Security Council Elections 2016

A delegate of Egypt distributes campaign paraphernalia in support of his country's candidacy ahead of the vote in the Assembly. (UN Photo/Cia Pak)

Introduction

The 70th session of the UN General Assembly is scheduled to hold elections on 28 June for non-permanent members of the Security Council for 2017-2018. This is the first time that elections are being held six months ahead of the beginning of the term of office. Except for the Council elections in 1946, which took place in January, the earliest that they have been held in the last 70 years has been late September. Five of the ten non-permanent seats on the Security Council will be filled and they will be distributed regionally as follows:

- one seat for the African Group (currently held by Angola);
- one seat for the Group of Asia and the Pacific Small Island Developing States (the Asia-Pacific Group, currently held by Malaysia);
- one seat for the Group of Latin American and Caribbean States (GRULAC, currently held by Venezuela); and
- two seats for the Western European and Others Group (WEOG, currently held by New Zealand and Spain).

The Eastern European Group is not contesting any seat this year as its seat (held by Ukraine through 2017) is up for election every other year.

The five new members elected this year will take up their seats on 1 January 2017 and will serve through 31 December 2018. The procedures governing elections to the Security Council are described in detail in Annex 1.

Ethiopia and Bolivia are running unopposed, having been each nominated by their regional groups, the African Group and GRULAC, respectively. Both countries have previously served on the Council on two occasions: Ethiopia in 1967-1968 and 1989-1990, and Bolivia in 1964-1965 and 1978-1979.

Races for the Asia-Pacific Group and WEOG seats are being contested this year. Kazakhstan and Thailand are competing for one seat from the Asia-Pacific Group, while Italy, the Netherlands and Sweden are competing for two WEOG seats. With the exception of Kazakhstan, all candidates have served on the Council in the past: Thailand on one occasion (1985-1986); Italy on six (1959-1960, 1971-1972, 1975-1976, 1987-1988, 1995-1996 and 2007-2008); the Netherlands on five (1946, 1951-1952, 1965-1966, 1983-1984 and 1999-2000); and Sweden on

three (1957-1958, 1975-1976 and 1997-1998).

Of all the 2016 candidates, Italy, the Netherlands and Sweden have the most prior Security Council experience. Kazakhstan is one of 68 UN member states that has never served on the Council (accounting for approximately 35 percent of the membership).

A country must obtain votes from two-thirds of the member states present and voting at the General Assembly session in order to secure a seat on the Council, regardless of whether the election is contested. This means at least 129 votes are required to win a seat if all 193 UN member states vote. (A member state can be prohibited from voting as a result of arrears in payment of financial contributions, in accordance with Article 19 of the UN Charter.)

Elections to the Council, as with other principal organs of the UN, require formal balloting, even if candidates have been endorsed by their regional group and are running unopposed. If no candidate obtains the required number of votes in the first round, voting in the next round is restricted to the candidates that received the most votes. In this restricted ballot, the number of countries included is limited to twice the number of vacant seats; for example, if one seat is available, only the two countries that received the most votes in the first round could contest the next round. (Any votes for other candidates during this restricted voting round are considered void.) This restricted voting process

REGION	SEATS AVAILABLE IN THE 2016 ELECTION	STATES RUNNING AND PREVIOUS TERMS ON THE COUNCIL
Africa	1	Ethiopia (1967-1968, 1989-1990)
Asia-Pacific	1	Kazakhstan (none) Thailand (1985-1986)
Latin America and Caribbean	1	Bolivia (1964-1965, 1978-1979)
Western Europe and Other	2	Italy (1959-1960, 1971-1972, 1975-1976, 1987-1988, 1995-1996, 2007-2008) The Netherlands (1946, 1951-1952, 1965-1966, 1983-1984, 1999-2000) Sweden (1957-1958, 1975-1976, 1997-1998)

can continue for up to three rounds of voting. If, at that point, a candidate still fails to garner the minimum number of votes, unrestricted voting is reopened for up to three rounds. This pattern of restricted and unrestricted voting continues until a candidate is successful in securing the required two-thirds of the votes.

In theory, it is possible, although unlikely, that a country running unopposed might not garner the requisite votes of those present and eligible to vote in the General Assembly in the first round of voting. Such a country may then be challenged in subsequent rounds and ultimately not obtain a seat.

Historically, there have been a number of instances in which extended rounds of voting were required to fill a contested seat. This was more common before the Council's enlargement from 11 to 15 members in 1966, and it resulted in a number of agreements on split

terms. Despite the enlargement, extended voting has occurred a few times more recently. Such situations have been solved by the withdrawal of one of the contenders or the election of a compromise candidate, rather than by agreement on a split term. (See Annex 3 for the results of recent elections to the Security Council. A summary of the voting in the General Assembly elections for non-permanent seats on the Security Council since 1946 is available at www.securitycouncilreport.org.)

As mentioned above, this will be the first time that elections are held in the month of June. Following concerns that elected Council members did not have enough time to prepare for their terms, and to have enough time and flexibility in the event of any unforeseen circumstances, the General Assembly decided to hold the elections about six months before the members elected assume their responsibilities.

Council Seats

African Seat

Three non-permanent seats on the Council are allocated to Africa. One seat comes up for election every even calendar year, and two seats are contested during odd years. Although there have been exceptions, elections for seats allocated to Africa tend to be uncontested as the African Group maintains an established pattern of rotation among its five subregions (Northern Africa, Southern Africa, Eastern Africa, Western Africa and Central Africa). This year, Ethiopia is running unopposed for the Eastern Africa seat.

Ethiopia

Ethiopia, a founding member of the UN, has served on the Council twice (1967-1968 and

1989-1990). It received the endorsement of the AU in January 2016.

In its campaign, Ethiopia has placed particular emphasis on enhancing the quality of peacekeeping operations while also promoting greater cooperation between the UN and regional and subregional organisations, with a special focus on the partnership with the AU. Ethiopia has underscored its interest in peace and security in its sub-region and in Africa in particular. To that end, Ethiopia has highlighted its mediating role in South Sudan in its capacity as a chair of the Intergovernmental Authority on Development, which eventually led to the signing of the comprehensive peace agreement in August 2015. Among its other priorities, Ethiopia has

listed its commitment to complete disarmament and arms control, while also stressing the importance of the nexus between development and international peace and security.

