

UNIT 2



United Nations Security Council (UNSC)

Peace | Security



Quick Knowledge

As of August 2024

Chinese Name:	联合国安全理事会
English Name:	United Nations Security Council
Abbreviation:	UNSC
Headquarters:	New York, USA
Formation:	13 January 1946
Membership:	15 Member States
China's Membership:	1946, membership reconfirmed 1971
President:	rotating among the UNSC Members on a monthly basis

Introduction

What is UNSC?

The Security Council (SC) is one of the six main organs of the United Nations. Its primary responsibility is to maintain international peace and security. The Council is composed of 15 Members, including five permanent members—China, France, Russian Federation, the United Kingdom, and the United States, and ten non-permanent members elected for two-year terms by the General Assembly. Each Member of the Council has one vote. While other organs of the UN make recommendations to Member States, only the SC has the power to make decisions that Member States are then obligated to implement under the *Charter*. A State which is a Member of the UN but not of the SC may participate, without a vote, in its discussions when the Council considers that country's interests are affected.

A representative of each of its members must be present at all times at the UN Headquarters so that the SC can meet whenever peace is threatened.

What does UNSC do?

Under the *Charter*, the functions and powers of the SC are:

- to maintain international peace and security in accordance with the principles and purposes of the UN;
- to determine the existence of a threat to the peace or act of aggression and to recommend what action should be taken;
- to call on Members to apply economic sanctions and other measures not involving the use of force to prevent or stop aggression;
- to take military action against an aggressor;
- to recommend the admission of new Members;
- to exercise the trusteeship functions of the UN in “strategic areas”;

- to recommend to the GA the appointment of the Secretary-General and, together with the Assembly, to elect the Judges of the International Court of Justice.

How is UNSC structured?

Article 29 of the *Charter* sets out that the SC may establish subsidiary bodies as needed for the performance of its functions.

The main committees and working groups of the SC include the following: Counter-Terrorism Committee, Non-Proliferation Committee, Military Staff Committee, Sanctions Committees, Committee of Experts on Rules of Procedure, Committee on the Admission of New Members, Committee on Council Meetings away from Headquarters, United Nations Compensation Commission, Working Group established pursuant to Resolution 1566 (2004), Working Group on Children and Armed Conflict, Working Group on Peacekeeping Operations, Ad Hoc Working Group on Conflict Prevention and Resolution in Africa, informal Working Group on Documentation and other Procedural Questions, and International Residual Mechanism for Criminal Tribunals. Among them, the Committee of Experts on Rules of Procedure and the Committee on the Admission of New Members and the Committee on Council Meetings away from Headquarters are standing committees.

The existing committees and working groups are comprised of the 15 members of the Council. One exception is the Military Staff Committee, which comprises only the permanent members. While standing committees are chaired by the President of the

Council, other committees and working groups are chaired or co-chaired by designated members of the Council who are announced on an annual basis by a Note of the President of the SC.

How is UNSC funded?

The main source of UNSC's funds is the contributions of Member States, determined by considering their relative shares of total gross national product, plus a number of factors, including their per capita incomes. China's contribution to the UN's regular membership dues has increased substantially in the past 20 years, from 0.995% in 2000 to 15.254% in 2023. China's contribution to UNSC's peacekeeping expense has jumped straight up, from 6.64% in 2013—2015 to 15.22% in 2019—2021, \$1.1773 billion.

President

The presidency of the Security Council is held by each of the 15 members in turn for one month, following the English alphabetical order of the Member States names.



KEY CONCEPTS

- ① **defence of the mandate:** One of the three basic principles (consent of the parties; impartiality; non-use of force except in self-defence and defence of the mandate) that set UN peacekeeping operations apart as a tool for maintaining international peace and security. UN peacekeeping operations are not an enforcement tool.
- ② **inclusive disarmament:** In realizing its goals of multilateral disarmament, the UN has given highest priority to reducing massive killing weapons, including nuclear weapons, chemical weapons, and biological weapons. However, the scope of deliberations has become more inclusive, considering the excessive proliferation of small arms, the massive deployment of landmines, and the impact of telecommunications technologies and other emerging technologies on international security.
- ③ **primacy of politics:** It is stressed by the SC that politics instead of military actions should be the primary approach to the resolution of conflict, including through mediation, good offices, the monitoring of ceasefires, and assistance to the implementation of peace accords. It is the consensus of the UN that lasting peace is neither achieved nor sustained by military engagements alone, but through political solutions.
- ④ **sustainable peace:** The concept, first proposed in the Security Council Presidential Statement S/PRST/2001/5 in 2001, indicates that the goal of the UN peacebuilding is broadened from post-conflict peacebuilding to prevent the outbreak or the recurrence of armed conflict. The position was reaffirmed in the SC's twin peacebuilding resolutions (A/RES/70/262 and S/RES/2282) that were adopted in 2016.

