FAILURE TO PROTECT:
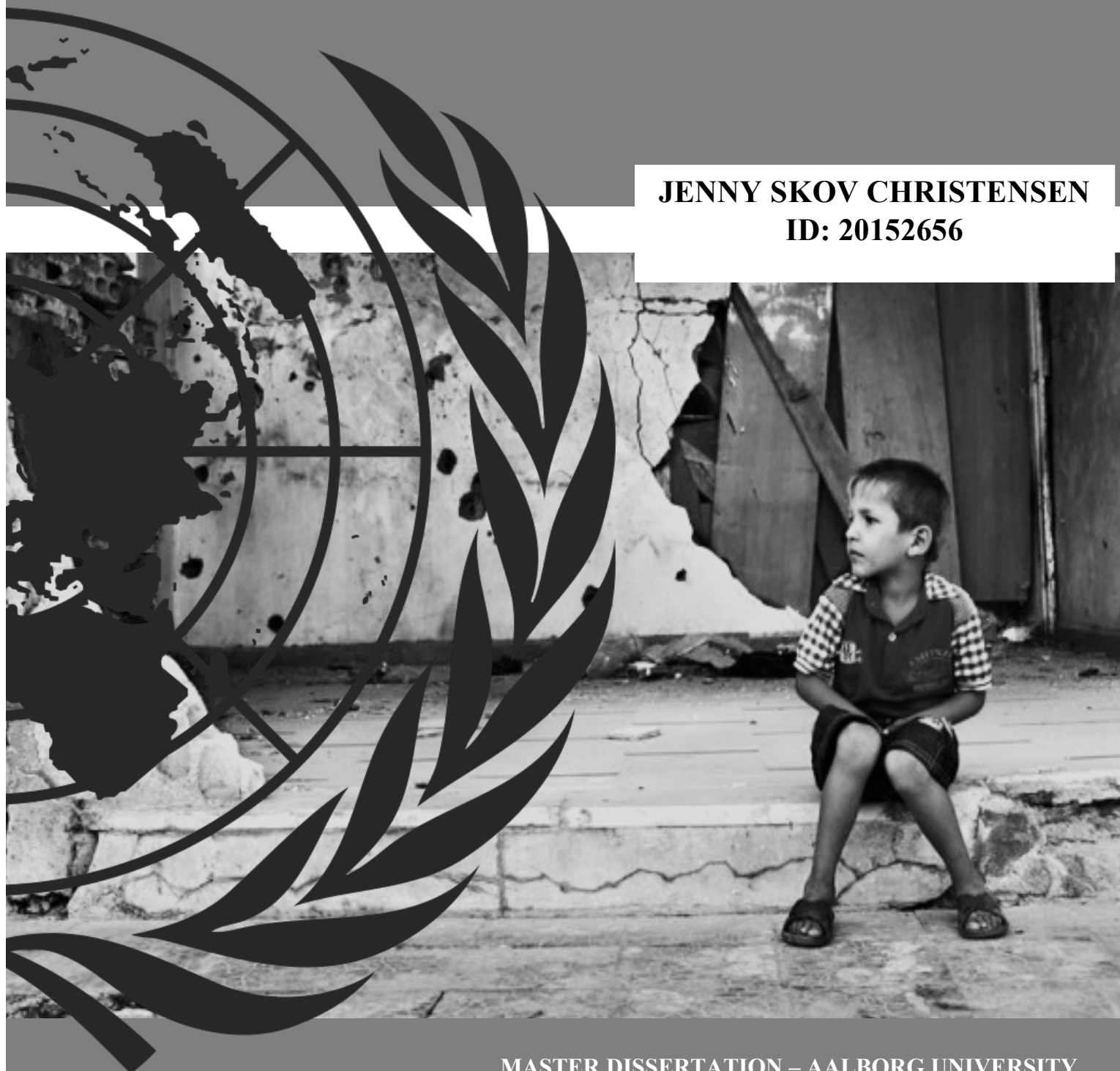## Study of the UN Security Council and The Responsibility to Protect in regard to the Syrian civil war

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Abstract

During the 1990´s the world experienced an increase in intra-state wars in countries such as, Kosovo, Rwanda, Darfur, Somalia, etc., and with it, a significant rise in support for military intervention on humanitarian grounds. Thus, the international community soon engaged in a massive debate regarding whether they had a role to play when it came to preventing such atrocities or not, and if so, how to properly respond. Subsequently, in 2001, the International Commission on Intervention and State Sovereignty presented a report titled *the Responsibility to Protect* and in 2005 the concept was agreed upon by all member states of the UN, including the five permanent members of the UN Security Council. The UN member states thereby affirmed their commitment to protect populations from gross violations on human rights. Nevertheless, since 2005 the concept has been widely argued, mainly due to its third pillar which contains the possibility of military intervention on humanitarian grounds. In 2011, the Syrian civil war broke out and has following left Syrian civilians in crucial pain. Several international norms have been breached, such as the protection of human rights and the use of chemical weapons, which has led to devastating consequences for Syrian civilians. Nevertheless, intervention by the UN Security Council has been missing. Thus, this dissertation seeks to research why there has been no UN Security Council intervention into the Syrian civil war, despite the UN´s concept of the Responsibility to Protect.

The dissertation will begin with the introduction followed by an overview of the methodological framework. Following, the theoretical framework will be introduced, namely realism and liberalism. After this, the dissertation will provide an introduction of the Responsibility to Protect and the dilemmas associated with it, including the conversies surrounding the notion of humanitarian intervention. This will be followed by a short introduction of the UN Security Council and its primary role in international politics. Hereafter, an short overview of the Syrian civil war and how it initially began will be provided. Subsequently an analysis will be conducted, following a discussion on the findings of the analysis. This will be followed up with a conclusion stating that the missing intervention by the UNSC has primarily been due to a dominance of national interests in the UNSC, particularly those of Russia and China. Furthermore, it has been concluded that Russia carries a distrust towards humanitarian intervention, especially when conducted by western states, and last it will be concluded that the changing world order and the influence of emerging states, such as China and Russia, have caused a divide between the P5 in the UNSC, and prohibits them from carrying out their Responsibility to Protect in Syria.

