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# India's Campaign for the 2028–29 United Nations Security Council Non-Permanent Seat

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## Recent Developments:

- **India** is set to launch its campaign for a **2028–29 Non-Permanent Seat** in the **United Nations Security Council**, reaffirming its commitment to strengthening its role in **global governance** and advancing the interests of the **Global South**.
- The campaign comes amid growing geopolitical instability marked by the **West Asia conflicts, Russia–Ukraine conflict, increasing geopolitical rivalry and divisions within multilateral institutions**, making the election strategically significant.
- The election will test India's diplomatic outreach across the **Global South, Organisation of Islamic Cooperation members, Shanghai Cooperation Organisation countries, African nations, Small Island Developing States and major Western partners**.
- The campaign also reinforces India's long-standing demand for **permanent membership of a reformed United Nations Security Council** that reflects contemporary geopolitical realities.

## Key Issues and Priorities for India's 2028–29 United Nations Security Council Bid:

### *Diplomatic Mobilisation:*

- India will require extensive diplomatic engagement because **Tajikistan** is also contesting for the **Asia–Pacific non-permanent seat** in the **United Nations Security Council**, making the election competitive.
- India's diplomatic outreach aims to secure broad-based international support through sustained bilateral and multilateral engagement across different regions.

### *Building International Support:*

- Reports indicate that **Tajikistan** enjoys support from several members of the **Organisation of Islamic Cooperation**, increasing the electoral challenge for India.
- India will therefore need to expand support beyond traditional partners such as **Fiji, the United States, Austria and Sri Lanka** by strengthening engagement with countries across **Africa, Latin America, the Caribbean, the Pacific and the Global South**.

### *Leadership of the Global South:*

- India seeks to project itself as a **responsible and credible voice of the Global South** by advocating issues relating to **energy security, food security, fertiliser availability, sustainable development, climate justice and equitable global governance**.
- Through its diplomatic engagement, India aims to promote the concerns and developmental priorities of developing countries within the global multilateral framework.

### *United Nations Security Council Reform:*

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- India will continue advocating the **expansion and reform of the United Nations Security Council** to make it more **representative, democratic, transparent and reflective of present-day geopolitical realities**.
- India maintains that the existing structure no longer adequately represents the contemporary distribution of global political and economic power.

#### *Expanding Diplomatic Engagement:*

- India's diplomatic outreach, including high-level engagements by the **External Affairs Minister**, has increasingly focused on the **Gulf region, Caribbean countries and other strategic partners** to broaden support ahead of the election.
- Such engagement also strengthens India's long-term diplomatic partnerships beyond the immediate election process.

#### *Increasing Electoral Competition:*

- The recent electoral victory of **Kyrgyzstan** over the **Philippines** for a **United Nations Security Council** seat demonstrates that elections have become increasingly competitive because of changing geopolitical alignments.
- The election also marked **Kyrgyzstan's first-ever membership** of the **United Nations Security Council** since joining the **United Nations** in **1992**, highlighting the growing opportunities for emerging countries in multilateral diplomacy.

#### United Nations Security Council:

##### *About the United Nations Security Council:*

- The **United Nations Security Council** was established in **1945** under the **Charter of the United Nations** and is one of the **six principal organs** of the **United Nations**.
- It bears the **primary responsibility for maintaining international peace and security**, including conflict prevention, peacekeeping, sanctions and authorisation of collective security measures.

##### *Composition:*

- The **United Nations Security Council** consists of **15 Member States**, comprising **5 Permanent Members** and **10 Non-Permanent Members**.
- The **Permanent Members** are **China, France, Russia, the United Kingdom and the United States**, each possessing the **Veto Power**.
- The **10 Non-Permanent Members** are elected by the **United Nations General Assembly** for a **2-year term** and do not possess veto power.

##### *Regional Distribution of Non-Permanent Seats:*

- **5 seats** are allocated to **African and Asian States**.
- **1 seat** is allocated to **Eastern European States**.
- **2 seats** are allocated to **Latin American and Caribbean States**.
- **2 seats** are allocated to **Western European and Other States**.

##### *Election of Non-Permanent Members:*

- Elections are conducted **every year** through a **secret ballot** in the **United Nations General Assembly**.
- A candidate must secure a **two-thirds majority** of the members present and voting, even if it is the sole candidate for the seat.