Ethiopia has participated in UN peacekeeping operations since 1950. It is currently the single largest troop contributor to UN peacekeeping operations, with 8,321 military and police deployed as of 30 April. In addition, Ethiopia maintains one of the largest contingents in the AU Mission in Somalia. Its capital, Addis Ababa, hosts the AU and the UN Economic Commission for Africa, and is the third largest UN duty station after New York and Geneva.

GRULAC Seat

Two non-permanent seats are allocated to Latin America and the Caribbean, with one coming up for election every year. From 2008 on, there has only been one candidate every year for the GRULAC seat. (Although candidates sometimes have not had the endorsement of the regional group, so far they have not been challenged at the elections stage.)

Bolivia

Bolivia is a founding member of the UN and has served on the Council on two occasions (1964-1965 and 1978-1979). It presented its candidature in 2007 and was endorsed by GRULAC in 2016.

During its campaign, Bolivia has highlighted the importance of promoting the respect for human rights and the protection of vulnerable people, including children, women, refugees and indigenous peoples. It has emphasised the importance it attaches to the peaceful settlement of disputes, as well as the need to address the root causes of conflict. Bolivia has expressed interest in considering issues related to environmental sustainability when addressing threats to international peace and security.

Bolivia has underlined the importance of inclusive multilateralism. It has also committed to making sure that the Council listens and takes into consideration the priorities of all stakeholders, including troop- and police-contributing countries and the wider membership.

As of 30 April, Bolivia had 21 peacekeepers deployed in six UN missions.

WEOG Seats

The two elected WEOG seats are filled every even calendar year. In 2016, Italy, the Netherlands and Sweden are contesting the two seats, replacing New Zealand and Spain.

Italy

Italy has been a member of the UN since 1955 and has served on the Council six times (1959-1960, 1971-1972, 1975-1976, 1987-1988, 1995-1996 and 2007-2008). It presented its candidature in 2009.

Italy has emphasised its commitment to peacekeeping focused on the integrated civilian and military approach, while also stressing the need for improving the UN's conflict prevention and mediation capacities. In addition, Italy has drawn attention to the importance of protecting cultural heritage and has advocated the position that preservation of world heritage could be a crucial component of UN peacekeeping and peacebuilding efforts. In its candidacy, Italy has argued for more integrated approaches to counter-terrorism and advocated a strengthened role for the UN to this end.

During its campaign, Italy emphasised the link between development and security, and in particular the effects of climate change and environmental challenges on global security. In addition, Italy stressed its commitment to advancing human rights, especially the rights of women and children. Italy has committed itself to improving the relationship between the Council and the wider UN membership.

With 1,310 military and police personnel currently deployed in various UN missions, Italy is the largest troop and police contributor to UN peace operations among EU and NATO members. Since 1960, it has deployed over 60,000 military and police personnel to various UN missions. Italy hosts the UN Logistics Base in Brindisi, which provides logistical support for UN missions, as well as the World Food Programme and the Food and Agriculture Organization.

The Netherlands

The Netherlands is a founding member of the UN and has served on the Council five times (1946, 1951-1952, 1965-1966, 1983-1984 and 1999-2000). It presented its candidature in 2005.

The Netherlands has stressed the importance of UN peacekeeping in building lasting peace, while recognising the role of peacebuilding efforts and the importance of cooperation with regional partners in preventing and resolving conflicts. The Netherlands has emphasised the importance of promoting the protection of civilians agenda and advancing disarmament efforts. During its campaign, the Netherlands has devoted significant attention to development issues, such as the impact of climate change and issues related to water management. One of the main pillars of the Netherlands' campaign has been its emphasis on strengthening the international legal order as a means for the peaceful settlement of disputes. The Netherlands has stated its intention to enhance cooperation between the UN and international courts. Also, the Netherlands has emphasised its unique perspective as a kingdom comprising territories in Europe and in the Caribbean.

The Netherlands has participated in UN peace operations since 1947, deploying over the years more than 125,000 military and police personnel to various UN missions. As of 30 April, the Netherlands had 512 deployed peacekeepers in five UN missions. Its capital, The Hague, hosts the ICC, the International Court of Justice, the Permanent Court of Arbitration, the International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia and the Special Tribunal for Lebanon.

Sweden

A UN member state since 1946, Sweden, which announced its candidacy in 2004, has served on the Council three times (1957-1958, 1975-1976 and 1997-1998).

In its campaign, Sweden has emphasised its credibility on development and human rights issues while stressing its integrity-driven foreign policy. Sweden has underscored the need for a more comprehensive approach towards contemporary issues of peace and security, which would include strengthening UN efforts in peacekeeping, disarmament, peacebuilding and sustainable development. It has also emphasised the need to strengthen the nexus between security and development, while stressing the importance of peacebuilding and institution-building for lasting peace. In addition to its long tradition of participating in UN peace operations, Sweden has highlighted its experience in the Peacebuilding Commission (PBC), which Ambassador Olof Skoog chaired from March 2015 to February 2016. Since 2012, Sweden has also chaired the Liberia configuration of the PBC. Sweden has also stated its commitment to addressing climate change-related issues. Also, Sweden has stressed its intention to work for a more representative and transparent Council while seeking the perspectives of other member states and acting as a consensus-builder.

Sweden has contributed more than 80,000 military and police personnel to various UN peace missions since 1948. As of 30 April, Sweden had 285 peacekeepers deployed in seven UN missions.

Asia-Pacific Seat

One of the two Council seats allocated to the Asia-Pacific Group comes up for election every year. Kazakhstan and Thailand are contesting one Asia-Pacific Group seat this year. The elected candidate will replace Malaysia and join Japan as the two Council members from the Asia-Pacific Group.

Kazakhstan

Kazakhstan has been a member of the UN since 1991 and has never served on the Council. It presented its candidature in 2010.

