

How Should The United Nations Security Council be Reformed to Better Ensure International Peace and Security?

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Abstract: Concerning its original mandates and with consideration to its original aims, the United Nations Security Council has largely failed to fulfill its duty and hence has become ineffective. According to the two "timeless procedural obstacles": veto and membership concluded by Weiss, the permanent members are abusing their veto privilege, rendering the UNSC ineffective, while the current geopolitical landscape of the current and future world is not represented within the Council, which was established and fixed since 1945. Both problems are increasingly relevant in our multipolar, globalized 21st Century world. Based on these two main factors, the Security Council has been unable to effectively accomplish its paramount duty of maintaining international peace and security. Problems exposed by the Security Council desperately need practical, persistent, and immediate solutions and reforms as the world tries its best to prevent tensions from developing into regional and global conflicts. However, the future of the Security Council represents a gloomy picture. Unfortunately, proposals that can be potentially adopted will not effectively address the underlying problems, and recommendations aimed at addressing these problems are not likely to pass the legal barriers outlined in the United Nations Charter. Reforming the Security Council is a long and winding road. With the current level of global consensus, it won't be easy to see the United Nations Security Council reformed and reconstructed.

Keywords: *The United Nations Security Council, Peace, and Security, Geopolitical Landscape*

1. Introduction

On 24th October 1945, the world embraced the formal formation of the United Nations (UN) after the destructive Second World War, bringing its six main organs into existence, and the Security Council was one of the most crucial parts. The Security Council maintains international peace and security, promotes friendly relations between countries, solves global problems through cooperation, promotes respect for human rights, and coordinates national actions [1]. However, after decades of operation,

the capabilities and capacity of the Security Council to carry out its initial responsibilities have been brought under intense international scrutiny. Gradually intensifying voices of criticism claim that the Security Council's actions have deviated from its original purposes when it was established. This concern is pronounced as the principal actors on the international stage often break international law themselves and can evade the sanctions and repercussions under the rule-based international order. The problem of the Security Council intensifies due to its apparent lack of representation and diversity in a multipolar and globalized world, much different from the international order in 1945, when it was founded. It is worth questioning whether the Security Council has become ineffective and incompetent. How should the Security Council be reformed to fix the problems? Will improved proposals achieve their intended outcomes? This report will answer these questions by identifying possible factors and explanations for the Security Council's diminishing efficacy. Placing problems leads to the introduction and evaluation of patterns shown by possible reform solutions to conclude that it is unrealistic for any reform proposal to effectively address the Security Council's current problems and be politically feasible and adaptable to create such an impact.

2. Identifying the Problems

2.1. Why Has Security Council Become Problematic?

As a crucial part of the United Nations (UN), the Security Council (SC) has shouldered the chief responsibility for maintaining an internationally peaceful and secure environment under the restriction of the United Nations Charter, at least according to its theoretical definition. However, in practice, the SC has become ineffective concerning its primary mandate of preserving international peace and security [2]. The primary pushing forces are the abusive uses of veto power initiated by permanent members and the need for more inclusive representation in the Council.

2.2. Abuse of Veto Power

On November 17, 2022, the General Assembly of the UN opened its annual debate for its members, in which speakers from each country once again appealed for expanding the Security Council admissions and new possible solutions to enhance the Council's performance. During the debate, multiple representatives mentioned how the veto power obstructs the Council's operations. Indeed, the frequent abuse of veto power by the P5 is attributed to the SC's inefficacy. It breaches its original purpose, stalls international peace-making, and decreases its positive impact.

Veto is a special voting privilege that the creator of the UN Charter grants to the permanent members of the Council, including the Russian Federation, the UK (the United Kingdom), China, and the United States (the US) [3]. As recorded by the Article 27 of the UN Charter, an affirmative vote of the nine members, including permanent & non-permanent members, is required to exercise all decisions in the SC [4]. If, during this process, any of the P5 casts veto powers on a proposed resolution, then it will be directly disapproved [3].

According to the data collected in the Security Council Report, from 1946 to 2022, have been 251 vetoes exercised on various issues, including more than 200 disapproved draft resolutions [5]. It is an undoubted fact that the veto power has been constantly abused, usually involving illegal acts by the permanent members, to obstruct the proper application of new member states and provide protection from one's illicit actions.

The P5 could purposely achieve prevention from new membership due to diplomatic conflicts. As a result, such privileged procedures have caused the Council and even the United Nations to be ineffective, unfair, and divided. Article 4 of the UN Charter grants the P5 this right to affect the admissions of new members of the United Nations and the Council: "The recommendations of the Security Council will affect the new UN membership applications [6]." This privilege has delivered

the complete initiative to the hands of the permanent Council members. With such an initiative, the P5 is incentivized to invite their preferred countries to join the United Nations and prioritized to deter their rival states' entrance. As a result, the admission of the United Nations is seriously swung, which depends on the interests of the Security Council's permanent members.

According to Wouters and Ruys, about 25 percent of all vetoes has been cast to oppose membership application since the day the UN was funded [7]. For example, from August 1948 to September 1949, the Soviet Union cast nine vetoes upon membership applications from states like Ceylon, North Korea, Nepal, Portugal, Jordan, Italy, and Finland [5]. Also, the US rejected the request from Vietnam five times [5]. The international disputes and deadlocks between states have been commonly acknowledged, especially among the influential permanent members of the Council. The unstrained veto employment to block new members has frequently deteriorated these rivalries rather than promoted unity [7].

Besides blocking members' applications, the P5 also exercises vetoes to protect oneself from sanctions or punishments after violations of international laws, which obstructs the Security Council's international peace-making and stalls the exercise of effective regulation of responsible states, especially when the veto is exercised to sometimes covering the illegal acts by permanent members themselves. It is particularly evident in the most recent example in September 2022, when the Russian Federation vetoed the draft solution circulated by the United States and Albania on the invasion of Ukraine [8,9]. Although Russia's action received a broad rebuke from the international community, the veto power authorized Russia the right to avoid taking responsibility for its illegal attack on Ukraine and protect itself from possible punishments.

