

This lesson will be divided into three parts: learning about the UN Security Council, learning about the Olympic Truce, and simulating a meeting of the UN Security Council. You will be representing one of the countries on the Security Council to discuss how to make a reality of the Olympic Truce ideals. This will involve discussion, debate, public speaking and representing your country's view. You will also need to work with other countries to produce a UN resolution on how to use the Truce to build a safer world. Good luck!

### Learning objectives

- To find out more about the UN Security Council
- To prepare for the Security Council debate



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### WHAT IS THE UN SECURITY COUNCIL?

The Security Council is probably the most famous part of the UN. Tasked with maintaining international peace and security, it is the only UN body that can compel states to take action. It is also the only part of the UN that can authorise the use of military force.

### WHO IS ON THE SECURITY COUNCIL?

The Security Council is made up of 15 UN Member States.

#### Permanent members

Five of these states are permanently on the Council. These states represent the victorious powers after World War II: China, France, Russia, the UK and the USA. The five permanent members have 'veto' powers. This means they can block any major proposal in the Council by voting against it.

#### Non-permanent members

Ten further states are elected by the UN General Assembly to serve two-year terms on the Council. States are chosen from the UN's five regional groups: Africa, Asia, Latin American and the Caribbean, Eastern Europe and Western Europe and Others. The last group includes countries like Canada and the USA.

You can find out which states are currently on the Security Council by visiting [www.un.org/sc](http://www.un.org/sc)

### WHAT CAN THE SECURITY COUNCIL DO?

The Council has the power to consider any situation that could endanger international peace. It can take the following action:

1. Investigate situations and determine whether they are likely to threaten international peace
2. Ask parties to a dispute to seek a peaceful solution, for example, by negotiating
3. If this fails, it can authorise non-military measures that might put pressure on the parties to reach a peaceful agreement e.g. economic sanctions such as restricting imports or exports or suspending diplomatic relations
4. If fighting persists, it can authorise the use of armed force to restore peace
5. In order to protect civilians under threat, it can send UN peacekeepers to a troubled area
6. If it believes that war crimes or other severe human rights abuses have taken place, it can refer the situation to the International Criminal Court

### Challenge task!

Can you think of any recent action taken by the Security Council?

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**QUICK QUIZ ON THE SECURITY COUNCIL**

1. How many countries are on the Security Council?

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2. What special power do the permanent Council members have?

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3. What is the main aim of the Security Council?

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4. List three actions that the Security Council can take.

i. 

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ii. 

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iii. 

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**Discussion question**

One of the Security Council's roles is to prevent conflicts from escalating. Think about factors that divide and unite people and list them below.

**Unite people**

1. 

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2. 

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3. 

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**Divide people**

1. 

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2. 

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3. 

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What about countries? List your answers below.

**Unite countries**

1. 

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2. 

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3. 

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**Divide countries**

1. 

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2. 

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3. 

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Do the same factors unite and divide different countries?

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