During its candidacy, Kazakhstan has emphasised its impartiality and independence as one of its main assets that could be useful in bridging the divides within the Council. If elected, Kazakhstan intends to draw on its significant experience contributing to disarmament and nuclear non-proliferation. Kazakhstan completely dismantled the world's fourth-largest nuclear arsenal of weapons after gaining independence in 1991.

Kazakhstan has highlighted its role in international efforts to promote nuclear non-proliferation in the region by facilitating the creation of the Nuclear-Weapons-Free-Zone in Central Asia. In addition, Kazakhstan has emphasised its role in facilitating the negotiations between Iran and the P5+1 (the five permanent members of the Council and Germany) on Iran's nuclear programme by hosting in 2013 in Almaty the initial negotiations that eventually led to the signing of the Joint Comprehensive Action Plan. In addition to non-proliferation, Kazakhstan has underscored its commitment to advancing development-related issues such as food, water and energy security, which Kazakhstan considers as closely linked to the maintenance of international peace and security. Kazakhstan has also emphasised its commitment to strengthening the UN's conflict prevention, peacekeeping and peacebuilding efforts.

As of 30 April, Kazakhstan had six peacekeepers deployed in two UN missions.

Thailand

Thailand, a UN member state since 1946, has served on the Council once (1985-1986). It presented its candidature in 2007.

If elected, Thailand has expressed its commitment to improving the transparency, efficiency and engagement of the Council with concerned parties, as well as promoting greater cooperation with regional and subregional organisations. It has stressed that it could play a role as a bridge-builder between the developed and developing worlds and between Asia and the rest of the world. Thailand has stressed the importance of a comprehensive approach towards the issues of peace and security, development and human rights. It has emphasised its role in promoting preventive diplomacy and conflict prevention as well as a people-centred approach to peace operations. It has highlighted its commitment to disarmament and the non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction in the region and globally. During its campaign, Thailand has stressed its commitment to upholding the humanitarian tradition of helping refugees and displaced persons from neighbouring countries, having hosted more than a million over the past three decades. It has also emphasised its commitment to fight climate change, promoting disaster preparedness and combating food insecurity.

Since 1950, Thailand has contributed more than 20,000 military and police personnel to UN peacekeeping operations in at least 20 UN missions. As of 30 April, Thailand had 34 peacekeepers deployed in five UN missions.

Potential Evolution of Council Dynamics in 2017

Existing divisions within the Council over issues such as Ukraine, Syria or Israel/Palestine are likely to remain despite the departure of five current and the arrival of five newly elected members. While it is difficult to assess how Council dynamics in 2017 will develop, especially without knowing the full composition of the new membership, the interests of current candidates provide some perspective on a few general patterns that might emerge.

Some of the candidates appear to have a strong national interest in the countries in their region that are on the Council's agenda. Ethiopia shares borders with three countries—Somalia, Sudan and South Sudan—that are on the Council's agenda and is likely to devote significant attention to these issues. Given its geographical location, Kazakhstan could be expected to have a substantial stake in developments in its region, including Afghanistan, Iran and possibly frozen conflicts in the North Caucasus. Given its historical ties to Libya, Italy would be likely to play a role in the Council's approach to that country.

Regarding thematic issues, Italy and Ethiopia have stated their interest in efforts to counter terrorism and transnational organised crime. Given its focus on promoting the international legal order, the Netherlands could play an active role in advancing cooperation between the UN and international courts and tribunals, including the possibility of reviving efforts to establish accountability for the downing of Malaysia Airlines flight MH17 in July 2014, in which many Dutch citizens were killed. Considering its strong emphasis and experience in supporting UN peacebuilding, Sweden would be expected to make this a key priority. Kazakhstan would seek to play a significant role regarding non-proliferation issues. Thailand has expressed interest in prioritising conflict prevention if elected to the Council and in promoting a people-centred approach to peace operations.

Next year, there could be an increase in the number of elected members who are keen to further advance conflict prevention and peacebuilding measures. In addition, all candidates for 2017 have emphasised various aspects of sustainable development and its interconnectedness with peace and security. This could create some friction with those Council members that tend to take a more restricted approach towards these issues, and advocate narrowing the Council's agenda to issues that predominantly involve situations of armed conflict.

The majority of the candidates seem to have a strong desire to improve the transparency and inclusiveness of the Council's work. In the past year, most elected members have expressed their frustration with the way business is usually conducted in the Council, including inadequate time to negotiate resolutions and presidential statements, and the limited interactivity of Council meetings. Most candidates have also pledged to listen to interested stakeholders which are not seated on the Council and to take their perspectives into account. One candidate, Sweden, is a member of the Accountability, Coherence, and Transparency Group (ACT), an initiative launched in May 2013 by a group of member states focusing on the Council's working methods, in particular those that enhance non-members' interaction with the Council. (ACT member New Zealand is leaving the Council at the end of this year, while another ACT member, Uruguay, will serve through

the end of 2017.) The goals of ACT are likely to resonate with Council members that are not members of the group but are nonetheless committed to enhancing the accountability, effectiveness and legitimacy of the Council.

Some elected members of the class of 2016 have been particularly active in drafting resolutions. Two departing members—New Zealand and Spain, joined by Egypt in 2016—have led on the Council's outcomes on the humanitarian situation in Syria. In a departure from general practice, the last three countries, along with Uruguay and Japan, took the initiative to draft and negotiate what would become resolution 2286 on health care in armed conflict. In addition, Spain has been a penholder on Afghanistan as well as on non-proliferation and issues related to weapons of mass destruction, while another outgoing member—Malaysia—took a lead on the children and armed conflict agenda. It remains to be seen whether incoming Council members will take the initiative to draft Council outcomes and further challenge existing penholder arrangements.

