

INDIA'S UNSC CAMPAIGN FOR TEMPORARY SEAT

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India is campaigning for a non-permanent seat on the United Nations Security Council (UNSC). This effort is focused on the theme of Securing Holistic Advancement through Norms, Trust, and Integrity (SHANTI). The election for the term covering 2028-2029 will take place in 2027, during which the External Minister of India, Shri S. Jaishankar, has officially launched the campaign. This initiative represents a significant step for India as it seeks to navigate the existing challenges involved in securing a permanent seat on the UNSC. The drive is not solely about gaining membership; it emphasises India's commitment to fostering global stability, peace, and security. By advocating for a role in the UNSC, India aims to contribute effectively to discussions on critical issues affecting the international community.

In 2025, the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) clearly stated that India accords “highest priority to securing permanent membership for India”¹ by engaging both at bilateral as well as multilateral levels. In 2025, the MEA also confirmed that 5,206 personnel from India were serving UN Peacekeeping missions, which included troops, staff, police personnel and experts.² Jaishankar, in 2026, further added that India’s total personnel till date contributing to UN Peacekeeping missions is three lakh to fifty UN missions.³ He iterated the value that India would add to decision-making in the UNSC with its membership. India has served eight terms earlier as a non-permanent member and strengthened its presence in global governance, contributing not only in peacekeeping missions, but also in strengthening counter-terrorism and maritime security.

Non-permanent membership is viewed as a stepping stone to achieve permanent membership. This dream has become a cornerstone in Jaishankar’s advocacy for India’s temporary membership in the UNSC who has been constantly vocal about the need for reforms in the UNSC.

Jaishankar views India’s position in the UNSC as a state which could work for a “secure, peaceful and equitable world where the voice of the Global South is heard in equal measure.”⁴ He also stresses the need for multilateralism to “reflect contemporary realities and provide effective solutions, not remaining a bystander.”⁵ Jaishankar’s solution-based approach to UNSC membership rather than a state solely identifying challenges should make India a strong contender for the seat.

¹ “Question No- 2149 India’s Seat in UNSC,” *Ministry of External Affairs*, December 15, 2025, <QUESTION NO- 2149 INDIA’S SEAT IN UNSC>

² “Question No- 3336 Indian In UN Peacekeeping Operation,” *Ministry of External Affairs*, December 19, 2025, <QUESTION NO- 3336 INDIANS IN UN PEACEKEEPING OPERATION>

³ “India Launches Campaign For UN Security Council Seat For 2028-29 Term,” *News on Air*, July 14, 2026, <India launches campaign for UN Security Council seat for 2028 | Akashvani News>

⁴ “EAM Jaishankar launches India’s UNSC campaign for 2028-2029,” *The Hindu*, July 14, 2026, <EAM Jaishankar launches India’s UNSC campaign for 2028-29 term - The Hindu>

⁵ “EAM Jaishankar launches India’s UNSC campaign for 2028-2029,” *The Hindu*, July 14, 2026, <EAM Jaishankar launches India’s UNSC campaign for 2028-29 term - The Hindu>

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His perspective is clear. India not only understands the complexities of global order in the present circumstances, but also has the capability to deliver effective solutions both in intellectual capacity as well as in administrative and logistic support to strengthen the UNSC. He praises technological advancements in the global order but also identifies the need for safeguards against their misuse and misapplication. While noting the need for strengthening maritime security, he identifies ways to do so by keeping oceans safe and secure.⁶

He identifies the threat from terrorism but also provides a viable solution of choking the resources that feed it. He stresses sustainable growth through "climate action and climate justice, and clean energy transitions."⁷ He reiterates his Prime Minister's notion for a broader framework of the UNSC allowing for more representation, especially from the Global South. Jaishankar presents India as an action-oriented country with a solution-based approach: the key today for a state to achieve success in a multilateral forum.

