

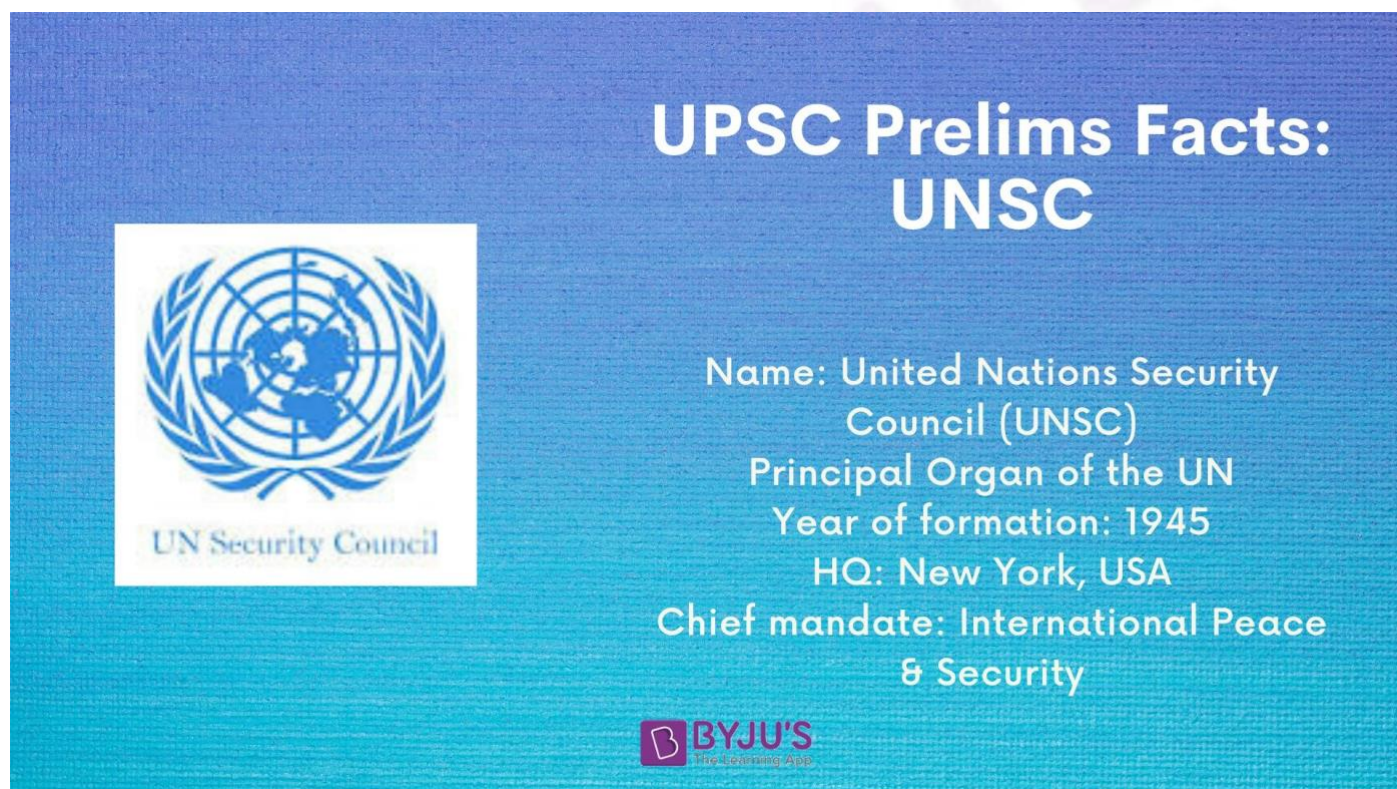
United Nations Security Council (UNSC): UPSC Notes

Established in 1945, the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) is one of the five principal organs of the United Nations, charged with the maintenance of international peace and security as well as accepting new members to the [United Nations](#) and approving any changes to UN Charter.


Its powers include the establishment of peacekeeping operations, the establishment of international sanctions, and the authorization of military action through Security Council resolutions; **it is the only UN body with the authority to issue binding resolutions to member states**. This article will explain further the functions and role of the UNSC in world affairs in the context of the [IAS Exam](#).

What is the Role of the United Nations Security Council?


The UNSC's role in international collective security is defined by the UN Charter, which authorizes the Security Council to investigate any situation threatening international peace; recommend procedures for peaceful resolution of a dispute; call upon other member nations to completely or partially interrupt economic relations as well as sea, air, postal, and radio communications.



**UPSC Prelims Facts:
UNSC**



Name: United Nations Security Council (UNSC)
Principal Organ of the UN
Year of formation: 1945
HQ: New York, USA
Chief mandate: International Peace & Security



The UNSC was established keeping in mind certain key features and powers. Given below are the **functions and powers** of the United Nations Security Council:

1. The most important function of the UNSC is maintaining peace and security at the international level. It takes the lead in determining the existence of a threat to peace or act of aggression.
2. Apart from maintaining peace, the Security Council can also deploy UN peacekeeping operations and impose sanctions on states.

Aspirants can also know about the [United Nations Security Council Reforms](#) at the linked article.

