Relationship of the Security Council to the General Assembly

*Briefing for delegates on the 77th session of the General Assembly*

Security Council Affairs Division | Ms. Blanca Montejo, Senior Political Affairs Officer

New York, 13 September 2022
# The GA and the Council: some key differences

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>General Assembly</th>
<th>Security Council</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Composition: 193 members (all with equal status)</td>
<td>• Composition: 15 members (5 permanent and 10 non-permanent)</td>
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<td>• Scope: any questions or any matters within the scope of the Charter of the</td>
<td>• Scope: primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and</td>
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<tr>
<td>United Nations</td>
<td>security</td>
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<td>• Decision-making: two-thirds majority for ‘important questions’</td>
<td>• Decision-making: nine votes absent veto for substantive questions</td>
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<td>• On the maintenance of international peace and security: recommendations</td>
<td>• On the maintenance of international peace and security: decisions</td>
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UN Charter: key provisions

Article 10
Except for Article 12, the GA may discuss or make recommendations (also to the Council) on any questions or matters within the scope of the Charter or relating to the functions and powers of other organs.

Article 11
The GA may discuss and make recommendations on general principles and questions relating to the maintenance of international peace and security. But if action is necessary, it shall be referred to the Security Council before or after discussion. The GA can also bring matters to the attention of the Security Council.
UN Charter: key provisions

**Article 12**
While the Security Council is seized, the General Assembly shall not make any recommendation with regard to that dispute or situation unless the Security Council so requests. Consequently, the SG notifies the GA of any matters on the Council’s agenda.

**Article 14**
Subject to Article 12, the GA may recommend measures for the peaceful adjustment of any situation, which it deems likely to impair the general welfare or friendly relations among nations.
UN Charter: key provisions

Article 24
Member States have conferred on the Security Council the primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security and agreed that in carrying out its duties under this responsibility it acts on their behalf. Consequently, the Council acts in accordance with the Charter and submits annual and special reports to the GA for its consideration.
Main areas of collaboration: maintenance of international peace and security

• Early practice and Uniting for Peace
• Contemporary practice and the new Veto Initiative

• GA recommendations to the Council:
  - On general principles
  - On specific situations
Most recent Emergency Special Session  
(invoked by the Council)

Chronology of events:

- **27 February 2022** – adoption of resolution 2623 (2022) by the Council
- **28 February 2022** – Assembly convened its 11th Emergency Special Session
- **2 March 2022** – the Assembly adopted resolution ES-11/1
- **24 March 2022** – the Assembly adopted resolution ES-11/2
- **6 May 2022** – the Council issued its first PRST in connection with the item “Maintenance of peace and security of Ukraine”
### Emergency Special Sessions (invoked by the Council)

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Resolution reference</th>
<th>Meeting</th>
<th>Vote</th>
<th>Repertoire reference</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Resolution 2623 (2022)</td>
<td>S/PV.890, 27 Feb 2022</td>
<td>11Y-1N-3A</td>
<td>Not available (to be featured in the 25th Supplement of the Repertoire) (Russian Federation voted against; China, India and United Arab Emirates abstained)</td>
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*There have been eleven Emergency Special Sessions, eight of which were invoked by the Security Council.*
Main areas of collaboration: appointments and elections

- Admission, suspension, expulsion of members
- Appointment of the Secretary-General
- Appointment of judges to the ICJ and international tribunals
- Election of non-permanent members
Main areas of collaboration: annual notifications and annual and special reports

- Annual **notification** to the GA (A/SESSION/300)
- Summary **statement** (“seizure list”, S/YEAR/10)
- Weekly **addenda** to the summary statement (S/YEAR/10.Add.#)
- **Annual report** and special reports
Main areas of collaboration: working methods

- Monthly coordination meetings between the Presidents of the GA and the Security Council
- Briefing on the Security Council’s programme of work and wrap up sessions
- Annual open debate on working methods (last one was held on 28 June 2022)
- Participation of Presidents in their respective activities
Collaboration with the GA’s subsidiary organs

- Committee on the Exercise of Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People
- Human Rights Council
- Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations
Collaboration with the Peacebuilding Commission

- Coordinating programmes of work and agenda items (S/2022/202)
- Advanced unedited versions of the reports of the Secretary-General to the Council
- Written advice to the President of the Council
- PBC’s annual report (S/2022/89)
Resources

- Charter of the United Nations
- Provisional rules of procedure of the Security Council
- Note by the President of the Security Council of 30 August 2017 (S/2017/507) and subsequent notes
- Repertoire of the Practice of the Security Council
- Research and analysis resources on the Security Council
- Rules of procedure of the General Assembly
- Index to proceedings