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DENMARK

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new approaches to understanding and unlocking the gridlock

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BY
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DISSERTATION SUBMITTED 2022

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ENGLISH SUMMARY

For decades, extensive research and policy proposals have engaged the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) reform issue. However, the political process is in a stalemate, a status that the gridlocked negotiations in the UN magnify. The research coming from academia appears to need new input. UNSC reform scholarship primarily focuses on whether the council's structure (membership and veto) or the council's working methods (procedures) should be the primary dimension for reform. The spheres of policy-oriented research and policymaking are connected, and thus the role of academia has the potential to influence the debate about UNSC reform among diplomats. As academia explores the UNSC reform issue, several reform proposals emerge. However, the starting points for these ventures circumvent specific dimensions of the reform debate, resulting in certain knowledge gaps that this dissertation engages. Very little is known about the roles of discourse, governmentality, and policy-problematizations in the UNSC reform debate. Additionally, scholars engaged in UNSC reform research have been unreflective about the potentially detrimental consequences of their input in the debate.

Accordingly, I use one article to scrutinise the status and the direction of UNSC reform research. Based on this, I discuss these dimensions' detrimental and progressive potential for the debate about UNSC reform. Another article assumes a critical approach towards the reform policy of the reform coalition known as the G4 (Brazil, Germany, India, and Japan). It questions the validity and potential of the policy and suggests changes. In another, co-authored, article, we focus on diplomats' utilisation of and operation within discursive and governmental frames of the UNSC reform debate. Finally, an article is used to zoom in on social relations' role in the diplomatic debate. All four articles approach the issue of and the debate about UNSC reform from constructivist and interpretative angles to test such underapplied approaches as ways for policy recommendations. This overall frame for the study comes from a puzzle that emerged when I saw that research on international politics, diplomacy, and international organisations tends to include and appreciate the role of the dimensions that this study incorporates. Nevertheless, when it comes to the issue of UNSC reform, such dimensions are implicitly (by way of not being studied) treated as insignificant.

The laid-out models for studying the mentioned dimensions should be included in the findings. The articles show how to study the debate about UNSC reform by focusing

on the role of academia, through discourse analysis, via critical policy analysis, and by applying a "situational analysis" to map out and dissect the function and utilisation of social relations. The findings are as follows regarding the policy-oriented conclusions and recommendations for UNSC reform scholarship.

As scholars engage on the issue of UNSC reform, we must be attentive to securing a sound balance of reform proposals coming from academia so that we do not overwhelmingly conclude that UN member states' reform agendas are unproductive and unobtainable. This primarily means that we must, along with opposing arguments, investigate the potential of structural reform as a catalyst for increased efficiency. Further, we must also focus on how the Global South, primarily the AU, can obtain permanent seats on the council. One path towards this end is for the AU and the G4 to align their reform policies. The G4 should be more explicit about its agenda, i.e., the demand for permanent seats for G4 members and how this political feat will benefit the Global South. On the other hand, the AU must drop its stonewalling stance for veto prerogatives to new permanent members, primarily to appease the P5 block that includes members that will probably utilise their veto to prevent a reform that expands the veto prerogative. Concerning discourse and governmentality, there is a need for more research on the professional debate about what constitutes democratic reform. Finally, since social relations and personal friendships are channels for diplomacy, such dimensions should be increasingly analysed to investigate how they can become a higher prioritised strategic focus of diplomats who seek progress towards reform.

DANSK RESUME

Både forskere og politikere har i årtier studeret og er kommet med forslag til reform(er) af FN's sikkerhedsråd. På trods af denne konstante og intense opmærksomhed er rådets struktur kun blevet ændret én gang, i 1965, hvor de seks ikke-permanente sæder blev til ti. Siden da har de kontinuerlige forhandlinger ikke båret frugt. For at forskningen på området kan bidrage til politisk fremgang, er der brug for nyt input. Forskningen fokuserer på henholdsvis strukturel reform (medlemskab og veto) eller arbejdsmetodereform (procedurer) og drejer sig ofte om et argument for, at enten den ene eller anden slags reform er vigtigst. Der er en stigende tendens til, at forskere advokerer for arbejdsmetodereform, selvom de fleste FN medlemslande ser strukturel reform som vigtigere. Siden forskningen på området er forbundet med det diplomatiske og politiske arbejde, er det væsentligt at fokusere på netop denne forbindelse og dermed akademias mulighed for at øve indflydelse. De mange reformvinkler og -forslag, som lægges frem af forskere, styrer dog udenom bestemte dimensioner, der bør studeres. Heriblandt kan nævnes følgende, som denne afhandling fokuserer på: diskurs, styringsmentalitet (*governmentality*) og problematiseringer. Derudover mangler der kritiske refleksioner over hvilke negative konsekvenser, det kan have, at akademia i stigende grad ser arbejdsmetodereform som den bedste (og eneste mulige) løsning. Derfor kaster en af afhandlingens artikler lys på den akademiske debats status og retning. Baseret på dette diskuterer jeg forskningens potentiale til at promovere eller forhindre fremskridt i reformprocessen. En anden artikel kaster et kritisk blik på G4 koalitionens (Brasilien, Indien, Japan og Tyskland) reformpolitik. Artiklen sår tvivl om, hvorvidt G4's reformagenda kan opnå det tilsigtede mål og kommer med forslag til forbedringer. I en anden artikel (skrevet med Laura Bang Lindegaard) fokuserer vi på, hvordan diplomater bruger og opererer indenfor reformdebattens diskursive og styringsmentale rammer. I en sidste artikel fokuserer jeg på sociale relationers roller i reformdebatten. Alle fire artikler er konstruktivistiske og interpretative, da sådanne tilgange er sjældne eller ikke-eksisterende, når det kommer til reform af FN's sikkerhedsråd. Herved ønsker jeg at bidrage til den politiske diskussion gennem disse nye tilgange. Mit udgangspunkt er en undren over, at forskningen indenfor internationale relationer, international politik samt internationale organisationer gerne inkluderer de samme dimensioner som denne afhandling. Dog er det samme ikke tilfældet, når det kommer til forskning af sikkerhedsrådsreform. Afhandlingen præsenterer altså et kritisk fokus på akademias rolle, en diskursanalyse, en kritisk policy-analyse og en såkaldt "situational analysis" af sociale relationers roller. Gennem disse bidrag afprøves

forskningsmetodernes potentiale til at underbygge forslag til reformdebattens fokus. Afhandlingen munder dermed ud i følgende konklusioner:

Forskere, der engagerer sig i FN's sikkerhedsrådsreform, bør være mere opmærksomme på at holde forskningen balanceret mellem pragmatiske og idealistiske forslag til reformer. Dette indebærer et øget fokus på, hvordan en strukturel reform af rådet kan føre til øget effektivitet. Det er også nødvendigt med et øget fokus på det globale syd, primært på hvordan Afrika kan tildeles permanente pladser i rådet. En mulig vej hertil er, at Den Afrikanske Union og G4 nærmer sig hinanden i deres reformpolitikker. G4 bør være mere eksplicit omkring koalitionens reelle agenda om at sikre de fire medlemmer permanente pladser i rådet. Indeholdt i dette skal G4 sælge sin agenda bedre til det globale syd, så det fremstår mere tydeligt, hvorledes en G4-inspireret reform vil være til fordel for det globale syd. Den Afrikanske Union bør derimod også justere sin tilgang. For at berolige P5-landene og undgå deres veto af nye reformforslag bør unionen droppe kravet om vetoret til nye permanente medlemmer.

Der er også mere behov for forskning af de diskursive og styringsmentale dimensioner, heriblandt analyser af hvad der af FN-medlemslandene opfattes som en demokratisk reform / demokratisk reformproces. Sluttelig, siden sociale relationer og venskaber bliver brugt som kanaler for diplomati, så bør disse dimensioner i højere grad inkluderes i fremtidige studier af reformspørgsmålet samt af internationale relationer bredere set. Der mangler viden om diplomater og politikeres strategiske brug af disse dimensioner i forhandlingerne omkring reform af sikkerhedsrådet.

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Acknowledging the people who have helped me is daunting as the list is very long. However, it is also a pleasant task because it reminds me of how grateful I am for the opportunities to expand my personal network that have emerged along the way. The task's difficulty, nonetheless, has probably resulted in more than one whom I have embarrassingly forgotten. Apologies.

First and foremost, I want to thank my wife, Louise. Besides being the primary breadwinner at home for the last several years, you also gave birth to two of our three children during my dissertation process. Moreover, you encouraged me to stay motivated and be positive when I suffered a concussion a week before we left for Oxford. In Oxford, you kept things together at our temporary home so that we could enjoy our time there and I could progress with my research. Moreover, being the most intelligent person in our household, you always ask the right questions about my research. You help my own understanding of what it is I am doing. Thank you, sweet Louise – you are extraordinary.

The following people come to mind as runners-up to Louise. Chronology is of no significance here; you are all dearly valued. A sincere thank you to my supervisors, Ben Dorfman and Bent Boel. You both helped me a lot, even though we discovered that the academic article genre was more challenging for me to learn than we thought. Thank you both for helping me grow as a lecturer by allowing me to teach relevant courses. A big and warm thank you to Sam Daws for inviting me to and supervising me in Oxford. Your encouragements and your insights about UNSC reform were priceless. I probably requested more advice and time from you than what was fair, but the fact that you responded kindly only makes me more grateful. Thank you to my research group, DEMOS. Martin Bak Jørgensen, Óscar García Agustín, and Anne Grethe Julius Pedersen, your input at our meetings and in the hallways have been instrumental in my process. To my former colleague Daniel Rosengren, thank you for all our talks about theory; I hope to see you back as a researcher one day. Lotte Crone Roulund, with whom I have shared office space since late 2017, must also be mentioned. Our professional and friendly talks have played prominent roles in keeping me going.

Thank you, Mikkel Jensen, for your moral support and professional input. I will also never forget the initial and continual support from Søren Dosenrode - you believed in my research agenda when many others could not understand it. My master thesis supervisor and colleague Julia Zhukova Klausen, thank you for always being open for talks about the frustration of writing a dissertation, encouraging me to pursue a career in academia, and much more. Thank you to the leadership at the (no longer existing) Department for Culture & Global Studies, who provided me with a scholarship. Marianne Rostgaard in particular. Thank you also to Trine Lund Thomsen, who headed the PhD school back when Culture & Global Studies still existed. Your continuous encouragement helped a lot along the way.

*If you are sailing across the Pacific Ocean and drop your keys
in the water – forget about them; they're gone, man!*
(unknown)

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PREFACE

This dissertation is about the reform of the United Nations Security Council (UNSC). It displays a pluralist approach and comprises analyses of various dimensions of UNSC reform through separate research methodologies. As such, the aim of my research has been to tread out new ways of studying UNSC reform. The pluralist approach responds to what Audie Klotz labels the inadequacy of discussions about mixed/new International Relations research methods. She argues that existing studies of new dimensions tend to be overly about ontology or epistemology. There is a need, she argues, for practical answers.[1] [(p2)] This is, I hope, what the present dissertation provides: examples of how to apply new or inadequately used methodologies (primarily in the articles) and extended discussions (primarily in the frame) about relevant implications of the articles' essentials. As I elaborate on selected essentials from the articles, I am bound to repeat a couple of central observations, for example, the structural/working methods reform distinction and the proposed policy emphasis on the African Union (AU).

The dissertation's title is "United Nations Security Council reform — new approaches to understanding and unlocking the gridlock." The following sections serve as an overall frame of the research presented in the articles. It is sometimes also referred to as a cape (hereafter: frame). Following the frame are the four self-contained articles listed below:[a]

Appendix A—Article 1: Winther, Bjarke Zinck. "A Review of the Academic Debate About United Nations Security Council Reform." The Chinese journal of global governance 6, no. 1 (2020): 71–101.

Appendix B—Article 2: Winther, Bjarke Zinck, and Laura Bang Lindegaard. "In the Name of Democracy: UNSC Reform at the Intersection of Discourse and Governmentality." Discourse & Society 32, no. 2 (2021): 231–253.

Appendix C—Article 3: Winther, Bjarke Zinck. "How are social relations diplomacy in the debate about UNSC reform 2015–2016". (Under review)

Appendix D–Article 4: Winther, Bjarke Zinck. "What is the problem represented to be in the Group of Four's policy on reform of the United Nations Security Council?– An argument for clarity towards the Global South," Bandung: Journal of the Global South. 2022, no.3.

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[a] Attached as appendices to the dissertation for the assessment committee–but not in the public version due to copyright issues.

When I refer to the four articles in the frame, I use the system presented below. I have assigned different "codes" to each article that reflect the article in question's main theme.

Article	Main theme
Article 1 (rev)	Review of the academic debate
Article 2 (dis)	Discourses in the professional debate
Article 3 (soc)	Social relations in the professional debate
Article 4 (pro)	Problematisations in the professional debate

Accordingly, references to the listed articles look like this:

(EXAMPLE)

The debate about UNSC reform heavily involves a discussion about Global North Global South relations (rev),[2] and often relies on discursive constructions about who and what represents the most democratic agenda (dis).[3]

KEY TERMS:

Much of the frame relies on key terms that specifically concern the UNSC reform issue. The following overview introduces the most used titles and acronyms and explains certain essential concepts since readers' levels of familiarity with UNSC reform may vary.

AU = The African Group/African Union. The collected efforts of all African countries concerning UNSC reform.

E10 = the ten elected or non-permanent members of the UNSC who sit on the council for two-year stints based on a system of election that ensures regional representation

GA = The United Nations General Assembly

G4 = The Group of Four: Brazil, Germany, Japan, and India. A UNSC reform coalition that supports each other's candidacies for permanent seats and emphasises reform via TBN (see below).

