

The Upcoming Global South Summit Paves the Path for India's Permanent UNSC Seat

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Next week's virtual summit will secure the support of the Global South for India's permanent UNSC seat while the conclusion of its G20 chairmanship in September will do the same with respect to the Golden Billion. Once the vast majority of the international community unites around this cause, India will then likely draft a UN General Assembly resolution on this issue in order to prove the overwhelming support that it has.

["EAM Jaishankar Made Some Solid Points About Why India Deserves A Permanent UNSC Seat"](#) earlier this month, essentially arguing that the over three-quarter-century-old UN system is urgently in need of reform in order to accommodate for contemporary realities like the irreversible rise of the Global South. About that category of countries, India will bring over 120 of them together next week during the virtual [Voice Of Global South Summit](#) that it's hosting to discuss their shared geo-economic interests.

["India's Global South Summit Is The Most Important Multilateral Event In Decades"](#) since, as the preceding hyperlinked analysis concluded, "The gathering of so many countries for apolitical and geo-economic purposes proves that the vast majority of humanity wants mutually beneficial development that unites the world instead of more geopolitical competition that'll only tear it apart." Furthermore, India is the only truly neutral and bonafide developing state with the credibility to unite its peers.

China can't play this role since its unprecedented economic development of the last four decades reduces its credibility as a self-declared developing state while Russia is a [leading player](#) in the [New Cold War](#) between the US-led West's [Golden Billion](#) and the jointly [BRICS](#)- & [SCO](#)-led Global South of which it's a part so it can't be credibly described as neutral. India, by respective contrast to both of them, is a bonafide developing state that's truly neutral in this competition over the [global systemic transition](#).

While India shares China and Russia's desire to make International Relations more democratic, equal, just, and predictable, it's not against the Golden Billion per se like they are since it has many more mutually beneficial relations with that de facto bloc, [including military ones](#). Prime Minister Modi's [vision](#) is one of gradual reforms instead of radical ones in order to avoid inadvertently contributing to any further instability, to which end India still works closely with the Golden Billion on shared interests.

This pragmatic approach of multi-aligning between major powers enabled India to [maximize its sovereignty](#) in the New Cold War, thus bestowing it with [kingmaker status](#) and proving that it's indeed possible to benefit from principled neutrality. Comparatively smaller-sized and less geostrategically positioned states can't realistically replicate this unique role, but they can indeed follow in its footsteps in order to carve out their own in ways that also maximize their sovereignty in the current uncertainty.

This explains why so many of them will participate in the upcoming Global South Summit since they hope to learn more from India's successful example as well as share ideas with it that they expect their partner to promote during its [chairmanship of the G20](#) in pursuit of their shared interests. This category of countries sincerely trusts India since they regard it as one of their own, unlikely much more economically developed China, and seek to emulate its masterful balancing act in the New Cold War.

Likewise, the Golden Billion also trusts India as a responsible member of the international community, ergo why White House **Press Secretary Karine Jean-Pierre** [praised](#) Prime Minister Modi for helping to formulate the careful wording of last November's G20 joint statement. By successfully balancing between the Global South and the Golden Billion in the pragmatic manner that it has, India is expected to earn the vast majority of their members' support for a permanent UNSC seat.

The challenge, however, remains China. The People's Republic is reluctant to give its neighbor this privilege for geopolitical reasons related to its distrust of India stemming from their unresolved border disputes that [once again led to a clash](#) last month. This unofficial stance contradicts Beijing's official claim of wanting to jointly build the [Asian Century](#) in equal partnership with Delhi, the rhetoric of which could ring hollow if it obstructs more serious moves by India to secure a permanent UNSC seat.

That might happen sooner than later too since India is expected to make a major move in this direction by the end of the year. Next week's virtual summit will secure the support of the Global South for its permanent UNSC seat while the conclusion of its G20 chairmanship in September will do the same with respect to the Golden Billion. The first de facto New Cold War bloc regards India as the champion of their interests while the second considers its growing influence to be a peaceful counterweight to China.

Once the vast majority of the international community unites around the cause of India's permanent UNSC seat, that South Asian state will then likely [draft a UN General Assembly \(UNGA\) resolution](#) on this issue in order to prove the overwhelming support that it has. That'll in turn put immense pressure on China to soften its stance lest it risks the negative optics of going against the democratic will of the global majority, which could cripple its carefully crafted soft power for years to come.

The modus operandi being proposed applies the insight obtained from former Indian Ambassador to China **Vijay Gokhale**, whose 2021 book about ["The Long Game: How The](#)

[Chinese Negotiate With India](#)” (reviewed [here](#) and channeled in his latest paper [here](#)) is integral to understanding Chinese calculations. The relevance to the present piece is that he emphasizes how sensitive China is to global perceptions about it, which is why it’ll be loathe to cultivate a negative impression by going against the UNGA.

After all, if China truly considers itself to be a developing country like India and the rest of the Global South veritably are in spite of its indisputable economic asymmetry with its self-declared peers, then it naturally follows that it shouldn’t have a problem supporting India’s envisaged permanent UNSC seat. Moreover, China’s official claim of wanting to build the Asian Century in equal partnership with India would be put to the test upon being pressured to react to any UNGA vote in favor of Delhi’s dream.

Obstructing the democratic will of the international community as embodied in a successful UNGA resolution officially requesting a permanent UNSC seat for India would discredit China’s preceding claims upon which a lot of its contemporary soft power is built. It wouldn’t be regarded as a developing country that respects the UNGA’s politically non-binding resolutions and wants a multipolar Asia, but as an elitist country that ignores the Global Majority because it secretly wants a unipolar Asia.

Faced with the zero-sum choice of sacrificing its carefully crafted soft power in naked pursuit of its geopolitical interests or pragmatically accommodating this in response to the UNGA’s request to preserve that selfsame soft power despite its geopolitical misgivings, China is expected to do the latter. With these calculations in mind, it’s expected that India will build upon the success of next week’s Global South Summit to help make its dream of a permanent UNSC seat a reality by the end of the year.

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