

Security Council Elections 2022



Jerry Matthews Matjila (left, behind nameplate), Permanent Representative of the Republic of South Africa, and other members of the South African delegation in the Assembly Hall after their country is elected to the Security Council. Photo Credits UN Photo/Manuel Elias

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Introduction: The 2022 Elections

On 9 June, the 76th session of the UN General Assembly is scheduled to hold elections for membership of the Security Council. The five seats available for election in 2022, according to the regular distribution among regions, will be as follows:

- one seat for the African Group (currently held by Kenya);
- one seat for the Asia-Pacific Group (currently held by India);
- one seat for the Latin American and Caribbean Group (GRULAC, currently held by Mexico); and

- two seats for the Western European and Others Group (WEOG, currently held by Ireland and Norway).

The Eastern European Group is not contesting any seats this year, as its one seat, held by Albania through 2023, comes up for election every other year. The five new members elected this year will take up their seats on 1 January 2023 and will serve until 31 December 2024.

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The 2022 Candidates

Five member states—Ecuador, Japan, Malta, Mozambique, and Switzerland—are currently running for the five available seats. Three out of the five candidates have served on the Council previously: Japan has served eleven times, Ecuador three times, and Malta once. Mozambique and Switzerland have never served on the Council.

The table below shows the number of seats available by region in the 2022 election, the declared candidates, and their prior terms on the Council.

REGION	SEATS AVAILABLE IN 2022	CANDIDATES AND PRIOR COUNCIL TERMS
Africa	1	Mozambique (never served)
Asia-Pacific ¹	1	Japan (1958-1959, 1966-1967, 1971-1972, 1975-1976, 1981-1982, 1987-1988, 1992-1993, 1997-1998, 2005-2006, 2009-2010, 2016-2017)
Latin America and Caribbean	1	Ecuador (1950-1951, 1960-1961, 1991-1992)
Western Europe and Others	2	Malta (1983-1984) Switzerland (never served)

Japan is one of only two elected members with ten or more previous terms (the other is Brazil, currently serving its eleventh Council term): upon taking its seat in 2023, Japan will take the record with twelve Council terms. Mozambique and Switzerland are among 62 UN member states—31.9 percent of the total membership—that have never been on the Council.

African Seat

Three non-permanent seats are always allocated to Africa. One seat comes up for election during every even calendar year, and two seats are contested during odd years. Although there have been exceptions, elections for these seats tend to be uncontested, as the African Group maintains an established pattern of rotation among its five sub-regions (North Africa, Southern Africa, East Africa, West Africa, and Central Africa), as described in greater detail below. This pattern has been interrupted on occasion, such as when Djibouti and Kenya (both from the East Africa sub-region) contested the single African seat in 2020. Last year, the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) entered the race very late but withdrew in favour of Gabon, which was the AU-endorsed candidate. Prior to 2020, the last contested election in the Africa Group was in 2011, when three candidates (Mauritania,

Morocco and Togo) ran for the two seats allotted to the group.

This year, Mozambique is running uncontested for the one seat available to the African Group. According to the rotation pattern in the African Group, the Southern Africa sub-region is expected to propose one candidate for the current elections, and that candidate is Mozambique. The selection and endorsement of candidatures for the African Group take place within the AU structures. At its 38th Ordinary Session in February

2021, the AU Executive Council endorsed the candidature of Mozambique [EX.CL/Dec.1107- 1125(XXXVIII)].

Mozambique

Mozambique became a member of the UN after it gained its independence in 1975. It is one of 62 UN members that have never been on the Council. Mozambique officially launched its candidature in September 2021 and has been endorsed by the Southern African Development Community (SADC), the Community of Portuguese Language Countries (CPLP) and the African Union.

During its campaign, Mozambique has highlighted its history in fighting against racial injustice, noting that it was a front-line state in the struggle against apartheid in South Africa. The situation in Mozambique was on the agenda of the Security Council in the 1990s, and the UN Operation in Mozambique (ONUMOZ) was deployed to monitor the peace agreement signed between the Mozambican National Resistance (RENAMO) and the Front for Liberation of Mozambique (FRELIMO) in 1992. Mozambique believes that its experience as a post-conflict state enhances its understanding of the Council's efforts to grapple with peace and security challenges.

While Mozambique does not currently have UN peacekeepers deployed in the field,

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it has been a troop-contributing country in the past. Its civilian and military personnel were deployed as part of UN peacekeeping operations in the Democratic Republic of Congo, Sudan, Abyei, East Timor, and Burundi. Mozambique is also a member of the Special Committee on Peacekeeping (C-34).

If elected to the Council, Mozambique is likely to focus on the fight against terrorism, a priority that reflects its own security concerns. In recent years, Mozambique has been dealing with the threat of terrorism in Cabo Delgado, the country's northern province. The SADC Mission in Mozambique (SAMIM) has been deployed since July 2021 as part of a regional response to the threat of terrorism. Rwanda has also deployed its forces, based on bilateral agreements with Mozambique, to assist in stabilising Cabo Delgado province.

Like other African members of the Council, Mozambique is expected to support enhanced cooperation between the UN and regional and sub-regional organisations. It could be guided by the decisions of SADC and the African Union in advancing positions on African issues in the Security Council.

Mozambique's other thematic priorities include small arms and light weapons; women, peace and security; children and armed conflict; human rights; and humanitarian action. It is also interested in exploring the links among culture, tourism, sports, and peace and security in advancing sustainable development. Mozambique also supports efforts to have the Security Council address non-traditional threats to peace and security, such as pandemics and climate change. The country has been increasingly vulnerable to climate-related risks, including droughts, floods and cyclones.

Asia-Pacific Seat

Two non-permanent seats are allocated to the Asia-Pacific Group, with one coming up for election every year (similar to the GRULAC seat). This year, Japan is running unopposed for the seat currently held by India. Although Mongolia had presented its candidature for this seat in 2014, it decided to withdraw its candidature in favour of Japan.

Japan

Japan became a member of the UN in 1956. Since then, the country has served on the Council eleven times (1958-1959, 1966-1967, 1971-1972, 1975-1976, 1981-1982, 1987-1988, 1992-1993, 1997-1998, 2005-2006, 2009-2010 and 2016-2017). It announced its candidacy for the 2023-2024 term in December 2017.