On the other hand, the permanent members also cast veto power to shield their allies from punishments for violating international laws. With the shield from the permanent member countries, many countries can also enjoy the privilege of escaping their responsibility. For example, the United States vetoed several draft solutions opposing Israel's illegal actions in Palestine problems from 2003 to 2004 because Israel was a cooperative companion of the US in the Middle East region [10]. Consequently, the proposed punishments on Israel for its illegal deportation of Palestinian citizens and unlawful attack on Palestine territories were continuously miscarried under the wings of the United States.

2.3. Lack of Representation

Another common issue of the Security Council acknowledged in the General Assembly Annual debate is the need for more representation, in which many states or regions need to be better represented in the Security Council to express their opinions and thoughts. Accordingly, the decisions made by the Security Council could be more accurate, overlooking the benefits of non-inclusive members.

According to Article 23 of the UN Charter, the SC members include 15 UN members, and they are categorized into two parts, states with permanent membership and non-permanent memberships. The article directly appoints the US, the Soviet Union, China, the United Kingdom, and France as the five long-lasting permanent members [11]. On the other hand, ten states without permanent memberships would be selected with a two-year term by the general assembly [11].

On an international level, many countries prioritize geographical expansion in the permanent memberships, which the P5 has excluded states from Africa and South America. At the annual debate in 2022, the representative from Sierra Leone expressed this request [12,13]. He suggested five non-permanent and two permanent African members to correct historical injustice. Besides the exclusion of regions, another main critique of the representation of the Security Council, which also appeared in the 2022 General Assembly debate, is that the developing states need more permanent and non-

permanent participation in the SC. Countries like China criticize the Security Council for being prone to developing countries and appeal to the introduction of developing countries in the SC [13].

In conclusion, the Security Council is indeed problematic and ineffective, and the main reasons are the abuse of veto power by the permanent members of the Security Council and the lack of representation in the Council. The veto power transformed into a privileged political tool exclusive to the permanent members to escape potential punishments, protect allies, and enhance international rivalries. Moreover, as a global organization, the Security Council has failed to set itself as an inclusive representation of all states. Without clear standards and effective execution of international laws, the entries of various countries into the Security Council have been ignored due to economic or regional reasons, which inflicts unfairness and division.

As the primary platform that is supposed to provide international peace-making and decide significant global issues, the SC has failed to accomplish its mission and satisfy the needs of the entire international community. Thus, the Security Council needs immediate reforms, which highlights the importance of recognizing the problems of the Security Council.

2.4. Why Does the United Nations Security Council Need Reform Urgently?

Because of the abuse of veto power by the permanent members and underrepresentation of the Council, problems have arisen in the Security Council that has presented its primary task of safeguarding international peace and security ineffectively. Under the situation, stagnant and inefficient (even ineffective) solutions make the organization useless and exacerbate existing problems.

Since Security Council was established in 1942, it has played a pivotal role in transnational negotiations such as case arbitration, prohibition of aggression, and military action [14]. But historical forms of mediation are gradually becoming inefficient enough for the current international situation, despite its formal role according to the UN Charter to preserve global safety. The Security Council is defeated to pass the most significant challenges that the world faces today. To reach a better deal, the Security Council must reform its mediation and treatment in order to fulfill its mandate as quickly as possible.

2.5. The intended role of the Security Council

The United Nations ought to fulfill the obligation of preserving international peace. It maintains harmonious connections among states and promotes social processes (United Nations). The United Nations struggles to hold harmony across the world, help nations collaborate with others to improve people's livelihood and be the focus of sorting the national actions to carry out these goals.

2.5.1. Inability to Keep the National Invasion

Geopolitical realignment and conflict significantly weaken the effect of the United Nations' negotiation [15]. UN Security Council should do certain things to prevent a country from invading another. Obviously, the United Nations Security Council was founded to fulfill its duty. The war between Russia and Ukraine is one of the most severe problems in the world, which has influenced a lot. All humanity has been affected by the war in different aspects.

When the war started, Ukrainians fled the clash in their motherland, and many Russian men were conscripted by force. This invasion has induced calamitous death, extensive exile, and food crises [16]. People's safety is not guaranteed; 8 million refugees in Ukraine moved to adjacent countries, and brings a labor shortage and education tension; Meanwhile, the war also changed the geopolitical situation-Finland, and Sweden reversed decades of neutrality and joined NATO; Russia, the leading producer of wheat, barley, and cooking oil, with most of the output exported to Africa and Middle

Eastern. Also, fertilizer and petroleum were exported from Russia. The war cut commodity circulation, intensifying climate challenges and unavailable resources, soaring food and gas prices [16]. Simultaneously, as a country with nuclear power, the war between Russia and Ukraine stimulates the world toward realignment. Russia has many atomic weapons, frightening NATO, the EU, and the United Nations. It exacerbates tensions and diplomatic shifts. The United Nations Security Council has no role to play in this. Militaries consume a large amount of fossil fuels, which directly causes global warming [16].

2.5.2. Inability to Resolve Conflicts between Great Powers

Instability in relations between major powers also makes Security Council's work harder. The existing principles of the Security Council cannot stop and lapse serious facts compulsorily, which leaves it unable to meet its obligations.

Since World War II, China has grown massively, regardless of economy, technology, or science. Security Council hasn't adapted to this fact which leads to it being unable to fix the growing tension between great people. International politics is a struggle for powers. The contest between nations is expected and needed [17]. The growth of China provoked fear in Russia, as much as anger and a desire to stop it in the United States. "The growth of the power of one increases the fear of the other." (The rule is identical for everyone) Although Russia wants to stop the progress of China just like the United States, there is still a different position. For America, the strength of China has threatened its political fixture in the world since World War II. Regarding Russia, China's development just stimulates the natural desire against unpredictable consequences for international standing and adjusts how to balance the complicated relations with China [17].

2.5.3. Inability to Face Global Collective Challenges

The characteristics of the countries determined that nations solve the problem in distinctive patterns. This makes UN hard to have a unified strategy when facing collective global challenges. The Security Council had no way to negotiate with different countries and find peaceful and effective ways to control the situation. The Security Council cannot mediate and resolve problems well enough to fulfill its duty to keep people safe. Undoubtedly, the Security Council cannot compel all nations to listen and carry out their suggestions.