IGN = Intergovernmental Negotiations. The UN's designated forum for official but informal (closed to the public) debates about UNSC reform.

LIO = Liberal International Order. The idea that liberal/western values permeate the international order and international organisations.

P5 = the permanent members of the UNSC: China, France, Russia, the United Kingdom, and the United States of America.

Structural reform = reform of the UNSC that requires UN Charter amendments, e.g., added members or changes to the veto system.

TBN = text-based negotiations about UNSC reform, i.e., negotiations that work via incremental progress where certain aspects are agreed upon and put on binding paper before the process moves on.

The academic debate = The debate about UNSC reform that unfolds between scholars within academia and policy-oriented think tanks. If a person with academic affiliation participates in a debate in the UN, I place this input under the professional debate (see below).

The professional debate = the debate about UNSC reform that occurs between diplomats, UN personnel, and other state representatives. If a diplomat writes a chapter or an article in a book or a journal, I place this input as part of the academic debate (see above).

UfC = Uniting for Consensus. A coalition of states that works to prevent the G4's reform agenda and ensure that any reform process does not include the addition of permanent seats. The coalition is led by Italy, Pakistan, Argentina, and Mexico and has the support of about thirty more countries, including China,

UNSC = The United Nations Security Council

Working methods reform = reform of the UNSC that does not require UN Charter amendments, e.g., non-binding agreements about veto usage or agreements about UNSC debate procedures.

INTRODUCTION

The issue of UNSC reform is as old as the UN itself (rev)[2] and represents, in a sense, a story of the unfulfilled wishes of those that want to see the council reformed. Besides an expansion of the non-permanent membership from six to ten members in 1965, the council as a whole, along with its permanent membership of five, remains unreformed. Nevertheless, optimism for progress in the negotiations about reform tends to spike in the lead-up to UN anniversaries (pro). [4–6]

Accordingly, this dissertation focuses primarily on the negotiations during the 70th UN General Assembly 2015–2016. It uses the negotiations about reform in and around this event as the basis for analyses of the negotiations' dynamics and how these affect the reform debate at large. Based on this focus, I present observations about; the reform debate, how academia can consider new angles to the study of UNSC reform, and how the negotiations might advance towards results. While a focus on only one year of negotiations can be seen as possessing a low level of generalisability, the literature review (rev.) [2] and the explicit connections to longstanding political themes concerning UNSC reform improve the observations' validity.

Foundational for understanding the 2015–2016 negotiations are the debate's historical backdrop, the discussions and developments from 1945 until 2015. This dimension is included as a focal point of the first article (rev),[2] which thoroughly presents the debate as it has unfolded within academia. The developments within the academic debate reflect and inspire the debate among states' political leaders/diplomats (hereafter the professional debate) and can provide a solid understanding of the major historical contours of the UNSC reform debate. However, there is more to be said about the connection and influence between the debate among academics and professionals, respectively. This connection is recurring in the frame, and I discuss it in more detail in the section about "The academic debate and the G4/AU potential" Yet, to initiate a discussion of the dissertation's emphases and the issue of UNSC reform, broadly speaking, the following contextual information is necessary— information that is further unpacked in and that undergirds the detailed discussions of the ensuing sections.

The UNSC was founded with the UN Charter on June 26, 1945, and it was assembled for the first time in London six months later, on January 17, 1946. [7 (p1)] The council consists of fifteen members at all times, five permanent (the P5) and ten non-permanent/elected members (the E10). The permanent group of members are the same countries as in 1946 (China, France, Russia, USA, and the UK), albeit the People's Republic of China or communist China replaced the Republic of China or nationalist

China in 1971,[8] and the Russian Federation replaced the USSR in 1991.[b] [9] The non-permanent members (the E10) occupy their seats for two years, with five seats up for election each year through a system that divides the E10 seats according to regional considerations.[10,11] Thus, the council is adaptable in its diverse and varying non-permanent membership while very static in terms of its permanent membership. Furthermore, it is the most powerful organ in the UN since member states, according to article 25 of the UN Charter, are obliged to comply with its decisions.[11 (p407)]

Many countries covet presence in this powerful forum.[12,13] China, Russia, and the USA naturally want to maintain their permanent presence, and they work to prevent reforms that will water down their current power in the council.[14 (p64)] The official positions of France and the UK can be seen as more open to reforms, but neither is interested in losing their current prerogatives.[15 (p1252, 1285)] A group of sub-power countries[c] seek increased presence/influence in the council. They believe that the current geopolitical realities dictate a restructuring/expansion of the council that fulfils their ambitions about inclusion. The G4 coalition (members: Brazil, Germany, India, and Japan) primarily exemplify this group, but countries like South Africa and Nigeria are also in this category. Additionally, some countries seek to prevent these sub-power countries from obtaining increased presence/influence—mainly the G4 countries' regional rivals, a group of circa thirty countries that have rallied behind Italian/Pakistani leadership in the coalition known as the UfC (Uniting for Consensus) (dis, soc).[3,16–18] A handful of other coalitions play important roles in the UNSC reform discussion as well, namely the L69 group and the African Group/African Union; coalitions that want to see the Global South increasingly represented and, in particular, increased African presence on the council.[14 (p43)]

The mentioned actors' (geo)political motivations materialise in reform proposals concerning the make-up of the council (structural reform) and how it operates (working methods reform). These reform dimensions occupy the core of both the professional and the academic debates about UNSC reform (rev).[2] Structural reform is what many perceive to be the real reform issue, and it is also the most sought-after reform type among UN member states (rev, dis, pro).[2–4,19] However, changes in the council's working methods are not merely sideline issues in the reform debate. Such reforms are seen by some member states and an increasing number of scholars as being feasible and therefore preferable, or feasible and preferable (rev).[2,20,21]

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[b] Without charter amendments meaning that article 23 of the charter still reads USSR (Russia) and ROC (China) as members.

[c] The terms sub-power and middle-power are used to describe countries with a certain degree of international influence regionally or even globally, but that are not *powers* at the level of the P5 countries.

Accordingly, the balance between the two approaches to UNSC reform plays a role in all of the four articles of this dissertation.

Myriad research with suggestions to what kind of reform is preferable have already been put forth. While such endeavours remain necessary, this dissertation's focus differs. Instead of starting by asking what kind of reform is best or how to achieve said kind of reform, I take a step back and focus on how academia can advance the understanding of the gridlocked reform debate via the application of untried or little-tried approaches[d] to study understudied dimensions of the UNSC reform issue. Based on the outcome of such endeavours, I then jump back into the practical and normative discussions about how to achieve reform and what kind of reform approaches are best/most fair. This method for reform suggestions resides in all four articles, and the present frame expands the presented context and certain theoretical end methodological dimensions, all of which were not possible to fit into the articles.

The approach described above and, therefore, also the four articles rely on a principal research question that asks:

How can research on United Nations Security Council reform be advanced and consequently rethink the current gridlocked dynamics to advance new paths towards reform?

The four articles represent different approaches to answering this question, each via distinct methodological cores.

The first article: ***A Review of the Academic Debate about United Nations Security Council Reform*** (rev),[2] addresses the gap of a missing extensive literature review[e] by providing one. Subsequently, it proposes convergence between the focus on either structural reform or working methods reform. The two positions are not mutually exclusive, but much scholarship emphasises one over the other to varying degrees. Additionally, the article highlights the relationship between the direction of UNSC reform scholarship and the debate among professionals. The majority within these two areas, respectively, move in opposite directions in terms of what the dominant understandings are concerning the moral/right and best modes of reform. This

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[d] Approaches here meaning both methodologies and empirical focus, e.g., social relations or discourse

[e] Peter Nadin lists a small number of works in his 2015 book and Bardo Fassbender a larger amount in his 2019 book, but neither of them discusses the trends in the research as a whole

development could hamper academics' hopes of influencing the debate among professionals by presenting mainly policy options that oppose states' UNSC reform policies. (rev)[2] More research is needed to understand further the dynamics between UNSC reform scholarship and policy-making, perhaps by trying to look towards Michael J. Tierney and others who focus on the academia-diplomacy linkage and influence and highlight different dimensions as challenging for the potential of scholarly impact on policy-making in general.[22,23] A growing number of researchers propose that expansion of the council's membership would detriment its efficiency,[18,20,24,25] whereas most countries seek a reform that expands the council's membership.[15 (p1301)] Therefore, instead of deconstructing the logic of many member states' reform proposals, which argue for the imperative of structural reform, research that aligns with the demands of member states is needed. In looking to suggest acceptable solutions to vested member states, scholars should focus on how to converge opposing reform positions, even when they, at first sight, appear difficult, if not impossible, to combine. This approach can primarily be applied to the African Group's official position, comprising African states' agendas that diverge when it comes to policy details. Accordingly, the article rounds off the presented literature review with elaborations on how the African Group's internal diversity concerning a UNSC reform agenda can source future political convergence. The article turns the focus onto academia and proposes attentiveness to countries' wishes, and based on that, suggests potential pathways towards reform progress.

The second article: ***In the Name of Democracy: UNSC Reform at the Intersection of Discourse and Governmentality*** (dis),[3] is a co-authored piece. It presents the following argument: Democracy discourses and governmentalities are significant devices within the reform debate regarding how the reform coalitions construct and present their agendas as democratic/promoting democracy. Consequently, the current reform gridlock relies on these actors being able, through subtle discursive devices, to present themselves as the primary agents of democracy-promotion even though, from a critical stance, the so-called democratic cores of their arguments can be challenged. The article exemplifies how to study constructions of truth as seen in discourse and argues that increased focus on this dimension has the potential for expanding current understandings about what matters when it comes to the UNSC reform issues.

The third article**: *The Debate about a Reform of the United Nations Security Council 2015–2016: (How) Are Social Relations Diplomacy?*** (soc),[f][16] draws from the fact that many studies of international relations, diplomacy, and UN negotiations appreciate the relevance of social relations and friendships among diplomats.[26–28] However, when it comes to studies of UNSC reform, these aspects all but vanish from the scope. Consequently, the article zooms in on how actors utilise social relations as diplomacy concerning a UNSC reform. The paper also introduces a new way of

[f] Under review

studying international relations, namely the grounded theory-inspired approach called situational analysis (SA).[29] In doing so, it combines a methodological discussion of how to include new dimensions in UNSC reform studies with an analysis of empirical insights into the pinnacle of UNSC reform debates. The study relies on several interviews with high-level diplomats and UN personnel.

The fourth article: ***What Is the Problem Represented to be in the Group of Four's Policy on Reform of the United Nations Security Council—An Argument for Clarity Towards the Global South*** (pro),[4] centres around a critical policy analysis. The article's point of departure is a discrepancy between the G4's agenda and the coalition's reform policy (which omits specifying the group's real agenda). The G4 agenda is for its members—Brazil, Germany, India, and Japan—to obtain permanent seats in the UNSC. However, the official policy emphasises the expansion of the council based on a vote among UN members—without demands for G4 seats. The article relies on a differentiation between problem presentations and problem representations to grasp the mentioned divergence analytically. This differentiation inquiries whether a problematisation is explicit or implicit. The article's main argument is that the G4 members could advance their reform agenda by making their policies' implicit and seemingly essential aspects explicit. In doing so, the G4 can focus on promoting its agenda towards the powerful African countries—a notion very similar to one of the main arguments found in the dissertation's first article (rev).[2]

The articles comprise interpretative analyses of what can be called sub-systemic levels[30,31] of UNSC reform to highlight that not only the systemic and global levels (the geopolitical structure that inhibits reform progress) are relevant concerning UNSC reform. The articles focus on what lies beneath power politics. They emphasise the *how* of power/geopolitics, that is, how these politics are enacted in terms of UNSC reform. All four articles present examples of how to analyse understudied aspects of UNSC reform and argue how these aspects can be utilised, policy-wise, to progress the real-life reform efforts and thereby impact the systemic/geopolitical level. The articles do not present all relevant dimensions of the UNSC reform debate, and neither do they propose that overarching systemic/structural geopolitics has no effect on the sub-systemic levels. The connection between the levels is intersubjective, which constructivists primarily call mutually constitutive.[g] [32,33] The primary analytical focus of the articles, however, remains distinctively on the direction from sub-system to system and from agency to structure.

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[g] The interrelatedness of different levels of analysis or foreign policy-making is a notion that also resonates within so-called neo-classical realism.

REFORM AS A CONCEPT ➔ REFORM OF THE UN / UNSC

According to the *Oxford English Dictionary*, the word reform originates from both French (reformer) and Latin (reformãre).[h] The most commonly used meaning of the noun form refers to "the action or process of making changes in an institution, organization, or aspect of social or political life, so as to remove errors, abuses, or other hindrances to proper performance".[34] The verb form mainly means "renew something" or "to restore to full strength or health, or to proper function", but also "to put into another and better form; to amend or improve by alteration of form, arrangement, or composition; to correct errors or remove defects".[35] In the case of UNSC reform, the notions of restoration, renewal, and improvement describe what kind of results those seeking reform pursue. UNSC reform directly concerns the council itself and indirectly the international system and the merger of powerful states' unilateral interests and multilateralism, which the council represents.[36] Since the UNSC is imperative for the status of the current international order,[37] then, the quest for a reform of the UNSC is also imperative for the international order, the so-called liberal international order (LIO). Peter Nadin notes that reform of the UNSC highlights wishes "to eliminate the faults of a system without fundamentally altering the system itself."[14 (p72)] Accordingly, reform of the UNSC can be seen as a means of preventing a deconstruction of the current international order. Would-be reformers work to change the system from within the boundaries of the system and not to deconstruct the idea of a UNSC—they want the membership to be expanded and the processes of the council to be improved.

