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# **THE CRISIS OF COLLECTIVE SECURITY: ANALYZING THE FAILURES OF THE UN SECURITY COUNCIL AND THE RISE OF NATO AS THE MAIN SECURITY PROVIDER.**

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## **ABSTRACT**

This study critically evaluates the United Nations Security Council's inability to fulfil its primary mandate of maintaining international peace and security. While the UN Charter grants the Council broad authority to prevent aggression and restore order, its actions are persistently constrained by geopolitical interests, structural imbalances, and the permanent members' veto power. By examining the historical origins of the UN, the legal framework of collective security, and significant episodes of institutional paralysis, such as the Rwandan genocide and recent crises in Syria and Ukraine, this analysis contends that the Security Council operates less as a collective security mechanism and more as a forum dominated by major powers. The study contrasts the UN's inconsistent responses to global threats with NATO's increasing effectiveness, whose model of mutual defence and political cohesion often compensates for the Council's inaction. The findings suggest that the crisis of collective security stems not only from temporary disagreements but also from the entrenched political architecture of the UN system, raising urgent questions about the future of global security governance.

**Key Words:** United Nations Security Council, International Peace and Security, UN Charter, Geopolitical Interests, Structural Imbalances, Veto Power, Permanent Members, Collective Security, Institutional Paralysis, Rwandan Genocide, Syria Crisis, Ukraine Crisis, Major Powers, NATO, Mutual Defence, Political Cohesion, Global Threats, Security Governance, UN System, Global Security

## **INTRODUCTION: EXPLORING WHAT INTERNATIONAL PEACE MEANS WITHIN THE UN, INCLUDING ITS MANDATES, THE MECHANISMS IT USES, AND THE LIMITATIONS IT FACES –**

The primary objective of the United Nations is to maintain international peace and security.<sup>1</sup> In addition to the United Nations, various other actors contribute significantly to establishing global peace and before we go further it is necessary to define international peace within the context of the United Nations, outline the specific role of the UN in achieving this objective, identify the institutions responsible for its implementation and most importantly, examine why the United Nation's role in maintaining international peace and security is often perceived as less effective than that of other actors particularly the states and there organised security alliances.<sup>2</sup>

The United Nations Charter does not explicitly define the concepts of peace or what constitutes a threat to or breach of peace, as these terms are inherently broad and cannot be easily defined and according to the United Nations,<sup>3</sup> a violation of the peace includes the use of force by one state against another and acts of aggression that undermine a state's sovereignty in this Article 1 of the United Nations Charter<sup>4</sup> plays a crucial role in maintaining

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<sup>1</sup> He, Qizhi. "The Crucial Role of the United Nations in Maintaining International Peace and Security." *The United Nations at Age Fifty*, 1 Jan. 1995, pp. 77–90, doi:10.1163/9789004634664\_009.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

<sup>3</sup> Bahouli, Loubna. (2023). The role of United Nations In Maintaining International peace and security: An Analysis Of The Most Important Theoretical Approaches. 7. 1073-1088.

<sup>4</sup> "Chapter I: Purposes and Principles (Articles 1-2)." *United Nations*, www.un.org/en/about-us/un-

international peace and world order as in light of the circumstances that led to the formation of the United Nations, Article 1<sup>5</sup> clearly emphasises that the organisation must not wait for attacks or violent confrontations to escalate into full-scale war.<sup>6</sup> Instead, the United Nations is obligated to take proactive measures to address emerging conflicts between states, ensuring that any attack is suppressed through peaceful means.<sup>7</sup> The measures outlined in Article 1 are designed to maintain international peace<sup>8</sup> as the United Nations is empowered to address tensions and skirmishes between nations, as well as conflicts involving parties at war and according to the United Nations Charter,<sup>9</sup> the Security Council possesses significant authority and a comprehensive set of tools to address threats to international peace and to restore stability, the United Nations may implement either peaceful or when necessary and repressive measures as provided by the Charter.<sup>10</sup> The Charter of the United Nations grants the General Assembly authority through several articles, including Articles 11,<sup>11</sup> 12,<sup>12</sup> 13,<sup>13</sup> and 14<sup>14</sup> under

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charter/chapter-1. Accessed 02 Nov. 2025.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid.

