

# Security Council Elections 2023



Election of new non-permanent members of the Security Council (2016)  
UN Photo/Loey Felipe

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## Introduction: The 2023 Elections

On 6 June, the 77th session of the UN General Assembly is scheduled to hold elections for membership of the Security Council. The five seats available for election in 2023, according to the regular distribution among regions, will be as follows:

- two seats for the African Group (currently held by Gabon and Ghana);
- one seat for the Group of Asia and the Pacific Small Island Developing States (Asia-Pacific Group) (currently held by the United Arab Emirates);
- one seat for the Latin American and Caribbean

Group (GRULAC, currently held by Brazil); and

- one seat for the Eastern European Group (currently held by Albania).

The Western European and Others Group (WEOG) is not contesting any seats this year, as its two seats, held by Malta and Switzerland through 2024, come up for election every other year. The five new members elected this year will take up their seats on 1 January 2024 and will serve until 31 December 2025.

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## The 2023 Candidates

Six member states—Algeria, Belarus, Guyana, the Republic of Korea (ROK), Sierra Leone, and Slovenia—are currently running for the five available seats. All six candidates have served on the Council previously: Algeria three times, Guyana and the Republic of Korea twice, and Belarus, Sierra Leone and

Slovenia once. Only the Eastern European Group has a contested election this year.

The table below shows the number of seats available by region in the 2023 election, the declared candidate(s), and their prior terms on the Council.

REGION	SEATS AVAILABLE IN 2023	CANDIDATES AND PRIOR COUNCIL TERMS
Africa	2	Algeria (1968-1969, 1988-1989, 2004-2005) and Sierra Leone (1970-1971)
Asia-Pacific	1	Republic of Korea (1996-1997, 2013-2014)
Latin America and Caribbean	1	Guyana (1975-1976, 1982-1983)
Eastern Europe	1	Belarus (1974-1975, as the Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic) and Slovenia (1998-1999)

### African Seats

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 seats allocated to Africa are usually 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. In 2021, 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 available seats allocated to the group. This year, Algeria and Sierra Leone are running uncontested for the two seats available for the African Group.

Algeria is running unopposed for the North Africa seat, which will rotate with the Central Africa seat currently held by Gabon. Algeria will also fill the “Arab swing seat”, which alternates every odd calendar year between the Asia-Pacific Group and the African Group and is being vacated by the United Arab Emirates on 31 December 2023. (The Arab swing seat is described in greater detail below.)

This year, Sierra Leone is running unopposed for the West Africa seat currently held by

Ghana. This seat usually alternates between Anglophone and Francophone countries. Given that both Ghana and Sierra Leone are Anglophone countries, this will be a departure from this pattern of rotation. In the 2019 elections, a similar situation occurred when Niger, a Francophone country, succeeded another Francophone country, Côte d’Ivoire.

The selection and endorsement of candidates for the African Group take place within the AU structures. The AU Executive Council endorsed Algeria at the 37th Ordinary Session [EX.CL/Dec.1097-1106(XXXVII)] and Sierra Leone at the 40th Ordinary Session [EX.CL/Dec.1143-1167(XL)].

### Algeria

Algeria became a member of the UN in 1962, shortly after gaining independence from France. Since then, it has served on the Council three times (1968-1969, 1988-1989, 2004-2005). The AU endorsed its candidacy in 2020.

In its campaign, Algeria has emphasised its role in promoting the core principles of the UN Charter and its commitment to multilateralism. It has noted its role in strengthening cooperation at the international, regional, and sub-regional levels. In this regard, Algeria has highlighted its mediation efforts in Africa, including with respect to the settlement of the conflict between Ethiopia and Eritrea in 2000 and the signing of the 2015 Agreement for Peace and Reconciliation in Mali.

Algeria has identified four main priorities for its prospective Security Council membership: strengthening international peace and

1 Arab countries are a sub-group within the Asia-Pacific Group.

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security; countering terrorism and transnational organised crime; promoting multilateralism and strengthening partnerships; and promoting the women, peace and security and youth, peace and security agendas.

If elected, Algeria plans to share its knowledge of the main peace and security challenges in its neighbourhood, mainly the Middle East and Africa. It has signaled that it will devote special attention to the situation in the Sahel, a region affected by crises of rule of law, governance, economic development, and environmental degradation. Algeria has also said that it will contribute to seeking lasting political solutions to the crises affecting the Arab world.

