Chapter 5

After completing this chapter, you will be able to:

1. Explain the origins and emergence of the UN
2. Recount the UN’s principal organs and their functions
3. Characterize the basic principles and main purposes of the UN
4. Discuss how the UN contributes to global governance
5. Assess both the weaknesses of the UN and reform proposals

Chapter Outline

Introduction
The Origins and Emergence of the UN
The United Nations System: Principal Organs and Their Functions
Basic Principles and Main Purposes of the UN
The Role of the UN in Global Governance
Weaknesses of the UN and Reform Proposals

Key Terms

- International Peace and Security
- The General Assembly
- The Security Council
- Human Rights
- The Use of Force
- Veto Power
- Self-Defense
- The Atlantic Charter
- Development
- International Law
- Peacekeeping
- UN Reform
INTRODUCTION

The modern international system is characterized by the absence of a world government. It is a network of sovereign states without any overarching central authority. International relations, therefore, have a complex nature, involving diverse political, economic, military, social and cultural interactions among states and non-state actors today. Moreover, problems with transnational and global issues have increasingly become main topics in the study of international politics. However, despite the absence of a world government, the management of world affairs and global interactions has been conducted within a framework of relative order and stability. So the critical question is: how can we create and manage an orderly world without any central authority? Weiss and Thakur (2010) suggest the concept of global governance in order to understand and manage the relations among actors of world politics.

What is global governance? For James Rosenau, for example, “global governance is conceived to include systems of rule at all levels of human activity—from the family to the international organizations—in which the pursuit of goals through the exercise of control has transnational repercussions” (1995:13). In other words, global governance includes formal and informal arrangements to regulate human activity and interactions at different levels from the local to the international. It is defined as “the sum of laws, norms, policies, and institutions that define, constitute, and mediate relations among citizens, society, markets, and the state in the international arena” (Weiss and Thakur, 2010: 6). In brief, global governance embodies collective mechanisms for the regulation of global interactions. Therefore, despite the absence of a world government, the mechanisms of global governance ensure the maintenance of an orderly and stable world.

The UN plays a central role in global governance. As a universal international organization, the UN has a global reach, consisting of a complex network of diverse bodies, organizations, committees, programs, and experts. It performs significant functions in solving global problems. Therefore, this chapter will focus on the organizational structure and main functions of the UN and discuss its contributions to global governance.

Against this background, the chapter is divided into five sections. The first section focuses on the origins and establishment of the UN. The second introduces its principal organs and their main functions. The third identifies the basic principles and main objectives of the organization. The fourth examines how the UN contributes to global governance. The fifth and final section discusses its weaknesses and need for reforming the UN.

THE ORIGINS AND EMERGENCE OF THE UN

At the end of World War II, a major effort to “develop ways of maintaining peace and stability” led to the formation of the United Nations (Bennett, 1995:43). However, the UN did not come out of blue. It was built on existing experience in international politics. In other words, the path-dependent effects of former institutional and political practices as well as principles can be observed in the creation and the main structure of the UN.

Developments That Set Precedents for the Establishment of the UN

Mingst and Karns identify five key events that had an important impact on the creation of the UN (2012:19-21). First, European traditions and experience in international law and organization since the 16th century had a significant impact on the creation of an international organization in the 20th century. Second, the UN also evolved out of the Concert of Europe that was created by the Congress of Vienna in 1815. On the one hand, the Concert of Europe was dominated by the great powers, which acted as the guardians of the modern state system (Alger, 1995: 4). On the other hand, meeting more than 30 times between 1815 and 1878 to settle common issues and coordinate their actions, these same powers had also set practices and principles such as multilateral consultation, collective security, and special status for powerful countries that are still influential in the UN system today (Mingst and Karns, 2012:19).

Third, the origins of the UN system can be also traced to The Hague Conferences, a pair of international meetings that were held...
In 1899 and 1907, The Hague system codified procedures for the prevention of war and the pacific settlement of conflicts, which extensively influenced the UN (Alger, 1995: 5). The Hague system also created techniques and practices such as arbitration, negotiation, legal recourse as well as significant legal regulations and institutions including the Convention for the Pacific Settlement of International Disputes, ad hoc commissions of inquiry, and the Permanent Court of Arbitration. More importantly, The Hague Conferences contributed to the formation of the UN by establishing and reinforcing the principles of universality and legal equality, because both non-European states and relatively small states were included among the participants (Mingst and Karns, 2012:20).

Fourth, the international bodies or international public unions were already established in the 19th century to settle common technical issues stemming from modern developments in communication, health, commerce, railroads, and agriculture. Growing out of the Industrial Revolution, they formed another example of early transnational integration and led to the creation of international public unions such as the Rhine Commission (1815), the Danube Commission (1848), the International Telegraphic Union (1865), and the Universal Postal Union (1874). (Alger, 1995: 5) These international bodies solidified a group of permanent bureaucrats called international secretariats to implement specific tasks on a regular basis. Moreover, these organizations were also instrumental in creating methods for multilateral conventions, treaties, and international law (Mingst and Karns, 2012:20).

Finally, the League of Nations, established after the end of World War I, had a huge impact on the creation of the UN. In fact, the UN can be defined as “a child of the League of Nations” (Alger, 1995: 4). The League provided a model for the normative and institutional structure of the UN. It is a fact that the UN derived important organizational features from the League such as the Secretariat and Assembly. By including other international agencies such as the International Labour Organization (ILO) and the Permanent Court of International Justice (PCIJ), the League also set a precedent for the UN (Hanhimaki, 2008: 10). The UN also seemed to have learnt from both the failures and achievements of the League. For instance, because the League had failed to prevent the aggressions of Italy and Japan in the 1930s, the architects of the UN altered the unanimity rule, which had been required in the League to deploy military forces in response to aggression (Alger, 1995:4).

On the other hand, the UN Charter also shared the ideals and many structural elements on which the League was built. The most remarkable example was that both organizations identified the promotion of international security and the peaceful settlement of disputes as their key goals. The UN has put more emphasis on the economic and social progress of nations than the League, because the Great Depression of the late 1920s was considered the root cause of World War II. As such, in the UN system the economic and social progress of societies has been appreciated for sustaining international security. In order to prevent another devastating war, the founders of the UN defined international security in a broader sense and sought to enable the UN to become active in international politics. Therefore, they identified key areas of the UN as military security, economic and social development, human rights, and international justice (Hanhimaki, 2008: 15-16).

Although the League failed to prevent the outbreak of World War II, the idea of creating an international organization to protect international peace never faded (Mingst and Karns, 2012:21-22). In fact, the War strengthened the efforts to construct a stronger collective security mechanism at the international level. The UN was also a response to a radically transformed world politics in the wake of World War II. While the European imperial powers collapsed, the US and Soviet Union emerged from the war as the two superpowers in international politics. Therefore, the UN was formed also to manage this changing international system and power relations between the superpowers as well as the blocs (Hanhimaki, 2008: 13).
While the official process for the creation of the League was initiated after the end of World War I, the preparations for the establishment of the UN began in the early years of World War II. In this regard, the US was quite eager to lead the creation of a new international mechanism even before actively entering the war (Gönlübol, 1968: 172). As early as January 1940 the US Department of State began its post-war planning, while several private organizations such as the Commission to Study the Organization of Peace and the Commission for a Just and Durable Peace provided the Department with proposals for a new international organization (Bennett, 1995: 44-45). Particularly after its active involvement in the war, the US concentrated its efforts on creating a new international organization in the final years of the war. Just like the League of Nations, then, the UN was also an initiative led by a US president; and this time Franklin D. Roosevelt was instrumental in the creation of a universal organization. According to Bennett, the role of American leaders in the establishment of the UN “represented a significant departure from the refusal of the United States to join the League of Nations” (1995: 45).

The first concrete step toward establishing the UN was taken when U.S. President Roosevelt and British Prime Minister Winston Churchill signed a joint declaration called the Atlantic Charter in August 1941. This included common war aims and post-war objectives of both governments (Gönlübol, 1968: 172). More importantly, the Charter also referred to “the establishment of a wider and permanent system of general security” (UN, 1947:2). The Atlantic Charter paved the way for the Declaration by United Nations that was signed in January 1942 by twenty-six nations fighting against the Axis powers. The declaration was not only the first official document that included the term ‘United Nations’ but also reaffirmed the commitment of these states to the principles of the Atlantic Charter (Bennett, 1995: 47). In another declaration issued by the Soviet Union, the US, Britain, and China in Moscow in October 1943, the four key governments officially endorsed the establishment of a permanent international organization (Gönlübol, 1968: 174). These declarations show that the key major powers became committed to the establishment of an international organization by the end of 1943 (Bennett, 1995: 47).

Between August and October 1944, representatives from China, the Soviet Union, the United Kingdom, and the United States gathered at Dumbarton Oaks in Washington D.C. to draft the charter and main principles of a new international organization. In these two rounds of the Dumbarton Oaks Conversations, the US and British diplomats met with their counterparts from the Soviet Union before conferring with delegates from China. Some disagreements over security issues and the mandate of the organization emerged particularly between the Western powers and the Soviet Union. However, the negotiations between the Allied governments eventually produced an agreement on the basic structure of the organization that is known as the Dumbarton Oaks Proposals (Gönlübol, 1968:175). In addition to a General Assembly, Secretariat, and Court of Justice, the governments decided that a Security Council with five permanent members (consisted of four major powers and France) would become the central organ of the new organization. Nevertheless, several critical points including the voting formula in the Security Council were left undecided.