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List of abbreviations and acronyms

IC	International Community
ICISS	International Commission on Intervention and State Sovereignty
IDP´s	Internally Displaced Persons
IICK	Independent International Commission on Kosovo
ISIS	Islamic State in Iraq and Syria
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organization
P2	Russia and China
P3	The U.S., the U.K., and France
P5	The permanent members of the United Nations Security Council
R2P	The Responsibility to Protect
OIF	Operation Iraqi Freedom
OOD	Operation Odyssey Dawn
OPCW	The Organization for the Prohibition on Chemical Weapons
OUP	Operation Unified Protector
UN	United Nations
UNGA	General Assembly of the United Nations
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UNSC	United Nations Security Council
UNSCR	United Nations Security Council Resolution
U.K.	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland
U.S.	Unites States of America
WMD	Weapons of Mass Destruction

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1. Introduction

In 2000, former UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan published his Millennium report *We the Peoples*, in which he sought to address the role of the UN in the 21st century. In the report, Annan explicitly expressed the appeal to all member states of the UN to agree on more effective policies in order to end mass atrocity crimes. The appeal came as a response to the crucial increase in intrastate wars, including the genocides in Rwanda in 1994 and in Srebrenica in 1995. As a result, the Responsibility to Protect was introduced at the 2005 UN World Summit and subsequently agreed upon by all member states, including the five permanent members of the UN Security Council. Thus, the UN agreed on a principle that were to guide states on how to respond when faced with gross violations on human rights. Noteworthy is that the concept entails the possible use of humanitarian intervention. Humanitarian intervention, however, remains one of the most controversial issues within contemporary international politics, mainly due to the lack of consensus surrounding it and further how it should be carried out, and therefore the Responsibility to Protect has been up to much debate, not least in relation to the situation in Syria. In the spring of 2011, the Syrian civil war broke out and subsequently left the Syrian civilians in crucial pain. As a result, according to the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR, n.d.), an estimated 5,4 million people have fled to neighboring countries like Lebanon, Turkey, and Jordan, along with the more than 6 million people that are believed to be internally displaced, due to the continuing fighting taking place in Syria. Thus, Syria is experiencing one of the worst humanitarian crises yet seen. Several international norms have been breached, such as the protection of human rights, the protection of non-combatants, and the use of chemical weapons, which have had devastating consequences for Syrian civilians. Thus, the Syrian civil war, in theory, constitutes an obvious case in which to invoke the UN´s concept of the Responsibility to Protect. Nevertheless, the UN Security Council has not been able to reach consensus on any major resolutions regarding Syria and the Responsibility to Protect and therefore intervention by the UN Security Council has been and remains missing. Based on this, I seek to answer the following research question:

Why has there been no UN Security Council intervention into the civil war in Syria, despite the UN´s concept of the "Responsibility to Protect"?

The dissertation is divided into 10 chapters. Chapter 1 presents the introduction, followed by chapter 2 which will provide you with the methodological framework for this dissertation, and thus an introduction to the different methods used in order to obtain the knowledge needed to conduct this dissertation. Chapter 3 will introduce the theoretical framework used in this dissertation. In order to understand how states, act within the international system, it is important to have an in-depth understanding of how states view the international system. Therefore, I will introduce the two different international relations theories used in this dissertation, namely realism and liberalism. In chapter 4, 5 and 6 the dissertation will provide an overview of the Responsibility to Protect and some of the dilemmas associated with its, specifically the third pillar and the notion of humanitarian intervention. This will be followed by a short introduction of the UN Security Council and its main responsibilities, and finally chapter 6 will provide a short introduction into the Syrian civil war. Chapter 7 contains the analysis. In order to provide as comprehensive an analysis as possible, I seek to bring about different features that can help to explain why the UNSC has been unable to take action in Syria, despite the Responsibility to Protect. As such, the analysis will begin with two paragraphs examining the military interventions of Iraq and Libya and the dilemmas that derived thereof. Following I will look into whether or not the missing UNSC intervention has been due to a Russian distrust towards humanitarian intervention, hence R2P. The second paragraph will look into cooperation between the UNSC on the situation in Syria, and finally, I will finsish the analysis with a paragraph concerning the influence of the emerging powers, specifically China and Russia. In chapter 8 I will provide the reader with a discussion on the findings in the analysis, followed by a conclusion in chapter 9. Finally, chapter 10 will contain a list of all the data used in this dissertation.

2. Methodology

When undergoing the execution of a dissertation, it is relevant to look at the research strategy used, as it is what guides the outlook and content of the dissertation. Therefore, it is relevant to determine whether one has used quantitative or qualitative research, and whether a deductive or inductive approach has been used in order to determine the relation between theory and research. In the following section I therefore seek to explain the research design that has been used for this dissertation, which will be followed by a review of the different sources used. At last, I will finish

with a paragraph explaining the analytical approach to the empirical data obtained for this dissertation.

2.1 Case study design and approach

The research framework chosen for this dissertation is built upon a multiple case study design, where the analysis covers various case examples. I have chosen a multiple case study because the research question can simply not be adequately answered by emphasizing one case only. The different cases have been critically chosen and assessed through their ability and relevance for the research question, along with their relevance towards the theoretical framework.

Moreover, the dissertation has been structured through a deductive approach, where the empirical data has been tied up on the theoretical approach. Thereby, the theory is what guides the analysis and the data obtained for it. Thus, I have applied qualitative data in the form of United Nations [UN] reports and other published material, peer-reviewed articles, etc., and conducted analyses through a theoretical lens in order to reach my research findings, which will eventually formulate an answer to the research question asked.

2.2 Data collection and empirical delimitation

This paragraph aims to provide an overview of the type of data used to conduct the analysis. The analysis will be built on secondary sources in the form of written texts, such as peer-reviewed articles, reports, and webpages by international organizations, primarily the United Nations. These have been used in order to form a complete understanding of the matter. By applying documents and reports directly from organizations like the UN, I believe this will further enhance the legitimacy of the findings in the analysis. In his book "*Matter of Record – Documentary Sources in Social Research*", John J. Scott (1990) provides a useful guide for evaluating secondary sources, as the ones that stipulate the basis for the data used in this dissertation. According to Scott (1990) there are four basic requirements that a source must fulfill, namely *authenticity*, *credibility*, *representativeness*, and *meaning*. First, Scott (1990) argues that in order for a source to be useful, it must have authenticity. According to Scott (1990, p. 6), this constitutes a fundamental criterion, as sources may otherwise mislead the researcher. Thus, it is important to be critical in the choice of sources and make sure that these are published by authentic sources. In relation to this, the sources used for this dissertation derive from a variety of peer-reviewed journals, such as *Foreign Affairs* and *The American Political Science Review.* Furthermore, I have used official UN documents and reports, all published and archived through the UN, and therefore I find them authentic and do not question their origin either.

