

NOT Freshman F

Reforming the Security Council

Hello, my name is Bryce McMahon and I am going to be one of your chairs at SOCOMUN XXVII! I will be a senior at Santa Margarita Catholic High School this coming September, and it will also be my fourth year in Model United Nations. For me, MUN is beneficial because it keeps me up to date with current events. In addition, it provides critical thinking skills and forces me to develop practical thinking strategies. Also, seeing that Model UN is filled with speaking during caucuses and speeches, my public speaking has improved significantly over the past three years. Personally, my favorite topics to debate are ones that involve health such as bacterial resistance and HIV/AIDS, and my favorite committee to participate in is the World Health Organization. With SMCHS MUN I have travelled to UC Santa Barbara, Georgetown University, and the University of Pennsylvania to participate in conferences, and this year I will be travelling to Prague to participate in a conference there! Besides debating in MUN, I am a full IB student and my hobbies include listening to podcasts, collecting sports cards, and creating music playlists.

My only hope for all delegates is that you will have an unforgettable experience here at SOCOMUN and that this conference will successfully propel you into your young MUN career. Once committee begins, we will start debate right away. Delegates will give speeches where they propose solutions for the topic at hand. To discuss these solutions more in depth, delegates can motion for unmoderated caucuses in which they can debate freely amongst each other to clarify and add more detail to them. Eventually, after much debate, resolutions will be drafted, we will present the resolutions, and then finally we will vote on them. An essential component of MUN is being aware of your country’s policy and sticking to it. If you stick to your country’s policy as well as thoroughly understand our topic, you will put yourself in the best position to succeed at SOCOMUN. If you have any questions, don’t hesitate to email me at [socomunnotf@gmail.com](mailto:socomunnotf@gmail.com) . I can’t wait to meet all of you this coming September. Best of luck to all of you!

Hello, my name is Alex Falino and I will be your legal at SOCOMUN this year! I am a junior at Santa Margarita Catholic High School and this will be my third year in MUN. MUN gives me opportunities to explore global situations and issues that I would not be exposed to in other classes, which is why I enjoy it. Apart from MUN, I am also on the Mock Trial team here at SMCHS, I manage the boys’ varsity soccer team, and I participate in a community service organization.

Hello, my name is Kate Lu and I am currently a sophomore. This is my second year of MUN and first time being a part of the dais. I am excited to be the secretary of this committee. MUN has enriched my experiences and greatly enhanced my public speaking skills when I am communicating with other delegates. It has helped me to be more aware of what is happening around the world. I am looking forward to this conference!

