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Towards the Betterment of the Security Council



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Executive Summary

The chief purpose of this thesis is to examine the reform process of the UN Security Council and highlight the obstacles and limitations of the various existing reform proposals. This research is conducted through the use of qualitative methods, namely desk research and field research. The qualitative research methods include two semi-structured interviews, a comparative analysis of two reform proposals, and a case study on the events of the 2011 conflict in Syria. Through these methods, the history of the UN and the UNSC is analysed with an outline of the criticisms towards the UNSC. Moreover, the two reform proposals are examined, and ultimately, the limitations and obstacles of the reform proposals are drawn.

The results of this research reveal that the two selected reform proposals, the Annan Proposal and the French Proposal, face two primary obstacles and that there are limitations and hindrances to the overall reform process. The Annan proposal is confronted with the first obstacle of reform, which is the extreme discussions faced when reform is debated between the Member States, which leads to continuous disagreement and absence of consensus. Secondly, the French proposal faces the obstacle of the non-negotiable veto, which privileges the P5 in the decision-making process of the UNSC, while also paralysing the reform conversation. The general obstacles of reform obtained through academic literature and the conducted interviews encompass firstly, the inherently imbalanced composition of the UNSC which lacks representation of the major regions and the different Member States. Then, the negative vacuum in which the reform proposals are often discussed creates another obstacle in which a positive political will is difficult to generate. Another obstacle is the absence of participation of academics and UN officers in the reform discussions. The last obstacle presents a more contemporary issue in which the challenge is to keep the P5 members committed to the UNSC.

In conclusion, for the reform process of the UNSC to be improved, the above-mentioned obstacles and limitations must be taken into account when continuing the reform conversation and considering existing or new proposals of UNSC reform.

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Preface

In Arabic culture, there is a popular saying that goes: In unity, there is power, in separation, there is weakness. While this saying applies to many things, I found it to be particularly accurate when it comes to international organisations. Through my passion for the public sector of European Studies and my great interest in policy and intergovernmental institutions, I learned more about the European Union and international organisations such as the United Nations. I became convinced that when countries unite and work together towards a common goal, their potential and competence become greater. That is why international organisations intrigue me, and why I decided to write my thesis on the United Nations and the Security Council.

I would like to thank the lecturers of the public sector within European studies, especially Ms Michaela Anghel and Ms Enitsa Gabrovska, who made the public lectures always more fascinating since my first year in ES. Their knowledge, passion and enthusiasm always reached me and made my passion for the public sector grow throughout my studies. I was therefore thrilled when Ms Anghel was assigned my thesis supervisor, and I would like to especially thank her for her supervision, patience, encouragement and support during the process of writing this thesis.

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List of acronyms

BRICS – Brazil, Russia, India, China, South Africa
DPKO – Department of Peacekeeping operations
G4 – Germany, Japan, Brazil & India (Four nations supporting each other for permanent membership)
HLP – High-level Panel on Threats, Challenges and Change
HRC – Human Rights Council
IPB – International Peace Bureau
IPU – Inter-Parliamentary Union
L.69 Group – Group of Developing Countries comprising 42 member states advocating for membership in the UNSC
LoN – League of Nations
OPCW – Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons
P5 – The Five Permanent Members of the Security Council (United States, Russia, United Kingdom, China, France)
UN – United Nations
Uniting for Consensus – Canada, Argentina, Spain, Italy, Mexico, Pakistan and South Korea
UNSC – United Nations Security Council
WILPF – The Women's International League for Peace and Freedom

Introduction

Throughout its 75 years of existence, the United Nations (UN) has become the most significant intergovernmental organisations in the world. The UN has accomplished the art of international organisation in which 193 sovereign states cooperate on a daily basis in political, economic and social matters through several UN organs, offices and assemblies. The main mission of the UN is to maintain international peace, stability and security; which is the primary responsibility of its most powerful organ, the Security Council (UNSC). This responsibility is delegated to 15 members of the UNSC, five of which founded the UN and are known as the five permanent members of the council (P5), consisting of the United States, Russia, the United Kingdom, China and France. Besides a privileged permanency status granted to these members, they also possess the power to veto any decision in the UNSC.

Within its mission, the role of the UNSC has often been questioned, debated and heavily criticised as peace, stability and security have not always been safeguarded. While a world war has not occurred since 1945, breaches of peace and mass atrocities have taken place over the years, for instance, the Rwandan genocide, the Srebrenica massacre and the Iraq invasion. In just the past decade, events occurred such as the Ukraine conflict, the Myanmar crisis, and the biggest humanitarian crisis of the past decade, the Syrian war. These events have demonstrated the ineffectiveness of the UNSC, the incapability of the P5, and the failure of fulfilling the UNSC's role in safeguarding peace and security. Consequently, for decades, numerous reform proposals have been offered by UN officials, academics and the Member States in an attempt to improve the effectiveness of the UNSC and develop a contemporary body that reflects the state and challenges of the 21st century. Nevertheless, the process of reform experiences many obstacles and complications, resulting in a slow, complex and extremely challenging process.

As the calls of reform are growing, it is essential to explore the reform process of the UNSC and analyse the obstacles of the suggested reform proposals. Therefore, the central research question of this thesis is: *What are the limitations and obstacles of the various proposals for reforming the United Nations Security Council?*

The purpose of this research is to investigate the UNSC, its decision-making mechanisms and the process of reform. First, this thesis provides a historical overview of international organisation and explores the creation of the UN and the design of the UNSC. Furthermore, to assess why reform is needed, the criticisms towards the UNSC are outlined and discussed. The second chapter conducts

a comparative analysis in which two different proposals are examined. The Kofi Annan proposal of 2005 and the French proposal of 2013 are selected for this comparison. Afterwards, an evaluation of the obstacles and limitations of the two proposals is presented. In the third chapter, a case study on the Syrian events of 2011 is conducted. Therein, the response of the international community and the decision-making process of the UNSC are analysed. In addition, a hypothetical analysis is conducted in which the compared reform proposals are examined in light of the UNSC's shortcomings. The purpose of the hypothetical element in this chapter is not to look into a glass ball and predict the future, but rather to examine if the reform proposals were to be implemented, how different the decision-making process could have been in Syria and how the probability of adopting the vetoed resolutions could have been higher. Finally, with the results of the conducted analyses, the conclusion provides an answer to the central research question.

Methodology

This section aims at providing an overview of the methodology used in conducting the research for this thesis. First, an explanation of the qualitative nature of the research is given, highlighting the comparative analysis and case study. Then, the use of desk research is justified along with the description of the most essential sources and their availability. Furthermore, the use of field research in the form of interviews is outlined, with a description of the participants. Lastly, the research ethics, scope and limitations of this research are illustrated.

Research design

The qualitative research method was chosen to conduct research for this thesis, in addition to the descriptive and explanatory research design. Qualitative research provides an insight into the problem and helps uncover trends, develop ideas and have a deeper understanding of the issue (Barakso, Sabet, & Schaffner, 2014). The reason for choosing the qualitative method was mainly because of the access it grants to a variety of sources and the details needed for the chosen cases. Qualitative research is the most suitable and feasible method when it comes to this topic as opposed to the quantitative method, which also explores many cases but without the same wealth of details.

Qualitative research

In order to explore the different proposals of reforming the UNSC and discover the limitations and feasibility of these reforms in reality, a comparative study was conducted in this thesis. This method was chosen because it offers a limitation of scope that is essential for a focused and comprehensive analysis (2014, p. 177). It also identifies the similarities and differences between approaches and assessed arguments of support and criticisms through academic literature. This comparative analysis also served as the theoretical framework of this thesis. With the wide variety of reform proposals in the existing literature, this study was conducted by selecting two proposals of two distinctive categories to illustrate specific insight into how reform is approached by different actors in the international community. Specifically, the proposals were chosen from a UN perspective and a Member State perspective. The UN perspective illustrates a reform attempt from the organisation itself, while Member States often propose reforms in unilateral or multilateral initiatives from their viewpoint. Therefore, adding a proposal by a Member State was deemed appropriate for this comparative analysis.

For the UN perspective, the 2005 proposal by Secretary-General Kofi Annan was selected. This proposal of reform is the most recent and comprehensive proposal by the UN to date that focused on the organisational and structural reform of the UN in general and the UNSC in specific.

Additionally, the two UNSC reform models described in this proposal coincide with many academic viewpoints on reform. As for the Member State perspective, the French initiative of 2013 on reforming the veto power was chosen for its relevance, its link to recent events such as the Syrian crisis, and how it is proposed by a permanent member of the UNSC. Ultimately, the purpose of this comparative analysis was to examine the challenging process of reforming the UNSC and to understand the complications of adopting reform proposals. Therefore, the obstacles and limitations of the reform proposals were explored in this comparison.

Another qualitative method used in this thesis to illustrate obstacles of reform even further, was a case study on the Syrian conflict. This case study assessed the UNSC decision-making process throughout the events in Syria at the time. The case of Syria was chosen because it is one of the most crucial cases that happened in the last decade, which also required immediate response from the UNSC. However, the atrocities of the war intensified, and the UNSC failed to de-escalate the conflict and protect the Syrian civilians. This case is relevant because it is still ongoing and provides ground for discussing the limitations and obstacles of the UNSC and the reform process. The events of Syria are relatively well documented, and a clear timeline was followed using documents from the UN archive database and UNSC resolutions. Additionally, through a hypothetical analysis, the two reform proposals of the comparative study were analysed in light of the Syrian conflict. The purpose of such analysis is not to predict the future or look into a glass ball for answers, but rather to examine how the reform proposals could have been an approach to boost the international response towards Syria and adopt the vetoed resolutions that were the cause of UNSC inaction towards the crisis. The practical example of the case study helped in illustrating what went wrong in Syria. Conducting the comparative analysis and the case study provided an outline of the decision-making process in the UNSC during the Syrian war and illustrated how the interest of great powers forms an obstacle when talking about reform.

[Desk Research](#)

Desk research was conducted as the primary method for this thesis. In doing research and gathering information, desk research was found to be the most feasible and accessible method, especially when considering literature and online sources in exploring institutional literature, academic literature and journalistic sources. Desk research provided more insight and knowledge on the history of the UN, the goals of the UNSC and academic insights on reform. The UN websites presented the documentation of events, meetings, adopted resolutions and draft resolutions. In addition, it also provided information relevant to the case study on the Syrian war and demonstrated how the UNSC handled this case. Furthermore, literature by scholars on reforming the UNSC helped

to compare the two proposals and analysed their different viewpoints and limitations. Primary sources were used such as UN resolutions, speeches, meetings and council records, which are reliable sources retrieved from the UN databases, archives and libraries. Secondary sources were also used, such as books, journals, online publications and news articles.

Field Research

For this thesis, field research was conducted in the form of two semi-structures interviews. Interviews are the most feasible source of primary data and are found essential in gaining a professional perspective while answering the sub-questions. This thesis was aimed at obtaining two different perspectives; an institutional perspective from a UN official who is knowledgeable in UN decision-making and has operational experience, and an academic perspective provided by a professor who is an expert in UN history.

The purpose of interviews was to gain insight into the chosen experts views about their opinion on the current decision-making process within the UNSC along with their views on reform. The participants were asked about reforming the UNSC in the general sense, what such reforms in their opinions entailed, how it could be applied, and what the limitations are. They were also asked about their view on the Syrian case and how the UNSC managed the situation. Correspondingly, the interviews had a semi-structured format with open-ended questions to give the interviewee the liberty to express their views and provide the interviewer with the freedom to ask follow-up questions if needed.

The first interview was conducted with Mr Lucien Back, who has worked for many UN organisations and is a member of the NVVN (The Dutch association of the United Nations). Mr Back worked in the General Assembly and contributed in reforming the UN, increasing the transparency and efficiency of the organisation. The questions in this interview were mainly about his work and experience as a UN official, his ideas on the current state of decision-making in the UN, his views on the Syrian case, and on reforming the UNSC and the limitations of reform. The second interview was conducted with Professor Alanna O'Malley, who is a university lecturer at Leiden University and a historian focused on the United Nations. As a scholar who is an expert in UN history and international relations, the questions in this interview targeted the evolution of decision-making and reform within the UNSC, her assessment of the Syrian case, her views on reform and academic reform proposals, and the obstacles faced in reforming the UNSC. In answering the question, their expertise and different insights helped in explaining the structural process of reform, their analysis on Syria and how the UN reform discussion could be more effective.

Research Ethics

In the context of social sciences, research ethics is defined as “the moral principles guiding research from its inception through to completion and publication of results” (The British Psychological Society, 2010, p. 5). The topic of reforming the UN, with a focus on the UNSC is certainly not new. The discussion arises, especially when certain events around the world occur where it is expected of the UN to act and uphold their mission. To ensure that this research is relatively representative, it was intended to include interviews and a variety of sources containing as many different views as possible. The credibility of the literature sources was also checked comprehensively through obtaining the sources from trustworthy databases and comparing the different sources to ensure reliability and accuracy.

The ethics protocol was upheld with the participants of the interviews. The participants were contacted by email, and the scope and aim of the research was explained. They were informed of their right to privacy and confidentiality beforehand and were provided a manuscript of the potential interview questions. The participants were asked permission to record the interview and whether they wanted to remain anonymous, in addition to signing the Informed Consent form. The signed forms are attached in the appendices.

Scope and Limitations

As every research is subject to limitations that may affect the outcomes; this thesis also faced some limitations. The first limitation was the reliance on secondary data. While the ideal choice would have been primary data, this was not possible due to the scope, time and feasibility of this research project. Moreover, the outbreak of the Covid-19 virus in the Netherlands formed an even bigger constraint as educational institutions were forced to close by governmental measures. One main limitation was the inability to obtain more sources and conduct more interviews, as the social distancing measures forced facilities, libraries and universities to close and encouraged all to stay home. Nevertheless, online methods and technology were used to continue pursuing this research, and that is why secondary data was deemed the best option.

Secondly, in searching for proposals of reforming the UNSC, it was observed that most proposals and scholarly articles on reform were produced up until 2010, and a limited number of academic articles produced after. This excludes ten years of global events and crucial shifts that are not taken into consideration in those earlier publications. Therefore, it was necessary to search for quality sources that include the events of the last decade, even if it were limited. It is important to note that while this thesis does not all the solutions and reform proposals, it derives its results from most

academic works. In addition, information and discussions on recent events was gathered through the conducted interviews, UN databases and recent news articles. Another limitation is the Syrian case study, in which the scope focusses on one country which is Syria. Therefore, the research cannot be generalised to all cases of mass atrocities and events of UNSC inaction.

Thirdly, for this thesis, it was intended to interview more professionals to cover various perspectives; such as viewpoints from the UN, academia, journalistic insights, and a Member States perspective from permanent and non-permanent seats. Unfortunately, due to lack of response, constraints in time and feasibility, and the outbreak of Covid-19; it was only possible to obtain two interviews with Mr Back and Professor O'Malley, acquiring a UN and an academic perspective.

Chapter 1

The aim of this chapter is to provide a historical overview of the UN. Why does the UN exist and what is its purpose? In answering this question and exploring the historical context of this international organisation; it unlocks the goals of the UN, its mission and vision, and provides an understanding as to why the organisation operates as we know today. Equally as important to this analysis is the history of the League of Nations (LoN), which was established before the UN and is seen as its forerunner. By examining the history behind the creation of both organisations, it illustrates a clear view on what the purpose of such organisations is, in addition to the similarities, differences and lessons learned. This chapter also analyses the creation of the UNSC, its decision-making process and explores the criticisms towards the UNSC's operation.

1. History of International Organisation

The UN is defined as an international organisation of 193 Member States committed to the maintenance of international peace and security, developing friendly relations among nations and promoting human rights, social progress and better living standards (United Nations, 2020). The powers of the UN are vested in its founding Charter, the Charter of the United Nations, that was signed in June 1945 (Charter of the United Nations, 2020). The Charter stipulates that "the United Nations can take action on the issues confronting humanity in the 21st century, such as peace and security, climate change, sustainable development, human rights, disarmament, terrorism, humanitarian and health emergencies, gender equality, governance, food production, and more" (2020). Moreover, to enable the dialogue between the 193 Members States, the UN established several fora like the General Assembly, the Security Council, the Economic and Social Council, and other bodies and committees as a mechanism for governments to negotiate, come to agreements and solve problems together (2020).