Finally, Roosevelt, Stalin, and Churchill agreed at the Yalta Conference, held in February 1945, that the permanent members would have a veto right in the Security Council, particularly on substantive issues such as enforcement actions in case of threats to peace and acts of aggression (Bennett, 1995:49-50). At the Yalta Conference, the US and Britain accepted that, besides the Soviet Union, two Soviet republics, namely Ukraine and Belarus, would also...
become full members of the UN. Moreover, the Big Three called for an international conference in San Francisco in April 1945 to draw up the formal charter of the new organization. They also decided that governments that had not joined the United Nations’ war against the Axis powers by March 1, 1945, would not be invited to the San Francisco Conference (Gönlübol, 1968:176).

The United Nations Conference on the International Organization convened in San Francisco on April 25, 1945. Delegates from fifty countries participated in the San Francisco Conference, where the Dumbarton Oaks Proposals provided the ground for negotiations (Mingst and Karns, 2012: 22). When Poland was agreed to sign the Charter as an original member, the UN had secured fifty-one states as founding members.

At the San Francisco Conference, the tension between the great powers and relatively small states was considerable. This was particularly true because the great powers sought to establish their superiority in the new organization. Small states, however, aimed to increase the power of the General Assembly and the International Court of Justice while raising objections against the privileged position of the permanent members in the Security Council (Gönlübol, 1968:177-178).

The most controversial issue was the veto rights of the five permanent members (P5) in the Security Council. Small states particularly questioned the privileged position of P5 states as well as the lack of clarity about the right to veto. Although small states were not successful in changing the voting formula in the Security Council, they were able to make some major alterations in the UN structure. For example, their efforts led to the creation of the Trusteeship Council as a major UN organ. They also elevated the Economic and Social Council to the status of principal UN bodies. Moreover, small states successfully incorporated into the Charter Chapter XI, which is the ‘Declaration Regarding Non-Self-Governing Territories’. These advancements regarding dependent peoples paved the way for the adoption of a declaration on the independence and self-determination of nations by the General Assembly in 1960 (Bennett, 1995: 50-53).

The UN Charter was unanimously adopted on June 26, 1945. It officially came into force on October 24, 1945. The first meeting of the UN General Assembly was held on January 10, 1946 in London. Former Norwegian Foreign Minister Trygve Lie was appointed as the first UN Secretary-General. The General Assembly decided that the headquarters of the UN be located in New York, USA. The League of Nations officially ceased to exist on April 19, 1946, and the UN took over non-political and technical missions as well as the properties of the League (Gönlübol, 1968: 179-181).

What are the similarities between the UN and the League of Nations?

THE UNITED NATIONS SYSTEM: PRINCIPAL ORGANS AND THEIR FUNCTIONS

This section examines the six principal organs of the UN: the General Assembly, Security Council (UNSC), Secretariat, Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC), Trusteeship Council, and the International Court of Justice (ICJ). It should be noted that the UN system is complex; besides main organs, it contains many specialized agencies, programs, and funds (See Figure 5.3).
The General Assembly

The General Assembly is the main deliberative body where all members of the organization can make their voice heard (Hanhimaki, 2008:33). Chapter IV of the UN Charter sets out the organization’s structure, functions, powers, and voting procedures. Similar to the League system, the General Assembly is the only UN body where all member states are equally represented. In other words, regardless of their size or power, each member state has only one vote. Compared to the Security Council, where the P5 states have veto rights, the General Assembly is considered to be relatively a democratic UN organ due to its “one state- one vote” formula and the majority rule in its decision-making process. As such, the General Assembly is based on the principle of the sovereign equality of states. Nevertheless, this does not mean that all states are equal in terms of their economic, political, or military power (Hurd, 2014: 106 and 115).

According to Article 4(2), the General Assembly is authorized to approve the admission of any new state to the UN membership upon the recommendation of the Security Council. Currently, in addition to 193 member states, two states in the UN have “non-member observer status.” Besides the Holy See (Vatican), the General Assembly granted Palestine the non-member observer status in December 2012 by adopting the Resolution 67/19 on “the Status of Palestine in the United Nations” with 138 votes in favor, 9 against, and 41 abstentions.

The General Assembly’s regular session begins each year on a Tuesday, on the third week of September and continues for about three months. The Assembly elects a president and 17 vice-presidents for that year’s session. Despite limited powers, the president can guide the work of the General Assembly, avert crises, bring parties into agreement, ensure that procedures are respected, and accelerate the agenda (Karns, Mingst, and Stiles, 2015: 118). According to Article 20, the General Assembly can also be called into emergency and special sessions at the request of the UN Security Council or a majority of Member States. For instance, the 30th and latest special session was convened to deal with the “world drug problem” in 2016 (General Assembly of the United Nations- A). In addition, if there is a deadlock at the Security Council,
an emergency special session of the General Assembly can be convened within 24 hours under the “Uniting for Peace” resolution. For example, at the tenth Emergency Special Session that was resumed in December 2017 after the US decision to relocate its embassy to Jerusalem, the General Assembly adopted a resolution calling for members “not to place diplomatic missions in Jerusalem” (UN, 21 December 2017).

The General Assembly has subsidiary organs such as boards, commissions, committees, councils, panels, and working groups. The majority of its work takes place in six main committees, each of which is responsible for a specific topic. The First Committee deals with disarmament and international security; the Second Committee with economic and financial matters; the Third Committee with social, humanitarian and cultural matters; the Fourth Committee with special political and decolonization matters, the Fifth Committee with administrative and budgetary questions; and the Sixth Committee with legal matters.

The General Assembly is divided into five regional groups: Group of Western European and other states (WEOG-including the United States, Israel, Japan and Canada), Eastern European States Group, African Group, Group of Latin American and Caribbean, and Asia-Pacific Group. Turkey has a special position. While Turkey attends fully in both Asian Group and the WEOG, it is considered a member of the WEOG only for electoral purposes.

According to Article 18, the voting procedure in the General Assembly depends on the nature of the question before the Assembly. “Decisions of the General Assembly on important questions shall be made by a two-thirds majority of the members present and voting. These questions shall include: recommendations with respect to the maintenance of international peace and security, the election of the non-permanent members of the Security Council, the election of the members of the Economic and Social Council, the election of members of the Trusteeship Council in accordance with paragraph 1 (c) of Article 86, the admission of new Members to the United Nations, the suspension of the rights and privileges of membership, the expulsion of Members, questions relating to the operation of the trusteeship system, and budgetary questions.” However, decisions on other questions, “including the determination of additional categories of questions to be decided by a two-thirds majority, shall be made by a majority of the members present and voting” (Article 18).

The General Assembly also fulfills important elective functions. The General Assembly has the authority to elect the non-permanent members of the UNSC, all members of the ECOSOC, and non-administering members of the Trusteeship Council. The General Assembly has a joint responsibility with the Security Council for the election of judges to the ICJ, the appointment of the Secretary-General, and the admission of new states to UN membership (Bennett, 1995:66).

The General Assembly has also several significant powers and functions. The most significant function of the General Assembly is to consider and make recommendations on any subject. Article 10 mandates the General Assembly to discuss any matter within the scope of the Charter. However, its recommendations are non-binding on member states (Bennett, 1995:65). Its agenda has expanded over the years. The items on its agenda include conflict situations, development, poverty, human rights, global warming, international justice, and administrative and financial matters (Karns, Mingst, and Stiles, 2015:113). The increase in the number of member states is another reason for the expansion of the agenda, as each member may propose a new item to be considered. The number of member states increased from 51 original members to 193 with the latest admission of South Sudan in 2011. Therefore, new items have gradually become more visible on the agenda. The establishment of subsidiary bodies under the General Assembly also confirms its growing agenda: the Disarmament Commission, Human Rights Council, International Law Commission, Standing Committees, and ad hoc bodies. While in the initial five years the General Assembly adopted around 119 resolutions per year, this number climbed to 300 in the 2000s (Karns, Mingst, and Stiles, 2015:122).

Another function of the General Assembly is to operate as a central coordinating body among other UN bodies and agencies. The Assembly reviews annual reports sent from other principal UN organs—namely, the UNSC, the ECOSOC, and the Trusteeship Council. In addition, it receives
periodic reports from other UN agencies (Bennett, 1995:65).

The General Assembly also has a mandate to consider and approve the budget of the UN and apportion the expenses among member states. The Assembly is authorized to consider and approve financial and budgetary arrangements for specialized agencies (Article 17). The UN budget is the only issue on which the General Assembly can take binding decisions. According to Article 19 of the Charter, if the financial arrears of any member state equal or exceed the amount due for the preceding two years, that state can lose its voting right. However, the General Assembly can allow that state to vote if it considers its inability to pay beyond its control. Based on 2018 figures, the largest contribution to the UN budget comes from the US, whereas Libya does not have a vote due to its failure to make its contribution. On the other hand, Comoros, Guinea-Bissau, Sao Tome and Principe, and Somalia are permitted by the General Assembly to vote, despite their inability to pay their dues (General Assembly of the United Nations-B).

Arrears in payments, however, can be used as a political tool. For instance, the US uses its payment dues as leverage on the UN, while the Soviet Union and France did not make their payments in the 1960s, protesting the General Assembly for operations carried out in the Middle East and Congo (Hurd, 2014:117).

Finally, the General Assembly and the Security Council also have joint responsibility for revision to the UN charter. The General Assembly can propose amendments by a two-thirds majority. Nevertheless, two-thirds of the member states, and every permanent member of the Security Council, must ratify these proposals. The General Assembly and the Security Council also have the authority to call for a general conference to revise the Charter. To date, there have been two amendments to the UN Charter, both of which enlarged the number of members in the UNSC and ECOSOC (Karns, Mingst, and Stiles, 2015:117).

