

Should Japan and India Become Permanent Members

of the UN Security Council?

Background:

The permanent five members of the UN Security Council—the United States, Russia, China, Great Britain, and France—jealously guard their current status. Yet France and Russia have both declined significantly as world military and economic powers in the years since WWII. India is now the world's second most populous country, possesses nuclear capability, and is one of the world's largest contributors of U.N. peacekeeping personnel, although its membership would greatly upset Pakistan. Japan remains an economic superpower, especially in Asia, and is the world's largest aid donor. Should the UN Security Council be modified to reflect this 21st-century reality or would India and Japan joining anytime soon represent too much of a dislocation at this sensitive time?

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*Yes, add Japan
and India.*

LAWRENCE EAGLEBURGER
*Former Secretary of State to
President George H.W. Bush*



*Yes, through a
“gentlemen’s
agreement.”*

JOSEPH NYE
*Dean, Harvard’s Kennedy School of Government, and
author of The Paradox of American Power: Why the World’s
Only Superpower Can’t Go It Alone*



*Yes, definitely
add them.*

ROBERT STRAUSS
*Former U.S. Ambassador to the
Russian Federation and Partner,
Akin Gump Strauss Hauer & Feld*

Yes, Japan and India should be added as Security Council members. Given the political difficulty of amending the Charter, the best prospect for accomplishing this would be a “gentleman’s agreement” that they would be continually re-elected as non-permanent members. But even this will be difficult.



*These discussions are
politically meaningless.*

OTTO GRAF LAMBSDORFF
*Former German Minister of
Economics and Honorary Chairman of
the Free Democratic Party*



*Absolutely,
add them.*

STEVE S. FORBES, JR.
*President and Chief Executive Officer,
Forbes, Inc., and Editor-in-Chief of
Forbes magazine*

I cannot answer this question in these terms. I am basically of the opinion that these discussions, while intellectually interesting, are politically meaningless. Nothing will change in the foreseeable future, especially not following the course of the debate on the Iraq crisis.

If the Security Council were to be expanded, then Germany certainly ought to be a member. If you wish to involve India, why not Indonesia, the country with the largest Muslim population in the world? And Brazil?

I do not think the subject is so simple that it can be answered with a simple yes or no.



No, keep it as it is.

HELMUT SONNENFELDT
Guest Scholar, Brookings Institution

*Yes, Japan and India
should be added, and France
should be eliminated.*

ANDERS ÅSLUND
*Senior Associate,
Carnegie Endowment for International Peace*

*Yes, but replace France and Russia
with Japan and India.*

GERARD BAKER
*Chief U.S. Commentator and Associate Editor,
Financial Times, Washington*

I would not add Japan and India to the UN Security Council—that would give us way too many countries with veto power—but I would replace France and Russia with

Japan and India if that is the question. France simply does not have the geopolitical weight to justify its continuing veto (and in any case wants to wrap much of its foreign policy into a common EU policy), and Russia, while it continues to have geopolitical weight now, seems unlikely to have as much of a global role in the future as either Japan or India.



Yes, but then redesign the entire United Nations structure.

WILLIAM GREIDER

National Affairs Correspondent, The Nation, and author of Fortress America: The American Military and the Consequences of Peace

Yes. Japan and India should be permanent members...then the entire structure of the United Nations should be re-opened for design improvements. This won't happen so long as the Colossus is into imperial war-making.



Yes, Japan and India should be added, but without a veto and without increasing the size of the Security Council.

WILLIAM CLARK, JR.

President, Japan Society, and former U.S. Assistant Secretary of State for East Asian and Pacific Affairs



Yes, the Security Council should include both.

RICHARD BURT

Senior Adviser, Center for Strategic and International Studies, and Chairman, International Equity Partners, L.P.



Yes, but also combine the French and British seats.

RADEK SIKORSKI

Director, New Atlantic Initiative, American Enterprise Institute

Yes. And the French and British seats should be converted into a EU seat, and veto power abolished.



Not at this time. Plus, isn't the larger issue the viability of the UN itself?

LINDA CHAVEZ

President, Center for Equal Opportunity, and a syndicated columnist

I think it inadvisable to add members to the Security Council at this time, although I think a strong case can be made for adding Japan at some point in the future. In light of the ongoing disputes between India and Pakistan and the current cooperation of Pakistan in the war on terrorism, it certainly would not be advisable for the United States to sponsor expansion on the UN Security Council to include India now. However, the larger issue of the viability of the Council as a meaningful body to resolve world crises is being severely challenged by the failure of that body to live up to its obligations under its own previous resolutions. If the United States invades and successfully disarms Iraq against the will of the majority of the current members of the Council, as I believe we will, the Council's effectiveness will be limited in the future and its composition will be less relevant.