Algeria has expressed its desire to make a meaningful contribution to the Security Council's efforts to combat terrorism and violent extremism. It underscores that it participates in various regional and international counter-terrorism mechanisms, and that it is a founding member of the Global Counterterrorism Forum, a multilateral platform that contributes to the international architecture for addressing terrorism. While in the Council, Algeria vows to strengthen its cooperation with the UN on counter-terrorism efforts and to continue to support the UN Global Counterterrorism Strategy.

If it wins a seat on the Council, Algeria says that it will place special emphasis on advancing cooperation between the UN and the African Union on conflict prevention and management in Africa. On the issues facing the Arab world, Algeria notes that it will seek to strengthen cooperation between the UN and the League of Arab States (LAS).

Algeria has stressed the importance of promoting the empowerment of women and the inclusion of youth in decision-making processes related to peace and security.

As at March 2023, Algeria had two personnel deployed in the UN Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of Congo (MONUSCO).

### *Sierra Leone*

Sierra Leone became a member of the UN in 1961 after gaining independence from the United Kingdom. It has served on the Council once (1970-1971).

During its campaign, Sierra Leone has placed particular emphasis on the importance of promoting partnerships to contribute to the maintenance of international peace and security. If elected, it says that it will seek to contribute to efforts to strengthen the regional peace and security architecture in Africa, mindful of the overarching mandate of the Security Council to maintain international peace and security. Sierra Leone has also expressed its support for strengthening the Peacebuilding Commission's (PBC) efforts in conflict prevention and peacebuilding.

While on the Council, Sierra Leone plans to share its background in post-conflict peacebuilding as a country that hosted a successful UN peacekeeping operation, the UN Mission in Sierra Leone (UNAMSIL). It notes its experience in peace negotiations; disarmament, demobilisation, and reintegration (DDR); security sector reform; transitional justice; and reconciliation.

Sierra Leone believes that it can add value to Security Council's work on human rights and accountability, and emphasises its experience in and contribution to the field of transitional justice. Sierra Leone also believes that there is a need for better cooperation between the Security Council and the Human Rights Council on

the prevention of human rights violations.

During its tenure at the Security Council, Sierra Leone intends to promote the active involvement of women and youth in peace processes, mediation, and peacekeeping operations and to share its own experiences in this regard.

Sierra Leone calls for collaborative and coordinated approaches to tackling terrorism and violent extremism.

It considers climate change as an emerging threat to international peace and security. It says that it will advocate for Security Council engagement on this issue.

Sierra Leone is expected to dedicate special attention to the issues of arms control, disarmament, and non-proliferation, given its interest in and background on these matters. In 2021, Sierra Leone presided over the 7th Conference of States Parties to the Arms Trade Treaty (ATT). One of the core priorities for Sierra Leone's presidency of the ATT was strengthening efforts to eradicate the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons (SALW).

Sierra Leone is an advocate for improving Security Council working methods to make the body more efficient, transparent, and accountable.

As at March 2023, Sierra Leone had 56 personnel in UN peace operations, mainly in UN Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS), UN Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali (MINUSMA), UN Interim Security Force for Abyei (UNISFA), and UN Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in the CAR (MINUSCA).

### **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 run unopposed, with the exception of 2019, 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.

Starting in 2007, an informal understanding developed among GRULAC members to avoid contested elections. This followed the 2006 elections for the GRULAC seat on the Security Council for the 2007-2008 term, contested between Guatemala and Venezuela, which were inconclusive after 47 rounds of voting between 16 October and 7 November. (Panama was elected in the 48th round as the compromise candidate.) This year, Guyana is running unopposed for the seat currently held by Brazil.

### *Guyana*

Guyana became a UN member state in 1966 after it gained independence from the United Kingdom. It has served in the Security Council twice (1975-1976 and 1982-1983).

During its campaign, Guyana has placed a special emphasis on the link between sustainable development and sustainable peace. It has also called attention to evolving threats to international peace and security that have forced the Security Council to broaden its discussions, issues such as health crises, conflict-related sexual violence, and climate change. Guyana seeks to contribute to the Council's efforts to address these challenges in an effective manner.