General Assembly resolutions serve as an important source of the UN’s normative influence around the world. First, its statements and resolutions serve a significant norm-creating function. The adoption of the principle of responsibility to protect (R2P) at the 2005 World Summit thoroughly illustrates this point. Another example is the principle of common heritage that the 1967 Treaty on Outer Space and 1982 Convention on the Law of the Sea acknowledge (Karns, Mingst, and Stiles, 2015: 116-117).

Second, they contribute to the legitimization of new ideas and policies (Hurd, 2014:110). For example, since the early 1960s the UN has encouraged the progress of decolonization—a “process of peoples’ emancipation from the rule of other nations” (Doğan, 2012: 135). The Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples, which was adopted by the General Assembly in 1960, is a landmark international document stating that all people have a right to self-determination and calling for the end of colonialism.

In the UN system, the UN Security Council is the principal organ responsible for the maintenance of peace and security. Nevertheless, the General Assembly also fulfills some functions with regard to international peace and security. Article 11 of the Charter authorizes the General Assembly to consider the general principles regarding the maintenance of international peace and security and make recommendations. The General Assembly can also discuss any question related to the maintenance of international peace and security that are brought by a member state or by the Security Council and make recommendations to the concerned parties or the UNSC. One exception is the provision of Article 12. If the UNSC is exercising its functions with regard to any dispute or situation, the General Assembly is not allowed to make recommendations about that situation without the request of the UNSC. On the other hand, the General Assembly can call the attention of the UNSC to situations that may endanger international security. However, General Assembly resolutions are recommendations and therefore not legally binding. Because of this, some scholars argue that the Assembly’s power, although broad, is “shallow” (Hurd, 2014:108).

Despite the provisions set by the Charter, the General Assembly was able to adopt decisive resolutions when the UNSC was deadlocked. The most notable example came with the adoption of the Uniting for Peace Resolution during the Korean War in 1950. The resolution authorized the General Assembly to make recommendations about collective measures if the UNSC was paralyzed...
by a veto. Under the resolution, the General Assembly has been also able to meet in emergency special sessions (Pease, 2012: 116-117). Therefore, under the provisions of the Uniting for Peace resolution, the General Assembly held emergency special sessions in order to deal with the Suez and Hungarian crises (1956), the Middle Eastern crises (1958, 1967, 1980, and 1982), the Congo crisis (1960), and the Palestine-Israel conflict (1997) (Mingst and Karns, 2012: 27).

Under the resolution 377A (V), “Uniting for Peace,” adopted by the General Assembly on 3 November 1950, an emergency special session can be convened within 24 hours:

Resolves that if the Security Council, because of lack of unanimity of the permanent members, fails to exercise its primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security in any case where there appears to be a threat to the peace, breach of the peace, or act of aggression, the General Assembly shall consider the matter immediately with a view to making appropriate recommendations to Members for collective measures, including in the case of a breach of the peace or act of aggression the use of armed force when necessary, to maintain or restore international peace and security. If not in session at the time, the General Assembly may meet in emergency special session within twenty-four hours of the request therefor. Such emergency special session shall be called if requested by the Security Council on the vote of any seven members, or by a majority of the Members of the United Nations (www.un.org).

The Security Council

The UN Security Council is the central organ in the UN system. The primary responsibility of the UNSC is the maintenance of international peace and security. Compared to the League, the architects of the UN wanted to create a more effective security mechanism (Hanhimaki, 2008: 30). The UNSC therefore has broad powers: it can investigate disputes that may pose a threat to international peace and security, and make recommendations toward resolving disputes peacefully.

The Security Council has also powers to take diplomatic or economic measures against an aggressor state. Most importantly, it can authorize military action (Bookmiller, 2008: 54). According to Article 24 of the Charter, the Security Council is mandated to act on behalf of all UN members. While Chapter VI includes the peaceful settlement of disputes with a range of non-coercive techniques, Chapter VII authorizes the Security Council to “identify aggressors and to commit all UN members to take enforcement measures, such as economic sanctions, or provide military forces for joint action”. Before 1992, all peacekeeping missions were mandated under Chapter VI; enforcement instruments were deployed according to Chapter VII on only two occasions. However, the Security Council has increasingly relied on Chapter VII, including economic sanctions and military action (Mingst and Karns, 2012: 31).

Together with the General Assembly, the UNSC takes part in the election of the UN Secretary-General, judges to the ICJ, and new members of the UN.

The Security Council was designed to be relatively small in order to act swiftly and efficiently (Mingst and Karns, 2012: 31-32). It initially had eleven members, but this number increased to fifteen in 1965. The status of membership is divided into two: permanent and non-permanent members. The United States, Britain, China, France, and Russia are the five permanent members (P5) of the Security Council. Ten non-permanent members are elected by the UN General Assembly for two-year terms (Hanhimaki, 2008: 32). In order to be elected to the Security Council, a state must receive a two-thirds majority of votes at the General Assembly. Five of the non-permanent members should be elected from African and Asian states, one from Eastern Europe, two from Latin America, and two from Western Europe and other states (General Assembly of the United Nations -C). Republic of Turkey served in the Security Council as a non-permanent member for the periods 1951-1952, 1954-1955, and 2009-2010 and also in 1961 (www.un.org/en/sc/members/elected.asp).

The Security Council has no regular meeting schedule. It is in permanent session to meet at any time so as to respond effectively to international conflicts and crises. Any state can submit an issue to the Council. The General Assembly or the Secretary-General can also bring an issue before
the Council. Since 2000, the Security Council has also been organizing thematic meetings to discuss global issues related to health, child soldiers, post-conflict-justice, and reconciliation. Nonmember states may attend and address the Council, and non-governmental organizations or other non-state actors can participate in consultations with the Security Council. The presidency of the UNSC is subject to a monthly rotation among its fifteen members and controls the agenda, calls for meetings, and facilitates discussions and consensus building (Mingst and Karns, 2012: 32-33).

Resolutions of the Security Council are legally binding on all UN members. It has two voting formulas. If it is a procedural matter, a successful resolution must secure the vote of at least nine out of fifteen members. On substantive matters, all permanent members must vote in favor of the resolution. Put differently, since they have veto power, any permanent member can block a decision (Bookmiller, 2008: 54).

The Secretariat

Another principal organ of the UN is the Secretariat, which consists of a Secretary-General and thousands of international civil servants responsible for the day-to-day activities of the organization at the UN headquarters in New York as well as its regional offices around the world. Unlike the General Assembly, the UNSC or ECOSOC, the Secretariat is not constituted of delegates that represent member states. The Secretariat is composed of full-time employees who must perform their tasks impartially and promote the international goals of the UN, independent of their own nationality (Bennett, 1995: 74). As such, the UN Secretariat is considered the ‘second UN’ and has the capacity to exercise significant influence over the UN itself and occasionally on member states (Karns, Mingst, and Stiles, 2015:134).

The UN Secretariat comprises a series of offices and departments, each of which is headed by an undersecretary-general. Their work involves the implementation of the economic, humanitarian, and social programs that aim to fulfill the Charter’s promises. Several departments are responsible for the conduct of UN peace operations. The Secretariat also undertakes technical tasks such as data collection, research, documentation, and translation (Mingst and Karns, 2012: 39).

The Secretary-General is the chief administrative officer of the UN. The Secretary-General is elected by the General Assembly upon the recommendation of the UNSC for a five-year renewable term. The appointment process of the Secretary-General is highly sensitive because any permanent member of the UNSC may use its veto power (Hanhimaki, 2012:39). Nine individuals have served as UN Secretary-General since 1946. António Guterres, who assumed the office in January 2017, is the current UN Secretary-General.
The United Nations and Global Governance

Table 5.1 UN Secretaries-General since 1946

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Terms of Office</th>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Nationality</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1946-1952</td>
<td>Trygve Lie</td>
<td>Norway</td>
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<tr>
<td>1953-1961</td>
<td>Dag Hammarskjöld</td>
<td>Sweden</td>
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<tr>
<td>1961-1971</td>
<td>U Thant</td>
<td>Burma (now Myanmar)</td>
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<tr>
<td>1972-1981</td>
<td>Kurt Waldheim</td>
<td>Austria</td>
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<td>1982-1991</td>
<td>Javier Pérez de Cuéllar</td>
<td>Peru</td>
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<tr>
<td>1992-1996</td>
<td>Boutros Boutros-Ghali</td>
<td>Egypt</td>
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<tr>
<td>1997-2006</td>
<td>Kofi Annan</td>
<td>Ghana</td>
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<tr>
<td>2007-2016</td>
<td>Ban Ki-Moon</td>
<td>South Korea</td>
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<tr>
<td>2017-</td>
<td>António Guterres</td>
<td>Portugal</td>
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Source: www.un.org

Major Functions of the UN Secretary-General

Chapter XV of the UN Charter clearly identifies the main tasks that the Secretary-General must fulfill:

- To act as the chief administrative officer of the organization,
- To act as the secretary in all meetings of the other principal organs of the UN,
- To perform other functions tasked by these UN bodies,
- To make an annual report to the General Assembly on the work of the UN,
- To bring to the attention of the Security Council matters that may threaten international peace and security,
- To appoint the UN staff under regulations established by the General Assembly.

The Secretary-General is the public face of the UN. Despite its limited powers, the position has high international visibility as well as big expectations (Hanhimaki, 2008: 37). The Secretaries-General have been significant in the emergence of the UN as an autonomous actor in global governance, as they have convened meetings of experts to debate global problems, sponsor research, and represent the UN’s ideals (Karns, Mingst, and Stiles, 2015:134).

Besides these main functions, they often play significant additional roles. As the chief diplomat, for instance, the Secretary-General also acts as mediator in conflicts between the member states. Together with the secretariat, the Secretary General also proposes new agenda items on issues ranging from the environment to education for deliberation in UN bodies (Bookmiller, 2008:62).

