



## General Assembly

*Topic: The role of diplomatic organs in worldwide dynamics*

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### 1. Definition of key terms

**Diplomacy:** The practice of managing international relations through negotiation, communication, and peaceful conflict resolution.

**IGOs:** Organizations composed of Member States (governments) that work together on various global or regional issues. Intergovernmental organizations facilitate cooperation among countries, create binding agreements, and address international challenges like trade, security, and human rights. Examples of IGOs include:

- United Nations (UN)
- World Trade Organization (WTO)
- European Union (EU)
- African Union (AU)
- NATO (North Atlantic Treaty Organization)

**Charter:** A formal document that frames the principles, purposes, and structure of an organization, institution, or entity. It serves as a foundational legal text that defines the rights, responsibilities, and powers of the members or governing bodies.

**Security Council:** A UN body responsible for maintaining international peace and security.

**P5 (Permanent 5):** The five permanent members of the UN Security Council, which hold veto power over substantive resolutions in the Security Council. These countries are China, France, Russia, the United Kingdom, and the United States.

**Veto Power:** The authority of a country to unilaterally block or prevent the adoption of a decision, resolution, or proposal, even if it has majority support. In the context of the United Nations Security Council (UNSC), veto power is held by the P5.

**Diplomatic Organs:** The body of diplomats representing their countries abroad, including ambassadors, consuls, and other officials responsible for managing international relations.

**Foreign Policy:** A country's strategy in dealing with other nations, focusing on its national interests, security, trade, and diplomacy.

**Dance of Death:** A term used metaphorically to describe the delicate and precarious nature of international relations, especially in situations involving conflict or power struggles. Just as the Dance of Death in medieval art symbolized the inevitability of death and the fragility of life, in diplomacy, it represents the careful balancing act diplomats must perform when facing threats, power imbalances, or potential conflicts that could lead to catastrophic outcomes.

**Reform:** The process of making changes or improvements to an existing system, organization, law, or policy to address its deficiencies, adapt to new circumstances, or improve its effectiveness.

**Non-Amendment Reform:** Changes or improvements made to an organization or system that do not formally modify its foundational or governing documents, such as a constitution or charter. In the context of international organizations, non-amendment reform might involve adjustments to practices, decision-making processes, or reinterpretations of existing rules to achieve desired outcomes.

**Global South:** A term broadly used to describe the regions of Latin America, Africa, Asia, and Oceania.

**Soft Power:** The ability to influence others through attraction and persuasion rather than coercion or force. It relies on cultural appeal, shared values, diplomacy, and policies that inspire admiration and alignment. In international relations, it is often complemented by the use of hard power.

**Hard Power:** The use of coercive methods to influence the behaviour or actions of other states. It is often employed in situations requiring immediate results.

**Smart Power:** The strategic combination of soft power and hard power in diplomacy and international relations. It helps maximize influence and reduce the downsides of relying solely on one approach.

## 2. Introduction

Nowadays, the importance of diplomacy in international affairs is becoming increasingly significant. However, disparities in representation and decision-making processes have rapidly changed its role. As society continues to evolve in economic and technological fields worldwide, an in-depth understanding of global issues, such as humanitarian crises, conflicts, and political instability, remains urgent to precisely address the ever-evolving structure of international organizations. Not only does this require reform, but also a restored dedication from governments to enhance multilateralism.

Intergovernmental Organizations (IGOs), such as the United Nations and the World Trade Organization, and regional representation bodies (e.g., the European Union), serve as fundamental engines to assist communication and promote joint decision-making through mechanisms by which states pursue their objectives.

Two key concepts in diplomacy are the use of **soft power** and **hard power**. These strategies significantly impact other nations to achieve foreign policy goals. While soft power relies on persuasive methods, hard power involves coercion, such as military force, economic sanctions, or threats, to influence the behaviour of other states. Diplomacy often combines these mechanisms, leading to the so-called “**smart power**” strategy. For instance, in trade negotiations, economic warrants (hard power) might be paired with investment opportunities supported by all parties involved (soft power).

The field and reach of diplomatic efforts have triggered debates concerning effective methods of action within IGOs, as global challenges grow unreasonably fast and increasingly complex. Failures in decision-making and a lack of equality are among the primary obstacles to the effectiveness of these organs. The impact of IGOs extends beyond conflicts and negotiations; they play a key role in norm-building and agenda-setting.

For example, the United Nations’ **Sustainable Development Goals** showcase how these organs determine priorities and allocate global resources. Similarly, the **World Trade Organization (WTO)** works to prevent economic instability and maintain global economic order. Moreover, regional representation bodies tackle localized challenges: the **African Union (AU)** focuses on conflict resolution across the continent, while the **European Union (EU)** takes responsibility for political integration and economic collaboration.