<sup>6</sup> Supra, note. 3, at page 1077.

<sup>7</sup> Ibid.

<sup>8</sup> Supra, note, Article. 1-2

<sup>9</sup> Ibid.

<sup>10</sup> Ibid.

<sup>11</sup> “International Law, Codification, Legal Affairs, Legal, Committee, Terrorism, Charter, Criminal Accountability, Administration of Justice, Jurisdictional Immunities, Cloning, Safety of United Nations and Associated Personnel, Ad Hoc, Diplomatic Conferences, Reports of International Arbitral Awards, Summaries of International Court of Justice Judgments and Advisory Opinions, Legislative Series, Juridical Yearbook, Repertory of Practice of United Nations Organs, Books.” *United Nations*, [legal.un.org/repertory/art11.shtml](http://legal.un.org/repertory/art11.shtml). Accessed 02 Nov. 2025.

<sup>12</sup> “International Law, Codification, Legal Affairs, Legal, Committee, Terrorism, Charter, Criminal Accountability, Administration of Justice, Jurisdictional Immunities, Cloning, Safety of United Nations and Associated Personnel, Ad Hoc, Diplomatic Conferences, Reports of International Arbitral Awards, Summaries of International Court of Justice Judgments and Advisory Opinions, Legislative Series,

Chapter IV<sup>15</sup> which address issues related to the maintenance of international peace and security additionally the Security Council under Article 11 of Chapter II<sup>16</sup> is empowered to take necessary measures to peacefully resolve situations that threaten public welfare and disrupt international order. Article 143<sup>17</sup> further outlines the General Assembly's power to issue directions and recommendations to states or organisations, enabling them to undertake

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Juridical Yearbook, Repertory of Practice of United Nations Organs, Books." *United Nations*, legal.un.org/repertory/art12.shtml. Accessed 02 Nov. 2025.

<sup>13</sup> "International Law, Codification, Legal Affairs, Legal, Committee, Terrorism, Charter, Criminal Accountability, Administration of Justice, Jurisdictional Immunities, Cloning, Safety of United Nations and Associated Personnel, Ad Hoc, Diplomatic Conferences, Reports of International Arbitral Awards, Summaries of International Court of Justice Judgments and Advisory Opinions, Legislative Series, Juridical Yearbook, Repertory of Practice of United Nations Organs, Books." *United Nations*, legal.un.org/repertory/art13\_1a1.shtml. Accessed 02 Nov. 2025.

<sup>14</sup> "International Law, Codification, Legal Affairs, Legal, Committee, Terrorism, Charter, Criminal Accountability, Administration of Justice, Jurisdictional Immunities, Cloning, Safety of United Nations and Associated Personnel, Ad Hoc, Diplomatic Conferences, Reports of International Arbitral Awards, Summaries of International Court of Justice Judgments and Advisory Opinions, Legislative Series, Juridical Yearbook, Repertory of Practice of United Nations Organs, Books." *United Nations*, legal.un.org/repertory/art13\_1a1.shtml. Accessed 02 Nov. 2025.

<sup>15</sup> "Chapter IV: The General Assembly (Articles 9-22)." *United Nations*, www.un.org/en/about-us/un-charter/chapter-4. Accessed 02 Nov. 2025.

<sup>16</sup> *Supra*, note. "International Law, Codification, Legal Affairs, Legal, Committee, Terrorism, Charter, Criminal Accountability, Administration of Justice, Jurisdictional Immunities, Cloning, Safety of United Nations and Associated Personnel, Ad Hoc, Diplomatic Conferences, Reports of International Arbitral Awards, Summaries of International Court of Justice Judgments and Advisory Opinions, Legislative Series, Juridical Yearbook, Repertory of Practice of United Nations Organs, Books." *United Nations*, legal.un.org/repertory/art11.shtml. Accessed 02 Nov. 2025.

