

# Brief Introduction to the United Nations



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## The United Nations (UN)

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The UN is one place where the world's nations can **gather** together, **discuss** common problems and **find shared solutions**.

The UN is an international organization founded in 1945. Currently made up of 193 **Member States**, the **UN and its work** are guided by the purposes and principles contained in its founding **Charter**.

# The Governance of the UN (Six Main Organs)

## 1. General Assembly (GA)

- 193 members - equal representation
- Oversees the UN's budget
- Appoints the non-permanent members to the Security Council
- Receives and considers reports from other parts of the UN
- Provide mandates (GA resolutions)
- President elected yearly



## 2. Security Council (UNSC)

- 15 Member States (5 permanent & 10 non-permanent)
- Veto power for permanent members
- Maintenance of international peace and security
- Establishment of peacekeeping operations & international sanctions
- Authorization of military action
- Presidency rotates every month



# The Governance – Six Main Organs (Cont'd)

## 3. Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC)

- 54 members – elected by secret ballot – 3 years term
- Geographical Balance
- Central forum for discussing international economic and social issues, and formulating policy recommendations to member states and the UN System

## 4. The Secretariat

- Headed by the Secretary-General: Provides studies, information, and facilities needed by UN bodies for their meetings
- Carries out tasks as directed by the UNSC, the General Assembly, the ECOSOC other U.N. bodies

## 5. International Court of Justice (ICJ)

- Settle legal disputes submitted to it by states
- Provide advisory opinions on legal questions submitted to it by duly authorized international organs, agencies, and the UN General Assembly

## 6. Trusteeship Council

- Trust Territories - administered in the interest of international peace & security
- Mandates of the League of Nations or derived from World War II
- Made up of the 5 permanent members of the UNSC
- Suspended its operations in November 1994 after all Trust Territories became either attained self-government or independence





# The United Nations System

## UN PRINCIPAL ORGANS

### GENERAL ASSEMBLY

### SECURITY COUNCIL

### ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL

### SECRETARIAT

### INTERNATIONAL COURT OF JUSTICE

### TRUSTEESHIP COUNCIL<sup>6</sup>

#### Subsidiary Organs

- Disarmament Commission
- Human Rights Council
- International Law Commission
- Joint Inspection Unit (JIU)
- Main Committees
- Standing committees and ad hoc bodies

#### Funds and Programmes<sup>1</sup>

- UNDP** United Nations Development Programme
  - UNCDF** United Nations Capital Development Fund
  - UNV** United Nations Volunteers
- UNEP** United Nations Environment Programme
- UNFPA** United Nations Population Fund
- UN-HABITAT** United Nations Human Settlements Programme
- UNICEF** United Nations Children's Fund
- WFP** World Food Programme (UN/FAO)

#### Research and Training

- UNDIR** United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research
- UNITAR** United Nations Institute for Training and Research
- UNSSC** United Nations System Staff College
- UNU** United Nations University

#### Other Entities

- ITC** International Trade Centre (UN/WTO)
- UNCTAD**<sup>1,4</sup> United Nations Conference on Trade and Development
- UNHCR**<sup>1</sup> Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
- UNOPS**<sup>1</sup> United Nations Office for Project Services
- UNRWA**<sup>1</sup> United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East
- UN-WOMEN**<sup>1</sup> United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women

#### Related Organizations

- CTBTO** Preparatory Commission Preparatory Commission for the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization
- IAEA**<sup>1,3</sup> International Atomic Energy Agency
- ICC** International Criminal Court
- IOM**<sup>1</sup> International Organization for Migration
- ISA** International Seabed Authority
- ITLOS** International Tribunal for the Law of the Sea
- OPCW**<sup>1</sup> Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons
- WTO**<sup>1,4</sup> World Trade Organization

#### Peacebuilding Commission

- HLPP** High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development

#### Subsidiary Organs

- Counter-Terrorism Committee

- International Residual Mechanism for Criminal Tribunals
- Military Staff Committee

