



## Press Corps/Le Monde

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**Reporters: Mena Zavala and Freya Thakar**

**Topic: UNSC/Use of the Veto**

The United States, Russia, United Kingdom, France and China were considered the 'winners' of World War II. They emerged as the leaders of the new world after the fighting had stopped. The leaders came together to create the United Nations, and specifically the security council. These leaders became the five permanent members of the UN Security Council, meaning they had the power of the veto. They are the only ones. However, because of their permanent positions and veto power, they could override anyone who attempted to reform the council; and this has resulted in little change or amendments being made since the council's beginning. The council has failed to represent several regions, which has resulted in several consequences, including showing bias and not being able to create effective change in these regions as a result of the struggle against reform. The veto is now seen as a roadblock on the path to peace, not a tool to achieve it. The council was originally created to represent international unity and was responsible for keeping peace and security around the world, but times have changed. The UNSC holds so much power and makes so many important decisions and resolutions but it unfortunately does not represent the majority of the world zones that require its aid and solutions.

Youth is where the solutions begin. At MMUN students from around the world gather to address some of the UN's most pressing issues. Students in the Security Council committee discussed the five permanent members' power to veto. They sat across three tables that were arranged to make a 'U'. They practiced decorum, as each time they wished to talk, they would raise their country's plaque card and wait to be called on. They came up with subtopics for this issue. One subtopic, how in the group of the five permanent members, there is no representation of regions like Africa and South America, stood out to be quite controversial.

Allegra San Agustin, a delegate from South Korea gives an example to show just how serious of an issue this is.

“There are a lot of countries who are not being represented, they don't have any perspective, they cannot collaborate or contribute.” San Agustin says, “If there was a war, the countries who are affected may not have a say in the Security Council and it becomes counterproductive.” This lack of representation makes it difficult to create solutions that are beneficial or successful to those areas. The permanent members are vetoing options of reform to keep themselves in power, even when the conditions could improve the functionality of the security council and improve the lives of so many. The members have misused their privilege and their control has spread far beyond its limits. UN members have tried to set restraints for its usage but even that has been vetoed. South Korea suggests a committee called the Veto Accessibility Committee or the VAC. The VAC oversees, overlooks and analyzes the vetoes that go through and considers the rationale of the country or P5 member using the veto. This would keep the intentions of the veto uses in check but as of now there have not been adjustments.

The veto and the old ways of the UNSC are stuck in the past and are stunting the growth of the UN as a whole. The world is ready to move forward, but cannot get there without a reform. Evelyn Hertel, Delegate of Algeria agrees. “The security council is not inclusive because it was designed decades ago and it hasn't kept up with the times.” She says, “There are many countries that back then were still under colonization, Algeria was under French colonization at the time so while Algeria was not on the council, France was and France still had Algeria's best interest in mind. Back then there may have been Algerian representation in a way. Now the world has evolved, new countries have emerged.” The delegates of Algeria believe that the current system is not a sustainable one. Algeria supports non amendment reform by abolishing the veto as well as supporting the African Union and their request to gain 2 permanent seats on the security council with veto power and 2 additional rotating member seats so africa may gain representation in the Security Council. They also are supportive of other countries' attempts to get permanent seats to create a more diverse decision making group where the opinions of regions like Africa, Oceania, Latin American and smaller countries are more present amid the voices of world superpowers.

The opinions of the veto amongst the P5 vary. Russia holds veto power and has the most vetoes taken. Russian Delegate, JV Azzariti believes the veto does not need much reform.

When asked about misuse of veto power and fairness of its use, Russia responded with “no comment”. Russia's solution for reform included a panel to audit vetoes to prevent any breaches of human rights or national law. France also holds veto power however they propose a different solution. Sage Nephew, Delegate of France suggests to reform or abolish the veto entirely. “The country of Republican France thinks there needs to be more representation in Africa and other continents,” Nephew says. Despite France’s position and power they support reform of the veto and security council. “Because France has not used the veto in so long, we are not worried.” Nephew says.

Support toward the use of the veto is situational. It can be viewed as good and bad depending on the circumstances, especially for those who are permanently seated on the UNSC. The veto was created to aid the permanent members in negotiating peace and equality but it is now being taken advantage of. Members are vetoing resolutions for the wrong reasons. They are using their power to ensure their countries and allies are benefiting the most from the conditions, and their enemy countries and others in that region do not benefit. It has become increasingly difficult to cater to all countries when the UNSC struggles to agree on resolutions and vetoes the attempts of reform for the betterment of all countries.

Noel Braggs, Delegate of Ecuador believes the use of the veto has negatively affected peace processes internationally and the veto can be over or misused. “Ecuador believes that there have been a lot of irresponsible uses of the veto. Veto uses have been at an all time high and many of the vetoes cast have not been helpful in any way. Countries can definitely be more responsible in their uses.” Braggs says. Ecuador proposes an amendment reform through reinterpreting the charter to be more equitable and accurate.

Delegates in the UNSC committee work toward solutions that promote international cooperation, representation, fairness and peace. They strive to create a council that equally distributes humanitarian aid, sustainable development, healthcare, nutrition and education to all. They work to include all regions in discussions so they may correctly serve and benefit them. Their solutions will evolve and develop with the time so they remain effective and ethical. Together, the youth will work not only to solve the problems of today but to light the way to a brighter future.