International Relations · GS - II

Critically examine the role of the UN Security Council's permanent members in selecting the Secretary-General. Suggest reforms to make the process more transparent and representative.

EXAM YEAR	PAPER	SUBJECT
DAILY PRACTICE 22/10/2026	GS - II	International Relations

MARKS	WORD LIMIT
10	~150 words

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Answer Hint

UN Charter Article 97, P5 veto, General Assembly, democratic representation, transparency, multilateralism, institutional reform.

Model Answer

Introduction:

The UN Secretary-General serves as the organisation's chief administrative officer and plays an important role in diplomacy, conflict prevention and international cooperation.

Main Body:

Concerns with the Existing Process

1. Concentration of power: The P5 veto gives five countries decisive influence over candidate selection.
2. Limited transparency: Closed-door negotiations can reduce public scrutiny.
3. Representation: Smaller states and underrepresented regions may have limited influence over the outcome.
4. Geopolitical considerations: Strategic interests can outweigh candidates' qualifications and leadership experience.

Suggested Reforms

1. Strengthen the General Assembly's role through more substantive candidate hearings and deliberations.
2. Publish candidate qualifications, vision statements and campaign-financing disclosures.
3. Encourage the Security Council to consider multiple candidates and explain its recommendations.
4. Promote gender balance and equitable regional representation.
5. Build broader consensus while recognising the existing UN Charter framework.

Conclusion:

Reforming the selection process could improve the Secretary-General's legitimacy and independence. However, fundamental changes to the Security Council's formal powers would require changes to the UN Charter, making broad international agreement essential.

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