- Peacekeeping operations and political missions
- Sanctions committees (ad hoc)
- Standing committees and ad hoc bodies

#### Functional Commissions

- Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice
- Narcotic Drugs
- Population and Development
- Science and Technology for Development
- Social Development
- Statistics
- Status of Women
- United Nations Forum on Forests

#### Regional Commissions<sup>8</sup>

- ECA** Economic Commission for Africa
- ECE** Economic Commission for Europe
- ECLAC** Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean
- ESCAP** Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific
- ESCWA** Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia

#### Other Bodies<sup>10</sup>

- Committee for Development Policy
- Committee of Experts on Public Administration
- Committee on Non-Governmental Organizations
- Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues
- UNAIDS** Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS
- UNGEGN** United Nations Group of Experts on Geographical Names
- UNGIM** Committee of Experts on Global Geospatial Information Management

#### Research and Training

- UNICRI** United Nations Interregional Crime and Justice Research Institute
- UNIRISD** United Nations Research Institute for Social Development

#### Departments and Offices<sup>9</sup>

- EOSG** Executive Office of the Secretary-General
- DCO** Development Coordination Office
- DESA** Department of Economic and Social Affairs
- DGACM** Department for General Assembly and Conference Management
- DGC** Department of Global Communications
- DMSPC** Department of Management Strategy, Policy and Compliance
- DOS** Department of Operational Support
- DPO** Department of Peace Operations
- DPPIA** Department of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs
- DSS** Department of Safety and Security
- OCHA** Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs

- OCT** Office of Counter-Terrorism
- ODA** Office for Disarmament Affairs
- OHCHR** Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights
- OIOS** Office of Internal Oversight Services
- OLA** Office of Legal Affairs
- OSAA** Office of the Special Adviser on Africa
- SRSG/CAAC** Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict
- SRSG/SVC** Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Sexual Violence in Conflict
- SRSG/YAC** Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Violence Against Children

#### Specialized Agencies<sup>1,5</sup>

- FAO** Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
- ICAO** International Civil Aviation Organization
- IFAD** International Fund for Agricultural Development
- ILO** International Labour Organization
- IMF** International Monetary Fund
- IMO** International Maritime Organization
- ITU** International Telecommunication Union
- UNESCO** United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
- UNIDO** United Nations Industrial Development Organization
- UNWTO** World Tourism Organization
- UPU** Universal Postal Union
- WHO** World Health Organization
- WIPO** World Intellectual Property Organization
- WMO** World Meteorological Organization
- WORLD BANK GROUP**<sup>7</sup>
  - IBRD** International Bank for Reconstruction and Development
  - IDA** International Development Association
  - IFC** International Finance Corporation

#### Notes:

- Members of the United Nations System Chief Executives Board for Coordination (CEB).
- UN Office for Partnerships (UNOP) is the UN's focal point vis-a-vis the United Nations Foundation, Inc.
- IAEA and OPCW report to the Security Council and the General Assembly (GA).
- WTO has no reporting obligation to the GA, but contributes on an ad hoc basis to GA and Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) work on, inter alia, finance and development issues.
- Specialized agencies are autonomous organizations whose work is coordinated through ECOSOC (intergovernmental level) and CEB (inter-secretariat level).
- The Trusteeship Council suspended operation on 1 November 1994, as on 1 October 1994 Palau, the last United Nations Trust Territory, became independent.
- International Centre for Settlement of Investment Disputes (ICSID) and Multilateral Investment Guarantee Agency (MIGA) are not specialized agencies in accordance with Articles 57 and 63 of the Charter, but are part of the World Bank Group.
- The secretariats of these organs are part of the UN Secretariat.
- The Secretariat also includes the following offices: The Ethics Office, United Nations Ombudsman and Mediation Services, and the Office of Administration of Justice.
- For a complete list of ECOSOC Subsidiary Bodies see [un.org/ecosoc](http://un.org/ecosoc).



