
INDIA AS A GLOBAL POWER AND THE DEBATE ABOUT ITS MEMBERSHIP IN THE SECURITY COUNCIL

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ABSTRACT

The paper discusses and analyses the objective of India's membership in the Security Council. It focuses on rendering the importance of India's role and its expansion as an emerging power. Various debates on the growth of the India's reflection with its permanent seat considering the historical background have been showcased in the paper. It highlights the regional representation and bilateral agreement that India has been collaborating with alliances in the geopolitical diaspora. The paper further provides arguments on the inclusion in the UNSC. It explores the diplomatic challenges faced by India in the global sphere. It also gives a brief study of the current geopolitical dynamics. India's efforts to secure a permanent seat including the bilateral and multilateral dimension are one of the key importance of the paper. It also aims to provide an analysis of the recent challenges and conflicts that have been of utmost importance. The research paper aims to prepare a study of the evolvment around the topic. The relationship of the India with other alliances in the contemporary reality and their showcase have been discussed with analysis and proper evaluation has been done in the research paper.

INTRODUCTION

India's success story, particularly in the last 20 years, has led to numerous requests for India to be granted permanent membership in the UN Security Council from both the Indian government and numerous regional and international forums.

India has always approached foreign policy by avoiding taking sides in intra-regional conflicts and by continuing to be non-judgmental, non-prescriptive, and non-intrusive in the affairs of other nations. The world recognizes India as a power that has no extraterritorial ambitions, and this is something that is greatly valued. A major declaration of foreign policy is India's "no first use" policy on nuclear armaments. When India's fighter aircraft refused to breach the Line of Control during the Kargil War in 1999, despite losing the tactical advantage and suffering losses, they were upholding the high moral ground. In the field of international affairs, there has been much research and debate around India's rise to prominence as a powerful nation. India is the biggest democracy in the world and has one of the fastest-growing economies. As such, its impact is seen in many areas, from economics to culture to technology. The complex geopolitical dynamics, historical legacies, and current power changes that are evident in this discussion raise important issues related to accountability, representation, and the changing character of global governance.

OBJECTIVES

- To find out the role played by India in the historical development of the United Nations Security Council.
- To assess the challenges and obstacles faced by India for its inclusion in the Security Council.
- To evaluate the current geopolitical Dynamics of India.
- To analyse the role played by India in the Global Security.
- To examine the efforts made by India for its permanent membership in the Security Council.

HYPOTHESIS

- Whether India exercise its influence and power to solve regional security issues, advance its interests internationally and participate as a permanent member in the United Nations Security Council (UNSC).

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

1. In the article authored by **R. Mukherjee and D.M Malone** titled “**India and the UN Security Council**” is a broad study of the opinions and debates over the membership and its relation quo over the years. The paper further delves into the topic of the challenges and influence of Indian policy in different areas of concern at a global level. However, the paper does not provide the basis for inclusion in the Security Council as a permanent member and fails to provide the current status of India in the geopolitical sphere and the various perspectives required in its emerging power.¹
2. In the article authored by **Y. Choedon** titled “**India’s Perspective on the UN Security Council Reform**”, provides an analysis of the opinions on the Security Council’s viewpoints and emphasizes global security as the main role of India in foreign policy. The paper however does not delve into the implication of India’s membership and its role in conflict-rising situations which can adversely affect the status of India in keeping up friendly relations with the friendly alliances.²
3. In the article authored by **A. Nafey** titled “**Permanent Membership in the UN Security Council: India’s Diplomatic Initiatives and Strategies**”, encompasses a complete analysis concerning the diplomatic challenges faced in advocating its membership role and various multilateral treaties that have been playing a significant role. However, the analysis fails to comply with the emphasis on regional dynamics and socio-economic challenges when debating the challenges in the reforms of India-UNSC relations.³
4. The article authored by **M. Mishra** titled “**India’s Case for UN Security Council Permanent Membership**”, talks about the current status and geopolitical dynamics of India and its role and effects concerning the COVID-19 pandemic. It highlights the arguments for the inclusion of India in the UNSC. In relation to the topics covered in the article, it limits the argument of its positive implication post-pandemic while overshadowing the adverse effects

