EVALUATING THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE UNITED NATIONS IN MAINTAINING GLOBAL PEACE UNDER INTERNATIONAL*

Abstract

The United Nations (UN) was established in 1945 with the primary objective of maintaining international peace and security. This work evaluates the effectiveness of the UN in achieving this goal under international law. A review of the UN Charter and relevant international treaties reveals that the organization has made significant contributions to global peace, including the prevention of interstate conflicts, peacekeeping, and humanitarian intervention. On the flip side however, the UN's effectiveness is hindered by several challenges, including the veto power of permanent members of the Security Council, inadequate funding, and the lack of a standing army. Furthermore, the UN's response to emerging global threats, such as terrorism and climate change, has been criticized for being inadequate. This work adopted doctrinal methods of research, and primary and secondary sources were used namely textbooks, statutes, conventions and online or internet materials. The work concludes that the UN's effectiveness in maintaining global peace can be enhanced by reforming the Security Council, increasing funding, and strengthening cooperation with regional organizations. Ultimately, the UN remains a crucial institution for promoting international peace and security, and its effectiveness can be improved through a commitment to reform and cooperation.

Keywords: Global Peace, Humanitarian Intervention, International Law, Security Council, United Nations.

1.0. Introduction

The United Nations Organization (UNO) is an international organization committed to maintaining international peace and security, developing friendly relations among nations and promoting social progress, better living standards and human rights.[1] As described by Tim Dunne, the "United Nations is a multi-purpose agency directed to specific goals including collective security, peace-keeping, health, environmental and human rights concerns".[2] In the post-WWII era , states of the world came together to establish a common international organization to stop breaking out of any more major conflict and to establish world peace. Therefore, they established the UNO. States of the world came together under the leadership of the then major powers of the world, to establish and maintain collective international peace and security, protect international law, protect and promote human rights worldwide, address international environmental concerns and to deal with fundamental threats to international security.[3] The core principles of the UNO are laid out in its Charter, which comprises a complex set of rules for the proper functioning of the UNO within an international framework to bring about the peace and harmony that the member states craved for so long. The United Nations is supportive of "democratic governments, economic interdependence" and "as means to overcome the security dilemma of the international system.[4] However, the effectiveness of the UNO has become a topic of moot as UNO was successful to resolve some issues and unsuccessful to resolve some others. The function of the United Nations in the international milieu seems to become more and more controversial day by day and its effectiveness is being constantly put under question. The two major schools of thoughts are the Realist

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[1] United Nations, *UN at a Glance*<https://www.un.org/en/model-united-nations/un-glance> Accessed 6 August 2023

[2] Dunne Tim and Kurki Milja and Smith Steve, *International Relations Theories: Discipline and Diversity* 2nd edition. (New York, Oxford University Press, 2010), 103.

[3] *Ibid*

[4] Sarwar J. Minar, 'Evaluating the Effectiveness of the United Nations Organizations: The Limits of Theories and Need for A New Analytical Framework', *International Journal of Advanced Research [2018]* 6(7):457-462

and Liberalist views. The realist tradition, on the one hand, posits a pessimistic assessment about the effectiveness of the UNO and argues that UNO is an ineffective institution. The liberalist tradition, on the other hand, posits an optimistic assessment about the effectiveness of the UNO and argues that UNO is an effective institution. While both schools of thought present logical and different assessments, this work argues that both schools of thoughts arguments are inadequate and therefore misleading to evaluate overall effectiveness of the UNO.

1.1. Brief History of United Nation Organization

Despite the problems encountered by the League of Nations in arbitrating conflict and ensuring international peace and security prior to World War II, the major Allied powers agreed during the war to establish a new global organization to help manage international affairs. This agreement was first articulated when U.S. President Franklin D. Roosevelt and British Prime Minister Winston Churchill signed the Atlantic Charter in August 1941. The name United Nations was originally used to denote the countries allied against Germany, Italy, and Japan. On January 1, 1942, 26 countries signed the Declaration by United Nations, which set forth the war aims of the Allied powers. The term "United Nations" was coined by United States President Franklin Delano Roosevelt in 1941. The term was first officially used on January 1, 1942.[5]As the US Secretary of State, Cordell Hull, recalled, from the moment when Hitler's invasion of Poland revealed the bankruptcy of all existing methods to preserve peace, it became evident…that we must begin almost immediately to plan the creation of a new system.[6] 26 Countries signed the Declaration of the United Nations on 1 January 1942 that subscribed to the principles of the 1941 US-UK Atlantic Charter. The signatories, to include 21 more nations that added their adherence during World War II, represented the alliance that successfully defeated the Tripartite Pact of Germany, Japan and Italy. Before the fighting of World War II ended, an expanded assembly of 51 nations created and signed the Charter of the United Nations that placed international peace and security especially the prevention of armed aggression of any country against another at its core.[7] The USA and the British did most of the planning. Two grand designs emerged, one advocated by the Americans, the other by the British. The former strongly championed by Cordell Hull and President Roosevelt, hinged on a few main points:

