

1. UNSC reforms are long called for. Many emerging economies including India are pressing for immediate reforms. Why? Analyse. Also discuss the interests of countries like Japan, Brazil and Germany to get permanent membership of the UNSC.

Approach

Introduce with generally by giving a background of United Nations and then contextualise to the need for reforms. In next part mention various reasons for reforms in United Nations and finally mention what are the interests of G4 countries in general and India in particular. Make an optimistic conclusion with India being at the centre of change.

Introduction:

The United Nations (UN) was set up, 75 years ago, with the principal aim of maintaining world peace and security. It has been successful in the decolonisation process and preventing another World War. However, the 21st century world is very different from that 20th century and poses many new problems and realities.

Body

Need for reforms in United Nations

- **Defunct UNSC:** The United Nations Security Council (UNSC) is the UN's main executive body with the primary responsibility of maintaining international peace and security.
- However, the veto powers possessed by the UNSC's five permanent members are used as an instrument to shore up their geopolitical interests, regardless of the disastrous consequences for the victims of armed conflict. As it can be seen in Syria, Iraq, etc.
- Further, It does not reflect today's distribution of military and economic power, nor a geographical balance. Thus, the structure of the 15-member Security Council ought to be more democratic and representative.
- This has been long overdue on the demand, especially from the Group of 4 (G4) countries — Brazil, Germany, India and Japan — which advocate a permanent seat for all of them.
- **General Assembly Reforms:** The UN General Assembly (UNGA) can only make non-binding recommendations, which is another reason for ineffectiveness of the UN and another important issue of UN reform.
- **Undermining of Associated UN Bodies** The Economic and Social Council has been criticised, as it has become overshadowed by institutions such as the IMF and the World Bank, which are lacking democratic processes, transparency, and accountability.
- **UN's Financial Crisis:** It can be said that the UN has a lot to do but it has too little money, as it is in a permanent financial crisis due to the unwillingness of

many members to pay their contributions on time. As long as the UN's budget remains tightly constrained, it cannot be effective.

- **Toothless UN Peacekeeping Operation:** While the vast number of international law treaties affecting international trade, economics and human rights has proved very effective, laws prohibiting the use of force have been less so. Thus, there is a need to include more personnel and carry out structural reforms for the UN Peacekeeping Operations.

Emerging challenges to the present order:

- **Rise of New Cold War:** Conflict between the US on the one hand and China and Russia on the other has become a new reality in West-East Conflict.
- **Divided West:** Despite the enduring post-War alliances, there is a growing divergence between US and its European partners on many global issues.
- Some of the differences between the US and the other powers is very visible in the Iran Nuclear Deal.
- Further, rejection of post-War multilateralism and post-Cold War globalism is at the heart of Trump's "America First" foreign policy.
- **Ineffectiveness of UN:** The UN has been unable to respond effectively to the once-in-a-century global crisis triggered by the coronavirus. At the UN Security Council, China blocked a serious discussion on the origin and sources of the crisis. While the US walked out of the World Health Organisation on allegation of supporting China.

