

# The United Nations: Challenges and Change

Fourth edition. February 2014.

## HISTORICAL CONTEXT

- Begins with the history of the League of Nations, its formation, and failures.
- Includes World War II, the initial United Nations structure, and how the UN changed in response to the Cold War and decolonization.
- Concludes with an overview of the continuing questions of power, role, and purview.

## STUDENT TEXT

- Explains the organizational structure of the United Nations, specifically the functions of the Security Council, UN agencies, and peace-keeping forces.
- Profiles case studies of UN responses to global crises: Suez Canal, Bosnia, Timor-Leste, and Darfur.
- Overviews the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the Commission on Human Rights, and Humanitarian Aid initiatives.
- Contextualizes calls for reform and scaling back the United Nations.
- Presents the political, economic, and social dilemmas that will face the United Nations.

## CENTRAL ROLE PLAY ACTIVITY

**Question:** What should the United Nations' role be? What is the U.S. role in the UN?

**Setting:** U.S. Senate Committee on Foreign Relations

## SKILL DEVELOPMENT THROUGH LESSONS

A short description of each lesson can be found on the unit webpage [here](#).

Students will:

- **Interpret** the United Nations Charter and the Declaration of Human Rights.
- **Evaluate** the composition of the Security Council through sources such as Saudi Arabia's decision to reject a seat on the Council.
- **Simulate** the Security Council debate of a resolution to impose economic sanctions.
- **Debate** how to respond to the civil war in Syria.
- **Work with a team** to synthesize readings, lessons, and position profiles into class presentations.
- **Listen** actively and deliberate with peers about the complex viewpoints expressed.
- **Reflect** and write their own position.

## LINKS FOR FURTHER CURRICULUM EVALUATION

**Videos** - A free online [video collection](#) accompanies this unit, and the videos are incorporated throughout the Digital Editions.

**Print Format** - This unit [preview](#) includes the table of contents, a reading excerpt, and a sample lesson plan.

**Digital Editions Format** - Interested in what the Digital Editions format looks like? Check out our web-based curriculum [here](#).