

Joint Master in Global Economic Governance and Public Affairs

Veto Powers' Resistance: United Nations Security Council Reform Proposals and Global Governance Shifts

Supervised by Monika Sus

Lirian Jerliu

2025



Co-funded by
the European Union

ANTI-PLAGIARISM AND FRAUD STATEMENT

I certify that this thesis is my own work, based on my personal study and/or research and that I have acknowledged all material and sources as well as AI tools used in its preparation. I further certify that I have not copied or used any ideas or formulations from any book, article, or thesis, in printed or electronic form, or from AI tools without specifically mentioning their origin, and that complete citations are indicated in quotation marks.

I also certify that this assignment/report has not previously been submitted for assessment in any other unit, except where specific permission has been granted from all unit coordinators involved, and that I have not copied in part or in full or otherwise plagiarized the work of other students and/or persons.

In accordance with the law, failure to comply with these regulations makes me liable to prosecution by the disciplinary commission and the courts of the Republic of France for university plagiarism.

Name: Lirian Jerliu

Date: June 26, 2025

Signature:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "L. Jerliu". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "L" and a stylized "J".

Acknowledgements

I would like to express my deepest gratitude to those who have supported me throughout the journey of completing this thesis.

First and foremost, I am immensely thankful to my supervisor, Monika Sus, for her invaluable guidance, expertise, and encouragement, which have been instrumental in shaping this work.

I extend my heartfelt appreciation to my family, friends, and colleagues for their unwavering support, patience, and encouragement. Your belief in me has been a constant source of motivation.

My sincere appreciation goes to the Centre International de Formation Européenne, Luiss Guido Carli University, and the Young Cell Scheme in Kosovo for their generous support and for providing exceptional opportunities for my personal and professional growth. These opportunities have been pivotal to this academic journey.

Thank you all for being part of this milestone.

Abstract

This thesis examines reform proposals of the United Nation Security Council (UNSC) from 1945 to after 2022, focusing on how G4 countries (Brazil, Germany, India, Japan), African Union (AU), and other efforts expose the Council's legitimacy crisis. Using a realist framework of reference, complemented by institutionalist and constructivist insights, it assesses older reform attempts (e.g., 1965 Expansion, 2005 Annan Models) and most recent, post-2022 proposals (G4, Ezulwini Consensus, Veto Initiative) through case studies, putting four factors into consideration: Institutional Prestige, Alternative Power Configurations, Emerging Powers and Legitimacy, and Crisis-Driven. Evidence finds G4 and AU reform proposals to be most influential, although veto dominance of the five permanent UNSC members and coalition fragmentation persist, with crises regarding veto power use heightening demands for reforms. Yet, the non-binding commitments limited change.

Contents

List of Acronyms.....	6
Chapter 1: Introduction	7
<u>1.1</u> Contextual Background	7
1.2 Research Problem	10
1.3 Research Question and Hypotheses	10
1.4 Significance	12
1.5 Structure.....	12
Chapter 2: Literature Review	14
2.1 Theoretical Frameworks for UNSC Reform.....	15
2.2 Historical Reform Efforts	16
2.3 Veto Power Controversies.....	17
2.4 New regional groupings and emergent powers.....	18
2.5 Gaps in the literature.....	19
Chapter 3: Methodology	23
3.1 Research Design	23
3.2 Data Sources	25
3.2.1 Primary sources	25
3.2.2 Secondary Sources	26
3.3 Analytical Approach	26
3.4 Limitations.....	26
Chapter 4: Historical Analysis of UNSC Reform Attempts	27
4.1 Early Reform Discussions (1945–1965).....	27
4.2 1965 Expansion	28
4.3 1979 Nigerian-Led Initiative	29
4.4 1997 Razali Plan.....	30

4.5 Kofi Annan’s 2005 Models	33
4.6 Impact of Global Crises on Reform Momentum	34
4.7 Veto Power Debates	35
4.8 Emerging Powers and Legitimacy	36
4.9 Lessons Learned	36
Chapter 5: Post-2022 Prospects for UNSC Reform	38
5.1 G4 Plan	39
5.2 Ezulwini Consensus.....	37
5.3 Uniting for Consensus (UfC) Proposal.....	38
5.4 Veto Initiative (2022).....	38
5.5 Small State Initiatives	39
5.6 Alternative Reform Strategies.....	39
5.7 P5 Internal Dynamics	41
5.8 Opposition to Reform	45
5.8.1 Regional Perspectives.....	46
5.9 Could Conditions for Reform be Met?	47
Chapter 6: Conclusion.....	47
6.1 Summary of Findings & Reflection on the four hypotheses.....	47
6.2 Implications for Realist Theory	49
6.3 Implications for Global Governance.....	54
6.4 Policy Recommendations	55
6.5 Future Research	57
6.6 Final Remarks.....	57
Bibliography:	54

List of Acronyms

ACT - Accountability, Coherence, and Transparency

AMISOM - African Union Mission in Somalia

AU - African Union

BRICS - Brazil, Russia, India, China, South Africa

CARICOM - Caribbean Community

EU - European Union

G4 - Group of Four (Brazil, Germany, India, Japan)

GDP - Gross Domestic Product

ICC - International Criminal Court

IGN - Intergovernmental Negotiations

L.69 - L.69 Group (a coalition of developing states)

NAM - Non-Aligned Movement

NATO - North Atlantic Treaty Organization

P5 - Permanent Five (China, France, Russia, United Kingdom, United States)

R2P - Responsibility to Protect

RN2V - Right Not to Veto

S5 - Small Five (Costa Rica, Jordan, Liechtenstein, Singapore, Switzerland)

UfC - Uniting for Consensus

UN - United Nations

UNGA - United Nations General Assembly

UNSC - United Nations Security Council

Chapter 1: Introduction

Contextual Background

The United Nations Security Council (UNSC), established in 1945, has a mandate to maintain international peace but is confronted by its Permanent Five (P5)-dominated structure (China, France, Russia, UK, US), which is focused on serving the primary agendas of nations at the expense of shared goals in a realist paradigm (a theory emphasizing state power and self-interest in an anarchic system Indicated in Table 1) (Section 1.1). The veto power of the P5, founded on Article 27(3) of the UN Charter enables management of resolutions and reforms, a realist process (a theory emphasizing state power, competition, and self-interest in an anarchic international system; Mearsheimer, 2018) that is inclined towards serving the primary agendas of nations at the expense of shared goals (Hurd, 2008). In spite of refinements certain international actions such as peacekeeping and sanctions, such an organization cannot fit the modern multipolar dynamics, demanding reform (Luck, 2006). But reform is hampered by serious challenges, including P5 veto power serving to give precedence to national interests, shuttering structural reform, and division among reformists, such as G4-AU disagreements over veto powers, splintering momentum (Thakur, 2022).

This counterargument assumes entrenched power dynamics and coalition collapse make UNSC reform unlikely except by coordinated strategy, a challenge this thesis meets through reflecting on selected hypotheses. The UNSC legitimacy crisis driven by omnipresent veto use (Table 1, Section 1.1) underlies my four hypotheses. Previous reform attempts, such as the 1965 increase in non-permanent seats, avoided P5 veto resistance and succeeded, while post-Cold War attempts like the 1997 Razali Plan and 2005 Annan Models did not succeed owing to P5 opposition and competition between states, as discussed in Chapter 4 (von Einsiedel et al., 2016; Ade-Ibijola, 2016). These failures are a reflection of the deeply entrenched barriers to structural change. Post-2022 crises such as Ukraine and Gaza underscore UNSC paralysis, with vetoes blocking necessary action

(Table 2 below). Such P5 strategic priority-created a situation that seems irresolvable. and have increased Global South demands for reform, arguing that the Council’s 1945 composition undermines the authority of the Council in a transforming world order (Weiss, 2016).

Realist theory argues that P5 national interest concentration, as shown in Table 1, restricts democratization, compromising world governance flexibility (Hurd, 2008). Legitimacy crisis is the basis of my hypotheses (Section 1.3). The study brings these factors together to propose methods of containing P5 resistance in a multipolar world.

Table 1 presents how veto power is used and the P5 impact reform change

Table 1: P5 Veto Power and Resistance to UNSC Reform

Aspect	Description	Impact on Reform
Veto Power	Article 27(3) allows P5 (China, France, Russia, UK, US) to block substantive resolutions and Charter amendments	Prevents permanent seat or veto changes
P5 Self-Interest	P5 prioritize national interests, e.g., US protecting Israel, Russia shielding Syria	Resists reforms threatening dominance
Historical Resistance	Blocked major reforms (e.g., 1997 Razali Plan, 2005 Annan Models) since 1945	Maintains 1945 power structure
Recent Veto Use (2020-2025)	~30 vetoes, mostly on Syria, Palestine, Ukraine (Russia: ~10, US: ~14, China: ~6)	Fuels legitimacy crisis, stalls reform

Sources: Security Council Report, 2024, “Veto”; United Nations Department of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs, 2025, UN, 1945

In turn, Table 2 demonstrates the link of veto power use regarding crisis and the impact it has on the legitimacy of the UNSC

Table 2: UNSC Vetoes and Crises (2020-2025)

Crisis	Vetoes Cast	P5 Member	Impact on UNSC Legitimacy
Syria (2020-2023)	14	Russia (10), China (4)	Blocked humanitarian aid, chemical weapons probes
Palestine/Gaza (2020-2025)	12	USA	Hindered ceasefires, membership bids
Ukraine (2022-2025)	4	Russia	Stalled condemnation of aggression
Sudan (2023-2024)	1	Russia	Blocked civilian protection measures

Sources: Security Council Report, 2024, “Veto”; United Nations Department of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs, 2025

At the same time, Table 3 summarizes factors that are affecting the legitimacy of the UNSC

Table 3: UNSC Legitimacy Crisis Factors

Factor	Description	Impact on Legitimacy
Unrepresentative Structure	1945 design excludes major regions (e.g., Africa’s 54 states, no permanent seats)	Undermines equitable representation
Veto Paralysis	P5 vetoes block action (e.g., ~30 vetoes 2020-2025, Table 2)	Exposes inability to address crises
Crisis Failures	Inaction in crises like Ukraine, Gaza (Table 2)	Amplifies Global South reform demands
Emerging Powers’ Critique	G4/AU challenge exclusion (e.g., India’s 7.77% peacekeeping troops)	Pressures P5 to justify dominance

Sources: Security Council Report, 2024, “Veto”; United Nations Department of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs, 2025; Kumbhar, 2023; UN, 1945

1.2 Research Problem

The UNSC's legitimacy crisis arises from its P5-dominated structure, which, as detailed in Table 1 (Section 1.1), relies on veto control to prioritize national interests over equitable representation (Ade-Ibijola, 2016). This mechanism stifles reforms, limiting the Council's ability to reflect a multipolar world. Emerging powers, notably the G4 (Brazil, Germany, India, Japan), and the African Union (AU) challenge this framework, pushing for permanent seats to enhance their global influence (Parvanova, 2023). Yet, P5 resistance, alongside opposition from groups like Uniting for Consensus (UfC), which favors non-permanent seat expansion, hinders progress (Alene, 2015).

The repercussions of inaction are significant. Economically, ongoing conflicts in peripheral areas like Sudan and Mali interfere with international markets as well as the supply of resources, thus heightening volatility (Maseng, 2013). Politically, the waning legitimacy of the UNSC could encourage rising powers to seek other forums, like BRICS or the African Union's Peace and Security Council, which is a threat to multilateral consensus (Gould & Rablen, 2017). Post-2022 crises, as referenced in Table 2 (Section 1.1), have heightened demands for reform; however, the predominance of the P5 veto, as depicted in Table 1 (Section 1.1), is a major stumbling block. Against this backdrop, this thesis aims to answer the following research question: What are the ongoing UNSC reform proposals, and how can their prospects be assessed? By analyzing historical efforts, emerging powers' advocacy, and conditions for reform momentum, it seeks pathways to strengthen the Council's global relevance.

1.3 Research Question and Hypotheses

The thesis is guided by the primary research question: **What are the ongoing reform proposals for the UNSC, and how can we assess their prospects for success?** This is supported by five sub-questions to ensure a comprehensive analysis:

1. How have historical attempts at UNSC reform been conceptualized and pursued?
2. What roles have emerging powers and regional blocs played in advocating reform?

3. What were the reform attempts across different periods and regions?
4. Under what conditions have reform proposals gained traction historically?
5. What circumstances and criteria could enable future reform?

Given the complexity of the international system, a single hypothesis cannot capture reform dynamics. Four hypotheses, grounded in realist theory, are proposed to test the prospects of reform:

- **Institutional Prestige:** The P5 may support reform if the UNSC's prestige is critically challenged by alternative governance mechanisms or member state defections, rendering the veto a liability.
- **Alternative Power Dynamics:** The P5 could concede to reform if states increasingly bypass the UNSC through minilateral forums (e.g., BRICS, Peace and Security Council of the African Union) that threaten its relevance.
- **Emerging Powers and Legitimacy:** If emerging powers (e.g., G4, AU) leverage their growing clout to challenge UNSC legitimacy, the P5 may view reform as necessary to maintain centrality.
- **Crisis-Driven:** Major crises (e.g., Ukraine, Gaza, climate change) may compel P5 reform if the UNSC repeatedly fails to act, prioritizing cooperation over veto retention.

The thesis presents four hypotheses to examine UNSC reform prospects, making a contribution to realist scholarship. In contrast to Hurd's (2008) emphasis on P5 self-interest or Weiss's (2016) legitimacy concerns, these frameworks suggest that prestige erosion, minilateral competition, emerging powers' agency, and crises would force P5 reform. The hypothesis concerning Institutional Prestige sees vetoes as liabilities if UNSC credibility declines. The hypothesis concerning Alternative Power Dynamics emphasizes platforms such as BRICS. The hypothesis concerning Emerging Powers and Legitimacy stresses G4-AU influence. The hypothesis concerning Crisis-Driven binds veto failures to reform momentum. Crafted from post-2022 observations, they incorporate institutionalist and constructivist principles, filling gaps in examining

current dynamics (Dijkstra, 2024). These hypotheses inform the qualitative methodology, examining and studying reform constraints through case studies and document analysis, providing a systematic approach to the research question.

