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THE VETO POWER AND THE DEADLOCK OF UN SECURITY COUNCIL REFORM

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Universiti Utara Malaysia

MASTER OF ARTS (INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS)
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THE VETO POWER AND THE DEADLOCK OF UN SECURITY COUNCIL REFORM

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ABSTRACT

This study explores the impact of veto power on efforts to reform the United Nations Security Council (UNSC), emphasizing how the privileges of its five permanent members create structural rigidity and decision-making paralysis. Although there is broad international agreement on the need for reform, progress has remained minimal due to the continued use of veto power, which has weakened the Council's effectiveness in addressing modern security challenges and undermined its legitimacy as a representative global body. The study aims to examine the development and functions of the UNSC, identify the factors driving calls for reform, and analyze how veto power constrains reform initiatives. It addresses questions related to the Council's institutional evolution, the sources of reform pressure, and the role of veto power in maintaining the status quo. Grounded in Veto Player Theory, the research conceptualizes the five permanent members as institutional veto players whose shared interests in preserving their privileged positions perpetuate the existing structure and block meaningful change. This theoretical framework explains the systemic resistance to reform and the Council's long-standing inflexibility. Using a qualitative research design, the study draws on semi-structured interviews with diplomats and UN officials, as well as documentary analysis of UNSC resolutions, reports, and academic literature. The literature review highlights recurring criticisms of the UNSC's undemocratic composition, inefficiency, and frequent misuse of veto power. It also reviews major reform proposals, including the Razali Plan, High-Level Panel models, and initiatives by the Group of Four (G4) and the African Union (AU), all of which have failed due to opposition from veto-wielding states. The findings reveal that the veto system, originally intended to promote unity among major powers, has evolved into a tool for safeguarding national interests at the expense of collective security and institutional fairness. The study concludes that as long as the current veto structure remains intact, meaningful reform of the UNSC is unlikely, and efforts to enhance its legitimacy, representativeness, and effectiveness in maintaining international peace and security will remain severely constrained.

Keywords: UNSC, Veto Power, Status Quo, Permanent Member, Reformation

ABSTRAK

Kajian ini meneliti kesan kuasa veto terhadap usaha reformasi Majlis Keselamatan Pertubuhan Bangsa-Bangsa Bersatu (UNSC) dengan menekankan bagaimana keistimewaan lima ahli tetapnya mewujudkan kekakuan struktur dan kelumpuhan dalam proses pembuatan keputusan. Walaupun terdapat persetujuan antarabangsa yang meluas tentang keperluan reformasi, pembaharuan ini masih sangat terhad akibat penggunaan kuasa veto yang berterusan, yang telah melemahkan keberkesanan Majlis dalam menangani cabaran keselamatan semasa serta menjejaskan legitimasinya sebagai sebuah badan global. Kajian ini bertujuan untuk meneliti perkembangan dan fungsi UNSC, mengenal pasti faktor-faktor yang mendorong tuntutan reformasi, serta menganalisis bagaimana kuasa veto menjadi kekangan terhadap inisiatif reformasi. Kajian ini menjawab persoalan berkaitan evolusi institusi, sumber tekanan terhadap reformasi, dan peranan kuasa veto dalam mengekalkan status quo. Berlandaskan Teori Pemain Veto, penyelidikan ini mentafsir lima ahli tetap sebagai pemain veto institusi yang mempunyai kepentingan bersama untuk mengekalkan keistimewaan mereka, sekaligus mengukuhkan struktur sedia ada dan menghalang perubahan yang bermakna. Kerangka teori ini menjelaskan rintangan sistemik terhadap pembaharuan dan ketidakanjalan Majlis yang berpanjangan. Menggunakan kaedah penyelidikan kualitatif, kajian ini berpandukan temu bual separa berstruktur dengan diplomat dan pegawai Pertubuhan Bangsa-Bangsa Bersatu, di samping analisis dokumen terhadap resolusi UNSC, laporan, dan literatur akademik. Sorotan literatur menekankan kritikan berulang terhadap komposisi UNSC yang tidak demokratik, ketidakcekapan, dan penyalahgunaan kuasa veto yang kerap. Ia juga mengkaji cadangan pelan reformasi utama seperti Pelan Razali, model Panel Peringkat Tinggi, serta inisiatif Kumpulan Empat (G4) dan Kesatuan Afrika (AU), yang kesemuanya gagal akibat tentangan daripada negara-negara pemegang kuasa veto. Dapatan kajian menunjukkan bahawa sistem veto, yang pada asalnya bertujuan untuk menjamin perpaduan antara kuasa-kuasa besar, kini telah berkembang menjadi alat untuk melindungi kepentingan nasional sehingga mengorbankan keselamatan kolektif dan keadilan institusi. Kajian ini menyimpulkan bahawa selagi struktur veto sedia ada dikekalkan, pembaharuan Majlis Keselamatan Pertubuhan Bangsa-Bangsa Bersatu yang bermakna adalah mustahil, dan usaha untuk meningkatkan legitimasi, keberperwakilan, serta keberkesanan Majlis dalam mengekalkan keamanan dan keselamatan antarabangsa akan terus terbatas.

Kata Kunci: Majlis Keselamatan PBB, Kuasa Veto, Status Quo, Ahli-Ahli Tetap, Reformasi

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

AU	The African Union
CFR	America Council on Foreign Relations
G4	The Group of 4 (Brazil, India, Japan and Germany)
HLP	High Level Panel
NAM	Non-Aligned Movement
OCHA	UN Office for Coordination & Humanitarian Affairs
UC	The United Consensus (Argentina, Mexico, Canada, Malta, Pakistan, South Korea and Italy)
UK	The United Kingdom
UN	United Nations
UNGA	United Nations General Assembly
UNSC	United Nations Security Council
UNSG	United Nations Secretary general
US	The United States
WHO	World Health Organization

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.0 Introduction

This chapter encompasses the introductory part and presents the background study, problem statement, research objectives, questions, theoretical framework, significance of the study, and the research methodology utilized in this study to collect and analyze data. The study commences with a review of literature on the history of the UN formation and the evolution of the Security Council, including the use of the veto power in accordance with the veto player theory, which obstructs the reform process within the Council.

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1.1 Background of the Study

The UN members are subject to binding commitments legally to uphold peace and security, imposed by the UNSC as the main principal crisis-management body. The members of the UNSC both permanent and the elected non-permanent members embodied the role and duties to resolve global security issues such as terrorism, civil wars, and natural disasters (Alipour, 2024). Throughout the years, the UN has been instrumental in bringing an end to many conflicts by utilizing the authority of the UNSC.

Since the formation of UNSC in 1945, the UNSC structure has remained unchanged which also igniting the debate among the UN members on the quest for reforms. In the recent major global disputed crises, such as the civil war in Syria, Israeli-Palestinian conflict, the COVID-19 pandemic, Russia annexation of Crimea and subsequent invasion of Ukraine and other issues, have all been hampered by the UNSC inability to resolve the world affairs amicably due to conflicting interests among the members.

1.2 Problem Statement

The UNSC often cited for its inefficiency and illegitimacy dealing with global affairs is the exclusivity of veto power granter to the permanent members. Given such privileges and exclusivity, the direct use of or the implicit threats of its use has banned the adoption of many resolutions for the past decades. Numerous of countries called for the UNSC fundamental reform to reflect 21st century geopolitical centuries yet ceased to be heard. The following critique on the privileges of specialty veto power among the current permanent members tends to be abusive which results in a lack of efficiency and transparency in the decision- making process. Singh (1958) justifies that "the insertion of veto provision in the Charter was bad but its frequent use in the UNSC voting has been still worse".

Since the establishment of the UN, the used veto had prohibited the passing of hundreds of resolutions on global peace and security. Viewing in the recent escalating crisis in Ukraine, the UNSC dismissed a proposed resolution aimed at halting the Russian military aggression towards Ukraine. The resolution, put forward by Albania and the United States, received backing from 11 council members but

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faced a veto from the Russian (Lederer, 2022). Similarly, the United States, as a staunch ally of Israel, has once more utilized its veto power within the UNSC to prevent Palestine's quest for full UN membership in the recent General Assembly (Lederer, 2024). The effect of permanent members veto has stopped many resolutions being adopted by the UNSC to be a part of international law acting under Chapter VII of the UN Charter, which is considered binding, following Article 25. Although many of the UN member states agreed on the reform of the UNSC yet it considers the redistribution of world power.

Significantly, a country acts in accordance with its national interests, Although the permanent members welcome the debate on the UNSC reform, it has not been reaching any mutual consensus among the members. The urge for reform and expansion of the UNSC has been resisted strenuously by the Permanent with its veto power. Krastev (2008) asserted that the role of the UN will diminish and be less relevant in dealing with world affairs without the reform of the UNSC. Several Secretary General of the UN prominently Boutros Ghali, Ban Ki Moon, and Kofi Annan have advocated the need to reform the UNSC as the powerful organ within the UN. However, such an effort led to very limited success. The only reform did take place was in 1965 on the enlargement of non-permanent members from six (6) to ten (10) seats (Gould & Rablen, 2014).

The attempt to the change status quo seems to be impossible even after the 1965 enlargement that has successfully made. The UNSC has undergone a single change in its composition, which took place in 1964. This modification followed a significant increase in UN membership and a two (2) year's period of intense

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discussions that led to the addition of four more non-permanent seats, expanding the Council to a total of 15 members. As the world faces escalating challenges to global peace and security, compounded by growing geopolitical divisions and threats to the international multilateral framework, demands for the restructuring of the UNSC have intensified in recent times. Nevertheless, the progress made annually at the UNGA's ongoing Intergovernmental Negotiations (IGN) on UNSC reform has been slow and incremental. In some cases, the IGN process continues to be overshadowed by the inadequacies of the current UNSC composition in effectively carrying out its responsibilities in maintaining international peace and security. While there is a consensus on the need to enlarge the Security Council and capitalize on the current push for reform, there remains a lack of agreement on the specific details of the reform package.

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1.3 Research Objectives

Crafting precise aims and objectives is crucial when working on a thesis, dissertation, or a research paper. These elements determine the boundaries, thoroughness, and path of researcher study. Well-defined aims and objectives provide focus to researcher study and ensure clarity to its audience, with aims outlining the goals and objectives detailing the methods to achieve it. Research objectives play a vital role in directing the research process and maintaining the study's focus and coherence. Thus, the research objectives of this study aim to:

a) To examine the background and development of the UNSC.

b) To analyze the factors in quest for UNSC reform.

c) To examine how the veto theory applied impedes the UNSC reform process.

1.4 Research Questions

A well-defined research question provides direction for a research paper, dissertation or thesis, articulating precisely what researcher intend to investigate and providing a clear focus and purpose of the work. The goal of this research is to find answers to the research questions listed below:

a) What is the role, functions and development of the UNSC?

b) What are the factors that contribute to the need for UNSC reform?

c) How does the veto theory impede UNSC reform process?

1.5 Significance of the Study

Research is fundamental to the advancement of human civilization. It arises from the inherent human desire to improve our quality of life and exert control over our surroundings. To accomplish this, it is essential to deepen our understanding and awareness; we must grasp how various phenomena operate or fail to operate in order to create new applications or enhance existing ones.

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The field of international relations (IR) is witnessing an increasing demand for insight. The interplay of actions and activities both within and outside national borders has raised significant concerns regarding transnational development, peace, and security. A comprehensive understanding of these core elements necessitates an exploration of global identities, cultures, and religions, which are expected to shape interactions and relationships. Recognizing these factors is crucial for understanding their impact on international relations and the overall dynamics of global interactions. As nations and communities become more interconnected, the influence of cultural, religious, and identity-related factors on international diplomacy and

conflict becomes increasingly significant. These aspects are vital in shaping national policies, fostering international cooperation, and developing global security strategies.

To enhance relationships and promote these essential pillars, continuous improvement in understanding and strategies is required. This highlights the critical role of research in IR. For instance, research has identified the underlying causes of wars and global conflicts, facilitating the development of targeted solutions. The ever-changing nature of the international landscape, often affected by power imbalances, has led states and non-state actors to adopt a cautious approach, heavily relying on diplomatic methods in their engagements.

The UNSC plays a crucial role in the international system by upholding peace and security. However, it faces criticism for its inconsistent performance. While the UNSC has been instrumental in resolving certain international disputes, it is often seen as having neglected numerous other global conflicts. This perceived ineffectiveness is frequently attributed to the decision-making power of its permanent members, particularly their exclusive right to veto. The misuse of this veto power has led to longstanding calls for reform within the UNSC, as it contributes to the Council's dysfunction. This study aims to enrich the existing literature by exploring the challenges associated with UNSC reform through the lens of veto theory.

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In the realm of foreign policy, the importance of well-informed strategies cannot be overstated. Effective policy development hinges on evidence-based research, which is grounded in relevant theories and suitable methodologies. The interplay of research, theory, and methods in International Relations is essential for understanding the characteristics, processes, and underlying causes of global events. This research seeks to illuminate the effects of foreign policy actions taken by both permanent and non-permanent members of the UNSC. By analyzing the roles assumed by these states, the study aims to clarify their impact on the evolution of the UNSC from the viewpoint of UN member states.

Engaging in international relations research requires a diverse skill set, including strong interpersonal, analytical, decision-making, and negotiation skills. Investigating the UNSC within the context of international relations can enhance these competencies and provide a deeper understanding of societal dynamics and human behavior. Additionally, such research equips scholars with the ability to comprehend the global ramifications of policies, strategies, conflicts, and legal frameworks.

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1.6 Research Methodology

This study adopts a qualitative research design to explore and analyze the complex interactions and perceptions surrounding the influence of veto power on the reform process of the UNSC. The qualitative approach enables a deep understanding of human experiences, attitudes, and interpretations within their natural context, making it particularly suitable for political and diplomatic studies where nuanced perspectives are essential. According to Miles and Huberman (1994), qualitative

methods provide a holistic means to understand phenomena by capturing the depth and richness of participants' views. Sutton and Austin (2015) further emphasize that qualitative inquiry allows researchers to adapt and refine their investigation as new insights emerge. Hence, this study uses both primary and secondary data sources to ensure comprehensive coverage of the subject matter.

Table 1.1: Qualitative Research Data Method Collection

Qualitative Research Data Collection Method	
Qualitative Primary Data	1. UN & UNSC Report 2. Minister or Ambassadorial speech text 3. Interview (Semi structured interview)
Qualitative Secondary Data	1. Academic Journals 2. Books 3. Biography or letters 4. Government press statement and report from official website

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Qualitative primary data collection involves gathering data in an unstructured manner,which can provide a more comprehensive understanding of a topic or phenomenon. This method is beneficial for exploring issues from various perspectives and obtaining information about people's opinions and emotions regarding a particular subject. Furthermore, it is useful for investigating how individual perceive a specific problem or issue. Different individuals or groups perceive a particular issue. It enables researchers to gather diverse viewpoints, uncover underlying motivations and understand the contextual factors influencing

people's opinions and behaviors. This approach is also effective in uncovering emotional reactions and personal experiences. It creates an opportunity for participants to articulate their emotions and perspectives yielding valuable insightsinto their connections with and interpretations of particular issues or phenomena.

Qualitative secondary data refers to information that has already been gathered and published by other sources, offering insights into individuals' thoughts, emotions and behaviors. This data sourced from a variety material, including academic journals, government publications, books, media articles, documentary records, Researcher examine studies that aggregate qualitative findings related to the topic, highlighting common perspectives. By leveraging qualitative secondary data, researcher obtained essential context and corroborative evidence in these studies, enhancing the comprehension of the subject without the necessity of conducting new data collection.

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1.6.1 Primary Data

The primary data in this study were collected through semi-structured interviews. Semi-structured interviews provide a balanced framework offering consistency across interviews through guiding questions, while also allowing flexibility to explore emerging themes in depth. A total of ten (10) interviewees were selected using purposive sampling, ensuring each respondent possessed relevant expertise, experience, or professional background related to international diplomacy, global governance, and UNSC operations. The sample included diplomats, ambassadors, international activists, and scholars many of whom have served or collaborated with

institutions such as the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (Wisma Putra), the United Nations, or foreign embassies in Malaysia.

During interviews, a general set of open-ended questions was provided to all participants. However, as the discussion progressed, probing questions were asked spontaneously to deepen understanding and clarify responses based on the information shared by the interviewees. This approach enabled a richer and more authentic collection of insights. Interviews were conducted in both physical and virtual formats, depending on the availability and geographic location of respondents. Each interview lasted between 45 and 90 minutes and was audio-recorded with consent for transcription and analysis.

The data collection process concluded when data saturation was reached that is when additional interviews no longer yielded new insights or themes relevant to the research questions. At that point, the number of interviewees was capped at ten. The selected participant for this research interview was as follows.

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Table 1.2: UNSC Distribution of Seats

Interviewee	Background
Tan Sri Razali Ismail	A prominent Malaysian diplomat boasts a remarkable career in international relations that spans over thirty years. He began his journey in Malaysia's foreign service in the early 1960s and held several significant diplomatic roles, including serving as Malaysia's Ambassador to Poland, India, and the Czech Republic. Razali gained international recognition during his time as Malaysia's Permanent Representative to the United Nations from 1989 to 1996, where he was influential in global diplomatic efforts. In 1996, he was chosen to be the President of the 51st session of the United Nations General Assembly, advocating for reforms within the UN system, especially in the Security Council, to promote better representation and fairness among member states. On the domestic front, Tan Sri Razali also took on the role of Malaysia's Special Envoy to

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	Myanmar and later led the Human Rights Commission of Malaysia (SUHAKAM). His vast experience and dedication to multilateralism established him as a respected authority on matters of global governance and international collaboration. His insights into UNSC reform were shared during an interview on August 21, 2021.
Dato Seri Ramlan Ibrahim	A seasoned Malaysian diplomat whose distinguished career in the Foreign Service began in 1983. Over the decades, he has held numerous key positions both at home and abroad, demonstrating deep expertise in multilateral diplomacy and international affairs. He served as Malaysia's Permanent Representative to the United Nations from 2015 to 2017, a period that included Malaysia's term on the UN Security Council (2015–2016). During this time, he played a central role in articulating Malaysia's priorities on global peacekeeping, conflict prevention, and institutional reform within the UN system.

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	Before and after his UN posting, Dato' Seri Ramlan held several other senior diplomatic assignments, including serving as Secretary-General of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (Wisma Putra), Malaysia's top diplomatic position. His leadership was marked by efforts to strengthen Malaysia's engagement in regional and global diplomacy, particularly within ASEAN and the UN framework. He discussed Malaysia's UNSC priorities during 2015- 2016, focusing on peacekeeping and reform, in an interview on April 15, 2023.
Dato Syed Mohamad Hasrin Aidid	A senior Malaysian diplomat with an extensive career in foreign affairs and multilateral diplomacy. Appointed as Malaysia's Ambassador and Permanent Representative to the United Nations in 2019, he represented the country at the UN during a period marked by complex global challenges, including debates on the effectiveness and reform of the UN Security Council (UNSC). Before his UN posting, Dato' Syed Hasrin held several important positions within the Ministry of

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	Foreign Affairs (Wisma Putra) and Malaysia's diplomatic missions abroad. His career has included roles focusing on regional cooperation, international security, and policy planning. Throughout his service, he has been known for advocating stronger multilateral engagement, promoting Malaysia's foreign policy priorities, and highlighting the need for a more transparent and representative UN system. His interview took place on September 2, 2023 at Malaysia Embassy in Jakarta.
Datuk Dr. Rajmah Hussain	A veteran Malaysian diplomat with over three decades of distinguished service in the Malaysian Foreign Service. Over her 32-year career, she held several key ambassadorial and senior diplomatic positions, representing Malaysia in countries such as France, Germany, and the United States, as well as serving in various capacities at Wisma Putra. Renowned for her expertise in international relations and foreign policy analysis, Dato' Dr. Rajmah has also contributed to academic and policy

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	discourse through her writings and publications on Malaysia's foreign policy and diplomacy. Her extensive experience and intellectual engagement have made her a respected voice in Malaysian diplomacy, offering valuable perspectives on the country's evolving role in regional and global affairs.. She was interviewed virtually on June 17, 2021.
Dato Nadzirah Osman	An accomplished Malaysian diplomat with a distinguished career spanning over two decades in the foreign service. She began her diplomatic journey in 1996 with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (Wisma Putra) and has since held various key postings both at home and abroad. Her overseas assignments include serving as Second Secretary at the Malaysian Embassy in Mexico City, Counsellor at the High Commission in London, and Ambassador to the Czech Republic. Within Wisma Putra, she has held several senior positions, including Under-Secretary for Multilateral Affairs and Deputy Secretary-General (Multilateral Affairs). She later served as

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	Malaysia's Ambassador to the Netherlands and Permanent Representative to the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW). In 2023, she was appointed as Malaysia's Permanent Representative to the United Nations Office in Geneva, where she represents Malaysia in key multilateral discussions on human rights, disarmament, health, and labour. Her career reflects Malaysia's strong commitment to multilateral diplomacy and global cooperation. Her interview meeting was on October 27, 2021 at Baku, Azerbaijan.
Dato Dr. Rameez Yahaya	An accomplished Malaysian diplomat and academic with extensive expertise in international law and multilateral diplomacy. Throughout his career, he has held various positions overseas, including serving as Malaysia's Ambassador to Chile from 2015 to 2018, as well as participating in diplomatic missions in Australia and Africa, where he is currently the Acting High Commissioner to Namibia. He earned his PhD from Keele University in the

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	United Kingdom, focusing his research on international criminal law, especially regarding the International Criminal Court (ICC) and the crime of aggression. Dato' Dr. Rameez has also represented Malaysia in significant UN legal committees and has written extensively on international law. His career exemplifies a combination of diplomatic experience and scholarly knowledge, highlighting Malaysia's involvement in global legal and political matters. A virtual interview was taken place on November 7, 2021.
Terence Seme	A Dutch diplomat serving as Second Secretary (Political Affairs) at the Embassy of the Kingdom of the Netherlands in Kuala Lumpur since 2020. His role involves handling political and diplomatic matters, which may include human rights and regional cooperation. He emphasized UNSC reform during an interview on February 27, 2023.
Shivakumar Nair	A Singaporean diplomat currently holding the position of Deputy High Commissioner and Minister-Counsellor in Kuala Lumpur.