Also, the Security Council does not help to lighten the climate crisis. China, the United States, Russia, India, and many other big countries are still seriously overshooting their carbon emissions. Excessive carbon emission severely damages the atmosphere; Japan insists on dumping the Fukushima nuclear wastewater, causing damage to the Marine ecology, and taking risks to the ecosystem. The Russian invasion of Ukraine also extensively harmed Ukraine's natural environment, which destroyed biodiversity and led to the global climate crisis [16]. Those events harm the environment and cause sea level rise, severe weather increases, rainfall changes, and habitat reduction.

3. Proposals

3.1. Proposals for and Evaluation of Veto Reform

The detrimental effects of the veto power on the United Nations Security Council's incompetence to carry out its responsibilities in preserving global peace and security have become apparent, considering the Council's current issues and duties due to the misuse of veto power. To achieve the Security Council's responsibility and ensure international harmony and security, in view of the effectiveness and legality, the proposal of double veto is most likely to be the first step in veto reform to attain better global peace and stability.

3.1.1. Existing Proposals for the Reform of the Veto

Getting Rid of the Veto Entirely

There are proposals suggesting abolishing the present veto entirely [18,19]. While this proposal is too rigorous to attain, most states have moved away from proposing the total elimination of the veto power and have instead suggested more moderate solutions.

Limiting the Veto Power

Several proposals for restraining the veto, from double veto to restricting ban in specific ranges.

First, the double veto is a popular proposal for constraining the ban, which means the permission to use veto rights should be attained with the agreement of at least two permanent members of the Security Council casting opposing votes concurrently [20].

She was second, limiting the veto power advocates eliminating the veto power in cases involving widespread atrocities. France first announced the proposal in 2001, refusing to exercise veto rights in situations involving mass atrocities and block humanitarian action. Several proposals follow to support such recommendations in the international community, such as the ACT Group's Code of Conduct.

Furthermore, another commonly suggested proposal is to refrain from the right to veto any proceedings related to Chapter VI of the UN Charter, which pertains to resolving disputes through peaceful means. A proposal variation tries to limit the veto under the guidelines in Chapter VII of the UN Charter (A/53/47) [21-23,24].

Expanding the Number of States with Veto

There have been several proposals to expand the number of states possessing the veto power in the Security Council, the G4 proposal with a total of 25 members and 6 additional permanent seats [25]. And the African Union proposal is considering the establishment of six new non-permanent seats for African countries as well as the creation of two new permanent seats with veto power specifically allocated to African nations are some of the most notable proposals [26-28].

No veto on issues that the state is involved with

The existing proposal takes several steps to make sure that it is indeed one of the parties of the conflict and that other Security Council members should vote to freeze its veto power.

First, state parties to the dispute are invited to attend the meeting of the Security Council that is specially related to the issue. Second, the participant should give evidence of the permanent member's involvement in the war. When the Council finally votes to recognize the permanent member as a party to the dispute, if three-fifths of the Security Council vote in favor, the permanent member's ability to veto should be frozen [29].

3.1.2. Evaluation of the Proposals

Effectiveness

First, getting rid of the veto entirely would promote democracy, fairness, and accountability in the process of making decisions within the Security Council. With this progress, the Council would more effectively respond to a crisis concerning international peace and security. However, the UN may become like the League of Nations, which failed and was dissolved, if it loses the veto power held by its most influential member states, the permanent members [30-32].

Second, there are several proposals concentrating on limiting veto power. As for the submission of a double veto, the proposal would primarily help mitigate the negative impacts of the veto power while still preserving the permanent members' veto privilege. In addition, banishing the exercise of the veto in situations of widespread and severe crimes against humanity would allow the Security Council to protect human rights better and build trust and confidence [21,33,34]. Besides, by limiting

the veto under a specific chapter of the UN Charter, the Security Council can also increase its effectiveness in solving international stability and safety crises.

Furthermore, the expansion of the Security Council with veto has both positive and negative impacts. Adding members with the power of veto would increase the representation of different regions and countries, accompanied by a greater diversity of views, enhancing cooperation and accountability of the Council [7]. Nevertheless, expanding the Security Council with veto power has drawbacks; in addition to selecting which countries should acquire veto, the consequence is that more countries obtaining the privilege of veto would enlarge the inequality of the international legal system and have a higher possibility of causing gridlock [29].

Finally, no veto on issues that the state is directly involved in the conflict could enhance the trustworthiness of the Security Council, showing its decisive actions in tackling crisis destabilizing global stability [29]. However, this proposal also has limitations. Since this proposal stays in the present framework of the UN Charter, it is only a "gentlemen's agreement," which indicates that there is no consequence even if one of the parties to the conflict does veto a related resolution.

Legality

The proposals can be categorized into two different groups.

The first group includes eliminating the veto power, limiting the veto power, and expanding the number of states that can veto. However, either proposal must be adopted for the UN Charter to be enforceable. As per Article 108 of the UN Charter, all five permanent members of the Security Council can veto the reformed amendments. The attitude of the permanent members to improve the veto should be considered. While China's position towards the ban is still unknown, the United Kingdom, France, and the United States are optimistic about partly reform of the veto right. France is willing to voluntarily restrain the use of the veto when mass crimes are presented while it rejects losing the veto right [29]. The United Kingdom supports not using the ban regarding large-scale human rights abuses, but its attitudes toward other proposals restricting the veto are unknown [29]. The viewpoint of the United States opposing objective to change the status and privileges of the veto power has recently changed in the face of the Russia-Ukraine war, taking turns to back for expanding the number of permanent and non-permanent members of the Security Council [35]. For Russia, it is against any changes regarding veto rights. Under this circumstance, the Security Council's permanent members hold veto power, paradoxically allowing them to veto any proposals to reform the veto system.

The other group of proposals only contains no veto on issues that the state is involved in, which could be reformed within the current framework of the United Nations, and its legal issues are resolved.