KEY POINTS

- basic principles of peacekeeping
- national priorities and primary responsibility of the host State
- integrated peacekeeping strategies

Main Text

Security Council's Peacekeeping Operations in 2022¹

- [1] *The Security Council,*
Recalling the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations, and *reaffirming* the primary responsibility of the Security Council under the Charter of the United Nations for the maintenance of international peace and security,

¹ The Resolution (S/RES/2594) was adopted by the Security Council at its 8852nd meeting, on 9 September 2021. All 15 Member States, including the 5 permanent members, and 10 non-permanent members, Estonia, India, Ireland, Kenya, Mexico, Niger, Norway, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Tunisia, and Viet Nam, voted unanimously for the Resolution.

- [5] *Recalling* its previous relevant resolutions and presidential statements addressing issues of peacekeeping, and *reaffirming* the basic principles of peacekeeping, such as consent of the parties, impartiality, and non-use of force, except in self-defence and defence of the mandate,
- Stressing* that the primacy of politics should be the hallmark of the approach of the United Nations to the resolution of conflict, including through mediation, good offices, the
- [10] monitoring of ceasefires, assistance to the implementation of peace accords,
- Underscoring* the importance of peacekeeping as one of the most effective tools available to the United Nations in the promotion and maintenance of international peace and security, *reaffirming* that lasting peace is neither achieved nor sustained by military and technical engagements alone, but through political solutions and strongly convinced that this should
- [15] guide the design and deployment of United Nations peace operations, and *understanding* United Nations peace operations as peacekeeping operations and special political missions,
- Recognising* the crucial role peacekeeping plays in creating conditions for stability and lasting peace, and the need for United Nations peace operations to have integrated strategies that articulate a clear pathway to transition and to achieving sustainable peace, and *underlining*
- [20] that transitions of United Nations Peace Operations are understood as a strategic process which builds towards a reconfiguration of the strategy, footprint, and capacity of the United Nations in a way that supports peacebuilding objectives and the development of a sustainable peace, in a manner that supports and reinforces national ownership, informed by the operational context and the national priorities and needs of the host State and its
- [25] population, and that includes engagement with local community and civil society, and, where relevant, regional and sub-regional organisations, and other relevant stakeholders, with the full, equal and meaningful participation of women and the inclusion of youth and persons with disabilities,
- Reiterating* the primary responsibility of States to protect the population throughout their
- [30] territories, *recognising* that reconfigurations of missions may entail increased risks for civilians, in particular for women, youth, children, persons with disabilities, and, where relevant, the need to enhance States' capacity to protect their own civilians, *emphasising* the importance of security sector reform, poverty reduction measures, gender equality, human rights monitoring and reporting, the promotion of rule of law and good governance, and the
- [35] extension of legitimate State authority in ensuring the protection of civilians over the longer term and in the consolidation of peace and stability, *taking note* of interlinkages between transitional justice, inclusive disarmament, demobilisation and reintegration processes, functional child protection services, national small arms and light weapons management, and organised crime and anti-corruption measures, for enhancing stability, *reaffirming* that
- [40] development, peace and security, and human rights are interlinked and mutually reinforcing,

and *recalling* further the General Assembly resolution, A/RES/70/1, entitled “Transforming our World: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development”²,

[45] *Recognising* that States bear the primary responsibility to respect and ensure the human rights of all persons within their territory and subject to their jurisdiction as provided for by international law, and *acknowledging* the important role of those who protect and promote human rights, civil society organisations, journalists and other media workers in the promotion and protection of human rights,

[50] *Reaffirming* its commitment to addressing the impact of armed conflict on women, youth, and children, and recalling its resolution 1325 (2000) on women, peace and security, resolution 1265 (1999) on the protection of civilians in armed conflict, resolution 2250 on youth, peace and security, resolution 1261 (1999) on children and armed conflict, and resolution 2475 (2019) on the disproportionate impact of armed conflict and related humanitarian crises on persons with disabilities, as well as all subsequent resolutions concerning these agendas,