<sup>17</sup> "United Nations Charter (Full Text)." *United Nations*, www.un.org/en/about-us/un-charter/full-text. Accessed 02 Nov. 2025.

peaceful measures deemed appropriate by the Assembly such as investigations, negotiations, or the use of good offices. However, these recommendations are not legally binding.<sup>18</sup>

Chapters VI<sup>19</sup> and VII<sup>20</sup> of the United Nations Charter mention the powers of the Security Council and also the main task of maintaining international peace and security, as Chapter VI<sup>21</sup> includes the peaceful resolution of conflicts and Chapter VII<sup>22</sup> includes the means of suppressing the crime of aggression.<sup>23</sup> The security Council under Article 24 examine disputes and situations which are harming the international peace and rule based order but that must be based on a resolution issued by the security council under Article 24<sup>24</sup> of the charter or that action can be taken at the request of the any member of the United Nations under Article 35<sup>25</sup> beside that security council's machinery can be put into action at the

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<sup>18</sup> Supra, note. 3

<sup>19</sup> "Chapter VI: Pacific Settlement of Disputes (Articles 33-38)." *United Nations*, [www.un.org/en/about-us/un-charter/chapter-6](http://www.un.org/en/about-us/un-charter/chapter-6). Accessed 04 Nov. 2025.

<sup>20</sup> "Chapter VII: Action with Respect to Threats to the Peace, Breaches of the Peace, and Acts of Aggression (Articles 39-51)." *United Nations*, [www.un.org/en/about-us/un-charter/chapter-7](http://www.un.org/en/about-us/un-charter/chapter-7). Accessed 04 Nov. 2025.

<sup>21</sup> Supra, note. 19

<sup>22</sup> Supra, note. 20

<sup>23</sup> Ibid.

<sup>24</sup> "International Law, Codification, Legal Affairs, Legal, Committee, Terrorism, Charter, Criminal Accountability, Administration of Justice, Jurisdictional Immunities, Cloning, Safety of United Nations and Associated Personnel, Ad Hoc, Diplomatic Conferences, Reports of International Arbitral Awards, Summaries of International Court of Justice Judgments and Advisory Opinions, Legislative Series, Juridical Yearbook, Repertory of Practice of United Nations Organs, Books." *United Nations*, [legal.un.org/repertory/art24.shtml](http://legal.un.org/repertory/art24.shtml). Accessed 15 Nov. 2025.

<sup>25</sup> "International Law, Codification, Legal Affairs, Legal, Committee, Terrorism, Charter, Criminal Accountability, Administration of Justice, Jurisdictional Immunities, Cloning, Safety of United Nations and Associated Personnel, Ad Hoc, Diplomatic Conferences, Reports of International Arbitral Awards,

request of the secretary general of the United Nations under Article 99.<sup>26</sup>

The Security Council also deals with existing disputes between states if they fail to resolve them, as provided for under Article 37 of the Charter.<sup>27</sup> This shows that the Security Council has significant powers to maintain international peace, but its decisions are merely recommendations that lack any mandatory force. Even after this, the Security Council can issue binding decisions on states within the scope of Chapter VII,<sup>28</sup> taken in cases related to

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Summaries of International Court of Justice Judgments and Advisory Opinions, Legislative Series, Juridical Yearbook, Repertory of Practice of United Nations Organs, Books.” *United Nations*, [legal.un.org/repertory/art35.shtml](http://legal.un.org/repertory/art35.shtml). Accessed 15 Nov. 2025.