## The General Assembly – Six Main Committees

1. **First Committee** (Disarmament & International Security)
2. **Second Committee** (Economic & Financial)
3. **Third Committee** (Social, Humanitarian & Cultural)
4. **Fourth Committee** (Special Political & Decolonization)
5. **Fifth Committee** (Administrative & Budgetary)
6. **Sixth Committee** (Legal)

### The General Assembly has subsidiary organs

- ☐ **Advisory Committees**
- ☐ Committees and Commissions
- ☐ Boards, Councils, Panels and Working Groups, etc.



# Subsidiary Organ of the GA: The Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions (ACABQ)

## The ACABQ

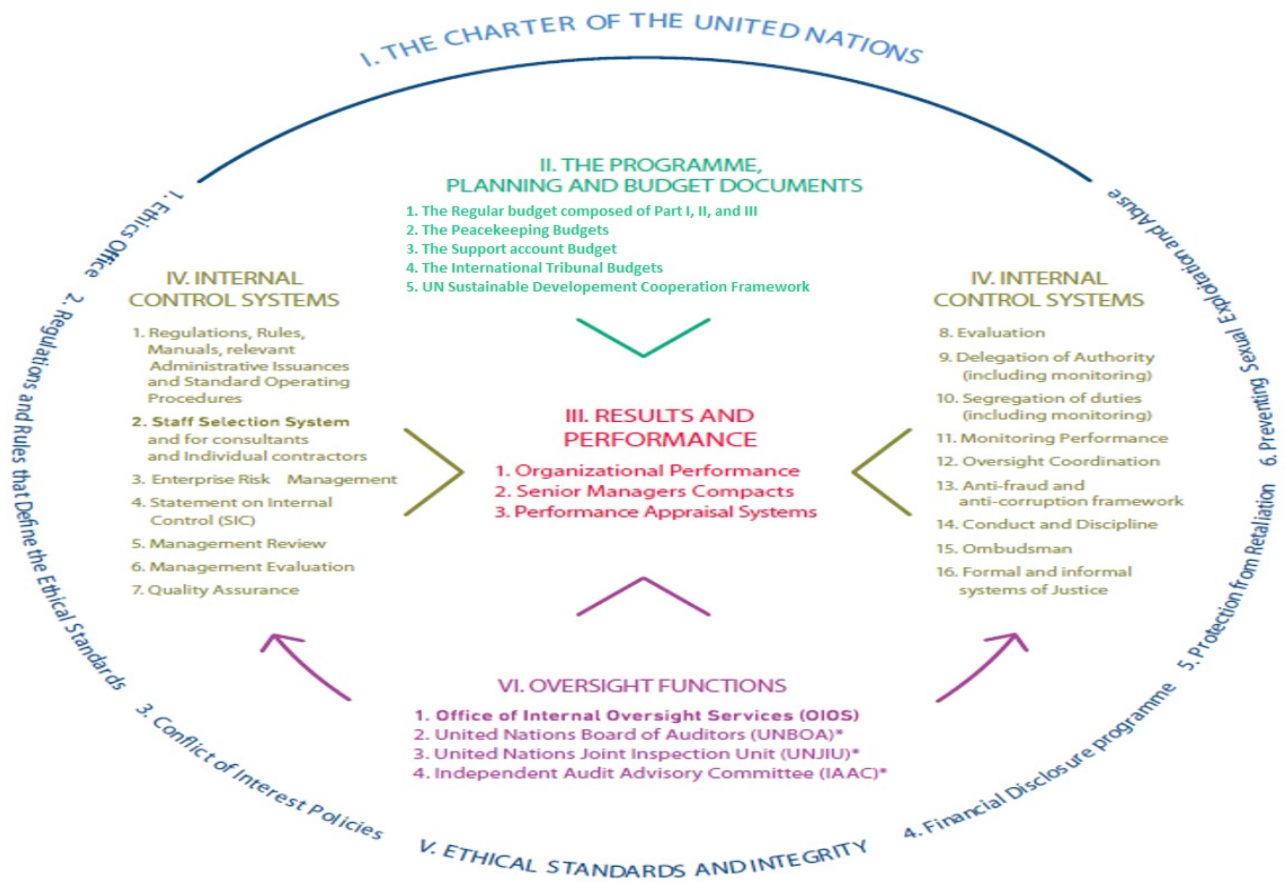
- ❑ Expert Committee of the GA
- ❑ 21 members elected by the GA in their personal capacity for 3 years
- ❑ Broad geographical representation
- ❑ Chair & Vice-Chair elected by its Members