(1) resorting to military force in international relations must be banned:
(2) the traditional system of unilateral action, of military and political alliances of spheres of influence and balance of power ought to be removed; all these mechanisms and practices must be replaced by a universal organization set up by peace loving nations:
(3) in this organization a major role was to be given to the most powerful allies fighting against the Axis Powers, namely the USA, the USSR, as well as Britain and France which still had huge colonial empires), and China, which was to be associated with them. They were to be allotted the role of world policemen, responsible for enforcing peace.
(4) economic and social co-operation was to be promoted so as to ensure economic progress and better working conditions with a view to forestalling future armed conflict resulting from dramatic economic inequalities.
(5) colonial empires were to be dismantled, particularly if they belonged to weak nations on three grounds:
    (a) for ideological reasons, that is, to realize the principle of self-determination of people throughout the world.
    (b) for political reasons, namely, to avert future clashes and conflicts resulting from the existence in the world of over one billion 'brown people' resenting the domination of white minorities:

[5] C. Hull, *Memoirs* (New York: Macmillan, 1948), ii, at 1625.
[6] Dr. Richard Lacquement, *The United Nations' Greatest Accomplishment*: *A whiteboard*, 2022
[7] A. Cassese, *International Law*, (Second Edition, Oxford University Press, 2005) Chapter 16

(c) for economic reasons colonial empires distorted equality and free trade on the world market, one of the primary goals of the US neo-liberal approach; indeed, the colonial powers had access to cheap labor and cheap primary commodities in their colonial. However, the break-up of the colonial system must not be abrupt but gradual: an international trusteeship system was to gradually bring about the demise of that system. The British scheme, relentlessly propounded by Churchill, accepted the idea of banning force and promoting economic and social co-operation, but also hinged on

- The notion that world security could be safeguarded by the setting up of regional councils under a world council.
- The maintenance of colonial empires or alternatively, their gradual change into self-governing entities. As the USA was by far the most powerful country and had indeed become the most industrialized and military powerful state in the world, it easily gained the upper hand.

However, it had to compromise with Britain over the question of colonialism, the more so because another future 'policeman'. France, although temporarily defeated, very much clung to its colonial empire. The soviet, Union played a relatively minor role in the establishment of the universal organization, the UN, and was primarily vocal on some political issues such as the veto power in the Security Council (SC), the proposed participation in the founding of the organization of all 16 Soviet republics (eventually accepted by the Western allies only for Byelorussia and the Ukraine) and the upholding of the principles of self-determination. The fundamental tenets of the future UN Charter were gradually agreed upon. This was done first in the Atlantic Charter, drafted by the USA and Britain in 1941, then by the three notorious powers the USA, Britain and the Soviet Union) plus China in a string of summaries at Moscow (October 1943), at Dumbarton Oaks (an estate in Washington DC, from 21 August to 7 October 1944) at Yalta (4-11 February 1945, without the participation of China). When the diplomatic conference designed to work out and approve the UN Charter was held (San Francisco, 25 April – 26 June 1945), it was presented with a text elaborated by the Great Powers. To this text amendments, requiring a two thirds majority, were technically permitted although politically they were allowed only on relatively minor points. The 50 states gathered at San Francisco (most states of the world: the four convening powers, the 42 states (including India not yet independent) that had declared war either on Germany or on Japan, plus Argentina, Denmark, Byelorussia, and the Ukraine, the last two not yet recognized as independent states) could not but accept the key provisions of the Charter. Among these were the provision on the establishment of a central organ consisting of a few countries, dominated by the five permanent members with veto power, and responsible for the maintenance of international peace and security; and the provision on domestic jurisdiction, corresponding to the present article 27 which was closely intertwined with the traditional principle on non-interference in the internal affairs of states (see below).

However, small and medium-sized countries were able to contribute on some points, chiefly:

(1) the laying down, in Article 51 (18.2-4) of the right in individual and collective individual and collective self-defense. [8]

(2) the expansion of the competence of the General Assembly (GA) (the collective body where every member state had one seat and one vote), which was empowered both to discuss any matter within the scope of the Charter and to make recommendation on questions concerning peace and security not being dealt with by the SC,

(3) the elevation of the Economic and social council, ECOSOC (the body charged with promoting co-

[8] Chater of the United Nations(adopted 26 June 1945,entered into force 24 October 1945) 1 UNITS XVI

operation on economic, social, cultural, educational, health, and related matters) to the rank of one of the principal organs of the new organization.