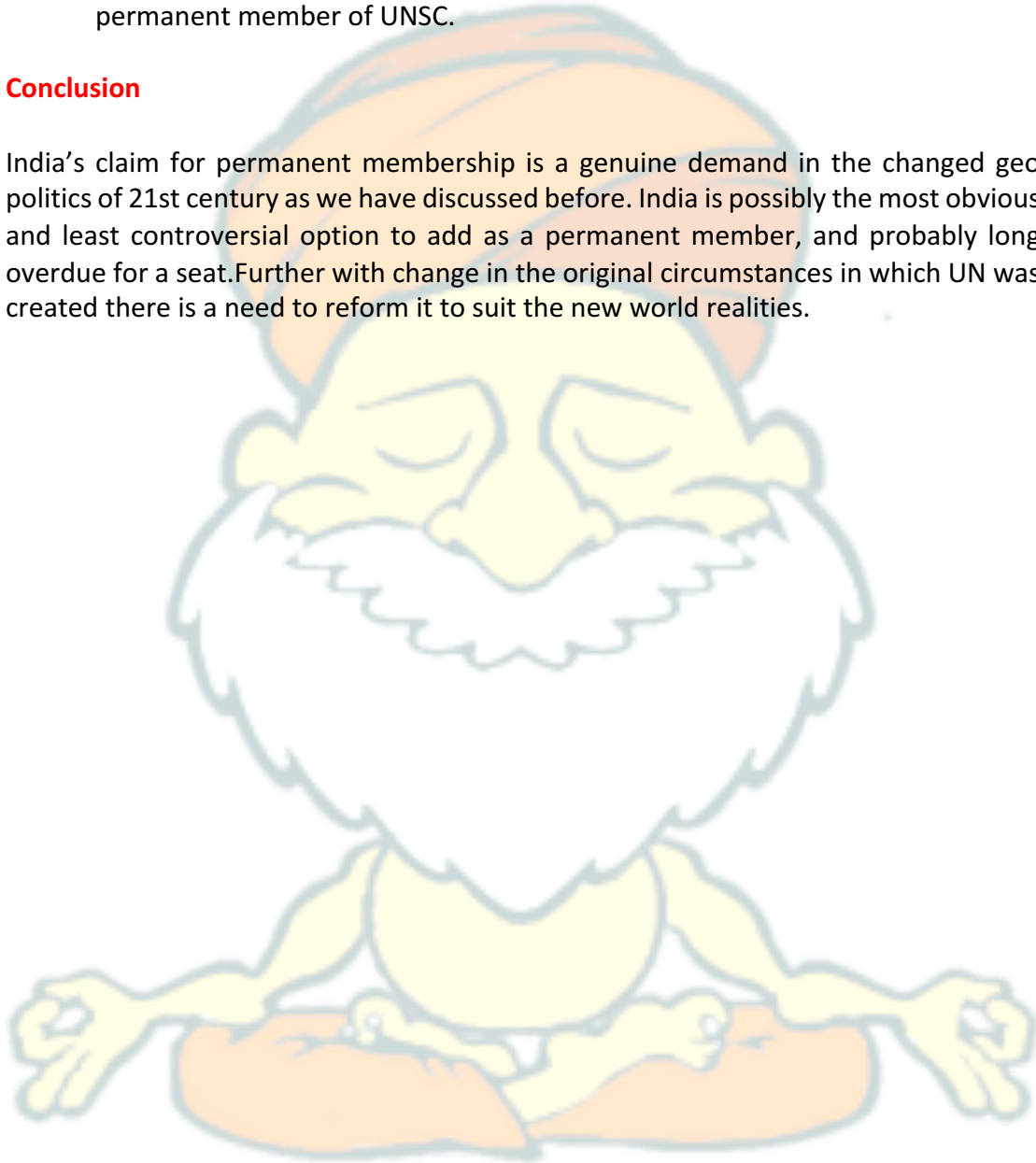
Interests of G4 for UN reforms:

- **Ensuring greater representation for Africa:** Africa needs to be represented in both the permanent and non-permanent categories of UNSC to correct the historical injustice against this continent with regard to its under-representation in the Security Council.
- **Enhanced role of developing countries and of major contributors to the UN:** To make UNSC more legitimate, effective and representative, it is needed to increase the number of permanent (from 5 to 11) and non-permanent (from 10 to 14) seats.
- New included members will get to say in the matters of war and peace, effectively UNSC move towards a democratic set up where nations like India can put up their matters more strongly and vehemently with support of their partner nations.
- India can represent or lead other countries to stop western forces from promoting their vested interests. Invasion of Iraq, bombing of Libya, non-recognition of Palestine state are few examples.
- Currently, veto power is a unique privilege of the permanent members, in the regional context China can exercise this power in matters of war and peace in its own interest.
- With India getting veto power it will dilute China's elite status in Asia and will help India to put forward its interest in a better way.

- With India's background of continued support of UN's peace keep missions since 1945 India can assert more productively its stand on various international issues.
- If India becomes a permanent member of UNSC it can shift focus on developing nation's interest which is the current demand due to visible shift in focus from west to Asia in world dynamics. Thus India will have leverage in geopolitics, military, economic and political groupings and negotiations as permanent member of UNSC.

Conclusion

India's claim for permanent membership is a genuine demand in the changed geo politics of 21st century as we have discussed before. India is possibly the most obvious and least controversial option to add as a permanent member, and probably long overdue for a seat. Further with change in the original circumstances in which UN was created there is a need to reform it to suit the new world realities.



2. The UN is the only universal body we all have, the one organisation to which every country in the world belongs; if it is discredited, the world as a whole will lose an institution that is irreplaceable. Critically comment.

Approach

Make a general informative introduction on united nations. In next part write what is the importance of United nations in different fields. Make counter view with need for reforms in the United Nations. Make a summary based conclusion of the whole analysis.