<sup>26</sup> “International Law, Codification, Legal Affairs, Legal, Committee, Terrorism, Charter, Criminal Accountability, Administration of Justice, Jurisdictional Immunities, Cloning, Safety of United Nations and Associated Personnel, Ad Hoc, Diplomatic Conferences, Reports of International Arbitral Awards, Summaries of International Court of Justice Judgments and Advisory Opinions, Legislative Series, Juridical Yearbook, Repertory of Practice of United Nations Organs, Books.” *United Nations*, [legal.un.org/repertory/art99.shtml](http://legal.un.org/repertory/art99.shtml). Accessed 15 Nov. 2025.

<sup>27</sup> “International Law, Codification, Legal Affairs, Legal, Committee, Terrorism, Charter, Criminal Accountability, Administration of Justice, Jurisdictional Immunities, Cloning, Safety of United Nations and Associated Personnel, Ad Hoc, Diplomatic Conferences, Reports of International Arbitral Awards, Summaries of International Court of Justice Judgments and Advisory Opinions, Legislative Series, Juridical Yearbook, Repertory of Practice of United Nations Organs, Books.” *United Nations*, [legal.un.org/repertory/art37.shtml](http://legal.un.org/repertory/art37.shtml). Accessed 15 Nov. 2025.

<sup>28</sup> “International Law, Codification, Legal Affairs, Legal, Committee, Terrorism, Charter, Criminal Accountability, Administration of Justice, Jurisdictional Immunities, Cloning, Safety of United Nations and Associated Personnel, Ad Hoc, Diplomatic Conferences, Reports of International Arbitral Awards, Summaries of International Court of Justice Judgments and Advisory Opinions, Legislative Series, Juridical Yearbook, Repertory of Practice of United Nations Organs, Books.” *United Nations*, [legal.un.org/repertory/art39.shtml](http://legal.un.org/repertory/art39.shtml). Accessed 15 Nov. 2025.

threats to the peace, breaches of the peace, and aggression, as clearly stated under Article 39,<sup>29</sup> and that include measures that don't require military action and the other ones which require military force.<sup>30</sup>

## **THE CRISIS OF COLLECTIVE SECURITY: EXAMINING THE UN SECURITY COUNCIL'S FAILURES AND THE GROWTH OF NATO –**

Eighty years ago, from the ashes of war, the world planted a seed of hope. One Charter, one vision, one promise that peace is possible when humanity stands together.<sup>31</sup> - António Guterres

United Nations General Assembly's 80th session under the theme 'Better together: 80 years and more for peace, development and human rights' this comes at a time when the world is at a moment of global commitment to multilateralism,<sup>32</sup> solidarity and shared values of the people of the world and during this high level meeting the number of events took place in which from the sustainable development goals to AI governance and the total elimination of nuclear weapons take place.<sup>33</sup> I am here to criticise the United Nations Security Council because it has drastically failed in its primary responsibility, which is to maintain international peace and security. The Security Council is bound to intervene and stop any

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<sup>29</sup> Ibid.

<sup>30</sup> Supra, note. 3

<sup>31</sup> "Commemorating Anniversary of Charter, Secretary-General Stresses 'we Cannot and Must Not Normalize Violations of Its Most Basic Principles' | Meetings Coverage and Press Releases." *United Nations*, [press.un.org/en/2025/sgsm22704.doc.htm](https://press.un.org/en/2025/sgsm22704.doc.htm). Accessed 15 Nov. 2025.

<sup>32</sup> "General Assembly High-Level Week 2025." *United Nations*, [www.un.org/en/high-level-week-2025](https://www.un.org/en/high-level-week-2025). Accessed 15 Nov. 2025.