Reform agendas that seek to radically transform the institutional pillars of the international system garner little traction. The two following examples demonstrate that reform agendas and debates are kept within the LIO paradigm and, consequently, how this dynamic blocks out reform calls that are too radical. A coalition of developing countries (that also play a role in the UNSC reform debate), the G77, called for a "new international economic order" in 1974 but did so through the UN system. Their aim was an improvement, not a revolution.[38] Following this, the G77 group became the most important voice for the developing countries concerning the UNCTAD emphases (United Nations Conference on Trade And Development).[39] Conversely, the more radical call for "Reshaping the International Order" that was headed by experts from both developed and developing countries in 1976 also worked through the UN.[40] However, with calls for universal welfare, increased market regulations, and comprehensive bans on nuclear arms tests, the efforts fell short of

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[h] The etymological development of the word is vast because of its use and meaning pertaining to the Christian religion's reformation

gaining traction. A similar dynamic is often displayed in UN debates. Certain unwritten rules exist for what can and cannot be said and suggested. Playing by these rules allows actors to remain within the debate, whereas overt breaches, for example, Holocaust denials or, as recently, a statement in the GA by Russian foreign minister Lavrov, lead to de facto exclusion via attendees' walkouts (dis).[3,41]

When reform concerns change within the system and not of the system at large, it appears to play into the hands of the reactionary actors, that is, those that want to prevent effectful reform or minimise the scope of potential reform. These actors are often those who possess power within the current system (e.g., the P5). It is worthwhile noting that two of the significant geopolitical powers, Russia and China, who oppose the democracy and human rights dimensions of the LIO, also oppose significant reforms of the UNSC[15 (p1232),18] and, by implication, reforms of the LIO. China and Russia possess powerful positions within the council and also benefit from the LIO, for example, via their inclusion in international markets.[i] Therefore they neither support reform of the UNSC nor a revision of the LIO.[42] The order, as it pertains to its institutional setup, is acceptable to them, albeit they oppose significant aspects of its ideological underpinnings, which have some scholars proclaiming the emergence of a revised international order.[43–45] But still, a complete deconstruction of the LIO's structural setup is not imminent. In terms of powerful actors' approach to reforms of international institutions and order, Arthur Stein's description of how actors approach reform in international institutions is accurate. It explains both Russian, Chinese, and others' participation in reform proposals, debates, and processes in and concerning multilateral organisations as being

> *Charades of politics, in which reform is demanded but not really desired and in which proffered reform is illusory. States and the politicians who direct them complain at times and argue for reform, but prefer things to remain unchanged. And when the pressures for reform become unstoppable, states and the politicians who direct them supply reform without change, dealing with political pressures in a wholly illusory fashion.* [46 (p40)]

Stein's description, however, does not adequately explain the incentives of the progressive reform proponents when it comes to UNSC reform. The G4 and the African Union both support reform publicly while genuinely wanting a reform to materialise. On the other hand, Stein's assessment accurately describes the motives and agency of the reactionaries—those who want to prevent reform but acknowledge the need to speak into and alongside dominating discourses about the need and support for reforms (dis).[3] The LIO incorporates both those who want to see reforms as well as those who oppose reform. This tension inhibits reform progress when it comes to

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[i] Russia currently being ousted from the large parts of the international market as a result of its agression towards Ukraine.

the UNSC, most clearly seen in the fact that the council's veto system enables reactionary actors to prevent progress legitimately. Reform approaches and their respective success rates vary across the landscape of international organisations.[47–49] More comparative studies or studies that include both the UNSC and other IOs are needed to fully understand how the UNSC reform dynamics differ from and resemble those from other reform cases.

Naturally, historical events such as cold and hot wars and global economic conjunctures affect involved actors' motivation and perception about the possibility of achieving reforms in international organisations. Additionally, conflicts of interest between big powers and lesser powers pervade the contours of international organisations' reform debates.[50] So-called middle-powers also possess distinct roles "in international [reform] politics, as both followers and leaders".[51] [(p11)] The dissertation's four articles all discuss the triangular connection between the agendas and actions of top-powers, middle-powers, and lesser powers, mainly exemplified by the P5, the G4, and the UfC (rev, dis, soc, pro).[2–4,16] Noteworthy because it pertains to reforms in IOs more broadly is a study of how 72 international organisations' institutional setup promotes or obstructs reform incentives and possibilities, a study that observes that "The larger the number of veto players in an organization, the higher the barrier to reform".[52] [(p306)] The study's operationalisation of veto players includes national parliaments' vetoes concerning commitment to or support for international organisations' politics. The UNSC's veto dimension plays an essential part in the UNSC reform debate, but it is not the only essential dimension, nor does it have to be studied only from the perspective that geopolitics predetermine the outcome and development of the reform debate.

While studies of IO-reforms can uncover myriad details that enhance or prevent the prospects for reform, the three dimensions outlined above provide a sound overall idea of what is seen as the most critical dimensions concerning institutional reforms, namely: 1) (geo)political/economic contexts, 2) the hierarchy of states, and 3) IOs' constitutional limits/incentives for reform progress. To a lesser extent, scholarship on IOs and reform appreciates the dimensions on which this dissertation focuses. One of these is the significance of networks that span the formal/informal and official/unofficial demarcations within diplomacy. In the article about diplomacy through social relations, I operationalise sites of such interactions as "social worlds" and "social arenas" (soc),[16] which are notions that resemble Anne-Marie Slaughter's informal governance networks.[53] Whereas Slaughter's networks span issues (e,g., climate policies and political-institutional reforms) and venues, the study's social worlds and arenas were applied only to the specific situation of reform debates during the 70th UN GA.

The aspects presented as significant for understanding reforms in IOs, broadly speaking, resemble the following narrower focus on reform in the UN and the UNSC. It must be noted, however, that when talking about IOs, this concept includes a grand

variety of organisations, interests, structures, and contexts. Making excessive general claims about reforms in IOs, therefore, demands a different focus than that of the present study. Accordingly, the focus of this introduction turns more specifically towards the UN and the UNSC.

REFORM OF THE UN

The dimensions introduced above as significant and academically appreciated concerning reforms of IOs also fit when it comes to reforms in the UN. Olivier Nay focused on the issue of IO reforms through a case study of how the UN's UNAIDS programme brought together a variety of UN agencies and thereby prompting lasting organisational reforms. He argues for increased attention towards the dangers of achieving structural ("organizational"/"bureaucratic") change to no avail of improved performance.[54] This warning aligns with the logic used to support arguments for working methods reform of the UNSC—without structural reform. As discussed further below, the call for exclusive working methods reform often relies on the notion that structural reforms will inhibit the council's effectiveness.[2]

Nay also poses that a central issue for understanding UN reform dynamics is the struggle or sometimes collaboration between outside actors asserting pressure to reform and internal actors either agreeing with or obstructing said pressure. In Nay's study, outside actors are financial donors and UN member states, whereas inside actors are those working in and for the UN.[54] In the case of UNSC reform, the inside-outside dynamic is challenging to define, but it fits if taken as a frame for those always on the inside (the P5) and everyone else who are mainly outside (unless when they serve for two years at a time as elected members). This division highlights that the P5 countries generally oppose reform and are under pressure from everyone else to support reform efforts.

Besides delineations between inside and outside actors, norms are key when it comes to UN reforms. The primary example of norms as effective facilitators of reform is the emergence of the R2P doctrine, which significantly altered the understanding of the sovereignty norm based on human rights norms.[55,56] Moreover, while not being a reform as such, UNSC resolution 1325 raised the level of acceptance of gender issues as being significant for security policies and peace missions.[57] Kirsten Haack has also demonstrated how the norm of democracy pervades the UN[57] in a study that was followed up on in this dissertation's article about democracy discourses and UNSC reform (dis).[3] In the final analysis, however, the most proper understanding of norms as catalysts for UN reforms is to acknowledge the interconnectedness or reciprocity of influence between norms and (power) politics/states' agendas.[58] Moreover, different norms contain different degrees of potential for promoting/blocking reform processes. The norms of equality and democracy heavily influence reform debates and

processes, [2–4] but the influence of human rights norms is declining.[59 (p197)] Equality or the pursuit thereof is a strong norm in the UN, established by the UN Charter. Article 2(1) notes that the UN is "based on the principle of the sovereign equality of all its members".[11 (pxx)] However, the charter also confers relatively more power to the P5 states in articles 27(3) and 108.[11 (pxxiv; xxxvii)] Consequently, reforms in the UN (and in the UNSC in particular) reflect the tension present in the charter between the presence and validity of norms and power politics. Joachim Müller emphasises said tension based on his extensive documentation and analyses of UN reforms.[60,61] Müller concurs with the significance of—but also modifies the operationalisation of—so-called external and internal drivers for reform initiatives in the UN.[61 (p81)] Whereas this tension has been seen as between donors and the UN, national politics and UN politics, Müller paints it differently. The main inside/outside tension, he argues, is between geopolitical contexts[j] and "perceived institutional shortcomings [in the UN]".[61 (p81)]

Another tension relevant to UN reforms and highlighted by Müller is the tension between the Global North and the Global South. This tension inhabits all four articles of this dissertation but is emphasised mainly in two.[2,4] Countries from the Global North tend to seek reforms that promote human rights and security, whereas countries from the Global South are more interested in reform that targets debt relief and development issues. Müller outlines these dynamics of UN reform as political processes that aim for consensus and thereby often adjust to the lowest common denominator. He also notes that intergovernmental negotiations about reform increase the chances of success.[61 (p82-84)] That is not the case, however, when it comes to UNSC reform. The Intergovernmental Negotiations (about UNSC reform), the IGN, were initiated to achieve progress by providing involved actors with an informal forum wherein to negotiate. These negotiations have become gridlocked. Partakers restate their positions over and over without resulting in progress in the negotiations.[14 (p130),62 (p23),63 (p168)] The real informal negotiation processes occur via unofficial social and informal gatherings (soc).[16]

The lack of progress in the IGN resembles a problem concerning UN reforms more broadly. It can be very difficult to reach binding agreements in forums dominated by liberal norms such as inclusivity, democracy, debate, multilateralism, and consensus. This challenge arises from another relevant tension, namely, between action (the ability to achieve things via the mentioned norms) and deliberation (the ability to negotiate in manners that cater to the mentioned norms). Jan Klabbers discusses this tension as being between instrumental rationality (results over norms) and political rationality (norms over results).[64]

In the final analysis of what drives (quests for) UN reforms and what prevents them, the presented overview suffices in the sense that it points to the most relevant tensions.

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[j] Müller labels it "the political environment in which the UN operates" and mentions The Cold War, climate change and global terror as examples

These tensions can also be understood via contrarieties like achievable/preferable or realist/idealist approaches. I will come back to these labels shortly, but for now, it is fair to say that a general outline can be made about the essentials concerning UN reform issues. Also fair, however, is to point out that it is critical to appreciate the diversity within the UN system when we talk about UN reforms. The debates about reform do not play out within identical frames when it comes, for example, to reform of the UNSC, the WHO, or the World Bank (or other UN organisations). Reform discussions concerning the World Back primarily concern the level of monitoring of the organisation by member states—increasingly about investments in black or green industries.[65] Moreover, the Covid-19 pandemic has exacerbated discussions about compliance with and funding of the WHO.[65] The UNSC reform debate is neither about funding nor compliance. In a comprehensive edited volume about UN reforms, Paul Taylor, Sam Daws, and Ute Adamczick-Gerteis present UNSC reform as unique compared to other UN reform processes.[66] [(pxiii)] Nonetheless, the council is a foundational part of the UN and the LIO, and the issue must be approached as related to and influenced by these general frameworks, but also as being a unique body resulting in a distinct reform discussion.

In the following section, I present the issue of UNSC reform via a chronological overview connected to the research foci from the present dissertation.

REFORM OF THE UNSC

Reform of the Security Council has been described by Edward Luck as

> *The attempts and/or acts of modifying the composition, the status and the voting powers of the members as well as the decision making procedure of the Security Council. Depending on the way reform is effected, one can make a distinction between de jure or formal reforms and de facto or informal reforms, the former referring to changes brought about through formal amendments or alterations in the text of the UN Charter and the latter changes without formal amendment of the UN Charter* [67] [(p4)]

The calls for and debate about a UNSC reform have been constant since the UN's inception.[68] The pressure for reform has increased because the world around the USNC has changed or evolved via the emergence of more independent nations and resulting UN members. In contrast to these developments, the council has retained its structure and dynamics.[k] Until 1954, the UN membership had increased by only nine, yet, after this early period of the UN's existence, the membership growth accelerated as de-colonisation crescendos gained momentum. From 1955 to 1965, the UN membership grew from 60 to 117.[69] Correspondingly, the Non-Aligned Movement, a group of developing countries that wished to escape the East-West schism and power-

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[k] The structural reform of 1963/1965 is a significant exception— something I will get to below.

bloc politics,[70] advocated intensively for reforms to reflect the membership growth via efforts led by India.[14 (p46)] As Lydia Swart puts it, "The calls [for a reform] were too loud to ignore",[62 (p2)] and an expansion of the non-permanent membership from six to ten was effectuated in 1965—in the first and only reform of the council's membership structure.

Before the momentum resulting in the 1965 structural reform, concerted efforts to promote a reform started, according to Dimitris Bourantonis, in the early 1950s with a cooperative effort from eleven Latin American countries and Spain.[71 (p15)] By way of the UN Charter's Article 109, the UN's tenth anniversary in 1955 had to contain a call for a conference to amend the charter, so, naturally, discussions about UN reforms across the board ensued. Alexander Loveday noted in 1953 that "there are reasons for believing that a number of governments are already giving thought to this question [of UN reforms]".[72 (p325)] Albeit he referred to UN reforms in general, other scholars' works at that time confirm that dissatisfaction with the council persisted among UN member states (rev),[2] along with thoughts about improving the council's ability to fulfil its mandate.[73,74] Moreover, in April 1949, the UN General Assembly adopted a resolution on "The problem of voting in the Security Council",[75] which mainly compelled the permanent members to restrict their veto usage. While discussions about reform appear to have played a lesser role in UN diplomacy in the late 1940s than it has since the 1950s and up until and including today, the debate's existence from the UN's early years is verifiable.