Secretaries-General have developed different techniques to maintain international peace and security. They deploy fact-finding missions, use their good offices, and appoint special representatives to deal with UN peace operations and various thematic issues such as the use of children in armed conflicts, migration, development, poverty, and HIV/AIDS (Karns, Mingst, and Stiles, 2015:136-138).

Several Secretaries-General have demonstrated a relatively higher profile. For instance, Dag Hammarskjöld of Sweden pioneered the creation of peacekeeping forces, which perform such tasks as “monitoring ceasefires, separating hostile forces and maintaining buffer zones” (www.un.org). Boutros Boutros-Ghali tried to increase the UN’s influence in international politics after the end of the Cold War. Thus, he embarked on an ambitious agenda of peacebuilding, democratization, and development. However, due to his antagonistic relationship with the US, the Washington administration vetoed his candidacy for a second term in 1996. His successor, Kofi Annan, also proved one of the most energetic Secretaries-General of the UN. He initiated administrative and budgetary reform toward increasing the effectiveness of the organization, pioneered the adoption of the Millennium Goals aimed at reducing poverty, and commissioned expert reports to address problems with UN peace operations in the mid-1990s (Karns, Mingst, and Stiles, 2015:136-138).
International Court of Justice (ICJ)

The ICJ is one of the principal organs of the UN. Located in The Hague (La Haye), the ICJ is the judicial arm of the organization. The previous Permanent Court of International Justice (PCIJ) formed the institutional foundations of the ICJ (Doğan, 2014:131-132). Nevertheless, there are significant differences between the two courts. First, even though their statutes are identical, unlike the PCIJ, the Statute of the ICJ is integral to the UN Charter. Second, whereas the PCIJ and its membership were independent of the League, all UN members are automatically parties to the Statute of the ICJ (Bennett, 1995: 75).

The ICJ consists of fifteen judges co-elected by the General Assembly and Security Council for a nine-year term. One-third of the judges are elected every three years, and they may be reelected. Judges must possess the qualifications required for appointment to the highest judicial institutions in their home country or must show competence in international law. Each judge must have a different nationality; together they represent the major legal systems of the world (Mingst and Karns, 2012:41).

The ICJ has two main functions: first, the court settles legal disputes between states. This kind of cases before the court is called contentious cases. Second, the court is authorized to give advisory opinions on legal questions upon request (Doğan, 2014:133). The ICJ can also hear specific cases on legal disputes referred to it by states. Only states can bring cases before the court. In other words, non-state actors such as citizens, non-governmental organizations, or businesses cannot sue or be sued (Bookmiller, 2008:65). As such, the ICJ cannot settle disputes between states and non-state actors. The court may also issue advisory opinions on legal questions referred to it by authorized UN organs and agencies including the General Assembly and Security Council. 170 cases were brought before the court between May 1947 and January 2018 (ICJ-A). It has ruled on a wide range of legal disputes including territorial disputes, delimitation of the continental shelf, the legality of nuclear tests, rights of asylum, the use of force, and environmental protection (Mingst and Karns, 2012:42).

The jurisdiction of the ICJ is different from that of national courts. Given that the ICJ does not have compulsory jurisdiction, a state cannot be forced to appear before court. The ICJ can hear and decide a case only if all contending parties agree to submit it to the court. However, if states accept to appear before the ICJ, judgments delivered by the court are binding upon them (Karns, Mingst, and Stiles, 2015: 141) As of June 2018, 73 states have recognized the compulsory jurisdiction of the ICJ (ICJ-B).
The Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC)

ECOSOC is the principal UN organ responsible for addressing international economic and social programs. Considered the most complex body of the UN system, the council aims to promote the welfare of the individuals, find solutions to global economic, social and health problems, and support human rights (Karns, Mingst, and Stiles, 2015: 129). Its structure, functions and power, voting, and procedures are detailed in Chapter X of the UN Charter.

The Charter mandates ECOSOC to initiate studies and reports on economic, social, cultural, educational, health, and related topics, and make recommendations regarding such issues to the General Assembly. It can also recommend measures for promoting respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms.

The agenda of ECOSOC has expanded and diversified over time and now includes a wide range of areas such as housing, literacy, environment, drug control, refugees, statistics, education, HIV/AIDS, and development (Karns, Mingst, and Stiles, 2015: 131). The initial 18 members of ECOSOC enlarged to 27 in 1965 and 54 in 1973. All ECOSOC members are elected by the General Assembly for three-year terms (Bennett, 1995: 70). All permanent members of the UN Security Council (except China) and relatively wealthy countries are generally re-elected. The membership in ECOSOC is allocated on a regional basis: 14 seats for Africa, 13 for Western Europe and Others, 11 for Asia, 6 for Eastern Europe, and 10 for Latin America and the Caribbean (Bookmiller, 2008: 68).

ECOSOC holds an annual meeting in New York or Geneva to discuss economic and social issues. ECOSOC does not have binding power upon member states, but it plays a coordinating role between specialized agencies and programs. It generates a globally normative and political influence and increases world-wide awareness through high-profile international meetings and sponsoring research on related topics (Hurd, 2014:111). Bennett also divides the main functions of ECOSOC into three categories: a) deliberation and recommendations, b) research and reports, c) coordination (1995:71).

ECOSOC mainly oversees and coordinates diverse agencies, commissions, committees, funds, and programs within the UN system. In this regard, the first group consists of eight functional commissions, five regional commissions, and other bodies. Because the Commission on Sustainable Development had been abolished in 2012, the number of functional commissions decreased from nine to eight. The first group organs are directly tied to ECOSOC. The second group includes 19 specialized agencies,
including the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund (IMF), and World Health Organization. These agencies operate independently from ECOSOC. In the third group, there are programs and funds established by the General Assembly such as the UN Development Program (UNDP), the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), and the UN Children’s Fund (UNICEF). (Aslan and Aslan, 2014:99) These programs and funds submit reports to both the General Assembly and ECOSOC. The latter also has the authority to oversee the implementation of the Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (Pease, 2012: 271).

### Table 5.2 Specialized Agencies

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Specialized Agencies</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>FAO</td>
<td>Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ICAO</td>
<td>International Civil Aviation Organization</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IFAD</td>
<td>International Fund for Agricultural Development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ILO</td>
<td>International Labor Organization</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IMF</td>
<td>International Monetary Fund</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IMO</td>
<td>International Maritime Organization</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ITU</td>
<td>International Telecommunication Union</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UNESCO</td>
<td>United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UNIDO</td>
<td>United Nations Industrial Development Organization</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UNWTO</td>
<td>World Tourism Organization</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UPU</td>
<td>Universal Postal Union</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WHO</td>
<td>World Health Organization</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WIPO</td>
<td>World Intellectual Property Organization</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WMO</td>
<td>World Meteorological Organization</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>World Bank Group</td>
<td>IBRD- International Bank for Reconstruction and Development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>IDA- International Development Association</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>IFC- International Finance Corporation</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Source:** Karns, Mingst, and Stiles, 2015:115

Although ECOSOC oversees a majority of activities of many institutions and bodies, it is still a relatively powerless organ within the UN system. As Hanhimaki argues, ‘the three sisters’ (namely the World Bank, IMF, and World Trade Organization) hold the real global economic power (2008:41). Moreover, these institutions, together with other UN specialized agencies, act independently from ECOSOC. In addition, as the number of affiliated agencies, programs, and funds has excessively proliferated, the ability of ECOSOC to coordinate has also gradually weakened (Bookmiller, 2008: 69).

### The Trusteeship Council

The Trusteeship Council, another principal organ of the UN, was established to oversee the administration of trust territories. The council was authorized to examine reports about the political, social, economic, educational development of colonial people and send special missions to these regions. The main objective of the council was to promote the decolonization process after World War II. It supervised the transition of 11 trust territories toward independence. The Trusteeship Council ended its operations following the independence of the Pacific island of Palau (the last trust territory) in 1994. It is considered one of the most successful UN bodies for its ability to help trust territories attain self-governance (Bookmiller, 2008: 69).
While it exists officially, the council is no longer an active UN body. “The Trusteeship Council, by amending its rules of procedure, will now meet as and where occasion may require” (www.un.org).

The United Nations and Global Governance

BASIC PRINCIPLES AND MAIN PURPOSES OF THE UN

Chapter 1 of the Charter outlines the basic principles and main purposes of the UN. They are:

- To maintain international peace and security,
- To develop friendly relations among nations based on respect for the principle of equal rights and self-determination of peoples,
- To encourage respect for human rights and for fundamental freedoms for all without distinction as to race, sex, language, or religion
- To be a center for harmonizing the actions of nations.

Article 2 identifies the basic principles underlying the structure and operations of the UN. Together with other rules provided by the Charter, these principles not only constitute the main obligations of member states but also define the legal framework to which they are committed (Bennett, 1995: 58).

First and foremost, the UN Charter establishes the sovereign equality of its members as the most fundamental principle upon which the UN is founded. Equality here means that all states are equal in terms of their legal status rather than their size, population, or political and economic power. As mentioned earlier, the “one state/one vote” rule in the General Assembly is based on this very principle of states’ sovereign equality. On the other hand, the design of the UNSC with its permanent membership and veto system reflects the power distribution and inequality among nations (Karns, Mingst, and Stiles, 2015:118).

The key principles of the UN underline the maintenance of international peace and security as the primary goal. Toward this goal, two principles gain prominence. The first is the prohibition of the threat or use of force. Article 2(4) clearly states that “all members shall refrain in their international relations from the threat or use of force against the territorial integrity or political independence of any state, or in any other manner inconsistent with the Purposes of the United Nations” (UN Charter, 1945:3). This provision, which aims to ensure all states to act in accordance with international peace and security, is binding upon both member states and non-member states.