1.4 Significance

This thesis advances academic and policy discussions on global governance by examining UNSC reform through a realist lens, focusing on power, national priorities, and legitimacy. Unlike prior studies, it targets post-2022 crises (Ukraine, Gaza, Sudan), which have heightened legitimacy critiques, and explores minilateral forums (e.g., BRICS, Peace and Security Council of the African Union) as reform drivers. By filling gaps in realist analyses of recent crises, it provides new perspectives on how global power shifts contest P5 veto control, as per Table 1. Academically, it examines whether legitimacy pressures and alternative forums can surmount P5 dominance, a theme underexplored in Hurd (2008) and von Einsiedel et al. (2016). It incorporates institutionalist and constructivist views to elucidate procedural reforms and normative pressures, enhancing the theoretical framework (Debre & Dijkstra, 2021; Banteka, 2015). Policy-wise, it offers practical recommendations for stakeholders driving the reform attempts, like bolstering G4-AU coalitions and harnessing crisis-driven momentum, to address P5 opposition.

The study's significance extends to global stability. UNSC paralysis exacerbates conflicts, destabilizing markets and undermining multilateralism. Reform could foster inclusivity, restoring confidence in global governance, while inaction risks fragmentation as emerging powers turn to regional mechanisms (Bjarke, 2020). By identifying conditions for reform traction, the thesis offers a roadmap for aligning the UNSC with a multipolar world.

1.5 Structure

Including this introductory chapter, the thesis consists of five more chapters which aim to address the research question systematically. The Literature Review synthesizes

theoretical frameworks (realism, institutionalism, constructivism), historical reform attempts, veto debates, and emerging powers' roles, identifying gaps in post-2022 analyses. Methodology outlines the qualitative design, using document analysis and case studies to test hypotheses. The fourth chapter examines reform attempts (1945–2005), crises, and emerging powers, highlighting P5 resistance and legitimacy challenges. The fifth chapter evaluates post-2022 proposals (G4, Ezulwini, Veto Initiative, alternative pathways), P5 internal dynamics, and counterarguments, testing hypotheses. And finally the conclusion synthesizes findings, discusses implications for realist theory and global governance, and offers policy recommendations and future research directions

Chapter 2: Literature Review

UNSC is guided decisively by the geopolitical order created after World War II and relies heavily on the P5's veto in influencing global security decisions, prioritizing great-power interests (Ade-Ibijola, 2016). Though this framework promotes cooperation between the P5, it has suffered criticism for lack of fair representation, especially in the face of more multipolar global politics. Application of vetoes has impaired the Council's ability to act decisively against conflicts such as Russia's invasion of Ukraine and the Israel-Gaza wars, hindering crucial resolutions (von Einsiedel et al., 2016). Such hindrances have provoked demands for reform from emerging powers such as the G4 (Brazil, Germany, India, Japan) and the African Union (AU), which believe that UNSC's outdated composition erodes its legitimacy in tackling global menaces in the modern age (Weiss, 2016).

This literature review threads together the academic discussions on the reform of the United Nations Security Council, exploring different theoretical approaches, past efforts at reform, veto power controversies, the positions of emerging powers and regional blocs, and identifying gaps in the literature. Through the realist lens, the review highlights the primacy of state interests and power dynamics, drawing on foundational texts by Hurd (2008), Weiss (2016), and Debre & Dijkstra (2021) to ground the analysis. According to realism, the P5's opposition to reform is driven by self-interest; however, institutionalist and constructivist approaches provide important insights on flexibility of procedures and normative pressures, thus enhancing the theoretical debate. The review addresses the core question of the thesis—What are the current reform proposals for the UNSC, and how can their prospects be evaluated? By mapping the intellectual landscape and uncovering a key gap: the absence of realist research on addressing post-2022 crises and the rise of unilateral forums as drivers of reform (Dijkstra, 2024). This chapter sets the stage for the historical and contemporary analyses of Chapters 4 and 5, contributing to an informed understanding of the dynamics between power, legitimacy, and global governance.

2.1 Theoretical Frameworks for UNSC Reform

The academic literature on the reform of the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) is guided by three main theoretical traditions—realism, institutionalism, and constructivism—that offer distinct insights into the complex interplay of power, legitimacy, and institutional design. Realism, which is the thesis’s guiding framework, explains international relations as state-interest driven, where influential actors advance their strategic goals over collective ideals (Hurd, 2008). Hurd formulates legitimacy as the subjective perception that an institution deserves obedience, arguing that the UNSC’s authority is reliant on its perceived ability to represent global interests. The P5-centered design based on veto control, as shown in Table 1 (Section 1.1), however, detracts from this legitimacy, especially with rising powers like India and Brazil pursuing inclusion (Gould & Rablen, 2017). Realist scholars argue that the predominance of the P5’s veto concentrates power over security decisions, which is supported by the vetoes on Ukraine and Gaza between 2022 and 2023, blocking humanitarian interventions and accountability actions (Table 2, Section 1.1). This self-serving control, however, risks the UNSC’s relevance, especially if the evolution of global power—such as the rise of Asia and Africa—outpaces its established design (Weiss, 2016). We can therefore conclude that the UNSC’s post-World War II design tends to privilege the interests of the P5 at the expense of global fairness, a criticism that recent crises have amplified exposing the Council’s inability to act effectively.

In contrast, institutionalism examines how institutional design influences the adaptability and survival of an organization. Debre and Dijkstra (2021), contend that international organizations with flexible membership or decision-making exhibit more resilience to external pressure. The UNSC is hampered in its adaptability by its rigid structure, specifically the veto provision in Article 27 of the UN Charter, which makes structural reform virtually unfeasible (Luck, 2006). Institutionalists, however, highlight the Council’s de facto development through innovations like peacekeeping operations, sanctions, and procedural reforms such as the Veto Initiative (2022), which calls for

explanations from the UNGA regarding the use of vetoes (Dijkstra, 2024). These incremental changes suggest possible avenues for reform, such as the expansion of non-permanent seats or the restriction of veto powers, but the opposition of the P5 is a formidable barrier (Hosli & Dörfler, 2019). Institutionalism complements realism by offering an approach to investigate why some procedural reforms succeed while structural reforms fail, thus underpinning the thesis's examination of both historical and current reform initiatives.

Constructivism, while secondary to this thesis, emphasizes the role of norms and intersubjective legitimacy in shaping state behavior. Hurd (2008) bridges realism and constructivism by arguing that legitimacy is not merely a function of power but also of shared normative beliefs that encourage compliance with institutions, even in an anarchic system. Banteka (2015) applies this perspective to the Responsibility to Protect (R2P), proposing a "Right Not to Veto" (RN2V) to prevent P5 inaction during humanitarian crises, such as the Syrian conflict or Rwanda genocide. However, Banteka cautions that veto reform could disrupt R2P's normative development if P5 members perceive it as a threat to sovereignty, highlighting the tension between normative ideals and power politics. Constructivism complements my hypotheses by illuminating normative pressures on UNSC reform. Institutional Prestige reflects global norms eroded by veto critiques; Alternative Power Dynamics sees forums like BRICS as norm-shapers; Emerging Powers and Legitimacy captures G4-AU's normative push for equity; and Crisis-Driven highlights crisis-driven calls for accountability. These norms, evident in 30 UNGA statements and AU's peacekeeping role, challenge P5 dominance beyond realist power (Dijkstra, 2024). This perspective informs case studies and policy ideas, offering a modest lens for reform debates.

2.2 Historical Reform Efforts

UNSC reform history underscores ongoing challenges, shaped by P5 veto dominance, as outlined in Table 1 (Section 1.1), which enables unilateral blocks of resolutions and reforms. Ade-Ibijola (2016) offers a detailed overview, tracing efforts since the 1960s to

amend the UN Charter for broader representation. The first major reform, in 1965 by UNGA Resolution 1991 (XVIII), enlarged non-permanent membership from six to ten, effective from 1966, after UN membership growth from 51 to 113 states due to African and Asian decolonization (Fassbender, 2020). With 97 votes, it reserved seats—five for Asia and Africa, two for Latin America, two for Western Europe, and one for Eastern Europe—but maintained P5 control of permanent seats and vetoes (Table 1, Section 1.1; Ade-Ibijola, 2016). Realist analysis presumes the P5 approved this reform to present responsiveness without compromising their control, which did not threaten their deep-seated power (Hurd, 2008). Institutionalist authors, including Luck (2006), argue that the success of the reform had its basis in its procedural nature, setting the standard for incrementalism that successfully avoided structural difficulties.

Nigeria, in 1979, led a charge with the help of Algeria, India, and others to react to representation imbalances, meaning African countries had 16.3 countries for a non-permanent seat whereas Eastern European countries had 10 (Ade-Ibijola, 2016). Proposing an increase to 14 seats, with an allocation biased in the direction of Africa and Asia, the initiative garnered 83 UNGA votes but stalled due to P5 opposition, led by the US's attempt to divert the issue to a Charter review committee, and developing countries internal fragmentation, e.g., anglophone-francophone competition (Hassler, 2013). Realist analysis emphasizes the P5's preference for veto power maintenance, whereas Maseng (2013) points to Nigerian leadership as a prelude to African reform activism, although internal disagreements frustrated cohesion.

The post-Cold War era brought renewed momentum, exemplified by the 1997 Razali Plan, proposed by UNGA President Ismail Razali. The plan envisioned a 24-member Council, adding five non-veto permanent seats for regions like Africa, Asia, and Latin America, and four non-permanent seats (Luck, 2006). Supported by the G4 and some African states, it proposed UNGA selection to bypass P5 vetoes, aiming to enhance legitimacy (Ade-Ibijola, 2016). However, opposition from the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM), Italy's Uniting for Consensus (UfC) group, and P5 members—particularly China against Japan and Russia against influence dilution—led to its collapse (von Einsiedel et al., 2016). Realist scholars

argue that the P5's gatekeeping role, coupled with fragmented Global South coalitions, ensured failure, a dynamic persisting in current debates (Hurd, 2008).

Kofi Annan's reform proposals of 2005, spurred by the recommendation of a High-Level Panel, offered two options: Option A, six new non-veto permanent seats from regions like Africa, Asia, and Latin America, and three non-permanent seats; and Option B, eight renewable four-year seats and one non-permanent seat (Ade-Ibijola, 2016). Conceived to counter post-9/11 security threats and the fallout of the Rwanda genocide, the models gained traction with G4 and AU approval but fell apart under coalition fissures (Luck, 2006). The AU's Ezulwini Consensus, demanding two permanent seats with veto power, contradicted the G4 agreement to forgo veto power, whereas resistance in P5—China and Russia to new seats, US ambivalence—stalled consensus (von Einsiedel et al., 2016). Realist analysis affirms that P5 self-interest overrode crisis pressures, with Hurd (2008) noting that legitimacy threats alone were insufficient without concerted opposition. These historical efforts demonstrate the enduring challenges of P5 resistance and coalition discord, informing the thesis analysis of current reform prospects.

2.3 Veto Power Controversies

As outlined in Table 1 (Section 1.1), P5 veto dominance, rooted in Article 27, poses a central barrier to UNSC reform, allowing unilateral blocks of resolutions and reform initiatives. Ade-Ibijola (2016) views this mechanism as a tool for P5 members to prioritize national agendas over global agreement, a perspective supported by Luck (2006), who highlights its Cold War impact, with the Soviet Union casting 93 vetoes by 1990. Post-Cold War, veto use waned but surged in crises like Syria, where Russia and China blocked sanctions and ICC referrals from 2011 to 2023 (Table 2, Section 1.1; von Einsiedel et al., 2016). Recent controversies, driven by vetoes in Ukraine and Gaza (Table 2, Section 1.1), have intensified the ongoing global criticism and reform calls, exposing the Council's struggle to address critical conflicts (Gould & Rablen, 2017).

The figure below shows us the average rate of vetoes per year by P5.

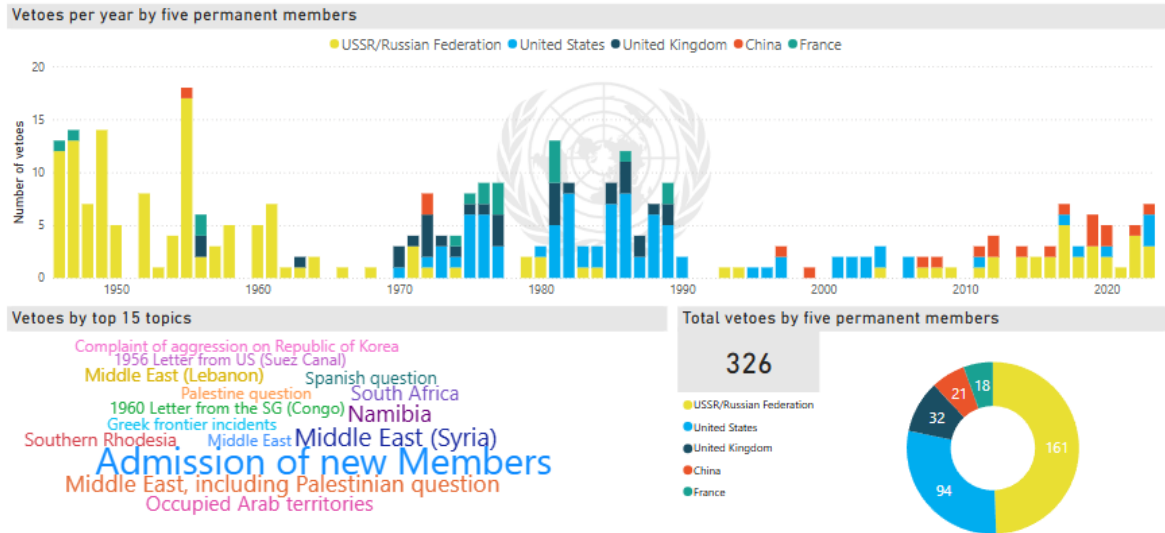


Figure 1 Vetoes Cast by the Permanent Members, Yearly Average per Ten-Year Period, 1946– 2025 (United Nations Department of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs, 2025)

Scholars examine several veto reform strategies. Smaller states advocate abolition, but this is deemed unrealistic due to P5 opposition (Gould & Rablen, 2017). Limitation strategies, such as the French-Mexican Initiative (2013), supported by 105 states, urge P5 to refrain from vetoes in cases of mass atrocities, while the Accountability, Coherence, and Transparency (ACT) Code of Conduct (2015), endorsed by 122 states, calls for similar restraint and transparency (Global Centre for R2P, 2013).