<sup>33</sup> Ibid.

aggression or harm to the peace and security of the nation-states by the aggressor state.<sup>34</sup> John Yoo stated that the United Nations charter proposes a bargain to member states to give up war as a means of international politics in exchange for the protection and security provided by a supranational government.<sup>35</sup>

This paper argues that the Security Council functions more as a group of major powers than as a proper collective security system. Like the 19th-century Concert of Europe, it was set up by powerful states to manage international affairs.<sup>36</sup> The Council's structure shows this, since permanent members can veto any decision that goes against their interests, and there are no legal limits on this power.<sup>37</sup> Permanent members often make decisions based on their own strategic interests instead of prioritising international peace and security. For instance, in 1994, they ignored the Rwandan genocide,<sup>38</sup> which led to the Security Council failing to respond. When these members disagree, it can stall decision-making, and this situation suggests that maintaining a balance among powerful nations is important for effective global governance and world peace.<sup>39</sup>

War has been a common part of human history, and its threat is always present. When one

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<sup>34</sup> "United Nations Charter (Full Text)." *United Nations*, [www.un.org/en/about-us/un-charter/full-text](http://www.un.org/en/about-us/un-charter/full-text). Accessed 15 Oct. 2025.

<sup>35</sup> Yoo, John. *Point of Attack: Preventive War, International Law, and Global Welfare*. Oxford University Press, 2014.

<sup>36</sup> Helal, Mohamed. "The Myth of U.N. Collective Security." *SSRN Electronic Journal*, 2018, doi:10.2139/ssrn.3167357.

<sup>37</sup> *Supra*, note. 4

<sup>38</sup> "Rwanda, Genocide, Hutu, Tutsi, Mass Execution, Ethnic Cleansing, Massacre, Human Rights, Victim Remembrance, Education, Africa." *United Nations*, [www.un.org/en/preventgenocide/rwanda/historical-background.shtml](http://www.un.org/en/preventgenocide/rwanda/historical-background.shtml). Accessed 15 Nov. 2025.

<sup>39</sup> *Supra*, note. 6, at page. 1067

country becomes stronger, nearby countries often worry about possible future risks.<sup>40</sup> To protect themselves, they increase their military power and form alliances and this can lead to a cycle where countries continue to build up their forces and form new alliances, raising tensions and ultimately harming innocent people.<sup>41</sup> To prevent this cycle from getting worse, countries have created security regimes to help them communicate, these agreements can make the security dilemma less severe for example, the Quadruple Alliance that defeated Napoleon<sup>42</sup> was one such temporary partnership and according to Karl Deutsch, a security community is a group where the security dilemma is nearly gone and conflict is very unlikely.<sup>43</sup> Security mechanisms refer to structured strategies designed to safeguard states, which may be implemented unilaterally or through multilateral cooperation, depending on specific security requirements.<sup>44</sup> These alliances are based on the principle ‘Unus pro omnibus, omnes pro uno’, meaning ‘One for all, and all for one’.<sup>45</sup> The North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) operationalises this principle by considering an attack against one member state as an attack against all member states.<sup>46</sup>

NATO was established as a Western alliance to counter the influence of the Soviet Union and

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<sup>40</sup> *Id.*, at page. 1069

<sup>41</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>42</sup> “Quadruple Alliance (Austria, Britain, Russia, Prussia) - (AP European History) - Vocab, Definition, Explanations.” *Fiveable*, [fiveable.me/key-terms/ap-euro/quadruple-alliance-austria-britain-russia-prussia](https://fiveable.me/key-terms/ap-euro/quadruple-alliance-austria-britain-russia-prussia). Accessed 15 Nov. 2025.

<sup>43</sup> Deutsch, Karl W. “Political Community and the North Atlantic Area: International Organization in the Light of Historical Experience.” *Debates on European Integration*, 2006, pp. 68–86, doi:10.1007/978-0-230-20933-6\_4.

