

Security Council Manual

1. What is the Security Council?

- The Security Council has the responsibility for maintaining international peace and security. It is the only organ of the United Nations whose decisions are legally binding: under the UN Charter, all Member States are obliged to comply with the decisions of the Security Council.
- The Security Council tackles threats to peace by calling upon the parties involved to settle the dispute by peaceful means and recommending methods of adjustment.
- As opposed to other committees, debate takes place clause by clause, meaning that delegates have the chance to submit individual clauses, which will be debated on.
- It is targeted at **advanced delegates**, who must have an extensive knowledge and understanding of their countries' aims and policies, as well as limitations and boundaries that are in the self-interest of their countries.

2. What is the Historical Security Council?

- The Historical Security Council (HSC) is a committee with the same mandate but in the setting of a chosen year, discussing issues that occurred at that given time.
- Delegates are immersed
- Delegates must rely only on information and events up to that point in history; future developments can't be considered. For example, if the session is set during the Cuban Missile Crisis, participants can't reference any agreements or outcomes that occurred afterwards.
- The procedural rules of the Historical Security Council are the same as those in the Security Council.

3. Who are the members of the Security Council?

- In the Security Council, 5 out of the 15 members hold permanent seats in the Council and have the right to prevent any proposal from being implemented by using veto power. These five permanent members are China, France, the Russian Federation, the United Kingdom and the United States of America. They are otherwise referred to as "the P5".
- The other 10 Member States are elected by the General Assembly for 2 years. They are elected with equitable geographical distribution to ensure that the views of all regions of the world are represented.
- Apart from the 15 members, UN Member States that aren't UNSC members are allowed to attend the meetings of the Council as guests. They can participate in the discussion by expressing their country's view but aren't able to vote. A country may be a "guest" if that country is directly involved or affected by the issue under discussion.

4. What is the procedure like?

- Debate is clause by clause.

- In the SC, each clause has one main-submitter and no co-submitters.
- Often the clauses of the resolutions of the two alliances will be merged into one document, making up one resolution per topic, with each clause submitted by its respective main submitter. The merged, final resolution will be co-submitted by all present delegations.
- In the beginning of the debate of each issue, there needs to be a “motion to divide the question”.
- The debate time on each clause ranges from 5-20 minutes based on the length, importance and controversy of the clause.
- Reference to previous clauses that have been debated on are not appropriate.

5. Rules of Procedure

- The following points and motions are only entertained in the SC:
 - Motion to divide the question: The first motion needed at the beginning of the debate session of each topic.
 - Motion to reconsider a clause: The equivalent of the “motion to reconsider a resolution”. It calls for the re-voting and re-debating of a clause that has already been debated and voted. It may only be entertained when there are no more clauses to debate.
 - Motion to table a clause: This motion calls for the temporary closure of debate on a clause. It requires a majority to pass.
- Amendments to the first and second degree are only entertained on the relevant clause.
- Following a debate and vote on all the operative clauses, preambulatory clauses are debated en-bloc.

6. Voting

- For a decision to be made, a minimum number of 9 votes in favour is needed.
- Nevertheless, when a P5 State votes against, this constitutes a veto and leads to the automatic rejection of the clause or amendment. When a delegate is to veto, they need to inform the Chairs beforehand.
- In the case of a veto threat, there is a “P5 caucus” between the P5 and one of the Presidents of the Council, which is a private talk that aims to find a solution and prevent a veto outside the room. P5 countries are encouraged to abstain should they not support a clause. The remaining delegates are in an unmoderated caucus.

7. Veto Threat

- A veto threat is only used if a country’s national benefits are critically threatened.
- In the UN, veto is almost never used so delegates shouldn’t abuse the veto power.
- 2024 – 5 vetoes, 35 resolutions passed unanimously.
- 2023 – 5 vetoes, 50 resolutions passed unanimously.