(4) the laying down of provision on colonial matters (such as the declaration regarding non-self-governing territories, contained in Article 73, and the provision on the trusteeship system);

(5) the insertion of a provision establishing the prevalence of obligation imposed by the UN Charter over conflicting obligations, if any, deriving from other treaties (Article 103).

A point of some contention was the principle of non-intervention, which was dear to the hearts of Latin American and other small countries (as was pointed out by a distinguished commentator, there was a widespread conviction among the middle and lesser states that some formal safeguard against intervention in their internal affairs was needed in an organization in which the great powers were to play a dominant role). This principle was intended to be put into what became Article 2.4 (banning the use of force): the mention of Latin American and other countries had enough support to be inserted by a divided vote. However, in the end, the compromise (probably a perverse one) was to put into Article 2.7 (safeguarding members' states 'domestic jurisdiction from undue interference by the organization). It must be stressed that from the outset the new organization was envisaged as a political body dominated by the Great Powers. They had taken upon themselves the task of safeguarding peace and security on behalf and in the interest of all nations of the world but did not intend to make major concessions to small nations on matters they regarded as of crucial importance. In this connection, an exchange of views between Stalin, Churchill and Roosevelt that occurred on 4 February 1945, at Yalta, is illuminating, while discussing the issue of voting procedures in the SC, Stalin noted that 'he would never agree to having any action of any of the Great Powers submitted to the judgment of the small powers. The other two leaders substantially agreed.

Furthermore, the new organization was to be a political entity pursuing political objectives, albeit within a legal framework. In its action it was not to be trammeled by legal technicalities, let alone by judicial restraints: efforts to make disputes on the interpretation of the charter subject to the mandatory jurisdiction of its principal judicial organ, the ICJ, were rejected at San Francisco (they secured majority support but not the requisite two-thirds majority).[9]

2. Conceptual Clarification

2.1 United Nations: The United Nations is an international organization founded in 1945. Currently made up of 193 Member States, the UN and its work are guided by the purposes and principles contained in its founding Charter. The UN has evolved over the years to keep pace with a rapidly changing world.[10]

2.2 International Organisation: Potter defined *international* organization as "an association or union of nations established or recognized by them for the purpose of realizing a common end. THE TERM "international organization (IO)" generally refers to international governmental organizations or organizations with a universal membership of sovereign states. The most prominent IO is the United Nations, with 191 members.[11]

2.3 Liberal Traditionalist: Libertarian philosopher Roderick T. Long defines libertarianism as "any political position that advocates a radical redistribution of power from the coercive state to

[9] Google search.< https://www.google.com/search?q=what+is+united+nations+organisation&sca >Accessed 16 August 2023
[10] Potter Pitman B, 'The Classification of International Organizations,' *American Political Science Review.[1935]* **29** (2): 215
[11] United States Institute of peace, I. International Organizations, <usip.org/i-innternational-organisation.o> Accessed 15 August 2023

voluntary associations of free individuals", whether "voluntary association" takes the form of the free market or of communal co-operatives[12]

2.4 Realist Traditionalist: Classical realism is an international relations theory from the realist school of thought.13 Realism makes the following assumptions: states are the main actors in the international relations system, there is no supranational international authority, states act in their own self-interest, and states want power for self-preservation[14]

3. Organs of United Nations Organisation

The United Nations is comprised of five main organs: the General Assembly, the Security Council**,** the Economic and Social Council, the Secretariat**,** and the International Court of Justice. Historically, a sixth main organ, the Trusteeship Council**,** played a significant role in the process of decolonization. The Trusteeship Council suspended its operations in 1994.