The reform from 1965 led to a handful of years with dissipated reform focus, as seen in the decreasing number of calls for reform from academia and member states in the UN (rev).[2] While the 1965 reform might have "provided an almost equal representation to all geographical areas",[76 (p351)] the imposingness of the Cold War on the international cooperation through the council soon resulted in calls for reform to make the council work again.[20 (p2),77 (p20)]

In the review article (rev),[2] I summarise how the overlapping issues of de-colonisation/increasing membership and Cold War stasis/post-Cold War East-West schism connect to the two distinct reform dimensions: structural reform and working methods reform. As mentioned, structural reform refers to changes in membership, whereas working methods reform refers to changes in procedural matters. Calls for structural reform seek to amend the perceived inequity resulting from a discrepant relation between the number of countries in the council and those outside. Moreover, in most cases, the calls for a structural reform target increase of permanent council members. Accordingly, structural reform refers to changes in the council's membership or other changes, e.g., the veto system, which requires amendments to the UN Charter. On the other hand, working methods reforms refer to changes in the council's procedures. This kind of reform does not require charter amendments. According to article 30 of the UN Charter, the council is the master of its own procedures.[11 (p487)] Thus, changes (reforms) in the conduct of meetings (the so-called

"provisional rules and procedures" of the UNSC), the inclusion of experts/NGOs, and even unofficial agreements about restrictions of veto usage are proposed examples of working methods reforms (rev).[2]

Most reform proposals seek to amend member states' beliefs that the council upholds geopolitical inequity and works inefficiently. The difference between emphases on either structural or working-methods reforms reflects advocates' opposing understandings of the causal relationship between the sought-for equality and efficiency of the council. Structural reform proponents believe that increased membership and expansion of veto rights increase the council's legitimacy and therefore lead to enhanced efficiency. In contrast, proponents of working methods believe that a better functioning council (efficiency) will satisfy the calls for immediate structural changes in the membership structure due to increased legitimacy (rev).[2] The opposing beliefs about whether efficiency or legitimacy comes first display a deep-rooted theme within the UNSC reform debate that can be explained via the theoretical dichotomy between idealism and realism. This theme will be presented and discussed more in-depth further below. At this point and in the case of the legitimacy-efficiency disagreement, it is sufficient to know the following. The realist/pragmatic position pursues efficiency before legitimacy, and the idealist/liberalist stance pursues the reverse agenda.

The UNSC reform debate also involves foundational understandings concerning the council's character and potential. Reform positions reflect that the council is either seen as an organ that strengthens the LIO through impactful multilateralism[36,78,79] and via effective international organisation.[80,81] Or it is seen as an organ that primarily serves as a tool for powerful states on the global scene.[82] The majority of UNSC reform scholars are positive about the idea of a UN and a UNSC.[70,83–85] Consequently, reform is seen as the necessary path towards ensuring the persistence of a needed forum for multilateralism and as a balance against power politics.

The presence of power politics in and through the council appears undeniable.[14 (p2),20 (p89),86 (p45)] The P5 countries dominate council dynamics, and the E10 countries go along and appreciate the benefits of presence in the deliberations (rev).[2,14,80] However, whereas this P5-E10 dynamic can make it seem like the UNSC is beneficial only for the P5, the shaping of networks across the P5-E10 division is highly valued, not the least for the E10 members.[87,88] Correspondingly, the network among the P5 countries is also significant. According to David Bosco, the network and institutionalised meetings in the council have prevented conflicts between the P5 countries through unofficial diplomacy in what he labels a concert of powers among the P5.[79]

The P5-E10 dynamics that showcase the dominance of the P5 and thereby undergird the calls for reform so as to balance against P5 power politics materialise significantly, but not only, in the three following manners: The veto system, the permanent or non-permanent membership dimension, and the penholder system.

The UNSC's veto system affords a unique privilege to the P5: the ability to block unwanted UNSC resolutions. Following the UN Charter's Article 27, adopting a resolution requires nine affirmative votes (out of fifteen possible), including the affirmative votes of the P5. However, in practice, abstentions from the P5 do not prevent the adoption of resolutions.[11 (p430)] Nevertheless, a negative vote from a P5 country functions as a veto and prevents the adoption of the resolution in question. Consequently, any outcome from council debates must be acceptable to all the permanent members' preferences or at least not contradict their agendas to the degree of provoking a negative vote (a veto). At the same time, the group of non-permanent members also possess a degree of power. Whereas individual E10 countries cannot prevent the adoption of resolutions, they can act as a bloc and prevent the adoption of resolutions. If at least seven E10 members vote against a resolution, they leverage a "sixth veto".[89 (p71)] According to John Langmore and Ramesh Thakur, the E10's power has potential concerning the reform issue because an expansion of the elected membership could suffice in making the council more legitimate and effective.[88] However, the veto system displays and institutionalises great powers' geopolitical muscles in the final analysis and divides the UNSC into two layers of power and influence. Therefore, the veto system is seen by many member states and scholars as an embodiment of geopolitical inequity,[82,90–93] which makes the issue close to inescapable when it comes to discussions about reform. Nonetheless, precisely the veto system is widely regarded as the dimension of the UNSC that is hardest to reform vis-á-vis the P5's effective, albeit often unofficial, reluctance towards any changes in the current veto system.[14,17,94–96]

The two membership categories outlined above display the dynamics and power in the council in more ways than those linked directly to the veto system. Whereas the P5 members are part of an established network of powerful countries' representations,[81,82,97,98] the E10 members represent the outcome of countries' pursuits of temporary inclusion in the said network.[99,100] The P5-E10 dynamic needs no further elaboration since the point highlights that unequal power relations are part of the council's structural make-up, not only via the veto system.

The penholder system refers to a working method of the council.[101,102] So-called penholders are the countries that initiate the debates and make drafts for resolutions. Per rules 32 and 35 of the UNSC's provisional rules of procedure, the penholder has the right to object to votes about separate parts of their proposal and withdraw it before a conclusive vote. While non-permanent members can hold this role, it overwhelmingly befalls the so-called P3 (France, UK, and the USA) to initiate debates and draft resolutions. Consequently, the practice for drafting most resolutions often goes like this: The P3 (France, UK, and the USA) agree on a draft, runs it by Russia/China, and then presents it to the rest of the council.[14 (p29)] While this practice is not applied to all resolutions' drafting processes, its presence and widespread application display, significantly, the P5's power in the council's day-to-day operations.

The council's internal power dynamics rely on and materialise through both structures and processes. Criticism of and suggestions for improvements of both the structure and the process (workings methods) of the council ultimately concerns three overarching dimensions: The perception of international inequality upheld by the council's structure; the perceived lack of effectivity and efficiency of the council; and the perceived need for more inclusion of Global South countries.

Primarily, the debate about a UNSC reform reflects that the council's current structure does not mirror so-called contemporary geopolitical realities. This notion is a significant vein in the reform debate and has been labelled the international inequity argument.[14 (p117)] The argument relies on the earlier-mentioned discrepancy between increased UN membership, the number of seats in the council, and the emergence of— but the inadequate representation of—new geopolitical powers.

The part of the debate that focuses on the process, that is, how to make the council more effective and efficient (without restructuring it), emphasises the council's working methods. Its proponents see China, Russia, and the USA's opposing geopolitical agendas as asphyxiating the council's capability to prevent war and promote peace.[21,103 (562)] Accordingly, arguments for emphases on workings methods reform look for ways to circumvent the big power stalemate via processual changes (rev).[2]

Following the reform in 1965, the Cold War dynamic (stagnation) increased awareness about the need for a better functioning UNSC. While the council was active and adopted resolutions during the years 1965–1989,[14 (p.13)] the UN membership at large did not see the status and ensuing performance as sustainable for the long term.[15 (p16)] With the (apparent) end of the Cold War, which led to an explosive increase in adopted resolutions in the 1990s, calls for reforms once again grew stronger because of renewed belief in the council's potential and relevance.[14 (47)] In 1992, reform of the council made it to the formal agenda of the GA, and in 1993, official consultations began. These consultations have been dubbed the "never-ending working group" because of the missing results.[6 (661)] These reform consultations still figure on the GAs agenda, but reform discussions were moved to informal debates in the so-called IGN from 2008 onwards. Fassbender dubs the period from 1992–1997 "the most productive time" vis-à-vis reform optimism due to the end of the Cold War and the successful UNSC-authorised US operation to liberate Kuwait in 1991, which demonstrated the council's potential.[15 (17)]

The period is also seen as productive and promising because it resulted in the so-called Razali proposal/initiative/plan.[l] Ismael Razali, the president of the 51st GA 1996/97, presented a three-step plan towards a structural reform via the addition of five permanent members (without veto rights) and four non-permanent members, that is,

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[l] The terms proposal, initiative, and plan figure interchangeably in the literature.

an expansion of the council from fifteen to twenty-four members.[15] (p152) Dimitris Bourantonis assessed in 2005 that the Razali plan "is the single most important and most coherent reform proposal ever tabled in the UN".[71] (p2) While the plan ignited the debate, it was never put to a formal vote in the GA. Nevertheless, the plan is vital because reactions from member states and coalitions showcased the divides that undergird the debate to this day. Additionally, it became clear in the early 2000s that both developing countries and developed countries required a more substantial reform than merely expanding the non-permanent membership again.[15] (p22-23) Via negotiations and public statements, the actors engaged in the reform debate calibrated to their positions, which materialized formally through several reform proposals and official positionings in 2005 (see Figure A below). The positions pictured in Figure A are responses to the Razali plan and to a report from a panel instigated by Kofi Annan in 2004/2005 that presented two models for reform based on the Razali plan. Figure A displays the positions of the most significant actors from their 2005 proposals.[15] (p1289-1319),104

Figure A.

Actor	Proposed membership size	Added permanent seats	Veto-system reform
USA	21–23	Yes—5	To be decided once the new structure is in place
AU	26	Yes—7	Yes—veto to new p-members
G4	25	Yes—6	No—reconsider status after at least 15 years
UfC	25	No	No
China	Focus on added representation from the developing world	No position	No position

Following the outcome of the 2005 World Summit, that is, the stabilisation of major coalitions' reform positions, the debate in the working group on reform continued. Probably, the most important development in the period between the World Summit and the initiation of the Intergovernmental Negotiations (IGN) in 2008 was the significant coalitions' realisation that none of them had considerable support in the GA for their reform plans.[15] [(p26)] Also, it became clear in this period that the USA opposed putting a UNSC reform to a vote in the GA. Consequently, the period was shaped by "reform fatigue".[62] [(p9)] Overall, this fatigue led to certain important developments. Essentially, the negotiations were turned over to the already mentioned IGN in 2008. In terms of the content of the debate, a heightened focus on working methods reform ensued. Reform of the council's working methods can be achieved without charter amendments and, therefore, without a vote in the GA. In the review article (rev)^2, I focus on the increasing popularity of this solution among academics. Reforming (only) the working methods of the council is not equally popular among professionals, but it has some support, and reform of the working methods (as part of the broader reform discussion) is part of the official UNSC reform agenda.[14] [(43)] The discussion about working methods reform led to an initiative concerning a non-binding working methods reform wherein any veto usage by the P5 must be explained. The initiative was criticised heavily by the P5 and the G4 and never materialised.[62] [(p10)]

The period from 2005 until 2008 is, in a sense, a microcosmos of the broader debate. It showcases the apparent circular process of the gridlocked debate, as shown in Figure B.

Figure B.
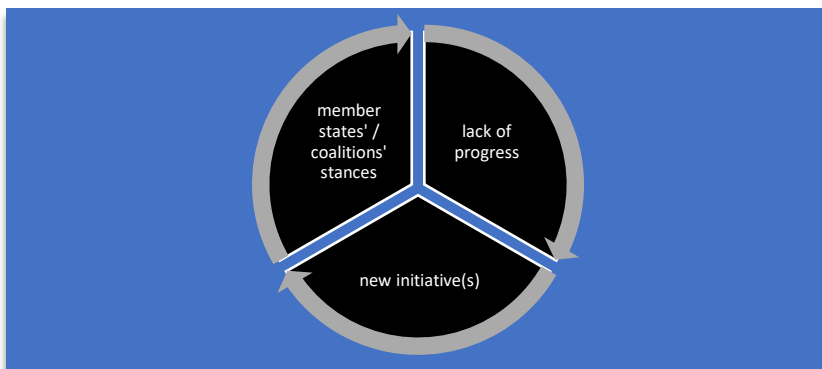
For now, the proposed (generalized) way of seeing the process of the reform debate is meant to illustrate its circularity and not meant as a substantive argument. My focus has not been on categorizing the historical progress of the debate among professionals as I have done with the progress of the academic debate (rev).[2] Dimitirus Bourantonnis[71] and Peter Nadin[14] have laboured successfully to do so, albeit not making the same argument explicitly as that which I propose in Figure B. Accordingly, Figure C presents a flyover of the reform process from 1965 to 2008 that tentatively fits within the presented circular understanding of the process at large.

Figure C. [14,15,62]

Lack of progress ➔	**New initiatives ➔**	**Presentation of states' and coalitions' stances ➔**
1965 (after the reform) –1971	1971: The GA call on members to express views on how to improve the UNSC's effectiveness	1972–73: Members states and coalitions take positions.
1973–1992: Cold War stasis	1992/93: UNSC reform on the formal agenda of the GA	1995: Report from the formal UNSC reform working group about the positions of states and coalitions
1996–2005: No results from the formal working group	2005: Engagement by UN SG Kofi Annan by proposing two reform models based on the Razali Plan	2005: The presentation of the current positions of the G4, the UfC, and the AU
2005–2008: The known positions and Annan's plan fail to spawn progress.	2008: the formal negotiations moved to the IGN.	2008–present: in the IGN, the states and coalitions restate their positions.