**Background:**

Since 1945, the Security Council has done its best to stick to its goal of maintaining international peace and security. In recent years, however, there has been much debate on many aspects of the council, including its credibility, involvement, and membership. When it comes to credibility, several nations believe that the Security Council is not nearly as effective at ending conflict that it used to be. For most people, the failures of the council in response to the crises in Cote d’Ivoire and Libya in 2011 are what they rely on to make this argument. While these conflicts were going on, the council was highly involved, but over time it began to withdraw its interest even though the crises were still active. Most susceptible to believe the council has been ineffective are European and Asian nations, especially members of the European Union (EU). Membership of the Security Council unexpectedly may just well be its most controversial component. In the council, there are five permanent members referred to as P5 members and ten temporary members which are elected by the General Assembly for two-year terms, and this makeup has not changed since its birth after World War II. The P5 nations have always included the United States of America, Russia, China, France, and the United Kingdom. A unique ability of these P5 nations is that they can veto any Security Council resolution on the floor. The “veto power” is a polarizing issue in the council simply because as a nation you can either believe it is fair or unfair. Some believe this power should be stripped from P5 nations and some believe it should be preserved. A popular opinion is that when P5 nations veto a resolution, this interferes with the council’s original promise (as mentioned above) to preserve peace and that if this power is removed, crises will instantly become easier to resolve. Nations that support the reformation of this privilege justify their stance by pointing out bias that permanent members have regarding the most pressing peace issues on the globe. For example, the situation in Syria comes to mind. This conflict is a civil war which has been evolving for more than 7 years now. It involves the government of Syria, especially leader Bashar Al-Assad, and thousands of dissidents across the nation. All 5 P5 nations are in some way in alliances when it comes to this issue. Russia supports the Syrian government, and since China is aligned with Russia, they also favor Assad. However, the United States, France, and United Kingdom all condemn Assad and call for an end to the conflict. The most prominent component of this issue is the alleged use of chemical weapons in by the government in the fighting. Even though this is highly illegal on all fronts, Russia supports Syria. Therefore, whenever a Security Council resolution which condemns Syria is drafted, Russia automatically vetoes it. For example, in April of 2018, Syria used chemical weapons on its people once again in the suburb of Douma, killing around 70 people. The council held an emergency meeting following this attack. They drafted a resolution which would punish Syria for its actions, but Russia predictably vetoed it. United States President Donald Trump then warned Syria, stating there would be a “big price to pay” for the attack. On April 14, the US, UK, and France carried out air strikes on Syrian chemical development and research centers. Are country-on-country attacks the last result due to the ineffectiveness of the council? That’s a question that must be answered. Russia was also notorious for vetoing Security Council during its conflict with Ukraine in 2014. Of course, any resolution which condemned Russia would be vetoed by Russia in this conflict, so there was effectively no point in drafting resolutions on this issue. Since the founding of the council, Russia has vetoed over one hundred resolutions. Not surprisingly, this makes it the member of the P5 which uses its veto power the most. The United States uses its veto power second to most frequently, and the rest of the permanent members, the United Kingdom, France, and China, rarely use this power. Another criticism of the Security Council is the actual composition of the P5. The P5 lacks contains no Latin American nations and does not have any members who are not significantly economically powerful. This makes the Security Council seem outdated, especially since it was formed around the victors of a war fought over 70 years ago. Some groups, such as one called the G4, have proposed alternative compositions of the council. The G4’s proposition is for the council to have 25 members (adding 6 permanent members and 4 non-permanent members). This expansion allows for two African nations, two Asian nations, one Latin American or Caribbean nation, and one other nation to become permanent members of the council. However, while this solves the problem of more international inclusion, the question becomes: does this plan intensify the problem of the veto power? Nonetheless, the chance of a plan like this working is close to nothing, considering the UN Charter would have to be redrafted and would have to pass with a 2/3 majority in the General Assembly. Much more realistic and crafty plans of actions must be imagined, and that is where all of you delegates step in.

**Possible Solutions:**

Because of the abundance of issues regarding the broader issue of reforming the Security Council, there are an abundance of creative solutions which can be crafted. Delegates who are brainstorming solutions should consider the most recent events in history, including current ones, and examine how the Security Council could have been improved/can improve to alleviate these issues more efficiently. A delegate could possibly create a three-pronged plan that solves each of the three main problems with the council (credibility, involvement, and membership) in one fatal swoop, a delegate could propose separate solutions for each of these, or a delegate could explore diverse issues with the council and propose solutions for those. For example, a viable solution to fix the credibility of the Security Council would be to write a UN draft resolution which states that if a crisis of mass destruction or casualties occur, the veto privilege is revoked. This would make many issues, especially the situation in Syria, instantly a lot easier to solve. This solution would uphold integrity in the international community and hold all nations accountable for their actions. For the problem of membership, nations in the committee will most likely debate whether to expand the council or keep it how it is. Either position is fine, as long as one sticks to country policy and understands the topic. If one wanted to expand the council, he or she could propose something similar to G4’s expansion plan mentioned in the background section of this paper, or he or she could propose something completely different. Personally, I believe membership is not the largest problem at hand and other issues in the council must be solved before we move on to this one. Another problem that needs to be solved in the council is its necessity to stay relevant, and it can do this by adapting to the 21st century. An expansion could be in order to resolve this predicament, but a delegate would be more realistic if they proposed solutions which involved improvements of the technologies of the council and the council’s actual powers when it comes to resolving conflicts first-hand. In the end, because of the amount of negativity surrounding the Security Council at the time, it’s necessary that it is reformed in some way. If another fruitless meeting regarding the Security Council is had, its state will only become worse. However, delegates must remember that most solutions proposed on this topic will require a re-drafting of the UN Charter, so feasibility of solutions should be considered before they are proposed. Also, remember that we do not have to worry about funding because it is assumed this will be taken care of the United Nation’s 3rd committee of the General Assembly, which allocates funding. Remember three things: keep your solutions creative, keep your solutions feasible, and when proposing solutions, stick to your country’s policy. Keeping these tips in mind and following them will make you a unique delegate and put you in the best position to succeed at this conference.

