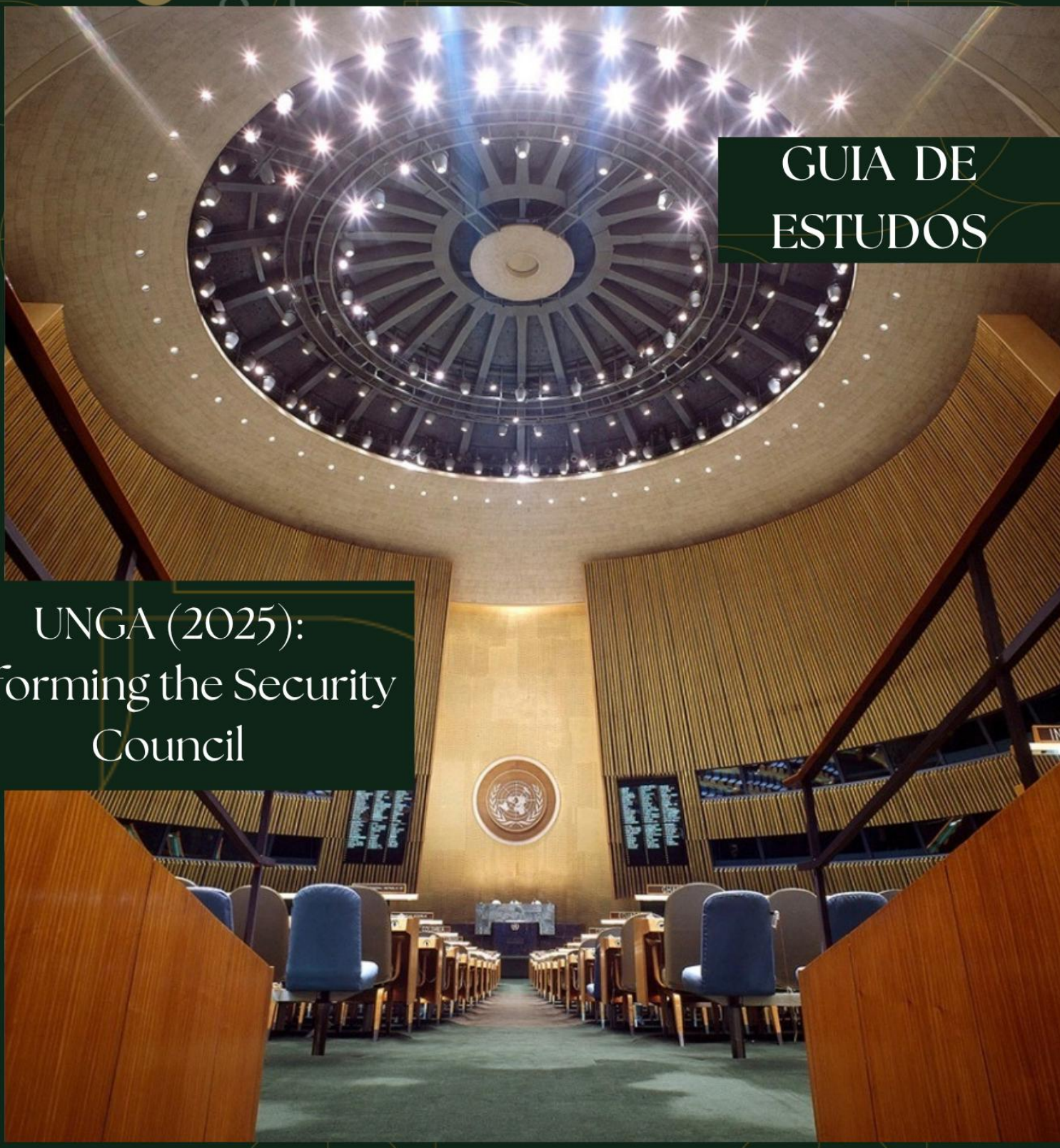
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MINIONU

Saberes que florescem



GUIA DE ESTUDOS

UNGA (2025): Reforming the Security Council

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MINIONU

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1 PRESENTING THE BOARD

1.1 Bernardo Leite – Director

Hello, delegates! It is such a pleasure to introduce you to the study guide for our committee and thank you for stepping up to participate in this project. My trajectory within International Relations owes a great debt to model UN simulations, just like this one. Throughout my high school years, I fell in love with the brilliant proposal of sitting down with other students to discuss and attempt to solve complex issues of the real world – issues states themselves have a hard time solving – while developing key skills to any field of work and making friends in the process, especially in other languages. For that reason, I am very excited to hop on this experience with you and hope you make the best out of it.

1.2 Gabriela Passini – Assistant Director

Hello, dear delegates! It is the greatest happiness to have you in our committee!