1.1 The Concert of Europe

Nevertheless, the idea of organisation, cooperation, arbitration and international government emerged long before the creation of the UN. The Concert of Europe in 1815 was one of the first attempts to create a cooperation between the great powers back then; Austria, Russia, Britain and Prussia (Mazower, 2012, p. 3). "it aimed to maintain existing governments, territorial borders and the status quo more generally" (Housden, 2012, p. 23). While the Concert of Europe played a major role in upholding the stability of the continent and containing the violence as much as possible; the lack of institutions or a representative body, along with the growing differences between the powers, were the main reasons why the Concert ultimately failed (Mazower, 2012). According to

Housden (2012), the application of arbitration was used for relatively minor issues, “not ones of vital interest for those concerned” (p. 24).

Nevertheless, the call for unity and ending violence was voiced by many peace activists even before World War I (UNOG, 2018). Many similar initiatives served as steppingstones leading up to the creation of the LoN, like the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU), the International Peace Bureau (IPB) and the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom (WILPF). Thereupon, in 1915, the women of WILPF convened in the Hague, along with over 1000 delegates from 12 countries to protest the ongoing war (WILPF, 2018). Besides creating resolutions, initiating conversations and mediating between nations; ‘*The 18 Final Recommendations to End the War and Foster Peace*’ list was created and submitted to many heads of state. Many of these points inspired the famous Fourteen Points speech by President of the United States, Woodrow Wilson, which was the outset of the creation of the LoN later on (UNOG, 2018, p. 2).

1.2 The League of Nations

Consequently in 1919, after the devastations caused by World War I, there was a widespread call for an international organisation that could prevent a repeat of such a devastating war, develop international cooperation and achieve peace and security (UNOG, 2018, p. 2). Wilson held his famous Fourteen Points speech, and many supported his outline of the LoN which was founded under the Treaty of Versailles (Hanhimäki, 2015, p. 9). Accordingly, the LoN was the first, true institution with a global membership that would organise global peace, security and international cooperation comprehensively for the long term (Housden, 2012). Unfortunately, despite Wilson being one of the main engineers of the LoN with his idealism and commitment to internationalism, this global membership did not include the United States due to the Senate’s refusal of ratifying the Versailles Treaty. In other words, the US never joined the LoN (Hanhimäki, 2015, p. 9).

According to Mazower (2012), the LoN was projected to be a forum for quasi-parliamentary deliberation rather than a judicial court to deliver verdicts (p. 119). The LoN was envisioned through the term ‘collective security’, which was set in the blueprint of the LoN known as the *Covenant of the League of Nations*. The term collective security was derived from Article 8 of the covenant that committed the members of the LoN to the enforcement of their international obligations by common action (Housden, 2012, p. 3). The more established the LoN became, the more definition the term ‘collective security’ gained through the following elements: Firstly, the public debate in the Council and Assembly. Secondly, the arbitration of disputes by the Council. Thirdly, in case of

aggression, economic sanctions against the aggressor state, and lastly the possible supply of military units by states if military intervention is needed to stop war (Housden, 2012, p. 3). Through these core elements, many assignments and tasks derived such as referring disputes to court, international reconciliation and disarmament, the establishment of the Mandate system, the protection of minorities and the facilitation of refugees (UNOG, 2018). Other technical activities promoting international cooperation included creating social and economic initiatives, forming the Health organisation and promoting transit, transport and communications (2018). These activities and principles of diplomacy and alliance-building adopted by the LoN were extremely modern ideas of security at the time and were underpinning groundwork for the foundation of the UN's Security agenda (Housden, 2012, p. 4).

1.3 Unfulfilled promise

Ultimately, the LoN continued its activities for 27 years until the outbreak of World War II. While it had managed in the 1920s to achieve some remarkable successes in establishing several operations, contributing to the notion of international law and deescalate some tensions between countries; the 1930s were shattering for the organisation (Blakemore, 2020). The increasing economic strife and extreme nationalism resulted in the collapse of cooperation between the Member States and several conflicts that were difficult to resolve, consequently leading the nations to enter a second world war (UNOG, 2018). The failure to prevent the outbreak of World War II caused the demise of the LoN (Hanhimäki, 2015).

In retrospect, many have analysed the reasons behind the ineffectiveness of the LoN and argue that it was doomed from the start due to several reasons. Firstly, despite President Wilson being the leading advocate for the organisation, the US Senate refused to ratify the Treaty and thus joining the LoN (Hanhimäki, 2015, p. 9). Therefore, the LoN was missing a crucial great power from the start. Secondly, according to Hanhimäki, the League's importance was minimised by the lack of respect it commanded among other great powers and was, therefore "handicapped by its inability to apply sufficient pressure in clear-cut cases of aggression." (Hanhimäki, 2015, p. 12). Member States like Germany joined briefly then exited when the Nazis came to power in 1933, and the Soviet Union joined briefly in the same year but was then expelled by the LoN when it attacked Finland (Hanhimäki, 2015, p. 11). When Japan occupied Manchuria, China and Italy attacked and occupied Ethiopia, they were dissatisfied with the LoN's criticism and also left (Hanhimäki, 2015, p. 11). Even if the LoN wanted to enforce sanctions of any sort, the sense of unity and international collaboration was absent, which minimised the authority of the LoN. Additionally, the global economic crisis of the

1930s made it difficult to uphold any sanctions or costly military interventions, besides the rising tension between the nations towards World War II (Hanhimäki, 2015, p. 12).

From that perspective, the LoN could be seen as a complete failure that could not be repeated. From another perspective, the atrocities of World War II made it more evident that again, an international organisation was immensely needed to preserve peace and avoid war ever again, thus creating the United Nations. “...it is not the League’s failures that we should focus on, but its enduring influence.” (Mazower, 2012, p. 153). After all, according to Mazower, the LoN was the first organisation to marry the democratic idea of a union of nations with the reality of Great Power hegemony, “a model of international government that would not only survive the Second World War but be greatly expanded and refined thereafter” (p. 153). In essence, it is important to realise that international government is always evolving gradually and that the UN is the result of a continuous evolutionary development derived from the LoN (Goodrich, 1947).

1.4 Creation of the United Nations

Accordingly, the governing principles of the UN were formulated under the lead of the United States, the Soviet Union, the United Kingdom, China and France; proclaiming the intention of continuing peacetime cooperation based on common purposes (Baehr & Gordenker, 2005, p. 15). Thereby, 50 states adopted the United Nations Charter in 1945 in San Francisco, and the UN officially came into existence (Hanhimäki, 2015). All the sovereign states would be represented in the General Assembly, and the UNSC members would have the specialised task of maintaining international peace and security (2005, p. 18). The UN stipulates its *raison d’être* in the preamble of its Charter that outlines the following ideals and principles:

“We, the peoples of the United Nations determined

- *to save succeeding generations from the scourge of war, which twice in our lifetime has brought untold sorrow to mankind, and*
- *to reaffirm faith in fundamental human rights, in the dignity and worth of the human person, in the equal rights of men and women and of nations large and small, and*
- *to establish conditions under which justice and respect for the obligations arising from treaties and other sources of international law can be maintained,*
and

- *to promote social progress and better standards of life in larger freedom*” (UN Charter, 1945).

Furthermore, Article 1 and 2 of the UN Charter describe these ambitions in more detail with the concrete purposes of the institution. The first and foremost purpose is to maintain international peace and security by taking effective measures for the prevention and removal of threats to peace (UN Charter, 1945, Art. 1). Secondly, establishing friendly relations among nations that are rooted in respect and universal peace; which ultimately links to the ambition of international cooperation in economic, social, cultural and humanitarian character, and consequently promoting fundamental freedoms and human rights (1945, Art. 1). All Member states shall act in accordance with these principles and the Charter as a whole (Art. 2).

1.5 Lessons Learned from the League

To avoid repeating the mistakes made in the LoN in approaching the new organisation, adjustments and alterations had to be implemented in terms of exercising global leadership and conducting international governance. The most crucial distinction between both organisations would be the character of their charters (Luck, 2006). The UN as an organisation is based upon the sovereign equality of its members, therein, neither the UN nor its principal organs have the authority to take decisions binding on the Members States without their expressed consent (UN Charter, 1945, Art. 2). This essential notion is explicitly stated in the first principles of the UN Charter, whereas this was merely implicit in the League’s Covenant but not clearly affirmed (Goodrich, 1947, p. 8). Consequently, the Charter placed a huge emphasis on the voting regulations within the General Assembly and the UNSC; where the League Assembly required a unanimous vote, the General Assembly invoked a two-thirds majority vote (UN Charter, 1945, Art. 18). However, bearing in mind that in matters of voting on policy, the General Assembly has only the power to recommend (Goodrich, 1947, p. 9).

As for the UNSC, its role became more dominant and overriding than its counterpart in the League. The Great Powers who had won WWII aspired an increasingly central role for the UNSC as the organ with the principal responsibility in managing threats to the international order (Bourantonis, 2005, p. 3). As article 24 states:

(1) In order to ensure prompt and effective action by the United Nations, its Members confer on the Security Council primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security and agree that in carrying

out its duties under this responsibility the Security Council acts on their behalf.

(UN Charter, 1945, Art. 24).

Two major structures differentiate the UNSC from the League Council. Firstly, according to Bourantonis (2005), "The experience of the League of Nations in the inter-war period had shown that international bodies which lack muscle and which are confined only to passing resolutions and issuing condemnations of aggressors are doomed to lose their creditability and legitimacy" (p. 4). Therefore, the provision was implemented for a Council with a binding character that holds power and enforcement against states violating the peace. This is correspondingly outlined in an entire Chapter providing the UNSC with a system of collective security for the enforcement of peace, which was more advanced than that of the LoN (p. 4). In other words, the decisions of the UNSC are binding and require a nine out of fifteen majority to pass, rather than the unanimity required in the League (Hanhimäki, 2015, p. 33).

Furthermore, focussing on the composition and power of the UNSC members states. The UNSC membership was initially composed of 11 seats, later expanded to 15 seats in 1965, where the places are filled by elections of two-year terms (Baehr & Gordenker, 2005, p. 24). Non-permanent members are selected by the General Assembly, based on equal geographical representation from every continent: Three African memberships, two Asian, one Eastern European, two Latin American and two from Western Europe and other states (Baehr & Gordenker, 2005, p. 25). In addition, a privileged position for the Great Powers was installed in the UNSC in the form of permanent status and veto powers, conferred to the United States, China, the Soviet Union, the United Kingdom and France, also known as the Permanent Five (P5); in exchange for their delegated authority and offering their political, financial, military and technological support to the UNSC (Bourantonis, 2005, p. 5).

1.6 Operation of the Security Council

With the UNSC's responsibility of maintaining international peace and security, the UN Charter outlines the realisation of this premise in the following ways:

- First, the UNSC is responsible for the formulation of plans for the Member States to establish a system for the regulation of armaments (UN Charter, 1945, Art. 26).
- Second, international disputes that threaten international peace and security are settled in a peaceful manner according to the methods described in Chapter VI of the Charter (Art. 24). Nonetheless, 'decisions' made by the UNSC

are regarded as 'recommendations' that have no legally binding effect on the members of the UN (Bourantonis, 2005, p. 3).

- Third, in case of threats to peace, breaches of peace and acts of aggression, the SC is authorised to take enforcement action to deal with such situations as stipulated in Chapter VII of the UN Charter (1945, Art. 39). As Bourantonis explains, "Two distinct forms of enforcement measures were available to the executive organ of the UN: those stipulated in Article 40 and 41, not involving the use of armed force, and those described in Articles 42–45 involving military action by air, land and sea forces." (Bourantonis, 2005, p. 3). Then again, two exceptions on enforcement measures are stated in Article 51 on the exercise of individual or collective self-defence, and in Article 53 where enforcement action is taken by regional agencies authorised by the UNSC (p. 4).
- Lastly, a fourth function that was authorised to the UNSC in a later stage was the launching of peacekeeping operations (p. 4). Peacekeeping is the act of attempting to resolve or halt conflicts with the use of diplomacy and mediation (Luck, 2006, p. 33). It must be taken into consideration that peacekeeping does not fall under military enforcement as described in the Charter.

In addition to these primary functions assigned to the UNSC, there are secondary responsibilities jointly executed with the General Assembly, where a decision cannot be made without a recommendation from the UNSC (Bourantonis, 2005, p. 4). For instance, the election of the Secretary-General, the addition and expulsion of Member States from the UN, and the suspension of the exercise of rights and privileges of UN membership (United Nations, 1945).

1.7 Criticism towards the UNSC

From the outset of the creation of the UN, the organisation has regularly been a subject to criticism, specifically in regard to its most powerful organ: The Security Council. Many states, scholars, journalists and UN officials have voiced demands on reforming the UNSC, expressing concerns regarding the unequal representation of Member States and the exclusively reserved veto right for the P5 (Weiss, 2009). Major events and crises underline these criticisms, questioning the effectiveness of the UNSC in maintaining its primary mission of safeguarding international peace and security. Overall criticisms of the UNSC are not mutually exclusive but could be placed in an overview of 3 categories; the composition of the UNSC, the P5, and the right to veto.

1.8 Composition

Correspondingly, the first criticism targets the composition of the UNSC membership. According to Luck, differences towards the representation of the UNSC were vigorously contested even during the UN's founding conference in San Francisco in 1945 (Luck, 2006, p. 111). Initially, the Great-Power alliance that defied the Axis-powers in 1945 were seen as the victors and great powers at that time, therefore granted the permanent memberships and the right to veto (Luck, 2006, p. 111). The P5 members include the US, China, Russia, France and the UK. With the influx of new Member States, the discussion of UNSC global representation developed and indicated the inequitable geographical distribution between the over-represented North and under-represented South (Bourantonis, 2005, p. 12). Consequently, many Latin African and Asian Member States argued for an expansion of seats in the UNSC in an attempt to reflect regional balance and encompass the Global South (Luck, 2006, p. 115). While the notion of expansion was adopted with heavy opposition, it ultimately resulted in a resolution that adopted an increase of the membership seats from eleven to fifteen with rotating two-year terms (Baehr & Gordenker, 2005, p. 24). This reform of 1965 is the only change to date regarding the number of seats of the UNSC; subsequent efforts of reform have not been successful (Harrington, 2017, p. 41).

Presently, the UNSC reflects the post-WWII era and not the twenty-first century's distribution of power. According to Harrington (2017), many proposals have been issued by the Member States under the interest termed by the General Assembly as 'question of equitable representation on and increase in the membership of the Security Council' (p. 42). Since the Cold War, the international arena has changed as other countries emerged as influential. These emerging powers that are viewed as strong candidates for permanent membership, such as Germany, India, Japan, and Brazil, also known as the G4, argue that the UNSC would become more reflective of the realities of the new world (Hanhimäki, 2015, p. 136). Moreover, groups of states like the African Group and the L.69 Group of Developing Countries advocate for both permanent and non-permanent seats to represent the Global South, in addition to states that proclaim their military or economic power to be the criterion when considering this reform (Harrington, 2017, p. 42). Others argue that a UNSC of more than 20 members would hardly improve effectiveness. Weiss suggests that "...the group would be too large to conduct serious negotiations and still too small to represent the UN membership as a whole" (Weiss, 2003, p. 151).

1.9 The P5

The second category of criticism would focus specifically on the five permanent members of the UNSC. As set out in the UN Charter, the primary responsibility of the UNSC is to safeguard international peace and security; however, many criticise the P5 for not acting in pursuit of these ideals, but rather in their respective national interest (Leigh-Phippard, 1994, p. 168). Leigh-Phippard (1994) argues that while committing to collective decision-making guarantees the effectiveness of the UNSC; history shows that the effectiveness of the Council is paired to “the extent to which the interests of member states, and in particular of the permanent members, coincide” (p. 168). All members of the P5 are subject to this criticism of using their privileged positions in the UNSC to serve their national interests, but the United States has by far received the most criticism. In general, the US vetoed resolutions and directed UN interventions to befit their national interests (Hanhimäki, 2015, p. 135). According to Hanhimäki (2015), “the United States is treating the UN as a mere tool of their policy that can be used, abused, or ignored as those in power in Washington see fit” (p. 136). In recent years, China and Russia increasingly received more criticism for vetoing several resolutions that condemned the human rights violations, for instance during the Syrian War, as the Russian veto regarding the Crimean/Ukrainian crisis (Hanhimäki, 2015, p. 70).