**Questions to consider:**

1. What is your country’s position on reforming the Security Council (are you for or against reformation)?
2. Is your country involved in the Security Council, and if so, to what capacity? If not, would you like to become involved?
3. Has your country ever been hit by a crisis that could not be solved by the Security Council due to its ineffectiveness?
4. Is your country in an alliance with one of the permanent members of the Council (US, Russia, China, France, UK)?
5. How does your country feel about Security Council expansion?
6. What is your country’s opinion on the veto power?
7. How should the Security Council handle the situation in Syria involving Syria, Russia, the US, the UK, and France? Which side of the issue does your nation lean? What is the best way to reform the Security Council to solve *this* solution?
8. Are there any non-UN bodies or organizations, such as regional, national or non-governmental organizations (NGOs) that would be beneficial in addressing the issues pertaining to reforming the Security Council?
9. How important is it to your nation to include nations from the African and South American continents at permanent members of the Security Council?
10. How will your solutions be implemented in the international community?

Works Cited

1. “Security Council Reform.” *Background on Security Council Reform*, Global Policy Forum, 2005, www.globalpolicy.org/security-council/security-council-reform/49885.html?itemid=1321.

This article provides a detailed background on the problems that currently exist within the Security Council and why they need to be addressed. It also gives information on what blocs around the world have proposed reforms to the Security Council. This article believes to be reliable, and it also has links attached to other UN documents that go into greater detail of what certain countries are in favor of what resolutions. This source would be very useful for the background portion of the topic synopsis because it gives an overall summary of the topic.

1. “Updated Security Council Must Reflect Changing Global Reality, Member States Say, as General Assembly Debates Ways to Advance Progress on Reform | Meetings Coverage and Press Releases.” *United Nations*, United Nations, 7 Nov. 2016, www.un.org/press/en/2016/ga11854.doc.htm.

This article gives readers different perspectives on Security Council reform from many different countries. It gives the statements of over 50 speakers, all from different countries, on what their position is on Security Council reform. There does not seem to be any bias in this article as it is simply giving the words that representatives from each country believes. This source would be best for the country policy part of the paper as its main focus is what each country believes is the right decision.

1. “Security Council Reform.” *Security Council Reform*, www.centerforunreform.org/?q=securitycouncil.

This source explains why there is still an issue in reforming the Security Council. It gives recent information on any new changes that have happened and who is involved in these changes. Between my first article and this one, they could both be used as background as the first one explains the problem, and this one gives an understanding of why the problem still exists. It can also be used to help find solutions and to see what has been tried in the past to understand what change needs to happen in the future. While the website seems to be in strong favor of reforming the Security Council, this article does not prove to have bias because it just gives facts of recent events.

1. “Calling for Security Council Reform, General Assembly President Proposes Advisory Group to Move Process Forward | Meetings Coverage and Press Releases.” *United Nations*, United Nations, 7 Nov. 2013, www.un.org/press/en/2013/ga11450.doc.htm.

This source is a written press conference of a meeting that called for Security Council Reform and describes changes moving forward. There is no bias in this article and it is very reliable as it came directly from the United Nations website and was written down from the 46th and 47th meetings. This would be best used for UN involvement because it gives a background of resolutions that have been passed in the past. It also provides information on the General Assembly’s position on reforming the Security Council.

