MEDZINÁRODNÉ VZŤAHY
SLOVAK JOURNAL OF INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS
Faculty of International Relations, University of Economics in Bratislava
2023, Volume XXI., Issue 2, Pages 135 – 154
DOI: https://doi.org/10.53465/SJIR.1339-2751.2023.2.135-154
ISSN 1336-1562 (print), ISSN 1339-2751 (online)
Submitted: 10. 7. 2022 | Accepted: 22. 6. 2023 | Published 15. 9. 2023

UNITED NATIONS SECURITY COUNCIL AND GLOBAL STABILITY

Temitope Peter Ola[1]

The United Nations remains the only institution with the universality and breadth to address global problems. Given the scope, scale and nature of the challenges there is a need for a new reading of the United Nations Security Council in light of the changing global security. Using the theory of functionalism this study argues that like previous experiments at global institutional building, the Security Council will incrementally provide the platform for a radical reconsideration and reversal of global peace to make the United Nations decline into irrelevance and ultimate obscurity. That will happen not necessarily because the Council is a site of established global power inequalities but in response to the impotence of the veto powers in gatekeeping global stability for collective wellness.
Key words: World Provinces, multilateralism, global security, veto power, United Nations reforms
JEL: F51, F53, F55

1 INTRODUCTION

This paper contextualizes the social crucibles that forge disarticulation in the task of inventing a holistic dialogue between the Security Council, one of the institutional building blocks of the United Nations, and global stability thus producing the perennial maladjustments which unglue the search for sustainable solutions to global problems. It seeks to understand the internal logic of the continued valorization of veto power fixation despite the availability of the plethora of material evidence on the ominous failure of the Security Council-based security paradigms. The paper owes its significance to the deliberate focus on the deep and festering inclusion deficit problems bedevilling the activities and processes of the Security Council given that it is almost inefficient, defective, malign, compromised and unreliable. In addressing the nature of the intersections of United Nations problematic regarding the Security Council as progression towards a more stable and peaceful global polity, it is necessary to pay

[1] Temitope Peter Ola, PhD., Department of History and Diplomatic Studies, Faculty of Arts, Olabisi Onabanjo University, Nigeria, e-mail: ola.temitope@oouagoiwoye.edu.ng. https://orcid.org/0000-0003-2523-7947

attention to the institutional vacuum that led to the creation of the world body. It was Auguste Comte (1798–1857) in his classic treatise entitled Système de politique positive (System of Positive Polity, 1851–54) who argues that human beings create institutions to deal with serious problems, and when they are no longer able to perform the vital function, they are replaced by other institutions. True to expectation, between 1914 and 1945 diverse dynamics shaped pre-United Nations attempts at international organizations and the agency which encased global peace and stability played epoch-making roles in making diplomacy, collective security, balance of power, and wars into the grundnorms for global security. While the instruments engage the perennial maladjustments which unglue states relations in their change milieus they seek new anchors to operate in a new socio-political framework. The new framework is the United Nations Security Council. If Comte (1851–54) is right to posit that, historically, institutions are often imperfect and evolve slowly then the actions and inactions of the most vital organ of the United Nations, the Security Council, are capable of incrementally providing the platform for a radical reconsideration and reversal of global peace that would make the United Nations lose its relevance and ultimately fade away.

Of the many purposes and objectives identified for the United Nations in the preamble and Article 1 of the Charter (United Nations, 1945), the organization's strategic project is the maintenance of international peace and security. In other words the creation of the United Nations delegitimizes international aggression. Owing to its universal membership; decision-making processes; unequalled reach; and its ability to provide critical services the United Nations provides a unique platform for international cooperation. The founders of the United Nations based its structure on the assumption that threats to international peace and security would arise primarily between nation-states (Ola, 2021) and, ahistorical though, that the victors of World War II would continue as world powers. The inability of the founders of the United Nations to see far beyond the immediate aftermath of World War II in their design of the institutions of the international organization has multifaceted implications for the ultimate viability of not just the organs but the organization itself.

Though a new wave of interstate wars is not preordained, however a number of other important developments are likely to influence the future direction of world peace. Yet a combination of global intolerance and religious fanaticism could easily bring about a global upsurge in inter-state wars particularly among the Security Council's five permanent members as well as between anyone of them and other members of the United Nations. The task of reaching agreement about what security policies states would adopt is difficult due to the absence of a true consensus about what global peace should look like, as the continuing contest over possessing of nuclear weapons illustrate. For this reason the Security Council of the United Nations is empowered by the Charter to make decisions, under Chapter VII, that are binding on the entire membership of the United Nations. The Security Council is expected to help the United Nations in being proactive

and instrumental in promoting international peace and security. Consequently, advancing on extant literature, this piece explores the challenges bedevilling the Security Council in the performance of its responsibility of sustaining global peace and security. It considers the extent to which the Security Council performs the tasks of maintenance of global peace and security.

The corollary implication of our objective in this article is the answers proffer to the fourfold set of puzzles. These are:

1. What are the achievements and shortcomings of the United Nations Security Council in respect of global peace and security since 1945?
2. Since the Security Council's inability to find common approach to handling complex security challenges starting with Iraq in 2003 to Russia's invasion of Ukraine in February 2022 has the entire system of promoting peace and security envisioned in the United Nations Charter collapsed, did this not call for the creation of a new institution that will be better engineered to bring lasting peace to the emerging international environment of the 21st century?
3. Is the United Nations merely a framework through which it members pursue their interests or an actor that enjoys significant autonomy to pursue its own interests and programmes, and how does this affect the effectiveness of the United Nations?
4. What prospect does the United Nations Security Council has in addressing global security challenges?

With a view to determining whether the United Nations will continue to find relevance in the coming decades we answer the research questions by drawing on empirical evidence to document our assertions, reinforce our speculations, and stimulate an appreciation of the multifarious implications brought about by the activities of the Security Council. Therefore, the piece is evocative of backwards in critical introspection of the imperfect past and forwards in apprehension of the uncertain future.

