

IMUN 2024 Research Report

General Assembly Issue #2: The question of structural reforms of the UN Security Council.

The United Nations was created at an attempt for peace after World War II. Representatives of fifty countries came together to create the United Nations (UN) Charter which outlined its structure, more specifically that of the Security Council (United Nations). It consists of fifteen members of the UN, five of which are already permanent, the United States of America (USA), the United Kingdom (UK), France, the Republic of China, and the Russian Federation. These were chosen shortly after the end of World War II and were given veto-power (Council on Foreign Relations). The remaining ten are elected by the General Assembly and rotate every two years. They are chosen with the consideration of maintaining international peace and security along with equitable geographical distribution (United Nations, "United Nations Charter").

Throughout the years, Russia has blocked 155 resolutions in the Security Council along with the USA which has used its veto ninety times. Although China has used it more sparingly than Russia and the USA, it still trails behind these nations. The UK and France have not exercised their veto since 1989 and advocate for a more limited use of it (Council on Foreign Relations). The main purpose of the Security Council is to maintain international peace, yet the use of the veto ignores this goal (United Nations, "United Nations Charter"). The security council commonly receives criticism for this reason.

In April 2024, the USA vetoed a highly supported resolution which would have cleared the way for Palestine to join the UN fully, something Israel has long sought to obstruct (Lederer). The USA is historically known for using its veto to protect its long-standing alliance with Israel which completely disregards the mission of the Security Council in the first place (Council on Foreign Relations).

Furthermore, Russia was highly disapproved of when vetoing resolutions regarding its attacks on Ukraine. Despite the multiple sanctions, clear disapproval from the UN itself, Russia refuses to vote for a resolution that has impacts on itself. Secretary-General António Guterres condemned that annexation plan and deemed it a violation of international law and of the principles of the UN

Charter (United Nations, “Russia Vetoes Security Council Resolution Condemning Attempted Annexation of Ukraine Regions | UN News”).

Debate should be focused on how the Security Council could change to maintain international peace and not violate the UN Charter. Delegates should outline pivotal moments of the use of the veto along with the consequences and negative impact it had. While doing such, they should bear in mind the initial structure of the UN. It is imperative that delegates are realistic and consider a solution helpful for all nations involved in the Security Council.

Works Cited

- Council on Foreign Relations. "The UN Security Council." *Council on Foreign Relations*, 28 Feb. 2023, www.cfr.org/backgrounder/un-security-council. Accessed 14 June 2024.
- Lederer, Edith. "US Vetoes Widely Supported Resolution Backing Full UN Membership for Palestine." *AP News*, 18 Apr. 2024, www.apnews.com/article/un-vote-palestinian-membership-us-veto-8d8ad60d8576b5ab9e70d2f8bf7e2881. Accessed 14 June 2024.
- United Nations. "History of the United Nations." *United Nations*, United Nations, 2024, www.un.org/en/about-us/history-of-the-un. Accessed 14 June 2024.
- . "Russia Vetoes Security Council Resolution Condemning Attempted Annexation of Ukraine Regions | UN News." *News.un.org*, 30 Sept. 2022, www.news.un.org/en/story/2022/09/1129102#:~:text=Russia%20on%20Friday%20vetoed%20a. Accessed 14 June 2024.
- . "United Nations Charter." *United Nations*, 1945, www.un.org/en/about-us/un-charter/full-text. Accessed 14 June 2024.