During its campaign, Japan has stressed the principle of human security in implementing the sustainable development goals. It has also emphasised the need for global solidarity in addressing current global challenges such as the COVID-19 pandemic and climate-related security threats.

As part of its campaign platform, it has reaffirmed its commitment to multilateralism and the rules-based international order. In this regard, it has underscored its respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms; its commitment to free trade and freedom of navigation in the maritime domain; and its support for the development of norms governing cyberspace and outer space.

Japan has embarked on and supported a number of initiatives related to international peace and security in recent years. It highlights its "New Approach for Peace and Stability in Africa", announced during the 7th Tokyo International Conference on

African Development (TICAD7) held in Yokohama in August 2019, to support conflict resolution efforts on the continent. Japan has also showcased its commitment to peace and stability through its Corridor for Peace and Prosperity initiative, proposed in 2006, to support Palestinian development to facilitate confidence-building measures between the parties in the Middle East Peace Process. And it has emphasised its contribution to strengthening the capacities of UN peacekeepers under the Triangular Partnership Program and its support to African peacekeeping training centres. Japan has also focused on combating terrorism and transnational crime, highlighting its role as the host of the 14th UN Congress on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice in 2021.

The issue of disarmament and non-proliferation is a major priority for Japan in light of the prevailing threat of nuclear conflict on the Korean peninsula. Other issues of particular importance to Japan include peacebuilding and sustaining peace, and women, peace and security. With regard to the latter, it has underscored the need to promote the meaningful participation of women in peace processes and expressed its intention to mainstream the women, peace and security agenda in all its approaches.

In addition to its interest in these agenda items, Japan has long been a strong proponent of enhancing the Council's working methods. When Japan chaired the Informal Working Group (IWG) on Documentation and Other Procedural Questions during its 2005-2006 Council tenure, it spearheaded the development of a presidential note that consolidated the Council's working methods (S/2006/507). During its 2009-2010 Council tenure, it further developed this presidential note with updated practices and newly agreed measures and facilitated the adoption of a revised note (S/2010/507).

During its Council term in 2016-2017, Japan facilitated the adoption of the most recent Note 507 (S/2017/507), which consolidated, streamlined and restructured the former Note 507 (S/2010/507) and all additional stand-alone presidential notes on working methods. The revised note includes a focus on several new elements, such as the monthly programme of work, informal consultations of the whole, the drafting of outcome documents, dialogue with non-Council members and bodies, and Security Council visiting missions. If elected to the Council, Japan could be interested in once again assuming the chairmanship of the IWG.

Japan is the third largest contributor to the UN regular budget and the peacekeeping budget, after the US and China, accounting for eight per cent of both budgets. Since 1992, more than 10,000 Japanese personnel have been deployed to various UN peacekeeping operations. As of March 2022, Japan has four staff officers deployed in the UN Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS).

The GRULAC Seat

Two non-permanent seats are allocated to Latin America and the Caribbean, with one coming up for election every year. Since 2007, candidates for the GRULAC seat have generally run unopposed. One exception was in the 2019 election, when Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, which was the GRULAC-endorsed candidate, won the seat with 185 votes, after El Salvador submitted its candidacy just days before the 7 June election and received only six votes.

In 2006, elections for the GRULAC seat on the Security Council for the 2007-2008 term were inconclusive after 47 rounds of voting over several weeks. With the General Assembly unable to decide

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between Guatemala and Venezuela, Panama agreed to stand and was elected in the 48th round as the compromise candidate. The process lasted from 16 October until 7 November. As a result of this experience, an informal understanding developed among GRULAC members to avoid contested elections, starting with the 2007 elections for the 2008-2009 term. Since then, Mexico (2008), Brazil (2009), Colombia (2010), Guatemala (2011), Argentina (2012), Chile (2013), Venezuela (2014), Uruguay (2015), Bolivia (2016), Peru (2017), and the Dominican Republic (2018) have all been sole candidates for the GRULAC seat on the Security Council, until the 2019 experience. This year, Ecuador is running unopposed for the seat currently held by Mexico.

Ecuador

Ecuador is a founding member of the UN. It has served in the Security Council three times (1950-1951, 1960-61 and 1991-1992). It presented its candidature in March 2011.

If elected, Ecuador has vowed to uphold its commitments to multilateralism and the principles of the UN Charter. It has expressed its continued support for the work of the UN across its three pillars—the maintenance of international peace and security, the promotion and protection of human rights, and sustainable development.

During its campaign, Ecuador has highlighted its role as one of the co-initiators of the joint statement by 172 UN member states in support of the Secretary-General's appeal for a global ceasefire, announced in March 2020 following the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic. Ecuador has expressed the desire as a Council member to follow up on the implementation of the Secretary-General's initiative as part of its commitment to the peaceful settlement of disputes.

Ecuador has been active on the issue of disarmament and non-proliferation. Given the challenges facing its region in relation to the illicit trafficking of small arms and light weapons, Ecuador appears to be keen to strengthen global efforts to address this scourge.

Ecuador has also identified as priorities several other thematic issues that have become a major focus of the Council's work during the past two decades, such as the protection of civilians, children and armed conflict, women, peace and security, and peacebuilding and sustaining peace.

In addition, Ecuador espouses Council efforts to address emerging threats such as pandemics and climate-related security risks. It is likely to take a keen interest in two country-specific issues on the agenda in its own region, Colombia and Haiti.

Ecuador has clearly defined positions on the Middle East Peace Process and regularly participates in the quarterly Security Council open debate on "The situation in the Middle East, including the Palestinian Question". Ecuador supports the two-state solution and is expected to maintain its position.

Ecuador is a strong proponent for improving the Council's working methods, as reflected by its membership in the Accountability, Coherence and Transparency (ACT) group. In particular, it appears keen to enhance the working relationship between the Security Council and the General Assembly.

As at March 2022, Ecuador has nine peacekeeping personnel deployed in four UN peacekeeping missions: MINURSO, UNISFA, UNMISS, and MINUSCA.