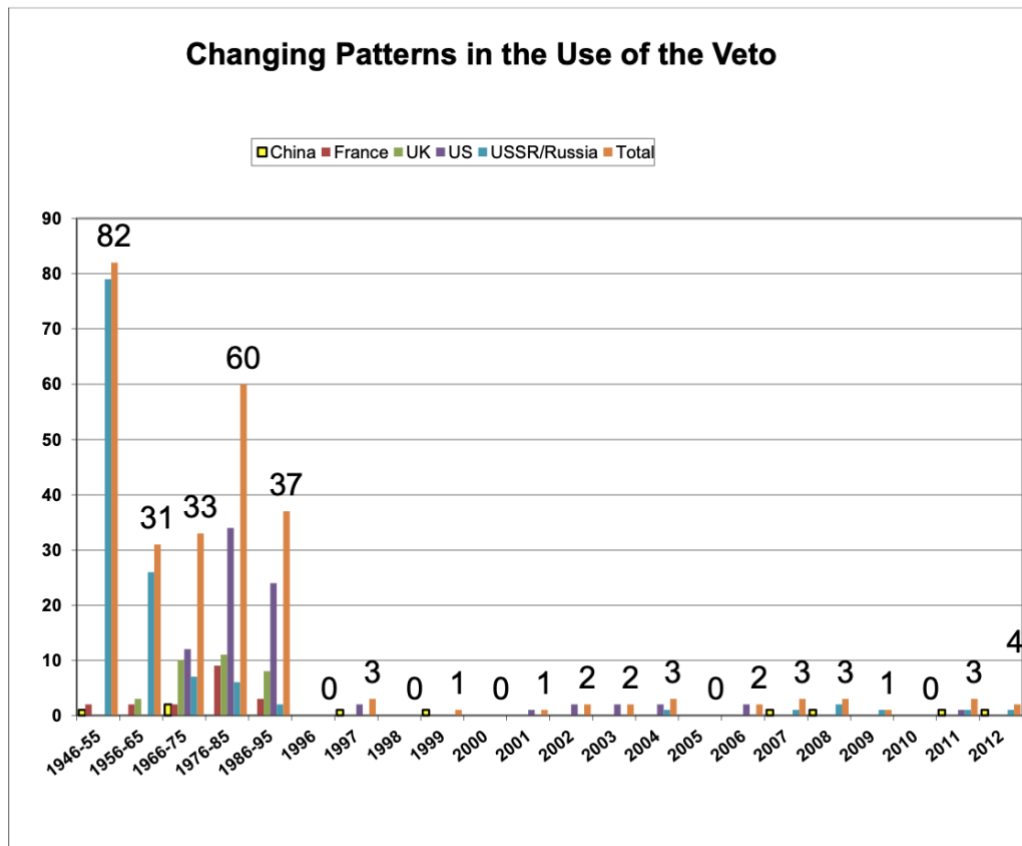
1.10 The right to veto

Consequently, the previous category directly links to the last category of criticism which is on the right to veto. The veto power was an essential component in the creation of the UN, which was established to the P5 under article 27 of the UN Charter:

- (2) Decisions of the Security Council on procedural matters shall be made by an affirmative vote of nine members*
- (3) Decisions of the Security Council on all other matters shall be made by an affirmative vote of nine members including the concurring votes of the permanent members (UN Charter, 1945, Art. 27).*

The right to veto is highly criticised because of its extensive use by the P5 who seek their national interests at heart and in turn neglect the principles of the UN Charter. According to Mahmood (2013), the veto has been one reason why the UNSC has been quiet about several conflicts with implications for international peace and security (p. 126). The majority of UN Member States perceive the veto as a privilege that “inherently clashes with the principle of sovereign equality of states” (Mahmood, 2013, p. 129). The decisions

of the UNSC are determined by the collective will of the P5; therefore the veto is deemed as an inequitable, ineffective instrument that makes the UN undemocratic and undermines its legitimacy (Hanhimäki, 2015, p. 51). Figure 1 illustrates the usage of the veto in the UNSC over the years (Global Policy, 2012). As shown, both the United States and Russia, formerly the Soviet Union, were the permanent members to frequently use the veto in the early years of the UNSC, during the Cold War, as a demonstration of superpower rivalry (Mahmood, 2013, p. 127).



Data compiled by Global Policy Forum with Information from the United Nations

Figure 1. Use of veto in Security Council from 1945 to 2012 (Global Policy, 2012)

Statistically, the use of the veto has declined significantly since the end of the Cold War which could lead to the argument that refutes the criticism towards the veto, claiming that reforming the veto is not needed since the P5 are no longer extensively make use of this right. However, while the usage of the veto is certainly lower, there is a tactic used in backroom diplomacy called the 'hidden-veto', which is used as an invisible threat to veto a potential resolution (Mahmood, 2013, p. 127). In other words, the veto might not be used as much visibly during official UNSC meetings, but the threat to veto is practised by the P5 to influence decision-making behind closed doors and block resolutions early on in the process; thereby underlining the power differences within the UNSC which is still deemed problematic. Besides, even the visibly used veto's, although low in number, are used to

block potential resolutions that could prevent violence and de-escalate conflict, therefore paralysing the UNSC to act and ultimately serve the interest of the P5 (Weiss, 2003, p. 155).

1.11 Events

Correspondingly to these three categories, several events and crises have intensified the criticism towards the UNSC over the years. In addition to the East-West confrontation that paralysed the UNSC to act in many global conflicts during the Cold War; the 1990s and early 2000s illustrate some of the biggest failures of the UNSC in safeguarding international peace and security, namely the massacre of Rwanda and the invasion of Iraq. In 1994, despite the multiple requests of the UN mission in Rwanda (UNAMIR) for authorisation and assistance in stopping the genocidal violence, the UNSC passed a resolution withdrawing the troops of the UN mission and failed in halting the genocide that resulted in 800,000 deaths (Weiss, 2009, p. 120). The Iraq war of 2003 was a result of the US invading Iraq with massive military force while ignoring the UNSC and the UN altogether, reducing the UN to a role of a bystander (Hanhimäki, 2015, p. 64). US President George W. Bush warned the UNSC to “either back the US demand of forceful disarmament of Iraq and regime change, or it would be side lined, and in effect, deemed irrelevant” (Chitalkar & Malone, 2013, p. 5). Secretary-General at the time, Kofi Annan declared the war illegal and being in complete breach of the UN Charter (MacAskill & Borger, 2004). A more recent example is that of 2011, where the UNSC was unable to act against the mass atrocities and war crimes in Syria because of the excessive use of the veto by China and Russia (Subedi, 2017, p. 113).

In essence, as H.G. Nicholas (1971) described it, “of all the organs of the UN, none has shown a greater discrepancy between promise and performance than the Security Council” (p. 67). The effectiveness of the UNSC is subjugated to the structural problems of membership, the functional weaknesses of the veto, and ultimately the collective will of the P5 (Chatterjee, 2010). In light of the criticisms directed at the UNSC and the radical changes in world politics and international relations today; the demands of reform have been growing. Many stakeholders in the international community are calling for constructive change to the decision-making system of the UNSC in making it more democratic and representative of the world and challenges of the 21st century. Therefore, numerous proposals of reform are offered by Member States, policymakers, academics and UN officials in an attempt to devise an approach to reform the UNSC effectively. In the next chapter of this dissertation, three proposals of reform will be presented, compared and examined along with their limitations and obstacles of implementation. The recent events of the Syrian war will be used as a case study in analysing these proposals and their effectiveness.

Chapter 2

In order to analyse the limitations of UNSC reform, this chapter offers a descriptive examination of suggested reform proposals through a comparative analysis. For the scope of this analysis, two different reform proposals are selected within two categorisations; a proposal from an organisational UN perspective and a proposal offered by a Member State. Consequently, an outline of each proposal is provided, followed by a central comparison of the proposals, and lastly an exploration of the obstacles and limitations of reform through an academic lens with integrated empirical information from several scholars. This chapter serves as a theoretical framework for the case study on Syria.

2. The proposals of reform

In the quest of reforming the UNSC; many actors in the international community have contributed to the efforts and debates of reform over the years. Academics, UN Officials and Member States have suggested numerous proposals of reform, in an attempt to make the UNSC more democratic, representable and effective. In this wide variety of proposals in the existing literature, this comparative analysis focusses on two different proposals to offer distinctive points of view and analyse the similarities and differences between them.

Firstly, a proposal is selected from a UN perspective that illustrates a reform attempt from the organisation itself. Secondly, as many UN Member States offer proposals of reform in multilateral or unilateral initiatives, a proposal offered by a Member State is deemed appropriate to add to this comparative analysis.

Accordingly, the following two proposals are chosen:

- UN perspective: *Kofi Annan's reform proposal of 2005*
- Member State perspective: *French initiative of veto power limitation.*

2.1 UN Perspective: Kofi Annan's reform proposal

Upon assuming his position as Secretary-General of the UN, Kofi Annan was keen on making the UN a more effective organisation with a competent and sustainable decision-making process. Therefore, in 1997, Annan led the initiative of the reform process and introduced the '*Programme for Reform*' to create a platform for structural change and reform measures on an organisational level. He was convinced that reform is not a single event, but rather a continuing process (UN General Assembly,

1997). Annan also believed that for reform to be effective, change should be implemented in the intergovernmental organs of the UN and their governance structures, and not only limited to the executive branch (UN General Assembly, 2005). This notion was shared by many Member States who expressed support in organisational reform of the UN, and the urge to reform the UNSC. The Member States' dissatisfaction with the composition of the UNSC was growing; they supported the notion of enlargement, calling for a reflective geographical representation and regional balance, in addition to the consideration of geopolitical realities, which was specifically the ambition of the emerging Member States aiming for a permanent seat (Luck, 2006, p. 116). The Iraq War of 2003 added to these concerns as the UNSC failed to stop the fatalities and the use of force (p. 116).

Notably, as Annan sensed these frustrations and concerns about the performance of the UNSC, he proposed a report on March 2005 called, *'In Larger Freedom: Towards Development, Security and Human Rights for All'* that presented specific administrative and organisational reform to the UN (Hanhimäki, 2015, p. 29). This report contained many proposals of change and improvement to almost every aspect of the UN and its agenda, from development and environmental sustainability to terrorism and use of chemical weapons, and obviously the structural reform to the organs of the UN (UN General Assembly, 2005). The aim of presenting this report to the Member States was for them to consider the adoption of these proposals of reform at the UN Summit of September 2005. Annan stated, "These are reforms that are within reach — reforms that are actionable if we can garner the necessary political will" (2005, p. 3).

Annan wholeheartedly believed that "no reform of the United Nations would be complete without reform of the Security Council" (2005, p. 42). In his report, he identified the need of change in the composition of the UNSC, that considered the broad representation of the international community as well as representation of geopolitical realities, ensuring its effectiveness, transparency and legitimacy (p. 42). Additionally, Annan emphasised that "The Council must be not only more representative but also more able and willing to take action when action is needed. Reconciling these two imperatives is the hard test that any reform proposal must pass" (UN General Assembly, 2005, p. 42). To outline the criteria for reforming the UNSC, Annan adapted the position defined in the report of the High-level Panel on Threats, Challenges and Change (HLP) stating that:

- (a) Reforms should honour Article 23 of the Charter in increasing the involvement in decision-making of those who contribute most to the United Nations financially, militarily and diplomatically;

- (b) Reforms should bring into the decision-making process countries more representative of the broader membership, especially of the developing world;
- (c) Reforms should not impair the effectiveness of the Security Council;
- (d) Reforms should increase the democratic and accountable nature of the body (United Nations, 2004, Art. 249)

Thereupon, emerging from the HLP and Annan's report, two different models for reforming the UNSC were proposed in the form of expanding membership seats, named Model A and Model B.

Box 5
Security Council reform: models A and B

Model A provides for six new permanent seats, with no veto being created, and three new two-year term non-permanent seats, divided among the major regional areas as follows:

<i>Regional area</i>	<i>No. of States</i>	<i>Permanent seats (continuing)</i>	<i>Proposed new permanent seats</i>	<i>Proposed two-year seats (non-renewable)</i>	<i>Total</i>
Africa	53	0	2	4	6
Asia and Pacific	56	1	2	3	6
Europe	47	3	1	2	6
Americas	35	1	1	4	6
Totals model A	191	5	6	13	24

Model B provides for no new permanent seats but creates a new category of eight four-year renewable-term seats and one new two-year non-permanent (and non-renewable) seat, divided among the major regional areas as follows:

<i>Regional area</i>	<i>No. of States</i>	<i>Permanent seats (continuing)</i>	<i>Proposed four-year renewable seats</i>	<i>Proposed two-year seats (non-renewable)</i>	<i>Total</i>
Africa	53	0	2	4	6
Asia and Pacific	56	1	2	3	6
Europe	47	3	2	1	6
Americas	35	1	2	3	6
Totals model B	191	5	8	11	24

Figure 2. Security Council reform models: Model A & Model B (UN General Assembly, 2005, p. 43)

2.1.1 Model A

As shown in figure 2, Model A proposed to enlarge the UNSC by six new permanent members and three non-permanent members, adding up to a total of 24 seats. The new permanent members would not be granted the right to veto, and the non-permanent members would rotate every two

years amongst the four major regions; Africa, Asia and the Pacific, Europe and the Americas. The original permanent members maintain their right to veto.

2.1.2 Model B

Model B proposed no new permanent member seats. Instead, it offered one non-permanent seat with a two-year term, and the new notion of eight 'semi-permanent seats'. These eight seats have a term rotation of four years and are distributed geographically amongst the four major regions.

2.2 Member State Perspective: The French initiative

Towards the end of 2013, France prepositioned an initiative of reform regarding the permanent members and their right to veto. This proposal emerged after the UNSC repeatedly failed to halt the escalating violence and atrocities during the Syrian crisis (Espada, 2014). This failure was a result of the extensive use of the veto by China and Russia whenever the UNSC proposed to adopt a resolution to protect Syrian civilians, thus paralysing the UNSC to act (Espada, 2014, p. 4). "The UN has a responsibility to take action, and whenever our organisation proves to be powerless, it is peace that pays the price" (Hollande, 2013). In this context, to prevent the danger of inaction in the areas of international security, genocide, mass atrocities, crimes against humanity, large-scale war crimes and nuclear proliferation; France proposed a '*code of good conduct*' to the UNSC regarding the veto power of the P5 (Permanent Mission of France to the United Nations, 2019).

The reform proposal was consecutively directed towards the end of 2013 by French president François Hollande, the Minister of Foreign Affairs Laurent Fabius, and the Permanent Mission of France to the United Nations (Espada, 2014, p. 11). In his speech to the General Assembly on September 2013, François Hollande proposed that in the aforementioned events of mass crimes, the P5 must collectively and voluntarily renounce their veto powers (Ministère de l'Europe et des Affaires étrangères, 2019). Consequently, the French Minister of Foreign Affairs, Laurent Fabius, published an article in Le Monde to clarify this proposed code of conduct furthermore, specifying that this process would be carried out without modification to the UN Charter (Fabius, 2013). He also underlined that this proposal would exclude cases in which the vital national interests of a permanent member is at risk (Fabius, 2013). On November 2013, the Permanent Mission of France to the United Nations made it clear that the French proposal was open to suggestions; "This applies both to what is actually considered as a mass crime, as well as to the practical modalities that, in general, would allow the application of the proposed code of conduct" (Espada, 2014, p. 11). Moreover, according to the French officials, the French initiative now has the support of 104 countries (Ministère de l'Europe et des Affaires étrangères, 2019).

In essence, as Espada explains, this French proposal contains three elements:

- In the events of mass crimes, all five permanent members of the UNSC will renounce their right to veto. Therefore, the P5 countries will have to agree on this code of conduct.
- This code of conduct only applies in the occurrence of mass crimes, which makes this self-limitation of the veto partial and subject to reaching a definition of what a mass crime constitutes. France proposes that an external authority to the UNSC, like the Secretary-General, should judge the situation as article 99 of the UN Charter states. (United Nations, 1945, Art. 99). " However, the Secretary-General could not act on his own initiative, but rather at the request of 50 Member States of the United Nations" (Espada, 2014, p. 13)
- As Fabius highlighted, the proposal contains a clause that would exclude events in which crucial national interests of a permanent member are threatened (Fabius, 2013).