<sup>44</sup> *Id.*, at page. 69

<sup>45</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>46</sup> Nato. “Collective Defence and Article 5.” *NATO*, 5 May 2025, [www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/topics\\_110496.htm](https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/topics_110496.htm). Accessed 15 Nov. 2025.

its Eastern European allies.<sup>47</sup> To date, no NATO member state has been attacked by these adversaries but the only instance of a direct attack on a member occurred on 11 September 2001, when the United States was targeted.<sup>48</sup> The foundation of such alliances is the protection of member states and the cultivation of mutual trust according to Hans Morgenthau, collective security necessitates the abandonment of nationalistic self-interest in favour of mutual assistance and, if required, the willingness to engage in armed conflict to defend an allied state.<sup>49</sup>

## **THE TRUE POLITICAL MOTIVES BEHIND THE UNITED NATIONS SECURITY REGIME ARE INTRICATE –**

The United Nations security regime was created with the idea of peace, but that idea had other interests backing it because, behind the creation of any institution, there are always some political, social, and economic interests.<sup>50</sup> The United Nations was created by the United States, the Soviet Union, and Britain after World War II because they were the most capable and powerful nations.<sup>51</sup> They believed it was their responsibility to ensure that something like World War II would not happen again and as President Roosevelt said that these nations are

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<sup>47</sup> Nato. "Homepage." *NATO*, www.nato.int/. Accessed 16 Nov. 2025.

<sup>48</sup> *Supra*, note. 6, at page. 1073

<sup>49</sup> "Politics among Nations. the Struggle for Power and Peace. by Hans J. Morgenthau. Third Edition (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1960). Pp. 630." *American Political Science Review*, vol. 54, no. 4, Dec. 1960, pp. 1065–1065, doi:10.1017/s0003055400303082.

<sup>50</sup> "Act of Creation: The Founding of the United Nations Stephen C. Schlesinger. Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 2003. \$27.50. 374 Pp." *Survival*, vol. 46, no. 1, Mar. 2004, pp. 164–165, doi:10.1093/survival/46.1.164.

<sup>51</sup> *Ibid.*

the police who oversee world politics and maintain global peace.<sup>52</sup> Many summits took place for the creation of the United Nations, but two of the most famous were the Dumbarton Oaks Conference<sup>53</sup> and the Yalta Conference.<sup>54</sup> One of the most significant factors scholars consider in the formation of the United Nations is the failure of the League of Nations because at that time, the great powers did not join the League, and those who did enter were expelled.<sup>55</sup> All these factors played a vital role in developing what we have today, the United Nations, which is much more accountable, responsible, and empowered to make bold decisions.<sup>56</sup>

## **THE BASIC STRUCTURE OF THE UNITED NATIONS SECURITY COUNCIL COMPARED TO NATO –**

The Security Council was established not as a general collective security body, but primarily to prevent war among major powers and the Article 2(3) of the United Nations Charter<sup>57</sup> emphasises international cooperation in solving global problems without discrimination, and along with this Article 2(4) calls for peaceful means to resolve disputes.<sup>58</sup> However, neither article guarantees support or protection against aggression toward member states. This highlights a key difference from NATO, whose Article 5 treats an attack on one member as an

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<sup>52</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>53</sup> *The Dumbarton Oaks Conversations, 1944 — Dumbarton Oaks*, [www.doaks.org/newsletter/news-archives/2015/the-dumbarton-oaks-conversations-1944](http://www.doaks.org/newsletter/news-archives/2015/the-dumbarton-oaks-conversations-1944). Accessed 16 Oct. 2025.

<sup>54</sup> “History of the United Nations | Naciones Unidas.” *United Nations*, [www.un.org/es/node/44721](http://www.un.org/es/node/44721). Accessed 16 Nov. 2025.

<sup>55</sup> *Supra*, note. 6, at page. 1079

<sup>56</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>57</sup> *Supra*, note. 4

<sup>58</sup> *Ibid.*

attack on all, thereby offering explicit collective protection.<sup>59</sup> The Security Council appears to be a guarantor of security and safety in times of threat or attack but in practice, however, the Council's primary duty is to maintain peace and security because under Chapter VI of the Charter,<sup>60</sup> it can recommend measures for the peaceful settlement of disputes and along with this Chapter VII<sup>61</sup> addresses enforcement measures when there is a breach of peace, starting with less severe actions like trade embargoes and escalating to force if necessary. The Security Council assesses each situation's gravity before taking action.<sup>62</sup>

