

The United Nations

The slogan for the United Nations (2014), “We the peoples...A stronger UN for a better world” reminds people all over the world that they are the principle purpose of the united nations. Each year the UN works to streamline its influence and cut overhead, work sustainably, and to effectively meet the needs around the world (UN, 2014). Ban Ki-Moon, the current Secretary-General, has instituted a Rights Up Front initiative with three primary goals: to assist people in getting and maintaining rights, to be preventative, and to prepare proactively for crisis (UN, 2014). To effectively achieve those goals, Ban Ki-Moon highlights the following steps: sustainable development, prevention, innovation with business principles, support for nations in transition, and work with and for women and young people (UN, 2014).

Although it is well-known that the UN works for peace and human rights, the organization went through a variety of transitions to become the powerful influence it is today. It was not the first international organization because in 1865 the International Telecommunication Union facilitated the widespread use of the telegraph (UN, History, 2014). Then, in 1919 with the creation of the Treaty of Versailles ending World War I, the nations present established a League of Nations. But, their influence was not strong enough to prevent World War II; therefore, the League of Nations disbanded (UN, History, 2104). As early as 1942, Franklin Delano Roosevelt met with twenty-five other nations allying against the axis powers and coined the phrase “united nations” (UN, History, 2014). However, the United Nations’ charter wasn’t written until after the war, and then ratified by the majority of the 51 founding nations on October 24, 1945, which is now know as United Nations day (UN, History, 2014).

With full-knowledge that an international organization for peace had failed before, the founding members deliberated over the purpose and functions of the Charter of the United Nations. They set down four main goals: “to save succeeding generations from the scourge of war” (UN, 2008, 3), “to reaffirm faith in fundamental human rights” (3), “to establish conditions under which justice and

respect...can be maintained” (3), and “to promote social progress and better standards of life in larger freedom” (3). They also established four pathways to reach these lofty goals: “to practice tolerance and live together in peace” (3), “to unite our strength to maintain international peace” (3), “to ensure...that armed forces shall not be used, save in the common interest” (4), and “to employ international machinery for the promotion of the economic and social advancement of all people” (4). So far the UN concept has worked, probably because since its inception it has had more member support than previous attempts; currently, there are 193 member nations (UN, 2014).

Under these goals, the Charter of the UN establishes an advisory role of jurisdiction in every member nation (UN, 2008, 5-7). There is to be open communication about the topics of peace and security, development, human rights, humanitarian aid, and international law between all member nations through the General Assembly format (11-18) at UN Headquarters in New York City. If a conflict between nations arises that cannot be solved in the General Assembly, an International Court of Justice was also established concurrently with the UN charter to hear cases between member nations (57) as well as to legally advise any of the UN’s organs (58), the assisting branches the UN creates to achieve the desired ends. On November 7, 1956, the UN instituted the peacekeeping forces made up of troops from member nations to respond to the Suez Canal Crisis (UN, History, 2014).

Currently, the world works together via the debated decisions of the UN and its subsidiaries.

Works Cited

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