I was introduced to the world of academic simulations in 2023 and have since had the opportunity to participate in the 26th edition of MINIONU. Now, in 2026, I have the privilege of returning as an Assistant Director in the UNGA - Reform of the Security Council committee. Through these simulations, I have developed valuable skills in public speaking, research, negotiation, and critical thinking, all of which have contributed significantly to my academic and professional growth.
I wish you all a productive and enriching simulation. I hope this committee provides engaging debates, meaningful learning opportunities, and an unforgettable experience.

1.3 Maria Beatriz Volpe – Assistant Director

Dear delegates, welcome to the UNGA! I hope that you are able to embrace and cherish the MINIONU and this committee as much as I do. One of my first contacts with the simulation world was already during college. Even though I was drawn to the subjects surrounding the International Relations course, I did not have contact with simulations in my school years.
But after volunteering for the first time in MINIONU and meeting the amazing people involved in this project, I cannot help but be even more excited this year. Especially being part of a committee whose theme I am personally very fond of. It is always very moving and rewarding to watch the achievements of you, delegates, who are so concerned with global issues and also capable of expressing your belief in such interesting ways. I remain eager to help you

through this incredible and transforming journey. I hope that you will be able to believe in us as much as we believe in you and this cause. See you soon!

2 PRESENTING THE THEME

In the 25th of October, 2025, a month after the Assembly General shook up international politics in an attempt to show that multilateralism is still alive in a world full of conflict, the Secretary General of the United Nations Antonio Guterres stated via his Instagram account:

> For 80 years, the UN Security Council has shaped the @unitednations and the course of history. The Council is a vital necessity and a powerful force for good. But its legitimacy is also fragile. When one nation flouts the rules, others think they have licence to do the same. This not only stalls action; it erodes trust in the entire United Nations. History tells us, with brutal clarity, where that road leads. Reform of the Security Council is imperative, and long overdue - including expanding the membership. Africa has no permanent voice. Latin America and the Caribbean are underrepresented, while the Asia-Pacific region - home to more than half of humanity - holds only one permanent seat. Expanding the membership is not only about justice. It has the potential to undo deadlocks, and offer stability in our increasingly multipolar world. Without a Security Council fit for purpose, the world is in grave danger. Let's meet the challenges of the next 80 years and deliver justice and safety for all.

Such a public cry from the head of the United Nations himself summarizes the legitimacy crises faced by the United Nations Security Council in terms of its lack of representation. This has been a topic in discussion since the United Nation's inception, when many States established the attempt to guarantee a place in this Council a core topic within their foreign policy agendas - supported by claims of military prowess or diplomatic capability in solving controversies.

2.1 Theories of International Relations: the Security Council through the lens of a scholar

International Relations as a field of study has produced many theories over the decades. While the phenomenon of international politics changed, so did the scholars' perspectives on how to analyse such phenomena. In an International Relations Manual made by Burchill et al, the authors recognized that:

> practitioners in the field do not agree about what is involved in theorizing international relations. When we compare theories we are comparing different and seemingly incommensurable phenomena. There is no agreement about what counts as the best line of argument in any theory, and no agreement about whether their principal achievements can be combined in a unified grand theory (Burchill et al, p. 12)

Theories should not, therefore, be approached as right or wrong, better or worse, but rather different ways on how to interpret the complexity of international relations - though every scholar is subject to seeing the world through different analytical lenses.

Still, the topic of institutions in International Relations spans decades of theorizing: “no topic in international relations theory has generated more debate over the last decade than the role of international institutions – whether institutions matter, why states invest in them, and how they influence decisionmakers’ choices in world politics” (Schweller; Priess, 1997, p .2) and it is worth making a quick overview of what some perspectives in International Relations theory have to say about institutional power, relevance and independence when facing states.

This chapter is dedicated to giving you no more than a swift, superficial overview of some theories of international relations (yes, there are many more!) that could assist in understanding different perspectives on the topic of Security Council Reform and, therefore, prepare deeper arguments and positions.

Realism and its heritage commonly advocates for four main assumptions in international relations (Schweller and Press, 1997, p. 5):

- The State is the main actor in international politics
- International affairs take place in a state of anarchy (not in the sense of chaos but rather in the sense of an absence of an authority above the State)
- The nature of international interaction is essentially conflictual (though authors may present different motives, such as human nature or anarchy)
- Power plays the central role in international politics.

