

# افغانستان آزاد – آزاد افغانستان

AA-AA

چو کشور نپاشد تن من مباد بدین بوم و بر زنده یک تن مباد  
همه سر به سر تن به کشتن دهیم از آن به که کشور به دشمن دهیم

[www.afgazad.com](http://www.afgazad.com)

[afgazad@gmail.com](mailto:afgazad@gmail.com)

European Languages

زبانهای اروپایی

BY RAMZY BAROUD

25.05.2023

## **Led by China and India: On the Global South Efforts to Fix the UN**



Photograph Source: Prime Minister's Office – GODL-India

In anticipation of next month's United Nations Security Council talks on reforming the inherently archaic and dysfunctional political body, China's foreign policy chief, Yang Yi stated his country's demands.

“The reform of the Security Council should uphold fairness and justice, increase the representation and voice of developing countries, allowing more small and medium-sized countries to have more opportunities to participate in the decision-making of the Council,” Wang Yi said in a statement on April 29.

More specifically, the new UNSC must “redress historical injustices against Africa”.

Although calls for reforms of the UNSC have been made many times in the past, Beijing's position is particularly important, in both language and timing.

When the United Nations was founded in 1945 following World War II, it was meant to mark the rise of a new world order, one that was largely dominated by the winners of that horrific war, giving greater influence to the United States and its Western allies.

Indeed, of the 51 founding members of the UN back then, five countries were chosen to serve permanently on the Security Council – the executive branch of the UN. The rest were given membership in the General Assembly, which played a marginal and, at times, even symbolic role in world affairs.

Six other nations were allowed to serve as non-permanent members of the Council, though they were not granted the same veto power, held and exercised by the five powerful UNSC members only.

A few years later, in 1963, the non-permanent membership status, served through annual rotations, was expanded to 10, making the total number of 15 UNSC members. However, the ‘reforms’ ended there, never to be revisited.

The UN was hardly ever a democratic platform, fairly reflecting the realities of the world, whether based on economic influence, demographics or any other indicators – aside, of course, from military might and political hegemony.

From the post-WWII geopolitical realities, however, the UN perfectly expressed a sad, unfair, but also somewhat true global power paradigm.

That paradigm, however, is now shifting, and rapidly so.

Calls for reforms have been underway for years, reflected in the activities of the Group of Four (G4) – Brazil, Germany, India and Japan – for example; and the Sirte Declaration of the African Union (AU) in 2005, among others. But the renewed calls for reforming the UN in recent months have become louder, more significant and, indeed, more possible.

The Russia-Ukraine war, which has divided the world into political camps, further empowered China – the world’s soon-to-be largest economy – and emboldened many countries in the Middle East, Africa and South America.

Of the many indicators of a global power shift, the BRICS nations – Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa – have proven to be the greatest success story in challenging Western dominance over global markets and the status of the dollar as the world’s main currency.

As BRICS readies for a major membership expansion, it is poised to become the world’s leading economic forum – ahead of the powerful G7.

One of the BRICS members, India, as of April 2023, overtook China to become the world’s most populous country. Along with China, and the combined demographics and wealth of other BRICS countries, it becomes unacceptable that a BRICS member, like India, is still not a permanent member of the UNSC. The same logic applies to Brazil.

India’s UN Ambassador, Ruchira Kamboj, recently referred to the UN Charter as “anachronistic”. “Can we practice ‘effective multilateralism’ by defending a charter that makes five nations more equal than others, and provides to each of those five the power to

ignore the collective will of the remaining 188 member states?” Kamboj said during a debate on the UN Charter.

Of course, she is right. Her logic, however, carries much greater weight now that her country – along with other BRICS nations, the collective power of the African Union among other nations and political entities – is in a much stronger position to bargain for substantive change.

China, on the other hand, is already a permanent UNSC member, and a holder of the veto power.

The fact that Wang Yi is demanding serious changes at the UN, particularly in the makeup of the Security Council, is a powerful indicator of China’s new global foreign policy agenda. As a rising superpower with close and deepening ties with many countries in the Global South, China rightly believes that it is in its interests to demand inclusion and fair representation for others.

This is an unmistakable sign of political maturity by Beijing, which will surely be resisted by the US and other European powers.

The West is keen on either maintaining the UNSC’s West-leaning status as it is, or, if it must, engaging in superficial or self-serving reforms. This would be unacceptable for China and the rest of the Global South.

The UN’s reputation is already in tatters following its failure to address international conflicts, climate change, global pandemics and more. If not reformed to meaningfully address global challenges through more democratic means, the UN will risk its future relevance, if not its very existence.

Ramzy Baroud is a journalist and the Editor of The Palestine Chronicle. He is the author of five books. His latest is “These Chains Will Be Broken: Palestinian Stories of Struggle and Defiance in Israeli Prisons” (Clarity Press, Atlanta). Dr. Baroud is a Non-resident Senior Research Fellow at the Center for Islam and Global Affairs (CIGA), Istanbul Zaim University (IZU). His website is [www.ramzybaroud.net](http://www.ramzybaroud.net)

MAY 24, 2023