The second principle related to international peace and security is the peaceful settlement of international disputes. Article 2(3) provides that all members shall settle their international disputes through peaceful means so that they do not endanger international peace and security. Article 32(3) of the Charter also authorizes the UNSC to encourage regional arrangements (institutions) and individual states to promote the pacific settlement of local disputes. In addition, member states are obliged to support the enforcement actions of the UN and refrain from giving assistance to states against which such actions are taken. Moreover, all members have an obligation to “fulfill in good faith all the obligations assumed by them in accordance with the Charter” (Karns, Mingst, and Stiles, 2015:110).

The only exception to the prohibition of the use of force is provided in Article 51 of the Charter. Article 51 establishes the right to self-defense of a state against armed attack. In case of armed attack, member states have the inherent right of individual or collective self-defense until the UNSC takes necessary measures. Members are obliged to immediately report their measures to the UNSC. However, such measures taken by member states under the right of self-defense cannot prevent the UNSC to take necessary measures for the maintenance of international peace and security. Given the history of international relations, it is not easy to establish which state has the right to self-defense and which state is the aggressor or victim in each and every case, because states have no consensus on the definition of aggression and attack (Mingst and Karns, 2012:24).
Article 51
Nothing in the present Charter shall impair the inherent right of individual or collective self-defense if an armed attack occurs against a Member of the United Nations, until the Security Council has taken measures necessary to maintain international peace and security. Measures taken by Members in the exercise of this right of self-defense shall be immediately reported to the Security Council and shall not in any way affect the authority and responsibility of the Security Council under the present Charter to take at any time such action as it deems necessary in order to maintain or restore international peace and security.

The non-interference in internal affairs of member states is another core principle of the UN. The Charter clearly prohibits the organization from intervening in matters that are essentially under the domestic jurisdiction of any state. The only exception is the application of enforcement measures taken by the UNSC. However, the distinction between the domestic affairs and international affairs is not that clear and this makes this principle of “non-interference” quite controversial (Bennett, 1995:60). More importantly, this creates a great dilemma between state sovereignty and the protection of human rights. Particularly in the case of gross and systemic human rights violations, humanitarian intervention has generated a controversial debate in recent international politics (Pease, 2012: 275). On the other hand, because the respect and promotion of human rights is one of the major goals of the UN, there have also been efforts such as the endorsement of “responsibility to protect” (R2P) to secure a reconciliation between these basic principles and the protection of human rights.

THE ROLE OF THE UN IN GLOBAL GOVERNANCE

International Peace and Security
Maintaining international peace and security is the primary objective of the UN. Moreover, despite some legal and political limits, the organization has decisive authority over states on matters concerning international security (Hurd, 2014: 137). In other words, global security governance constitutes a significant aspect of the UN’s responsibility and activities. Global security governance consists of a wide range of activities and issues, from controlling the flow of small arms and inspecting weapons of mass destruction to peacekeeping and peace-enforcement missions. Although the UNSC is the central authority, these activities involve various types of actors at different levels from the local to the international. The main problem concerning global security governance stems from the coordination of diverse activities of various actors (Weiss and Thakur, 2010:4).

The UN has contributed to global governance with regard to international peace and security in two main ways, both of which are intertwined: operational and normative. First, the operational contribution of the UN involves concrete activities in preventing, settling, managing, and resolving conflicts. In this regard, the organization has developed several instruments throughout its history such as the pacific settlement of disputes, peacekeeping and peacebuilding, and peace-enforcement. These instruments are designed so as to make sure that states fulfill their obligations under the UN Charter and that the UN take the necessary measures if states fail to comply with the Charter (Hurd, 2014: 138).

The pacific settlement of disputes is defined as the ‘diplomatic’ instrument of the UN that aims to help conflicting parties solve their disputes through peaceful and non-coercive means (Dogan, 2012: 131). The UN employs different techniques, including mediation, good offices, special envoys and missions as well as preventive diplomacy (Mingst and Karns, 2012:102). For instance, a UN-mediated truce ended the war between India and Pakistan in 1947. The UN also sent special envoys and missions to peacefully settle disputes. For example, the Secretary-General appointed Staffan de Mistura as the “Special Envoy for Syria”
in July 2014 (UN-B). Preventive diplomacy is an approach that was originally developed by Secretary-General Dag Hammarskjöld to “prevent disputes from arising between parties, prevent existing disputes from escalating into conflicts and to limit the spread of the latter when they occur” (Mingst and Karns, 2012: 103).

**Peacekeeping** is another significant tool of the UN with regard to promoting international security. It emerged as an innovation of the organization to adapt itself to the changing security conditions of international politics. Under the Cold War circumstances, peacekeeping was regarded as the only “realistic operational function” of the organization in maintaining international peace and security (Dogan, 2012: 124). As such, peacekeeping was the UN’s main security activity during the Cold War years.

Peacekeeping involved the deployment of a military force in conflict zones to monitor a ceasefire or patrol a buffer zone between belligerents. Although initial UN missions were sent to Palestine in 1948 as well as to India and Pakistan in 1949, the first peacekeeping mission that included armed forces was deployed during the Suez Crisis in 1956. This first UN peacekeeping mission was called “United Nations Emergency Force (UNEF I),” which also provided a model for later missions. All peacekeeping operations during the Cold War, with the exception of the mission to Congo (1960-1964), were deployed in interstate conflicts based on the consent of conflicting parties as well as on principles such as the non-use of force except for self-defense, political neutrality, and international legitimacy (Diehl, ss.116-117).

**UNEF I** – the first United Nations peacekeeping force – was established by the first emergency special session of the General Assembly which was held from 1 to 10 November 1956. The mandate of the Force was to secure and supervise the cessation of hostilities, including the withdrawal of the armed forces of France, Israel, and the United Kingdom from Egyptian territory and, after the withdrawal, to serve as a buffer between the Egyptian and Israeli forces and to provide impartial supervision of the ceasefire. UNEF was withdrawn in May-June 1967, at Egypt’s request (www.un.org).

Peacekeeping had significant purposes. Its main one was to contain a conflict and prevent it from escalating into a war, especially into a larger systemic war. In this regard, it has been a significant instrument toward maintaining international security. Through its peacekeeping missions, the organization succeeded preventing the interference of the superpowers in conflicts or the escalation of any military confrontation that might have endangered the world order (Dogan, 2012: 125). Put differently, peacekeeping has been a significant instrument of the UN to manage power relations between great powers.

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Following the end of the Cold War, **peacebuilding** gained further importance in international politics. Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali particularly pioneered this process with his report, *An Agenda for Peace*, in 1992. In this report, **post-conflict peacebuilding** is defined as an “action to identify and support structures which will tend to strengthen and solidify peace in order to avoid a relapse into conflict” (Boutros-Ghali, 1992). Peacebuilding is a more ambitious policy agenda than peacekeeping, because it
particularly focuses on intrastate conflicts. It is also a method for the governance of new security issues such as ethnic conflicts or civil wars, whose number has increased since the early 1990s.

The rise of the new concept also led to a shift in UN operations from traditional peacekeeping activities to **multidimensional peace operations**. In fact, concrete problems that the UN faced during peace operations in Somalia and the former Yugoslavia made it necessary for multidimensional peace operations. This concept is defined as “a middle ground between forcible intervention and full respect of state sovereignty” and was implemented in El Salvador, Cambodia, and Mozambique. The concept of ‘multidimensional peace operations’ has expanded the peacebuilding agenda with humanitarian needs, as well as democratization, economic reforms, reconciliation, and justice at the societal level. It is a multidimensional task for the UN. However, as Doyle and others indicate, since the end of the Cold War, peace operations have created tension between state sovereignty and the role of the international community (Doyle et al., 1997:1).

**Peace-enforcement** involves coercive means that the UN can deploy against a state in order to maintain international security and peace (Hurd, 2014:138). As noted earlier, Chapter VII of the UN Charter provides the legal basis for peace-enforcement since it authorizes the UNSC to take the necessary measures, including the use of military force, to address aggression as well as threats to peace.

Peacekeeping missions differ from peace-enforcement in three aspects: first, peacekeeping is based on the consent of parties to the conflict. Second, they are politically neutral. Third, force can be used as a last resort and only for self-defense (Mingst and Karns, 2012: 112). Peace-enforcement missions, on the other hand, do not require the consent of target states or political neutrality. Most importantly, they involve collective military action against a state (Hurd, 2014: 138).

The first example of UN military intervention under Chapter VII was the Korean War in 1950. In order to defeat the North Korean attack on South Korea, the UNSC authorized collective military action, which was the only UN military intervention during the Cold War. (Hanhimaki, 2008:18). After the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait in 1990, the UNSC launched another full military campaign. Resolution 678 authorized member states to take all the necessary measures to force Iraq from Kuwait if Iraq remained in the country after January 15, 1991. This was the second UN military intervention under Chapter VII in the UN history.

Also in Bosnia, the UN authorized a military intervention for humanitarian purposes and asked the regional organizations to help the UN to impose a 'no-fly zone' over the country. Finally, this peace-enforcement mission was conducted in cooperation with NATO (Mingst and Karns, 2012: 107).

Not only the use of force but also other forms of coercive missions such as economic sanctions or arms embargos are significant tools for global security governance. Although UN-imposed mandatory sanctions were only twice enforced during the Cold War (the economic sanctions against Southern Rhodesia in 1965 and an arms embargo against South Africa in 1977), sanctions have been more frequently deployed by the UNSC since 1990. For example, economic or diplomatic sanctions as well as arms embargos have been imposed against Iran, Sudan, North Korea, and Libya (Mingst and Karns, 2012: 112).

