers, Director of Security Council Procedure, told the Council that its outdated working methods needed improvement in order to create a transparent, nimble 15-nation organ capable of tackling contemporary global challenges.** Sievers presented wide-ranging proposals from restraining the use of the veto, to reforming the sanctions regime and the system of drafting resolutions. **Sievers concerns accentuate the geopolitical challenges that have heightened levels of fragmentation within the Council and placed it under intense scrutiny.**

**Warrant:** The UNSC no longer aligns with current geopolitical dynamics.

Friedman, Uri. "How the UN Security Council Can Reinvent Itself", The Atlantic, 7 Jul 2022, <https://www.theatlantic.com/ideas/archive/2022/07/un-security-council-russia-ukraine/661501/>.

**The Security Council also suffers from a crisis of legitimacy stemming from the fact that its permanent members are a snapshot of the prevailing world powers circa 1945.** It has, for example, no permanent representation from Africa or Latin America. Influential countries such as India and Japan are missing as well. **As UN Secretary-General António Guterres told me in 2018, "the Security Council doesn't correspond anymore" to contemporary geopolitical dynamics.**

**Warrant:** For countries like India, the P5 represent outdated ways of thinking and prevent equitable functioning.

Patrick, Stewart, et al. “UN Security Council Reform: What the World Thinks”, Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 28 Jun 2023,  
<https://carnegieendowment.org/2023/06/28/un-security-council-reform-what-world-thinks-pub-90032>.

**From India’s perspective, the current international order is inherently unjust. It is dominated by a great power club comprising the five permanent members (P5) of the Security Council—who often flagrantly violate the very rules and standards to which they hold all other countries. It is also obsolete, privileging a group whose claim to centrality—being the victors of World War II—is outdated. For India, the distribution of power and moral authority in the world has shifted substantially since 1945. The core issue, then, is one of equity, a vital precondition for the Security Council’s continued legitimacy in the eyes of those who aspire to join the great power club.**

**Warrant:** The Security Council is not built for modern day problems and issues.

Patrick, Stewart, et al. “UN Security Council Reform: What the World Thinks”, Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 28 Jun 2023,  
<https://carnegieendowment.org/2023/06/28/un-security-council-reform-what-world-thinks-pub-90032>.

**Second, the nature of global threats and the definition of international security have changed dramatically since 1945. The Security Council must be adapted to respond to new and evolving challenges like climate change, novel pandemics, and global terrorism. Such threats can only be resolved, African leaders argue, by an institution that represents the interests and perspectives of all of humanity. African states have**

long lobbied the council to include development and poverty reduction, as well as controlling the flow of small arms, as essential strategies for conflict prevention, rather than focusing on only traditional big power priorities like peacekeeping and nuclear nonproliferation. During its presidency of the Security Council in February 2023, for example, Mozambique convened an open debate on “Peace and Security in Africa: The Impact of Development Policies in the Implementation of the Silencing the Guns Initiative.” The aim of the event was “to facilitate a deeper understanding of the contribution that socio-economic factors can make in promoting social cohesion, peace, and stability, or, conversely, in triggering conflict, including the resurgence of unconstitutional change of governments in Africa and beyond.”

**Impact:** Without modernization and total reform, the UN will lose legitimacy and become entirely unproductive.

Pierce, Kailee. “Reforming the UN’s Security Council: The Outdated Role of Permanent Membership”, Fordham Political Review, 22 Dec 2023, <https://fordhampoliticalreview.org/reforming-the-uns-security-council-the-outdated-role-of-permanent-membership/>.

**Challenging the frameworks of the UN’s Security Council and the states formerly granted their privileged position is necessary. Demography tells us that by 2050, South and Southeast Asia, Africa, and the Middle East will contain the populations with the largest working share. This will undoubtedly change the economic and political balance driving the modern world’s power dynamics. Though this change is happening fast, Security Council states are reluctant to acknowledge the vital need for total reform (not just expansion), giving the impression that they are unwilling to give up their privilege—even if it is the morally correct decision. If this behavior is not recognized, the future powers projected to run the world in 2050 will be silenced by outdated frameworks and institutionalized biases. This will stunt development,**

increase tensions between countries that have been overlooked repeatedly, and leave our multinational peace frameworks completely unproductive.

**Analysis:** This argument is strategic for the pro because it explains why reform is not good enough, and the permanent members of the UNSC need to be completely abolished. They no longer represent global dynamics which slows progress and makes the UN inequitable as a whole.

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**PRO: Permanent Members Slow Climate Change Progress.**

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**Argument:** Permanent members of the UNSC disagree on methods to address climate change which decreases the likelihood of passing necessary resolutions.

**Claim:** The UN Security Council has been unsuccessful at addressing climate change.

Day, Adam and Florian Krampe. “Beyond the UN Security Council: Can the UN General Assembly tackle the climate–security challenge?”, SIPRI, 20 Jun, 2023, <https://www.sipri.org/commentary/essay/2023/beyond-un-security-council-can-un-general-assembly-tackle-climate-security-challenge#:~:text=While%20some%20permanent%20and%20elected,peace%20operations%2C%20imposing%20sanctions%2C%20authorizing.>

**Despite the evidence, and despite the Security Council having already passed more than 70 resolutions and statements on climate-related security risks, efforts to make climate change a standing item on the Security Council’s agenda have so far failed.** While some permanent and elected members favour broadening the Security Council’s mandate to cover responses to all ‘threats to peace and security’, including climate change, **others—notably China and Russia—want to keep Security Council business restricted to deploying peace operations, imposing sanctions, authorizing the use of military force and creating tribunals. These mechanisms are not sufficient to address the plethora of climate-related security challenges societies around the world are facing.**

**Warrant:** Permanent members have the ability to veto resolutions that address climate change.

Friedman, Uri. “How the UN Security Council Can Reinvent Itself”, The Atlantic, 7 Jul 2022, <https://www.theatlantic.com/ideas/archive/2022/07/un-security-council-russia-ukraine/661501/>.

Nor has the council distinguished itself on contemporary challenges that pose serious threats to human security, broadly defined. It has been a big player in the global response to COVID-19, taking months to pass a resolution urging warring parties around the world to abide by a humanitarian cease-fire during the pandemic—only for the measure to then go unheeded. **The institution has also done little on climate change: Last year, Russia vetoed a rather anodyne resolution nudging the council toward tackling climate change as a threat to peace and security, despite 113 countries co-sponsoring the resolution—the second-highest tally for a draft resolution in the organization’s history.**

**Warrant:** Possible dissent amongst permanent members disincentivizes climate change action.

Arias, Sabrina B. “The UN Security Council Declined to take up Climate Change as a Security Problem. Why?”, Columbia SIPA, 11 Oct, 2022, <https://multilateralism.sipa.columbia.edu/news/un-security-council-declined-take-climate-change-security-problem-why>.

We would expect that the states most threatened by climate change would have the greatest incentive to “securitize” the problem to raise attention and commitment. Small island developing states like Kiribati, Tuvalu, and the Maldives face the most severe threat. Yet these states also care deeply about the implications of climate change for international law, human rights, and development. **If the UNSC took up the issue of climate change, it could focus international attention, it would also give important decision-making power to a small group of states that may not represent advocate for the preferences of the most vulnerable countries. While UNSC members - particularly**



the P5 - would gain additional power, they may be unlikely to try to expend political capital in forcing a securitizing move, if they perceive that other member states would not be on board. Indeed, my research based on a machine learning model to examine all speeches on climate change given at the General Assembly's annual meetings from 1970-2014 shows that the P5 states are 5.4 percentage points more likely to securitize climate change than other states, whereas small island developing states are 6.4 percentage points less likely to do so. **While security concerns make up more than 15 percent of the climate debate, most member states do not discuss climate change as a security threat. States do raise security implications of climate changes - for example, the threat of rising sea-levels - but they do not do so in a way that suggests the UNSC should play a role in addressing the matter. This suggests that most member states would not be in favor of a security-centric approach to addressing climate change, and can explain why some of the Permanent 5 members - namely Russia - blocked the December 2021 resolution.** Indeed, Russia stated that expanding the UNSC's authority to address climate change would neglect other important dimensions of the climate crisis, including socio-economic development.

**Warrant:** Certain permanent members dispute the responsibility of UNSC to address climate change.

Security Council Report. "The UN Security Council and Climate Change", Security Council Report, 21 Jun, 2021,  
[https://www.securitycouncilreport.org/atf/cf/%7B65BF9B-6D27-4E9C-8CD3-CF6E4FF96FF9%7D/climate\\_security\\_2021.pdf](https://www.securitycouncilreport.org/atf/cf/%7B65BF9B-6D27-4E9C-8CD3-CF6E4FF96FF9%7D/climate_security_2021.pdf)

**China and Russia have long been sceptical of Council engagement on this issue. They believe that climate change is fundamentally a sustainable development issue (rather than a matter of international peace and security) that is more appropriately addressed by other parts of the UN system, such as the General Assembly, the UNFCCC,**

ECOSOC, and the UN's development system. While emphasising the importance of mitigation and adaptation measures in addressing climate change, both countries underscore the need for donor countries to provide support to developing countries through technology transfers and climate financing. **They chafe at what they believe is an effort by other Council members to draw generalised links between climate change and threats to international peace and security.** China and Russia have noted that climate change can worsen conflict in particular situations on the Council's agenda, but emphasise that evidence of direct causal linkages between climate change and conflict is lacking. **Russia in particular cautions that focusing on climate change could divert the Council's attention from other more basic security threats;** in this respect, Russian ambassador Vassily Nebenzia has asserted that, "to assume that climate change is the root cause of security issues would mean failing to determine its true causes and taking the wrong path when trying to resolve those issues".

**Impact:** Climate change is a significant threat to humanity and global sectors.

WHO. "Climate Change", World Health Organization, 12 Oct 2023,  
<https://www.who.int/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/climate-change-and-health#:~:text=Climate%20change%20is%20directly%20contributing,in%20scale%2C%20frequency%20and%20intensity.>

**Climate change presents a fundamental threat to human health. It affects the physical environment as well as all aspects of both natural and human systems – including social and economic conditions and the functioning of health systems. It is therefore a threat multiplier, undermining and potentially reversing decades of health progress. As climatic conditions change, more frequent and intensifying weather and climate events are observed, including storms, extreme heat, floods, droughts and wildfires. These weather and climate hazards affect health both directly and indirectly, increasing the risk of deaths, noncommunicable diseases, the emergence and spread**

**of infectious diseases, and health emergencies.** Climate change is also having an impact on our health workforce and infrastructure, reducing capacity to provide universal health coverage (UHC). More fundamentally, **climate shocks and growing stresses such as changing temperature and precipitation patterns, drought, floods and rising sea levels degrade the environmental and social determinants of physical and mental health. All aspects of health are affected by climate change, from clean air, water and soil to food systems and livelihoods. Further delay in tackling climate change will increase health risks, undermine decades of improvements in global health, and contravene our collective commitments to ensure the human right to health for all.**

**Analysis:** This argument is strategic due to its specificity. There is tons of evidence validating the UNSC's lack of climate action, specifically due to China and Russia utilizing their veto. The P5 are the main reason why the UNSC has been so slow to adopt climate change resolutions, even though the consequences of global warming are becoming dire.

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## PRO: Permanent Members Divert Resources From More Pressing Issues.

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**Argument:** The UNSC permanent members have weakened the UN's ability to efficiently distribute resources to the countries who need it most. This puts millions of lives at risk.

**Claim:** Due to disagreements between permanent members, the UNSC has been inefficient at distributing resources and effectuating change.

Fassihi, Farnaz. "The World Has Changed, but Can the U.N.? Don't Hold Your Breath.", The New York Times, 27 Sep 2023, <https://www.nytimes.com/2023/09/27/world/middleeast/united-nations-security-council-reform.html>.

Both Russia and China have also in theory supported change as part of their efforts to champion the interests of the Global South against the West. **But in practice, Russia has repeatedly thrown up obstacles to collective actions even beyond Ukraine. In July, it vetoed a draft resolution that would have authorized a nine-month renewal of cross-border aid delivery to northern Syria, vetoed sanctions on individuals in Mali and blocked a unified response to North Korea's ballistic missile launches. The push for change at the United Nations is not limited to the Security Council. The organization has also been under pressure to streamline its stifling bureaucracy and to streamline its many agencies, with the goal of both increasing efficiency and reducing costs.**

**Warrant:** The P5 has failed to equitably distribute economic benefits across the world.

Ryder, Hannah, Anna Baisch and Ovigwe Eguegu. "Decolonizing the United Nations Means Abolishing the Permanent Five", Foreign Policy, 17 Sep

2020, <https://foreignpolicy.com/2020/09/17/decolonizing-united-nations-means-abolish-permanent-five-security-council/>.

Yes, China's economic rise within the P5 has been notable—in fact, doubling in economic importance from accounting for 14 percent to 33 percent of the P5's total wealth. **But for the rest of the world, their economic relationship with the P5 has hardly changed over the U.N.'s 75 years. Global economics and the U.N. structure remain rooted in the power structures of 1945, despite the political independence.** Has the P5's U.N. status helped to maintain economic imperialism, or has their economic might helped them to maintain their powerful U.N. positions? In some ways it is only the correlation that matters. **The U.N.'s structural inability to compel the P5 countries themselves to act decisively for the greater good is often acknowledged as a key justification for change,** but this is often countered with economic arguments that we are all better off now. This counter does not hold water. **The P5's failure to distribute economic benefits to the rest of the world despite decolonization is also a structural problem that justifies change.**

**Warrant:** The UNSC does not prioritize aid in the countries that need it most, Syria proves.

CARE International. "UN Security Council fails to guarantee continued humanitarian aid to millions of people in Syria", CARE, 7 Dec 2022, <https://www.care-international.org/news/un-security-council-fails-guarantee-continued-humanitarian-aid-millions-people-syria>.

**CARE International is extremely disappointed by the vote today in the UN Security Council to reduce the duration of the UN's cross-border humanitarian assistance operation into Northwest Syria from 12 months to just six. The Council ignored calls from humanitarian organizations to use all means necessary to ensure that the four million Syrians in the Northwest who are in acute need will get the help they need**

**over the coming year.** Reducing the reauthorization of the Bab al-Hawa crossing to only six months when humanitarian needs are higher than ever before and set to rise further, will add to the suffering of Syrians, who have endured more than a decade of conflict and displacement. Within Syria’s precarious context, **this adds further uncertainty for Syrians and their consequential mental distress.** At a time of heightened needs across Syria, CARE and other humanitarian actors have been calling for the reauthorization of the Bab al-Hawa border crossing for 12 months. **Consistent and sustained cross-border assistance is vital to ensure crucial aid including food, water, shelter, medical care, and other life-saving assistance to some four million Syrians living in the Northwest, 80% of whom are women and children. Aid agencies were already struggling to plan and fund relief programs, but will now face even greater challenges with a shorter planning cycle.**

**Warrant:** The US and China, P5 members, contribute to the UN’s budget problems by failing to pay their dues.

Franco, Widad. “UN’s Financial Troubles Jeopardize Critical Human Rights Work”, Human Rights Watch, 13 Feb 2024, <https://www.hrw.org/news/2024/02/13/uns-financial-troubles-jeopardize-critical-human-rights-work>.

**The United States owes the most** but continues to make partial payments. According to UN sources, **the US owes \$1.1 billion to the UN’s regular budget for 2023 and 2024 plus additional arrears.** The Biden administration wants to pay, but Congress has not passed a budget that would allow it to do so. “The Biden administration is committed to working with Congress to ensure that the US fully pays its dues to the UN,” said Chris Lu, US ambassador for UN management and reform. The US isn’t the only member country that has been slow to pay – 50 others hadn’t paid as of the end of 2023. **China, the second biggest contributor, didn’t pay its dues until November, which exacerbated the**

UN's liquidity problems. UN management was forced to impose a hiring freeze last year. All UN departments are affected, including the handful of human rights investigations, most of which have relatively small staffs and budgets. For example, the UN Independent International Fact-Finding Mission for the Sudan, established four months ago has a one year mandate to investigate widespread atrocities, but still lacks investigators to carry out the mission. And while the freeze is supposed to allow exceptions for hiring essential staff, UN officials and diplomats told Human Rights Watch there was confusion about how to get those exceptions.

**Impact:** The UNSC finally passed a resolution to provide humanitarian relief in Gaza, but it doesn't go nearly far enough.

Al Jazeera Staff. "UN resolution on Gaza aid criticised as 'insufficient', 'meaningless'", Al Jazeera, 23 Dec 2023, <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2023/12/23/un-resolution-on-gaza-aid-criticised-as-insufficient-meaningless>.

While UNSC resolutions are legally binding, Al Jazeera's Alan Fisher said that Israel and other countries have ignored them in the past. "The circumstances and the consequences for people refusing to follow these Security Council resolutions seem to be much worse for some countries than others," said Fisher, reporting from occupied East Jerusalem. **Palestinian officials have said that more than 20,000 people, about 70 percent of them children and women, have been killed in Israel's land, air and sea offensive in the Gaza Strip since the start of the war on October 7. While top UN officials and international aid agencies welcomed the call for more humanitarian assistance, they said the resolution does not go far enough with the majority of the enclave's population of 2.3 million displaced, the imminent threat of famine and the spread of diseases.**

**Impact:** The world is facing record levels of need for humanitarian assistance; an effective UNSC is crucial.

United Nations. “People in Need of Humanitarian Assistance at Record Levels, Secretary-General Tells Economic and Social Council, Urging More Aid Funding, Efforts to Resolve Conflict”, United Nations Press Release, 21 Jun 2023, <https://press.un.org/en/2023/sgsm21852.doc.htm>.

**Global humanitarian needs this year are at record levels — once again. 360 million people worldwide need humanitarian assistance — up 30 per cent since the start of last year. More than 110 million people have been forced from their homes. And more than 260 million people face acute food insecurity, with some at risk of famine.**

The reasons have not changed: unresolved conflicts grind on while new wars are launched — with a devastating impact on civilians; global economic woes, started by COVID-19 and aggravated by the worldwide impact of the Russian invasion of Ukraine, are hitting the most vulnerable hardest; sustainable development — the ultimate prevention tool — has stagnated or gone into reverse; and the climate crisis has contributed to the deaths of thousands of people and displaced millions over the past year.

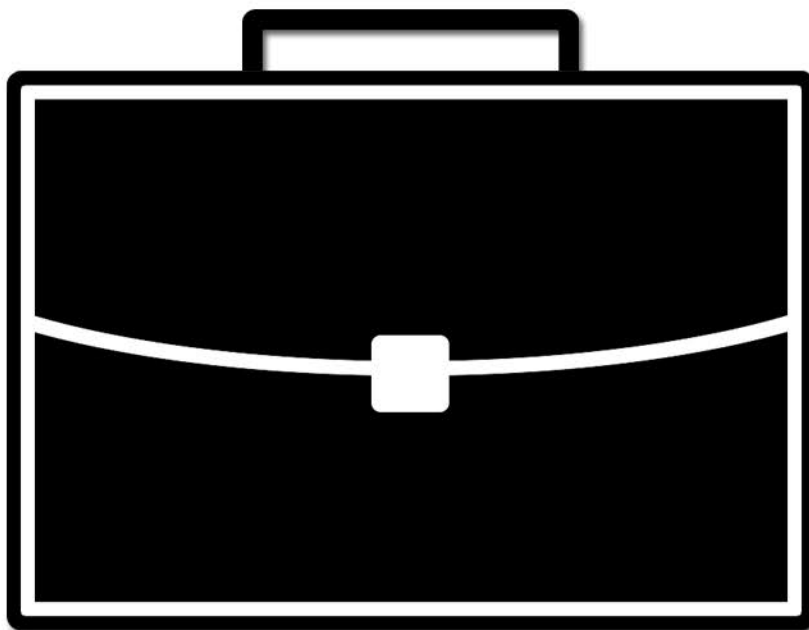
**Analysis:** This argument is strategic because the warrants are so wide-ranging. Whether it be paying dues, blocking resolutions, or not equitably distributing wealth, the P5 are preventing resources from reaching those who need it. The impact amplifies the magnitude of this impact: hundreds of millions of people are in need of aid: only a well-functioning organization can ensure it is provided efficiently.



# Champion Briefs

April 2024

Public Forum Brief



Pro Responses to  
Con Arguments

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## A/2: Permanent Membership Creates Deliberation

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**Turn:** Permanent membership reduces deliberation.

**Warrant:** Permanent status creates blockage

Martin, Ian. "The Key to Security Council Reform Is Fewer Permanent Members, Not More." PassBlue. Mar. 2024. <https://www.passblue.com/2024/02/26/the-key-to-security-council-reform-is-fewer-permanent-members-not-more/>

**But as long as France and Britain remain permanent members, how can India be expected to accept only nonpermanent status, or Africa to accept exclusion from permanent membership? When the overwhelming view of member states is that France and Britain are no longer geopolitically qualified to be two of five permanent members, why shouldn't they have to compete for the four-year renewable terms too? None of the permanent members can prevent the adoption of a resolution to amend the Charter in the General Assembly, where the veto does not operate. Under Article 108 of the Charter, they can only subsequently block its ratification through their legislatures. When in 1963 the Assembly voted to expand the Council's nonpermanent members from 6 to 10, China (the seat then held by Taiwan) was the only permanent member voting in favor: France and the Soviet Union voted against, while Britain and the US abstained. Yet the amendment was ultimately ratified by the legislatures of all five permanent members.**

**Warrant:** The alternative to reform is fragmentation.

Martin, Ian. "The Key to Security Council Reform Is Fewer Permanent Members, Not More." PassBlue. Mar. 2024. <https://www.passblue.com/2024/02/26/the-key-to-security-council-reform-is-fewer-permanent-members-not-more/>

**As the United Nations approaches its Summit of the Future in September, the anger of under-represented regions is compelling stronger statements of commitment to reforming the Security Council. Secretary-General António Guterres warns that "the alternative to reform is further fragmentation — it's reform or rupture." But despite current efforts to reinvigorate the process of intergovernmental negotiations, now in their 15th year, member states appear no closer to agreement on what change should look like.** Yet there is a feasible path to reform: Instead of considering more permanent seats, member states should recognize that France and Britain no longer qualify geopolitically to be two of five permanent members of a post-colonial Council. So it is time for them to join the competition among an increased, longer-term elected membership.

**Warrant:** The status quo is not working

Winther, Bjarke. "Reforming the United Nations Security Council: Increasing Equality in the International Arena" Georgetown Journal of International Affairs. Sept. 2017. <https://gjia.georgetown.edu/2022/09/09/reforming-the-united-nations-security-council-increasing-equality-in-the-international-arena/>

**The issue of UNSC reform is both straightforward and complicated. Besides the unequal representation showcased by a lack of permanent representation from the Global South, there is an obvious need for a more effective UNSC. The wars in Syria and Ukraine exemplify how the veto system balances the Council's peace and security efforts towards power politics instead of humanitarian-oriented multilateralism.** The flipside of the need to increase equality by expanding the permanent membership and

reforming the veto system is that the current institutionalized dialogue between the P5 prevents big-power conflicts and that the privileges afforded to the big powers ensure their continued interest and participation and hedges against a dissolution like that of the League of Nations.

**Warrant:** Reform increases legitimacy

Winther, Bjarke. "Reforming the United Nations Security Council: Increasing Equality in the International Arena" *Georgetown Journal of International Affairs*. Sept. 2017. <https://gjia.georgetown.edu/2022/09/09/reforming-the-united-nations-security-council-increasing-equality-in-the-international-arena/>

It is not a given that an increase in permanent membership enhances the Council's effectiveness. However, **it would strengthen the body's legitimacy, leading to increased performance based on ensuing upsurge in support from more UN member states. The permanent presence of African countries would likely improve approaches to peace missions on the African continent and align Global North/Global South norms concerning global governance through the UN. In the final analysis, the combined agency of the AU and the G4 could permanently add four Global South countries on the Council (two African, Brazil, and India). This end will not come easy, but it is essential to keep "agitating for reform" and utilize the fact that advocacy for increased inclusion of Global South countries is an established norm in the debates.**

**Analysis:** Use this response to show the judge that although the UNSC is theoretically a deliberative body, the problems caused by permanent membership make deliberations toxic and difficult.

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## A/2: Permanent Membership Helps The United States

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**Turn:** Permanent membership causes backlash to the United States

**Warrant:** The veto makes the US unpopular

Mallow, Muzaffar. "Abolish UNSC's veto power." New Straits Times July 2018,  
<https://www.nst.com.my/opinion/letters/2023/10/971019/abolish-unscs-veto-power>

Given what had happened in Gaza, many saw the UN as failing its role as a global peacemaker that could bring unity to all countries. Thus, **for the UN to stay relevant, it must abolish totally the veto power of its permanent members: the US, the UK, France, Russia and China. For many years, veto power has been abused by these permanent countries to serve their interests, resulting in major issues and conflicts to remain unsolved.** The longest is the Palestinian issue. It has continued for 75 years because the US used its veto power to prevent condemnation against Israel for its acts of terror and aggression in the Palestinian-occupied territories.

**Warrant:** The Veto power has been used for harm

Staff. "Colleges Absolutely Have the Money to Pay Student Athletes." Huffington Post, July 2018, [https://www.huffpost.com/entry/ncaa-pay-student-athletes\\_n\\_6940836](https://www.huffpost.com/entry/ncaa-pay-student-athletes_n_6940836)

**In 2015, Russia used its veto rights in the UNSC to block a five-nation proposal, initiated by Malaysia, to establish an ad hoc criminal international tribunal to try those responsible for the downing of Flight MH17 on July 17, 2014, in eastern Ukraine.**

A total of 298 people, including 43 Malaysians, were killed in the tragedy. Another example was the inability of the UNSC in 2014 to adopt a resolution that would have referred Syria to the International Criminal Court (ICC) for the crimes it had committed despite repeated appeals by senior UN officials.

**Warrant:** Pressure is mounting for veto reform

Evans, Gareth. "Should the UN Security Council veto be limited?." World Economic Forum, 2018, <https://www.weforum.org/agenda/2015/02/should-the-un-security-council-veto-be-limited/>

Nor has the United States, which has used its veto some 80 times (most frequently, in recent years, on Israel-related issues), shown much enthusiasm, notwithstanding its generally strong stand on genocide and related cases. Only the United Kingdom (which, like France itself, last resorted to the veto in 1989) has given any hint of support for the French initiative. The right to veto was the price demanded by China, France, Great Britain, Russia, and the US for joining the UN. No one believes that a formal Charter amendment to abolish or limit this right is remotely likely. **But international pressure on the P5 has been mounting for the last 15 years – and especially since the General Assembly’s unanimous embrace in 2005 of the “responsibility to protect” (R2P) principle. Advocates of the French position want these countries to forswear their veto when a clear majority supports proposed action to mitigate the risk of a mass-atrocity crime. Distaste for the blocking of the Syrian resolutions has been particularly intense, and, at last count, 68 countries had given explicit support to the French proposal in various UN forums.**

**Warrant:** The permanent five face a moral crisis

Evans, Gareth. "Should the UN Security Council veto be limited?." World Economic Forum, 2018, <https://www.weforum.org/agenda/2015/02/should-the-un-security-council-veto-be-limited/>

**The moral argument that the veto should not be used in cases of mass-atrocity crimes is overwhelming. The P5 have obligations under the UN Charter, as well as international humanitarian and human rights law, not to undermine the effectiveness of the UN or that body of law. And the political argument against using the veto in these situations – that it jeopardizes the credibility and legitimacy of the Security Council, whose structure is already seen as not reflecting the geopolitical realities of the twenty-first century – should also weigh heavily on the P5.** But is it possible to craft a veto-restraint proposal to which all of the P5 can agree? In January, at a conference I attended in Paris that brought together French policymakers and international experts, it became clear that a draft agreement could meet most, if not all, objections. But it would need to have at least three key elements.

**Analysis:** Tell judges that the backlash from US vetoes have created an acrimonious international climate that will be bad for the US in the long run.

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## A/2: The United Nations Infringes On Sovereignty

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**Turn:** The UN affirms sovereignty.