When it comes to institutions, traditional realism argues that “institutions enable Great Powers to rule others and to manage regional and world affairs more effectively and efficiently than would be possible in their absence” (Schweller and Press, 1997, p.3), though recognizes that Great Powers are still subject to the norms they put in place and that there are consequences for non compliance. This realist perspective can be very useful when analyzing the Security Council as a direct reflection of the P5’s (the permanent 5 of the Security Council: The United States, The United Kingdom, France, Russia and China) power and their assumed responsibility over international affairs in matters of security. Additionally, traditional realism also believes that “Institutions reflect the power relationships that existed at their creation; they are representations of the past that endure beyond the situations and interest that created them” (Schweller and Priess, 1997, p.9), which also points to the fact that the Security Council resists from a time when power dynamics in international affairs were notably different than what they currently are. It is also important to note that the realist perspective of power is

deeply linked to how economic and military capabilities (tools, assets) are distributed among countries.

Later, traditional realism has been used as a basis for the creation of other theories that stem from the same 4 assumptions, though they may differ in other topics. Within the realist heritage, one can find either theories that are remarkably negative when it comes to institutional power and influence over international affairs, such as neorealism – whose main author John Mearsheimer (1994) concluded that "institutions have minimal influence on state behavior" (Schweller, Priess, 1997, p.5) as institutions are ultimately subject to how power/capabilities are distributed and, therefore, subject to the interests of great powers – as well as theories that build upon realist analysis of institutions, such as modified structural realism which argues that international institutions serve four vital functions (Schweller and Priess, 1997, p.9):

1. Creates stability and helps fill in the gap between rising political participation and weak governing institutions
2. Participation in these institutions can be offered in exchange for an effort to reduce issues such as nationalism, militarization and conflict
3. Can be used to manage nuclear proliferation, either politically or technically
4. Gives weaker states a chance to voice their concerns and a greater influence over their stronger counterparts

When it comes to realism's historical rival liberalism, there are also different perspectives that descend from their original counterpart. The more important iteration of liberalism in International Relations to the institutions discussion is liberal institutionalism. This strand of liberalism "shares with neo-realism an acceptance of the importance of the state and the anarchical condition of the international system, though liberal institutionalists argue that the prospects for cooperation, even in an anarchical world, are greater than the neo-realists would have us believe" (Burchil et all, 2005, p. 65).

Using concepts such as game theory, liberal institutionalists believe that institutions enable cooperative behavior from states (presuming a pre-existing will to cooperate, which is also different from neo-realism) by features such as reducing transaction costs (the costs related to the negotiation step of any cooperative endeavor) and reduces the shadow of the future (the fear that current allies could turn into enemies in the future).

Applied to the UN System and the Security Council, institutional neoliberalism could be used to analyse why strong, legitimate institutions are important for international cooperation in providing predictability, information (see the many reports on countries, conflicts and

international challenges provided by international organizations) and enhancing trust between parties that would otherwise be in conflict.

Other, often more modern theories that do not fall within the realism *versus* liberalism dilemma also offer valuable insights on understanding institutions and international cooperation. The English School of International Relations' main claim, for example, is that "sovereign states will form a society, albeit an anarchical one in that they do not have to submit to the will of a higher power" (Burchill et al, 2005, p.84). This means that even in an anarchical environment, states will share basic values that, institutionalized, start to rule interactions. This does not mean that the English School does not cover conflict and war in their analysis, but rather, "Its members regard violence as an endemic feature of the 'anarchical society' […] they also stress that it is controlled to an important extent by international law and morality" (Burchill et al, 2005, p.84).

Lastly, Constructivism is one of the most prominent theories on the analysis of institutions, though it differs the most from the traditional theories. Constructivists hold that "normative or ideational structures are just as important as material structures. Where neo-realists emphasize the material structure of the balance of military power […] Constructivists argue that systems of shared ideas, beliefs and values also have structural characteristics, and that they exert a powerful influence on social and political action" (Burchill et al, 2005, p.196). Material reality, according to constructivism, depends on a relationship with social elements such as identities and perception to have meaning. Additionally, it is this socially constructed identity that informs state interests and actions. "For example, Canada and Cuba both exist alongside the United States, yet the simple balance of military power cannot explain the fact that the former is a close American ally, the latter a sworn enemy" (Burchill et al, 2005, p.84). This relationship between material reality and social elements ultimately manifests itself in the anarchical environment of international politics, as "Anarchy is what states make of it" (Wendt, 1992). This means that in the absence of a global authority, states themselves socialize and build the rules of the game.

Both the English School and Constructivism are of prime importance to the debate of Security Council Reform, as it informs debates on non-material power, shared values and international community which are key to actors such as the G4.

2.2 Global Chaos in 2025: a crash course

The United Nations' creation is tied intrinsically to the idea of power. This institution was created by the end of the largest military conflict ever seen by humanity, the Second Great War, when realist tradition in International Relations was at its peak. Foreign policy and cooperation were, accordingly, based primarily on security issues and military power.

Unsurprisingly, therefore, the Security Council - the organ within the UN System that embodies the hard aspects of power and has jurisdiction over security topics (the main driver of states behavior according to realist tradition) – far outweighs the General Assembly in political capital: “The UN was set up with the Security Council as its dominant organ and beneath it the general Assembly and an array of other bodies dealing with specific issues, such as the EOCOSOC, the Secretariat and the ICJ” (Bouratonis, 2004. p . 3).