Over the past two years, there has been a general trend toward increased transparency in the work of sanctions committees, including public briefings by the chair, engagement with regional actors and several field visits

SUBSIDIARY BODY	CHAIR UNTIL 31 DECEMBER 2016
1988 Taliban Sanctions Committee	New Zealand
1718 DPRK Sanctions Committee	Spain
1970 Libya Sanctions Committee	Malaysia
751/1907 Somalia-Eritrea Sanctions Committee	Venezuela
1591 Sudan Sanctions Committee	Venezuela
Children and Armed Conflict Working Group	Malaysia
1267/1989 Al-Qaida Sanctions Committee	New Zealand
1540 Committee	Spain
Ad Hoc Working Group on Conflict Prevention and Resolution in Africa	Angola

Subsidiary bodies to be vacated by the elected members on 31 December 2016

(although there has also been pushback by permanent members in some cases). Given the significance of the chair's personal engagement and how it impacts the work of sanctions committees, it is unclear to what extent the trend toward increased transparency and outreach will continue. With the election being held more than six months prior to the assumption of their Council membership by each new member, the selection of the chairs is likely to take place considerably earlier than in the past. This would afford the incoming chairs a longer period of preparation and for a better handover process between the exiting and incoming chairs. In 2017, it will be interesting to watch whether and how this might impact the overall performance of the subsidiary bodies of the Council.

Established Practices in Becoming a Candidate

Most candidate countries follow a fairly standard path in announcing and pursuing their bid for the Council, with the exception of candidates from the African Group, which has a more involved process. If the country is a member of an African subregional group, it will often first inform members of its subregional group of its intention to run and seek support. The endorsement of the subregional group then becomes an important factor in the next step.

A candidate country formalises its intention to seek a Security Council seat by informing the rotating monthly chair of its respective regional group in New York. This is done in writing, specifying the two-year term the country seeks. The chair then incorporates that information into the UN candidacy chart of the regional group, which is maintained by each group and reviewed at monthly group meetings. At this point, most candidate countries prepare a circular note to all missions in New York, informing them of the candidacy. Most candidate countries also send a note to the Secretariat or the president of the General Assembly or both, although this is not required by the General Assembly's rules of procedure.

As the relevant election year approaches, the regional group may decide to give its endorsement, and nearer to the election date, if the candidate is running unopposed, the chair of the regional group will inform the president of the General Assembly of the "clean slate". This becomes a guide to help the Secretariat prepare the relevant documentation for the election process.

Campaigning for the Security Council

Candidates seek commitments from member states to vote for them, often years in advance of the election, and may continue to do so up until the day of the vote. Campaigning for the Security Council requires significant investments of time and financial resources, although funds brought to bear vary greatly depending on a number of factors, including the wealth of the candidate country and whether the candidacy is contested. (Candidates predictably tend to spend less if running unopposed.)

Commitments are sought in writing, or orally, or both. Member states that promise to vote for a particular candidate do not always keep their word, and as votes are cast by secret ballot, it is not possible to determine which member states might have reneged on their pledges. There are a number of reasons why pledges may be broken. In some cases, there may not be adequate communication within the pledging government. A high-level official in the capital might pledge to vote for a particular candidate but fail to convey the commitment to the permanent mission to the UN in New York, where the votes are cast. Additionally, if there is a change in government, the new government may not believe that it is committed to upholding the pledges made by the preceding administration. Given the secrecy of the ballot, there are incentives to pledge to all different candidates in a competitive election. Knowing commitments cannot be relied on with certainty, some candidate countries repeatedly cultivate those countries that have already promised to vote for them, seeking reassurances that they have not changed their minds. Candidates often seek pledges from member states at many levels of government.

For the first time this year, and in the context of the momentum to enhance accountability in the selection process of the new UN Secretary-General, candidate countries to the Council participated in two election debates at UN headquarters. These debates were organised by the World Federation of UN Associations on 23-24 May and consisted of two debates among the competing candidates of the Asia-Pacific and WEOG regional groups respectively.

As candidate countries generally focus their campaigns on influencing the voting decisions of diplomats in member state capitals and at UN headquarters, the foreign minister and permanent representative to the UN play a key role in the campaign process. Additionally, particularly in contested elections, many candidates appoint special envoys who try to secure voting pledges from high-level officials in various capitals. These envoys are usually former high-level government officials or diplomats. Depending on their campaign strategies and resources, candidate countries may use multiple envoys, often focusing their efforts on particular regions where they do not have strong diplomatic representation.

To secure voting commitments from member states, candidate countries may volunteer or be asked for certain inducements. For example, a candidate may offer development assistance to a member state in exchange for its vote, or it may promise that while on the Council it will bring attention to (or avoid) an issue of concern to that member state. Such quid pro quo arrangements are not an uncommon element of the campaign process.

The promotion of candidacies by arranging trips to the capitals or holding workshops in attractive locations on issues of interest (and normally not particularly controversial ones) has been used by several candidates in recent years to raise the profile of their campaign and attract permanent representatives (those who will finally cast the vote) to these events. "Swag bags" filled with items imprinted with the logo of the campaign that are handed out within UN circles are used to increase the outreach of the campaign. Customarily, on the day of the elections, permanent representatives are offered small gifts by most candidates, even those headed for an unopposed election.

As Security Council elections may continue for several rounds, some candidates use a campaign strategy that tries to ensure that member states that vote for them in the first round continue to do so in subsequent rounds, while attempting to secure votes in subsequent rounds from member states that did not commit to voting for them in the first round.

As a result of this strategy by candidate countries to gain second round or subsequent votes, some member states have made the distinction that when they commit their vote to a candidate, they do so for the duration of the electoral process, regardless of the number of rounds. However, member states are sometimes forced to make a further choice if, for example, their preferred candidate(s) do not win or obtain the higher result in the first round in a race with two or more candidates.

It should also be noted that member states will often shift their vote in protracted elections that come down to two candidates vying for a single seat if it appears that their candidate of choice is losing ground and is unlikely to win the seat.

Modern Regional Groups and Established Practices

For the purposes of elections to the Security Council, the regional groups have been governed by a formula set out in General Assembly resolution 1991 (XVIII), which was adopted in 1963 and took effect in 1965. The key feature of the resolution was to amend the UN Charter to increase the number of Council members from 11 to 15. Under that resolution, the seats originally corresponding to the African and Asia-Pacific states were combined. In reality, however, the candidacies for the African and Asia-Pacific seats operate separately, and this report reflects that customary practice.

Article 23 of the Charter specifies the criteria that the members of the General Assembly should apply when considering which countries should be elected to serve on the Council. It provides that due regard shall be "specially paid, in the first instance to the contribution of Members of the United Nations to the maintenance of international peace and security and to the other purposes of the Organization".

