

PREVIOUS YEAR QUESTION

UPSC 2022 · 15 marks

Explain the factors which justify India's claim for a permanent seat at the UN security council. (2022/15 marks)

FLOW SNAPSHOT — how the answer moves

Intro routes

R1 permanent membership still a 1945 settlement of the war victors → India's exclusion now the sharpest anomaly **R2** not one credential but a convergence → a Council built for the past cannot exclude India and stay legitimate

Body flow

founding member, universal character (**Bhagavan**, Ghetto Act) → eight non-permanent terms, sustained engagement → most populous (China 2023) + fourth-largest economy (IMF 2025) + largest democracy + responsible nuclear power (NFU) → peacekeeping, largest cumulative contributor → implementers should shape mandates → voice of the developing world (NAM, G-77, L.69) → backing of four P5 + 120-plus states → 2024 Pact for the Future endorses redressing Africa/Asia under-representation

Counter-view

credentials have not delivered → Council frozen, China non-committal, Pact short on a negotiating text → **Shyam Saran**: build concrete power, seat not owed

Conclusion routes

R1 the factors justify the claim in justice → convert rising weight into influence **R2** merit alone will not open the Council → make the claim irresistible, not merely just

The UNSC's permanent membership reflects the 1945 settlement among the 5 war victors. India's case rests not on one credential but a convergence that makes its exclusion the sharpest anomaly in a Council meant for present realities.

The claim begins in history. India was a founding member; Manu Bhagavan credits it with moulding the UN into a body of universal character, seen in the early campaign against South Africa's Ghetto act. 8 terms as a non-permanent member, recently in 2021-22, show sustained engagement across development, disarmament & peacebuilding.

India is the most populous country, having overtaken China in 2023, & the 4th largest economy on IMF's 2025 estimate.

It is the world's largest democracy & a responsible nuclear power committed to No First Use. Its peacekeeping - largest cumulative contribution, over 2,90,000 personnel across more than fifty missions.

India speaks for the developing world through the NAM, the G-77 & the L.69 group, 4 of the 5 permanent members & over 120 states back it, and the 2024 Pact for the Future - the most concrete reform commitment since the 1960s - endorses redressing the under-representation of Africa & Asia.

Yet credentials have not delivered. The council stays frozen, China non-committal, and the Pact remains short on a negotiating text. Shyam Saran urges India to build concrete power rather than treat the seat as owed. The factors justify the claim; the task is to convert rising weight into influence that makes it irresistible.