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	He has represented Singapore in various multilateral forums. He emphasized that within the UN Security Council (UNSC), Singapore frequently champions the interests of small states, advocating for issues such as transparency, fairness in elections, and equal participation, often utilizing platforms like the Forum of Small States (FOSS). An interview with Nair on February 23, 2023 has provided insights on these matters, illustrating Singapore's wider diplomatic perspective.
Dr. Chandra Muzaffar	A Malaysian political scientist, advocate for human rights, and scholar of global justice, he is recognized for his contributions to the moral and ethical underpinnings of international relations. He has consistently criticized the structural inequalities present in the global system, pointing out that institutions such as the UNSC perpetuate outdated power dynamics that disadvantage the Global South. Through his leadership roles in NGOs like the International Movement for a Just World (JUST) and his scholarly work

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	on civilizational dialogue and human rights, he stresses the importance of establishing a global governance framework that is more inclusive, accountable, and morally sound. Although he does not propose specific technical reforms, his advocacy highlights that any reform of the UNSC should focus on fair representation, restrict veto powers in cases of atrocities, and ensure that decisions are guided by principles of justice and human dignity, rather than solely the interests of dominant states. He discussed UNSC global justice issues in a virtual interview on June 28, 2021.
Prof. Dr. Mohd Azizuddin Mohd Sani	A Malaysian scholar of international relations and Southeast Asian politics, currently serving as Professor at the School of International Studies and Deputy Vice- Chancellor (Academic and International Affairs) at Universiti Utara Malaysia. He holds a PhD in Politics and International Relations from Keele University, UK, and has extensive experience as an academic leader, researcher, and public intellectual.

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	His research focuses on political theory, human rights, media politics, democratization, and regional and international relations, with particular emphasis on Southeast Asia. Through his analysis of Malaysia's foreign policy and regional dynamics, he provides insights into global governance and the United Nations system, highlighting the need for more inclusive and representative international institutions such as the UN Security Council. His work combines scholarly research with practical perspectives, emphasizing accountability, legitimacy, and the incorporation of Southeast Asian and Global South voices in global decision-making. His interview occurred on August 19,2021.

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UN and UNSC Report data collection. The collection of data from the UN and the UNSC involves the acquisition of qualitative primary data derived from their published reports. It is crucial to concentrate on specific content types, including official statements, resolutions, deliberations, and policy decisions. Such information is typically presented in various formats, such as reports, briefings, resolutions, meeting records, and statements, which offer comprehensive narratives

and contextual insights into global challenges, peacekeeping initiatives, conflict resolution strategies, and international diplomatic efforts. By analyzing the reports and documents obtained from official web sources, researchers can extract qualitative data in the form of narratives, testimonies, and analyses that are vital for comprehending global issues, peace processes, and humanitarian initiatives pertinent to this study.

In conclusion, the collection of qualitative primary data serves as an effective approach for acquiring a detailed and multifaceted understanding of a subject. This method provides significant insights into individuals' perceptions, feelings, and experiences, rendering it a crucial instrument for the in-depth exploration and analysis of intricate issues.

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1.6.2 Secondary Data

Secondary data were obtained from a wide range of scholarly and institutional sources, including academic journals, books, official UN and UNSC reports, government statements, diplomatic speeches, and media articles. These materials provided established knowledge and supported triangulation with the primary data findings. The secondary sources served to contextualize the interview data within existing theoretical and empirical research, thereby enhancing the credibility and validity of the study. Academic journals, books, published official reports, and speeches represent secondary data within this research methodology, encompassing information that has already been collected and shared in scholarly works. This type of data is adopted by researchers as it offers established findings, theoretical frameworks, and insights into specific topics without necessitating new data

collection. A literature review was conducted to pinpoint relevant studies that correspond with the research questions. This process aids researchers in comprehending the existing body of knowledge and identifying gaps within the literature. The data extracted is subsequently analyzed to establish connections, identity trends, or compare findings with the researchers' own data or hypotheses. This involves synthesizing results from various studies to develop a comprehensive understanding of the subject matter. Furthermore, researchers contextualize the findings within the broader academic discourse, employing secondary data to bolster the arguments and underscore the significance of the study. Proper citation of these secondary data sources is essential in recognizing the original researchers and enhancing the credibility of the current investigation.

In conclusion, secondary data is a vital resource in research methodology, allowing researchers to utilize existing knowledge and build upon it to further their inquiries.

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1.6.3 Data Analysis

This study employed both content analysis and thematic analysis to systematically interpret the qualitative data collected from interviews and secondary sources. The integration of these two analytical techniques ensured a comprehensive and balanced understanding of the findings by allowing both descriptive and interpretive exploration of the subject matter.

Content analysis was utilized to identify, categorize, and interpret recurring ideas and concepts from the interview transcripts, official United Nations documents, and related literature. The process began with the familiarization of data, in which the

researcher carefully read and reviewed all transcripts and textual materials to develop an in-depth understanding of the content. Following this, the data were coded and categorized according to key themes such as veto power, UNSC reform and expansion, legitimacy, global peace, and international diplomacy. The researcher then analyzed the frequency and context in which these key ideas appeared, allowing for the identification of the most dominant topics and concerns across various sources. For example, the repeated emphasis on "veto power as an obstacle to reform" or "inequality in representation" revealed the prevailing sentiments among participants and documents. Through this systematic categorization, content analysis enabled the researcher to quantify qualitative data, identify patterns, and establish the prominence of specific issues discussed within the context of UNSC reform.

In parallel, thematic analysis was conducted to uncover deeper meanings and relationships within the data. The researcher adopted familiarization and initial coding of significant statements relevant to the research objectives. From these codes, broader themes were developed, including "political resistance and power imbalance", "the veto as a barrier to institutional change," and "the call for democratization and equal representation." These themes were then reviewed, refined, and named to ensure clarity and conceptual consistency. Thematic analysis allowed the researcher to interpret not only what was said but also the underlying motivations, perceptions, and emotions of the respondents regarding the reform of the UNSC. It provided insights into how participants conceptualized issues of fairness, legitimacy, and reform feasibility within a highly politicized international framework.

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The combination of content and thematic analysis strengthened the study's methodological rigor. Content analysis provided a structured, data-driven view of key issues, while thematic analysis offered interpretive depth by exploring the interconnected meanings and perceptions underlying those issues. The integration of both methods ensured triangulation and enriched the overall analysis, enabling a holistic understanding of how the veto power functions as both a political tool and a major obstacle to reform within the UNSC framework.

1.7 Theoretical Framework

The theoretical framework of this study is built upon two key perspectives in international relations, Realist Theory and Veto Player Theory. These frameworks provide a comprehensive understanding of the underlying power dynamics and institutional barriers that hinder reform within the UNSC. Both these theories help explain how state behavior, driven by national interest and strategic power preservation, sustains the current status quo of the UNSC despite recurring global calls for reform. Realism remains one of the most enduring and influential theories in international relations. Its central premise is that the international system is anarchic, with no overarching authority above sovereign states (Waltz, 1979). States therefore act primarily to ensure their own survival and to maximize their power relative to others (Mearsheimer, 2001). According to this school of thought, moral or normative considerations such as equality or fairness are secondary to pragmatic concerns like national security and influence. Realists view international institutions as reflections of the power distribution among states, rather than as independent actors capable of overriding state interests (Gilpin, 1981).

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Within this framework, the UNSC embodies a clear manifestation of Realist power dynamics. The concentration of authority in the hands of the five permanent members illustrates a structure designed to reflect post-World War II power realities. The veto power serves as an institutional safeguard that allows these states to protect their geopolitical interests while maintaining a dominant position within the international system (Hosli & Dorfler, 2017). As a result, decisions within the Council often reflect the balance of power rather than a collective commitment to global peace and security. The permanent members reluctance to support reforms that could dilute their influence underscores the Realist logic that states prioritize self-interest and relative advantage over collective progress (Aggarwal, 1984).

The Realist interpretation aligns closely with the key reform concerns particularly the issues of membership size, veto privileges, and regional representation. Expanding the Council's membership or limiting veto power would disrupt the current balance of power and diminish the authority of the permanent members. Therefore, these states, acting rationally within a Realist framework, resist any reform that might undermine their strategic dominance (Moon, 2021). Realism, thus, provides the conceptual foundation for understanding why the UNSC's reform process has remained stagnant despite overwhelming global support for change.

To complement this Realist understanding of state behavior, this study adopts George Tsebelis's Veto Player Theory (2002) as its principal analytical framework. Veto Player Theory explains institutional resistance to change by identifying the actors whose approval is required to alter the status quo. According to Tsebelis (2002), a "veto player" is an individual or collective actor whose consent is necessary

for a policy shift. The greater the number of veto players, and the wider the ideological distance between them, the more difficult it becomes to enact change. This theory is widely used in comparative politics and political economy to analyze how institutional arrangements can either facilitate or obstruct policy reforms (Warntjen, 2010).

Applied to the UNSC, the permanent members function as institutional veto players. Their unanimous consent is required for substantive decisions under Article 27(3) of the UN Charter, meaning any one of them can block a proposal regardless of the majority opinion among the remaining members. This structure creates a high degree of policy stability, where the status quo is maintained even in the face of overwhelming international consensus for reform. The persistence of this veto system exemplifies what Tsebelis (1995) describes as a "locked-in equilibrium," where institutional design prevents adaptation to new realities.

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The theory is particularly useful in explaining the obstacles highlighted in this study. Each of the five reform clusters membership size, membership category, veto power, regional representation, and working methods can be interpreted as policy domains constrained by veto players.The expansion of permanent or non- permanent seats would introduce new potential veto players and dilute the relative influence of existing ones. Under the Veto Player Theory, such an increase in veto players exponentially reduces the probability of consensus (Tsebelis, 2002). Therefore, the P5 consistently oppose membership expansion that could threaten their dominance (Bourantonis, 2005).

The veto mechanism itself epitomizes the core principle of Tsebelis's theory. Each permanent member capacity to unilaterally block reform acts as both a procedural and political veto, effectively neutralizing initiatives that challenge their authority. Historical evidence demonstrates that the permanent members have used the veto over 260 times to protect their interests or allies (Global Policy Forum, n.d.), confirming the theory's assumption that veto players act to preserve outcomes aligned with their preferences.

Underrepresentation of regions such as Africa, Latin America, and the Middle East is not merely an oversight but a strategic consequence of the veto structure. Granting new permanent seats to these regions would alter the configuration of veto players and thereby disrupt existing hierarchies. The veto system thus perpetuates global inequities in representation (Venter, 2003).

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The procedural opacity of the UNSC and its limited accountability to the General Assembly are institutional expressions of veto player dominance. As Tsebelis (2002) suggests, veto players often use procedural control to prevent agenda-setting reforms that could diminish their power. Through this lens, the UNSC reform process can be understood as a struggle between reformist coalitions seeking institutional modernization and entrenched veto players intent on maintaining the existing power equilibrium. The Veto Player Theory thus provides an analytical framework to explain why reform efforts such as the 1965 enlargement, the G4 and African Union proposals, and the Razali Plan have repeatedly failed despite broad international consensus (Vicente, 2013).

By integrating Realist Theory and Veto Player Theory, this study offers both a behavioral and structural explanation for the UNSC's reform deadlock. Realism contextualizes the motivations behind the permanent members opposition to change, while Veto Player Theory elucidates the institutional mechanisms that allow such resistance to persist. Thus, it revealed that the UNSC's challenges its limited membership, unequal representation, and decision-making inefficiency are not incidental weaknesses but deliberate outcomes of a power structure designed to favor stability over adaptability.

Combining application of Realist and Veto Player theories provides a multidimensional understanding of the UNSC's reform dilemma. Realism explains why the permanent members act to preserve their dominance, while Veto Player Theory explains how the institutional structure enables them to do so. The synthesis of these theories underscores that any meaningful reform of the UNSC must address both the political will and the institutional design that perpetuate inequality and stagnation. As long as the veto remains a defining feature of the Council, the reform process will continue to be constrained by the self-interest and power asymmetry embedded within the international system.

1.8 Literature Review

The literature review makes an attempt to review and survey past literature and related research to provide an overview of the previous research study. Thus, this chapter will be categorized into four subtopics. Firstly, the failure of the UNSC in decision making; second, the overview of the undemocratic aspect of the UNSC; thirdly, the Permanent members with veto power privileges; and finally, the hail on

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the UNSC reform and expansion. The debate and concern on UNSC reform efforts have been a subject in most scholars' academic articles and journals. Most of the literature is concerned with the UN body as an international institution which also discusses the quest for reform efforts. However, this reform process failed to make any progress since the UN General Assembly in 1994.

The question of reforming the UNSC has dominated international political discourse for decades and remains one of the most persistent and complex challenges in the field of global governance. He (2025) emphasized that the UNSC, being the main body tasked with upholding international peace and security, has frequently faced criticism for its structural imbalances, selective interventions, and inability to represent current geopolitical realities. Scholars have consistently emphasized that the obstacles to reform are not only political but deeply theoretical rooted in the international system's structural dynamics and the institutional mechanisms that preserve the existing balance of power. To understand this enduring paralysis, two theoretical frameworks provide the most comprehensive analytical tools: Realist Theory in international relations, and Veto Player Theory from institutional political analysis. The intersection of these two perspectives provides a multidimensional understanding of how power, interests, and institutional design converge to perpetuate the status quo within the UNSC.

1.8.1 The Failure of the UNSC

Despite the unique mandate and power of the UNSC in the world system, the UNSC proved ineffective. The UN Office for Coordination and Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) in 2020 purported that the UNSC failed to manage global threats and

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violence, respond to war and deal with the consequences of the rising conflicts. As revealed, the UNSC cannot respond promptly to the suffering in Syria, Yemen, South Sudan, and most recently Myanmar. Since February 2021, the coup of the military junta and seizure of power in Myanmar, the UNSC has not taken any punitive actions nor has any sanctions announced and stressing the release of democratically elected nations leaders (Suhasini, 2021). Following the cause of the Coronavirus outbreak impacting the global economy and healthcare, the World Health Organization (WHO) and the UNSC failed to curb the spread of viruses.

Subashini (2021) addressed that China was held accountable for its actions without concluding the origin of the virus outbreak as it had no access to the Chinese laboratory. Similarly, Mike Pompeo as the US Secretary of State referred this pandemic to as the "Wuhan virus. Moreover, the failure to ensure equitable supply and delay vaccine needs causes millions of deaths with the coming forth of the new variant virus. To date, no one is held responsible for the ignited outbreak.

Moreover, in the recent disputed war between Russia and Ukraine in the Middle East and North Africa, the UNSC failed to adopt a resolution and action or impose sanctions or action on the invader. This was a further critique by the UN Secretary-General, Antonio Guterres where The UNSC failed to halt and stop Russia's war on Ukraine. Quoted from the UN Secretary-General, further stress that the UNSC failed to do everything in its power to prevent and stop this war (Khalid, 2022). These indeed reflect a vast disappointment in the role and responsibility of the UNSC in maintaining global peace and security.

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These consequences are grave and have displaced more than a million people from the arising conflict surrounding the world. The failure of the UNSC to act timelessly and coherently has resulted in unresolved disputes and conflicts lasting for decades, causing a mass number of innocent civilians to die and suffer. Without an effective role of the UNSC that can forge an evident common response, all conflicts will fasten, and new disputes multiply. The UNSC should be a mechanism to prevent war and maintain global peace and security. However, in realizing the agendas, only through a comprehensive and structural reform of the Council a different approach of intergovernmental negotiations on the reform would be required.

The Realist Perspective: Power, Interests, and the Post-War Order

From a Realist standpoint, the UNSC's design and enduring structure are an embodiment of post-World War II power politics. The Realist school of thought, founded on the works of classical theorists such as Hans Morgenthau and later developed by Kenneth Waltz, holds that the international system operates in a state of anarchy where there is no overarching authority above sovereign states. In such a system, states pursue survival and power as their principal objectives. The creation of the UNSC in 1945, therefore, was not an act of idealist universalism but a pragmatic arrangement to institutionalize the hegemony of the five victorious powers while ensuring their continued participation in maintaining global order. These powers were granted permanent seats and veto privileges, not to ensure equality among nations, but to secure their compliance with the new international system and prevent a recurrence of the global conflict that the League of Nations failed to avert (Mathiason, 2008).

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Under Realism, power is both the defining currency and the ultimate guarantee of security. The literature affirms that the UNSC structure is an institutionalized hierarchy, where the distribution of power among the permanent members mirrors the geopolitical order of 1945. This arrangement ensures that major powers retain disproportionate control over international security decisions. Hosli and Dorfler (2017) argue that this asymmetrical structure is not an accidental flaw but a deliberate design that prioritizes great-power stability over democratic representation. Similarly, Krastev (2008) warned that the UN's legitimacy would continue to erode if the Security Council failed to adapt to emerging global realities, as new economic and political centers such as India, Brazil, South Africa, and others gain influence. From this Realist lens, reform becomes inherently paradoxical while the changing international system demands greater inclusivity, the dominant powers, driven by self-interest, have no incentive to dilute their authority. This inherent contradiction between the logic of power and the ideals of equity constitutes the theoretical root of the UNSC's reform crisis.

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Realism also illuminates why the UNSC's actions or inactions often reflect the interests of the permanent members rather than collective global welfare. The Council's repeated paralysis in responding to crises such as Syria, Myanmar, Ukraine, and Palestine underscores how the veto system serves as a political shield for the strategic interests of major powers. For instance, Russia's use of the veto to block resolutions on Ukraine or China's silence on Myanmar's coup reveals how state interests override the principle of global justice. Binder & Heupel (2015) and Moon (2021) highlight that such actions have progressively undermined the UNSC's credibility, contributing to what scholars now call a "legitimacy crisis" in global

governance. The Realist logic therefore remains the cornerstone for understanding why, even as the international order evolves, the Council's structure remains frozen in time.

1.8.2 The Undemocratic Nature of the UNSC System Structure.

Bourantonis (2005) is one of the scholars reviewed in the publication titled "The History and Politics of UN Security Council" dedicated to the history of the reform process. The rise of the emerging nations and member states in the UN has proven the imbalance of seats in the UNSC. The significant reform made in 1965 had the increase to ten member seats for the non-permanent category (20th Session General Assembly, 1965). However, UNSC's further reform remains a deadlock and less likely to be achieved. Robert (2002) urged for the UNSC to be rapidly reformed and expanded to ensure more equal representation, effectiveness, and legitimacy in dealing with world issues during the Head of State meeting at the UN Millennium Summit 2000. Trachsler (2010) stressed decades of efforts underway to ensure the UNSC has more representatives increasing its legitimacy and efficiency yet unachievable due to disagreements, regional rivalries, conflict of interest within states, and institutional challenges.

Hosli & Dorfler (2015) further justified that the existing structure and adapted patterns of the UNSC membership affect the prospect for change and are viewed as anachronistic and realistic in practicality. Morris (2000) arguably critiques that the Council is predominantly dominated by an elite group of big states. The possession of great power by these big states is inevitably inquisitive about the legitimacy of decision-making, integrity, and transparency of the UN UNSC. Damianou (2015),

expressed the three essential reforms urgently needed for the UNSC specifically, membership categories, veto power, and equitable representation. The UNSC must expand its membership, including developing states in adapting current realities or else at risk of legitimacy.

The composition of the UNSC is frequently deemed undemocratic. Out of 193 member states in the UN, only 15 are represented on the Council at any moment, with just five, the United States, the United Kingdom, France, Russia, and China holding permanent seats that come with veto power. Consequently, a mere 10.4% of member states possess decision-making power, while the five permanent members wield an outsized influence over international matters (Christopher et al., 2021) . These few nations are tasked with making and implementing decisions that impact the entire global community, yet the overwhelming majority of countries have minimal or no input in the process. Therefore, the likelihood of smaller or less influential states being chosen or having an impact on UNSC decisions is exceedingly low. Furthermore, the observer states that the UNSC not expose the privileged voting rights. Suppose the UNSC adopts a resolution deploying military troops to a country and intervening in dispute. In that case. a non-member or observer state has no right to object or vote against it.

The Veto Player Theory: Institutional Entrenchment and Decision-Making Paralysis

While Realism explains the motivations of states, the Veto Player Theory provides a more institutional explanation of how and why these motivations translate into

systematic gridlock. Developed by George Tsebelis (2002), the theory identifies "veto players" as actors whose agreement is essential for any policy change. The number and ideological distance among these veto players determine the level of policy stability or rigidity in a political system. When applied to the UNSC, this theory becomes particularly powerful, the five permanent members represent the institutional veto players whose consent is indispensable for any amendment to the UN Charter or adoption of substantive resolutions. Because these actors possess divergent geopolitical interests and often conflicting ideological orientations, the probability of consensus on reform is exceedingly low. The system thus tends toward inertia what Tsebelis calls a "locked-in status quo."

Ganghof (2003) and Warntjen (2010) emphasize that in multi-veto-player systems, even marginal disagreement can obstruct significant policy transformation. The UNSC epitomizes this dynamic, where a single negative vote from any permanent member nullifies collective consensus. This structural feature transforms the Council from a collective decision-making body into a forum of elite guardianship. Reform, therefore, becomes institutionally improbable, not simply politically contested. The institutional design amplifies Realist interests, whereby each permanent member, acting as a rational veto player, seeks to preserve its privileged position and prevent redistributive change. The veto, therefore, functions as both a legal instrument of power and a psychological mechanism of control, allowing the P5 to maintain dominance through the implicit threat of its use even when it is not exercised.