2.3 Points of comparison

For this comparative analysis, the proposals are discussed in order as outlined above. The Kofi Annan proposal is referred to as the first proposal, therein discussing Model A and Model B. The French proposal is referred to as the second proposal. The following points of comparison are encompassed:

- Context of reform proposal
- Membership Expansion: Number of seats & type of seats
- Veto: Presence of veto right & reason for using veto

2.4 Context of reform proposals

As the Annan proposal emerged in 2005 and the French proposal in 2013, the period between both proposals is eight years. The context in which the proposals were introduced suggests different times, settings, and leadership; conversely, similarities and differences can be equally drawn. The first proposal was initiated by Kofi Annan as part of a structural report of reforming the UN as a whole. Annan was the first Secretary-General to be personally involved in matters of reform and undertake such a mission (Luck, 2006, p. 117). Moreover, the proposal came after the Iraq War in 2003, which signified a period of high pressure and criticism towards the UN. The inability of the UNSC to halt the American invasion in Iraq and the destructive consequences that followed, resulted in questioning the performance and legitimacy of the UNSC (Hanhimäki, 2015, p. 40). The second proposal was initiated by France, a UN Member state and one of the P5 members of the UNSC. France is considered a permanent member that is open to reforming the UNSC, especially when it

comes to the expansion of membership. It has been in favour of supporting the G4 members in obtaining a permanent seat and equal representation of African members (Ministère de l'Europe et des Affaires étrangères, 2019). The French proposal evolved in light of the mass atrocities of the Syrian war in 2011 and the inability of the UNSC to act, specifically because of the excessive use of the veto by Russia and China (Subedi, 2017, p. 204). Therefore, calling the P5 to renounce their right to veto in the occurrence of such crisis again (2019).

To enumerate, both proposals emerged after two major crises of mass atrocities where the UNSC showed incapability to take action and failure to uphold its role in maintaining international peace and security. In both situations, one or more permanent members are involved in the inaction of the UNSC; either by ignoring the UNSC and taking matters in own hand, as the US acted when invading Iraq, or excessively using the veto right in blocking any resolution to protect civilians and prevent mass crimes, like China and Russia in the case of Syria (Espada, 2014, p. 4). While the circumstances parallel in some points, the manner in which the reforms are proposed differs considerably. The initiators come from vastly different viewpoints; the first proposal was introduced from an organisational UN background in the form of an extensive report, whereas a permanent member state presented the second proposal as a 'code of conduct' that does not necessarily imply an official proposal of reform (p. 13). Accordingly, the Annan proposal would require a formal amendment in the UN Charter, while the French proposal would not amend the Charter, but rather be perceived as a moral code that compliments the Charter, also known as a '*gentlemen's agreement*' (p. 12).

Furthermore, the Annan proposal concentrates on membership enlargement, the composition of seats, and regional balance for all Member States, offering two different models in his report (UN General Assembly, 2005). The French proposal focusses only on the P5 and the right to veto, in particular when the right of veto could be limited. Ultimately, while both proposals equally required the political will to be adopted, none of them survived the endless debates and discussions between the Member States, and in the end, neither proposal received absolute consensus.

2.5 Membership Expansion: Number of seats & type of seats

The question of equitable representation in the UNSC has always been a pressing reform issue. The imbalance of geographical distribution in its composition has created numerous calls for enlarging UNSC membership and adding many types of seats, including permanent seats, non-permanent seats and even innovative suggestions of semi-permanent seats (Luck, 2006, p. 117). While the Annan proposal focusses specifically on membership expansion and equitable geographical

distribution of the major regions, the French proposal does not propose any change to UNSC composition, as it only focusses on the veto power. Therefore, the French proposal is disadvantaged as it ignores an essential aspect of UNSC reform. In contrast, the Annan proposal offers two models of membership expansion that approach the type and number of seats, as Figure 3 illustrates.

Membership Expansion	<i>Current</i>	<i>Kofi Annan's Proposal</i>		<i>French Proposal</i>
	<i>State</i>	<i>Model A</i>	<i>Model B</i>	
<i>Added number of new seats</i>	-	+ 9	+ 9	No change
<i>Permanent seats</i>	5	(+6) = 11	5	5
<i>Non-permanent seats</i>	10	(+3) = 13	(+1) = 11	10
<i>Semi-permanent seats</i>	-	-	(+8) = 8	-
<i>Total Number of seats</i>	15	24	24	15

Figure 3. Comparing Membership expansion

Comparatively, both Model A and Model B suggest the addition of nine new seats to the UNSC, which results in a total of 24 seats. With regards to the permanent seats, Model A offers six new permanent seats to the existing P5, which would make 11 permanent seats in total. However, there is no specification as to who these new members would be, and none of the new permanent members would be granted the right to veto. Evidently, the original P5 would maintain their veto. Model B does not offer any modification to the permanent seats. Furthermore, Model A and B increases seats to the non-permanent membership, where Model A adds three seats and Model B adds one seat. For these temporary seats, the geographical distribution comes into play where the seats are divided among the four major geographic regions: Africa, the Americas, Europe and Asia and the Pacific (UN General Assembly, 2005). Like the current non-permanent seats, it entails a two-year term rotation between the regions. Model B offers a unique twist by introducing a new category of seats, also called semi-permanent seats, that entail eight new seats of four-year renewable terms.

2.6 Veto: Presence of veto right & reason for using the veto

When comparing the proposals in regard to the veto power, they differ greatly in approach and method. As Figure 4 illustrates, The Annan proposal does not suggest any reform to the current veto powers, even when Model A of the proposal adds six additional permanent seats to the current five, it does not grant them the veto power and maintains it for the original P5, which creates a difference between permanent members in this model. The French proposal, however, primarily tackles the

right to veto and the circumstances in which this right is exercised. France proposes a self-limitation reform where the P5 should voluntarily and collectively renounce the veto right in the cases of mass crimes. The assessment of such cases would be defined by a determined procedure (Espada, 2014, p. 12). As the Ministry of Foreign affairs stated, once the Secretary-General has given his assessment, the code of conduct would be directly enforced (Ministère de l'Europe et des Affaires étrangères, 2020).

<i>Right to Veto</i>	<u><i>Kofi Annan's Proposal</i></u>		<u><i>French Proposal</i></u>
	<i>Model A</i>	<i>Model B</i>	
<i>Presence of the Veto</i>	Present	Present	Present
<i>Reason to use the veto</i>	No change	No change	Renunciation in case of mass atrocities, genocide, crimes against humanity & large-scale war crimes.

Figure 4. Comparing Power to Veto

2.7 Obstacles and limitations to proposals of reform

"From the outset, the clearest candidate for inaction and paralysis at the World Summit was the Security Council" (Weiss, 2009, p. 56). The quest of reforming the UNSC and its decision-making process is therefore viewed as being crucial, yet extremely challenging. This complexity helps in explaining why the last and only reform made to the UNSC was in 1965. It was a minor reform of expanding the membership seats from 11 to 15, and subsequent efforts of reform have not been successful (Harrington, 2017, p. 41). Naturally, after 1965, many actors in the international community and academia have elaborately pursued initiatives and efforts of reform, but all have been confronted with endless debates, disagreement and power politics between the Member States. Accordingly, this has also been the case for the two proposals in this analysis. In order to understand the obstacles of UNSC reform, it is necessary to explore the limitations and hindrances of these proposals, which could help in understanding the obstacles to reform in general. The conducted interviews with former UN official Lucien Back, and UN historian Alanna O'Malley provide a professional perspective to what the reality of these obstacles and limitations encompass.

2.8 Imbalance of UNSC composition

One of the basic approaches to reform is UNSC composition and tackling the imbalance of membership and geographical representation. Therein, numerous demands of Member States are considered in which the case of equitable representation is made. According to Leigh-Phippard, another key consideration to be taken in account is how the composition of the UNSC should continue to be linked to its ability to exercise international responsibility and uphold the mission of the UNSC (Leigh-Phippard, 1994, p. 168). The connection between representation and Member State contribution, which is also outlined in the UN Charter, is of extreme importance when discussing any reform to membership (Leigh-Phippard, 1994, p. 167). Naturally, each Member State has requests and demands of their own; either requests for enlargement to include their region or favouring a certain type of seat. Correspondingly, Annan decided to explore these various calls and eventually offered the Member States two models of expanding the membership from 15 to 24 seats.

Considering the above, this approach raises the question of whether large membership equals more effective UNSC decision-making. Scholars like Weiss and Blum discuss this question while acknowledging the need for equitable UNSC representation. Weiss argues that when choosing results over the process, “that a Security Council of 21 or 25 members would hardly improve effectiveness” (Weiss, 2003, p. 151). According to Blum, it is not certain whether enlargement necessarily enhances its effectiveness, as such increase changes the dynamics of the UNSC and its capacity to operate and take firm decisions (Blum, 2005, p. 644). Nevertheless, “The virtually uninterrupted pressure for its enlargement over the past three decades is fully understandable” (Blum, 2005, p. 644). Upon presenting Annan’s reform initiative to the Member States, both Model A and Model B had some supporters; however, others looked for an alternative model that would involve less than 24 seats, or put greater focus on working methods that explicitly represent the needs of smaller states (Luck, 2006, p. 118). Such debates on the size and composition of the UNSC form one of the first limitations to reform. In the conducted interview, O’Malley explains that initially, the inherently imbalanced UNSC contributes to the limitations of reform and that two different conversations exist in the West and Global South on two wavelengths, with different opinions of how the UNSC should look like (O’Malley, 2019).

2.9 The Member States

By the same token, this limitation expands into another deliberation, namely which Member States are eligible for attaining these seats in the UNSC. In Annan’s proposal, although the four major regions among which the seats are distributed are clearly described, the proposal refrains from

indicating specific countries in neither of the models. This task was delegated to the Member States themselves, which ultimately lead to endless debates in unilateral and multilateral contexts. For instance, Member States like Germany, Brazil, Japan and India, who formed the G4, were the four aspirants for permanent seats proposed in Model A (Luck, 2006, p. 118). Model A included six new permanent seats to be distributed among two African countries, two Asian countries, one to Latin America, one to the Caribbean and one to the Western European and Others Group (UN General Assembly, 2005). However, the G4 proposed a slightly alternative resolution, wherein four more non-permanent seats are added instead of three, making a membership total of 25 seats in the UNSC (Luck, 2006, p. 119). Another multilateral initiative was proposed by the 'Uniting for Consensus' group that contained countries such as Canada, Argentina, Spain, Italy, Mexico, Pakistan and South Korea. The group advocated for the addition of non-permanent seats, from ten to twenty seats, and opposed any expansion of permanent seats (Luck, 2006, p. 119). According to Mahmood, this objection was claimed by the states to avoid the creation of new centres of power in the UNSC (Mahmood, 2013, p. 123).

Furthermore, several initiatives emerged through other Member States; from the African Group representing the African continent to the L69 group representing the developing countries and small states of the Global South (Mahmood, 2013, p. 125). Some states claimed that specific criteria should be taken into consideration, for instance; the size of the country, its GDP and military force. Other states opposed the membership of certain states and rejected the notion of being represented by a state that would not reflect their demands adequately in the UNSC (Luck, 2006). The Member States' various opinions and clashes in the debates on UNSC composition are ultimately about national interest (O'Malley, 2019). Eventually, the discussion for all the added seats became extremely political; the constant disagreement created a paralysis to the reform conversation and displayed many obstacles (Luck, 2006, p. 119). Ultimately, neither models in the Annan proposal were adopted.

2.10 Non-negotiable veto

Correspondingly, the French reform proposal demonstrates another instance of political paralysis, this time on the power to veto. Since the formation of the UN, one of the biggest obstacles to reforming the UNSC is how the veto has been non-negotiable (Luck, 2006, p. 13). As the interviewee Lucien Back stated; the P5 made it clear, "If there is no veto, there is no Charter, there is no UN" (Back, 2019). The motivation behind preserving the veto is essentially to maintain the great powers in the UNSC and avoid the conditions that led to the downfall of the LoN (Weiss, 2003, p. 150). Back

explains that if the power to veto were abolished or compromised in any way, the P5 would leave the UNSC and that ultimately the UN would collide (Back, 2019). Consecutively, the role of great powers in the UNSC is the core obstacle regarding the veto, whether it is in excessively using the veto in decision-making to serve their interests, or the lack of political will to reform the UNSC. While the veto is generally viewed in such way, an argument for the necessity of the veto explained by Cox suggests that “The Council was never intended as a tool to deal with internal conflicts, to prevent violence or arguably to prevent *all* war. The purpose of the Security Council is to ‘maintain international peace and security’. The veto is a cornerstone in this duty” (Cox, 2009, p. 120). Nevertheless, Cox welcomes a voluntary restriction of the veto as the French proposal suggests, arguing that the veto was intended to be used to protect the vital interests of the P5 and not to hinder the operation of the UNSC and its decision-making process (Cox, 2009, p. 121).

Accordingly, notions of abolishing or retaining the veto are met with immediate rejection by the P5, refusing to relinquish their veto powers and privileged status in the UNSC (Mahmood, 2013, p. 129). Therefore, reforms to the veto have been approached carefully. The French proposal of 2013 followed this approach in suggesting a code of conduct rather than a formal reform that would amend the UN Charter (Espada, 2014, p. 13). The P5 would renounce the veto in cases of mass crimes and atrocities that threaten the international security, but it is unclear what constitutes as a mass crime and if the P5 would agree to such establishment (Espada, 2014, p. 13). In addition, a clause indicates that limitation of the veto would not be applied if a vital national interest of the permanent member is threatened. This could give space for the P5 to invoke this clause excessively as their behaviour with the veto equally indicates, which still poses an obstacle for swift and effective decision-making in cases of mass atrocities (Espada, 2014, p. 17). Ultimately, it is notable that France as a permanent member showed a willingness in initiating such a proposal of limiting the veto, but the political will should be unanimous in the entirety of the P5. Till November 2019, a total of 104 UN Member States supported the French proposal (Permanent Mission of France to the United Nations, 2019). This excludes some of the P5 members since the proposal has not been adopted yet.

2.11 General obstacles of reform

In the conducted interviews, both Back and O’Malley state some obstacles and limitations to reform processes in general aside from the two reform proposals in this analysis. In addition to the lack of political will of the P5 and the Member States, O’Malley argues that the reform conversation always happens in a negative vacuum where the UN has not achieved positive results, for example, the Iraq War, the Libyan intervention, the Syrian crisis (O’Malley, 2019). The UN as an entity is subject to such

political trends and to the context, which creates a difficulty to generate positive political will in a climate of negative opinion. While both interviewees acknowledge the shortcomings of the UNSC and its failure in several occasions like in Syria, Libya, Ukraine, Yemen and Congo; they also mention how the reform discussion puts the UNSC in the context of its failures, while anyone hardly mentions its achievements and progression in certain areas. Back observes the maintenance of peace and harmony with no world war outbreak in the last 70 years (Back, 2019). Other examples of successes are, for instance, the resolution on women, peace and security, and the resolution that de-escalated the Ebola crisis (O'Malley, 2019). The interviewees equally emphasise the importance of a balanced view of the UNSC when talking about reform and the importance of acknowledging its significant achievements.

Moreover, according to O'Malley, there are many UN organisations, research groups and programmes that talk about UNSC reform, but few have put forward a useable model of reform (O'Malley, 2019). O'Malley sees potential in academia and believes that academics can contribute an objective model of reform through cooperation with people who work for the UN rather than the Member States (O'Malley, 2019). People working for the UN include undersecretaries in their respective areas of expertise, like the Department of Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO), the office of the Secretary-General and the UN Legal Affairs office. These officers could optimise the reform discussion by providing an internal perspective that is an objective and balanced assessment of the UNSC, combined with the external perspectives of academics and the civil society instead of only taking the national interest of the Member States into consideration. O'Malley also mentions that other UN aspects need reform and that the reform of the UNSC should happen at the end of the process (O'Malley, 2019). Additionally, Back contextualises various proposals to the present-day state of the UNSC, saying that the bigger contemporary obstacle is to keep the United States, Russia and China committed to the UNSC (Back, 2019). "the challenge is not to enlarge or water down the Council, but tomorrow Trump can say I am not interested anymore in the members, or Russia could argue that this is not the forum where we want to discuss" (Back, 2019).

In essence, the reform process should include all the different actors in the UN and outside the UN, and as Kofi Annan (2005) mentioned, the process of reforming the UNSC is not a singular event, but an ongoing process.