If the focus is on whether reform has been achieved, then the reform debate since 1965 is a story of failure. If we want to move beyond that conclusion, then UNSC reform research needs to focus increasingly on other dimensions, for example, the ones outlined in the schema above, that is, the formation of new initiatives and how member states and coalitions arrive at and present their stances. A body of literature focuses on these dimensions, but mainly in ways that ignore or underappreciate the aspects that I focus on in my UNSC reform research. Another motivation for rethinking the academic focus is that the reform process is gridlocked. While academia is not to blame for this, the present state of the reform debate calls for innovative approaches, that is, if the goal is to help move the process forward. Accordingly, emerging research must tread out new approaches to understanding the debate to provide progressive professionals with stronger arguments[105] or diplomatic emphases. Since no reform has materialised since 1965, such approaches must include the study of the unsuccessful agency of those who seek reform. Fassbender notes that "failure needs to be studied too, especially if it concerns something so important as the future of world organisation".[15 (p14)] One example of studying so-called failure is an analysis of social relations among diplomats within the UNSC reform debate (soc)[16] to focus on how the apparent failures (to achieve a reform) materialised. Such a study should also aim to understand how the agency of reactionary agents succeed. Besides the article from this dissertation that takes such an approach, there are other hints at the significance of social relations concerning UNSC reform.

In 2006, UfC leaders (at the prime minister level) of Italy and Pakistan hosted an informal dinner in New York that was attended by G4 diplomats and 50+ other missions to discuss structural UNSC reform. "[A] couple of months later, in December 2006, UN member states once more decided to take up the issue of reform".[62 (p10)] In a sense, this contests the notion portrayed above that 2005–2008 displayed a lack of progress. However, the mentioned decision by member states was merely an agreement to discuss the issue formally in the GA, and this discussion did not lead to any official progress. The question to be raised, however, is whether the process of moving the debate into an informal forum in 2008 (the IGN) originated in this social gathering in 2006. More analysis is needed to determine potential causality/causation between the dinner and the reinvigorated official debate, but if nothing else, the observation showcases the need for more research into the social dimension of UNSC reform diplomacy.

The aim of this dissertation is precisely to hash out new approaches, including research on social relations' role in UNSC reform diplomacy. Another dimension in need of more focus in terms of policy is the potential of the AU's position (rev, pro).[2,4] If the AU would soften its stance on the veto question (which is: expansion of veto rights to new members or remove the veto system altogether), then the group would be in alignment with the more flexible G4 position, thereby forming a formidable alliance in terms of both numbers (of supporting UN member states) and the Global South Agenda. Internal disagreements between the African countries, which are

frontrunners for permanent seats, and Chinese influence against progress appear to prevent changes in the AUs reform policy (pro).[4] Still, a focus on this dimension seems like the main venue for potential political progress. [m]

From 2005 to 2008, Nigeria attempted, to no avail, to press the issue of softening the AU's veto stance. [62 (10)] More research is needed concerning how and why these efforts were halted and why this dimension with apparent potential remains at a standstill. As mentioned, the period from 2005 to 2008 concluded with the negotiations' transfer to the IGN for so-called informal consultations, with the hope that an informal forum could lead to more open debates.

Resolution A/62/557 officially formed the IGN in 2008. Each year the president of the GA (PGA) appoints a chair of the IGN to conduct the debates about UNSC reform. The IGN chair is the permanent representative of a UN member state, and chairing the IGN is a national mission task. The chair, as such, represents his/her country in the role of chair, and the role is to conduct a member state-driven process, not to influence the debate in any direction. Since 2016 (the 71st GA), co-chairs have conducted the IGN, that is, two chairs, one from each of two national UN missions. The article about social relations as diplomacy (soc)[16] analyses the role of social relationships between the chair, the PGA, and the different coalitions.

In 2009 (the 63. GA), the IGN debates concluded with Zahir Tanin, Afghanistan's PR and chair of the IGN, circulating a document containing member states' and coalitions' positions. [15 (p874)] The document is vital, mainly for two reasons. First, the document stirred the pot concerning the questions about reform resulting from either incremental process, also known as text-based negotiations (TBN) or reform resulting from consensus about all aspects at once. The G4 and the majority of member states support the TBN/incremental process, whereas the UfC insists on the pursuit of consensus.[14 (p52),19 (p14)] Second, Tanin's 2008 document is the first negotiation outcome that reflects the "five key issues" as the official framework for reform negotiations.[63 (p168)]

To this day, there is disagreement about whether Zanin's document should be seen as a negotiation text (TBN) or as a non-binding text on which to base discussion.[62 (23)] The G4's and the UfC's mutually exclusive stances concerning TBN mirror the main issue of contention between the G4 and the UfC in terms of the negotiation progress (dis).[3] Essentially, the G4 appreciates the document's significance, whereas the UfC does not.

The G4 and the UfC reform-antagonism is the core and centre of the UNSC reform debate (soc, dis).[3,16] Additionally, Peter Nadin notes that the African countries, the

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[m] I also unfold this argument in an upcoming policy oriented essay in the Georgetown Journal of International Affairs's online magasine.

AU, are the "king makers" (in terms of which countries can hope to gain seats in an expanded council)[5] [(p21)] and they seemingly hold the key to further movement.[3,4,16] However, the AU is on the G4 side when it comes to TBN and the overall reform agenda. Both the G4 and the AU pursue expansion in both categories, while the UfC is set on an expansion of the non-permanent membership—exclusively. Accordingly, the stalemate between the G4 and the UfC is essential, which is why it is the focal point of three out of this dissertation's four articles on UNSC reform (soc, dis, prob).[3,4,16] It is difficult to envision how the G4 (along with the AU and the majority of member states) can convince the UfC to accept expansion in both categories. Not the least because China participates in UfC meetings without being a member (soc).[15] [(p1235),16] Therefore, the UfC-coalition's minority position has the structural backup needed to prevent unwanted progress (China's veto power). In the article that focuses on the discursive dimension of the debate, we argue that the debate's discursive stalemate is significant. It plays out as a so-called discursive struggle between the G4 and the UfC about which agenda—and by implication which coalition—is more democratic (dis).[3] While it might be a "pipe dream"[106] to believe in reform progress based on increased awareness about the significance of the discursive dimension, we argue that substantive discussions about whether and how the coalitions' agendas are (really) democratic might bear fruit in terms of progressing the debate—albeit minutely.

In addition to the G4–UfC antagonism, the mentioned "five key issues" of UNSC reform have been a vital dimension for understanding the debate since 2008. These five issues are:

-       Categories of membership

-       The questions of the veto

-       Regional representation

-       Size of an enlarged Council and working methods

-       The relationship between the council and the General Assembly[15] [(p28)]

The IGN discussions about these issues concern what the result should be (a reformed UNSC concerning each issue) and how to get there (TBN or consensus).

Each round of IGN debate takes up one or two "key issues". The debates occur each spring/summer, and every round of debate usually contains two sessions: one early in the day and one in the afternoon. Increasingly, there has been a tendency to have member states'/coalitions' initial statements in the early session and back-and-forth

statements/debates in the late session (soc)[16] Diplomats (on behalf of their country's UN mission and often also on behalf of their respective coalition) present stances concerning the issue being debated and criticise their positional counterparts. Presently in the IGN (at the time of writing this), the Qatar/Danish chairs have allocated two days for each round of debates; the first day for statements and the second day for the back-and-forth discussions.[n]

This recurring debate about reform solutions and processes appears to promote or uphold the current political stalemate. Disagreements are illuminated when technical details fill up the debates. This is another debate dynamic which motivated me to investigate if and how different approaches could inspire new ways of thinking about the issue to unlock the present gridlock.

As of 2022, the IGN remains the official UN forum for the UNSC reform debate. The informal forum that the IGN supposedly provides has not led to significant progress towards reform. Conversely, the most potent talks between stakeholders, that is, G4 and UfC diplomats, occur at social gatherings outside of the UN (soc).[16] The period from 2008 to 2022, then, initially fits with the process outlined in Figure B with the coalitions' positions being the (only) results from the IGN as a new initiative, and, as a consequence, the debate still lacks progress.

The IGN debates, however, can also be seen in a more optimistic light. Zahir Tanin chaired the negotiations from 2008/9 to 2013/14 (the GAs 63–68). He concluded that during the IGN under his chairmanship, "we moved from talking to text-based negotiations in the form of various revisions to the negotiation text"[15 (p922)] and that "a true indicator of progress within the Intergovernmental Negotiations process was the shift to text-based negotiations"[15 (p923)] Clearly, Tanin's conclusion pushes both the need for TBN and promotes the notion of the IGN outcomes as being TBN. In the same conclusion, however, he notes that "we cannot move forward without a commonly agreed concise working document".[15 (p923)] The latter statement conveys the fact that Tanin's collection of countries' and coalitions' stances cannot work as TBN in the sense of it representing negotiated matters being settled. It is worth noting that the UfC, via Italian PR Sebastiano Cardi, has stated its principal support for TBN in the GA during the 69th session in 2014.[107] At the same time, however, the UfC has also degraded Tanin's document to being a technical rollover from one year to the next.[14 (p52)] Any optimism concerning Tanin's document and the UfC's responses about whether it represents TBN or not then, is found in this apparent crack in Italian/UfC stalwartness against TBN.

The 70th (2015-2016) and the 75th (2020–2021) GAs spurred cautious optimism, which seems like a tendency when approaching UN anniversaries (rev).[22] While the

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[n] This information was provided to me in a handful of informal talks with IGN co-chair and Danish PR Martin Bille Hermann

IGNs during both GAs led to outcome papers, not negotiation texts (TBN), that highlighted convergences/commonalities between coalitions' positions, these papers present minuscule potentials for breakthroughs—at best. Accordingly, the political gridlock remains, and the quest for a breakthrough is ever-present. Reform, that is, structural reform, appears to be a prerequisite for a continued international order that relies upon and promotes multilateralism. The UNSC is the UN's most powerful organ as it can decide whether military interventions are legitimate or not, and as such, the UNSC spearheads the continual strength of a liberal international order.

To understand the debate and negotiations about UNSC reform, one must appreciate that the issue revolves around the different tensions presented in the section above. Primarily these tensions all reflect perceptions and ensuing promotions of what is preferable or mandatory on one side and what is obtainable and pragmatic on the other side. These tensions can also be discussed via an IR theoretical approach vis-á-vis the concepts of idealism and realism, which is part of the following section's focus.

UNSC REFORM – FROM THE PERSPECTIVE OF RELEVANT THEORETICAL STANCES.

This chapter expounds on the dissertation's theoretical frame. It shows how the UNSC reform debate can be explained through engagement with foundational IR concepts. The primary focus is not to transfer the dissertation's main focus onto IR theory but to open up and elaborate on significant dimensions through IR-theoretical lenses and discuss how relevant academic disciplines engage the issues at hand.

The discussion about UNSC reform does not rely on or fit within only one academic field. The authors engaged in the debate rarely position their research in terms of field-specific affiliation. Still, the debate about UNSC reform occurs predominantly within the frameworks of International Relations (IR), International Law (IL), and International Organisation (IO) (rev).[2] Some studies fit neatly within only one out of the three fields, but most are more concerned with how to achieve reform than with theoretical demarcations and ensuing field allegiance. Accordingly, the questions placed in the centre of Figure D portray what the dominating emphases of UNSC reform studies are and that different fields tend to tackle the same central questions from their respective positions.

Figure D.
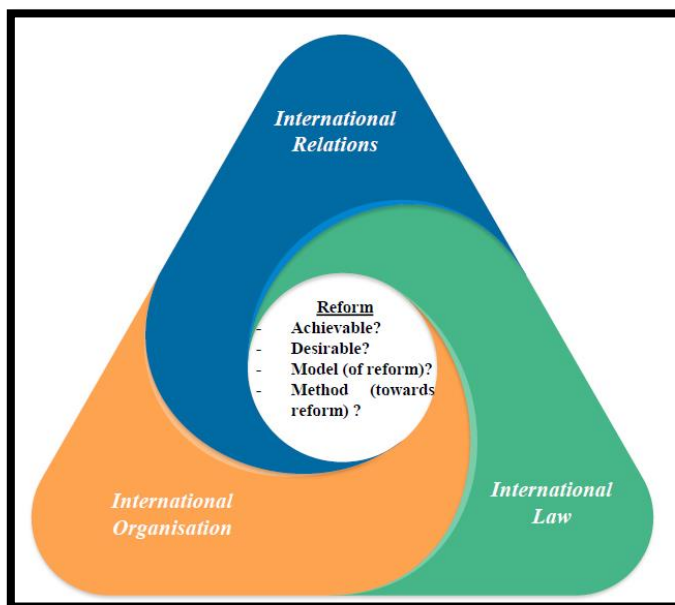
The three mentioned academic fields permeate studies of UNSC reform. The daunting task of achieving reform and the potential consequences of reform concerns the policies of international relations enacted by/on nation states. Therefore, central focus points of the mainline IR frame, such as the make-up and effects of states' self-interests and perceptions of security and issues related to international cooperation,[107,108] are close to omnipresent within studies of UNSC reform.[o] At the same time, studying UNSC reform engages the setup and effects of UN bureaucracy, how the UN seeks organisational legitimacy, and general questions about practical aspects of an international organisation—essentials of international organisation studies.[109] Finally, reform of the UNSC concerns interpretations of the UN Charter and is often discussed via references to human rights and other aspects of centrality to studies of International Law.[110]

This hybrid predisposition (in terms of academic field inspiration/focus) governs approaches from prominent researchers of UNSC reform, such as Weiss, Luck, Daws, Mahbubani, and Wallensteen.[92,102,111–114] Nonetheless, some studies are principally more engaged in one of the three fields depicted in Figure D. Bardo Fassbender's emphases, for example, are mainly on the judicial aspects,[94,95,115] which is also the

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[o] All studies of UNSC reform touches on these dimensions in some degree.

case in others' publications.[116] On the other hand, Marcus Franda[117] and Alexander Volacu[118] exemplify foci on organisational dimensions, which is also the nucleus of Sumihiro Kuyama & Michael Fowler's edited volume on UN reforms.[119]

This dissertation develops the UNSC reform research landscape by highlighting certain understudied dimensions and unchartered analytical approaches. Still, it has little to say directly about the judicial aspects, that is, analyses of how the UN Charter's wording might affect the reform debate or how new voting procedures can affect the council's operations. Consequently, the study primarily fits within the scope of IR.