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Empirical evidence reinforces this theoretical claim. According to data from the Global Policy Forum, over 260 vetoes have been cast since 1946, with the United States and Russia accounting for the majority. Nahory (2004) observes that the veto is no longer used as a tool of last resort but as a routine mechanism to advance national interests and shield allies from international accountability. The United States' repeated vetoes against resolutions critical of Israel and Russia's vetoes regarding its military interventions are emblematic of this trend. Amnesty International (2015) further argues that the misuse of veto power in situations of humanitarian crisis, including genocide and war crimes, has transformed the UNSC from a guardian of peace into a gatekeeper of impunity. Thus, the veto is both a symptom and a cause of the Council's paralysis: it sustains the illusion of collective governance while ensuring the perpetuation of unilateral dominance.

1.8.3 The UNSC reflects the global power structure.

Ifkins (2023) addressed that The United States (US), the United Kingdom (UK), Russia, China, and France are the majority decision-makers among themselves. Moon (2021) stressed that the existing structure of the UNSC is jeopardizing the credibility that has suffered in the council because of this unchecked power. Arguably. the inability to modernize the UNSC membership has been the most damaging of all the inconsistencies and frustrations in the UN system. The elected ten (10) UN member states to the UNSC are unequal to the five permanent members. In a recent highlight of the America Council on Foreign Relation (CFR), The UNSC (2020) accentuate that any council position may be vetoed by permanent members for any reason and make many decisions among themselves.

Significantly, the unchecked imbalance of power has eroded the UNSC credibility to the point where rogue nations routinely dismiss its criticism as illegitimate. It is terrible when a state vetoes a resolution for domestic or strategic reasons rather than for its impact on international peace and security. Carswell (2013) states that some countries have been given carte blanche to violate international law, while dictators with a permanent members ally have been allowed to violate human rights. Following, the Permanent members' structure represents the global power structure as it existed in 1945 (during the world war), not as it exists today. Venter (2003) in his write up asserted that several nations have pointed out that the Latin American, Arab, and African nations continue to lack a permanent seat, reducing their contribution to the organization. It is also unlikely and idealistic for it to be changed.

The entire permanent members of the UNSC must agree on the membership size expansion. If so, which countries should be included? The big five nations will always veto any proposal that weakens their power and position. Meanwhile, the remaining nations will have to decide which nations will represent their regions. Securing deals among the permanent members and other UN members remains a legacy. Despite often favorable criticism towards UNSC, the UN Secretary-General held no authority or power confer by the UN Charter on this arising disputed matter. Unless the UNSC reforms and expands its membership to include developing countries, it is at risk of losing legitimacy. Singapore's Foreign Affairs Minister, Vivian Balakrishnan (2024), emphasized that all permanent members of the UNSC must prioritize the overarching objective of ensuring international peace and security. She advocated for limitations on the exercise of veto powers by these members, highlighting the necessity for reform within the council to effectively address the challenges posed by a world in a

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"highly perilous phase. Balakrishnan stated, "All permanent members should focus on the broader goal of delivering international peace and security." (Jayaram, 2024). Over the past decades, the center of political and economic power has shifted dramatically. Thus, the UNSC system structure shall reflect more democracy and represent the rapidly globalizing contemporary world.

1.8.4 The UNSC Reform and Expansion.

In advocating the overhaul of the UN, Galtung (2000) asserted that the enjoyment status of the veto privileges among the permanent members has become a simmering issue within the UN system. Many global and regional power players without such privileges have been suppressing changes and reform arguing that the current membership has never been realistic and is decreasing over time (Rourke, 2002). On the other hand, less powerful countries jumped on the bandwagon. To illustrate that, the President of Sri Lanka called for the expansion of the UNSC to create more representation and responsibility for the general membership of the UN (Afoaku & Ukaga, 2001). Moreover, the President of Zambia stressed that "...the UNSC can no longer be retained like the sanctuary of hollies with only the original members acting as high priests, deciding on issues for the rest of the world who cannot be admitted" (Umeh, L. C. et al., 2018).

In Larger Freedom: Development, Security and Human Rights for All, Kofi Annan, the UN Secretary-General claims that no overhaul of the UN would be complete without reform of the UNSC (Schoeman & Muller, 2009). The dissatisfaction with the UNSC's existing system structure has created various efforts and reform plans. Provision to Article 108, any changes in the UNSC membership require the UN

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Charter _to be amend, where it needs the consent of veto-wielding permanent members. Hence, concerning the permanent members veto, any formal changes are considered less likely to occur. Odunuga (2018) asserted that for calling for reform, the proposals mainly advocated the addition of member seats and the right to veto in the UNSC.

Thus, the objective of the UNSC expansion was to enhance regional representation (Lund, 2010). Despite this, even an increase in the permanent seats in the UNSC still may not result in balanced geographical representation. Questioning the possession of veto powers on the new permanent members may possibly further abuse or purposeful use suppressing other members of the UNSC. Thus, it would be a concern of the UNSC reform process. The subject of veto power is discussed in academic articles. Most of the literature describes the suggestion and outcome of the reformation efforts. Certainly, the UNSC has also been evaluated and called for reform in several of the UN documentation apart from the academic analysis such as the Kofi Annan report, former UN Secretary-General, and Open Ending Group of the UNSC reform (Hole Wirkola, 2010). The query on the UNSC remains the most central subject of these reports.

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UNSC Reform Efforts and Structural Obstacles

The literature on UNSC reform proposals including the Group of Four (G4), African Union (AU), and United for Consensus (UfC) models provides further insight into the institutional entrenchment of the veto system. Bourantonis (2004) and Vicente (2013) detail how each initiative aimed to expand representation or modify veto

privileges, yet all ultimately failed due to the resistance of the permanent members. The Razali Plan 1997 sought to add five new permanent members without granting them veto power, while Kofi Annan's High-Level Panel 2004 proposed two alternative models of enlargement. Both proposals recognized the inequity of the existing system but underestimated the degree to which the P5 would oppose even symbolic dilution of their authority. As Verhoeven (2005) notes, reform in the UNSC requires the consent of the very actors whose privileges are at stake a structural paradox that guarantees stagnation. In this sense, the UNSC reform discourse embodies what Tsebelis describes as a "veto-saturated equilibrium" a state in which institutional change is theoretically conceivable but practically unattainable.

The African Union's adds another dimension to this debate, highlighting the North-South divide in the reform discourse. While the G4 nations (Germany, Japan, India, and Brazil) argue for inclusion based on their economic and political contributions, African and Latin American countries emphasize historical marginalization and equitable representation. Yet, the literature shows that these competing visions often fragment reform coalitions, making consensus among non- permanent members as elusive as agreement among the P5. Chen et al. (2022) and Kalantar (2019) argue that such fragmentation further strengthens the institutional dominance of the P5, who exploit divisions among reform-seeking states to sustain the status quo.

1.8.5 The Abuse of Veto.

In reflecting on the contemporary geopolitical realities, many efforts have been made to amend and change the structure of the UNSC over the years yet remains a stumbling block acting as a barrier and challenge for the reform process. The

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Permanent members are ready to quash any attempt to agitate their interest and amendment of the UN Charter (Article 108).

Given that a number of non-permanent members and member states of the UN had expressed dissatisfaction with the veto and could jeopardize the role and effectiveness of the UNSC. Nahory (2004) highlights that although the permanent members claim to apply the veto as a last resort, evidence has proven that the veto is used continuously, enabling them to control the work and functions of the UNSC. The collected data from the Global Policy Forum reflected that the UNSC cast 261 vetoes since1946 to the present (Global Policy Forum, n.d.). Consequently, the vetoed draft resolution has been rejected. Russia is championing the most cast of vetoes, followed by the United States, United Kingdom (UK), France, and the least, China. Examining the application of veto, the permanent members have often used their veto extensively in pursuing their national interest and purposes and the furtherance of their foreign policy.

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In the process of passing a resolution, the UNSC requires open ballot voting with nine (9) affirmative votes on the decision as underlined under Article 27(3) UN Charter. It reflects that resolutions are allowed to pass before the presence of nine (9) concurring votes and abstentions by one or more permanent members. If any of the permanent members cast a negative vote on the resolutions, it constituted a veto, and the resolutions failed to be adopted (Sievers & Daws, 2014). Non- permanent members of the UNSC and many member states do not like veto power because permanent members often use it to protect their allies and friends, who both have close economic and diplomatic ties, from criticism or sanctions (Sinha, 2019). In other

words, any state that affirm their strong position or relationship with any of the permanent members can get rid of recurrent unlawful incursion towards other states and violation of human rights.

Concerning the existence of vetoes among the permanent members, it is unjust and in a state of anachronism. Ziabari (2011) argues that the creation of the UN was to support and represent the member states equally in dealing with world affairs. However, some states are given more equal opportunities than others. The veto is deemed to have the privilege and a form of discrimination responding to an unfair and inequitable law enabling the authoritative minority powerful states to dictate and determine indispensable and subjugated majority (Ziabari, 2011).

Moreover, the veto power is also viewed as the primary threat to human rights calling for a revolution to relinquish the permanent member's veto on the genocide issue. The permanent members extend their privileges to promote their political self-interest rather than protect the civilian's interest. Following this, Amnesty International called for a revolutionary solution that sought the permanent members to relinquish the veto on the genocide issues (Amnesty, 2015). Rourke (1995) emphasizes that the existence of a veto in practice is symbolic of big power status. The amendment procedure is less likely to continue without major revision despite critics of the existing structure being unrepresentative countries undermining the UNSC's legitimacy.

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Synthesis and Theoretical Integration

When viewed together, the Realist and Veto Player theories offer complementary insights. Realism explains the power logic behind the veto the self- preservation instinct of the great powers while the Veto Player framework explains the mechanics of obstruction, showing how institutional rules transform individual interests into collective paralysis. In effect, the UNSC operates as a dual-layered power system: the Realist layer, which is defined by the distribution of material capabilities and strategic interests, and the institutional layer, which is governed by procedural veto constraints. This theoretical synthesis suggests that the UNSC's reform failure is not accidental or temporary but a structurally reproduced condition embedded in both international anarchy and institutional design.

1.8.6 The Reform Proposals

The demand to expand the UNSC was raised shortly after its formation. These demands were only met in 1965. The UN Charter was amended, and six new members were added to the UN UNSC's non-permanent membership (Bourantonis, 2004). Since then, attempts to expand the UNSC have failed, specifically in the permanent category due to the opposition of the permanent members.

The UNSC was mostly dormant during the cold war. However, there was a renewed push for expansion and enhance admission of new members, particularly in the permanent category aftermath of the cold war. Since the cold war ended, significant efforts have been made to increase the UNSC's membership of permanent seat and non-permanent seat (Dharmani, 2021). A resolution 37/62 was tabled and passed in

UNGA in 1992 titled "The Question of Equitable Representation on and Increase in the Membership of the UNSC," which requested written comments from member states "on a possible review of the UNSC's membership" (Question of equitable representation on and increase in the membership of the UNSC, G.A. res. 47/62, 47 U.N. GAOR Supp. (No. 49) at 25, U.N. Doc. A/47/490, 1992). Similarly, the United Nations Secretary-General (UNSG) convened a High-Level Panel (HLP) on "Threats, Challenges, and Change" to propose UNSC reform in September 2003.

Following, a panel report submitted "A More Secure World: Our Shared Responsibility." in December 2004 proposing enlargement models; Model A and Model B. Both models advocated for permanent and non-permanent expansion. On the other hand, Model B introduced a new semi-permanent membership category. The High-Level Panel (HLP) recommendation on "Threat, Challenges and Change" prompted immediate response and swift actions from countries and regional groups for themselves demanding a seat in the UNSC. The Group of Four (G4), the African Union (AU), and the United for Consensus (UC) emerged as the main groups during the process (Sarwar, 2011).

1.8.6.1 The Group of Four (G4)

The G4 comprises Germany, Brazil, India, and Japan have proposed the UNSC expansion both permanent seat and non-permanent seat. The members of G4 recommended an increase of six (6) permanent and four (4) nonpermanent members in a joint resolution presented to the UNGA (A/59/L64), increasing membership from 15 to 25 in July 2005 (Vicente, 2013,). Their demand for additional veto power is ambiguous. The G4 model has suggested two seats for African nations and four

permanent seats for G4 nations. The G4 contends that their capacity is enabled to take on the global leadership role. Therefore, they should be admitted as permanent members of the UNSC.

Germany ranks third in terms of financial support towards the UN budget (Russett et al, 1996). Since World War Il, it has had a sizable economy and has experienced relative peace. Despite this, Germany's application for a seat on the council is opposed by Italy and Spain (Bourantonis, 2004). Italy worries that Germany's candidacy would increase the worldwide political and diplomatic influence that may affect the balance of power on the European continent if it gains a permanent seat at the UNSC. Italy suggested having the European Union (EU) a permanent seat rather than just one for a particular nation (Hurd, 2008).

Whereas India claims to be the world's largest democracy. India pleads that its large size, population, and troop contribution to United Nations Peacekeeping Operations (PKO) merit a larger role on the global stage (Jiang, 2011). The US, UK, and France have backed India's quest in UNSC expansion for permanent member seat. Even so, the bid was opposed by China and Pakistan. Sarwar (2011) alleged that Pakistan and India shared border and water disputes. Apart from other issues, Kashmir is a major point of contention between the two regional rivals, and it is also on the UN agenda (Jiang, 2011). These two (2) nations have fought over the Kashmir conflict. Pakistan disagrees with India's admission in UNSC as permanent member. Significantly, it affects the power imbalance in the region favoring India.

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Japan, one of the world's leading economies, is the UN's second-largest financial contributor. The US supports Japan becoming a permanent member of the UNSC. However, it was opposed by China and South Korea. This was due to Japan and China sharing a history of animosity. China holds Japan responsible for its involvement in World War Il and for failing to offer a sufficient for the excesses of its soldiers in China and other East Asian nations (Russett et al, 1996). China also sees Japan in the UNSC participation as giving the US a second veto.

Besides, Brazil is Latin America's burgeoning economic and military force. There are no seats currently for Latin America "at the UNSC. Therefore, Brazil considered itself to be the best option for admission. Yet, Brazilian efforts to become a permanent member are opposed by Colombia, Mexico, and Argentina. These countries argue that the Brazilian veto is particularly untrustworthy, and there are concerns that it would lead the enhancement in South America competitiveness on Brazil's permanent membership (Jiang, 2011).

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1.8.6.2 Africa Union

Consequently, African Union proposed expanding the number of Council members to 26 by adding six (6) permanent seats and five (5) non-permanent seats (Vicente, 2013). African Union seeks two (2) permanent seats and two (2) non- permanent seats. The group alleged that Africa is underrepresented in the council's existing organizational structure (Murithi & Ndinga, 2005). In the meantime, the AU requests veto power along with the same privileges and authority as the present permanent members. However, it is interesting to note that the AU has not yet decided who will fill its permanent seats on the expanded UNSC.

1.8.6.3 The United for Consensus Group

Prominent countries such as Canada, Mexico, Italy, Pakistan, Argentina, and South Korea are members of the United for Consensus (UC) group. These groups are particularly regional rivals to the G4. UC opposes the UNSC enlargement in the permanent category. The UC group contends that adding more permanent members to the UNSC is unfair and discriminatory and that there is no such necessity for the enlargement. The group emphasizes opposing any form of discrimination and equality to all member states. The group claims that the prolonged category expansion will divide the nations apart instead of uniting them. Also, the group claims that the geographical representation argument is flawed. A country may be from a specific region, but it may not represent all the countries in that region. To sum up, the group proposed ten new non-permanent members, bringing the total membership from 15 to 25 (Vicente, 2013, 2011).

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1.8.6.4 The UN HLP Proposal

The UN HLP recommended two models of enlargement, Model A and Model B (Verhoeven, 2005). Model A proposes expanding UNSCs permanent and non-permanent membership. The panel proposed raising the membership from the current 15 to 24 by adding six permanent and three non-permanent members (Verhoeven, 2005). Whereas Model B only proposed an increase in a nonpermanent category (Verhoeven, 2005). The model suggests adding eight (8) nonpermanent renewable seats and one (l) non-permanent, nonrenewable seat.

The newly proposed non-permanent seat would have a four-year term compared to the current two-year term, and it would also allow for immediate reelection. In contrast, it is unjustified whether the limit of reelections in a country would be allowed or whether it would be an unlimited provision of reelection or there may be a limitation.

1.8.6.5 The Razali Reform Plan

The Reform Plan's Open-ended Working Group highlighted that the UNSC should not be seen as an endless talk place as it would reflect the bad reputation of the United Nations. Former UN General Assembly (UNGA) President Razali Ismail (1997) stated that the main outlined proposed resolution calling for the addition of five (5) Permanent members. Two are from industrialized nations and three from developing countries from Africa, Asia, the Caribbean and Latin America following four (4) non-permanent members.

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Besides, the resolution motion called for the identification of a specific state's candidature (Wirkola, 2010). As industrialized countries and nations campaigning for permanent seats in the UNSC, Germany, and Japan were in the Razali Reform Plan. The suggestion on the enlargement of the permanent members would not entitle the privileges of veto power but encouraged adoption and limit its use for the cause of actions in the UN Charter under Chapter VII. However, this resolution would need to put a vote of two-thirds (2/3) majority support from UN Assembly members who present and vote according to the UN Charter (Article 18). The plan was in favor of most Western powers. The Western powers regarded it as a realistic plan successfully compromising conflict points of view (Penketh, 1997).

Even so, the Razali Plan ignited the outright rejection of most developing states from the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) member states as a legally flawed deviation from Article 108 (Wirkola, 2010). As aforesaid, Razali's plan calls for three levels of UNSC enlargement. The final resolution in this proposal would need 2/3 of the majority support of the member states according to Article 108, whereas the previous resolutions suffice with present members and voting with a 2/3 majority. The UN Charter is not simply regulating before the provision of Article 108 is adhered to. The decision for UNSC enlargement and fundamental issues on the structure and functioning of the UN is not necessarily applicable and implying with the Charter amendment on the earlier first two resolutions of the Razali Plan. The experience in the 1963 enlargement precedes from 11 to 15 members by increasing the additional four non-permanent members. These are illegitimate to assess or as a tool used to testify the Razali Plan because, during the time, the UN Assembly voted on a single resolution under Article 108. Also, the constitutional requirements for Charter amendments were adhered to strictly. (Nadin, 2016). In reflecting on multi-polarization contemporary world leadership, the UNSC acts as the essential platform for maintaining global peace and security as well as promoting international cooperation (Kalantar, 2019). Institutional structure reform and core decision-making procedures in the UNSC reflect to be one of the most challenging efforts (Chen et al, 2022). The UNSC is the only international body that can authorize the use of force in promoting peace and security. The composition of the council consisted of fifteen (15) members, five (5) permanent members and ten (10) non-permanent members. These existing permanent members in the UNSC are known to those victorious countries in the aftermath of World War 2 and are the sole decision makers on behalf of all the UN member states.

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Since its inception, the UNSC has asserted a greater intervention and role in dealing with global conflicts, nuclear weapon, terrorism, and war (Hosli & Dorfler, 2017). The UNSC has been actively engaging in peacekeeping missions with increasingly robust mandates, regimes sanctions and authorized military interventions. However, war and violent conflict persisted. Binder & Heupel (2015) had been doubting the UNSC's legitimacy and effectiveness in the past decades. According to Sengupta (2017), the call for UNSC reform and expansion ceased to be heard. Essentially, the permanent members cast a veto on the basis any attempt tends to jeopardise their interests and allies. The veto privileges if the permanent members provide them many advantages while the rotating two-year term for non- permanent members is a far-reaching privilege.

The UNSC must be reformed. Chen (2022) asserted that the UNSC needs a power shifting and sustain the credibility of global power distribution. The UN member states are in favor of the reform efforts by increasing the membership size and equal regional representation. Some countries are ambitious to accede to the UNSC due to its bigger population size and military strength, financial contribution to peacekeeping missions and economic power. Despite several tabled reform proposals, it has not garnered any support required. The literature on the UNSC reform is considered descriptive in a way that it defines the outcomes of the reform effort. Nonetheless, several UN publications, such the Razali Plan, Open-Ended Working Group and Kofi Annan's report have examined and supported the UNSC's reform initiative. The query on the UNSC enlargement remains to be the central subject of these reports. The researcher intends to contribute to the literature on UNSC reform by studying the outcomes of the reform process using the veto theory. The veto theory

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can help in understanding how the veto power of the five permanent members influences the reform process. It can provide insights into how the permanent members interests and positions shape the discussions on enlargement and other aspects of reform. It can help in predicting which reform proposals in near future which are more likely to be accepted or rejected based on the veto dynamics. This study may offer an analysing power relation within the UNSC. It can elucidate how the distribution of power among members affects decision-making processes and the ability to achieve consensus on reform. The understanding on this theory has not been applied much in the previous study; it uses to analyze the course of events and determine the possible outcome under the theory.

Gaps, Weaknesses, and Future Directions

Despite the substantial body of literature on UNSC reform, several critical gaps remain. First, existing studies are overly descriptive, focusing on the chronology of reform proposals rather than engaging in deep theoretical integration. Many analyses stop at recounting diplomatic efforts and do not interrogate the interplay between power politics and institutional rules that perpetuate inequality. Second, the application of Veto Player Theory to international institutions remains limited. While extensively used in comparative politics and domestic policy- making, its utility in explaining global institutional rigidity has been underexplored. This research seeks to fill that gap by applying the theory to the UNSC's reform stalemate, thereby broadening its explanatory scope. Third, the voices of the Global South remain marginalized in mainstream literature. African, Asian, and Latin American perspectives on representation and justice are often overshadowed by Eurocentric or

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Western-centric analyses, which focus disproportionately on the internal politics of the P5. Fourth, there is a lack of predictive analysis in the current scholarship. While many studies explain why reforms have failed, few attempt to theorize the conditions under which reform might succeed for instance, through shifts in the global distribution of power, coalition-building among middle powers, or normative transformation within the UN itself. Finally, little attention has been given to the interaction between global legitimacy and institutional design, particularly how prolonged inequality in the UNSC undermines the UN's credibility in addressing emerging threats such as cyberwarfare, pandemics, and climate security.