**Warrant:** Sovereignty has evolved.

Mortimer, Edward. "The United Nations, National Sovereignty, and the Responsibility to Protect." German Development Institute. <https://www.idos-research.de/en/the-current-column/article/the-united-nations-national-sovereignty-and-the-responsibility-to-protect/>

**The phrase "the responsibility to protect" reflects a line of thought which had developed under the impact of a series of humanitarian tragedies in the 1990s, notably in Africa but also in the Balkans. In reaction to a tendency of some governments to treat sovereignty as a privilege that would allow rulers to commit the gravest atrocities without being accountable to any higher power, this line of thought emphasised the concept of "sovereignty as responsibility" – the responsibility of a state for the security and wellbeing of its citizens.** The R2P report, published in 2001 by an international commission set up by the Canadian government, was at first overshadowed by the very different debates that followed the events of September 11, 2001. Worse, the Anglo-American invasion of Iraq in 2003 was misleadingly presented by some commentators as an exercise of R2P, thereby rendering the new doctrine deeply suspect in the eyes of many developing country governments.

**Warrant:** R2P supersedes traditional notions of sovereignty

Mortimer, Edward. "The United Nations, National Sovereignty, and the Responsibility to Protect." German Development Institute. <https://www.idos-research.de/en/the-current-column/article/the-united-nations-national-sovereignty-and-the-responsibility-to-protect/>



current-column/article/the-united-nations-national-sovereignty-and-the-responsibility-to-protect/

In spite of this, over time, the report proved remarkably successful in reformulating the terms of the debate over what had previously been called “humanitarian intervention”, in a way that made it easier for many developing countries to accept. Its main ideas were taken up in the report of the high-level panel set up by then UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan after the Iraq war, then in the Secretary-General’s own report “In Larger Freedom”, and finally in the “Outcome Document” of the UN World Summit in September 2005. **In paragraph 138 of that document the world’s states accepted that each of them individually “has the responsibility to protect its populations” from genocide, war crimes, ethnic cleansing and crimes against humanity, and undertook to act accordingly. In paragraph 139 they declared themselves “prepared to take collective action, in a timely and decisive manner, through the Security Council...should peaceful means be inadequate and national authorities are manifestly failing to protect their populations” from the same four crimes. They also committed themselves to helping each other “build capacity” to protect their populations, “and to assisting those [states] which are under stress before crises and conflicts break out”.** Under the same heading, in paragraph 140, they declared their support for the mission of the Special Adviser of the Secretary-General on the Prevention of Genocide – a post created the previous year, on the tenth anniversary of the genocide in Rwanda.

**Warrant:** Sovereignty is not a defense for human rights violations.

Staff. “State Sovereignty And The United Nations Organization.” Colombo Telegraph. July 2019, <https://www.colombotelegraph.com/index.php/state-sovereignty-and-the-united-nations-organization/>

The widely publicized peacekeeping missions in the former Yugoslavia, Rwanda, and Somalia called into question the legitimacy and limitations of UN military interventions. This led to the concept of the Responsibility to Protect (R2P), conceived in 2001 and formally accepted into UN vernacular at the 2005 World Summit. **The R2P asserts that if a state is manifestly failing to protect its citizens from mass atrocities and peaceful measures are not working, the international community has the responsibility to intervene: first diplomatically, then more coercively, and as a last resort with military force. States are bound by the UN Declarations on Human Rights and are required to abide by them and cannot plead State Sovereignty to shut out the UNO.**

**Warrant:** The UN plays a vital role in R2P

Staff. "State Sovereignty And The United Nations Organization." Colombo Telegraph. July 2019, <https://www.colombotelegraph.com/index.php/state-sovereignty-and-the-united-nations-organization>

Obviously, diplomatic means are always the first employed by the United Nations, and Chapter VI takes precedent in all cases. This can range from preventive diplomacy, peacemaking or negotiating settlements, to post-conflict maintenance and continued negotiation. Peacekeeping goes a step beyond this with the deployment of troops. However, the presence of troops does not mean that the UN is using force. Peacekeepers have a wide range of mandates. **Early goals of peace keeping were limited to maintaining ceasefires and stabilizing violence in order to make diplomatic solutions more reachable, but as the Cold War ended, the range of activities and mandates for peacekeepers has expanded. Peacekeepers now help build government institutions, promote human rights, set up local police forces, and disarm former combatants (UN Peacekeeping) to protecting and building peace after a conflict. UN peacekeeping aims to adapt to each conflict in order to meet the challenges of each situation.**

**Analysis:** This response makes it clear that sovereignty has its limits. Properly defined, sovereignty accounts for a government's obligations to protect human rights, which the UN must defend.

## A/2: Veto Power Stops Aggression

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**Turn:** Vetoes create aggression.

**Warrant:** Russia uses vetoes to abet aggression.

Magid, Shelby. "Russia's veto makes a mockery of the United Nations Security Council." Atlantic Council, May 2023, <https://www.atlanticcouncil.org/blogs/ukrainealert/russias-veto-makes-a-mockery-of-the-united-nations-security-council/>

"This is an extraordinary moment," declared US ambassador to the United Nations Linda Thomas-Greenfield during a recent UN General Assembly (UNGA) emergency special session on Ukraine. "Now, at more than any other point in recent history, the United Nations is being challenged. If the United Nations has any purpose, it is to prevent war, it is to condemn war, to stop war." With this purpose in mind, in a sweeping show of international unity, **141 countries voted in favor of an UNGA resolution demanding an immediate end to the Russian offensive in Ukraine. While non-binding and largely symbolic, this overwhelming show of global support for Ukraine came at a time when it was doubly needed, both for Ukraine itself and for the sake of the UN. Only four countries joined Russia in voting against the resolution. To the surprise of nobody, the list included Belarus, North Korea, Eritrea, and Syria. Thirty-five nations abstained.**

**Warrant:** Obstructionism prevents resolutions on international conflict.

Magid, Shelby. "Russia's veto makes a mockery of the United Nations Security Council." Atlantic Council, May 2023,

<https://www.atlanticcouncil.org/blogs/ukrainealert/russias-veto-makes-a-mockery-of-the-united-nations-security-council/>

**The P5 have frequently wielded their veto power to torpedo resolutions incongruent with their national and foreign policy interests. Such machinations have been at the root of repeated Council inaction on Syria, Israel, and perhaps most memorably, Ukraine following the 2014 annexation of Crimea by Russia. Unilateral obstruction in the Council has over time fed into growing criticism of the UN's alleged irrelevance on the international stage.** Established to foster global cooperation for the common good and consensual laws governing international behavior to preempt and mitigate interstate conflicts, today the UN is becoming increasingly captive to geopolitical rivalry and indecision. Russia is using its perch on the Security Council to distort international norms and sow discord in the pursuit of national interests.

**Warrant:** The veto makes the UN powerless to help those in need.

Shwartz, Jon. "The U.N. Is Powerless to Help Gaza. That's How the U.S. Wants It." The Intercept. Oct. 2023. <https://theintercept.com/2023/10/21/security-council-veto-united-nations/>

**The United States was the only country to vote "no" on a proposed U.N. Security Council resolution authored by Brazil that called for "humanitarian pauses" in Israel's bombing of Gaza. Twelve countries voted for the resolution, including several surprising ones, such as France and the United Arab Emirates. Two more, Russia and the U.K., abstained. But according to the Security Council's rules, America's sole "no" vote meant that the resolution failed.** Human Rights Watch criticized America's actions, saying, "Once again the U.S. cynically used their veto to prevent the U.N. Security Council from acting on Israel and Palestine at a time of unprecedented carnage."

**Warrant:** Russia has used the veto power to stonewall efforts to help Ukraine.

Shwartz, Jon. "The U.N. Is Powerless to Help Gaza. That's How the U.S. Wants It." The Intercept. Oct. 2023. <https://theintercept.com/2023/10/21/security-council-veto-united-nations/>

**We are dealing with a state that is turning the veto in the U.N. Security Council into the right to die. This undermines the whole architecture of global security. It allows them to go unpunished, so that they're destroying everything that they can. So, if this continues, the countries will rely only on the power of their own arms to ensure their security and not on international law, not rely on international institutions. The United Nations can be simply closed. ... The U.N. system must be reformed immediately so that the veto is not the right to die, that there is a fair representation in the Security Council of all regions of the world.**

**Analysis:** Use this response to demonstrate that the veto will always prevent the UN from acting when it does so in conflict with the interests of a major power. This will inherently pose problems for conflict resolution.

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## A/2: Veto Power Stops Destabilizing Policies.

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**Response:** The veto is itself destabilizing because it creates gamesmanship and prevents cooperation.

**Warrant:** Russia vetoed a climate change resolution.

Peltz, Jennifer. "Russia vetoes U.N. resolution linking climate change to international security." PBS. 2023, <https://www.pbs.org/newshour/world/russia-vetoes-u-n-resolution-linking-climate-change-to-international-security>

**Russia on Monday vetoed a first-of-its-kind U.N. Security Council resolution casting climate change as a threat to international peace and security, a vote that sank a years-long effort to make global warming more central to decision-making in the U.N.'s most powerful body.** Spearheaded by Ireland and Niger, the proposal called for "incorporating information on the security implications of climate change" into the council's strategies for managing conflicts and into peacekeeping operations and political missions, at least sometimes. The measure also asked the U.N. secretary-general to make climate-related security risks "a central component" of conflict prevention efforts and to report on how to address those risks in specific hotspots.

**Warrant:** Vetoing climate change measures has lasting consequences.

Peltz, Jennifer. "Russia vetoes U.N. resolution linking climate change to international security." PBS. 2023, <https://www.pbs.org/newshour/world/russia-vetoes-u-n-resolution-linking-climate-change-to-international-security>

**Stronger storms, rising seas, more frequent floods and droughts and other effects of warming could inflame social tensions and conflict**, potentially “posing a key risk to global peace, security and stability,” the proposed resolution said. Some 113 of the U.N.’s 193 member countries supported it, including 12 of the council’s 15 members.

But India and veto-wielding Russia voted no, while China abstained. Their envoys said the issue should remain with broader U.N. groups, such as the Framework Convention on Climate Change. **Adding climate change to the Security Council’s purview would only deepen global divisions that were pointed up by last month’s climate talks in Glasgow, Scotland, the opponents said. The talks ended in a deal that recommitted to a key target for limiting warming and broke some new ground but fell short of the U.N.’s three big goals for the conference.**

**Warrant:** The UN is deadlocked over Sudan

Nichols, Michelle. “As UN urges Sudan truce, Russia and China cite Gaza.” March 2024.  
<https://www.aol.com/news/un-urges-sudan-truce-russia-221524384.html>

**The United Nations Security Council on Friday called for an immediate cessation of hostilities in Sudan, prompting China to remind it not to forget about the Israel-Hamas war in Gaza and Russia to accuse the United States of double standards. Russia abstained, while the remaining 14 council members voted in favor of the British-drafted resolution that called for an immediate cessation of hostilities during the Muslim fasting month of Ramadan, which begins early next week.** War erupted in Sudan on April 15, 2023, between the Sudanese army and paramilitary Rapid Support Forces (RSF). The U.N. says nearly 25 million people - half Sudan's population - need aid, some 8 million have fled their homes and hunger is rising. Washington says the warring parties have committed war crimes.



**Warrant:** The UN has not come up with a solution for Sudan

Nichols, Michelle. "As UN urges Sudan truce, Russia and China cite Gaza." March 2024.

<https://www.aol.com/news/un-urges-sudan-truce-russia-221524384.html>

**During a Security Council meeting on Thursday. U.N. Secretary-General Antonio Guterres urged a Ramadan truce. Sudan's U.N. ambassador, Al-Harith Idriss Al-Harith Mohamed, told the council on Thursday that the president of the country's transitional council commended Guterres' appeal, but "he's wondering about how to do this." "All those who would like to see that appeal transformed into action are welcome ... to present a mechanism for implementation of it," the Sudanese ambassador said.**

**Analysis:** Use the first two cards to show that even if sports trade off with education, student athletes still deserve to be paid for their time. Use the second set of cards to demonstrate that piecemeal efforts at reforming the status quo are ineffective and slow.

## A/2: Veto Power Is Appropriate

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**Turn:** The veto is illegitimate

**Warrant:** The veto is antidemocratic

Lopez-Carlos, Augusto “The Origins of the UN Veto and Why it Should be Abolished.”

Global Governance Forum, April 2022.

<https://globalgovernanceforum.org/origins-un-veto-why-it-should-be-abolished/>

**Related to concerns over the voting mechanism, was the perception that a Security Council in which the five permanent major power members had veto power—France was included in 1945—and that the UN would turn into an imperialistic organization in which the permanent members of the Council would be, de facto, running the world. The veto itself was perceived by many as undermining the democratic legitimacy of the organization, a practice that could not be defended on the basis of any principle of just governance. Non-permanent members of the Security Council accepted to be limited by a two-thirds majority, whereas the permanent members accepted no such constraints. More importantly—and with huge practical and political implications—some argued that a system was being created in which the organization would not be able to deal with problems and/or conflicts between the major powers or between a major power and a smaller country.**

**Warrant:** The veto defeats the purpose of international cooperation over security

Lopez-Carlos, Augusto “The Origins of the UN Veto and Why it Should be Abolished.”

Global Governance Forum, April 2022.

<https://globalgovernanceforum.org/origins-un-veto-why-it-should-be-abolished/>

Since most major security problems in the future were likely to involve, directly or indirectly, one of the major powers, this gave rise to the concern that, given the strategic importance, economic size, and large geographic footprint of the Soviet Union, China, the United States and the British Commonwealth, the United Nations, as conceived, would be largely useless at doing what it was created to do, namely, “maintain international peace and security, and to that end: to take effective collective measures for the prevention and removal of threats to the peace, and for the suppression of acts of aggression or other breaches of the peace, and to bring about by peaceful means, and in conformity with the principles of justice and international law, adjustment or settlement of international disputes or situations which might lead to a breach of the peace.”

**Warrant:** The veto has been a problem in the past.

Narvaez, Sabina. “Veto Power in the Security Council Should Be Abolished.” June 2024, <https://www.iestork.org/veto-power-in-the-security-council-should-be-abolished/>

**This has significantly impacted the UNSC’s ability to function in the past. During the Cold War, the US and the Soviet Union rarely agreed on international security issues. Each world power was able to use its veto to block resolutions, rendering the UNSC ineffective in a context full of crises and threats to international peace.** The Security Council is now more effective. After the Cold War ended, it authorised more peace-keeping missions in a decade than it had in the previous 40 years. However, this wasn’t due to reforms but to a change in the global order. If there was ever another Cold War between any of the five permanent members, the Council would be completely blocked again.

**Warrant:** The veto currently prevents effective action.

Narvaez, Sabina. "Veto Power in the Security Council Should Be Abolished." June 2024, <https://www.iestork.org/veto-power-in-the-security-council-should-be-abolished/>

Furthermore, even now, there are key conflicts that the UNSC can't intervene in because of the veto. For example, the US has used its veto to block action on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict 43 times, including resolutions calling for Israel to respect Muslim places of worship and abide by the Geneva Conventions in its military occupation of Palestinian territory. Meanwhile, **Amnesty International has accused Russia and China of abusing their veto power during the Syrian war. This includes preventing the UNSC from holding the Syrian government accountable for illegal chemical attacks. Clearly, the veto is still being used by world powers to protect allies who have committed crimes against humanity.**

**Analysis:** Use this response to demonstrate that legitimacy requires democracy. If the veto allows the permanent members to act in counter-majoritarian ways, it cannot lead to legitimacy.

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**A/2: Proposals For Reform Are Nonserious.**

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**Turn:** Proposals are serious.

**Warrant:** African states have advanced serious proposals.

Mbetse, Sithembile. “UN Security Council Reform: What the World Thinks” Carnegie Endowment. Sept 2021, <https://carnegieendowment.org/2023/06/28/un-security-council-reform-what-world-thinks-pub-90032#africa>

**African states have long advocated for the expansion and reform of the Security Council. Two convictions inform this view. First, the council is not representative of the world’s people. Nations from the Global South make up more than two-thirds of the UN’s membership, while the Security Council represents only 8 percent of member states. When the UN was established in 1945, most of Africa was still under colonial rule. The only Security Council expansion to date took place in 1965, in the early stages of the continent’s decolonization.** Although African conflicts take up over 50 percent of council meetings and 70 percent of its resolutions, no African country has a permanent seat—only three nonpermanent seats that rotate among the continent’s subregional blocs. Many African leaders see this as a “historical injustice” and have argued that the council must be reformed to better represent the world’s population and reflect contemporary geopolitical realities.

**Warrant:** Serious proposals have been advanced.

Mbetse, Sithembile. “UN Security Council Reform: What the World Thinks” Carnegie Endowment. Sept 2021, <https://carnegieendowment.org/2023/06/28/un-security-council-reform-what-world-thinks-pub-90032#africa>

Nearly twenty years ago, in 2004, then UN secretary-general Kofi Annan revived the debate on UN reform by appointing a High-Level Panel on Threats, Challenges, and Change. It proposed enlarging the Security Council without advocating a single institutional solution. In response, **the African Union (AU), in March 2005, adopted a common position known as the Ezulwini Consensus. It called for, among other things, Africa “to be fully represented in all the decision-making organs of the UN, particularly in the Security Council,” where the continent should have no less than two permanent seats, “with all the prerogatives and privileges of permanent membership including the right of veto,” as well as five nonpermanent seats.**

**Warrant:** India has advanced a serious proposal.

Mukherjee, Rohan “UN Security Council Reform: What the World Thinks” Carnegie Endowment. Sept 2021, <https://carnegieendowment.org/2023/06/28/un-security-council-reform-what-world-thinks-pub-90032#africa>

**India’s official position on Security Council reform seeks to correct three existing sources of institutional inequity: membership, formal powers, and informal powers.** First, **India advocates increasing both permanent and nonpermanent membership in the Security Council to approximately twenty-six members (up from today’s council of fifteen nations). The new permanent members would be India, Brazil, Germany, and Japan (the so-called G4 nations), as well as two countries nominated by the African Group at the UN.** Second, India insists that all new permanent members possess a veto. At the same time, it believes that all permanent Security Council members (new and old) should commit to using it only in exceptional circumstances and avoid blocking enforcement action in response to grievous acts such as genocide, crimes against humanity, and war crimes.

**Warrant:** India's plan would improve the security council.

Mukherjee, Rohan "UN Security Council Reform: What the World Thinks" Carnegie Endowment. Sept 2021, <https://carnegieendowment.org/2023/06/28/un-security-council-reform-what-world-thinks-pub-90032#africa>

**India seeks to make the Security Council more transparent, consultative, and accountable. Some of its proposed reforms include: greater Security Council consultation with nonmembers; more institutionalized access to information about council deliberations; regular and robust reporting to the General Assembly; and curbing practices such as the so-called hidden veto and penholding, which together give the P5 significant agenda-setting powers.** India's case for permanent membership has focused both on its existing contributions to peace and security and on the need for equitable geographic representation. Other G4 nations and groups such as the African Group and L.69 (a coalition of like-minded developing countries) have based their reform proposals on similar principles. Indeed, minor differences aside, the G4 has spoken with one voice on Security Council reform since the group's formation in 2005.

**Analysis:** Use this response to show the judge that various serious options for reform exist and could be implemented if the affirmative wins the debate.

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## A/2: Status Quo Is Working

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**Answer:** The status quo is failing because the UN is not passing policy

**Warrant:** The UN is in gridlock over security issues

Sarah, Dadouch. "U.N. gridlock on Gaza continues amid U.S. objections" Washington Post. December 2023. <https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/2023/12/20/un-security-council-israel-gaza/>

**The U.N. Security Council failed again Wednesday to produce a resolution that could pressure Israel to curtail the violence in Gaza and allow humanitarian aid into the enclave. World powers agreed to delay a vote for another day as they tried to hone language of a resolution that the United States would not veto related to a call for the cessation of hostilities and the establishment of a U.N. mechanism for monitoring the delivery of aid, said diplomats familiar with the matter.** The standoff underscored the isolation of the United States on the world stage, with foreign diplomats making clear that if a compromise couldn't be brokered soon, the resolution would be put up for a vote.

**Warrant:** The UN cannot move forward because of the veto

Sarah, Dadouch. "U.N. gridlock on Gaza continues amid U.S. objections" Washington Post. December 2023. <https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/2023/12/20/un-security-council-israel-gaza/>

**If diplomats cannot find a solution before the council puts it to a vote, the Biden administration will have to decide whether to anger the vast majority of U.N. member states or Israel, its longtime Middle East ally. "We have been working overnight hours, long hours,"** the UAE ambassador to the United Nations, Lana Zaki Nusseibeh, told



reporters after leaving a gridlocked meeting of the council. “We appreciate your patience with the council.” The closed-door meeting ended without a vote as world powers agreed to reconvene on Thursday.

**Warrant:** UN leadership sees the body as dysfunctional

Besheer, Margaret. “UN Chief: Global Family ‘Dysfunctional’ Voice of America. Sept 2023, <https://www.voanews.com/a/un-chief-global-family-dysfunctional-7260298.html>

U.N. Secretary-General Antonio Guterres warned Friday that global divisions are growing, risking catastrophic fragmentation and confrontation. He told reporters at the G20 summit in New Delhi that the gathering’s theme - One Earth, One Family, One Future - resonates today not just as an ideal but as an indictment of the times. **“Because if we are indeed one global family – we today resemble a rather dysfunctional one,” he said. “Divisions are growing, tensions are flaring up and trust is eroding – which together raise the specter of fragmentation, and ultimately, confrontation.”**

**Warrant:** Gridlock risks disaster in terms of global public policy.

Besheer, Margaret. “UN Chief: Global Family ‘Dysfunctional’ Voice of America. Sept 2023, <https://www.voanews.com/a/un-chief-global-family-dysfunctional-7260298.html>

**He said such divisions are very concerning in the best of times, but in the present, “it spells catastrophe.”** Guterres noted a list of challenges facing the international community, including accelerating climate change, a multiplicity of wars and conflicts, growing poverty and hunger, and the risks from new technologies. He emphasized that the outdated multilateral institutions of the post-World War II era need to evolve to meet 21st-century challenges. **“We need effective international institutions rooted in 21st-century realities and based on the U.N. Charter and international law,”** he said.

**“That is why I have been advocating for bold steps to make those global institutions truly universal and representative of today’s realities, and more responsive to the needs of developing economies.”**

**Analysis:** Use this response to show how the status quo is not holding. The UN is unable to respond to important global events. In a future crisis, the UN will be paralyzed and unable to act. This could spell disaster due to ineffective crisis response.

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## A/2: Abolishing Permanent Membership Would Lead To Backlash By The US

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**Response:** The backlash problem is overstated, as evidenced by US proposals for UNSC reform.

**Warrant:** Every student would get the benefits of professionalization

Xie, John. "Biden's Call to Expand UNSC Membership Likely to Go Unheeded" Voice of America. December 2023. <https://www.voanews.com/a/biden-s-call-to-expand-uns-c-membership-likely-to-go-unheeded-/7279316.html>

**U.S. President Joe Biden has again called for an increase in the number of permanent and non-permanent members of the United Nations Security Council. In his speech on Tuesday to the U.N. General Assembly, Biden said the U.S. has "undertaken serious consultation with many member states. And we'll continue to do our part to push more reform efforts forward, look for points of common ground, and make progress in the year ahead." "We need to be able to break the gridlock that too often stymies progress and blocks consensus on the council," he said. "We need more voices and more perspectives at the table."**

**Warrant:** Most of the current friction stems from Russia

Xie, John. "Biden's Call to Expand UNSC Membership Likely to Go Unheeded" Voice of America. December 2023. <https://www.voanews.com/a/biden-s-call-to-expand-uns-c-membership-likely-to-go-unheeded-/7279316.html>

**Patrick told VOA Mandarin in a phone interview that the deepening of frictions between the U.S. and China and between the U.S. and Russia have increasingly**

intruded on the ability of the council to address other matters such as climate change. But Patrick said there is "renewed momentum" on "the desire to reform the composition and perhaps the rules of the U.N. Security Council to make it more representative, but also more effective." The declaration that came out after the BRICS summit in August included a line that supported calls for Brazil, India and South Africa to play "a greater role in international affairs, in particular in the United Nations, including its Security Council." All three nations belong to the bloc, which also includes China and Russia.

**Warrant:** Biden's proposal shows the US is serious

Dayal, Anjali. "UN Security Council Reform: What the World Thinks" Carnegie Endowment. Sept 2021, <https://carnegieendowment.org/2023/06/28/un-security-council-reform-what-world-thinks-pub-90032#africa>

**Yet the Biden administration's proposals recommend shifts in diplomatic practices that actually could change the Security Council, albeit slowly and incrementally. There are two main routes for the council to become more just and equitable: one is expanding its membership to be more representative; the other is promoting more equitable outcomes via mechanisms like enhanced transparency or agreements to restrict veto use.** The former, which would require UN Charter revisions to add new, veto-wielding permanent seats, is extremely unlikely to happen. Instead, if the United States wants to push the body in a more just and democratic direction, it is likely to have better luck embracing the multilateral norms and new working methods and diplomatic practices that other member states have championed at the UN.

**Warrant:** Biden's proposals are detailed

Dayal, Anjali. "UN Security Council Reform: What the World Thinks" Carnegie Endowment. Sept 2021, <https://carnegieendowment.org/2023/06/28/un-security-council-reform-what-world-thinks-pub-90032#africa>

**The Biden administration has advanced six key principles for responsible behavior by Security Council members. These include commitments to: (1) "defend and act strictly in accordance with the UN Charter"; (2) "engage pragmatically with all Council members to address threats to international peace and security" (regardless of any bilateral disputes); (3) use the veto only in rare and extraordinary circumstances; (4) "demonstrate leadership in defending human rights and fundamental freedoms"; (5) "enhance cooperation, inclusivity, and transparency" via frequent, substantive engagement with the General Assembly and other relevant bodies; and (6) advance efforts for Security Council reform.**

**Analysis:** Use this response to demonstrate that the US is also interested in reforming the UNSC. Although the US does not support abolishing the permanent membership, this shows the US is amendable to changes from the status quo.

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## A/2: Abolishing Permanent Membership Would Lead To Backlash By China

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**Answer:** China will not backlash against the UN

**Warrant:** China favors reform

Guihong, Zhang. "UN Security Council Reform: What the World Thinks" Carnegie Endowment. Sept 2021, <https://carnegieendowment.org/2023/06/28/un-security-council-reform-what-world-thinks-pub-90032#africa>

**As a permanent member of the Security Council and the largest developing country, China articulated its principled position on Security Council reform in 2005. It includes five key points: (1) more developing countries should be represented in the council; (2) more countries, especially small- and medium-sized states, should have greater opportunities to serve on a rotating basis and participate in decisionmaking; (3) Security Council reform should adhere to the principle of geographic balance, ensuring representation of "different cultures and civilizations"; (4) all regional groupings should agree on reform proposals that concern their respective regions; and (5) any consensus on reform should reflect full democratic deliberations, as is consistent with the UN Charter.**

**Warrant:** China supports equity for developing countries

Guihong, Zhang. "UN Security Council Reform: What the World Thinks" Carnegie Endowment. Sept 2021, <https://carnegieendowment.org/2023/06/28/un-security-council-reform-what-world-thinks-pub-90032#africa>

There have since been no substantive changes to China's position. In November 2021, China's ambassador to the UN added that "hasty preparation of documents for negotiation and launching text-based negotiations will only aggravate division and confrontation among member states and undermine the momentum of reform." China supports adding new seats to the Security Council for developing countries, especially from Africa, but it does not support any specific country becoming a new permanent member. The Security Council is a unique institutional organ that distinguishes the UN from any other international organization. It provides a premier platform for its five permanent members (P5), who share joint responsibility for preserving international peace and security. Since it was established nearly eighty years ago, the body has played a critical role in ending conflicts, discouraging wars (particularly among the great powers), and generally maintaining world peace.

**Warrant:** China consistently echoes support.

Young, Ryan. "The Case for Paying College Athletes." American Institute for Economic Research, 16 Feb. 2023, <https://www.aier.org/article/the-case-for-paying-college-athletes/>.

Wang, also a member of the Political Bureau of the Communist Party of China Central Committee, said that as the first founding member to have signed the UN Charter and a permanent member of the UNSC, China has always firmly upheld the authority of the UN and supported the central role of the UN in international affairs. In a world that is undergoing both transformation and upheaval, countries expect the UN to effectively play a leading role in addressing global challenges and the Security Council to shoulder the important responsibility of maintaining international peace and security entrusted to it by the UN Charter, said Wang. **Wang added that China supports the steady progress of Security Council reform in the right direction, increasing the representation and voice of developing countries, giving more small and medium-**

**sized countries the opportunity to participate in decision-making, and enabling all member states to benefit from the reform.**

**Warrant:** Developing countries support China's position.

Young, Ryan. "The Case for Paying College Athletes." American Institute for Economic Research, 16 Feb. 2023, <https://www.aier.org/article/the-case-for-paying-college-athletes/>.