### 3. Background information

Analysing the historical development of global politics and diplomacy provides valuable insights into the creation of the modern system. Over time, key events have significantly influenced this evolution, especially in addressing global issues.

The Peace of Westphalia in 1648 reshaped the concept of state sovereignty and established the principle of non-interference in the internal affairs of other nations. This treaty set the groundwork for the modern system of nation-states and the framework for diplomatic relations between independent states.

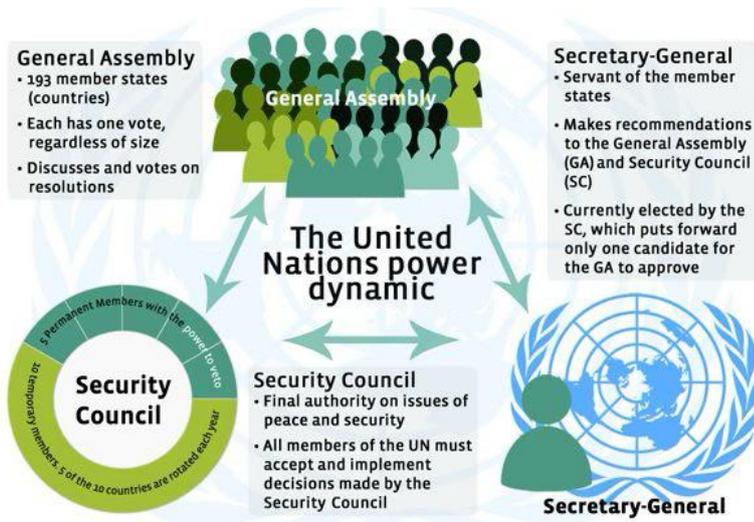
A century ago, the future of diplomacy was questioned due to technological progress, such as the invention of the radio and telegraph, and the growing involvement of the public in foreign policy matters.

Another turning point was the founding of the United Nations in 1945, which further transformed diplomacy. Its creation represented a collective effort to firmly engage in diplomacy, driven by the need for immediate solutions to the atrocities of World War II. Indeed, the UN has played a key role in international dialogue and cooperation, serving as a venue for conflict resolution and the promotion of peacekeeping operations.

In recent years, the UNSC’s failure to effectively address the Russian assault on Ukraine has underscored the necessity of improving its functionality. This conflict exemplifies how the Security

Council is hindered by the conflicting interests of its permanent members. Russia has frequently exercised its veto power to block any resolutions condemning its actions or opposing its interests.

The issue of inequality in diplomatic organs is closely linked to the Global South. Despite the relevance of these states in global affairs, they have been marginalized due to the absence of a strong collective voice and insufficient representation in intergovernmental organizations. In the first United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) in June 1965, developing countries began to collaborate, setting aside their internal divisions. They believed that uniting could help secure the majority of votes and drive revolutionary change in the global political framework. However, their strategic move did not yield the desired outcomes.



Throughout much of the twentieth century, the Cold War relegated diplomacy to a subordinate role in the service of power politics. As a result, diplomacy often engaged in what has been described as the “dance of death.”

Moreover, today we are witnessing a shift in power dynamics that affects not only the major units of world politics (the states) but also brings new actors—such as nongovernmental organizations (NGOs), the media, foundations,

and multinational firms (MNFs)—to the forefront of international relations. These actors are increasingly demanding a role in shaping and implementing foreign policy.

#### 4. Major countries involved

- **1648 – Peace of Westphalia:** The Peace of Westphalia marked the birth of the modern system of nation-states, establishing the principles of sovereignty and non-interference in the internal affairs of other nations. It laid the foundation for the contemporary international diplomatic system.
- **1919 – Treaty of Versailles:** After World War I, the Treaty of Versailles established the League of Nations (LN), a precursor to the United Nations, with the goal of ensuring global peace through cooperation. Although the LN failed to prevent future global conflicts (e.g., World War II), it represented an early attempt to establish an international order based on diplomacy and multilateral cooperation.
- **1945 – Yalta Conference:** The Yalta Conference (February 1945), held between the leaders of the Allied powers (United States, United Kingdom, and Soviet Union), defined the post-war geopolitical landscape, leading to the division of Germany and the creation of spheres of influence that shaped the Cold War.
- **1945 – Founding of the United Nations (UN):** The United Nations was established after World War II to maintain international peace and security. It plays a key role in facilitating diplomatic engagement, resolving conflicts, and promoting peacekeeping operations.

