



# STRUCTURING OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL IN 1944

UNSC - BATHMUN 2023

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## Letter from your chairs

Honourable Delegates, welcome to BathMUN!

Hi, I'm your Head Chair for the UNSC, Morris Shaye. I'm from Brazil but now I'm studying Mechanical Engineering at the University of Sheffield. I first got into MUN in 2019 and travelled to many places whilst representing my school and now my university. MUN can look very scary at times and trust me we all make loads of mistakes, so feel free to reach out if you have any problems whatsoever.

And I am your French chair in this UNSC, Baptiste Dervaux. Born in Strasbourg, I now study Geography in La Sorbonne, Paris. The MUN world is a whole new story that opens to you, so

trust yourself, learn, enjoy, improve and create your place in our world. You can count on us to help you and introduce you to everything you need! Good luck with your preparation, don't hesitate to reach out to us if you need to.

Looking forward to meeting you in December.

We hope to see you soon,

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## Statement of the Issue

The delegates will be responsible for the creation of the UN Security Council and vote on how the chamber should be structured. It is key to not mention any events that took place after 1944, the delegates should base their arguments solely on the current geopolitical context (as of 21st August 1944, the Dumbarton Oaks conference)

We will be simulating the Dumbarton Oaks conference. For the voting on this first topic though, a two-thirds supermajority with no vetoes will be used. Other Rules of Procedure will either abide by the BathMUN conference standards or, if historically applicable, will be decided by the committee.

When approaching historical committees, it is important to acknowledge the difference between "reflection" and "breaking the meta". Hence information that has since come to light can be used to inform delegates' ideas of their foreign policy and potential solutions. However, no facts or events that have not occurred can be discussed and all information should be approached from the point of debate.

The debate surrounding reforming the Security Council is almost as old as the UN itself. Recent geopolitical events such as the Russian invasion of Ukraine or the escalation of the Israel-Palestine conflict have further highlighted the structural issues of the veto vote.

However, these key players are unlikely to give up their political advantage and hence modern reform is often limited and deadlocked.

This year in BathMUN's UNSC we aim to go back in time and step into the shoes of those at the heart of the formation of the UN and the Security Council's mandate.

In an unconventional committee such as this one, a clear understanding of the mandate and expectations is important. Hence, we would recommend if you have questions or concerns before the conference email us to clarify your queries.

And \*wink wink\*, should we discuss and pass a mandate for the UNSC, then perhaps we will have the chance to test it out in real-time.

## Historical Situation – League of Nations

When considering the formation of the UN and the Security Council, we must first consider the geopolitical landscape after World War II and the failings of the UN's predecessor, the League of Nations.

### *The excessively ambitious start of the League of Nations 1920*

The League of Nations was spearheaded by the United States of America during the Treaty of Versailles negotiations after WW1. In theory, it was supposed to prevent another major war like WW1 from happening, but as numbering suggests, that didn't work.

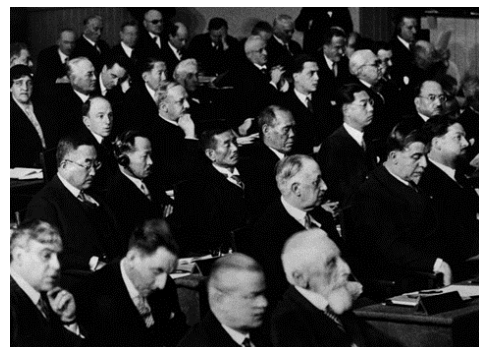
The League's duties, aims and structure were set up by the 26 articles called "The Covenant of the League of Nations". One of the core articles stated that the outbreak of a war of conquest (a war that was not initiated out of self-defence) was a crime against the international community. In the scenario, as per Articles 11 and 15, all member states would need to take "action" to resolve it. Therefore, in theory, the threat of global economic and military retaliation would keep potential aggressors at bay. However, the definition of this "action" was shallow and as shown by the 1931 Manchurian crisis, this agreement proved futile.

Alarmed by the arms race sparked during WW1, another main goal of the League was promoting disarmament as per Article 8 of the Covenant. However, the First World War proved to many the importance of military strength and many global powers refused to downscale their armies for fear of a new conflict.

The League also had the duty of arbitrating over new conflicts to help find a peaceful solution as per Article 13. The problem is that several of the conflicts in the 1920s and 30s were between European powers and their colonies/protectorates, not between Member States. Like the Abd el-Krim's Rif War (1921–1925) in between France and yet-to-be

Morocco. This shows one of the less ethical goals of the League, the maintenance of the imperialistic system since even though Article 22 contains provisions for the fair treatment of colonies, it also states that "*the tutelage of such peoples should be entrusted to advanced nations.*" Showing that the League didn't see the colonies as capable of commanding themselves.