Bouratonis (2004) also goes as far to say that the Security Council was structured in such a way as to reflect both the power distribution within countries as well as a proportional representation, a sort of microcosmos of the UN membership as a whole. What comes into question lately, though, is that both of these instances of representation have gone through significant changes since 1945. The United Kingdom, France and the URSS (now Russia) have declined in their great power status in lieu of new emerging faces in the International System, as countries such as Japan, Germany, Brazil and India resurface as main drivers of international economy and politics and the UN membership multiplies almost fourfold.

Meanwhile, the organ shows more and more symptoms of the same disease that plagued the League of Nations - the lack of concrete action and effectiveness: “Obviously the League of Nations was unable to fulfill the “core of its mandate”, i.e. to prevent future wars. Its failure was definite when it could not forestall the outbreak of WW II. During the war the League of Nations was of no political relevance whatsoever.” (Yurtsever; Hmaidan, 2019, p.451). The current inability of the United Nations when it comes to putting aggression between countries (especially great powers) to a halt poses an uncanny similarity to the League of Nations’ failure.

Even though Article 24 of the United Nations Charter states that the member states confide in the Security Council “[…] to ensure prompt and effective action […]”, this club of Great Powers has shown little effectiveness in the latest major conflicts such as the Palestinian Genocide and Russia’s invasion of Ukraine, as the veto power - created to preserve such Great Power’s national interest even in face of a supranational organization such as the UN - ends up freezing all attempts of approving resolutions.

This pampering to Great Powers also freezes any attempts to amend the charter and reform the organization’s structure. Article 108 guarantees that

> Amendments to the present Charter shall come into force for all Members of the United Nations when they have been adopted by a vote of two thirds of the members of the General Assembly and ratified in accordance with their respective constitutional processes by two thirds of the Members of the United Nations, including all the permanent members of the Security Council (United Nations, 1945)

In this discussion, we should always keep in mind that international law and institutions are still subject to states’ interests and sovereignty. As stated before, anarchy is what states

make of it (Wendt,1992), and in this context, the strength of multilateral institutions such as the United Nations is subject to changing priorities and policies from member states. Under the administration of Donald Trump, the United States as been one of the main actors contributing to undermine multilateral institutions in lieu of a unilateral, nationalist approach. Cooper writes that

> Trump's trade wars against China and its European partners, and his withdrawal of the US from several international agreements and institutions, put multilateralism in an uncomfortable position mainly because these anti-multilateral stances came from the president of a country that was the creator of the multilateral order that emerged in the aftermath of WWII (Cooper et al, 2025).

This movement also brought to light populist leaders in other countries, such as Bolsonaro in Brazil, Orbán in Hungary and others. Just as the United States seemed to lead the world into multilateral cooperation at the end of the Cold War (when its main competitor, the Soviet Union, collapsed) it is now steering towards a world less bound by global governance and solidarity. At the UN's annual grand session of the General Assembly, President Donald Trump included many sharp, yet symbolic comments towards the United Nations, amidst discussions of the organization's effectiveness at solving global issues. When claiming to have ended 7 "unendable wars", Donald Trump stated:

> (…) the United Nations did not even try to help in any of them. I ended seven wars, dealt with the leaders of each and every one of these countries, and never even received a phone call from the United Nations offering to help in finalizing the deal (The American Presidency Project, 2025).

The fact that this statement comes from the head of a country member of the P5 is also very showing: instead of resourcing to the Security Council and relying on its ability to keep security matters in check, the United States chose to unilaterally act towards each conflict, with no consequences in sight.

This lack of regard from main players towards the Security Council is not a cause, but rather a symptom of the global move away from multilateralism. In fact, latest events in International Relations, such as the humanitarian crisis in Gaza and Russia's invasion of Ukraine clearly show "growing disparity among UN members regarding key principles of the UN charter, including the non-aggression principle, constituting another indication that the institutions of the multilateral order are also in crisis" (Cooper et al, p. 1828). As players such as the United Kingdom, France and China strategically support reform projects that fits their interest, Russia and the United States use their veto power to avoid any consequence towards their military actions, sending the organ into a deep paralysis.

Other global crises, such as the pandemic, has also contributed to expose the flaws and weaknesses in the current multilateral system, showing that

> (…) many states, even highly developed ones, were/are not well prepared to engage in multilateralism in times of crisis and scarcity. This fact is evidenced by the fierce competition among developed countries for masks and vaccines at the expense of poor countries. States' turn to bilateral vaccination exports, which consists of exporting vaccines to friendly nations instead of supplying the COVID-19 Vaccines Global Access (COVAX) multilateral scheme, was another implication of declining multilateralism (Cooper et al, 2025).