1.9 Conclusion

In sum, the literature reveals that the UNSC's paralysis is not a product of bureaucratic inertia but the inevitable outcome of a system built to preserve power hierarchies. The Realist framework clarifies why the great powers created and continue to defend a structure that privileges them, while the Veto Player Theory demonstrates how institutional rules operationalize that dominance into enduring immobility. The convergence of these theoretical perspectives underscores that meaningful reform cannot occur without confronting the dual realities of power and procedure. Yet, the scholarly discourse remains constrained by its descriptive nature, lack of theoretical synthesis, and limited engagement with non-Western perspectives. This study therefore seeks to contribute a more integrated and analytical understanding of the UNSC's reform impasse by bridging these theoretical traditions and situating the veto within the broader dynamics of power, legitimacy, and institutional survival in the 21st-century international order.

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Following the study delves into the study on background and evolution of the UNSC, examining the reform proposal and assessing the current size and composition of the Council, with a focus on its permanent membership structure and regional representation. The chapter also aims to assess the strengths and weaknesses of reform proposals and their impact on regional peace and stability.

1.10 Chapter Organizations

Chapter 1

This chapter lays the groundwork for the study by presenting an overview of the background, problem statement, and research objectives. It details the theoretical framework and the significance of the study, explaining the methodology used for data collection and analysis. The chapter sets the stage with a literature review on the formation and development of the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) and discusses the role of the veto power within the context of veto player theory, highlighting its impact on the reform process.

Chapter 2

This chapter examines the current state of UNSC reform proposals, focusing on the Council's existing size, membership structure, and regional representation. It evaluates the strengths and weaknesses of various reform proposals and their implications for regional peace and stability. The chapter aims to provide a detailed analysis of the proposals and their potential impact on the UNSC's effectiveness.

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Chapter 3

This chapter explores the factors necessitating reform of the UNSC. Key aspects include the UNSC's failure to effectively promote global peace and security, issues related to its membership size, the undemocratic nature of its structure, and the implications of the veto power held by permanent members. This analysis helps to understand the root causes behind the call for reform.

Chapter 4

This chapter delves into the concept of veto player theory and its relevance to the UNSC reform process. It examines how the veto power of permanent members serves as a significant barrier to reform efforts, providing a deeper insight into the dynamics that hinder progress and maintain existing power structures within the UNSC.

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Chapter 5

The final chapter summarizes the study's findings and provides recommendations based on the comprehensive research conducted. It reflects on the historical and theoretical insights gained, evaluates the effectiveness of current reform proposals, and suggests ways to enhance the UNSC's functionality and credibility to better address contemporary global challenges and ensure fair representation.

This study offers an in-depth examination of the UNSC by providing a historical overview and theoretical framework, particularly emphasizing the impact of veto power, which has proven to be a major impediment to reform efforts. The analysis then assesses various reform proposals, evaluating their potential effects onthe

UNSC's composition, membership, and regional representation. The key findings indicate a pressing need for reform, stemming from the UNSC's shortcomings in fostering global peace and its undemocratic framework, which is further complicated by the veto rights of its permanent members. The application of veto player theory illustrates how these privileges obstruct progress and maintain the existing power dynamics. The research highlights the necessity of tackling these challenges and recommendation is provided to improve the UNSC's effectiveness and credibility whilst better reflect contemporary global demands and ensure fair representation.

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CHAPTER TWO

BACKGROUND AND DEVELOPMENT OF UNSC AND REFORM PROPOSALS

2.0 Introduction

This chapter aims to examine the history and evolution of the UNSC, evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of reform proposals, and assess their impact on regional peace and stability. Additionally, it will assess the current size and composition of the UNSC, with a focus on its permanent membership structure and regional representation.

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The UNSC is one of the six main organs of the UN, responsible for maintaining international peace and security, as outlined in Article 24 of the UN Charter. This article emphasizes the Council's crucial role in addressing threats to peace and coordinating collective action to prevent conflict. When the UN was established in the aftermath of World War Il, the UNSC was devised to empower the global body to effectively address and mitigate threats to international peace and security. The founders entrusted the UNSC with the primary responsibility for maintaining global peace and security. As a key decision-making body, the Council's was crafted to be accountable, representative, and capable of taking effective and prompt actions.

2.1 Background of UNSC

The five (5) victorious countries at the conclusion of World War Il were accorded special privileges as permanent members of the UNSC. These members possess the authority to veto any decision with which they disagree. In exchange for these privileges, the permanent members were tasked with a greater role in advancing global security and contributing significantly to the organization (UN 2011 art 244). The UNSC is organized to operate continuously, with a representative from each member state present at all times at UN Headquarters. The presidency of the UNSC rotates monthly based on the English alphabetical listing of its member states (United nations, n.d). The UNSC comprises fifteen (15) members: the permanent five (5) and ten (10) elective members. The elective members are chosen by the General Assembly (GA) for a two (2) year term, with five (5) seats up for election each year. The distribution of the ten elective seats is allocated among different regions to ensure a balanced representation in the UNSC.

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The setup of the UNSC highlights a system aimed at fostering global security and cooperation, with mechanisms in place to ensure a diverse representation of member states and the ability to respond effectively to international crises and conflicts.

Table 2.1:UNSC Distribution of Seats

Region	Permanent Seats	Non-Permanent Seats	Total
Eastern Europe	1	1	2
Western Europe & Others	2	2	4
North America	1	0	1
Latin America	0	2	2
Asia	1	2	3
Africa	0	3	3

In the UNSC, the voting process is governed by distinctions between procedural and substantive matters, influencing the decision-making procedures. Procedural matters, such as rulings of the President, emergency special sessions of the General Assembly, order of items, and invitations to participate in discussions, require a majority vote of at least nine (9) members for decisions to be made (Bailey, 1988). These decisions can be approved by a simple majority vote, with no veto power held by the permanent members. For non-procedural matters, a majority of at least nine (9) members is also needed for decisions. Crucially, this majority must include the consent or abstention of all five (5) permanent members in addition to other members (Baehr & Gordenker, 1984). In essence, the permanent members have veto power in substantive matters, ensuring their agreement or abstention is essential for decision-making.

Proposed reforms to the UNSC, by definition, fall under substantive matters and require the approval or abstention of all five (5) permanent members along with other member states. The voting rules within the UNSC reflect a delicate balance between procedural and substantive matters, emphasizing the pivotal role of the permanent members in key decision-making processes, particularly regarding substantial global issues and reforms.

In summary, the UNSC consists of five permanent members whereby these nations were key allied powers during World War Il and possess considerable military and economic clout. Each of these members holds veto power over significant resolutions, meaning that a single dissenting vote from any of them can prevent a resolution from being adopted. Whereas ten non-permanent members who serve two-year terms are elected by the General Assembly with a focus on regional representation; The UNSC has the authority to pass resolutions that member states are required to implement, which may include actions such as sanctions, arms embargoes, or military interventions. The Council is also responsible for establishing and managing peacekeeping operations to address or resolve conflicts, which are conducted by member states under the UN banner. Furthermore, the UNSC can refer cases to international courts, including the International Criminal Coun (ICC), for the prosecution of war crimes or crimes against humanity. For most significant issues, the UNSC requires a minimum of nine votes in favor from the fifteen members, including the agreement of all five permanent members or the absence of any veto. In contrast, for procedural matters, only nine votes are necessary, and veto power does not apply.

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2.2 The Effort Made to Reform UNSC

The pursuit of reforming the UNSC has been a long-standing endeavor, demonstrating a widespread agreement on the necessity for modifications to better align with current global realities and enhance the Council's effectiveness and representativeness. Bourantonis (2005) emphasizes that the UNSC, recognized as the most powerful body within the United Nations, encounters ongoing challenges that raise concerns about its effectiveness and representativeness in today's global environment. The High-Level Panel's report highlights key issues that undermine the UNSC's legitimacy and functionality:

2.2.1 Lack of Adjustment to Modern World Dynamics

Despite of its pivotal role, the UNSC has struggled to adapt to the evolving global environment. The UNSC's structure and decision-making processes have not kept pace with modem geopolitical shifts and emerging global challenges. The global landscape has undergone significant transformations since the establishment of the UN, witnessing a fourfold increase in its membership alongside the proliferation of terrorism, violent extremism, and asymmetric warfare.

The existence structure of the UNSC system is deemed as unethical and unjust, as it continues to uphold the legacy of colonialism and fails to adapt to the emergence of new influential nations and changing global dynamics in diplomacy and governance. The Permanent Representative of India to the United Nations, Ambassador Kamboj, expressed during a Roundtable on Security Council Reform held at the UN headquarters by the Permanent Missions of Brazil, India, South Africa, and Saint Vincent and the Grenadines that the current configuration of the UNSC is outdated

and fails to mirror the current interconnected and multi-polar global landscape. Ambassador Kamboj highlighted that the Council's structure, established in a bygone era, does not acknowledge the emergence of new influential nations, the evolving geopolitical environment, and the desires of countries seeking a more just and balanced international system (Mohanty, 2023).

The need for reforming the UNSC is needed due to unprecedented global challenges that surpass national boundaries. Issues such as climate change, terrorism, pandemics, and humanitarian crises necessitate collaborative actions and shared accountabilities. By restructuring the UNSC, it will be possible to consolidate resources, expertise, and viewpoints from a broader spectrum of nations, empowering global community to address these challenges with increased efficiency and solidarity. Emphasizing that the time for UNSC reform is imminent, it is crucial for member states to seize the opportunity to rejuvenate and fortify the UN by enhancing its inclusivity, representation, and responsiveness to the needs and aspirations of all countries. Given these circumstances, prioritizing UNSC reform is essential to guarantee that the body retains its effectiveness in upholding the objectives, values, and commitments outlined in the UN Charter.

2.2.2 The Legitimacy Concerns

The legitimacy UNSC poses a considerable issue for many member states and international analysts. Central to these concerns are matters related to the authority to make decisions, and the overall effectiveness of the Council. The UNSC's legitimacy has come into question multiple times, raising doubts about its ability to effectively represent the diverse world of today. Critics often point out the undemocratic nature

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and effectiveness of the UNSC dealing with global crisis, where a select few nations have significant influence and veto power over crucial decisions.

The veto authority possessed by the permanent members enables any single member to obstruct significant resolutions, potentially hindering progress on essential matters. This authority is often perceived as undemocratic and inconsistent with the concept of majority rule, particularly when the interests of the permanent members conflict with the wider international agreement. The exercise of veto power by the permanent members may occasionally safeguard their own interests or those of their allies, even in situations where there is widespread international backing for intervention. Such actions can weaken the UNSC capacity to respond effectively to pressing global challenges (Anis, 2022).

For instance, Carroll (2019) highlights the failure of UNSC to formulate an effective solution to the Rohingya crisis underscores numerous challenges and intricacies inherent in international diplomacy and conflict resolution. The existing Rohingya crisis involving significant human rights abuses, including ethnic cleansing, large-scale killings, and the extensive displacement of Rohingya Muslims (Lee, 2021). Tackling this intricate humanitarian issue necessitates a unified international response and 4 substantial resources. The crisis is fundamentally linked to deep-seated ethnic and religious conflicts between the Rohingya minority and the Myanmar government, alongside wider concerns of nationalism and identity within the country.

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The UNSC unable to devise an efficient resolution to the Rohingya crisis, despite the widespread global backing for the Rohingyas. In a webinar titled "Myanmar's Relations with Russia and China: Convenience or Co-optation" dated 16 April 2024, Dr. Ian Storey, a Senior Fellow at Yusof Ishak Institute (SEAS) articulated that the permanent members of the UNSC display a variety of geopolitical interests that frequently clash in the context of the ongoing crisis. Notably, both China and Russia have demonstrated reluctance to support strong measures against Myanmar, a stance that is partially shaped by their strategic interests and regional alliances. In this context, Myanmar has not encountered any legal repercussions for the genocide perpetrated against the Rohingya people. The UNSC reluctance to take action has empowered the Myanmar military to perpetrate further crimes (Storey, 2024). Furthermore, despite Israel's aggression in the Palestinian territories and the ongoing violation of human rights in recent years, the UNSC remains unable to reach a unanimous decision to take effective measures.

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Provision to the UN Charter Article 39 explicitly prohibits aggressive war, the US violated the UN Charter by invading Iraq in 2003 and overthrowing Saddam's regime without the UN's approval (Askill & Borger, 2004). Furthermore, the US and UK conducted airstrikes in Libya in 2011, claiming "interference in the protection of human rights" as a pretext (Mazumder, 2022). This led to the overthrow of Gaddafi and the subsequent failure of Libya as a state. Similar concerns have been raised in Syria, and Russia's recent invasion of Ukraine went unchecked by the UN, these examples highlight how a country's breach of UN policy tends to increase with its power.

2.2.3 Inequal of Representation

There have been discussions regarding the expansion of permanent members to more accurately represent contemporary global power dynamics. Recommendations frequently suggest the inclusion of nations such as Germany, Japan, Brazil, and India as new permanent members, potentially with or without the ability to exercise veto power.

Efforts to enhance representation within the UNSC have seen some degree of success. In 1963, the number of member states rose from 11 to 15, increasing non-permanent seats from 6 to 10, while also establishing specific seat allocations for each region during that session (Danyal and Dunton, 2023). The current allocation includes 5 seats for African and Asian nations, 1 for Eastern European nations, 2 for Latin American nations, and 2 for Western European nations. This distribution, however, limits equitable representation, as the two most populous continents share only five seats. In contrast, European nations, which represent a smaller population, occupy three seats across lesser regions. Despite the reforms introduced in 1963, dissatisfaction remained, with more powerful states voicing concerns regarding the membership of certain countries in the UNSC.

Additionally, there is a prevalent proposal to increase the number of non- permanent members, which could entail either augmenting the total number of seats or modifying the regional allocation to promote wider representation. The UNSC's composition and decision-making mechanisms have been criticized for failing to adequately represent the voices and perspectives of a changing and diverse world. The calls for reforms to make the UNSC more inclusive, transparent, and reflective of

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contemporary global realities have been persistent (Echochu, 2024). Europe, with only 6.6% of the world's total land area, holds a disproportionate amount of power in the UNSC with 60% representation. In contrast, Africa and South America, which collectively make up 32% of the world's land area, do not have any permanent members in the UNSC. Asia, with over 60% of the world's population, has a representation rate of less than 20% in the UNSC (Lai & Lefler, 2009). This lack of geographic and regional diversity in the UNSC is a significant issue, considering the importance of such diversity in the UN forums.

Reforming the UNSC to increase the number of permanent members would be a challenging task, as it would require the agreement of 2/3 of the General Assembly and all current UNSC members. However, given the current global landscape, it is imperative to either reform the UNSC or expand the number of permanent members to better reflect the realities of the world today. While the UNSC remains a central pillar of international peace and security, it faces significant challenges in maintaining legitimacy and relevance in a rapidly changing world. Addressing criticisms of undemocratic practices and enhancing representation are crucial steps towards ensuring the UNSC's effectiveness in addressing complex global issues and promoting peace and stability worldwide (Fassbender, 2004).

2.3 The UNSC In the Early Years

The UNSC convened for its inaugural session on 17 January 1946, comprising eleven members at that time, which included both permanent and six non-permanent members chosen regionally for two-year terms. The increase of UN membership during the 1950s and 1960s, there were increasing demands for the UNSC to be

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enlarged. In 1965, the count of non-permanent members was raised from six to ten, representing the only significant reform in the UNSC's 65 years history.

During the Cold War, the UNSC encountered difficulties stemming from the East-West conflict and the strains among its permanent members, especially the US and the Soviet Union. The persistent rivalry between the US and the Soviet Union during this period rendered the UNSC largely ineffective (Britannica, 2024). Nevertheless, following the conclusion of the Cold War in the late 1980s, the activity of the UNSC saw a significant increase. It became engaged in various conflicts, including the Gulf War, Iran-Iraq war and disputes in Cambodia, Angola, and Namibia.

In the early 1990s, Japan and Germany emerged as the second and third largest contributors to the UN budget, leading them to seek more influence in the UNSC and permanent seats (Panda, 1992). This sparked interest from other countries like Italy, Brazil, India, Nigeria, South Africa, and Egypt in joining the powerful group. The potential expansion of the UNSC became a contentious issue, leading to the formation of three main blocs of actors advocating for their interests (Freiesleben, 2008).

The Group of Four (G4) comprised India, Brazil, Japan, and Germany, advocating for permanent seats on the UN UNSC. Their rationale included being major donors (Japan and Germany), having large populations and economies, and significant contributions to UN peacekeeping missions (India). The G4 has shown flexibility in their demands, considering options like non-permanent seats with the potential for permanency over time.

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Contrary to the G4, the Uniting for Consensus group, which includes South Korea, Pakistan, Mexico, Argentina, Italy, Canada and Italy contended that the introduction of permanent seats would establish new centers of power and compromise the principle of sovereign equality. This group has consistently upheld its position during the reform discussions.

Another group, the **African Group** representing the African Union (AU), sought two permanent seats with veto power. Despite attempts to negotiate and adjust their demands, the African Group continues to uphold its position for permanent seats with veto rights within the UNSC.

2.4 The 1965 UNSC Reform

The 1965 reform of the UNSC was a significant milestone in the evolution of the UN system. This reform primarily focused on the expansion of the UNSC's non-permanent membership and was driven by the growing recognition of the need for a more representative and effective international security body.

The first meeting of the UNSC was held on 17 January 1946, with a total of eleven (11) members. There were five (5) permanent members and six (6) non- permanent members. Later, in August 1965, the UNSC experienced its only change in composition. This change added four (4) non-permanent seats, raising the total number of non-permanent seats to ten (10), in addition to the five (5) permanent seats already in place. As a result, the number of non-permanent members increased from 6 to 10. This adjustment was made possible through Resolution 1991 (XVIII), which was adopted by the UN General Assembly on December 16, 1965 (Ronzitti, 2010).

The purpose of this expansion was to enhance the representation of the UNSC in light of the UN's increasing membership and the geopolitical context of the era. By increasing the number of non-permanent seats, the reform aimed to ensure a broader regional representation and improve the legitimacy of the Council.

Following this reform, the UN witnessed a significant increase in its membership, particularly after the dissolution of the Soviet Union, which led to the admission of numerous new members into the organization. The enlargement of non-permanent seats has resulted the Africa entitled three seats, while Asia received two, and West and Eastern Europe were allocated three seats (Christopher et al., 2021). This allocation was intended to better reflect the global distribution of states and their interests, promoting a more equitable representation of different regions.

Remarkably, the reform proposal encountered no resistance from the members of the UNSC. However, it took two years of stagnation before the amendments related to the increase of non-permanent seats were ratified by (2/3) of the UN member states, including all permanent members. The success of these reforms has led to a rise in the number of non-permanent members, thereby enhancing the diversity of perspectives and interests within the UNSC. This change was anticipated to foster more inclusive and equitable decision-making processes. By broadening its membership, the UNSC seeks to bolster its legitimacy and enhance its capacity to tackle a broader spectrum of global challenges, ultimately strengthening its function in upholding international peace and security.

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Despite the increase in non-permanent seats, the fundamental framework of the UNSC has not altered, as the five permanent members continue to hold their veto authority and maintain significant influence over decision-making processes. The reforms introduced in 1965 failed to tackle the essential issues regarding power distribution within the UNSC, especially the prevailing authority of the permanent members and the insufficient representation of emerging powers nations. Ongoing demands for additional reform emphasize the necessity for a thorough restructuring of the Council.

The 1965 UNSC reform was a notable step towards making the UNSC more representative and effective by increasing the number of non-permanent members. While it improved regional representation and the diversity of perspectives within the UNSC, it did not address the fundamental issues related to the power dynamics and the dominance of the permanent members. The legacy of the 1965 reform highlights the ongoing challenges and the need for continued efforts to achieve a more equitable and functional UNSC.

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2.5 The Reaction of the Permanent members towards the Reform

a) Russia

In the lead-up to the reform, Russia stated its strong position regarding the UN Charter amendment ratification. They highlighted China being a member of the UN and a permanent member of the UNSC is essential. The Russian government further claimed that they would not support any expansion of the UNSC unless there

was a written assurance that the non-permanent seat designated for Eastern European states would be exclusively allocated to them. During this period, the UNSC, along with the broader UN, was marked by a division between Eastern and Western blocs. Russia believed that the US would not jeopardize a potential UNSC reform due to their opposition to the People's Republic of China. Consequently, linking the UNSC reform to Chinese representation was seen as a strategy to pressure Western nations into recognizing the People's Republic of China. (Bourantonis, 2005).

Russia clearly indicated that it would not agree to any changes to the UN Charter unless the UN Secretariat was restructured to incorporate representation from Eastern states, Western states, and non-aligned states. Russia proposed the 'troika proposal,' which suggested changing the role of the Secretary-General into a collective executive made up of three individuals, one from each region, each with the authority to veto the others (Bourantonis, 2005). However, Russia ultimately withdrew this request due to considerable resistance from the non-aligned states.