WEOG Seats

Two seats on the Council are allocated to the Western Europe and Others Group. These seats come up for election every even calendar year.

Malta

Malta became a UN member in 1964, shortly after it gained its independence from the United Kingdom, and has served once on the Security Council (1983-1984).

In its campaign, Malta has highlighted its neutrality and firm commitment to multilateralism. It has also given primacy to issues of conflict prevention, mediation and resolution. As a European country with a strong Mediterranean identity, Malta believes that it is well-placed to promote dialogue and understanding with Africa and the Middle East.

Malta has identified four key priorities for its membership of the Security Council: climate and security; children and armed conflict; women, peace and security; and literacy. In supporting Council engagement on climate and security, Malta would like to draw attention to the climate vulnerability of Small Island Developing States (SIDS) and the need to strengthen their resilience. In this regard, it would like to bring a spotlight to the challenge of sea level rise as a significant threat to SIDS.

Malta champions the issue of children and armed conflict, and has underscored its commitment to the protection of children affected by armed conflict in the discussions and decisions of the Security Council. It currently serves as a co-chair of the Group of Friends on the Reintegration of Child Soldiers and as a member of the Group of Friends of Children and Armed Conflict (CAAC).

Furthermore, Malta has underscored the importance of women's participation in peace processes, as well as in peacekeeping and peacebuilding efforts. If elected, Malta would like to advance the women, peace and security agenda, emphasising the need to address the increasing threats against women and girls and promote women's inclusion and leadership.

Malta has stressed the importance of addressing the root causes of conflict and strengthening the social fabric of societies. It has advanced a comprehensive approach to transitional justice and an accountable security sector as critical factors in consolidating peace and preventing countries from relapsing into conflict. Malta has also emphasised the role of education, particularly digital literacy, in fighting disinformation and as a means of countering radicalisation and violent extremism.

In addition to these thematic issues, Malta might have a particular interest in country- and region-specific situations, such as Ukraine, Libya, the Sahel, the Middle East Peace Process, Lebanon, Syria, and Yemen.

As at March 2022, Malta has nine peacekeepers deployed in the UN Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL).

Switzerland

Switzerland became a full UN member state in 2002 after being involved in the UN's work since the organisation's founding. It is home to the UN's second headquarters in Geneva, where several UN agencies and other international organisations are located. This is the first time Switzerland has run for a Council seat.

In its campaign, Switzerland has emphasised its role as a

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longstanding champion of international humanitarian law, notably with the founding of the International Committee of the Red Cross in Geneva in 1863. It has underscored the significance of respect for international law as the cornerstone of multilateralism and a guarantor of peace.

Furthermore, Switzerland has advocated respect for human rights and the protection of civilians. In this regard, it has indicated its strong support for the work of the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights and the UN Human Rights Council in Geneva. Switzerland is interested in highlighting the linkages between New York and Geneva across relevant issues and discussions in the Council. It has also referred to its role as chair of the Group of Friends of the Protection of Civilians in New York and as co-chair of the Human Rights and Conflict Prevention Caucus in New York and Geneva. If elected to the Council, it will assume its first presidency of the Council in May 2023, the month when the annual debate on the protection of civilians takes place.

In addition to the protection of civilians, Switzerland is supportive of Council engagement on various other thematic agenda items, such as conflict prevention and mediation, peacekeeping, peacebuilding and sustaining peace, disarmament, and non-proliferation. It has particularly stressed its longstanding tradition of peace promotion by providing good offices to parties to a conflict in the search for finding a negotiated solution. Switzerland is engaged in some 20 peace processes around the world, facilitating

and supporting peace agreements between parties.

Switzerland also stresses its role as chair of the Burundi configuration of the UN Peacebuilding Commission and its important contribution as one of the top ten financiers of the Peacebuilding Fund. It has expressed its desire to advance a holistic approach to peacebuilding and strengthen the cooperation between the Security Council and the Peacebuilding Commission.

Furthermore, Switzerland has promoted its active engagement in multilateral discussions on disarmament and non-proliferation indicating its membership on the Board of Governors of the International Atomic Energy Agency. It is expected to assume chairmanship of the Missile Technology Control Regime in 2022–23.

Aside from these thematic issues, Switzerland is also keen on emerging issues such as climate security. This year, Switzerland co-chairs, together with South Africa, the Women, Peace and Security Focal Points Network. It might be interested in chairing the Informal Expert Group on Women, Peace and Security. As coordinator of the cross-regional ACT group in New York, Switzerland has also vowed to enhance the transparency and effectiveness of the Security Council by improving its working methods.

As at March 2022, Switzerland has 35 civilian and military personnel deployed in six UN peacekeeping missions—MINURSO, MINUSMA, MONUSCO, UNMISS, UNMOGIP, and UNTSO. A Swiss officer, Major General Patrick Gauchat, heads UNTSO, one of the oldest UN peacekeeping missions.

Potential Council Dynamics in 2023

Council dynamics have become more difficult following the Russian invasion of Ukraine in February. The Ukrainian crisis is expected to dominate discussion in the Council for the foreseeable future. Council engagement on Ukraine has followed several tracks, with a focus on the political, humanitarian and other dimensions of the conflict, such as issues of nuclear, biological and chemical weapons. It remains to be seen whether this trend will continue with the emergence of additional tracks, including on accountability, and the extent to which developments in respect of Ukraine will influence the Council's ability to act in unison on other agenda items.

Council members remain broadly supportive of the fundamental value of UN peace operations. While the large majority of resolutions mandating these operations continue to be adopted unanimously, there are often disagreements about some aspects during negotiations, such as language on human rights, women, peace and security, and climate change. The incoming members are likely to support the integration of these thematic issues into the mandates of peace operations, perhaps generating disagreements with members such as China and Russia, which have a more traditional view of the UN Charter and the meaning of international peace and security.

With a number of UN peacekeeping missions in the process of drawdown, reconfiguration and exit, there is a growing focus on peace operations transitions. The discussion on this issue will be further informed by the upcoming report of the Secretary-General pursuant to resolution 2594 of 9 September 2021.