The paper is divided into eight interconnected sections, the first of which is the introduction. It introduces the cruise of an assessment of United Nations Security Council and global stability. This was done by detailing the research problem, questions, objectives, and significance of the study and so provides a framework within which the analysis of United Nations Security Council and global stability can be understood. In the second section, we take a cursory look at the context within which the United Nations is constructed in literature while the third section speaks to the mode of data generation for the paper which is intended to establish a conceptual framework within which to engage the questions of United Nations Security Council and global stability. We then go on, in the section that follows, to x-ray the United Nations Charter and global security in (post)World War II international system. We also look at the legal peculiarities that shape

the way the United Nations Security Council engage with and in security, and the overall implications of all these for the ability of the United Nations to effectively participate in the maintenance of global peace. In section five, we answer the questions of "why" and "how," by looking at the various ways in which the veto powers of the Security Council have used their privileged positions to condition the rights of other sovereign states of the international system. The sixth section takes a look at the attempts to balance the powers of the Security Council through a denial of sufficient fund. With a look to the future the seventh section takes due note of the broad challenges confronting the United Nations and suggests ways of ameliorating them. The concluding section summarizes the key arguments and draws attention to their implications.

2 LITERATURE REVIEW: THE UNITED NATIONS

Studies on international organizations date back as far as those organizations themselves. The appearance of the League of Nations and the United Nations were accompanied by scholarly exposition on the new organizations. Prominent among the efforts is that of Claude (1984, first published in 1956) who critique international organizations in a world of sovereign states. Meanwhile, Mitrany (1943) and Haas (1958) came up with functionalism and neo-functionalism theoretical footing of how international organizations could be useful for solving the problems of war. Furthermore, Kohane and Nye (1971) attempt to shift the focus of International Relations scholarship from state-centered and conflict-based realist paradigm to nonmilitary interaction among states as well as the growing presence of non-state actors in world politics. However, the early writings are bedeviled by historical detail, thick legal description and a focus on what the organizations were at the expense of how they functioned. Notwithstanding, the paradigms suffered from a number of weaknesses (Archer 1992, pp. 88-106) as they did not explore the formal and informal structures and processes that determine the decision-making procedures within these new actors.

On January 1, 1942 twenty-six (26) countries signed the United Nations Declaration in Washington D.C. and in April 1945 fifty (50) states met at the San Francisco United Nations Conference on International Organization to draw up the United Nations Charter which was subsequently signed on 26 June 1945 (United Nations, 1945). At that outset of the United Nations, in 1945, Beardsley Ruml projected that *" … everyone believes the United Nations is essential today; after five years people will believe that the United Nations is the greatest vision of man; after ten years, doubts will begin to creep in about the United Nations and its place in the world, but all of you will still believe in it, after fifteen years, there will be general assumption that it cannot succeed; but after twenty years, everybody will reverse and love it as the only alternative to the demolition of the world ... ."*

It has to be admitted that matters are not so simplistic, and no one dares lay claim to omniscience, or profess prophetic insights into the future of any complex organization

such as the United Nations. Yet, there are now enough unresolved tragicomedies of the United Nations to determine the validity of Ruml's conjectural speculation. The United Nations is changing in diverse ways into an extraordinary complex network of overlapping institutions. The United Nations can now be described as a decentralized conglomerate of numerous committees, commissions, centers, boards, offices, agencies, bureaus, and institutes scattered around the world (the United Nations system). Many of the changes to the United Nations are in response to concerns of non-permanent, non-veto wielding members of the organization who have continued to seize upon their numeric advantage under the one-state/one-vote rules of the General Assembly to push and pull the organization in new directions. If the United Nations has been able to adapt and evolve and meet other needs that were not necessarily envisioned when it was created contemporary reality means that the Security Council cannot continue to be the most important and powerful organ of the organization.

3 METHODOLOGY

This paper is historical, interpretative and analytical. It is also conceptual and qualitative in nature. The qualitative approach facilitates new perspectives on things about which much is known or to gain also more in-depth information that may be difficult to convey quantitatively. The paper draws insights from relevant virtual and physical secondary constructs such as scholarly exegesis, empirical materials and historical evidence using the theoretical prism of functionalism as postulated in the seminal works of Mitrany (1933) and Haas (1958). The basic argument of functionalism, according to Haas (1958) and Mitrany (1933, p. 101), is that the international political system has to be analyzed within the context of international integration – the collective governance and material interdependence between states – which develops its own internal dynamic as states integrate in limited functional, technical and economic areas. Using this problem of international governance as core analytical foci the descriptive analysis cast light on the identified empirical and normative questions that are directly related to the contemporary concerns of statesmen and students of international affair. For convenience of systematic organization of thought, the thrust of analysis in the paper is schematically presented under a number of select themes and carefully formulated to prosecute the paper's derived assumption to wit: the United Nations will fade away in response to its impotence in gatekeeping global stability.

4 UNITED NATIONS CHARTER AND THE PATHOLOGY OF SECURITY

While the international community is expected to continue on its peace path the profound hybridity of global insecurity exemplified in the intractable Korean War, the Cuban Missile Crisis of 1962, the protracted Arab-Israeli wars, the Iraqi war, the Kuwait war, the conflict in Georgia, the Rwandan genocide of 1994, the 2009 massacre of the Tamils in Sri-Lanka, the Arab Spring which led to the Syrian civil war of 2011 and which

made Libya and Syria to become failed states, the forceful annexation of Crimea by Russia in March 2014, the civil wars in Africa such as in Congo, Liberia, Sierra-Leone, Sudan and other places around the globe are clear indications that the global peace which the United Nations built up over the past seven decades remain fragile even though spectacular. That is partly because the United Nations and its member-states suffer from the limitations of the provisions for security in the Charter.