**It is necessary to put the solidarity and cooperation of the international community in an important position and seek the broadest consensus of the international community, Wang said. Albanai and Marschik, who are permanent representatives to the UN of Kuwait and Austria, expressed their appreciation for China in strengthening the role of the UN and upholding multilateralism and safeguarding the purposes and principles of the UN Charter, adding that they are willing to maintain communication and consultation with China and other member states regarding the reform of the Security Council.**

**Analysis:** Use this response to show that China wants reform, too. They have institutional interests in maintaining good relations with developing countries and would not backlash if the UNSC were abolished.



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## A/2: The UNSC Is Evolving In The Status Quo.

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**Answer:** No action has been taken.

**Warrant:** The UNSC has been the same for decades.

“The UN Security Council.” Council on Foreign Relations, 26 Feb. 2024,  
<https://www.cfr.org/backgrounder/un-security-council>.

The Security Council, the United Nations’ principal crisis-management body, is empowered to impose binding obligations on the 193 UN member states to maintain peace. The Security Council’s five permanent and ten elected members meet regularly to assess threats to international security, including civil wars, natural disasters, arms proliferation, and terrorism. **Structurally, the Security Council remains largely unchanged since its founding in 1946, stirring debate among members about the need for reforms. In recent years, members’ competing interests have often stymied the Security Council’s ability to respond to major global conflicts and crises, including the COVID-19 pandemic, Russia’s annexation of Crimea and subsequent invasion of Ukraine, and the war between Israel and Palestinian militant group Hamas.**

**Warrant:** No member has convened a meeting to discuss reform.

Gowan, Richard. “The UN Security Council between Rifts and Reform.” International Crisis Group, 13 July 2023, <https://www.crisisgroup.org/global/un-security-council-between-rifts-and-reform>.

Prior to the pandemic, the ambassadors of the fifteen UN Security Council member states took time to reflect on the state of the world every summer, heading out to an

estate on Long Island for discussions with the Secretary-General. The conclave was, as Crisis Group noted in advance of the last one to occur before COVID-19's onset in 2019, a chance "to discuss ways to ease relations" after bruising diplomatic exchanges. **While the coronavirus put a brief halt to the annual tradition, health concerns no longer constrain diplomats. But in 2023, politics rather than the pandemic presents the main obstacle to the retreat. As of yet, no Council member has opted to convene the meeting, presumably because each worries that the discussions would degenerate into rows over Russia's war in Ukraine.**

**Analysis:** This is a good response because it shows that actions speak louder than words. Although there have been talks of reform, nothing has actually been done to change the UNSC in decades, so nothing is likely to happen in the future.

**Answer:** Reform won't happen in the future.

**Warrant:** There are practical limitations.

"The UN Security Council." Council on Foreign Relations, 26 Feb. 2024,  
<https://www.cfr.org/background/un-security-council>.

**The odds of substantial reform are seen as remote because amending the UN Charter requires an affirmative vote and domestic ratification by two-thirds of UN member states. This includes all of the Security Council's permanent members, which are unlikely to take measures that would curb their own influence.** While there is broad agreement among UN members that the Security Council's makeup is outdated, each of the various proposals for reform inevitably leaves some aspirants alienated. Some proposals call for additional permanent members and others for a new class of elected seats that have the possibility of renewal. In the absence of charter reform, smaller

states have advocated for procedural changes, including greater transparency and closer consultations with troop-contributing countries.

**Analysis:** This is a good response because it shows that even if the public and member states want reform, it is not in the best interest of the permanent members. Thus, voting aff and fiat-ing the resolution is the only way to actually see change.

**Answer:** Abolishing permanent membership leads to reform.

**Warrant:** Middle powers are better negotiators.

Martin, Ian. "The Key to Security Council Reform Is Fewer Permanent Members, Not More." PassBlue, 26 Feb. 2024, <https://www.passblue.com/2024/02/26/the-key-to-security-council-reform-is-fewer-permanent-members-not-more/>.

The way forward is not, therefore, a negotiation led by permanent members. **Instead, a cross-regional group of middle powers, in consultation with other member states, should negotiate the compromises needed to propose in the Assembly an amendment to the Charter creating additional four-year renewable seats and two-year seats, while removing France and Britain from permanent membership.** Negotiators would need to thrash out an appropriate regional distribution and to consider the interests of the Arab bloc (currently a subset of the Asia-Pacific Group) and the "small island developing states," while avoiding a Council so large that it would be unwieldy. Ideally, France and Britain would recognize geopolitical reality and win themselves much good will by collaborating in a negotiation that involved renouncing their permanent membership. There should be real competition in elections within each regional group, with proper regard to the criterion in Article 23(1) of the Charter that due regard should be "specially paid, in the first instance to the contribution of Members of the United Nations to the maintenance of international peace and security." Instead of the African

Group having to decide which of its states should be permanent members, the contenders could compete in these elections. **The competition for four-year seats would create a healthy accountability of Council members to the wider UN membership, especially as some of those initially elected would want to win renewal of their terms.**

**Analysis:** This is a good response because it demonstrates that permanent members are not the best countries to be making decisions about the future of the UNSC. Instead, it should fall to middle powers who are more representative. This response could be added to with a representation turn.

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## A/2: Permanent Membership Promotes Democracy.

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**Answer:** The quest to spread democracy undermines other nations.

**Warrant:** The UN's behavior is neocolonialist.

Jain, Katie. "How the Dominance of Western Nations is Antithetical to the Mission of a United Nations." Yale Model United Nations, 20 Jan. 2019, <https://ymun.org/presscorpsxlv/2019/1/20/how-the-dominance-of-western-nations-is-antithetical-to-the-mission-of-a-united-nations>.

**Neocolonialism and economic imperialism have affected numerous committees in the UN this weekend.** In the Arab League, addressing the refugees in Yemen, delegates worked to find a solution to the US supplying oil and weapons to Saudi Arabia and pitting Arab nations against one another. According to Qatar they do this "because they recognize that once we do have these discussions and are capable of living in entire micro economy, they will lose a lot of power." The Delegation of the Syrian-Arab Republic added that everyone in the committee chose to, "gradually reduce the amount of influence Saudi Arabia has in the region," in order to help each other. Furthermore, in DISEC, an issue regarding NGOs arose when it was discovered they, too, were being used for Western exploitation which is, as the Delegation of Turkey said, "absolutely ridiculous and shouldn't be allowed." **The UN encourages peace and equality, but has demonstrated a significant lack thereof.** In some conferences, delegates are even required to wear "Western" business attire. Not African, not Middle-Eastern, not Asian, but Western. **By trying to spread Western ideals and democracy into regions in which the people don't want it or aren't ready for it, this organization has even undermined its own purpose. It is time for the UN to change, to become the reliable source it was**

supposed to be, to begin serving all nations and not merely the richer, Western, imperial ones.

**Warrant:** People don't want democracies pushed on them.

Bose, Sarmilla. "What if the 'people' don't want democracy?" Aljazeera, 20 Feb. 2012, <https://www.aljazeera.com/opinions/2012/2/20/what-if-the-people-dont-want-democracy>.

**A survey has revealed that the people of Libya may not be keen on democracy after all. The "Arab Spring" has been celebrated in the Western world as a struggle of democracy against dictatorship. Often the implicit assumption was that what the revolutionaries who were trying to overthrow their authoritarian regimes wanted was a Western-style parliamentary democracy. So when only 15 per cent of those surveyed in Libya say they want democracy established in a year, compared with 40 per cent who profess a preference for a "strong leader", it's a bit of a let-down for Western cheerleaders of the upheavals in the Arab world. Moreover, apparently only about a third of those polled wanted democracy even in five years' time. According to the BBC, one of the academics involved with the poll said that "the survey suggested Libyans lacked the knowledge of how democracy works". As Libyans have just emerged from a long and reportedly oppressive dictatorship, that is probably true, but that very lack of knowledge may just as well have elicited an overly optimistic view of democracy.**

**Analysis:** This is a good response because it shows that other countries are uninterested in democracy because it undermines their culture and legal systems, and they don't think it is all it is cracked up to be. This casts doubt on democracy good arguments.

**Answer:** Democracy is overrepresented.

**Warrant:** Western states hold the majority of permanent member seats.

“Security Council Must Expand, Adapt to Current Realities or Risk Losing Legitimacy, Delegates Tell General Assembly amid Proposals for Reform.” United Nations, 25 Nov. 2019, <https://press.un.org/en/2019/ga12217.doc.htm>

MAJID TAKHT RAVANCHI (Iran) said preserving and promoting justice, the rule of law and multilateralism depends on reforming the Council, whose membership expansion must transform it into a truly democratic, representative, transparent, efficient, effective, rules-based and accountable organ. Broadening its membership must be one of multiple objectives and its composition, once expanded, must be balanced geopolitically and geographically. **Noting that the Council is dominated by Western countries, three of which have veto power, he pointed out that the Western European group of countries is overrepresented, while other regions remain poorly represented and have less rights in terms of veto power or permanent membership.** Indeed, one third of Member States have never been part of the Security Council and 20 countries have served terms adding up to between 10 and 22 years. As such, Council reform must ensure equal opportunities for all States.

**Analysis:** This is a good response because it paints democracy as a problem, rather than the perfect solution to everything. At the very least, the argument casts doubt on its solvency and your opponent’s impacts.

**Answer:** US democracy is on the decline.

**Warrant:** Partisan infighting has caused American democracy to decline.

“The State of Democracy in the United States: 2022.” Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the People’s Republic of China, 20 Mar. 2023,

[https://www.fmprc.gov.cn/eng/wjdt\\_665385/2649\\_665393/202303/t20230320\\_11044481.html#:~:text=The%20Brookings%20Institution%20concludes%20in,legitimacy%20and%20health%20of%20capitalism.](https://www.fmprc.gov.cn/eng/wjdt_665385/2649_665393/202303/t20230320_11044481.html#:~:text=The%20Brookings%20Institution%20concludes%20in,legitimacy%20and%20health%20of%20capitalism.)

The functioning of American democratic institutions may look as lively as a circus, with politicians of all stripes showing off themselves one after another. But however boisterous the show is, it cannot hide the lethargy in addressing the long-standing, grave problems. Le Monde points out that 2022 is a year of doubt for US democracy. A silent civil war has taken root in the US, and repairing damaged democracy requires a sense of nation and public interest, both of which are currently lacking. This is sad for a country that has long held itself up as a model. **In 2022, the Swedish think tank International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance added the US to its “list of regressive democracies”. Two years after the Capitol riots on 6 January 2021, the US system of democracy still has difficulty in learning the lessons, as political violence continued to grow and deteriorate. The Washington Post and The New Yorker observe that American democracy is in a worse state than ever before, with the congressional riots fully exposing social rifts, political divisions and rampant misinformation.** The two parties, although not unaware of the age-old ills of American democracy, have neither the resolve nor the courage to pursue changes, given the increasingly polarized political atmosphere, as well as their focus on party interests. In 2022, the US Congress was brought into another paralysis, not by riots, but by partisan fights. The farce of failing to elect the 118th House speaker lasted four days and a decision was only reached after 15 rounds of voting. In the last round, divisions were such that Republicans and Democrats voted strictly along party lines. The New York Times warned that Congress could see repeated chaos like this over the next two years. Brad Bannon, president of a US political consultancy, put it bluntly, “The impasse in the US House of Representatives over the election of the Speaker is another demonstration of the decline in our political institutions.”

**Answer:** This is a good response because it shows that even democratic leaders are struggling to make democracy work. This makes it a suboptimal idea for potential adoptees.





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**A/2: Permanent Members Increase Organizational Legitimacy.**

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**Answer:** The P5 is losing legitimacy.

**Warrant:** China is losing legitimacy.

McGinnis, John O. "A Legitimacy Crisis for Hong Kong and China." Austrian Economics Center, 16 July 2019, <https://austriancenter.com/legitimacy-crisis-hong-kong-china/>.

**Hong Kong has an illegitimate government and its illegitimacy underscores the substantial risk that China's own government may become illegitimate as well.** Illegitimacy, as I use the term here, is not a normative, but a positive concept. **A government becomes illegitimate if enough of its citizens believe that its institutions are so fundamentally untrustworthy or unjust that the government cannot take controversial actions unless they are enforced at gunpoint.** That is not true of legitimate governments, like that of the United States. They can retain the acquiescence of their citizens even if the great majority disagree with an important action that the government undertakes.

**Warrant:** Russia is losing legitimacy.

Fix, Liana & Maria Snegovaya. "Leadership Change in Russia." Council on Foreign Relations, 15 Feb. 2024, <https://www.cfr.org/report/leadership-change-russia>.

Before Russia's invasion of Ukraine in February 2022, President Vladimir Putin looked set to stay in power for as long as he wanted. Under a series of constitutional amendments passed in 2020, he can stay in office until 2036, when he will be eighty-

three years old. **However, the war against Ukraine has turned into a stress test for Russia's leadership and regime stability.** The Kremlin has stabilized the political system after the mutiny of Yevgeny Prigozhin, the now-deceased leader of the private military company Wagner Group, and Putin remains popular (to the extent that approval ratings are meaningful in an autocratic society). **However, internal Russian elite politics and competition are difficult to decipher from the outside and can lead to unexpected outcomes and surprising reshuffles.** The Kremlin could be hoping to outlast U.S. and Western support for Ukraine, which appears less steadfast than once assumed, and to relieve internal pressure by presenting the war as turning its way. Yet domestic tensions are unlikely to disappear. The Russian economy will remain under strain, which will make tensions and elite power struggles more probable. **Putin could still leave office sooner than many experts predict. Accordingly, the United States and its allies should anticipate the possibility of leadership change in Moscow, prepare to mitigate its harmful consequences, and manage its conceivable opportunities.**

**Warrant:** The US is losing legitimacy.

"The State of Democracy in the United States: 2022." Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the People's Republic of China, 20 Mar. 2023, [https://www.fmprc.gov.cn/eng/wjdt\\_665385/2649\\_665393/202303/t20230320\\_11044481.html#:~:text=The%20Brookings%20Institution%20concludes%20in,legitimacy%20and%20health%20of%20capitalism.](https://www.fmprc.gov.cn/eng/wjdt_665385/2649_665393/202303/t20230320_11044481.html#:~:text=The%20Brookings%20Institution%20concludes%20in,legitimacy%20and%20health%20of%20capitalism.)

The functioning of American democratic institutions may look as lively as a circus, with politicians of all stripes showing off themselves one after another. But however boisterous the show is, it cannot hide the lethargy in addressing the long-standing, grave problems. Le Monde points out that 2022 is a year of doubt for US democracy. A silent civil war has taken root in the US, and repairing damaged democracy requires a sense of nation and public interest, both of which are currently lacking. This is sad for

a country that has long held itself up as a model. In 2022, the Swedish think tank International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance added the US to its “list of regressive democracies”. Two years after the Capitol riots on 6 January 2021, the US system of democracy still has difficulty in learning the lessons, as political violence continued to grow and deteriorate. The Washington Post and The New Yorker observe that American democracy is in a worse state than ever before, with the congressional riots fully exposing social rifts, political divisions and rampant misinformation. The two parties, although not unaware of the age-old ills of American democracy, have neither the resolve nor the courage to pursue changes, given the increasingly polarized political atmosphere, as well as their focus on party interests. In 2022, the US Congress was brought into another paralysis, not by riots, but by partisan fights. The farce of failing to elect the 118th House speaker lasted four days and a decision was only reached after 15 rounds of voting. In the last round, divisions were such that Republicans and Democrats voted strictly along party lines. The New York Times warned that Congress could see repeated chaos like this over the next two years. Brad Bannon, president of a US political consultancy, put it bluntly, “The impasse in the US House of Representatives over the election of the Speaker is another demonstration of the decline in our political institutions.”

**Warrant:** France and the UK are losing legitimacy.

Vijay. “Shouldn’t the United Kingdom and France Relinquish Their Permanent Seats at the United Nations?: The Thirty-Ninth Newsletter (2023).” TriContinental, 28 Sept. 2023, <https://thetricontinental.org/newsletterissue/unsc-permanent-membership/>.

Meanwhile, Britain and France, two permanent members of the UNSC, currently have minuscule populations of 67 million and 64 million respectively. It is puzzling that these two European countries – neither of them the most powerful country in Europe (which

in economic terms is Germany) – have retained veto power despite their dramatically declining role in the world. The recent setbacks for France’s colonial ambitions in Africa, as well as France’s inability to lead a European agenda for peace in Ukraine, show how increasingly irrelevant this European country has become for world affairs. Equally, Britain’s declining position in the world after Brexit and its failure to provide a vision for a Global Britain suggest that, despite Prime Minister Rishi Sunak’s anger at the use of the term, it is correct to consider it a ‘midsize country’ with an inflated sense of itself. **Britain and France’s permanent seats in the UNSC illustrate the anachronism of the council’s architecture since neither country inspires confidence when it comes to providing leadership for security and development in the world.**

**Answer:** This is a good response because if the P5 members themselves are becoming illegitimate, then their reputation not only fails to help the UNSC, but it actively harms it by association. This can be used as a series of delinks followed by a logical turn to try and garner some offense off of your opponent.

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## A/2: Permanent Members Are Climate Leaders.

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**Answer:** Permanent members are not climate leaders.

**Warrant:** China is not a climate leader.

Shepherd, Christian. "In a breakthrough, U.S. and China agree to restart climate talks."

The Washington Post, 15 Nov. 2023, <https://www.washingtonpost.com/climate-environment/2023/11/15/china-united-states-climate-change-talks/>.

**China ranks as the world's largest emitter of carbon dioxide, releasing roughly 12.7 billion metric tons each year, more than twice that of the United States.** But because of its earlier industrialization, the United States bears more global responsibility for total carbon emissions, which linger in the atmosphere for decades. Americans also generate more emissions per person than their Chinese counterparts, according to a number of analysts. **Environmentalists warn that China, because of its expansion of coal mining, is contributing substantially to rising levels of atmospheric methane, which has a warming impact about 80 times greater than carbon dioxide over a 20-year period.** Beijing last week announced it would gradually set up mechanisms to monitor and control methane emissions by 2025 and continue improving the system through 2030, but it did not commit to formal targets.

**Warrant:** Russia is not a climate leader.

Pudovkin, Evgeny. "How the war changed Russia's climate agenda." BBC, 10 Dec. 2023, <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-67637803>.

Ahead of the UN's COP28 climate summit in Dubai, Russia spoke against the "phasing out" of fossil fuels, while its recently updated climate doctrine makes no mention of fossil fuels and their impact on climate change. **While there is a broad scientific consensus that gas emissions from fossil fuels need to be drastically reduced, Russia marginally upped its oil and coal production in 2022. In further evidence of Russia playing spoiler to spite the West, the Kremlin is blocking EU countries from hosting the COP29 summit scheduled for 2024, according to Reuters.** Moscow said it was sticking to the commitments to become carbon neutral by 2060 and limit greenhouse gas emissions to 70% of 1990 levels by 2030, yet climate change experts see those targets as modest. Russia's levels of emissions already stand at around 30% below 1990 levels, excluding forest sinks. **The Climate Action Tracker, a research project that tracks government climate action and the globally agreed Paris Agreement commitments, rated Russia's climate targets as "highly insufficient" to meet the 1.5°C criteria.**

**Warrant:** The US is not a climate leader.

Wagner, Lynn & Jennifer Allan. "The U.S. Has Exited the Paris Agreement. Does it Matter?" IISD, 4 Nov. 2020, <https://www.iisd.org/articles/insight/us-has-exited-paris-agreement-does-it-matter>.

"When America sneezes, the world catches a cold." The saying is meant to remind the world that the United States is a giant economy with the world's largest military and that it leads the world by several metrics. On climate change, it's not the case anymore. **On November 4, 2020, the United States officially left the Paris Agreement. We've known this day was coming for four years. If we're honest with ourselves, the euphoria of American leadership on climate policy was a historical blip. We've been here before, but this time it's different. Even with President-Elect Biden's promise to rejoin the Paris Agreement, the deep divisions in the United States may mean that the nation will continue to be an unreliable climate partner.** The United States may

sometimes sneeze at the Paris Agreement, but the world will move on. **The last time there was a major climate treaty, the United States stood on the sidelines. Although Vice President Gore had signed the Kyoto Protocol on behalf of the United States, the next administration, led by President George W. Bush, withdrew the signature and refused to send it to Congress to consider ratifying it. Congress passed the Byrd–Hagel amendment instead, requiring any future American involvement in climate change agreements to be matched by equivalent commitments by developing country parties.**

**Analysis:** This is a good response because it shows that UNSC permanent members are failing as leaders and setting a bad precedent for other countries in the UN and the world. Whether they say they commit to climate action, their actions tell a different story.

**Answer:** Climate change is not on the UNSC agenda.

**Warrant:** The UNSC does not view climate change as a security risk.

“Russia vetoes UN security council resolution linking climate crisis to international peace.” The Guardian, 13 Dec. 2021,  
<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2021/dec/13/russia-vetoes-un-security-council-resolution-climate-crisis-international-peace#:~:text=Russia%20has%20vetoed%20a%20first,the%20UN's%20most%20powerful%20body.>

**Russia has vetoed a first-of-its-kind UN security council resolution casting the climate crisis as a threat to international peace and security – a vote that sank a years-long effort to make global heating more central to decision-making in the UN’s most powerful body.** Spearheaded by Ireland and Niger, the proposal called for “incorporating information on the security implications of climate change” into the council’s strategies for managing conflicts and into peacekeeping operations and



political missions, at least sometimes. The measure also asked the UN secretary-general to make climate-related security risks “a central component” of conflict prevention efforts and to report on how to address those risks in specific hotspots. The council has occasionally discussed the security implications of climate change since 2007 and it has passed resolutions that mention destabilizing effects of warming in specific places, such as various African countries and Iraq. But Monday’s resolution would have been the first devoted to climate-related security danger as an issue of its own. Stronger storms, rising seas, more frequent floods and droughts and other effects of warming could inflame social tensions and conflict, potentially “posing a key risk to global peace, security and stability”, the proposed resolution said. **Of the UN’s 193 member countries, 113 supported it, including 12 of the council’s 15 members. But India and veto-wielding Russia voted no, while China abstained.**

**Answer:** This is a good response because it shows that, despite what these supposed ‘climate leaders’ say, they voted against climate change legislation that would have supported climate action. Thus, they give more lip service than assistance with the climate crisis.

**A/2: Permanent Members Provide The Greatest Contributions.**

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**Answer:** The P5 are not the biggest contributors.

**Warrant:** Japan and Germany contribute more than 3 of the P5 members to peacekeeping.

“How we are funded.” United Nations, <https://peacekeeping.un.org/en/how-we-are-funded>.

**The top 10 providers of assessed contributions to United Nations peacekeeping operations for 2020-2021 are:** 1. United States (27.89%), 2. China (15.21%), **3. Japan (8.56%), 4. Germany (6.09%), United Kingdom (5.79%), 5. France (5.61%),** 6. Italy (3.30%), **7. Russian Federation (3.04%),** 8. Canada (2.73%), 9. Republic of Korea (2.26%).

**Analysis:** This is a good response because it shows that not all the P5 are making contributions worthy of giving them additional power. In fact, other countries are contributing more, which makes us question whether they deserve permanent members as well.

**Answer:** P5 violence costs more.

**Warrant:** P5 contributions to violence overshadow their financial and military contributions..

Patrick, Stewart et al. “UN Security Council Reform: What the World Thinks.” Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 28 June 2023, <https://carnegieendowment.org/2023/06/28/un-security-council-reform-what-world-thinks-pub-90032>.

A serious discussion about reforming the UN Security Council is long overdue. The structure of the Security Council—with five permanent members (P5) who wield veto power and ten nonpermanent elected members serving two-year terms—is anachronistic, reflecting the configuration of global power at the end of World War II. **Rather than act as guardians of peace, the P5 have often contributed to violence. Russia, most egregiously, is embroiled in a war with Ukraine that many fear could trigger a third world war. Other permanent members have also been implicated in major conflicts on the Security Council's agenda, including the United Kingdom's support for Saudi Arabia's war in Yemen, France's interventions in the Sahel, China's support for Myanmar's military junta, and the United States' (as well as Russia's) ongoing involvement in Syria.**

**Warrant:** In fact, right now, Russia's veto perpetuates conflict rather than peace.

Magid, Shelby & Yulia Shalomov. "Russia's veto makes a mockery of the United Nations Security Council." Atlantic Council, 15 Mar. 2022, <https://www.atlanticcouncil.org/blogs/ukrainealert/russias-veto-makes-a-mockery-of-the-united-nations-security-council/>.

"This is an extraordinary moment," declared US ambassador to the United Nations Linda Thomas-Greenfield during a recent UN General Assembly (UNGA) emergency special session on Ukraine. "Now, at more than any other point in recent history, the United Nations is being challenged. If the United Nations has any purpose, it is to prevent war, it is to condemn war, to stop war." With this purpose in mind, in a sweeping show of international unity, 141 countries voted in favor of an UNGA resolution demanding an immediate end to the Russian offensive in Ukraine. While non-binding and largely symbolic, this overwhelming show of global support for Ukraine came at a time when it was doubly needed, both for Ukraine itself and for the sake of the UN. Only four countries joined Russia in voting against the resolution. To the surprise of nobody, the

list included Belarus, North Korea, Eritrea, and Syria. Thirty-five nations abstained. Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy applauded the outcome, declaring “Destructive results of the vote in the UN for the aggressor convincingly show that a global anti-Putin coalition has been formed and is functioning. The world is with us.” Yet while Zelenskyy’s description of a global anti-Putin coalition may ring true for the UNGA, a meaningful multilateral response is still being blunted by Russia’s veto power in the UN Security Council (UNSC). **While the UNGA vote showed overwhelming global support for Ukraine, just a few days earlier the UN’s most powerful body sent a very different message. Despite the support of 11 Council members, the UNSC failed to adopt a resolution necessitating the immediate cessation and withdrawal of Russian troops from Ukraine following a single “no” vote from Russia. This once again highlighted the privileged and troubling role the five permanent members (P5) enjoy within the international body’s most powerful organ.**

**Warrant:** The human capital costs of this conflict are large.

Cooper, Helene et al. “Troop Deaths and Injuries in Ukraine War Near 500,000, U.S. Officials Say.” The New York Times, 18 Aug. 2023, <https://www.nytimes.com/2023/08/18/us/politics/ukraine-russia-war-casualties.html>.

**The total number of Ukrainian and Russian troops killed or wounded since the war in Ukraine began 18 months ago is nearing 500,000, U.S. officials said, a staggering toll as Russia assaults its next-door neighbor and tries to seize more territory.** The officials cautioned that casualty figures remained difficult to estimate because Moscow is believed to routinely undercount its war dead and injured, and Kyiv does not disclose official figures. But they said the slaughter intensified this year in eastern Ukraine and has continued at a steady clip as a nearly three-month-old counteroffensive drags on. Russia’s military casualties, the officials said, are approaching 300,000. The number

includes as many as 120,000 deaths and 170,000 to 180,000 injured troops. The Russian numbers dwarf the Ukrainian figures, which the officials put at close to 70,000 killed and 100,000 to 120,000 wounded.

**Warrant:** The economic costs of this conflict are large.

Shatz, Howard J. & Clint Reach. "The Cost of the Ukraine War for Russia." RAND Corporation, 18 Dec. 2023, [https://www.rand.org/pubs/research\\_reports/RRA2421-1.html#:~:text=RAND%20researchers%20estimated%20the%20costs,to%20%24132%20billion%20through%202024.](https://www.rand.org/pubs/research_reports/RRA2421-1.html#:~:text=RAND%20researchers%20estimated%20the%20costs,to%20%24132%20billion%20through%202024.)