2.3 Past powers, present issues

Amid this context of changing polarities and weakening multilateralism, what does the Security Council even do? What are their responsibilities, possibilities of action, and how has it worked over the last decades?

The Security Council has clear roles and responsibilities outlined in the UN Charter:

> to maintain international peace and security in accordance with the principles and purposes of the United Nations;
> to investigate any dispute or situation which might lead to international friction;
> to recommend methods of adjusting such disputes or the terms of settlement;
> to formulate plans for the establishment of a system to regulate armaments;
> 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 United Nations in "strategic areas";
> to recommend to the General Assembly the appointment of the Secretary-General and, together with the Assembly, to elect the Judges of the International Court of Justice (United Nations Security Council, 1945)

Some of these responsibilities have concrete examples in reality. Especially after the collapse of the Soviet Union and an "unipolar moment"[1] for the United States, international cooperation through institutions worked at a high. The Security Council managed to investigate and contribute to settling regional conflicts such as Iraq's invasion on Kuwait in the Gulf War or the Bosnian Crisis. To say that the great powers worked unanimously during this period is a stretch, but they were in fact much more cooperative when compared to current standards, where most attempts at a resolution are barred by one of the P5: "From 1991 to 1993, the Council prolifically adopted 185 resolutions, as compared to 685 in the previous 46 years of

[1] Considering international politics were bipolar (led by two rival great powers, the United States and the Soviet Union), after the Soviet Union's collapse, the United States could enjoy an unipolar moment: being the only great power in international politics at the time.

the UN's existence. (Malone, 2004, p. 6) It also launched 15 new peacekeeping operations versus 17 in the preceding 46 years. (Malone, 2004, p. 6).

Interestingly, France and the United Kingdom have not vetoed any resolutions since 1989. For the past 37 years, all vetoes were made by the United States and Russia (often along with China). As Russia vetoed continuously resolutions aimed at its own invasion in Ukraine, the United States vetoed repeatedly resolutions aimed at solving the Palestinian crisis, in support of its close partner Israel (United Nations, 2026).

It is also not correct to state that all of the United Nations' peacekeeping operations were successful. Notably, some Security Council interventions such as the peacekeeping mission in Rwanda (1994) and the council-sanctioned military intervention in Libya (2011) began exposing the system's weaknesses and failures to the world by portraying how missions were still ultimately subject to the Security Council's will. French journal The Conversation writes about the U.N's participation in the Rwandan crisis:

> The Rwandan peacekeeping mission, like U.N. peacekeeping in general, suffered from having a very narrow mandate. Officially, peacekeepers are tasked by the U.N. security council with monitoring, assisting and investigating crimes and violence. Soldiers may only use force in self defense or to help evacuate foreigners. This limited mandate put soldiers in an impossible situation when genocide began in April 1994. Some soldiers felt a moral obligation to intervene when they saw civilian killings (Lakin, 2019).

A big shift in cooperation prospects can be seen in the beginning of the 21st century, with two similar events: the United States' invasion in Afghanistan, in 2001, and Iraq, in 2003. After the terrorist attacks in New York in the 11th of September and the proclamation of Washington's war on terror, the Security Council passed two resolutions, 1368 and 1373. These resolutions don't openly affirm that the US should, under the aegis of international law, wage a "self-defence" war against Afghanistan, but there was also a consensus among the Security Council that the self-defence clause in the UN Charter was applicable.

The second instance, in 2003, tells a different story. After voicing concerns about weapons of mass destruction in Iraq, the United States went to the Security Council seeking their approval for another military intervention. This time, the Council actively decided it went against international law, leading to one of the biggest ruptures in current international order. Washington decided to unilaterally invade Iraq all the same, much to Secretary General Kori Annan's concern:

> The United Nations secretary general, Kofi Annan, declared explicitly for the first time last night that the US-led war on Iraq was illegal. Mr Annan said that the invasion was not sanctioned by the UN security council or in accordance with the UN's founding charter (The Guardian, 2004)

This event became a dangerous precedent: great powers unilaterally choosing to take military action against other states with no regard for international law, also seen in episodes such as Russia's invasion of Ukraine, the United States' attacks on Iraq or their invasion on Venezuela (though the former does not concern the timeframe of our committee).

How, therefore, are nations to trust current international order if the actors responsible for maintaining such order act outside the rules they, themselves, shaped?