The United Nations was established to "save succeeding generations from the scourge of war" (United Nations, 1945) and one of its primary responsibilities is to silence the guns. In carrying out this universal public-interest objective of combating by all means, in accordance with the Charter, threats to international peace and security, the Security Council has the authority to take a variety of actions, including the establishment of a United Nations peacekeeping mission. Although the Security Council is not required to refer to a specific Chapter of the Charter when passing a resolution authorizing the deployment of a United Nations peacekeeping operation the legal basis for such action can be found in Chapters VI, VII, and VIII of the Charter. Since the first armed United Nations peacekeepers were deployed in Congo in July 1960 over one million personnel have served under the United Nations flag in over 70 United Nations peacekeeping operations. Though each of the interventions requires context specific study so as to understand the political and social circumstances around it, the Security Council has adopted the practice of invoking Chapter VII of the Charter when authorizing the deployment of United Nations peacekeeping missions. The invocation of Chapter VII is an evidence of firm political resolve and a means of reminding parties in conflict and the wider United Nations membership of their obligation to give effect to the Security Council's strategic decisions. Some of the decisions are: Security Council Resolution 1325 (2000) on women, peace, and security; Security Council Resolution 1612 (2005) on children and armed conflict; and Security Council Resolution 1674 (2006) on civilian protection in armed conflict.

While it was expected that whenever other States are unable to settle their disputes peacefully, the United Nations Security Council's five permanent members would act in concert to deter or rollback aggression. However, the Charter is silent on how to respond to a permanent member of the Security Council who is an aggressor and who also refuses to settle its disputes peacefully. Also, unlike the European Union's Lisbon Treaty of 2007 (which came into force on December 1, 2009) which in Article 50 outlines how a country could leave the EU[2] the United Nations Charter provides no option of exit for states that see their national interest at variance with the goals of the organization. However each of the P5 chose to remain in the United Nations so far

[2] European Parliament. (2022):The Treaty of Lisbon. [Online.] In: *European Parliament*, 2022. [Cited 21.06.2022.] Available online: <https://www.europarl.europa.eu/factsheets/en/sheet/5/the-treaty-of-lisbon>. The United Kingdom has invoked it rights under Article 50 of Lisbon Treaty of 2007 to exit the European Union.

because they know that inclusion rather than exclusion offered more options and benefitted their ability to make policy decisions internationally and expand their room for maneuver. Unlike the pulling out from the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) by the United States in the 1980s, the vote powers chose to remain within the United Nations because they are able to achieve their objectives in spite of the Security Council.

The creation of collective security doctrine on which the United Nations Security Council is based is an admittance of the failure of balance-of-power as the path to global peace. French ecclesiastic councils held in Poitiers (1000), Limoges (1031), and Toulouse (1210) discussed versions of collective security. Similar proposals emerged in the writings of Pierre Dubois (1306), King George Podebrad of Behemia (1462), the Duc de Sully (1617-1638) and the Abbe de Saint-Pierre (1713). As a concept collective security is premised on the creed espoused by Alexandre Dumas' d'Artagnan and his fellow Musketeers: 'One for all and all for one!' To make it suitable for application in the comity of nations the Musketeer creed is translated into four (4) rules of statecraft thus:

a. All threats to peace must be a common concern of everyone;
b. Every member of the state system should join the collective security organization;
c. Members of the organization would pledge to settle their dispute through pacific means; and
d. If a breach of the peace occurs, the organization will apply timely, robust sanctions to punish the aggressor.

In line with this, Article 1 (1) of the Charter (United Nations 1945) of the United Nations directs the organization to take "effective collective measures for the prevention and removal of threats to the peace". In Article 2 (paragraph 4) all members of the United Nations are to "refrain in their international relations from the threat or use of force" and are to (in paragraph 3) "settle their international disputes by peaceful means". But, learning from the failure of collective security under the League of Nations the Charter of the United Nations created the United Nations Security Council which resembles a great-power concert by permitting the Council's five permanent members to veto any proposal for military actions it disagrees with. Under this arrangement, relative to the United Nations Security Council each of the great powers has more authority. Article 39 of the Charter gives the United Nations Security Council the power to act when there is a 'threat of breach of international peace and security'. To this end, the Charter provides that the General Assembly can only initiate studies of conflict situations; bring perceived hostilities to the attention of the Security Council for initiatives to keep the peace. Furthermore, Article 99 (United Nations, 1945) restricts the roles of the Secretary-General (and the Secretariat under him) to that of a chief administrative officer alerting

the Security Council to peace-threatening situations and providing administrative support for the operations that the Security Council approves.

The composition of the Security Council is provided for in Article 23[3] of the Charter (United Nations, 1945). Most significantly five states (the P5) are identified in the article as permanent members: the Republic of China, France, the Soviet Union, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, and the United States. Though these names of the P5 have not been amended in the Charter, two changes have occurred regarding which states exactly occupy these permanent seats (Bailey and Daws 1998, p. 137). The seat of China was occupied by the Nationalist regime in Taiwan until 1971, when it was taken over by the People's Republic of China, and the seat for the Soviet Union was assumed by the Russian Federation in 1991 when the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR) dissolved into 15 separate states. The privilege and function of the permanent seats are that all must agree on the action to be approved. The idea is that any permanent member could in effect defeat an item or proposed decision by objection (veto) of the Council. The unique materiality of the veto power system bestowed on each of the P5 is to not only appease them individually but to also guarantee their continued collective and individual commitments to the global peace processes since the comity of nations suffers from the exhaustion of the era of the two world wars. By virtue of the investiture of the power to veto on the P5 it was expected that, in fidelity to the privileged position confers (*noblesse oblige*), each and every one of them would be honorable, restrained and generous in their general collective and individual specific governance of global affairs. In other words the Charter wants each of the permanent members of the Security Council to be chief peace-brokers for the international system. But is it so?