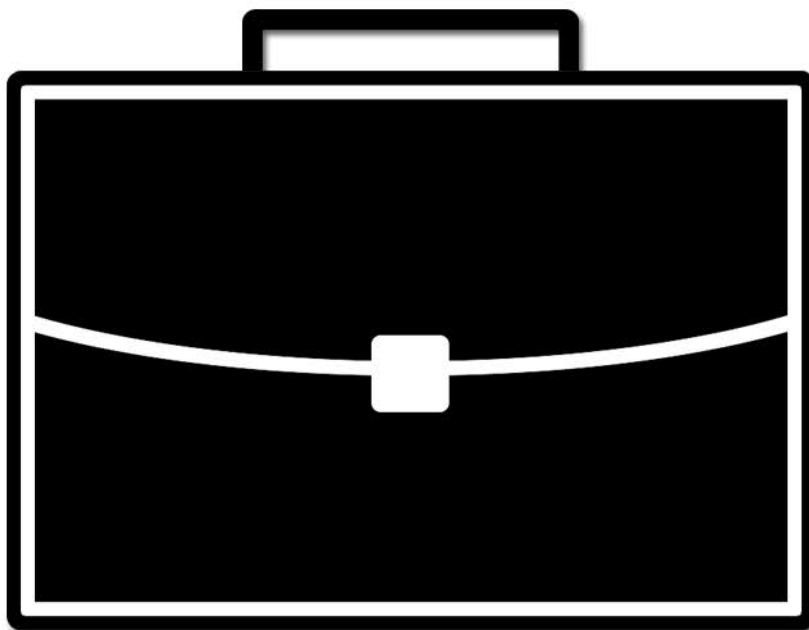
In this report, RAND researchers present estimates of what costs Russia is incurring as a result of its invasion of Ukraine. **As of September 2022, researchers estimated military costs reached \$40 billion. Full-year 2022 gross domestic product losses amounted to between \$81 billion and \$104 billion and full-year financial capital destruction reached \$322 billion. Direct military spending may amount to almost \$132 billion through 2024.** Over the long term, even with a stalemated war, Russia's economy and the standard of living of its people are likely to decline. The main factor sustaining Russia's economy is the export revenue it earns from oil and gas sales. Despite these significant economic losses, RAND researchers judged these costs to be sustainable for the next several years.

**Analysis:** This is a good response because it shows that P5 members, especially Russia, are failing to put their money where their mouth is. Rather, they are putting their money towards the opposite of the UNSC mission, showing that they should not be in power.

# Champion Briefs

April 2024

Public Forum Brief



Con Arguments

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**CON: Permanent Membership Creates Deliberation.**

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**Argument:** The current permanent membership of the Security Council creates a workable system that forces parties to compromise and bargain constructively.

**Warrant:** The veto power of permanent membership is a precondition for deliberative negotiations.

Bosco, David. "In defense of the veto power." *Foreign Policy*, Jan. 2012,  
<https://foreignpolicy.com/2012/01/31/in-defense-of-the-veto-power/>

That said, there are a few things worth noting about the veto power and its use. First, contrary to the conventional wisdom, Russia and China are not the most profligate in their use of the veto. Since the 1970s, that distinction has belonged to the United States (usually on draft resolutions containing criticism of Israel). Second, overall use of the veto has declined markedly since the end of the Cold War. The threat of the veto has important shadow effects on Council deliberations, of course, but the historical trajectory is toward greater consensus on the Council and against the casual use of the veto. **Perhaps the most fundamental point about the veto is that you could not have a Security Council without it. Major powers will simply not grant an international body binding legal authority on matters of peace and security unless they are certain that it will not prejudice their interests. So the alternative to the Security Council veto is really no Security Council, or at least not in a recognizable form. As maddening as the likely Russian nyet will be, that's a tradeoff that few would be willing to make. As frustrating as it is, the Security Council is still an enormously useful body, not least because it institutionalizes the practice of great-power security consultations.**

**Warrant:** The permanent members do not excessively use their authority

Bosco, David. "In defense of the veto power." Foreign Policy, Jan. 2012,  
<https://foreignpolicy.com/2012/01/31/in-defense-of-the-veto-power/>

Absent a new world constitutional moment—which would not benefit the West or the cause of human rights at all—the veto is here to stay. That said, there are a few things worth noting about the veto power and its use. First, **contrary to the conventional wisdom, Russia and China are not the most profligate in their use of the veto. Since the 1970s, that distinction has belonged to the United States (usually on draft resolutions containing criticism of Israel).** Second, **overall use of the veto has declined markedly since the end of the Cold War. The threat of the veto has important shadow effects on Council deliberations, of course, but the historical trajectory is toward greater consensus on the Council and against the casual use of the veto.**

**Warrant:** The Security Council currently serves an important purpose of facilitating great power dialogue

Post, Paul. "The U.N. Security Council Doesn't Need Reforming." World Politics Review, Sept. 2022, <https://www.worldpoliticsreview.com/unsc-reform-permanent-members-security-council/?one-time-read-code=1401761709775830108111>

More recently, the council has failed to take action in cases where the need for it seemed clear, whether failing to condemn a coup in Myanmar or failing to call for a global cease-fire during the height of the coronavirus pandemic. These failures are lamentable, but not damning. That is because **the ultimate purpose of the Security Council was to provide a forum in which the major powers could discuss, criticize and perhaps, on some occasions, agree on issues. This happened, for instance, during the Cuban Missile Crisis in 1962, when the Security Council provided a forum for the U.S. to reveal intelligence showing the placement of Soviet missiles in Cuba, thereby**



putting the Soviets on the spot and making them amendable to a negotiated solution. Stated differently, the main goal of the Security Council is to avoid repeating the ravages of World War II by preventing direct great power military conflict. So long as that is achieved, the council is a success.

**Warrant:** Reforms are not necessary.

Post, Paul. "The U.N. Security Council Doesn't Need Reforming." World Politics Review, Sept. 2022, <https://www.worldpoliticsreview.com/unsc-reform-permanent-members-security-council/?one-time-read-code=1401761709775830108111>

**Second, the proposed reforms are unnecessary. If members of the Security Council other than Russia wish to take action against Russia, they can. Indeed, they have, from imposing sanctions to supplying arms to Ukraine. In other words, the council's inability to pass a resolution regarding the war in Ukraine did not prevent member states from taking their own action. So it is unclear why changing the council's makeup is required. Nor is reform needed for members of the Security Council to use the forum to publicly condemn Russia's actions. Linda Thomas-Greenfield, the current U.S. ambassador to the U.N., remarked that while Moscow can veto council resolutions, "Russia cannot veto our voices. Russia cannot veto the Ukrainian people. And Russia cannot veto the UN Charter. Russia cannot, and will not, veto accountability."** Indeed, one of the most poignant speeches about what was then still the prospect of a Russian invasion was given at the Security Council by Kenya's ambassador to the U.N., Martin Kimani, who condemned nations that "looked ever backward into history with a dangerous nostalgia."

**Analysis:** Use this argument to demonstrate that the security council serves a valuable purpose in the status quo. Make your opponents justify steps that would destabilize the current order.

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**CON: Permanent Membership Helps The United States.**

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**Argument:** Permanent membership gives the United States veto power, which protects its core national security interests. Use this argument in conjunction with another point that destabilizing great powers can lead to backlash or increased insecurity.

**Warrant:** The security council benefits the US.

Schaefer, Brett. "The United States Should Oppose Expansion of the U.N. Security Council." The Heritage Foundation, Sept. 1997, <https://www.heritage.org/report/the-united-states-should-oppose-expansion-the-un-securitycouncil-0>

**Many countries make no effort to hide the fact that a primary benefit of this power redistribution would be a reduction in the power of the current permanent members.** Ambassador Rizali Ismail, Malaysian delegate and president of the General Assembly for 1997, for example, insisted that "If we get it right, then the Security Council that we will have in the future will be quite different from the one that was put together in 1945."<sup>7</sup>Venezuela's foreign minister in 1992, General Fernando Ochoa Antich, derided Security Council actions as subject to the "aegis of the values of the victors" of World War II who "can outline an international scenario according to their interests."**Expanding the Council, however, would decrease the power and influence of all members of the Security Council, both permanent and elected.<sup>9</sup>Moreover, there would be a particularly negative impact on U.S. initiatives if the new permanent members shared a political stance generally opposed to that of the United States.**

**Warrant:** Other countries generally vote against the US.

Schaefer, Brett. "The United States Should Oppose Expansion of the U.N. Security Council." The Heritage Foundation, Sept. 1997, <https://www.heritage.org/report/the-united-states-should-oppose-expansion-the-un-securitycouncil-0>

Evidence provided by the U.S. Department of State supports this conclusion. In regular reports to Congress, the State Department identifies a number of "important issues" that relate to U.S. foreign policy priorities and records how each country votes in the U.N. on these issues. In line with their votes generally, the candidates for permanent seats on the Council have a dismal record of supporting U.S. priorities. Specifically, in the 12 most important U.N. votes of 1996, Mexico and Brazil voted with the United States just seven times; South Africa, six times; Egypt and Indonesia, four times; Nigeria and Pakistan, three times; and India, only twice.

**Warrant:** The United States uses its Security Council position to fight terrorism.

Schaefer, Brett. "The United States Should Oppose Expansion of the U.N. Security Council." The Heritage Foundation, Sept. 1997, <https://www.heritage.org/report/the-united-states-should-oppose-expansion-the-un-securitycouncil-0>

Specifically, in the 12 most important U.N. votes of 1996, Mexico and Brazil voted with the United States just seven times; South Africa, six times; Egypt and Indonesia, four times; Nigeria and Pakistan, three times; and India, only twice. Based on these voting patterns, it is logical to conclude that U.S. foreign policy priorities will meet even more opposition in an expanded Security Council than is currently the case. For example, a larger Security Council could be expected to: **Evidence provided by the U.S.**

**Department of State supports this conclusion. In regular reports to Congress, the State Department identifies a number of "important issues" that relate to U.S. foreign**

policy priorities and records how each country votes in the U.N. on these issues. In line with their votes generally, the candidates for permanent seats on the Council have a dismal record of supporting U.S. priorities. Specifically, in the 12 most important U.N. votes of 1996, Mexico and Brazil voted with the United States just seven times; South Africa, six times; Egypt and Indonesia, four times; Nigeria and Pakistan, three times; and India, only twice.

**Warrant:** The US uses its position to prevent the spread of WMDs.

Schaefer, Brett. "The United States Should Oppose Expansion of the U.N. Security Council." The Heritage Foundation, Sept. 1997,  
<https://www.heritage.org/report/the-united-states-should-oppose-expansion-the-un-securitycouncil-0>

**U.S. efforts to prevent the spread of weapons of mass destruction would face greater difficulty in an enlarged Security Council. The Council, for example, passed several resolutions requiring Iraq to dismantle its weapons of mass destruction and submit to inspection by U.N. teams to confirm compliance. A larger Security Council would make it more difficult to achieve such strict enforcement mechanisms.** Specifically, this resolution probably would not have passed if such countries as Egypt, India, Indonesia, and Pakistan, all of which possess weapons of mass destruction or have a record of sympathizing with Iraq, had been permanent members of the Council-especially if they possessed the veto.

**Analysis:** This argument only works if you can normatively defend the stance that the US takes in the Security Council. Make sure to be familiar with the United States' policy positions on important issues so as to make a compelling argument.

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## CON: The United Nations Infringes On Sovereignty.

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**Argument:** The United Nations infringes on the core principle of state sovereignty, the idea that countries get to decide on their own terms how to conduct their affairs. To the extent that the Security Council protects sovereignty by preventing UN action, it is good.

**Warrant:** The UN infringes on sovereignty

McArdle, Angela. "Do Not Expand the U.N. Security Council." Newsweek Magazine. Aug. 2023. <https://www.newsweek.com/do-not-expand-un-security-council-opinion-1817367>

Proponents of expansion argue that an updated Security Council with more voices could bring more balance to the council and the U.N. But years of disagreements on the size, composition, and powers of an expanded council have left generations of U.N. diplomats wondering if change will ever be possible. **The United Nations Security Council will not improve or become more equitable if it is expanded. It is not the nations in power, but the allure to power itself that makes it an untenable organization. The structure and underlying purpose of the U.N. are inherently flawed. There should not be an elite group of global rulers lording their authority over the people of the world. Each nation across this globe is sovereign and should have the right to self-governance, free of the undue influence of others.** James Cleverly, U.K. foreign Secretary, recently shared his thoughts on expansion. "\

**Warrant:** Security council reform is simply another attempt to erode sovereignty

McArdle, Angela. "Do Not Expand the U.N. Security Council." Newsweek Magazine. Aug. 2023. <https://www.newsweek.com/do-not-expand-un-security-council-opinion-1817367>

James Cleverly, U.K. foreign Secretary, recently shared his thoughts on expansion. "The Global South deserves a more powerful voice at the world's top table by expanding the U.N. Security Council. ... There is a real risk that the Global South will walk away from the global trading system," he said. The decision to engage in a global trading system is not up to James Cleverly or the UN. That decision lies solely with the nations of the Southern Hemisphere. Statements like these reveal ulterior motives of Cleverly and the U.N. **In 2020, U.N. Secretary-General António Guterres alluded to the same problem. "The nations that came out on top more than seven decades ago have refused to contemplate the reforms needed to change power relations in international institutions," he said. We all want a level playing field, but the fact that they acknowledge the U.N. might have powers and influence over other sovereign nations is the biggest problem of all. The U.N. uses the allure of power to draw more nations into its organization. Entrance into organizations like the U.N. and NATO plunge its members into entangling alliances. Different countries in different regions of the world have different interests and should not be forced to make compromises that are not in their best interests.**

**Warrant:** The UN continues to expand its power at the expense of member states

Schaefer, Brett. "The U.N.'s Latest Proposals Would Undermine U.S. Sovereignty." Heritage Foundation. July 2023. <https://www.heritage.org/global-politics/commentary/the-uns-latest-proposals-would-undermine-us-sovereignty>

This so-called "Pact of the Future" represents a stunning attempted power grab by the secretary-general. These proposals raise serious concerns and objections from the U.S.

and other governments that value their sovereignty and that question the wisdom of granting more authority to international bureaucrats and establishing new supra-national rules and institutions that might dramatically impact the U.S. and its future interests. **Among the most concerning policy briefs is one that would grant Guterres authority to “convene and operate an Emergency Platform in the event of complex global crises,” whether that be another pandemic, an environmental crisis, disruptions in global flows of goods, people, or finance, or some other “black swan” event. Under the proposal, Guterres would be granted “standing authority to convene and operationalize automatically an Emergency Platform” with minimal consultation from governments. Specifically, he would consult in advance the President of the General Assembly, the President of the Security Council, relevant national authorities, regional organizations, and other relevant U.N. agencies and other multilateral institutions “that have been mandated by Member States to respond to sector-specific crises.” There is no requirement to consult with all governments. In other words, the U.N. could take important decisions without input from the U.S.**

**Warrant:** UN reform proposals diminish the power of states.

Schaefer, Brett. “The U.N.’s Latest Proposals Would Undermine U.S. Sovereignty.”  
Heritage Foundation. July 2023. <https://www.heritage.org/global-politics/commentary/the-uns-latest-proposals-would-undermine-us-sovereignty>

**The purpose of the Emergency Platform is to “overcome obstacles and bottlenecks to an effective response”—i.e., the reluctance of governments to heed the dictates of the U.N. Unsurprisingly, the proposal specifies that “Any response mechanism must ensure that participating actors make clear commitments [such as financial or technical resources or a significant policy shift] that directly and immediately support the global response to a complex shock... Participants would need to accept accountability for delivering on these commitments.” Indeed, the structure—where Guterres would**

invite international organizations, experts, academics, and non-governmental organizations to participate alongside governments—seems designed to diminish the authority of national governments and pressure them into cooperation with their decrees.

**Analysis:** This argument appeals first principles of international relations. State sovereignty is one of the bedrock ideas of global affairs and tinkering with it may be dangerous.



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**CON: Veto Power Stops Aggression.**

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**Argument:** Stripping the veto power from the major powers would create instability and weakness.

**Warrant:** Eliminating veto power would create uncertainty in UN policymaking.

Abrams, Elliott. "The Biden Administrations Flirts With Dangerous Moves to Weaken U.S. Veto Power in the United Nations." Council on Foreign Relations, April 19, 2022. <https://www.cfr.org/blog/biden-administrations-flirts-dangerous-moves-weaken-us-veto-power-united-nations>.

But here it's the thought that counts, and the thought is to make the Security Council report to the General Assembly. It is one step in a long process that is meant to change the way the Security Council works, eventually by adding members and removing the veto—or making it subject to override by the General Assembly. Pressure Points

Abrams gives his take on U.S. foreign policy, with special focus on the Middle East and democracy and human rights issues. A moment's thought shows how damaging this might be to U.S. interests. **The United States is a global power that has been involved in military activities repeatedly. Without our veto power, the Security Council could do literally anything: subject American troops to International Criminal Court jurisdiction; subject the United States to new international treaties or agreements that impose standards to which we object and outlaw military activities we consider vital to our national security; and outside the area of national security, adopt standards relating to parents, children, family law, and gender rules that we find objectionable, or impose rules against "insults to religion" that clearly violate the First**

**Amendment. Without the veto there is simply no way to protect against limitless actions against our national interest.**

**Warrant:** The US uses the veto to protect democracies

Abrams, Elliott. "The Biden Administrations Flirts With Dangerous Moves to Weaken U.S. Veto Power in the United Nations." Council on Foreign Relations, April 19, 2022. <https://www.cfr.org/blog/biden-administrations-flirts-dangerous-moves-weaken-us-veto-power-united-nations>.

But today, the Biden administration is co-sponsoring a UN General Assembly resolution that goes down the path leading to a delegitimization of the veto itself. Forty-four countries, at last count, are supporting a text that requires any country that exercises the veto to defend that veto in the General Assembly. This resolution will pass in the General Assembly and taken alone, it isn't a very big step. The United States always gives an "EOV" or explanation of vote in the Security Council when it vetoes a resolution. It can easily enough transmit that EOV to the General Assembly. **The UN is debating the resolution today, April 19. There can be no doubt that Russia and China have used the veto to protect malicious behavior on their own part and that of their allies. The United States has used it, and must continue to do so, to protect legitimate interests of our own and those of our democratic allies. The Biden administration should make it clear that we will vote against any effort to limit the veto—even if the administration wrongly supports this not-so-innocent reporting requirement. A Security Council majority whose power is not limited by the veto would simply be too dangerous for the United States.**

**Warrant:** The veto holds the UN together

Davis, Sarah. "Don't be too quick to condemn the UN Security Council power of veto."

The Conversation. July 1, 2014. <https://theconversation.com/dont-be-too-quick-to-condemn-the-un-security-council-power-of-veto-29980>

**The P5's veto powers proved controversial in San Francisco. An Australian-led revolt against the veto was rejected by the US. Washington argued that a world organisation that hinged on ongoing participation of the great powers must allow them to protect their "vital interests" or fall into irrelevance. This proved to be the case for the UN's predecessor, the League of Nations, which had no veto provisions in its Covenant. By the time it was most needed, at the onset of the Second World War, none of the most significant world powers (US, USSR, Germany, Japan) were members. Without the veto, the UN Security Council would surely have suffered the same fate. It is difficult to imagine how the UN would have survived the Cold War were it not for the veto. Facing an anti-Soviet majority in the years immediately after 1945, the USSR is unlikely to have remained committed to a capitalist-dominated UN with international enforcement powers.**

**Warrant:** Harms of the veto are exaggerated.

Davis, Sarah. "Don't be too quick to condemn the UN Security Council power of veto."

The Conversation. July 1, 2014. <https://theconversation.com/dont-be-too-quick-to-condemn-the-un-security-council-power-of-veto-29980>

**Although a veto is undoubtedly frustrating to those on the receiving end, the omnipotence of the veto is greatly exaggerated. Agreement in the Security Council is, and always has been, much more common. Even at the height of the Cold War – when the Security Council was divided along ideological lines – the number of vetoes never went beyond 20 in one calendar year. Although recent media attention on the gridlock**

in the Security Council in the cases of Syria and Israel/Palestine paint a bleak picture of the divisions, the council has achieved noteworthy consensus.

**Analysis:** Use this argument to show how the veto protects the good work that the UN does. Without the veto, all of this collaboration would be the jeopardy.

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**CON: Veto Power Stops Destabilizing Policies.**

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**Argument:** Incentivizing students to spend more time as athletes is bad because it comes at the cost of attaining an education.

**Warrant:** The veto is a force for stability

Khilari, Yashwardhan. "Security Council's Veto: A Necessity for World Stability" CNN, October 2021, <https://new.iimun.in/blog/international/security-councils-veto-a-necessity-for-world-stability/>

China would never permit India to become a UN permanent member taking into consideration the strained relations between both nations. France would never give its seat to the European Union neither would the US, UK, and Russia give up their seats citing their greed for power. This in turn makes the situation highly complicated since there's almost always a probability that a veto-powered nation may not vote in favor of an amendment but that doesn't mean reforms can't be made. **Even if we manage to somehow eradicate veto power and bring equality amongst all the fifteen members of the Security Council, do you believe that these fifteen nations will agree on a solution or will make a decision in the right direction? There is always a factor that will undermine a decision and in this case, the factor will be equality because there will be no driving force in the Council that will make the decision valuable to others. The League of Nations failed because it had no provision for a veto in its Covenant and that's the reason why the majority of decisions taken by the League weren't taken seriously by member nations.**

**Warrant:** Abolishing the security council creates discord

Khilari, Yashwardhan. "Security Council's Veto: A Necessity for World Stability" CNN, October 2021, <https://new.iimun.in/blog/international/security-councils-veto-a-necessity-for-world-stability/>

**When Mr. Putin referred to the veto as the profound vision of the founders of the UN and underpinning the international stability, he meant it for his defense as a veto powered nation, same goes for the Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi who said that the veto has an important role in checking proclivity of war. Though the United States of America, the United Kingdom, and France have never openly spoken about the privilege they bear they too have used veto for their own self-motive. Now taking into consideration the fact that the above countries would never give up their veto nor would they let any other nation join their elite group, we need to figure out different ways in order to bring about reform and make a real difference. One such reform can be brought if all those 188 countries without a veto come together and demand the elite five for permanent membership in the UN, this will put these five nations under immense international pressure and will in turn drive them to reform the Council.**

**Warrant:** Taking away the veto would create discord

Cowin, Andrew. "Expanding The U.N. Security Council: A Reciepe for More Somalias, More Gridlock, and Less Democracy." Heritage Foundation. Feb 25, 2093. <https://www.heritage.org/report/expanding-the-un-security-council-reciepe-more-somaliasmore-gridlock-and-less-democracy>

**Every country currently on the Security Council pursues its own goals and self-interests. More countries on the Security Council would mean a greater divergence of goals and thus more gridlock. Moreover, because some of the new members inevitably will be dictatorships and possibly hostile to the United States, an expanded Security Council will be more likely to oppose American values and interests. Overall,**

**Clinton's policy toward the U.N. threatens to entangle America in costly and unwinnable ways that do not advance the interests of the United States.** President Clinton is 9 1 2 Thomas Lippman and Barton Gellman, A Humanitarian Gesture Turns Deadly, The Washington Post, October 10 1993, p. A1. The permanent members of the Security Council are the United States, Russia, China, France, and Great Britain. exacerbating the problem by calling for an expanded and more powerful Security Council.

**Warrant:** Other countries could pressure the US into military action

Cowin, Andrew. "Expanding The U.N. Security Council: A Reciepe for More Somalias,More Gridlock, and Less Democracy." Heritage Foundation. Feb 25, 2093. <https://www.heritage.org/report/expanding-the-un-security-council-recipe-more-somaliasmore-gridlock-and-less-democracy>

Despite the presence of the U.N., the war will probably be decided by the military power of the combatants rather than the negotiating prowess of the U.N. Of course, the most recent U.N. fiasco was in Somalia. The U.S. involvement in Somalia is a direct result of a failed U.N. operation. At first the U.N. operation in Somalia relied on troops from other countries, like Pakistan. But when it became clear they could not handle the job, **George Bush sent 19,000 American troops in December 1992 to feed the Somalis, at a cost of 800 .million to the US. In May 1993, the U.S. pulled out, leaving behind a small contingent of troops for emergencies. By August, it had become clear that the U.N. could not handle the operation and again requested help from the Americans. That led to the tragic firefight in Mogadishu where eighteen Americans died and 75 were wounded. If the Security Council is expanded, more countries will be able to apply greater pressure on t he U.N. to participate in Somalia-type operations. And, of course, when these operations fail, the United States will likely be called upon to commit troops, as it was in Somalia.**

**Analysis:** This argument is strong because it demonstrates how countries like the United States could be pushed into committing their resources towards ill conceived foreign policy adventures by other states without the veto.



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**CON: Veto Power Is Appropriate.**

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**Argument:** The permanent five members of the UNSC are some of the largest and most militarily powerful countries in the world. This gives them global interests that require permanent membership.

**Warrant:** Permanent membership emerged from World War II

Choudhury, Sajjad. "Why Does the United Nations Security Council Only Have 5 Permanent Members?" Medium. Feb 25, 2021. <https://medium.com/the-history-magazine/why-does-the-united-nations-security-council-only-have-5-permanent-members-61c4d141a8e4>

**In the aftermath of World War Two, there was rapid change. European empires collapsed, new countries began to emerge, and political ideologies like communism started to divide people. To prevent future issues like these from escalating into conflict, the victors of World War Two decided to set up a board of global powers that would oversee world security. Unlike the previous League of Nations concept, most countries agreed to this idea, particularly as the world had faced not one but two gruesome wars. In the original plan, it was decided that there would only be four members who were the four great powers: The United States, the United Kingdom, Soviet Russia, and the Republic of China. China and the USA agreed to this, but there were a few issues for the UK and USSR. The USSR, for instance, believed that the majority of the members were allies of the USA and that the Security Council would become anti-communist. So it wanted at least one other member that was neutral or pro-USSR. One idea was to add Brazil as a fifth member, but this was rejected on the basis that Brazil was too aligned to the West, as well as the fact that Brazil didn't want to join anyway.**

**Warrant:** There is a rational reason for France to be included.

Choudhury, Sajjad. "Why Does the United Nations Security Council Only Have 5 Permanent Members?" Medium. Feb 25, 2021. <https://medium.com/the-history-magazine/why-does-the-united-nations-security-council-only-have-5-permanent-members-61c4d141a8e4>

**Gene Smith, the athletic director at Ohio State University, has said that if the N.C.A.A. pay ceiling were lifted and he were pushed to pay basketball and football student-athletes more than their full-ride scholarship packages, he would not expect to maintain the same number of sports. The chancellor at the University of Wisconsin, Rebecca Blank, has also said that her school would consider cutting sports programs altogether. Forcing the N.C.A.A. to pay student-athletes would undermine opportunities for the vast majority of them. It would create a winner-take-all system in which only a handful of top recruits would get a paycheck on top of earning a diploma debt-free.** Similar problems would arise in the case of so-called third-party payments, in which student-athletes could be paid for things like endorsements. Major brands like Nike would pay top football and basketball talent at the biggest schools, while student-athletes in other sports or at smaller programs would be ignored. Currently, corporate funds go to athletic departments and are generally distributed among all sports; with third-party payments, those funds could instead mostly go directly to a few student-athletes, starving the rest.

**Warrant:** The Security Council allows large, powerful members to work together.

Staff. "What is the UN Security Council?" Council on Foreign Relations, 2021, <https://world101.cfr.org/understanding-international-system/global-governance/what-un-security-council>

**International institutions are often only influential when their most powerful members agree to work together. The Security Council, for instance, can't act when any of the P5 countries uses its veto to block resolutions that threaten its national interests or those of its allies. However, cooperation between the P5 countries can have significant consequences. Security Council resolutions have legitimized multinational forces defending invaded countries and supported military interventions to protect civilians from mass violence.** The United Nations can also build and deploy its own multinational military force consisting of personnel, called peacekeepers, supplied by member countries.

**Impact:** The Security Council can succeed when working together

Staff. "What is the UN Security Council?" Council on Foreign Relations, 2021, <https://world101.cfr.org/understanding-international-system/global-governance/what-un-security-council>

**One of the Security Council's top responsibilities is to protect the sovereignty of the United Nations' members. After Iraqi leader Saddam Hussein invaded Kuwait on August 2, 1990, U.S. President George H.W. Bush announced that Iraq's aggression would not stand. What followed has been hailed as a high point for cooperation among the Security Council's P5 and an example of how the United Nations can effectively advance the collective security of the world.** With the United States playing a leadership role, the Security Council passed several resolutions imposing economic sanctions on Iraq and a deadline for Saddam's forces to withdraw from Kuwait. After Saddam refused to comply, the United States spearheaded a UN-approved air and ground campaign comprising around 750,000 soldiers from dozens of countries to restore Kuwait's sovereignty. Working through the United Nations provided legitimacy

to the military intervention, helping the United States drum up support from Congress and its international partners.

**Analysis:** Use this argument to demonstrate that the UNSC currently produces important positive results for global peace and security. Show the judge that introducing uncertainty into the mix would be destabilizing.