## Functions

- ❑ Examine and report to the GA on the budget proposals
- ❑ Advise the GA on administrative and budgetary matters
- ❑ **Consider and report to the GA on the Board of Auditors' reports on the accounts of the United Nations and its funds & programmes**
- ❑ **Examine the administrative budgets & proposals for financial arrangements of the specialized agencies (UNFRR-Reg. 2.7)**
- ❑ **Concur with the allocation and rotation of the audit work among the members of the Board of Auditors**



# Accountability System for the UN Secretariat





# Oversight Bodies of the UN Secretariat

## **I. Board of Auditors (BOA) – GA resolution 74 (I), Article VII – of the UNFRR, and the annex to the UNFRR**

- External auditors (6-year non-consecutive term)
- Financial Audit: Financial statements
- Managerial Audits: Efficiency of the financial procedures, the accounting system, internal financial controls and in general the administration and management of the organization
- Performance Audit (GA resolution 66/232 B)
- Special requests to the BOA from ACABQ/GA
- <http://www.un.org/en/auditors/board/>

## **II. Joint Inspection Unit (JIU) - GA resolution 31/192 and JIU Statute**

- External & system wide (11 inspectors with 5-year terms)
- Subsidiary organ of the legislative bodies of its members
- Evaluations
- Inspections
- Investigations
- <https://www.unjiu.org/en/Pages/default.aspx>



## Oversight Bodies of the UN Secretariat (Cont'd)

### III. Office of Internal Oversight Services (OIOS)

- GA resolution 48/218, UN Financial Regulation 5.15 and ST/SGB/2002/7.
- Internal & Operationally independent
  - Reports directly to the SG and the GA
- USG appointed by the SG - Approved by GA for 5 years non-renewable
- Audits, Evaluations & Inspections and Investigations
- <https://oios.un.org/>

### IV. Independent Audit Advisory Committee (IAAC)

- GA resolutions 60/248 and 61/275 (5 members with 3-year terms)
- Subsidiary body of the GA. Expert advisory capacity to assists the GA to fulfil its oversight responsibilities
- Oversight on the workplans, budget and activities of OIOS
- Management risk and internal control – Advise the GA
- Financial reporting (Trends in BOA reports & accounting policies and disclosure practices)
- <http://www.un.org/ga/iaac/>

## Coordination Role of BTAD



The Business Transformation and Accountability Division (BTAD) coordinates the interactions of the Administration with the oversight bodies by arranging meetings, coordinating the Administration's responses and monitors the implementation of oversight bodies recommendations and provides regular updates to the Management Committee and to the IAAC.



BTAD coordinates inputs from various UN Secretariat entities and UN Funds and Programmes, and prepares reports of the Secretary-General on implementation of BOA recommendations that are submitted to the ACABQ and Fifth Committee.

## Coordination Role of BTAD (Cont'd)



BTAD coordinates written responses to questions by the ACABQ and Fifth Committee on the reports of the Secretary-General on implementation of the BOA recommendations.



BTAD also coordinates responses to OIOS and JIU surveys, questionnaires, detailed audit results and draft reports.



BTAD performs its coordination role through a network of oversight bodies focal points in all UN Secretariat entities and in UN Funds and Programmes that report to the General Assembly.

**Thank You  
Gracias  
Merci**