[55] *Reaffirming* its commitment to include in the mandates of peace operations a desired outcome of the implementation of sequenced, mandated tasks and, where appropriate, a clear prioritisation of tasks to achieve this outcome, reflecting the need to create favourable conditions for sustainable peace, *understanding* prioritisation as the mission focussing on those specific mandated tasks which are based on up-to-date conflict analysis and planning and are assessed as responding to the evolving needs on the ground, and *further understanding* sequencing as a logical, flexible implementation of the mandate over time, in line with the strategic vision as set out in the mandate, aligned with the peace and security needs within the host State, building towards a consolidation of peace,

[65] *Recognising* that the effective implementation of peacekeeping mandates is the responsibility of all stakeholders and is contingent upon several critical factors, including well-defined, realistic and achievable mandates, political will, leadership, performance and accountability at all levels, adequate resources, policy, planning and operational guidelines and training and equipment, and *welcoming* further engagement and dialogue between United Nations, troop and police contributing countries, and other relevant stakeholders to improve performance and inform decisions regarding mandate design,

[70] *Reaffirming* its belief that United Nations peacekeeping, including mission transition processes, is a unique global partnership that draws together the contributions and commitments of the entire United Nations system, and reaffirms its commitment to

² The Resolution was adopted by the General Assembly on 25 September 2015, at the fourth plenary meeting, 70th session.

strengthening this partnership, including to ensure a coherent, integrated, and planned approach to transitions at the earliest possible stage,

- [75] *Noting* efforts undertaken by the Secretary-General to mobilise all partners and stakeholders in support of more effective United Nations peacekeeping through his initiatives “Action for Peacekeeping” and “Action for Peacekeeping +”, which highlight the importance of advancing political solutions, strengthening protection of civilians, improving the safety and security of peacekeepers, implementing the Women, Peace and Security agenda,
- [80] supporting effective performance and accountability, improving peacekeeping partnerships, strengthening the conduct of peacekeeping operations and personnel, and strengthening the impact of peacekeeping on peacebuilding and sustaining peace,

- Reaffirming* that “sustaining peace” should be broadly understood as a goal and a process to build a common vision of a society, ensuring that the needs and human rights of all
- [85] segments of the population are taken into account, which encompasses activities, including promotion of justice and accountability, aimed at preventing the outbreak, escalation, continuation and recurrence of conflict, addressing root causes, assisting parties to conflict to end hostilities, ensuring national reconciliation, and moving towards recovery, reconstruction and development, and *emphasising* that sustaining peace is a shared task
- [90] and responsibility that needs to be fulfilled by the government and all other national stakeholders and should flow through all three pillars of the United Nations’ engagement at all stages of conflict, and in all its dimensions, and needs sustained international attention and assistance,

1. *Stresses* the crucial role peace operations play in the pursuit of sustainable political
- [95] solutions and building peace, and, in this regard, *emphasises* the need for peace operations to engage at the earliest possible stage in integrated planning and coordination on transitions with the Resident Coordinators, United Nations Country Team, other United Nations agencies, funds and programmes, the host State and other national stakeholders including civil society and further emphasises that in order to be sustainable, the transition planning
- [100] process should take into account broad challenges, including risks to stability, governance, and the rule of law, as well as the political, economic, development, humanitarian, and human rights context;

...

14. *Requests* the Secretary-General to incorporate comprehensive reporting on the status
- [105] of ongoing transitions of United Nations peacekeeping operations in his regular country specific reporting on relevant missions, and to provide updates on the status of transitions across relevant United Nations peace operations, including those that have transitioned within the previous twenty four months, which includes updates from relevant Resident

[110] Coordinators and United Nations Country Teams as well as the view of the Peacebuilding Commission in his comprehensive annual briefing mandated by the Security Council under its resolution 2378 (2017), and *further requests* the Secretary-General to provide a report on the status of transitions across relevant United Nations peace operations, including those that have transitioned within the previous twenty four months, before 30 June 2022;

15. *Decides* to remain seized of the matter.

Post-class Tasks

I Read to Know

1. The following sentences are definitions or explanations of some of the words or expressions that are frequently adopted in the documents of UNSC. Please match the definition or the explanation with the word, varying the form when necessary.

vision	implementation	convince	deployment	monitor
hallmark	mobilize	commitment	escalate	govern

- 1) The _____ of the approaches of the UN means the most typical feature of the work of the UN.
- 2) The 2030 Agenda of the UN expresses the common _____ of the global community for transforming our world to a better future.
- 3) Global _____ refers to the system of decision-making and co-operation among international actors, including states, intergovernmental organizations, non-governmental organizations, and civil society.
- 4) _____ is the execution or practice of a plan, a method or any design, idea, model, specification, standard or policy for doing something.
- 5) As war rages in Gaza, another simmering conflict risks _____ on Israel's northern border with Lebanon—which is why the UN peacekeeping mission there is so important.
- 6) The United Nations General Assembly is deeply _____ that the adoption of the Definition of Aggression would contribute to the strengthening of international peace and security.
- 7) The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development represents the unequivocal _____ of all UN Member States to eradicate poverty in all its forms, end discrimination and exclusion, and reduce the inequalities and vulnerabilities that undermine the potential of individuals and of humanity as a whole.