With Mozambique joining Gabon and Ghana on the Council, the

three African members (A3) are likely to work closely in coordinating their positions and advancing the common African position on regional and thematic items on the Security Council's agenda. In 2021, the A3 (Kenya, Niger and Tunisia) delivered 53 joint statements on the African region and on thematic agenda items such as UN peacekeeping operations and children and armed conflict. The A3 are also expected to coordinate their positions on working methods and present joint commitments in this regard.

Tensions over the scope of the Council's mandate can be expected to remain in 2023. For example, several members believe that climate change and security is within the Council's mandate of maintaining international peace and security; most candidate countries have explicitly highlighted climate change and security as one of their Council priorities. While they will find support from several members in the Council, they will encounter resistance from others: China, Russia and Brazil have long had reservations about the Council's work on this issue. In December 2021, a draft resolution on climate and security failed to be adopted because of a veto by Russia. It received 12 votes in favor, two against (India and Russia) and one abstention (China).

The Council's efforts to fight terrorism and violent extremism is likely to remain important in 2023, as this issue features in the campaign platform of some candidate countries. For instance, Mozambique is keen to forestall the expansion of terrorism in its northern province, while Malta has also indicated an interest in this issue, underscoring the role of education in fighting violent extremism.

Potential Council Dynamics in 2023

Several candidate countries have highlighted human rights issues, the protection of civilians, and children and armed conflict in their campaigns. Switzerland wants to draw attention to the linkages between the work of the UN in New York and Geneva on these thematic issues. Malta, in particular, considers children and armed conflict as a key priority. Ecuador is also interested in the CAAC agenda and would like to spotlight this issue in the context of the 75th anniversary of the Geneva Conventions in 2024.

Disarmament and non-proliferation will continue to attract attention in 2023 with three of the candidate countries—Ecuador, Japan and Switzerland—identifying the issue as a priority. Each of these candidate countries might be interested in assuming the chairmanship of the 1540 non-proliferation committee.

Small arms and light weapons continue to be raised in country-specific discussions and negotiations in the Council. This trend is likely to continue in 2023 with Ecuador and Mozambique identifying the issue of small arms and light weapons as a priority.

The advancement of the women, peace and security agenda is likely to continue in 2023. All candidate countries have emphasised this as a priority of their Council tenures. In 2023, there will be a new chair of the Informal Experts Group (IEG) on Women, Peace and Security as Ireland and Mexico, which co-chaired the IEG for the last two years, finish their Council terms in December. Candidate countries are also expected to join the WPS commitment, which started with the “trio” initiative of Ireland, Kenya and Mexico. Among the permanent members, the UK, France and the US can be expected to remain strong proponents of this issue. Other member states, such as China and Russia, will probably continue to maintain that this agenda item should not be expanded to post-conflict situations and to emphasise that the issue of gender equality should not be within the Council’s purview.

The COVID-19 pandemic affected the Council’s work from March 2020, leaving members unable to meet in person to negotiate texts and discuss difficult issues, or to travel to the field, for a protracted period. Since June 2021, the Security Council has been back in the Security Council Chamber and holds in-person meetings as the COVID situation continues broadly to improve. The Security Council also conducted a visiting mission to the Sahel in October

2021 for the first time since the start of the pandemic. In 2023, there is a possibility for the Council to conduct more visiting missions.

Throughout the COVID pandemic, several Council members have held signature events during their presidencies focusing on the crisis, and the Council has adopted two resolutions (S/RES/2532 and S/RES/2565) and one presidential statement (S/PRST/2021/10) to address its effects. Some candidate countries are interested in pandemics as an emerging challenge, and Ecuador, in particular, would like to keep the momentum on the Secretary-General’s initiative on the global ceasefire.

While two members of the Accountability, Coherence and Transparency (ACT) group—Ireland and Norway—leave the Security Council at the end of 2022, two other members—Ecuador and Switzerland—will replace them in 2023. The other ACT group members currently serving in the Security Council are Gabon and Ghana. These members might be keen to push for improving the Security Council’s working methods based on proposals advocated by the ACT group.

Elected members continue to seek active roles in the Council, including as penholders, the informal designation of a drafting and convening lead often taken by one of the P3 (France, the United Kingdom and the United States). Co-penholding by an elected member and one of the P3 had been non-existent until 2019 when Germany succeeded in obtaining a shared pen with the UK on Sudan. Recently, more elected members have succeeded in holding the pen together with a permanent member: Albania with the US on Ukraine, Mexico with the US on Haiti, and Mexico with France on Ukraine (humanitarian). Ireland holds the pen on Ethiopia and seeks to work closely with African members. Elected members usually hold the pen on Syria (humanitarian) and some candidate countries may seek this role. Elected members also hold the pen on Afghanistan, and Japan might be interested in replacing Norway next year based on its experience as penholder on Afghanistan during its previous tenure in the Council in 2016-2017. Malta could be interested to co-penhold with France on Operation IRINI, the EU naval force deployed in the Mediterranean to enforce the UN arms embargo on Libya.

The Election Process

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. A Council candidate country must always obtain the votes of two-thirds of the member states voting at the General Assembly session. This means that at least 129 votes are required to win a seat if all 193 UN member states vote. Member states that abstain are considered not voting. Under Article 19 of the UN Charter, a member state can be excluded from voting as a result of arrears in payment of financial contributions. At press time, Venezuela is not permitted to vote in the General Assembly because of its arrears.

Member states vote for five candidates representing the various regional groups in each round of voting. In theory, it is possible that

a country running unopposed might not garner the required number of votes of those present in the General Assembly in the first round of voting. Such a country may then be challenged in subsequent rounds by hitherto undeclared candidates and could ultimately fail to obtain a seat. However, this has never happened.

In a contested election, if no candidate obtains sufficient votes to be elected in the first round, voting in the next round would be restricted. In this restricted ballot, the number of candidates is limited to twice the number of seats available, and the candidates are those that received the highest number of votes in the first round. For example, if one seat is available, only two countries can contest this round—the two that received the most votes in the first round. Any votes for other candidates during this restricted voting round

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are considered void. This restricted voting process can continue for up to three rounds of voting.

If no candidate has then garnered the required 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 majority.

