**The Issue of Revoking Veto Powers**

The United Nations Charter established six main organs of the United Nations, including the Security Council. The Security Council retains the primary responsibility for maintaining international peace and security, which may meet whenever peace is threatened. It includes the five permanent members (United States, Russian Federation [as a state successor to the USSR], United Kingdom, China and France) that have veto power, and also ten elected non-permanent members.

The issue of veto powers in the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) has been a longstanding and contentious topic, drawing attention to the need for reform within the international organization.

The power of veto was granted to the five permanent members of the United Nations Security Council as a mechanism to prevent the Council from taking actions contrary to their national interests. This privilege was intended to maintain a balance of power and encourage the participation of major nations in the United Nations. However, over time, concerns have arisen regarding the abuse of veto powers and its impact on the Council's ability to effectively address global challenges.

One of the primary arguments for revoking veto powers is to eliminate the frequent instances of inaction and gridlock in the UNSC. The ability of a single member to block resolutions, even in the face of overwhelming international support, has hindered the Council's capacity to respond promptly and decisively to crises. In recent years, this is evident where UN resolutions, that were widely supported by member states, have been vetoed and thus discarded, as a result of the disagreement of one or more permanent members.

Additionally, revoking veto powers aligns with the principles of equality and fair representation among member states. The current system grants disproportionate influence to a select few, undermining the democratic ideals upon which the United Nations was founded. Arbitrary use of the veto power has been warned of, as it may undermine the Council’s work and renders it unable to preserve international peace and security. “The use of the veto reflects the pure political interests of permanent Council members,” the delegate of Turkey stated at the Seventy-Third session of the General Assembly.

Furthermore, a reformed Security Council without veto powers could enhance the credibility and legitimacy of the United Nations. Following the resignation of the director of the New York Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, in criticism of the UN’s inability to act as a result of the veto power, critics argue that the current structure perpetuates a perception of an unequal and undemocratic international system. In light of these challenges and critiques, the reconsideration of veto powers becomes not only a matter of structural reform but also a pivotal step towards reinforcing the credibility and democratic legitimacy of the United Nations in addressing pressing global issues.

On the other hand, opponents to the revocation of the veto power assert that the veto power vested in the permanent members of the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) serves as a fundamental safeguard for the preservation of national sovereignty. Central to this argument is the concern that without the ability to veto resolutions, these permanent members would be susceptible to decisions imposed by the international community that might run contrary to their vital national interests.

The contention that veto powers contribute significantly to the maintenance of stability and consensus, within the United Nations Security Council (UNSC), underscores a perspective that values deliberate and cautious decision-making over swift, potentially impulsive actions. Advocates of this viewpoint argue that the veto power, though often criticized for causing delays, serves as a crucial mechanism to prevent decision making that could exacerbate tensions or escalate conflicts. Additionally, critics of revoking veto powers express concerns that without the influence of permanent members, non-permanent members might exploit their positions for short-term political gains, leading to instability and unpredictability in the Council.

If veto powers were to be revoked, the UNSC would need to implement alternative decision-making processes to ensure effective and inclusive decision-making. Without the threat of veto, member states may be more willing to engage in collaborative efforts, fostering a sense of shared responsibility for addressing global challenges. A reformed UNSC could better reflect the diverse perspectives of the international community, promoting a more inclusive and equitable approach to global problem-solving.

In order to reform the United Nations Security Council procedure, the international community must engage in open and constructive dialogue to explore potential reforms that address the shortcomings of the current system.

Points to Consider:

* Should restrictions be placed on the veto power?
* Should non-permanent members obtain the ability to override the veto power?
* Should the veto power be removed? What issues may arise as a result of this?
* Are there ways of making Security Council voting more inclusive without changing the nature of the veto power?
* Should the veto power be allocated to member states outside of the P5?
* (How might one propose changes without triggering veto from a P5 member?)

Stances that member states have taken on this issue:

<https://press.un.org/en/2018/ga12091.doc.htm>