At last, I have included knowledge derived from a variety of books by what I deem to be relevant authors. All books have been published through recognized publishers, and therefore I do not question their origin either. The use of newspaper articles has been limited, and have only been used from what I believe to be reliable sources. The second criterion concerns the credibility of sources and as such the possibility of distortion of such. When dealing with UN documents, and resolutions in particular, these have all been agreed upon by member states before made public, and therefore cannot be victim to distortion, when presented in their pure form. As the name states, articles from peer-reviewed journals have been subject to review by other scholars, and as such has to stay inside a reasonable framework, consistent with the journal in which it has been published, which makes these credible as well. The third criterion concerns the representativeness of sources, which essentially deals with the availability of data. I have only used public available documents and reports from the UN, all books have been retrieved through different public libraries, and journal articles have been retrieved through Aalborg University´s online library site. Finally, the fourth criterion regarding meaning refers to the way in which the researcher is able to understand the data acquired. All texts acquired for this dissertation have been written in English. Throughout this Master´s program all courses have been conducted in English, along with all the exams and papers. Furthermore, I have been on exchange in Australia, and taken an internship at a multilateral organization, in which all meetings are conducted in English. I therefore consider myself to be a proficient speaker, interpreter, and writer within the English language. Looking at the content of the data acquired, all of this is of similar character as material undergone in previous courses or through my internship, and I am therefore not concerned of my ability towards understanding the meaning of this.

As will be viewed in chapter 4, the Responsibility to Protect is a concept that has been underway for many years. Therefore, I have not been able to cover every step of its development, and instead I have focused on providing the reader with an overview of the process. Furthermore, the Syrian civil war is now entering its 7th year of continuous fights between different parties, and as such the process of covering the Syrian civil war in the UNSC covers a large timespan. Therefore, I will not address every meeting, resolution, and report carried out by the UNSC in regard to the Syrian civil war. Instead, I have chosen to pick out a few of these, which I consider as having the ability to reflect some of the main issues related to the research question. In the case of Syria, I will be focusing on the Syrian regime only, and therefore not the various non-state actors represented in Syria.

2.3 Analytical approach to empirical data

This paragraph will provide an overview of how I will conduct the analysis. The analytical section of this dissertation will begin by creating an overview of the 2003 invasion of Iraq followed by the 2011 military intervention of Libya. I will do this in order to highlight some of the obstacles that derived from these two military interventions. After that, I will look into three of the draft resolutions vetoed by Russia and China on the situation in Syria. Here, I will look for indications on whether or not the two permanent members of the UNSC have vetoed the resolutions based on a distrust towards humanitarian intervention, including the Responsibilty to Protect. I will end the paragraph with a theoretical discussion on the behavior of Russia and China, as observed through the draft resolutions. Following this, I will look into the cooperation that has occurred between the UNSC on the situation in Syria. I will do this in order to examine why cooperation has been possible on some, but few, resolutions, whereas the main part have been vetoed by Russia and China. Finally, I will examine the current world order and the influence of emerging states, specifically Russia and China, and whether or not this has had a say on why the UNSC has not been able to act on the situation in Syria, despite their Responsibility to Protect the Syrian civilians.

3. Theoretical framework

To have an understanding of how states view the international system is a key component in understanding how states act within it. Therefore, the following paragraphs will explore the theoretical views of realism and liberalism. The paragraphs do not aim to provide a comparative analysis of the two theories, instead, it seeks to provide an overview and understanding hereof. Therefore, the following paragraph will outline some of the most fundamental aspects of realism and liberalism and how these can relate to the research question asked in this dissertation.

3.1 Realism

Within the theory of realism, states are the focal point and the theory therefore seeks to explain the competitive nature of politics between sovereign states (Dunne & Schmidt, 2014, p. 100). Moreover, realism focusses mainly on great powers, because they, according to realism, dominate and shape international politics (Mearsheimer, 2014, p. 17). Realism is often believed to be a pessimistic theory which tends to portray the world of international politics as a rather grim world in which power is the

dominating factor. According to social scientist John J. Mearsheimer (2014, p. 12), "*What money is to economics, power is to international relations*", stating that power is believed to be a vital factor within international relations, and the acquisition and possession of such is a crucial factor. For all realists, the same essential question applies: Why do states want power? Although there are various strands of realism, they all share some core elements that can explain this, namely, statism, anarchy, self-help, and survival.

According to Dunne & Schmidt, "*for realists, the state is the main actor and sovereignty is its distinguishing trait*" (2014, p.107). Thus, realism believes that sovereignty is what entitles states to establish and enforce laws. This further relates to the view of Weber, who claims that states hold the monopoly on the legitimate use of force within their borders (Dunne & Schmidt, 2014, p. 107). Hence, realists are strong advocates of the Westphalian sovereignty, as it is believed to ensure the security and power of the state internally, along with maintaining state autonomy. However, when looking at the external environment of sovereign states, other characteristics apply. According to realism, the international system is anarchic, meaning there is no central authority above states. In other words, there is no higher ruling body, no world government, in the international system that stands above sovereign states (Jackson & Sørensen, 2013), and therefore no "emergency number" states can call when faced with the risk of danger. In other words, anarchy can be described as the complete absence of order (Jackson & Sørensen, 2013, p. 71). Thus, realism argues that international relations are conflictual due to the anarchic state of the system. In relation to this, realism stipulates that states operate in a system of self-help, and therefore have to secure their own national security and interests. Thus, the self-help system constitutes a consequence of anarchy, as both higher authority and the notion of collective security is absent (Wendt, 1992, p. 392). In relation to this Mearsheimer argues "*if we lived in a hierarchic system rather than an anarchic one, we could afford to guess wrong about the intentions of other states, because there would be a nightwatchman to call if trouble came knocking*" (Mearsheimer, 2006, p. 121). In addition, it is crucial for states to act according to their own self-interests and not so much the interests of other states, nor the interests of the international community, as it pays to be selfish in an anarchic system (Mearsheimer, 2014, p. 33). Overall, states must seek to survive in an anarchic system because if a state sees itself conquered, it may no longer be in a position to pursue power, and therefore survival is of crucial importance.

