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Can a new State or Government be recognized by the UN? How does a country become a member of the UN?

The recognition of a new State or Government is an act that only States and Governments may grant or withhold. The United Nations is neither and, therefore, does not possess any authority to recognize a State or a Government.

The United Nations may admit a new State to its membership or accept the credentials of the representatives of a new Government. Paragraph 1 of Article 4 of the Charter of the United Nations states that it "is open to all other peace-loving States which accept the obligations contained in the present Charter and, in the judgment of the Organization, are able and willing to carry out these obligations." The procedure is as follows:

- The State submits an application to the Secretary-General and a formal declaration stating that it accepts the obligations under the UN Charter.
- The application is considered first by the Security Council. Any recommendation for admission must receive the affirmative votes of nine of the 15 members of the Council, provided that none of its five permanent members - China, France, the Russian Federation, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and the United States of America – has voted against the application.
- If the Council recommends admission, the recommendation is presented to the General Assembly for consideration. A two-thirds majority vote is necessary for admission of a new State, and membership becomes effective on the date the resolution for admission is adopted.

At each session, the General Assembly considers the credentials of all representatives of Member States participating in that session. During such consideration, the issue can be raised whether a particular representative has been accredited by the Government actually in power. If controversial, this issue is ultimately decided by a majority vote in the Assembly. It should be noted that the normal change of a Government, through a democratic election, does not raise any issues concerning the credentials of the representative of the State concerned.



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