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An Enduring Concept for Security Council Reform

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Author(s)

Klaus Schlichtmann

ABSTRACT

UN Security Council reform has been lingering over the years, since it was first seriously considered in the 1990s, after the collapse of the Soviet Union. This paper argues that enlarging the Security Council by adding new permanent and non-permanent members, while many of the Charter provisions vital for the maintenance of international peace and security and disarmament are not in effect, would be counterproductive. Instead, the composition of the Council should be reshuffled and expanded by giving a seat to a prominent member of the Global South, i.e. India, and replacing the seats of France and Britain with a single European representation. While there would be no increase or change in the number of permanent and non-permanent members, the result will be a dramatic increase in the numbers of people represented by the Permanent Five, which then will, in effect, comprise half of the world's population projected for 2012. The underlying logic is that increasing the number of permanent members (P5) would make the Security Council not only less effective, but also prevent the realization of a fundamental purpose of the United Nations, i.e. the transition from an armed to an unarmed peace. By maintaining the number 5, the effective operation of the consensus principle required for the maintenance of international peace and security during the transition is ensured. It is maintained that the changes proposed in this paper may be regarded as "purely procedural" under Article 27 paragraph 2 of the Charter. It will be seen, however, that to trigger the process of the transition, UN Member states (other than the P5, who bear responsibility under the Charter to guarantee safe passage during the transition) must begin, one by one, to delegate "Security Sovereignty" to the Council.

KEYWORDS

Transitional Security Arrangements/Transition Period, Collective Security, Consensus Principle/Veto, Limitation/Delegation Of Sovereign Powers, International Security, Disarmament

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