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Russia was the most outspoken in voicing its disapproval of the suggested expansion. This early opposition raised questions about the viability of the reform. Nevertheless, after China's support for the reform, Russia changed its position. In 1965, both nations led the permanent members by submitting their ratification instruments to the UN, facilitating the enlargement of the UNSC.

b) China

The position of the Chinese government on the expansion of the UNSC, along with the draft resolution put forth by Afro-Asian and Latin American nations, was ambiguous for an extended time because of uncertainty surrounding the legitimate government of China. Russia asserted that it had communicated with the Chinese government to obtain clarity on their stance concerning the reform. On December 12, 1963, the Chinese government made an official statement, indicating a preference for reallocating existing seats instead of expanding the UNSC (Bourantonis, 2005). This position was in line with Russia's perspective that any enlargement of the UNSC should take into account China's representation within the UN. Nevertheless, this recent declaration contradicted an earlier message from the People's Republic of China to various Afro-Asian nations in September 1963. In that prior communication, China highlighted that the matters of reinstating its rightful position in the UNSC and amending the UN Charter regarding seat allocations were separate issues and should not be merged (Bourantonis, 2005). After a vote in the Special Political Committee, which resulted in 96 votes in favor, 11 against, and 4 abstentions, the General Assembly adopted the draft resolution as Resolution 1991 A with a tally of 97 to 11 (also with 4 abstentions). It is noteworthy that the nationalist government of the Republic of China, which did not take part in the committee vote, cast a supportive vote in the General Assembly (Rai, 1964).

The member states were urged to ratify the proposed amendments by September 1965, as outlined in the Resolution. For the ratification to be deemed valid, it was necessary for all permanent members to participate. On 18 December 1963, the day

after the General Assembly adopted Resolution 1991A, the communist government of the People's Republic of China publicly announced its government policy via a newspaper. This declaration articulated China's unwavering support for the Resolution, marking it as the first permanent member to do so ahead of Russia (Bourantonis, 2005).

c) France

In the 1960s, France was initially against the expansion of the UNSC. This opposition stemmed from fears that the proposed enlargement would weaken its influence within the Council. Although France had previously shown support for a limited expansion of the UNSC, it ultimately voted against a draft resolution in December 1963. In contrast, both the US and the UK opted to abstain from the vote and provided justifications for their choices, while France did not offer any explanation. Nonetheless, it was commonly believed that France's negative vote was mainly influenced by the suggested number of additional seats rather than a general opposition to enlargement. By 1965, France changed its stance and ratified the amendments, aligning itself with the other permanent members. This shift was driven by diplomatic pressure and the understanding that endorsing the reform could help preserve its influence in the changing global landscape. France's initial opposition and subsequent ratification illustrate the need to balance national interests with broader objectives for international collaboration (Schwelb, 1965).

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d) The United Kingdom (UK)

The United Kingdom (UK), together with the United States (US) and France, voiced their support for a modest increase in the number of non-permanent seats in the UNSC. Nevertheless, during discussions in the Special Political Committee, they adopted a critical view towards a Council comprising more than thirteen members. It was particularly crucial for the UK to evaluate the implications for the British Commonwealth seats if the Council were expanded to fifteen members and the seats were allocated based on the draft resolution. The suggested redistribution of seats would effectively remove formal Commonwealth representation from the elective seats of the UNSC (Bourantonis, 2005). When the draft resolution was put to a vote in the Special Committee in December 1963, both the UK and the US chose to abstain. However, in August 1965, their stance shifted, and they endorsed the amendments alongside the other permanent members.

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d) The United States (US)

The United States (US) adopt a moderate approach and support for a limited expansion of the UNSC. However, during the debate on the 1963 draft resolution in the Special Political Committee, the US response turned somewhat negative. The US representative clarified that they were only authorized to vote in favor of amendments to the Charter that proposed a thirteen-member Council, and could not support any other motions (Schwelb, 1965). Nonetheless, this indicated that the US was willing to support an enlargement, but had reservations about the number of seats being proposed. When the draft resolution was voted on in the Special Political

Committee, it passed with 96 votes in favor, 11 against, and 4 abstentions. The US and the UK were among those who abstained, despite earlier declarations of intent to vote against the draft (Schwelb, 1965). However, in August 1965, following expressions of support for the amendments from both the Russia and China, the US proceeded to deposit their instrument for ratification.

2.6 The Permanent members Agreed on the Reform

Following China endorsement of Resolution 1991A in the 1963 reform debate, the Russia underwent a shift in attitude and expressed its willingness to accept the proposed amendments. In February 1965, they officially ratified the resolution and urged the other permanent members of the UNSC to do the same, which they' ultimately did in August of the same year (Wirkola, 2010).

It is important to consider whether any of the permanent members had motivations to resist the suggested reform. Based on veto player theory (Tsebelis, 2002), if such incentives existed, the status quo would likely have been maintained. In 1965, the same permanent members of the UNSC who had the power to approve or block reforms are still the ones holding that authority today. It can be argued that their role as veto players was even more influential at that time than it is now.

Merely two decades after the establishment of the UN, the UNSC provided a more contemporary reflection of the global power dynamics than it does today. The permanent members could still assert their status as major powers to varying degrees (Wirkola, 2010). Thus, one might wonder why the permanent members endorsed a reform that reduced their privileged status in the UNSC, particularly when their

position was not as heavily contested as it is today. Another perspective could be that, given the relatively brief history of the UNSC, the regulations and practices governing its functions had not yet become entrenched, allowing for greater flexibility than is currently the case. At that time, informal sessions had not been established, and the stances of the permanent members on issues discussed in the Council were publicly accessible, rendering them more vulnerable to criticism from other UN member states. Initially, Russia maintained a negative viewpoint among the permanent member nations at the onset of the reform process. However, this stance changed dramatically after China voiced its support for the reform (Wirkola, 2010). The abrupt alteration in Russia's position was never thoroughly clarified, leaving space for speculation. Furthermore, Russia believed that the matter of Chinese Representation would adversely affect the United States, as they were the ones resisting the acknowledgment of the People's Republic of China's government. This opposition from the US rendered it impossible for Russia to accept reforms in the UNSC. While numerous members supported a swift resolution to the Chinese issue, they did not concur with linking it to the enlargement question (Hurd, 2002). One could speculate that encountering such opposition, especially from the Afro-Asian nations, many of which maintained amicable relations with Russia, significantly influenced Russia's change of perspective.

These states were well-structured and created a robust coalition pushing for reform in the UNSC. The anti-reform stance of Russia had resulted in a significant divide between these states and the non-aligned nations, particularly the Afro-Asian countries, and was viewed as an antagonistic political maneuver against them. In light of the Cold War context, Russia required allies within the UN. It remains

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uncertain whether these elements ultimately influenced Russia's endorsement of the reform. While Russia had reasons to uphold the existing situation in the Council, it also possessed crucial incentives to embrace change. Russia was more inclined than the US to vocalize its opposition to reform, whereas the US adopted a contrasting position and actually backed the reform. Nonetheless, the US expressed apprehensions regarding the number of available seats (Malone, 2004).

As veto players within the UNSC, the permanent members possessed the power to resist reform. At first, they might have been content with the current status quo and the advantages it provided. Nevertheless, as the UN membership expanded and the demand for reform intensified, the motivation to maintain the status quo likely lessened. The permanent members may have recognized that a modest increase in non-permanent seats would not greatly threaten their prevailing influence in the Council.

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2.7 Discussion and Analysis

The UN Charter designates the preservation of international peace and security as its foremost goal. This duty is primarily assigned to the UNSC, which consists of five (5) permanent members and ten (10) non-permanent members who are elected on a rotating basis. Empowered with considerable authority, the UNSC wields the highest power within the UN framework. It possesses the capability to initiate actions, endorse sanctions, and even deploy military force, including peacekeepers and voluntary military operations from its member nations (Ossoff et.al, 2020). The swift transformations occurring globally have led to a situation that is significantly different from the post-World War II period. Nevertheless, the UNSC has not made any

noticeable modifications. The UNSC's persistent failure to effectively tackle peace and security challenges is apparent in its lack of decisive action during numerous critical global crises. This ineffectiveness has sparked concerns regarding the legitimacy of the UNSC, with various factors contributing to this predicament.

The UNSC has faced criticism for its lack of effectiveness in maintaining global peace. On numerous occasions, the UNSC has been hesitant to take action in times of crisis. Furthermore, when decisions are made by the Permanent Five, often prioritize their own national interests over the goal of global peacekeeping. The handling of crises such as those in Israel - Palestine, Rwanda, and Ukraine has highlighted the shortcomings of the current UNSC.

Concerns have been raised about the UNSC legitimacy. As the leading powerful global organization, the decision-making process of the UNSC should be transparent to the public to prevent any potential abuse of power. Nevertheless, the procedures of the UNSC are predominantly secretive and lack scrutiny from both the public and other institutions. Although the UN is built on the principles of state sovereignty and equality, the UNSC's decisions frequently exclude or marginalize states that are likely to be significantly affected, and even when these states are included, their perspectives are often overlooked by the more dominant nations within the UNSC. The outlook for reforming the UNSC seems bleak. Initiatives to reform the Council have been in progress since the 1950s, yet the power dynamics within the Council have largely remained the same. In fact, new challenges have arisen, such as certain nations undertaking unauthorized military actions without facing repercussions. The sluggish pace of reform does not align with the swiftly evolving global environment.

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One of the primary obstacles to reform lies in the significant political challenges that seem nearly insurmountable. The intense conflicts between various groups make it difficult to reach a consensus. The existing significant disparity in the interests of various nations, addressing these group conflicts continues to be a challenging endeavor. Additionally, the veto mechanism and membership rules specified in the UN Charter, coupled with the intricate procedure for UN Charter which necessitates a 2/3 of votes from the UN General Assembly and unanimous consent from the permanent members further obstruct the reform efforts.

In an interview, Tan Sri Razali Ismail, a distinguished Malaysian diplomat, shared his insightful views on the reform of the UNSC. His opinions are informed by his extensive background in international diplomacy and his commitment to advancing global governance reforms. Razali Ismail emphasized the necessity for reform to ensure that the UNSC accurately represents the contemporary global geopolitical environment.

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He emphasized that the UNSC needs to reflect the realities of the 21st century, especially the rising influence of emerging economies and the importance of better representation for developing countries. He strongly supports expanding both the permanent and non-permanent seats to include a broader range of nations. In his view, this kind of reform would help make the Council more legitimate and effective by bringing in more diverse perspectives from different regions and political contexts.

Critics Razali says that "*expanding UNSC to include more members is necessary to bring in diverse perspectives, but the Permanent Members are likely opposed to such expansion. The UN is not prioritizing equality, noting that countries with poor human rights records have been elected as Non-Permanent Members. The lack of international activism from certain member states had undermines the UN's potential as a platform for promoting global peace and security.*"

Razali Ismail voiced his concerns regarding the existing structure of the UNSC, stating that he perceives it as unbalanced and not operating as efficiently as it should. He believes that its current configuration does not accurately represent the global dynamics of today and requires significant modifications to improve its effectiveness for all parties involved. The existing permanent members wield considerable power, including veto authority, which can result in decision-making paralysis and impede effective responses to global challenges (Razali Ismail, personal communication, August 21, 2021).

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Whereas Nadzirah Osman, underscores the importance of inclusivity within the UNSC. Nadzirah advocates for reforms that would enable the UNSC to better mirror contemporary geopolitical realities. She highlights the necessity for enhanced representation that acknowledges the significant shifts in global power dynamics since the UNSC's inception. Her position is aligned with Razali Ismail includes a call for increased representation of emerging economies and developing nations within the UNSC, suggesting an expansion of membership to encompass countries from various regions and developmental stages. In this regard, Nadzirah favors on incremental reforms over a complete restructuring of the UNSC. She contends that

gradual adjustments can effectively address the diverse interests of UN member states, ultimately leading to more viable solutions. In her view, fostering consensus among UN member states is crucial, and she agreed on the promotion of diplomatic initiatives aimed at negotiating reforms that reconcile the interests of both major powers and smaller nations (Nadzirah Osman, personal communication, October 27, 2021).

According to Terence Seme, an effective reform has the potential to create a UNSC that better reflects contemporary global dynamics, which would, in turn, improve its legitimacy and efficacy in tackling international security concerns. Additionally, such reforms could bolster multilateralism by rectifying current disparities, thereby promoting enhanced global collaboration and backing for multilateral approaches to worldwide challenges. Nonetheless, Terence Seme observed that reaching a consensus on the reform of the UNSC is quite difficult, primarily due to the varying priorities of different countries and the understandable hesitance of the current permanent members to relinquish any of their existing privileges. (Terence Seme, personal communication, February 27, 2023).

Syed Hasrin Aidid agreed on Razali Ismail's and Nadzirah's perspective view, contending that the current structure of the Council, which is heavily influenced by the five permanent members wielding veto power, is antiquated and fails to adequately represent the varied interests and power dynamics of the 21st century. According to interviewee Syed Hasrin Aidid conveyed that *"Since the establishment of UN, the UNSC has served as a cornerstone for global peace and security. However, significant flaws in its structure are becoming increasingly apparent.*

These issues are leading to deadlock, stalemate, and stagnation in addressing today's most urgent crises such as the Palestine war: Moreover, they are contributing to a wider crisis of credibility and legitimacy that undermines multilateralism as a whole. The UNSC was established by the victors of World War 11, reflecting the power dynamics of that era. The world has evolved and the Council's composition, with only minor adjustments, has failed to adapt accordingly. "

To address these issues, Aidid advocates for a gradual reform approach as suggested by Nadzirah Osman. While the reform of the UNSC signifies a longstanding commitment, it remains crucial to continuously promote changes that reflect the Council's operational realities. Additionally, he emphasizes the necessity of including representatives from regions such as Africa, Latin America, and the Asia-Pacific, which are presently underrepresented in the UNSC's decision-making framework (Syed Hasrin, personal communication, September 2, 2023). Realizing the achievable reform within the UNSC, it is crucial to undertake comprehensive dialogues and consultations on key issues through intergovernmental negotiations under the UN's framework. This process involves clearly defining the principles and approaches for reform and developing a viable plan in a timely manner. Engaging all relevant stakeholders and ensuring transparent and inclusive discussions are essential for crafting effective and sustainable reforms. In my opinion, the reform discussions must engage a diverse array of stakeholders, including member states, international organizations, and non-governmental entities. This comprehensive approach is vital for ensuring that a variety of perspectives and interests are taken into account, which is essential for crafting a reform plan that garners widespread acceptance. It is imperative to conduct detailed intergovernmental negotiations, which should be led

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by skilled diplomats and experts capable of facilitating dialogue, resolving disputes, and steering the process toward a consensus. It is also important to identify and prioritize critical reform issues, such as the structure of the UNSC, the implications of veto power, and the representation of different regions. Targeted discussions on these matters can elucidate the specific reforms that are necessary.

Establishing the fundamental principles of the reform initiative, such as equity, efficiency, and inclusiveness, is essential. These principles must align with the objective of rendering the UNSC more just and responsive to current global issues. Various reform strategies should be examined, including increasing membership, altering the veto mechanism, and improving regional representation. Each strategy must be assessed for its practicality, potential effects, and consistency with the foundational principles. A detailed reform strategy should be crafted, specifying alterations to the UNSC's framework, decision-making methods, and operational practices. This strategy should delineate clear goals, timelines, and implementation mechanisms. It is important to foresee and tackle possible obstacles to executing the reform strategy, such as political opposition, logistical challenges, and conflicts of interest. Formulating approaches to navigate these obstacles is vital for the reform's success.

The reform strategy should remain flexible to adapt to unexpected developments and insights from ongoing discussions. This adaptability enables modifications and enhancements in response to the shifting political and diplomatic environment. The reform initiative should prioritize transparency, ensure open communication and report on discussions, decisions, and advancements. Such transparency fosters trust

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among stakeholders and the international community. Incorporating diverse voices in the reform process is crucial to ensure that the viewpoints and requirements of smaller and less influential nations are acknowledged, leading to a more equitable and balanced outcome.

By focusing on these aspects, the reform process can be efficiently overseen to improve the UNSC's capacity to tackle global challenges while ensuring equitable representation and operational effectiveness.

2.8 Conclusion

The successful reform in 1965 was largely a result of the collective voting and lobbying strength of the expanded African, Asian, and Latin American groups within the General Assembly (Leigh-Phippard, 1997). The reason why the veto- holding members of the UNSC did not oppose the reform remains unanswered. The permanent members had reasons to object, as the addition of non-permanent seats somewhat diminished their privileged status in the UNSC. While the reform did enhance the influence of non-permanent members to a certain extent, it represented the least significant alteration to the UNSC's structure, as it did not include an increase in permanent seats or a redistribution of veto power.

The ability of permanent members to block UNSC decisions would not be diminished; rather, it was the capacity to pass a UNSC resolution that was affected. With the rise in membership, the disparities in representation became so pronounced that an expansion of the UNSC appeared unavoidable. Given that rejecting the proposed reform could lead to heightened demands for an even larger Council, the

permanent members seemed to view the acceptance of non-permanent additions as their most favorable option (Bourantonis, 2005). The next chapter will explore the factors influencing the discussion on UNSC reform.

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CHAPTER THREE

FACTORS INFLUENCING THE REFORM OF THE UNSC

3.0 Introduction

This chapter analyzes the contributing elements that necessitate the reform of the Council. Factors to be explored include the UNSC's inability to effectively uphold global peace and security, the size of the UNSC membership, the undemocratic nature of the UNSC's structural framework, and the veto powers held by the permanent members.

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As the global landscape has evolved, the UNSC pivotal institution in the realm of international diplomacy and global governance put on significant debates have emerged regarding the effectiveness and representativeness of the UNSC. The UNSC decision-making process, characterized by the veto power of the permanent members, has often led to paralysis in addressing urgent global crises and has been criticized for not reflecting contemporary geopolitical realities. The calls for UNSC reform are driven by several factors. These include the need for more equitable representation, membership expansion and veto restrictions to reflect the current global balance of power, the desire to enhance the UNSC effectiveness and responsiveness, and the demand for greater transparency and accountability in its operations (Butler, 2012).

The rise of emerging powers and the shift in global security threats further underscore the necessity of reevaluating and potentially restructuring the UNSC. As debates about reform continue, understanding these driving factors and exploring potential changes to the Council's composition and decision-making processes are essential. This examination not only aims to address the limitations of the existing system but also to ensure that the UNSC remains a relevant and effective body capable of addressing the complex challenges of the 21st century.

3.1 The Key Concern in the UNSC Reform Debate

Lund (2010) highlighted that in 2007, Sheikha Al Khalifa, the former President of the UN General Assembly, identified "five key cluster areas" for reforming the UNSC. These areas have remained central to ongoing discussions and negotiations regarding UNSC reform. The five key clusters outlined by Sheikha Al Khalifa are:

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3.1.1 The Size of UNSC Membership

A key concern in the discussion about reform is the structure of the UNSC. Some advocate for an increase in the number of permanent members, while others favor the expansion of non-permanent members.

The topic of enlarging the UNSC has been a matter of discussion in the General Assembly since 1979 however, official talks only began in 1991 (Daws, 1997). Proponents of UNSC expansion argue that it is essential for the body to become more inclusive and efficient. At present, the ratio of UNSC members to the total number of UN members is below 8 percent, in contrast to over 20 percent at the time of the organization's founding. Advocates for a substantial enlargement assert that decisions

made by a larger UNSC would carry greater weight and legitimacy, thereby improving effectiveness (IPA, 1997).

On the other hand, opponents of such expansion express concerns about the UNSC's ability to function efficiently with an increased membership. Some have questioned whether a UNSC with 24 members, as proposed in Models A and B, would be more effective than the current 15-member body, as highlighted in a Financial Times commentary (Paul & Nahory, 2005). Despite the realistic option of maintaining the status quo, the debate primarily revolves around the "Low-Twenties Option" (20-23 members), the "Mid-Twenties Option" (23-26 members), and the "High-Twenties Option" (more than 26 members). Efficiency is emphasized as the primary rationale for the "Low Twenties Option," with the United States favoring this approach. However, achieving a truly representative UNSC may prove challenging under the "Low-Twenties Option." The "Mid-Twenties Option" is seen as a potential compromise that could accommodate various proposals.

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According to Rameez Yahya, the expansion of the UNSC membership has become a prominent subject of discussion and debate. Proponents of this expansion contend that it is essential for various reasons, including fairness, effectiveness, and representation. He asserted that the existing structure of the UNSC, which is primarily influenced by the five permanent members fails to adequately represent the emergence of new global powers such as India and Brazil. By increasing the number of members, these influential nations can be included in critical global decision-making processes. Furthermore, the global power dynamics have evolved since the UNSC's inception, and an expanded membership would better reflect current geopolitical realities.

Incorporating a wider array of countries can introduce diverse viewpoints into discussions, fostering more balanced and effective solutions to international security issues. Additionally, a larger membership can enhance consensus and collaboration among member states, thereby strengthening the UNSC's capacity to tackle complex global challenges (Rameez Yahya, personal communication, January 12, 2024).

It is essential to recognize the necessity of including additional nations in the UNSC that possess veto power. Guler (2019) expressed that countries such as Turkey, Indonesia, Pakistan, and Malaysia are well-positioned to serve as representatives of the Muslim world within the UNSC. A system of rotating permanent membership among these four nations could be established, while simultaneously expanding the UNSC to include Japan, India, South Korea, Brazil, and Germany. Such an expanded UNSC would reflect a broader global representation, moving beyond the current five permanent members. This configuration would ensure representation for the Muslim population, which is approximately 1.7 billion, as well as for India, with around 1.3 billion, Japan with 127 million, South Korea with 52 million, Brazil with 210 million, and Germany with 83 million.

In a published statement made by Joe Biden, the former President of the US has reiterated his call for an expansion of both membership categories of the UNSC during the UN General Assembly 2023 (Xie, 2023). Biden emphasized that the United States has engaged in extensive consultations with numerous members states and remains committed to advancing reform initiatives, seeking common ground, and making headway in the coming year. Biden stated, "We must overcome the gridlock that frequently hinders progress and obstructs consensus within the council,"

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asserting that the UNSC requires a broader range of voices and perspectives. Nonetheless, one might question whether this statement is merely rhetorical in nature? Prior to this concern, the membership of the UNSC should not overlook the contributions of smaller states, given their ability and effectiveness in participating within the council. Thorhallsson (2012) emphasizes that the first element of influence for small states lies in their internal capabilities, which include their expertise, initiative, and proficiency in diplomacy, coalition-building, and leadership. The second element relates to how the state is viewed in the international arena, especially regarding its perceived neutrality or its standing as a norm entrepreneur in particular policy domains.