3.1.1 Balancing power

Balancing deals with the essential question of how much power each state holds. As previously mentioned, the ultimate goal for a state is to survive in a system built on anarchy and self-help. Thus, in order for this to work, a state will most often have to pursue power at the expense of other states. However, when states pursue power, they challenge and possibly alter the balance of power among great powers, which most great powers will most likely try to prevent from happening, and consequently, they will try to balance the aggressor (Mearsheimer, 2014). When it comes to balancing, there are different means states can take on. First, a state can seek to message the aggressor through diplomatic channels, and thereby signal its stance and goal of maintaining the balance of power. Should this not work, a state can aim to create a defensive alliance together with other states. This, however, can only work when operating within a multi-polar system, as there are numerous states to join alliances with. Finally, a state can balance against the aggressor by increasing its own resources (Mearsheimer, 2014). In the end, regardless of means, the initial goal of balancing is for the state to be able to protect its interests by balancing and thereby maintain power. Balancing can therefore be perceived as a strategy for survival and a way in which states can sustain and secure interests (Waltz, 2000, p. 38).

When the UNSC was founded by the five great powers at that time, one of the reasons for them to sign was the instalment of the veto power. The veto was made to ensure the balance of power between the five. In relations to this, when major interests of the five powers have been threatened the veto has been heavily used (Taylor & Curtis, 2014, p. 310). As such, it can be argued, and especially in the light of the Syrian civil war, that the veto power has come to signify an arena of power relationships between the five states, which subsequently has had grave effects on the maintaining of international peace and security.

3.1.2 Realism and international institutions

Within todays international relations literature there are different ways of understanding institutions, however, according to Mearsheimer, institutions are merely *"a set of rules that stipulate the ways in which states should cooperate and compete with each other. They prescribe acceptable forms of state behavior, and proscribe unacceptable forms of behavior"* (Mearsheimer, 1994/95, p. 8). As realism is a theory built on security competition and power, one would think that realists dismiss cooperation between states. Nevertheless, realism acknowledges that cooperation between states occur, but that it is, however, difficult to achieve and always difficult to sustain. Therefore, Mearsheimer argues that

cooperation between states has its limits, mainly due to the continuous security competition that states engage in (Mearsheimer, 1994/95).

Within international relations there are absolute and relative gains. With absolute gains, states think about their own power maximization and do not put much emphasis on how much power the other state wins or loses from cooperating. With relative gains, states not only estimate their own individual gains but also how much they gain compared to the other states. As states operate in a system influenced by the balance of power, they must from a realist view be concerned with relative gains, which again makes it difficult for states to cooperate with each other (Mearsheimer 1994/95). In the end, realism simply argues that institutions are basically "*arenas for acting out power relationships*" (Evans & Wilson, 1992, p. 330, as cited in Mearsheimer, 1994/95, p. 13). Therefore, the rules are based on the self-interests of the great powers and as such have no real effect on how states behave. This can further be backed by Waltz, who argues that institutions are only able to survive in their original form when they manage to serve the interests of their creators (Waltz, 2008, p. 213). Therefore, when international institutions, such as the UNSC, are able to cooperate, realism would argue that this is only because the great powers allow this to happen. This again, stresses the fact that realists do not believe that institutions facilitate peace. In relation to this, one could question if the UNSC is merely an arena that allows states to engage in power politics on an institutional basis?

3.1.3 Realism and the Responsibility to Protect

Some of the early realists believed in the raison d´état or reason of state, which tells the state what it must do in order to protect the state. Most noteworthy, this form of thinking, among others, sought to explain the relationship between realism and morals and ethics, and their role in international politics. As such, it became clear that realism in general does not acquire much emphasis on these, and moreover, tend to be dubious about the idea that universal moral principles have a role to play within international politics (Dunne & Schmidt, 2014, p. 100). As stated above, realists believe that states must focus on national interests and own security, not interests of other states, nor the interests of international organizations like the UN, as it can lead to distraction that eventually may harm the state (Barnett, 2012). Specifically, it is the job of the state to protect its own community and not that of others. That is not to say, that states never help other states. But one must always be cautious of the motives hereof. To quote Michael Barnett who says that from a realist point of view one should *"beware whenever states claim they are doing something for someone else. Such claims are mere smokescreens, ideological props that are intended to legitimate their more primeval foreign policy*

goals", he goes on to say that *"sometimes states will help others, but rarely will they do so when it actually cost them something"* (Barnett, 2012, p. 226). Thus, realists claim that states will in most cases only help others if it benefits themselves, their interests, and national security. When it comes to the Responsibility to Protect, this means that only when the case is beneficial for the states themselves will they turn to the concept. Thus, in relation to the paragraph above, states do cooperate and make rules and international agreements, but when all comes to all these rules and agreements do not constitute any real effect on how states behave. In addition, for realists, *"all international agreements are provisional and conditional on the willingness of states to observe them… [they are] merely expedient agreements which can and will be set aside if they conflict with the vital interests of states"* (Jackson & Sørensen, 2013, p. 67). Therefore, as Mearsheimer argues, when all comes to all, *"realists are very cautious in their prescriptions about the use of force: wars should not be fought for idealistic purposes, but instead for balance of power reasons"* (Mearsheimer, 1994/95, p. 48). As such, it can be concluded that realism does not believe in the Responsibility to Protect, nor the idea of humanitarian intervention, as they are firm believers that reality will always trump ideologies.

3.2 Liberalism

In order to understand the rationale behind the UN and the concept of the Responsibility to Protect, one needs to understand the most important aspects of liberalism, as it stipulates the central basis of the two. Liberalism tends to take on a broader view of the world and in general create a more optimistic view of the international system, and so, unlike realism, liberalism is not only concerned with power and the power struggles that occur between states. In order to understand why this is the case, some basic fundamentals of liberalism need to be introduced.