Another general goal of the LoN was to improve overall living quality globally by improving people's working conditions, reducing drug traffic and tackling disease. This led to the creation of several subsidiary bodies that still exist to this day such as the ILO (International Labour Organisation).



*Figure 2 Delegates attending a League of Nations meeting, c. 1930.*

### *The Structure of The League of Nations*

The League of Nations had two main bodies, the Assembly (predecessor of the General Assembly) and the Council (predecessor of the Security Council).

The Secretariat set the agenda for the two bodies and administered the activities of the League. Besides the core bodies, it also set up the following organs: International Court of Justice,

International Labor Organization and Mandates Commission (to deal with/distribute the former colonies of Germany and the Ottoman Empire/Turkey).

The Assembly was composed originally of 42 countries and had 58 at its height. A proposed resolution could only come into effect by a unanimous vote. It was to meet every September and always started with lengthy discussions of the actions of the previous year and goals for the next, but what usually would happen was mostly formal decisions with low to zero real impact, so vetoes were as rare as impactful decisions.

The Assembly was still revolutionary as giving equal power and speaking opportunities to smaller countries was unprecedented and would become a cornerstone of the modern diplomatic system as represented by the current UN General Assembly. It also reinvented international politics since countries would usually only hold exclusive meetings to discuss peace and economic treaties in a stiff diplomatic style. The idea of parliamentary-style meetings with global members was incredibly important and served as a steppingstone to future UN procedures.

The second main body of the LoN was the LoN Council. At its conception it was meant to have 5 to 7 permanent members and 4 temporary members would be elected by the Assembly. The suggested permanent members were the United States, Italy, Japan, France and the United Kingdom with Germany and the Soviet Union joining later. In reality, only Italy, Japan, France and the United Kingdom were a part of it.

The Council was intended to be a forum for regular discussion between the great powers. Contrarily to the Assembly, it mainly focused on political matters. Matters such, as upholding and managing peace treaties, dealing with border and territorial disputes, inhuman treatment claims (the Human Rights Declaration didn't exist yet) etc. In identical form to the Assembly, it required unanimous voting.

The Council had the power to create and amend peace treaties, impose sanctions, determine military actions, and expel Member States. However, due to the need for unanimity, Member States needed to find broad compromises that often diminished the effectiveness of approved resolutions. Something that greatly improved the Council's accountability and effectiveness was the decision of most members to start sending foreign ministers instead of (often retired) political figures. For example, the United Kingdom sent Arthur Balfour and France sent an ex-prime minister.

### *The Failures of The League of Nations*

The League heavily relied on the adherence of the powers, especially the United States. However, after holding a congress vote, the US decided to not join the League, the Republican Senators believed that the United States should isolate itself from international matters and the Democrats were unable to rally enough votes for a fully-fledged membership. In the 1920s and 30s, some of the most influential countries of the world were not members of the League, or at least not simultaneously, which would hamper the effectiveness of any economic sanction. These were: The USA, Germany (only a member from 1926-1933) and the USSR (a member from 1934-1939).

The Council specifically proved ineffective, even though it had on paper the power to impose military action either to ensure a ceasefire or to retaliate against a country that attacked a League member, it didn't have a standing military force and no members wanted to risk their own people. As well as the need to find broad compromises in order to achieve the necessary unanimity in the Council and Assembly proved detrimental in the long term. We can note the failures in the 1931 Manchurian Crisis, the Abyssinia Crisis and the Spanish Civil War.

Furthermore, the League could not sustain its large operations with wealthier Member States reducing their contributions over time. Thus, it became even harder for the Secretariat to administer its auxiliary bodies. Bearing in mind that the League had overly ambitious goals to begin with didn't help.

The nail in the coffin of the League of Nations was the start of World War II in 1939. It evidenced the cumulative flaws of the League

that led to failure at its core purpose. With the beginning of WW2, most members left.

The last meeting took place in 1946, six months after the creation of the UN. The 3 remaining members had a final decision to transfer all assets and duties to the newly created United Nations, including the classic Palais des Nations that is now the European headquarters for the UN.



*Figure 3 Building A of the Palace of Nations (United Nations Office at Geneva), seen from the park (south).*

