More than at any other time in its history, the United Nations Security Council is active in addressing increasingly complex and varied threats and challenges to international peace and security.
• What is the Security Council?

• How does the Security Council operate?

• How does the Security Council Affairs Division (SCAD) support the work of the Security Council?

• Reform of the Security Council
The Security Council

- Responsible for maintenance of international peace and security

- One of the six United Nations principal organs (Article 7)


- Organ of limited membership (Article 23)

For more information, visit the SC website: http://www.un.org/Docs/sc/
Composition

- 5 permanent members (P5) (China, France, Russian Federation, UK & US) and 10 non-permanent members (E10) (Article 23)

- **Non-Permanent Members of the SC (Article 23)**
  - Elected by the GA for two-year term
  - Not eligible for immediate re-election
  - Due regard paid to “equitable geographical distribution” and “contribution to the maintenance of international peace and security and to other purposes of the Organization”

- **Distribution of Non-Permanent Seats among Regional Groups**
  - 5 from Africa and Asia
  - 2 from Latin America and the Caribbean
  - 2 from Western Europe
  - 1 from Eastern Europe
  With one Arab seat from either African or Asian Group

- **Presidency rotates every month in alphabetical order in English**
Current Composition

P-5: China
    France
    Russia
    United Kingdom
    United States

2011-12 term: Colombia
    Germany
    India
    Portugal
    South Africa

2012-13 term: Azerbaijan
    Guatemala
    Morocco
    Pakistan
    Togo
Voting and “Veto”

Article 27

- Each member of the Security Council has one vote.

- Decisions of the Security Council on procedural matters are made by an affirmative vote of 9 members.

- Decisions of the Security Council on all other matters are made by an affirmative vote of 9 members including the concurring votes of the permanent members.

- A party to a dispute shall abstain from voting.
Voting in the Council, 2007-2012

![Bar chart showing voting statistics from 2007 to 2012, with data points for adopted unanimous, adopted non-unanimous, and veto votes. The chart highlights the number of votes in each category for each year.]
Functions and Powers

Under Article 24 of the Charter:

- Conferred primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security under the UN Charter.
- Acts on behalf of the members of the UN.
- Acts in accordance with the purposes and principles of the UN.
- Specific powers laid down in Chapters VI, VII, and VIII of the Charter.

Under Article 25 of the Charter:

- The members of the UN “agree to accept and carry out the decisions of the Security Council”.
• To recommend the admission of new members of the Organization (Article 4 (2))

• To recommend to the General Assembly the appointment of the SG (Article 97)

• To elect the Judges of the International Court of Justice (ICJ) (Rules 40 and 61)
Peaceful settlement of disputes

- To call upon parties to settle a dispute or situation which might lead to international friction through negotiations, mediations and other methods (Article 33)

- To investigate any dispute or situation which might lead to international friction (Article 34)

- To recommend procedures and methods of adjusting such disputes or the terms of settlement (Articles 36-38)
1. Peacekeeping operations

- Currently **15 operations** deployed and authorized with over 116,000 personnel (incl. 96,000 uniformed) from 119 countries (as of July 2012)
  - 7 in Africa (MINURSO (Western Sahara), UNMIL (Liberia), UNOCI (Côte d’Ivoire), UNMISS (South Sudan), UNISFA (Abyei), UNAMID (Darfur) and MONUSCO (DRC))
  - 2 in Europe (UNFICYP (Cyprus), UNMIK (Kosovo))
  - 3 in Middle East (UNTSO, UNDOF, UNIFIL)
  - 2 in Asia (UNMOGIP (India/Pakistan); UNMIT (Timor-Leste))
  - 1 in Americas (MINUSTAH)

2. Political and Peacebuilding Offices

- Currently **13 missions** with approx. 4,400 int’l and local personnel (incl. 447 uniformed) in:
  - Afghanistan (UNAMA), Iraq (UNAMI), Middle East (UNSCO), Lebanon (UNSCOL), Nepal (UNMIN), Central Asia (UNRCCA), Libya (UNSMIL), West Africa (UNOWA), Sierra Leone (UNIPSIL), Guinea-Bissau (UNIOGBIS), CAR (BINUCA), Burundi (BNUB) and Somalia (UNPOS)
Council actions under Chapter VII

Threats to peace, breach of the peace or acts of aggression

• To determine the existence of a threat to the peace, breach of the peace, or act of aggression (Article 39) and to recommend what action should be taken

• To call on Member States to apply sanctions and other measures not involving the use of force to prevent or stop aggressions (Article 41)