Another major contribution of UN to global security governance is normative in character. This refers to the creation and promotion of new security norms and frameworks. It is directly related to the UN’s function of collective legitimization, which strengthens particular policies, positions of particular states, and particular values in international politics. In other words, collective legitimization highlights the UN’s capacity to legitimize or delegitimize norms in the international system (Dogan, 2012: 134-135). The development of the norm of R2P in the early 2000s clearly illustrates this function of the UN with regard to global security governance.

**International Law and Justice**

One of the most significant functions of the UN with regard to global governance has been promoting international law and justice. The UN plays a leading role in the creation of international conventions, treaties, and legal and normative
The United Nations and Global Governance

standards that regulate political, economic, social, cultural and security aspects of global politics.

First, the work of the General Assembly is of great importance to the development of international law. Article 13 of the Charter mandates the General Assembly to initiate studies and make recommendations in order to encourage the development of international law and its codification. Since its inception in 1945, the General Assembly has carried out the codification of international treaties. The Sixth Committee as well as the International Law Commission assist the General Assembly toward this mission (Karns, Mingst, and Stiles, 2015: 118). The General Assembly serves as a forum where member states negotiate and adopt multilateral conventions. Thus, its resolutions have gradually paved the way for the creation of new international treaties, agreements, and norms, and for enhancing the development of international law, including international humanitarian and human rights law. The legal work of the UN addresses a wide range of issues including environmental protection, drug trafficking, nuclear proliferation, migration, and terrorism (UN-C). The General Assembly produced significant multilateral treaties such as the 1961 Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations, the 1968 Treaty on the Non-proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, the 1969 Vienna Convention on the Law of Treaties, and the 1982 UN Convention on the Law of Sea (Karns, and Mingst, 2012: 27).

Second, as the judicial arm of the UN, the work of the ICJ also contributes to global governance in several ways. As pointed out above, the court provides states with an opportunity to settle their disputes through judicial means. For instance, the ICJ has been successful in solving some territorial issues such as the delimitation of the North Sea continental shelf, fisheries in the Gulf of Maine, and the maritime boundary between Cameroon and Nigeria. Moreover, since the ICJ Status mentions judicial decisions of the court among the secondary sources of international law, its advisory opinions and decisions are important for developing international law (Karns, Mingst, and Stiles, 2015:142).

Third, the UN has a leading role in the promotion of the rule of law and justice in post-conflict situations. In this regard, the UN has greatly encouraged the emergence of transitional justice, which includes both judicial and non-judicial measures in addressing gross and systemic human rights violations after a period of oppression or armed conflict. The 2004 Report of the Secretary-General is a prominent landmark for the progressive development of transitional justice (UN Secretary-General, 2004). More importantly, the UN has a crucial operational function in supporting transitional justice mechanisms. First, in order to combat impunity and to ensure accountability for mass atrocities, the UN contributed to the promotion of international criminal justice by creating ad hoc and hybrid tribunals. The International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia (ICTY) and The International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda were both established to try serious crimes committed such as genocide, war crimes, and crimes against humanity. The UN also provided substantial support to 'hybrid courts' established in Sierra Leone, Cambodia, and Lebanon. The organization encourages not only criminal justice but also truth-seeking initiatives in order to promote accountability for past human rights violations. For instance, the UN was influential in creating truth commissions in El Salvador, Sierra Leone, and Timor-Leste (East Timor).

A truth commission is a temporary, non-judicial body that investigates past human rights violation committed over a period of time. Truth commissions engage with victims, survivors, and perpetrators and aim to produce a final report on the patterns of human rights abuses. They are often authorized by a state (Hayner, 2011:11-12).
Human Rights

The protection of human rights is defined by the Charter as one of the main objectives of the UN. However, especially in the first two decades following the establishment of the UN human rights bodies, the power and responsibilities of these bodies were not clear. For example, the Commission on Human Rights, established in 1946, was not active in taking actions against human-rights violations. 1966 was a turning point in the UN’s approach toward protecting universal human rights; in 1966, the organization adopted two core international human rights covenants, namely “the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights,” and “the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights”. The UN also gave a green light to the Commission on Human Rights to investigate human rights violations in South Africa (Dalar, 2014:156).

The UN bodies contribute to the governance of the international human rights regime in three main ways: (1) norm creation, (2) institutionalization, (3) monitoring and reporting. This is an analytical classification; in practice, these functions are intertwined.

The first significant contribution of the UN to the global governance of human rights is its function of establishing human rights norms and standards, of which the most notable example is the adoption of the 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights by the General Assembly (Bookmiller, 2008: 49). Although not legally binding, the Declaration clearly demonstrates how the General Assembly can contribute to both creating international norms and reinforcing customary international law. Moreover, the 1948 Declaration laid the groundwork for future international conventions on human rights in that the General Assembly adopted the 1966 human-rights covenants (Hurd, 2014:110). Following the adoption of these covenants, the General Assembly also produced significant international legal documents on such issues as women’s rights, children’s rights, elimination of torture, migration, forced disappearances, and individuals with disabilities (See Table 5.3.) These documents include monitoring mechanisms and protection mechanisms as well as provide global standards toward promoting and protecting human rights.

Table 5.3 Core International Human-Rights Treaties and Their Monitoring Bodies

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Core International Human Rights Treaties</th>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Monitoring Body</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination</td>
<td>1965</td>
<td>Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination (CERD)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights</td>
<td>1966</td>
<td>Human Rights Committee (CCPR)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights</td>
<td>1966</td>
<td>Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (CESCR)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women</td>
<td>1979</td>
<td>Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment</td>
<td>1984</td>
<td>Committee against Torture (CAT)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Convention on the Rights of the Child</td>
<td>1989</td>
<td>Committee on the Rights of the Child (CRC)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families</td>
<td>1990</td>
<td>Committee on Migrant Workers (CMW)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance</td>
<td>2006</td>
<td>Committee on Enforced Disappearances (CED)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities</td>
<td>2006</td>
<td>Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: https://www.ohchr.org
The second significant function of the UN with regard to human rights has been promoting the institutionalization through the creation of human-rights bodies. The establishment of the **Commission on Human Rights** by ECOSOC in 1946 was the first significant step toward this objective. The Commission prepared drafts for critical international human rights declarations and covenants, including the 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights. However, the Commission gradually turned into a highly politicized body (Pease, 2012: 270). Particularly, states carried out serious and systemic human rights violations such as Libya and Zimbabwe were elected to shield human-rights abuses of many nations. Therefore, based on the decision of member states at the 2005 World Summit, the Commission on Human Rights was replaced by the **Human Rights Council** in 2006 (Hurd, 2014:121).

The Human Rights Council is composed of 47 members elected by the General Assembly for three-year terms. Membership is allocated on a regional basis. The Council is today the central UN body responsible for the promotion and protection of human rights and addressing human rights violations committed by UN member states. However, decisions of the Council are not legally binding on member states. It can send fact-finding missions to investigate human-rights abuses. These investigative mechanisms aim to combat impunity and promote accountability for violations of human rights (OHCHR-A). Yet the Council suffers from problems similar to those of the Commission on Human Rights. For instance, human rights-abusing countries have been also elected to the Council. Moreover, the Council has been criticized for not being impartial in its decision-making process (Pease, 2012: 270). Furthermore, the United States has had a conflicting relationship with the UN Human Rights Council. In June 2018, Washington withdrew from the Council, “accusing the body of bias against the US ally Israel and a failure to hold human rights abusers accountable” (CNN, 2018).

The **Office of the High Commissioner on Human Rights** (OHCHR) is another key human rights body within the UN system. Created by the General Assembly in 1993, it works closely with governments, civil society, and national and international human rights institutions. The business of the OHCHR is composed of setting human rights standards, monitoring human rights practices, and implementing global human-rights norms on the ground. The OHCHR also provides assistance to other UN bodies, including the Human Rights Council (OHCHR-B).

Monitoring and reporting state practices regarding human rights is the third major contribution of the UN. There are ten human rights treaty bodies. Apart from the Subcommittee on the Prevention of Torture, each body monitors the implementation of the relevant international human rights treaty (OHCHR-C). Toward this objective, the UN works in close cooperation with key international human rights non-governmental organizations. For example, Amnesty International and Human Rights Watch are central actors in identifying, investigating, monitoring, and reporting human rights violations (Pease, 2012: 273). It can be concluded that the UN is crucial for developing the international human rights regime—an essential component of global governance.

**Development Assistance**

The UN has been instrumental also in global economic governance, particularly through its global development policy. In fact, the organization has been defending the idea that improving the economic and social wellbeing of individuals is essential for international peace. The Charter identifies the promotion of higher living standards, full employment, and economic and social development as one of the main responsibilities of the UN.

After World War II, the reconstruction of war-torn countries was at the top of the economic agenda of the organization. With the process of decolonization in the 1950s and 1960s, the number of newly independent countries rapidly increased in the General Assembly. This led the organization to fight social and economic problems as well as the global economic inequality, that is, the inequality between the “haves” and “have-nots.” The North-South divide emerged and remained a major problem in the international system. As a result, **development** became the top priority in the UN economic agenda in the 1960s (Hanhimaki, 2008: 92-94).
The work of the UN is crucial in two main ways. First, the organization has created key institutions in the field of development. Formed in 1964, the UN Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) has become an important body on development issues, providing a platform for the North-South dialogue. The UN Development Program (UNDP) is another significant part of the UN that gives aid to underdeveloped countries.