## Towards the UN Charter

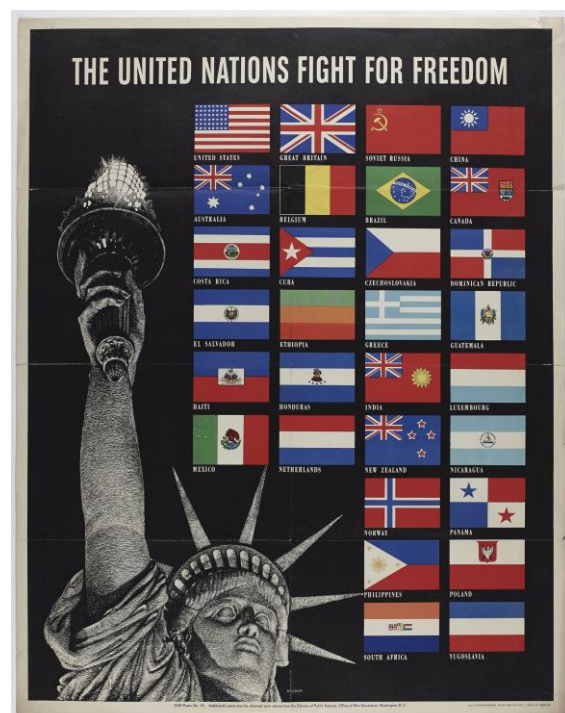
### *The Declaration of St James's Palace and the Atlantic Charter*

In 1941 Allied Governments including those in exile from Occupied countries met in London at St James's Palace to sign a Declaration bearing the name of the Palace to ensure punishment for the crimes committed by the Axis [[Punishment for war crimes : the inter-allied declaration signed at St. James's Palace, London on 13th January 1942, and relative documents. \(nla.gov.au\)](https://www.nla.gov.au/13th-january-1942)]. The Declaration constituted the first document that set out an intention to effectively enforce those international laws established by the Hague Conventions of 1899 and 1907 on the conduct of warfare [[https://casebook.icrc.org/a\\_to\\_z/glossary/hague-conventions](https://casebook.icrc.org/a_to_z/glossary/hague-conventions)].

Later that same year, US President Roosevelt and British Prime Minister Churchill released the Atlantic Charter, containing their aims for the war and outlining a new international system for after their victory. The principles set out in the Charter would constitute the basis for the future creation of a United Nations Charter. These principles closely match those of, inter-alia, self-determination for all peoples, international cooperation, renouncing to the use of force in place of diplomacy, disarmament and of sovereign equality later enshrined in the UN Charter. Notably, the Atlantic Charter also contained a provision for the free passage of ships through high seas and oceans [[NATO - Official text: 'The Atlantic Charter' - Declaration of Principles issued by the President of the United States and the Prime Minister of the United Kingdom, 14-Aug.-1941](#)].

### *The Declaration by United Nations and the Moscow and Teheran Conferences*

On January 1st, 1942, in Washington D.C. 26 Governments signed the Declaration by United Nations, the first time the term "United Nations" has ever been used in an official document, with 21 countries joining later. At this time, the United Nations were the Allied Governments or those who had joined the war against the Tripartite Pact. As contained in the final document, the



signatories all subscribed to the principles set out in the Atlantic Charter. For the first time in a major international agreement, the concept of human rights was included, after being referenced to by Roosevelt earlier the same year [[NATO - Official text: 'The Atlantic Charter' - Declaration of Principles issued by the President of the United States and the Prime Minister of the United Kingdom, 14-Aug.-1941](#)].

This same year the US State Department will also begin working on proposals for a future world



organisation.

[<https://doi.org/10.1080/09592296.2012.679475>]

The Third Moscow Conference of 1943 will explicitly state for the first time the aim to create a new international organisation and "a system of general security". The four signatories, United States, United Kingdom, Soviet Union and China further committed to consult with the other United Nations on this new organisation if required [[The Avalon Project : The Moscow Conference, October 1943 \(yale.edu\)](#)]. The composition of the future United Nations was also privately discussed by Roosevelt and Stalin

between November and December 1943 at the Teheran Conference in Iran. The US President's vision outlined in Teheran comprised of an assembly which included all member states and an executive committee with 10 members supposed to discuss social and economic questions. The Four of the Moscow Conference were also envisioned to fulfill the role of universal peace guarantors. Between this year and 1944 many organisations that will be put under the United Nations will begin their work, including, but not limited to, the FAO, UNESCO, IMF and the World Bank [[Milestones: 1937–1945 - Office of the Historian \(state.gov\)](#)].

## Main Discussion Points

### Principles and aims:

The UNSC's purpose is very similar to the existence of the LoN Council, therefore it is recommended that delegates bear in mind the purpose of such councils in being able to pass genuine action in the case of international crisis.

### Membership:

One vital discussion point was who should have membership in this council. In the LoN, although the Council was created with several permanent members in mind, only 2 of them ultimately joined this council.

Ultimately after the year-long discussion, it was decided that the UNSC should have 5 permanent members and 6 rotating members. Who should be decided by their contribution towards maintaining international peace and providing an equitable geographical distribution? However, at the inception of the UNSC, the focus was played primarily on the first criteria instead of the latter.

It is important to note that each country had a slightly different ideal set of what members should sit within this council. There were discussions over whether France should be a permanent member after their weakness in the recent war, or whether Brazil would bring a better geographical equity to the table.

