

# **GS Paper 2**

## **International Relations**

### **India and UN**

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## Context:

- **December 12, 2023---** India voted in favour of a United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) resolution that called on Israel for an immediate ceasefire, the protection of civilians in accordance with international law and the release of all hostages.

As many as 153 nations, including India, voted in favour of the resolution, while 10, including US, Israel and Austria, voted against and 23 countries, including Argentina, Ukraine and Germany abstained from voting.

Israel expressed that though unsatisfied in general with the decision made in the U.N. Assembly, it appreciate India's votes in favor of the amendments of both U.S. and Austria.

At the UNGA the U.S. also proposed an amendment that would insert a specific mention of "heinous terrorist attacks by Hamas that took place in Israel starting 7 October 2023 and the taking of hostages", while Austria proposed an amendment to name Hamas and other groups that are holding Israeli hostages. India voted in favour of them, but both amendments were dropped as they did not receive the votes required.

Earlier India has abstained from the previous UNGA resolution on October 27, 2023, that had called for an immediate. Clarifying on this, India stated that the resolution had not included any "explicit condemnation" of the terror attacks of October 7 or of hostage releases. In the absence of all the elements of our approach not being covered in the final text of the resolution, India abstained in the vote.

- **December 1, 2022---** India assumed the monthly rotating presidency of the UN Security Council (UNSC) on December 1, the second time in its two-year tenure as an elected member of the Council in 2021-22.
- **December 31, 2022---** India's tenure ( 2021-22) as non permanent member of UN Security Council ended.
- India has declared its candidature for non permanent membership of UNSC for the 2028-29 term.

## UN Reforms

During the December Presidency of India at the UNSC, Ms. Kamboj ( the Permanent Representative of India at the United Nations )said that the reformation of the United Nations is the **“most complex process”** of the UN system.

Ms. Kamboj said that there is a lot of “pessimism and cynicism” about the possibility of reform of the UN Security Council as the item of reform has remained on the agenda of the UNSC for nearly three decades without any substantive progress.

**“Today, you have almost two hundred member states. Their voices are not being heard anymore. Let’s say, the voice of the voiceless, the smaller states, the countries from Africa - who hears them? Everything is being scripted for them in many ways,” Ms. Kamboj said , warning that “may be the UN will be overtaken by other institutions for example that are more democratic such as the G-20”**

## **Ques/- Need to reform UNSC**

### **1) Power distribution within UNSC is asymmetrical.**

- For example owing to the exercise of Veto power, US has more than 40 times used its veto power to save Israel regarding the Israel-Palestine issue.
- As far as the issue of chemical attacks by the Syrian regime is concerned Russia has always vetoed it and China has sometimes vetoed and sometimes abstained.
- China has vetoed a resolution proposed by India to designate Masood Azhar as a terrorist. (In fact, US, UK, and France have passed this resolution)

### **2) Representation within UNSC is asymmetrical.** There is an under-representation of the African continent, Latin America and Asia.

**3)UN is facing a permanent financial crisis.**

**4)Stalling of various development projects by the UN.**

**5)Greater domination of the US and other Western countries as important donors in day to day functioning of the UN and its bodies.**

**6)Non-binding recommendations of UNGA** which is another reason for the ineffectiveness of the UN.

## **Ques/-India's Quest for permanent membership in UNSC**

- 1) India has a historic association with UN as being its founding member. Till now India, has been elected for eight terms as a non-permanent member seat of two years.
- 2) India has been one of the largest contributors to UN peacekeeping forces as of now. As of now, India has contributed more than 2 lakh peacekeepers to the UN. I
- 3) India has always upheld the essence of nuclear non-proliferation and arms trade.
- 4) India has always played a leading role in UN efforts in addressing climate change so much that in 2015 India was the key player in the negotiation of the Paris Agreement on climate change. India has gone forward with approving a 5 climate target called the "Panchamitra" strategy.

5) India is one of the largest financial contributors to the UN. India gives approximately \$ 40 million every year for supporting UN activities.

6) India has displayed the spirit of “unity in diversity”. India also has a very vibrant and stable civil society necessary for having a stable democracy.

7) India has turned out to be one of the most stable democracies in the world.

8) India has emerged as that voice of the voiceless therefore a true representation of the global south.

9) India has spearheaded many multilateral organizations like G20, SCO, SAARC, BIMSTEC, etc.

10) Progress from Incredible India” to “Inevitable India”---It is predicted India will become the world’s second largest economy by 2075.



All the P5 countries except China have always supported India's candidacy. It is only through diplomacy and multi alignment, India can maneuver China to accept its position.

India and other G4 nations of Brazil, Germany and Japan have been at the forefront of efforts calling for urgent reform of the Security Council, which has remained deeply divisive in dealing with current challenges.

India has asserted that the Council, in its current form, does not reflect today's geo-political realities and UN position as a global institution can be upheld if developing power like India achieves a permanent seat at UNSC.