3.2.1 Liberal peace

The liberal view argues that not all states share the same identity. Hence, some states tend to be more focused on war and power, whereas others tend to be more peaceful in their behavior. As such, not all states are alike, and it is thus the different identities of states that determine how they act in an international system (Dunne, 2014, p. 114). Liberalism is characterized by being a domestic theory. Therefore, liberalism is not only concerned with states but also believes that the domestic political systems of other states matter in an international context. Thus, whether a political system is autocratic, totalitarian or democratic is important to liberalists, as they see a high correlation between national governance and how they affect international political outcome (Waltz, 2008, p. 198). The reason for this is that in general liberalism claims that democracies are more peaceful, and that

democratic states are more prone to pursue negotiation rather than disputing each other (Doyle, 2012). As such, states that are based on democratic governance are more peaceful in their foreign relations, as stated by Waltz (2008, p. 199) *"the guarantee of the state´s proper external behavior would derive from its admirable internal qualities"*. According to liberal thinkers, one of the most remarkable and effective achievements among liberal states, has been their ability to create a so-called *zone of peace*. Additionally, it has become a fact that liberal democratic states almost never go to war with each other (Doyle, 2012, p. 57). Furthermore, this liberal peace has done so that when faced with war, liberal states tend to end up on the same side of the dispute. Therefore, it has been stated that *"liberals do exercise peaceful restraint and a separate peace exists among them"* (Doyle, 2012, p. 59). This special characteristic has also been referred to as *democratic peace*. Nevertheless, this peace tends only to exist among themselves and therefore it has been argued that liberal states in cases have sought to transport liberal views and regime-change to non-liberal countries, which is where a problem may occur. To explain this, liberal states may fight wars with non-liberal states, as a way to defend themselves. Now this is not the main issue. However, when liberal states become the main aggressor, it has sometimes become a highly controversial matter, mainly due to the term liberal imprudence. Liberal imprudence refers to the claim that "*liberal states invade weak non-liberal states and display exceptional degrees of distrust in their foreign policy relations with powerful non-liberal states*" (Doyle, 2012, p. 59). In 1917 President Woodrow Wilson declared in a speech addressed to the American Congress that:

> *"Our object now, as then, is to vindicate the principles of peace and justice in the life of the world as against selfish and autocratic power and to set up amongst the really free and self-governed people of the world such a concert of purpose and of action as will henceforth ensure the observance of those principles"* (Doyle, 2012, p. 57).

The statement above served as an encouragement of liberal states, including the U.S., to go fight in the name of liberalism, democracy, and peace. In relation to this, Doyle promoted the question; *"can the liberal peace be effectively preserved and expanded without provoking unnecessary danger and inflicting unnecessary harm?"* (Doyle, 2012, p. 54). As such, some may argue that democracies do promote war in order to preserve peace, and that they do this by fighting and defeating non-democratic states, as a way to make them democratic (Waltz, 2008, p. 201). Two examples that can be helpful in highlighting this and further make a case that can be helpful in answering the research question, are

the highly controversial invasion of Iraq in 2003 and the military intervention in Libya in 2011, which will further be discussed in the analysis in chapter 7.

3.2.2 Liberalism and International Institutions

Another important aspect put forward by liberalism, is cooperation between states in international politics. Liberalism generally acknowledges that the system is anarchic, but differs from realism in the way it views anarchy. Therefore, liberalists do not believe that anarchy undoubtedly leads to power struggles between states. Instead, liberalists argue that states can transcend this power struggle and instead pursue cooperation among them. One way to do this, has been by creating a rule-based international order, including the establishment of the UN Charter (Ikenberry, 2011). As such, liberalism argues that by creating rules, norms and institutions, you lay out a framework in which cooperation can function. An important part of this process, has been the creation of international institutions that can constitute arenas in which these rules can be managed, and where mutual interests between states can be structured. Thus, as former U.S. President Woodrow Wilson argued, the creation of an international organization that would be able to regulate the presence of international anarchy, could be a way to secure peace (Dunne, 2014, p. 117). Therefore, peace is not a natural given in international politics, but something that can be constructed, specifically through cooperation within international institutions. On the basis of this, liberalism views the UN in a positive light, as it is an institution based on cooperation and rules that stipulates the basis of such cooperation.

For many years, a liberal world order has been predominantly steered by the U.S., mainly due to its powerful position in international politics. Thus, cooperation within the UN has been highly influenced by this way of thinking. The U.S. has managed to do so by incorporating *"fundamental liberal principles into the regulatory rules and institutions of international society"* (Dunne, 2014, p. 121), such as the UN, and it is those exact liberal principles that, for several years, have stipulated the basis for cooperation between the 15 members of the UNSC, including the five permanent members of the UNSC [P5]. So, what has changed within this liberal order that has made it impossible for this body to agree? If international institutions should have the ability to facilitate cooperation through established rules and norms, why has it then not been able to come to a mutual agreement between states on Syria?

3.2.3 Liberalism and the Responsibility to Protect

Another essential key component within liberalism, is the freedom of the individual. Essentially, liberalism believes that human beings are entitled to freedom along with the right to be treated and

treat others with respect (Doyle, 2012, p. 55). According to Michael Doyle, liberal states are founded on those exact rights, and most importantly they aim to seek equality before the law (Doyle, 1986, p. 1151). As Tesón notes, "*a major purpose of states and governments is to protect and secure human rights, that is, rights that all persons have by virtue of personhood alone*" (Tesón, 2003, p. 93). As such, ensuring that basic human rights are protected, is indeed a crucial feature of liberalism and states have a duty to assist in places where these rights cannot be sustained, which is mainly due to the fact that human rights abuses, such as genocide, war crimes, crimes against humanity and ethnic cleansing stipulates a betrayal of the very purpose of the state: to secure and protect human rights through right and legitimate governance (Tesón, 2003). Overall, states are believed to have a moral responsibility to fulfill. It is, however, not only states that are believed to have a moral responsibility. Thus, a strong liberal argument entails the responsibility and duty of international organizations to uphold this, along with their responsibility to make sure that governments respects these rights as well (Tesón, 2003). Therefore, the UN is believed to constitute a moral authority suitable to create a forum in which these rights and responsibilities can be secured.

Tesón, argues that human rights and individual freedom are independent of national borders (2003, p. 94). This argument can further be found in the third pillar of the Responsibility to Protect [R2P] via the right to take appropriate action, including military intervention, and as such stipulates a foundation build on liberal values. As Ikenberry and Etzioni argues, many liberal countries, including the U.S., were troubled when the UN did not intervene in Rwanda and Srebrenica in the 1990´s when they experienced large violations of their human rights, including genocide and ethnic cleansings (Ikenberry & Etzioni, 2011, p. 172). It eventually led to the development of the Responsibility to Protect in 2001. To conclude, liberalism does not oppose the norm of the Responsibility to Protect, nor humanitarian intervention.