However, it is also important to remember the geopolitical situation after the war. There is a reason why Germany and Japan are not represented in this debate, and the council is likely to remain politically imbalanced.

### Veto Power:

When we look at the modern discussion around the UNSC veto power, critics have often called it the most undemocratic element of the UN. The veto has threatened or prevented action against the permanent members and their allies. Supporters argue that it was necessary to form the UN, noting that these states are defined as the Nuclear-Weapon States in the Treaty on the Non-proliferation of Nuclear Weapons.<sup>1</sup>

During the series of discussions surrounding the creation of the UN, the discussion around Veto powers was the longest and most drawn out, carrying on until the end of the San Francisco conference<sup>2</sup>.

Several proposals were considered throughout the discussion period, with there at one point being a discussion that the UK should possess two vetos, one for her and one for her commonwealth. Ultimately when general consensus was reached around permanent membership before the San Francisco conference occurred, the question became "What should the veto look like" as opposed to "Who should possess one".

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.armscontrol.org/factsheets/nptfact>

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.britannica.com/event/San-Francisco-Conference>

## Bloc Stances

Within this simulation, we will have these 15 countries: The UK, the USA, the USSR, China (Republic of), the French Republic, the Ukrainian SSR, Turkey, Australia, Colombia, the Philippines (Commonwealth), Ethiopia, Egypt, India, Brazil, Yugoslavia.

- 1) "Four Policemen": The term "four policemen" refers to the four major Allied powers—United States, Soviet Union, United Kingdom, and the Republic of China—that were identified during the early discussions and negotiations leading up to the creation of the United Nations (UN) in 1945. These four nations were considered the primary contributors to the Allied victory in World War II. This bloc centres around the critical debates of membership and recognition across the UN, as no country wants any of their counterparts to gain an advantage in control over the General Assembly. It is the role of this bloc to keep one another in check and prevent any overt power grabs. Furthermore, this bloc is chiefly important to the ratification of a potential Charter, and any addition of clauses, responsibilities or representative countries must account for the opinions of these countries.
- 2) "Smaller States": The priority of the smaller, non-superpower states is to create a framework for the organization that satisfies the many contrasting needs of the "Four Policemen". While these countries have contrasting views and alliances of their own, their priority is the formation of the United Nations to provide them with a forum to put forward their concerns. Therefore, these smaller countries should look to focus on creating compromises to facilitate healthy dialogue between the larger powers.
- 3) "Soviet-Leaning States": In order to equalise the growing disadvantage created by the large number of democratically-leaning states within the newly forming committee, it is important for Soviet-leaning states to find opportunities for themselves to gain recognition within the Council. Soviet and Soviet-allied states should be heavily pushing for more Soviet Socialist Republics (SSRs) to gain UN member status and neutralize American influence in the committee.
- 4) "American-Leaning States": Similarly to Soviet-leaning states, the priority of states under the influence of the United States of America is to gain membership and hopefully, a majority to allow your bloc to control decision-making in the UN. With the chaos and destruction the world has seen over the last four years, it is imperative that your speeches focus on the idea of ensuring that such tragedies never occur once more.
- 5) France: France's position in this committee remains unique, given that it is a) not a P5 member and b) politically neutral between Russia and the US. France's main priority lies with the redevelopment of Europe, a task abandoned by the UK but pursued by the two global superpowers in order to gain influence. The French delegation must look to balance the competing views of the US and Russia, fight for their own P5 membership and work with fellow European member states to plan redevelopment following the war.

## Guiding Questions and Discussion Points

Remember, not all of these items will be addressed in the time available during this conference, however, the delegates should identify the most pressing issues for their own country and the international community. Keep in mind delegates might introduce issues not included here.

- How to ensure the fair and equal representation of all Member States including newly established countries? How to ensure a fair decolonization process?
  - What should the Veto Power look like?
  - What should the membership of the UNSC look like?
- How to give the respective political weight and influence to the winners of the World War, without compromising the Council's long-term success?
- How can the United Nations ensure a new world war does not occur? How can member states be encouraged (or coerced) not to use military force against other nations? What are the limits of a country's sovereignty?
- Determine the grounds for military intervention by the UN and determine conditions that would ensure a peace mission won't be exploited by interested parties.
- Discuss and establish what the UNSC should do in the face of aggressive militaristic movements from states. I.e., How to prevent the LoN's failures during the Manchurian crisis/Abyssinia Crisis.
- Design a voting system that avoids stalemates but ensures a wide adoption of the solutions.

## Recommended Reading

The Old and the New League: The Covenant and the Dumbarton Oaks Proposals:

<https://www.jstor.org/stable/2192309?seq=3>

(Discussing the difference between the LoN and the new proposed league under the Dumbarton Oaks Conference)

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