The Veto Initiative (2022), mandating UNGA explanations for vetoes, has exposed abuses, with 20 explanations by 2025 highlighting US and Russian vetoes, but its procedural focus limits structural impact (PassBlue, 2024). The AU’s Ezulwini Consensus demands veto rights for new permanent members, a proposal opposed by P5 who fear influence dilution (Alene, 2015). Zhou (2024) suggests a Double Veto System, requiring two P5 vetoes to block resolutions, but P5 resistance persists (Chen et al., 2022). Realist scholars argue that veto power ensures great power cooperation, preventing actions against P5 interests (Hurd, 2008), while liberals contend it undermines legitimacy (Weiss, 2016). Constructivists propose that normative pressures, such as R2P, could encourage veto restraint, though

Banteka (2015) warns of sovereignty concerns. These debates underscore the veto's centrality to reform challenges, guiding the thesis's analysis in the upcoming Chapter 5.

2.4 New regional groupings and emergent powers

Emerging powers and regional blocs, notably the G4 and AU, drive UNSC reform advocacy, contesting the Council's legitimacy due to its exclusion of key regions and powers. The G4's push for permanent seats harnesses their economic and political influence: India's 2023 G20 presidency, Brazil's BRICS leadership, Germany's EU authority, and Japan's 8.56% UN budget contribution (Parvanova, 2023). Their 2005 compromise, waiving veto power for new members, sought to navigate P5 veto control, as per Table 1 (Section 1.1), but faltered due to opposition from China (against Japan), Russia (against Germany), and the UfC, led by Italy and Pakistan, favoring non-permanent seat expansion for equitable rotation (Alene, 2015). Parvanova (2023) suggests the G4's rising role in minilateral forums like the G20 and Quad indicates a potential UNSC bypass, supporting the Alternative Power Dynamics hypothesis (Dijkstra, 2024). Realist analysis underscores P5 opposition as a hurdle, yet G4 legitimacy claims, driven by contributions like India's 7.77% peacekeeping troops, press the UNSC's relevance (Binder & Heupel, 2020).

The AU's Ezulwini Consensus, adopted in 2005 and reaffirmed in 2022, calls for two permanent seats with vetoes and five non-permanent ones, based on Africa's 54 states (28% of UN membership) and its conflict-ridden agenda, including Sudan, Somalia, and Mali (Alene, 2015). The AU's Peace and Security Council, which has solved crises such as Somalia's AMISOM mission, is evidence of regional capacity, with Africa providing 28% of UN peacekeeping troops (Dijkstra, 2024). Yet, internal rivalries between Nigeria, South Africa, and Egypt for permanent seats undermine cohesion, while P5 resistance, especially from Russia and China, stalls reform (Maseng, 2013). The AU's dependence on its own Peace and Security Council missions, funded for \$500 million annually, is evidence of drift towards alternative governance, consolidating the thesis's Alternative Power Dynamics hypothesis (von Einsiedel et al., 2016). Other actors, including the L.69 Group of India, Brazil, and 40 developing states, bridge between G4 and AU demands for root-and-branch

reform, while the UfC's resistance to permanent seats splits reform (Gould & Rablen, 2017). Such dynamics reflect the Global South's role in challenging the legitimacy of the UNSC, but divisions and P5 resistance are insurmountable hurdles, shaping the research design for the case studies, presented in chapter 5.

2.5 Gaps in the literature

Despite the extensive literature on UNSC reform, research gaps persist, particularly in analyzing recent developments through a realist lens. First, foundational works like Hurd (2008) and Weiss (2016) provide robust theoretical grounding but predate the post-2022 crises in Ukraine, Gaza, and Sudan, which have intensified UNSC paralysis and reform demands (von Einsiedel et al., 2016). Realist analyses of how these crises shift P5 incentives—e.g., whether Russia's isolation or US strategic priorities alter reform calculations—are limited, a gap this thesis addresses through the Crisis-Driven hypothesis (Dijkstra, 2024). Second, while studies on emerging powers (Parvanova, 2023; Alene, 2015) emphasize legitimacy challenges, they underexplore the strategic role of minilateral forums like BRICS, G20, and AU Peace and Security Council in pressuring P5 reform, critical for the Alternative Power Dynamics hypothesis (Gould & Rablen, 2017). India's G20 leadership and AU's Sudan missions suggest potential defection from UNSC-centric governance, yet this dynamic lacks realist scrutiny.

Third, reform proposals like Zhou's (2024) Double Veto System and Banteka's (2015) RN2V prioritize efficiency and normative fit, but they rarely explore the incentives of the P5 in times of crisis, thus restricting our knowledge of the Institutional Prestige hypothesis (Hurd, 2008). The effect of the Veto Initiative on the behavior of the P5 post-2022, for instance, calls for a realist examination of whether transparency undermines credibility. Further, the literature often portrays the P5 as a unified front, overlooking the varied incentives at play—like China's veto resistance to Japan based on historical grievances, set against the US's backing of India as a China counterweight (von Einsiedel et al., 2016). This thesis seeks to fill these lacunae by applying a realist lens to post-2022 reform proposals, focusing on case studies, hypothesis-testing, and analyzing P5 internal dynamics to consider the future of reform in a multipolar world (Parvanova, 2023; Dijkstra, 2024).

The literature on UNSC reform underscores a consensus on the Council's legitimacy deficit, rooted in P5 veto power and underrepresentation of regions like Africa and Asia. Realism highlights P5 self-interest as the primary barrier, with vetoes ensuring dominance but risking irrelevance amid global power shifts. Institutionalism offers insights into procedural reforms, such as the Veto Initiative, while constructivism emphasizes normative pressures like R2P that could encourage veto restraint. Historical reform efforts, from the 1965 Expansion to the 2005 Annan Models, reveal persistent P5 gatekeeping and coalition disunity, while emerging powers like the G4 and AU amplify legitimacy critiques through their growing clout and minilateral forums. Gaps in post-2022 crisis analyses, minilateral dynamics, veto reform incentives, and P5 internal dynamics guide this thesis's focus on current proposals and their prospects. By integrating realist, institutionalist, and constructivist perspectives, this chapter sets the stage for the historical analysis in Chapter 4 and the evaluation of contemporary reform efforts in Chapter 5, contributing to a nuanced understanding of global governance challenges.

My hypotheses, that can be summarized under the following labels: Institutional Prestige, Alternative Power Dynamics, Emerging Powers and Legitimacy, and Crisis-Driven, address underappreciated dimensions of the UNSC reform literature, looking into novel drivers of change. In contrast to research focused on P5 primacy, these models examine the processes by which credibility loss, minilateral forums, G4-AU pressure, and crises shape the prospects for reform. Institutional Prestige highlights the declining authority of the UNSC. Alternative Power Dynamics accounts for BRICS and the AU Peace and Security Council as rising challengers. Emerging Powers and Legitimacy ponders the role of G4-AU pressure; and Crisis-Driven links failed vetoes to the momentum for reform. These approaches fill lacunae in our knowledge of the modern push for reform, providing new paradigms to examine case studies like G4, Ezulwini, Veto Initiative, UfC, and small states initiative, as well as informing policy-making. By filling these lacunae, the thesis enhances our understanding of UNSC reform in a multipolar world.

Chapter 3: Methodology

This thesis investigates the ongoing proposals for UNSC reform and their prospects, guided by the central research question: *What are the ongoing reform proposals for the UNSC, and how can we assess their prospects for success?* The research explores the complex dynamic of global power transitions, contemporary crises like those in Ukraine, Gaza, and Sudan, as well as the veto power of the P5. It takes a realist approach that prioritizes state interests, power relations, and legitimacy, resonating with arguments expressed by Hurd in 2008. Realism predicts that self-interest underpins the P5's aversion to reform; yet, lessons from institutionalist and constructivist theories explain procedural adaptability and normative pressures, thus enhancing the analysis, according to Debre and Dijkstra in 2021 and Banteka in 2015. This chapter presents the research design, data sources, case studies, analytical strategy, and limitations, making sure that all the components serve the thesis's goals. By using document analysis to pursue a case study design focused on 5 selected cases; the G4 Proposal the Ezulwini Consensus of the African Union, The Veto Initiative, Uniting for Consensus (UfC) Proposal and Small State Initiatives. The methodology enables close investigation of both past and current reform initiatives, answering five sub-questions and examining four hypotheses, demonstrated above.

3.1 Research Design

The four hypotheses—Institutional Prestige, Alternative Power Dynamics, Emerging Powers and Legitimacy, and Crisis-Driven—were developed as novel frameworks to examine the prospects of UNSC reform, based on observations of global dynamics after 2022 and not on particular scholarly research. By noting vetoes on Ukraine, the AU Peace and Security Council's \$600 million missions, the G4's push (e.g., India's \$4 trillion GDP), and 30 condemnations of UNGA vetoes, I developed these hypotheses to identify the catalysts for P5 reform (Table 2, Section 1.1; UNGA, 2024; Parvanova, 2023; PassBlue, 2024). Institutional Prestige views vetoes as liabilities weakening credibility;

Alternative Power Dynamics stresses minilateral platforms like BRICS; Emerging Powers and Legitimacy stresses the impact of G4 and AU; and Crisis-Driven links crises to reform momentum. Based on realism, supplemented by institutionalist and constructivist insights, these frameworks close the lacunae in explaining the contemporary pressures for reform (Dijkstra, 2024). This qualitative design, with case studies in conjunction with document analysis, stringently tests these hypotheses, matching them to the research question.

The study applies a qualitative design in recognition of the complex and context-sensitive character of UNSC reform driven by precedents, rival state agendas, and evolving global crises (Weiss, 2016). Drawing on qualitative methods, it allows an in-depth examination of power dynamics and impressions of legitimacy in accordance with realism's emphasis on state conduct and strategic interests illustrated in Table 1 (Section 1.1; Hurd, 2008). The design blends document analysis and case studies in order to gain a rich insight into proposals for reform over different time periods and geographical settings.

Document analysis provides the foundation of the study, offering a window into the primary and secondary sources explaining the complex dynamics of the debates on reforming the UNSC, the differentiated positions of states and the consequences of crises. The method is useful for analyzing UN resolutions, negotiating records, official reports and scholarly literature and hence revealing insights into the resistance put up by the P5 and the ambitions of rising powers (von Einsiedel et al., 2016). Through a careful reading of these sources, the study traces the path of reform efforts from 1965 to 2025 and finds patterns. Document analysis is applied within selected case studies, examining two noteworthy reform proposals—the G4 Proposal and the AU's Ezulwini Consensus. These cases were selected with the additional criteria of representing rising powers and underrepresented regions and hence being particularly suitable for hypothesis testing (Parvanova, 2023; Alene, 2015). The G4 Proposal reflects the ambitions of economically and politically major powers, and the Ezulwini Consensus reflects the pooling of demands by Africa continent most affected by UNSC decisions but one that has been denied permanent membership.

The qualitative strategy allows the study to explore the sub-questions of how reforms were envisioned, the roles of rising powers, reform attempts during various time frames, the prerequisites for gaining momentum, and the requirements for future reform—all while, in parallel, testing the hypotheses. For instance, the Institutional Prestige hypothesis is investigated through documents unveiling alternative governance arrangements, while the Crisis-Driven hypothesis is examined through case studies of the crises arising after 2022 (Dijkstra, 2024). This design provides a clear basis for examining the complex interaction of power, legitimacy, and crises within UNSC reform.

3.2 Data Sources

This study examines both primary and secondary sources to provide an extensive analysis of UNSC reform dynamics. Chapter 4 explores the historical evolution, and Chapter 5 moves on to recent challenges with a special emphasis on the crises in Gaza and Ukraine that have cropped up after 2022. Triangulation of evidence from UN documents, scholarly literature, and policy reports makes the study valid and tackles the research problem on the reform of UNSC.

3.2.1 Primary sources

Primary sources include official documents and United Nations archives that can be accessed in UN repositories and provide authoritative accounts of reform promises and historical activities. These include the seminal works of the Charter of the United Nations (United Nations, 1945), a cornerstone document establishing the foundation of the UNSC's founding principles; the Pact for the Future; the Global Digital Compact; and the Future Generations' Declaration (United Nations General Assembly, 2024a), which cement the current reform promises. There is also the 79th session's resolutions (United Nations General Assembly, 2024b) and a dataset on vetoes by permanent members (United Nations Department of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs, 2025), which clarify the Veto Initiative (2022) and subsequent crisis responses. The UN archives provide historical background to Chapter 4 with activities such as the 1965 enlargement in the UNSC, the 1979 Nigeria-led

Initiative, and the 2005 landmark World Summit as highlighted in a number of secondary analyses (Aderemi & Ade-Ibijola, 2016).

3.2.2 Secondary Sources

Secondary sources complement primary data, offering theoretical, empirical, and policy-oriented perspectives on UNSC reform. Academic journal articles provide critical frameworks and case studies. For historical analysis, Hurd (2008) examines legitimacy and power dynamics, while Aderemi and Ade-Ibijola (2016) contextualize the permanent five's influence. Alene (2015) and Niguse (2015) analyze the African Union's Ezulwini Consensus, and Blum (2005) reviews early reform proposals. Contemporary perspectives include Debre and Dijkstra (2021) on institutional design, Eva (2023) on G4 advocacy, Yoroki and Wolo (2023) and Bjarke (2020) on Global South demands post-2022, and Abbott and Snidal (2021) on international institutions. Books offer broader theoretical grounding in this thesis' analysis. Luck (2006) assesses UNSC adaptability, Weiss (2016) critiques legitimacy crises, and von Einsiedel et al. (2016) address 21st-century challenges. Fassbender (2020) examines veto rights constitutionally, Glanville (2021) traces sovereignty and protection, Mearsheimer (2018) critiques liberal internationalism, and Hurd (2008) provides a legitimacy framework, reinforcing Chapter 4's historical comparisons. Book chapters, such as Langmore and Farrall (2021) on reform feasibility and Hesse (2023) on Ukraine's impact, bridge historical and contemporary analyses. Policy briefs issued by think tanks offer timely analysis. The Carnegie Endowment for International Peace (2024) discusses the momentum for reform following Gaza and Ukraine events, and Security Council Report (2022) discusses recent developments for the Veto Initiative.