4. The Effectiveness of United Nations as an International Organisation

As described by Tim Dunne, the "United Nations (UN) is a multi-purpose agency directed to specific goals including collective security, peacekeeping, health, environmental and human rights concerns".[15] Although the concerns for the UN are many, there are two classical viewpoints which divide opinion on the UN's effectiveness in global politics; the liberal and the realist argument. The realist views international organizations such as the UN "of little help in channeling the perpetual power struggle between states, since they cannot change the anarchical structure of the international system" In contrast, the liberal view, strongly influenced by Immanuel Kant, argues that "well-functioning international organizations contribute to the formation of peace"[16] Given that the UN is a 'multi-purpose' agency, it would be inappropriate to evaluate its effectiveness based on a specific goal, and thus this essay will take into account all five major areas (collective security, peace keeping, health, environmental and humanitarian rights) identified by Dunne. This phase of the paper will evaluate the effectiveness of the UN since its inception in 1945 and will to some extent agree with common liberal belief that the UN is an effective institution despite its inadequacies and inefficiencies in some of its operations and general decisions. Collective security was a priority of the UN's agenda post-World War II. However, realists may have the slight edge when they argue that the "logic of collective security is contrasted with the difficulties of its application".[17] Unsurprisingly, there was a large sense of distrust after the Second World War, as highlighted by the Security Council's 193 vetoes between 1945-1990".[18] The United States invasions of Vietnam, Grenada and Panama in addition to the Soviet Union's invasions of Hungary, Czechoslovakia and Afghanistan[19] are merely a few examples of the constant proxy war operations conducted throughout the second half of the 20th century. This highlighted the ineffectiveness of the UN's Security Council in preventing conflict, and strongly supported realist thinkers, that "there is no supranational authority [the UN] capable of wielding overwhelming power"[20].

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[12] *Baradat Leon P. Political Ideologies, (Routledge 2015) p. 31*
[13] *Kirshner, Jonathan, An Unwritten Future: Realism and Uncertainty in World Politics, (Princeton University Press 2022)*
[14] *Reus-Smit Christian and Snidal Duncan, , (The Oxford Handbook of International Relations, 2008)*
[15] n 3
[16] Rittberger Volker and Zangl Bernhard, *International Organization: Polity, Politics and Policies,* (New York, Palgrave Macmillan 2006)
[17] Kant Immanuel, *Political Writings* in Reiss, (London, University of Cambridge Press, 1970)
[18] Weiss Thomas and Forsythe David and Coate Roger and Pease, Kelly-Kate, *The United Nations and Changing World Politics , (5th edition,* Colorado, Westview Press 2007)
[19] Baylis John and Smith Steve and Owens Patricia , *The Globalization of World Politics: An introduction to international relations,(5th edition,* New York, Oxford University Press 2011)
[20] n 17

The realist school view "international organizations used by powerful states to implement their power politics more effectively and to pursue self-interest".[21] When looking at case studies including Rwanda and Sierra Leone, realists would argue that the reason why the UN was not as effective is largely because Rwanda had little interest to the hegemonic powers at the time. Other conflicts however, such as the Korean War, had strong backing from countries such as the US, UK and other nations in Europe, because it was in their interests to do so. In Korea's case, the UN was effective in restoring security. This largely contradicts Kant, who claims that "international organizations can constrain decision-makers by positively promoting peace"[22]. From the evidence presented we can deduce that hegemonic states have superior influences to those of the UN, and so it is hardly surprising that the UN succeeded in restoring security when it was in the general interest of the unipolar state at the time (the US), rather than the majority of states sitting in the General Assembly. However, liberals claim that "after the Cold War it became more difficult for states and diplomats to accept that what happened within states was of no concern to outsiders".[23] As a result, the UN became more involved in the mediation between nations, which granted it higher respect from member states. "By the mid-1990s the UN had become involved in maintaining international security by resisting aggression between states".[24] Liberalists including Kofi Annan argued that the 'security dilemma', which is built on the premise that "one country improves its security at the expense of other states"[25] had been averted. Although the recent past has been bright in terms of the UN serving as a successful platform for peace and compromise between states; I cannot disregard the period 1945-1990 when the UN was unable to prevent a series of conflicts and thus conclude that the UN has been ineffective at establishing collective security since 1945.

Despite the UN's mediocre success with regards to security, the institution has a lot more to boast concerning peacekeeping and health efforts. The UN's peacekeeping operations which include the UN Transition Assistance group (UNTAG) in Namibia, UN Observer Group in Central America (ONUCA) as well as the UN Iraq-Iran Military Observer Group (UNIIMOG) are a few examples of the peacekeeping missions ranging from 1948 up to 2012, many of which are still active. Likewise, the World Health Organization (WHO) is a branch of the UN which helps promote health and development in areas of extreme poverty and conflict. These 'branches' reinforce Kant's liberalist theory that international institutions are effective tools in solving health and preventing conflict. However, realists such as George Gibbs, an American ethnologist assert the view that the agenda of the WHO interferes too much with the legislations of sovereign states; then again, in defense of liberalists, "critics and supporters alike celebrate the eradication of smallpox; in this the WHO has made a big difference in the world". With regards to peacekeeping, although realists can make the point that "the network of international organizations is spread very unevenly across the globe",[26] liberalists have the upper hand when defending UN success rates in areas of civil conflict; "Namibia (1989-90), El Salvador (1991-95) and Cambodia (1991-93) are repeatedly cited as success stories"[27].