Chapter 3

3. The case study on Syria

In 2011, the Arab Spring uprisings erupted across the Middle East. The people flooded the streets of the Arab world, and through massive protests demanding bread, freedom and social justice in the face of the oppressive regimes. While the use of violence by the authoritarian regimes was an essential tool to suppress the uprisings, the intensity of violence and eventually, the outcomes of the revolutions differed from country to country. One country in particular that has suffered the most from its dictatorial regime is Syria, where the uprisings turned into a civil war and ultimately resulted in the worst humanitarian crisis of today (UNHCR, 2020). This chapter conducts a case study on the Syrian crisis in light of the discussed UNSC reform proposals. This case study tries to explore if the reform proposals could have changed the decision-making process and helped de-escalate the situation in Syria. Firstly, a brief history of the early events in Syria is given with a background on the response of the international actors and the UNSC to the crisis. Then the case study examines the reform proposals analysed in the previous chapters and links them to several resolutions drafted by the UNSC during the Syrian conflict.

3.1 Historical background

After the overthrow of the dictators in Tunisia and Egypt, the Syrians started small peaceful demonstrations in March 2011, addressing the corrupt conditions of the country under Al-Assad's regime and demanding respect for human rights, political freedom and social justice (BBC, 2016). Syrian security forces responded by opening fire on the protestors, and the regime enforced repressive measures as the weekly protests continued (Gifkins, 2012, p. 378). As the unrest sparked nationwide protests, the situation escalated rapidly as to which the regime intensified its violent approach by using heavy weaponry in civilian areas across Syria (Gifkins, 2012, p. 378). The excessive use of force continued throughout 2011 and 2012 in the form of massacres, mass atrocities and other crimes against humanity where civilians, including women and children, were exposed to arrests, detention and torture (Gifkins, 2012, p. 379). According to UN reports, it was estimated that between March 2011 and June 2012, more than 10,000 civilians were killed in Syria and tens of thousands were displaced since the uprising (United Nations, 2012).

"In just a year, the Syrian uprising evolved from a largely peaceful and organic revolution into a full-scale sectarian civil war" (Hokayem, 2013, p. 39). Many opposition groups and already existent sects in Syria either peacefully joined the protests or eventually resorted to violence against the regime.

Eventually, international actors and states interfered in the conflict and either backed Assad's regime or the many opposition groups, which turned the civil conflict into an international proxy war between regional and international powers (Hokayem, 2013). Additionally, the regime saw the deployment of massive force as their only option and intensified its brutal response, which allegedly developed in the massacres, large-scale war crimes and use of chemical weapons. This resulted in more than 500,000 deaths (Human Rights Watch, 2018) and the displacement of 12 million Syrians around the world (UNHCR, 2020). UNHCR Commissioner Filippo Grandi stated that the situation in Syria is the world's gravest humanitarian crisis, and responsible for the largest on-going refugee crisis of our time (UNHCR, 2020).

3.2 Response of the international actors

Since 2011, various international actors and organisations responded to the Syrian crisis, including the different organs of the UN such as the Human Rights Council (HRC), the General Assembly and the UNSC. As the maintenance of international peace and security is the primary role of the UNSC, Chapter VII of the UN Charter outlines the UNSC's framework regarding action to threats to the peace, breaches of the peace and acts of aggression (United Nations, 1945). Therein, Article 39 states:

(39) The Security Council shall determine the existence of any threat to the peace, breach of the peace, or act of aggression and shall make recommendations, or decide what measures shall be taken in accordance with Articles 41 and 42, to maintain or restore international peace and security (1945, Art. 39).

Accordingly, Articles 41 and 42 quote:

(41) The Security Council may decide what measures not involving the use of armed force are to be employed to give effect to its decisions, and it may call upon the Members of the United Nations to apply such measures (Art. 41).

(42) Should the Security Council consider that measures provided for in Article 41 would be inadequate or have proved to be inadequate, it may take such action by air, sea, or land forces as may be necessary to maintain or restore international peace and security. Such action may include demonstrations, blockade, and other operations by air, sea, or land forces of Members of the United Nations (Art. 42).

Thereby, the Charter gives the UNSC the authority and power to recognize violence and threats to peace and act accordingly upon them. In April 2011, while the HRC adopted a resolution requesting

an investigative mission to Syria (Security Council Report, 2018), the European members of the UNSC tried to reach consensus on issuing a press statement that calls for an end to the violence and human rights violations (Security Council Report, 2011). It would also support an independent investigation into the violence conducted by the Syrian security forces. However, no consensus was reached by the Member States to issue the statement, specifically by Russia and China, who perceived the statement as interference in domestic affairs (Security Council Report, 2011). According to Gifkins (2012) even though the press statement was the most subtle non-binding act that the UNSC could have delivered at the beginning of this crisis, it clearly failed in doing so; and thus effectively setting the tone for the further negotiations, which from then was characterised by division and disagreement among the Member States leading to several rejected resolutions (Gifkins, 2012, p. 381). Espada (2014) emphasized how the UNSC failed in acting according to the articles in the Charter, saying that “this would have constituted a first step before the adoption of coercive measures – without excluding armed measures – which would have brought an end to the conflict or brought it back to less disastrous proportions” (Espada, 2014, p. 3).

On the one hand, the divisions between the Member States, and the P5 in particular, stemmed from the earlier authorised intervention in Libya in 2011. The UNSC passed Resolution 1973 approving the use of force by the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) to protect the civilians from the Libyan regime’s airstrikes through a no-fly zone (Espada, 2014, p. 3). Member States such as Brazil, India and South Africa opposed the Western initiative in Syria claiming that the NATO surpassed its mandate in Libya, consequently resulting in the fall of Libyan dictator Al-Ghaddafi. Gifkins argues that these Member States including Russia and China (BRICS) indicated that the NATO “morphed from enforcing a no-fly zone to actively seeking regime change and that this exceeded the mandate set out by the UNSC in Libyan resolution 1973” (Gifkins, 2012, p. 381). On the other hand, there was another on-going battle between the P5 members on the ground in Syria; Russia supported the Assad regime, and the US backed the opposition in Syria, making it a proxy war of the powers safeguarding their national interests (O'Malley, 2019).

Throughout the years and the on-going crisis in Syria, the international community at large was in favour of international cooperation to end the conflict. Various draft resolutions were presented before the UNSC in an attempt to take action and prevent escalation of the conflict. The resolutions involved calls to condemn the violence in Syria, protect the demonstrators, end military attacks, halt the use of toxic chemicals, destruct the chemical weapons, find political solutions, launch investigations and allow humanitarian access in Syria (Security Council Report, 2020). However, with

the adoption of some of these resolutions, Russia and China deliberately used their veto power to block the significant resolutions designed to take concrete and decisive actions (Subedi, 2017, p. 32). “Due to the veto – or the mere threat of its use – it was not possible to implement this in the Syrian conflict” (Espada, 2014, p. 4). Between Russia excessively using its veto power along with China either abstaining from voting or using the veto, a total of 14 different resolutions have been vetoed from April 2011 till December 2019 (Security Council Report, 2020). Despite numerous reports by UN human rights agencies and fact-finding missions declaring the Assad regime responsible for the human rights atrocities; the right to veto paralysed the UNSC decision-making process, hindered any concrete action, and ultimately failed the people of Syria (Subedi, 2017, p. 27).

While it is difficult to predict whether the vetoed resolutions could have ended the conflict in Syria and how the situation in the country would presently be today; it could, however, be argued that there would have been a high possibility that the resolutions would have encouraged more international cooperation in ending the crisis and de-escalating the conflict. The Syrian conflict and the UNSC’s inability to fulfil its mandate caused the rise of criticisms and calls for reform again, attacking the P5 for their opportunistic use of the veto while millions of Syrians suffer the consequences. In light of the two discussed reform proposals in this thesis, the case study of Syria explores how the reforms could have impacted the decision-making process in the Syrian conflict. It should be disclaimed, nevertheless, that this case study does not make predictions, but rather tries to clarify the limitations of the UNSC and its reform process.

3.3 Annan’s proposal

Firstly, Annan’s proposal addresses the composition of the UNSC and the geographical imbalance thereof. When looking at the events that happened from 2011 onwards, specifically in the Middle East, it is significant to note that other than the non-permanent rotation of seats, the region is not represented in the permanent membership of the UNSC. As O’Malley mentions, the inherently imbalanced UNSC is not representative of the needs and demands of the other states or regions (O’Malley, 2019), in this case, the Middle East. If the UNSC, and in particular the P5, would have had members from the region, the conversation could have been more balanced. Model A of Annan’s proposal suggested that in the occasion of adding new permanent seats to the UNSC, two of these seats would be for African members and two for Asia and the Pacific, which eventually would have encompassed at least one Middle Eastern country. Moreover, Model B proposed eight semi-permanent seats over all the major regions, which would have also included a minimum of one

Middle Eastern seat for a four-year term. Such Middle Eastern perspective is essential in the UNSC decision-making process.

To illustrate the importance of equitable representation; this instance corresponds with the vetoed draft resolution S/2012/77. In January 2012, the Arab League created a plan to facilitate a Syrian-led political transition to achieve a peaceful resolution of the crisis (Security Council Report, 2020). In February 2012, the UNSC drafted a resolution, along with 11 other Middle Eastern member states as co-drafters, to support the Arab League's decision and condemn the violence in Syria (S/2012/77, 2012). The resolution got vetoed by Russia and China while all the other UNSC members at the time voted in favour of the resolution (Security Council Report, 2012). As is known, according to the Security Council Report, the situation on the ground in Syria continued to deteriorate furthermore without action taken by the UNSC (Security Council Report, 2012).

3.4 The French proposal

The French proposal was presented after the first years of the Syrian conflict in 2013 and was initially proposed to prevent further inaction from the UNSC and the P5's excessive use of the veto. The French proposal would limit the P5 in using their veto power in events of mass atrocities, genocide, crimes against humanity and large-scale war crimes. While the deliberation exists as to what constitutes as a case of mass atrocity, UN investigative missions and human right reports indicated that the events of Syria constitute to mass atrocities, crimes against humanity and large-scale war crimes (UN Human Rights Council, 2020). Through this reform proposal, the P5 would have collectively renounced their right to veto in the case of Syria, and the 14 vetoed resolutions would have had a high chance of being adopted. For instance, when the use of chemical weapons was ascertained in Syria in 2012, many draft resolutions were initiated condemning the chemical weapon attack and seeking solutions to eliminate the chemical weapons. However, no consensus was reached. In 2017, France, the UK and the US attempted a fourth draft resolution, condemning the chemical attacks and requiring Syria to comply with the recommendations of the fact-finding mission and the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) (S/2017/315, 2017). Consecutively, Russia vetoed this resolution, and China abstained from voting (Security Council Report, 2017).

In view of the P5's excessive use of the veto throughout a circumstance of mass crimes, human rights violations and humanitarian disasters, the adoption of the French reform proposal would have confirmed the first step of limiting the veto power during the Syrian case. The members of the P5

would collectively renounce their veto powers, yet, a constraint is still posed, as this reform is addressed as a code of good conduct instead of an actual amendment in the UN charter. Additionally, the safeguard clause that excluded cases where vital national interests are at stake, gives countries who already use the veto the opportunity to declare their interests as endangered, especially in the Syrian case where Russia and the US are proxy actors on the ground in Syria (Espada, 2014, p. 17). Conversely, if the French proposal would have been applied and the P5 conformed accordingly to the code of conduct without invoking the clause, the vetoed resolutions would have had an increased probability of being adopted at the time. Hypothetically, the UNSC resolutions would have condemned the violence much quicker, held the Syrian regime accountable for the massive atrocities and crimes committed, eradicated the use of chemical weapons early on, enabled humanitarian access to the civilians, and finally, potentially protected the Syrian civilians from the scourge of war.

Conclusion

This section is devoted to answering the main research question of this thesis: *What are the limitations of the various proposals for reforming the United Nations Security Council?* The qualitative research of this thesis aimed to investigate the decision-making process of the UNSC, the various reform proposals offered to improve this crucial UN organ and the obstacles that hinder reform from being implemented.

The first chapter provides a historical background of the international organisation, discussing the forerunners of the UN and the creation of the UN itself. In addition, an outline of the creation of the UNSC and the design of its decision-making operation is explained. Furthermore, this chapter focusses on the criticism towards the UNSC to illustrate the necessity of reform and outlines the criticisms into categories: the composition of the UNSC, the P5 and the right to veto. The second chapter serves as a theoretical framework and constitutes of a comparative analysis, in which two different reform proposals are selected, outlined and compared to specific points of comparison. The chosen proposals of reform are the Annan proposal of 2005 and the French proposal of 2013. The obstacles and limitations to reform proposals are also examined in this comparison through an academic lens and conducted interviews with experts on the topic. Finally, the third chapter conducts a case study in which the Syrian conflict is explored. An outline of the events is provided with the response of the UNSC and international actors. Furthermore, as the UNSC failed to act in Syria, the case study examines the barriers of reform and explores hypothetically how the two selected reform proposals could have changed the decision-making of the UNSC, and ultimately potentially helped in the Syrian case. All the chapters led to the conclusion below.

Firstly, the history of international organisation, in particular, that of the LoN and the UN, illustrates the foundations of the UN and the influence of the P5 members in its creation. The LoN did not survive as an organisation due to the lack of commitment that its members failed to show and the absence of great powers. In creating the UN, this mistake could not be repeated, hence the privileged position granted to the P5 of permanent membership and the right to veto in the UNSC. Therefore, any modification to this privilege is considered a threat to lose these powers and a high possibility of following the downfall of the LoN. Nevertheless, this privileged position and the general composition of the UNSC is subject to a great deal of criticism, especially when the decision-making process fails to comply with the primary mission of the UNSC in maintaining international peace and security. The imbalanced geographical representation, the excessive use of the veto, the P5 serving

their national interests, and multiple events where the UNSC failed to uphold its mission, are the main aspects in which the UNSC is criticised and where proposals of reform are offered.

Moreover, in the sea of reform contributions proposed by scholars and the international community, the two selected proposals for this analysis offer solutions to the concrete criticisms. The UN proposed reform by Annan undertakes the issue of the imbalanced UNSC composition and proposes to enlarge the membership seats. The French proposal offers a code of conduct in limiting the veto power in cases of mass atrocities. Both proposals face many complications, including the actual points of criticisms directed to the UNSC in the first place. Through the academic literature and the conducted interviews, some general obstacles are observed; firstly, how the inherently imbalanced composition of the UNSC paralyses the reform discussion between the Member States and lacks the representation of the different conversations by the different regions. Furthermore, the negative vacuum in which reform discussion is always initiated contributes a difficulty to generate a positive political will for reform. Moreover, the lack of cooperation between different actors complicates the ability to propose a useable model of reform. Such a model could be achieved by the collaboration of academics, research groups and UN officers working in various bodies of the UN. Lastly, the more substantial contemporary obstacle is to keep the P5 committed to the UNSC, especially when talking about present-day Russia, China and the United States. As for the two main obstacles concerning the two reform proposals discussed in the analysis; the Annan proposal faces the obstacle of having complex and prolonged political discussions between the Member States on the membership seats, which leads to constant disagreement and an absence of consensus. As for the French proposal, the non-negotiable veto power results in immense political paralysis and demonstrates how the P5 will not concede their veto privileges easily.

Correspondingly, the case study of Syria illustrates these obstacles and limitations of reform even further. The inaction of the UNSC and the excessive use of the veto created a political paralysis and hindered the presence of concrete measures to protect the Syrians from the committed mass atrocities and large-scale war crimes. While it is hard to predict whether the vetoed resolutions could have meant the end of the Syrian conflict, by drawing the parallel between the two reform proposals and the case study, the argument of a higher probability of effective decision making could be presented. It could be argued that if the suggested reforms were to be implemented, the vetoed resolutions would have been timely adopted, potentially protecting the civilians from the humanitarian crisis and preventing the de-escalation of the conflict in Syria.

In conclusion, the answer to this research question is imperative for the future of an organisation of great significance like the UN. There is an increasing urge for a UN that reflects the contemporary worldview of the 21st century and embodies sustainable decision-making processes for the issues presently encountered. Therefore, the necessity to reform is currently more crucial than ever. In the continuing efforts to reform, it is important to evaluate the attempts of implementing structural and organisational reform to the UN and concretely identify the obstacles of the reform process to the vital organ of decision-making that is the UNSC. The development of the reform conversation includes improvement on the existing reform proposals and the collaborations of all actors in the international and academic community. In closing, during the present turbulent and unpredictable times, this thesis underscores the importance of upholding the mission towards the maintenance of international peace and security, and towards the betterment of the UNSC.