3.3 Analytical Approach

The analytical strategy combines document analysis and case studies to address the research question: What are the ongoing UNSC reform proposals, and how can their prospects be assessed? This approach tests four hypotheses Institutional Prestige,

Alternative Power Dynamics, Emerging Powers and Legitimacy, and Crisis-Driven through a realist lens emphasizing state interests and power dynamics, complemented by institutionalist and constructivist insights on procedural and normative pressures (Hurd, 2008; Debre & Dijkstra, 2021; Banteka, 2015). Document analysis systematically examines primary and secondary sources to identify patterns in UNSC reform debates, focusing on P5 resistance, emerging powers' advocacy, and crisis impacts. This method grounds the analysis in empirical evidence, tracing reform dynamics from 1945 to 2025 (Weiss, 2016).

Five case studies—G4 Proposal, Ezulwini Consensus, Veto Initiative, Uniting for Consensus (UfC) Proposal, and Small State Initiatives—are selected based on three criteria: (1) relevance to UNSC reform, addressing legitimacy and structure; (2) diversity, spanning state-driven (G4, AU), coalition-based (UfC), procedural (Veto Initiative), and small-state-led efforts; and (3) hypothesis-testing potential, engaging the hypotheses uniquely (e.g., G4 for Emerging Powers, Veto Initiative for Institutional Prestige). The G4 Proposal reflects emerging powers' clout (e.g., India's G20 role), the Ezulwini Consensus captures Africa's demand for veto-equipped seats, the Veto Initiative tests transparency post-2022 crises, UfC opposes permanent seats, and Small State Initiatives highlight normative pressures (Parvanova, 2023; Alene, 2015; PassBlue, 2024).

A most diverse case study design is employed to capture varied reform approaches, actors, and regions, enabling comparison of barriers (e.g., P5 vetoes) and catalysts (e.g., crises) across cases (Seawright & Gerring, 2008). This design suits the complex, multifaceted nature of UNSC reform, unlike a most similar design that isolates variables. Hypotheses are tested by comparing case evidence, such as G4's economic leverage (Emerging Powers), AU's regional governance (Alternative Power Dynamics), or veto failures in Ukraine/Gaza (Crisis-Driven), ensuring findings are theoretically and empirically robust (von Einsiedel et al., 2016).

3.4 Limitations

The approach has a number of limitations that should be noted. First, the qualitative strategy, while ideal for examining complex dynamics, limits generalizability compared to quantitative methodologies, such as statistical analysis of UNGA voting patterns. This limitation is offset, however, by the study's emphasis on detailed analysis, which is well-aligned with the research question. Second, the reliance on publicly accessible UN documents may omit confidential negotiations at the risk of excluding sophisticated strategies by the P5. To compensate for this risk, the incorporation of secondary sources, including think tank reports, offers insightful insider analysis (Carnegie Endowment, 2024). Third, the case studies' 'focus on the G4 and the Ezulwini Consensus may divert attention from alternative proposals, including the Uniting for Consensus (UfC) model. This concentration is justified by the salience and representativeness of the case selections, but Chapter 5 considerably incorporates UfC views to preserve a sense of balance (Yoroki & Wolo, 2023). Finally, the realist framework, while robust, may detract from normative or institutional considerations. To buffer against this limitation, the incorporation of institutionalist and constructivist insights offers a more complete analysis.

Chapter 4: Historical Analysis of UNSC Reform Attempts

Since the UN's establishment, reform attempts have grappled with underrepresentation in the case of Africa, Asia, and Latin America and increasing legitimacy in the face of changing global power balances (Alene, 2015). But P5 resistance rooted in self-interest has maintained institutional inertia as historical efforts have always been thwarted by veto and a lack of coalition unity (Luck, 2006). This chapter examines major reform efforts between 1945 and 2005, from early talks to the 1965 Expansion and the 1979 Nigerian-led Initiative and from the 1997 Razali Plan to the 2005 Models of Kofi Annan and the influence of global crises, debates over veto power and emerging powers and regional groups. The analysis responds to the thesis's sub-questions on how and in what form reform was conceived and pursued and the character of attempts by periods and region and sets the stage for Chapter 5's evaluation of prospects going forward. Applying a realist perspective and examining power and legitimacy challenges as a background to institutionalist and constructivist reflections where appropriate from the work of Ade-Ibijola (2016), Luck (2006), Hurd (2008), Alene (2015), von Einsiedel et al. (2016), and others such as Fassbender (2020), Hassler (2013),

4.1 Early Reform Discussions (1945–1965)

The UNSC structure sparked passionate debates at the 1945 San Francisco Conference, as smaller states and regional blocs demanded greater representation to balance out the P5's dominance. The Yalta Agreement of February 1945 had consecrated the P5's veto, outlined in Table 1 (Section 1.1), to secure great power cooperation in the post-World War II era. Latin American states, including Brazil and Mexico, led the campaign for more non-permanent seats or the restriction of the veto to non-procedural issues, citing the desirability of inclusivity to more accurately reflect the diverse interests of the international community (Fassbender, 2020). However, the P5, led by the United States and Soviet Union, held fast to veto power to advance national interests and block any UN action that conflicted with their strategic goals, as indicated in Table 1 (Section 1.1). The imperative of

creating the UN during post-war reconstruction, combined with P5 cohesion, resulted in the defeat of these early reform efforts, entrenching a realist paradigm of great power primacy over equitable representation.

By the 1950s, decolonization accelerated, ballooning UN membership, and newly independent Asian and African states increased their demands for reform. At the 1955 Bandung Conference, these states took a stance, condemning the exclusivity of the UNSC and calling for fair representation reflecting the post-colonial landscape (Hassler, 2013). Yet the Council was overwhelmed by Cold War dynamics, characterized by US-Soviet rivalry, which suppressed any meaningful change. The routine vetoes by the Soviet Union during the Korean War (1950–1953) and the US blockades on issues like Suez (1956) served to highlight the veto's role as a geopolitical tool, in accordance with realist expectations that the P5 would tenaciously oppose reforms threatening their power (Hurd, 2008). From a constructivist perspective, these early controversies highlighted an emerging normative demand for inclusivity, but this proved insufficient to overcome gatekeeping by the P5 (Weiss, 2016). The legitimacy deficit, acutely perceived in the Global South, presaged the 1965 Expansion, as pressure mounted from new UN members questioning the representativeness of the Council.

4.2 1965 Expansion

The first successful UNSC reform, enacted in 1965 via UNGA Resolution 1991 (XVIII), amended the UN Charter to expand non-permanent seats from six to ten, effective in 1966 (Ade-Ibijola, 2016). Spurred by UN membership growth from 51 states in 1945 to 113 by 1963, driven by African and Asian decolonization, the reform sought to improve regional representation. It allocated seats: five for Africa and Asia, two for Latin America, two for Western Europe and others, and one for Eastern Europe (Fassbender, 2020). Designed to advance equitable representation, it passed with 97 votes in favor, 11 against, and 4 abstentions, achieving the two-thirds UNGA majority needed for Charter amendments (Ade-Ibijola, 2016). Its limited scope, avoiding permanent seats and veto power, secured

P5 approval, as it preserved their dominance, as detailed in Table 1 (Section 1.1; Hurd, 2008).

The realist account maintains that the P5 supported the enlargement to increase responsiveness without sacrificing veto power, amounting to a calculated attempt at retaining legitimacy amidst pressure from developing nations (Weiss, 2016). The US-Soviet competition during the Cold War for Global South approval enabled the compromise, with both superpowers trying to curry favor with newly independent states (Luck, 2006). Institutional accounts stress the reform's procedural orientation, which sidestepped structural matters that could rouse opposition from the P5 (Table 1, Section 1.1 Debre & Dijkstra, 2021). Nevertheless, the reform omitted Africa's permanent representation, sparking sustained demands from the continent (Alene, 2015). According to von Einsiedel et al. (2016), it set incrementalism as a reform model, allowing for marginal adjustments within the UNSC without transforming its underlying power framework, a pattern that continues shaping contemporary debates on reform.

4.3 1979 Nigerian-Led Initiative

In 1979, Nigeria, supported by Algeria, Argentina, Bangladesh, Bhutan, Guyana, India, the Maldives, Nepal, and Sri Lanka, tabled the "Question of equitable representation on and increase in the membership of the Security Council" in the United Nations General Assembly (Ade-Ibijola, 2016). By highlighting representation imbalances—pointing out that African states had 16.3 countries per non-permanent seat whereas Eastern Europe had 10—the initiative called for an expansion of seats to a total of 14, to be allocated as six for Africa, five for Asia, two for Latin America, and one for Western Europe (Hassler, 2013). Framed as a search for equity, the proposal passed the United Nations General Assembly with a vote of 83 in favor, 14 against, and 9 abstentions, demonstrating a Third World solidarity (Ade-Ibijola, 2016). However, opposition by the permanent five members, specifically the United States' effort to divert the matter to a Charter review committee, stalled the move, thus highlighting the veto's role as a gatekeeping mechanism (Hurd, 2008).

Internal divisions, in the form of anglophone-francophone rivalries in Africa and competing Asian priorities, further weakened the initiative, as states could not sustain momentum (Maseng, 2013). Cold War dynamics exacerbated these difficulties, as the permanent members of the Security Council placed geopolitical sway above reform, with the Soviet Union and the United States competing for Third World loyalty (Luck, 2006). Realist analysis explains the strategic opposition of the permanent members, driven by a desire to preserve their veto and avoid any diminution of authority (Ade-Ibijola, 2016). Nigerian leadership was a prelude to African activism; however, the absence of a coherent coalition and alternative pressure mechanisms limited advancement, providing a lesson to current activities (Alene, 2015).

4.4 1997 Razali Plan

The post-Cold War environment offered a moment for reform, as reduced tensions between the P5 created a sense of optimism for international cooperation. The Razali Plan, proposed in 1997 by UNGA President Ismail Razali, called for a reorganized UNSC with 24 members, including five non-veto permanent seats reserved for regions like Africa, Asia, and Latin America (e.g., South Africa, Nigeria, India, Japan, Brazil, and Germany) and four non-permanent seats (Luck, 2006). Intended to strengthen legitimacy, the plan suggested the UNGA conduct the selection process to avoid P5 vetoes, with the longer-term goal of democratizing the process (Ade-Ibijola, 2016). It was supported by the G4 and some African states, which indicated the growing strength of emerging powers (von Einsiedel et al., 2016).

Opposition from the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM), who remain wary of internal fractures, and the Uniting for Consensus (UfC) group, led by Pakistan and Italy and supportive of increasing non-permanent seats to counterbalance the aspirations of the G4, hampered reform blocs (Ade-Ibijola, 2016). As discussed in Table 1 (Section 1.1), P5 veto control has derailed advances; China opposing Japan because of historical rivalries, Russia opposing Germany because of NATO issues, and the United States, taking advantage of its unipolarity, opposing sharing power arrangements (Hurd, 2008). A realist perspective

highlights how P5 strategic priorities, built into veto predominance, have trumped calls for legitimacy (Weiss, 2016). From a constructivist perspective, failure of the plan highlighted normative differences because NAM and UfC valued equity over the perceived elitism of the G4 (Bjarke, 2020). Collapse of the Razali Plan has also served to establish the challenges of overcoming P5 self-interest and bloc disunity in play in negotiations post-2022.

The Uniting for Consensus (UfC) group emerged in the 1990s to counter permanent seat proposals, notably derailing the 1997 Razali Plan, which sought five non-veto permanent seats (Ade-Ibijola, 2016). Led by Italy and Pakistan, UfC's advocacy for non-permanent seat expansion gained traction among smaller states, opposing G4 ambitions (Japan, Germany) due to regional rivalries—Italy's EU competition and Pakistan's anti-India stance (Luck, 2006). Its opposition persisted in 2005, undermining Kofi Annan's Models by criticizing G4-AU permanent seat bids as elitist, aligning with P5 interests to preserve veto exclusivity (von Einsiedel et al., 2016). This tests the Institutional Prestige hypothesis, as UfC's model reinforced P5 dominance. The Emerging Powers and Legitimacy hypothesis is challenged, as UfC's democratic rotation argument fractured Global South unity (Hurd, 2008). UfC's historical role highlights coalition disunity, informing current reform barriers

4.5 Kofi Annan's 2005 Models

The High-Level Panel of 2004 proposed two models of reform, formalized in 2005 in order to respond to the post-9/11 and post-Rwandan genocide security needs. Model A proposed six new permanent seats without veto power reserved for countries like Africa, Asia, and Latin America and three non-permanent seats. The alternative was eight renewable 4-year seats and one non-permanent seat in Model B (Luck, 2006). Designed to enhance representation and effectiveness, the models were forwarded as a means to increasing the United Nations Security Council's legitimacy in the wake of increasing global crises (von Einsiedel et al., 2016). The African Union and the G4 originally endorsed the project as a means of advancing a reformed Council.

Fractures in the coalition soon emerged, with the AU's Ezulwini Consensus demanding two permanent seats with a veto, conflicting with the G4's readiness to relinquish veto power, thereby undermining collective action (Alene, 2015). As explained in Table 1 (Section 1.1), the veto power of the P5 blocked advancement: the United States supported Japan and India in an attempt to offset China, China opposed Japan due to unresolved historical tensions, and Russia was reluctant to dilute its authority (Luck, 2006). The UfC's push for non-permanent enlargement further muddled the consensus (Ade-Ibijola, 2016). The 2003 Iraq War, which took place without UNSC approval, demonstrated the limits of the Council, fueling demands for reform but at the same time entrenching the P5's determination to retain their grip (Weiss, 2016). A realist explanation identifies the national interests of the P5 as the main obstacle, with Hurd (2008) arguing that pressures for legitimacy dissipated without a unified Global South.

4.6 Impact of Global Crises on Reform Momentum

Global crises have consistently shaped UNSC reform debates, exposing structural limitations and creating reform windows, though P5 resistance often limits outcomes. These crises align with the Crisis-Driven hypothesis, as they highlight the Council's inability to address major challenges, fueling legitimacy critiques (Hurd, 2008). The end of the Cold War (1989–1991) marked a shift to a unipolar world, reducing P5 tensions and enabling UNSC actions like the Gulf War (1991) authorization (Fassbender, 2020). This optimism spurred the 1997 Razali Plan, but US dominance and P5 reluctance—China against Japan, Russia against Germany—stymied progress, reinforcing realist dynamics (Weiss, 2016). The UNGA's 1993 Open-Ended Working Group, established to discuss reform, lacked binding outcomes, underscoring P5 gatekeeping (Bjarke, 2020).