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**CON: Proposals For Reform Are Nonserious.**

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**Argument:** Most proposals for eliminating permanent membership and replacing it with something are political stunts that are ill thought out.

**Warrant:** These proposals are politically easy but hard to impliment

Dayal, Anjali. "Proposals for Security Council Reform." Carnegie Foundation, March 2023, <https://carnegieendowment.org/2023/06/28/un-security-council-reform-what-world-thinks-pub-90032#us>

U.S President Joe Biden’s administration says it wants UN Security Council reform, and the council plainly needs it. “The question before us,” U.S. Ambassador to the UN Linda Thomas-Greenfield told UN General Assembly delegates in November 2022, “is whether we will defend an outdated status quo—or reform the Security Council and empower the UN to take on the challenges of the 21st century.” **Publicly supporting Security Council reform is an easy political win for diplomats. The council is an explicitly unfair body designed to sideline most UN member states on questions of international peace and security, to tip international law toward the advantage of its permanent five members (P5), and to allow these powers to protect and exonerate themselves and their allies when they violate the UN Charter. But these same flaws that make reform a universally popular goal also make real efforts for change a quagmire at best—and an obvious nonstarter at worst.**

**Warrant:** These proposals are mere diplomatic populism

Dayal, Anjali. "Proposals for Security Council Reform." Carnegie Foundation, March 2023, <https://carnegieendowment.org/2023/06/28/un-security-council-reform-what-world-thinks-pub-90032#us>

Every few years, a permanent member advocates adding new permanent seats, secure in the knowledge that regional groups are deadlocked over representation and that the Security Council's other permanent members would veto any proposed structural changes. Indeed, these proposals from the P5 risk becoming what Richard Gowan has called "diplomatic populism"—dead-end gambits that gin up short-term goodwill without yielding any real change. **Yet the Biden administration's proposals recommend shifts in diplomatic practices that actually could change the Security Council, albeit slowly and incrementally. There are two main routes for the council to become more just and equitable: one is expanding its membership to be more representative; the other is promoting more equitable outcomes via mechanisms like enhanced transparency or agreements to restrict veto use. The former, which would require UN Charter revisions to add new, veto-wielding permanent seats, is extremely unlikely to happen.** Instead, if the United States wants to push the body in a more just and democratic direction, it is likely to have better luck embracing the multilateral norms and new working methods and diplomatic practices that other member states have championed at the UN.

**Warrant:** The path to reform is politically difficult

Staff "In Hindsight: The Long and Winding Road to Security Council Reform", Security Council Report, October 2022, <https://www.securitycouncilreport.org/monthly-forecast/2022-10/in-hindsight-the-long-and-winding-road-to-security-council-reform.php>

On 21 September, US President Joe Biden told the UN General Assembly that the US backed an increase in the number of both permanent and non-permanent members of the Council, saying that the UN needed to "become more inclusive so that it can better respond to the needs of today's world". **He specified that this included seats for**

nations the US has long supported and for countries in Africa, and Latin America and the Caribbean. He also committed the US to not using the veto except in “rare, extraordinary situations”, to ensure that the Council remains credible and effective.

There have long been calls for a more representative Security Council, and there appears to be some agreement among member states that reform would make the Council, if not more effective, at least more representative in a manner enhancing its legitimacy. **However, the path to reform is fraught with procedural and political challenges.**

**Warrant:** Reform would require amending the UN charter

Staff “In Hindsight: The Long and Winding Road to Security Council Reform”, Security Council Report, October 2022, <https://www.securitycouncilreport.org/monthly-forecast/2022-10/in-hindsight-the-long-and-winding-road-to-security-council-reform.php>

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**Analysis:** This argument can tee up a claim about political capital. If security council reform is so politically toxic, then major concessions will have to be made in order to achieve it.



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**CON: Status Quo Is Working.**

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**Argument:** The current structure and composition of the United Nations has produced many positive results and should not be tampered with recklessly.

**Warrant:** The UN performs important international functions

Esther Brimmer. "How Engagement at the United Nations Benefits the United States."  
Department of State. Feb. 2011. <https://2009-2017.state.gov/p/io/rm/2011/171889.htm>

Americans benefit immensely from globalization and the interconnections it brings with peoples around the globe. Here, in one of the tourism and commerce capitals of the world, you instinctively understand that more than most. Our security and prosperity are inextricably hardwired to the rest of the world but it does not mean that the United States should take on the world's problems by ourselves. American troops should not police every conflict, and American generosity alone cannot solve every humanitarian crisis or bring relief after every natural disaster. Because these common global challenges call for shared global solutions, we find ourselves more than ever working through the UN to achieve many of our most important foreign policy goals. **On matters of international peace and security, the UN's role has been central to several top U.S. foreign policy priorities. UN peacekeepers help prevent conflict and protect civilians around the globe, at a fraction of the cost of sending U.S. troops. Security Council sanctions on Iran have had a significant effect on that regime, including by hampering its efforts to develop nuclear weapons. UN counterterrorism sanctions have isolated terrorists and frozen their assets and those of their supporters. UN missions in Afghanistan and Iraq work to strengthen democracy and mediate local conflicts, meaning that we can draw down our military forces there on schedule.**

**Warrant:** The UN promotes security and human rights

Esther Brimmer. "How Engagement at the United Nations Benefits the United States."  
Department of State. Feb. 2011. <https://2009-2017.state.gov/p/io/rm/2011/171889.htm>

**The UN's humanitarian agencies also deliver lifesaving aid in many of the world's worst crises. From Haiti to Somalia, Pakistan to the Congo, the World Food Program and UNICEF are preempting starvation, the World Health Organization is preventing outbreaks of disease through vaccination programs, and the UN High Commissioner for Refugees is providing comfort to those displaced from their homes. These agencies are only a few of the important UN organizations that are saving lives, providing critical humanitarian assistance to vulnerable populations, and contributing to the overall human security on which lasting peace must be built.** The United States also works through the UN system to promote global respect for human rights and universal values. I will discuss in a moment our work at the Human Rights Council, and the advances that body has made as a result of U.S. engagement. We see the UN as an increasingly important forum for bringing the countries of the world together to promote human rights and call out abuses and violations of liberty, equality, and basic human dignity, no matter where they occur.

**Warrant:** The UN fights hunger

Staff. "10 Things Accomplished by the United Nations", Borgen Magazine, February 2019, <https://www.borgenmagazine.com/10-things-accomplished-united-nations/>

The UN Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) spearheaded international efforts to reduce world hunger. FAO's collaborative efforts with its partners such as the European Union (EU) has accelerated efforts in eradicating world hunger and progressed more rapidly to fulfilling the Millennium Development Goals (MDG).

**FAO and EU implemented the EU Food Facility, a €1 billion initiative in response to the food price crisis of 2008-2011. This initiative improved the livelihood of 59 million people in 50 countries. More recently, the FAO and EU partnership was further augmented by a €1 billion EU initiative which provided two million people in six countries with agricultural development activities worth almost €60 million EU. This new initiative aimed to achieve the 2015 international development goal of reducing by half the world's number of hungry people.**

**Warrant:** The UN fights poverty

Staff. "10 Things Accomplished by the United Nations", Borgen Magazine, February 2019, <https://www.borgenmagazine.com/10-things-accomplished-united-nations/>

**The International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) makes available low-interest loans and grants to poor rural people to enable them to grow and sell food, increase income, and decide the direction of their lives. According to the UN, IFAD has invested more than \$14 billion since 1978, assisted more than 410 million people to grow and sell more food, and increased their incomes, which has helped provide for their families. Currently, IFAD oversees more than 250 programs and projects in 97 countries.** In 1990, the child mortality rate was significantly high. One out of 10 children died before they were five years old. UN agencies embarked on definitive measures such as oral rehydration therapy, clear water and sanitation and other health and nutrition practices to reduce child mortality rates in developing countries. As a result, it

decreased to one in 18 by 2011. The new objective for 2015 is to reduce the 1990 under-five mortality rate by two-thirds.

**Analysis:** Leverage this argument in conjunction with arguments about how affirming will damage the UN by causing the current permanent members to withdraw support to show the judge that the risks to radical change are too great.

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## CON: Abolishing Permanent Membership Would Lead To Backlash By The US.

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**Argument:** If the United Nations abolished the Security Council it could lead to retribution from the current members who would cut funding or support to UN programs based on the perceived insult.

**Warrant:** The US withdrew from the UN human rights council after being snubbed.

Shaefer, Brett "America Is Right to Leave the UN Human Rights Council" Heritage Foundation. Jan, 2018. <https://www.heritage.org/global-politics/commentary/america-right-leave-the-un-human-rights-council>

Unfortunately, most governments either prefer a weak, biased council or are unwilling to make the effort necessary to reform it. This is not a recent development in response to the Trump administration. **The Obama administration met similar resistance when it proposed reforms at the mandatory 2011 review of the council.** Nonetheless, over the past year, the United States has tried again. Led by Ambassador Nikki Haley and strongly supported by U.S. diplomats in Geneva, New York, Washington and around the world, **the United States has engaged bilaterally and multilaterally to promote reforms to address anti-Israel bias, membership quality, and improve the council's efficiency. They have been met with disinterest and hostility. Even European governments and human-rights groups have opposed the U.S. reform effort out of fear that countries hostile to human rights might seize the opportunity to weaken the council. This is a self-fulfilling prophesy that condemns the council to its current gravely disappointing status quo.** Worse, as long as this fear exists, any future reform effort will be stillborn.

**Warrant:** The US withdrew after other countries rebuffed its proposals

Shaefer, Brett “America Is Right to Leave the UN Human Rights Council” Heritage Foundation. Jan, 2018. <https://www.heritage.org/global-politics/commentary/america-right-leave-the-un-human-rights-council>

**Those dismissing the decision to withdraw from the Human Rights Council as an example of the Trump administration’s rejection of multilateral engagement miss the target. The administration could have left the council any time in the past eighteen months, but it did not. Instead, it sought to work within the UN to fix the council. Only when it proved futile did the United States pull back. Sadly, the United States seems to be the only government that seriously wants the Human Rights Council to promote universal respect and protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms in a fair and equal manner.** The council has proved to be a flawed, biased, often ineffective instrument—despite U.S. membership and engagement. The Trump administration recognized, rightly, that staying in the council would at best ensure continued bias, selectivity and disappointment. Worse, it would implicitly endorse those outcomes.

**Warrant:** The US has left UNESCO in the past

Oliver Waxman. “The U.S. Has Left UNESCO Before. Here’s Why.” TimeMagazine. Feb. 2017, <https://time.com/4980034/unesco-trump-us-leaving-history/>

When **the U.S. Department of State announced Thursday that the U.S. would leave the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO)**, scholars of the U.N. may have felt a certain déjà vu. The Trump administration’s statement cited “mounting arrears at UNESCO, the need for fundamental reform in the organization, and continuing anti-Israel bias at UNESCO” as reasons for the decision. **Those rationales echo arguments made by the administration of president Ronald Reagan in December 1983, when the U.S. previously announced a decision to pull out of UNESCO: “UNESCO**

**has extraneously politicized virtually every subject it deals with. It has exhibited hostility toward a free society, especially a free market and a free press, and it has demonstrated unrestrained budgetary expansion.”**

**Warrant:** The US left UNESCO because it could not influence its members

Oliver Waxman. “The U.S. Has Left UNESCO Before. Here’s Why.” TimeMagazine. Feb. 2017, <https://time.com/4980034/unesco-trump-us-leaving-history/>

**When 37 nations created UNESCO as a human rights organization promoting education, science and cultural causes in November 1945, “it was essentially a western entity, dominated by western funding,”** says political scientist Jerry Pubantz, co-author of *To Create a New World? American Presidents and the United Nations* and co-editor of *The Encyclopedia of the United Nations*. School systems in Europe were undergoing “denazification” and, as part of that process, the U.S. wanted to be sure that they taught World War II accurately. UNESCO was a way to influence those curricula. **Likewise, during the Cold War, American officials imagined UNESCO as an advocate for free speech in an era of communist propaganda. But, as more members joined the group — about 160 members by July 1983 — U.S. policy makers grew worried their voices would be drowned out. The newest members were “largely the decolonized new independent states of Africa and Asia” who “tended to be less supportive of American policies, and more supportive of the Soviet bloc’s position,”** says Pubantz.

**Analysis:** Use this argument to demonstrate that the US has a track record of backlash against the UN for perceived anti-American action. This could hurt the ability of the UN to function and provide vital services.

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## CON: Abolishing Permanent Membership Would Lead To Backlash By China.

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**Argument:** Colleges suffer from a variety of institutional impediments that hinder their ability to efficiently administer sports teams. Transforming student-athletes into employees would only make that problem worse.

**Warrant:** China opposes security council reform

Brar, Aadil, "Why China Wants to Be Asia's Only UN Security Council Member"  
Newsweek. March 2023. <https://www.newsweek.com/china-india-united-nations-security-council-members-1870215>

**Analysts suggest that China's opposition is rooted in its ambition to be the singular Asian representative among the council's permanent members. Ashok Kantha, India's former ambassador to China from 2014 to 2016, told Newsweek that Beijing has made efforts to thwart New Delhi's candidature to the coveted UNSC while giving passive assurances. Newsweek reached out to China's embassy in New Delhi for comment. "However, in practice, we have found that China has actively obstructed any restructuring of the UNSC and our efforts run into the Great Wall of China's opposition. We have interpreted the Chinese behavior as the lack of support for the rise of India and its aspirations, notwithstanding formal assurances to the contrary," Kantha said.**

**Warrant:** China does not want to share space with other countries.

Brar, Aadil, "Why China Wants to Be Asia's Only UN Security Council Member"  
Newsweek. March 2023. <https://www.newsweek.com/china-india-united-nations-security-council-members-1870215>



"China is not inclined to share the space with another developing country and would like to preserve its status as the only non-western country that is a permanent member of the UNSC." Kanti Bajpai, a professor and Wilmar chair of Asian Studies at the National University of Singapore, told Newsweek that China may try to build consensus among other middle powers to stall India's quest for a UNSC seat. "China will certainly invoke the middle powers argument. Namely, there is a range of middle powers that would not support India, Japan, and Germany, and until there is more consensus, it would be inappropriate to admit these three powers as permanent members," Bajpai said. "Singapore is very cautious and will not break with the rest of ASEAN on this. A lot, therefore, depends on key players in ASEAN. For Singapore, that means Indonesia and Malaysia. New Delhi has not paid much attention to the region after Modi's first term and has done quite a lot of things to annoy it (including not joining RCEP)," he added.

**Warrant:** Beijing opposes reform

J. Mohan Malik. "Security Council Reform: China Signals Its Veto." Columbia University.  
<https://ciaotest.cc.columbia.edu/olj/wpj/spring05/spring05c.pdf>

**A valuable insight into Chinese thinking is provided in a commentary in the authoritative Beijing Review of May 13, 2004, by the Chinese Foreign Ministry analyst, Wu Miaofa, which, for the first time, spelled out. "five principles" for reform of the Security Council.<sup>8</sup> A critical scrutiny of these "principles" (in effect, "conditions") reveals them to be self-serving, impractical, contradictory,**

**inconsistent, and antidemocratic—all seemingly designed for the purpose of stalling an expansion of the council that would increase the number of veto-holding permanent members. The "five principles" put in question Beijing's commitment to a**

**multipolar world and also contravene the “five principles of peaceful coexistence” (premised on the equality of all nations, big and small, first outlined in 1955 during the heyday of Sino-Indian friendship), which are touted by Beijing as the moral basis of sound interstate relations.**<sup>9</sup> At best, the Foreign Ministry’s analysis provides valuable insight into Beijing’s insecurities and fears regarding the gathering momentum for U.N. reform and reflects its core attitudes toward great power relations within Asia. At worst, it is an unconvincing plea for maintaining the status.

**Impact:** China will block reforms

J. Mohan Malik. “Security Council Reform: China Signals Its Veto.” Columbia University.  
<https://ciaotest.cc.columbia.edu/olj/wpj/spring05/spring05c.pdf>

**A critical assessment of the Chinese perspective suggests that New Delhi and Tokyo are no closer to their objective of achieving permanent seats on the Security Council than they have been in the past. China will do everything to safeguard its coveted status as a veto-holding, permanent member. Beijing’s rhetoric about a multipolar world and Asian solidarity notwithstanding, China does not want any other major Asian country to sit on the council as an equal. Despite deepening economic ties with India and Japan, China’s political relationships with the two countries remain antagonistic.** Unless Beijing changes its attitude with respect to Security Council reform, talk of China-Japan-India triangular cooperation will remain meaningless. Moreover, China’s opposition is unsustainable over the long term if Beijing wants to avoid an India-Japan alignment. Beijing’s strategic interests lie in supporting one or the other in order to prevent the two from ganging up against China. There are already some indications that Beijing sees India as the lesser evil.

**Analysis:** Use this argument to show that China stridently opposes Security Council reform. Connect this to the topic by explaining that China is likely to take retaliatory actions against the UN for infringing on its interests.

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**CON: The UNSC Is Evolving In The Status Quo.**

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**Argument:** Right now, both permanent and non-permanent members of the UNSC are calling for reform. Due to the overwhelming support, specifically from the US, reform is likely to occur. This will address concerns of an outdated governing body.

**Warrant:** Permanent members support overall reform.

De Riviere, Nicolas. "We need to reform the Security Council." Mission Permanente de la France, 16 Nov. 2023, <https://onu.delegfrance.org/we-need-to-reform-the-security-council>.

In the discourse surrounding the reform of the United Nations Security Council (UNSC), the distinction between norm entrepreneurs and norm antipreneurs is evident. Initially, Kofi Annan played a pivotal role as a norm entrepreneur, catalyzing the emergence of the norm for UNSC reform. However, over the years, the state actors forming the three dominant reform blocs have taken on the role of norm entrepreneurs in advocating for UNSC expansion. The P5, benefiting from established global governance norms, wields considerable strategic advantages. Despite growing international support for UNSC reform, the P5 continues to resist expansion, mainly through delaying tactics. The P5, adhering to institutionalized global governance norms, utilizes its veto power to maintain a strong position. In 2005, the USA employed various delaying tactics, opposing the G4 bid for veto rights and proposing limited additions to the Council. **The P5 insists on an overall UN reform plan before supporting Council expansion.** The veto power, rooted in historical-political rather than legal considerations, grants the significant blocking ability to antipreneurs within the UNSC, especially the P5.

**Warrant:** France supports reform.

De Riviere, Nicolas. "We need to reform the Security Council." Mission Permanente de la France, 16 Nov. 2023, <https://onu.delegfrance.org/we-need-to-reform-the-security-council>.

France's position is constant and well known. We want the Council to be more representative of today's world, in a way that further strengthens its authority, legitimacy and effectiveness. We must take into account the emergence of new powers that are willing and able to assume the responsibility of a permanent presence on the Security Council, and which, in accordance with the UN Charter, are in a position to make a significant contribution to the Council's action. In order to preserve its executive and operational nature, an enlarged Council could therefore have up to 25 members, including new permanent and non-permanent members. **France supports the candidacy of Germany, Brazil, India and Japan as permanent members. We would also like to see a stronger presence of African countries, including among the permanent members. The remaining seats will have to be allocated so as to achieve equitable geographical representation.** The aim is twofold : on the one hand, to consolidate the legitimacy of the Security Council; on the other, to strengthen its capacity to fully assume its responsibilities in the maintenance of international peace and security. It was in this spirit that France proposed several years ago that the five permanent members should voluntarily and collectively suspend the use of the veto in the event of mass atrocities. This voluntary approach does not require a revision of the Charter, but a political commitment by the permanent members. Today, this initiative, which we are promoting jointly with Mexico, has the support of 106 countries. We call on all member states that have not yet done so to support it, so as to rapidly reach the symbolic two-thirds threshold of the General Assembly. We also reiterate our willingness to continue discussing this proposal with the other permanent members of the Council.

**Warrant:** US support is key.

Jones, Bruce & Adrianna Pita. "UN reform and the Global South at the 2023 General Assembly." Brookings Institution, 29 Sept. 2023, <https://www.brookings.edu/articles/un-reform-and-the-global-south-at-the-2023-general-assembly/>.

The deeper question about reform is whether or not it would be valuable to see a wider set of powers at the Security Council. We're talking here about the quote unquote rising powers, the new middle powers, the Global South, the Indias, Turkey, Brazil, etc., as well as countries like Japan and Germany that have grown substantially in power over the last 30 or 40 years and yet do not have permanent seats. This often gets dismissed as mere chatter or mere talk. I don't think that's right. **I think this round of reform is different for the following reason.** At least in the post-Cold War period, all prior efforts to reform the Security Council took the form of one of the countries that wanted a seat, or the U.N. itself, advancing the notion of reform, going to the United States to say, will you back us? And the Americans saying, in effect, "this is very interesting. We will study it carefully. We will not block you. Please go away." And put zero effort into making it happen. That is not what's happening now. **This round of reform was initiated by Joe Biden at his speech at the General Assembly last year.** I think at the time people thought this probably isn't serious. And in the years since, people like Salman Ahmed, the head of policy planning have been traveling around articulating this, pushing this, working it. And Biden went back to the U.N. this year and talked again about council reform. **And suddenly people are realizing, hold on a second, the United States is actually serious about this. That doesn't mean it will happen. But there is a world of difference between a reform initiative where some other country is pushing it and the United States is disinterested versus one where the United States itself is in the lead.**

**Warrant:** This has never happened before, so the situation is delicate – the P5 can veto.

“The Veto.” Security Council Report, 13 Feb. 2024,  
<https://www.securitycouncilreport.org/un-security-council-working-methods/the-veto.php#:~:text=Beyond%20permanency%20itself%2C%20the%20veto,votes%20of%20the%20permanent%20members%E2%80%9D>.

Beyond permanency itself, the veto power is probably the UN Charter’s most significant distinction between permanent and non-permanent members. **Article 27 (3) of the Charter establishes that all substantive decisions of the Council must be made with “the concurring votes of the permanent members”.** The veto has been addressed regularly during the annual working methods debates and is among the topics most frequently raised in the context of almost all discussions of Council working methods. **Permanent members use the veto to defend their national interests, to uphold a tenet of their foreign policy or, in some cases, to promote a single issue of particular importance to a state.** Since 16 February 1946—when the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR) cast the first veto on a draft resolution regarding the withdrawal of foreign troops from Lebanon and Syria (S/PV.23)—the veto has been recorded 293 times.

**Impact:** Stopping reform in its tracks is bad.

Stewart, Patrick. “UN Security Council Reform: What the World Thinks.” Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 28 June 2023,  
<https://carnegieendowment.org/2023/06/28/un-security-council-reform-what-world-thinks-pub-90032>.

Despite these challenges, Security Council reform remains desperately needed. **Major challenges to international peace and security—including those related to climate change, armed conflict, violent extremism, and geopolitical tensions among the great**

**powers—necessitate a more representative, credible, and transparent system of collective security that better reflects the contemporary international system and the evolving locus of power among states in the Global South.** In response to these demands, the Institute for Security Studies (ISS), a pan-African policy research institute, undertook wide-ranging consultations between 2015 and 2017 with various international state representatives, think tanks, and civil society organizations to explore an alternative pathway to Security Council reform. These informed the development of a reform campaign, Elect the Council, which provides a detailed proposal to circumvent an IGN process that remains mired in competing and ultimately irreconcilable national positions.

**Impact:** Thankfully, allowing reform to continue promotes international peace.

“United Nations Security Council.” Legal Information Institute at Cornell Law School, [https://www.law.cornell.edu/wex/united\\_nations\\_security\\_council](https://www.law.cornell.edu/wex/united_nations_security_council).

The United Nations Security Council (UNSC, or UN Security Council) is one of the five primary organs of the United Nations, responsible for maintaining international peace and security. **The UNSC resolutions are binding on all member states.** The UNSC was established on January 17, 1946 and includes the five permanent members (United States, Russian Federation [as a state successor to the USSR], United Kingdom, China and France) which hold veto power, and also ten elected non-permanent members. **The UNSC's first actions in situations which may cause a "threat to peace and security" is to recommend to the parties to try to reach agreement by peaceful means.** The council may issue cease fire directive, diploy peace-keeping forces of take other measures such as economic sanctions, trade embargos of military action.

**Analysis:** This is kind of a weird argument because it agrees that reform of the UNSC is needed, but it argues that the reform needed is happening in the status quo. Instead, the idea is that interrupting this positive reform by voting aff is what is most harmful. This argument will likely be more of a spike than something you collapse on, but it can be strategic nonetheless.



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**CON: Permanent Membership Promotes Democracy.**

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**Argument:** The UNSC's permanent members have varying ideological backgrounds. Despite this, the Council promotes democratic ideals. Democracy causes a plethora of positive impacts, so we want to keep Western countries in permanent member seats to continue this trend.

**Warrant:** The UNSC is unique in that it reflects the ideas of many nations in its agenda.

Hosli, Madeleine O. & Thomas Dörfler. "The United Nations Security Council: The Challenge of Reform." International Political Economy Series, 2015, [https://link.springer.com/chapter/10.1057/9781137397607\\_8](https://link.springer.com/chapter/10.1057/9781137397607_8).

The United Nations Security Council (UNSC) is one of the most important multilateral institutions having the ambition to shape global governance and the only organ of the global community that can adopt legally binding resolutions for the maintenance of international peace and security and, if necessary, authorize the use of force. Created in the aftermath of World War II by its victors, the UNSC's constellation looks increasingly anachronistic, however, in light of the changing global distribution of power. Adapting the institutional structure and decision-making procedures of the UNSC has proven to be one of the most difficult challenges of the last decades, while it is the institution that has probably been faced with the most vociferous calls for reform. Although there have been changes to the informal ways in which outside actors are drawn into the UNSC's work and activities, many of the major players in the current international system seem to be deprived from equal treatment in its core patterns of decision-making. Countries such as Brazil, Germany, India and Japan, alongside emerging African nations such as Nigeria and South Africa, are among the states eager to secure permanent representation on the Council. **By comparison, selected BRICS countries, China and Russia - in contrast to their role in other multilateral institutions - are permanent**

members of the UNSC and with this, have been “insiders” for a long time. This renders the situation of the UNSC different from global institutions, in which traditionally, Western powers have dominated the agenda.

**Warrant:** Even still, the UNSC promotes democracy.

“Democracy.” United Nations, <https://www.un.org/en/global-issues/democracy#:~:text=Democracy%20is%20a%20core%20value,than%20any%20other%20global%20organization.>

**Democracy is a core value of the United Nations. The UN supports democracy by promoting human rights, development, and peace and security.** In the 75 years since the UN Charter was signed, the UN has done more to support democracy around the world than any other global organization. **The UN promotes good governance, monitors elections, supports civil society to strengthen democratic institutions and accountability, ensures self-determination in decolonized countries, and assists in the drafting of new constitutions in post-conflict nations.** United Nations activities in support of democracy are carried out through the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the United Nations Democracy Fund (UNDEF), the Department of Peace Operations (DPO), the Department of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs (DPPA), the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), and the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN Women), among others.

**Warrant:** Frighteningly, democracy is at risk.

Heren, Kit. “‘Democracy is at risk’: Joe Biden warns of ‘unprecedented moment in US history’ as he hits out at Donald Trump.” NPR, 8 Mar. 2024, <https://www.lbc.co.uk/news/joe-biden-state-of-the-union-democracy-at->



Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN Women), among others.

**Impact:** A loss of democracy leads to a loss of freedom.

Gittings, Julie. "Real life consequences of losing democracy." 27 Jan. 2024, The Express, <https://www.lockhaven.com/opinion/letters-to-the-editor/2024/01/real-life-consequences-of-losing-democracy/>.

The 2024 presidential election provides voters with a stark choice about the future of American democracy. This isn't abstract; it has concrete, chilling consequences for our way of life. **Democracy means freedom.** Freedom isn't just an emancipatory ideal, it's how we live ("kitchen table issues"). **Freedom means: Voting and having our votes counted, Access to quality health care, including reproductive care, Financial security, Global security, Individual rights.**

**Impact:** A loss of democracy leads to decreased life expectancy.

Ortiz-Ospina, Esteban. "Does democracy lead to better health?" Big Think, 20 Jan. 2024, <https://bigthink.com/the-present/democracy-better-health/>.

The Liberal Democracy Index is produced by the Varieties of Democracy project at the University of Gothenburg. The index is based on a qualitative and quantitative assessment of elections and suffrage rights; freedom of expression and association; equality before the law; and judicial and legislative constraints on the executive. It is measured in a continuous scale where more democratic regimes obtain higher scores.