2.4 Reforming the UNSC? How are we supposed to do that?

Before presenting the possible outcomes of this committee's discussion, it would be useful to recall the current structure of the Security Council's voting environment. Article 27 of the UN Charter states that:

> Each member of the Security Council shall have one vote;
> Decisions of the Security Council on **procedural matters** shall be made by an affirmative vote of nine members;
> Decisions of the Security Council on all **other matters** shall be made by an affirmative vote of nine members including the concurring votes of the permanent members; provided that, in decisions under Chapter VI, and under paragraph 3 of Article 52, a party to a dispute shall abstain from voting. (United Nations Security Council, 1945, grifo próprio)

The definitions of procedural and other matters are key for understanding the prospect of Security Council reform. According to the United Nations' repertoire, procedural issues can fit into either of the following categories:

> Provisional Rules of Procedure (for instance, including a new official language, as done with Arabic in 1982);
> Membership in the United Nations: new members will be admitted into the United Nations after a decision of the General Assembly following the recommendation of the Security Council Security Council relations with other UN Organs, such as the own General Assembly or the International Court of Justice, for example. (United Nations Security Council)

For all other matters outside of the examples above, an affirmative vote from nine members (necessarily including the permanent five) is necessary for approving resolutions such as military action or peacekeeping missions. This is the device in the UN Charter that provides the P5 with their **veto power**. Given the many challenges faced by the United Nations Security Council in contemporary times, it is not surprising that many coalitions have been formed to pressure the organization into a reform.

The G4, composed by Brazil, Japan, Germany and India, often meet along the margins of the General Assembly to coordinate efforts. On September 2024, the Foreign Relations Ministers for the G4 countries issued a joint statement to the press:

> The G4 Ministers noted the current significant challenges to the multilateral system with the United Nations at its core. They stressed that a comprehensive reform of the Security Council is an essential part of any endeavor to make the United Nations better reflect contemporary geopolitical realities and thus fit for the present and future (Ministério das Relações Exteriores, 2024).

This joint statement and the meeting where it was formed also included future goals for the G4 countries to continue their advocacy for the UNSC reform, such as the Summit of the Future - a high level event within the United Nations, parallel to the General Assembly, “focused on forging a new international consensus on delivering a better present and safeguarding the future” (United Nations, 2024). This group’s most concrete project involves expanding the security council chairs from 15 to 25, including 6 new permanent seats.

Interestingly, the most significant opposition to the G4 countries does not come from the P5 (permanent 5) in the Security Council. In fact, “each G4 country has support from at least one P5 nation” (Pollack, 2021). This opposition comes, rather, from another group: the Uniting for Consensus (also known as the Coffee Club) that seek to maintain the status quo and prevent the G4 goals from reaching reality. This group is formed by countries such as Italy, Pakistan, South Korea, Mexico, and Canada. The rather broad objective for this group (opposing the G4) allows each individual country to preserve their own national interest which would be harmed by the expansion of the Security Council. Pakistan, for example, is against the expansion due to its security concerns regarding India, while Canada would prefer the status quo in order to preserve its close ally’s power.

Generally, pressures to reform not only the Security Council but global governance in general sees the support of the Secretariat. Along with the current Secretary General’s advocacy for UNSC reform seen at the beginning of this committee proposal, former Secretary Generals have already proposed their own plans of reform. Famously, former Secretary General Koffi Anan was very vocal towards this reform. In 2005, he released within his report “In Larger Freedom: towards development, security and human rights for all” clear guidelines for this to happen:

> If the UN is to be a vehicle through which states can meet the challenges of today and tomorrow, it needs major reforms to strengthen its relevance, effectiveness, and accountability. In September, decisions should be reached to make the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council more strategic in their work. Just as we contemplate creating new institutions such as a Peacebuilding Commission, we should abolish those that are no longer needed, such as the Trusteeship Council. No reform of the UN would be complete, however, without Security Council reform. The council's present makeup reflects the world of 1945, not that of the twenty-first century. It must be reformed to include states that contribute most to the organization, financially, militarily, and diplomatically, and to represent broadly the current

> membership of the UN. Two models for expanding the council from 15 to 24 members are now on the table: one creates six new permanent seats and three new non-permanent ones; the other creates nine new non-permanent seats. Neither model expands the veto power currently enjoyed by the five permanent members. I believe the time has come to tackle this issue head on. Member states should make up their minds and reach a decision before the September summit (Annan, 2005).

Though Kofi's proposals did not see completion, the Kofi Annan foundation remains advocating for reform in Global Governance to this day. Even Before Kofi Annan, Secretary General Boutros Boutros-Ghali first started openly speaking about the need for reform and how it is a "critical issue of our time. It must be dealt with seriously, carefully and responsibly. It can be at the heart of a United Nations transformed into a truly effective system for the maintenance of international peace and security, now and into the future." (United Nations, 1996).