Historically, there have been several 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, when it led to several agreements to split terms, such as the 1961-1962 term, split between Liberia and Ireland. Since 1966, such situations have been resolved by the withdrawal of one of the contenders or the election of a compromise candidate, with the sole exception being the 2016 agreement between Italy and the Netherlands to split the 2017-2018 term. A summary of the recent voting in General Assembly elections for non-permanent seats on the Security Council is contained in Annex 3 of this report.

Regional Groups and Established Practices

For purposes of election to the Security Council, the regional groups have been governed by a formula set out in General Assembly resolution 1991 A (XVIII), which was adopted in 1963 and took effect in 1966. The main feature of the resolution was to amend the UN Charter to increase the number of Council members from 11 to 15. Under this resolution, the seats previously assigned to the African and Asia-Pacific states were combined. In reality, however, the determination of candidates for election to the African and Asia-Pacific seats operates separately, and this report reflects that customary practice.

Article 23 of the Charter, which establishes the number of Council members, also specifies the criteria that the members of the General Assembly are to 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, and also to equitable geographical distribution”.

The Charter does not define equitable geographical distribution, stipulate how it should be achieved, or suggest the composition of appropriate geographical groups. However, the principle of equitable

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

geographical distribution gave rise to the establishment of regional electoral groups as a vehicle for achieving that goal. The regional groups, as they now operate, are as follows:

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. In May 2000, Israel became a WEOG member, initially on a temporary basis, and permanently in 2004. This enables it to put forward candidates for election by the General Assembly to various UN bodies.

African Group

Most of the groups have internal selection processes based on informal understandings. The African Group's process is more formal: it has adopted the rules of procedure of the AU's Ministerial Committee on Candidatures within the International System to endorse candidates to occupy the three African seats on the Council. Subregional groups within the African Group tend to follow a rotation system, though there have been some departures from this scheme. Theoretically, under this system, every country in Africa should eventually get a turn as a candidate for a Council seat.

The process of selecting a candidate in the African Group usually follows a defined path in accordance with the AU rules of procedure cited above. First, the subregional groups select the potential candidate countries and forward their names to the African Group for endorsement. The African Group submits all candidate countries' names to the Committee on Candidatures of the African Group in New York: at this stage, subregional organisations may add their endorsement before the list goes to the AU Ministerial Committee on Candidatures. This committee follows its written rules of procedure in selecting candidates.

Today, every member of the African Group is a member of the AU. Until 2017, Morocco was an exception as a member of the African Group but not of the AU. (It had been a founding member of the Organisation of African Unity [OAU], the AU's precursor, but withdrew from the OAU in 1984 after the organisation admitted the Sahrawi Arab Democratic Republic. It joined the AU in 2017.) The AU Executive Council makes the final decision on which members to endorse during an AU summit meeting. Despite the written rules of procedure for candidate selection, some countries have in the past submitted their candidature directly to the AU Ministerial Committee on Candidatures, bypassing the process in New York.

The African rotation generally follows a systematic cycle based on the following principles:

- Northern Africa and Central Africa rotate running for one seat every odd calendar year;
- Western Africa runs for one seat every odd calendar year; and
- Eastern Africa and Southern Africa rotate running for one seat every even calendar year.

Broad adherence to this system has meant that African candidates generally run on “blank slates”, or uncontested. This is not always the case, however. The 2011 election saw three candidates (Mauritania, Morocco and Togo) run for two seats, as Mauritania

Regional Groups and Established Practices

had decided to contest Morocco's candidature for the Northern Africa/Arab swing seat 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. When Sudan was the endorsed candidate in 2000, Mauritius contested the seat and won election to the Council. In 2020, Djibouti contested the seat allocated to the East Africa region but lost to Kenya, which was the endorsed candidate.

In addition to rival candidates emerging within a given subregional grouping, there have been times when countries that can claim to straddle more than one geographic region have shifted from one subgroup to another.

A factor that seems to be coming into play is the growing desire by some member states in the region to be elected more regularly than the—admittedly informal—rotation system would allow. Nigeria was elected for the 2014–2015 term after having been a Council member in 2010–2011. South Africa was on the Council in 2007–2008, in 2011–2012, and most recently for the 2019–2020 term. By declaring their candidacies ahead of their turn, these countries need to either persuade other candidates to withdraw or face a contested election.

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 known as the Asia-Pacific Group. The name change reflects the fact that more than a quarter of the group's members are island countries in the Pacific.

The Asia-Pacific Group has no formally established practices of rotation to fill the two seats, one of which becomes available every year. While it has 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 contested the same seat, and eight rounds of voting were needed before Pakistan prevailed.

Since 1958, Japan has also been a regular presence on the Council. When it completed its last term at the end of 2017, Japan had accumulated 22 years on the Council, the most of any non-permanent member. Since 1966, it has never been off the Council for more than six consecutive years.

The absence of a formal rotation system has meant that countries frequently compete for the Asia-Pacific seat regardless of when they have announced their candidacy. While larger member states have tended to declare their candidacy closer to the election year, smaller candidate countries from the region have often 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 (ASEAN), comprised 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 greater detail in Annex 2, General

Assembly resolution 1991 A (XVIII) provided five seats for "Asia and Africa", and, in practice, the seats have 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, to reserve one seat 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 always occupied a seat on the Council since 1968.

Eastern European Group

The Eastern European Group is the smallest regional group, consisting of 23 member states, with an election for one seat every odd calendar year. This is also the group that has expanded the most in recent decades, with 15 new members added since 1991 because of the dissolution of the Soviet Union and the splitting of both Czechoslovakia and Yugoslavia. Today, 11 of its countries are EU members, and four—Albania, the Republic of North Macedonia, Montenegro, and Serbia—are formal candidates for EU membership. Bosnia and Herzegovina, which applied for membership in 2016, is considered a "potential candidate", while Ukraine, Georgia and Moldova have applied for EU membership in 2022. An 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. The seat also became hotly contested among new member states that lacked a clear regional grouping. (For example, in 1955, when there was no Asian seat, the Philippines competed for a seat with members of the Eastern European Group. When voting remained deadlocked between Yugoslavia and the Philippines after 36 rounds, the two countries agreed to accept a split term: Yugoslavia served on the Council in 1956 and the Philippines in 1957.)