**As we can see, there is a general correlation: in 2022, the countries with a Liberal Democracy Index of at least 0.7 also enjoyed life expectancy of at least 70 years; and conversely, all countries whose life expectancy was less than 60 years had a Liberal**

**Democracy Index of at most 0.51.** This correlation holds for other measures of health and democracy; and several studies have found that it also holds after controlling for other factors such as national income or human capital. In a recent paper published in *The Lancet*, a group of researchers looked at data covering 170 countries over the period 1970 to 2015, and they concluded that democracies were better than autocracies at reducing mortality — especially in those causes of mortality that had not been heavily targeted by foreign aid and required health-care delivery infrastructure.

**Analysis:** This is a good argument because it starts with a spike against the Western bias argument. You can run the argument without this card, and use it as a frontline if you would prefer. Be prepared to frontline democracy bad arguments, as they are likely to come up.

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**CON: Permanent Members Increase Organizational Legitimacy.**

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**Argument:** The UNSC’s ability to impose binding resolutions on its member states makes it one of the most powerful organizations in the world. It gains its legitimacy from members like the US, Russia, and China. Voting aff would ensure that these powers are not all on the Council permanently, severely limiting its effectiveness.

**Warrant:** The UNSC is one of the most powerful organizations in the world.

“The UN Security Council.” Council on Foreign Relations, 26 Feb. 2024,  
<https://www.cfr.org/background/un-security-council>.

**The Security Council, the United Nations’ principal crisis-management body, is empowered to impose binding obligations on the 193 UN member states to maintain peace.** The Security Council’s five permanent and ten elected members meet regularly to assess threats to international security, including civil wars, natural disasters, arms proliferation, and terrorism. Structurally, the Security Council remains largely unchanged since its founding in 1946, stirring debate among members about the need for reforms. In recent years, members’ competing interests have often stymied the Security Council’s ability to respond to major global conflicts and crises, including the COVID-19 pandemic, Russia’s annexation of Crimea and subsequent invasion of Ukraine, and the war between Israel and Palestinian militant group Hamas.

**Warrant:** Permanent members are legitimate in the international community.

“Ukraine’s road to victory goes through the battlefield, not a permanent seat at the UNSC.” PR Jason, 14 Mar. 2023, <https://jasoninstitute.com/ukraines-road-to-victory-goes-through-the-battlefield-not-a-permanent-seat-at-the-unsc/>.

**The permanent members are recognised by the rest of the international community as great powers with the legitimacy to authorise the use of force to ensure international peace.** Moreover, to avoid the failings of the League of Nations, the UN's predecessor, the P5 are granted veto powers. Indeed, one of the essential reasons the League of Nations failed was because of the redistribution of power within the organisation in favour of smaller states at the expenses of bigger powers. According to the Netherlands' representative to the League of Nations in 1946, Jonkheer Beelaerts van Blokland, the disregard for the interests of great powers engendered the League's failure, and its subsequent demise. As such, the current veto powers enable the P5 members to protect their national interests and perpetuate the UN's existence. However, as the war rages on in Ukraine, these veto powers have enabled Russia to block resolutions condemning its illegal actions.

**Warrant:** This is imperative for the UNSC's legitimacy.

Tallberg, Jonas & Michael Zürn. "The legitimacy and legitimation of international organizations: introduction and framework." *The Review of International Organizations*, 5 Jan. 2019, <https://link.springer.com/article/10.1007/s11558-018-9330-7>.

**Legitimacy is central for international organizations (IOs) to make a difference in world politics.** While states have granted IOs more political authority in recent decades, in the expectation that they can help solve pressing problems and shape practices, IOs' long-term capacity to deliver is conditioned on their legitimacy in the eyes of governments and citizens. **As Buchanan and Keohane (2006, 407) put it, "[t]he perception of legitimacy matters, because, in a democratic era, multilateral institutions will only thrive if they are viewed as legitimate by democratic publics."** In this respect, IOs are

not different from other organizations in political life (Parsons 1960; Meyer and Rowan 1977; Dahl and Lindblom 1992).

**Impact:** Organizational legitimacy helps develop rules and norms.

Tallberg, Jonas & Michael Zürn. "The legitimacy and legitimation of international organizations: introduction and framework." *The Review of International Organizations*, 5 Jan. 2019, <https://link.springer.com/article/10.1007/s11558-018-9330-7>.

**Second, legitimacy affects the capacity of IOs to develop new rules and norms. When IOs suffer from poor legitimacy among elites and citizens, this makes it more difficult to gain governments' support for ambitious policy goals and to secure ratification of new agreements (Putnam 1988; Martin 2000; Sommerer and Agné 2018).** For instance, successive rejections of new European Union (EU) treaties by citizens in several countries have put plans for further large-scale reforms on the back burner. Most recently and dramatically, Britain voted to leave the EU, illustrating the importance of popular legitimacy for states' active engagement in international cooperation, but also effects of legitimacy crises for IO policy making.

**Impact:** Organizational legitimacy saves money.

Tallberg, Jonas & Michael Zürn. "The legitimacy and legitimation of international organizations: introduction and framework." *The Review of International Organizations*, 5 Jan. 2019, <https://link.springer.com/article/10.1007/s11558-018-9330-7>.

**Third, legitimacy influences IOs' ability to secure compliance with international rules and norms. In general, legitimacy is a much cheaper means to secure compliance than**



**coercion (Lindblom 1977).** Moreover, since few IOs command the coercive power to compel state and non-state actors to comply, legitimacy is particularly important in global governance (Franck 1990; Hurd 1999). Evidence from a broad range of regulatory domains and levels suggests that legitimacy contributes to compliance, even when adjustment costs are high (Chayes and Chayes 1998; Zürn and Joerges 2005).

Conversely, low legitimacy of an IO can hurt the respect for international rules. For instance, the declining legitimacy of the World Trade Organization (WTO) in the US government under President Donald Trump, and among regional powers such as Brazil and India, threatens to undermine the respect for the multilateral trade regime.

**Answer:** This is a good argument because it shows that the P5 are what make the UNSC so powerful and legitimate. Without them, it would be like any other international organization that is unable to make binding decisions to promote international peace. If you want to go crazy, you could link this to a war impact by finding an instance where the UNSC's legitimacy has prevented war.

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**CON: Permanent Members Are Climate Leaders.**

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**Argument:** Climate change is the biggest threat facing humanity, and P5 members are taking action to combat it. Other countries are following in their footsteps, so giving them a pedestal to stand on is a good way to further climate action and prevent the world from reaching climate tipping points.

**Warrant:** Climate change is killing us slowly.

“On climate and health.” United Nations,

<https://www.un.org/sites/un2.un.org/files/2021/08/fastfacts-health.pdf>.

**1. Climate change is the single biggest health threat facing humanity. The impacts are already harming health through air pollution, disease, extreme weather events, forced displacement, food insecurity and pressures on mental health. Every year, environmental factors take the lives of around 13 million people.** 2. Meeting the goals of the Paris Agreement could save about a million lives a year worldwide by 2050 through reductions in air pollution alone. Avoiding the worst climate impacts could help prevent 250,000 additional climate-related deaths per year from 2030 to 2050, mainly from malnutrition, malaria, diarrhoea and heat stress. 3. The value of health gains from reducing carbon emissions would be approximately double the global cost of implementing carbon mitigation measures. 4. Over 90 per cent of people breathe unhealthy levels of air pollution, largely resulting from burning fossil fuels driving climate change. In 2018, air pollution from fossil fuels caused \$2.9 trillion in health and economic costs, about \$8 billion a day.

**Warrant:** Thankfully, the P5 members are taking action.

Liu, Hongqiao. "The Carbon Brief Profile: China." CarbonBrief, 29 Nov. 2023,  
<https://interactive.carbonbrief.org/the-carbon-brief-profile-china/>.

China, formally known as the People's Republic of China, is the world's second-largest economy and the second most populous country. The country is home to half of the world's coal power plants and has the world's largest capacity of renewables and hydroelectricity, as well as the second-largest for nuclear. It is also the world's fifth-largest oil-producer and the second-largest for oil consumption, as well as the single largest contributor to global growth in demand for gas. In 2006, China overtook the US to become the world's largest annual emitter of greenhouse gases and its citizens now have carbon footprints well above the global average. However, its cumulative and per-capita emissions remain about half of the US's today. **Climate change is a priority for the ruling Communist Party of China (CPC) and the Chinese government. In 2020, China's leader Xi Jinping pledged to "peak carbon dioxide emissions before 2030" and "achieve carbon neutrality before 2060".**

**Warrant:** The US is taking climate action.

"President Biden's Historic Climate Agenda." The White House, 27 Jan. 2021,  
<https://www.whitehouse.gov/climate/#:~:text=President%20Biden's%20Actions%20to%20Tackle%20the%20Climate%20Crisis&text=As%20part%20of%20that%20vision,zero%20emissions%20economy%20by%202050.>

President Biden campaigned on a bold vision of tackling the climate crisis with the urgency that science demands, by building a clean energy economy that benefits all Americans—with lower costs for families, good-paying jobs for workers, and healthier air and cleaner water for communities. **As part of that vision, the President set groundbreaking goals: Reducing U.S. greenhouse gas emissions 50-52% below 2005 levels in 2030, Reaching 100% carbon pollution-free electricity by 2035, Achieving a**

**net-zero emissions economy by 2050, Delivering 40% of the benefits from federal investments in climate and clean energy to disadvantaged communities. The Biden-Harris Administration has made massive progress in translating these goals into action and impact on the ground – taking decisive steps to reduce climate pollution; cut energy costs; create good union jobs; increase resilience; advance environmental, economic, and racial justice; improve health; and achieve true energy security.** This federal mobilization – building on the leadership of states, Tribal Nations, and local governments – has already spurred historic progress.

**Impact:** Climate leaders create global climate action.

“Countries Follow U.S. Lead and Set Global Goal to Protect at Least 30% of Lands and Waters by 2030.” The White House, 19 Dec. 2022, <https://www.whitehouse.gov/ceq/news-updates/2022/12/19/countries-follow-u-s-lead-and-set-global-goal-to-protect-at-least-30-of-lands-and-waters-by-2030/>.

**At the U.N. Biodiversity Conference in Montreal, Canada (COP15), governments across the globe reached an historic agreement to collectively commit to conserving at least 30 percent of lands and waters by 2030, a goal that President Biden committed the United States to during his first days in office.** White House Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) Chair Brenda Mallory highlighted President Biden’s first-ever national conservation goal at COP15 events. The conference focused on strengthening international cooperation to set new goals for global action through 2030 to halt and reverse nature loss. “Turning the corner on the biodiversity crisis will require urgent and sweeping global action,” said CEQ Chair Brenda Mallory. “Together with our international partners, we can cultivate a global ecosystem where biodiversity flourishes, lands and waters are protected, and people have equitable access to all of nature’s benefits. Under President Biden’s leadership, the United States will continue

our progress towards broad, equitable, and strong environmental stewardship, with continued global cooperation as our shared goal.”

**Impact:** Global cooperation prevents us from reaching climate tipping points.

Wilson, Charlie. “Pivotal moment for humanity as tipping point threats and opportunities accelerate.” Environmental Change Institute, 6 Dec. 2023, <https://www.eci.ox.ac.uk/news/pivotal-moment-humanity-tipping-point-threats-and-opportunities-accelerate>.

A tipping point occurs when a small change sparks an often rapid and irreversible transformation, and the effects can be positive or negative. Based on an assessment of 26 negative Earth system tipping points, the report concludes that “business as usual” is no longer possible with rapid changes to nature and societies already happening, and more coming. **With global warming now on course to breach 1.5°C, at least five Earth system tipping points are likely to be triggered – including the collapse of major ice sheets and widespread mortality of warm-water coral reefs.** As Earth system tipping points multiply, there is a risk of catastrophic, global-scale loss of capacity to grow staple crops. Without urgent action to halt the climate and ecological crisis, societies will be overwhelmed as the natural world comes apart. Alternatively, emergency global action – accelerated by leaders meeting now at COP28 – can harness positive tipping points and steer us towards a thriving, sustainable future. **The report lays out a blueprint for doing this, and says bold, coordinated policies could trigger positive tipping points across multiple sectors including energy, transport, and food. A cascade of positive tipping points would save millions of lives, billions of people from hardship, trillions of dollars in climate-related damage, and begin restoring the natural world upon which we all depend.**

**Analysis:** This is a good argument because it connects the UNSC to huge impacts that can easily outweigh on magnitude, scope, and severity. Climate change impacts also can fit under literally any framework, so it is always a good argument to run.

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**CON: Permanent Members Provide The Greatest Contributions.**

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**Argument:** The P5 members provide the greatest financial and military contributions out of any UN member; thus, they should be compensated with the greatest amount of power. Voting aff would make the P5 less willing to contribute, and would decrease the legitimacy of the organization.

**Warrant:** The UN is funded by mandatory payments.

“Funding the United Nations: How Much Does the U.S. Pay?” Council on Foreign Relations, 29 Feb. 2024, <https://www.cfr.org/article/funding-united-nations-what-impact-do-us-contributions-have-un-agencies-and-programs#chapter-title-0-2>.

**All 193 members of the United Nations are required to make payments to certain parts of the organization as a condition of membership. The amount each member must pay, known as its assessed contribution, varies widely and is determined by a complex formula that factors in gross national income and population. These mandatory contributions help fund the United Nations’ regular budget, which covers administrative costs and a few programs, as well as peacekeeping operations.** In 2023, the United Nations assessed the United States’ share of the regular budget at 22 percent and its share of the peacekeeping budget at 27 percent; however, the U.S. Congress caps contributions to the peacekeeping budget at 25 percent, leaving the United States in arrears. China and Japan, the next two largest economies by gross domestic product (GDP), have the second- and third-highest assessed contributions, respectively. Assessed dues also finance other UN bodies, including the International Atomic Energy Agency and the World Health Organization (WHO).

**Warrant:** P5 members contribute more than is required.

“Funding the United Nations: How Much Does the U.S. Pay?” Council on Foreign Relations, 29 Feb. 2024, <https://www.cfr.org/article/funding-united-nations-what-impact-do-us-contributions-have-un-agencies-and-programs#chapter-title-0-2>.

**The U.S. government contributed more than \$18 billion to the United Nations in 2022, the most recent fiscal year with full data available. About 17 percent of this total was assessed and the rest was voluntary.** This represents about a quarter of the roughly \$70 billion the United States spends annually on foreign aid. By comparison, that contribution is slightly larger than what the government allocates annually to the U.S. Coast Guard.

**Impact:** Without P5 contributions, the UNSC would lose legitimacy.

“Ukraine’s road to victory goes through the battlefield, not a permanent seat at the UNSC.” PR Jason, 14 Mar. 2023, <https://jasoninstitute.com/ukraines-road-to-victory-goes-through-the-battlefield-not-a-permanent-seat-at-the-unsc/>.

**The permanent members are recognised by the rest of the international community as great powers with the legitimacy to authorise the use of force to ensure international peace.** Moreover, to avoid the failings of the League of Nations, the UN’s predecessor, the P5 are granted veto powers. Indeed, one of the essential reasons the League of Nations failed was because of the redistribution of power within the organisation in favour of smaller states at the expenses of bigger powers. According to the Netherlands’ representative to the League of Nations in 1946, Jonkheer Beelaerts van Blokland, the disregard for the interests of great powers engendered the League’s failure, and its subsequent demise. As such, the current veto powers enable the P5 members to protect



their national interests and perpetuate the UN's existence. However, as the war rages on in Ukraine, these veto powers have enabled Russia to block resolutions condemning its illegal actions.

**Impact:** Organizational legitimacy helps develop rules and norms.

Tallberg, Jonas & Michael Zürn. "The legitimacy and legitimation of international organizations: introduction and framework." *The Review of International Organizations*, 5 Jan. 2019, <https://link.springer.com/article/10.1007/s11558-018-9330-7>.

**Second, legitimacy affects the capacity of IOs to develop new rules and norms. When IOs suffer from poor legitimacy among elites and citizens, this makes it more difficult to gain governments' support for ambitious policy goals and to secure ratification of new agreements (Putnam 1988; Martin 2000; Sommerer and Agné 2018).** For instance, successive rejections of new European Union (EU) treaties by citizens in several countries have put plans for further large-scale reforms on the back burner. Most recently and dramatically, Britain voted to leave the EU, illustrating the importance of popular legitimacy for states' active engagement in international cooperation, but also effects of legitimacy crises for IO policy making.

**Impact:** Organizational legitimacy saves money.

Tallberg, Jonas & Michael Zürn. "The legitimacy and legitimation of international organizations: introduction and framework." *The Review of International Organizations*, 5 Jan. 2019, <https://link.springer.com/article/10.1007/s11558-018-9330-7>.

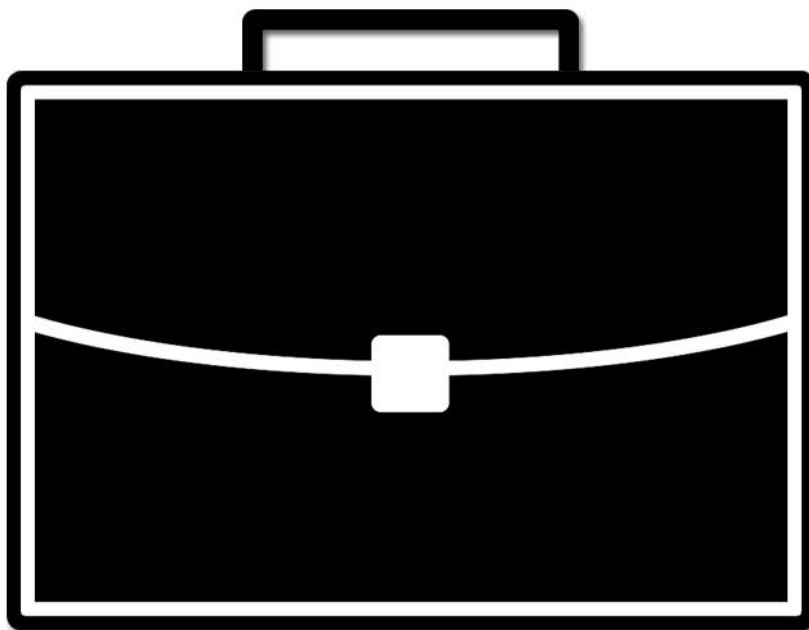
**Third, legitimacy influences IOs' ability to secure compliance with international rules and norms. In general, legitimacy is a much cheaper means to secure compliance than coercion (Lindblom 1977).** Moreover, since few IOs command the coercive power to compel state and non-state actors to comply, legitimacy is particularly important in global governance (Franck 1990; Hurd 1999). Evidence from a broad range of regulatory domains and levels suggests that legitimacy contributes to compliance, even when adjustment costs are high (Chayes and Chayes 1998; Zürn and Joerges 2005). Conversely, low legitimacy of an IO can hurt the respect for international rules. For instance, the declining legitimacy of the World Trade Organization (WTO) in the US government under President Donald Trump, and among regional powers such as Brazil and India, threatens to undermine the respect for the multilateral trade regime.

**Analysis:** This is a good argument because it combines the contribution and legitimacy arguments into one contention. This allows you to have a stronger link chain and a better grasp of the real-life situation, which tends to make for better debates.

# Champion Briefs

April 2024

Public Forum Brief



Con Responses to  
Pro Arguments

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## A/2: Permanent Membership Is Undemocratic

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**Response:** Permanent members on the Security Council promote democracy

**Delink:** Permanent membership ensures that world powers agree on major decisions

Schindlmayr, Thomas. "Obstructing the Security Council: The Use of the Veto In the Twentieth Century." *Journal of the History of International Law*, vol. 3, no. 2, Jan 2001, <https://doi.org/10.1163/15718050120956965>

Security Council analysts offer differing justifications for the veto, usually wrapped around the security interests of the five permanent members and the notion that peace and security can be achieved only if the Great Powers act as a unit. Former Australian foreign minister, Gareth Evans, claims that the establishment of the veto was to ensure that the United Nations did not subscribe to things it could not fulfil. **White, on the other hand, claims that the veto had its origins in the "desire to prevent the permanent members from being potential objects of collective measures". Sellen claims that four justifications for the veto became apparent at the San Francisco Conference: (1) unanimity was considered indispensable for peace; (2) permanent members needed to protect their national interests; (3) the need to protect minority blocs from over-dominating majority coalitions; and (4) the desire to prevent rash Security Council resolutions.**

**Delink:** The Security Council still holds elections for most seats on a regular basis

Nichols, Michelle. "Five nations elected to U.N. Security Council, but Belarus denied." *Reuters*, June 6, 2023, <https://www.reuters.com/world/five-nations-elected-un-security-council-belarus-denied-2023-06-06/>. Accessed March 8, 2024.

Algeria, Guyana, Sierra Leone and South Korea ran unopposed for a spot on the 15-member body, which is charged with maintaining international peace and security. In the only competitive race, Slovenia beat out Belarus. The five elected nations will replace Albania, Brazil, Gabon, Ghana and the United Arab Emirates. **The Security Council is the only U.N. body that can make legally binding decisions such as imposing sanctions and authorizing use of force. It has five permanent veto-wielding members: Britain, China, France, Russia and the United States. To ensure geographical representation, seats are allocated to regional groups. But even if candidates are running unopposed in their group, they still need to win the support of more than two-thirds of the General Assembly.**

**Turn:** Security Council decisions promoted democracy in Rhodesia

Farrall, Jeremy. "Does the UN Security Council Compound the Global Democratic Deficit?" *Alberta Law Review*, vol 46, no 4, 2009, <https://doi.org/10.29173/alr210>. Accessed March 8, 2024.

In December 1966, the Security Council used its sanctions powers under art. 41 of Chapter VII of the UN Charter for the very first time, applying sanctions against the illegal white minority regime, led by Ian Smith, that had taken control of Southern Rhodesia. In Resolution 232 (1966) the Council noted that it was acting in accordance with arts. 39 and 41, determined that the "situation in Southern Rhodesia [constituted] a threat to international peace and security," and applied a range of targeted trade sanctions. **At the same time, the Council reaffirmed "the inalienable rights of the people of Southern Rhodesia to freedom and independence."** In subsequent decisions strengthening the scope of the Southern Rhodesia sanctions regime, the Council reaffirmed the importance of the objective of enabling the self-determination and independence of

the Southern Rhodesian people. The sanctions remained in place until December 1979, shortly after the Smith regime relinquished control of Southern Rhodesia.

**Turn:** A substantial number of Security Council resolutions promote democracy

Farrall, Jeremy. "Does the UN Security Council Compound the Global Democratic Deficit?" *Alberta Law Review*, vol 46, no 4, 2009, <https://doi.org/10.29173/alr210>. Accessed March 8, 2024.

A survey of the democracy-related resolutions adopted by the Security Council in 2007 provides an interesting insight into the Council's increasingly close day-to-day relationship with democracy. **Twenty-two of the 55 resolutions adopted that year contain reference to democracy, democratic governance, democratic institutions, or elections. This amounts to a remarkable 40 percent of all resolutions adopted in that 12-month period. These democracy-related references are not always significant from a normative perspective. At times the Council simply describes a government as democratically elected (Iraq) or welcomes the fact that elections have taken place (Sierra Leone, Haiti). Yet even these apparently innocuous references indicate a general preference for domestic political systems that hold elections and promote democracy.** The Council's democracy-related references can be grouped into four general categories: (i) those affirming the general importance of democracy and democratic institutions; (ii) those affirming the importance of elections for the promotion of peace; (iii) those tasking a UN operation or senior official with supporting democracy; and (iv) those appealing to other actors to support democracy.

**Delink:** Elections are based on regions, ensuring representation from all parts of the world on the council

“Security Council Elections 2023.” *Security Council Report*, June 5, 2023, <https://www.securitycouncilreport.org/whatsinblue/2023/06/security-council-elections-2023.php>. Accessed March 8, 2024.

Tomorrow (6 June), the 77th session of the UN General Assembly is scheduled to hold elections for membership of the Security Council. **The five seats available for election in 2023, according to the regular distribution among regions, will be as follows: two seats for the African Group, one seat for the Group of Asia and the Pacific Small Island Developing States (Asia-Pacific Group), one seat for the Latin American and Caribbean Group (GRULAC), and one seat for the Eastern European Group.** The Western European and Others Group (WEOG) is not contesting any seats this year, as its two seats, held by Malta and Switzerland through 2024, come up for election every other year.

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## A/2: Permanent Member's Veto Power Is Undemocratic

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**Response:** Veto power ensures that world powers agree on major decisions

**Delink:** Veto power ensures that world powers agree on major decisions

Schindlmayr, Thomas. "Obstructing the Security Council: The Use of the Veto In the Twentieth Century." *Journal of the History of International Law*, vol. 3, no. 2, Jan 2001, <https://doi.org/10.1163/15718050120956965>

Security Council analysts offer differing justifications for the veto, usually wrapped around the security interests of the five permanent members and the notion that peace and security can be achieved only if the Great Powers act as a unit. Former Australian foreign minister, Gareth Evans, claims that the establishment of the veto was to ensure that the United Nations did not subscribe to things it could not fulfil. **White, on the other hand, claims that the veto had its origins in the "desire to prevent the permanent members from being potential objects of collective measures". Sellen claims that four justifications for the veto became apparent at the San Francisco Conference: (1) unanimity was considered indispensable for peace; (2) permanent members needed to protect their national interests; (3) the need to protect minority blocs from over-dominating majority coalitions; and (4) the desire to prevent rash Security Council resolutions.**

**Turn:** Vetos by permanent members have prevented conflict between great powers

Schindlmayr, Thomas. "Obstructing the Security Council: The Use of the Veto In the Twentieth Century." *Journal of the History of International Law*, vol. 3, no. 2, Jan 2001, <https://doi.org/10.1163/15718050120956965>



The right of the five permanent members to veto draft resolutions in the Security Council was open to question at the UN's inception and remains controversial until this day. However, this shortcoming may also be the Security Council's blessing. **The maintenance of the veto ensured that the Great Powers remained committed to the United Nations, instead of deserting it when their foreign policy objectives were not being met. Similarly, the veto saved the UN from entering conflicts with major members and involvement in divisive missions. It also prevented several situations from escalating into international crises, and helped the Great Powers from frequent involvement in domestic struggles.** If a primary purpose of the United Nations is to protect the world from being subjected to the scourge of war, then the veto may have inadvertently achieved this goal by maintaining a certain political balance that prevented the Great Powers from engaging in war with each other.

**Turn:** Vetoes ensure that decision at the UN do not cause harm

Weiss, Thomas and Giovanna Kuele. "The Veto: Problems and Prospects." *E-International Relations*, May 27, 2014, <https://www.e-ir.info/2014/03/27/the-veto-problems-and-prospects/>. Accessed March 8, 2024.

Second – and this reality is often ignored – **the logic of the veto is a variation on the Hippocratic Oath: UN decisions should do no harm – that is, at least not make matters worse. The idea of going to war against a major power, even for a land-grab or abuse of power, makes little sense if the result is World War III. Only if the danger were grave enough would a worldwide conflagration perhaps be justifiable;** but Crimea does not qualify, nor did Iraq. Humanitarians might think that Syria should, but there are few who support that view.

**Turn:** Even if the veto is undemocratic, it provides an important check against Russia and China

Abrams, Elliott. “The Biden Administrations Flirts With Dangerous Moves to Weaken U.S. Veto Power in the United Nations.” *Council on Foreign Relations*, April 19, 2022, <https://www.cfr.org/blog/biden-administrations-flirts-dangerous-moves-weaken-us-veto-power-united-nations>. Accessed March 8, 2024.

Moreover, the long list of U.S. vetoes of resolutions reflects the terrible, long-lasting bias of the United Nations against Israel. Of course those who specialize in attacking Israel, and U.S. support for Israel, want the veto eliminated—and that is another very good explanation of why it must be maintained. Delegitimizing the veto is a step toward delegitimizing Israel. **The UN is debating the resolution today, April 19. There can be no doubt that Russia and China have used the veto to protect malicious behavior on their own part and that of their allies. The United States has used it, and must continue to do so, to protect legitimate interests of our own and those of our democratic allies. The Biden administration should make it clear that we will vote against any effort to limit the veto—even if the administration wrongly supports this not-so-innocent reporting requirement.** A Security Council majority whose power is not limited by the veto would simply be too dangerous for the United States.

**Mitigate:** The use of veto power has ebbed and flowed over time, often used for explicitly good purposes

“This house would abolish the security council veto.” *IDEA*, January 25, 2022, <https://idebate.net/this-house-would-abolish-the-security-council-veto~b977/>. Accessed March 8, 2024.