What are then, possible resolutions for this committee's attempt at reform? There are many paths towards making the UNSC more representative. Delegates can either tackle the **voting system**, such as limiting what is the most criticized device of the Security Council: the veto power, by restricting P5's possibilities of voting if they're directly involved in a dispute (taking away Russia's possibility of veto on a resolution regarding their invasion in Ukraine, for example), including more veto players to dilute the P5's power or even expanding the quantity of affirmative votes necessary to approve a resolution from P5 + 4 rotating members to P5 + 8 rotating members; the **structure of the Security Council**, such as expanding the number of rotative seats, including more permanent seats (with or without veto power); or even the UNSC's **relation with other organs**, such as giving the General Assembly or the International Court of Justice the power to review and nullify UNSC's resolutions based on the UN Charter.

The examples given are merely some of the infinite possibilities of reform. Do not forget that even though the UNSC's legitimacy is at an all time low and even the great powers have shown relatively sympathetic towards global governance reform, a reform proposal in this committee will still have to **balance** many **contrasting interests** between many nations, and the extent of the reform may vary. Do not shy away from proposing big ruptures nor feel discontent with small adjustments: reforming such a powerful institution is in itself a hard task and any progress made towards a more representative global governance is already a win.

3 PRESENTING THE COMMITTEE

The UN General Assembly is the main forum for multilateral discussion and policy-making both within the UN System as well as the international relations as a whole. Being the synthesis of the strive towards a place where a community of states can debate as equals, each of the 193 Member States can vote equally. There are yearly regular sessions between September and December, as well as extraordinary sessions as required.

The topics considered important to the General Assembly are: recommendations relating to international peace and security, the election of non-permanent members of the Security Council, the election of members of the Trusteeship Council, the admission of new Member States, the suspension of rights and privileges of membership, the expulsion of members as well as questions relating to operation and budgetary systems, according to Article 18, depend on a ⅔ (two-thirds) majority of the members present and voting. (United Nations, 1945)

Other questions, including determining if additional questions should be decided by the same ⅔ majority, shall be made by a majority of the members present and voting. Therefore, the General Assembly may debate a plethora of topics, though the yearly sessions tend to focus on the latest events and worries of international politics.

This committee specifically would be based on a General Conference of the members of the United Nations for the purpose of reviewing the present Charter. As explained in Article 109 of the United Nations Charter:

> 1. A General Conference of the Members of the United Nations for the purpose of reviewing the present Charter may be held at a date and place to be fixed by a two-thirds vote of the members of the General Assembly and by a vote of any nine members of the Security Council. Each Member of the United Nations shall have one vote in the conference;
> 2. Any alteration of the present Charter recommended by a two-thirds vote of the conference shall take effect when ratified in accordance with their respective constitutional processes by two thirds of the Members of the United Nations including all the permanent members of the Security Council;
> 3. If such a conference has not been held before the tenth annual session of the General Assembly following the coming into force of the present Charter, the proposal to call such a conference shall be placed on the agenda of that session of the General Assembly, and the conference shall be held if so decided by a majority vote of the members of the General Assembly and by a vote of any seven members of the Security Council.

This Article forms the basis for this present committee. Hypothetically, President Lula of Brazil - a strong advocate for the reform of multilateral institutions, especially within the UN System - would invoke the General Conference for Charter Review. This Conference would be

approved and is to take place right after the annual regular session of the Assembly General, in 2025.

Figure 1 - View of the empty General Assembly hall from its main aisle



Fonte: UN Photos

4 CORE POSITIONS

4.1 The P5

Although one may believe at first glance that the P5 is unanimously interested in keeping their veto privileges and preserving the status quo, reality shows that this group is a bit more heterogeneous than expected. Each nation in the P5, although contempt with their veto power, knows they have to adapt in an environment of changing polarity and a possible reform on global governance. Instead of unilaterally choosing to undermine every reform attempt, the P5 countries act as patrons to reform attempts that would suit their interests and possibly amplify their political capital, even if that means the restriction of the veto capabilities. The extent to which they're excited about shifting the status quo also varies, of course.

4.2 The G4

Compared to the P5 and the Uniting for Consensus group, the G4 is the closest to an unanimous, coherent proposal between members. The strive towards reform in global governance and a place for Brazil, India, Germany and Japan in the Security Council has never left their diplomatic agenda, even among shifts in priority as governments change. G4 countries are surely to not only band together for reform, but also use their relationship with other countries (such as attaining patronage from great powers or legitimacy as leaders from fellow countries) to pressure the status quo.

4.3 Uniting for Consensus (UFC)/The Coffee Club

Out of the three groups mentioned, UFC is the least stable. Rather than being a group with set proposals and membership, UFC is closer to an informal counter-movement, set to oppose the reform attempts made by the G4 either with their own proposals or the decision to maintain status quo with each country's national interest in mind. Participation in this group is the most subject to change in governments foreign policy's priorities, often with the goal of protecting allied P5's political tools or directly opposing one of the G4 countries.