From a functional perspective many of the generic ideas underlying the Security Council made sense and were acceptable at the time of its creation. However the conditional factors have changed irreversibly since then. The changed geopolitical development trajectories of the 21st century as compared to 1945 and the breadth of the value-oriented happenstance have now made the Security Council not only a non-representative body which fails to fulfill the customary law requirements of general practice and *opinion juris* but the institutional status granted the five states run counter to the principle of sovereign equality of member states of the United Nations guaranteed under Article 2, paragraph 1 of the Charter (United Nations 1945). A *jus cogens* norm or natural rights on which rests, according to article 53 of the Vienna Convention on the Law of Treaties 1969 (United Nations 2005), "the international community of states as a whole". As the need for greater inclusiveness rises the Security Council becomes an

[3] Amendment to Article 23 of the Charter was adopted by the General Assembly on 17 December 1963 and came into force on 31 August 1965. The amendment enlarged the membership of the Security Council from eleven to fifteen.

object of principled critique, the most intractable United Nations reform issue[4] and for Charter amendment in the process of adaptation to evolving needs in line with the purposes of the United Nations.

The institutional crowding which allows the obscure selection of the privileged minority as well as the composition of membership and the *modus operandi* of the Security Council is not just a political problem – it is also a serious human right challenge. The composition of the Security Council is "top down multilateralism" foisted on society. Therefore, it lacks *process legitimacy* derived from an inclusive consultative process. Inaction on the inadequacies of this hierarchical artifact of World War II has the potential to compromise the long-term sustainability of global macro-political stability. Indeed the post-World War II order that provided the framework for the creation and structure of the Security Council that was tied to 'super power' represents the 'old' odd order which have become not only nugatory but incongruous also. Moreover the veto powers have ceased to reflect the values-aspirations-consensus-goal formation sequence of the world's population in a world that is increasingly non-Western. Insofar as the veto-wielding member states have acted against other elements of the United Nations to achieve common political goals then it should be clear that the might of the veto powers is no longer a *sine qua non* to global peace. Moreover given the gradual expansion of its functions there is no doubt that the United Nations' privileging of the hitherto untrammelled powers (nuclear arsenals) of the permanent members, which they would not use for global collective good (Greenstock 2008, p. 258), and the anachronous *diktats* of military fetishism as the space of arrival is not necessarily *"for the best"*, not for the members of the Security Council and not for the system at large. It subjects the international community to continuous psycho-material bondage.

[4] Amendments to Articles 23 and 27 of the Charter were adopted by the General Assembly on 17 December 1963 and came into force on 31 August 1965. An amendment to Article 109, adopted by the General Assembly on 20 December 1965, came into force on 12 June 1968. The amendment to Article 23 enlarges the membership of the Security Council from eleven to fifteen. The amended Article 27 provides that decisions of the Security Council on procedural matters shall be made by an affirmative vote of nine members (formerly seven) and on all other matters by an affirmative vote of nine members (formerly seven), including the concurring votes of the five permanent members of the Security Council. The amendment to Article 109, which relates to the first paragraph of that Article, provides that a General Conference of Member States for the purpose of reviewing the Charter may be held at a date and place to be fixed by a two-thirds vote of the members of the General Assembly and by a vote of any nine members (formerly seven) of the Security Council. Paragraph 3 of Article 109, which deals with the consideration of a possible review conference during the tenth regular session of the General Assembly, has been retained in its original form in its reference to a "vote, of any seven members of the Security Council", the paragraph having been acted upon in 1955 by the General Assembly, at its tenth regular session, and by the Security Council.

5 VETO POWER IN SECURITY COUNCIL: A PEACE BROKER OR A PEACE BREAKER

Having provided a broad view of what global stability means, we can now go on to examine the specific question of Security Council of the United Nations. The Security Council is the only organ with an exclusive strong decision-making and enforcement competence and powers since it is laid out that *"the Members of the United Nations agree to accept and carry out the decisions of the Security Council in accordance with the present Charter"* (Article 24, paragraph 1) (United Nations, 1945). The Security Council which is the legislative body of the United Nations, but also acts as an executive body as all resolutions of the General Assembly on security matters must be approved by the Security Council. Beyond that, the Secretariat which is the official administrator of the United Nations cannot act without approval from the Security Council. The Security Council is thus the only organ of the United Nations that reports to no one, yet it resolutions are binding on the United Nations (Article 24, paragraph 1). The framers of the Charter were oblivious of the fact that making the Security Council unaccountable to none other has the tendency to isolate the vital organ and such isolations can lead to ultimate destruction. But as a quasi-military decision-making apparatus the Security Council was established on a humanitarian ground to act as a succor, a defense and advocate for humanity without biases and intimidations while sustaining the morality, integrity and effectiveness of the United Nations. The ideal behind the powers invested in this vital instrument of policy of the world body is novel and would have stabilise the polity and with huge successes if not that the cauldron of irreconcilableness in the divergent interests of the key members stalled the workings of the United Nations Security Council on several occasions as the veto power is chaotically deployed to achieve certain primordial national interest starting from 1963. As the Council gets bogged down in increasing selfish nationalistic hardline positions it is not capable of taking rapid, simple, and appropriate decisions. That explains why global peace often remain a helpless bystander while global stability is mostly left to the unilateral whims and caprices of any interested great-power whenever the veto wielding states' refusal to cooperate conspire (occult politics) against the establishment principle of the United Nations Security Council. This does not however provide adequate explanation for the methods the veto wielding powers of the Security Council navigate the geography of global security challenges. In deconstructing Security Council handling of global security it is helpful to answer the questions of "why" and "how". "Why" helps us to understand the specific factors that draw veto powers into wars conduct while "how" explains the tactics and tools with which they navigate the dangerous geography of conflict. Both questions collectively provide important insights into the dynamic engagement of veto power with wars and the implications for the United Nations. To address the question of "why," we can note that for instance *"After reaching consensus to insist on Iraqi disarmament and send back United Nations weapon inspectors, the Security Council split on whether to authorize force against Iraq – the United States and Britain voted in favor;*

France, Russia, and China against. After France threatened to veto a UN resolution authorizing war a U.S.–British coalition toppled the Iraqi government without explicit United Nations backing. United Nations Secretary-General Kofi Annan later called the war 'illegal' " (Goldstein and Pevehouse, 2009, p. 59).