The UN Charter also provides that non-permanent members be elected according to equitable geographic distribution. It does not stipulate how that should be achieved. Nor does it suggest a possible composition of appropriate geographical groups. Nevertheless, the principle of equitable geographic distribution gave rise to the establishment of electoral groups as a vehicle for achieving that goal.

Kiribati, which had not been participating in any regional group within the UN, joined the Asia-Pacific group in 2013. The US is not a member of any group but attends meetings of WEOG as an observer and is considered a member of this group for electoral purposes. Israel, which did not belong to any group for many years, was given temporary membership in WEOG in May 2000, subject to renewal every four years. (Israel has announced that it plans to run for a WEOG seat on the Council in 2018.)

African Group

Most of the groups have informal understandings that are not codified into actual

rules. The African Group is an exception to this in that it has adopted the rules of procedure of the AU Ministerial Committee on Candidatures within the International System for the selection of candidates to occupy the three African seats on the Council. Subregional groups within the African Group tend to follow a disciplined rotation system. Theoretically, under this system, every country in Africa would eventually get a turn to be a candidate for a seat on the Council.

In most years, this means that the UN membership at large has little choice regarding the African candidates. However, there have been a number of exceptions. The election in 2011 was unusual in that three candidates (Mauritania, Morocco and Togo) ran for two seats. This happened because Mauritania decided to contest the Northern Africa/Arab swing seat with Morocco, rather than wait its turn in the rotational cycle. Morocco prevailed, as did Togo, which won the seat allocated by the African Group to the Western Africa subregion. In 2000, when Sudan was the endorsed candidate, Mauritius decided to contest the seat and won election to the Council.

The African rotation generally follows a systematic cycle based on the following principle:
- Northern Africa and Central Africa alternate running for one seat every odd calendar year;
- Western Africa runs for one seat every odd calendar year; and
- Eastern Africa and Southern Africa alternate running for one seat every even calendar year.

Nonetheless, the picture can become complicated, as some countries that can claim to straddle more than one geographic region have at times chosen to shift from one subgroup to another. Challengers can emerge within the same subregional grouping, upsetting the rotation. Candidate countries can often be persuaded to drop out to avoid a competitive election. Moreover, there have been times when

African Group	54 members
Asia-Pacific Group	54 members
Eastern European Group	23 members
GRULAC	33 members
WEOG	28 members

rival candidates have emerged and continued all the way through the election. In addition, within a subgroup some countries may choose to run more often, while others choose to run less frequently or not at all.

The process of selecting a candidate in the African Group usually has a defined path. First, the subregional groups select the potential candidate countries and forward their names to the African Group for endorsement. The group submits the candidates to the Committee on Candidatures of the African Group in New York, which transmits the information to the AU Ministerial Committee on Candidatures. The AU committee follows its written rules of procedure on selecting candidates. (The African Group and the AU are made up of the same members with the exception of Morocco, which is not a member of the AU.) Subregional organisations, of which there are several in Africa, may add their endorsement before the list goes to the AU Ministerial Committee. The AU Executive Committee makes the final decision during AU summit meetings. Despite the written rules of procedure for candidate selection, however, some countries in the past have submitted their candidature directly to the AU Ministerial Committee on Candidatures, bypassing the process in New York.

Overall, the system of rotation tends to favour unopposed or "clean slate" elections. There have been times when this has resulted in the election of candidates that might have struggled in a contested election and whose presence on the Council added little to resolving problems or was counterproductive.

A factor that seems to be coming more into play recently is the growing desire by some member states in the region to be elected more often than strict adherence to the rotation system would allow. Nigeria was elected for the 2014-2015 term after having been a Council member in 2010-2011, and South Africa was on the Council in 2007-2008 and again in 2011-2012. Although some have argued against the "miniaturisation" of the Council by including too many small states, smaller countries have suggested that they too contribute to international peace and security and should have the opportunity to serve on the Council.

Asia-Pacific Group

In 2011, the Asian Group officially changed its name to the Group of Asia and the Pacific Small Island Developing States, also called the Asia-Pacific Group. The name change was made to account for the fact that more than 26 percent of the group's members are Pacific Island countries.

In the Asia-Pacific Group there are no formally established practices for rotation to fill the two seats, one of which becomes available every year. While it has almost the same number of countries as the African Group, the Asia-Pacific Group's wide geographic span—from the Middle East to Polynesia—has led to much looser regional coordination.

Until the mid-1990s, there was a fairly consistent South Asian presence on the Council, with Bangladesh, India, Nepal and Pakistan rotating seats. In practice, South Asian countries rarely run against each other. (One exception occurred in 1975, when India and Pakistan, contesting the same seat, needed eight rounds before Pakistan finally prevailed.)

Since 1958, Japan has also been a regular presence on the Council. Including its current term (2016-2017), Japan will have accumulated 22 years on the Council, which is the highest number of years on the Council among non-permanent members. Since 1966, it has never been off the Council for more than six years consecutively. (Brazil comes in second, having accumulated 20 years on the Council as a non-permanent member.)

The absence of a formal rotation system has meant that there is frequently competition for the Asia-Pacific seat regardless of whether a candidate declares itself far in advance. While larger member states have tended to declare their candidacy closer to the election year, smaller candidate countries have usually announced their decision to run many years ahead of time. The only subgroup within the Asia-Pacific Group that endorses its candidates is the Association of Southeast Asian Nations, made up of Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, Myanmar, the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand and Viet Nam.

The Arab Swing Seat

There is an established practice that spans the Asia-Pacific and African Groups. As discussed in Annex 2 below, General Assembly resolution 1991 A (XVIII) provided five seats for "Asia and Africa"; in practice, this allotment has been divided into three seats for Africa and two for Asia. In 1967, after Jordan ended its two-year term in what had been the Middle East seat, there was a year with no Arab state on the Council, which coincided with the Six-Day War. It appears that at some point there

was an informal agreement, although there are no known records, that one seat would be reserved for an Arab state and that Asia and Africa would take turns every two years to provide a suitable candidate. As a result, this seat is often called the "Arab swing seat". An Arab country has continuously occupied a seat on the Council since 1968.