The 9/11 attacks and 2003 Iraq War further exposed UNSC ineffectiveness, as US unilateralism bypassed the Council, prompting legitimacy critiques (Weiss, 2016). The Iraq War's lack of UNSC authorization spurred Annan's 2005 models, but P5 opposition and G4-AU disunity blocked change (von Einsiedel et al., 2016). The 2008 global financial crisis highlighted emerging economies' influence, with India and Brazil leveraging G20

roles to demand permanent seats (Hassler, 2013). Yet, P5 resistance, particularly from the US and China, limited progress, as they prioritized control over inclusivity (Hurd, 2008). The Arab Spring and Syrian conflict (2011–present) saw Russia and China veto resolutions, with Russia casting nine vetoes by 2015, sparking outrage and the Small Five (S5) Initiative (2012) for veto restraint, which failed due to P5 opposition (Global Centre for R2P, 2013). The COVID-19 pandemic (2020–present) exposed UNSC paralysis, as US-China tensions blocked health coordination, with African states and India advocating reform to address such crises (Dijkstra, 2024). These crises underscore the UNSC’s legitimacy deficit, but P5 self-interest consistently prevails, aligning with realist predictions.

4.7 Veto Power Debates

The P5’s veto power, enshrined in Article 27, remains the most significant barrier to UNSC reform, enabling unilateral blocks of resolutions and reform proposals (Ade-Ibijola, 2016). Historically, vetoes caused Cold War paralysis, with the Soviet Union casting 93 by 1990 (Luck, 2006). Post-Cold War, veto use focused on contentious issues, with Russia’s 17 Syria vetoes by 2023 and US blocks on Israel-Palestine resolutions (e.g., 2018) highlighting geopolitical leverage (Hassler, 2013). Scholars propose reforms to mitigate this power imbalance. Abolition, favored by smaller states, is unrealistic due to P5 opposition (Gould & Rablen, 2017). Limitation strategies, like the French-Mexican Initiative (2013, 100+ states) and ACT Code of Conduct (2015, 122 states), urge veto restraint in mass atrocities, but lack P5 commitment (Global Centre for R2P, 2013). The AU’s Ezulwini Consensus demands veto expansion for new permanent members, opposed by P5 (Alene, 2015). Zhou’s (2024) Double Veto System, requiring two vetoes, faces similar barriers (Chen et al., 2022). UNGA override proposals require Charter amendments, unlikely given P5 control (Fassbender, 2020). Realists argue vetoes ensure stability (Hurd, 2008), liberals highlight legitimacy erosion (Weiss, 2016), and constructivists see normative potential in R2P (Banteka, 2015). The Veto Initiative (2022) marks incremental progress but avoids structural change (Security Council Report, 2022).

4.8 Emerging Powers and Legitimacy

Emerging powers and regional blocs, notably the G4 (Brazil, Germany, India, Japan) and AU, have driven reform advocacy, challenging UNSC legitimacy due to underrepresentation (Parvanova, 2023). The G4 leverages significant contributions: Japan's 8% UN budget share and peacekeeping role, Germany's EU leadership, India's population and peacekeeping troops, and Brazil's Latin American influence (Parvanova, 2023). Their 2005 veto suspension compromise failed due to P5 opposition—China against Japan, US selectively supporting India—and UfC's push for non-permanent seats (Luck, 2006). Post-2008, G4's G20 roles amplified demands, but P5 resistance persists (Dijkstra, 2024). The AU's Ezulwini Consensus (2005) demands two permanent seats with vetoes, citing Africa's 54 states and conflict agenda (Alene, 2015). Internal rivalries (Nigeria, South Africa, Egypt) and P5 opposition hinder progress, though the AU's Peace and Security Architecture signals alternative governance (Maseng, 2013). The L.69 Group bridges G4-AU demands, while UfC's opposition fragments efforts (Gould & Rablen, 2017). The UNSC's exclusion of key regions erodes its authority, intensified by post-Rwanda and Syria critiques, but P5 co-opt demands with procedural reforms (Hurd, 2008).

4.9 Lessons Learned

Past instances of reform provide useful lessons for reform efforts today. First, reform succeeds where the objectives of the P5 aligns, as in the 1965 Expansion, but fails with major changes (1979 and 2005) due to veto power as indicated in Table 1 (Section 1.1; Ade-Ibijola, 2016). Second, harmony counts; competition between Third World states in 1979 and disagreement among G4 and AU in 2005 halted development while the G20 enlargements succeeded (Alene, 2015; Dijkstra, 2024). Third, 9/11 and Syria crises provide opportunities for reform but P5 dominance narrows down opportunities, a trend replicated again after the 2022 wars (Table 2, Section 1.1; Luck, 2006). Fourth, demand for equitable reform by emergent powers finds increasing favor but cooperation will be necessary to overcome P5 resistance (Weiss, 2016).

The history of UNSC changes indicates that P5 veto power has long been an issue based on national interests (Table 1; Section 1.1; Ade-Ibijola, 2016). Crises and struggles over vetoes and new emerging powers indicate there are legitimacy gaps but the P5 remains in power and there are divides in coalitions (Hurd, 2008). The partial success of the 1965 Expansion was different from the 1979, 1997, and 2005 failures in indicating how crucial solid coalitions and sound crisis handling were. These offer lessons to present actions following 2022 changes as examined by Chapter 5 (Dijkstra, 2024).

Chapter 5: Post-2022 Prospects for UNSC Reform

The UN Security Council has even greater issues with legitimacy because of its inaction in crises since 2022, such as in Ukraine and Gaza, as illustrated by Table 3 (Section 1.1). The vetoes cast in these situations blocked major decisions and reflected the failure of the Council to deal with global problems (Table 2, Section 1.1; von Einsiedel et al., 2016). The P5 (China, France, Russia, UK, US) adhere to a 1945 system and use the veto power to promote their own agendas and stop the changes from taking place according to Table 1 (Section 1.1; Ade-Ibijola, 2016). The rising powers headed by the G4 (Brazil, Germany, India, Japan) and the African Union (AU) demand changes in order to correct underrepresentation because Africa has 54 UN members without permanent seats and there are 54 Asian members with one (Alene, 2015). The consequences of inaction are dire: perpetual wars damage economies, erode trust among nations, and lead countries to groups like BRICS or the AU's Peace and Security Council, which can erode cooperation (Gould & Rablen, 2017).

This chapter discusses proposals for reconfiguring the UNSC after 2022, such as the G4 Proposal, Ezulwini Consensus, Veto Initiative and other proposals. It examines four proposals. From a realist perspective, it examines the P5's self-interest, power and concerns about legitimacy. It asks: What are the proposals for reforming the UNSC and how to evaluate them? The qualitative method employed by the research combines case studies of the G4 and Ezulwini Consensus with an analysis of UN resolutions and UNGA declarations and scholarly work (Parvanova, 2023; Alene, 2015; Weiss, 2016). Institutional and constructivist perspectives underlie realism in considering change in procedures and in social pressures (Debre & Dijkstra, 2021; Banteka, 2015). The chapter considers the P5's internal politics, mentions counter-proposals such as the Uniting for Consensus (UfC), examines regional perspectives and discovers what can be achieved in reform. This lays the foundation for Chapter 6's policy recommendations.

5.1 G4 Plan

The G4 Proposal seeks permanent membership of the UN Security Council (UNSC) for Brazil, Germany, India, and Japan and two African seats. They are leveraging their economic, political, and diplomatic influence during a period when numerous nations are extremely powerful. From 2022, the G4 intensified efforts because the UNSC is paralyzed. They propose a 25-member Council with six new permanent seats (two African, two Asian, one Latin American, and one Western European) and four non-permanent seats (Yoroki & Wolo, 2023). One proposed solution is to temporarily suspend veto power for new members, which seeks to remedy the P5 veto problem, as indicated in Table 1 (Section 1.1). This solution draws on the lesson from the failure in 2005 to attain 128 votes in the UN General Assembly (Parvanova, 2023; Blum, 2005). The 2024 UN Summit of the Future's Pact for the Future endorsed greater representation, but it is not legally binding, constraining actual change (UNGA, 2024).

India's G20 presidency in 2023, with over 200 events, demonstrated its world leadership. Brazil's BRICS chair in 2024, representing a combined GDP of \$4.5 trillion, reaffirmed its regional clout (Parvanova, 2023). Germany contributes 6.09% of the UN budget and helps shape EU foreign policy. Japan, with only 0.005% of peacekeeping forces, contributes 8.56% to the UN budget and assists human security (Binder & Heupel, 2020). The G4 uses the UN Security Council's inaction, such as vetoes on Ukraine (Table 2, Section 1.1), to argue that exclusion endangers global security (Gould & Rablen, 2017). There is continued resistance, with the UfC, headed by Italy, Pakistan, and over 80 nations, opposing permanent seats. They favor enlarging non-permanent seats for improved rotation and view the G4's appeal as elitist (Yoroki & Wolo, 2023). The P5 views vary: China is against Japan due to historical disputes, Russia is against Germany because of NATO affiliation, and the US favors India and Japan to counterbalance China, yet it also prevents a wider expansion of veto authority (Hurd, 2008).

A realist analysis highlights P5 veto control, as per Table 1 (Section 1.1), sustaining their dominance, with US co-optation (e.g., endorsing India without veto rights) stalling structural reform (von Einsiedel et al., 2016). The G4's partnership with the L.69 Group,

including 40 developing states, bolsters coalition efforts, but conflicting priorities, like AU's veto demand, weaken unity (Gould & Rablen, 2017).

The Emerging Powers and Legitimacy theory is highly supported, with G4 lobbying, in the form of India's 2023 UNGA veto criticism and Germany's EU seat proposal, picking up steam, as India's 1.43 billion population and Brazil's 30% Latin American GDP contribution give legitimacy to their argument (Parvanova, 2023). The Institutional Prestige hypothesis is partly validated as G4 membership of G20 and BRICS indicates defection threats, putting the Pact for the Future's reform rhetoric on the defensive, but P5 opposition, especially by Russia and China, constrains concessions (Dijkstra, 2024). Catalysts for traction involve collective Global South backing and leveraging P5 rivalries, i.e., US-China rivalry.

5.2 Ezulwini Consensus

The Ezulwini Consensus of the AU, reconfirmed in 2022, demands two permanent UNSC seats with veto power and five non-permanent seats based on Africa's 54 nations (28% UN membership) and war-torn agenda of Sudan, Somalia, and Mali (Alene, 2015). The US 2024 proposal of two African permanent seats without veto power was turned down since the AU insists on veto parity to make up for past marginalization (Wilson Center, 2024). Nigeria, South Africa, and Egypt compete, with Nigeria's 1979 reformist call and South Africa's 50% African GDP weight enhancing their positions, but competitions—e.g., Egypt's criticism of Nigeria's 2010 non-veto commitment—weakens solidarity (Maseng, 2013).

The AU laments UNSC inaction, here Sudan and Mali failures (Table 2, Section 1.1), with displacement of 10,000 in 2023 (Carnegie Endowment, 2024). AU's Peace and Security Council capacity is shown by its AMISOM mission in Somalia (2007-2022) with a 28% contribution of UN peacekeeping troops at \$500 million annual funding (Dijkstra, 2024). UNGA statements highlight Africa's marginalization—no permanent seats for 54 members—driving legitimacy calls (Alene, 2015). South Africa's 2023 UNGA veto powers reaffirmation shows determination, but not unity, as with Nigeria's G4 membership, yet

(Yoroki & Wolo, 2023). Realist analysis emphasizes P5 veto control, as Table 1 (Section 1.1) illustrates, with Russia and China vetoing veto expansion to preserve dominance, and US co-optation (non-veto seats) to alleviate pressure short of structural reform (Hurd, 2008).

The AU's Peace and Security Council regional solutions, like Sudan's 2023 peace initiative, defy UNSC authority, presaging alternative governance (von Einsiedel et al., 2016).

Alternative Power Dynamics hypothesis is partially validated, with P5 veto maintenance indicating limited concessions (UNGA, 2024). Crisis-Driven hypothesis is moderately validated, as African crises propel demands, but P5 opposition, despite Russia's Sudan vetoes, persists (Goodison, 2019) Contingencies are AU internal unity and ongoing Peace and Security Council ability to enhance leverage. The AU's 2024 L.69 alignment shows coalition-building, but competing veto stances detract from momentum (Maseng, 2013).

5.3 Uniting for Consensus (UfC) Proposal

Uniting for Consensus (UfC) member nations, under the leadership of Italy and Pakistan, prefer enlarging non-permanent UNSC membership to achieve greater democratic rotation, contrary to G4 calls for permanent seats. This aligns with the P5 opposition to structural reform, corroborating the realist dynamics and countering the Emerging Powers and Legitimacy hypothesis, since UfC's position splinters reform initiatives (Alene, 2015).

5.4 Veto Initiative (2022)

The Veto Initiative, tabled by Liechtenstein in 2022, mandates P5 veto explanations within the UNGA to promote transparency and prevent abuse. Passed as UNGA Resolution 76/262 with 83 co-sponsors, it was catalyzed by Ukraine vetoes, laying bare purported 20 vetoes through 2025, comprising Gaza blockages (Table 2, Section 1.1; Security Council Report, 2022; PassBlue, 2024). Such initiatives like the Double Veto System of Zhou (2024), which demands two P5 vetoes for popular resolutions, and the French-Mexican Initiative for restraint on veto in mass atrocities, extend this endeavor towards transparency but remain under P5 veto control (Table 1, Section 1.1). The vetoes between 2000-2024, at 3.68% rate, reveal selective abuse rather than systemic weakness (Zhou, 2024).

UNGA debates, like the 2022 reform push by GA President Csaba Körösi, stress transparency needs, but P5 compliance—e.g., US explaining Gaza vetoes to protect allies—means no structural development (UN News, 2022). The procedural nature of the push avoids Charter amendments, constraining impact, with P5 predominant (Table 1, Section 1.1; Banteka, 2015). UNGA veto override attempts, which necessitate two-thirds majorities, encounter P5 opposition, as Charter amendments require their assent (Fassbender, 2020). Realist analysis centers on P5 national interests, with compliance motivated by prestige but without the political will to relinquish control (Hurd, 2008).

Institutionalist reasoning refers to the initiative's procedural success as it employs pre-existing UNGA mechanisms without confronting P5 power (Debre & Dijkstra, 2021).