- 8) If the Security Council determines that the _____ of a UN peacekeeping operation is the most appropriate step to take, it will formally authorize this by adopting a resolution.
- 9) The UN Security Council has encouraged governments and other actors to develop strategies and national action plans with goals and timetables that can be _____ to make sure that the Council's resolutions related to women, peace and security will be implemented.
- 10) The Department of Operational Support works together with UN and non-UN partners to plan, _____ and sustain 35 peacekeeping, special political and other field missions in the world's most complex environments.

2. What does “the primary responsibility of States” in line 29 exactly refer to?

II Read to Do

1. Watch *China's Peacekeepers*, a Documentary directed by Shang Changyi (尚昌仪) about China's peacekeeping operations in the conflicting areas all over the world. Read further about the situations in southern Sudan, think innovatively and write a proposal about the key issues of maintaining sustainable peace in southern Sudan.
2. Translate the following English passages into Chinese and Chinese passages into English.
 - 1) The Security Council stresses that the primacy of politics should be the hallmark of the approach of the United Nations to the resolution of conflict, including through mediation, good offices, the monitoring of ceasefires, and assistance to the implementation of peace accords.
 - 2) The Security Council reiterates the primary responsibility of States to protect the population throughout their territories, recognising that reconfigurations of missions may entail increased risks for civilians, in particular for women, youth, children, persons with disabilities.
 - 3) 中国忠实履行联合国安理会常任理事国职责和使命，维护联合国宪章宗旨和原则，维护联合国在国际事务中的核心作用。中国积极倡导以和平方式政治解决争端，派出 5 万多人次参加联合国维和行动，已经成为第二大联合国会费国、第二大维和摊款国。
 - 4) 联合国和平行动是指维持和平行动和特别政治任务。安理会强调，持久和平并不能仅通过军事和技术干预手段得以实现或维持，而需凭借政治解决办法。安理会坚信政治解决应是联合国和平行动筹划和部署的导向。

III Read to Think

1. During April to June 1994, massive killing against the Tutsi in Rwanda deprived the lives of up to one million people. The incident is called Rwandan Genocide. The Security Council adopted five resolutions concerning the security in Rwanda. In the Resolution S/RES/909 (1994) adopted on 5 April, two days ahead of the massive killing, the Security Council decided that United Nations Assistance Mission for Rwanda (UNAMIR) will be extended until 29 July 1994. In the Resolution S/RES/918 (1994) adopted on 17 May, the Security Council authorized an expansion of the UNAMIR force level up to 5,500 troops to “take action in self-defence against persons or groups who threaten protected sites and populations, United Nations and other humanitarian personnel or the means of delivery and distribution of humanitarian relief”. It is held by some people that UNSC should be blamed for its delayed and inefficient actions in protecting the Rwandan people. How do you think about this?
2. Under what conditions, according to you, is it necessary for the UN to dispatch peacekeeping force?

IV Read to Compare

1. Understanding China's position.

- 1) China strongly supports the UN resolutions and decisions concerning peacekeeping operations. China has been participating actively in the UN peacekeeping operations. The State Council Information Office issued *China's Armed Forces: 30 Years of UN Peacekeeping Operations* in September 18 2020, reviewing China's contributions in maintaining the international and regional peace in the past 30 years.
- 2) China's diplomatic policy follows the principle that the sovereignty and territorial integrity of each nation should be respected and protected, and that the resolution of the internal conflicts of a state should not be intervened by the external force. China takes the principle as the essential condition to maintain domestic and international peace and security.
- 3) China stresses the crucial importance of advancing regional cooperation in the spirit of win-win cooperation as an effective means to promote security, stability, and economic and social development of a nation or a region, so as to create a community of shared future for mankind.

2. Explain to foreigners China's position concerning international peace and security.

Further Reading

PROVISIONAL RULES OF PROCEDURE OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL³

[1] CHAPTER I. MEETINGS

Rule 1

- Meetings of the Security Council shall, with the exception of the periodic meetings referred to in rule 4, be held at the call of the President at any time he deems necessary, but the interval between meetings shall not exceed fourteen days.

Rule 2

The President shall call a meeting of the Security Council at the request of any member of the Security Council.

