



International Organisation: The United Nations



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What is United Nations?

- ▶ The United Nations is an intergovernmental organization tasked to promote international co-operation and to create and maintain international order.
- ▶ The UN Charter was drafted at a conference between April–June 1945 in San Francisco, and was signed on 26 June 1945 at the conclusion of the conference, this charter took effect 24 October 1945, and the UN began operation.



History and Establishment of the United Nations

- ▶ The predecessor entity to the UN was the **League of Nations**. The League of Nations was established during WWI in 1919, by the Treaty of Versailles (one of the peace treaties adopted at the end of WWI). The League of Nations' goal was to encourage cooperation between countries and keep international peace and security. Unfortunately, the League of Nations failed to prevent WWII and, therefore, was seen as a failure.
- ▶ The name "United Nations" was devised by United States President Franklin D. Roosevelt and was first used in the "Declaration by United Nations" of 1 January 1942, during the Second World War, when representatives of 26 nations pledged their Governments to continue fighting together against the Axis Powers.

History and Establishment of the United Nations

- ▶ The United Nations Charter was drawn up by the representatives of 50 countries at the United Nations Conference on International Organization, which met at San Francisco from 25 April to 26 June 1945. Those delegates deliberated on the basis of proposals worked out by the representatives of China, the Soviet Union, the United Kingdom and the United States at Dumbarton Oaks in August-October 1944. The Charter was signed on 26 June 1945 by the representatives of the 50 countries. Poland, which was not represented at the Conference, signed it later and became one of the original 51 Member States.
- ▶ The United Nations officially came into existence on 24 October 1945, when the Charter had been ratified by China, France, the Soviet Union, the United Kingdom, the United States and by a majority of other signatories. United Nations Day is celebrated on 24 October each year.

History and Establishment of the United Nations

- ▶ After the World War II was over, negotiating and maintaining the peace was the practical responsibility of the new U.N. Security Council, made up of the United States, Great Britain, France, the Soviet Union, and China. Each would have veto power over the other.
- ▶ After the ratification of the UN Charter, the remaining members of the League of Nations met and unanimously voted to transfer all of its assets to the United Nations and formally dissolve the League of Nations.

Aims and Purposes

- ▶ The UN Charter sets out four main purposes:
 - ▶ Maintaining worldwide peace and security.
 - ▶ Developing relations among nations.
 - ▶ Fostering cooperation between nations in order to solve economic, social, cultural, or humanitarian international problems.
 - ▶ Providing a forum for bringing countries together to meet the UN's purposes and goals.

Organs of United Nations

The UN has six principal organs to carry out its functions:-

- ▶ The General Assembly
- ▶ The Security Council
- ▶ The Economic and Social Council
- ▶ The Trusteeship Council
- ▶ The International Court of Justice
- ▶ The Secretariat

Organs of United Nations: The General Assembly

- ▶ The General Assembly is the largest organ of the UN. All members of the UN are members of the General Assembly. Each state can send up to five representatives but is entitled to one vote in the Assembly.
- ▶ The General Assembly meets once a year for three months. But special sessions may be held during times of crisis. At the beginning of every session, the Assembly elects a new President.
- ▶ Decisions are taken in the General Assembly by a simple majority vote. In some important cases a two-thirds majority vote is required for taking a decision.

Organs of United Nations: The General Assembly

The functions of the General Assembly are as follows:

- ▶ It can discuss any matter affecting international peace and security.
- ▶ It makes recommendations for peaceful settlements of disputes.
- ▶ It passes the budget of the UN.
- ▶ It elects the non-permanent members of the Security Council.
- ▶ It also elects the members of the Economic and Social Council and the Trusteeship Council.
- ▶ It admits new members to the UN on the recommendation of the Security Council.
- ▶ The Security Council and the General Assembly elect the members of the International Court of Justice.

Organs of United Nations: The Security Council

- ▶ The Security Council consists of 15 members. Five of them are permanent members, namely Britain, China, France, Russia and the USA. The ten non-permanent members are elected by the General Assembly for a term of two years.
- ▶ Each member has one vote. Decisions are taken by a majority vote of at least nine members including the five permanent members.
- ▶ The Security Council has the basic responsibility of maintaining peace and security in the world. The Security Council meets once a month but in the event of an emergency, a meeting may be held whenever required.

Organs of United Nations: The Security Council

The Functions of the Security Council are:

- ▶ To maintain international peace and security in the world.
- ▶ To investigate international disputes and recommend appropriate methods of settling them.
- ▶ To call on member states to apply economic sanctions against the aggressor and thus to put pressure on the guilty state to stop aggression.
- ▶ The Security Council may take military action against the aggressor, if required.

Organs of United Nations: The Economic and Social Council

- ▶ The Economic and Social Council consists of 54 members elected by the General Assembly for a three-year term.
- ▶ The ECOSOC discusses major economic and social issues. It is mainly concerned with the management of the UN's social, economic, cultural and humanitarian activities.
- ▶ It holds one four-week session each year in July, and since 1998, it has also held an annual meeting in April with finance ministers heading key committees of the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (IMF).

Organs of United Nations: The Economic and Social Council

The main functions of The Economic and Social Council are:-

- ▶ To promote economic and social progress.
- ▶ To solve problems relating to health, illiteracy, unemployment, etc.
- ▶ To coordinate the functions of the agencies of the UN like the International Monetary Fund (IMF), the International Labour Organization (ILO), the Food and Agricultural Organization (FAO), the World Health Organization (WHO), the United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), the United Nations International Children's Fund (UNICEF), etc.

Organs of United Nations: The Trusteeship Council

- ▶ The United Nations Trusteeship Council , one of the principal organs of the United Nations, was established to help ensure that trust territories were administered in the best interests of their inhabitants and of international peace and security.
- ▶ It was set up to ensure the proper administration and development of those areas of the world that were under foreign rule.
- ▶ The Council was also to take steps to help them attain self-government. By 1994, all Trust Territories had attained self-government. The Council will now meet only if required to do so.

Organs of United Nations: The International Court of Justice

- ▶ The International Court of Justice, located in The Hague, Netherlands, is the principal judicial organ of the United Nations.
- ▶ The International Court of Justice consists of 15 Judges from different countries elected by the General Assembly and the Security Council. They are elected for a nine-year term. No two judges can be citizens of the same country.
- ▶ Functions of the International Court of Justice:-
 - ▶ To settle disputes brought to it by member nations.
 - ▶ To provide legal advice to any organ of the UN on request.

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Organs of United Nations: The Secretariat

- ▶ The Secretariat is the principal administrative department of the UN. It is headed by the Secretary-General appointed by the General Assembly on the recommendation of the Security Council for a term of five years.
- ▶ The Secretariat organises conferences, oversees peace-keeping operations, drafts reports on economic and social trends, prepares studies on human rights, mediates in international disputes and prepares budget estimates.

Thank You