Prior to a discussion about the theoretical implications of the general approach outlined in Figure E, more needs to be said about IR theoretical frames and UNSC reform research at a general level.

Diving into IR scholarship about UNSC reform to hash out explicit IR-theoretical discussions can be a dissatisfying experience. On the one hand, most works implicitly promote stances that reflect the IR strands of liberalism's normative and substantive logics, by promoting the need for and value of the UN.[120,121] On the other hand, very few works commit explicitly to specific IR theoretical stances. Two of the most well-known anthologies on the UNSC showcase such positions. They both present atheoretical approaches in terms of their stated focus yet are theoretically uniform in terms of their starting points. In The UN Security Council in the 21st Century, editors Einsiedel et al. write:

> *Our approach is not theoretically driven. That said, what all authors of this book have in common is a belief that the council matters. In that sense, most if not all of them would probably subscribe to a thought tradition that has been termed "liberal institutionalism" in international relations theory* [83 (p15)]

David M. Malone adds to the notion that theoretical discussions are not central in his edited book, *The UN Security Council from the Cold War to the 21st Century*:

> *Our approach is not theoretically driven [...] we are content to let our research and conclusions serve as theory fodder for others.* [122 (p3)]

At large, the prevailing motivation among scholars of UNSC reform is to improve cooperation and relations among actors at the international level of politics (nation-states, IOs, INGOs, and NGOs). Moreover, scholars seek ways to improve the quality

of the UNSC's global governance, a venture not seen explicitly necessitating engagement with IR theory or theoretical labels.[14,19,20,113][p]

Nonetheless, studies of UNSC reform can likely benefit from more explicit theoretical discussions, mainly because scholars who wish to influence the real world of UN reform politics can present stronger arguments when they are more openly informed by—and explicit about—theoretical discussions and these discussions' underlying assumptions. Indeed, Stephen Walt argues that "theory remains essential for diagnosing events, explaining their causes, prescribing responses, and evaluating the impact of different policies".[123] However, discussions of a political issue such as UNSC reform can also become overly theoretical. Explaining positions through expansive theory can alienate diplomats,[124] a notion addressed further below. For now, the following section addresses the fact that little UNSC reform research expounds on the topic's theoretical dimensions explicitly.

As noted earlier, most scholars of UNSC reform rely on logic from the IR line of thinking known as liberalism, more specifically liberal institutionalism.[125] At its core, liberal institutionalism is "a more general doctrine that provides a justification not for the welfare state but for international institutions as foundations of social progress",[126] that is, that international institutions are essential for both the exercise and the promotion of international democratic participation.[127] If taken to its ultimate consequence, the mentioned uniformity seen in UNSC reform scholars' liberalist normative stance, that is, the support and promotion of the council as an essential body of international order albeit in need of reform, educes strains of what E.H. Carr called utopianism.[128] It resounds Carr's utopianism because, in essence, such thinking explicates the notion that multilateralism, embodied by the UN, can save humanity from hell—as the famous statement from Dag Hammarskjöld reads. Carr's caricatured utopians cannot understand the reality they want to change or the change processes.[128] They believe in and seek unobtainable political trajectories. Translated from Carr to the current UNSC reform debate, utopians would be those that believe in a reformed UNSC that can flawlessly and meritoriously prevent conflict and promote peace. However, UNSC reform scholars are not caught in Carr's realist/utopian dichotomy's utopian dimension because they realise that the council will never work perfectly. Despite the widespread support that the council enjoys in terms of its existence, both diplomats and professionals engage in the debate about UNSC reform to argue for the best and most plausible reform approach, that is, how to change and improve the UNSC—realistically, if you will. Such agendas do not connote Carr's utopianism but rather pragmatism.

The tendency among the majority of scholars then is for them to tout liberalist logics based on idealist convictions about the worth and potential of the UNSC while

[p] The referred examples back up my claim by being central works about UNSC reform and not emphasising the theoretical dimension.

projecting reform trajectories that rely on realist logic. This depiction is certainly correct when it comes to the growing tendency in academia to promote reform models that would not satisfy the majority of UN member states. The apparent idealist scholars' pragmatic approaches end up opposing liberalist essentials such as the pursuit of majority rule (democracy) and equality (between powerful actors such as the P5 and the rest of the UN membership).

Support for working methods reform is on the rise among academics because it is achievable and seen as a more efficient solution (rev).[2] However, most UN member states call for structural reform. Overall, a pattern appears. Professionals/diplomats seem to be at the idealist end of an idealist—realist continuum, whereas scholars are the realists. While this dichotomization does not encompass the complexity of engaged actors' stances, it highlights the relevance of applying the idealism/realism lens to the debate. A theoretically based discussion can show, among other things, how scholars' apparently balance between the two positions.

As I point out in the review article, scholars are not obliged to follow the political wishes of UN member states (rev).[2] Nonetheless, to understand the position of academia and the connection between academia and the world of diplomacy, it is noteworthy that the predominant logic or normative starting point that we call liberalism does not, essentially, impact scholars' policy proposals.

Fundamental traits of the IR theoretical lenses of realism and liberalism, while both representing many sub- or more detailed understandings, can help illustrate the tension between the preferable and the achievable when it comes to UNSC reform.

UNSC REFORM THROUGH THE LENSES OF IR-REALISM AND LIBERALISM

Liberalists see international and institutional cooperation as being in the best interests of states. [46,129,130] Following liberalist thought, international cooperation increases, and "international institutions can be found in every functional domain and in every region of the world". [125 (p201)] Therefore, it is argued, institutional international cooperation increases and this direction is progressively independent of nation-states. Liberal institutionalist logic sees this process as beneficial to both liberal and illiberal regimes. [131,132] If institutional cooperation increases, and the increased cooperation benefits all, why do these processes not translate into a reform of the UNSC that increases cooperation and satisfaction with the council's structure? Ed Luck provides a realist answer that resounds Carr's logic, namely, that the manner in which the UN has conducted the reform negotiations has been too idealistic and not political enough. States' fear of decreased political influence via reform has been largely ignored. [67,133] Additionally, explanations for lack of reform that rely on realist logic emphasise power-balancing and regional rivalries as reasons for lack of reform progress. [14,20,134,135]

Liberalist logic, however, does not necessitate that achieving (any) reform is essential. According to Thomas Weiss, "The sky ain't falling" because of an unchanged council, [112] and regardless of absent reform, the council works, which the many active UN peacekeeping operations documents. [136 (p15)] Moreover, the earlier mentioned argument from David Bosco that the council functions as a concert of powers irrespective of its resolutions' quantity and quality also resound liberalist logic. [79]

The Global South aspect of the reform debate provides empirical fodder for both liberalist and realist explanations for absent reform. Spencer Zifcak argues "that the principal reason for this failure [the failure to reform the UN during Kofi Annan's leadership] was that nations of the North and South could not agree as to the merits of the reforms proposed, exposing the sharply differing visions held by member states for a future and improved UN". [137 (p216)] Moreover, 99 out of the UN's 193 member states generally fit in the category of Global South countries.[q] Legally, a charter amendment is needed for a structural reform of the council to occur. Charter amendments require a two-thirds majority in the UN General Assembly (GA), where all countries have one vote. Democracy can then be seen as prevailing if the proposed reforms do not satisfy the Global South's wishes, and cause Global South countries to refrain from supporting such reform initiatives. Still, the Global South remains underrepresented on the council, which, at least to a certain degree, results from Global North countries with veto power. Accordingly, the Global South case can be seen as verifying that UN democracy works and ensures that only reforms that follow

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[q] If we see the African Union, the Latin-American Group, and the Caribbean Group as comprising Global South countries

the will of the majority (and the Global South) will prevail. It can also, however, be seen as exemplifying states fighting against the ascension to power of other states based on motivation pertaining to security dimensions and power politics more broadly. The latter explanation relies on examples of internal African disagreements about which countries should represent Africa in an expanded council, [138] and on the example of Mexico and Argentina vehemently opposing Brazil's ascension to permanency (dis). [4] Lauri Mälksoo's realist explanation also illustrates the latter point. He writes:

> *The main impediment to legitimacy is quite clearly systemic and far-reaching, and it stems from the fact that Council members and (non-members alike) continue to promote a never-ending game of classical realist international politics. The game creates structural winners and losers, and it allows winners to draft the peace treaties and write the histories. It is telling that in the case of Security Council enlargement, the most vehement resistance to adding Germany, Japan, Brazil, and India as permanent members has come from regional rivals who have not felt 'represented' at all by the aspirant countries—even notwithstanding common EU membership as in the case of Germany and Italy.* [139 (p112)]

Mälksoo's realist argument appears sound, but as argued above, the same case can be placed inside a liberalist explanation. Accordingly, there is a need for a more detailed discussion of theory as it pertains to the issue of UNSC reform. While it is worthwhile noting the value of the realism and liberalism umbrellas as frames for understanding UNSC reform, this dissertation's constructivist approach enables additional ways of interpreting the issue at hand.

Niels Nagelhus Schia also labels realism and liberalism ("realpolitik" and "liberalistic") approaches as the dominant theoretical frames for studies of the UNSC and international order. [140] To circumvent these frames, he applies an anthropological method to study the council without focusing on the nation-state system's structures. This approach to studies of the council and the reform issue fits, at large, with the constructivist archetype of international relations theory described by Nicholas Onuf, Alexander Wendt, Michael Barnett, and Martha Finnermore. [141–143] According to this group of renowned constructivists, the quest of IR-constructivism is to focus on international and global politics through lenses of states' roles in the construction of rules and norms and the social construction of norms and rules within international organisations. Whereas Schia's approach is anthropological and includes emphases on human dimensions, the UNSC reform studies from Martin Binder & Monika Heupel, Ian Hurd, and Leslie Wehner [144–146] rely on more apposite constructivist logic. Schia's emphases on social relations and human agency aspects are rarely present in studies of the council. Paul Kennedy, [147] Andrew Boyd, [148] and Stanley Meisler [149] include the role and impact of individuals/human agents in their overviews of the UNSC/UN, and Sam Daws and Lorraine Sievers point out the importance of personalities within the council, [102 (p725)] and so does Gary Rosenthal. [28] The human

agency dimension, which according to Daniel Jacobi and Annette Freyberg-Inan, is increasingly coming back into IR,[150] and can be studied as the impact of individual agents.[27] However, the human agency and social relations dimensions remain understudied when it comes to UNSC reform. I do not argue that UNSC reform studies promote the empirically unsustainable idea of leaving human agents and their relations out of the equation.[151] Nonetheless, no one seems to deem social relations between human agents worthy of being the emphasis of UNSC reform studies. This knowledge gap inspired the dissertation's third article about social relations as diplomacy (soc).[16]

As seen in the outline above, studies that deviate from the dominating theoretical frames outlined by Schia do exist. Nevertheless, an overview of the literature on UNSC reform (rev)[2] confirms Schia's claim about what theoretical positions make up the dominating approaches. Reform agendas and processes are chiefly explained vis-à-vis nation states' rationales and not by drawing from the notion that changes in international politics occur through human agents' reflections and ensuing actions.[152–154]

Having introduced the connection between UNSC reform and relevant IR theoretical dimensions, I want to focus on explicit engagement with the overall research question:

How can research on United Nations Security Council reform be advanced and consequently rethink the current gridlocked dynamics to advance new paths towards reform?

I draw from the notions of theorisation and methodological suggestions to provide answers that rely on and combine the main arguments and most significant observations from my four UNSC reform-focused articles. This approach means that I present theoretical considerations (meant to inspire further theoretically oriented research) and highlight significant methodological considerations. Based on these notions, I suggest how to guide UNSC reform research forward.

THEORISATION AND METHODOLOGICAL SUGGESTIONS

The ensuing section unfolds the dissertation's core arguments. I draw inspiration from the notion of theorisation. I use this concept to scaffold theoretical advances, but in the realisation that I do not propose grand theories to alter our understanding of UNSC reform. I do, however, believe that the dissertation's central observations can be presented and discussed in ways which amount to logical statements based on assumptions that can help advance explanations of causal mechanisms, propose hypotheses, and therefore propose expectations about the future of the UNSC reform debate.[r] Since the dissertation focuses on the academic dimension of the UNSC reform issue, the following discussion includes methodological suggestions for future research.

The two following statements answer the overall research question based on the four articles. The first statement results primarily from the review article (rev) and the critical policy analysis article (pro).[2,4] The second statement reflects the core conclusions from the discourse-focused article (dis) and the article about social relations as diplomacy.[4,16]

Statement one:

The academic debate about USNC reform should explore its potential influence on the professional debate. Hence scholars should critically assess the direction that UNSC reform scholarship is moving. Instead of dominantly pursuing a pragmatic turn and suggesting only working methods reform or structural reform of only the non-permanent membership, scholars should predominantly investigate how the Global South can achieve permanent representation on the council via exploration of the African Group's position and potential and increasingly focus on how the G4 and the AU can come near each other regarding reform policy.