Eastern European Group

The Eastern European Group is the smallest UN regional group, consisting of 23 member states, with an election for one seat every odd calendar year. This is the group that has expanded the most in recent decades, with 15 new members since 1991 due to the dissolution of the Soviet Union and the splitting of other states in the region (the former Czechoslovakia and Yugoslavia). The Eastern European seat was included in the permanent members' "gentlemen's agreement" in 1946. (See Annex 2.) But soon thereafter, the meaning of that agreement was contested, with the Soviet Union and the West vying for 20 years to place their preferred candidates in this seat. It also became a hotly contested seat among new member states that did not have a clear regional grouping. (For example in 1955, when there was no Asian seat, the Philippines competed with members of the Eastern European Group for a seat. When the voting remained deadlocked after 36 rounds between the Philippines and Yugoslavia, the two countries agreed to accept a split term: Yugoslavia served on the Council in 1955 and the Philippines in 1956.) Out of 23 members of the Eastern European Group, 11 are part of the EU and four are candidates for membership in the EU.

Latin American and Caribbean Group

After the expansion of the Council and the reorganisation of the UN regional groups that occurred as a result of General Assembly resolution 1991 A (XVIII), the Latin American Group took in the Caribbean states, several of which were former members of the British Commonwealth, and became the Group of Latin American and Caribbean states.

Like most of the other groups, GRULAC has no formal rules regarding rotation. For much of the last 60 years, non-Caribbean countries have tended to dominate regional representation. Historically, the group was often able to reach consensus on "clean slates". However, the group has also produced two of the most protracted and bitterly contested voting sessions in UN history. In 1979, the contest between Colombia and Cuba went to 154 rounds before Mexico was elected as a compromise candidate in the 155th round. In 2006, there were 47 rounds between Guatemala and Venezuela, with Panama finally coming in as the compromise candidate in the 48th round.

After the difficult 2006 Council elections, GRULAC moved towards a more coordinated system to avoid highly contentious competitions in future Council elections. There was an emerging sense that there should only be one candidate running each year and that GRULAC countries should not compete with each other.

Western European and Others Group

With 28 members, WEOG is the second-smallest UN regional grouping, and two seats become available to it every even calendar year. Strictly speaking, it is not a geographical group, as it comprises Western Europe plus "others". Its members, however, share broadly similar levels of economic development and political values. The "others" subgroup is made up of three members of what was previously called the British Commonwealth Group. The British Commonwealth Group grew rapidly in the late 1950s as states in Africa and Asia became independent. Most of these newly independent states joined the Asian and African Groups and GRULAC. Australia, Canada and New Zealand became the "others" in WEOG. Israel is the other non-European state that participates in WEOG, having been a member since 2000. With France and the UK as members and the US attending meetings as an observer, WEOG also includes three of the five permanent members of the Council. (The Holy See is also an observer in WEOG.)

WEOG practices what might be called an open-market approach to elections, which produces a regular pattern of contested candidatures that is likely to remain highly competitive in the coming years. The last uncontested election took place in 2006 (both Italy and Belgium were elected). Since then, the candidates have been: Turkey, Austria and Iceland (2008), Germany, Portugal and Canada (2010), Australia, Luxembourg and Finland (2012), New Zealand, Spain and Turkey (2014)

There are several subgroups within WEOG: the Nordic countries (Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway and Sweden), the CANZ (Canada, Australia and New Zealand) and the Benelux (Belgium, Luxembourg and the Netherlands). There are informal understandings within the Nordic countries and CANZ subgroups that have helped members to support each other's campaigns.

U Documents on Security Council Elections

General Assembly Documents

A/70/PV.33 (16 October 2015) was the record of the 2015 elections of non-permanent members.

A/RES/68/307 (10 September 2014) decided that elections of the non-permanent members of the Security Council would take place about six months before the elected members assume their responsibilities.

A/59/881 (20 July 2005) was a note verbale from Costa Rica containing information on elections from 1946 to 2004.

A/RES 1991 A (XVIII) (17 December 1963) was the resolution adopting amendments to the Charter on the composition of the Council and establishing the allocation of seats to various regions.

GAOR 1st Session, Part 1, 14th Plenary Session and Part II (12 January 1946) was the first election of non-permanent members.

Other

UN Charter

A/520/Rev.15 and amendments 1 and 2 were the rules of procedure of the General Assembly, including amendments and additions.

Repertory of Practice of the United Nations Organs, Supplement 6, Volume III on Article 23

See http://www.un.org/en/sc/repertoire/ for the online version of the Repertoire of the Practice of the Security Council. (The Repertory and the Repertoire are different resources.)

Useful Additional Resources

David Bosco, *Five to Rule Them All: The UN Security Council and the Making of the Modern World*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009)

Andrew Boyd, *Fifteen Men on a Powder Keg: A History of the UN Security Council*, (New York: Stein and Day, 1971)

Bruce Bueno de Mesquita and Alastair Smith, *"The pernicious consequences of UN Security Council membership"*, Journal of Conflict Resolution, vol. 54, no. 5 (2010)

Terrence L. Chapman and Dan Reiter, *"The United Nations Security Council and the rally 'round the flag effect"*, Journal of Conflict Resolution, vol. 48, no. 6 (2004)

Axel Dreher et al, *The determinants of election to the United Nations Security Council*, CESifo Working Paper Series, no. 3902 (2012)

Jared Genser and Bruno Stagno Ugarte, eds., *The United Nations Security Council in the Age of Human Rights*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014)

Edward Luck, *Reforming the United Nations: Lessons from a History in Progress*, International Relations Studies and the United Nations Occasional Papers, no.1 (2003)

David Malone, *"Eyes on the Prize: The Quest for Non-permanent Seats on the UN Security Council"*, Global Governance, vol. 6, no. 1 (January-March 2000)

Norman J. Padelford, *"Politics and Change in the Security Council"*, International Organisation, vol. 14, no.3 (Summer 1960)

Ruth Russell, *A History of the United Nations Charter*, The Brookings Institution, 1958

Bruce Russett, ed., *The Once and Future Security Council*, (New York: St Martin's Press, 1997)

