

Security Council Subsidiary Bodies: An Overview

The Security Council can establish subsidiary bodies under Article 29 of the UN Charter or Rule 28 of its Provisional Rules of Procedure. Since it first operationalised the Military Staff Committee (MSC)—its only subsidiary body mandated by the UN Charter—in resolution 1 (1946), it has used its Article 29/Rule 28 powers many times. At present, the Council has subsidiary bodies of different types, most of which mirror its composition. The only exceptions are the MSC (only permanent members), the Peacebuilding Commission (PBC) Organisational Committee (only permanent members plus two non-permanent members) and the Ad Hoc International Tribunals and Residual Mechanism (no states, only judicial officials). Moreover, with the exception of the MSC, PBC and Ad Hoc Tribunals, all subsidiary bodies are usually chaired by non-permanent members through an informal consultative process led by a different permanent member every year shortly after the annual Security Council elections in the General Assembly. (The Informal Working Group on the Protection of Civilians in Armed Conflict has been informally continued under the chairmanship of the UK, albeit without China participating and Russia doing so sporadically.) In addition, some of the Ad-Hoc or Sanctions Committees are assisted by a Panel of Experts (also called Group of Experts or Monitoring Group), composed of independent experts appointed by the Secretariat.

