



Group of Four (G-4) Countries

For Prelims: UN General Assembly, G-4 countries, United Nations Security Council (UNSC).

For Mains: Significance of UN Security Council's Permanent Membership.

Why in News?

On the sidelines of the [76th session of the UN General Assembly](#), the **G-4 countries** highlight 'urgent need' for reform in [U.N. Security Council \(UNSC\)](#).

Who are the Group of Four(G-4) Countries?

- The G4 is a grouping of **Brazil, Germany, India and Japan** which are **aspiring to become permanent members of the UNSC**.
- The G4 countries are supporting each other's bids for permanent membership of the UNSC.
- The G4 nations traditionally meet on the sidelines of the annual high-level UN General Assembly session.

What are the Key Highlights of the G-4 Meeting?

- They felt that the UN decision-making bodies **needed to be urgently reformed as global issues were increasingly complex and interconnected**.
- Further, they reiterated their **joint commitment to work toward text-based negotiations that lead to Reformed Multilateralism**.
- They highlighted that [General Assembly](#) **did not make "meaningful progress" in the Inter-Governmental Negotiations (IGN) and lacked transparency**.
- They reiterated their support for African countries being represented in a permanent and non-permanent capacity.
- The Ministers agreed on the need for **enhanced role and presence of developing countries and of major contributors** to the United Nations to enhance the capacity of the Council to respond effectively to the complex and evolving challenges on questions of international peace and security.

Why is there a Need for UNSC Reforms?

- **UN represents a larger world** and the irony is that it has **only 5 permanent members** in its important body.
- The current composition of the Security Council represents the post-World War II realities and thus is **not in pace with the changing balance of power** in the world.
- At the time of the formation of the UNSC, big powers were given privileges to make them part of the council. This was necessary for its proper functioning as well as to avoid failure like that of the organization 'League of Nations'.
- The **regions like far East Asia, South America, and Africa have no representation in the permanent membership** of the council.

Why is India Demanding the Permanent Membership of the UNSC?

▪ Overview:

- For the first 40 years of the UN Security Council's formation, India **never asked for permanent membership.**
- Even in 1993 when India submitted its written proposal to the UN in response to the General Assembly resolution related to reforms, it did not specifically state that it wants permanent membership for itself.
- It is only from the last few years that India has started asking for permanent membership in the council.
- India deserves a permanent place in the council **considering the size of its economy, population and the fact that it is the largest democracy** in the world.
 - India has become a major player not only in Asia but also in the world.
 - The Security Council would be a more representative body if India would be there in it as a permanent member.

▪ Need:

- By having veto power, one can enjoy **enormous powers.**
 - Since 2009, India was trying to designate Masood Azhar as a global terrorist. One veto power of China kept delaying it.
- India will be able to **work better for its interests.**
 - There was a time when the USSR actually started boycotting the UNSC and that was the time when US managed to get the resolution passed for the Korean War. From that time onwards USSR realized that it doesn't make sense to boycott the UN. It **needs to keep veto if at all resolution is against them.**
- India's presence as a permanent member will be an **acknowledgement of its rise as a global power**, ready to play a key role in the council's objectives of international peace and security.
- India will be able to enjoy the '**prestige**' associated with the permanent membership of the council.

What is the United Nations Security Council (UNSC)?

- Established by the United Nations charter in 1945, the Security Council has primary responsibility of maintaining international peace and security.
- The Security Council has **15 members.**
 - There are **five permanent members:** the United States, the Russian Federation, France, China and the United Kingdom.
 - The non-permanent members of the Security Council are elected for a term of two years.
- **Each member of the Security Council has one vote. Decisions** of the Security Council on matters are made by an **affirmative vote of nine members including the concurring votes of the permanent members. A "No" vote from one of the five permanent members blocks the passage of the resolution.**
- Any member of the United Nations which is not a member of the Security Council may participate, without vote, in the discussion of any question brought before the Security Council whenever the latter considers that the interests of that member are specially affected.

What is Intergovernmental Negotiations (IGN)?

- IGN is a group of nation-states working within the United Nations to further reform of the United Nations Security Council (UNSC)
- The IGN is composed of several different international organizations, namely:
 - African Union
 - G4 nations
 - Uniting for Consensus Group (UfC)
 - L.69 Group of Developing Countries
 - Arab League
 - Caribbean Community (CARICOM).

Way Forward

- **Global power hierarchies** are changing and the P5 needs to realize that this is high time to initiate **UNSC reforms**. The declining powers should either give away their membership or should expand the size of the UNSC, opening the doors for new emerging powers.
- Other reforms might succeed earlier than the expansion of P5. None of the so-called powerful nations wants to expand the table and share their pie with another nation.
- India needs to focus on strengthening itself **economically, militarily & diplomatically** in order to participate in major conversations and groupings. Steadily, the UNSC will itself deem India fit to become a part of the UNSC.

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