¹ MUKHERJEE, R., & MALONE, D. M. (2013). India and the UN Security Council: An Ambiguous Tale. *Economic and Political Weekly*, 48(29), 110–117. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/23528511>

² Choedon, Y. (2007). India’s Perspective on the UN Security Council Reform. *India Quarterly*, 63(4), 14–48. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/45073188>

³ Nafey, A. (2005). Permanent Membership in the UN Security Council: India’s Diplomatic Initiatives and Strategies. *India Quarterly*, 61(4), 1–38. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/45073359>

and challenges faced by India as the 'neutral' aspect of India shall be considered while addressing the emerging powers.⁴

CRITICAL ANALYSIS

India saw its UN membership as a crucial assurance for upholding global peace and security after gaining its independence. During the turbulent years of the UN's fight against colonialism and apartheid, India took the lead.

❖ Historical Background

One of the main UN bodies, the Security Council, has seen mixed results in its 77 years of existence. These members are the major military powers from that era and the winners of the World Wars, the United States (US), the United Kingdom (UK), Russia, China, and France (known as the P5). In 1945, when the United Nations was founded, these five countries virtually "self-acquired" a seat on the Security Council, giving them the necessary veto power to maintain the necessary balance when discussing and deciding on matters of international security.⁵

The Security Council is likewise beset with several flaws. The US-led aggression of Iraq in 2003, Russia's war in Georgia in 2008, the wars in the Arab Israel, the Rwandan genocide in 1994, the Somalian civil war in 1993, the Srebrenica massacre in 1995, and many more events, including the ongoing conflict between Russia and Ukraine, are examples of situations where the Security Council either reacted slowly to the situation or failed to pass any resolution because one of the P5 was a party to the conflict and used its veto.⁶

Numerous requests for a review and change of the UN Security Council have been made in various multilateral and international fora over the past few decades. Countries from growing economies, such as the G4 (India, Japan, Germany, and Brazil), have been outspoken in their calls to increase the number of permanent members. Concerns over the absence of an African nation also exist, thus Egypt and South Africa should be taken into account.

⁴ MISHRA, M. K. (2021). India's Case for UN Security Council Permanent Membership. *World Affairs: The Journal of International Issues*, 25(4), 24–41. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/48654878>

⁵ Royeppen, A. (Ed.). (2016). UNITED NATIONS SECURITY COUNCIL REFORM. In *United Nations @ 70* (pp. 5–8). Institute for Global Dialogue. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/resrep07780.6>

⁶ Malik, J. M. (2005). Security Council Reform: China Signals Its Veto. *World Policy Journal*, 22(1), 19–29. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/40209946>

❖ **Arguments in favour of India's Permanent Position in the UNSC**

The Council's greatest achievement is the absence of a third World War and no actual armed conflict between the P5 nations. India, one of the G4 nations, has a better chance of becoming a permanent member due to its rapid economic growth, recent status as a nuclear weapons state, and its significant contribution to UN peacekeeping operations. India's economic growth, liberal democracy, and population make it a strong candidate for permanent membership in the UNSC. Permanent members of the Security Council make significant voluntary contributions in the UNSC, India can also contribute in it. India has refrained from participating in informal Security Council conversations like the Arria Formula sessions due to Pakistan's misuse of the platform. But the author is of the view that if India wants to be the global player and a part of UNSC it should participate in such kinds of situations and take strict stand against it. Only then it will receive the recognition.

India grabbed the lead globally and assumed a central role when the Russia-Ukraine war broke out in February 2022, while the West was still trying to absorb the information. The world capital quickly emerged from Delhi, and Prime Minister Modi's well-known remark that "today's era is not an era of war," made at his meeting with President Putin, continues to have resonance in many international platforms. India's foreign policy has been marked by its commitment to the "no first use" of nuclear weapons and its remarkable display of restraint during the Kargil War in 1999.