The Most Likely Achieving Proposal

Based on the evaluation of the proposals above from the perspectives of effectiveness and legality, the submission of a double veto has the highest possibility to be achieved. First, although the double veto proposal limits the power of veto held by the Security Council's permanent members, it can preserve their present statuses, which the permanent members are likely to accept. Moreover, a double veto can reduce the potential for Council gridlock by discouraging individual permanent members from blocking resolutions. Thus, applying the dual ban to the recent solution concerning Ukraine, blocked by Russia, it can no longer be impeded by Russia despite China's choice to abstain since it always takes two vetoes to set aside a resolution.

3.2. The Feasibility of Independent International Military Force of the United Nations

A more practical method to improve the United Nations is to reform the veto. Also, there has always been a glorious but more idealistic immediate vision of an autonomous worldwide armed force. Most people believe using military force is vital to prevent a third world war and maintain peace. To

understand why creating an independent military power is still tricky, the thesis will attempt to contrast the 1940s and contemporary thoughts about such a force. Some recommendations for controlling and employing this independent military force will be presented.

3.2.1. The Concept of Creating an Independent International Military Force Emerged Following World War II.

The public is not wholly unfamiliar with the concept; creating a separate armed force to enforce adherence to its judgments was first conceived in the 1940s. Almost the entire world was embroiled in World War II (the Second World War) from 1939 to 1945. This historical context has increased the desire for peace among the world's people.

3.2.2. Why Does This Global Independent Military Force Need to be Established?

The nations with big powers have the propensity to think too highly of themselves and either disobey or ignore some UN resolutions or guidelines. Due to the Soviet Union's resistance to Security Council resolutions, which had a comparatively strong hold over the East, the United States started military action against North Korea in 1950 to preserve its interests in Asia [36]. Even if the United Nations can publicly denounce this, there isn't a strong and visible force vying for a reaction that addresses the circumstances in that nation and a solid and visual deterrent. To ensure that a world war's catastrophe never unfolds again, the United States has also discussed the necessity to calculate the costs of battle and develop military systems that engage all nations. It was challenging to try to create a separate military unit within The Times. But it appears that at the time, the idea of the military was not clearly defined, and such as Canada initially questioned who would be in charge and management of this separate military force. Should the autonomous military force, which consists of troops from various nations, be governed by each country separately or by a single international body?

3.2.3. Several Justifications for Not Establishing an International Independent Military Force

There are more explanations for why a free worldwide army was not created immediately. Thoughts of a return to normal were prevalent after the First World War, but the Second World War left much of Europe and Asia in ruins and caused even greater destruction. According to the widespread collapse and destruction of homes, it will take at least five years to repair the land and organize dwellings [37]. It will take more than ten years to clean up the degradation of the natural environment where people live caused by all the chemical weapons used in conflict. These pollutants include air, soil, and drinking water. The bridge was destroyed, several ports in Europe and Asia suffered major damage or completely collapsed, and locomotives and other train equipment vanished. The great cities of Berlin, Tokyo, Warsaw, and Kiev were reduced to ruins and ashes. This inadvertently contributed to the severe food shortages that followed the war. Many Europeans eat less than 1,000 calories per day; in Holland, tulip bulbs are consumed.

After the war, millions of individuals were forcibly relocated or exiled, moving as refugees. Following 1945, Poland deported 1.3 million Germans and the newly formed Czech Republic over 3 million. There are 300,000 orphans or separated children in Yugoslavia alone. Many abandoned infants compound the issue [37]. It is impossible to estimate the number of women raped throughout Europe by Red Army soldiers who considered them war booty. Still, between 1945 and 1948, two million women per year in Germany had abortions. They can only think about how to ensure their survival first because their homes have been destroyed, they have been uprooted, and their safety is at grave risk. They are unable to think about or concentrate on anything else. In addition, the war has caused severe economic hardship, leaving several nations cash-strapped [37]. Having scarce resources, European nations like Britain and France were left behind in the war, except for the United

States and its Allies like Canada and Australia. A more stable scenario and financial backing from other sources are necessary for the growth of an independent military force with a sense of duty. Unfortunately, achieving these conditions was problematic given the historical context of the period.

3.3. Reasons for Still No Justification for The Creation of an Independent International Military Force

Most nations today have their own autonomous systems of government, economy, and law, in contrast to the post-World War II era. But why hasn't a military force of this kind been developed internationally in modern society?

3.3.1. The Lack of Personnel

One factor is that the army lacks personnel and may soon confront a more significant recruitment challenge. Here's an illustration: Since fewer Americans are becoming eligible for military service, the Army's strength has dropped to its lowest point in 75 years, placing an increase on unstable and unprepared service members. According to the Defense Department, 71 percent of the close to 34 million 17 to 24-year-olds in the United States would not be eligible for the draft under current enrollment requirements because of mental or physical ailments, low educational achievement, or severe criminal convictions [38]. Many people who are qualified refuse to join. After all, averting a third World war and, if necessary, employing force to maintain peace in the globe were two of the goals of creating international military forces. The abilities of those recruited into this multinational military force must be greater than those of the men and women in the national armed forces on average. We can only ensure the use of force against some violators when it is crucial and required in this way. If an independent international military force's soldiers aren't as capable as a nation's regular defense forces, deploying forces as a counterbalance makes no sense.

3.3.2. Causes of Military

Another thing to think about is if every nation has an entire military system or a defensive force. Yet there are 23 nations without a military globally [36,39]. The majority are minor nations without any sort of military power. The Vatican, Samoa, Nauru, Kiribati, Costa Rica, Liechtenstein, Andorra, and other minor island nations are among them. Six additional countries that do not have permanent armies nevertheless keep little paramilitary security units for their protection. They include Panama, Monaco, Mauritius, Vanuatu, Monaco, Iceland, and Haiti [36,39]. Because of their tiny size and lack of external enemies, many nations, like the Federated States of Micronesia, Palau, Samoa, and Tuvalu, did not have militaries when they attained independence. The lack of an army is a source of national pride for many of these nations, which has even aided some in assuming the role of international peacekeepers. For instance, the United Nations University for Peace's headquarters is in Costa Rica, while Iceland participates in peacekeeping operations in Palestine and Bosnia and Herzegovina through its Crisis Response Unit. Another up for debate is whether these nations can provide the United Nations with capable personnel if a free-standing international military force is established. If these nations' populations go for an extended period without having national defense forces, they won't be able to comprehend and adjust to military control. Even if they are compelled to transfer talent to these nations, it's possible that they won't be able to fit in and obtain intensive training. This is detrimental to the long-term growth of a self-sufficient military force. Some nations that might serve as the primary sources of military talent might harbor hatred toward others who don't. A certain number of contradictions will be sparked by creating a free-standing international armed force, negating the purpose of its design in the first place.