The overarching theme for Guyana's candidacy is "Partnering for Peace and Prosperity". Guyana has identified five issue areas that it plans to focus on during its Council term: climate change,

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food security and conflict; peacebuilding and conflict prevention; women, peace and security; protection of children in armed conflict; and youth, peace and security.

Guyana has highlighted its commitment to multilateralism in today's environment of increased interdependence. It stresses that its engagement with the UN is based on the promotion of peace through the observance of agreed rules and standards, the preservation of the independence and security of all states, and global cooperation on economic and social advancement.

Guyana describes itself as a conscientious actor that regularly takes a principled approach towards issues on the Council's agenda. In this context, it highlights its support for the right to self-determination, including the aspirations of several non-governing territories for independence.

Guyana emphasises its constructive contribution to advancing the interests of developing countries. In this regard, it has highlighted its role in 2020 as chair of the Group of 77 and China, as well as its presidency of the 48th Session of the General Assembly.

It has pledged to promote the participation of women and youth in addressing peace and security issues and the protection of children in armed conflict during its prospective Council term. If elected, Guyana emphasises that it will work collaboratively with all Council members and that it will consider the views of the parties on the Council's agenda when forming positions.

While Guyana does not currently have UN peacekeepers deployed in the field, it has been a troop-contributing country in the past. Its civilian and military personnel were deployed as part of UN peace operations in El Salvador, Rwanda, Mozambique, and Haiti.

### Eastern European Seat

One non-permanent seat on the Council is allocated to Eastern Europe. This seat comes up for election every odd calendar year. In 2023, Belarus and Slovenia are contesting the single seat currently held by Albania.

#### Belarus

Belarus is a founding member of the UN as the Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic. It served on the Council once (1974-1975), while it was a part of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR). As a sovereign state, the Republic of Belarus has never been on the Security Council. It declared its candidature in 2007.

If elected, Belarus has said that it will promote strict adherence to Article 24 of the UN Charter, which prescribes the key competencies of the Council, primarily the maintenance of international peace and security. Belarus has stated its intention to engage constructively with other Council members and to avoid introducing initiatives that could be perceived as confrontational. It says that it will seek to advocate consensus-based positions from member states of the Eastern European regional group, as well as members of the Non-Aligned Movement, and strive to avoid the politicisation of Council agenda items.

If it wins a seat on the Council, Belarus has said that it will promote dialogue and confidence-building measures between major global powers. In this respect, it notes that it will encourage the strengthening of mechanisms for dialogue between regional military, political and economic unions. Belarus supports strengthening cooperation between the UN and other regional organisations, including

the Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO).

In its campaign, Belarus has identified the following priority areas for its potential Security Council membership: upholding the UN Charter; international peace and security; disarmament and non-proliferation; counter-terrorism and information security; improving the effectiveness of the Security Council; and Security Council reform. It also emphasises its interest in combating human trafficking, advancing issues of food security, and supporting the role of middle-income countries.

As a country that voluntarily gave up its nuclear weapons after the collapse of the USSR, Belarus has highlighted its role in disarmament and non-proliferation efforts. It says that it strives to support all existing nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament regimes.

If elected, Belarus has said that it will advocate for clear and realistic mandates and cost-effectiveness as means of improving UN peace operations.

As at March 2023, Belarus did not have UN peacekeepers deployed in the field. In the past, it had personnel deployed with the UN Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL).

#### Slovenia

Slovenia became a UN member state in 1992. Since then, it has served once on the Council (1998-1999). Slovenia announced its candidature in 2021.

Slovenia has campaigned under the slogan "Building Trust – Securing Future", highlighting issues on which it considers itself a reliable partner in international affairs. In terms of building trust, it focuses on issues such as international law, accountability, conflict prevention, transparency, and the women, peace and security agenda. On securing the future, Slovenia has underlined its support for Council engagement on issues such as climate and security, water diplomacy, food security and children and armed conflict.

Slovenia emphasises the importance of respect for international law and an inclusive multilateral system with the UN at its core. If elected, Slovenia says that it intends to bring to the Security Council the perspective of a small country with a tradition of building trust, stability, and goodwill with and among countries in its region and elsewhere. In this context, Slovenia has highlighted its role in promoting stability in the Western Balkans and its efforts in post-conflict rehabilitation processes in the region and beyond.