Latin American and Caribbean Group

After the expansion of the Council and the reorganisation of the regional groups that occurred as a result of General Assembly resolution 1991 A (XVIII), the Latin American Group incorporated the Caribbean states, several of which were members of the British Commonwealth, and became the Group of Latin American and Caribbean States (GRULAC). It currently has 33 members.

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. The 1979 contest between Colombia and Cuba went to 154 rounds before Mexico was elected as a compromise candidate in the 155th round, a process that lasted from 26 October 1979 until 7 January 1980. As noted above, elections for the GRULAC seat on the Security Council in 2006 were inconclusive after 47 rounds of voting over several weeks beginning on 16 October. With the General Assembly unable to decide between Guatemala and Venezuela, Panama agreed to stand and was elected in the 48th round on 7 November as a compromise

Regional Groups and Established Practices

candidate. This experience led to an informal understanding among GRULAC members to avoid contested elections, starting with the 2007 elections for the 2008-2009 term.

Brazil has served the highest number of terms among GRULAC members, with a total of 22 years on the Council by the end of its current membership.

Western European and Others Group

With 28 members, WEOG is the second smallest regional group, 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”, but its members share broadly similar political values and levels of economic development. 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 either the Asian or African group or GRULAC. Australia, Canada and New Zealand became the “others” in WEOG. Israel is the other non-European

state that participates in WEOG. With France and the UK as members and the US attending meetings as an observer, WEOG includes three of the five permanent members of the Council. (The Holy See is an observer in WEOG.)

This year’s single WEOG candidate is unusual, as the region practices what might be called an open-market approach to elections, which produces a pattern of regularly contested candidatures that may remain highly competitive in the coming years.

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

In its first term on the Council (1951-1952), Turkey served as the Middle Eastern Council member. It occupied the Eastern European seat twice (1954-1955 and 1961) and has since run for the WEOG seat. Turkey participates fully in both the WEOG and Asian Group but, for electoral purposes, is considered a member of WEOG only.

The 2017-2018 Split Term

Article 23(2) of the UN Charter states that the non-permanent members of the Security Council shall be elected for a term of two years. Split terms started to appear in the late 1950s because of disagreements regarding regional rotation and associated Cold War politics and to accommodate the aspirations of newly independent countries. Two candidates would occasionally agree to split a term following multiple rounds of inconclusive voting. The member that was elected first would relinquish its term after one year on the Council, thus enabling the holding of a by-election to fill the vacant seat.

By-elections are in line with Rule 140 of the Rules of Procedure of the General Assembly, which states: “Should a member cease to belong to a Council before its term of office expires, a by-election shall be held separately at the next session of the General Assembly to elect a member for the unexpired term”.

As discussed earlier, until the unusual 2016 election, the practice of splitting terms ended in the mid-1960s, when the non-permanent membership of the Council was enlarged from six to ten and regional representation was introduced.¹

In the 2016 elections, three candidates—Italy, the Netherlands and Sweden—ran for the two available WEOG seats. During the first round of voting, on 28 June, Sweden received more than the necessary two-thirds majority of votes to be elected (134). Thus, Italy and the Netherlands contested the second seat. After five inconclusive rounds of balloting, they were deadlocked at 95 votes each, well short of the 128 votes needed to win. The two countries then

announced they had agreed to split the two-year term, whereupon the meeting was suspended; this was formalised on 29 June 2016 by a letter from the WEOG chair to the president of the General Assembly (A/70/964). The letter indicated that the Netherlands had withdrawn its candidacy in favour of Italy, which WEOG endorsed as the group’s only candidate. In a stand-alone vote on 30 June 2016, Italy was elected. The Netherlands then ran as the sole and endorsed WEOG candidate in a by-election held on 2 June 2017, the same day as the regular elections for non-permanent members of the Council for the 2018-2019 term, and Italy relinquished its seat on 31 December 2017.

Russia and Egypt, a non-permanent member during the 2016-2017 term, outlined their concerns about the arrangement between Italy and the Netherlands in letters to the president of the General Assembly (A/70/971 and A/70/974). Both said they viewed the agreement to split the term as an exceptional case that should not set a precedent. They argued that a practice of split terms would have a negative impact on the functionality and efficiency of the Security Council in its responsibility for maintaining international peace and security. Russia noted that the last time a decision had been taken on splitting a term had been more than 50 years earlier, following which the Council’s workload had greatly increased, and said it was “gravely disappointed by the inability of the Western European and other States to designate a candidate by consensus, which has led to the current stalemate”.

¹ For further background, see “Security Council Elections: Italy and the Netherlands Agree to a Split Term”, What’s in Blue, 29 June 2016: <https://www.securitycouncilreport.org/whatsinblue/2016/06/security-council-elections-italy-and-the-netherlands-agree-to-a-split-term.php>

Becoming a Candidate

The path most candidate countries follow in announcing and pursuing their bids for the Council usually begins by informing members of their regional (or subregional) group of the intention to run and seeking its support. The group's endorsement then becomes an important factor in the next step. (The more complex process within the African Group is described above.)

A candidate country then formalises its intention to seek a Council seat by notifying 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. Most candidate countries then prepare a circular note to all missions in New York informing them of the candidacy. Most 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, the chair of the regional group will inform the president of the General Assembly whether elections will be contested or not. This allows the Secretariat to prepare documentation for the election process.

Campaigning for the Council

Candidates seek voting pledges from member states, often years in advance of the election, and may continue to do so up until the vote. Campaigning for the Council can involve 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 and whether the candidacy is contested. (Candidates predictably tend to spend less in unopposed elections.) In the last two years, due to COVID-19, the candidates had to move most of their election-related events to a virtual platform.

