



THE UNITED NATIONS SECURITY COUNCIL REFORMS

Sandesha Perera, University of Kelaniya

Abstract

The need to reform the United Nations has been a widely discussed topic. Yet these reforms have been always obstructed due to the lack of consensus of the states. This paper pays attention mainly to the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) reforms and Veto power reforms while there are many more areas where reforms are needed. Security Council reforms are always a debatable topic in the UN agenda and considered as difficult to be reformed. This research is mainly based on qualitative data which provide in depth analysis into the discussed phenomenon. For the study it has utilized mainly the secondary data obtained from UN documents, journal articles and books. It is discussed that the Security Council needs to be broadened giving way to member states to represent them in the UNSC without confining it to the 5 powerful members who have been using the power for more than 7 decades so far. Also there have been debates that veto power should be abolished, which is again doubtful as the veto power holding members have to give their consent for that. Therefore all these reforms are merely for the time being word sake reforms which cannot be put in to practice in reality.

Key Words- United Nations, Reforms, Security Council, Veto power

Introduction

United Nations (UN) can be identified as the world's largest international organization comprising of 193 member states. The United Nations came in to existence after the misery of World War II with the aspiration to prevent another world war taking place. Before the establishment of the UN, there was the League of Nations which was established after the WWI with the aim of preventing the WWII, but the League of Nations was unsuccessful as the WW II took place. Therefore the United Nations was established and so far it has been a success as it was able to prevent another World War taking place despite being unable to prevent wars taking place around the world even at this moment. The UN comprises of 6 main organs to achieve the objectives of the United Nations, such as to prevent another world war taking place, protecting fundamental human rights, maintaining international law and promoting social development. Out of the 6 organs, the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) plays the major role in UN with the permanent 5 members. Due to this reason over the time, reforms have been proposed for the UNSC for the betterment and efficacy of the UN system.

Literature Review

In common terms, "reform" is aimed at improving performance and altering something for the betterment. It is concerned with repairing defects and overcoming constraints in order to achieve some higher state of performance or efficiency. Likewise the reforms to the UNSC are a highly timely topic right now in the international system.

The UNSC is becoming more and more powerless in the present world scenario. Therefore reforms are necessary for the betterment of the UN in order to make the objectives of the UN a reality. One of the main examples which shows the inefficiency and failure of UNSC is the Syrian crisis which takes place at the moment to which UNSC has no power. This is in addition to the powerless nature UNSC had during the crimes against humanity in Rwanda or The UN consists of sovereign states and when a decision is taken it should be taken unanimously by each member's consent. Yet, it is unable to take actions if member states, the major players in particular are divided in opinion and fail to make the decision based on consensus. So, the real cause of the UNSC arises due to the lack of political will of member

states to respect the fundamental principles in international relations and UN Charter. What one should bear in mind, however, is: one does not throw the baby together with the

Reform of the United Nations is a much discussed subject constantly on the UN agenda. UN reforms are necessary in order to strengthen the UN's effectiveness as a multilateral organization while bringing more transparency to the institution and enhancing its reliability. The main focus is on the reform of the Security Council, as it is the most powerful UN institution with the most potential for bringing change.

The UN reforms were based on four principles. They were,

- 1) UN should consider more about global issues rather than institutional issues.
- 2) UN should open avenues for the civil society group such as NGOs to voice the people's thoughts as people tend to voice their needs through the civil society groups rather than through democratic instruments.
- 3) The UN should take steps to connect the global and local institutions.
- 4) UN should work for the benefit of the society being an active actor in the international arena rather than merely being an intergovernmental organization.

The main objective of UN has been to maintain world peace and security, yet UN has been more successful in areas such as human rights and decolonization. Therefore it is necessary to realign UN's goals and its activities.

The world of 1945 was very different from the world in the 21st century. Also UN increased its number of member states from 51 to 193 while finding solutions to newly arisen global issues such as the lack of natural resources, the rapid population increase, environmental issues, climate change, weapons of mass destruction, and new internal conflicts which directly and indirectly pose a threat to the global peace and security.

Moreover, some of the UN's structures have shown great inefficiencies. UN has failed to collect membership fees of the member states, has failed to deploy successful peace keeping operations and being unable to prevent massive Rwanda genocide taking place.

Governments worldwide have given their consent for UN reforms; the issue is no member has been able to agree as to how these reforms should be done. Yet, there is a sharp disagreement on which aspects of UN should be reformed. This is due to the reason that making changes to the UN's complex structure and processes is exceptionally difficult, especially when it comes to constitutional changes and amendments to the UN Charter.