Of the other four permanent members of the Security Council, only the United Kingdom supported the United States' decision to go to war with Iraq. China, Russia and France were united in opposition to the plan. The decision likewise divided the European Union. The United Kingdom, Poland and Spain supported while France, Germany and Belgium opposed it. However, the inability of the United Nations Security Council to reach a common ground and the eventual invasion of Iraq by the United States and its "coalition of the willing" in 2003 torn up the rule book of United Nations' international peace and security maintenance processes. That means the resolutions of the United Nations Security Council are increasingly shaped by, rather than to shape, states' policies – thus challenging the security prerogative of the Security Council itself.

The other question of "how" relates primarily to methods and tools for navigating the complex geographies of wars by the veto powers. In line with this we recall how the United States tried to gain legitimacy for an essentially aberrant social form. On 5 February 2003, United States' Secretary of State, Colin Powell, addressed the United Nations Security Council, charging Iraq with a breach of its disarmament obligations under the United Nations Security Council Resolution 1441. Unable to move away from the realm of speculations to that of evidence-based reality Powell asserted, hypocritically, that American intelligence agencies had evidence that Saddam Hussein's regime possessed weapons of mass destruction. Emphasizing the gravity of the threat the weapons posed, Powell reminded his listeners of Hussein's ruthlessness and submit that he would 'stop at nothing until something stops him'. Powell's assertions are not only deceptive but also clearly deflective from complete truth. Events have since punctured and dispelled Powell's misleading innuendoes and untruths. By purporting to engage in war on behalf of, in the name of, or through the agency of humanity, the United States gain public support or at least acquiescence for what is essentially a personality clash with a hostile foreign head of state. But the United Nations Security Council saw through the United States and refused to approve the invasion. With the benefit of hindsight the United States' invasion of Iraq was occasioned by illegal motives. As the debacle of the United Nations on this occasion shows the established diplomatic channels at the United Nations Security Council are practically a recipe for stalemate since most of the great powers are always reluctant to forego controlling the negotiations. In fact the parliamentary diplomacy involve in the political processes of the United Nations Security Council is not working.

In an effort to galvanize global support for the war against Iraq the United States announced in September 2002 that it would rejoin the UNESCO. The United States had in the 1980s withdrew from UNESCO, in part as a rejection of the organization's role in

promoting the demand for a New World Information and Communication Order (NWICO)[5] being championed by developing countries. The United States' invasion of Iraq and the subsequent overthrow of the state's sovereign by the invading forces were helped by the fact that the Cold War was ended. As such there was no rival ideological bloc that could support Iraq against the United States onslaught. The collapse of communism allows the United States to deploy unbridled power and treat every other state in a condescending way. By its actions in Iraq the United States demonstrated its willingness to defend its rank (position) and vested interests in comparison with other states in the international system.

One of the reasons for the United Nations Security Council refusal to grant United States' request for invasion of Iraq is the understanding that allowing the use of coercion by one state to change the political regime in another (Iraq) would significantly change the normative climate of international politics. The eventual invasion of Iraq by the United States despite its failure to successfully manipulate the Council for approval means that decisions of the United Nations Security Council which the veto wielding states disagree with can be liken to sermons, providing gallant rhetoric to encourage the pursuit of wistful ideals (Wedgwood 2002, p. 45). The victimization of Iraq by the United States lays the precedence for the invasion of Ukraine by Russia. And the veto at the Security Council is the icon behind which the duo hides thus revealing its defects. Though the conflict history reveals that the actions of the United States in Iraq are for opportunities (*greed*) and those of Russia in Ukraine are motive-oriented (*grievance*) the tragedies of the two super powers' resort to military self-help raise public disillusionment and fundamental questions about the balance between United Nations veto wielding states' commitments to the core objectives of the United Nations while pursuing their own parochial national interests that are at variance with the exalted positions they hold in trust for the comity of nations. Indeed, the original sin of international politics is that actors, irrespective of their privileged positions, will always be tempted to take shortcuts to reach their desired results. It is now clear that a Security Council led by pro-unilateralism and bloodthirsty warmongering global political aristocrats like Vladimir Putin of Russia cannot commit the United Nations to do the right things.

The veto powers of the Security Council have been indicted for sponsoring proxy wars in different regions of the world during the ideological conflict of 1945 to 1991. While those peace-breaking activities are not excusable the roles of the United States and Russia in post-Cold war invasions of Iraq and Ukraine are unpardonable. But the United Nations Charter lacks ways to genuinely curb the excesses of veto-wielding member states that transgress its powers. Neither the United Nations nor the Security Council was created to block the actions of super powers. Rather the United Nations and the Security

[5] The New World Information and Communication Order (NWICO) were adopted at the twenty-first general conference of the UNESCO in Belgrade (1980).

Council are to work for the benefit of veto-wielding member states [alternatively, other power structures/groups/individuals] which explains why the interference of the United States in Iraq in 2003 despite the non-approval of the Security Council was of no immediate consequence and Russia could advance on Ukraine while also threatening Sweden and Finland with similar actions for daring to consider the membership of the European Union (geographic crowding). Yet the same debacle of Article 2 (7) of the United Nations Charter which proclaims that ‘‘nothing should authorize intervention in matters essentially within the domestic jurisdiction of any state’’ (United Nations 1945) confronted the United States then and confronts the still unfolding oil-for-food scandal of Russia in Ukraine now.

Thus, two of the States mandated to be chief peace-brokers for the international system by the United Nations Charter have constituted themselves into peace-breakers. The question is if it were another State other than one of the P5 that went to war in Iraq would the Security Council have responded the same way? For now the unilateral determinations by the United States and then Russia constitute setbacks to the evolution of the United Nations. With this privatization of a public authority it became clear that as far as relations between the United Nations and its member states are concerned the veto wielding members of the United Nations Security Council are already invested with more power than even the United Nations itself. This is a perfidious letdown of multilateralism pregnant with deleterious effects and it is not a state any international organization that wants to claim the twenty-first century should be. Yet in a post human rights revolution era the United Nations should be able to, *en groupe*, invoke the provisions of its September 2005 United Nations World Summit on the ‘responsibility to protect (R2P) populations from genocide, war crimes, ethnic cleansing, and crimes against humanity‘ to stop the war between Ukraine and Russia.

