

India's UNSC presidency

August 3, 2021

In news- Recently, India assumed the presidency of the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) for the month of August.

Key updates-

- As India assumed the presidency of the UNSC, it will **organise key events in three major areas of maritime security, peacekeeping and counter-terrorism.**
- India took over the presidency from France.
- India will decide the agenda of the UN's highest decision making body whose resolutions and directives are binding on all member states.
- India will also coordinate important meetings on a range of issues during August.
- **Prime Minister Narendra Modi will be the first Indian PM to preside over a meeting of the UNSC.**
- This is the first time Indian political leadership has invested in presiding over an event of UNSC.
- The last time an Indian PM was engaged in this effort was the then PM PV Narasimha Rao in 1992 when he attended a UNSC meeting.
- This will be the country's first presidency during its 2021-22 tenure as a non-permanent member of the Security Council (which assumed in January 2021).

The United Nations Security Council(UNSC)-

- It is one of the six principal organs of the United Nations, charged with ensuring international peace and security and approving any changes to the UN Charter.
- Its powers include establishing peacekeeping operations, enacting international sanctions, and authorizing

military action.

- All members of the United Nations agree to accept and carry out the decisions of the Council.
- The UNSC is the only UN body with the authority to issue binding resolutions on member states.
- It held its **first session on 17 January 1946 at Church House, Westminster, London.**
- It has permanent residence at the UN Headquarters in New York City.
- The Security Council consists of **fifteen members, of which five are permanent: China, France, Russia, the United Kingdom, and the United States of America.**
- The remaining ten non-permanent members are elected on a regional basis to serve a term of two years.
- The body's presidency rotates monthly among its members.

How are the non-permanent members elected?

Each year the General Assembly elects five non-permanent members (out of 10 in total) for a two-year term. In accordance with the General Assembly resolution 1991 (XVIII) of 17 December 1963, the 10 non-permanent seats are distributed on a regional basis as follows: five for African and Asian States; one for Eastern European States; two for the Latin American and Caribbean States; and two for Western European and other States.

India has served in the UNSC as a Non-permanent member seven times previously.

- **In 1950-51:** India, as **President of UNSC**, presided over the adoption of resolutions calling for cessation of hostilities during the Korean War and for assistance to the Republic of Korea.
- **In 1967-68:** India co-sponsored **Resolution 238** extending the mandate of the UN mission in Cyprus.
- **In 1972-73:** India pushed strongly for **admission of**

Bangladesh into the UN. The resolution was not adopted because of a veto by a permanent member.

- **In 1977-78:** India was a **strong voice for Africa in the UNSC and spoke against apartheid.** Then External Affairs Minister **Atal Bihari Vajpayee spoke in UNSC** for Namibia's independence in 1978.
- **In 1984-85:** India was a leading voice in UNSC for **resolution of conflicts in the Middle East,** especially Palestine and Lebanon.
- **In 1991-92:** **PM P V Narasimha Rao participated in the first ever summit-level meeting** of the UNSC and spoke on its role in maintenance of peace and security.

In 2011-2012: India was a **strong vice for developing world, peacekeeping, counter-terrorism and Africa.**