• To take collective military action (Article 42)
Regional Arrangements

- Recognition of the existence of regional arrangements for dealing with matters related to maintenance of international peace and security (Article 52 (1))

- SC’s encouragement of pacific settlement efforts of “local disputes,” by regional arrangements before SC’s involvement (Article 52 (2) & (3))

- Utilization of regional arrangements for enforcement action by SC; no enforcement action by regional arrangements without SC authorization (Article 53)

- Obligation of regional arrangements to inform SC of its activities for maintenance of international peace and security (Article 54)
## Programme of Work

### Provisional Programme of Work of the Security Council – July 2012

(as of 27 July 2012)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Monday</th>
<th>Tuesday</th>
<th>Wednesday</th>
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<th>Friday</th>
<th>Saturday</th>
<th>Sunday</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2 Bilaterals (upon request)</td>
<td>Consularsions (A.M.) - Middle East (Syria)</td>
<td>3 Consularsions (A.M.) - Programme of work - Sudan/South Sudan</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5 Adoption (A.M.) - Peace and security in Africa - Briefing (A.M.) - BNUB Consularsions (A.M.) - UNMISS</td>
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<td>Consularsions (P.M.) - Libya</td>
<td>Consularsions (P.M.) - UNMISS</td>
<td>Adoption (P.M.) - UNMISS - TCC meeting (P.M.)</td>
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<td>Consularsions (A.M.) - Cyprus - Sudan/South Sudan</td>
<td>Consularsions (A.M.) - Sudan/South Sudan</td>
<td>10 Consularsions (A.M.) - Cyprus - Sudan/South Sudan</td>
<td>11 Consularsions (11:30 A.M.) - UNMISS</td>
<td>12 Open debate (A.M.) - Post conflict peacebuilding</td>
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<td>Consularsions (A.M.) - 1701 report - Yemen</td>
<td>TCC meeting (A.M.) - DRC</td>
<td>Consularsions (A.M.) - 1701 report - Yemen</td>
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<td>Adoption (A.M.) - UNMISS - UNIFICYP</td>
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<td>Adoption (A.M.) - UNSMIS</td>
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<td>UNAMID report due</td>
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<td>UNAMID Consularsion expires</td>
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<td>Consularsions (A.M.) - Somalia - Somalia/Eritrea - 751/1967 Committee</td>
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<td>Briefing (P.M.) - UNAMID Consularsions (P.M.) - UNOGBIS</td>
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<td>Consularsions (P.M.) - MONUSCO</td>
<td>Consularsions (P.M.) - UNAMID Consularsion expires Consularsions (P.M.) - UNOGBIS Consularsion expires</td>
<td>Consularsions (P.M.) - UNAMID Consularsion expires Consularsions (P.M.) - UNOGBIS Consularsion expires</td>
<td>Consularsions (P.M.) - UNAMID Consularsion expires Consularsions (P.M.) - UNOGBIS Consularsion expires</td>
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<td>End of Presidency reception</td>
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<td>31</td>
<td>Adoption (A.M.) - UNAMID Consularsion expires Consularsions (P.M.) - UNOGBIS Consularsion expires</td>
<td>1 August</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
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<td>29</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Non-proliferation; Peace and Security in Africa, Somalia; UNOGBIS report due; DPA briefing;
Meetings

• Normally held at HQ
  – Council Chamber for public meetings
  – Consultations room for consultations
  – Other rooms at UN HQ for unofficial meetings, or at the delegations

• Recent meetings away from HQ
  – Addis Ababa, May 2011, jointly with African Union (AU-PSC)
  – Nairobi, Nov. 2004, on Sudan, Somalia and AU

• Expected to function continuously and interval not to exceed 14 days
Rule 48

*Unless it decides otherwise, the SC shall meet in public. Any recommendation to the GA regarding the appointment of the SG shall be discussed and decided at a private meeting.*

In practice, the Council can meet in the format of:

- Public meetings
- Private meetings
- Informal consultations
- “Arria-formula” informal meetings
- Informal interactive dialogue
# Types of meetings