According to Chandra Muzaffar, he expressed that *"Malaysia stands out as a small nation that has made a significant impact in the UNSC as a Non-Permanent Member, thanks in large part to its thriving and cohesive society. Beyond its active role in UN peacekeeping missions, Malaysia has earned respect as a leader among developing countries, especially within the Muslim world. Our country's rich mix of ethnicities showcases a deep dedication to religious and cultural acceptance, enhancing its favorable reputation on the global stage. Additionally, Malaysia's historical background, proactive participation, and meaningful contributions to major global challenges have certainly strengthened its standing in international affairs. "* (Chandra Muzaffar, personal communication, January 13, 2024).

Expanding the membership size of the UNSC has been a topic of significant discussion and debate. Advocates for expanding the UNSC argue that it is necessary for a number of reasons related to fairness, effectiveness, and representation.

3.1.2 The Type of UNSC Membership

The present structure of the UNSC consists of five permanent members who possess veto power, along with ten non-permanent members who do not have veto authority. Debates regarding reform frequently focus on the potential expansion of permanent members and the possibility of creating new membership categories, such as semi-permanent members.

Rolf (2021) points out that the G4 nations support the idea of expanding the permanent member category in the UNSC. This perspective is in line with the African Group's stance, which also stresses its wish to include African nations in this expanded category, claiming their right to veto power (Mugabi, 2024). This indicates a wider call for reforming the UNSC to improve its representativeness and effectiveness in tackling global challenges. Regrettably, this disagreement has obstructed collaboration between the two groups in the reform efforts. Despite attempts from both the G4 and members of the African Group to convince the latter to give up or postpone its demand for veto power, the African Group remains resolute.

The Uniting for Consensus Group contends that an increase in permanent seats will merely result in the establishment of new power centers. They propose that if the UNSC is to be expanded effectively, the best approach to improve its efficiency is by augmenting the number of non-permanent seats (Uniting for Consensus, 2024). The introduction of additional permanent seats will only allow more nations to hinder essential processes.

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Another suggestion is the "Intermediate Model," which advocates for the addition of non-permanent seats that could potentially become permanent over time. Nevertheless, even if there is agreement on the expansion of permanent seats, the difficulty lies in deciding which countries should receive permanent status. There are widespread disagreements on this issue, with larger or more influential nations pushing for the inclusion of new permanent members, often themselves, while their regional competitors favor an increase in non-permanent seats.

Even among the existing permanent members, there is division. While they all theoretically back the addition of new permanent members, the contention arises over which states should be awarded permanent seats. For instance, France and the United Kingdom, both part of the G8, support the G4 as permanent members. The United States, also a G8 member, backs Japan's pursuit of permanent membership.

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3.1.3 The Veto Power within the UNSC system structure

The veto authority possessed by the five permanent members of the UNSC is a contentious topic in the discussion surrounding reform. Numerous individuals contend that this veto authority compromises the democratic values of the UN and obstructs the UNSC's ability to tackle global security challenges effectively (Lund, 2010). Reform proposals frequently suggest imposing restrictions on the application of the veto power or increasing the number of members who hold veto rights.

The pursuit of veto's usage has obstructed the UNSC's capacity to effectively tackle peace issues and avert loss of life has been a subject of debate. Only the five permanent members of the UNSC have the privilege to exercise the veto, but only on

matters that are not procedural. When a veto is cast, the member utilizing it is not obligated to provide reasons for their negative vote (Liang, 1950). According to Manusama (2005) the report from the High-level Panel, even beyond the formal use of the veto, the permanent members power to control critical peace and security issues on the UNSC's agenda has further eroded confidence in its work, The report also acknowledges that the veto system is outdated and incompatible with an increasingly democratic era, but it does not propose any practical solutions to alter the veto powers of existing members.

Besides the official veto, there exist alternative types of veto, including the double veto, hidden veto, and abstention from voting. The double veto relates to the discussion on whether an issue is procedural or substantive. Any member of the UNSC can assert that a particular proposal is substantive, and if this assertion is acknowledged, the proposal becomes open to veto. The initial veto stops the issue from being treated as procedural, while the subsequent veto nullifies the proposal as a substantive matter (Sievers & Daws, 2014).

The concealed veto denotes the potential for a formal veto and is mainly utilized by the permanent members in private informal discussions instead of in public meetings. While this practice is recognized to happen frequently, it is difficult to track because of its clandestine nature. The application of the concealed veto has encountered considerable criticism, especially concerning the United States' ongoing use of it to block UNSC actions that are unfavorable to Israel. Detractors contend that the use of the concealed veto typically worsens international crises. (Hajnal, 1993).

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Abstaining from voting can be classified into two (2) categories, voluntary abstention and mandatory abstention. Obligatory abstention occurs when a member of the UNSC is involved in a dispute being discussed (Gross, 1984). In these situations, members must refrain from voting. Nevertheless, this has been difficult to implement in reality, especially since the five permanent members of the UNSC, who hold veto power, are frequently hesitant to relinquish this advantage, particularly when the conflicts are directly tied to their own interests (Nahory, 2004). Conversely, voluntary abstention relates to significant issues where members opt not to cast a vote either in support or opposition to a specific matter. In these instances, members can choose to abstain from voting, and such abstention is not regarded as a negative vote.

The discussion regarding the veto power in the UNSC frequently centers on concepts like "democracy" and "equality." If the UNSC were to grow and incorporate additional permanent members, should these newcomers also receive the authority to veto decisions? Some nations pushing for new permanent seats contend that they are fundamentally opposed to the veto power. Nevertheless, given its current application, they argue that the new permanent members ought to possess the same right (Lund, 2008). Conversely, critics of expanding the veto power assert that allowing more states to wield it would make the UNSC ineffective, as each state has its own interests, which could result in a stalemate in decision-making during global crises and international relations.

An alternative proposal suggests that the five permanent members abstain from exercising their veto power in instances of genocide, crimes against humanity, and severe breaches of international humanitarian law (Lund, 2008). Although this idea

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may appear to be well-meaning, it is not regarded as a feasible option at present. To begin with, there would need to be an agreement on the precise circumstances that would be classified under these terms. Additionally, persuading the permanent five members to consent to such a change, which would inevitably reduce their authority, presents a considerable obstacle. Furthermore, restricting the privileges of the permanent five members risks jeopardizing the overall effectiveness of the UNSC, as they might discover ways to bypass or even withdraw from it entirely (Hajnal, 1993).

Rajmah Hussain emphasizes that the application of veto power can greatly obstruct the UNSC capacity to react swiftly and effectively to global emergencies. When the national interests of the permanent members take priority over the wider issues facing the international community, it frequently leads to inaction or postponed interventions. This behavior not only diminishes the Council's ability to respond but also threatens to undermine its credibility. As Hussain notes, the frequent invocation of the veto to advance individual state interests can diminish trust in the UNSC as a fair and impartial body, ultimately raising doubts about its legitimacy and function in maintaining international peace and security (Rajmah Hussain, personal communication, June 17, 2021).

3.1.4 The Regional Representation

Another key aspect of the reform debate is the question of regional representation on the UNSC. Many argue that the UNSC should better reflect the geopolitical realities of the 21st century by increasing the representation of developing countries and regions that are currently underrepresented (Cajigal et.al, 2023). Enhanced

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geographical representation will result in an enlargement of the UNSC, leading to similar advantages and disadvantages. In addition to the evident benefits of having regional seats, such as inclusivity, there are also certain challenges that cannot be ignored. The question of which countries from each region would be granted permanent seats and the method of selection poses a significant dilemma. Whether these seats should be allocated to specific countries permanently or on a rotational basis is another crucial aspect to consider in the discussion on regional seats. Detractors contend that a nation will prioritize its own interests over others, making it challenging for one country to effectively represent an entire region. Advocates, on the other hand, argue that regional seats are essential for ensuring a more diverse, democratic, and equitable UNSC, thereby enhancing its legitimacy and functionality.

Razali Ismail describes that the engagement of emerging powers countries like Japan and India are significant contributors to global peace and security is crucial. The involvement of smaller and less powerful nations is vital for fostering dialogue and shaping decision-making processes. Reform efforts should primarily target the disparities in representation between developed and developing nations, as well as among various continents (personal communication, March 7, 2024).

3.1.5 The Working methods and Relationship with the General Assembly

The operational procedures of the UNSC and its connection with the General Assembly are crucial topics in the reform discussion. Discussions often focus on ways to enhance the transparency, accountability, and efficiency of the UNSC, as well as improving coordination and collaboration between the UNSC and the General Assembly. In the 1990s, the question of UNSC seats reached an impasse, leading

several nations to become interested in the UNSC's operational methods and its relationship with the General Assembly. This issue attracted considerable attention when the Open-ended Working Group on the Question of Equitable Representation on and Increase in the Membership of the UNSC and Other Matters related to the UNSC, commonly referred to as the Open-ended Working Group, was formed in 1993 (Hanhimaki, 2008).

Three primary issues were highlighted, participation, transparency and accountability (Freiesleben, 2008). It was suggested that the permanent members ought to offer justifications for each veto to the General Assembly, and that the UNSC should hold more transparent meetings. However, some UNSC members opposed any interference in their working methods, despite the willingness of certain permanent members to promote a more open and transparent UNSC. In the past years, the number of open meetings has actually been regular, and there have been more interactions between the president of the General Assembly and the UNSC. Nonetheless, some representatives contend that specific issues should stay confidential within the UNSC to preserve its effectiveness (Lund, 2008). There are worries that an emphasis on working methods could shift focus away from the topic of UNSC expansion. However, thus far, this has not occurred, as both expansion and working methods have been included in the General Assembly's agenda over the past year.

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3.2 Discussion and Analysis

It is crucial to set regulations regarding the veto usage by permanent members, given the unfeasibility of its total elimination. Permanent members often utilize their veto power to obstruct resolutions that conflict with their national interests. This behavior undermines the UNSC's ability to tackle urgent matters, including humanitarian emergencies and conflicts, efficiently. The risk of inaction amidst significant global threats, such as genocide, highlights the urgent need for reforming the veto system.

The permanent member states are currently using the veto as a negotiating instrument to protect their own interests, frequently to the detriment of other countries. This strays from the veto mechanism's original intent. If this problem is not resolved, it could result in disastrous outcomes, including the unrestrained commission of genocide. Thus, it is crucial to implement limitations on the veto to improve the UNSC's ability to perform its designated function. There is a pressing need to regulate the veto power of permanent members and fortify the UNSC to allow it to operate more efficiently. Researcher believe that completely eliminating the veto power is unrealistic, given the opposition from the permanent members nations. However, it is crucial to implement regulations that limit its application. Suggested approaches include setting specific conditions or thresholds for exercising a veto, such as demanding a more robust rationale or confining its use to particular categories of decisions. Additionally, increasing transparency regarding veto usage and ensuring that permanent members are held accountable for their actions could help prevent abuse. Furthermore, establishing exceptions where vetoes are prohibited, particularly in situations involving mass atrocities or humanitarian crises, should be considered.

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The global political landscape is highly dynamic and fragmented, making consensus on UNSC reform difficult. The interplay of various national interests, power dynamics, and geopolitical shifts complicates the reform process. The UNSC reform is a challenging and complex process. The intricate and unstable global environment poses a significant barrier to reform. Different groups operate within the UN, each with their own vested interests, especially among the permanent members of the UNSC, which obstructs progress. The permanent members possess considerable authority and frequently show hesitation in endorsing reforms that may reduce their power. Their entrenched interests lead to considerable opposition against any modifications that could threaten their position or control.

Furthermore, emerging powers are eager to enhance their political influence, complicating the attainment of the necessary votes for reform approval. The rising global powers are striving for enhanced influence within the UNSC. Their ambitions introduce additional complexity to the reform discussions, making it more difficult to obtain the required votes for any changes. These emerging nations call for greater representation and authority, which further complicates the negotiation landscape. The UN consists of multiple factions with varying priorities and objectives, resulting in disjointed and sluggish reform initiatives. The necessity for widespread agreement among member states, along with the complex dynamics of reform negotiations, has led to considerable delays.

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3.3 Conclusion

The reform of the UNSC represents a complex and challenging undertaking, requiring a detailed exploration of many aspects. Despite the ongoing discussions, a unified

approach to reform remains elusive. However, focusing on key areas such as membership expansion, veto power regulation, working methods, representation, and regional balance provides a solid foundation for continued dialogue and negotiation.

The complexities associated with UNSC reform are deeply intertwined with the veto player theory, which illustrates how entrenched interests and power dynamics within the UNSC can obstruct meaningful change. This theory highlights the role of powerful actors who, by leveraging their veto power, create significant barriers to reform efforts.

The next chapter delve into the core principles of the veto player theory, offering a detailed analysis of how these principles impede the reform process. By analyzing these complexities, the research seeks to offer a more profound insight into the main challenges of reform and investigate possible strategies for addressing them. This analysis is crucial for developing more effective reform proposals and advancing the ongoing efforts to enhance the UNSC's effectiveness and fairness.

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CHAPTER FOUR

VETO PLAYER AS CHALLENGE TO UNSC REFORM

4.0 Introduction

This chapter seeks to explore the core principles of Veto Player Theory as they relate to the obstacles facing United Nations Security Council (UNSC) reform. By applying this theoretical lens, we can gain a more nuanced understanding of the structural dynamics within the UNSC and the inherent complexities that hinder meaningful reform.

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Veto Player Theory, formulated by political scientist George Tsebelis in 2002, offers a systematic framework for analyzing how various actors referred to as "veto players" influence policy outcomes through their capacity to approve or obstruct decisions. In this context, a veto player is defined as an individual or institutional actor whose consent is essential for policy change. The presence of multiple veto players increases the difficulty of enacting policy shifts, as it demands broader consensus and heightens the likelihood of deadlock due to the potential for any one actor to block progress.

This concept is particularly salient in the case of the UNSC, where the decision-making process is heavily shaped by the veto power vested in its five permanent members. Each of these members possesses the unilateral authority to block substantive resolutions or reform proposals, thereby positioning themselves as pivotal veto players within the Council's institutional structure.

4.1 The Veto Player Theory

The veto player theory serves as an appropriate framework for examining the decision-making process within the UNSC. The possession of veto power among the permanent members, the theory's focus on the influence of veto players aligns well with the dynamics of the UNSC. Understanding the incentives and preferences of these veto players can shed light on the likelihood of policy change and the obstacles that can impede it. By considering the veto player theory, the thesis enables to provide valuable insights into the decision-making dynamics of the UNSC and how it shapes policy outcomes.

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4.1.1 Understanding the Key Concept

The Veto Player Theory, developed by George Tsebelis, holds a prominent position in the study of comparative politics and political economy. Conceptualized as a game-theoretic framework, it is comprehensively articulated in Tsebelis' seminal work *Veto Players: How Political Institutions Work* (2002). This theory has been widely employed to analyze policy outputs and decision-making processes across diverse political systems and institutional settings. Its empirical relevance is especially notable in the examination of political dynamics and outcomes within the UNSC.

Game theory, which underpins the Veto Player Theory, centers on the strategic interaction among rational actors. In this context, "rationality" refers to individuals or entities that possess consistent beliefs and preferences and act in accordance with those principles, a definition that aligns with Jon Elster's concept of "thin" rationality. A key component of game theory is utility maximization, wherein rational behavior is understood as the pursuit of maximizing one's own utility or expected utility, as defined by their individual utility function (Harsanyi, 1966). The Veto Player Theory, grounded in game-theoretic principles, has become a prominent framework in comparative politics and political economy. It is widely employed to analyze policy outcomes and institutional decision-making processes, operating under the assumption that actors are rational and motivated by utility maximization.

In game theory, it is commonly assumed that actors are unified entities, an assumption that tends to hold more clearly when analyzing individual decision-makers. However, in political science where the focus often lies on states, governments, or institutions. This assumption becomes more problematic due to the complex and often fragmented nature of collective actors. George Tsebelis addresses this limitation by distinguishing between individual and collective veto players, acknowledging the internal dynamics and potential divisions within collective entities. An individual veto player refers to a single actor with substantial decision-making authority, such as the US President. In contrast, a collective veto player denotes a group-based entity such as a parliament or a political party where decisions are made through collective deliberation and agreement. Tsebelis' framework acknowledges that the nature of the decision-making process varies depending on whether the veto player is an individual or a collective actor, thereby providing a

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more nuanced understanding of political dynamics. In the analysis being conducted, the internal decision-making within states is not taken into account.

Therefore, the players are treated as individual veto players. This simplification allows for a clearer focus on the interactions and outcomes of decision-making processes without considering the complexities of internal dynamics within states. It is important to acknowledge that this assumption might oversimplify the reality of political processes, as decisions are often made collectively by various actors within a government. Thus, it is crucial to consider the limitations and potential implications of treating actors as individual veto players in the analysis. Before delving into the specifics of veto player theory, it is crucial to define several fundamental concepts that underpin the theory and its application to policy- making, including the reform of institutions such as the UNSC.

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Veto Players:

A veto player in the realm of politics refers to a person who possesses the power to prevent the acceptance of a specific decision. It can be referred to individuals or groups whose consent is required to change the status quo. Any alteration to the status quo typically necessitates unanimous agreement from all veto players (Tsebelis, 2002). Veto players hold substantial power in the decision- making process because they can prevent changes unless their approval is secured. This makes them pivotal in shaping policy outcomes, as their ability to block proposals can significantly influence the direction of policy changes.

Agenda Setter:

The agenda setter is the individual or entity responsible for establishing the policy agenda or proposing options for consideration. This actor often has a strategic advantage because they can shape the range of options available and influence which issues are prioritized. The agenda setter can propose non- negotiable options or set terms that other veto players must negotiate around. This position allows them to exert considerable influence over potential policy changes and the outcomes of negotiations (Tsebelis, 2002).

Winset of the Status Quo:

The winset denotes the spectrum of possible outcomes or policies that may substitute the existing status quo. It represents the collection of alternatives that are agreeable to all veto players. The dimensions of the winset are affected by the quantity of veto players and the ideological gaps that exist among them. A reduced winset signifies that a limited number of policy alternatives are acceptable to all veto players, thereby complicating the process of implementing substantial changes from the status quo (Tsebelis, 2002).

Policy Stability:

Policy stability describes the resistance to making significant changes to the status quo. It refers to the maintenance of political systems or policies without major disruptions or alterations over an extended period. High policy stability implies that the role of agenda setting in determining policy outcomes is diminished because the

status quo is resistant to change. In stable systems, the existing policies remain in place for longer periods due to the difficulty in achieving consensus for change (Tsebelis, 2002).

Unanimity Core (Pareto Set):

The unanimity core, or Pareto set, consists of policy options that cannot be defeated if all veto players reach a unanimous decision. Policies within this core are considered stable and immovable because they satisfy all veto players' preferences. Any factor that reduces the size of the winset will expand the unanimity core, making certain policies more entrenched. Conversely, increasing the winset can reduce the unanimity core and allow for more policy options to be considered (Tsebelis, 2002).

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Absorption Rule:

The absorption rule dictates how new veto players can affect the decision- making process or be integrated into the existing group of veto players. When additional veto players are introduced, the absorption rule determines whether they can influence decisions or must be assimilated by the existing players. This concept helps explain how changes in the number of veto players impact the stability and dynamics of decision-making (Tsebelis, 2002).

Understanding these fundamental concepts provides a foundation for analyzing how veto player theory influences policymaking and reform processes. By examining how power dynamics, decision-making structures, and policy stability interact, researcher

can gain insights into the challenges and opportunities associated with reforming institutions such as the UNSC. These concepts are essential for understanding the complexities of achieving meaningful change within the framework of veto player theory (Tsebelis, 2002).

4.1.2 The Main Proposition of the Veto Theory

Several propositions from Tsebelis book that are relevant to this study

Proposition 1: *states that the introduction of a new veto player can either increase or maintain policy stability. This can be achieved by reducing the size of the winset of the status quo or decreasing the size of the unanimity core, or by keeping both unchanged (Tsebelis 2002).*

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The winset of the status quo and the unanimity core act as indicators of policy stability. The winset of the status quo denotes the collection of policies that could potentially replace the existing state of affairs, whereas the unanimity core signifies the set of points that remain unassailable if a decision is reached unanimously. Policy stability, as noted earlier, relates to the challenges associated with implementing substantial changes to the status quo (Tsebelis, 2002). A new veto player can be interpreted as an additional participant capable of obstructing changes. This idea can be relevant to the context of the UNSC and may shed light on the reluctance of permanent members to modify the status quo. When the status quo is significantly distant from the ideal point of any veto player, the winset expands, suggesting low policy stability. In contrast, as the status quo approaches the ideal point of a veto

player, policy stability improves because the winset of the status quo encompasses only those points that this specific veto player favors over the current state. Thus, the location of the status quo is vital in influencing policy stability (Tsebelis, 2002).

The inclusion of an additional veto player cannot increase the winset of the status quo; however, it can certainly diminish or completely eliminate it. Furthermore, the winset may stay the same, contingent upon the stance of the new veto player. A winset is deemed empty when no alternative can overcome the status quo (Tsebelis 2002). In conclusion, if the winset of the status quo is present, its size either shrinks or remains constant with the addition of a new veto player, whereas the size of the unanimity core either grows or stays the same.

Proposition 2: *states that the introduction of a new veto player within the unanimity core of a pre-existing set of veto players does not have any impact on policy stability.*

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This claim is backed by the absorption rule, which indicates that the preferences of a new veto player are integrated among the current players. In simpler terms, when a new player joins the unanimity core, it does not change the winset of the status quo. On the other hand, if the inclusion of a new veto player does not influence the winset, it suggests that the player is located within the range defined by the existing veto players, particularly their unanimity core. It is crucial to highlight that this analysis overlooks potential transaction costs, presuming that there is no variation in cost for the veto players, regardless of how many players they engage with. Nevertheless, it is important to recognize that transaction costs are present, even though they are not considered in this discussion.