In addition, the presence of peacekeeping forces "are involved in the democratization processes"[28]. As Kant claims in his works, one of the objectives of international organizations such as the UN is to democratize single party countries through this process, allowing countries to benefit in areas such as health and human rights and prevent further conflict. It is unarguable to counter the claim that the 'UN, through organizations including the WHO, UNTAG, ONUCA and UNIIMOG have provided general

[21] *Ibid*
[22] *Ibid*
[23] *Ibid*
[24] n 18
[25] *Ibid*
[26] n 14
[27] *Ibid*
[28] n 17

healthcare and peacekeeping efforts effectively'. Thus, in agreement with Immanuel Kant's liberalist theory that international institutions promote positive results in countries in need of aid and mediation; I conclude that the UN has been an effective institution in establishing peace and promoting health-care efforts.

Similarly, the UN has been equally effective in implementing humanitarian rights around the world, as well as raising awareness and legislating environmental practices in most of its member states. The Kyoto Protocol was a major step towards the UN framework on climate change. But despite this, realists heavily criticize a collective attempt to prevent environmental work "the aim of critical research is to highlight how scientific explanations of environmental chance provide only partial insights into complex processes, and existing models of explanation reflect the agendas of the societies that created them".[29] Heavy economic powerhouses such as the US, (the only nation to not attend the conference) found that it was not in their interest to curb production at the expense of the environment. This approach strongly emphasizes a realist attitude. The alarming nature of climate change, however, has been addressed by the UN through the creation of the Environmental Programme in 1972, followed by the introduction of an Environmental Committee in the same year. The UN's response to environmental concerns strongly backs liberalist belief in that "liberal societies have become a fertile ground for the promotion of ecological attitudes and environmental philosophy"[30] and evidence highlighted by the Rio Summit, Montreal and Kyoto Protocol's suggest that the UN has effectively dealt with recognizing and fighting environmental problems such as deforestation and climate change. Furthermore, the UN has made an enormous step in the promotion of humanitarian rights. Article 1 of its charter "promotes and encourages respect for human rights and for fundamental freedoms for all without discrimination as to race, sex, language or religion"[31]. "For the past century most liberals have strongly endorsed human rights as the best mechanism for providing a life of autonomy"[32]. Through the UN, liberalists have enjoyed equality across all cultures. However, classical realism "stresses the 'national interest defined in terms of power.' Human Rights clearly reveals this notion to be a deeply problematic political prescription"[33]. Unlike most liberal thinkers, realism "draws our attention to the fact that states are principally concerned with the national interest" and often humanitarian values have become no more important than environmental or economic interests. However, the UN's Human Rights Council has been a highly influential means to promoting issues such as homosexuality, torture rights as well as women and child rights. As a result, we have witnessed a massive liberalization in developed countries including the UK, France, and the US etc. who embrace liberal approaches to humanitarian issues discussed in the UN. Due to this successful collaboration, we have witnessed the UN to be an effective institution in the worldwide legislation of environmental and humanitarian rights laws.

As this essay has demonstrated, the topic 'is the United Nations, an effective institution' has a variety of viewpoints and interpretations subject to the school of thought one follows. Essentially, the realist argument is one that is strongly linked to national self-interest, and thus it is unsurprising that through a realist scope, the UN failed in assuring security to the nations affected by the proxy wars of the Cold War. On a different note, the idea that "most states in the world have come to understand their interest include the fate of foreign nationals living abroad who are suffering gross and persistent systematic violations"[34] is by large a liberalist view, which has undoubtedly succeeded in shaping the UN's

[29] n 20
[30] De Shalit, Avner, *Social Theory and Practice,* (London, Sage Publications 1995)
[31] n 9
[32] n 18
[33] *Ibid*
[34] *Ibid*

response to Dunne's 'five goals'. It is therefore unsurprising that this essay concludes by acknowledging the United Nations as an effective institution.[35]

4.1 Evaluating the Effectiveness of the UNO: The Limit of Theories: -

While the arguments of both realist tradition and liberalist tradition remains precise and Bonafide in many aspects their explanations, especially conclusion is inadequate to understand the overall effectiveness of the UNO. Explanation offered by each school regarding the effectiveness of the UNO leaves out essentially important aspects or success (arguments of opposite) of the UNO. When liberalists declare UNO as an "effective institute", they leave out essential weaknesses of the UNO that are fundamental and real as pointed by the realists. Identically, when realists declare UNO as an "ineffective institute", they leave out essential achievements and successes of the UNO as identified by the liberalists. Therefore, the explanations offered by both liberalists and realists are inadequate and therefore misleading to the overall evaluation of the effectiveness of the UNO. This marks serious limits of the explanations offered by these theories to the evaluation of the overall effectiveness of the UNO.[36]