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Names of meetings</th>
<th>Format of meetings</th>
<th>Participation</th>
<th>Briefing by Secretariat</th>
<th>Official records</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Meetings of the Security Council</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Public Meetings</td>
<td>Open debate</td>
<td>Non-Council members may be invited upon their request</td>
<td>May or may not be conducted</td>
<td>YES</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Debate</td>
<td>Non-Council members that are directly concerned by the matter under consideration may be invited upon their request</td>
<td>May be conducted</td>
<td>Published (Provisional Verbatim Record (S/PV.####) and webcast (<a href="http://www.un.org/webcast">www.un.org/webcast</a>)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Briefing</td>
<td>Only SC members deliver statements following the briefing</td>
<td>Conducted</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Adoption</td>
<td>Non-Council members may or may not be invited upon their request</td>
<td>Not conducted</td>
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<tr>
<td>Private meetings</td>
<td>Private debate</td>
<td>Rules 37 and 39</td>
<td>May be conducted</td>
<td>Communiqué</td>
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<td></td>
<td>TCC meeting</td>
<td>TCCs</td>
<td>May be conducted</td>
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<tr>
<td>Informal consultations of the Security Council as a whole</td>
<td></td>
<td>Not permitted</td>
<td>May be conducted</td>
<td>NO</td>
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<tr>
<td>“Arria-formula” informal meetings</td>
<td></td>
<td>By invitation only (NGOs mainly)</td>
<td>Not conducted</td>
<td>NO</td>
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<tr>
<td>Informal Interactive Dialogue</td>
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<td>By invitation only (Member States)</td>
<td>NO</td>
<td>NO</td>
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<tr>
<td>Types of action</td>
<td>Usual decision procedure</td>
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<td><strong>Resolution</strong></td>
<td>An affirmative vote of nine members including the concurrent votes of the P5, pursuant to article 27 of the Charter, in a public meeting (Adoption)</td>
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<td>S/RES/[number] ([year])</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Statement by the President</strong></td>
<td>Consensus. The President of the Security Council reads out the statement in a public meeting (Adoption)</td>
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<td>S/PRST/[year]/[number]</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Note by the President</strong></td>
<td>Consensus (Usually for procedural issues)</td>
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<td>S/[year]/[number]</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Letter from the President</strong></td>
<td>Consensus</td>
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<td>S/[year]/[number]</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Press statement (unofficial document)</strong></td>
<td>Consensus. The President of the Security Council reads out the statement to the press</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Remarks to the Press (unofficial)</strong></td>
<td>Consensus. Oral statement by the President.</td>
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</table>
1. Volume

- Since its inception, the Council dealt with a total of approx. 500 agenda items relating to the maintenance of int’l peace and security
- Currently retained agenda items: about 85
- Actively discussed: about 55

2. Nature

- From inter-State conflicts to intra-State conflicts
- Thematic, cross-cutting issues (e.g., women, children, protection of civilians, climate change, cooperation with regional organizations, WMD proliferation)
How is a new agenda item introduced?

1. Regional and country-specific situations:
   - States (Referral in accordance with Article 35) e.g., 6 Feb. 2011 letter from Cambodia regarding Cambodian-Thai border situation
   - The SG
     “The SG may bring to the attention of the SC any matter which in his opinion may threaten the maintenance of int’l peace and security.” (Article 99)
   - The GA
     “The GA may call the attention of the SC to situations which are likely to endanger international peace and security.” (Article 11 (3))

2. Thematic topics:
   - Usually by the Presidency
     e.g., Impact of climate change by Germany in July 2011, Intercultural dialogue by Lebanon in May 2010
Breakdown of 2011 meetings by agenda item (country-specific/regional situations)

- Africa: 68% (120 meetings)
- Middle East: 15% (27 meetings)
- Asia: 7% (12 meetings)
- Europe: 7% (13 meetings)
- Americas: 3% (5 meetings)
The Security Council Affairs Division is the largest Division in the Department of Political Affairs (DPA) and consists of three Branches:

- Security Council Secretariat Branch (SCSB)
- Security Council Subsidiary Organs Branch (SCSOB)
- Security Council Practices and Charter Research Branch (SCPCRB)

A two-member team also supports the Military Staff Committee
Branches of the Division

• SCSB works closely with members of the Council, especially its rotating Presidency, in servicing meetings, processing documents, reporting

• SCSOB supports the work of subsidiary bodies which are established by the Council to assist it in the implementation of its decisions, such as sanctions committees and expert working groups

• SCPCRB is responsible for the preparation of the *Repertoire of the Practice of the Security Council*, an official publication which covers the evolving practice of the Council on constitutional, procedural and substantive matters
The Council reform debate

• Five key issues of reform being discussed:
  – Categories of membership
  – Question of the veto
  – Regional representation
  – Size of an enlarged Council and its Working Methods
  – Relationship between the Council and the General Assembly
Thank you!