4. The Winding Road to Reforming the United Nations Security Council

The United Nations is the largest and most influential international organization on a global scale. The United Nations was established in 1945, and its pioneer League of Nations failed to stop World War II. One of the essential purposes of the United Nations (UN), which came into being with the bloody conflict, is to “maintain international peace and security [40]”, and the UN Security Council (UNSC), as one of its six central departments, with the sole power to impose sanctions and enforce legally binding resolutions. In this sense, the UNSC is the most important international body responsible for promoting and safeguarding international peace and security [41,42]. However, the UNSC was rarely reformed since its establishment to ensure its continuing relevance [42]. The post-WWII global system was founded based on equality among sovereign and independent states [43]; nevertheless, when the UN was founded in 1945, it argued to a large extent that the superpowers were responsible for safeguarding global peace [44]. Baleson believes many inconsistencies exist in the UNSC's philosophy and its practice [41].

However, although it is previously mentioned that Security Council has not been able to fulfill its duty of conflict prevention several times in the past, it was not until its apparent failure to prevent and end the Russo-Ukraine War of 2022 that serious plans to reform were once again put under the spotlight of intense international scrutiny. While the necessity and urgency for Security Council reforms are recognized, several problems with reforms, including: 1.) the legal barriers as contained in the United Nations Charter, 2.) politics among the influential permanent members, and 3.) disagreements among regional blocs of aspiring nations severely damage the chance for proposals to succeed, all of which can easily jeopardize reform efforts. It is also arguable the risk that reform proposals may not only bring far fewer practical benefits to the world than intended but might even further jeopardize international security and world peace. Therefore, it is very unlikely that any proposal on reforming the United Nations Security Council will be feasible and capable of solving the underlying problems facing the Security Council.

Article 23, paragraph 1, of the Charter of the United Nations sets out two main criteria: first, the Security Council's mandate in maintaining world peace and security; second, committed to establishing a fair geographical distribution within the United Nations [11]. The first criterion, although a matter of principle, has been abandoned and is quickly confirmed from the list of non-permanent members elected in previous elections. In the first 20 years, before the number of UNSC increased from 11 to 15, Latin America obtained two and two by Western Europe and the Commonwealth; one was designated as Africa and Asia, and the other was designated as Eastern Europe, which was initially set for a country in the Soviet camp [45,46].

4.1. A Review of Literature on Reform Rhetoric and Evolution of Reform Debate

According to Weiss, there are two "timeless procedural obstacles": veto and membership, around which discontents regarding the status quo of the UNSC develop and which proposals for reform aim to address. The increase in the membership of the United Nations was mainly due to a decolonization movement in the mid-1950s, which significantly exceeded the expectations of its founders [46,47]. In this context, decolonization coincided with and contrasted with the integration and nationalism pursued by European countries. Hosli and Döfler argue that very little reform has been brought to the UNSC since its establishment, clearly not reflective of the overwhelming trend of globalization and independence of former colonies and the development of emerging economies [48]. Similarly, Weiss points out that the Council does not reflect power allocation in the 21st century [32]. Thekiso et.al concludes that the UN has failed to keep up with global dynamics [42].

After the Second World War, because of the Council's term of office and its veto clauses, the five significant councils could adopt or undermine resolutions that impacted global peace and security in

the twenty-first century. Barnett & Duvall and Hosli & Dörfler argue that this is no longer relevant or tolerable [49]. Although the number of non-permanent members increased from 6 to 10 in 1965 and, in fact, the majority of United Nations member States still insist that more Member States join the Security Council, since 1965, the number of seats on the Security Council has not been increased [50]. The issue of implementing the expansion of the membership of the UNSC appears to be a long-term problem, with few results achieved [41,48].

Similarly controversial and problematic as the size of the UNSC and the unlimited tenure of its permanent members, Article 108 effectively gives each permanent member the right to undermine its official authority. However, almost all other members of the United Nations have criticized the veto as unfair. Since P-5 has a vested interest in maintaining its head, and since the Constitution of the United Nations does not stipulate that they must waive this right, the veto has become. It continues to be a factor hindering change. The permanent members operate above the law or as the law themselves.

Regarding reform proposals, in March 2005, reiterating the saliency of UNSC reform, then-Secretary General Kofi Annan proposed two models for the enlargement of the Council with the regional groupings in mind [41,48]. Not only did the Secretary-General support reforms, Weiss pointed out that most countries also rhetorically supported the mindless call for equity, especially the expansion of membership, the abolition of veto, and so on [32]. However, Weiss pointed out that there has been no progress in the changes in this number and process, as it is simply impossible to agree on the committee's specific composition or abolish the veto [32].

In recent years, the G4, a notable proponent group of UNSC reforms consisting of Brazil, Germany, Japan, and India, became the first group to present an alternative reform proposal in UN legislation. With emerging powers wanting to assert their presence on the global governance platform, the UNSC reform was supported by more than one-third of all member states. The G4 is an example of the newly independent states and former colonists realizing the reality of a multipolar world. Similar calls for more excellent representation in the UNSC are echoed by many of the emerging economies in the United for Consensus (UfC), another critical group of nations propagating reform proposals. All these groups' members are emerging economic and political powers, which increasingly amplifies their identities and norms in international relations today. Therefore, these countries are legitimate, authoritative, and respected to support each other and require each other to be fully represented in the Council [41,48]. Generally speaking, due to the increasing number of countries supporting multipolarization and advocating that all countries have the same right to participate in international affairs, the forces emerging from the southern hemisphere demand that they have a more significant say in global matters according to their size and number. Indeed, Finnemore and Sikkink argue that UNSC reform is "no longer a matter of public debate" but has become the acquisition of good status within the UN and in global governance overall [50]. Baleson reinforces this view, suggesting that this proves that the norm of UNSC reform has entered the internalization stage [41].