Bruno Simma et al, eds., *The Charter of the United Nations, A Commentary*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002)

Loraine Sievers and Sam Daws, *The Procedure of the UN Security Council*, Fourth Edition, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014) and its update website www.scprocedure.org

Ramesh Thakur, ed., *What is Equitable Geographic Representation in the Twenty-First Century?*, International Peace Academy, Seminar Report, 26 March 1999

Thomas G. Weiss and Sam Daws, eds., *The Oxford Handbook on the United Nations*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007)

Taking Stock, Moving Forward, Report to the Foreign Ministry of Finland on the 2012 Elections to the United Nations Security Council, International Peace Institute, April 2013

Rules of Procedure of the AU Ministerial Committee on Candidatures within the International System, Doc. EX.CL/213 (VIII)

United Nations Handbook 2013-2014, New Zealand Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade (2013)

Annex 1: Rules and Process for Election to the Council: Relevant Charter Provisions and Rules of Procedure

Charter Provisions on Election to the Council

The UN Charter, in article 23, specifies the number of non-permanent members to be elected, as amended in 1963:

The General Assembly shall elect ten other Members of the United Nations to be non-permanent members of the Security Council…

It also stipulates the length of their term:

The non-permanent members…shall be elected for a term of two years.

The practical impact of rotation occurring every two years is mitigated by staggering the cycle so that the General Assembly elects five members each year for the stipulated two-year period. This was determined by rule 142 of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly.

Despite the specification of a two-year term, there have been exceptions when members have served shorter terms. There have been one-year terms, either to break electoral deadlocks or to establish the required rotational cycle.

Article 23 also contains a provision that ensures that no member can become a de facto permanent member by being re-elected to serve continuously in the Council:

A retiring member shall not be eligible for immediate re-election.

This is further reinforced by rule 144 of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly, which also states that a retiring member of the Council will not be eligible for immediate re-election.

In addition to the provisions stated above, the Charter also specifies the criteria that the members of the General Assembly should apply when considering which countries should be elected to serve on the Council. It provides in article 23 that due regard shall be:

…specially paid, in the first instance to the contribution of Members of the United Nations to the maintenance of international peace and security and to the other purposes of the Organization, and also to equitable geographical distribution.

"[C]ontribution … to the maintenance of international peace and security" is often interpreted in this context as the personnel or financial contributions for peacekeeping operations and peace processes. "[C]ontribution … to the other purposes of the Organization", by contrast, is a very wide term. In recent years, most discussions regarding article 23 at the General Assembly have focused on the criteria of equitable geographical distribution, with issues related to the candidates' contribution to international peace and security being left aside.

A key procedural provision of the Charter that is relevant to Security Council elections is article 18(2). This requires a two-thirds majority vote in the General Assembly on important questions. Under that article, election to the Council is defined as an important question.

In addition, article 18(3) defines the required majority by reference to members present and voting. This refers to members casting an affirmative or negative vote. Members who abstain from voting are considered not voting.

Relevant Rules of Procedure

Voting, especially during elections to the Security Council, can sometimes produce tense and dramatic situations on the floor of the General Assembly. In such circumstances, understanding the relevant rules of procedure can become very important.

Rule 88 of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly indicates that once the President of the General Assembly announces the commencement of voting, the process can only be interrupted on a point of order regarding the conduct of the vote. Furthermore, explanations of vote are not permitted when votes are cast by secret ballot.

Elections are governed by rules 92, 93 and 94 of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly.

Under rule 92, elections to the Council are held by secret ballot. Nominations are not required. Countries simply declare their intention to run, sometimes many years ahead, either by circular note to all members of the UN or to the chair of their regional grouping, or both.

Rule 93 sets out the procedure that applies when there is only one vacancy to be filled and no candidate obtains the required two-thirds majority in the first ballot. It provides that:

…a second ballot shall be taken, which shall be restricted to the two candidates obtaining the largest number of votes…if a two-thirds majority is required the balloting shall be continued until one candidate secures two-thirds of the votes cast…

What this first part of rule 93 means is that if there are more than two candidates and there is no clear winner on the first ballot, the lower-polling candidates drop out and the contest then continues to a second ballot between the top two candidates. The effect of rule 93 is that voting simply continues until one candidate prevails, either by securing the required majority or because the other withdraws.

If neither candidate receives the required majority on the second and third ballots, rule 93 says that after the third inconclusive ballot, votes may be cast for "an eligible … Member". This allows new candidates to come into the process, and the fourth ballot is therefore technically referred to as an unrestricted ballot. (It also allows any candidate excluded after the first restricted ballot to come back again.)

If a result is not achieved after three of these unrestricted ballots, rule 93 requires that the pool again be reduced to the top two. This cycle then repeats until a result is achieved. The emergence of new candidates during the unrestricted stage is rare but not unprecedented. If a trend is starting to emerge in one direction after a succession of inconclusive ballots, it is not unusual for the candidate with fewer votes to withdraw.

Rule 94 is similar to rule 93 but is applied when there are two or more seats to be filled.

When two or more elective places are to be filled at one time under the same conditions, those candidates obtaining in the first ballot the majority required shall be elected.

Rule 94 also specifies that if additional rounds of voting are required, the pool is reduced by a formula that says that remaining candidates should not be more than twice the number of places available.

Annex 2: Historical Background

When the UN was established in 1945, the Charter provided for 11 members of the Security Council: five permanent members and six elected members.

Article 23(2) included a provision that in the first election of Council members, three members would be chosen for a period of one year so that in the future three new members could be elected annually. This was decided by drawing lots for the one- and two-year terms.

In the first election, on 12 January 1946, the following countries were elected: Australia, Brazil, Egypt, Mexico, the Netherlands and Poland. The pattern of geographical distribution was: two seats for Latin America, one for the Middle East, one for Eastern Europe, one for Western Europe and one for the British Commonwealth.

The interpretation of what equitable geographic distribution should mean in terms of seats was based on an informal agreement among the permanent members, sometimes known as the London Agreement. From the start there was a lack of agreement about what had been agreed to. The US saw the 1946 formula as only applying to the first election, but the Soviet Union maintained that there had been a gentlemen's agreement of a more general nature for the future meaning of geographic distribution.