In its campaign, Slovenia stressed the importance of the peaceful settlement of disputes and mechanisms for conflict prevention, including mediation, arbitration, and judicial bodies. Slovenia says that as a Council member, it would strive to identify and promote new approaches and collaborative solutions to reduce the risk of future conflicts.

One of the focus areas for Slovenia's candidacy is addressing issues affecting human dignity and a better future for all. If elected, Slovenia is expected to take an interest in mitigating the effects of poverty and promoting sustainable development and human rights. Slovenia has highlighted its efforts to provide humanitarian aid and address global challenges such as the COVID-19 pandemic. It has also emphasised its role in humanitarian demining, stockpile destruction, and mine action management in countries affected by conflict.

During its candidacy, Slovenia has expressed its support for the progressive development of international law. It refers to the

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importance of fighting impunity and achieving accountability for victims of atrocities as an integral part of conflict prevention and reconciliation.

A strong advocate for improving the Council's working methods, Slovenia is a member of the Accountability, Coherence and Transparency (ACT) group. It supports the ACT Code of Conduct, which calls on Council members to refrain from voting against Council action to combat genocide, crimes against humanity, and war crimes.

As at March 2023, Slovenia has five civilian and military personnel deployed in the UN Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK), UN Truce Supervision Organization (UNTSO), and UNIFIL. Slovenia also hosts the Peace Operations Training Centre, which provides training for military, police, and civilian experts ahead of their deployment to peace operations and missions within the UN, EU, NATO, and OSCE.

### Asia-Pacific Seat

Two non-permanent seats are allocated to the Asia-Pacific Group, with one coming up every election year (similar to the GRULAC seat). This year, the Republic of Korea is running unopposed for the seat currently held by the United Arab Emirates.

#### *The Republic of Korea*

The Republic of Korea (ROK) became a UN member state in 1991. Since then, the country has served on the Council twice (1996-1997 and 2013-2014).

In its campaign, the ROK has identified four priority areas that it would pursue as a Council member: sustainable peace; women, peace and security (WPS); cybersecurity; and climate and security.

The ROK is a firm supporter of peacekeeping and peacebuilding. In 2021, Seoul hosted the most recent UN Peacekeeping Ministerial, which focused on the impact of technology on enhancing peacekeeping. If elected, the ROK says that it will strive to increase the effectiveness of UN peacekeeping operations by supporting the capacity-building of peacekeeping missions and enhancing the

safety and security of peacekeepers.

The ROK has stressed the growing need to address the root causes of conflicts under the constantly evolving security landscape through an integrated and holistic approach to peacebuilding and conflict prevention. As a long-standing Peacebuilding Commission (PBC) member, the ROK says that it will continue to encourage stronger partnership between the Security Council and the PBC, actively joining global efforts to achieve sustainable peace in Africa, Asia and elsewhere.

The ROK highlights its commitment to strengthening the women, peace and security (WPS) agenda. If elected, the ROK plans to contribute to efforts on this issue, especially in the context of the protection of civilians in armed conflict. The ROK also intends to share its own experience in promoting the WPS agenda. Starting in 2019, the ROK has held an annual international conference on WPS as a part of its "Action with Women and Peace" initiative. The ROK has emphasised the contribution of this initiative to development cooperation projects conducted in partnership with the UN Population Fund (UNFPA) and other UN agencies.

During its campaign, the ROK has emphasised its support for Security Council efforts to address emerging threats to international peace and security. If elected, it is expected to bring more attention to cybersecurity threats and climate and security. With regard to the former, it has expressed concern about attacks against critical infrastructure, disruptions by ransomware, and state-sponsored use of virtual assets to finance Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMD) programmes. With regard to the latter, the ROK will seek to advance efforts to integrate climate-related risks into the Council's deliberations and ensure that the concerns of the most affected countries are taken into consideration.

As at March 2023, the Republic of Korea has 587 personnel deployed, mainly in the peacekeeping missions UNMISS, UNIFIL, UN Mission for the Referendum in Western Sahara (MINURSO), and UN Military Observer Group in India and Pakistan (UNMOGIP).