4.2 Evaluating the Effectiveness of the UNO: A 'New Analytical Framework: -

Given the limits of the theories in evaluating the effectiveness of UNO in the backdrop, it is time for developing a "new analytical framework" for a better evaluation of the effectiveness of the UNO. This essay proposes an analytical framework to the evaluation of the effectiveness of the UNO that is an "issue specific" or "case specific" analytical framework for evaluating the effectiveness of the UNO. The New Framework suggests evaluating case or issue and whether the UNO is successful or unsuccessful, whether realist power politics played dominant role over liberalist thought or the liberalist principals' triumph over realist interpretation. Whether the leaders failed to reach a better decision making or succeed in reaching a better decision making regarding specific issues like preserving international peace and security, international health, and promoting human rights worldwide etc. or specific case like crisis in any state or region, prioritizing any event that deserves international attention and taking appropriate steps etc.

There is no doubt that the UNO has provided a common platform that facilitates communication among all member-states, of all ideologies throughout the world. Member States are allowed to broach issues of concern, for discussion and necessary action. Each state has an opportunity to represent their opinion. Appropriately some scholars argue that UNO should not only be regarded as an institution used for peacekeeping, but also as a tool to get to know and understand different communities and cultures; a medium for exchange which will ultimately promote world peace. This new approach-based analysis will help to the better functioning of the UNO in the long-term because its issue or case specific assessment is likely to encourage better functioning of the UNO by pinpointing the causes of success and causes of failure regarding specific cases or issue and therefore encouraging or discouraging that. This will have an impact on the future functioning of the UNO. In sum, it would be seriously misleading to conclude that UNO is ineffective because of a few aspects and just because of several cases of failures of the UNO. At the same time, it would also be misleading to conclude UNO is wholly an effective institution despite its serious limitations. Therefore, the analysis of the UNO's effectiveness should be on a case-by-case basis or issue specific.[37]

[35] *Ibid*
[36] Sarwar J. Minar, Evaluating the Effectiveness of the United Nations Organizations: The Limits of Theories and Need for A 'New Analytical Framework, *International Journal of Advanced Research[2018]* 6(7):457-462
[37] *Ibid*

5. Main Achievements and Failure of United Nations

5.1 Successes of the United Nations

First and foremost, it has prevented the occurrence of any further world wars. Instrumental in the maintenance of international balance of power:

- It played a significant role in disarming the world and making it nuclear free. Various treaty negotiations like 'Partial Test Ban Treaty' and 'Nuclear non-proliferation treaty' have been signed under UN.
- Demise of colonialism and imperialism on one hand and apartheid on the other had UN sanctions behind them.
- UN Acted as vanguard for the protection of human rights of the people of the world, Universal Declaration of Human Rights, 1948.
- Despite being crippled by Bretton Woods Institutions, the UN has played a limited but effective role on economic matters. Supported the North-South dialogue and aspired to the emergence of new international economic order.
- Agencies of United Nations like WHO, UNICFF, UNESCO have keenly participated in the transformation of the international social sector.
- Peace keeping operations, peaceful resolution of disputes and refugee concerns had always been on the list of core issues.
- Since 1945, the UN has been credited with negotiating 172 peaceful settlements that have ended regional conflicts.
- The world body was also instrumental in institutionalization of international laws and world legal framework.
- Passage of various conventions and declarations on child, women, climate, etc, highlights the extra-political affairs of the otherwise political world body.
- It has successfully controlled the situation in Serbia, Yugoslavia and Balkan areas.
- Several peace missions in Africa have done reasonably well to control the situation.[38]

5.2. Some Instances the UN has failed the world

The United Nations has failed to prevent war and fulfill peacekeeping duties many times throughout its history. Millions of people around the world have been killed and displaced since the UN was founded in 1945. Since the second half of the 20th century, there have been countless wars, some of them still ongoing, all under the watch of the United Nations. The United Nations (UN) was set up in 1945 as an international umbrella organisation with several objectives primarily including the prevention of war and maintaining peace in disputed areas. However, the UN has failed several times across the world mostly because of the right to veto at the disposal of five countries. Here are some of the most damning indictments of the UN's ineffectiveness.[39]

Cambodia violence (1975-1979)