4. The Responsibility to Protect

This chapter will seek to provide a profound introduction to the concept of the Responsibility to Protect along with the dilemmas it faces in international politics today. Especially, focus will be on the controversial aspects of the concept, including the third pillar, which addresses the coercive use of force by the international community, along with the acknowledgement of the specific concept within the UN.

4.1 The road towards the Responsibility to Protect

In 2000, then UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan published his millennium report *We the Peoples*, in which he sought to address the role of the UN in the 21st century. In relation to this, Annan posed the question; *"If humanitarian intervention is, indeed, an unacceptable assault on sovereignty, how should we respond to a Rwanda, to a Srebrenica – to gross and systematic violations of human rights that offend every precept of our common humanity?"* (Annan, 2000, p. 48).

Since the signing of the UN Charter in 1945, it has been clear that the UN neither seemed willing nor able to interfere in the internal affairs of states, due to the prohibitions stated in the UN Charter. As an example, in 1969 then UN Secretary-General U Thant went public with a statement condemning a public execution of Jews in Baghdad. Here, he underlined that it was clearly an internal affair concerning Iraq only, and further stated that he had no intention of bringing this matter to the attention of any of the UN organs, including the UNSC (Cohen, 2012, p. 9). Generally, during the Cold War, sovereignty and the concept of non-interference was considered to be inviolable, and especially the Soviet Union had been an advocate hereof (Cohen, 2012). Thus, there could be no talk of interfering in the internal affairs of states. Nevertheless, following the increase in intra-state wars in countries such as, Kosovo, Rwanda, Darfur, Somalia, etc., and a significant rise in support for military intervention on humanitarian grounds in the 1990s (Bulley, 2010, p. 3), the international community soon engaged in a massive debate regarding whether they had a role to play when it came to preventing such atrocities or not, and if so, how to properly respond. Especially after Kosovo, questions were raised regarding the legitimacy of military interventions in sovereign states, and the international community therefore seemed concerned with reconceptualizing humanitarian intervention (Bellamy, 2008, p. 620). As such, Kofi Annan *"called upon member states to unite in the pursuit of more effective policies to stop organized mass murder and egregious violations of human rights"* (Annan, 2000, p. 47).

The Government of Canada responded to the request and subsequently announced the establishment of the International Commission on Intervention and State Sovereignty [ICISS] (ICISS, 2001, p. 2). The Commission was co-chaired by the former Foreign Minister of Australia Gareth Evans and Mohamed Sahnoun, an experienced Algerian diplomat. Assisting the Commission were also members from Latin America, Western states, Africa and South Asia.

Following, the ICISS was asked to develop a report, in which they focused on the political, legal, operational and moral aspects of the debate, and from this they were asked to present a qualified

answer on how the International Community [IC] could find common ground in situations similar to the ones in Somalia, Rwanda, Kosovo, etc., in the future (ICISS, 2001). Specifically, the ICISS was given the task to *"develop a global political consensus on how to move from polemics – and often paralysis – towards action within the international system, particularly through the United Nations"* (ICISS, 2001, p. 2). In doing so, the ICISS would need to interact with various state and non-state actors, in order to create as encompassing a view on the issue as possible. Thus, the ICISS held meetings with several states presenting developed and developing states. Furthermore, various NGOs and regional organizations took part in the discussions (ICISS, 2001). In a year, the Commission met five times, held 11 regional roundtables along with several national consultations, including meetings with each of the P5 (ICISS, 2001, pp. 2-3), and in December 2001 the Commission could finally present the final report, titled *The Responsibility to Protect.*

4.1.1 The 2001 ICISS report

As outlined in its introduction, the report is concerned with the so-called *"right of humanitarian intervention",* and essentially deals with the question of whether or not it is appropriate for states to use coercive, and in particular military, means when it comes to the protection of human rights of people in other states (ICISS, 2001, p. VII). Intervention on humanitarian grounds has been, and still is, considered to be one of the most debated, controversial and difficult issues within international politics, and not only when it has happened, but also when it has failed to do so. It has thus become evident that there are various sides to the debate, however, as the ICISS stress *"in the interest of all those victims who suffer and die when leadership and institutions fail, it is crucial these divisions be resolved"* (ICISS, 2001, p. 2). Therefore, it became relevant to ask the question: what exactly should happen when states are not able to guarantee the human security of their citizens?

With the term and title *The Responsibility to Protect*, the ICISS wished to change the debate from right to intervene to the responsibility to protect, as they did not believe the word intervention would help carry the debate forward. On the contrary, it was argued that with the previous title, emphasis was put on those states thinking about intervening and not on the individuals who actually needed help. Thus, the ICISS was a significant advocate in changing focus from the state to the individual. Nevertheless, the central issue of the debate remained intact, namely, *"if there is a right of intervention",* and if so, *"how and when it should be exercised, and under whose authority"* (ICISS, 2001, p. VII).

4.1.2 The core principles of the Responsibility to Protect

The main philosophy behind the Responsibility to Protect is that each sovereign state has a responsibility to protect its population from mass atrocity crimes, including genocide, war crimes, ethnic cleansing and crimes against humanity (ICISS, 2001). It is therefore the state that carries the primary responsibility to protect its population from these. Should the state, however, be unwilling or unable to carry this responsibility, the international community has a responsibility to take control and act in the place of the state in question (ICISS, 2001). The Responsibility to Protect is, however, not only concerned with the responsibility to react, but also entails a responsibility to prevent and rebuild. Although, as the responsibility to prevent and rebuild is not within the scope of this dissertation, they will not be further explained nor analyzed.

4.1.2.1. The Responsibility to React

The Responsibility to React was incorporated in the report as a guiding principle for states to follow when faced with the immediate need for action on humanitarian grounds. These guidelines stipulate that when preventive measures fail to function or simply stop mass atrocities, other measures may be necessary (ICISS, 2001, p. 29). This could entail military intervention, but also other coercive measures, including targeted sanctions concerning political, economic and military matters.