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[r] Paraphrasing Professor Andrea Ruggeri's definition of theory from a Ph.D workshop on theorising at the Department of Politics and International Relations in Oxford, UK.

Statement two:

The discursive and social dimensions of the debate matter and should be studied. Such endeavours necessitate using hitherto untried methodologies such as discourse analysis and situational analysis. Policy-wise, there is potential for breakthroughs if researchers (and eventually professionals) include foci on how the notion of democracy is constructed and utilised in the debates about UNSC reform and by recognising that the IGN do not provide professionals with an informal arena of debate—unofficial social meetings does.

I have proposed that too little explicit theoretical discussion can be a problem, but also that too much theory can alienate the academic discussions from diplomats, an unfolding point in the article about social relations as diplomacy (soc).[16] Accordingly, the notion of theorisation is meant to provide a middle ground between turning the dissertation onto an overly theoretical focus and providing theoretically oriented discussions about the two statements posted above. Theorisation can also be called a process that leads to theory,[155] and the mentioned balancing act is meant to provide stepping stones for future theoretical developments about the issue of UNSC reform.

Rarely do readers get a comprehensive insight into the process of theorising when presented with theories about IR.[156,157] However, attempts to counterbalance this trend ought not to breed theoretical discussions for the sake of theory alone. Indeed, Michael Ward argues that theoretical endeavours are not beneficial unless they result in practical knowledge. While Ward emphasises the prediction of outcomes as the silver lining measure of proper theoretical ventures' outcomes,[158] the following theorisation process is more concerned with laying the groundwork for such ventures. Specific predictions of the reform process are not emphasised, but specific recommendations for how to advance the reform process are put forth. However, they are not the silver lining. The following theorisation then draws inspiration from Ross Gildea and James Ruggeri since its focus is on understanding a specific phenomenon (UNSC reform) and not so much on painting a picture of how certain aspects (only) fit within certain isms. Gildea and Ruggieri state:

> *All IR theories have their limits in explanatory power and scope. More desirable would be an approach to theory that is flexible and problem-driven. Rather than defining research in terms of paradigmatic disputes, we should emphasise substantive topics and questions. Fights between paradigms and -isms tend, in little time, to become irrelevant and useful only to fill pages in academic journals, rather than providing tools to understand and navigate the world.*[159 (p18-19)]

Drawing from the quote's sentiment, theorisation, as presented here, revolves around the overall research question about how to expand the debate about UNSC reform more than around IR-isms, albeit IR-isms are essential for understanding the underlying logic of presented answers to the research question.

THE ACADEMIC DEBATE AND THE G4/AU POTENTIAL

Further elaboration of statement number one.

Since the arenas of UNSC reform academia and diplomacy influence each other, it makes sense to focus on these mechanisms of influence. Even though the present research does not measure or prove this [124,161–164]influence dynamic, enough research exists about connections between scholarship and policy-making[124,160–163] to validate this connection concerning UNSC reform. Accordingly, if scholarship increasingly argues against the political preferences and agendas of policy-makers, this trend is bound to have consequences. Therefore, there is a need for academia to scrutinise its role in the reform debate to maintain the potential for converging dug-in political positions and inducing the debate with new perspectives. Such endeavours could focus on the potential of a common reform policy between the G4 and the AU, which would highly increase the potential for a breakthrough in the negotiations.

The proposed scrutiny should also focus on whether scholars are too pragmatic or too idealistic in how they present paths towards reform and, moreover, if the relations between theory and practice are properly understood and addressed. Fundamentally, scholars of UNSC reform should be more sensitive towards the wishes of UN member states concerning a reform of the UNSC. As mentioned earlier, there is growing support among academics for reforming the council's working methods without changing its structure; alternatively, for a reform that improves the council's working methods and changes the council's structure without altering the current setup of a permanent membership with veto rights (rev).[2] Conversely, most UN member states want a reform of the council that restructures the membership, including adding permanent members and changes to the current veto system.[15] [(p1301-1319)] Many academics, it seems, are too pragmatic/realist in their approach to UNSC reform. However, a dose of pragmatism is essential, so that proposed pathways towards reform do not only reflect idealism and policies that (realistically) will never materialise, despite support from the majority of UN member states.

The notion of scholars balancing between pragmatism by seeking a viable path towards reform and idealism via sensitivity towards countries' wishes is challenging to fulfil. Not least because academia has an important function as a voice of contestation of political trends,[160] and scholars should not be mere mouthpieces for countries' international policies. Particularly within IR research from feminist,[161] post-colonialist,[162,163] and critical theory[164,165] angles, academia has focused on challenging political trends. More generally, throughout the history of the IR discipline, the chief concern seems to be that the theoretical accolades from academia should strive to be applicable in so-called real-world policymaking,[123] but that a disconnect between theory and application exists.[166,167] Henry R. Nau laments and

labels this disconnect as a divorce.[167] The apparent disconnect results from different causes. One explanation is that there are few experienced scholars in politics and vice versa.[168,169] Another highlights a dichotomy between the complexity of theory and the need for clarity in policymaking.[170,171] Yet another proposes an ontological difference between diplomats' relational and practice-oriented world and academia's substantialist and meta-oriented world.[124] The challenge of a disconnect between academia and policymaking concerns the earlier mentioned issue that too little and too much theoretical emphasis can be problematic.

While the underlying causes of complexity vs clarity and opposing ontologies might reside between scholars and diplomats engaged with UNSC reform, the number of people who switch between UNSC reform academia and UNSC reform diplomacy appears higher than in other academia/policymaking connections. If we include think tanks and NGOs in a linkage between academia and diplomacy within the UNSC reform sphere, the connection caused by persons moving between diplomacy and academia is even more solid. [172] Moreover, think tanks and NGOs that are specifically oriented towards or include a focus on UNSC reform tend to include former diplomats in their boards/leadership. Examples of such are 'Elect the Council',[104] 'Global Policy Forum',[173] 'Center for UN reform education',[174] and 'Security Council report'.[175] Accordingly, when discussing UNSC reform, a focus on the role and potential of academia's influence on policymaking in global governance is justified, a notion that is likely part of certain scholars' explicit calls for academia as a whole to seek an increased influence to break the UNSC reform deadlock. [14 (p125),19 (p28)]

Since there is a solid connection between academia and the diplomatic realm in the UNSC reform debate, and since scholars are motivated to seek influence, it seems critical to keep in mind that, as noted earlier, a growing majority of USNC reform scholars advocate for working methods reforms without structural reforms.[2] The resulting transparency when it comes to scholars' policy preferences is a positive factor that answers Hedley Bull's call for how to respond to the fact that IR studies are never value-free exercises.[176] Another aspect of the said trend, however, needs scrutiny. The notion that most research recommends working methods reforms might negatively affect diplomats' respect for input from academia. In other words, while scholars might score points for transparency and apparent pragmatism, the same number of points (or more) might be subtracted because the recommendations go against the reform agendas of many UN member states by arguing against a structural reform of the council.

When scholars advocate for and propose working methods reforms, they primarily rely on two strings of argumentation. First, scholars look at the data, that is., the gridlocked process of (non-)reform and the fact that the council has been structurally changed only once since its inception. Consequently, many seek to propose a reform model that appears achievable (working methods reform).[14,18,20,24] Second is the argument that an expanded council (mainly an expanded permanent membership)

might be detrimental to the operability of the council[14,20,146] and that, consequently, working methods reform is the better option.[133,177] Both arguments often rely on negative reviews of the opposing argument, namely of the irreplaceability of structural reform.[91,92,114,178]

The overall body of research that brings forth UNSC reform proposals remains almost balanced concerning calls for both kinds of reform (rev),[2] but the tendency towards growing support for a working methods reform without structural reform is clear, and it is this trend that is potentially precarious. The sentiment among most countries from the Global South, which also makes up the majority of the UN membership, is clear. This group of countries see a reform sans structural change as enhancing a decline in the moral value of the council's decisions because this kind of reform, they argue, systemically upholds a geopolitical power division that patronises Global South countries (rev, pro).[2,4,70,92] Subsequently, the peril of an increasing majority of research supporting working methods reform contains two co-constitutive elements. One is an overly pragmatic stance that disregards the ideal dimension. Two is a position that excludes political priorities. The question then becomes how to balance research and ensuing proposals for a UNSC reform. It seems as if the following guides are essential. Proposed outcomes must be applicable and not estrange policymakers through unnecessary complexity. Furthermore, research outcomes must also support change (reforms) based on both what seems possible (realistic) and fair (idealistic) to combine what E.H. Carr labelled the two facets of political science, namely utopia and reality.[128]

In reviewing the academic debate about UNSC reform (rev),[2] I argue that one potential approach to the task of combining realism/pragmatism and idealism is to focus increasingly on a convergence between structural and working methods reform. It is often argued that working methods reform can satisfy the calls for structural reform. The argument goes that working methods reform can circumvent the charter amendments needed for structural reform. Then, through a focus on improving the council's efficiency, those calling for structural reform will eventually be satisfied as they see a better functioning council. However, based on my review of the academic debate and on the G4's reform policy and its implications for the G4–AU relationship (rev, pro),[2,4] I argue that more focus should be placed on how structural reform can enhance the council's effectiveness. The structural changes that many UN member states perceive as vital for the council's legitimacy ought not to be increasingly portrayed by scholars as obstacles to improved performance by the council, albeit well-rounded arguments exist for this dynamic.[133,146,179] More research is needed that explores how structural reform can increase the council's efficiency directly, and not only as a result of increased legitimacy, that is, that the council's actions will be increasingly respected and followed if the council has a broader representation.

One way of achieving a sound equilibrium is through a balanced view of scholarship and policymaking as mutually constitutive dimensions of the UNSC reform debate.

"While they are different, [they] are nevertheless joined at the hip, and neither can succeed, even within its own realm, without the other".[167] [(135-136)] Accepting that influence can flow in both directions necessitates that scholars must be influenced, in this case, by the idealist stances of many UN member states that want a significant reform of the council's structure, and then figure out how to assert realist/pragmatist influence from the said starting point.

The pursued convergence of realist and idealist approaches can inspire another convergence that I have touched upon earlier, namely, between working methods and structural reform emphases. As is the case with scholarship and the professional diplomatic sphere, the two reform frames should be increasingly treated as interconnected notions. While most UNSC reform scholars[s] will likely contend that their analyses and proposals include both reform frames, no research, to the best of my knowledge, has the convergence between the two frames as the explicit starting point and continued focus. The current underlying difference between proponents of structural reform and working methods reform, respectively, is seen by the normative focus of structural reformists and the evolutionary focus of working methods reformists. The former see structural reform as the only good and just solution, and the latter argue that working methods reform can produce outcomes that satisfy structural reformists.[2] To circumvent both the normative and the evolutionary frame, scholars could start with research questions that take a step back, focus on understanding the debate, and make policy proposals based on the results of these efforts. The present dissertation does that via a focus on how language/discourse shapes and maintains the reform gridlock (dis),[3] how social relations and friendships might be a ripe field for ensuring reform progress (soc),[16] and how powerful reform coalitions' reform policies can be changed/updated to enhance their appeal to the increasingly influential (in terms of the reform debate) Global South (pro).[4]

The mentioned convergence approach can also be applied to a specific policy facet of the UNSC reform debate. The African Union is an essential (f)actor. In terms of its size (55 members), its subsequent essentiality for acquiring two-thirds of the UN member states' support is needed for charter amendments and Africa's Global South identity. The case for increasing African representation on the council embodies the widespread arguments for a reform that reflects current geopolitical realities. Consequently, it makes much sense from both an idealist and a pragmatist viewpoint to focus on the African group. A reform that caters to AU's wishes all but promotes geopolitical equality, and it renders possible enough support to gain the needed 2/3 majority in the GA.

In summary, the AU's position, as represented in the Ezulwini Consensus, calls for two permanent and five non-permanent seats on the council for Africa. Furthermore, the AU calls for veto rights to the added P seats as long as the veto system subsists.

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[s] And probably all professionals, but I have not analysed this.

However, the Ezulwini Consensus also proposes the abolition of the veto system.[138] In my article about the G4's reform policy, I explore the apparent AU contradiction's potential (pro).[4] Progressive countries and reactionary countries alike acknowledge the importance of the AU. For example, the G4 and the P5ave tried to persuade the AU towards flexibility and subsequent alignment with other groups' reform agendas[15] [(p1221)] or towards maintaining positions that render progress impossible.[62 (p48,50,52)]

Following a hypothesis that argues for effectively applying a proper balance between realism/pragmatism and idealism and between working methods and structural reform focus, the following thought-out scenario emerges.

The realist perspective is that the AU should drop its maximalist position and that the African demand for veto rights is naïve.[14 (p135),77] According to this logic, working methods reforms can satisfy the African group's demands for increased inclusion in the council's power nucleus. Consequently, it is argued that this approach will make the council more effective, benefiting the AU and the Global South more broadly (and the rest of the world). This sentiment aligns primarily with the reform proposals that I call the tenacious working methods reforms arguments (rev).[2] On the other hand, the opposing and implicit liberalist/idealist logic concerning the AU and UNSC reform calls for a council representing the current geopolitical power map instead of an exclusively P5-dominated setup, which merely reflects the early post-WWII period.[70] More specifically, arguments that I see as rooted in liberalism propose that the countries from the AU and the Global South countries must be favoured in any talk about the expansion of the council and accompanying delegation of veto prerogatives as a moral imperative.[92,180–182] Accordingly, the two opposing logics appear hard to align.