India's permanent membership has been supported by the United States, United Kingdom, France, and Russia- the four permanent member states of the UNSC. In 2026, French President Emmanuel Macron acknowledged and supported India's bid for permanent membership in the UNSC.⁸ In

⁶ "EAM Jaishankar launches India's UNSC campaign for 2028-29 term - The Hindu", *The Hindu*, July 14, 2026, <EAM Jaishankar launches India's UNSC campaign for 2028-29 term - The Hindu>

⁷ "EAM Jaishankar launches India's UNSC campaign for 2008-2009," *The Hindu*, July 14, 2026, <EAM Jaishankar launches India's UNSC campaign for 2028-29 term - The Hindu>

⁸ "India-France Joint Statement (February 7, 2026,) <India – France Joint Statement (February 17, 2026)>

2025, the then UK Prime Minister, Keir Starmer, also made a strong case for India's permanent membership in the UNSC, citing India's "remarkable growth story and its expanding role in global affairs."⁹ India has gathered similar support from the United States as well. Russia also voiced the need to revamp the UNSC, keeping in mind the current global landscape.¹⁰

However, China is the only country which has ironically denied India permanent membership: a gesture that could be viewed as a stabbing in the back. This is because India was gracious enough to suggest Beijing's accession into the UNSC permanent membership- an act of brotherhood and kindness of the then Prime Minister, Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, which China never returned with favours. This was a missed opportunity for China to develop a real-time bond with India that would have benefited both countries in strengthening the region.

India, however, has also received credible support for permanent membership from countries like New Zealand, Japan, Germany, Brazil, the Netherlands, which viewed India as a natural and prime choice, Slovakia, and Seychelles.

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⁹ "India Should Get Rightful Place in UNSC: UK Keir Starmer", *DD News*, October 9, 2025, < India should get rightful place in UNSC: UK PM Keir Starmer | DD News>

¹⁰ "Russia Reiterates Its Support For India's Bid For A Permanent Seat In UNSC," *News in Air*, September 28, 2025, <Russia reiterates its support for India's bid for a permanent seat in UNSC | Akashvani News>



WHY THE UNSC NEEDS TO BE BROADENED?

UNSC framework for both temporary and permanent membership will need more refinement and broader participation to enable the UNSC to strengthen global as well as regional security. European security, for instance, cannot rely only on France, Britain and Russia's representation as permanent members. Many European countries are grappling with their own security concerns that do not align with the framework or belief systems of the European permanent members.

When five countries received permanent membership, the security situation circumventing the global order was different. However, today the security situation circumventing the global order is more complex, complemented with technologically advanced systems that undermine security. This means that only one power from a region may not become the right voice for UNSC reform. This issue has also been identified by India's MEA regarding the broader framework to include more countries from the Global South.

Globalisation is a common and unavoidable phenomenon today. Thus, it would be wrong to believe that a regional turmoil would not affect countries in other regions that could be dependent on the countries in turmoil in many ways. The recent crisis in the Middle East coerces global powers to reflect on the need to protect choke points, failing which non-traditional aspects of security become difficult to achieve for many states.

The Uniting for Consensus (UfC) remains a thorn for India alongside China's possible veto. However, Beijing does claim that it "understands and respects" India's desire to play a larger role in the UNSC. Thus, it is probably time for Beijing to outgrow its India-centric concerns and view New Delhi as a key partner in the UNSC to resolve challenging security concerns. China's defiance of India's permanent membership keeps India away from raising key issues that could aid China's own allies like Russia in matters of Ukraine. India has already matured as a state, which is clear when the External Minister highlights Western influence to arm states that do not view India's growth in a positive light, but he refrains from being recalcitrant about it. States must mature from old school security theories like 'security dilemma' and progress towards 'strategic imperatives to foster growth' if true globalisation needs to be implemented.

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The UfC demands non-permanent seats but voices to curb the expansion of permanent seats. But permanent members must overlook these contentions and seek to expand the UNSC to cater to voices that could bring significant changes to regional as well as global security. During the recent Middle East crisis, the author warned of a possible blockade of the choke point, the Strait of Hormuz, which eventually happened.