Introduction

The United Nations is an international organisation founded in 1945. Currently made up of 193 Member States, the UN and its work are guided by the purposes and principles contained in its founding Charter. The UN has evolved over the years to keep pace with a rapidly changing world. Recent session amid pandemic was its 75th Anniversary session. It has been a single uniting block in the world over the years amid many fault lines.

Body

Importance of United Nations

Peace and Security

- **Maintaining Peace and Security:** By sending peacekeeping and observer missions to the world's trouble spots over the past six decades, the United Nations has been able to restore calm, allowing many countries to recover from conflict.
- **Preventing Nuclear Proliferation:** For over the five decades, the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) has served as the world's nuclear inspector. IAEA experts work to verify that safeguarded nuclear material is used only for peaceful purposes. To date, the Agency has safeguards agreements with more than 180 States.
- **Supporting Disarmament:** UN treaties are the legal backbone of disarmament efforts: the Chemical Weapons Convention-1997 has been ratified by 190 States,
- **Preventing genocide:** The United Nations brought about the first-ever treaty to combat genocide—acts committed with the intent to destroy a national, ethnical, racial or religious group. For example :The 1948 Genocide Convention has been ratified by 146 States, which commits to prevent and punish actions of genocide in war and in peacetime. The UN tribunals for Yugoslavia and Rwanda, as well as UN-supported courts in Cambodia, have put would-be genocide perpetrators on notice that such crimes would no longer be tolerated.

Economic Development

- Promoting Development: Since 2000, promoting living standards and human skills and potential throughout the world have been guided by the Millennium Development Goals.
- Recently formulated sustainable development goals envisages a sustainable future for whole humanity.
- Fighting Hunger: The Food and Agriculture Organisation of the UN (FAO) leads global efforts to defeat hunger. FAO also helps developing countries to modernise and improve agriculture, forestry and fisheries practices in ways that conserve natural resources and improve nutrition.

Social Development

- Preserving Historic, Cultural, Architectural and Natural Sites: The UNESCO has helped 137 countries to protect ancient monuments and historic, cultural and natural sites.
- It has negotiated international conventions to preserve cultural property, cultural diversity and outstanding cultural and natural sites. More than 1,000 such sites have been designated as having exceptional universal value - as World Heritage Sites. Taking the lead on global issues:
- The first United Nations conference on the environment (Stockholm, 1972) helped to alert world public opinion on the dangers faced by our planet, triggering action by governments.
- The first world conference on women (Mexico City, 1985) put women's right, equality and progress on the global agenda.
- Other landmark events include the first international conference on human rights (Teheran, 1968), the first world population conference (Bucharest, 1974) and the first world climate conference (Geneva, 1979).

Human Rights

- UN General Assembly adopted the Universal Declaration of Human Rights in 1948. It has helped to enact dozens of legally binding agreements on political, civil, economic, social and cultural rights.
- Fostering Democracy: The UN promotes and strengthens democratic institutions and practices around the world, including by helping people in many countries to participate in free and fair elections. In the 1990s, the UN organised or observed landmark elections in Cambodia, El Salvador, South Africa, Mozambique and Timor-Leste.

Environment

- Climate change is a global problem that demands a global solution. The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), which brings together 2,000 leading climate change scientists, issues comprehensive scientific assessments every five or six years.
- Protecting the Ozone Layer: The UNEP and the World Meteorological Organisation (WMO) have been instrumental in highlighting the damage caused to Earth's ozone layer.
- Banning Toxic Chemicals: The Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants-2001 seeks to rid the world of some of the most dangerous chemicals ever created.

International Law

- Prosecuting War Criminals: By prosecuting and convicting war criminals, the UN tribunals established for the former Yugoslavia and for Rwanda have helped to expand international humanitarian and international criminal law dealing with genocide and other violations of international law.
- The International Criminal Court is an independent permanent court that investigates and prosecutes persons accused of the most serious international crimes—genocide, crimes against humanity and war crimes—if national authorities are unwilling or unable to do so.

Health

- Promoting Reproductive and Maternal Health: United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) is promoting the right of individuals to make their own decisions on the number and spacing of their children through voluntary family planning programmes.
- Responding to HIV/AIDS: United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS) coordinates global action against an epidemic that affects some 35 million people.
- Recent response to the corona pandemic with setting up of Covax vaccine facility to help developing nations access cheap vaccines to inoculate its population.