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## Potential Council Dynamics in 2024

The ongoing tensions among permanent members are expected to persist and are likely to shape Council dynamics in 2024. While several issues—for example, DPRK non-proliferation, Israel/Palestine, Syria, and Myanmar—remain divisive, the war in Ukraine has heightened tensions among members over the past 15 months. Russia continues to justify its invasion, which it refers to as a "special military operation", while several Council members—including Albania, Ecuador, France, Japan, Malta, Switzerland, the UK, and the US—condemn Russia for what they consider to be an act of aggression.

The situation of Ukraine is likely to continue to loom large on the Council's agenda in 2024. Among the current cohort of candidates, Belarus has a particularly strong interest in and connection to the situation in Ukraine. Belarus shares a border with both Ukraine and Russia. Following the initial outbreak of the crisis in Ukraine in 2014, Belarus hosted a series of negotiations that resulted in the signing of the "Package of Measures for the Implementation of the

Minsk Agreements", also known as the Minsk II agreement, adopted on 12 February 2015. Since the 24 February 2022 Russian invasion of Ukraine, Belarus has also hosted several rounds of negotiations between Ukraine and Russia.

Some Council members have accused Belarus of aiding Russia during its February 2022 invasion of Ukraine, when Belarus allowed Russian forces to use its territory as a staging ground. Earlier this year, Belarus announced that Russia would station tactical nuclear weapons on its territory.

Candidates Guyana, ROK, Sierra Leone, and Slovenia were among 141 member states voting in favour of the 2 March 2022 General Assembly resolution titled "Aggression against Ukraine". Algeria abstained, while Belarus voted against the resolution.

Most candidates have expressed a strong interest in issues on the Council's agenda within their respective regions. Algeria is expected to dedicate special attention to issues concerning the Sahel, Libya,

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## Potential Council Dynamics in 2024

and the Middle East. A member of both the AU and the LAS, Algeria could also potentially be active on the situation in Sudan. Algeria is also expected to play a prominent role on the issue of Western Sahara. As discussed above, Belarus, if elected, can be expected to have a particularly strong interest in the war in Ukraine. Slovenia has historically been interested in the Western Balkans, and, if elected, is likely to play an important role on issues such as Bosnia and Herzegovina and Kosovo, in addition to the Ukraine crisis. The ROK has a major stake in non-proliferation issues on the Korean peninsula. Sierra Leone has shown interest in focusing on threats to international peace and security in Western Africa, including in the Gulf of Guinea. As a member of GRULAC, Guyana could play an important role in Council discussions on Haiti and Colombia.

Peacekeeping is a key issue for several of the candidates. Among the current candidates, ROK ranks as the biggest troop contributor to UN peace operations and the largest contributor to the UN peacekeeping budget. Algeria and Sierra Leone are keen proponents of greater cooperation between the UN and AU on peace and security issues. Sierra Leone has emphasised its valuable experience both as a former host country and as a troop contributor.

African members have been trying to advance the discussion in the Council on the financing of AU-led peace support operations. Ghana, an outgoing member of the Council, has led these efforts, and may present a draft framework resolution in September. If negotiations on this issue are not finalised this year, they can be expected to continue in 2024.

In 2024, disarmament and non-proliferation issues are likely to garner more attention in the Council. ROK and Japan, which is currently serving its 2023–2024 term, both have a particular interest in non-proliferation issues, especially vis-à-vis the situation on the Korean peninsula. Among other candidates, Belarus has identified non-proliferation as one of its priorities.

Sierra Leone and Algeria have identified arms control and small arms and light weapons as priority areas, especially in the context of conflicts in Africa. Both candidates are strong supporters of the AU's Silencing the Guns initiative.

Some of the candidates have emphasised the importance of addressing terrorism and violent extremism. Algeria has expressed an interest in sharing its own experience in combating terrorism. It is also expected to draw the Council's attention to terrorism and violent extremism in its region, in the Sahel in particular. Sierra Leone has likewise underscored the need to tackle terrorism in the Sahel, as well as in the Gulf of Guinea.

Most candidate countries have highlighted the importance of addressing emerging threats to international peace and security. Among such threats, climate change, peace and security ranks high on the priority list for most candidates this year. Although several members of the Council support greater engagement on the issue, China, Russia, and Belarus, a candidate, have reservations about the Council's work on climate, peace and security.

To date, the Council has made limited progress in bringing more attention to cybersecurity threats. In 2024, the Council could take a more active role on this thematic issue, given that several candidates, most notably Slovenia and ROK, have included this on the list of their priorities.

