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Role of India in united nation

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Abstract

The United Nations is an intergovernmental organization established 24 October, 1945, to promote International co-operation. India strongly supports the purposes and principles of the UN and has made significant contributions to implementing the goals of the Charter, and the evolution of the UN's specialized programs and agencies. Its objective include maintaining international peace and securing, promoting human rights, fostering social and economic development, protecting the environment and providing humanitarian aid in casasa of famine, natural disaster and armed conflict. India is a member of the G4 group of nations who back each other in seeking a permanent seat on the Security Council. Indian Ambassador to the United Nations from 1952-1962. Indian leadership and peacekeeping roles in the UN brought it considerable recognition and global standing. India has taken part in 43 Peacekeeping missions with a total contribution exceeding 160,000 troops and a significant number of police personnel having been deployed. In 2014, India is the third largest troop contributor with 7,860 personnel deployed with ten UN Peacekeeping Missions of which 995 are police personnel, including the first female formed Police Unit under the UN.

Keywords: India, United Nation, intergovernmental organization, human rights, economic development.

Introduction

The United Nations is an intergovernmental organization established 24 October, 1945, to promote International co-operation. India was among the one member of the United Nations that signed the declaration by United Nations at Washington on 1 January, 1942 and also participated in the United Nations Conference on International Organization at San Francisco from 25 April to 26 June, 1945. India signed the Declaration by United Nations on 1 January, 1942 and was represented by Girija Shankar Bajpai, who was the Indian Agent-General at the time. Afterwards the Indian delegation led by Sir Arcot Ramasamy Mudaliar. Sir A. Ramasamy Mudaliar later went on to serve as the first president of the United Nations Economic and Social Council. As a founding member of the United Nations, India strongly supports the purposes and principles of the UN and has made significant contributions to implementing the goals of the Charter, and the evolution of the UN's specialized programs and agencies^[1]. Its objective include maintaining international peace and securing, promoting human rights, fostering social and economic development, protecting the environment and providing humanitarian aid in casasa of famine, natural disaster, and armed conflict. India had started raising concerns regarding colonialism, apartheid and racial discrimination. From early 1947-1948, India took an active part in Drafting of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Dr. Hansa Mehta, a Gandhian political activist and social worker who led the Indian delegation, had made important contributions in drafting of the Declaration, especially highlighting the need for reflecting gender equality by changing the language of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights from 'all men are created equal' all human beings'^[2].

A replacement for the ineffective League of Nations, the organization was created following the Second World War to prevent another such conflict. At its founding, the UNO had 51 member states; there are now 193. India is a charter member of the United Nations and participates in all of its specialized agencies and organizations. The headquarters of the United Nation is situated in Manhattan, New York. Further main offices are situated in Geneva, Nairobi and Vienna. The organization is financed by assessed and voluntary contributions from its member states.

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India has been a member of the UN Security Council for six terms (a total of 12 years), and was a member for the term 2011-12. India is a member of the G4 group of nations who back each other in seeking a permanent seat on the Security Council and advocate in favour of the reformation of the UNSC. India is also part of the Group of 77. India was one of the original members of the League of Nations.

In principle, only sovereign states can become UN members. However, although today all UN members are fully sovereign states, four of the original members (Belarus, India, Philippines and Ukraine) were not independent at the time of their admission^[3]. Independent India viewed its membership at the United Nations as an important guarantee for maintaining international peace and security. India stood at the forefront during the UN's tumultuous years of struggle against colonialism and apartheid. India's status as a founding member of the Non-Aligned Movement and the Group of 77 cemented its position within the UN system as a leading advocate of the concerns and aspirations of developing countries and the creation of a more equitable international economic and political order.

In 1953, the chief delegate of India at that time, Vijaya Lakshmi Pandit was elected the first woman President of the UN General Assembly. India supported the struggle towards global disarmament and the ending of the arms race, and towards the creation of a more equitable International economic order. India chaired the five-member Neutral Nations Repatriation Commission while the Indian Custodian Force supervised the process of interviews and repatriation that followed. India then went on to chair the three international commissions for supervision and control for Vietnam, Cambodia, and Laos established by the 1954 Geneva Accords on Indochina.