But with all its essential functions there also arise a need for reforms in United nations due to these reasons:

- It doesn't represent the current need of the 21st century. The current pandemic is an example where there was initial trade bans and rising vaccine nationalism which shows how UN has failed to build a global community feeling.
- The UN is dominated by the UNSC which restricts voices of other nations in crucial areas especially on development for Africa and developing countries.
- The rising threats to multilateralism with unilateral trade bans, the rising cold war between major powers of USA and China.
- The dependence of UN on big powers for its philanthropic needs is hindrance to true support system which is not politically motivated.

Conclusion

UN is a very important organisation for which there is no replacement in near future and it has been very successful in its initial tasks but it has to reform itself as per the changing global order and multipolar world to stay relevant to today's times.

3. What do you understand by the term 'Maritime Silk Road'? Critically examine its implications vis-a-vis India's interests**Approach**

Explain what is maritime silk road .In next part mention negative implications for India.Balance the negative implications with possible positive outcomes for India's greater engagement.In conclusion take a pragmatic view in the view of current geopolitics.

Introduction

Maritime Silk Route will be a Sea counter part of it's OBOR (One Belt One Road i.e. land silk route), which will drastically transform its connectivity with Indian Ocean littoral states and countries of South East Asia. The proposed port cities and maritime infrastructure will become conduit of economic cooperation and will elevate China to a strategic vantage.

Body

Implications for India:Negative

- Opacity in MSR: Though China has carefully projected MSR as an exclusive commercial venture, it has not yet released the details about the project, making countries (including India) apprehensive about its tacit & tactic military intensions.
- Doubtful credential: China's positioning of an exploration rig in the Vietnam's EEZ, its skirmishes with Philippines over the Scarborough reef, and the aggressive patrols off the Senkaku islands clearly shows Chinese intensions in the Western Pacific are anything but benign. With unsettled issues of sovereignty and sovereign jurisdiction over disputed Islands in the South China Sea and the East Sea, Beijing's expectation of a free-pass to create an entire infrastructure corridor in a contested maritime space, appears seriously doubtful.
- Strategic encircling and string of pearls: India has serious apprehensions that the maritime infrastructure will legitimise Chinese army positioning in the Indian Ocean. The China-Pakistan economic corridor, Gwadar port and growing proximity with India's maritime neighbours can hugely impair India's strategic role in its maritime neighbourhood.
- Indian endorsement of Chinese hegemony: If India joins the race of availing cheap Chinese Infrastructure fund without ensuring it's detailed long term impact and underlying motive, it will end up endorsing Chinese hegemonic stance and loose the confidence of the regional states as an worthy balancer of growing Chinese dominance.
- Chinese ambition in African Resource: With Chinese eye on emerging African economy and it's huge untapped resource, the MSR may turn a surrogate for giant Chinese SLOC, setting up Chinese logistical hubs in the Indian Ocean. This

can bring in stiff competition for India as a natural economic partner of Africa (India enjoys a strategic advantage in Africa owing to its historical and cultural linkages).

Possible advantages (If India -China relations remain stable)

- Huge opportunity for maritime economic cooperation: In the backdrop of slowing Chinese export, India can leverage its low cost labour and raw-material. MSR presents an opportunity to strengthen India's manufacturing base, propagate its 'Make in India' campaign, and generate employment opportunities.
- Port led Development: MSR has the potential to act as a vital supplement to the the proposed "Sagarmala" project if properly integrated with Bangladesh-China-India-Myanmar (BCIM) and other existing regional maritime infrastructure.
- Maritime Security force multiplier: India can partner the superior Chinese Navy to ensure peace security in the Indian Ocean Rim, which is prone to various security threats ranging from piracy to maritime terrorism. (Indian Navy being the sole security provider in the entire region).
- Political Dividend: Enhanced maritime cooperation and increased Chinese investment will lead to China developing greater stake in India, which may lead to greater interdependence and softening of stance in other areas like border dispute.

Conclusion

India's appreciation of the MSR must be based on an objective appraisal of these new realities. Even assuming the project delivers on its economic promise, it could well turn out to be detrimental to India's geopolitical interests in the India Ocean Region (IOR). As Beijing becomes more involved in building infrastructure in the Indian Ocean, it will play a larger part in the security and governance of the IOR, which could pose a challenge to India's stature as a 'security provider' in the region and also adversely affecting New Delhi's strategic purchase in its primary area of interest.