Methodology

The study has been mainly conducted using secondary data only and based on qualitative method. Secondary data has been obtained from the relevant fields of books, magazines, articles and other resources from internet.

Analysis

Security Council Reforms

Out of all the United Nations organs, United Nations Security Council (UNSC) is the most prominent with regard to its power and the ability to make a global influence.

The former Secretary-General Kofi Annan has stated that "No reform of the UN would be complete without reform of the Security Council" The SC is the UN's main executive body with the primary responsibility of maintaining international peace and security. Therefore reforms to the Security Council are widely agreed upon. Kofi Annan during his tenure brought forward many proposals for Security Council reforms which he named as "Renewing the United Nations". The proposed reforms included reducing the administrative costs, setting up a development account for poor countries, cut UN personnel and promote decentralized decision making at the country level.

If the UN Security Council is to be reformed, the following questions are to be considered.

They are,

- i. Would the enlargement of the UNSC improve the body's ability to act effectively and ensure peace and security in the world?
- ii. If another group of permanent members are added to the UNSC, would it increase the council's legitimacy or weaken the accountability?
- iii. Would simply expanding the UNSC qualify as a reform of the body?

In the contemporary world system, the Security Council does not represent the military and economic powers of states. Also there is no geographical balance in order to represent every region around the globe. Security Council still consists of the five permanent members, China, France, Russia, the UK and the US who were appointed at the very beginning in 1945, together with the ten non-permanent members who are elected by the GA every two years, making the other members of the UN less important as UNSC is the main decision making body of the UN. It is widely agreed that together with the decolonization and development, powerful states such as Germany and Japan, as well as of developing states such as South Africa, India, Egypt and Nigeria, should be given the Security Council permanent membership.

In addition to that the non permanent member seats of the Security Council do not represent the regional balance. The Asia-Pacific region is massively under-represented. The Asia-Pacific region accounts for roughly 55% of the world's population and 44% of its annual income but has just 20% (three out of 15) of the seats on the Security Council. This poses a great threat to the UN as Asia is the most populous and forceful region when it comes to international issues. Therefore in order to overcome this issue, one permanent seat can be offered to India while Countries like Japan and South Korea share one seat on a timely basis while ASEAN gets another seat. If these reforms are achieved, then it would be effective.

Moreover, the UNSC's working methods must be improved, regarding the transparency and reporting measures which would increase the efficiency of the UN.

Veto Power

The veto power is a very controversial issue in the United Nations. It gives the permanent members of the UNSC immense power together with a powerful and privileged position in world affairs. The veto was strongly opposed and was suggested to be abolished by many states stating the fact that how come only 5 states of the world decide on contentious issues in the world. Yet, abolishing the veto was considered as an unrealistic scenario because in order to abolish the veto the states who hold the veto should agree to abandon it. Also if there are to be new permanent members, there arises the issue whether the veto power should be granted to them as well. If the new permanent members are not granted the veto then it will create two groups of permanent members within the UNSC with the veto and without the veto.

Conclusion

Therefore as the conclusion, suggestions can be made persuading the permanent members to limit the use of their veto rather than abolishing it. Further it can be suggested that using the veto should be limited to international issues rather than national issues and also the permanent members should provide an explanation to the General Assembly for using their veto at any given situation.

Although expansion of the UNSC is highly discussed it is problematic as to which countries should be given the permanent membership. For an example even though Japan contributed immensely to the United Nations funds, Japan is not awarded the position of a permanent member. Therefore, it is suggested to represent the Security Council in regional blocs such as European Union, African Union and SAARC, rather than by individual countries. This is because; if the number of Security Council members goes high it would be even more difficult to get in to an agreement. Therefore to make the UNSC more effective the veto needs to be abolished.

In addition to that there are institutions such as Trusteeship Council which are not operating at the moment, yet in the existence as it is included in the UN Charter. Therefore the amendments to the UN charter itself are necessary to reform the UN as a whole. After all there should be changes in the UN system, yet the process of reform is a slow process and it should be done while not losing the global role of the United Nations. Therefore there seems to be no immediate reforms to the United Nations at the present context.

United Nations today is not a world government yet it can be considered as a stage for harmonizing interests of nations while utilizing its resources to the maximum to serve the nations. The United Nations should move its way forward promoting negotiations and formulating norms of international behavior. Since United Nations is an actor in the international system, new multilateral and bilateral partnerships would be of advantage for the whole system to reap more in the years to come and also to make the world a better place free from the scourge of war while ensuring economic and social development.

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