The veto power has been wielded with increasing success both during and since the Cold War. Between 1945 and 1990, 240 vetoes were cast. Yet between 1990 and 1999 the power was utilised on only 7 occasions, whilst more than 20 peacekeeping operations

were mandated. This figure exceeds the total number of operations undertaken in the entirety of the preceding 45 years. **The prodigious use of the veto during the Cold War period might have saved the world from the realisation of nuclear war. Now, increasing nuclear proliferation is a reason for maintaining the unity of the P5 by means of the veto. The current rhetoric concerns 'rogue states' gaining possession of nuclear weapons. These are states whose potential deployment of arms is unpredictable and with whom there is limited international dialogue. If the P5 is split on a matter of international security, any one or more of its members could become equally 'rogue'.**

## A/2: Permanent Membership Erodes UNSC Credibility

**Response:** There is no connection between UNSC credibility and United Nations effectiveness

**Mitigate:** Most people still view the United Nations favorably

Fagan, Moira. "People across 24 countries continue to view UN favorably." *Pew Research Center*, August 31, 2023, <https://www.pewresearch.org/short-reads/2023/08/31/people-across-24-countries-continue-to-view-un-favorably/>. Accessed March 8, 2024.

The United Nations General Assembly will open its 78th session on Sept. 5 against a favorable backdrop. **A median of 63% across 24 countries surveyed see the UN in a positive light, according to a spring Pew Research Center survey. Another 28% see it negatively. In most countries surveyed, a majority of the public has a positive opinion of the UN.** Views of the UN are especially favorable in Kenya, Poland, South Korea and Sweden, where about eight-in-ten express positive views.

**Mitigate:** More people trust the United Nations than any other multilateral organization

Trithart, Albert and Olivia Case. "Do People Trust the UN? A Look at the Data." *The Global Observatory*, February 22, 2023, <https://theglobalobservatory.org/2023/02/do-people-trust-the-un-a-look-at-the-data/>. Accessed March 8, 2024.

What, then, does existing data show us about the public's trust or confidence in the UN? **One consistent finding across surveys is that trust and confidence in the UN are generally higher than for other multilateral institutions such as the International Monetary Fund and International Criminal Court and for regional organizations like the**

**European Union (EU) and African Union.** But beyond this, making generalizations is difficult, partly because the answer can vary from survey to survey.

**Turn:** Security Council-sanctioned peacekeeping operations have been popularly accepted

Lederer, Edith M. "UN peacekeeping on 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary: successes, failures and challenges ahead in a divided world." *AP News*, May 25, 2023, <https://apnews.com/article/un-peacekeeping-75-anniversary-successes-failures-challenges-5a18ab63c9d54104c6863b71aed552cb>. Accessed March 8, 2024.

U.N. peacekeeping operations have grown dramatically. At the end of the Cold War in the early 1990s, there were 11,000 U.N. peacekeepers. By 2014, there were 130,000 in 16 far-flung peacekeeping operations. **Today, 87,000 men and women serve in 12 conflict areas in Africa, Asia, Europe and the Middle East. There have been two kinds of successes, U.N. peacekeeping chief Jean-Pierre Lacroix said in an interview Wednesday with The Associated Press. Those are the long list of countries that have returned to a reasonable degree of stability with the support of U.N. peacekeeping, including Liberia, Sierra Leone, Ivory Coast, Mozambique, Angola and Cambodia, and the countries where peacekeepers are not only monitoring but preserving cease-fires like in southern Lebanon and Cyprus.**

**Turn:** Failure to fully support Security Council-sanctioned operations, not veto power, is responsible for credibility issues

"Clear Mandates, Better Resources Needed for Peacekeeping to Succeed in Increasingly Volatile World, Fourth Committee Hears." *UN News*, October 31, 2023, <https://press.un.org/en/2023/gaspd792.doc.htm>. Accessed March 8, 2024.

Keeping peace in an increasingly polarized and dangerous world requires clear mandates, adequate resources and stronger cooperation with local stakeholders and regional organizations, the Fourth Committee (Special Political and Decolonization) heard today as its general debate on all aspects of United Nations peacekeeping operations continued.

**More than 7,000 peacekeepers from Bangladesh are deployed in 10 peacekeeping missions around the globe, that country's representative said, highlighting their discipline and professionalism. They face multifaceted challenges, including emerging geopolitical tensions, improvised explosive devices, attacks by armed groups and disinformation. Adequate resources are indispensable, he emphasized, including medical facilities plus the development of an integrated mitigation strategy to counter the threat of improvised explosive devices.**

**Non-Unique:** Great power credibility is affecting all great powers, not just the United Nations

Cohen, Jared and Ian Bremmer. "The global credibility gap. Assessing underperformance and overreach in today's geopolitics." *Goldman Sachs*, October 30, 2023, <https://www.goldmansachs.com/intelligence/pages/the-global-credibility-gap.html>. Accessed March 8, 2024.

Credibility flows not only from the capabilities at countries' disposal, but also from the degree of trust and predictability they exercise in deploying those capabilities. In a world where great powers and the international order that they uphold enjoy and exercise credibility, other countries recognize their own interest in working with those powers and within that order. **But when great-power credibility erodes, so too do the incentives for countries and other actors to respect established rules and conventions, intensifying geopolitical competition and destabilizing the international order as a result. The US has not lost significant power in recent years, but its credibility has diminished, whereas China has gained significant power but not the credibility to match it. Both countries suffer from a significant and growing credibility gap. Today, we are facing**

renewed instability in the Middle East, a raging war in Europe, and mounting tensions in the Indo-Pacific converging to produce the most unstable geopolitical environment since the end of the Cold War.

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## A/2: China's Permanent Membership Harms Global Security

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**Response:** China is not a threat to global security

**Delink:** Unlike the United States, China rarely uses its veto power

“UN Security Council Working Methods: The Veto.” *Security Council Report*, February 13, 2024, <https://www.securitycouncilreport.org/un-security-council-working-methods/the-veto.php>. Accessed March 8, 2024.

In the early years, the USSR cast most of the vetoes, with a considerable number of these used to block the admission of a new member state. Over the years, the USSR/Russia has cast a total of 120 vetoes, or close to half of all vetoes. The US cast the first of its 82 vetoes to date on 17 March 1970 (S/9696 and Corr. 1 and 2). The USSR had by that point cast 107 vetoes. Since 1970, the US has used the veto far more than any other permanent member, most frequently to block decisions that it regards as detrimental to the interests of Israel. The UK has used the veto 29 times, the first such instance taking place on 30 October 1956 (S/3710) during the Suez crisis. France applied the veto for the first time on 26 June 1946 with respect to the Spanish Question (S/PV.49) and has cast a total of 16 vetoes. **China has used the veto 16 times, with the first one, on 14 December 1955 (S/3502), cast by the Republic of China (ROC) and the remaining 13 by the People's Republic of China after it succeeded ROC as a permanent member on 25 October 1971.**

**Mitigate:** China and Russia are not considered major threats globally anymore

Gilchrist, Karen. “China and Russia no longer perceived as top security threats, research finds.” *CNBC*, February 13, 2024, <https://www.cnbc.com/2024/02/13/china-and->



russia-no-longer-perceived-as-top-security-threats-research-finds.html. Accessed March 8, 2024.

**While Russia ranked as a top threat for G7 countries last year, the majority of those perceived risks have since faded, according to the study conducted from October to November 2023. Only citizens from the U.K. and Japan still consider Moscow a top risk this year, while Germany and Italy recorded a significant easing of concerns. Included in that were waning worries around the risks of nuclear conflict and disruptions to energy supplies. China was also seen more favorably this year than last by five of the G7 countries, with Canada and Japan the exceptions.** Notably, though, Chinese respondents saw all countries apart from Russia and Belarus as more threatening now than before. It was also the only country to name the U.S. as a threat.

**Mitigate:** China is not an existential threat to global security

Swaine, Michael D. "China Doesn't Pose an Existential Threat for America." *Foreign Policy*, April 21, 2021, <https://foreignpolicy.com/2021/04/21/china-existential-threat-america/>. Accessed March 8, 2024.

Beijing has little interest in exporting its governance system, and where it does, it is almost entirely directed at developing countries, not industrial democracies such as the United States. **In addition, there is no evidence to indicate that the Chinese are actually engaged in compelling or actively persuading countries to follow their experience. Rather, they want developing nations to study from and copy China's approach because doing so would help to legitimize the Chinese system both internationally and more importantly to Beijing's domestic audience. In addition, the notion that Beijing is deliberately attempting to control other countries and make them more authoritarian by entrapping them in debt and selling them "Big Brother" hardware such as**

surveillance systems is unsupported by the facts. Chinese banks show little desire to extend loans that will fail.

**Mitigate:** China does not pose a threat to the neighboring region, much less the world

Ye, Jiang. "Will China be a "Threat" to Its Neighbors and the World in the Twenty First Century?" *Ritsumeikan Annual Review of International Studies*, vol. 1, no. 1, 2022, <https://www.ritsumei.ac.jp/ir/isaru/assets/file/raris/raris-01-4jiang.pdf>. Accessed March 8, 2024.

China's engagement with the world market and the multilateral international economic organizations is accompanied by its involvement in international and regional security institutions and all of these actions must cause anyone to be very cautious when arguing about the threat of China in the new century. **On the other hand, in terms of China's low per capita GDP, its comparatively low military budget, and the serious challenges in its domestic affairs, China's national power has not been increased to such an extent that it will threaten the security of the region and even that of the world let alone that Confucian peaceful tradition is still playing the role in China's foreign policy.**

**Turn:** Removing permanent membership would also remove the United States' check against China

Abrams, Elliott. "The Biden Administrations Flirts With Dangerous Moves to Weaken U.S. Veto Power in the United Nations." *Council on Foreign Relations*, April 19, 2022, <https://www.cfr.org/blog/biden-administrations-flirts-dangerous-moves-weaken-us-veto-power-united-nations>. Accessed March 8, 2024.

Moreover, the long list of U.S. vetoes of resolutions reflects the terrible, long-lasting bias of the United Nations against Israel. Of course those who specialize in attacking Israel,

and U.S. support for Israel, want the veto eliminated—and that is another very good explanation of why it must be maintained. Delegitimizing the veto is a step toward delegitimizing Israel. **The UN is debating the resolution today, April 19. There can be no doubt that Russia and China have used the veto to protect malicious behavior on their own part and that of their allies. The United States has used it, and must continue to do so, to protect legitimate interests of our own and those of our democratic allies. The Biden administration should make it clear that we will vote against any effort to limit the veto—even if the administration wrongly supports this not-so-innocent reporting requirement.** A Security Council majority whose power is not limited by the veto would simply be too dangerous for the United States.

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## A/2: Russia's Permanent Membership Harms Global Security

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**Response:** Russia is not a threat to global security

**Delink:** Russia's use of vetoes is less than that of the United States

“UN Security Council Working Methods: The Veto.” *Security Council Report*, February 13, 2024, <https://www.securitycouncilreport.org/un-security-council-working-methods/the-veto.php>. Accessed March 8, 2024.

In the early years, the USSR cast most of the vetoes, with a considerable number of these used to block the admission of a new member state. **Over the years, the USSR/Russia has cast a total of 120 vetoes, or close to half of all vetoes. The US cast the first of its 82 vetoes to date on 17 March 1970 (S/9696 and Corr. 1 and 2). The USSR had by that point cast 107 vetoes. Since 1970, the US has used the veto far more than any other permanent member, most frequently to block decisions that it regards as detrimental to the interests of Israel.** The UK has used the veto 29 times, the first such instance taking place on 30 October 1956 (S/3710) during the Suez crisis. France applied the veto for the first time on 26 June 1946 with respect to the Spanish Question (S/PV.49) and has cast a total of 16 vetoes. China has used the veto 16 times, with the first one, on 14 December 1955 (S/3502), cast by the Republic of China (ROC) and the remaining 13 by the People's Republic of China after it succeeded ROC as a permanent member on 25 October 1971.

**Mitigate:** China and Russia are not considered major threats globally anymore

Gilchrist, Karen. “China and Russia no longer perceived as top security threats, research finds.” *CNBC*, February 13, 2024, <https://www.cnbc.com/2024/02/13/china-and->

russia-no-longer-perceived-as-top-security-threats-research-finds.html. Accessed March 8, 2024.

**While Russia ranked as a top threat for G7 countries last year, the majority of those perceived risks have since faded, according to the study conducted from October to November 2023. Only citizens from the U.K. and Japan still consider Moscow a top risk this year, while Germany and Italy recorded a significant easing of concerns. Included in that were waning worries around the risks of nuclear conflict and disruptions to energy supplies. China was also seen more favorably this year than last by five of the G7 countries, with Canada and Japan the exceptions.** Notably, though, Chinese respondents saw all countries apart from Russia and Belarus as more threatening now than before. It was also the only country to name the U.S. as a threat.

**Mitigate:** Russia is losing the war in Ukraine

Lillis, Katie. "Russia has lost 87% of troops it had prior to start of Ukraine war, according to US intelligence assessment." *CNN Politics*, December 13, 2023, <https://www.cnn.com/2023/12/12/politics/russia-troop-losses-us-intelligence-assessment/index.html>. Accessed March 8, 2024.

**Russia has lost a staggering 87 percent of the total number of active-duty ground troops it had prior to launching its invasion of Ukraine and two-thirds of its pre-invasion tanks,** a source familiar with a declassified US intelligence assessment provided to Congress told CNN.

**Mitigate:** Russia's military has poor standards and is falling behind other countries

Weber, Peter. "Why the Russian army just isn't very good." *The Week*, February 10, 2023, <https://theweek.com/briefing/1013495/why-the-russian-army-just-isnt-very-good>. Accessed March 8, 2024.

"Among Russia's most costly mistakes when it invaded Ukraine was the expectation that it would dominate the electronic warfare part of the battle," David Ignatius writes in *The Washington Post*. **When it came to jamming or intercepting communications, "the Russians overestimated their own capabilities, underestimated Ukraine's — and didn't reckon on the power of NATO military support for Kyiv."** Russia's electronic warfare ops were "dazzling" when it invaded Ukraine in 2014, but Ukraine sharply improved its capabilities since then and "Russia's centralized, top-down command structure" meant nobody was empowered to "make speedy fixes," Ignatius adds. So "when their fancy communications equipment broke down, the Russians resorted to cellphones on Ukrainian networks, which revealed not just their plans but their locations — allowing precise attacks," including one that killed Maj. Gen. Andrei Simonov, "among his country's leading electronic war specialists."

**Turn:** Removing permanent membership would also remove the United State's check against Russia

Abrams, Elliott. "The Biden Administrations Flirts With Dangerous Moves to Weaken U.S. Veto Power in the United Nations." *Council on Foreign Relations*, April 19, 2022, <https://www.cfr.org/blog/biden-administrations-flirts-dangerous-moves-weaken-us-veto-power-united-nations>. Accessed March 8, 2024.

Moreover, the long list of U.S. vetoes of resolutions reflects the terrible, long-lasting bias of the United Nations against Israel. Of course those who specialize in attacking Israel, and U.S. support for Israel, want the veto eliminated—and that is another very good explanation of why it must be maintained. Delegitimizing the veto is a step toward

delegitimizing Israel. **The UN is debating the resolution today, April 19. There can be no doubt that Russia and China have used the veto to protect malicious behavior on their own part and that of their allies. The United States has used it, and must continue to do so, to protect legitimate interests of our own and those of our democratic allies. The Biden administration should make it clear that we will vote against any effort to limit the veto—even if the administration wrongly supports this not-so-innocent reporting requirement.** A Security Council majority whose power is not limited by the veto would simply be too dangerous for the United States.

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## A/2: Permanent Membership Is Inflexibly Withheld From Deserving Countries

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**Argument:** Permanent members balance the interests of these countries with the need for stability internationally, while encouraging diplomatic creativity.

**Warrant:** Existing elected seats already strike a balance between the demands of populous countries and the need to give every country a turn.

Dreher, Axel et. al. "The Determinants of Election to the United Nations Security Council." Public Choice, 2014. <https://eprints.whiterose.ac.uk/129617/>.

The United Nations Security Council (UNSC) is the foremost international body responsible for maintaining international peace and security. Members vote on issues of global importance and consequently receive perks – election to the UNSC predicts, for instance, World Bank and IMF loans. But who gets elected to the UNSC? Addressing this question empirically is not straightforward as it requires a model that allows for discrete choices at the regional and international levels; the former nominates candidates while the latter ratifies them. **Using an original multiple discrete choice model to analyze a dataset of 180 elections from 1970 to 2005, we find that UNSC election appears to derive from a compromise between the demands of populous countries to win election more frequently and a norm of giving each country its turn. We do find evidence that richer countries from the developing world win election more often, while involvement in warfare lowers election probability.** By contrast, development aid does not predict election.

**Warrant:** Permanent membership gridlocks the Security Council positively to prevent instability from changes in elected membership while strengthening the General Assembly.



Dayal, Anjali. "Security Council Gridlock Isn't the End of the Diplomacy—It's the Start."

United States Institute of Peace, 6 Jul. 2023.

<https://www.usip.org/publications/2023/07/security-council-gridlock-isnt-end-diplomacy-its-start>.

**Gridlock at the U.N. Security Council draws headlines, but it never truly grinds diplomatic and humanitarian work to a halt. Instead, concerned parties approach the threat of the veto as the beginning of diplomatic creativity. They deploy procedural, negotiated and informal tools at the U.N. General Assembly, in the Security Council and via the U.N. Secretariat when faced with explicit obstruction from the five permanent members of the Security Council, seeking out alternative pathways for action when a permanent member blocks multilateral conflict resolution, humanitarian assistance or decision making.** This is the first of two articles mapping three of these pathways. This article outlines **processes through the U.N. General Assembly (UNGA), which are non-binding, but can demonstrate the unpopularity of particular permanent member (P5) actions, target the legitimacy of the Security Council (UNSC) and move the levers of international justice.** It will also explore processes through the UNSC — where concerned parties have tried to reframe the UNSC's agenda over time — to break the P5's monopoly of control over information and leadership on conflict cases via coalition-building and procedural innovations, and to divide humanitarian and political portfolios to enable humanitarian relief. The second article will examine processes through the U.N. Secretariat. The UNGA is sometimes understood as the weakest body within the U.N. system because it cannot pass binding resolutions, has a one-country, one-vote structure, and is a primarily deliberative body — but in some ways, it has the most space for diplomatic innovation when the UNSC is beset by inaction. There is even an argument that **the UNSC's gridlock strengthened its relationship with the UNGA in 2022, with the UNSC invoking the "Uniting for Peace" resolution to refer Russia's invasion of Ukraine to UNGA, and then new diplomatic**

momentum for formal UNGA mechanisms following a P5 veto — both moves that could democratize UNSC decision-making. Powerful states often lose in the UNGA — and indeed, for the U.N. system to retain its legitimacy and the investment that its other member states make in it, sometimes the P5 must lose. Accordingly, the UNGA is a place where states can build counter-hegemonic coalitions that challenge powerful states, hold an anti-colonial line and try to pressure the P5. The UNGA’s emphasis on the sovereign equality of member states within the body; the absence of formal mechanisms for powerful states to pull rank; and the three singular powers of the UNGA — budgetary power, staffing power and knowledge production — give it unique breadth of action. **Countries can demonstrate the illegitimacy of P5 actions by voting to condemn them; can help move the levers of international justice by establishing independent investigative mechanisms, as they have done in Syria, or criminal tribunals, as they did in Cambodia; and can help fund and staff the critical bodies that deal with the humanitarian and human rights consequences that can follow from cases of UNSC gridlock.**

**Impact:** Diplomatic creativity is the only way to solve protracted conflicts.

Tuck, David. “Humanitarian Responses Need to Change As Wars Get Longer.” The Strategist, 9 Dec. 2020. <https://www.aspistrategist.org.au/humanitarian-responses-need-to-change-as-wars-get-longer/>.

Likewise, **as a conflict becomes protracted so does displacement. Temporary camps for people displaced by conflict can turn into ad hoc cities, where thousands of people may end up living for years. At the end of 2019, there were more than 50 million internally displaced people worldwide. Of these, close to 46 million were displaced due to conflict—the highest figure ever recorded.** Durable solutions to displacement, including voluntary returns or local integration and resettlement, should be prioritised. But conflict without end only makes this task harder. **Protracted conflict demands a**

**paradigm shift in how we approach our humanitarian work. For the ICRC, longer wars mean longer periods of time spent on the ground providing humanitarian assistance. Being uniquely situated as humanitarians in drawn-out conflicts means we need to strive for coherence and complementarity with other members of the ‘triple nexus’.**

**Analysis:** The link between the second warrant and the impact needs to be stressed. The best responses to this argument are actually more analytic: we can reform permanent membership to decide who deserves membership without abolishing permanent membership by expanding the list of permanent members.

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## A/2: Permanent Membership For The Uk And France Is Arbitrary

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**Argument:** Removing permanent membership may alienate France and UK, reducing their compliance with international law.

**Warrant:** Permanent membership increases communication between France and the UK and the rest of the P5, ensuring greater compliance with international law and multilateral interests.

Dayal, Anjali & Caroline Dunton. "The U.N. Security Council Was Designed for Deadlock—Can it Change?" United States Institute of Peace, 1 Mar. 2023.  
<https://www.usip.org/publications/2023/03/un-security-council-was-designed-deadlock-can-it-change>.

Although gridlock at the UNSC draws the most headlines and external attention, the bulk of the UNSC's work is on wars and crises where no permanent member has a primary national interest in the outcome of the conflict. **Here, the P5 have an incentive to keep the focus of international decision-making within UNSC chambers.**

**The status and rank that a permanent seat on the UNSC provides can incentivize the P5 to continue to work with one another on some issues even when their foreign policy goals and interests are wildly divergent. This willingness is a space for diplomatic action by other concerned states.**

**Impact:** International law helped strengthen parliamentary opposition to the Rwanda bill in the UK under the status quo model.

Taylor, Diane. "UK's Rwanda Bill 'Incompatible With Human Rights Obligations.'" The Guardian, 12 Feb. 2024. <https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2024/feb/12/uk-rwanda-bill-incompatible-with-human-rights-obligations>.

**The UK government's controversial Rwanda legislation that deems the African country as a safe place to deport people to is fundamentally incompatible with Britain's human rights obligations and places it in breach of international law, according to a damning parliamentary report. MPs and peers from the cross-party joint committee on human rights have delivered a critical analysis of the safety of Rwanda bill, which is progressing at speed through parliament. The aim of the bill is to counter the judgment of the supreme court last November that found Rwanda was not a safe country to which UK asylum seekers could be forcibly removed.** The bill states Rwanda is in fact a safe country and that anyone sent there by the UK government will not be forcibly removed to an unsafe country. The report finds it is unclear whether this can be guaranteed in practice. **The report is the latest of many from legal and human rights experts condemning the UK government's Rwanda plan and raising questions about whether the policy is safe, viable and compliant with national and international law. Following line by line scrutiny of the bill, which reaches its committee stage in the House of Lords on Monday the report finds that the bill is fundamentally incompatible with the UK's human rights obligations, erodes the protections laid down in the Human Rights Act, contravenes parts of the European convention on human rights and falls short of the UK's commitment to comply with international treaties.** It goes beyond concerns about the Rwanda policy and warns that the actions the government is taking to disapply certain laws places the UK's hard-won reputation for the rule of law and human rights "in jeopardy". "The bill's near total exclusion of judicial scrutiny seeks to undermine the constitutional role of the domestic courts in holding the executive to account," it states.

**Impact:** Removing these mechanisms of communication could reduce pressure on France for violating international law.

Tettenborn, Andrew. "If France can ignore the ECHR, why can't we?" *The Spectator*, 5 Dec. 2023. <https://www.spectator.co.uk/article/if-france-can-ignore-the-echr-why-cant-we/>.

A couple of weeks ago, according to a story broken last Friday in *Le Monde*, the French government did the unthinkable. 'MA', as he has been dubbed by the French press, is an Uzbek exile and alleged radical Islamist who has long been a thorn in France's side. Allegedly linked to the Islamist party Hizb-ut-Tahrir (which he denies), he had fled Uzbekistan after facing criminal proceedings in 2015, and was denied refugee status in Estonia. France, having found him to be someone 'embedded in the jihadist movement' with a desire to fight in Syria, followed suit and served him an expulsion order. He turned to the European Court of Human Rights, which duly issued an order to halt his deportation, on the basis that he might face torture in Uzbekistan. But to no avail. The French government, having taken its own view of the matter and decided that as far as it was concerned Uzbekistan was safe, simply ignored the word from Strasbourg and discreetly put him on a plane to Istanbul and Tashkent, where he was reportedly arrested on arrival. This is a big deal. **Previously France had on occasion deported people in pretty clear breach of the convention before their lawyers had had the chance to get to Strasbourg. But, as *Le Monde* pointed out, this was the first time France actually defied an order of the court.** The symbolism of this move is considerable. First, this was no crisis decision taken in a hurry. In October, after an Islamist fanatic with a knife murdered a teacher in Arras and wounded several others, interior minister Gérald Darmanin, an immigration hardliner, had already made clear his exasperation with human rights impediments to deportation. Even if deportees might face ill-treatment once removed, he said, he saw security at home as more important.

**Analysis:** Be wary of some problems with this response- France has a dualist legal system with international law directly applicable in legal courts, meaning that international law will still play a significant role regardless of what happens at the UN, and both of the specific actions by the UK and France are in violation of European law which is distinct. Nevertheless, it is easy to connect respect for EU law to international law, and it is still valuable to point out skepticism of international involvement for both countries. The link that they would feel reasonably alienated from global institutions is rather intuitive.

## A/2: US Permanent Membership Prevents Passage Of Effective Resolutions

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**Argument:** US permanent membership increases the military threat of the Security Council.

**Warrant:** The United States has the largest and most well-equipped military in the world.

Peter G. Peterson Foundation. "U.S. Defense Spending Compared to Other Countries."

Peter G. Peterson Foundation, 24 Apr. 2023. [https://www.pgpf.org/chart-archive/0053\\_defense-comparison](https://www.pgpf.org/chart-archive/0053_defense-comparison).

**The United States spends more on national defense than China, Russia, India, Saudi Arabia, United Kingdom, Germany, France, South Korea, Japan, and Ukraine — combined.** While the chart above illustrates last year's defense spending in dollar terms, **the United States has also historically devoted a larger share of its economy to defense than many of its key allies. Defense spending accounts for 12 percent of all federal spending and nearly half of discretionary spending. Total discretionary spending — for both defense and nondefense purposes — is typically only about one-third of the annual federal budget.** It is currently below its historical average as a share of GDP and is projected to decline further.

**Warrant:** The US thus plays the most substantial role in the military presence demanded of the UN by the Military Staff Committee.

Wheeler, William. "The United Nations Security Council Military Staff Committee: Relic or Revival?" National Defense University, National War College, 1994.

<https://apps.dtic.mil/sti/tr/pdf/ADA441632.pdf>.



As World War II ground toward its conclusion, post-war planners drew upon the concepts of the failed League of Nations experience in their efforts to develop a new international organization which would guarantee that there would be no more "wars to end all wars". Principal among the lessons learned was that the new body should have the ability to enforce its sanctions, decisions and measures against aggression.

**Collective security, provided by the armed forces of the Permanent Members, would serve to enforce these measures to preserve the peace or take action required against potential aggressors.** 3 Three options were initially considered in determining the nature of this potential UN military organization: an ad hoc coalition of forces developed as required, a permanent force under UN control, or a pool of national forces upon which the UN could quickly call. 4 The ad hoc force was rejected due to its similarity to the failed League model and the standing UN force was eliminated because of its suggestion of a world government structure. **Thus was born the concept of national "on-call" contingency forces to be requested for use by the UN as necessary.** To assist the Security Council with respect to technical guidance and advice concerning this UN military force, a Security and Armaments Commission (SAC) was created as the draft predecessor of the MSC.

**Impact:** Providing military intelligence to the UN prevent the US from seizing the mantle of global policeman.

Williams, Charles. "Intelligence Support to U.N. Peacekeeping Operations." National Defense University, Apr. 1993. <https://apps.dtic.mil/sti/tr/pdf/ADA277016.pdf>.

