

My partner and I affirm the resolution: *Resolved: The United Nations should abolish permanent membership on its Security Council.*

Definitions: We define “permanent membership” per the [SCR](#) as “the five states w[ith]... a permanent seat on the UN Security Council.” Importantly, per the [SCR 24](#), “The veto power is... the... most significant distinction between permanent and non-permanent members.” The United Nations Security Council, or UNSC, per the [UN](#), is responsible for “maintain[ing] international peace and security... [and can] issue ceasefire directives, [and] dispatch military... or... peacekeeping force[s]”

Framework: The United Nations’ constituent purpose is to serve the international community. Thus, the resolution must be evaluated solely on impact to the international community and not to any individual state.

Contention 1) Permanent Membership enables genocide

In the tragic case of the Rwandan genocide, permanent members utilized hidden veto powers to undermine peacekeeping efforts. [Melvern 04](#) explains that “A... resolution was submitted to the [UNSC] by Nigeria... that... peacekeepers be allowed to enforce public order... Thousands of innocent civilians [were already] being killed, but... Washington... considered... peacekeeping [in]appropriate for Rwanda... A US delegate told the [UNSC] that if a vote was taken, the US would vote for withdrawal. [...] The Nigerian ambassador... [again] made a plea for reinforcements... [and] the UK disagreed.” And in Myanmar, [Barber 21](#) notes that “The military is... committing crimes against humanity... The UN[SC] has the power to [address it], but it won’t... because of China and Russia.”

Genocide outweighs any other impact in today’s round. The Rwandan genocide ALONE, per [Verpoorten 05](#), resulted in a “death toll of... 800,000 Tutsi.” AND, [Anderton and Brauer 16](#), write, “since 1956, some forty-three genocides have taken place resulting in the deaths of at least fifty million civilians.”

Contention 2) Permanent Membership undermines peacekeeping operations

[Howard and Dayal 18](#) find that “The... P-5... do not want... UN [peacekeepers] to develop a military capacity.” When peacekeepers ARE authorized force, though notably not in significant conflicts like those in Gaza, Syria, or Ukraine, their mandates are often copy-pasted. [Howard and Dayal 18](#) (2) continue, “It [is] very difficult to alter the language of precedent—even when conflicts warrant a different type of response... it’s easier to use the same language next time even if it doesn’t make sense.” These generalized mandates typically fail. [Beardsley and Gleditsch 15](#) find that “Peace operations can actually increase... violence [without] specific mandates to protect civilians.” Even more critically, the P-5 also DIRECTLY blocks PKOs. [Hehir 14](#)

notes that “China vetoed the renewal of the mandate for a highly successful UN peacekeeping mission in Macedonia because the government there had recognized Taiwan, [and] in June 2009, Russia vetoed the renewal of the UN Mission to Georgia’s mandate because of its dispute with Tbilisi.”

Contention 3) Permanent Membership Exacerbates Human Rights Abuses

[US Ambassador Richard Mills, 22](#), states that “Russia... veto[ed]... the delivery of humanitarian assistance to over four million people suffering... in Syria... Russia has vetoed 17 Security Council resolutions... to shield the Assad regime... from accountability for its brutal human rights abuses.” [Hehir 14](#) notes that “Russia’s political and economic ties with the Assad regime were the driving force [behind these vetoes]...” These vetoes, [Amnesty International 22](#) reports, enabled “Syria... to commit... gross human rights abuses... The Syrian government... conducted a chlorine attack on... a town..., cut the water supply to at least 300,000 people..., [and] torture[d]... detainees.” This abuse is not limited to Russia and China. [Newton 21](#) reports that “The United States has vetoed [at least 53]... UNSC resolutions critical of Israel... [including] resolutions condemning violence against protesters, illegal Israeli settlements... and even calls for an investigation into the... killing of... Palestinian workers... Washington’s blanket support of Israel encourages a disproportionate use of force against Palestinians.” This support, per [Amnesty International 22](#), has led to “an institutionalized regime of oppression... against the Palestinian people... through inhumane acts..., [constituting] the crime against humanity of apartheid.” Note that this evidence comes from before the 2023 Hamas attack and the current conflict in Gaza, which has only worsened human rights violations.

The general trend is clear; [Doulah and Shafee 16](#) write that “[The P-5] are reluctant to pay... against violations of human rights [if] their national interests are not supplied... Action to protect... civilians is rare... because the respons[e] of permanent members [to] the severe violation of international human rights highly depends upon their cost-benefit approach... [and they are] reluctan[t]... to have military intervention in the crisis.” And when permanent members do hold a key stake in the conflict, their veto power precludes any UN intervention, as exhibited by the previous Rwanda, Syria, and Gaza examples, among countless others.

Because my partner and I stand against devastating loss of human life and violations of fundamental human rights that come from the existence of permanent membership, and because we believe that the UN must be able to respond robustly to international conflicts, we affirm the Resolution.