



CURRENT AFFAIRS



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INDIA PRESENTED A MODEL FOR UNSC REFORM

THIS ARTICLE COVERS 'DAILY CURRENT AFFAIRS' AND THE TOPIC DETAILS OF "INDIA PRESENTED A MODEL FOR UNSC REFORM". THIS TOPIC IS RELEVANT IN THE "INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS" SECTION OF THE UPSC CSE EXAM.

WHY IN THE NEWS?

India, as a member of the G4 nations, has presented a comprehensive proposal for United Nations Security Council Reform during the Intergovernmental Negotiations on the matter. This proposal advocates for the inclusion of new permanent members chosen through democratic processes by the UN General Assembly while also demonstrating a willingness to address concerns regarding the use of veto power. The G4 consists of Brazil, Germany, India, and Japan.

KEY FEATURES OF THE G4 PROPOSED MODEL FOR SECURITY COUNCIL REFORM

The G4 nations (Brazil, Germany, India, and Japan) have proposed a significant reform of the UN Security Council structure to address concerns about representation and effectiveness. Here's a breakdown of their key proposals, along with some additional considerations:

Addressing the Representation Gap: The G4 proposal rightly highlights the under-representation of key regions, particularly Africa, Asia-Pacific, Latin America, and even Western Europe (excluding the current permanent members). This imbalance undermines the Council's claim to legitimacy and its ability to address global challenges that disproportionately affect these regions.

Council Expansion: The G4 model suggests increasing membership from 15 to 25-26, adding both permanent and non-permanent members. This could enhance the Council's responsiveness to a wider range of issues and perspectives. However, some argue that a larger Council could lead to slower decision-making.

New Permanent Seats with Geographical Distribution: The proposal for six new permanent seats distributed geographically (two each for Africa and Asia-Pacific, one each for Latin America and Western Europe/Others) aims to rectify the representation imbalance. This could lead to a more balanced and inclusive Council. However, the specific allocation criteria and selection process for these new members would need careful consideration to ensure fairness.

Veto Reform with a Trial Period: The G4's suggestion for a temporary restriction on veto power for new permanent members is an intriguing concept. This "trial period" would encourage new members to engage in constructive dialogue before resorting to a veto. However, the details of this limitation (duration, specific issues) and its enforceability would require further discussion.

Democratic Elections for New Members: The emphasis on democratic elections for new permanent members aligns with calls for greater transparency and accountability within the Security Council. This approach could enhance the Council's legitimacy in the eyes of the global community.

Veto Power for Existing Permanent Members: The G4 proposal doesn't directly address the veto power of the current P5 (China, France, Russia, the UK, and the US). Reform efforts might also consider potential limitations on their veto use.

Regional Dynamics: The G4 model doesn't specify how regional blocs would choose their candidates for permanent seats. This aspect would require careful negotiation to ensure a smooth selection process.

WHY REFORM THE UN SECURITY COUNCIL?

The UN Security Council needs reform to ensure its effectiveness and legitimacy in today's world. Here's a concise breakdown:

Representation Gap: The Council's current makeup, based on 1945 realities, doesn't reflect the rise of new powers and regions like Africa, Asia, and Latin America. This undermines its legitimacy.

Outdated Structure: The Council's size and composition haven't kept pace with the UN's membership growth (142 new countries since 1945). Reform is needed to reflect this new reality.

Veto Power Concerns: The veto power of the permanent members (P5) is criticised for hindering action on critical issues and lacking democratic accountability. Reform could address this.

Alternative Decision-Making: A lack of reform risks decision-making shifting to other forums, weakening the Security Council's role.

Enhancing Legitimacy: Reform should ensure the Council reflects the current world order and operates with greater transparency and accountability. This will strengthen its ability to address global security challenges.

THE G4 AND UN SECURITY COUNCIL REFORM

The G4 (India, Japan, Brazil, and Germany) is a coalition pushing for reform within the UN Security Council (UNSC). Formed in 2005, they advocate for a more inclusive and representative decision-making process at the UN.

Key Goals

- **UNSC Reform:** The G4 emphasises the need for significant reforms, particularly in the UNSC, which is crucial for maintaining global peace and security.
- **Permanent Membership:** All G4 members aspire to become permanent members of the UNSC, currently dominated by the five veto-wielding P5 countries (China, France, Russia, the UK, and the US).

Renewed Push for Reform

- The 2023 G4 Ministerial Summit highlighted the increasing pressure on multilateralism due to complex global crises.
- The ineffectiveness of the current UNSC in addressing these challenges underscores the urgency for reform.
- The G4 emphasises the need to revitalise discussions on this critical issue.

Enhancing UNSC Participation

- The G4 calls for increased participation of developing countries within the UNSC.
- They reaffirm their support for the Common African Position (CAP) on UNSC reform, which advocates for greater African representation.

PRELIMS PRACTISE QUESTION

Q1. How many votes are required to pass a resolution in the UN Security Council?

- (a) Simple majority
- (b) Two-thirds majority
- (c) Unanimous consent
- (d) Four-fifths majority

Answer: C

MAINS PRACTISE QUESTION

Q1. Explore the challenges faced by the UN Security Council in responding to humanitarian crises caused by human rights violations. How do geopolitical considerations and divergent national interests hinder its ability to intervene effectively?

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