## CONSPIRACY AMONG MAJOR POWERS –

Nowhere in the charter is it stated that the council is obligated to intervene and resist threats. The great powers were granted unlimited authority, known as 'Veto Power,' which they often use to block proposals contrary to their interests.<sup>63</sup> Veto power is the UN Charter's most significant distinction between permanent and non-permanent members. Article 27(3) of the Charter establishes that all important decisions of the council must be made with the concurring votes of the permanent members.<sup>64</sup> The USSR has cast the most vetoes since 1970, the USA has used the veto far more than any other permanent member, most frequently to block decisions that are against the interests of Israel, France, and the UK have not cast a veto since 23 December 1989.<sup>65</sup> This clearly shows that the great powers did not establish

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<sup>59</sup> *Supra*, note. 16

<sup>60</sup> *Supra*, note. 4

<sup>61</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>62</sup> *Supra*, note. 6, at page. 1083

<sup>63</sup> SCRTweets. "The Veto." *Security Council Report*, [www.securitycouncilreport.org/un-security-council-working-methods/the-veto.php](http://www.securitycouncilreport.org/un-security-council-working-methods/the-veto.php). Accessed 21 Nov. 2025.

<sup>64</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>65</sup> "International Law, Codification, Legal Affairs, Legal, Committee, Terrorism, Charter, Criminal Accountability, Administration of Justice, Jurisdictional Immunities, Cloning, Safety of United Nations

collective security, but rather what Michael Howard called a “Condominium of the victorious major Allies, who would jointly keep the rest in order.”<sup>66</sup>

At Dumbarton Oaks,<sup>67</sup> the great powers introduced the concept of veto power, and at the same time, many smaller states seeking security assurances eventually joined them. Any attempt to amend the veto procedure was defeated by the great powers, with one such amendment later rejected in Bolivia.<sup>68</sup> Great powers are always adamant that nothing should be added to the charter to limit the Security Council’s powers, especially their own, we know that Aggression is the bane of international law, yet it cannot be defined conclusively or exhaustively.<sup>69</sup> The situation worsened when the members left the definition vague and avoided providing any automatic guarantee against aggression for this Hans Kelsen states that the Security Council is under no obligation to take enforcement measures even after determining a threat to, or breach of, the peace.<sup>70</sup>

Another challenge to the Security Council structure, which favours great powers, emerged

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and Associated Personnel, Ad Hoc, Diplomatic Conferences, Reports of International Arbitral Awards, Summaries of International Court of Justice Judgments and Advisory Opinions, Legislative Series, Juridical Yearbook, Repertory of Practice of United Nations Organs, Books.” *United Nations*, legal.un.org/repertory/art27.shtml. Accessed 15 Oct. 2025.

<sup>66</sup> Gosselin, Guy. “Roberts, Adam and Kingsbury, Benedict (Eds.). United Nations, Divided World. the UN’s Roles in International Relations. Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1988, XII-287 p.” *Études Internationales*, vol. 21, no. 4, 1990, p. 915, doi:10.7202/702785ar.

<sup>67</sup> Supra, note. 23

<sup>68</sup> Supra, note. 2, at page 1086

<sup>69</sup> Ibid.

<sup>70</sup> Preuss, Lawrence. “The Law of the United Nations: A Critical Analysis of Its Fundamental Problems. by Hans Kelsen. London: London Institute of World Affairs, 1950, Pp. XVIII. 904. Appendices. Index. £5 5s.” *American Journal of International Law*, vol. 44, no. 4, Oct. 1950, pp. 792–795, doi:10.2307/2195011.