Second, the UN has been instrumental in shaping the global development paradigm and setting development goals. With the advance of globalization, the concept of human development has become a multidimensional concept and issue. Besides economic growth, the indicators of human development include life expectancy, education, health, nutrition, and gender discrimination (Hanhimaki, 2008: 92-94). In September 2000, the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) were adopted by world leaders at a UN summit. The MDGs consist of eight goals such as eradicating extreme poverty, achieving universal education, combating HIV/AIDS, and ensuring environmental sustainability (Karns and Mingst, 2012: 7-8). At the 2015 UN Summit, the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development was adopted. Among its 17 goals are eradicating poverty, protecting the planet, and ensuring prosperity for all (UN-D).

In sum, providing development aid to less developed countries constitutes an important function of the UN toward a better global governance and an orderly world. Through economic assistance, the UN helps states so that they become capable of fulfilling their responsibilities at both the domestic and international levels (Dogan, 2012: 137-139).

WEAKNESSES OF THE UN AND REFORM PROPOSALS

The UN was founded on the premise of equality, justice, and human rights. It has been trying to adapt itself to changing global conditions through institutional innovations and to address new demands and problems by creating new entities and bodies. Nevertheless, the organization has fallen short of expectations in achieving its major objectives. For this reason, the UN has been harshly criticized and has been subject to numerous reform calls. Moreover, there have been several reform proposals and efforts to increase the institutional capacity and effectiveness of the organization.

To begin with, the UN has critical structural problems that prevent the organization from achieving its main objectives. As noted earlier, the UN primarily aims to maintain international peace and security and...
encourage universal respect for human rights, but it has failed to prevent gross human-rights violations and armed conflicts. What is more, since the UN Charter was founded upon general premises rather than specific targets, the scope of its activities has also excessively proliferated.

The UN has long been subject to substantial reform proposals. However, there are several obstacles to a comprehensive reform. The first obstacle is procedural. Amending the UN Charter is a difficult and complex process, because Charter amendments must be adopted by two-thirds majority of the General Assembly. These come into force when at least two thirds of member states, including all permanent members of the Security Council, ratify them in accordance with their own constitutional procedures. Second and more importantly, there are political obstacles stemming from the power politics of the international system. For instance, power politics as well as the North-South divide create further complications.

Most of the criticisms and reform calls are directed at two of the principal organs: the General Assembly and the UNSC. Critics of the Assembly underline that:

• The General Assembly has no coercive or binding authority. It is the most democratic UN body where all member states have equal voting rights, but its decisions are “recommendations” to member states rather than legally binding directives (Hurd, 2014: 108). As such, critics argue that the General Assembly is a powerless UN body despite the fact that its resolutions reflect the will of the majority of its members.

• Its agenda items and decisions lack focus. For instance, the Assembly passed 239 resolutions in 2017 on a wide range of issues (General Assembly of the United Nations-D). Many of these resolutions are defined as “ritual resolutions” that include similar texts on repeated items, and their content is formulated in general terms without paying due consideration to their implementation (Karns, Mingst, and Stiles, 2015: 122).

• The end of the Cold War has led to changes in the influence of the principal UN organs. The UNSC and Secretariat have gained prominence within the UN system and become the center of most UN activities. However, the importance of the General Assembly has declined (Mingst and Karns, 2012:30). While the General Assembly was able to take initiatives when the UNSC was paralyzed during the Cold War, it has taken a back seat since the early 1990s.

There have been reform proposals to create a stronger and more effective General Assembly. For instance, in his 2005 report, *In Larger Freedom*, Kofi Annan suggested some changes toward revitalizing the General Assembly that include reforming its agenda, committee structure, and working procedures; strengthening the position of its presidency; focusing on main substantive problems; and strengthening its relations with civil society (Annan, 2005: 40-41).

The composition of the Security Council is the most controversial aspect of the UN and has been criticized for several reasons:

• One of the harsh criticisms leveled against the Council is that it privileges the five permanent members (which reflects the balance of power at the end of World War II) and so fails to represent the changing nature of the international system, particularly in the post-Cold War era (Hanhimaki, 2008: 33). Therefore, the structure of the UNSC is subject to numerous calls for reform.

• Due to the veto power of the five permanent members, the UNSC is regarded as an undemocratic body (Teixeira, 2003: 12). Thanks to its veto power, any permanent member can block the decision-making process in the Council. The conflicting interests of great powers often prevent the UNSC from taking necessary measures for the maintenance of international peace and security. The impasse at the UNSC with regard to the Syrian war illustrates this point. Although hundreds of thousands of people have been killed or wounded in the Syrian conflict, the international community has failed to stop it, mainly due to Security Council deadlocks.
The UNSC does not fairly represent the majority of UN member states, especially since the organizational membership increased from 51 to 193. Indeed, the UNSC’s 15 members form only 7.7 percent of all UN members. More importantly, the P5 countries constitutes merely 2.6 percent of the total member states. Thus, only a limited number of states involve in taking significant decisions on international peace and security.

The UNSC also fails in terms of geographical representation of the world. Northern and European countries have been overrepresented in the Council while those from Africa, Asia, and Latin America have been underrepresented. What is worse, there is not any African or Latin American state among the P5 (Karns, Mingst, and Stiles, 2015: 149). Greater financial contributions from states other than the permanent members also lead to questioning the legitimacy of the Council (Mingst and Karns, 2012: 32).

Reform proposals include an increase in the number of members to enhance the Council’s geographical representation and strengthen legitimacy as well as making changes regarding the veto power (Karns, Mingst, and Stiles, 2015: 150-151). So far, however, the only structural change in the Council has been the increase in its membership from eleven to fifteen.

Other UN bodies also suffer from structural problems such as poor coordination among its bodies and agencies, personnel issues, limited resources, and a lack of transparency and accountability. The Secretariat, for instance, has been harshly criticized for its failure to employ more women and promote them to leadership positions. Moreover, the Secretariat has also been criticized on the grounds of not being neutral, duplicating the tasks, and poor management (Mingst and Karns, 2012: 40). In fact, Secretaries-General Kofi Annan and Ban Ki-Moon took important steps to address these issues. Annan created a new body called the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, which replaced three different departments. He also reduced the number of staff in the Secretariat and supported the idea of bringing UN development agencies under the ‘UN House.’ Annan also achieved major organizational changes in the structure of the Secretariat. For example, thirty different departments were regrouped under four main areas: peace and security; humanitarian affairs; development; economic and social affairs. In order to improve coordination in humanitarian programs, around fifteen agencies and departments were subordinated to the Executive Committee on Humanitarian Affairs. Annan also sponsored expert reports on the need for reform. The Brahimi Report, which was produced in 2000 by the Panel on UN Peace Operations, called for increasing the organization’s capacity in peacekeeping missions. Ban Ki-moon carried on organizational reforms with regard to peacekeeping and by creating new departments (Karns, Mingst, and Stiles, 2015: 149-152).

Finally, ECOSOC has organizational problems too. Expanding its scope of activity and number of affiliated entities has led to coordination problems and poor management. Besides, it is quite difficult for its 54 members with conflicting interests to reach a decision on economic and social matters (Aslan and Aslan, 2014:104). Nevertheless, it is argued that if ECOSOC were granted an authority similar to the UNSC, it would be more efficient and functional in addressing economic and social problems (Fasulo, 2009: 76).

Discuss reform proposals directed at the General Assembly and UNSC.
The United Nations And Global Governance

Summary

LO 1  Explain the origins and emergence of the UN

The UN System was built on developments from the 16th century onward. These are European traditions and experience in international law and organizations; the Concert of Europe; codified procedures for the prevention of war and the pacific settlement of conflicts in the Hague conferences; international public unions such as the Rhine Commission (1815) and the Danube Commission (1848), as well as that of the International Telegraphic Union (1865) and the Universal Postal Union (1874); and finally, the League of Nations. The first concrete step towards the establishment of the UN was taken when US President Roosevelt and British Prime Minister Churchill signed a joint declaration called the Atlantic Charter in August 1941. The Declaration by the United Nations was signed in January 1942 by twenty-six nations fighting against the Axis powers. Representatives from China, the Soviet Union, the United Kingdom and the United States gathered at Dumbarton Oaks in Washington D.C. to draft the charter and main principles of the new international organization. They produced Dumbarton Oaks Proposals on the basic structure of the organization in 1944. The United Nations Conference on the International Organization convened in San Francisco, and the UN Charter was unanimously accepted on June 26, 1945. It officially came into existence on October 24, 1945.

LO 2  Recount the UN's principal organs and their functions

The main organs of the UN are the General Assembly, the UNSC, the Secretariat, the ECOSOC, the ICJ, and the Trusteeship Council. The General Assembly is the main deliberative body of the UN. Each member state has one vote. Its major functions are to consider and make recommendations on any subject; operate as a central coordinating body among other UN bodies and agencies; consider and approve the budget of the UN; and elect the non-permanent members of the Security Council, all members of the ECOSOC, and non-administering members of the Trusteeship Council. The UNSC is the central organ in the UN system and its primary responsibility is the maintenance of international peace and security. It has five permanent members: the United States, Britain, China, France, and Russia—each of which has veto power—and ten non-permanent members. The UNSC can investigate disputes that may pose a threat to international peace and security and recommend the peaceful settlement of disputes. The Security Council also has powers to take diplomatic or economic measures against an aggressor state. It can authorize military action. The Secretariat consists of a Secretary-General and thousands of international civil servants responsible for the day-to-day activities of the UN. It works to implement the economic, humanitarian, and social programs. The ICJ is the judicial arm of the UN and consists of fifteen judges co-elected by both the General Assembly and the Security Council. It settles legal disputes between states and is authorized to give advisory opinions on legal questions upon request. ECOSOC is responsible for addressing international economic and social programs. Its agenda includes housing, literacy, environment, drug control, refugees, statistics, education, HIV/AIDS, development, and so on. The Trusteeship Council was established to oversee the administration of trust territories. It ended its operations with the independence of the last trust territory in 1994.
Chapter I of the Charter outlines the basic principles and main purposes of the UN. The UN Charter establishes the sovereign equality of its members. Its primary goal is the maintenance of international peace and security. Two principles gain prominence: the prohibition of the threat or use of force and the peaceful settlement of international disputes. The only exception of the prohibition of the use of force is the right to self-defense of a state under armed attack. The non-interference in internal affairs of member states is another core principle of the UN that puts a serious limitation on its authority.