In relation to this, The ICISS, clearly stipulates that before assuming military intervention, all other options must be exhausted, and further stress that only in extreme cases, armed intervention can be a last resort. In order for states to act accordingly, a definition of an extreme case had to be provided. As such, the ICISS argued, that in general, a case that requires armed intervention must be a case so violent in its character that it *"shock the conscience of mankind",* or which clearly represents a threat to international peace and security (ICISS, 2001, p. 31). Thus, before initiating armed intervention on humanitarian grounds, one needs to ask, "*what kind of harm is sufficient to trigger a military intervention overriding the non-intervention principle*" (ICISS, 2001, p. 32). In order to measure this, the ICISS provided six criteria that needed to be fulfilled before resolving to military intervention, and in order to make it a just cause. The six criteria clearly have their roots in the just war tradition, and thus stipulates the following: before initiating a military intervention, there needs to be: right authority, just cause, right intention, last resort, proportional means and reasonable prospects (ICISS, 2001, p. 32; Chalk et al, 2012, p. 37). As this dissertation is particularly concerned with the role of the UNSC in the light of the Syrian conflict, the next paragraph will focus on the notion of right authority, as stipulated by the ICISS.
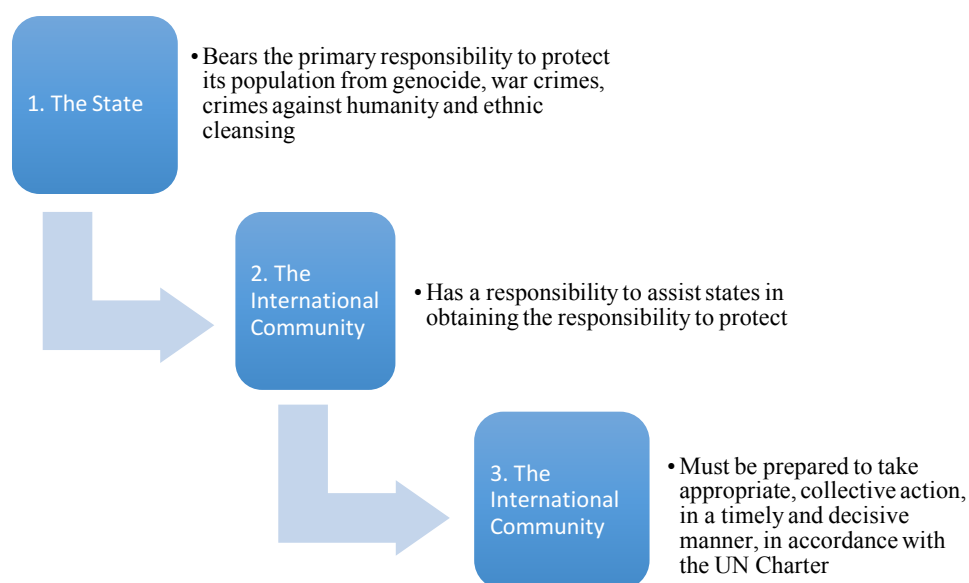
4.1.2.2. *The question of right authority*

As argued by the ICISS, attempts to enforce authority can only be exerted by the legitimate agents of that exact authority (ICISS, 2001, p. 48). As such, it becomes evident, that an act of armed intervention must be ordered by the right authority in order for it the be legitimate (and legal). Collective intervention is generally considered legitimate with the backing of a UN mandate, whereas unilateral intervention is often considered illegitimate, as it is then exerted on the basis of self-interests. As stipulated by the UN Charter, chapter VII, the UNSC is the only body of the UN that has the authority to authorize the use of force, including armed intervention, as it bears the primary responsibility to maintain international peace and security, cf. Chapter V, article 24 (ICISS, 2001, p. 47). Therefore, as there seems to be no direct right to intervention on humanitarian grounds, within the UN Charter, the ICISS argued that, with the authority of the legitimate use of force in order to preserve international peace and security, the UNSC would have a vital role to play when it concerned the implementation of the Responsibility to Protect (ICISS, 2001). But what happens when the UNSC is either unwilling or unable to secure the peace and security of its members? In that relation, the ICISS argued that the UN General Assembly should function as a second option, and thus be authorized with the power to take binding decisions in the place of the UNSC (ICISS, 2001, p. 48). However, at the 2005 World Summit Outcome, which will be further discussed in the next paragraph, the UN member states chose not to incorporate this proposal in the final version of the Responsibility to Protect, and thereby stipulated that in accordance with the UN Charter, the UNSC constitutes the right authority, and thus no other body can make use of the Responsibility to Protect, without the authorization of the UNSC. As such, this stipulates one of the dilemmas facing the concept, as the UNSC will not always agree on political matters of such character.

4.2 The 2005 World Summit Outcome

In 2004, three years after the initial report on the Responsibility to Protect had been presented, UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan put together a High-level Panel on Threats, Challenges and Change, that were to assess and evaluate current threats to international peace and security, and how to respond to them (United Nations, 2004). In the report, it was recognized that there was an emerging norm of a collective international responsibility to protect (United Nations, 2004, p. 66). Following this, in 2005, Kofi Annan published his report *"In Larger Freedom: Towards Development, Security and Human Rights for all"*. Once again, a report acknowledged the Responsibility to Protect, and therefore the norm quickly came to the attention of the international society. As a result, the

Responsibility to Protect was officially introduced to the UN at the 2005 World Summit and subsequently agreed upon by all member states (United Nations, n.d.(a); Thakur & Maley, 2015), which eventually led to the inclusion of the concept in the 2005 World Summit Outcome. Per se, in para 138 and 139 of the UN World Summit Document the member states affirmed their commitment to the Responsibility to Protect and thereby their commitment to protect their populations from genocide, ethnic cleansing, war crimes and crimes against humanity (United Nations General Assembly 60/1, 2005). Nevertheless, the final adoption of the concept by the UN does not fully entail all of the aspects proposed by the ICISS and it therefore somewhat limits the initial scope of R2P, though it did preserve some of the most fundamental aspects regarding the prevention of and response to mass atrocities (United Nations General Assembly 60/1, 2005). Specifically, the report has been limited into three central pillars. The first pillar recognize that each state has a responsibility to protect its population from genocide, war crimes, crimes against humanity and ethnic cleansing. The second pillar states that the IC has a responsibility to assist states in meeting that responsibility. Finally, the third pillar acknowledge that should a state not be able nor willing to protect its population against such crimes or simply itself be the perpetrator of these crimes, the IC must be prepared to take appropriate, collective action, in a timely and decisive manner and in accordance with the UN Charter (Global Centre for the Responsibility to Protect).