1. Cristol, Jonathan. “Don't Reform the Security Council.” *World Policy*, 2 Feb. 2018, worldpolicy.org/2015/09/21/dont-reform-the-security-council/.

This article is useful in a different sense as it shows the other side of the argument. The author explains why the Security Council does and should not be reformed by providing facts that disprove the arguments of those who believe the UN Security Council should be reformed. While it can be taken as a bias article, it is also important to get an understanding of the opposing side to view any loopholes in the solutions that may be proposed. This can best be used for the solutions section of the topic synopsis because it gives reasons for any countries on why they would be against reforming the Security Council.

1. Gowan, Richard. “U.N. Security Council Reform is Dead. That’s Still a Problem.” *World Politics Review*, World Politics Review. 27 Nov. 2017. Web. 26 March 2018. https://www.worldpoliticsreview.com/articles/23677/u-n-security-council-reform-is-dead-that-s-still-a-problem

This article gives the readers a brief overview of the challenges concerning the reformation of the Security Council. The P5 countries have tried to block reforms of the UN Charter and secure their positions. However, with the G4 countries being more active over the recent decades, it seems like their positions are being threatened. The current situation has turned into a deadlock. Delegates should keep in mind how to solve the problems addressed by the author as they are reading the article. This is a good source for writing solutions.

1. “Security Council Reform | General Assembly of the United Nations.” *United Nations*, United Nations. Web. 26 March 2018. https://www.un.org/pga/72/2017/11/07/question-of-equitable-representation-on-and-increase-in-the-membership-of-the-security-council/.

This source includes the delivered speech from the president of the 72nd session of the General Assembly on Security Council Reformation last November. With the same objective as all delegates of this committee, the president has pointed out that the Security Council needs to keep up with the pace of the modern world. He also stressed the need for dialogues and communications between the Member States for compromises to be made. This is an excellent source for writing the opening speech as well as background research for the paper as it includes the general situation and history of the United Nations Security Council.

1. “Security Council Reform: Why It Matters and Why It’s Not Happening.” *OpenSecurity*, openDemocracy, 07 Nov. 2013. Web. 26 March 2018. https://www.opendemocrarcy.net/opensecurity/sonia-rothwell/security-council-reform-why-it-matters-and-why-its-not-happening

UNSC faced challenges in its Council as many member states refuse to give up their positions, or that the veto power has been used beneficially to the individual state only. It is important to note that the purpose of the Security Council is to serve the global community in dealing with international crises, not national interest. This source has articulated the present difficult relationship between member states, which might affect the decisions of the UNSC. However, this source has also listed some of the possible solutions that are being called for by multiple groups from different standpoints. This is a reliable source that includes the Security Council reform paradox.

1. “The Necessity of Reforming the UN Security Council.” *TransConflict*, TransConflict. 18 May 2017. Web. 26 March 2018. www.transconflict.com/2017/05/the-necessity-of-reforming-the-un-security-council-185/

As the author of this article has pointed out, the Security Council reflects the decision in 1945 but not of today. The positions of the Permanent 5 is not suited to dealing with present issues in the world. Their veto power has been debatable. On the other hand, the addition of members will make the Council look more equitable, but it is associated with each country’s own interests. This unbiased article talks about this issue on both perspectives. When doing research, delegates can reference this site and its arguments to reinforce their own solutions. Answering questions listed in the article can help with writing the paper for this conference.

1. Welle, Deutsche. “Will the UN Security Council Ever Be Reformed?” www.dw.com/en/will-the-un-security-council-ever-be-reformed/a-41045697

The failures of the UNSC have lead many people to doubt its credibility when it comes to dealing with international issues. With the expansion and growing powers of the G4 countries, many states think that it is a time for changes to be made. India, as one of the G4 countries, is on the waiting list to be a part of the permanent members. A question that all delegates need to bear in mind when doing research is that with the addition of member states (note that they have veto powers), how effective will it contribute to ensuring security? Many more questions are being discussed in this article. Delegates can use these questions to help with writing research and writing solutions.