Commitments are sought in writing, orally, or both. Votes are cast by secret ballot, making it impossible to determine whether member states have kept their promises. There are several reasons why pledges may be broken. A high-level official in the capital may pledge the country's vote to a particular candidate but fail to convey the commitment to the permanent mission to the UN in New York, where the votes are cast. Or, if there is a change in government, the new government may not consider itself bound by the pledges of a previous administration. Given the secrecy of the ballot, there are incentives to pledge support to all candidates in a competitive election. Knowing that commitments are not always secure, some candidate countries persistently cultivate those countries that have already promised to vote for them, seeking reassurance that they have not changed their minds. Candidates often seek pledges from member states at many levels of government.

As candidate countries generally focus their campaigns on influencing the voting decisions of diplomats in member state capitals and at UN headquarters, their foreign minister and permanent representative to the UN in New York play significant roles in the campaign process. Additionally, particularly in contested elections, many candidates employ special envoys, usually former senior government officials or diplomats, who travel to capitals seeking voting pledges from high-level officials. Depending on their campaign strategies and resources, candidate countries may use multiple envoys, often focusing their efforts on regions where they lack strong diplomatic representation.

To secure voting commitments from member states, candidate

countries may volunteer, or be asked for, inducements. For example, a candidate may offer development assistance to a member state in seeking 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. Arranging trips to the candidate's capital or holding workshops on (uncontroversial) issues of interest in attractive locations have been used by several candidates in recent years to raise the profile of their campaign and attract permanent representatives, who will cast the actual vote, to these events. So-called "swag bags" filled with items imprinted with the candidate's logo may be distributed within UN circles to increase campaign visibility. Until recently, permanent representatives were customarily offered gifts on election day by most candidates, even those running unopposed. On 8 September 2017, however, the General Assembly adopted resolution 71/323 on the revitalisation of the work of the General Assembly, which decided that "on the day of election...the campaign materials distributed in the General Assembly Hall...shall be limited to a single page of information regarding the candidates, with a view to preserving the decorum of the Assembly". The following year, on 17 September 2018, resolution 72/313 welcomed the "efficient implementation" of this provision and decided "to continue to consider, within the Ad Hoc Working Group [on the Revitalization of the Work of the General Assembly], the potential concept and scope of guidelines on how to conduct the election campaigns by Member States, with a view to improving the standards of transparency and equity".

As contested elections may continue for several rounds, candidates try to ensure that member states that voted for them in the first round continue to do so while also attempting to secure support from uncommitted members. Some member states have said when they commit their vote to a candidate, they do so for the duration of the electoral process, regardless of the number of rounds. In protracted elections that come down to two candidates vying for a single seat, however, member states will often eventually shift their vote if it appears that their candidate of choice is losing ground and seems unlikely to prevail.

UN DOCUMENTS ON SECURITY COUNCIL ELECTIONS

Security Council Documents

[S/2018/1024](#) (13 November 2018) was a letter to the president of the Security Council from the elected ten and incoming five members advocating a more equal distribution of work among all members.

[S/2017/507](#) (30 August 2017) was the updated compendium of Security Council working methods.

[S/2016/619](#) (15 July 2016) was a note by the Council president concerning transitional arrangements for newly elected Council members, which among other matters called on Council members to agree provisionally on the appointment of chairs of subsidiary bodies by 1 October.

General Assembly Documents

[A/75/PV.78](#) (11 June 2021) was the record of the 2021 election of five non-permanent members.

[A/RES/72/313](#) (17 September 2018) was on the revitalisation of the work of the General Assembly and welcomed the “efficient implementation” of this provision and decided “to continue to consider, within the Ad Hoc Working Group [on the Revitalization of the Work of the General Assembly], the potential concept and scope of guidelines on how to conduct the election campaigns by Member States, with a view to improving the standards of transparency and equity”.

[A/72/PV.93](#) (8 June 2018) was the record of the 2018 election of five non-permanent members.

[A/RES/71/323](#) (8 September 2017) was on the revitalisation of the work of the General Assembly and decided that “on the day of election...the campaign materials distributed in the General Assembly Hall...shall be limited to a single page of information regarding the candidates, with a view to preserving the decorum of the Assembly”.

[A/71/PV.86](#) (2 June 2017) was the record of the 2017 election of five non-permanent members.

[A/70/PV.108](#) (30 June 2016) was the record of the 2016 elections for the remaining non-permanent member from WEOG.

[A/70/974](#) (30 June 2016) was a letter from Egypt expressing its understanding that the agreement between Italy and the Netherlands to split the 2017-2018 term would not lay the ground for future practice and would have no legal or procedural implications on future elections to the Security Council.

[A/70/971](#) (30 June 2016) was a letter from Russia expressing the position that

the exceptional case of the agreement between Italy and the Netherlands to split the 2017-2018 term would not set a precedent, arguing that this practice would have a negative impact on the Security Council's efficiency.

[A/70/964](#) (29 June 2016) was a letter from the chair of WEOG saying that Italy and the Netherlands had agreed to split the term, with Italy serving in 2017 and the Netherlands in 2018, requiring a by-election for the remainder of the term.

[A/70/PV.107](#) (28 June 2016) was the record of the 2016 elections of the non-permanent members for the remaining candidates from WEOG when Italy and the Netherlands announced that they would split the term.

[A/70/PV.106](#) (28 June 2016) was the record of the 2016 elections of four non-permanent members.

[A/70/PV.33](#) (15 October 2015) was the record of the 2015 elections of non-permanent members.

[A/69/PV.25](#) (16 October 2014) was the record of the 2014 elections of non-permanent members.

[A/RES/68/307](#) (18 September 2014) decided that elections of the non-permanent members of the Security Council would take place about six months before the elected members assumed 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 I, 14th Plenary Session and Part II](#) (12 January 1946) was the first election of non-permanent members.

Other

[Charter of the United Nations](#), <http://www.un.org/en/charter-united-nations/>

[A/520/Rev.15 and amendments 1 and 2](#) are the Rules of Procedure of the General Assembly, including amendments and additions.

[Repertory of Practice of the United Nations Organs](#), Supplement no. 6, Volume III on Article 23 (1979-1984).

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.)

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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...

Article 23(2) 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 establish the required rotational cycle or to break electoral deadlocks.

Article 23(2) 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 says that a retiring member of the Council is not eligible for immediate re-election.

In addition to the provisions cited above, the Charter specifies the criteria that the members of the General Assembly shall 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.