Most candidate countries have underscored the significance of the women, peace, and security agenda during their campaigns. As we move into 2024, the co-chairing of the Informal Experts Group (IEG) on Women, Peace and Security will transition: 2023 co-chair UAE will conclude its Council term in December, paving the way for another member to join Switzerland as co-chair.

Candidate countries may also sign on to the WPS commitments—which started with the “presidency trio” of Ireland, Kenya, and Mexico in late 2021—as Algeria, Guyana, ROK, Sierra Leone, and Slovenia have all denoted the WPS agenda as a priority. Among the permanent members, France, the UK, and the US can be expected to remain strong proponents of this issue. Russia will probably continue in its view that the issue of gender equality should not be within the Council's purview. Among current candidates, Belarus would have a similar position to Russia. China is likely to continue to argue that the development gap is the most important barrier to women's empowerment.

Two members of the Accountability, Coherence and Transparency (ACT) group—Gabon and Ghana—will leave the Security Council at the end of 2023. Among the current candidates, only Slovenia is a member of the ACT group. The other ACT group members who will continue on the Security Council in 2024 are Ecuador and Switzerland. These members will be keen to push for improved Security Council working methods, including proposals advocated by the ACT group.

With Algeria and Sierra Leone joining Mozambique on the Council, the three African members (A3) are likely to work closely in coordinating their positions and advancing a common African position on regional and thematic items on the Security Council's agenda. In 2022, the A3 (Gabon, Ghana, and Kenya) delivered 63 joint statements on the African region and on thematic agenda items. The A3 are also expected to coordinate their positions on working methods and present joint commitments in this regard.

In 2020–2021, then Council member Saint Vincent and the Grenadines formed a partnership with the A3. These members coordinated their positions on several issues on the Council's agenda and delivered joint statements as a part of the A3 + 1 group. There is a possibility that Guyana, which like Saint Vincent and the Grenadines is part of the CARICOM region, might renew this practice if elected.

Elected members continue to seek active roles in the Council, including as penholders, the informal designation for members who take the lead in drafting outcomes and convening negotiations on particular agenda items, a role most often assumed by one of the P3 (France, the United Kingdom, and the United States). Co-penholding by an elected and a P3 member had been nonexistent until 2019 when Germany succeeded in sharing the pen with the UK on Sudan. Recently, more elected members have co-penheld with a permanent member, including, among current members, Albania with the US on Ukraine, Ecuador with the US on Haiti, and Ecuador with France on Ukraine humanitarian issues. Elected members usually hold the pen on the Syria humanitarian file, and some candidate countries may seek this role, which is currently assumed by Brazil and Switzerland. Elected members also hold the pen on Afghanistan.

## The Process of Election

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, and blank ballots are not counted. Votes are secret. 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 are considered void. This restricted voting process can continue for up to three rounds of voting.

If no candidate has 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.<sup>2</sup> 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 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:

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

### 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 within 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.

<sup>2</sup> 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>

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## Regional Groups and Established Practices

Today, every member of the African Group is a member of the AU, Morocco having joined in 2017. The AU Executive Council makes the final decision on which members to endorse during an AU summit meeting. The written rules of procedure for candidate selection notwithstanding, some countries have submitted their candidature directly to the AU Ministerial Committee on Candidatures, bypassing the process in New York.

The African rotation generally follows a 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. In the 2011 election, Mauritania contested Morocco’s candidature for the Northern Africa/Arab swing seat, but lost. 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 sub-regional 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 two years after its Council membership of 2010–2011. South Africa was on the Council in 2007–2008, in 2011–2012, and again in 2019–2020. 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. After it completes its current term 2023–2024, Japan will have accumulated 24 years on the Council, the most of any non-permanent member. Since 1966, it has never been off the Council for more than seven consecutive years.

In the absence of a formal rotation system, larger member states have tended to declare their candidacy closer to the election year, while 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 held 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 seven—Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, the Republic of North Macedonia, Moldova, Montenegro, Serbia, and Ukraine—are formal candidates for EU membership. 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, before there was an 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.



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## Regional Groups and Established Practices

Historically, the group was often able to reach consensus on “clean slates”.<sup>3</sup> 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 term in 2022-2023.