UNSC Members

There are permanent and non-permanent members in the United Nations Security Council.

- A total of 15 members are there in the Council, out of which 5 are permanent and 10 are not permanent.
- The five permanent members include China, France, the Russian Federation, the United Kingdom and the United States.
- The 10 non-permanent members include Belgium, Dominican Republic, Estonia, Germany, Indonesia, Niger, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, South Africa, Tunisia and Vietnam.
- The non-permanent members are elected for two-year terms by the [United Nations General Assembly \(UNGA\)](#).
- Five members of the UNSC are replaced every year.
- The members are selected from all the regions of the world. Three members are from Africa, while Asia, Western Europe, Latin America and the Caribbean have two members each.

The First Session of the UN Council was held in London on 17th January 1947. The five permanent members are given 'great power unanimity' referred to as the **veto power**, which means if any of these countries veto a resolution it can't be passed even if it has the 9 votes needed.

India Elected as Non-Permanent Member of UNSC

In June 2020, India was elected to the UNSC as a non-permanent member, winning 184 out of the 193 votes at the UNGA. This membership is for 2021-22. India was the only candidate from the Asia-Pacific category for the year 2021-22. This is India's eighth stint at the UNSC. Previously, India had been a member in the years 1950-1951, 1967-1968, 1972-1973, 1977-1978, 1984-1985, 1991-1992 and 2011-12.

For a list of [important reports by international organizations](#), click on the linked article.

India and UNSC

India has been trying to make its way into the list of the permanent members of the UNSC but has not been successful. Despite India being a country with a huge population, a growing economy and a nuclear power, it is not a member of the UNSC.

India is one among the G4 countries (India, Germany, Japan, Brazil), which gives it an edge at becoming one of the permanent members of the UNSC. Given below is a list of claims raised by India to ensure its place as one of UNSC's permanent members:

1. India is the fastest-growing economy in the world.
2. India has recently acquired the status of a Nuclear Weapons State.
3. India is the second-largest in terms of population and the largest liberal democracy in the world.
4. The country ranks high in purchasing power parity and is a huge contributor to UN Peacekeeping Missions.

For India to become a permanent member, apart from garnering the minimum required votes from the other United Nations members, India would need to mend its way with all the UN countries in order to get the required votes.

Roadblocks in Getting a Permanent Seat at UNSC

- Although it may seem like a simple process, it is made difficult by the objections of certain permanent members of the Security Council. China, in particular, has been blocking India's push for a permanent seat at the Council. China believes that granting India a permanent seat at the UNSC will lead to Indian interests being of paramount importance in the geopolitics of the subcontinent, a sentiment echoed by its ally, Pakistan.
- In addition to this, India is also seen as a proliferating nuclear power. Analysts believe that this is the single most factor that is being a roadblock for India's UNSC dreams.
- To grant it a permanent seat without asking for any steps to cap its nuclear capabilities is an exercise in futility. As of late 2019, France has become the latest to join other nations in pushing for India's permanent UNSC seat, but with the permanent 5 members obstinate about India having to give up its nuclear capabilities to join, India being a permanent member of the UNSC seem like a distant dream.

For more information on this, check [RSTV Big Picture: UNSC & Permanent Seat for India](#).

Important Questions related to UNSC for UPSC

Who are the 15 members of the United Nations Security Council?

Along with the five permanent members - China, United States, Russia, the United Kingdom and France - there are 10 non-permanent members who are elected for a two-year term by the General Assembly. As of 2020, the current members are listed below along with the end of term year in brackets:

- Belgium (2020)
- Dominican Republic (2020)
- Estonia (2021)
- Germany (2020)
- Indonesia (2020)
- Niger (2021)
- Saint Vincent and the Grenadines (2021)
- South Africa (2020)
- Tunisia (2021)
- Viet Nam (2021)

What is the role of the United Nations Security Council?

The Security Council has primary responsibility, under the United Nations Charter, for the maintenance of international peace and security. It is for the Security Council to determine when and where a UN peace operation should be deployed. The first time the UN Security Council deployed a peacekeeping force anywhere in the world was during the Korean War, which began on 25 June 1950 and ended on 27 July 1953. Since then, UN peacekeeping forces have been deployed the world over including in the Balkans and Africa.

Where is the United Nations Security Council headquarters located?

Since its first meeting, the Security Council has taken permanent residence at the United Nations Headquarters in New York City. It also travelled to many cities, holding sessions in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, in 1972, in Panama City, Panama, and in Geneva, Switzerland, in 1990.

How did China acquire a permanent seat in the UN Security Council?

The United Nations Security Council's permanent members consisted of the victorious Allies of World War 2 who had played a key role in defeating Nazi Germany and Imperial Japan. At first, the seat was given to the anti-communist Kuomintang Government of the Republic of China. In 1949, however, the Communist-led

rebels under Mao Zedong won the Chinese civil war. This led to the fall of the Kuomintang Government, forcing it to be relocated to the island of Taiwan. Since the Communist Government claimed to be the sole representative of China, the remaining members thought it would be prudent to allow the new Chinese government to become a permanent member on account of its vast army and support from the Soviet Union.