“Contribution 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. “Contribution 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

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

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 applying only 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 1946-1947 period, split terms started to occur in the late 1950s until the Council was enlarged in 1966. This was driven in part by fallout 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. Over the next few years, this became a 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 resolved 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 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 outvoted by non-permanent members, although only on procedural questions, which are not subject to vetoes by permanent members, and when the permanent members choose not to cast a veto.

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.

2008 UNGA63 28th 17-10-08	1 ROUND Round 1: 192 votes, 6 abstentions	Mexico 185, Uganda 181, Japan 158, Turkey 151, Austria 133, Iceland 87, Iran (Islamic Republic of) 32, Madagascar 2, Australia 1, Brazil 1
2009 UNGA64 20th 15-10-09	1 ROUND Round 1: 190 votes, 7 abstentions	Nigeria 186, Gabon 184, Bosnia and Herzegovina 183, Brazil 182, Lebanon 180, Iran (Islamic Republic of) 1, Liberia 1, Sierra Leone 1, Togo 1, Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of) 1
2010 UNGA65 28th 12-10-10	3 ROUNDS Round 1: 191 votes, 5 abstentions Round 2: 191 votes, restricted Round 3: 184 votes, 2 abstentions, restricted	India 187, Colombia 186, South Africa 182, Germany 128, Portugal 122, Canada 114, Pakistan 1, Swaziland 1 Portugal 113, Canada 78 Portugal 150, Canada 32
2011 UNGA66 37th 21-10-2011 38th 21-10-11 39th 24-10-11 40th 24-10-11	17 ROUNDS Round 1: 193 votes, 2 abstentions Round 2: 193 votes, 2 abstentions, restricted Round 3: 193 votes, 1 abstention, restricted Round 4: 192 votes, 1 abstention, restricted Round 5: 193 votes, 1 abstention, unrestricted Round 6: 193 votes, 1 abstention, unrestricted Round 7: 193 votes, 1 abstention, unrestricted Round 8: 191 votes, 1 abstention, restricted Round 9: 191 votes, 1 abstention, restricted Round 10: 193 votes, restricted Round 11: 193 votes, 1 abstention, unrestricted Round 12: 193 votes, 1 abstention, unrestricted Round 13: 192 votes, 1 abstention, unrestricted Round 14: 192 votes, 1 abstention, restricted Round 15: 193 votes, restricted Round 16: 193 votes, restricted Round 17: 193 votes, 24 abstentions, unrestricted	Guatemala 191, Morocco 151, Pakistan 129, Togo 119, Mauritania 98, Azerbaijan 74, Slovenia 67, Kyrgyzstan 55, Hungary 52, Fiji 1 Togo 119, Slovenia 97, Azerbaijan 90, Mauritania 72 Togo 131, Slovenia 99, Azerbaijan 93, Mauritania 61 Slovenia 98, Azerbaijan 93 Azerbaijan 98, Slovenia 93, Hungary 1 Azerbaijan 96, Slovenia 95, Estonia 1 Azerbaijan 100, Slovenia 91, Estonia 1 Azerbaijan 110, Slovenia 80 Azerbaijan 113, Slovenia 77 Azerbaijan 110, Slovenia 83 Azerbaijan 110, Slovenia 82 Azerbaijan 111, Slovenia 81 Azerbaijan 111, Slovenia 80 Azerbaijan 110, Slovenia 81 Azerbaijan 117, Slovenia 76 Azerbaijan 116, Slovenia 77 Azerbaijan 155, Slovenia 13, Hungary 1

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

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
2016 UNGA70	6 ROUNDS	
106th 28-06-2016	Round 1: 191 votes, 8 abstentions	Ethiopia 185, Bolivia 183, Sweden 134, Netherlands 125, Kazakhstan 113, Italy 113, Thailand 77, Colombia 1, Cuba 1, Belgium 1
	Round 2: 193 votes, 2 abstentions, restricted	Kazakhstan 178, Netherlands 99, Italy 92, Thailand 55
	Round 3: 190 votes, 3 abstentions, restricted	Netherlands 96, Italy 94
107th 28-06-16	Round 4: 191 votes, 2 abstentions, restricted	Netherlands 96, Italy 95
	Round 5: 190 votes, 2 abstentions, unrestricted	Netherlands 95, Italy 95
108th 30-06-16	Round 6: 184 votes, 6 abstentions, unrestricted	Italy 179, Netherlands 4, San Marino 1
2017 UNGA71	1 ROUND	
86th 02-06-2017	Round 1: 192 votes, 5 abstentions	Poland 190, Côte d'Ivoire 189, Kuwait 188, Peru 186, Equatorial Guinea 185, Netherlands 184, Argentina 1, Guinea 1, Morocco 1
2018 UNGA72	1 ROUND	
93rd 08-06-2018	Round 1: 190 votes, 8 abstentions	Dominican Republic 184, Germany 184, South Africa 183, Belgium 181, Indonesia 144, Maldives 46
2019 UNGA73	2 ROUNDS	
89th 07-06-2019	Round 1: 193 votes, 4 abstentions	Viet Nam 192; Niger 191; Tunisia 191; Estonia 111; Romania 78; Saint Vincent and the Grenadines 185; El Salvador 6; Georgia 1; Latvia 1
	Round 2: 193 votes, 2 abstentions, restricted	Estonia 132; Romania 58
2020 UNGA 74	2 ROUNDS	
17-06 2020*	Round 1: 192 votes, 0 abstentions	Djibouti 78; India 184; Ireland 128; Kenya 113; Mexico 187; Norway 130
18-06-2020*	Round 2: 191 votes, 0 abstentions	Kenya 129; Djibouti 62
2021 UNGA 75	1 ROUND	
78th 11-06-2021	Round 1: 190 votes, 14 abstentions	Ghana 185; Gabon 183; Brazil 181; United Arab Emirates 179; Albania 175; Democratic Republic of the Congo 3; Islamic Republic of Iran 1; Peru 1

*General Assembly decided "to hold the election of non-permanent members of the Security Council in June 2020, simultaneously, without holding a plenary meeting of the General Assembly" A/74/L.67

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