However, critics remain cautious over UNSC reforms, indicating widespread difficulties and inconsistencies regarding the reform proposals. Weiss warned that state and individual analysts did not fully deal with the imbalance between UNSC seats and nations' capacity outside the chamber [47]. Weiss said they had looked for an imbalance in the number of countries around the world, the number of members of the UN Council, and the veto power held by the five countries [47].

4.2. Legal Barriers Facing Reform Proposals

To reform the existing structure, membership, and procedures of the Security Council, several formal legal requirements and barriers face any proposal attempting to do so. Indeed, Article 108 of the United Nations Charter — the founding constitution of the United Nations — states that amendments can only be passed when "they have been adopted by a vote of two-thirds of the members of the

General Assembly and ratified by their respective constitutional processes." To make matters more complex, a veto from any permanent member can override the entire reform proposal, albeit possibly having already gained a $\frac{2}{3}$ super majority. Therefore the group of consenters to the proposal should "include all the permanent members of the Security Council. Such difficulty is incredibly pronounced, as, in the 21st Century, the world is growing increasingly multipolar following the emergence of several economies representing a broad spectrum of interests, ideologies, and demands. The lack of a unifying, cohesive, and majoritarian world narrative is the result of the diversification of opinions among members of both the General Assembly and the Security Council, and therefore a consensus will be more challenging to reach. Hence, retrospectively, the legal barrier to reform, as outlined by the United Nations Charter, has led to the failure of numerous attempts to alter the Security Council. The result is that the Security Council has only been successfully changed once in its 77-year history – Resolution XVIII (1963), which expanded the Council's non-permanent members from six to ten.

4.3. Disagreements among Permanent Members

Aside from the legal and procedural barriers to reforming the Security Council, politics amongst the powerful, veto-wielding permanent members make it increasingly difficult for a reform proposal to gain their approval. Veto power is recognized as an exclusive privilege owned by the victors of the Second World War: The United States of America, Russia, China, the United Kingdom, and France. Their possession of the veto privilege allows them to operate above international law. Also, it immunizes them from facing repercussions and countermeasures by the UNSC over their breaches of international law. Under an increasingly competitive and unstable global order dominated by realpolitik and simmering regional and global tensions, with the recent ongoing US-China competition at heart, major world powers have become more conservative and defensive of their interest than ever. Therefore, it seems unreasonable for the permanent members to watch their exclusive rights be removed or be weakened by any reform proposal. Driven by their national interest priorities, the Chinese won't support either Japan or India; Africa cannot agree on any candidate, nor can the Arabs; and while Britain and France would support Germany, most would not support the addition of another permanent European member. The simplest way for any permanent member to dismiss a proposal is by vetoing it, which practically defeats any proposal deemed unfavorable to the national interest of any permanent member.

Given that there is no alternative means by which the result of a veto decision can be circumvented or have its impact mitigated, politics in the Security Council make reform proposals very difficult to pass. This is due to the exclusivity of veto power and the unlikelihood of any one proposal to appeal to the national interest of all permanent members. In addition, according to Hume, the P-5 countries had secretly agreed on several issues before referring a set of issues to the Security Council. Therefore, ensuring the effectiveness of the Council is a political issue; it is a statutory action, and at the same time, under the current mode of voting, democracy is bound to be undermined, thus hampering its legitimacy [48].

4.4. Disagreement among Nations Aspirant to Challenge the Status Quo

Given the complexities of politics and conservative attitudes within the Security Council, the voting stage is almost an unfeasible barrier. However, even before any reform proposal reaches the final voting stage, the coherence of such a proposal and the cohesion of the regional group supporting it might be well undermined by disagreements between regional rivals. Many current reform proposals aim to address the problem of underrepresentation of specific geographical regions, most of which are in the Global South. They typically realize the pain that permanent members are nations home to large populations and industrialized economies in Europe, North America, and Northern Asia.

Regions with smaller, growing economies are underrepresented, the most obvious of which include Latin America, Africa, South Asia, and Southeast Asia. However, there was no consensus regarding the need for reform, which countries should hold the new permanent and non-permanent seats, what new structure the body might adopt, and the reform of the veto, thus affecting the plan to increase representation. For example, rival powers from the same geographical region or continent, similar in territorial size, population, and economy, competing for the position of regional dominance, might oppose and undermine each other's plan to become the Permanent Member representative of the region at the expense of their opportunity. Weiss asks the following questions: how do Argentina and Mexico feel about Brazil's candidacy [47]? Pakistan about India's? South Africa and Egypt about Nigeria's? Weiss provides his answer to the last question, that South Africa and Egypt object to Nigeria's permanent membership candidacy, suggesting that rivalries between the dominant economic powers in Africa undermine the cohesiveness of reform proposals on a regional basis [46]. Indeed, little has changed since 1993, and the rumblings began when Jonah predicted: "It does not appear likely in the short term that this question can be resolved by consensus." It is difficult for regional blocs to decide their preferred candidate nation to represent them through gaining permanent membership status, as the appointment of one significant regional power will almost certainly lead to the alienation and discontent of another considerable power. Therefore, reform proposals will likely be severely disputed even before reaching and facing the legal barrier, potentially stopping them from reaching the voting stage.

4.5. Proposals That May Address The Problem Will Fail in The Political Process

Having established the premise that it is doubtful for any reform proposal for the Security Council to pass, given the exclusive veto privilege by Permanent Members, this section of the essay will examine typical reform plans proposed by countries and blocs to conclude that ambitious goals that can potentially address the underlying problems are very likely to fail due to the politics in the Security Council.