4.4 Unaligned

Although most countries in the committee will roughly fit into one of the categories above, nations that float in a limbo between these three political parties are still essential to the debate. As covered before, the General Assembly needs a ⅔ majority to approve

resolutions and each country equals one vote, no matter how powerful. This means that it is crucial to sway the unaligned into a reform proposal that fits into their national interests, seeking majority.

5 RELEVANT QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

a. The current effectiveness of the Security Council in an unstable international system (humanitarian crises in Africa, Russian invasion on Ukraine, Palestinian Genocide and more)
    i. Have the security council decisions been effective in matters related to security in the last decades? If not, where are the weaknesses/points of attention in this system?
b. The issue of representation with the UNSC's mandatory decisions
    i. Were the mandatory decisions put in place by the UNSC representative and fair? Is it a problem that one of the few instruments of international cooperation capable of issuing mandatory decisions lies in the interests of 5 countries?
c. The issue of representation within the UNSC discussions on security matters
    i. Over matters of global security in the last few years, was the Security Council inclusive in its discussion? Among participants of the discussion, were there members of civil society or states affected by those issues?
d. The issue of representation in terms of the current state of international affairs compared to 1945 and the ascendent global south
    i. Are current international organizations (mainly in the UN system) representative of the growing role that the Global South has played since the end of the Second Great War? If not, how should this be addressed in the future?
e. The loss of legitimacy and faith in the Security Council
    i. Considering the current state of multilateralism and states' approach to the Security Council, how could the organization be reformed/changed to fulfill the needs of the international order?
f. In synthesis, what should a revised Security Council look like?
    i. What is feasible in terms of reform and what isn't?

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ANNEX A - TABLE OF DELEGATIONS

VOTING, PERMANENT MEMBERS

Arab Republic of Egypt
Argentine Republoc
Commonwealth of Australia
Canada
Democratic People’s Republic of Korea
Democratic Republic of the Congo
Federal Republic of Germany
Federative Republic of Brazil
French Republic
Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan
Islamic Republic of Iran
Islamic Republic of Pakistan
Italian Republic
Japan
Kingdom of Spain
People’s Republic of China
Republic of Colombia
Republic of Haiti
Republic of India
Republic of Indonesia
Republic of Iraq
Republic of Korea
Republic of Nigeria
Republic of the Philippines
Republic of South Africa

Russian Federation
Socialist Republic of Vietnam
State of Israel
State of Kuwait
State of Libya
Republic of Turkiye
Ukraine
United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland
United Mexican States
United States of America

NON VOTING MEMBERS

CINI
CINI

ANNEX B - GLOSSARY

Coffee Club/Uniting for Consensus informal group created to oppose the G4's attempts at reform. Unlike the G4 and P5, membership is informal and diverse, subject to each country's interest within global governance and their diplomatic priorities. Frequent members include Italy, Pakistan, Mexico, Argentina, South Korea, Spain, Canada, Colombia, Turkey and others.

G4 Term used for the group created by Brazil, India, Japan and Germany to advocate for the reform of the UN Security Council and international governance.

Institutions are defined by the same author as "persistent and connected sets of rules, formal and informal, that prescribe behavioural roles, constrain activity, and shape expectations" (Keohane, 1990, p. 732). They can take the form of "international regimes - institutions with explicit rules, agreed upon by governments, that pertains to particular sets of issues in international relations - or bureacratic organizations, which assign specific professional roles to their employees" (Keohane, 1990, p. 733)**.** As we can see in the current state of international affairs, multilateralism is often not a clear-cut strategy, strictly used by every country. In fact, most countries often resort to other forms of cooperation, such as **bilateralism** (a more direct relation between two parties or, in IR, two states) or may even resort to no cooperation at all in **unilateralism** (acting with no regard towards international institutions).

Legitimacy is a pillar of the discussions to be made by this committee. In political science (especially within International Relations), legitimacy is a rather difficult concept to grasp and define. Most definitions tend to focus on the "right of an actor or institution to rule" and whether politics are exercised within the norms. If the legitimacy of the Security Council is being brought to question, for example, it means its right as an institution to rule global security is in check. It is important to not mix legitimacy with **legality**, another key concept. In International Relations, legality means accordance to the many sources of international law, such as treaties and the UN Charter.

Multilateralism (Keohane): One of the main definitions for multilateralism used in International Relations defines it "as the practice of co-ordinating national policies in groups of three or more states, through adhoc arrangements or by means of institutions." (Keohane, 1990, p. 733). This means that multilateralism is, in essence, between states, and has a very intimate relation with international institutions.

P5: Non-Official term used for the Permanent Members of the UN Security Council, with veto power: The United States of America, France, the United Kingdom, Russia and China.

“Unaligned”: for the purposes of this committee, “unaligned” countries would be those that do not fit directly into any of the previous categories, but are still crucial for the debate in order to reach majority for votes and pressure other players.