### 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 Australia, Canada and New Zealand, who were members of what was previously called the British Commonwealth Group. Israel is the other non-European state that participates in WEOG, while the Holy See is an observer. With the US also attending meetings as an observer and France and the UK as members,

WEOG includes three of the five permanent members of the Council.

WEOG practices what might be called an open-market approach to elections, which produces regularly contested candidatures, a pattern likely to continue 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), Türkiye served as the Middle Eastern Council member. After twice holding the Eastern European seat, in 1954-1955 and 1961, it has run for the WEOG seat. Türkiye participates fully in both the WEOG and Asian Group but, for electoral purposes, is considered a member of WEOG.

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## 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 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 in question;

this chart 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.

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## 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.)

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. Knowing that commitments are not always secure, some candidate countries persistently cultivate 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.

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<sup>3</sup> GRULAC produced two of the most protracted and bitterly contested voting sessions in UN history. The 1979 contest between Colombia and Cuba went to 155 rounds 26 October 1979 until 7 January 1980 before Mexico was elected as a compromise candidate, and between 16 October and 7 November 2006 47 rounds of voting were needed between Guatemala and Venezuela before Panama was elected in the 48th as a compromise candidate.

# Campaigning for the Council

To secure voting commitments from member states, candidate countries may volunteer, or be asked for, inducements, such as development assistance or promises to promote—or avoid—particular issues while serving on the Council. Several candidate countries have arranged trips to their capital or held workshops on (uncontroversial) issues of interest in attractive locations to raise their campaign profile. “Swag bags” 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 may 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/76/PV.79](#) (9 June 2022) was the meeting record of the 2022 election of five non-permanent members.

[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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## Useful Additional Sources

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

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*Rules of Procedure of the AU Ministerial Committee on Candidatures within the International System*, Doc.EX.CL/213 (VIII), African Union, (2006).

*United Nations Handbook 2017-2018*, New Zealand Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade, (2017).

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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

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

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.

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## 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.

<b>2008 UNGA63</b> 28th 17-10-08	<b>1 ROUND</b> Round 1: 192 votes, 6 abstentions	<b>Mexico</b> 185, <b>Uganda</b> 181, <b>Japan</b> 158, <b>Turkey</b> 151, <b>Austria</b> 133, Iceland 87, Iran (Islamic Republic of) 32, Madagascar 2, Australia 1, Brazil 1
<b>2009 UNGA64</b> 20th 15-10-09	<b>1 ROUND</b> Round 1: 190 votes, 7 abstentions	<b>Nigeria</b> 186, <b>Gabon</b> 184, <b>Bosnia and Herzegovina</b> 183, <b>Brazil</b> 182, <b>Lebanon</b> 180, Iran (Islamic Republic of) 1, Liberia 1, Sierra Leone 1, Togo 1, Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of) 1
<b>2010 UNGA65</b> 28th 12-10-10	<b>3 ROUNDS</b> Round 1: 191 votes, 5 abstentions Round 2: 191 votes, restricted Round 3: 184 votes, 2 abstentions, restricted	<b>India</b> 187, <b>Colombia</b> 186, <b>South Africa</b> 182, <b>Germany</b> 128, Portugal 122, Canada 114, Pakistan 1, Swaziland 1 Portugal 113, Canada 78 <b>Portugal</b> 150, Canada 32
<b>2011 UNGA66</b> 37th 21-10-2011  38th 21-10-11  39th 24-10-11 40th 24-10-11	<b>17 ROUNDS</b> 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	<b>Guatemala</b> 191, <b>Morocco</b> 151, <b>Pakistan</b> 129, Togo 119, Mauritania 98, Azerbaijan 74, Slovenia 67, Kyrgyzstan 55, Hungary 52, Fiji 1 Togo 119, Slovenia 97, Azerbaijan 90, Mauritania 72 <b>Togo</b> 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 <b>Azerbaijan</b> 155, Slovenia 13, Hungary 1