Charter provisions on Non-Self-Governing Territories were given a new thrust when the UN adopted the landmark 1960 Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples which was co-sponsored by India. The following year, the Special Committee on the implementation of the Declaration on Decolonization was established to study, investigate and recommend action to bring an end to colonialism, it was chaired by India for the first time. India played a leading role in the formation of a Sub-Committee against Apartheid set up by the General Assembly. When the Convention on Elimination of all forms of Racial Discrimination was adopted in 1965, India was among the earliest signatories, however, it does not recognize competence under article 14 and it does not consider itself bound by article 22.

Activities during 1947-1962

India's attitude toward the basic structure of the UN was fundamentally conservative^[4]. It accepted the organization and distribution of power in the UN, as both a guarantee of Indian sovereignty and as a check on the numerical superiority of the US and its western coalition. India supported the charter provisions for a Security Council veto for the great powers, opposed the US initiative to circumvent the veto through the Uniting for Peace Resolution and opposed all efforts to conduct UN directed plebiscites as tests of opinion^[5].

India's procedural conservatism was based both on its commitment to national sovereignty and its desire to protect Indian interests. Its experience with the UN had not always been positive. In the early years after independence, a whole

range of issues, which had their origins in the partition of the Indian subcontinent between India and Pakistan, came before the UN. These issues included the disputed princely states of Junagadh, Hyderabad and Kashmir, which were ultimately incorporated into the Indian Union through the use of military force^[6].

The most persistent of these disputes was the Kashmir conflict. Nehru's faith in the UN and adherence to its principles proved costly on some occasions due to the power play inherent in the organization. This was seen by his decision to refer Pakistan's intervention ('invasion') in disputed Kashmir to the UN Security Council in January, 1948. The United Kingdom, which was hoping to avoid being seen as unfriendly to a Muslim state after the creation of Israel, used pressure tactics on its allies France, Canada and the US to support the Pakistani viewpoint that Kashmir's accession to India was disputable and had to be put to the test of a plebiscite. Nehru's hope that the UN would unconditionally instruct Pakistan to vacate the one-third portion of Kashmir that the Pakistani tribesmen and army had occupied fell flat in the face of geopolitical maneuverings and cross-issue linkage. To this day, Indian strategic commentators and critics of Nehru bemoan his cardinal mistake of taking the Kashmir dispute to a UN that was packed with pro-Pakistani partisan powers. According to columnist Brahma Chellaney, 'Nehru did not appreciate that the UN was an institution of power politics, not an impartial police force'. As if a double reminder were needed that India was small fry in a UN dominated by crafty Great Powers divided into two ideological camps, New Delhi was disappointed to find that Security Council members the US, United Kingdom and France tried to prevent it from forcibly absorbing the Portuguese colony of Goa in 1961. But for the Soviet Union veto in favour of India, Goa could have become enmeshed in another Kashmir-like stalemate for decades, buffeted by the changing winds of Great Power alignments and preferences that were paralyzing and hijacking the UN^[7].

Washington Post reported that "India was offered a permanent seat on the council 55 years ago, in 1955. But that offer, made by the United States and the Soviet Union, was declined by India's first Prime Minister, Jawaharlal Nehru. Nehru said the seat should be given to China instead. The required council seat was then held by Taiwan. Prime Minister Nehru categorically denied receiving any such offer, formal or informal. Even if India were to accept such offers assuming they were made, it would have required the United Nations charter to be amended to include India in place of Republic of China (Taiwan) in the Security Council or to expand the Council. It is not known whether the Taiwanese government representing China's seat at the time in the Security Council would have vetoed the amendment or accepted the amendment under US pressure as Taiwan was solely dependent on the US for its protection from mainland China. Overall the period from 1947-1962 was marked by India's active interest in all UN activities under the leadership of Krishna Menon who was the Indian Ambassador to the United Nations from 1952-1962. Indian leadership and peacekeeping roles in the UN brought it considerable recognition and global standing^[8].