4.6. The Group of Four Nations

Perhaps the most well-known group of aspirant nations is the Group of Four Nations (G4). Founded by four economic heavyweights: Germany, Japan, India, and Brazil, the G4 proposes a Council with 25 members, including six new permanent members: India, Brazil, Germany, Japan, and two African countries) and an additional three elected seats [44]. The Group hopes to make the Council more representative and reflective of the current geopolitical reality by enlarging the number of its permanent and non-permanent members. Akindele and Bassey claim that since a nation's economic power is a significant factor in its capacity to maintain international peace and security, economic superpowers like Japan and Germany are often the greatest advocates for reforming the Security Council.

However, introducing six more veto-wielding powers certainly overhauls the existing power balance held by the current Permanent Members; and due to profound rivalries, China is likely to veto Japan and India's accession, while Russia is likely to do the same with Germany. The plan may be accepted if these countries enter as Permanent Members without veto power and associated privileges. But this theoretical approach fundamentally defeats the aim of improving accountability of the Security Council, which emphasizes diluting and deconcentrating veto power among more Permanent Members. The G4 proposal failed in 2005 because it did not achieve the required two-thirds majority support in the General Assembly. Lee reasons that the common issue among the G4 States is the strong resistance from neighboring countries such as Pakistan, Korea, Italy, and Argentina, while Japan, in particular, "lacks the moral ground" and must repair its relationship with

China and South Korea over WWII atrocities if it desires to play a more significant political role in the UN.

4.7. Proposals That Might Pass Will Be Inadequate Addressing Problems of the Security Council

In addition to a slim, uncertain chance for proposals aimed at solving problems to be passed by the Security Council, conversely, those proposals that might potentially be passed will not properly address underlying problems the Security Council faces. This section of the essay will examine the apparent lack of practicality, enforceability, and effectiveness of some of the most important proposals.

4.8. United for Consensus (UfC)

The UfC focuses on the need to expand the representativeness of the Security Council. It calls for the establishment of a Security Council with 25 members. It does not need to add more permanent members, but it needs to create new permanent seats in each region so that the members of each part can determine which seats are allocated in each area and the required duration [44]. UfC's proposal requires regional organizations to rotate for permanent seats. According to Lee, the UfC countries are only in favor of increasing the number of non-permanent categories, alternately at long-term seats to regional groups, and small States (less than 1 million of the population) and medium States (1 million to 10 million of the population) are unlikely to be re-elected soon. The UfC avoids directly challenging the current structure of the permanent membership, and it does not propose the stripping of existing veto privilege nor ask to add in more permanent members to dilute and deconcentrate the veto power. This makes the United for Consensus proposal more likely to be adopted than that of the G4, as it avoids damaging the interests of the powerful, veto-wielding permanent members, implying that it can be more likely to pass than a proposal directly challenging them. However, the UfC proposal is severely hindered by its fundamental weakness: the confusion aroused by the lack of transparent, specific countries the proposal aims to make permanent members and the length of time they will uphold this role undermines the reliability, persuasiveness, and effectiveness of this proposal when put into action.

4.9. Four Comprehensive and Overarching Arguments Against the Practicality and Feasibility of Security Council Reforms

In response to numerous reform proposals, four comprehensive counterarguments arise, which effectively put under doubt both the practical values and possible future repercussions reform proposals intend to achieve. This section of the essay will discuss two sides: 1.) intended benefits will not result, and 2.) unintended harm and negative repercussions will accrue. Most current academic literature on UNSC reform focuses solely, or primarily, on the legal barriers and politics thwarting the reform. However, evaluating the intended and potentially unintended outcomes of UNSC reforms is highly relevant and essential as a crucial part of determining the extent to which the intended results of the reforms can be achieved. A contingent question should be asked to everyone proposing reform plans: if the program cannot solve the problems with UNSC, why should they be considered?

4.9.1. Impairing the Positions of the P-5 Risks Impairing UNSC's Strength and Enforcement

The mission of the United Nations is to re-establish order politically and socially. To seek stability to maintain world peace and security. The Security Council's permanent members were designed to be a small but mighty group of major powers, who lead the world in economic, technological, and

military power, as well as global influence, to "ensure prompt and effective action by the United Nations." The Security Council's emphasis on effectiveness and enforceability makes its permanent members exclusive. However, by expanding permanent membership with the reason of increasing representation and with the addition of secondary powers such as Japan and Brazil, the nature of the Security Council as a group of the most powerful nations in the world comes under challenge and threat. Weiss feels that in addition to the existing biennial permanent and non-permanent seats, expanding seats is more appropriate; it increases and reflects more diversification. This is because the founders of the United States created a "restricted" committee with "peacekeeping enforcement powers." Reaching consensus among the major countries is a prerequisite for the Council's intention to fulfill its special responsibilities. Weiss et al. argued this is in contrast to the Council of the League of Nations, the general executive committee of all functions of the Union, failing miserably in the field of security, as it requires the unanimous consent of all countries [46]. At the same time, critics pointed out that a Security Council of 25 members "would hardly improve effectiveness" —a "rump" General Assembly certainly would have increased the chances for what one observer poetically called a *Sitzkrieg* over Iraq. The UNSC fundamentally relies on the force and influence of its permanent members to take actions, whose power under the UN system will be impaired with the addition of more permanent members or with the removal of the veto power, echoing the "two timeless procedural obstacles" put forward by Weiss [34,47].

4.9.2. Countries Represent Their Interests, Not the Interest of the Region They Are Located

It is essential to notice that arguments of all current proposals aimed at enhancing representation and democratizing the Security Council by adding more permanent members or enlarging the number of elected seats for an underrepresented region are intrinsically flawed. This is because, fundamentally, Permanent Representatives are appointed by their state and government to represent their country at the United Nations. This means countries aim to represent and foster their fundamental national interests by participating in the United Nations General Assembly and the Security Council.

On the one hand, Gleditsch & Ward, and Väyrynen point out that because closer areas can promote cooperation, socialization, and conceptual integration, regions are particularly conducive to forming group identity. Countries in the same region often share common languages, historical experiences, values, and economic systems, which include a series of unique common interests.