**The United Nations' ability to resolve conflict will determine, to a large extent, the stability of emerging world order. Effective intelligence support greatly enhances peacekeeping and peacemaking, the operational aspects of conflict resolution. Providing effective and timely intelligence support to the United Nations' conflict resolution mission is in the U.S. national interest.** The United States is dependent on

international trade for both raw materials and markets for our products. Regional tension or conflict can disrupt world trade impacting our economy and potentially threatening our national security. The United States clearly benefits from the peaceful resolution of disputes: successful conflict resolution efforts serve our national interests. **The United States is the most powerful country, but it has neither the desire nor resources to impose and enforce a "Pax Americana." A less costly and risky alternative is supporting the United Nations which is assuming an increasing role in conflict resolution since the end of the cold war. With the best intelligence capability in the world it's logical for the U.S. to provide intelligence as our U.N. contribution;** however, several issues require analysis and policy decisions: What can intelligence support do for peacekeeping efforts? Is intelligence support the most effective type? How should we share our intelligence? How do we protect intelligence sources? Should the U.S. share sensitive intelligence? These questions serve as the framework for this paper.

**Analysis:** Emphasize that this encourages information-sharing between global superpowers and prevents unilateral action.

## A/2: Permanent Membership Abolition Would Increase African Representation

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**Argument:** The A3 sufficiently allows for permanent African representation.

**Warrant:** The A3 partnership means there are always three African countries at the Security Council.

Carvalho, Gustavo de & Daniel Forti. ‘How Can African States Become More Influential in the UN Security Council?’ IPI Global Observatory, 12 Mar. 2020.  
<https://theglobalobservatory.org/2020/03/how-can-african-states-become-more-influential-un-security-council/>.

**The bloc of three elected African states on the United Nations Security Council—known as the A3—has grown considerably in stature and diplomatic capacity since the creation of the African Union (AU) in 2002 and the beginning of the partnership between it and the UN.** Although African issues have not traditionally been contentious in the Security Council, increasing geopolitical tensions among Council members are starting to spillover onto these files, much to the detriment of collective political action. If the A3 bloc wants to ensure its relevance and influence in 2020 and beyond, Africa will need to ensure that unified positions are at the core of its approaches. Africa is numerically significant at the Security Council: in 2018, over 50 percent of Security Council meetings, 60 percent of its outcome documents, and 70 percent of its resolutions with Chapter VII mandates concerned African peace and security issues. Furthermore, African member states comprise nearly 28 percent of the UN’s overall membership (54 out of 193 members), providing significant regional political backing to the A3. Niger, South Africa, and Tunisia are the A3 members in 2020.

Either Djibouti or Kenya will replace South Africa on the Security Council starting in January 2021.

**Warrant:** Abolishing permanent membership would prevent acquiring of permanent seat on Security Council despite broad support.

Misikir, Maya. "German, French Ministers Call for African Permanent Seats on UNSC." Voice of America, 13 Jan. 2023. <https://www.voanews.com/a/german-french-ministers-call-for-african-permanent-seats-on-unsc-/6917232.html>.

**The foreign ministers of France and Germany have voiced support for Africa to receive two permanent seats on the powerful U.N. Security Council. German Foreign Minister Annalena Baerbock said she and French Foreign Minister Catherine Colonna added their support to an African push for permanent seats on the Security Council.** Baerbock spoke after she and Colonna met with African Union Chairperson Moussa Faki at AU headquarters in Addis Ababa. "As **European partners** and I, as a German foreign minister, we **see that the world in 2023 is not the same than that after World War Two, and therefore** we are **supporting two permanent seats for the African continent,**" Baerbock said. African leaders have for years called for a permanent seat on the powerful U.N. body. **Outgoing African Union Chairman Macky Sall, also the president of Senegal, reiterated that demand at the September U.N. General Assembly.** He said Africa should also have a seat in the G-20 group of the world's largest economies. **U.S. President Joe Biden backed both efforts at the U.S.-Africa Leaders Summit in Washington last month.**

**Impact:** Africa gets less ability to participate in deliberations about their issues.

Misikir, Maya. “German, French Ministers Call for African Permanent Seats on UNSC.” Voice of America, 13 Jan. 2023. <https://www.voanews.com/a/german-french-ministers-call-for-african-permanent-seats-on-unsc-/6917232.html>.

**African states have long advocated for the expansion and reform of the Security Council.** Two convictions inform this view. First, the council is not representative of the world’s people. Nations from the Global South make up more than two-thirds of the UN’s membership, while the Security Council represents only 8 percent of member states. When the UN was established in 1945, most of Africa was still under colonial rule. The only Security Council expansion to date took place in 1965, in the early stages of the continent’s decolonization. Although **African conflicts take up over 50 percent of council meetings and 70 percent of its resolutions**, no African country has a permanent seat—only three nonpermanent seats that rotate among the continent’s subregional blocs. Many African leaders see this as a “historical injustice” and have argued that the council must be reformed to better represent the world’s population and reflect contemporary geopolitical realities.

**Analysis:** This will become a probability debate about how likely it is that African countries will get permanent seats. If it feels like it is not going your way, use the A3 card to show that the continent is still getting represented at least somewhat regardless to wash out any offense from your opponent.

## A/2: Permanent Members Have Disproportionate Power Over Elected Members

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**Argument:** Inequality does not prohibit some influence.

**Warrant:** Elected members are necessary to pass resolutions.

Farrall, Jeremy et. al. "Elected Member Influence in the United Nations Security Council." Cambridge University Press, 28 Nov. 2019.  
<https://www.cambridge.org/core/journals/leiden-journal-of-international-law/article/elected-member-influence-in-the-united-nations-security-council/374E19921CCB236F21DF0505E34A2D54>.

The constraints facing elected members are written into the UN Charter and have been the subject of considerable academic scrutiny both in the disciplines of international law and international relations. Footnote <sup>2</sup> The Charter institutionalizes an unequal Council hierarchy by granting the P5 not only permanence (Article 23(1)), but also veto power (Article 27(3)). Footnote <sup>3</sup> Kishore Mahbubani, the Permanent Representative of Singapore to the UN when Singapore served on the Council in 2001–2002, has pointed out that this 'structural weakness in the Council has resulted from a dichotomy ... the P5 have been given power without responsibility; the E10 have been given responsibility without power'. Footnote <sup>4</sup> At the same time, **it is important to recognize that the P5 do not have the power to adopt decisions without some support from elected members, at least in theory. Until 1965, a non-procedural decision of the 11-member Council required seven affirmative votes; from 1966, nine affirmative votes of the current 15-member Council have been required for a draft resolution to be adopted. This means that from the mere perspective of formal voting procedure, and irrespective of political realities, any substantive initiative by the P5 requires the support of at least**

four E10 members to succeed.<sup>5</sup> **Stronger E10 support is needed in cases where the vote of the P5 members is not unanimous.** Procedural voting requirements notwithstanding, E10 members face additional challenges beyond the institutionalized imbalance between permanent and non-permanent membership. In practice they are disadvantaged by the Council's informal working methods in at least three concrete ways:

**Warrant:** Elected members' engagement and ability to influence decisions is increasing over time.

Boutellis, Arthur. "Lessons from E10 Engagement on the Security Council." International Peace Institute, 30 Nov. 2022. <https://www.ipinst.org/2022/11/lessons-from-e10-engagement-on-the-security-council>.

**In recent years, the ten elected members of the Security Council, now commonly referred to as the E10, have come to play a more prominent role.** Although there were previous periods when elected members were active and took initiative, the space for such contributions began to shrink in the mid-2000s. The emergence of the E10 as a construct and a more cohesive coalition on the Security Council is thus recent. **Despite elected members' different levels of commitment to collective E10 initiatives, and although the Council's five permanent members have greater capacity, permanence, and veto power, there is a sense that the E10 have been able to influence the work of the Council, including its working methods, thematic issues, and some country-specific files.** This paper presents a broad policy perspective on lessons from both individual elected members and from the E10 as a group. It examines the E10's recent engagement on the Council and offers lessons for how elected members can most effectively prepare for their term, serve on the Council, and ensure their legacy. The paper concludes with reflections on the future of the E10 in a fragmented Security Council. While the E10 as a group have reached a level of maturity, their ability to

coordinate across a diverse group whose effectiveness depends on several internal and external factors may have reached a natural limit. The E10's composition, individual members' level of commitment to collective E10 initiatives, and the group's leadership all impact the E10's ability to influence the work of the Council. While **the E10 have been collectively successful at promoting certain issues and files and at making the Council more transparent**, individual members have and will continue to have different views on many issues on the agenda. They will also continue to face structural inequalities when it comes to penholding and chairing subsidiary bodies.

**Analysis:** This is a pretty clear mitigation. It is impossible to say that inequality does not exist, but you can say that it is limited in importance because rotating members still do have a say.



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## A/2: Permanent Membership Is Unrepresentative.

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**Answer:** Permanent members of the Security Council allow for effective and swift decision making.

United Nations. “Security Council Must Reflect Twenty-First Century Realities, Delegates Tell General Assembly, with Many Calling for Urgent Expansion of Permanent Seats”, United Nations Meetings Coverage and Press Releases, 16 Nov 2020, <https://press.un.org/en/2020/ga12288.doc.htm>.

Other delegates opposed expansion. **As the five permanent members cannot currently agree on disputes, Pakistan’s representative said adding new ones will increase the possibility of paralysis. “We cannot throw oil on the fire,” he said. Rejecting the idea of extending privileges to new Council members, Colombia’s delegate said it would not increase transparency.** Instead, the Uniting for Consensus proposal would open the door for developing countries to contribute to the Council’s work on an equal footing.

**Impact:** The structural inequalities of the UN are impossible to fix.

McArdle, Angela. “Do Not Expand the U.N. Security Council”, News Week, 10 Aug 2023, <https://www.newsweek.com/do-not-expand-un-security-council-opinion-1817367>.

Proponents of expansion argue that an updated Security Council with more voices could bring more balance to the council and the U.N. **But years of disagreements on the size, composition, and powers of an expanded council have left generations of U.N. diplomats wondering if change will ever be possible. The United Nations Security Council will not improve or become more equitable if it is expanded. It is not the**

**nations in power, but the allure to power itself that makes it an untenable organization. The structure and underlying purpose of the U.N. are inherently flawed.** There should not be an elite group of global rulers lording their authority over the people of the world. **Each nation across this globe is sovereign and should have the right to self-governance, free of the undue influence of others.**

**Warrant:** The Security Council is as effective as it needs to be; trying to solve for structural inequities would prove futile.

Editorial Board. “U.N. reform is a self-defeating idea — literally”, Washington Post, 2 Oct 2022, <https://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/2022/10/02/united-nations-security-council-reform-biden/>.

**Better for the United States to focus on shoring up what still does work at the United Nations.** Though not living up to its loftiest global-governance promises, **the U.N. has real crisis management capabilities and can facilitate limited cooperation among warring parties — when their mutual self-interest dictates.** Ironically, **the same Russian aggression against Ukraine that demonstrated the U.N.’s incapacity to prevent war has demonstrated the U.N.’s capacity for at least some damage control: Its diplomats were instrumental in negotiating and implementing a deal between Russia and Ukraine to lift the former’s previous blockade and allow the latter to export more than 1 million metric tons of much-needed grain through the Black Sea.** A U.N. body, the International Atomic Energy Agency, has been providing a crucial neutral monitoring presence at Ukraine’s massive, Russian-occupied Zaporizhzhia nuclear power plant. **There is no ready-to-hand procedural fix for what ails the United Nations because its failures ultimately stem from substantive conflicts of interest among states, on the Security Council and in the body as a whole.** If and when those conflicts can be lastingly resolved, institutional reform will become much easier — but also much less necessary.

**Analysis:** There are two avenues neg teams can take when responding to this argument: 1) abolishing the five permanent members will actually make the UN more ineffective 2) the UN's lack of representation is so terrible that nothing can fix its inherent flaws. Both answers prevent the affirmative team from accessing their impacts.

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## A/2: Permanent Membership Leads To Gridlock.

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**Answer:** The Security Council is already solving for gridlock and innovating new ways to hold the P5 accountable.

Dayal, Anjali. “Security Council Gridlock Isn’t the End of the Diplomacy — It’s the Start”, United States Institute of Peace, 6 Jul 2023, <https://www.usip.org/publications/2023/07/security-council-gridlock-isnt-end-diplomacy-its-start>.

A permanent member can exercise its veto no matter how unpopular its action is, but the veto can’t change how little support the action has — and the UNGA can underline unpopularity by adopting non-binding resolutions that allow member-states to vote in explicit condemnation of the action. Accordingly, **one set of strategies when the UNSC is gridlocked is for delegates in the General Assembly to sponsor and build support for resolutions that condemn P5 inaction or obstruction, as they have done when the P5 have exercised their vetoes or prevented collective action on Syria, Ukraine and Israel-Palestine. Even singularly powerful states that can act easily despite global opposition worry about both their popularity and the UNSC’s legitimacy. Building large coalitions to vote for these resolutions via the traditional diplomatic work of cultivating slow, patient relationships, and appealing to universal values embedded in the U.N. Charter, facilitates and underscores a P5 member’s diplomatic isolation on a particular issue. The UNGA has also established new mechanisms for holding the UNSC to account. In April 2022, after a years-long campaign initially spearheaded by Lichtenstein and eventually co-sponsored by 83 member states — including France, the United Kingdom and the United States — UNGA passed a resolution requiring any P5 state exercising its veto to explain why to the UNGA. The mechanism shifts the veto from the end of a**

diplomatic conversation at the UNSC to the beginning of an exchange with the larger body.

**Warrant:** Gridlock and veto can actually be a *good* thing; allows other members of the Security Council and General Assembly to be more creative and effectuate other multilateral initiatives.

Dayal, Anjali. “Security Council Gridlock Isn’t the End of the Diplomacy — It’s the Start”, United States Institute of Peace, 6 Jul 2023, <https://www.usip.org/publications/2023/07/security-council-gridlock-isnt-end-diplomacy-its-start>.

**This dynamic is particularly notable in the penholder system. Penholding is the informal practice by which one or more of the UNSC’s members initiate and chair the informal drafting process for UNSC resolutions.** In recent years, the E10 have either taken or shared the lead on an increasing number of files. Their ongoing work has been instrumental in the Council’s continued authorization of cross-border humanitarian aid in Syria. **During complex 2014 negotiations, countries led by Australia, Luxembourg, and Jordan found draft language to satisfy the divided P5.** Zaid Ra’ad Al Hussein was then Jordan’s permanent representative to the U.N., and by his account, Russia would not agree to the humanitarian provisions if the United Kingdom continued to hold the pen on Syria — and so the pen went to the E10, with Australia, Luxembourg, and Jordan “passing the baton” to elected members that succeeded: between 2014-2022, Sweden, Japan, Kuwait, Belgium, Germany, Ireland, Norway and Kenya. **Even as the political mediation process has stalled, establishing a separate humanitarian file for the Syrian conflict has enabled some multilateral negotiations for assistance to continue, while potentially establishing a future precedent for other gridlocked cases, as well. In some cases, some of the E10 may *want* a veto from the P5 on the table as a strategy for moving diplomacy.** As Louise Fréchette, former deputy secretary-general, said, “**forcing the veto is a name and shame issue — there’s a political value to this, even if it’s not**

an avenue for action. It's not without impact because permanent members do not like to use the veto — they know they'll be in the doghouse with not just a cross-section of other member-states, but also with interest groups and the press." Accordingly, sometimes putting clear text on the table to be vetoed and then following it with a concerted communication campaign that clearly ostracizes the vetoing state can help spark a larger pressure campaign.

**Impact:** The Security Council and the P5 actually encourage dialogue and diplomacy; it serves an essential role.

Dayal, Anjali and Caroline Dunton. "The U.N. Security Council Was Designed for Deadlock — Can it Change?", United States Institute of Peace, 1 Mar 2023, <https://www.usip.org/publications/2023/03/un-security-council-was-designed-deadlock-can-it-change>.

In fact, **the body remains an active site for diplomacy even on conflict cases that divide the P5, and even when one of the P5 members is a key obstacle to collective action.**

Many scholars have asked why the P5 turn to the UNSC at all, when in most cases they could simply bypass it altogether, and when in all cases the UNSC cannot keep powerful states from breaking international law. Some scholars have argued the **UNSC is a place where powerful states can work together to check other states' military ambitions, each member investing the chamber and its decisions with importance so every other powerful state will also invest the chamber with importance, and a place where powerful states can offer their own populations and the international community information about their plans and intentions, making the body a vital part of diplomatic and foreign policy projects even when it can't stop P5 members from breaking the U.N. Charter. Although gridlock at the UNSC draws the most headlines and external attention, the bulk of the UNSC's work is on wars and crises where no permanent member has a primary national interest in the outcome of the conflict.**

Here, the P5 have an incentive to keep the focus of international decision-making within UNSC chambers. **The status and rank that a permanent seat on the UNSC provides can incentivize the P5 to continue to work with one another on some issues even when their foreign policy goals and interests are wildly divergent. This willingness is a space for diplomatic action by other concerned states.**

**Analysis:** The best answer to this argument is a turn: the veto power is actually a positive thing because it allows the other members of the Security Council to exercise more authority and develop creative initiatives. Also, the pro's evidence probably makes the gridlock of the UNSC look worse than it is; action is still being taken in the status quo.

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## A/2: Permanent Members' Beliefs Are Outdated.

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**Answer:** Plans are already in place to reform the Security Council and address outdated norms.

Ryan, Missy. "U.S. seeks to expand developing world's influence at United Nations", The Washington Post, 12 Jun 2023, <https://www.washingtonpost.com/national-security/2023/06/12/biden-un-security-council-reform/>.

**The Biden administration is developing plans for overhauling the U.N. Security Council, an initiative that U.S. officials hope will restore confidence in the world's preeminent governance body by recognizing today's diffuse map of global power. Linda Thomas-Greenfield, President Biden's envoy to the United Nations, is consulting with diplomats from the organization's 193 member states to solicit feedback about a potential expansion of the powerful council ahead of world leaders' annual gathering in New York this fall. The evolving U.S. proposal, which is expected to include the addition of roughly a half dozen permanent permanent seats to the council without granting those nations veto power, reflects Biden's desire to acknowledge the developing world's growing clout and to address widespread frustration with the council's current members and their inability to stanch global conflicts, particularly the war in Ukraine.**

**Impact:** UNSC is passing resolutions that are critically important to current geopolitics and represent an understanding of the world today.

Strifflino, Kathryn and Sarah Fuhrman. "U.N. SECURITY COUNCIL PASSES RESOLUTION SAFEGUARDING HUMANITARIAN ACTION ACROSS ALL U.N. SANCTIONS REGIMES", The InterAction, 9 Dec 2022, <https://www.interaction.org/blog/u-n->



security-council-passes-resolution-safeguarding-humanitarian-action-across-all-u-n-sanctions-regimes/.

**The U.N. Security Council (UNSC) has taken an important step that will minimize and mitigate the consequences of sanctions on humanitarian action, one that will help save lives and alleviate human suffering. UNSC Resolution 2664, passed on December 9, 2022, establishes a humanitarian safeguard across all U.N. sanctions regimes which will help humanitarian actors and donors alike respond quickly and effectively.** For years, non-governmental organizations (NGOs) have faced increasing impediments to humanitarian action due to sanctions, including challenges related to accessing populations in need living in areas controlled by sanctioned entities and de-risking by financial institutions. These constraints negatively affect the safety and security of humanitarian professionals and the communities they work with, the speed and scale at which humanitarian action is delivered, and the efficient use of donor funding. **While humanitarian organizations continue to uphold rigorous due diligence mechanisms, UNSC Resolution 2664 will help humanitarian actors respond to crises in sanctioned contexts more quickly, reaching populations in need in a more efficient manner.**

**Warrant:** The US is spearheading efforts to modernize the United Nations.

U.S. Mission to the UN. "FACT SHEET: Showcasing U.S. Leadership at the United Nations in 2023", United States Mission to the United Nations, 30 Dec 2023, <https://usun.usmission.gov/fact-sheet-showcasing-u-s-leadership-at-the-united-nations-in-2023/>.

**In 2023, USUN advanced humanitarian relief efforts, including leading initiatives to combat global food insecurity, and worked to rally international cooperation to renew international resolve towards achieving the Sustainable Development Goals. In addition, USUN championed U.S. priorities on human rights and defended the core**

values of the UN Charter, including consistently standing up to Russia's violations of Ukraine's sovereignty and territorial integrity. USUN also managed challenges posed by the conflict in Gaza, both responding to Hamas's atrocious terrorist attacks against Israel and promoting humanitarian assistance and civilian safety in Gaza. What's more, USUN worked with partners across the UN system to modernize its processes and workforce to achieve better results. That included launching new initiatives to increase the number of American citizens working at the UN, leading reform efforts to ensure the UN is fit for purpose, and advancing Biden Administration initiatives to bolster democracy, engage youth, and recruit a more diverse workforce that better represents the American people. This year, Ambassador Thomas-Greenfield took this agenda to the road, traveling to 12 countries and nine cities across the U.S. to make the case for U.S. foreign policy priorities.

**Analysis:** The best way to respond to this argument is to stress that the UNSC is already aware of these issues and is taking steps to address them. Thanks to permanent members like the United States, there are numerous efforts to modernize and reform the UNSC, and without the influence of the P5 these kind of changes would not be possible.

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## A/2: Permanent Members Slow Climate Change Progress.

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**Answer:** Substantial improvements in combating climate change exist in the status quo.

Lakhani, Nina. “United Nations adopts landmark resolution on climate justice”, The Guardian, 29 Mar, 2023, <https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2023/mar/29/united-nations-resolution-climate-emergency-vanuatu>.

**A UN resolution was adopted on Wednesday that should make it easier to hold polluting countries legally accountable for failing to tackle the climate emergency, in a vote which was hailed as a historic victory for climate justice.** The UN general assembly adopted by consensus the resolution spearheaded by Vanuatu, a tiny Pacific island nation vulnerable to extreme climate effects, and youth activists to secure a legal opinion from the international court of justice (ICJ) to clarify states’ obligations to tackle the climate crisis – and specify any consequences countries should face for inaction. “Today we have witnessed a win for climate justice of epic proportions,” said Ishmael Kalsakau, prime minister of Vanuatu. **“Today’s historic resolution is the beginning of a new era in multilateral climate cooperation, one that is more fully focused on upholding the rule of international law and an era that places human rights and intergenerational equity at the forefront of climate decision-making.”**

**Warrant:** The Security Council is not necessary to tackle climate change.

Al Jazeera Staff. “UN Calls for rapid, ambitious action to tackle climate crisis”, Al Jazeera, 20 Mar, 2023, <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2023/3/20/world-can-tackle-climate-change-but-must-be-more-ambitious-ipcc>.

**The world has the tools to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and to secure a sustainable future if more ambitious actions are taken,** a United Nations report has said, noting that actions taken so far are not enough to tackle the growing threats posed by climate change. **A UN panel of scientists stressed in a synthesis report on Monday that there are multiple, feasible and effective options to adapt to climate change.** **“Mainstreaming effective and equitable climate action will not only reduce losses and damages for nature and people, it will also provide wider benefits,”** said Hoesung Lee, chair of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), in a statement. The report “underscores the urgency of taking more ambitious action and shows that, if we act now, we can still secure a liveable sustainable future for all”, he added. **The IPCC is a UN body that brings together leading scientists to assess the evidence related to climate change and inform political leaders with periodic scientific assessments.** The IPCC’s first main scientific input was delivered in 2014, which paved the way a year later for the Paris Agreement – a landmark international treaty on climate change.

**Impact:** Climate change is not an existential threat.

Deconinck, Carl. “‘Chill out’ says IPCC climate chief: global warming is ‘not an existential threat’”, Brussels Signal, 1 Aug, 2023, <https://brusselssignal.eu/2023/08/chill-out-says-ipcc-climate-chief-global-warming-is-not-an-existential-threat/>.

**British Professor Jim Skea, the new chairman of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), says apocalyptic messaging on climate paralyses public debate and that a rise in global temperatures is “not an existential threat to humanity”.** **The head of the UN climate team with a track-record of 40 years in climate science, said environmental doom-mongers do more harm than good.** While radical activist groups such as Extinction Rebellion, Just Stop Oil and the German-based Last Generation are causing disturbances in public spheres claiming the world will end imminently, Prof Skea said their methods and messages “paralyse” the public and fail to motivate them to

protect the planet. **Current predictions, in which the global temperature may rise by 1.5C, are “not an existential threat to humanity”,** he said.

**Analysis:** The issue to press the pro on with this argument is why exactly the UNSC is a key actor in solving climate change. Other organizations and other bodies of the UN are already tackling the issue, so there is no reason why a UNSC resolution is key to mitigating the impacts of climate change.

## A/2: Permanent Members Divert Resources From More Pressing Issues

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**Answer:** The United States in cooperation with the United Nations announced a new initiative to deliver aid in Gaza.

Myre, Greg. "Biden to announce the setting up of a temporary Mediterranean port to deliver Gaza aid", National Public Radio, 7 Mar 2024, <https://www.npr.org/2024/03/07/1236634945/us-gaza-aid-temporary-port>.

President Biden is set to announce in his State of the Union address Thursday that **the U.S. military will lead an emergency mission to build a new pier on the Mediterranean coast of Gaza to allow large ships to deliver food, water, medicine and temporary shelters to the territory.** The temporary pier will not require U.S. troops to land in Gaza, senior administration officials told reporters on a conference call. They noted that the military had "unique capabilities," but did not explain how this might work. **United Nations workers and other aid groups will distribute the aid,** the officials said. It will take a number of weeks to plan and execute the operation, the officials said. **When it is ready, the U.S. military will initially lead the operation, but other countries and groups are expected to join in,** the officials said. **The assistance arriving by ship from the nearby Mediterranean island of Cyprus should be able to fill hundreds of truckloads a day with aid,** the officials added.

**Warrant:** Total reforms are unachievable; the UN is a powerful organization that already has the tools and structures in place to achieve its goals efficiently.

Crisis Group. “Ten Challenges for the UN in 2022-2023”, International Crisis Group, 14 Sep 2022, <https://www.crisisgroup.org/b8-united-states/ten-challenges-un-20222023>.

**Rather than aspiring to unachievable root-and-branch reforms, the UN and its member states should focus on both applying the organisation’s strengths to complex crises (including aspects of the one in Ukraine) and examining its own capabilities to consider how these can be improved in light of emerging threats.** With its membership distracted and divided, that may seem a tall order. But despite its shortcomings, **the UN is often the only actor with the wherewithal, the mandate and the political profile to have a chance at success, whether acting through the good offices of its own agencies or through coordination of the efforts of member states. To dispel the notion of Cold War-style paralysis, it can and should continue using its existing tools where they can be most effective and developing those others it most needs to meet the challenges of the future.**

**Impact:** The United Nations has delivered aid to millions of people in Ukraine.

Abreu, Saviano. “UN and partners provided vital aid to 11 million people in war-ravaged Ukraine in 2023”, United Nations Ukraine, 30 Jan 2024, <https://ukraine.un.org/en/259215-un-and-partners-provided-vital-aid-11-million-people-war-ravaged-ukraine-2023#:~:text=Ukraine%20in%202023-,UN%20and%20partners%20provided%20vital%20aid%20to%2011%20million,w ar%2Dravaged%20Ukraine%20in%202023&text=The%20United%20Nations%20a nd%20its,in%20the%20country%2C%20Denise%20Brown..>

**The United Nations and its partners provided approximately 11 million people in Ukraine with vital humanitarian assistance in 2023**, informed today the Humanitarian Coordinator in the country, Denise Brown. According to Denise Brown, assistance to

people in communities close to the front line was one of the priorities for the humanitarian community in 2023, including through 107 inter-agency convoys that delivered much-needed supplies to families whose lives have been devastated by the war. “Entire communities along the front line are being pummeled daily, leaving millions with little to no capacity to provide for themselves, and dependent on humanitarian assistance. I visited nearly 30 of these war-torn villages and towns last year and could see how Russia’s invasion continues to cause massive destruction and decimate essential services for them,” explained Ms Brown. **Over the last months of 2023, the UN and its humanitarian partners stepped up efforts to provide critical supplies and services to ensure families can keep warm and safe during Ukraine’s bitter winter, when temperatures can drop to as low as minus 20 degrees Celsius. In total, nearly 1.7 million people were reached with solid fuel to ensure heating in areas without power, gas or water, as well as winter clothes, thermal blankets, and insulation of homes and centres hosting displaced people.**

**Analysis:** The pro’s argument is easily disproved with these responses. Even if the UNSC has some delays, at the end of the day, it’s not stopping the entire UN from fulfilling its goals. Aid is being delivered to Gaza and Ukraine, and the UN is the only organization with the ability to do so.