In the meantime with the broad-based disrespect of the norm of international community by the institutional law of the United Nations Charter it is well-nigh inescapable that the usage of veto power brings the ethos of sovereign equality of States under the assault of binarity making the concept to completely lose its *jus cogens* character. The long-term by-product and penal connotations of this transposition of general international law not only present dilemmas to States in the implementation of their obligations under the Charter but also constitute the bane of the political, judicial and legislative peace processes of the international system.

6 Budget of the United Nations: harmful or agentic empowerment?

Deconstructing Security Council attempts to arrive at global stability is incomplete without an engagement with the availability of fund for the operations of the United Nations. One reason the United Nations is a victim of its own mechanism is its budgeting methodologies including the inefficient payment schedules and borrowing and funding restrictions. The United Nations budget consists of three distinct elements: the

core (regular) budget, the peacekeeping budget, and the budget for voluntary programs. The core budget is approximately US$1.9 billion per year, while the total spending on United Nations peace keeping operations, agencies and programmes and fund is roughly US$15 billion. The real problem of the United Nations is in how the money is raised. The core budget and fund for peacekeeping activities are raised through assessments. But assessments are allocated based on a complicated scheme of states' capacity to pay. The formula used to determine contributions to the United Nations core budget, known as the "scale of assessments," serves as the starting point for each country's contribution to United Nations peacekeeping. The core budget scale is based on a country's share of global gross national income (GNI), with adjustments made for the country's level of indebtedness and position relative to average global income. Payment restrictions apply to both the least-developed countries and the largest contributors.

Based on the formula the United States contributes 22% of the United Nations annual budget while Japan pays – 19%; Britain 6.1%; France 6.1%; China 2.1%; Russia 1.1% while the poorest members, about seventy per cent of the membership, pay the minimum (0.01%) annually. By this formula, the richest states pay more than four-fifths towards the United Nations' 2020/2021 budget. This method of financing the United Nations is broken. One perpetual problem facing United Nations is that member states do not always pay their bills. This has led to depleted cash reserves, raids on peacekeeping accounts, ballooning accounts payable, and great uncertainty about the extent to which the United Nations can fulfill its responsibilities. The United Nations' extremely detailed budget effectively proscribes the secretary-general from transferring funds and staff into priority activities. The Secretariat was, for some time, able to deal with the funding shortfalls by drawing on its limited cash reserves however, due to the accumulation of late payments in recent years, these reserves are no longer sufficient to keep the United Nations solvent. If the cash-flow crisis continues to deteriorate at its current rate, the Secretariat may be forced to consider furloughing employees or curtailing certain aspects of its operations. The United Nations surely needs predictable financing.

At the same time, the wealthy countries which consider themselves the overburdened financial backbones of the United Nations are complaining that those who do not have the money, but only the vote at the General Assembly are the ones channeling the United Nations through majority rule. Therefore, the argument and debate on the challenge of a system of taxation without power versus the need for great-power United Nations members to shoulder financial responsibilities commensurate with their wealth persist. That explains why, for instance, since year 2000 the United State has deliberately being in arrears of an average of US$1.35 billion annually. But, even then the total budget of the United Nations, an organization expected to serve the world's 6.7 billion people is less than the annual budget of New York's Police Department. Enshrined in the Charter is the General Assembly's final say over the purse (Article 17, paragraph 2) (United Nations, 1945) perhaps to maintain a semblance of power balances between the organs.

Thus it might be no coincidence that the General Assembly places insufficient funding at the disposal of the United Nations. What is clear is that the General Assembly balances the powers of the Security Council, at least, through limited finance. Little wonder that Krauthammer (2006, p. 39) observes that the United Nations "has not worked. It never will."

7 A FUTURE FOR THE UNITED NATIONS

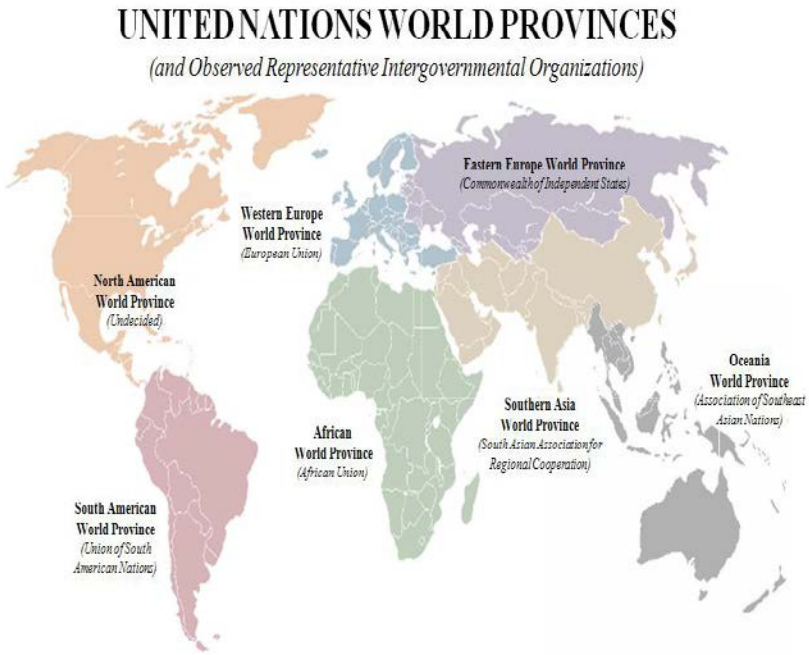
At its formal inception on 24 October 1945, the United Nations had only 51 member-states which has since increased to 193, covering all the continents of the world, just as its initially narrow focus on the maintenance of international peace and security has expanded to include other matters of common global concern such as human rights protection and advancement, equitable trade, conflict resolution, peacekeeping and peace-support operations, environmental protection, terrorism, etc. While it is true that the United Nations' membership and focus have broadened, it is equally true that its essential Cold War power structure and inequalities have not changed substantially since 1945. The original great powers that founded it and awarded positions of significant power and influence to themselves still hold sway in spite of considerable alterations in the global power configuration. For example, the Security Council, which is its most pivotal organ with the constitutional powers to undertake or order enforcement actions in maintaining international peace and security, has remained firmly in the hands of the original five permanent members. All of them have shown great unwillingness to ease their hegemonic stranglehold on the organ or even dilute their control of the agenda and decision-making capacity (agency), in spite of the recommendations for wide-ranging reforms. Instead of leveling up to the expectations of the global community, veto powers have built anecdotal evidence around themselves. Thus, wallowing in complacent self-absorption the veto powers went off-tangent in the attempt to make their acquisition of non-democratic control over the United Nations a once-and-forever decision even as their conservative instincts and self-serving fear of loss of power does not only sacrificed facts for the convenience of dogmatic schematization but are strategically obstructive of the system. This has implications for the entire membership of the United Nations but their expressions are surely graver for the marginalized continents of Asia, Africa and Latin America.