However, since the preferences of the region's countries are inconsistent, the above situation is not universal. Due to the contradictions among the countries in the region, the differences in cultural identity, institutional types, and the development process in the area, the degree of unity in the region decreases, and the common interests in the region also weaken. Member States of the region may also participate in non-regional organizations such as the Non-Aligned Movement. Emerging blocs of developing nations, such as BRICS, are not regional organizations but inter-continental partnerships that unite nations not by their geographical region but by their similar interests for, and level of, economic development. According to Weiss, for example, all of South America but Venezuela and Honduras oppose Brazil's candidacy for permanent membership, suggesting that essential distinctions exist in region blocs, undermining the extent to which a nation can represent its region [46]. With that in mind, it is arbitrary to assert that with the addition of permanent or elected members, the area they belong to will be adequately represented and will become better off. This indicates that even if proposals to improve regional representation are successfully adopted, they fundamentally do not address the problem of underrepresentation.

4.9.3. The Paradox of National Ascendancy

The negative impact of enlarging the Security Council is an apparent factor opposing reform proposals. This theory is based on the assumption that power is not always constant or permanent in international politics. Through the ages, "the rise and decline of a country" is this "evidence." The strong in the past is not strong, and the weak in the past is already strong. The reformed UN Security Council will not represent the culmination of history. In about 30 years, rising powers such as South Korea, Turkey, South Korea, and Mexico may ask, "Why don't we join?" As a result, the debate about reform will resume ("Who represents the Member States at the United Nations?") [79]. This is the direct result of waves of worldwide decolonization, as nations achieve continuous, large-scale economic uplifting, ascending their overall national power, influence, and ambitions. Therefore, the crucial question arises: shall the United Nations Security Council keep expanding in size as countries develop and strengthen over time? This argument highlights the practical impossibility of adding new members to the Security Council, as this inevitably leads to a cycle of vicious enlargement of more and more members over time.

As previously seen, newly decolonized countries demanded a better reflection of their numbers and priorities in the Security Council. Throughout the UN system, countries gained strength, confidence, and assertiveness through independence [47]. In the twenty-first century world, this may be reflected by the rapid developments of the Global South, achieving national ascension, and demanding greater institutional rights and representation, especially at the UNSC.

The spiral of gradual enlargement fundamentally defeats the purpose and original intention of the Security Council, as it was designed to be a small-scale, selected, and practical conference of countries, with the duty to "ensure prompt and effective action" instead of a large body of diverse membership. In addition, enlarging the Security Council also clashes with the permanent members' priority of conserving their position of privilege and influence and, therefore, will likely be defeated during the voting process.

4.9.4. How Reforms Can Lead to the Disengagement and Alienation of Permanent Members

Isolating the Security Council's permanent members would be detrimental, as they form the basis of international order and security.

Since the establishment of the United Nations, it has inevitably relied on the imbalance of the allocation and exercise of rights, put the rights and interests of the majority under the rights and interests of the minority, and taken the "Big Five" as its policy-making strategy. Hence, by removing or weakening the privilege enjoyed by permanent members of the Security Council, either by adding more permanent members or by abolishing the veto privilege, such efforts, and outcomes can undermine their trust in the international system, which can erode the efforts and extent of their commitments to supporting this system. This is exceptionally pronounced by the permanent members' aspirations of dominating and influencing the world to enhance national interests and positions; their status as permanent members enables them to maximize their national interests. Therefore, with less power in the Security Council, permanent members are less likely to keep previous levels of commitments. Such disengagement can be dangerous for the world, as the United Nations Security Council is fundamentally dependent on its members to carry out its duties, under their responsibility of maintaining international peace, which implies that member states are responsible for deploying economic sanctions, trade blockades and eventually adopting the use of force to combat threats to global security if empowered by the Security Council. This is shown by the UNSC Resolution 678 authorized the use of force against Iraq's annexation of Kuwait in 1990, backed by the US, UK, and France as permanent members.

However, on the other hand, the idea that the UN was contingent upon was that the Four Powers, namely the USSR, the US, the UK, and China that emerged out of WWII as the primary victors, would form an authority structure within the post-war international organization, enabling them to be the "policemen" or the "guarantors of security ."It was believed that the League of Nations, the UN's predecessor failed, firstly because there was no determinable division of authority between the Assembly and the Council, and secondly, because of the absence of great power. Looking back at pre-WWII history, the influence and force of the United States, a non-member, could not be used by the League to deter the expansion of Nazi Germany and Fascist Italy, which fundamentally led to the League's failure to prevent the Second World. The contrast between the two drastically different global security outcomes outlines that international peace can often be endangered without the involvement of global superpowers. Therefore, considering that the UN has no army or means to enforce international law and instead relies on its members, it is paramount to keep the permanent members engaged and committed to supporting the United Nations. Without the permanent members' military and economic might, the United Nations' overall power can be severely weakened, and it will not be able to enforce its objectives effectively or perform its duty of peace preservation. It is arguable that by diminishing the power and privilege of the permanent members, the United Nations is also weakening itself. It is, therefore, harmful and risky to try to impair the privileged positions of the permanent members. Thus, if enforced, reform proposals limiting permanent members might worsen the global security landscape.

5. Conclusion

However, on a positive note, it is not inevitable that humanity is doomed to be trapped in a spiral of more conflicts and antagonism in the years to come. In an era when the United Nations Security Council is ineffective and incompetent, regional and global powers find themselves frequently in the position in need of acting responsibly within their capacity as mediators and defenders of the rules-based international order. Through their political, economic, and military influence, they have a greater-than-ever impact on preventing and resolving conflicts. The recent achievement by China in helping to mediate between Iran and Saudi Arabia and US President Jimmy Carter's effort leading to the Israel-Egypt Peace Treaty in 1979 are examples of significant powers contributing to a more peaceful world in which the United Nations was not involved. In the future, major regional and global forces should receive more international support and recognition in mediating peace. While still highly active and committed to making peace through all branches and organs, the United Nations should also assist such efforts by great powers. However, the governments, media, and the public of the international community should be more tolerant of the United Nations, acknowledging the natural limitations to its power and authority as an institution without borders, promised in the UN Charter. The world should rely less on the United Nations in resolving and preventing conflicts and diversify international mechanisms and means towards achieving and preserving international peace.

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