❖ **Diplomatic and other Challenges faced by India for its inclusion in the UNSC**

To achieve permanent membership in the UNSC, India must forge strategic partnerships, address local and international issues, and demonstrate its support for an adaptable and updated global governance framework. One of the main challenges is managing the United States and Russia while navigating an unstable West Asian atmosphere. India has significant challenges as relations involving the US and Russia worsen and tensions between the US and Iran escalate. To protect the security of the country, India must support a global system based on rules while giving human rights fair consideration.

One element is the growing prominence of nations such as Brazil, India, Japan, and Germany on the world platform. The UNSC's current state of disarray is another; the five permanent members never manage to agree on a significant issue that impacts global peace (for instance,

the conflict between Russia and Ukraine war). The escalating protests about the prominent insufficiency of its representation of women in the UNSC adds up to another factor of challenge.

Other may include the Socio-economic Challenges that are faced. India has obstacles to its worldwide leadership position across numerous socio-economic metrics, notwithstanding its economic progress in the global dynamics. As in the current scenario, it includes India's ranking on the Human Development Index and issues like health and poverty statistics. There is also an excessive reliance on imports of weapons India's strong reliance on weaponry imports may make it more difficult for it to extend its influence outside of its geographical area. For example, some may doubt India's ability to play a leading role in international security given the country's military acquisitions from the US and Russia.

Insufficient Funding for multilateral diplomatic efforts, a lack of involvement with the ethical components of many UN Security Council issues, and an excessive emphasis on entitlement as the cornerstone of India's assertion of permanent membership at the expense of negotiating in the UN are all problems for the Indian government⁷. Furthermore, India appears to have had fewer options since joining the G4 because efforts by the organization to secure permanent representation for all members would be hampered by the political stance of great power and region. The global order has already been disrupted by the COVID-19 virus, and the competition between the United States and China has intensified. New discussions about bolstering international cooperation and multilateral institutions emerged from this. India ought to resist the urge to pick sides in the increasingly contentious Security Council, particularly in the aftermath of conflicts between the US and China.

Recognizing the many viewpoints that currently present on regional representation, which differ throughout areas, India has applauded the strategy of regions that include Africa that have requested to be included as a group in particular circumstances. However, they are to be regarded as complementary measures, not a substitute for the Charter's mandate that every Member State vote to choose a permanent member to ensure fair regional representation. While acknowledging the connections made by the African states linking the question of classifications and regional representation, India is against these connections.

⁷ SHAHI, D. (2013). Indian Scholarship on International Relations and Multilateralism. *Economic and Political Weekly*, 48(5), 50–58. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/23391208>

Over 20 years, the US-Indian alliance has undergone a major transformation. India, however, follows US policy at the UN on a smaller scale than other US partners. American policymakers are quite concerned by this. Some people think that India is a member of a counterhegemonic alliance that could endanger Western interests because of its frequent multilateral cooperation with countries like China and Russia. There has also been unjustified resentment towards the membership that may arise from erroneous expectations that India will conduct itself as one of the main allies of the United States⁸.

❖ Current Geopolitical Dynamics

At present, India is undergoing a significant geopolitical realignment, disregarding its previous argumentation of being a non-aligned movement and adopting a firm national interests-based policy. Additionally, it is building closer strategic connections with numerous nations, such as the US and its regional allies, notably Japan. India has been arguing with large debates on its membership that it can play a major impact globally and create a larger democracy. India has led the Security Council's efforts to reform for decades, claiming that the organization's 1945 design is out of step with contemporary reality and inadequate for addressing pressing issues. As a two-year non-permanent member of the Security Council, India aimed to express its opinions and participate in international deliberations. The world's food and energy security have been affected, the Russian invasion of Ukraine disrupted the post-World War II order, as the global economy was approaching a recession. India's internal initiatives will require strategic alliances with foreign countries to support them. India is aiming at making fresh alliances while maintaining relationships with old allies like Russia, engaging with all nations, including China, and settling unresolved issues with smaller neighbors that have hampered foreign policy for years.

