

The United Nations

A Very Short Introduction

By Jussi M. Hanhimäki

Questions for Thought and Discussion

- Why was the United Nations created?
- What are its principal goals and purposes?
- How did the successes and failures of the League of Nations affect the organizing principles and rules of the United Nations?
- What factors explain the growth of the United Nations' membership over the past seven decades?
- What are the main organs – and their functions – of the United Nations?
- Has the UN Security Council been successful in maintaining peace and security?
- What have been the main challenges to international peace and security and how have they affected the UN's effectiveness over time?
- Has the Security Council itself changed? If so, in what ways?
- Is the United Nations the best organization (or actor) to deal with modern challenges of peacekeeping and peacebuilding? Why/why not?
- Do the different UN and UN-related agencies (World Bank, IMF, UNDP) share the same goals regarding economic development?
- What do the Millennium Development Goals consist of?
- How does the UN promote human rights?
- How important is the notion of 'responsibility to protect' to the UN agenda?
- Why does the UN have a difficulty to 'deliver as one'?
- What are the major reform agendas for the UN in the early 21st century?
- How likely is it that any/some/all of these challenges will be met?
- Do you think the UN is an indispensable organization?

Other books by the Author

International History of the Twentieth Century and Beyond (London: Routledge, 2014, 3rd edition)

Transatlantic Relations Since 1945: An Introduction (London: Routledge, 2012)

The Flawed Architect: Henry Kissinger and American Foreign Policy (New York: Oxford University Press, 2008)

The Cold War: A History in Documents and Eyewitness Accounts (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003)

Further Reading

Paul Kennedy, *The Parliament of Man: The Past, Present and Future of the United Nations* (New York: Random House, 2007)

Mark Mazower, *Governing the World: The History of An Idea* (New York: Penguin, 2013)

T. G. Weiss, D. P. Forsythe and R. A. Coate, *The United Nations and Changing World Politics* (Boulder, CO: Westview, 2013, 7th edition)