Proposition 3: *states that the agenda setter in a political system holds a significant advantage. This advantage stems from the ability of the agenda setter to consider the winset of other players as a constraint and choose the outcome that aligns with their preferences.*

To analyze the sequence of moves and predict outcomes, it's important to identify the agenda setter and understand their preferences. When both players try to reach their ideal point or get as close as possible, veto player A will choose the point (PA) from the winset that is nearest to them when proposing to veto player B (PB). Likewise, if veto player B proposes to A, they will choose point PB. This gives the proposing player a major advantage since they can set the agenda, leaving other players to pick from the options already suggested by the agenda setter. If there is only one veto player, they automatically become the agenda setter.

As the stability of policies improves and the winset shrinks, the significance of agenda setting lessens. In simpler terms, when the winset is smaller, the agenda setter is limited to choosing a point within this narrower winset. As a result, the preferred choice of the agenda setter is expected to be further from their ideal point than it would be when the winset was more expansive.

4.1.3 The Critique on the Veto Player Theory

Veto Player Theory, as developed by George Tsebelis and others, is a widely used framework to analyze decision-making processes in political systems where certain actors hold the power to block or approve decisions. However, critiques of Veto Player Theory, such as those discussed by scholars like Gangof, highlight several

limitations and areas for improvement. Ganghof (2003) highlights several significant issues with Veto Player Theory, particularly focusing on the problem of identification. This critique challenges the theory's ability to accurately identify and differentiate veto players from other influential actors in the decision-making process.

Ganghof (2003) highlights three main problems associated with this theory. The first problem, according to Ganghof, is the issue of identification. Ganghof (2003) critiques Veto Player Theory primarily on the grounds that its criteria for identifying veto players are problematic. The theory's reliance on what Ganghof describes as "disputable assumptions" makes it difficult to clearly differentiate between veto players and other potentially influential actors. This issue arises from the theory's emphasis on identifying veto players based on their ability to block decisions, without adequately addressing the nuances of political influence and the interaction between actors.

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Tsebelis' rules for identifying veto players rely on assumptions about the nature of blocking power and the structure of decision-making processes. Ganghof argues that these assumptions are not always applicable or valid, which can lead to inaccuracies in identifying who truly possesses veto power (Ganghof, 2003). Ganghof emphasizes that Veto Player Theory often overlooks the distinction between outcome preferences (what actors want to achieve) and policy preferences (how they wish to achieve it). This distinction is crucial because it affects whether an actor's influence is genuinely about blocking decisions or merely about shaping policy outcomes. The theory's failure to account for this distinction can lead to misidentifying who has effective veto power (Ganghof, 2003).

The theory assumes that veto players have ideal points that align with the unanimity core of other veto players. Ganghof challenges this assumption by pointing out that the ideal points of veto players may not always be aligned, making it difficult to determine if an actor's veto power is effective or merely a reflection of their policy preferences (Ganghof, 2003). The critique highlights by Gangof that the theory's rules for distinguishing veto players from other influential actors are based on questionable assumptions and fail to account for the complexities of policy preferences and alignment.

The second problem identifies measurement as a significant problem with Veto Player Theory. This issue concerns the theory's assumptions about policy preferences and its implications for theoretical coherence and empirical testing. Tsebelis' Veto Player Theory assumes that actors have fixed policy preferences that remain constant over time. This assumption simplifies the analysis but fails to

account for the dynamic nature of political preferences. Ganghof argues that this lack of flexibility can lead to inaccurate representations of how decisions are actually made, as real-world preferences can shift based on context and evolving political landscapes (Ganghof, 2003).

Ganghof points out that Veto Player Theory does not provide precise details regarding the specific policy preferences of actors. The theory's focus on blocking power rather than detailed policy preferences can obscure important aspects of how decisions are influenced. This lack of clarity makes it difficult to distinguish between policy preferences (what actors want) and policy outcomes (the results of decision-making processes) (Ganghof, 2003).

Ganghof raises further inquiries about whether Veto Player Theory ought to be seen as a cohesive theoretical framework or simply as a theory that can be tested empirically. The assumptions of the theory regarding fixed preferences and the overall nature of blocking power may not offer a completely coherent theoretical foundation for comprehending decision-making. Rather, it could serve more effectively as an instrument for empirical analysis instead of a thorough theoretical framework (Ganghof, 2003).

After discussing the third issue, Ganghof examines the "problem of equivalence" in Veto Player Theory. This matter revolves around whether all veto players ought to be viewed as alike in every aspect apart from their policy preferences, or if it is essential to distinguish between different categories of veto players. Ganghof's examination clarifies the intricacies involved in regarding veto players as a uniform group and

emphasizes the difficulties in distinguishing among them.Veto Player Theory often treats all veto players as equivalent, assuming that they are similar in all aspects except for their policy preferences. This means that any actor who has the power to block decisions is considered a veto player, regardless of their other characteristics or their role within the decision-making process (Ganghof, 2003).

Ganghof argues that treating all veto players as equivalent overlooks the potential differences between them. Veto players can vary significantly in terms of their influence, strategic behavior, and interaction with other actors. For instance, a veto player with strong institutional authority might have different effects on decision-making compared to one with more limited influence or different strategic goals. Differentiating between these types of veto players can provide a more nuanced understanding of how decisions are made and blocked (Ganghof, 2003).

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The Veto Player Theory provides an insightful framework for understanding the impact of blocking power on decision-making processes; however, it faces several criticisms. Gangof highlight the concerns including the reduction of complex political interactions to simplistic models, the variability of contexts in which decisions are made, the significance of non-veto players, the influence of external variables, and questions regarding the empirical support for the theory. Engaging with these critiques can improve the theory's relevance and contribute to a more sophisticated comprehension of political decision-making mechanisms. Overall, Ganghof critique sheds light on the limitations and complexities associated with the veto player theory.

4.2 The Application of Veto Theory in UNSC

Tsebelis makes connections to the works of Montesquieu and James Madison, despite the differences in their terminology. The concept of checks and balances is highlighted as an early application of the veto player approach. The division of the legislative body into two chambers allow for mutual veto power, which was considered a safeguard against the abuse of authority (Tsebelis, 2002). According to Tsebelis, veto players are a well-known concept in political science, particularly in studies on legislative decision-making (Ganghof, 2003).

Certainly, the permanent members effectively manipulate the right of veto in accordance with the national and collective interests of each member. As a result, this becomes a major obstacle to the efficiency of the UNSC and hinders the reform process, ultimately delaying the peacekeeping activities of the UNSC.

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In the realm of political realism, which prioritizes national interest and security, the notion of veto has frequently been adopted to analyze how the permanent members utilize these privileges. Morgenthau, a key figure in realism, argues that power-based interests are essential for understanding international politics. To explore the veto from a political realism perspective, it is vital to reflect on the assumptions that realists hold about the international system. These assumptions highlight the importance of states as the main actors in the global arena, their pursuit of self-interest and advantages, and the existence of an anarchic international system (Lomia, 2020). From these premises, one can deduce that the permanent members use the veto to protect their national interests and security, often overlooking its intended purpose. As a result, the criteria for approving resolutions related to intervention in a

particular country are significantly shaped by elements such as military and political alliances, economic and geo-strategic interests, and political ideologies.

The veto system has not operated as expected in the course of history. Rather than promoting collaboration among the major powers, fierce competition has prevailed, leading to the regular vetoing of resolutions that contradict their own interests. Consequently, the UNSC has experienced reduced efficiency and struggles in maintaining peace and security.

Numerous inevitable conflicts between the major powers, where their actions are driven not by the welfare of humanity, but rather by their economic, political, and ideological agendas (Folarin & Iyase, 2018). The veto system, based on the principle of "unanimity among the great powers," not only falls short in guaranteeing that the major powers collaborate to address armed conflicts, but also hinders the UNSC from reacting swiftly.

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Consequently, this delay often results in severe human rights crises. The circumstances in the Middle East serve as a significant example. Over the last ten years, the permanent members of the UNSC have employed 28 vetoes concerning resolutions about the Middle East. In detail, Russia has enacted 16 vetoes, China has implemented 9, and the United States has utilized 3 vetoes (Folarin & Iyase, 2018). This is primarily attributed to the Middle East's substantial importance regarding energy security, arms trade, and several other factors.

A notable instance of the improper use of veto in the Syrian civil war, during which China and Russia have consistently obstructed resolutions intended to impose sanctions on the Syrian government or to provide humanitarian assistance (Al Jazeera, 2022). Since the conflict erupted in 2011, their vetoes motivated by national interests have prevented crucial international action, allowing the Syrian regime to continue its violent crackdown without facing significant consequences. Notably, in 2021, Russia vetoed a resolution to extend cross-border humanitarian aid, exacerbating the dire situation for millions of civilians in need (Cohen et al., 2024). This case highlights how the veto power can undermine efforts to address humanitarian crises and prolong conflicts, prioritizing the political agendas of a few over the collective good.

Additionally, another significant example of the misuse of veto power is the situation in Ukraine, particularly regarding the annexation of Crimea by Russia in 2014. Following Russia's actions, the United States and its allies sought to pass resolutions condemning the annexation and affirming Ukraine's territorial integrity. However, Russia exercised its veto power to block these initiatives in the UNSC, effectively shielding itself from international censure. This use of the veto has not only hampered efforts to hold Russia accountable but has also emboldened aggressive actions in the region (Cohen et al., 2024). The stalemate created by the veto has contributed to ongoing tensions and conflict in Ukraine, highlighting the challenges of addressing violations of international law when one of the permanent members acts in its own national interest.

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An additional instance of the improper use of veto power can be seen in Myanmar, especially after the military coup in February 2021. In reaction to the coup and the ensuing violence against protesters and ethnic minorities, various nations, including the United States and the United Kingdom, put forward resolutions in the UNSC aimed at imposing sanctions on the Myanmar military and urging an end to the violence. Nevertheless, Russia and China exercised their vetoes to obstruct these resolutions, citing worries about interference in domestic matters and emphasizing the necessity for dialogue (Zahed, 2023). This obstruction hindered the international community's ability to take decisive measures to tackle the human rights violations occurring in Myanmar, underscoring how the veto power can impede efforts to foster democracy and safeguard human rights in scenarios where immediate intervention is crucial.

Certainly, all significant powers aim to enhance their interests within the region. Thus, it is their wish for resolutions from the Council that serve their own needs rather than those of other countries (Hurd, 2008). Additionally, utilizing the veto has fewer adverse effects on public perception compared to resorting to violent actions. Therefore, these powers partake in political maneuvering via the veto system, which ultimately leads to the paralysis of the Council and hinders its ability to address the growing conflict in the Middle East. Considering the impractical nature of the conditions necessary for the veto system to operate effectively, it is unavoidable that the great powers must confront deeply rooted statism and nationalism.

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The veto power granted to permanent members is intended to promote collaboration and a collective responsibility for sustaining peace. Nevertheless, in reality, major powers often place their own interests above the wider interests of humanity when applying the veto, thus compromising the efficacy of the UNSC.

4.3 The UNSC Reform Debate & Veto Player Theory

The maintenance of the status quo often emerges as the most feasible outcome in environments characterized by diverse and competing interests among key actors. This dynamic is reflected in the ongoing debate surrounding reform of the UNSC. It is frequently argued that while a more inclusive and expanded UNSC may enhance representation, it could also result in reduced efficiency. This section aims to identify the primary veto players, analyze their respective interests, and assess how these interests influence the prospects for UNSC reform. The analysis will primarily focus on comprehensive reform proposals concerning expansion and membership categories. However, ongoing debates related to veto power and procedural operations will also be briefly addressed.

4.4. The UNSC Reform Procedure

The UNSC has undergone three significant transformations since its establishment in 1945. The first alteration occurred in 1965 with the increase in the number of non-permanent seats from six (6) to ten (10). This expansion was part of a broader reform aimed at enhancing the Council's representativeness and ensuring a more equitable distribution of seats among member states (Malone, 1997). In 1971, a significant transformation took place when the People's Republic of China assumed the position of the permanent representative of China, displacing the Republic of China (Taiwan)

in the UNSC. This event was historically significant as it marked the acknowledgment of the People's Republic of China as the legitimate government of China. The dissolution of the Soviet Union in 1991 resulted in the Russian Federation taking over the permanent seat on the UNSC that was previously held by the Soviet Union. This change marked a pivotal moment, symbolizing the conclusion of the Cold War and highlighting Russia's new role as an influential participant in global security and diplomatic affairs.

In order to make changes to the UNSC, it will be necessary to revise the UN Charter. The process for amending the UN Charter is a crucial aspect of maintaining the relevance and effectiveness of the UN in addressing contemporary global issues. The amendment procedure is governed by Articles 108 and 109 of the UN Charter, and it involves several stages to ensure broad international consensus and proper implementation. The Article 108 UN Charter underline as below:

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"Amendments to the present Charter shall come into force for all Members of the United Nations when they have been adopted by a vote of two thirds of the members of the General Assembly and ratified in accordance with their respective constitutional processes by two thirds of the Members of the United Nations, including all the permanent members of the Security UNSC (UN 1945 art. 108)".

The amendments to the UN Charter can be proposed by any member state or group of states. Proposals may arise from changes in international relations, shifts in geopolitical dynamics, or evolving needs within the UN system (Simma, 2005). Once proposed, amendments are debated in the UN General Assembly. The General

Assembly must adopt the proposal by a 2/3 majority of member states present and voting (Peters, 2014). Once proposed, amendments are debated in the UN General Assembly. The General Assembly held the authority to pass resolutions without the consent of the permanent members, but these resolutions will only become valid once a two-thirds (2/3) majority of UN member states, including the permanent members, deposit their instruments of ratification with the UN. For certain amendments, especially those affecting the UNSC structure or veto power, the proposal must also be approved by the UNSC. The UNSC approval process involves a majority vote, but no veto power is allowed (Weiss & Daws, 2007).

In 1965, a reform was implemented through a resolution adopted by the General Assembly, which approved amendments to Articles 23 and 27 of the UN Charter. The draft resolutions were initially prepared by the former Special Political Committee of the General Assembly and subsequently recommended for adoption. These amendments entered into force following ratification by 2/3 of UN member states, including all permanent members of the UNSC (Bourantonis, 2005).

4.5 The Veto Players in the UNSC Reform Process

Decisions regarding the structure and functions of the UNSC as an organ are determined within the General Assembly. The permanent members hold significant power as they are required to deposit their instruments of ratification with the UN for any amendments to the UN Charter. This grants them the ability to veto any reforms to the UNSC.

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Additionally, there is a possibility of a sixth veto player, which would require a coalition of at least one more member than a third of the General Assembly. With the UN currently comprising 192 member states, a minimum of 128 votes in favor of the reform is necessary. However, if 65 member states reject the proposed reform, they effectively function as a veto player, maintaining the status quo. Although this scenario is unlikely, it is important to note that the permanent members is not a unified bloc, with members from the G8, G77, and Eastern European Group.

If the permanent members reach a consensus on a proposal, it is highly probable that they have already garnered sufficient support. Moreover, challenging any of the permanent members individually, let alone all five, poses a significant challenge. Therefore, while there is a potential for a sixth veto player, I consider this possibility to be largely theoretical. Consequently, the focus will primarily be on the permanent members as the more probable veto players in this context.

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Decisions made within the UNSC encounter potential resistance from five influential nations possessing the power to veto. Within it, the UN body, there exists the theoretical potential for a sixth veto player. This sixth player consists of a coalition formed by seven non-permanent members, who can collectively block a proposal even if all the permanent members countries are in favor of it.

The amendments made in 1965 brought about a significant shift in the voting dynamics within the UNSC. The addition of four new seats challenged the dominant position of the United States by granting an opposing group (comprising votes from the Soviet Union, Eastern Europe, and Afro-Asian countries) the ability to

collectively cast seven votes, as opposed to the previous five, thereby enabling them to defeat any resolution, whether substantive or procedural. Another aspect of the reform was that, as long as the veto power remained unused, the non-permanent members possessed enough votes amongst themselves to pass a resolution without relying on support from the permanent members. However, they still had to ensure that none of the permanent members countries opposed their resolution (IPA, 1997).

4.6 The Veto Players Interest in the UNSC

The comprehensive reform of the UNSC, as emphasized in the UN Millennium Declaration of September 2000, has been a subject of global consensus (Fassbender, 2004). Nevertheless, the divergent perspectives among member states have hindered the attainment of a viable solution. Notably, the permanent members, comprising the permanent members, and the elected non-permanent members, both past and future, share certain common interests in UNSC reform. Primarily, their interests revolve around acquiring or maintaining power within the UNSC. While the permanent members seek to preserve their existing power, the non-permanent members aspire to enhance their influence. It is worth noting that the national interests of member states have consistently taken precedence within the organization (Mahbubani, 2004).

The permanent members and the non-permanent members play distinct roles in the UNSC, evidently in their interests and behaviour. The permanent members were granted veto power and permanence to prevent the great powers from abandoning the organization. This strategy has been effective, as none of the permanent members have withdrawn from the UNSC or the UN. Kishore Mahbubani, the Singaporean representative to the UNSC from 2001-2002, argues in his essay *"The Permanent*

and Elected UNSC Members" that the permanent members behave as if they have ownership of the UNSC and view the E10 as mere"tourists" (Mahbubani, 2004). He further contends that the UNSC decisions align with the interests of the permanent members, particularly the United States, often referred to as the permanent member, within the UNSC corridors. Mahbubani illustrates this point by highlighting how Afghanistan transitioned from being a "strategic orphan" to a "strategic priority" following the September 2001 Twin Towers attack (Mahbubani, 2004).

The discussion on the expansion, membership, and veto authority has reached a standstill due to three key issues. Firstly, the majority of UN member states express a desire for additional non-permanent seats, yet they are divided on the exact number of seats to be added. Secondly, a majority supports the idea of more permanent seats, but there is disagreement on which countries should be included in this expansion. Lastly, while most members are in favour of either abolishing or limiting the right to veto, the permanent members countries are not part of this majority. Furthermore, there is ongoing debate on whether the potential new permanent members should be granted the veto power (Fassender, 2004). The issue of reform can be viewed as a North-South divide to some extent. The industrialized nations in the North currently hold four out of the five permanent seats and three out of the ten non-permanent seats, excluding the two Latin American seats. As any increase in the UNSC seats would result in a decrease in the North's relative power, these nations have generally been hesitant to support such an enlargement. Conversely, countries in the South have been more vocal in advocating for a significant increase in UNSC seats, as this would enhance their power and influence (Fassbender, 2004).

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There is a lack of consensus on whether member states are in favor of a neighbouring state having a permanent seat. States without a permanent seat in the UNSC are eager to secure one, but for many, this remains an unattainable goal due to factors such as size, population, or contributions to the UN. Instead, these states may opt to align themselves with a neighbouring state to gain influence. However, concerns about regional rivals gaining too much power and influence in the UNSC have led to competition rather than cooperation among states. Examples include India and Pakistan, Brazil and Argentina, and Italy and Germany, who are actively working to prevent their neighbours from obtaining a permanent seat while simultaneously pursuing one for themselves. The permanent members, the United Kingdom and France, have also expressed reservations about granting Germany a permanent seat, fearing that it would give the country an unfair advantage and greater influence within the European Union.

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The African Group, which asserts its entitlement to two permanent seats along with the power of veto, can be cited as another illustrative case. Despite the recurring debates surrounding the issue of the veto, the African Group remains steadfast in their demand, recognizing that the inclusion of the veto power poses an even greater challenge to their pursuit of permanent seats. African leaders have acknowledged that the group's insistence on the right to veto may be influenced by the realization that even if permanent seats were to be allocated to the region, they might not be granted to them specifically. Consequently, they persist in asserting their claim for veto rights, fully aware that this demand would impede their neighbouring countries' chances of securing a permanent seat (Lund, 2010).

4.7 The Use of Veto within UNSC Permanent members in Agenda Setting

The theory of the veto player emphasizes the importance of being an agenda setter. Within the UNSC, an agenda setting can be done in two (2) ways: by adding motions to the agenda or by preventing certain matters from being included. The hidden veto plays a significant role in this dynamic. Despite the infrequent use of the formal veto within the security UNSC, its informal application during closed consultations remains prevalent, Kishore Mahbubani, the former President of UNSC provides examples of the veto being utilized for procedural issues, even though the Charter specifies that it should only be used for substantive matters. This argument challenges the notion that the UNSC is moving towards a higher level of consensus, a perception that may arise from the significant decrease in the formal use of the veto in recent years.

The formal veto has experienced a significant decline since 1995. In the years following 1995, it has been utilized merely 19 times, whereas prior to that, it was employed 242 times (excluding the additional 43 vetoes used to obstruct Secretary-General nominees during closed sessions, which are not accounted for in official statistics). This translates to an average of 4.8 vetoes per year until 1995, compared to a mere 1.4 vetoes per year thereafter (Wirkola, 2010).

Before 1965, Russia predominantly exercised the veto power, while from 1966 to 1996, it was mainly used by the United States, with occasional instances from the United Kingdom, France, and Russia. China has only used the veto 6 times, whereas Russia and the US have done so 124 and 82 times, respectively. Between 1996 and 2009, the US exercised the veto 12 times, China 4 times, and Russia 3 times. In total,

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59 vetoes have been employed to block the admission of member states, including former adversaries after World War II like Italy and Japan (Global Policy Forum, 2010).

The permanent members of the UNSC maintain control over the topics discussed due to their significant use of both double and hidden vetoes. Although they claim that the veto should be a measure of last resort, these members frequently utilize the hidden veto, positioning themselves as key agenda setters within the UNSC (Nahory, 2004). This hidden veto is mainly applied during informal sessions, and since the late 1980s, the UNSC has largely operated in these private environments.