❖ India's Role in Global Security

The definition of peace differs throughout cultures. For Third World countries, peace involves a long-term socioeconomic reconstruction endeavor rather than merely the absence of fighting. The Indian Army has made a significant contribution to UN peacekeeping efforts throughout

⁸ Mitra, S. K., Schottli, J., & Pauli, M. (2023). India and global security challenges. In *Statecraft and Foreign Policy: India 1947-2023* (pp. 257–272). DCU Press. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/jj.13049259.26>

the globe and has earned a reputation for professionalism and compassion. There are currently about 8,000 Army peacekeepers serving with the UN all throughout the world, and this number will only increase in the future. Angola, the Congo, Liberia, Mozambique, Namibia, Rwanda, and Somalia were among the UN peacekeeping missions in which Vietnam participated, demonstrating the nation's concern for the security and well-being of the recently formed African nation-states. Global relations have been greatly influenced by India's non-aligned foreign policy, which is based on post-independence idealism. In order to challenge the U.S. and the Soviet Union's bipolar dominance, India, under the leadership of leaders such as Jawaharlal Nehru, adopted non-alignment during the Cold War. With its changing international positions and historical background, India manages regional and global security concerns. Against terrorism, which comes mostly from Pakistan, it uses a multifaceted approach that includes information exchange, collaboration between law enforcement, and diplomatic initiatives to put pressure on countries that provide sanctuary.

❖ **Efforts made by India for its Inclusion in the UNSC**

- **Bilateral Dimensions:**

1. **Strategic alliances:** To secure support for its ambition, India has formed strategic alliances with important nations, particularly the P5 (Permanent Five members of the UNSC): the United States, the United Kingdom, Russia, China, and France. During bilateral talks, diplomatic attempts are frequently made to convince these nations to support India's candidacy.
2. **Bilateral Agreements:** India has inked strategic agreements with a number of nations, highlighting shared interests in fields including commerce, technology, and military. These agreements are sometimes used as leverage to increase support for India's ambitions to join the UNSC.
3. **Diplomatic Outreach:** To garner support for its UNSC candidacy, India has carried out a great deal of diplomatic outreach, including high-level visits, meetings, and conversations with leaders of powerful nations.
4. **Trade and Investment:** India's bilateral efforts heavily rely on trade and economic connections. Developing business ties with nations especially powerful ones can foster goodwill and help India win support to join the UN Security Council.

- **Multilateral Dimensions**

1. **United Nations General Assembly (UNGA):** To further its bid for a permanent seat on the UNSC, India actively engages in UNGA talks. With persuasion and involvement, it aims to create a wide coalition of support among member nations.
2. **G4 Group:** Brazil, Germany, Japan, and India are the other members of the G4 group that India is a part of. The G4 countries back one another's applications for permanent membership and push for UNSC reform, which includes increasing the number of permanent seats.
3. **Non-Aligned Movement (NAM):** Throughout its history, India has actively participated in the Non-Aligned Movement, which is made up of a large number of UN members. India uses its position in the NAM to bolster support for both its own application for permanent membership and UNSC reform.
4. **Regional Organizations:** In order to get support from the area for its UNSC candidacy, India works with regional groups like the African Union (AU) and the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC).

To establish consensus and win over support from a wide range of nations and organizations, India is pursuing a permanent seat on the UNSC through a combination of bilateral discussions, multilateral diplomacy, and strategic alliances. Yet, there are still a number of geopolitical factors at play in the UNSC reform process, making it difficult for India to accomplish its objective.

CONCLUSION

India do not have a permanent place on the Security Council, but it has also become a worldwide leader in recent years. It is a strong contender for permanent membership in the UN Security Council due to its combination of physical, soft, and structural power. As a result, India's appointment to the UN Security Council seems inevitable; the question is not "if," but "when." Furthermore, democratization of multilateral forums is important, with the United Nations organization being the first to undergo this process. In this regard, India is presenting a strong argument for its permanent position within the evolving framework of international governance, which includes the UN Security Council.