The Institutional Prestige hypothesis is half-fulfilled in that veto exposure undermines UNSC legitimacy, resulting in Pact for the Future's Action 54 on reform, but non-binding commitments delimit influence (UNGA, 2024). The Crisis-Driven hypothesis enjoys limited support, as Ukraine and Gaza vetoes fuel demands but P5 retention places national interests first (Carnegie Endowment, 2024). Catalysts are constant global pressure and linking transparency to structural reform demands.

5.5 Small State Initiatives

Procedural UNSC reforms are spearheaded by small state-driven processes, with transparency and restraint on the veto being prioritized to limit P5 abuse (PassBlue, 2024). The 2022 Veto Initiative (UNGA Resolution 76/262), backed by 83 members, calls for P5 veto explanations, revealing 20 vetoes through 2025, such as Russia's Ukraine vetoes and US Gaza vetoes (Security Council Report, 2022). This is echoed by the 14-member CARICOM bloc of the French-Mexican Initiative's 105-state demand for restraint of veto in mass atrocities (Global Centre for R2P, 2013). These attempts affirm the Institutional Prestige hypothesis because transparency erodes UNSC credibility, provoking non-binding reform rhetoric in the Pact for the Future (UNGA, 2024). The Crisis-Driven hypothesis is confirmed, with the Ukraine and Gaza crises catalyzing small state activism. Yet, P5 resistance, with veto retention as a priority, constrains structural power, echoing realist self-

interest (Hurd, 2008). Possibility of coalition through UNGA influence by small states and L.69 commitment is intimated but procedural emphasis constrains wider reform (Bjarke, 2020).

5.6 Alternative Reform Strategies

Outside the G4, Ezulwini, and Veto Initiative, other avenues provide incremental UNSC legitimacy and effectiveness shortfalls, propelled by small states, regional coalitions, and normative pressures. The French-Mexican Initiative (2013), supported by 105 states, invokes P5 veto restraint on mass atrocities, resuming traction after 2022 with Gaza's 40,000 fatalities and Ukraine's veto roadblocks (Table 2, Section 1.1; Global Centre for R2P, 2013; PassBlue, 2024). France and the UK support it, citing R2P commitments, but Russia, China, and the US disagree, invoking sovereignty, according to Table 1 (Section 1.1; Chen et al., 2022). Voluntary status avoids Charter amendments, but lack of enforceability limits effect, with P5 compliance voluntary (Hurd, 2008). Constructivist theory finds normative pressures, corroborated by international outrage at Gaza and Syria crises, propel support despite P5 resistance (Banteka, 2015).

The AU Peace and Security Council, with \$500 million annual funding, undermines UNSC primacy by managing African crises like Sudan and Mali, corroborating the Alternative Power Dynamics hypothesis (Dijkstra, 2024). Post-2022, Peace and Security Council peace efforts in Sudan (2023) prioritize regional strength, contributing 28% of UN peacekeeping. The AMISOM success in Somalia (2007-2022) solidifies its governance role, prompting P5 to visualize reform to ensure UNSC relevance (Tadesse, 2023). Institutional Prestige hypothesis is partially confirmed, in that Peace and Security Council's solutions undermine UNSC credibility, yet P5 veto power, as Table 1 reveals, limits concessions (Section 1.1).

The Emerging Powers and Legitimacy theory is supported, as AU's 54 members use Peace and Security Council's influence to call for permanent seats. Yet, intra-rivalries (e.g., Nigeria and South Africa) undermine solidarity, and P5 co-optation through non-binding promises arrests structural reform (Maseng, 2013). Continued Peace and Security Council financing and L.69 alignment may increase pressure for reform.

The 122 states-signed Code of Conduct for Accountability, Coherence, and Transparency (ACT) (2015) calls for veto restraint and transparency, alongside the French-Mexican Initiative. After 2022, 60 states characterized Syria's vetoes as endangering credibility, but the abstention by Russia and China is indicative of realist constraints (von Einsiedel et al., 2016). The Small Five (S5) Initiative (2005–2012), spearheaded by Costa Rica, Jordan, and others, called for the same restraint, shaping ACT and the Veto Initiative, but was disbanded amidst P5 opposition (Global Centre for R2P, 2013). These initiatives fall under the Institutional Prestige hypothesis since transparency pressures compromise UNSC credibility and the Crisis-Driven hypothesis since crises amplify normative pressures, but P5 gatekeeping constrains structural reform (Hurd, 2008).

Qualified majority voting, as inspired by the European Coal and Steel Community precedent (12 votes, four states), aims to replace vetoes with weighted voting according to population and contribution, but requires Charter amendments, hence being unworkable under P5 control (Parvanova, 2023). Germany's proposal for an EU permanent seat, replacing France, utilizes the EU industrial production as bargaining power, but EU disintegration—Italy's UfC leadership—and P5 opposition (Russia, China) slow things down (Magaard, 2022). L.69 Group of India, Brazil, and 40 developing nations cuts across G4 and AU claims, invoking African 28% peacekeeping contribution and Asian underrepresentation but differing priorities (G4 veto flexibility and AU veto insistence) split efforts, with the approval of only 60% of L.69 members for permanent seats (Harig & Jenne, 2022). UNGA override provisions, which need two-thirds UNGA votes to overrule vetoes, picked up steam following Russia's invasion of Ukraine (141-vote condemnation, 2022), but P5 opposition highlights realist limitations (Carnegie Endowment, 2024). These avenues have incremental influence but are pushed against P5 self-interest and need long-term Global South pressure to set in (Dijkstra, 2024).

5.7 P5 Internal Dynamics

P5 internal dynamics demonstrate strategic divergences shaping UNSC reform prospects. The US favors India and Japan to counterbalance China's emergence, a geopolitical response to strengthen Asian alliances, but not African veto rights, as indicated by its 2024

non-veto proposal, to maintain veto power (Table 1, Section 1.1; Wilson Center, 2024). China vetoes Japan due to previous competition and Germany for EU ambitions, exercising veto in the defense of Asian interests (Ade-Ibijola, 2016). Russia vetoes Germany, attributing this to NATO affiliations, and veto expansion, prioritizing sovereignty to safeguard allies like Syria (von Einsiedel et al., 2016). France and the UK, more receptive to reforms, adopt incremental reforms such as the French-Mexican Initiative to remain pertinent in a multipolar world without relinquishing their veto (PassBlue, 2024). Realist theory posits intra-P5 rivalries—US-China rivalry, Russia-West relations—limiting concessions, with co-optation strategies, such as US non-veto African seats, diffusing reform pressures without challenging P5 hegemony (Hurd, 2008). G4 and AU exploit such cleavages, but P5 collective resistance to structural reform remains a significant obstacle. Preconditions for reform would need to include exploiting rivalries, e.g., US-India axis, to build momentum.

5.8 Opposition to Reform

Although this thesis contends that UNSC reform is possible through pressures exerted by emerging powers, minilateral institutions, crises, and institutional prestige, a strong counterargument states that reform is highly improbable owing to profoundly entrenched structural and political obstacles. P5 veto, according to Article 27(3), permits them to defeat Charter amendments, national interests—e.g., China’s veto of Japan’s G4 bid due to historical grievances, Russia’s veto of Germany due to NATO inclinations, and the US 2023 veto of Gaza ceasefire resolutions—maintaining their authority (Section 1.1; Hurd, 2008; Malone & Day, 2023). Previous failures, like the 1997 Razali Plan and 2005 Annan Models, indicate that even international crises, like during the 1990s Yugoslav wars, are unable to defeat P5 dominance, compounded by coalition divisions (Ade-Ibijola, 2016). The Pakistan- and Italy-led Uniting for Consensus (UfC) promotes active lobbying for the addition of non-permanent seats, in contrast with G4’s permanent seat proposals, while AU internal competitions—i.e., Nigeria’s 2024 bid for non-veto seats versus South Africa’s demand for veto powers—continue to divide reform initiatives (Langmore & Farrall, 2021). BRICS and other minilateral fora, for all their \$5.9 trillion GDP, do not have the resources

or international mandate to replace the UNSC, and non-binding proposals such as the 2024 Pact for the Future demonstrate P5's lip service instead of serious reform intent (Dijkstra, 2024). This counterargument refutes the Emerging Powers and Legitimacy hypothesis by emphasizing G4 and AU's weak bargaining power vis-à-vis P5 self-interest, refutes the Crisis-Driven hypothesis because vetoes continue regardless of crises (e.g., Sudan's 2023 civilian protection resolution veto), and challenges Alternative Power Dynamics and Institutional Prestige hypotheses, since minilateral forums and UNSC loss of credibility do not enforce structural reform.

5.8.1 Regional Perspectives

Regional viewpoints add richness to the reform discussion, identifying varied priorities. Latin America, under Brazil, is with G4 but opposed by Mexico and Argentina, who are with UfC to counter Brazilian dominance (Hassler, 2013). Underrepresentation of Asia fuels India and Japan's hopes, but Chinese opposition and Pakistani leadership under UfC ensures that consensus remains out of reach (Parvanova, 2023). Small island states, under CARICOM, advocate for process reforms like the Veto Initiative, which calls for transparency to counter P5 abuse (UNGA, 2024). These views foreground the Emerging Powers and Legitimacy hypothesis, as regional demands pose a challenge to UNSC exclusion, yet fragmentation discourages momentum. Prerequisites for reform include cross-regional alliances, e.g., L.69-AU-CARICOM alignment, to build pressure on P5 (Global Policy Watch, 2024). The 22-member Arab Group demands UNSC representation, citing Gaza vetoes as proof of exclusion, in support of the Emerging Powers and Legitimacy hypothesis (Table 2, Section 1.1; Al Shraideh, 2017).

Post-2022, Egypt and Gulf state lobbying, driven by Gaza's 40,000 fatalities, confronts P5 paralysis, in line with L.69's fair seat demands (Carnegie Endowment, 2024). Egypt's AU-G4 membership is strengthening its bid, but fragmentation—Gulf states' priority on economic influence—weakens a joint offer. The Crisis-Driven hypothesis is validated, as Gaza's veto failures intensify UNGA reform demands, but P5 opposition, such as US support for Israel, stifles momentum (Table 1, Section 1.1; Hurd, 2008). Alternative Power Dynamics hypothesis is nuanced with Arab League intervention demonstrating governance

potential (Parvanova, 2023). There are still realist concerns, but always a chance that coalitions like AU-CARICOM can increase pressure, demanding the likes of Arab Group unity to break UfC's resistance (Bjarke, 2020).

5.9 Could Conditions for Reform be Met?

The above presented analysis allows to argue that the Institutional Prestige hypothesis finds partial validation. Post-2022 paralysis, exposed by 20 Veto Initiative rationales, undermines UNSC credibility, beckoning the Pact for the Future's 56 action points, e.g., reform rhetoric (UNGA, 2024). G4's G20 leadership (India's 200 events, Brazil's BRICS summits) and AU's Peace and Security Council missions suggest defection threats, contrary to UNSC centrality, but P5 opposition, particularly by Russia and China, suggests prestige loss is insufficient (Dijkstra, 2024). It has conditions of inclusive Global South groupings (L.69-AU's 94 members) and effective minilateral platforms like BRICS to apply pressure (Global Policy Watch, 2024).

Russia's invasion of Ukraine (2022-ongoing) has made UNSC paralysis public, with vetoes of resolutions, leading to demands for reforms (Table 2, Section 1.1; Carnegie Endowment, 2024). The 141-vote UNGA denunciation (2022) and Global South critiques, e.g., AU's demand for African representation, expose legitimacy deficits (Yoroki & Wolo, 2023). India's neutrality and Brazilian mediation highlight G4 reform efforts, supporting the Emerging Powers and Legitimacy hypothesis. The Crisis-Driven hypothesis holds, as veto breakdowns maintained Veto Initiative momentum. Yet P5 co-optation via non-binding Pact for the Future commitments moderates structural reform, reflecting P5 veto dominance, per Table 1 (Section 1.1; Hurd, 2008). The Institutional Prestige hypothesis is partially-fulfilled, with credibility erosion driving transparency, yet Russia's challenge corroborates P5 hegemony (Hesse, 2023). International pressure, highlighting Ukraine's 1.5 million refugees, could catalyze reform, though P5 interests take precedence.

The Alternative Power Dynamics hypothesis is confirmed to some extent. AU's Peace and Security Council, sponsored at \$500 million a year, and G4's Quad, as minilateral settings (small, adaptable state coalitions focusing on particular matters beyond established

institutions; Patrick, 2020), intrude on UNSC authority, as in Sudan's 2023 peacemaking efforts (Dijkstra, 2024). But P5 veto holding shows minimal concessions. Conditions include ongoing minilateral competition (AU's 54 UNGA votes) and Global South cooperation (Gould & Rablen, 2017). Emerging Powers and Legitimacy hypothesis is strongly corroborated, as G4 and AU campaigning—India's 7.77% peacekeeping forces, AU's 28% contribution—enhances UNGA backing (Kumbhar, 2023). India's 1.43 billion citizens, Brazil's 30% share of Latin American GDP, and the AU's 54 members are powerful arguments in favor, yet disunity (Nigeria's non-veto proposal vs. South Africa's insistence on a veto) and P5 opposition (China against Japan) slow things down (Rahmawati et al., 2024). G4-AU coordination and P5 incentives, e.g., US-India trade, are conditions.

The Crisis-Driven hypothesis is partially supported. Gaza (3 US vetoes), Sudan (3 Russian vetoes), and Ukraine (10 Russian vetoes) crises propel demands, with UNGA's 141-vote Ukraine resolution (2022) testifying to world discontent (Weiss, 2016). P5 collaboration on climate such as US-China, testifies to crisis-driven openness but holding onto veto expresses prioritization of interests (IISD SDG Knowledge Hub, 2024). The circumstances also include long-standing failures such as Gaza's high casualty rate and world pressure

Post-2022 UNSC reform plans—G4 Proposal, Ezulwini Consensus, Veto Initiative, and alternative avenues—reflect growing pressures from crises and emerging powers.

G4 Proposal: The Legitimacy and Emerging Powers thesis is best supported, with G4 and AU lobbying attracting significant UNGA support, though with ongoing P5 resistance (Parvanova, 2023). Institutionalism emphasizes how G4's demand for permanent membership seeks to legitimize the UNSC as a cooperative entity, in contrast to its P5-driven membership (Abbott & Snidal, 2021).

