



## India at UNSC

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**Context :** India begins its two year tenure as Non-permanent member of UN Security Council.



**Background :** India has officially

begun its two-year term as a non-permanent member of the United Nations Security Council along with Norway, Mexico, Ireland and Kenya.

Amidst the continued stand-off between India and China along the Line of Actual Control (LAC), come January 1, 2021, India will be at the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) for a period of 2 years as a non-permanent member.

On 17 June, India was elected to the UN Security Council with 184 of the total 192 votes. A member country needs a two-third majority of votes in the General Assembly to become a non-permanent member. This is the eighth time India has been elected as a non-permanent member.

### In Detail

India will sit in the 15-nation United Nations Security Council (UNSC) for the 2021-22 term as a non-permanent member, the eighth time that the country has had a seat on the powerful horseshoe table. In 2021, India, Norway, Kenya, Ireland and Mexico join non-permanent members Estonia, Niger, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Tunisia and Vietnam and the five permanent members China, France, Russia, UK and the US in the Council.

India will be UNSC President in August 2021 and will preside over the Council again for a month in 2022. The presidency of the Council is held by each of the members in turn for one month, following the English alphabetical order of the Member States names.

### **India's Focus in the Council**

The focus of India as a non-permanent of the UNSC will be on reforms and this was highlighted by Prime Minister, in his speech at the UNGA in September this year.

Some of the priority areas that India will be focusing on during its two-year term will be on a comprehensive approach to peace and security, new opportunities for progress, effective response to terrorism globally, reforming multilateral systems, and technology with a human touch.

India's Permanent Representative to the UN Ambassador T S Tirumurti has said that as the world's largest democracy, India will promote fundamental values like human rights and development and reinforce multilateralism while underlining the need for greater cooperation in the United Nations Security Council.

India's message will also be to ensure, how do we let diversity flourish in a united framework, which is in many ways the United Nations itself. This is something which India as a country, as what we stand for" will take to the Council.

### **Previous Tenure & Achievements**

- Previously, India has served seven times in the UN Security Council.
- In 1950-51, India, as President of UNSC, presided over the adoption of resolutions calling for cessation of hostilities during the Korean War and for assistance to Republic of Korea.
- In 1967-68, India co-sponsored Resolution 238 extending mandate of UN mission in Cyprus.
- In 1972-73, India pushed strongly for admission of Bangladesh into UN. The resolution was not adopted because of a veto by a permanent member.
- In 1977-78, India was a strong voice for Africa in the UNSC and spoke against apartheid. Then External Affairs Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee spoke in UNSC for Namibia's independence in 1978.

- In 1984-85, India was a leading voice in UNSC for resolution of conflicts in the Middle East, especially Palestine and Lebanon.
- In 1991-92, PM P V Narasimha Rao participated in the first ever summit-level meeting of the UNSC and spoke on its role in maintenance of peace and security.
- In 2011-2012, India was a strong vice for developing world, peacekeeping, counter-terrorism and Africa. First statement on Syria was during India's Presidency at the UNSC.

## Conclusion

India played an active role in discussions on all issues related to international peace and security, including several new challenges which the UNSC was called upon to deal with in Afghanistan, Cote d'Ivoire, Iraq, Libya, South Sudan, Syria and Yemen. In view of the threat posed to international trade and security by piracy off the coast of Somalia, India promoted international cooperation against the pirates.

At India's initiative, the Security Council mandated international cooperation for release of hostages taken by pirates as well as for prosecution of those taking hostages and those aiding and abetting these acts.

India also worked for enhancing international cooperation in counter-terrorism, prevention of the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction to non-state actors, and the strengthening of UN peacekeeping and peace building measures.

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## Connecting the Article

**Question for Prelims :** Consider the following statements regarding the United Nations Security Council :

1. It was established just after the Second World War.
2. Its non-permanent members are elected by the United Nations General Assembly.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct ?

- (a) 1 only
- (b) 2 only
- (c) Both 1 and 2
- (d) Neither 1 nor 2

**Question for Mains :** UNSC has been on the receiving end of criticism for its general ineffectiveness, inclination towards serving the interests of the powerful P5 with their veto power and for under-representation geographically. Critically examine.

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