Rule 3

- [10] The President shall call a meeting of the Security Council if a dispute or situation is brought to the attention of the Security Council under Article 35⁴ or under Article 11(3)⁵ of the Charter, or if the General Assembly makes recommendations or refers any question to the Security Council under Article 11 (2)⁶, or if the Secretary-General bring to the attention of the Security Council any matter under Article 99⁷.

³ From S/96/Rev.7, 1982. Article 30 of the UN Charter stipulates that the Security Council shall adopt its own rules of procedure, and in 1946 the Council adopted its *Provisional Rules of Procedure* (S/96). Subsequently the *Provisional Rules of Procedure* were modified on several occasions; the last revision was made in 1982 (S/96/Rev.7) in order to add Arabic as the sixth official language, in conformity with General Assembly Resolution 35/219 of 17 December 1980. The document is composed of 11 Chapters, 61 articles. The selection here is the first two Chapters.

⁴ Article 35: 1. Any Member of the United Nations may bring any dispute, or any situation of the nature referred to in Article 34, to the attention of the Security Council or of the General Assembly.

⁵ Article 11(3): The General Assembly may call the attention of the Security Council to situations which are likely to endanger international peace and security.

⁶ Article 11(2): The General Assembly may discuss any questions relating to the maintenance of international peace and security brought before it by any Member of the United Nations, or by the Security Council, or by a state which is not a Member of the United Nations in accordance with Article 35, paragraph 2, and, except as provided in Article 12, may make recommendations with regard to any such questions to the state or states concerned or to the Security Council or to both. Any such question on which action is necessary shall be referred to the Security Council by the General Assembly either before or after discussion.

⁷ Article 99: The Secretary-General may bring to the attention of the Security Council any matter which in his opinion may threaten the maintenance of international peace and security.

[15] **Rule 4**

Periodic meetings of the Security Council called for in Article 28 (2)⁸ of the Charter shall be held twice a year, at such times as the Security Council may decide.

Rule 5

Meetings of the Security Council shall normally be held at the seat of the United Nations.

- [20] Any member of the Security Council or the Secretary-General may propose that the Security Council should meet at another place. Should the Security Council accept any such proposal, it shall decide upon the place and the period during which the Council shall meet at such place.

CHAPTER II. AGENDA[25] **Rule 6**

The Secretary-General shall immediately bring to the attention of all representatives on the Security Council all communications from States, organs of the United Nations, or the Secretary-General concerning any matter for the consideration of the Security Council in accordance with the provisions of the Charter.

[30] **Rule 7**

The provisional agenda for each meeting of the Security Council shall be drawn up by the Secretary-General and approved by the President of the Security Council.

- Only items which have been brought to the attention of the representatives on the Security Council in accordance with rule 6, items covered by rule 10, or matters which the Security Council had previously decided to defer, may be included in the provisional agenda.
- [35]

Rule 8

The provisional agenda for a meeting shall be communicated by the Secretary-General to the representatives on the Security Council at least three days before the meeting, but in urgent circumstances it may be communicated simultaneously with the notice of the meeting.

[40] **Rule 9**

The first item of the provisional agenda for each meeting of the Security Council shall be the adoption of the agenda.

⁸ Article 28(2): The Security Council shall hold periodic meetings at which each of its members may, if it so desires, be represented by a member of the government or by some other specially designated representative.

Rule 10

[45] Any item of the agenda of a meeting of the Security Council, consideration of which has not been completed at that meeting, shall, unless the Security Council otherwise decides, automatically be included in the agenda of the next meeting.

Rule 11

[50] The Secretary-General shall communicate each week to the representatives on the Security Council a summary statement of matters of which the Security Council is seized and of the stage reached in their consideration.

Rule 12

[55] The provisional agenda for each periodic meeting shall be circulated to the members of the Security Council at least twenty-one days before the opening of the meeting. Any subsequent change in or addition to the provisional agenda shall be brought to the notice of the members at least five days before the meeting. The Security Council may, however, in urgent circumstances, make additions to the agenda at any time during a periodic meeting.

The provisions of rule 7, paragraph 1, and of rule 9, shall apply also to periodic meetings.

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Questions and tasks based on the Further Reading

1. According to the *Provisional Rules of Procedure of the Security Council*, in what kind of conditions shall the President call a meeting of the SC?
2. According to the *Provisional Rules of Procedure of the Security Council*, who is responsible for drawing up the provisional agenda for each meeting of the SC?
3. Summarize the procedures concerning how the provisional agenda for each meeting of the SC is adopted.