There are contemporary developments that question the United Nations' ability to perform its core function of maintaining international peace and security and still remain relevant to the vast majority of the world. These worrying developments include the United States gradual but cynical retrenchment from multilateralism and deliberate weakening of the United Nations and its organs; the increasing predilection of great powers for unilateral use of force in total disregard of the United Nations Charter and disdain for the Security Council; the rise of new great powers such as China, Germany, India, as well as the rise of new economic blocs such as BRICS (Brazil, Russia, India,

China, and South Africa), etc. Perhaps a much greater concern is the refusal or failure to implement the recommended reforms which are intended for inclusiveness and equity. For example, Africa with 54 states, more than a fourth of total United Nations membership, has no permanent member in the Security Council. The same goes for Latin America. Contrarily, Europe with 44 states has three (United Kingdom, France and Russia). Additionally, countries like Japan and Germany, though defeated powers at the time the United Nations was formed and had no say in its structure, have since emerged two of the largest economies in the world, whose individual annual contributions to the United Nations purse is more than that of United Kingdom and France and yet have no permanent seats in the Council. These inequalities in regional power relations have a rolling effect, leading to even more and continued inequalities in the future. Correcting regional power inequalities where they existent in the organization are both a challenge and an opportunity for the United Nations.

As there is currently a mismatch between global problems and global institutions and processes expedient realism suggests a rejig of the United Nations structure in order to make it more representative and reflective of contemporary global realities as well as cope with the increasing complex emergencies across the globe. Previous attempts to reform the structure of the Security Council both through Charter alteration and or institutional practice are at best inadequate and at worst ineffectual. Though the solutions to the age long problem of the United Nations is complex yet if the United Nations is to begin to surmount the glitches of militating challenges which providence has strategically planted to ambush the peace, development and progress of the international system something has to be done and quickly too. There are a number of options to make the most vital organ of the United Nations and its veto more representative. The options include regionalism, population distribution, economic weight, civilization and democracy. But given that the biggest challenge is the absence of representation for Africa, Asia and Latin America to start with, the permanent seats on the Security Council should be increased to seven. Given the inability of the power to veto to transform selfish nationalistic and arrogant power politicians into world-minded, justice-oriented statesmen of humanity. None of the permanent seats of the Security Council would be promised to individual member states. The seven seats would be held, on an “equitable geographical distribution”, by the seven World Provinces of North American World Province, Western Europe World Province, Eastern Europe World Province, South American World Province, African World Province, Southern Asia World Province, and Oceania World Province (see Fig. 1). A permanent seat on the Security Council would have all the privileges and functions of the current permanent seats. Each of the seven World Provinces will elect their respective World Province representative to fill the seat. If this is done it will strengthen the structure of incentives to make countries’ commitment to the United Nations much stronger just like the commitment to their various regional economic communities.

Fig. 1: United Nations world provinces



Source: United Nations, 2022.

The future of global peace is in the ability of the United Nations to prevent the type of United States and Russia's invasions of Iraq and Ukraine respectively through the elucidation of the facts in dispute, clarification of the applicable law, and invocation of the calmness and self-possession of reasonable men. The foregoing notwithstanding, the argument that the unilateral invasions of Iraq and Ukraine by veto wielding States confirm the signals that the United Nations Security Council is finally about to descend into somnambulism is problematic. That is because international politics is a baffling mix of patterned regularities and novel events, deliberate choices and inadvertent accidents. Though under certain conditions, certain types of international actors respond the same way to the same kind of events yet, sometimes similar actors in similar situations make different decisions. Thus, world politics' regularities notwithstanding, we cannot draw on a body of uniform, deterministic laws to predict the future of the United Nations Security Council precisely. Rather, we will make probabilistic forecasts about what is likely to happen, other things being equal (Singer 2002, pp. 12-13). Whereas it would be premature to abandon the focus on the United Nations Security Council, it would be equally mistaken to exaggerate the United Nations' power as a determinant of the world's fate and the shaper of global future.

8 CONCLUSION

The United Nations Security Council has, since the end of World War II, been helpful in ensuring a semblance of global peace and stability. Notwithstanding, if the international system will safe itself from global security catastrophe a holistic overhauling of the United Nations security architecture is inevitable. That is largely because, as presently fashioned, the United Nations is only a little more than a willing tool in the hands of its most powerful member states. With that being the case the United Nations' prospects in being able to effectively address global security challenges are indeed very blink and prone to failure. The need to reconfigure the international security architecture as represented in the Security Council in ways that take due cognizance of the broad context of global progress has become pertinent. It is in recognition of this fact that the paper considers the expansion of the number of states with veto powers within the United Nations Security Council in the indubitable quest for social justice as critical tools in the search for a stable peace of the United Nations. This is with a view to addressing the matrix of (dis)empowerment which the unrepresented peoples of Asia, Africa and Latin America have long been subjected. Even though the complex tapestry of lived deprivation experience which the three continents have to navigate flows from the broader crises of their late entries into global relevance there is a sound conviction that the empowerment and inclusion which the extension of the Security Council veto power to them connotes is the surest resident source of global stability and fructifying gateway to sustainable peace. The participation of these three continents in global security decision making bodies cannot merely be considered an indulgence grudgingly accepted by the victorious powers of World War II but as an imperative for success. This concern is neither unfounded nor misplaced, not just because more than two-thirds of global population is located on these continents but more importantly because the variety of their concerns have become central and strategic to the making and unmaking – for good or bad – the global community. Unfortunately, it is clear that substantial ground still needs to be covered before the United Nations can seize the initiative.