Balancing pragmatism/realism and idealism/liberalism, in terms of the AU and UNSC reform, can be conceived of in (at least) two potential ways. The first way relies on increased attentiveness to the most potent AU countries' national reform agendas. The idea is to engage in or facilitate support for these countries' efforts to convince the rest of/the majority of AU countries to accept an altered AU position. The most powerful countries in the AU concerning UNSC reform (the countries favoured for permanent/increased inclusion in the UNSC) are Ethiopia, Egypt, Algeria, South Africa, and Nigeria (primarily the last two).[14 (p61)] Some or all of these have sought to align the AU's position with the G4's.[183] The question is what it takes for the powerful African countries to unite Africa as they commit to the G4 agenda. Committing to the G4 agenda means dropping the claim for veto rights that currently reside in the AU's reform agenda. In this approach to reform, the AU will not obtain permanent seats on equal terms with the current P5. The key, it seems, is figuring out how much it would take to get the powerful AU countries to officially support the G4's agenda, that is, how many and what kind of seats are reserved for African countries in a reformed council. If the G4 and the powerful AU countries unite, it will lead to a certain level of pressure on the rest of the AU. Publicly, it will be known that if the AU can unite

behind the powerful African countries' support for the G4 agenda, structural reform is theoretically close. While P5 opposition is expected, and the proposed AU unity can seem far off,[183] the key to this path is the abstention from veto prerogatives, which leaves the P5's exclusive roles in place. Moreover, a permanent presence in the council is highly valued even without veto rights. [2] Therefore, African alignment behind the G4 is worthwhile for the AU if the rest of the African countries feel represented by the G4 and the powerful AU countries.

Second, there could be a path to alignment between the AU and the G4 coalition if the latter becomes clearer in presenting its reform policy towards the Global South and hence the AU (pro).[4] The G4 claims that its reform policy benefits the AU and the Global South, yet a critical analysis of said policy shows that it is unclear how the G4's reform policy benefits the Global South and the AU (pro).[4] The G4 could advance the connection to the AU by clarifying how the G4's reform policy will secure increased influence to the Global South/the AU without expansion of veto rights.

The paths proposed above need further research regarding their real-world potentials and whether the idealist/realist distinction and balancing are applicable. Concerning policy recommendations, my article about the G4's policy and the Global South proposes that:

> *Expansion of the veto right is likely a non-starter for informal negotiations with P5 countries about permanent membership expansion. Since the G4 must choose one of the two stances concerning veto (expansion or not), and since the P5 is more potent in this regard than the AU, then the G4 should forfeit veto expansion explicitly* (pro). [4]

This statement relies on realist logic. It emphasises the P5's inherent power and superiority over the AU. Indeed, the statement does not connote idealism. Doing so would steer the G4 away from choices based on geopolitical power structures. However, it is worth noting that the G4 is more flexible concerning veto expansion rights than the AU.[15 (1224)] Therefore, the position is also one that encourages the G4 to utilise its flexibility towards the veto and thereby appease the P5 (realism/pragmatism) and increasingly acknowledge and emphasise the AU's demands for increased permanent representation in the G4's reform policy (idealism/liberalism) (pro).[4]

DISCOURSE, GOVERNMENTALITY, AND SOCIAL RELATIONS

Further elaboration of statement number two.

The discourse on democracy in the UNSC reform debate is significant. So is the UNSC reform governmentality, which relies on, utilises, constitutes, and negotiates the democracy discourse. Both dimensions, and their co-constitutive relation) maintains the current diplomatic gridlock. Hence, more research on these dimensions could be critical for understanding and unlocking the gridlock. Additionally, social and interpersonal dimensions of the UNSC reform debate are venues that professionals take seriously but scholarship does not—when it comes to UNSC reform. (soc).[16] Both the discursive/governmental and the social relations dimensions should be increasingly included as objects of research, not least how they play into and affect each other.

The term discourse essentially means how language and communication shape the understanding of what is true, and critical discourse analyses focus on struggles about meaning, ideology, and power,[184–186] which are notions that are highly relevant for the UNSC reform debate (dis).[3]In the article that zooms in on these aspects of UNSC reform, discourse refers specifically to how different (and disagreeing) actors construct and negotiate the truth (the discourse) about what is/what would be a democratic reform of the UNSC. This operationalisation and understanding of discourse draw theoretically from the critical tradition of discourse studies, that is, critical discourse analysis (CDA).[186–188] Methodologically, doing CDA means including contexts such as existing political and social dynamics in the understanding of how language is utilised to shape the understanding of what is true.

Other discourse analytical traditions such as conversation analysis (CA) emphasise the minutes of conversations such as pauses and turn-taking and seek to exclude or minimise the impact of contexts in the analytical strategy.[189–191] Regarding UNSC reform studies, neither discourse analytical approach has been adequately applied. Ian Hurd's article about so-called myths of membership in linguistic/argumentative legitimation practices resembles a CDA approach. However, Hurd's work is not discourse-focused.[146]

Nevertheless, discourse analytical approaches, in general, are exceedingly present in IR research.[192–194] Yet, as is the case with constructivist approaches in general and emphases on human agency and social relations, it seems as if such dimensions are considered to be insignificant when it comes to the issue of high-level diplomacy[1 (p1)] for example, concerning UNSC reform. UN pundit Thomas Weiss writes that "people

and ideas matter[197]" and social relations and diplomats' personalities are generally seen as significant in international diplomacy.[26,27,195] Still, such approaches do not figure in UNSC reform studies. Consequently, there is a need for more studies on these dimensions' role and impact within the UNSC reform debate. The following observations underscore this need. In this frame document, I have pointed out the (potential) connection between a dinner arrangement and the initiation of the IGN (see page xx). In the article about social relations as diplomacy, I present how PGA Mogens Lykketoft's employed a strategic focus on Sylvie Lucas' (IGN chair) and Sebastiano Cardi's (Italian PR) personal relationship (soc) to get the latter's acceptance of the former as the chair of the IGN.[16] The same article proposes a general but heavy indication about social events playing the role of venues for informal UNSC reform talks (soc).[16]

Discourse analyses of the highly politically charged arena of geopolitics, for example, the UNSC reform debate, primarily demonstrate how power relations manifest in and through language and argumentation and how language and argumentation manifest in and through power relations. Paraphrasing Fairclough, discourse shapes society (context), and society (context) shapes discourse.[184] Translated to the UNSC reform debate focus, it means that how the negotiations are constructed discursively and the geopolitical contexts co-constitute each other. Such interpretations risk coming up short when explaining how these so-called shaping or co-constituting practices govern or are governed by participating actors. Thus, the term governmentality comes in handy. According to Michel Foucault, governmentality concerns the relationship between power and freedom. In essence, this relation materialises when individuals conduct their conduct (behaviour/actions) and when those in power govern as a response to what is possible/impossible in exercising power.[196,197] Boiled down, the complex notion of Foucauldian governmentality is about actors' understanding of the realm of possible actions and how these are limited and how these limits are constructed and upheld.

The article about discourse and governmentality in the UNSC reform debate (dis)[3] works with what we call "the intersection of discourse and governmentality" (dis).[3] The article draws from Kirsten Haack's research about how democracy-promotion is a dominating paradigm within the UN[57] and shows how actors (in the article: the G4 and the UfC) seek to construct and control the discourse about democracy/a democratic reform while also operating within a delimited realm of actions—which constitutes governmentality within the reform debate (dis).[3] Utilising and seeking to construct the UN discourse of democracy has certain boundaries. Neither the G4 nor the UfC can claim that placing themselves as dictators of the UNSC is a democratic agenda. Accordingly, the two coalitions are involved in a discursive struggle about what should assume dominance as the truth about what is democratic. The G4 promotes the idea of a democratic reform being one that rewards countries' resourcefulness—thereby implicitly invoking a realist logic. The UfC, on the other hand, promotes a reform that enhances the UNSC's democratic profile as one with a

focus on equality between member states, regardless of resourcefulness, based on an idealist/liberalist logic (dis). [3]

Accordingly, I want to suggest that future research increasingly understands the debate about UNSC reform as one that relies on certain governmental boundaries or conditions and that researchers explore how the presence of said boundaries can guide the debate. For example, instead of focusing only on the question of structural or working methods reforms, it might be fruitful to have a more substantive discussion about what a democratic reform entails, perhaps by exploring member states' understanding of democracy and how to influence these.

Since it is possible to point out certain rules that shape what can and must be said in the reform debate among professionals, research that works from this starting point should be able to interpret the unwritten but effective rules of the debate and hereafter work to translate their findings into policy recommendations. The examples of the presence and impact of a democracy discourse and governmentality (dis),[3] demonstrate that it is just as important to monitor the debate's discursive and governmental developments as it is to monitor the geopolitical contexts, such as the geopolitical agency of reform coalitions. Doing so enables a focus on causality from the debate outwards, whereas most present research sees the debate as one shaped by geopolitics and not as one that shapes geopolitics. The present dissertation has not proven that discourse and governmentality dimensions shape geopolitics, but it has demonstrated an approach towards further inquiries into this starting point. However, the dissertation has demonstrated that the ongoings within the social/interpersonal dimensions have significance vis-á-vis the political dimension. In the article that focuses on this dynamic, the main results are not measurable as such but rather general and indicative. It shows that—and how—actors utilise social gatherings and friendships for policy agendas and that certain social rules and practices guide the UNSC reform debate, for example, that senior diplomats tend to play the role of good cops and junior diplomats tend to be the bad cops (soc).[16] All in all, the focus on discourse, governmentality, and social relations has shown that the UNSC reform debate is complex and multidimensional and has demonstrated new ways of approaching the issue methodologically.

One theoretical dimension challenges the dissertation's cohesion and must be unfolded. In the article about discourse and governmentality (dis)[3] we posit that the G4's reform discourse relies on realist rationality and that the UfC's reform discourse relies on idealist rationality. The G4 emphasises (its members') resourcefulness as essential for potential new permanent members of the UNSC, and the UfC emphasises equality among all UN member states as a contradiction to the idea of more permanent members. However, in the theorisation section above, I argue that the idealist position is the one which calls for new permanent members and the realist position is the one that pragmatically calls for working methods reform or reform of only the non-permanent membership. While this resembles self-contradictory argumentation, it

undergirds the notion I proposed earlier, the need to balance pragmatism/realism and idealism/liberalism and the need to be problem-oriented and not -ism focused.

When the UfC constructs its reform discourse via idealism-rationality, the coalition is essentially engaging in power politics, that is, realism. The coalition's chief aim is to prevent the G4 from achieving permanent seats, to prevent the G4 members from becoming regional powers to a larger degree than they already are. When the G4 constructs its reform discourse via realism-rationality, the coalition is also motivated by power politics to secure increased geopolitical influence on its members. In the final analysis, the two coalition's reform agendas are motivated by a realist understanding of international politics, albeit they both invoke democracy (primarily a concept that connotes idealism/liberalism), and the UfC discourse construction emphasises equality.

When, as argued above, scholars engage in the debate, it is precisely the underlying realist-inspired motives of the G4 and the UfC that we must not submit entirely to. However, the idealism that we must include does not align with the UfC discourse that all countries should have the same opportunities (ref to page number), but rather that the reform debate must cater to what the majority of countries seek, namely a structural reform of the UNSC. Moreover, it is also a liberalist/idealist notion that the regions of the globe must be represented on the council in manners that are more equal than the present set-up. The pragmatism/realism that scholars must accept and promote is that not all countries from the Global South/the AU can be put forth as equally fitting candidates for permanent seats, and thereby our input must subscribe to significant aspects of the G4's explicit realist rationality.

HOW CAN RESEARCH ON UNITED NATIONS SECURITY COUNCIL REFORM BE ADVANCED AND CONSEQUENTLY RETHINK THE CURRENT GRIDLOCKED DYNAMICS TO ADVANCE NEW PATHS TOWARDS REFORM?

Part of the answer is: By increasingly including dimensions and methodologies that are broadly appreciated within studies of international relations but underappreciated in studies of UNSC reform. In terms of dimensions, research should combine the present focus on the geopolitical, judicial, and organisational dimensions with discursive, governmental, and social dimensions. To do so, UNSC reform scholarship should include interpretative methodologies such as critical discourse analysis and situational analysis. Moreover, research should comprise a more critical approach. One way of applying a critical approach is by increasing awareness of our roles and obligations as scholars and working to maintain a sound balance between pragmatism/realism and idealism/liberalism. Additionally, there is room for critical analysis of the construction of the reform policies coming from the stakeholders of the reform debate. All of the approaches above can be utilised to find ways wherein a reform can lead to an increased Global South, particularly permanent African representation. The current war in Ukraine, and the resulting reinvigorated East-West schism and subsequent council-paralysis concerning the said war, has skewed the debate about UNSC reform increasingly towards the question of the veto.[198] While the veto question remains relevant and while unofficial agreements between the P5 about not using their vetoes in certain situations (when being part of a conflict or when genocide is happening) are enticing,[63 (p170)] neither approach will satisfy the Global South's and African viewpoint of being left out/patronised by the Global North. Accordingly, academia has a vital task in the years to come as advocates for structural reform of the council that expands the permanent membership. When things are politically gridlocked, as with the UNSC reform process, there is a need to try out new approaches. Perhaps more studies like those in this dissertation can help open up new channels for debate and guide academics' analytical and professionals' strategic emphases towards the social and interpersonal realms by providing insights into the ongoings within these dimensions and proposing ways to operate there. Maybe the hope for a reform that increases African permanent representation lies not in the large-

scale geopolitical realm of public calls for justice or endless debates where actors reclaim their position as the most pro-democratic agents. Instead, perhaps such reform advances could be achieved via increased strategic cohesive agency from G4 and AU diplomats targeting the right people at the right time by utilising the most impactful discourses.

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