Phase from 1962-1976

India's defeat in the Indo-China War of 1962 came as a grave shock in comparison to its global aspirations and recognition. Large scale hostilities and military reverses dealt a shattering

blow to its self-confidence and pride. India was obliged to turn towards the west for military and political support. Following the conflict with China, India became involved in two wars with Pakistan and entered a period of political instability, economic stagnation, food shortages and near-famine conditions. India's role diminished in the UN which came both as a result of its image and a deliberate decision by the post-Nehru political leadership to adopt a low profile at the UN and speak only on vital Indian interests. This change in policy was implemented during the 1965 debate on Kashmir in the Security Council when Indian Foreign Minister Swaran Singh dramatically stormed out of the session in response to the intemperate language of Zulfikar Ali Bhutto, Pakistan's Foreign Minister. In 1974 India tested its first nuclear device, the aftermath of which resulted in a nuclear embargo by US and Canada. Soon after the UN's non-proliferation agenda became another irritant that forced New Delhi to view some units of the organization with distaste as fronts for imposing discriminatory regimes instead of promoting universal disarmament^[9]. In short, the 1960s as a whole saw major changes in the global system but a general decline in UN activities.

Seeking of Permanent Seat in UNSC

India has been elected seven times to the UN Security Council. Only three countries have served longer than that (Japan, Brazil, and Argentina), except for the Permanent Five, and Colombia has served the same amount of time. India has also provided and continues to provide eminent Force Commanders for UN Missions. Although the U.S. and other permanent Council members were not very supportive of expanding the Security Council, in his visit to India President Obama has offered his support for India to become a permanent member of the Council. However the reaction from other Council members are not very clear, particularly from China. Thus it is uncertain whether the demands by G4 nations will be implemented anytime soon. India has been seeking a permanent seat on the United Nations Security Council as a member of the G4, an organization composed of Brazil, Germany, Japan, and India, all who are currently seeking permanent representation. According to their proposal the UN Security Council should be expanded beyond the current fifteen members to include twenty-five members. If this actually happens, it would be the first time permanent Security Council status is extended to a South Asian nation and supporters of the G4 plan suggest that this will lead to greater representation of developing nations rather than the current major powers. India makes a number of claims to justify its demand. India has the world's second largest population and is the world's largest liberal democracy. It is also the world's tenth largest economy and third largest in terms of purchasing power parity as of 2012.

Peacekeeping Missions

India is the third largest contributor of troops to United Nations peacekeeping missions with 7,860 personnel deployed with ten UN Peacekeeping Missions as of 2014 after Bangladesh and Pakistan,^[10] all three nations being in South Asia. India has taken part in 43 Peacekeeping missions with a total contribution exceeding 160,000 troops and a significant number of police personnel having been deployed. In 2014 India is the third largest troop contributor with 7,860 personnel deployed with ten UN Peacekeeping Missions of which 995 are police personnel, including the first female formed Police Unit under the UN. The Indian

Army has undertaken numerous UN peacekeeping missions^[11]. As of 30 June 2014, 157 Indians have been killed during such operations. The Indian army has also provided paramedical units to facilitate the withdrawal of the sick and wounded.

The UN General Assembly on 11 December, 2014 adopted without a vote a resolution commemorating 21 June as the International Day of Yoga,^[12] recognizing the holistic benefits of this timeless practice and its inherent compatibility with the principles and values of the United Nations. India is one of the main contributors to the UN regular budget. Indian contribution to United Nations Democracy Fund was USD 16 million for 2009^[13]. India has a permanent mission to the UN, which is led by the Permanent Representative (UN Ambassador), currently Asoke Kumar Mukerji, since 16 April 2013^[14].

Conclusion

Overall the period from 1947-1962 was marked by India's active interest in all UN activities under the leadership of Krishna Menon who was the Indian Ambassador to the United Nations from 1952-1962. Indian leadership and peacekeeping roles in the UN brought it considerable recognition and global standing. India has been elected seven times to the UN Security Council. Only three countries have served longer than that (Japan, Brazil, and Argentina), except for the Permanent Five, and Colombia has served the same amount of time. India has taken part in 43 Peacekeeping missions. India is one of the main contributors to the UN regular budget. Indian contribution to United Nations Democracy Fund was USD 16 million for 2009.

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