That the United Nations is going through a recession due to system-fragility is not strange but the Security Council intentional stifling of multilateralism despite its vagary of inherently peculiar structural inequalities is a misnomer. These are no doubt symptomatic of deeper and festering problems bedevilling the (un)United Nations system. Therefore as the veto powers of the United Nations Security Council rail against multilateralism, privileging the virtues of unilateralism, leading to the informal disappearance of the Security Council through increasing performance and representativeness illegitimacies, it might just be time to replace the global intergovernmental organizations that were established at the end of World War II as they seem too old to meet the challenges of a rapidly changing world. Insofar as the veto powers are too uninterested to pay the price for relevance it would be a big mistake for anyone to grant validity to the United Nations Security Council. And of course the history

of the Council shows that the wisdom of its resolutions at the best is but a blind guide; its policies are meteor that dazzles and lead astray.

A sustainable, functional and unbiased United Nations remains pivotal to ensuring global peace and stability. From a functional perspective, given the failures of the United Nations Security Council to act decisively for Iraq and Ukraine, it is not difficult to see that those who think that the Council really means something today are those who wish to tie the world down to existential peril and political liabilities of the bloodiest war (World War II) in history which the super powers have learnt to not only manipulate, but also to appropriate its discourses and patterns for self-advancement. In any case, as an organ of the United Nations the Security Council is more useful in the past than in the present, and it is still more useful now than it is likely to be in the future except it is able to device more awareness of risk, and beforetime risk management instruments to hedge against crisis escalation as the organization would increasingly become an object of contemptuous universal derision. If collective actions cannot be attained within the United Nations on vital global security issues Security Council architecture will lose its legitimacy as a guarantor of global peace and security and the United Nations Security Council would fade into irrelevance. As global conditions get to the level of making that to happen the super powers' worst apprehensions and fears metamorphose into a self-fulfilling prophecy.

What we have done above is to explicate the reflective and refractive implications of the geographies of exclusion and inclusion that help solidify United Nations Security Council's management of global peace and stability along with the undercurrent of great powers' positions and vetoes that ultimately frame it, understanding it as both a failure of institution and a strategy for global dominance. In sum, this study extends and deepens the discourse of functionalism of survival tactics in the etiology of global stability. This is particularly relevant in a world that is being eclipsed by refractive temperament birthed by socio-historical decompositions, economic crisis and sectorial exclusion. The corollary implication of these topical issues is that it raises valid empirical questions which deepen the argumentation on the client-patron structure and paternalistic congruency of international peace. What is obvious is the fact that the issues that are thrown up by the Security Council's roles in the maintenance of global peace have always recurred: absence of democracy, personalization of global security apparatus, persistent usage of the veto and refusal to implement reform proposals.

REFERENCES:

1. ARCHER, J. (1992): *Ethology and Human Development*. New York: Barnes and Noble, 1992. 273 p. ISBN 0389209961.
2. BAILEY, S. D. – DAWS, S. (1998): *The Procedure of the UN Security Council*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1998. ISBN 9780199685295. https://doi.org/10.1093/0198280734.001.0001

3. CLAUDE, I. (1956): *Swords into Plowshares: The Problem and Progress of International Organization*. New York: Random House, 1956. 497 pp. ISBN 0394310039978.
4. COMTE, A. (1851-54): *Système de politique positive (System of Positive Polity)* New York: Calvin Blanchard, 1851-54. 838 pp.
5. EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT. (2022): The Treaty of Lisbon. [Online.] In: *European Parliament*, 2022. [Cited 21.06.2022.] Available online: <https://www.europarl.europa.eu/factsheets/en/sheet/5/the-treaty-of-lisbon>.
6. GOLDSTEIN, J. S. – PEVEHOUSE, J. C. (2009): *Principles of International Relations*. New York: Pearson Longman, 2009. 224 p. ISBN 0205652662.
7. GREENSTOCK, J. (2008): The Security Council in the Post–Cold War World. In: *International Journal of Peace and Conflicts Studies*, 2008.
8. HAAS, E.B. (2004) [1958]: *The uniting of Europe: Political, Social, and Economic forces, 1950-57*. Notre Dame, Indiana: University of Notre Dame Press, 2004. 641 p. ISBN 9780268043476.
9. KRAUTHAMMER, C. (2006): Remember What Happened Here. In: *Time*, 2006, 168, 2, p. 76.
10. MITRANY, D. (1943): *Working Peace System: An Argument for the Functional Development of International Organization*. London: Royal Institute of International Affairs, 1943. 56 p. ISBN 220751685.
11. NYE, J.S. – KEOHANE, R. (1971): Transnational Relations and World Politics: An Introduction. In: *International Organization*, 1971, 25, 3, p. 329-349. https://doi.org/10.1017/S0020818300026187
12. OLA, T.P. (2021): 'United Nations' Provisions for Pacific Settlement of International Disputes. In: *Acta Universitatis Danubius. Relationes Internationales*, 2021, 14, 2, pp. 84-95.
13. SINGER, J. D. (2002): The Etiology of Interstate War: A Natural History Approach. In: *Polemos*, 2002, 5, 1-2, pp. 13-31.
14. UNITED NATIONS (1945): *Charter of the United Nations and Statute of the International Court of Justice*. San Francisco: United Nations, 1945. 55 p.
15. UNITED NATIONS (2005): Vienna Convention on the Law of Treaties 1969. In: *Treaty Series*, 2005, 1155, p. 331.
16. WEDGWOOD, R. (2002): Internalism Explained. In: *Philosophy and Phenomenological Research*, 2002, 65, 2, pp. 349-369. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1933-1592.2002.tb00206.x