- **1947 – Truman Doctrine and Marshall Plan:** The Truman Doctrine (1947) and the Marshall Plan (1948) marked the beginning of the Cold War and the ideological confrontation between the Western bloc (led by the United States) and the Eastern bloc (led by the Soviet Union). These initiatives introduced a new form of diplomacy focused on containing communism and providing economic support to war-torn European countries.
- **1963 – Reform of the UNSC:** The United Nations Security Council (UNSC) increased its non-permanent membership from six to ten and raised the number of votes needed for decisions from seven to nine. This marked the first major reform of the Council since the UN's founding, although the veto power of the P5 remained unchanged.
- **1965 – First UN Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD):** Developing nations from the Global South began collaborating within UNCTAD to address economic and trade issues while advocating for increased representation in international decision-making.
- **1975 – Helsinki Accords:** The Helsinki Accords, signed by 35 countries—including the United States and the Soviet Union—aimed to promote economic cooperation, human rights, and security in Europe, seeking to ease Cold War tensions.
- **1992 – General Assembly Working Group on UNSC Reform:** The UN General Assembly established an open-ended working group to explore issues of equitable representation on the Security Council, though no fixed timeline for action was set.
- **2007–2008 – Intergovernmental Negotiations on UNSC Reform:** The General Assembly initiated intergovernmental negotiations on the question of equitable representation and increased membership of the Security Council, focusing on finding solutions acceptable to the widest range of member states.

## 5. UN involvement

The United Nations body that most directly addresses global issues is the Security Council (UNSC). Established as one of the six main organs of the United Nations, the UNSC was created after World War II with the primary responsibility of maintaining international peace and security. It consists of 15 members: 5 permanent members with veto power (the United States, the United Kingdom, France, Russia, and China) and 10 non-permanent members elected for two-year terms.

Permanent membership is one of the central points in the ongoing debate surrounding the Security Council. The P5—the victorious countries of World War II—have held the privilege of permanent membership for 80 years, despite significant geopolitical changes since then. Countries such as India, Brazil, Japan, and Germany (collectively known as the G4) are excluded from key decision-making processes. These nations have repeatedly advocated for permanent membership in the UNSC, arguing that their inclusion would better reflect current global power dynamics. The rise of these nations has not prompted changes to the UNSC's structure, highlighting the imbalance in how the Council addresses global issues.

Additionally, there have been calls for the inclusion of African countries as permanent members. The African continent is disproportionately affected by UNSC decisions yet lacks the opportunity to adequately voice its concerns or influence outcomes.

Another critical issue is the use of veto power, which has been a subject of debate since the Council's inception. Modifying the UN Charter to address this issue has proven nearly impossible, as it requires unanimous agreement from the P5.

The Charter outlines two mechanisms for amendment:

1. **Article 108**, which addresses individual amendments.
2. **Article 109**, which calls for a General Conference to review the Charter in its entirety.

However, efforts to reform through amendments face a significant dilemma: the veto system creates a deadlock. P5 members can both propose and block amendments, stalling any substantive changes.

Despite the challenges, the UN has experienced change over time through evolving interpretations of its foundational document. Since its adoption in 1945, the Charter has been amended only three times. The most notable amendment occurred in 1963, when the number of non-permanent members of the Security Council was increased from six to ten, and the required votes for decisions rose from seven to nine. However, this reform left the P5's veto power untouched.



Throughout the 20th century, various attempts were made to achieve concrete progress in reforming the UNSC. In December 1992, the General Assembly established a working group with no fixed timeline to examine fair representation on the Council.

During its sixty-second and sixty-third sessions (2007–2008), the General Assembly decided to initiate intergovernmental negotiations on “Equitable representation on and increase in the membership of the Security Council and related matters” (decision 62/557). The goal

of these negotiations was to reach a solution that respected the perspectives of as many member states as possible.

After fifteen years of discussions, the diplomatic deadlock remains, largely due to the failure of member states to agree on a single, unified resolution.

## 6. Useful links

- [United Nations | Peace, dignity and equality <BR>on a healthy planet](#)
- [Homepage | Security Council](#)
- <https://www.un.org/en/ga/screform/>

- [UN Security Council Reform: What the World Thinks | Carnegie Endowment for International Peace](#)
- <https://www.un.org/en/ga/president/63/pdf/letters/20081006-scr.pdf>
- [Power Dynamics and Inequality Between Countries in the United Nations and the Effect on Diplomatic Problem Solving | OxJournal](#)

## **7. Bibliography**

- [Power Dynamics and Inequality Between Countries in the United Nations and the](#)
- [Effect on Diplomatic Problem Solving | OxJournal](#)
- [UN Security Council Reform: What the World Thinks | Carnegie Endowment for International Peace](#)
- <https://www.un.org/en/ga/president/63/pdf/letters/20081006-scr.pdf>
- <https://www.diplo-magazine.co.uk/why-diplomacy-matters-in-today-s-globalized-world-of-politics-and-economics/#:~:text=Effective%20diplomacy%20is%20essential%20to%20establish%20and%20maintain,mitigating%20tensions%2C%20and%20promoting%20international%20cooperation%20and%20collaboration.>