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Appendices

- European Studies Student Consent Form



European Studies Student Ethics Form

Your name: Fatema Mahmoud

Supervisor: Michaela Anghel

Instructions:

Before completing this form you should read the APA Ethics Code (<http://www.apa.org/ethics/code/index.aspx>). If you are planning research with human subjects, you should also look at the sample consent form available in the Final Project and Dissertation Guide.

- Read section 2 that your supervisor will have to sign. Make sure that you cover all these issues in section 1.
- Complete section 1 and, if you are using human subjects, section 2, of this form, and sign it.
- Ask your project supervisor to read these sections (and the draft consent form if you have one) and ask him/her to sign the form.
- Always append this signed form as an appendix to your dissertation. This is a knock-out criterium; if not included the Final Project/Dissertation is awarded an NVD.

Section 1. Project Outline (to be completed by student)

(i) Title of Project: Towards the Betterment of the UN Security Council

(ii) Aims of project:

The aim of this project is to explore the notion of reforming the United Nations Security Council and analyse its limitations and obstacles through two reform proposals and a case study regarding the Syrian War.

- (iii) Will you involve other people in your project – e.g. via formal or informal interviews, group discussions, questionnaires, internet surveys etc. (Note: if you are using data that has already been collected by another researcher – e.g. recordings or transcripts of conversations given to you by your supervisor, you should answer 'NO' to this question.)**
- No

If yes: you should complete the section 2 of this form.

If no: you should now sign the statement below and return the form to your supervisor. You have completed this form.

This project is not designed to include research with human subjects. I understand that I do not have ethical clearance to interview people (formally or informally) about the topic of my research, to carry out internet research (e.g. on chat rooms or discussion boards) or in any other way to use people as subjects in my research.

Student's signature _____ Date _____

Section 2 Complete this section only if you answered YES to question (iii) above.**(i) What will the participants have to do? (v. brief outline of procedure):**

Two interviews are conducted in a semi-structured format with open-ended questions. The interviewees are professionals in their respective fields who are asked about the decision-making process in the UN Security Council and their thoughts on reform in general, and various suggested reform proposals.

(ii) What sort of people will the participants be and how will they be recruited?

The first interviewee used to work in the United Nations in the General Assembly on many topics including reform. The second interviewee is a university professor who is an expert in UN history. Both interviewees are contacted by email where the objective of the thesis & interview is explained. They were informed of their right to privacy and confidentiality beforehand and provided a manuscript of the potential interview questions. The participants were asked permission to record the interview and whether they wanted to remain anonymous, in addition to signing the Informed Consent form with an overview of all the mentioned above.

(iii) What sort of stimuli or materials will your participants be exposed to? Tick the appropriate boxes and then state what they are in the space below

- ☒ Questionnaires Semi-structured interview with open-ended questions.
- ☐ Pictures
- ☐ Sounds
- ☐ Words
- ☐ Other

(iv) Consent: Informed consent must be obtained for all participants before they take part in your project. By means of an informed consent form you should state what participants will be doing, drawing attention to anything they could conceivably object to subsequently. You should also state how they can withdraw from the study at any time and the measures you are taking to ensure the confidentiality of data. A standard informed consent form is available in the Dissertation Manual. Appendix the Informed Consent Form to your Final Project/Dissertation as well.

(vi) What procedures will you follow in order to guarantee the confidentiality of participants' data?

First, informing the participants on the process of this interview, make sure it is understood and ask them to read the consent form and sign it. They are asked if recording the interview is permissible and whether they want to remain anonymous. Questions are sent beforehand, and reminded again of the process and consent to record. Before the interview, they are asked to read the consent form carefully, sign it and made aware of when the recording is started. Afterwards, the interview is transcribed. Interviews are handed in to the supervisors only upon delivering the thesis. Recordings are deleted after the thesis is completed.

Student's signature: Fatema Mahmoud

Date 2 May 2020

Supervisor's signature:

M. Angl.

Date 04/05/2020

(if satisfied with the proposed procedures)

- Interview Consent Form (1) – Lucien Back

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Appendix 6.4 – Informed Consent Form

Informed Consent Form

1) Project Title *Towards The Betterment of the UN Security Council*

2) Project Description (1 paragraph)

The aim of this research is to explore the UNSC decision-making process and examine its obstacles through a comparative analysis and case study on Syria

If you agree to take part in this study, please read the following statement and sign this form.

I am 16 years of age or older.

I can confirm that I have read and understood the description and aims of this research. The researcher has answered all the questions that I had to my satisfaction.

I agree to the audio recording of my interview with the researcher.

I understand that the researcher offers me the following guarantees:

All information will be treated in the strictest confidence. My name will not be used in the study unless I give permission for it.

Recordings will be accessible only by the researcher and relevant university assessors. Unless otherwise agreed, anonymity will be ensured at all times. Pseudonyms will be used in the transcriptions.

I can ask for the recording to be stopped at any time and anything to be deleted from it.

I consent to take part in the research on the basis of the guarantees outlined above.

Signed: _____

J Back

Date: _____

04 APRIL 2019

- Interview Consent Form (2) – Alanna O'Malley

ES Guide for Final Project and Dissertation 2018-2019 | 2018-2019

Appendix 6.4 – Informed Consent Form

Informed Consent Form

1) Project Title *Towards the Betterment of the UN Security Council*

2) Project Description (1 paragraph)

The aim of this research is to explore the UNSC decision-making reform process and examine its obstacles through a comparative analysis and a case study on Syria.

If you agree to take part in this study, please read the following statement and sign this form.

I am 16 years of age or older.

I can confirm that I have read and understood the description and aims of this research. The researcher has answered all the questions that I had to my satisfaction.

I agree to the audio recording of my interview with the researcher.

I understand that the researcher offers me the following guarantees:

All information will be treated in the strictest confidence. My name will not be used in the study unless I give permission for it.

Recordings will be accessible only by the researcher and relevant university assessors. Unless otherwise agreed, anonymity will be ensured at all times. Pseudonyms will be used in the transcriptions.

I can ask for the recording to be stopped at any time and anything to be deleted from it.

I consent to take part in the research on the basis of the guarantees outlined above.

Signed:

Alanna O'Malley

Date:

10 April 2019.

- Transcribed Interview Lucien Back

Transcription Interview 1 Lucien Back

Interviewee: Lucien Back

Interviewer: Fatema Mahmoud

Date & Place: Thursday 4th of April 2019 in Amsterdam

Fatema: *Could you tell me more about the work you did for the UN?*

Back: "I should say, I retired the first time in 2012, and then again in 2015, So until 2012, the last 5 years, I was very much involved in the work of the tri-annual and later quadrennial comprehensive policy review of operational activities of the UN. That is a long title, operational activities of the UN is the work in development and humanitarian assistance in developing countries to help those countries implement normative agreements between all member states. There are 40 programmes , specialised agencies, ranging from UNDP, UNICEF, UNFCA, WOP, but then also specialised agencies like the World Health Organisation, UNESCO, FAO and so on, you probably know most of them, and they are together what we call the UN development system, and they are guided by the General Assembly, in the sense that the second committee, which takes care of the economic and social affairs, sets out the broad orientations of these organizations. And you have ECOSOC, the economic and social council with 54 members, which is again, a complicated issue of how they are selected, but basically it is the countries that provide development assistance, financial assistance, technical assistance and so on, and the recipient countries of the South that agree on these broad orientations. One should say that the governance system of the UN is extremely complicated, as you have the General Assembly, but that is only the broad framework, and each of these organisations have their own governing bodies or executive boards. For example, the governing body of WHO (World Health Organisation), mostly has representatives of Ministries of Health for logical reasons; FAO (Food, Agriculture Organization of the UN), agriculture and so on, and what these delegations on these boards want the organizations to do, is very technical and is not always the same like what the General Assembly would like it to do. So each member state, so to say, has many windows on how to guide the system, and part of the incoherence comes from the fact that there are so many guidance systems and so on, and it is rather confusing, and I think it is confusing to recipient countries in the South, and it is also confusing to the donor countries. Now what I should say is that these broad orientations, there was a tri-annual comprehensive policy review in 2007 which I supported from the department of economic and social affairs. I was seconded from UNICEF as my specialisation was evaluation, and evaluation is really looking at the performance of the system, its strength and its weaknesses, and incoherence was definitely one of the weaknesses, and coherence one of the challenges. Politically speaking, I think it was, maybe you have heard the name of the British head of, I think, UNDP, at one point of time, Malik Brown. He created the high-level panel on system wide coherence, out of that came the orientation to the tri-annual comprehensive policy review, and then the (QCPR) Quadrennial in 2012. I supported that with reports, which are reports from the Secretary general, that are submitted to the member states, and the member states then debate, adopt a resolution and then that resolution in 2007 was very important. So that was my first big job in the UN.

The second one was kind of further development of that and was the initiative of Delevering as One. That resolution had created or had proposed 8 pilot countries in the world, in all continents of the developing world. They were to experiment better organizational country-level of the UN system, which was strengthening of the resident coordinate system, also doing away with the

difference between resident coordinator and humanitarian coordinator, and even the political arm special representative of the Secretary General, so one leader has one goal and one program, and also one budget. What is very important here is the multiple funding streams, which pushes the organization sometimes into doing things they are not meant to do, because for what they are meant to do, money is not available, and what they give money for is not always what is wanted by the countries, so you get that big debate between, on the one hand the political process and on the other hand funding mechanisms, and the big confrontation in all these discussions was between G77 on the one hand, which are the 77 countries of the developing world, in reality now they are now 120 or something, and on the other hand the OECD countries with the United States and Russia and increasingly of course China, and the EU, with the EU operating quite cohesively there, so being on the other side. And difficult negotiations, because the world view of the recipient countries was very different from the world view of the donor countries. The donor countries wanted very much emphasis on human rights, gender, democracy, good governance and transparency, women's rights and so on. On the other hand, the recipient countries wanted ownership, leadership, don't bother us too much, give us the money but we will do what we want to do. That was a compromise at the end, because of course they did want the money and they did want the support, and there are certain themes which are more easily passed, even on the human rights issues like children's rights that is quite universally accepted, that there should be protection and promotion of children. But gender is a very delicate issue, when you go to, say, reproductive health, AIDS, HIV or all these big topics, which are affecting the developing world, the views can be very different.

So I did the evaluation of 'Delivering As One', which I completed in 2012, which was a global evaluation commissioned by the General Assembly and then the report was also received by the General Assembly, which was quite remarkable and well received because it was quite consensual and then it fed into the next comprehensive policy review of 2012. In 2012 was my last job in that area, and I was quite proud that we had good work. It was not really me doing the evaluation because I had set up a commission that was regionally balanced and so on, but we had to steer it so to say, and that was of course very essential. So that was 2012, and based on that success, I was called to the Joint Inspection Unit (JIU), which is based in Geneva, which is a very old kind of body, which is completely independent. The JIU has 11 elected/appointed regional inspectors which are geographically balanced, that have great powers to evaluate and audit the system. I should say more the General Assembly and what we did before, not so much the Security Council. It is really more a technical body that has great powers. They also have a website with a lot of evaluations and audits. I was head of the secretariat for some time. We had 40 staff and I was the executive secretary, and that was a kind of interim because they had a transition from someone who left to someone who was coming. It was a very interesting period because it gave a very good perspective of the entire system."

Fatema: "And from these evaluations, would you say that maybe, reform proposals came out and were presented on the table? Did you or the UN body that you were working at have that power?"

Back: "I mean, yes, all these evaluations of the JIU result in some kind of recommendations, which are shared with the Fifth Committee of the UN. The Fifth committee which is administrative and budgetary and the Second Committee, which I had worked for before, was economic and social. So, the Fifth committee can then adopt it again. I have to say that it is a lot 'take note of' and then not much happens. Most happens still when the Senior Management of the organisations take it to heart and say well this and that would be improved. That is the whole question of evaluation in the UN but also in the world. A lot of good ideas come up but not necessarily implemented or implementable, given the political realities.

Fatema: All right, so I will start with my questions right away. I have divided them into section. I have questions about reform, about Syria and about reform proposals.

So, like you said, you worked on evaluation and on the effectiveness or how to increase effectiveness but more on the General assembly side

Back: Of the system which is guided by the General Assembly

Fatema: Exactly. How would you describe reform processes or implementing reform in the past? How did that process unfold in the UN?

Back: Coming back to the previous 'Delivering as One', at country level in a capital in a small country like Africa or Asia or wherever; You had offices of each of the UN organisations with a representative and a car and a flag and everything, which is madness because all these people, could they not be more together. Could there not be one leader who would then actually represent the whole system. And because of the historical background, there was enormous resistance against that. I mean, each organisation also had financial interest and political interest and so on to resist that. I think now it is much better, so there is much more coordination, there is much more togetherness. There is one leader who is now also not UNDP anymore but under the Secretary General. So that whole system has been reformed, so it is a reform of operational effectiveness of the system. And I think from the diagnosis to some kind of therapy, well through pilots, more and more countries adopt one approach. So that is a concrete example of a success story. The other thing is, I think in the humanitarian sector as well, I mean, there has always been the pretence of the UN to coordinate humanitarian assistance. And a lot of NGO's were very much against that, because they want to be seen only as humanitarian and be partners of all warring factions or forces in a country. Whereas the UN, if you want it or not, is always much more on the government side. And has entries on the government side, but less with civil society or with warring factions or tribes or interest groups and so on. And I think the creation or the strengthening of OCHA (United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs) was also a success in that sense. OCHA took a very non-political role, basically also opening up to all factions in a country and try to have access to the populations. So, I think there is also a slight progress, it may sound modest, and of course I don't say it is without problems, when you have such a coordinating role, everybody also likes to criticize you. Another example where you have reform is since the 90's, there has been a lot of peacekeeping, and the original peace keeping missions were not very well defined. The mandates were not very clear from the Security Council, and now we come to the Security Council, and they were out right failures. I mean, Bosnia is one example, Rwanda was another example where the UN and the troops that were placed there were not well-prepared and looked on while people killed each other or were killed and were not mandated or equipped to actually do something about it. That may have improved by more clarity in missions, also better equipment, and there may have been some success stories and cooperation with other countries like Sierra Leone, where there was a peace-keeping mission and at the same time, the UK army moved in and supported that. That was much more effective than only have UN troops. Somalia made an arrangement with the OAU (Organization of African Unity) and have African troops coming in, which was culturally more acceptable to Somalis. I am telling a little bit about the success stories, there is another initiative which at one point of time may have had some impact, was what they called peace building, not only peace keeping but peace building. At some time, they did that in Burundi, that have the peacekeeping forces, but at the same time initiatives from the political side was Kofi Annan who brought parties together and then the humanitarian side and the development side, so all three/four dimensions together. It didn't go very far, for various reasons. I found that one of the most interesting examples. And at the same time there have been enormous failures, Bosnia and Rwanda I mentioned already. I

think Sri Lanka, South Sudan, Central African Republic and Haiti was not very good. Because, partly because the troops did not behave well. There were abuse cases, there was imported cholera in Haiti, poor response by the UN, which thought that it was immune from criticism, so lot of problems in the implementation as well. And the complexity of issues, I mean you cannot also expect that people coming in as peace keepers or peace builders or whatever, are going into combat roles. That is not their task and they are not ready to give their lives there on battlefields with which they have nothing to do, and no stake. So, that is a whole dimension by itself.