In contrast to the highly public sessions of the UNSC, these informal gatherings are enveloped in secrecy, with no official documentation maintained. This allows the permanent members to exercise the veto, especially the threat of it, without facing public scrutiny. One example of this is Russia's engagement in issues related to Chechnya, while another is China's involvement in matters concerning Tibet. A notable, though unusual, case of a concealed veto is France's warning to obstruct a resolution that would authorize military action against Iraq in 2003. Unlike most concealed vetoes, France chose to make this particular veto known, counting on international backing for its stance and expecting other UNSC members to align with it (Nahory, 2004).

The work of the UNSC is greatly affected by the concealed veto, which enables the permanent members to dominate the UNSC agenda. The double veto, which is utilized to decide if an issue is procedural or substantive, has been previously noted.

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As a result, the permanent members already possess control over the agenda. Non-permanent members, confronted with ongoing hidden vetoes, are discouraged from bringing up issues that they anticipate will face opposition from the permanent members. This leads to what can be termed a "double hidden veto." Hidden vetoes are not only used to hinder action but also to weaken the definitions of crises within international law (Nahory, 2004).

This became clear during the Rwandan genocide in 1994, when the term "genocide" would have required intervention as per the 1948 Genocide Convention. Instead, the events in Rwanda were labeled as "acts of genocide," a classification that did not mandate immediate action. This situation was largely shaped by France's vested interests in Rwanda and its backing of the government, along with the United States' hesitance to provide the necessary funding for intervention. Consequently, any action was postponed until after the most horrific months of violence had transpired and the disaster had already unfolded. Former President Bill Clinton later expressed regret in a speech referred to as "the Clinton Apology" for failing to intervene sooner in Rwanda (Nahory, 2004).

Shivakumar emphasizes that the use of veto power in shaping the agenda of the UN Security Council has significant and far-reaching implications (Shivakumar, personal communication, February 27, 2023). Firstly, the permanent five members have the capacity to hinder or alter the agenda of the UNSC to reflect their national priorities. Certainly, the implications for peace and security are affected due to the paralysis caused by the use of the veto on urgent issues and a growing inclination towards selective engagement. The existence of the veto significantly shapes the negotiation

processes and the development of resolutions within the UNSC. The regular use of the veto may erode the legitimacy and credibility of the UNSC and the presence of veto power poses considerable obstacles to the reform effort. To tackle these challenges, it is essential to adopt an imperative strategy that balances the interests of the permanent members with the need for a more efficient and representative UNSC.

4.8 Benefitting the Permanent members in the UNSC

The UNSC is distinguished as a singular platform that can tackle, if not entirely resolve, security issues of global importance. It plays an essential role in granting nearly universal legitimacy to the actions undertaken by states or coalitions of states, a capability that no other current or proposed organization has succeeded in achieving (Berdal, 2003). The permanent members of the UNSC have demonstrated a keen interest in preserving the UNSC's role, status, and authority within international relations for a variety of reasons. A notable example of this dedication is the robust diplomatic effort made by the United States and the United Kingdom to obtain authorization for military action in Iraq in 2003, which underscores the UNSC's critical function in maintaining legitimacy, even among powerful nations. Before exploring specific reform proposals, it is vital to highlight the importance of the UNSC to the permanent members and the motivations behind it.

The UK status as a significant global power has come under examination owing to its historical context as a prominent colonial entity. Although its influence has diminished, the UK mitigates this decline by assuming leadership positions within the UN and providing considerable support to security-related initiatives. Its permanent seat on the UNSC grants it a disproportionate level of power on the

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international stage, a fact that the UK emphasizes as crucial. France, similarly, values its role on the UNSC as a means to counterbalance the United States' hegemonic tendencies. Russia, like the UK and France, views its permanent UNSC membership as vital to maintaining its status as a Great Power.

Certainly, reforming the UNSC involves numerous substantial challenges. These challenges stem from the intricate nature of international politics, the established interests of member states, and the fundamental framework of the UNSC. The permanent members possess veto authority, enabling them to prevent the passage of any significant resolution. This authority poses a considerable obstacle to reform, as any proposed changes that could jeopardize the interests of the permanent member are prone to being vetoed. Given the considerable advantages and influence derived from the existing system, the permanent members resistant to modifications that could diminish their power or alter their exclusive status (Ramlan, personal communication, April 15, 2023).

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The UNSC holds significance for these countries as they strive to uphold their positions of power, a goal shared by China and the United States, both of which hold an undisputed status as Great Powers. The United States, being a formidable nation, may not rely on the UNSC as much as its fellow members do. However, it recognizes the significance of UNSC resolutions in providing legitimacy. Therefore, the United States remains committed to working towards achieving these resolutions, as demonstrated in the case of Iraq. It is crucial for a state reputation to act in accordance with such resolutions, as evidenced by the severe damage incurred in this particular instance. Hence, the UNSC continues to hold importance for the United States. This

could also elucidate the rationale behind the reengagement of the Barack Obama administration with the United Nations (Berdal, 2003).

Rajmah (personal communication, June 17, 2024) indicated that the necessity for permanent members approval is required on any proposed, each of whom has a vested interest in preserving the current system. Achieving consensus among the General Assembly and the permanent members regarding specific reforms is a highly intricate and often contentious endeavour. It is essential to obtain widespread support from both the public and political leaders to ensure the success of any reform initiative. In a historical instance, the success of previous UN reforms, such as modifications to non-permanent membership and the enlargement of the General Assembly, illustrate that reform is achievable. Despite this, insights gained from previous reform attempts underscore the complexities and challenges involved in altering established international institutions. Although reforming the UNSC is attainable, it necessitates navigating these challenges through diplomatic dialogue, compromise, and a dedication to fostering a more representative and effective international organization. This came into illustration of Razali Ismail, who previously served as the ambassador to the UN for smaller nations like Malaysia, exhibited exceptional engagement and skill in negotiations with various member states. In his capacity as Chairman of the UNSC, he was particularly responsive to the needs and evolving challenges associated with global matters (Chandra, personal communication, June 28, 2021).

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4.9 Discussion and Analysis

The challenges surrounding the reform of the UNSC stem from deep-seated disparities in national development, varying geopolitical interests, and conflicting visions for the future of international governance. These challenges are influenced by the following factors.

The rising nations versus the established powers nations. The Emerging nations seek to reshape the UNSC to gain more influence, reflecting their growing economic and political clout. Conversely, established permanent members, such as the United States, China, Russia, the United Kingdom, and France, are focused on maintaining their dominant positions within the Council. The tension between the desire for increased representation by newer global players and the reluctance of established powers to cede influence creates a significant obstacle to reform.

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South African, Venter (2003) argues that the permanent members of the UNSC are unlikely to relinquish their power without a substantial shift in global power dynamics. Venter suggests that only the emergence of a new, influential world power could force a reconsideration of the existing power structure within the UNSC. This viewpoint underscores the entrenched nature of the current power balance and the difficulty of achieving reform under the existing conditions.

The divergent interests of advanced and emerging nations. The developed countries frequently promote reforms in the UNSC grounded in Western ideals, prioritizing democratic principles, operational efficiency, and adequate representation. Conversely, developing nations aim to tackle concerns surrounding dominance and

disparities in power, advocating for a more just and representative global framework. These contrasting viewpoints highlight significant global inequalities and complicate the process of achieving a unified approach to reform. In the meantime, UNSC reform affects both immediate and long-term national interests. Established powers are concerned about how changes might affect their current status, while emerge powers and develop nations focus on the potential benefits of increased representation and influence. The intersection of these interests makes consensus difficult to achieve.

Currently, the reform of the UNSC is being pursued by several major groups, such as the G4, The Uniting Consensus Group, the African Union and others. Most of these groups are formed based on shared interests, which often conflict with those of other groups, leading to a deadlock in the reform process. The conflicting goals of these groups contribute to a deadlock in the reform process. The diversity of interests and demands among the different groups makes it challenging to achieve a 2/3 majority consensus required for significant reform.

For instance, Japan, a member of the G4, significantly supports the reform plan to increase the number of permanent seats in the UNSC, reflecting the changing global landscape since the UN's establishment after World War II. Conversely, countries like China and the United States, which secured their positions through historical events such as wars, are hesitant to relinquish their power to smaller nations. This reluctance highlights the entrenched nature of international politics, where nations prioritize their own interests and historical advantages over collective reform.

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Conversely, countries like China and the United States, which gained their political status through war, are reluctant to relinquish their power to smaller nations, highlighting the inherent law of international politics where each country prioritizes its own interests. National interests are essential in influencing international relations and foreign policy. The diverse historical backgrounds, strengths, and statuses of countries contribute to the difficulty of achieving uniform aspirations and consensus on UNSC reform.

4.10 Conclusion

The issue of the UNSC veto power mechanism has been a significant concern as it allows one to evade accountability by being overruled by any of the Permanent members. When a resolution or decision is being considered for passage or adoption, the permanent members possess the authority to veto it. Consequently, even if the majority of votes are in favor, the resolution or decision will not be accepted. Numerous conflicts, such as the recent one between Russia and Ukraine, have highlighted the clash between the veto system and the Rule of Law. Evidently, when a resolution proposed by Albania and the United States, aimed at prohibiting any actions intended to undermine Ukraine's territorial integrity and national unity, including threats, use of force, or other illegal means to alter its borders, cannot be approved and adopted due to Russia's veto power as a UNSC Permanent Member. Significantly, the existing veto power system affecting the legitimacy and effectiveness of UNSC dealing with global affairs.

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The reform of the UNSC is hindered by complex and competing factors, including disparities in national development, conflicting interests between developed and developing nations, and the divergent goals of major reform groups. The entrenched positions of established powers and the strategic interests of emerging nations create significant barriers to achieving meaningful change. Addressing these challenges requires navigating the intricate landscape of international politics, balancing competing interests, and fostering cooperation among diverse stakeholders. The upcoming chapter section of this thesis covers the conclusions reached through the comprehensive research undertaken, along with the recommendations formulated based on the results and data obtained. An analysis of the research data gathered during the study provided by the researcher in this section.

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CHAPTER FIVE

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

5.0 Introduction

The concluding chapter of this thesis summarizes the conclusions drawn from the comprehensive research undertaken, along with the recommendations based on the findings. The researcher will provide a detailed analysis of the research data gathered throughout the study.

The UNSC reform process at the UN has come to a halt, despite numerous years of discussions, critiques, and various reform proposals. This thesis seeks to examine the influence of veto powers within the UNSC on the reform process in three specific instances, and to investigate the degree to which the results correspond with the veto player theory. According to this theory, if any of the members with veto power have a motive to preserve the status quo, then changes are improbable to happen.

5.1 Overall Findings

5.1.1 Role, functions and development of the UNSC

In 1965, the UNSC experienced a major reform that introduced four non- permanent seats, increasing the total membership from 11 to 15.

This change was largely motivated by the advocacy of Non-Aligned states, which sought greater geographical diversity within the UNSC. At first, the permanent members were reluctant to support this expansion, fearing it would reduce their individual power. Nevertheless, in the end, all permanent member countries approved the amendments to the UN Charter, facilitating the enlargement. This reform of 1965 is still regarded as the most significant alteration to the UNSC to this day.

In 1997, Razali Ismail, the chair of the Open-Ended Working Group on Security Reform, presented a comprehensive reform proposal known as the Razali Plan. This plan suggested expanding the UNSC to a total of 24 seats, with ten seats being permanent. Despite the coherence of the proposal, the reform efforts were unsuccessful. The member states of the UN failed to reach a consensus, and although the permanent members did not outright reject the plan, their demands indicated that the proposal would not be accepted.

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In 2005, Secretary-General Kofi Annan highlighted the need for reforming the UNSC in his document "In Larger Freedom". Annan's report outlined Model A and Model B, two possible models for an expanded UNSC. These models ignited renewed discussions on reform, resulting in the establishment of new coalitions among states. The most notable of these coalitions was the G-4, which pushed for permanent seats for Germany, Brazil, Japan, India, and two yet-to-be-determined African nations. Despite these initiatives, the reform effort ultimately stalled due to disagreements among member states and resistance from certain permanent members. While the United Kingdom and France were in favor of the G-4's proposal, the United States

and China threatened to veto it. As a result, the proposal never reached a vote in the General Assembly, leading the Secretary-General to reluctantly recognize yet another setback in the ongoing attempts to reform the UNSC.

5.1.2 The Factors that Contribute to the need for UNSC reform.

The UNSC is in dire need of reform, which includes expanding the number of permanent members and reevaluating the veto privileges. The current composition of the UNSC does not adequately reflect the security concerns of the global community, and the veto power often hinders the council from effectively addressing international issues by allowing powerful nations to obstruct actions they deem unfavourable. Since 1946, the permanent membership of the UNSC has remained unchanged, with three (3) out of five (5) seats held by European countries. This lack of representation from Latin America and Africa, as well as the dominance of Western and Great Powers, undermines the credibility of the UNSC. Additionally, the veto power wielded by permanent members creates obstacles to decision- making, as conflicting interests among these nations frequently lead to gridlock.

To ensure its credibility, the UNSC must include a diverse group of new permanent members from various regions. The global consensus is that expanding the UNSC is crucial, but it comes with intricate challenges. Balancing regional representation while identifying suitable candidates is essential. Any reform initiative for the UNSC must also secure approval from the current permanent members, which poses its own set of obstacles. India is a strong contender for permanent membership, but its rivalry with China and the ongoing border dispute complicate matters. Russia advocates for the inclusion of non-western members, but opposes Japan and Germany due to their

alignment with the US and participation in sanctions. The UK, France, and the US are unlikely to support membership for countries with poor human rights or democracy records. The veto power held by permanent members leads to a deadlock in the UNSC, making reform challenging. One potential solution could be granting the General Assembly the authority to override vetoes.

Nevertheless, in the sense of consideration the role of smaller states as non-permanent members of the UNSC can also be significant. Although smaller state influence overall is often override by larger or more dominant nations yet these states can still play an important role. In some situations, small states can exert considerable influence.

As the presidency of the UNSC rotates monthly among its 15 members, allowing a small state to assume this role and shape the agenda and discussions during that period. Smaller nations frequently play a significant role in mediation and diplomatic efforts, offering distinct perspectives or acting as impartial intermediaries in resolving conflicts. They can play an important role in establishing coalitions or partnerships with other countries, thereby amplifying their influence on particular matters. These nations may have unique expertise or focused interests in specific domains, such as environmental concerns or humanitarian issues, which enhances the significance of their contributions. They can utilize their standing to advocate for human rights, promote environmental sustainability, and address other global challenges, employing their moral authority to influence discussions and resolutions within the UNSC.

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The influence of a state's leadership on its role in the UNSC (UNSC) is undeniably shaped by national priorities and the global context at any given time. Smaller nations like Malaysia, despite their size, have been able to wield significant influence on the global stage, particularly when their leadership is proactive and assertive in international affairs. Under the leadership of Tun Dr. Mahathir Mohamad, Malaysia positioned itself as a middle power in global diplomacy. His tenure saw Malaysia actively engaging in international discussions and acting as a mediator in conflicts, despite being a non-permanent member of the UNSC. Malaysia's diplomatic efforts during this time were marked by a consistent and assertive approach to international challenges, showcasing how a smaller nation could leverage its position to affect global outcomes.

In contrast, the leadership of Tan Sri Muhyiddin Yassin and Dato Sri Ismail Sabri Yaakob has shifted the focus of Malaysia's international engagements. While the country remains active in the UNSC, the emphasis has largely turned inward, with more attention directed toward domestic affairs. This shift in priorities highlights the impact of national leadership on the country's foreign policy stance and its role within international institutions like the UNSC. For smaller states like Malaysia, Lithuania, Estonia and others there is no singular best practice in navigating their role in the UNSC. However, a consistent and proactive approach is crucial in maintaining influence and addressing global concerns effectively. Smaller nations should aim to adapt to changing global dynamics while safeguarding their interests and participating meaningfully in addressing international issues. This approach allows them to maintain relevance and contribute to discussions that shape the future of global diplomacy.

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5.1.3 The Veto Theory impedes the UNSC reform process

The 1965 reform suggests that the veto player theory might not be the best framework for understanding the changes in the positions of veto players regarding the reform. The empirical data contradicts the theory's claim that if any veto player has motives to block a proposed change, the existing state will persist. However, since the 1965 reform involved only a slight decrease in the authority of the permanent members, caution is advised against overanalyzing their agreement to this reform. The permanent members remain the most powerful actors within the UNSC. It is suggested that an alternative theoretical approach, such as the theory of rational communication, could provide a more comprehensive understanding of the events in 1965. Although the veto player theory has its shortcomings in elucidating the 1965 reform, it is argued that it continues to serve as a significant framework for comprehending the responses of veto powers and the outcomes of the reform deliberations in 1997 and 2005. Considering that these reform efforts aimed to reduce the influence of the veto players, the permanent members made concerted efforts to obstruct the suggested changes to the existing order. With regards to the Razali Plan, it is argued that although the permanent members were not the official blockers of the proposed reform, their demands diverged so significantly from the original reform proposal that it could be interpreted as a form of rejection.

In 2005, the positions of the permanent members regarding Annan's proposal were divided. The G4 garnered backing from the UK and France, whereas the US and China warned of their potential to use veto power. Nonetheless, based on the veto player theory, it is posited that as long as at least one veto player has reasons to obstruct any alteration to the current situation, the present state can be preserved.

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Therefore, the opposition from China and the US was sufficient to ensure that the status quo prevailed.

The matter concerning the veto power within UNSC has long been a point of contention, with many arguing that its elimination could lead to more efficient and democratic decision-making within the UN framework. At present, the veto power possessed by the permanent members enables them to obstruct any significant resolution, regardless of whether the majority of the Council's members are in favor of it. This gives disproportionate power to these nations and often prevents meaningful action on pressing global issues. If the veto were removed, decisions could mainly be made via a majority vote among member states, especially in the General Assembly, which reflects the wider membership of the UN.

This would likely make the UN system more democratic, as it would allow for greater representation of the international community's interests and less room for the political maneuvering of a few powerful nations. In theory, the removal of veto power could ensure that the UNSC's decisions reflect the will of the global majority, rather than the interests of a few states. However, the need for UNSC reform remains critical due to its significant authority within the UN framework. While the General Assembly plays a crucial role as a forum for discussion, its resolutions are non-binding and do not have the enforcement power that the UNSC's resolutions carry. The UNSC's ability to pass legally binding resolutions makes it a more powerful body in ensuring compliance with international law, particularly regarding peace and security. Its resolutions are enforceable, and violations can lead to sanctions or military intervention, which is why its decisions carry considerable weight.

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Nonetheless, the UNSC's decision-making process is often hindered by the use of veto power, especially when major powers seek to protect their own interests or align with allies. Veto-wielding members can block resolutions that may go against their national interests, preventing the UN from taking decisive action on key issues such as conflicts, humanitarian crises, or peacekeeping operations. This has prompted numerous calls for reforms aimed at enabling the UNSC to operate more efficiently and justly in tackling global issues. Whilst the removal of the veto power within the UNSC might result in fairer decision-making and a more robust, responsive UN framework. Such a change would require careful consideration of the balance between power, fairness, and the practical needs of international governance. It is clear, however, that UNSC reform is necessary if the UN is to remain an effective and legitimate forum for addressing the world's most urgent issues. While the explanatory capacity of the veto player theory is constrained regarding the 1965 reform process, its utilization in these various instances underscores the fundamental reason that reforming the UNSC appears exceedingly improbable. If even one of the influential permanent members is unwilling to alter the status quo, the chances of reform taking place diminish significantly.

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5.2 Recommendation for Future Study

This thesis suggests several recommendations for future studies. One suggestion is to further examine other proposals for reforming the UNSC to understand and establish criteria for permanent membership. This examination will help determine if a state is eligible for permanent membership based on specific criteria that can be used as a benchmark for other countries or under-represented regions.

This analysis may encompass various elements such as economic influence, military strength, human rights practices, regional representation, and contributions to global peace and security. By establishing a set of clear and widely accepted standards, the research could create a framework for evaluating potential candidates for permanent membership, ensuring that selections are made based on merit rather than political motivations. Additionally, it would provide a mechanism to tackle the issue of under-representation, especially for regions that have been historically overlooked in the current UNSC framework. Moreover, this study could investigate how these standards might facilitate the development of a more equitable, inclusive, and effective UNSC, reflecting the changing landscape of international relations. Such a proposal could serve as a basis for broader discussions on UNSC reform, promoting a more transparent and fair process for the selection of permanent members.

It is important to note that this study does not intend to suggest particular reform strategies. However, to address the lack in the proposals, further reform suggestions may be put forward after conducting an in-depth study. These new proposals should aim to better represent and gain acceptance from UN member states. Additionally, a feasibility study could be conducted to assess the practicality of implementing reforms to the UNSC. This study may identify both short-term and long-term reforms, as well as easily achievable changes that can be implemented. Furthermore, continuous research should be conducted to determine if there is still a need for UNSC reform and identify the best approach to adopt. Reforming the UNSC alone may not represent the most effective approach moving forward. Instead, pursuing broader institutional reforms within the UN or other international entities might prove to be a more efficient or complementary strategy. For example,

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strengthening the functions of regional organizations or UN General Assembly, or reassessing the governance frameworks of other global institutions could address issues related to representation, decision-making, and equity within the UNSC.

It may be discovered that reforming the UN or other international organizations could be a more effective path towards achieving UNSC reform. Research in this area should not solely concentrate on the UNSC but also investigate how reforms in the broader international system can facilitate the objectives of UNSC reform. This could include analyzing the interactions among various UN bodies, regional coalitions, and other international organizations to identify how they can collectively foster a more inclusive, equitable, and effective global governance framework.

5.3 Conclusion

The endeavor for UNSC and membership expansion is perceived as unlikely in the foreseeable future. As mentioned earlier, the permanent members are not expected to relinquish its veto privileges. As a result, any restructuring of the UNSC will require significant compromise, not just from the permanent members but also from the other member nations of the UN. Progress is anticipated to be made only when the countries advocating for expansion realize that significant concessions are necessary for success.

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