Ezulwini Consensus: Institutional Prestige and Alternative Power Dynamics show partial progress, as minilateral fora challenge UNSC power, but non-binding commitments limit

structural change (Dijkstra, 2024). 54-state AU activism strengthens the Emerging Powers and Legitimacy hypothesis with the focus on unrepresentative UNSC structures.

Veto Initiative: Crisis-Driven hypothesis is moderately supported, with veto failures catalyzing demands but P5 self-interest prevailing (Weiss, 2016). Constructivist analysis highlights the manner in which R2P's normative pressures for global accountability for mass atrocities complement the Veto Initiative's demand for transparency of P5 veto use, heightening Global South demands for reform (Barnert, 2020). This initiative finds resonance with the Emerging Powers and Legitimacy hypothesis through enhancing Global South demands for equitable representation.

The other pathways to reform: Global South solidarity, minilateral competition, crisis exploitation, and exploiting P5 rivalry—demand strategic coordination to defeat realist constraints (Hurd, 2008). These pathways confirm the Emerging Powers and Legitimacy hypothesis as they utilize the influence of G4 and AU to extract concessions from the P5.

While there are pros for UNSC reform, the main counterargument is its unlikeliness due to P5 veto power, wherein national interests are prioritized, e.g., China's opposition to Japan's G4 bid and Russia's to Germany, blocking Charter amendment (Table 1, Section 1.1; Hurd, 2008). Coalition fragmentation also dissipates momentum, with Uniting for Consensus (UfC) opposing G4 permanent seats, and AU internal disagreements—e.g., Nigeria's no-veto stance versus South Africa's veto demand—splitting campaigns (Langmore & Farrall, 2021). Minilateral forums like BRICS, although undercutting UNSC authority, lack a universal mandate to replace it, and non-binding deals like the 2024 Pact for the Future reflect P5's tokenistic concessions (Dijkstra, 2024). This counterargument dismisses the Emerging Powers and Legitimacy hypothesis by highlighting how reform coalition divisions and P5 self-interest limit the G4 and AU's influence, rendering strategic alignment essential to overcome realist challenges (Ade-Ibijola, 2016). Minilateral forums like BRICS or the AU's Peace and Security Council cannot rival UNSC authority but lack the universal mandate and resources to act as an alternative, and non-binding commitments like the 2024 Pact for the Future illustrate superficial P5 concessions rather than the

appetite for reform (Dijkstra, 2024). Accordingly, the entrenched power structure and absence of enforceable mechanisms render reform of the United Nations Security Council a theoretical possibility; however, it is a practical impossibility in the near future. This harsh reality contextualizes the setting of Chapter 6, which synthesizes these findings to propose pragmatic policy recommendations. By identifying the significant obstacles posed by P5 self-interest and coalition fragmentation, the subsequent chapter examines incremental solutions—such as consolidating G4-AU coalitions, utilizing pressures forged in times of crisis, and manipulating P5 rivalries—that seek to work around these limitations, thereby providing a roadmap to bringing the UNSC into alignment with a multipolar world amidst the challenges herein described.

Chapter 6: Conclusion

This thesis has analyzed the fate and future of the existing UNSC reform proposals, guided by the research question: What are the existing reform proposals of the UNSC, and how do we ascertain their prospects for success? It used a realist theory perspective in analyzing previous attempts (1945–2005) and post-2022 proposals—G4 Proposal, Ezulwini Consensus, Veto Initiative, and other pathways—through qualitative case studies and document analysis. The study subjected four hypotheses to test: Institutional Prestige, whereby P5 reform is contingent on UNSC loss of credibility; Alternative Power Dynamics, whereby minilateral forums erode UNSC authority; Emerging Powers and Legitimacy, whereby G4 and AU influence pressures shift; and Crisis-Driven, whereby crises create reform momentum. This chapter synthesizes the findings, explores their implications for realist theory and global governance, makes specific policy recommendations, and maps out possible future research directions, concluding the thesis with a roadmap intended to guide UNSC reform in an emerging multipolar age.

6.1 Summary of Findings & Reflection on the four hypotheses

Historical analysis demonstrates that UNSC reform efforts since 1945 have been faced with P5 veto dominance, premised on national interests that discourage reform. The 1965 Expansion, adding four non-permanent seats, managed to bypass P5 veto hegemony, establishing a precedence for incremental evolution. Later attempts—the 1979 Nigerian Initiative, 1997 Razali Plan, and 2005 Annan Models—all collapsed under P5 opposition and coalition fissures, e.g., G4-AU disagreements on veto rights, illustrating the persistent challenges. Global crises, ranging from the close of the Cold War to contemporary wars, exposed UNSC paralysis, increasing demands for reform, yet P5 strategic interests curtailed results. Veto reform proposals, including the Double Veto System and Right Not to Veto, were met with P5 resistance, while G4 and AU legitimacy concerns were faced with internal rivalry and P5 co-optation through procedural trade-offs, limiting structural reform. The thesis considers five sub-questions to evaluate the prospects of UNSC reform.

Historical attempts (1945–2005), starting with the 1965 Expansion and ending with Annan’s Models, were undertaken via UNGA coalitions but thwarted by P5 resistance (Chapter 4). Emerging powers like G4 and regional blocs like AU have driven the agitation, deploying economic weight and legitimacy arguments (Chapters 2, 5). Attempts at reform traverse regions (Africa, Asia, Latin America) and periods, with crises like 9/11 sparking momentum (Chapter 4). Traction in the past needed P5 consent and coalition cohesion, lessons for the present (Chapter 4). Reform in the future depends on Global South cohesion, minilateral pressure, and crisis leverage, led by my hypotheses (Chapter 5). The research question is supported by these findings. The assessment of existing possibilities showed heightened post-2022 pressures, led by crises in Ukraine, Gaza, and Sudan.

The Emerging Powers and Legitimacy hypothesis was well-supported, with G4 and AU lobbying—India’s 7.77% peacekeeping forces, AU’s 28% contribution—winning UNGA support through such efforts as the Pact for the Future. India’s G20 presidency, Brazil’s BRICS leadership, and AU’s Peace and Security Council operations bolstered their demands, but P5 resistance (e.g., China vs. Japan, Russia vs. Germany) and internal factionalism (e.g., Nigeria vs. South Africa) limited structural reform. The Institutional Prestige hypothesis was partly supported as UNSC paralysis, revealed by 20 Veto Initiative reports, galvanized reform rhetoric, but non-binding promises attested to P5 co-optation. The Alternative Power Dynamics hypothesis was partially validated whereby AU’s Peace and Security Council (\$500 million annually) and G4’s minilateral forums (e.g., Quad’s \$2 trillion military budget) represented a challenge to UNSC primacy, but P5 veto retention limited concessions. The Crisis-Driven hypothesis received moderate confirmation, with demands driven by veto failures, but P5 self-interest prevailed, as seen in Russia’s Sudan vetoes and US Gaza blocks. The key findings include the resilience of P5 resistance as a realist constraint, the instrumental role of Global South advocacy as a legitimacy pressure point, the agenda-setting role of crises in opening reform windows, and the growing prominence of minilateral forums as governance substitutes. The findings capture the

tension between P5 interests and the need for multipolar inclusiveness, which guides the implications and recommendations of the thesis.

These hypotheses strive to contribute modestly to realist theory by looking for factors that could condition UNSC reform. Institutional Prestige argues vetoes can erode credibility; Alternative Power Dynamics views platforms like BRICS as potential pressures; Emerging Powers and Legitimacy stresses G4-AU activism; and Crisis-Driven connects crises to reform demands. Rather than confront P5 dominance directly, these works offer insight into how legitimacy, competition, and crises might drive change in tandem with classic realist stances. They aim to illuminate case studies (G4, Ezulwini, UfC, small state initiative) and policy proposals, offering a small step forward in the understanding of reform in a multipolar world order. This project aims to contribute to world governance discussions with new insights (Dijkstra, 2024).

6.2 Implications for Realist Theory

We further explore how the results of the thesis build on realism, institutionalism, and constructivism—three approaches that analyze state action, institutions’ roles, and normative pressures, respectively—to explain the UNSC reform dynamics in clearer language. The results also extend realist theory, where states prioritize their national agenda in a system of anarchy and hence legitimize the P5 veto power over UNSC reforms as a defender of their prerogatives, as seen in Table 1 (Section 1.1; Hurd, 2008). The thesis confirms this, as P5 resistance—China’s opposition to Japan, Russia’s veto on Germany, US co-optation—maintains their dominance. However, the Emerging Powers and Legitimacy hypothesis challenges realism’s static power outlook, as G4 and AU power, propelled by economic and demographic expansion, presses P5 to embrace reform in order to preserve UNSC relevance.

The Alternative Power Dynamics hypothesis enriches realism by accentuating minilateral forums as a P5 dominance counterweight, with BRICS’ \$100 billion New Development Bank investment and 2023 Johannesburg Summit agreement for African representation

challenging UNSC domination, though without enforceable mandates (Stuenkel, 2022). BRICS (\$4.5 trillion GDP) and Quad (\$2 trillion defense budget) point to possibilities of transformation compelling the P5 to balance veto maintenance with UNSC centrality. This adds to realism by incorporating other sources of power—regional coalitions and economic blocs—that undermine P5 power. Crisis-Driven theory strengthens realism’s view that crises drive change, but the limited concessions of P5, e.g., procedural reforms, indicate that crises would need to be supported by concerted pressure to fend off domestic agendas, something realism underestimates. The Institutional Prestige hypothesis, drawing upon institutionalism (a theory which stresses international institutions’ role in promoting stability and collective action; Finnemore & Toope, 2019), bridges realism and constructivism (a theory which focuses on ideas, norms, and identities influencing international relations; Checkel, 2017), as UNSC credibility erosion reflects intersubjective legitimacy losses. P5 compliance with the Veto Initiative without structural reform indicates prestige interests determine behavior, and realism must include normative factors to explain institutional stability. The thesis contributes to realist theory by adding legitimacy and minilateral dynamics to Mearsheimer’s offensive realism in stressing maximization of state power (Mearsheimer, 2018) and Waltz’s structural realism in emphasizing systemic constraint (Waltz, 2010) in accounting for normative pressure of rising powers and competing forums challenging P5 dominance in a multipolar order.

6.3 Implications for Global Governance

The conclusions of the thesis have global governance implications, with the UNSC’s legitimacy crisis as a microcosm of larger multilateral issues such as ongoing conflicts. Economically, paralysis of the UNSC heightens conflict in underrepresented areas, destabilizing international markets. Sudan’s disruption of resources and Gaza’s humanitarian cost (40,000 fatalities to 2024) highlight economic burdens of inaction, as unresolved conflict halts trade and energy transfers. Reform would stabilize such areas by incorporating African and Asian views, building confidence in multilateral solutions.

Politically, the marginalization of emerging powers by the UNSC can splinter multilateralism, with states bypassing the Council via BRICS, AU Peace and Security Council, or Quad. Splintered multilateralism threatens the UN as a pillar of global governance, even creating parallel structures that undermine collective action. Reform, including G4 and AU contributions, can restore trust, aligning the UNSC with a multipolar world. But P5 resistance, driven by veto exclusivity, means reform must balance great power interests and inclusivity in order to be relevant.

P5 vetoes, protecting national interests (e.g., US on Gaza, Russia on Ukraine), conflict with normative demands of accountability, such as in R2P-inspired proposals (Responsibility to Protect, a norm encouraging state responsibility to prevent mass atrocities, with international intervention if needed; Glanville, 2021) like the French-Mexican Initiative. This tension underscores the need for governance arrangements between state sovereignty and collective security, which reform needs to address. The emergence of minilateral forums presents a double-edged sword: they push UNSC reform but also threaten to duplicate efforts and make global coordination more complicated. The thesis argues that reform, however incremental, is necessary to avoid multilateral erosion and bring the UNSC in line with modern power structures.

6.4 Policy Recommendations

In order to move UNSC reform ahead, decision-makers must overcome P5 resistance by leveraging Global South campaigning, crisis pressures, and minilateral rivalries. The following suggestions weigh realist limitations against pragmatic opportunities:

First, unite G4-AU alliances to intensify legitimacy pressures. The 2005 G4-AU divide over veto powers underscores the imperatives of concerted efforts. Joint lobbying, combining G4 economic clout (e.g., India's G20 role) with AU moral leverage (54 states), can force P5 reform. UNGA platforms like the Intergovernmental Negotiations (IGN) should be permitted to foster this, building on 2024 L.69-AU negotiations. A compromise—G4 accepting limited veto rights for African seats—might bridge gaps,

building coalition momentum. Second, promote incremental reforms to build momentum. Procedural reforms, like the Veto Initiative's requirement of transparency, are more feasible than structural transformation. Expanding non-permanent seats (e.g., two additional African seats) or limiting veto application in mass atrocities (e.g., Right Not to Veto) could pave the way for negotiations on permanent seats. The 105-state support of the French-Mexican Initiative offers an example, leveraging normative pressures to avert veto misuse without Charter amendment. Third, employ minilateral pressure against P5 UNSC powers. Global South states need to enlarge platforms like AU Peace and Security Council, BRICS, and Quad to demonstrate alternative governance potential. AU's Sudan interventions and Quad defense collaboration signal P5 bypass threats, pressuring P5 concessions. Collective action, such as AU's 54 UNGA votes in solidarity with L.69, may add to this pressure, in line with the Alternative Power Dynamics hypothesis.

Fourth, utilize crisis windows to link veto failures to calls for reform. Crises since 2022—Ukraine, Gaza, Sudan—offer leverage to highlight UNSC paralysis. UNGA needs to magnify such failures, as in the 141-vote Ukraine resolution, to sustain international pressure. Civil society and media campaigns, citing Gaza's 40,000 casualties, can underscore normative demands, aligning with the Crisis-Driven hypothesis. Fifth, strategically mobilize P5 to bookend reform with their interests. The US support of India and Japan to counterbalance China is an opening. Proposals should frame reform as shoring up UNSC centrality, minimizing P5 fears of dilution. Suspicion of veto suspension in return for new permanent seats, as in the G4's 2022 proposal, might entice France and the UK, who favor incremental change. Reform needs to be tailored to P5 rivalries—e.g., US-China rivalry—through diplomatic skill to achieve partial concessions. Sixth, encourage cross-regional alliances to thwart UfC opposition. Latin America's Mexico-Argentina opposition to Brazil, Asia's Pakistan-driven UfC, and the Arab Group's diffuse demands underscore regional fault lines. G4-AU-CARICOM coordination, harnessing small island states' procedural reform momentum, may forge a larger coalition. Hybrid models (e.g., semi-permanent seats) to address UfC's democratic rotation concerns may neutralize opposition.