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

<b>2012 UNGA67</b>	<b>2 ROUNDS</b>	
27th 18-10-2012	Round 1: 193 votes, 8 abstentions	<b>Argentina</b> 182, <b>Rwanda</b> 148, <b>Australia</b> 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	<b>Republic of Korea</b> 149, <b>Luxembourg</b> 131, Finland 62, Cambodia 43
<b>2013 UNGA68</b>	<b>1 ROUND AND A SPECIAL ELECTION</b>	
34th 17-10-2013	Round 1: 191 votes, 5 abstentions	<b>Lithuania</b> 187, <b>Chile</b> 186, <b>Nigeria</b> 186, <b>Chad</b> 184, <b>Saudi Arabia</b> 176 (declined), Senegal 2, The Gambia 2, Lebanon 1, Croatia 1
61st 6-12-2013	Round 1: 185 votes, 4 abstentions	<b>Jordan</b> 178, <b>Saudi Arabia</b> 1
<b>2014 UNGA69</b>	<b>3 ROUNDS</b>	
25th 16-10-2014	Round 1: 193 votes, 10 abstentions	<b>Angola</b> 190, <b>Malaysia</b> 187, <b>Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela</b> 181, <b>New Zealand</b> 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	<b>Spain</b> 132, Turkey 60
<b>2015 UNGA69</b>	<b>1 ROUND</b>	
33rd 15-10-2015	Round 1: 192 votes, 14 abstentions	<b>Senegal</b> 187, <b>Uruguay</b> 185, <b>Japan</b> 184, <b>Egypt</b> 179, <b>Ukraine</b> 177
<b>2016 UNGA70</b>	<b>6 ROUNDS</b>	
106th 28-06-2016	Round 1: 191 votes, 8 abstentions	<b>Ethiopia</b> 185, <b>Bolivia</b> 183, <b>Sweden</b> 134, Netherlands 125, Kazakhstan 113, Italy 113, Thailand 77, Colombia 1, Cuba 1, Belgium 1
	Round 2: 193 votes, 2 abstentions, restricted	<b>Kazakhstan</b> 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	<b>Italy</b> 179, Netherlands 4, San Marino 1
<b>2017 UNGA71</b>	<b>1 ROUND</b>	
86th 02-06-2017	Round 1: 192 votes, 5 abstentions	<b>Poland</b> 190, <b>Côte d'Ivoire</b> 189, <b>Kuwait</b> 188, <b>Peru</b> 186, <b>Equatorial Guinea</b> 185, <b>Netherlands</b> 184, Argentina 1, Guinea 1, Morocco 1
<b>2018 UNGA72</b>	<b>1 ROUND</b>	
93rd 08-06-2018	Round 1: 190 votes, 8 abstentions	<b>Dominican Republic</b> 184, <b>Germany</b> 184, <b>South Africa</b> 183, <b>Belgium</b> 181, <b>Indonesia</b> 144, Maldives 46
<b>2019 UNGA73</b>	<b>2 ROUNDS</b>	
89th 07-06-2019	Round 1: 193 votes, 4 abstentions	<b>Viet Nam</b> 192; <b>Niger</b> 191; <b>Tunisia</b> 191; Estonia 111; Romania 78; <b>Saint Vincent and the Grenadines</b> 185; El Salvador 6; Georgia 1; Latvia 1
	Round 2: 193 votes, 2 abstentions, restricted	<b>Estonia</b> 132; Romania 58
<b>2020 UNGA 74</b>	<b>2 ROUNDS</b>	
17-06 2020*	Round 1: 192 votes, 0 abstentions	Djibouti 78; <b>India</b> 184; <b>Ireland</b> 128; Kenya 113; <b>Mexico</b> 187; <b>Norway</b> 130
18-06-2020*	Round 2: 191 votes, 0 abstentions	<b>Kenya</b> 129; Djibouti 62
<b>2021 UNGA 75</b>	<b>1 ROUND</b>	
78th 11-06-2021	Round 1: 190 votes, 14 abstentions	<b>Ghana</b> 185; <b>Gabon</b> 183; <b>Brazil</b> 181; <b>United Arab Emirates</b> 179; <b>Albania</b> 175; Democratic Republic of the Congo 3; Islamic Republic of Iran 1; Peru 1
<b>2022 UNGA 76</b>	<b>1 ROUND</b>	
79th 09-06-2022	Round 1: 192 votes, 2 abstentions	<b>Mozambique</b> 192; <b>Ecuador</b> 190; <b>Switzerland</b> 187; <b>Malta</b> 185; <b>Japan</b> 184; Mongolia 3

\*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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