during the San Francisco Conference on International Organisations.<sup>71</sup> The famous issue of veto power was discussed,<sup>72</sup> with some suggesting that the veto must not be used arbitrarily in favour of national interests. In response, the USA argued that such a restriction could not be guaranteed, as future circumstances are unpredictable and as a result, we have the current system of unlimited veto power, given that the great powers made this a crucial condition for their participation and in addition to this they required assurances that the organisation would not be used to undermine or threaten their security or vital interests.<sup>73</sup> This clearly shows that the great powers intended to facilitate peaceful relations among themselves, rather than to work for an overall international system.<sup>74</sup>

## **THE FUTURE CONFIGURATION OF THE INTERNATIONAL ORDER REMAINS SUBJECT TO ONGOING DEBATE –**

When challenges to the privileges granted to major powers were suppressed, these states justified their actions by asserting that drafting a flawless charter was impossible.<sup>75</sup> President Roosevelt, during the San Francisco Conference,<sup>76</sup> stated that Perfectionism, no less than isolationism, imperialism, or power politics, may obstruct the paths to International peace.<sup>77</sup> The founders of the United Nations recognised a pluralistic international system characterised by multiple centres of power and, as a result, emphasised the need to establish a common

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<sup>71</sup> “The San Francisco Conference.” *United Nations*, [www.un.org/en/about-us/history-of-the-un/san-francisco-conference](http://www.un.org/en/about-us/history-of-the-un/san-francisco-conference). Accessed 22 Nov. 2025.

<sup>72</sup> *Supra*, note. 33

<sup>73</sup> *Supra*, note. 3, at page 1089

<sup>74</sup> *Ibid*.

<sup>75</sup> *Supra*, note. 36

<sup>76</sup> *Supra*, note. 41

<sup>77</sup> “State of the Union Address.” *State of the Union Address. | The American Presidency Project*, 6 Jan. 1945, [www.presidency.ucsb.edu/documents/state-the-union-address](http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/documents/state-the-union-address). Accessed 26 Nov. 2025.

framework to facilitate peaceful coexistence among robust,<sup>78</sup> ideologically diverse states and eventually, this approach enabled major powers to communicate and resolve disputes without resorting to armed conflict.<sup>79</sup>

## CONCLUSION

The United Nations was established as the central institution of the post-war international order, intended to prevent aggression, resolve disputes, and ensure that peace would not depend on the interests of powerful states. However, the Security Council's record over the past eight decades indicates that this vision remains largely unfulfilled. The combination of great-power privilege, unrestricted veto authority, and the political motivations inherent in the Council's design has consistently undermined its capacity to act decisively during crises. Its inability to prevent atrocities in Rwanda and its paralysis regarding conflicts in Syria, Ukraine, Gaza, and other regions underscore that international peace is often contingent upon the priorities of the most influential member states. In contrast, the development and durability of NATO illustrate a model of collective security that, despite its criticisms, provides greater clarity, predictability, and mutual assurance. NATO's Article 5 commitment, strategic cohesion, and the political resolve of its members have enabled it to function as a more effective security guarantor than the UN Security Council. As states increasingly depend on regional alliances rather than universal mechanisms, the global security landscape is gradually diverging from the UN's foundational vision. The future of international peace and security will depend on whether the United Nations can adapt beyond its original power structure or if alternative alliances will continue to surpass it in legitimacy and effectiveness.

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<sup>78</sup> Marlin-Bennett, Renée. "Andrew Hurrell, on Global Order: Power, Values, and the Constitution of International Society, Oxford University Press, 2009, Hardback, 336 Pp., \$97.84 Hbk, ISBN 978-0199-23310-6; Paperback, 336 Pp., \$45.00, ISBN 978-0199-23311-3." *Japanese Journal of Political Science*, vol. 10, no. 1, Apr. 2009, pp. 143–145, doi:10.1017/s1468109908003423.

<sup>79</sup> *Id.*, at page. 144

Without substantive reforms to address the veto imbalance and the political incentives shaping the Council's actions, the UN will remain a symbol of collective security rather than an effective instrument. As the disparity between the UN's commitments and its actual performance widens, it is increasingly necessary to reconsider strategies for safeguarding global peace within a system still dominated by power politics.

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