After the end of the US-Vietnam War and the Cambodian civil war in 1975, the Khmer Rouge regime took control of Cambodia turning it into a socialist country, by using the policy of ultra-Maoism. The regime carried out genocide between 1975-1979, killing some two million people, nearly 25 percent of the country. The Vietnamese intervention ended genocide by the Khmer Rouge regime. The United Nations recognized the Khmer Rouge regime, while ignoring concerns of human rights violations.[40]

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[38] Dilip Chandra, *Successes and Failures of the United Nations*, (Hub pages 2014)

[39] TRT WorldTRTWorld and agencies, Twelve times the UN has failed the world, TRT World (2019)< https://www.trtworld.com/americas/twelve-times-the-un-has-failed-the-world-21666> Date accessed 4 March 2025

[40] *Ibid*

Somali civil war (1991-Now)

Since the ouster of Dictator Mohamed Siad Barre by the Somali Rebellion in 1991, the decades-long civil war has raged between rival clans in the country. The UN peacekeeping mission, UNOSOM, which was set up in December 1992 to facilitate humanitarian aid to people trapped by civil war and famine, has since failed because of the lack of government to communicate with and repeated attacks against UN officers. The failure of the UN peacekeeping mission caused about 500,000 civilian deaths in the country.[41]

Rwandan civil war (1994):

One of the worst ethnic genocides since World War II, the civil war between the Rwandan Armed Forces and the rebel Rwandan Patriotic Front (RPF) began in 1990 and lasted until 1994. In 1994, the then Hutu-dominated regime killed 10 UN peacekeeping officers to prevent international intervention. In only three months, Hutus brutally murdered about 800,000 Tutsis and raped nearly 250,000 women in Rwanda while UN troops abandoned the victims or just stayed there as spectators while the horrific and brutal violence raged on.[42]

Darfur conflict in Sudan (2003-Now)

Rebels in Sudan's western region of Darfur revolted against the government in February 2003, saying Khartoum discriminated against non-Arab farmers there. Some 200,000 people have been killed in the conflict since then, while 4.4 million people need aid and over 2.5 million have been displaced. However, four years later, the UN decided to send 26,000 troops for a resolution in Darfur. The International Criminal Court issued arrest warrants for Sudanese President Omar Hassan al Bashir in 2009 and 2010 on charges of war crimes and genocide in his drive to crush the Darfur revolt.[43]

Iraq invasion (2003-2011)

More than one million Iraqis have died because of the conflict in their country since the US-led invasion in 2003, according to research conducted by one of Britain's leading polling groups. The intervention and regime change sought by the US left Iraq with civil and economic instability, and vulnerable to terrorism by Daesh in the coming years. UN Resolution 1483 attempted to legitimize the invasion that was carried out under the false assertion by the US and the UK that the Saddam regime was in possession of Weapons of Mass Destruction.[44]

South Sudan (2013-Now)

South Sudan became an independent country in July 2011, separating from Sudan. The country has been experiencing a civil war between President Salva Kiir, from the Dinka ethnic group, and former vice president Riek Machar, frin the Nuer ethnic group. In the civil war, at least 382,000 people have been killed, according to a State Department-funded study. More than 14,500 UN peacekeeping officers deployed in the country have failed to prevent the humanitarian crisis in South Sudan. The conflict has forced 2.5 million people to flee the country and left another 1.8 million people displaced within South Sudan. Nearly five million people are also facing severe food insecurity.[45]

[41] *Ibid*
[42] *Ibid*
[43] *Ibid*
[44] *Ibid*
[45] *Ibid*

Rohingya Crisis, Myanmar (2017-Now)

On August 25, 2017, Myanmar launched a major military crackdown on the Muslim ethnic minority, killing almost 24,000 civilians and forcing 750,000 others, including women and children, to flee to Bangladesh, according to the Ontario International Development Agency (OIDA).[46] China stood behind Myanmar on the Rohingya crisis by blocking efforts for the Rohingya in the UN Security Council. The UN documented mass gang rapes, killings including of infants and young children's brutal beatings and disappearances committed by Myanmar state forces. The UN has described the Rohingya as the "world's most persecuted people."[47]

Russian/ Ukraine War

UN has done little or nothing in the ongoing Russian /Ukraine war in terms of maintaining peace.

6. Conclusion

One of the most often asked questions about the United Nations is its effectiveness in global governance or as an international organization, thus always putting the organization on the line. Both the Liberal and Realist views have strong points to argue their cases in terms of the Effectiveness and Ineffectiveness of the Organisation.

