



EDITORIAL | At 75, the United Nations is Hostage to Aggressors in Security Council

The United Nations marks its 75th anniversary this autumn as the U.N. General Assembly (UNGA) gets underway. Founded on October 24, 1945, immediately after the end of World War II, the institution's primary aim is the "maintenance of international peace and security." And its organ assuming the greatest responsibility for attaining these purposes is the U.N. Security Council (UNSC).

It can hardly be said, however, that the UNSC has fulfilled its role. It has fallen short, not only in the face of the Cold War, but also when it encountered conflicts involving antagonistic regions, ethnic groups, and religions. Nor did it fare well against the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and international terrorism.

It is extremely regrettable that the task of thoroughly reforming UNSC has been left unaddressed, even though its "dysfunction" has long been evident.

Japan's Foreign Minister Toshimitsu Motegi sent a video message to the high-ranking meeting to mark the 75th anniversary of the founding of the world body. He reiterated the willingness of Japan to tackle reform of the UNSC and hold a permanent seat on the key decision-making body. Japan must not give up on the fulfillment of these goals, even though they are challenges that have repeatedly fallen short of being achieved.

The biggest of problems with the Security Council is that the five victorious powers of World War II — the United States, Great Britain, France, China, and Russia — each hold a permanent seat, possess nuclear weapons, and have a monopoly on the right of veto.

The "former enemy" clause in the U.N. Charter remains unabolished, theoretically allowing other U.N. members to use force against defeated countries such as Japan and Germany, among others, without prior approval of the Security Council. Although an argument has been made that a 1995 resolution of the UNGA rendered the clause powerless, we remain skeptical. Isn't there a possibility that a victor country would use this former enemy clause, which has a fixed definition, to invade Japan for its own purposes?

[GO TO THE NEXT PAGE]

Today, Russia has annexed the Crimean Peninsula, while China has been militarizing land grabs in the South China Sea. China and Russia have both been carrying on the burden of protecting the nuclear and missile programs of North Korea, while defending the Hafez al-Assad administration over the Syrian civil war, hampering efforts to find resolutions to these issues.

China and Russia are both seeking to “change the status quo by force,” even if it means trampling on international law. But they are both permanent members of the Security Council, making that body helpless against the two countries, whose behavior poses a menace to world peace.

In view of the current behavior of permanent members of the Security Council, the question arises as to whether the body would be able to exercise persuasive coercion in the event of a UNSC member country committing problematic actions.

This U.N. milestone anniversary should have been an opportunity for the General Assembly to boost momentum for reform of the UNSC. Instead, it is truly regrettable that the council’s deliberations have instead become video-centric because of the new coronavirus pandemic.

Nevertheless, the time is ripe for the U.N. member nations, which have increased to 193 from 51 at the time of founding, to break away from the concept of wartime victor nations with special rights.

If Japan can set an example for the world by showing it is a country that protects the liberal world order and lives by the rule of law, as well as one that assumes a heavy responsibility for doing its share to maintain world peace, such efforts themselves will be certain to help expedite the reform of the United Nations.

Source: EDITORIAL | At 75, the United Nations is Hostage to Aggressors in Security Council
<https://japan-forward.com/editorial-at-75-the-united-nations-is-hostage-to-aggressors-in-security-council/>

【主張】国連創設75年 「戦勝国の発想」と決別を

創設75年を迎える節目の国連総会が始まった。第二次世界大戦終結直後の1945年10月24日に生まれた国連は「国際の平和と安全の維持」が第一の目的であり、その責務を担う最重要機関が安全保障理事会である。

東西冷戦はもとより、その後の地域や民族、宗教をめぐる紛争、大量破壊兵器の拡散、国際テロリズムなどの脅威を前に安保理がその役割を果たしてきたとはいえない。その「機能不全」が指摘されながら、抜本改革が手つかずなのは極めて遺憾である。

茂木敏充外相は75周年記念の高官級会合にビデオメッセージを送り、安保理改革と日本の常任理事国入りに意欲を表明した。挫折を繰り返してきた課題だが、あきらめてはならない。

安保理が抱える最大の問題点は、大戦の戦勝国で核保有国でもある米英仏中露の5大国が常任理事国を占め、拒否権を独占してきたことだ。

国連憲章には、加盟国が日本やドイツなど敗戦国に対して、安保理の許可なく武力行使を可能とした旧敵国条項も残っている。95年の総会決議により空文化したとの指摘もあるが、納得できない。戦勝国の発想が固定化したこの条項が、日本を侵略しようとする国に悪用される恐れはないのか。

今日、ロシアはクリミアを併合し、中国は南シナ海の軍事拠点化を進めている。中露両国は、核・ミサイル問題では北朝鮮の肩を持つ言動を繰り返し、シリア内戦をめぐってもアサド政権を擁護して問題解決を妨げている。

国際法を踏みにじり、「力による現状変更」を目指す中露両国が常任理事国であるがゆえに、安保理は世界の平和を乱す両国の振る舞いに対して無力である。

常任理事国がこのありさまでは、他の加盟国が問題行動をとった際に、安保理が説得力をもって強制力を行使できるのか、という疑問もある。

節目の国連総会は、安保理改革の機運を盛り上げる機会となるべきだが、コロナ禍で冒頭からビデオ中心になったのは残念だ。

当初の51カ国から加盟国が193カ国に増えた国連は、戦勝国の発想から決別すべきときを迎えている。日本が国際秩序を守る範を示し、平和を維持する重責を担っていくなら、そのこと自体が国連改革を促すことになる。

出典：【主張】国連創設75年「戦勝国の発想」と決別を
<https://japan-forward.com/japanese/> 【主張】国連創設75年「戦勝国の発想」と決別を/