In fact, it is strange that Pakistan does not wish to join permanent membership owing to its interest in becoming a major player in the Middle East in recent times. It is also strange that South Korea opposes such expansion owing to its concerns against Japan's accession to permanent membership. These concerns are despite the two countries sharing a common adversary, North Korea, with nuclear weapons capabilities.

It is also noteworthy that the United States allows such discrepancies to exist among states that are crucial forward bases of the country. Italy, which leads this UfC group, must also realise the fallacies of relying on alliances for protection and security and seeking power and privileges that grant a state its own voice to fight its own security concerns. Surely, it cannot depend on European countries which are permanent members of UNSC to voice its concerns.

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THE SILVER LINING FOR INDIA

India's ratification of the Additional Protocol with the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) in 2014 makes it a perfect country to become a permanent member of the UNSC. The Indo-US nuclear deal and US waiver on the Nuclear Suppliers' Group (NSG) for India clearly indicate India's responsible position as a nuclear energy power.

India's nuclear weapons have always been for defensive purposes, with India adopting a strong stance on its nuclear doctrine by choosing to refrain from using nuclear weapons first with a 'no-first use' doctrine. India has strongly supported nuclear disarmament despite being a nuclear weapons power. However, for India to support the cause of nuclear disarmament diligently, it must be recognised as a nuclear weapons state (NWS). India has long argued for remaining outside the purview of the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT), despite being one of the few non-member states to have followed its guidelines faithfully.

A permanent membership to the UNSC could elevate India's status to an NWS in future solely because of its high moral standards regarding its nuclear weapons. China's 'no-first use' doctrine is conditional and does not apply to territories that Beijing considers its own. India's nuclear doctrine does not have any such limitations that subject mankind to human rights violations. It will only detach the condition of 'no-first use' from the use of chemical or biological weapons. This could lead India to become a member of the NPT also. Thus, denying India the scope to join the UNSC as a permanent member, China denies India's progress towards non-proliferation mechanisms that could strengthen global non-proliferation efforts. Once India can gain access to NPT membership, it could also legally mediate conflict issues between states that are NPT members.

India is also strictly against the non-proliferation of both nuclear weapons as well as delivery platforms and strictly adheres to Missile Technology Control Regime (MTCR) guidelines to transfer missile systems to friendly countries. India is also a signatory to the International Convention for the Suppression of Acts of Nuclear Terrorism in 2006. India is a signatory to both the Chemical Weapons Convention as well as the Biological Weapons Convention.

While India expects international order to reflect upon India's plight against terrorism, it has also become self-sufficient to combat the same. This is a major development in India's security framework that promotes zero tolerance for terrorism without having to indulge in a full-fledged conflict, unless in one or two cases. India's terrorism concern has expanded beyond the geographic borders of the South Asian periphery. India's counter terrorism strategy now revolves around a strong legal paradigm



CONCLUSION

India is vouching for UNSC non-permanent membership. However, it will also become a stepping stone for demanding a permanent seat in the UNSC. India is fulfilling the global criterion to become a permanent member. This membership would not only elevate India's own stand in the global arena, but also become conducive for the UNSC to gain perspectives of countries of regions that need more understanding owing to challenging security paradigms.

Perspectives and perceptions of countries that do not support such changes in the UNSC framework must be considered. India's own threat perceptions must be highlighted. Even though New Delhi continues to remain a victim of sponsored terrorism from state systems that are now extending beyond South Asian borders, it must focus on growth and development-driven approaches to secure its place in the UNSC. India

must continue to highlight its strengths and opportunities while providing solutions to its threat environment and its limitations. Terrorism no longer curbs India's rise, and India must make that clear to the world. This is also precisely the reason why the external minister provides a solution-based approach to avail UNSC membership rather than a victim-based mindset.

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