##### *Binding Authority:*

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- The **United Nations Security Council** is the **only organ of the United Nations** whose decisions are **legally binding** on all **United Nations Member States** under the **Charter of the United Nations**.
- Its resolutions may include **peacekeeping operations, sanctions, diplomatic measures and authorisation of the use of force**, making it the most influential decision-making body of the **United Nations**.

## Way Forward:

### *Reforming the United Nations Security Council:*

- The existing imbalance of power between the **Permanent Members** and the wider **United Nations Membership** should be addressed to make the **United Nations Security Council** more **democratic, representative, transparent and legitimate**.
- Comprehensive institutional reforms should ensure that the Council reflects contemporary geopolitical, economic and demographic realities rather than the international power structure that emerged after the **Second World War**.

### *Expansion of Membership:*

- The **United Nations Security Council** should be expanded by providing greater representation to **Africa, Latin America and the Global South**, which remain under-represented in the existing structure.
- Countries such as **India, Germany, Brazil and South Africa** should be considered for permanent membership in recognition of their growing contributions to **international peace, global governance, sustainable development and multilateral cooperation**.

### *Improving Representation:*

- Both **Permanent** and **Non-Permanent Membership** should be restructured to ensure equitable regional representation and greater participation of developing countries in global decision-making.
- A more inclusive Council would enhance the legitimacy, credibility and effectiveness of the **United Nations Security Council** in addressing emerging international challenges.

### *Reforming the Veto Power:*

- The exercise of the **Veto Power** should be restricted in cases involving **Genocide, War Crimes, Crimes Against Humanity, Terrorism, Humanitarian Crises and Mass Atrocities**, enabling the Council to respond more effectively to serious global emergencies.
- Reform of the veto mechanism would reduce institutional paralysis and strengthen the credibility of the **United Nations Security Council**.

### *Enhancing Transparency and Accountability:*

- The working methods of the **United Nations Security Council** should become more transparent through **open debates, wider consultations and greater participation of affected non-member states**.
- Decisions relating to **sanctions, peacekeeping operations and collective security measures** should be implemented in a fair, impartial and consistent manner so that they are not perceived as serving the interests of only a few powerful countries.

### *India's Role in United Nations Security Council Reform:*

- In **September 2022**, India renewed its campaign for **United Nations Security Council Reform** by convening meetings of the **G4 Group** and the **L.69 Group** on the sidelines of the **United Nations General Assembly** in New York.

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- As a leading voice of the **Global South**, India should continue articulating the concerns of developing countries regarding **peace, security, development, climate justice and equitable global governance** within the multilateral system.
- India's expanding diplomatic engagement, development partnerships and leadership in multilateral institutions can strengthen its long-term claim for **Permanent Membership** of a reformed **United Nations Security Council**.

### Conclusion:

#### *India's 2028–29 Campaign:*

- India's campaign for the **2028–29 Non-Permanent Seat** in the **United Nations Security Council** represents both a significant diplomatic opportunity and an important test of its global outreach.
- The campaign provides India with an opportunity to reinforce its image as a **responsible stakeholder, leading voice of the Global South and strong advocate of multilateralism** amid an increasingly fragmented international order.
- Beyond securing a non-permanent seat, India seeks to promote **meaningful United Nations Security Council Reform, equitable representation, responsible use of the Veto Power and a more democratic, transparent and accountable multilateral system** capable of addressing contemporary global challenges.

### Value Addition for UPSC:

#### *Important Facts about the United Nations Security Council:*

- **Established: 1945**
- **Legal Basis: Charter of the United Nations**
- **Principal Responsibility: Maintenance of International Peace and Security**
- **Total Membership: 15 Members**
- **Permanent Members: China, France, Russia, the United Kingdom and the United States**
- **Non-Permanent Members: 10**
- **Tenure of Non-Permanent Members: 2 Years**
- **Electing Body: United Nations General Assembly**
- **Election Requirement: Two-Thirds Majority through Secret Ballot**
- **Unique Feature: Only United Nations organ whose resolutions are legally binding on all Member States**

#### *India and the United Nations Security Council at a Glance:*

- **Non-Permanent Membership: 1950–51, 1967–68, 1972–73, 1977–78, 1984–85, 1991–92, 2011–12 and 2021–22**
- **Permanent Membership Claim: Member of the G4 Group**
- **Major Priorities: Counter-Terrorism, Maritime Security, Peacekeeping Reforms, Multilateral Reform, Development-Oriented Security**
- **Recent Reform Initiative: Convening of G4 Group and L.69 Group Meetings during the United Nations General Assembly in 2022**