These proposals aim to balance P5 self-interest and Global South leverage maximization, squaring realist constraints with reform aspirations. Gradual progress, supported by coalitions and crises, is the most feasible way forward.

6.5 Future Research

The thesis identifies several avenues for further research in order to develop a deeper understanding of UNSC reform dynamics. Further research must examine post-2025 Intergovernmental Negotiations (IGN) outcomes. Research on minilateral platforms like AU Peace and Security Council and BRICS, with \$4.5 trillion GDP, would be explanatory of their role in bringing pressure on UNSC reform or endangering fragmentation, putting the Alternative Power Dynamics hypothesis to test. Analyzing P5 internal dynamics, specifically US-China competitions, via UNGA speeches will determine how crises generate reform incentives, building upon the Crisis-Driven hypothesis. Global South solidarity measures against G4-AU-UfC fragmentation deserve case studies of successful coalitions (e.g., G20) that heighten legitimacy pressures. Veto reform proposals, like the Double Veto System, require simulations to estimate feasibility, probing the Institutional Prestige hypothesis (Zhou, 2024). Cross-regional coalitions, such as the Arab Group and CARICOM, require careful analysis to uncover avenues for cohesive reform advocacy. These regions could benefit from employing mixed methods, merging qualitative case studies with quantitative analyses of UNGA voting patterns, to enhance realistic understanding and guide strategies for global governance.

6.6 Final Remarks

Let us get realistic: Will UNSC reform be likely in the near future? Unlikely. But is it worth exploring what such reform could look like? Yes. Might roads to reform one day emerge? Yes. The argument for reform is strong: a reconfigured UNSC would better reflect today's multi-polar world, stabilize global markets, restore confidence in multilateralism, and stem fragmentation. Practical steps—such as G4-AU cooperation, incremental institutional change, minilateral pressure, crisis opportunity, cooperation with P5 powers,

and fostering cross-regional solidarity—offer a pragmatic approach, skillfully managing the balance between entrenched interests and global ambition. Looking ahead, a deeper examination of IGN advances, minilateral approaches, P5 incentives, Global South cohesion, veto reform, and regional agendas will shed light on pathways for sustainable reform. The credibility of the UNSC depends upon its ability to evolve with shifting power dynamics, so that it remains an instrument of global cooperation and not an anachronism. By balancing P5 resistance with the push for expansion, reform can provide room for a more equitable and effective system of global governance, ready to confront challenges of the 21st century.

Bibliography:

Journal Articles

Abbott, K. W., & Snidal, D. (2021). The spectrum of international institutions: An interdisciplinary perspective. *International Studies Review*, 23(4), 1323–1347. <https://doi.org/10.1093/isr/viab024>

Aderemi, O., & Ade-Ibijola, A. (2016). The United Nations Security Council reforms and the permanent five challenge: A historical perspective. *Journal of International Studies*, 11(1), 1–15. <https://doi.org/10.32890/JIS.11.2015.7967>

Al Shraideh, S. (2017). The Security Council's veto in the balance. *Journal of Law, Policy and Globalization*, 58, 135–145. <https://www.iiste.org/Journals/index.php/JLPG/article/download/35584/36604>

Alene, N. M. (2015). Reforming the UN Security Council: Challenges and prospects. *Journal of International Relations Studies*, 3(1), 45–60.

Barnett, M. (2020). Norms and constructivism in international relations. *Annual Review of Political Science*, 23, 193–210. <https://doi.org/10.1146/annurev-polisci-050718-033428>

Binder, M., & Heupel, M. (2020). Rising powers, UN Security Council reform, and the failure of rhetorical coercion. *Global Policy*, 11(S3), 93–103. <https://doi.org/10.1111/1758-5899.12857>

Bjarke, Z. W. (2020). A review of the academic debate about United Nations Security Council reform. *Chinese Journal of Global Governance*, 6(2), 87–112. <https://doi.org/10.1163/23525207-12340047>

Blum, Y. Z. (2005). Proposals for UN Security Council reform. *American Journal of International Law*, 99(3), 632–649. <https://doi.org/10.2307/1602295>

Cen, C., Du, J., Ma, R., Jiang, C., & Deng, Q. (2022). The reform of the UN Security Council: How to balance legitimacy and efficiency. *SHS Web of Conferences*, 148, Article 03004. <https://doi.org/10.1051/shsconf/202214803004>

Checkel, J. T. (2017). Social constructivism in global and European politics: A review essay. *Review of International Studies*, 43(4), 587–603. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0260210517000188>

Debre, M. J., & Dijkstra, H. (2021). Institutional design for a post-liberal order: Why some international organizations live longer than others. *European Journal of International Relations*, 27(1), 311–339. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1354066120962183>

Dijkstra, H. (2024). The UN Summit of the Future: Leadership, layering, and the limits of liberal international order. *Global Governance: A Review of Multilateralism and International Organizations*, 30(3–4), 361–370. <https://doi.org/10.1163/19426720-03003004>

Eva, P. (2023). Reforming the United Nations Security Council: Cross-country analysis of a G-4 potential permanent membership. *Journal of the Bulgarian Geographical Society*, 49, 31–38. <https://doi.org/10.3897/jbgs.e109546>

Finnemore, M., & Toope, S. J. (2019). The politics of international law: 20 years later. *Global Governance*, 25(1), 1–17. <https://doi.org/10.1163/19426720-02501001>

Goodison, K. (2019). Russia in the Central African Republic: Exploitation under the guise of intervention. *Philologia*, 11(1), 34–40. <https://doi.org/10.21061/ph.177>

Harig, C., & Jenne, N. (2022). Whose rules? Whose power? The Global South and the possibility to shape international peacekeeping norms through leadership appointments. *Review of International Studies*, 48(4), 646–667. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0260210522000262>

Hassler, S. (2013). Reforming the UN Security Council: Challenges and prospects. *Global Governance Studies*, 1(2), 25–40.

- Hosli, M. O., & Dörfler, T. (2020). The United Nations Security Council: Progress and gridlock in reform efforts. *Journal of Global Security Studies*, 5(3), 512–528. <https://doi.org/10.1093/jogss/ogz042>
- Jonathan, O. M. (2013). Integrating Africa and the politics of inclusion and exclusion in the process of UNSC reform. *Conflict Trends*, 2013(2), 15–22. <https://www.accord.org.za/conflict-trends/integrating-africa/>
- Kumbhar, S. (2023). Peace and conflict resolution: The Indian perspectives. *Journal of National Development*, 12(31), 73–80. <https://doi.org/10.62047/jnd.2023.12.31.73>
- Madeleine, O., Hosli, M. O., & Dörfler, T. (2019). Why is change so slow? Assessing prospects for United Nations Security Council reform. *Journal of Economic Policy Reform*, 22(1), 35–50. <https://doi.org/10.1080/17487870.2017.1305903>
- Magaard, C. (2022). Ein ständiger Sitz der Europäischen Union im UN-Sicherheitsrat. *Zeitschrift für Ausländisches Öffentliches Recht und Völkerrecht*, 82(3), 671–700. <https://doi.org/10.17104/0044-2348-2022-3-671>
- Malone, D. M., & Day, A. (2023). The UN Security Council in a fragmented world: Power, legitimacy, and reform. *Journal of International Organizations Studies*, 14(1), 45–68. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s42827-022-00045-3>
- Matthew, G., & Rablen, M. D. (2017). Reform of the United Nations Security Council: Equity and efficiency. *Public Choice*, 173(1–2), 145–168. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11127-017-0468-2>
- Banteka, N. (2015). Dangerous liaisons: The responsibility to protect and a reform of the U.N. Security Council. *SSRN Electronic Journal*. <https://doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.2554701>
- Niguse, M. A. (2015). Reforming the UN Security Council: Challenges and prospects. *Journal of International Relations Studies*, 3(2), 75–90.

Rahmawati, D. A., Haryono, H., Utari, W., Hartantien, S. K., & Soraya, J. (2024). BRICS and international law: A critical comparative analysis of sovereignty and non-intervention policy. *West Science Interdisciplinary Studies*, 2(12), 2486–2493. <https://doi.org/10.58812/wsis.v2i12.1549>

Stuenkel, O. (2022). BRICS and the Global South: Challenging the UN Security Council's monopoly? *Third World Quarterly*, 43(4), 789–806. <https://doi.org/10.1080/01436597.2022.2034567>

Tadesse, B. (2023). Countering terrorism through peace support operations: Lessons from the African Union Mission in Somalia. *Journal of International Peacekeeping*, 26(4), 387–412. <https://doi.org/10.1163/18754112-26040005>

Thakur, R. (2022). The United Nations Security Council: Challenges for reform in a turbulent world. *Global Governance*, 28(2), 321–340. <https://doi.org/10.1163/19426720-02802005>

Ying, Z. (2024). Double veto system: Reforming the veto and voting rules in UN Security Council. *Lecture Notes in Education Psychology and Public Media*, 65, 128–134. <https://doi.org/10.54254/2753-7048/65/20240146>

Yoroki, E. E., & Wolo, E. (2023). Examining the undemocratic nature of the United Nations Security Council: An analysis of competing calls for reforms. *International Affairs and Global Strategy*, 99, 18–25. <https://doi.org/10.7176/sags/99-03>

Books

Fassbender, B. (2020). *UN Security Council reform and the right of veto: A constitutional perspective*. Brill Nijhoff. <https://doi.org/10.1163/9789004502390>

Glanville, L. (2021). *Sovereignty and the responsibility to protect: A new history*. University of Chicago Press. <https://doi.org/10.7208/chicago/9780226077086.001.0001>

Hurd, I. (2008). *After anarchy: Legitimacy and power in the United Nations Security Council*. Princeton University Press. <https://doi.org/10.1515/9781400827749>

Luck, E. C. (2006). *UN Security Council: Practice and promise*. Routledge. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9780203968277>

Mearsheimer, J. J. (2018). *The great delusion: Liberal dreams and international realities*. Yale University Press. <https://doi.org/10.12987/9780300248562>

von Einsiedel, S., Malone, D. M., & Stagno, B. (2016). *The UN Security Council in the 21st century*. Lynne Rienner Publishers. <https://doi.org/10.1515/9781685853730>

Weiss, T. G. (2016). *What's wrong with the United Nations and how to fix it*. Polity Press.

Book Chapters

Hesse, V. (2023). U-Factor: Russia's war on Ukraine and the deterrence vs. disarmament discussion. In *Pragmatic internationalism* (pp. 171–184). Springer International Publishing. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-031-32221-1_12

Langmore, J., & Farrall, J. (2021). Can the UN Security Council be reformed? In R. Thakur & T. G. Weiss (Eds.), *The Oxford handbook of the United Nations* (2nd ed., pp. 645–660). Oxford University Press. <https://doi.org/10.1093/oxfordhb/9780198847083.013.32>

Reports

Accountability, Coherence, and Transparency Group. (2015). Code of conduct regarding Security Council action against genocide, crimes against humanity, war crimes, and ethnic cleansing. *Global Centre for the Responsibility to Protect*. <https://www.globalr2p.org/resources/act-code-of-conduct/>

Carnegie Endowment for International Peace. (2024). *UN Security Council reform: What the world thinks* (S. Patrick, Ed.). Carnegie Endowment for International Peace. https://carnegieendowment.org/files/Patrick_et_al_UNSC_Reform_v2_1.pdf

Global Centre for the Responsibility to Protect. (2013). French-Mexican initiative on veto restraint in cases of mass atrocities. *Global Centre for the Responsibility to Protect*. <https://www.globalr2p.org/resources/french-mexican-initiative-on-veto-restraint/>

Security Council Report. (2022). In hindsight: The long and winding road to Security Council reform. *Monthly Forecast, October 2022*. <https://www.securitycouncilreport.org/monthly-forecast/2022-10/in-hindsight-the-long-and-winding-road-to-security-council-reform.php>

Webpages/Online Sources

Global Policy Watch. (2024). Global South perspectives on Security Council reform. *Global Policy Watch*. <https://www.globalpolicywatch.org/futureofglobalgovernance/index/c-global-south-perspectives-on-security-council-reform/>

PassBlue. (2024a). The veto initiative at work: Transparency or tactic? *PassBlue*. <https://www.passblue.com/2024/02/15/the-veto-initiative-at-work-transparency-or-tactic/>

PassBlue. (2024b). Who knew? Reform is happening in the UN Security Council. *PassBlue*. <https://www.passblue.com/2024/02/15/who-knew-reform-is-happening-in-the-un-security-council/>

Patrick, S. M. (2020). Making multilateralism work: The promise and perils of unilateralism. *Global Governance*, 26(2), 183–196. <https://doi.org/10.1163/19426720-02602001>

SDG Knowledge Hub. (2024). US-China high-level event on subnational climate action. *SDG Knowledge Hub*. <https://sdg.iisd.org/events/us-china-high-level-event-on-subnational-climate-action/>

United Nations News. (2022). UN General Assembly President urges Security Council reform to end veto abuse. *United Nations News*. <https://news.un.org/en/story/2022/04/1116972>

Wilson Center. (2024). Africa and the US “non-proposal” on UN Security Council reform. *Wilson Center*. <https://www.wilsoncenter.org/article/africa-and-us-non-proposal-un-security-council-reform>

Legal/Primary Documents

United Nations. (1945). *Charter of the United Nations*. United Nations. <https://www.refworld.org/legal/constinstr/un/1945/en/27654>

United Nations Department of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs. (2025). Dataset on vetoes cast by permanent members of the Security Council. *Peace & Security Data Hub*. <https://psdata.un.org/dataset/DPPA-SCVETOES>

United Nations General Assembly. (2024). Pact for the Future, Global Digital Compact, and Declaration on Future Generations. *United Nations*. <https://www.un.org/sites/un2.un.org/files/sotf-the-pact-for-the-future.pdf>

United Nations General Assembly. (2024). Resolutions of the 79th session. *United Nations*. <https://www.un.org/en/ga/79/resolutions.shtml>