However, no matter how you want to see it, the conception ideology of the body is clearly a good initiative, but the core issues revolve around its structure and operational framework. The huge imbalance in power allocation amongst member states, the preferred and ignored network approach in terms of peace keeping operations and intervention remains its greatest flaws yet. Some instances which we pointed out earlier were that the UN should have intervened to maintain peace and prevent humanitarian crises, but they did not, would continue to hunt the organization till they set aside those network approaches and apply equality.

As noted earlier, the conception ideology of the organization is quite good. Could you imagine the world without such a body? It will be akin to Hobbesian society of Nasty, Brutish, and Short considering the sort of horror we are witnessing in the 21st century world stage we live in, for instance the Russian invasion of Ukraine, American senseless Invasion of Iraqi and Libya etc, these instances are where you have the organization present. It will be hard to imagine what the trigger-happy 21st century world stage will look like without such an organization that attempts to deter any aggressing State.

Again, one of the present problems of the organisation is the perception that the organization is being controlled by the most powerful advanced political force (United States). So much so that the UN rarely investigates US and its interest like NATO and State of Israel despite some manifest allegations of crimes against Humanity. From the foregoing, it would be proper to argue that there is an urgent need for reform and restructuring of the organization, particularly the Security Council, which is the strongest organ. Although the United Nations is the most important international political organization of its kind, its achievements in maintaining peace have been widely criticized, and voices calling for reform have never ceased to be heard.

Indeed, since the end of the Cold War in 1989, demands for reform have gained new momentum. Reforming the Security Council is key to successful reform of the United Nations, as the Security Council is the most powerful organization within the UN. Criticism of the Security Council centers on the following three issues:

[46] *Ibid*
[47] *Ibid*

(1) Security Council membership does not reflect today's world; developing countries are underrepresented, and there are no permanent members from either Africa, Latin America or Arab Region.
(2) five permanent members enjoy veto power and frequently abuse their privileges.
(3) there is a lack of transparency and efficiency in the Security Council's decision-making process. Although the Security Council has improved its decision-making, *transparency, and efficiency over the past decade, there has been no progress on the enlargement of the Security Council.*

Many UN member states would also like to cancel the P5's veto power, but they realize that this is a mission impossible, because the P5, which can veto the UN Charter amendment, will not agree to give up their veto power. Therefore, some countries concede and have asked for restriction of the use of veto power by the P5. It is still highly difficult to achieve this goal. Almost all the UN members agree that it is necessary to reform the Security Council. However, this issue touches not only on the North-South conflict, but also on the redistribution of power in the world. Every country bases its actions on its national interests. There has been no consensus reached among UN members, including the P5, on how to adjust the Security Council's structure, and on how to increase the number of new permanent members. Thus, it would be optimistic to assume that the Security Council can be enlarged soon. Yet an elusive concept.

Having said the above about the UN, the biggest challenge of the Organization in terms of global power balance NATO and BRICS. "NATO" is the acronym for North Atlantic Alliance Treaty. While "BRICS" is the acronym denoting the emerging national economies of Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa. The term was originally coined in 2001 as "BRIC" by the Goldman Sachs economist Jim O'Neill in his report[48]. At that time, the economies of Brazil, Russia, India and China experienced significant growth, raising concerns regarding their impact on the global economy. Foreign ministers of these countries began meeting informally in 2006, which led to more formal annual summits beginning in 2009. These meetings are held to improve economic conditions within BRICS countries and give their leaders the opportunity to work in collaboration regarding these efforts. In December of 2010, South Africa joined the informal group and changed the acronym to BRICS. Together these emerging markets represent 42% of the world population and account for over 31% of the world's GDP according to the World Fact book. According to the 2023 summit chair South Africa, over 40 nations are interested in joining the forum for the benefits membership would provide including development finance and increase in trade and investment for the time being.[49]

6.1. Recommendations

1. A total change of international Strata, if that is not possible, then,
2. There is need for proper regulation of UN Security Council particularly on how veto power is exercised to guarantee effectiveness
3. There should be constructive ways of dealing with erring Veto power holders other than sometimes ineffective sanctions.
4. There is a need for the inclusion of countries with nuclear war heads as veto members of the Security Council.
5. To guarantee the principle of Equality of states, continents like Africa, Latin America and Arab region must have a veto power representative.

[48] Building Better Global Economic BRICs (Global Economics Paper No: 66)' 1
[49] Library of Congress, Research Guide, 2020 <https://guides.loc.gov/brics#:~:text=%22BRICS%22%20is%20the%20acronym%20denoting,%3A%2066)%20%5BPDF%5D%20. >Accessed 23 August, 2023