Fatema: *In the time that you worked in the UN, with the failures that happened, were there any concrete points within the Security Council, as in how can we in the future respond better to these crises?*

Back: Of course there was learning, in the sense of, and you always have to make a distinction between the secretariat and the Member States. You see, the Secretariat of course, there are concerns of how do you manage people who move around the world? How do you your staff? How do you not expose peace keeping troops even to warfare and so on? Safety, staff safety, troop safety were concerns, secondly of course effectiveness. And I remember in 2005, after the millennium summit which had also given an enormous boost to peace keeping, there was an intermediate conference in 2005 where there was the obligation to protect and there were refined methods how that could be done. So I think, there was learning going on. Now there other thing is, how Member States deal with that, you see, and there you have to go a little bit back also to Security Council composition with the Five Permanent Members who in my view make opportunistic use of the Security Council when it suits them, they like to do it, but when it does not suit them they immediately restrict. And there are good examples where Security Council members worked more or less well with the UN, in the field I mentioned Sierra Leone, UK troops moving into Sierra Leone having good effect. Mali could also be an example where France worked with the UN with relative success. Even the Central African Republic, but the abuse cases were French troops and no other. But on the other hand, we have to say that the US for example, I mean, they are of course the dominant force everywhere and it is good if there is a case where they are not very interested. I mean they have no interest in it, and they leave it alone, but Syria for example, initially there was a kind of active role of the US, and then the US under Obama already did not want to get too much involved. Supported the Kurds, supported certain groups and factions of the opposition, but then when the red line was crossed by Assad with the chemical attacks and so on, Obama withdrew, he did not make the next step. So it was very opportunistic already at that time and there is continuity between the American reluctance under Obama and Trump's presidency. So there is absolute continuity. You were mentioning Libya, I think Libya was very much an affair of the Europeans with Libya, promises were made to Ghadaffi at that time and then he was killed by internal forces, it was allowed to happen. And the UN was called in to repair the broken glass which was of course very difficult and up to the present time not successful. And at the same time destabilization of the entire African region, the downfall of Libya had very negative effects on West Africa and Central Africa. The other case is where America of course was completely opportunistic, I mean as a Security Council member, they neglected the Security Council when they invaded Iraq, so that was quite scandalous on lies and on betrayal, so that definitely was not a good example of a Security Council member actually abiding by the rules of the UN or respecting even the UN, and well, Russia for its own interest moving into, well having always been involved in the Syrian conflict, moving in and taking it to itself and doing a lot of things with Turkey and Iran and other countries down to the Astana process (Syrian peace process) which were very self-centered and self-interested. I mean there is opportunistic use, I think is very important.

Fatema: *and speaking of the opportunistic use, is because they (P5) have the veto power, and they use, or some might even say abuse their veto power. My question to that would be, what are your thoughts on the veto right in general? Like we know, when the UN was created, the veto was an essential part of the creation of the UN, but now we are in the 21st century and there is a lot of criticism towards the veto, and I would like to know your opinion on this.*

Back: Well, you see, on the one hand it is obvious, the United Nations and the Security Council were created after the Second World War by the victors of the war and they made it clear: If there is no veto, there is no UN, there is no Charter

Fatema: *to not repeat the failure of the League of Nations that happened before*

Back: Yeah, not to repeat that and also that was the condition, and I think there would be no United Nations without these powers, which for security reasons, I mean they control I don't know at least half or three quarters of the world weaponry and military force, so you have to have them. So I think it is unrealistic to expect them to give that up. And any attempt to enlarge the Security Council giving other countries permanent seats or even veto power have ended in nothing, it all failed for various reasons. I mean, rivalry between countries and of course Germany, Japan and to a certain extent Italy being the countries that were defeated in the Second World War had very low political status anyway, because the *raison d'être* was to control them, and until rather recently the unification of Germany, Germany did not want, and even to the present day, does not want to take a very strong political lead role, even in the EU it is a reluctant leadership. Japan would have liked it probably, but was blocked by China. Brazil would have probably liked it, but yeah, they are also not strong enough and there is rivalry in the region and so on. So, it did not come to anything. And, I would be a little bit skeptical of anyone who says oh yes, the system is so bad. It reflects the reality of the world, where I don't know, 60%-70% of all military power is with these five countries and we have to accept it, right? And relatively, we have kept the peace over the last 70 years, I mean there has not been a World War like the League of Nations could not prevent the second world war, so it has proven to be globally effective and since the end of the Cold War, I would say the Security Council and the UN in general and so on, had a tremendous boost. I mean there is one wave of enthusiasm after the Second World War, especially the US were absolutely front and center there. But the second boost came after the downfall of the Soviet Union and that East and West divide and all the big conferences and agreements and peace keeping and so on, was happening from '89-'90 onward until now, and now I think we have another moment of hesitation because everywhere it is withdrawing within national boundaries and lack of commitment to international agreements where we will still see agenda 2030 how that will fare? And then of course the other thing is, one should not underestimate also the tremendous positive effect on decolonization. I mean the fact that in the 60's all these countries in the developing world became countries at one proof of having international recognition was to be accepted as Member States by the Security Council, tremendous boost and it created a whole new world order as the original UN was I think 21 countries or something. So this is all positive, despite all the failures I would say, well I am almost 70 years old now, and the fact that I have been able to live in peace and harmony and welfare for the last 70 years, which is the longest period of world peace in the world, to a large extent, thanks to the UN.

Fatema: *To that, of course we didn't have any World War in the past decades, but we surely have major wars happening in the World, especially now in Syria and the casualties that happen over there. There are proposals on the table, you said that we have to accept the Security Council as it is now, but isn't there any proposal that you might think is feasible in reality? What are your thoughts on this?*

Back: Well you see, in the present day where, the challenge now is to keep the United States, Russia and China committed to the Security Council. I mean the challenge is not to enlarge and water down so to say, but I mean tomorrow, Trump can say I am not interested anymore in the membership, or Russia could say that. It is not the forum where we want to discuss.

Fatema: *But for example, some have suggested a double veto, or maybe in an event of crisis or war or severe circumstances, we do not use the veto. So what are your thoughts on that?*

Back: I don't know, I think in the present day, reality of these countries, I don't see that happen. I mean, it would rather be, if they don't have the veto, they would turn away from the Security Council and lose interest in it. And then we would have an important guarantor of international peace and certain norm setting and so on, that we would lose that. I mean, say Brazil and Indonesia are in agreement would not be enough to guarantee world peace just to say. I am very reserved about, well, letting them give that up and at the same time, I see the enormous blockade and in the view of many that of course the role of Russia in Syria and the veto was especially done by Russia, so that is very double-edged, but at least there are some resolutions which are framework on which to pursue.

Fatema: *So to answer the question, you don't think there is any proposal that might work for the current day or there is not anything that might pursue the P5 to change their mind?*

Back: There was that Italian proposal I think, you have to distinguish between permanent seats, and there was kind of a semi-permanent seat that some countries would have longer periods of seats, and I think that is a good idea and in order to avoid too much rotation, because now every year the composition changes

Fatema: *and to give them a veto or not?*

Back: I would not necessarily give them a veto, because you see, it always if you give a veto, for whatever reason, can block the whole thing. So, I mean I would rather not have vetoes, as these countries will certainly not give them up, I would not extend it to other countries to have a veto, but maybe longer periods of being a member. There is another thing which was a rumor, and I would be interested to know what you may have found, is that there was quite a lot of corruption for developing countries to become members of the Security Council, I mean when they were appointed by their regional groupings, very often it seems they got a lot of development funding from the US or Russia or something to make sure they would be in line with those big powers. I thought I had heard that about Bolivia, but that would be interesting to investigate.

Fatema: *What is your opinion on the Security council response when the Syrian conflict started early on.*

Back: I am not absolutely sure if I am familiar enough with that dimension. I mean I know, if I remember well, I mean you had the Arab Spring and you had uprisings in Syria and there was a lot of international sympathy for Arab Spring. I am not absolutely sure, I think it was Lakhdar Brahimi or was it Kofi Annan, he tried to bring the different factions together and have kind of a cease fire and so on. But that was rather doomed. You see, the problem is that in principle you have of course the right of every country to run its own affairs, and the fact that Assad, the Assad family were violating human rights and doing all kinds of terrible things, is not enough for the UN to intervene. If there is not an international dimension to it. So, I think there was a certain reluctance to engage. That is more or less what I understand. And then you could say it was of

course a missed opportunity but there were other countries that were just as bad at that time; Iraq, and the Gulf countries and Saudi Arabia and so on, and not to forget Israel, the occupied territories by Israel. And there is one dimension you have to always take into account when you talk about the UN and the Middle East: The UN was created as a follow-up to the Second World War and I think there has always been a certain indulgence with especially Israel, because it was the people that benefitted of course from the new world order, the new state was created and so on. And with the different wars Israel became, how should I say it, more and more criticized also by the new decolonized countries, which became members of the UN and now of course the relations between Israel and the UN are very bad, but the Security Council which is so dominated by the Western world and also by Russia, had much more indulgence to Israel than the General Assembly. It would be interesting to see which resolution were passed where and what was condemned by whom, and at the same time we realize because Israel was so supported by the US, even if there was a resolution against occupied territories and the Golan heights and so on, it was not respected by Israel and nobody did anything about it. So that is also a little bit the context why probably the Security Council was rather reluctant in intervening, and then there was of course an arrangement on the Golan Heights, which is now also overridden, very recently because the Golan Heights are simply annexed I don't know what is going to happen on that peace keeping force which is there, which is been there forever. And then I don't know, I mean then big initiatives came not at the start of the Syrian War, but I think at a later stage. The Geneva peace talks and so on were again, Stephen De Mastoura did everything possible to get people together, to talk and so on, and he was constantly undermined by either the United States or by Russia, and Russia eventually took it to itself, together with Turkey and went to Astanna and so on. And you have to say they created kind of peace, but the peace of the graveyard because everybody was already dead. And the entire opposition which had been criminalized as terrorist were virtually wiped out. It is a very sad story and I think that story should be told, it is almost as sad as Palestinians and the occupied territory.

Fatema: *We talked previously about Libya, because the UN did intervene in Libya, and many say well the argument is, because we intervened in Libya and that did not go well, we are not intervening in Syria now. Do you see that comparison fit or do you have another opinion on this?*

Back: Well I think now they have some success; I mean relative success in Libya. I mean they have brought the factions together, there is recognition of a government in Tripoli which is UN backed. But then again, I mean a Security Council member which is France, doing business with Haftar in the East because of the oil and so on, I mean it is all a little bit murky. You see, you can blame the UN for not being effective but at the same time, if the very core pillars of you own actions, the permanent members are constantly undermining you, what are you going to do? And Libya, but there is again Italy involved and that, Italy and France are in competition, and there is again oil. There is another side which I have no idea about how that really works, but is of course, one is nuclear proliferation and one is conventional arms, which are being sold. I mean, the permanent members of the Security Council are the ones that produce most weapons in the world and they export them into all these markets, and that is completely outside the purview of the Security Council. It is NGO's that denounce that, but Security Council members are very much involved in that. There is an interesting thing which is happening at the moment, Germany, I don't know if you have heard that, Germany has general interdiction of exporting weapons to Syria and to Yemen, especially Yemen because they are used against civilian population. And France, which is a big exporter, wants to continue exporting, and Germany is blocking that because now a lot of these weapons are jointly produced between Germany and France, so if there is a German element in a French weapon, then the Germany veto comes in. But how can France as a Security Council member in charge of done proliferation and so on, actually do exactly what it is not supposed to do by its membership in the Security Council.

Fatema: *What can we actually learn from the Syrian conflict? What can the UN learn from the mistakes that have been made in the conflict?*

Back: You see, I do not have simple solutions there, and my problem is, you have to be very careful, what you can learn is, why are the permanent members of the Security Council so hypocritical? Do one thing with one hand and do something else on the other hand. And you can say that about the US, about France, about Russia, so this is what I call opportunistic use but also in violation of that membership. So I have no easy answer on that. I mean you cannot, as I said before, doing away with the veto power and with the permanent membership is not the solution, as they would then turn away from it and it would be a completely powerless body, but for the rest there is not a very ... and I don't think that the other say 10 members that are rotational, and of course because of the frequent rotation are rather powerless. I mean they can, I mean Holland and Sweden were very proud that we are members of the Security Council, but it does not representing it. I mean yeah they can bring certain things to the agenda

Fatema: But no concrete changes?

Back: No.

Fatema: *So should we be hopeful for the future?*

Back: I would be hopeful for the UN. I think the UN is, including all its imperfections, is I think a very sound body, and I would also say, I mean without I mean too much praising my colleagues and that is the Secretariat and the Secretary General's Office and so on. They work a lot behind the scenes, and they have a very moderating influence. I mean, they have their representatives in those countries, what people I think very often of high integrity with staff, and you can call them shepherds or whatever you want, they carry the load, they draft resolutions, they write reports and so on, and I mean the member states would be no where without that kind of hidden force. It's not perfect, we're all human, and there is also probably corruption, there is also power play and incompetence in certain cases and abuse of populations and so on. But by enlarge I think the civil service of the UN is of quite good quality, hardworking and of sane mind.

- Transcribed Interview Alanna O'Malley

Transcription Interview 2 Alanna O'Malley

Interviewee: Alanna O'Malley

Interviewer: Fatema Mahmoud

Date & Place: 10 of April 2019 at the Hague University of Applied Sciences in The Hague

Fatema: *Could you tell me more about yourself and the work you are doing.*

O'Malley: My name is Alanna O'Malley and I have a chair in United Nations Studies and Peace and Justice, and this is a special appointment created by the city of the Hague to honour the work of Joias van Aartsen, the former mayor and the former Foreign Minister, and it is a chair that is shared between Leiden University, the institute for Security, Governance and Global Affairs, and The Hague University of Applied Sciences. So, I am 30% here (HHS) and 30% there (Leiden University) and then 40% at the institute for History where I teach the in the MA International Relations. So, I am a historian, not a lawyer or a political scientist, and I work mostly on the UN in the Global South. So, the chair has 4 research elects: One is the UN in the Global South, one is Women, Peace and Security, one is on UN and the Youth and the fourth one is about UN and Informal Diplomacy Network.

Fatema: *As an academic who is specialized in the History of the UN, what do you think the main problem is when it comes to effectiveness of the UN Security Council, and do you think that with time, the problem has been maximized or minimized?*

O'Malley: I think there is two major problems with the Security Council. The first one is that any reform initiative relies on the political will of the Member States and also of the P5, and so this means that it is very difficult for any reform to happen because you have to have a moment in time in which the context for political will is suitable to create a momentum to have a conversation about reform. And this means that it is inquired to be subjective. So, this question about reform comes up at times of crisis when the UN does not do enough to solve humanitarian issues. But also, at times of post-crisis such as, the Libyan example where the UN does intervene but does not achieve its results. So, the problem is that any reform conversation always happens in this negative vacuum, so it is very difficult to generate positive political will in a climate of negative opinion, and that is the first major issue with Security Council reform. The second issue is that the Security Council is inherently imbalanced because it is not representative, and the elected members of the Security Council, the 10 elected members, can only come from specific regional and, you know, country groups. And so this rather exacerbates that imbalance, and so, on the one hand you have a lot of conversation in the West about well, you know, we need to reform the Security Council because it is not effective or archaic or it is outdated, and you have the same conversation on the global south but for them it is much more about representation, participation and being listened to. So, that is another problematic conversation because even within the global South movement or group, you know there is a lot of different opinions about what the Security Council should look like. So really, reform has been, if you like, paralyzed by these two conversations, which are inherently political, which means that the UN is subject even, we know it is ,, through the member states, but it is also subject to political trends and to the context, and this really diminishes the ability of the UN itself, so those people who work for the Secretariat, to participate in really positive ways to have conversations about reform.

Fatema: Do you think that, because there have been efforts to reform, the last one was in 2005 when Kofi Annan suggested proposals to reform the Security Council, but do you think that the calls to reform in the past and in the present are different?

O'Malley: I think the difference between the calls in the past, and I mean, the call now is not official right, so it is, people know we should do this but they have not come out and said yes we want UN Security Council reform. And so, it really depends, and this is what makes it such a subject, because Kofi Annan lead this call in 2005 because he had an overall view of how the UN works in relationship to the Security Council, so he understood the intricacies of international politics and how the UN responded and failed to respond to international crises during his tenure, but other calls in the past and often times when they come from countries like India and Brazil in particular, it is really about national interest. So, when they call for reform it is because they want a seat on Security Council permanent seat. And this is something that the P5 just really are not going to discuss, right. So, really, when you are looking at the history of reform efforts, you have to contextualize these calls in a particular moment, but you also have to look at whether not this willingness to really think about Charter reform initiatives, and also the pressure from civil society groups. So, there are many UN organizations and research groups and programmes that are talking about Security Council reform, but not many of them have put forward a useable model for how that would work, and I think that is the contribution that academics can make for it clearly, is to really think about what is an objective model for reform that suggests that the UN could look like this, the Security Council could look like this, and I think that they, in order to do that, they really need to work with people who work at the UN, not the Member States because they are only really there because they have a national interest.

Fatema: And when you say people who work at the UN, what do you mean in particular?