The Charter clearly specifies a two-year term for elected members of the Council, but in addition to the 1946-47 period, split terms started to occur in the late 1950s until the Council was enlarged in 1965. This was in part driven by fall-out from the disagreement over regional rotation and associated Cold War politics. But the aspirations of newly independent countries was also an important factor. The first example of this was seen in 1955 when the Philippines and Poland contested a seat. After four inconclusive ballots, Poland withdrew and Yugoslavia declared its candidacy. However, the stalemate continued, and after two months and more than 30 rounds of voting, it was informally agreed that the Philippines would withdraw and that Yugoslavia would resign after one year, at which point the Philippines would run as the only candidate for that seat. As explained above, over the next few years, this became an increasingly common occurrence.

By the early 1960s, there was a growing acceptance that the original composition of the Council had become inequitable and unbalanced. Between 1945 and 1965, UN membership rose from 51 to 117 member states, with the proportion of Asian, African and Caribbean states increasing from 25 percent to about 50 percent. On 17 December 1963, the General Assembly adopted resolution 1991 A (XVIII), which contained amendments to the Charter to address the issue by increasing the number of elected members to ten. The resolution also dealt with the issue of geographic distribution, which was defined as follows:

- five elected members from the African and Asian states—(this was subsequently subdivided in practice into two seats for the Asian Group and three seats for the African Group);
- one from the Eastern European states;
- two from the Latin American states (this included the Caribbean); and
- two from the Western European states and other states (this included Australia, Canada and New Zealand).

At the same time, article 27 was altered so that resolutions of the Council required the vote of nine members instead of seven. This also meant that for the first time the permanent members could be out-voted by non-permanent members, although only on procedural questions.

Annex 3: Results of Recent Elections for Non-Permanent Members of the Security Council

The left-hand column lists the year and the UN General Assembly Session in which the voting was held, as well as the number of the plenary meetings (the ordinal numbers) and the date of meetings. The middle column reflects the highest number of votes and abstentions in a given round of elections. (The number of votes cast to fill the different seats in a given round is not always the same.) Candidate countries that won the election are in bold. A table with the complete results can be found in the PDF of the *Special Research Report on Security Council Elections 2015* at www.securitycouncilreport.org.

2011 UNGA66	17 ROUNDS	
37th 21-10-2011	Round 1: 193 votes, 2 abstentions	**Guatemala** 191, **Morocco** 151, **Pakistan** 129, Togo 119, Mauritania 98, Azerbaijan 74, Slovenia 67, Kyrgyzstan 55, Hungary 52, Fiji 1
	Round 2: 193 votes, 2 abstentions, restricted	Togo 119, Slovenia 97, Azerbaijan 90, Mauritania 72
	Round 3: 193 votes, 1 abstention, restricted	**Togo** 131, Slovenia 99, Azerbaijan 93, Mauritania 61
38th 21-10-11	Round 4: 192 votes, 1 abstention, restricted	Slovenia 98, Azerbaijan 93
	Round 5: 193 votes, 1 abstention, unrestricted	Azerbaijan 98, Slovenia 93, Hungary 1
	Round 6: 193 votes, 1 abstention, unrestricted	Azerbaijan 96, Slovenia 95, Estonia 1
	Round 7: 193 votes, 1 abstention, unrestricted	Azerbaijan 100, Slovenia 91, Estonia 1
	Round 8: 191 votes, 1 abstention, restricted	Azerbaijan 110, Slovenia 80
	Round 9: 191 votes, 1 abstention, restricted	Azerbaijan 113, Slovenia 77
39th 24-10-11	Round 10: 193 votes, restricted	Azerbaijan 110, Slovenia 83
40th 24-10-11	Round 11: 193 votes, 1 abstention, unrestricted	Azerbaijan 110, Slovenia 82
	Round 12: 193 votes, 1 abstention, unrestricted	Azerbaijan 111, Slovenia 81
	Round 13: 192 votes, 1 abstention, unrestricted	Azerbaijan 111, Slovenia 80
	Round 14: 192 votes, 1 abstention, restricted	Azerbaijan 110, Slovenia 81
	Round 15: 193 votes, restricted	Azerbaijan 117, Slovenia 76
	Round 16: 193 votes, restricted	Azerbaijan 116, Slovenia 77
	Round 17: 193 votes, 24 abstentions, unrestricted	**Azerbaijan** 155, Slovenia 13, Hungary 1
2012 UNGA67	2 ROUNDS	
27th 18-10-2012	Round 1: 193 votes, 8 abstentions	**Argentina** 182, **Rwanda** 148, **Australia** 140, Luxembourg 128, Republic of Korea 116, Finland 108, Cambodia 62, Bhutan 20, United Republic of Tanzania 3, Barbados 1, Cuba 1, Democratic Republic of the Congo 1
	Round 2: 192 votes, restricted	**Republic of Korea** 149, **Luxembourg** 131, Finland 62, Cambodia 43
2013 UNGA68	1 ROUND AND A SPECIAL ELECTION	
34th 17-10-2013	Round 1: 191 votes, 5 abstentions	**Lithuania** 187, **Chile** 186, **Nigeria** 186, **Chad** 184, **Saudi Arabia** 176 (declined), Senegal 2, The Gambia 2, Lebanon 1, Croatia 1
61st 6-12-2013	Round 1: 185 votes, 4 abstentions	**Jordan** 178, Saudi Arabia 1
2014 UNGA69	3 ROUNDS	
25th 16-10-2014	Round 1: 193 votes, 10 abstentions	**Angola** 190, **Malaysia** 187, **Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela** 181, **New Zealand** 145, Spain 131, Turkey 109, Democratic Republic of the Congo 1, Brazil 1
	Round 2: 193 votes, restricted	Spain 120, Turkey 73
	Round 3: 192 votes, 1 abstention, restricted	**Spain** 132, Turkey 60
2015 UNGA69	1 ROUND	
33rd 15-10-2015	Round 1: 192 votes, 14 abstentions	**Senegal** 187, **Uruguay** 185, **Japan** 184, **Egypt** 179, **Ukraine** 177

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