The UN’s contribution to global governance can be summarized in four concepts: international peace and security, the development of international law and the promotion of justice, development assistance, and human rights. Firstly, the UN has contributed to global governance with regard to international peace and security in operational and normative ways. The operational contribution of the UN involves its concrete activities in preventing, settling, managing, and resolving conflicts. These can be grouped into pacific settlement of disputes, peacekeeping and peacebuilding, and peace-enforcement. The normative contribution refers to the creation and promotion of new security norms and frameworks such as the development of the norm of R2P in the early 2000s. Secondly, the UN plays a leading role in the creation of international conventions, treaties, and legal and normative standards that regulate political, economic, social, cultural and security aspects of global politics. The work of the General Assembly and ICJ have contributed to the development of international law and both play leading roles in the promotion of the rule of law and justice in post-conflict situations. Thirdly, the UN makes a double contribution to global governance with regards to development. It has created key institutions such as UNCTAD and UNDP and is instrumental in shaping the global development paradigm and goals. Finally, the UN contributes to global governance by creating norms, institutionalization, monitoring, and reporting in the field of human rights.

The UN has been harshly criticized for various reasons and subject to numerous reform calls for failing to achieve a number of its main objectives. Most of the criticism and reform calls are directed particularly at the General Assembly and UNSC. The former, for example, has no coercive or binding authority, and its agenda items and decisions often lack focus. While the UNSC and Secretariat have gained more prominence within the UN, the importance of the General Assembly has declined relatively. Thus reform proposals aim to create a stronger and more effective General Assembly. The major criticism directed at the UNSC is that it has five permanent members and veto power and does not fairly represent the majority of UN member states. Other UN bodies also suffer from structural problems. These are coordination problems among its bodies and agencies and management issues such as inadequate personnel, limited resources, and a lack of transparency and accountability.
1. The UN Charter was signed at.... Which of the following options correctly completes the sentence above?
   a. The Yalta Conference
   b. The San Francisco Conference
   c. The Dumbarton Oaks Conference
   d. The Bretton Woods Conference
   e. The Paris Peace Conference

2. I. The Hague conferences  
   II. International Public Unions  
   III. The League of Nations  
   IV. Universal Declaration of Human Rights  
   V. European experience on international law and organizations
Which ones of the above had an important impact on the creation of the UN?
   a. I and II
   b. II and V
   c. I, II and III
   d. I, II and V
   e. I, II, III and V

3. Which of the following countries is a permanent member of the UN Security Council?
   a. Japan
   b. Germany
   c. India
   d. China
   e. Canada

4. Which of the following sentences is correct concerning the UN organs?
   a. Each of UN member states is represented in the General Assembly.
   b. The Trusteeship Council has five permanent members.
   c. General Assembly decisions are binding on member states.
   d. The Security Council has a mandate to approve the budget of the UN.
   e. The Secretary-General occupies the top of the ECOSOC.

5. I. Sovereign equality of all its Members  
   II. Peaceful settlement of international disputes  
   III. The prohibition of the threat or use of force  
   IV. The right to self-defense against an armed attack  
   V. Non-interference in internal affairs
Which ones of the above are principles of the UN?
   a. I and II
   b. I, II and III
   c. I, II and IV
   d. I, II, III and IV
   e. I, II, III, IV and V

6. The UN charter prohibits the use of force except for....?
   a. Self-defense of a state against an armed attack
   b. Interference in internal affairs
   c. Encouraging regional arrangements
   d. Political independence
   e. National interests

7. I. Good offices  
   II. Special envoys and missions  
   III. Preventive diplomacy  
   IV. Mediation  
   V. Military Force
Which of the above diplomatic instruments does the UN employ to help conflicting parties solve their disputes through peaceful and non-coercive means?
   a. I and II
   b. I and III
   c. I, II and V
   d. I, II, III and IV
   e. I, II, III, IV, and V.
8. Which of the following UN bodies has contributed to global governance by the judicial settlement of territorial issues?
   a. International Court of Justice
   b. Trusteeship Council
   c. Secretariat
   d. General Assembly
   e. Economic and Social Council

9. I. Every member state has a seat at the General Assembly.
   II. General Assembly decisions have no focus.
   III. The UNSC fairly represents every region in the world.
   IV. The permanent members in the UNSC have veto powers.
   V. The importance of the General Assembly has been in decline.

Which ones of the above are among the criticisms leveled against the UN?
   a. I and II
   b. I and III
   c. II and V
   d. II, IV and V
   e. I, II, III and IV

10. Which of the following is not one of the structural problems of the UN today?
    a. Redundant agencies
    b. Inadequate personnel
    c. Limited resources
    d. Transparency
    e. Peacekeeping operations
1. b
If your answer is not correct, review the section on “The Origins and Emergence of the UN”.

2. e
If your answer is not correct, review the section on “The Origins and Emergence of the UN”.

3. d
If your answer is not correct, review the section on “The United Nations System: Principal Organs And Their Functions”.

4. a
If your answer is not correct, review the section on “The United Nations System: Principal Organs And Their Functions”.

5. e
If your answer is not correct, review the section on “The Basic Principles and Main Purposes of the UN”.

6. a
If your answer is not correct, review the section on “The Basic Principles and Main Purposes of the UN”.

7. d
If your answer is not correct, review the section on “The Role of the UN in Global Governance”.

8. a
If your answer is not correct, review the section on “The Role of the UN in Global Governance”.

9. d
If your answer is not correct, review the section on “Weaknesses of the UN and Reform Proposals”.

10. e
If your answer is not correct, review the section on “Weaknesses of the UN and Reform Proposals”.
What are the similarities between the UN and the League of Nations?

The League of Nations and the UN were initiatives led by US presidents. The UN Charter also shared the ideals and many structural elements on which the League was built. Both organizations identified the promotion of international security and the peaceful settlements of disputes as their key goals. However, the UN put more emphasis on the economic and social progress of nations than the League. Both of them shared the idea of creating an international organization to protect international peace and to prevent future wars. Whereas the official process for the creation of the League was initiated after the end of World War I, the preparations for the establishment of the UN began in the early years of World War II.

Which of the UN organs do you think is more influential?

The UN has six principal organs. Despite the fact that the Trusteeship Council officially exists, it is no longer an active UN body. Although the other organs share responsibility for maintaining the purposes of the UN Charter, the UNSC is more influential within the UN system. One main reason of this is that the resolutions passed by the UNSC are legally binding. The Council can investigate disputes that pose a threat to international peace and security and make recommendations for the peaceful settlement of disputes. The Security Council has powers to take diplomatic or economic measures against an aggressor. Most importantly, it can authorize military action. To amend the UN Charter, the ratification of amendment proposals by each and every permanent member of the Security Council in accordance with their respective constitutional process is required.

Explore and discuss the emergence of R2P as an international norm.

The emergence of R2P has been a result of efforts to reconcile the protection of human rights with the basic principles of international law—namely, state sovereignty and non-interference in internal affairs. The UN-mandated military actions in the 1990s in Bosnia and Somalia already created controversy on 'humanitarian intervention.' However, the NATO military intervention in Kosovo was extremely controversial since it was conducted without a UNSC authorization. Yet it was defended as morally legitimate for 'humanitarian' purposes. In this context, at the 54th session of the General Assembly, Secretary-General Annan called for a new normative framework to cope with such humanitarian crises (Annan, 1999). R2P was subsequently formulated by the International Commission on Intervention and State Sovereignty, and the concept was incorporated into the UN World Summit Outcome Document in 2005. R2P has become an influential international norm for states’ responsibility to protect its population from mass atrocities. If a state fails, R2P falls onto the international community. It was invoked for the first time in 2011 by the UNSC when it authorized a ‘no-fly zone’ in Libya in order to protect civilians from the regime (Dunne and Gifkins, 2011).
Explain the UN peacekeeping operations during the Cold War.

Peacekeeping has had significant purposes. Its principal purpose has been to contain regional or civil violence and prevent it from escalating into a major war. The first peacekeeping mission was deployed after the Suez Crisis in 1956. All peacekeeping operations during the Cold War, except for the mission in Congo (1960-1964), were deployed to threats with interstate conflicts. The UN established missions in the Dominican Republic, West New Guinea (West Irian), Yemen, and Cyprus in the 1960s. Peacekeeping operations in the Middle East were also established to contain the conflicts between Egypt and Israel and to confirm the Israeli withdrawal from Lebanon.

Discuss reform proposals directed at the General Assembly and UNSC.

There have been reform proposals to create a stronger and more effective General Assembly. These include reforming the agenda, its committee structure, and working procedures; strengthening the position of its presidency; focusing on the main substantive problems; and strengthening the relations with civil society. The composition of the UNSC is the most controversial issue in the UN. Reform proposals include increasing the number of UNSC members in order for the body to better represent the member states and become relatively transparent as well as accepting new permanent members with the veto right (Global Policy Forum).

Further Reading


References

**Books and Articles**


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