O'Malley: So, if you think about the undersecretaries with each of their areas of priority, you think about the people who work at DPKO (Department of Peacekeeping Operations) and have to, in many cases their hands are tied by the procedures and mechanisms of the Security Council. So, for them it is not efficient either to get the job done, and that is even when they can get the question on the table. So people who work, there are people who work in the Secretary General's office because, I mean, they are responsible for the questions he puts before the Security Council, people who work for the UN Legal Affairs office because they are responsible for the outcome of what the UN Security Council could do. So I think that, you know, for me the most interesting reform issues come when they embrace and they analyse the contributions of these sets of actors, because this is much more objective than looking at what the member states want to do, because the member states all want different things and it is all for their own interest. But this is much more I think where the realm of possibilities lies for Security Council reform, when you have a very balanced assessment of the Security Council, it is an internal perspective as well as an external perspective. And then there you can have some potential to produce an idea of how to do it, or what it should look like, and then you worry about the politics afterwards.

Fatema: So, internal the UN and external the academics or maybe the NGO's?

O'Malley: Yes, the NGO's and civil society, other who have to work with the Security Council.

Fatema: In academic literature, many scholars like Leigh-Phippard, Luck and Bourantonis that have written on this subject between 2000 and 2005, have acknowledged that the Security Council's current formation is not sustainable in the long run. Do you think that this still applies? And did their prediction come true?

O'Malley: You see, using the word sustainable is problematic. Because of course it is not sustainable, I mean it is not fair, it is not representative, it does not work. But at the same time, of course, you know, suggesting that it is not sustainable would seem to imply that it would not last in this format. But it will last because it has lasted since 1945, unless someone else changed it. So perhaps they are not using the correct language for that, but I think they're right I mean, there is nobody that would say that the Security Council does not need reform. But really again, the question comes back to, who is going to do that reform initiative. And I think that this really has to come a little bit from the inside if the UN as well as the outside, and I think a lot the academic work that has produced on this, is very limited because it only looks at the perspective of the member states, because they are of course the real, the important actors of the UN but they are not the only ones. And I think that as long as you only have your analysis of one set of actors, then you can't possibly offer a fair critique of what the Security Council should look like.

Fatema: *One might argue that a lot of aspects in the UN need reform, not only the Security Council. Do you think other aspects of the UN should be reformed before reforming the Security Council?*

O'Malley: I think, yes, this reform of the Security Council should happen at the end of the process. You know, these reforms do not have to be massive, I mean, you are not talking about structural changes that much, I mean, you can of course mix agencies and certain legs of the UN more efficient by combining their, pulling their resources. But at the same time, I think, you know, you are talking about procedures and mechanisms that could be reformed and that could make the UN just work better, which means that the Security Council will work better, because it would be more streamlined.

Fatema: *So, in my research I found that the majority of the literature written about the reform of the Security Council was written before 2010. There is literature out there after 2010, but not a lot. This means it does not take into consideration any of the major events that happened in the last decade like the Arab Spring, Syria, Ukraine...etc. One could say that the reason behind this is because some of these events are still ongoing, so that is why there is not anything concrete on paper. But my question is: Do you think that these events could maybe shed light on new aspects that we have not seen in the literature before? Is there a major difference between the events before 2010 and after?*

O'Malley: It is in the moment different now than 2010. Yeah, of course it is different because I mean, it has been a period of great upheaval, and that is good right? So, we have shaken up a lot of the Arab regimes across the Middle East and Northern Africa, I think we have seen a massive change of leadership in the United States which is, in my view, also providing opportunities as much as it is problematic, and I also think you have a different European Union than you had in 2010. I mean, Brexit is one aspect of that of course, but also you have more this idea of what the 27 (member states) can do together, and what they should be doing on the global stage. So, Europe's role in the world has shifted quite a lot. And on top of that of course, you know, the majority of people in Africa are under 30, and the majority of African States are struggling to cope with the youth and how to channel youth energy into their national economies, and that of course has implications for the UN because in a couple of years, these African leaders will be younger, you know, there will be more of them we hope, and they will have very different ideas for the international system. So, this is a very different moment, and I think, I know that there is not really much political energy for reform right now, because there are so many crises. Also, this has made more difficult by the fact that the UN has been seen not to do anything really in Syria, not to achieve anything in Yemen, not to achieve anything with Ukraine, not to achieve anything

in Libya, not to achieve anything in Congo, not to achieve anything anywhere. But at the same time if you look at what the Security Council has done, I think then you get a more balanced conversation. So, they have made progression in certain areas I mean they passed 1325 (Resolution 1325 on women, peace and security), they have continued to keep women and peace on the Security Council Agenda, they have tried to implement that in who gets to speak at the Security Council, and they have expanded the agenda items of the things the Security Council deals with, so I think it is important for your project and for literature as a whole to talk about reform but not only about intervention questions, because the Security Council is lots of other things, but no one really talks about that, and there you have much if you take in account what else it does, you get a balanced view of what the Security Council can be, not just what it is. And then you can separate it out, from these conversations about sovereignty and R2P because that is ultimately where a lot of reform debates end up, well sovereignty and member states as well, actually, it is not just about R2P, that is an important function but it is not the only one. And Peace and Security agenda the Security Council has comes a lot of other important aspects. I mean if you look at what they did during the Ebola crisis, that is the first time ever that we had the escalation of an international health security issue that was seen as a threat to international peace and security, and the UN did manage to get a resolution passed on that and solved the crisis. These are really really important achievements, but nobody ever talks about that. So that is why this moment is so different.

Fatema: *Moving on to Syria, I want to know your thoughts on the UN's response to Syria in the first years and the chemical weapons, and the response of the Security Council in specific.*

O'Malley: Well obviously, the UN has not done a great job at all there. Unfortunately, a lot of the things, the initiatives that they made have failed, so they did not manage to negotiate a settlement with Assad, even, I think they nominated Kofi Annan as a special peace envoy at a certain moment, but that did not work either. They didn't manage to bring the parties to the table, and beyond that they did not manage to stop the use of chemical weapons despite Obama saying that this is a red line, and he was really kind of leading the discourse on that for a while. So, the UN, you know, really was not able to do anything in Syria because it has ultimately become a super power conflict. It is about Russia versus the United States. Now what they did manage to do is, they created the humanitarian corridor in Syria, which is something that I think will be taken as a model for other conflicts. And they managed to use that to good effect in some instances because of the horror, the public horror generated by the Syrian war. So, I think the UN is in a very difficult position with Syria because their political interventions have not produced any results but there is no way there will be a military intervention because the United States and Russia will never agree to this, and also because R2P really has not gone that well in Libya, so an R2P mission is not really ideal. But at the same time of course, they are preparing, the UN is preparing for a presence at the moment once the Syrian conflict is brought to an end, and I think they are already there in these more civil capacities. So, again, I think it is important to have a balanced view of the efforts that they have achieved, because the Syrian conflict really, because it is a regional conflict as well as being an internal civil conflict because it involves a violation of sovereignty, because it involves insurgency groups, because it involves a problematic authority of the state. It is a myriad of different problems that the UN is not equipped to deal with. Because they are not able to have a balanced conversation about it. So, if the P5 was P10, then maybe you can at least have a conversation about what the UN should do. But at the moment, they can't really even discuss anything because it becomes a charging match between the US and Russia.

Fatema: *So you do think that they could not have done more for Syria because of the formation of the Security Council?*

O'Malley: I mean, Russia and the US are, you know they also make it more problematic because they are proxy actors in this as well. So, they will not, if they had, you know in other conflicts you know, I mean in Congo which is an ongoing war, where millions of Congolese have been killed, Russia and the US are not as clearly involved. They are behind the scenes but it is not the same way that they are in Syria, and because, you know, the Russians decided to support Assad's regime and the US have supported the Kurds, it has become a proxy war of the superpowers, and that is why it is so difficult. So even when it comes upon the Security Council, then you see the most acrimonious debates and you see the Russians really like closing off. So, can they do anything about it? I don't know. I would not be too hopeful, unless in a humanitarian capacity they are able to help. Which they will do, that they are very good at actually. But a military intervention will never happen, I do not think so.

Fatema: *What do you think we can learn from Syria? What can the UN learn from the conflict to avoid a similar thing happening in the future again?*

O'Malley: I think, if you read the SG (Secretary General) report from last year, he talks about the fact that the UN spends the majority of its budget, something like 80% on conflict and post-conflict but they spend pretty little on pre-conflict. So they really need to do a better job in identifying when hot zones, where the recipe of conflict is there, so there is a weak state or a failed state where there is poor social infrastructure, where there is a lack of opportunity for people, where there is a desecrated economy, where there has been a natural disaster. They need to do a better job in, if you like, forecasting the probabilities of violent conflict, and then you spend more money in that regard. If they had done that in Syria, all the recipes are there, all those factors, all those indicators are there. Then, I am not saying it would have prevented the outbreak of the conflict, but then I think the UN would be more prepared for it, and they would have maybe been able to be more active in getting involved which may have forestalled the invisible interventions of Russia and the United States, maybe. But again, that kind of question comes then to political will in the moment.

Fatema: *Which report was it again that you mentioned at the beginning?*

O'Malley: The Secretary General's report from last year February 2018, and I think that he would have released one 2019 too, but I am not sure

Fatema: *The failure to respond to the conflict in Syria has resurfaced the discussion of the veto, removing or limiting the use of the veto. As we know, the veto was essential in the creation of the UN at the time, but many say it is outdated, it is not democratic. I would like to know your thoughts on this, and if there maybe is a way that we could preserve the freedom of the great powers like the veto did.*

O'Malley: There is two debates about the veto power. The first one is; well, it is not very good for the UN because Russia uses it all the time, China uses it, so it means that the UN, it kind of paralyses what the UN Security Council can do. But the other debate about the veto made by countries like Britain and France is that, they never invoke their veto. So basically, it does not really matter because they decide on a kind of conscience based, we know it is interest based, but they decide more on a conscience-based format what will they support. But in my view, neither of these arguments are sufficient for either abolishing or retaining the veto. Because what the veto does is precisely allow countries more room for manoeuvre on various questions. Even if you do not invoke the veto, you can always hold it as a threat to the other members that you may invoke it, so just because it is there, that is the threat in itself, and using it or not using it does not matter. And so, the countries that do use it, they also do that because they do not want to

publicly discuss some of the, or they do not probably want to commit to some of the questions that would be put forward. So I think, the veto is something that probably should be transformed rather than abolished, so I think rather than simply having a veto against items, I think it is sufficient to allow countries to abstain, and that that abstention is taken as a dissent rather than a consent, and that is the way it is perceived now. So when a country says it is kind of sometimes interpreted as consent, whereas if it was deliriant in abstentionment, dissent I think that would be fine. Because that would prevent the acrimony of a negative veto, and the atmosphere that that creates, and it would also still allow countries to manoeuvre a little bit on what they want to do, and it would still be this threat that could be used to create a mode of persuasion, or something that could be used. So actually, I am not really, you know, that much of the opinion that it should be totally abolished, because you need to have something, and countries, you know, are not going to walk away from that power. But I think if you change the meaning of the abstention and abolish the dissenting veto, then that should be fine. I mean that would be a starting point, I mean, then you could think about procedurally what would happen after that.

Fatema: *That leads into my question about the proposals, because there have been proposals and ideas on maybe a double veto, or no veto at all in cases of war and crises. Would you agree with these proposals?*

O'Malley: So I am not in the business of reforming the United Nations I mean I think that that's not the most interesting aspect of what the UN does, so I am not going to tell you how I think UN reform should look like, because I would really have to think a lot more about that, do a lot more research on it. There are many more experts on that out there. But what I think about the reform proposals on the double veto aspect is that, you cannot really divide the power of veto between different issues, because it is far too subjective, and procedurally the veto system as I said, does create positive and negative aspects. So, for me, the subjective part of the Security Council is, what issues get put on the agenda for a vote. Why those issues get put up and then what does that signify for the way in which the Security Council interprets threats to peace and security, because that agenda is very wide, it is not just about war or humanitarian intervention. So, you cannot have the situation where if it is about war, then the veto becomes a double veto or no veto, because it is too problematic, and it is too difficult. If you had that you would never get these questions on the agenda, so rather I think they need to change the meaning of the veto and its effectiveness, but I think they should retain it as a standard procedure in the Security Council, in order to retain the actors that are there, because you do not want Russia or China or the US to leave the UN, I mean that would be devastating, but you need to retain it and really keep it as a procedural vote, but maybe change its meaning. But it has to be the same across all the issues because otherwise it is far too problematic.

Fatema: *So even in matters of urgency, you think that we should retain it. Because I keep thinking, in wars or in outbreaks of disasters, there should be a quick response.*

O'Malley: Yeah, and there is a proposal I think put forward to have a rapid response committee, the SG also talks about that. He talks about creating a national dashboards that can be activated quickly in the case of emergencies and I think those kind of initiatives are much more useful than reforming the Security Council for emergencies, and also if you look at the past, I mean, historically a lot of emergent crises are dealt with in the General Assembly and in the ECOSOC, not just at Security Council, and in fact the first major intervention that the UN made into the Congo in 1960, that mandate came from the ECOSOC not from the Security Council. So, I mean, the Security Council is not the only thing in the UN that does things, that is not very articulate but it is not the only organ that does things, the other organs do things too, and I think the SG's

proposals about rapid response team, national dashboards, reserved contingency, this is much more helpful for humanitarian crises and rapid response than anything else.

Fatema: *What are your thoughts on the proposals of expanding permanent seats or non-permanent seats?*

O'Malley: That is a very difficult one actually because, you know, in my view, I mean objectively, I think that the global South are shot out of the debate in a very problematic way and that is incredibly problematic because it delegitimizes the whole of the UN. So I think that these countries should be given far more voice at the Security Council, and even if you look at the way it is broken down among the elected members, I mean right now you have a situation in the next round of voting in September where the Western European group, the contest is between Norway, Canada and Ireland. That is a very uneven contest, they are all western countries, of course they all have vaguely similar principles and similar priorities, but they are just incomparable in size, and Canada is supremely a more powerful actor than the other two, but Norway is probably richer than all three. So, what does that mean for a country like Ireland that has a small and limited position? But then have got to craft a very specific contribution. So, even within the elected groupings, it is not very even in terms of representation, so I would say actually if you think about the breakdown of those groups, it might be more interesting to reassess what would happen if you put all the small island nations, if you give them a seat at the Security Council together, what would that look like?

Fatema: *You mean as one permanent or non-permanent seat?*

O'Malley: As a non-permanent seat. And amongst the P5 I mean, I think you really have to start to embrace the global south, the countries that are larger, I mean, I don't think South Africa is a good example because it is kind of western, but I mean Brazil, India, Japan maybe, in Africa you could look at Nigeria, you could look at maybe a country like Ghana. These are the countries that I think really should be in the mix for an expansion of membership. Will that happen? I really do not know, but you know, I do not think it is impossible, I think that is an easier issue than the veto reform question. Because if you look at China, China considers itself a globalized country, that can vary depending on what perspective you look at, but I mean they are really amplifying their role at the UN for the wrong reasons, and so that might create space for others, maybe.

Fatema: *A lot of proposals say well, maybe we should distribute seats, permanent or non-permanent on basis of GDP, strongest military, economy or the strongest developed countries, and these proposals come from the academic side, but are they also proposed within the UN?*

O'Malley: Some get discussed, but not very often. Because there is no space and time or capacity for that most of it. But I mean, if you look at some of these proposals, if you look at the way the UN has adapted over time, you know, yes they want to embrace countries that have a strong military because that is useful for peace keeping, and yes they want GDP countries to be involved in the Security Council because it is useful for UN contributions, so these are materialistic concerns that the UN has, and that is why those countries would be embraced for those debates, but if you look at what has happened previously, it has been a much more objective view, it has been: How do we make the UN stronger? What are the amends? Okay we need more money, we need more peace keeping, we need more countries that contribute troops, but we also need more countries that are positive about the UN, and they are usually the countries that are affected most by these crises, right? They are usually the more reliant ones on the UN. So, I mean, countries like small island nations, because climate change, countries that are in a state of crisis if you think about certain Latin American countries, or you think about somewhere like

Somalia, Sudan, South Sudan. These countries, you know it is almost like a lifeline that they have to the UN in many cases. So I think you also have to envision that by embracing the actors are the countries that are the most reliant on what the UN does, you will also make the UN stronger because you are directly involving the people for whom the UN is most relevant, and in many cases they also have the most positive view of what the UN can do. Also, negative, but then that is also good for the UN, because then they will learn lessons that maybe a little bit more quickly. So, I think you have to expand your scope a little bit in thinking of who, which other actors would be involved.