Figure 1: The three pillars of the Responsibility to Protect

1. The State
- Bears the primary responsibility to protect its population from genocide, war crimes, crimes against humanity and ethnic cleansing

2. The International Community
- Has a responsibility to assist states in obtaining the responsibility to protect

3. The International Community
- Must be prepared to take appropriate, collective action, in a timely and decisive manner, in accordance with the UN Charter

Source: (Christensen, 2017; Global Centre for the Responsibility to Protect)

Although the World Summit Outcome recognized fundamental aspects of the work put forward by the ICISS, there were still some differences between the two documents. Most noteworthy was however, that fact that the final version of R2P adopted by the UN, made sure that military interventions could only be approved by the UNSC. As such, the next paragraph will present one of the central dilemmas associated with the third pillar of the Responsibility to Protect, namely humanitarian intervention.

4.3 Humanitarian Intervention

In 1994 ethnic tensions between the Hutus and the Tutsis in Rwanda led to the mass killings of an estimated 800,000 people in just a hundred days, most of the killed being Tutsis and moderate Hutus. The International Community, including the UN, did not take any measures to stop the genocide (Holzgrefe & Keohane, 2003), and while the crisis did not only create a severe humanitarian crisis for Rwanda, it also destabilized the whole Great Lakes region (ICISS, 2001). Following this, in 1995 in Srebrenica, an estimate of 8,000 Bosnian Muslim boys and men were killed by Bosnian Serb forces, in which was understood to have been a genocide (Annan, 1999). Following the atrocities, The UN refused to get militarily involved in the war, however, in the following 1999 Srebrenica report, former Secretary-General of the UN Kofi Annan stated that the UNSC should have approved *"more decisive and forceful action to prevent the unfolding horror"* (Annan, 1999, p. 105). The mass murder is considered to be one of the worst in Europe since World War II. Furthermore, in March 1999, the North Atlantic Treaty Organization [NATO] launched an air campaign under the name Operation Allied Force, in Kosovo (NATO, 2016). The intervention was initiated as a response to the humanitarian crisis that had evolved due to the conflict between the Kosovar Albanians and the Milosevic regime (Hehir, 2013a; NATO, 2016). The intervention was, however, not authorized by a UNSC mandate and it was therefore, by some, highly criticized as a violation of international law, including the use of force. Still, in a report issued by the Independent International Commission on Kosovo [IICK], it was concluded that *"the NATO military intervention was illegal but legitimate"* (IICK, 2000, p. 4).

Together these cases, among others, prompted a rethinking of how we perceive relations between sovereignty and security. As an example, in 1999, the then UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan noted this rethinking in a speech directed at the UN General Assembly. Here, he argued that a *"developing international norm"* was emerging, one that would forcibly protect people who were compromised

to genocide and mass killings (Bellamy & Wheeler, 2014, p. 480), he was here referring to what later became institutionalized in the Responsibility to Protect. Humanitarian intervention, however, still remains one of the most controversial issues within contemporary international politics, one substantial reason being the lack of consensus of if and how humanitarian interventions should be carried out.

Another essential problem concerning the term "humanitarian intervention" is that it lacks transparency. Thus, there are numerous interpretations and definitions on how to understand the character of such interventions. According to Holzgrefe (Holzgrefe & Keohane, 2003, p.18), humanitarian intervention is: *"The threat or use of force across state borders by a state (or group of states) aimed at preventing or ending widespread and grave violations of the fundamental human rights of individuals other than its own citizens, without the permission of the state within whose territory force is applied"* (Holzgrefe & Keohane, 2003, p. 18). The ICISS chose to describe it as *"action taken against a state or its leaders, without its or their consent, for purposes which are claimed to be humanitarian or protective…including all forms of preventive measures, and coercive intervention measures – sanctions and criminal prosecutions – falling short of military intervention"* (ICISS, 2001, p. 8). Thus, the ICISS includes various forms of possible measures taken, and not just the threat or use of force, as seen in the definition put forward by Holzgrefe. Nor does the ICISS determine the body of the intervening actor, as is the case in Brownlie´s definition, which is *"the threat or use of armed force by a state, a belligerent community, or an international organization, with the object of protecting human rights"* (Brownlie, 1974, p. 217, as cited in Hehir, 2013a, p. 21).

Although the three definitions are somewhat different, some features can be identified as fundamental when defining humanitarian intervention. As such, most definitions focus on interventions where the intervening actor is a third party to the conflict and where the act takes place without the consent of the host state (Hehir 2013a, pp. 20-24). However, noteworthy is especially the fact that most scholars argue that the intervention must be driven by a humanitarian concern (Hehir, 2013a). Many definitions, however, differ when it comes to the question of morality and the legality of the intervention. As this paragraph is merely to provide an insight into the term humanitarian intervention and the most well-known dilemmas linked to it, a comprehensive analysis of the ethical and theoretical aspects of humanitarian intervention will not be part of this paragraph. Rather useful to this paragraph is the legal status of the term, which essentially will provide a background for some of the issues dealt with in the analysis.

4.3.1 International law and humanitarian intervention

The concept of a sovereign state became a reality in 1648 via the Treaty of Westphalia, which was signed as a response to the Thirty Years War (Scott, 2010). According to the treaty, all states are considered equal, regardless of size and wealth. Furthermore, the condition of one state´s sovereignty depends on the obligation to respect the sovereignty of every other state (ICISS, 2001, p. 12). Due to this, the Westphalian Sovereignty is by many believed to provide order and stability among states. Besides being a well-respected concept, the Westphalian Sovereignty has come to signify the legal identity of a state within the framework of international law (ICISS, 2001, p. 12), cf. article 2(7) of the UN Charter, stating that "*nothing contained in the present Charter shall authorize the UN to intervene in matters which are essentially within the domestic jurisdiction of any state*" (Scott, 2006, p. 5). Thus, quoting the words of Max Huber *"Sovereignty in the relations between states signifies independence. Independence in regard to a portion of the globe is the right to exercise therein, to the exclusion of any other state, the functions of a state"* (Scott, 2010, p. 20). According to this, humanitarian intervention and the R2P poses a direct challenge to Westphalian Sovereignty – a concept that lies at the heart of contemporary international law. As Bellamy and Wheeler so accurately describes it *"humanitarian intervention poses a hard test for an international society built on principles of sovereignty, non-intervention, and the non-use of force"* (2014, p. 480).

Those who argue against the concept of humanitarian intervention, seem to rely heavily on the legal regime of the use of force. The use of force regime essentially seeks to limit the use of force between states, and is therefore of special importance to the international community, as it *"represents an attempt to replace anarchy with order"* (Scott, 2010, p. 97). One of the most substantial laws concerning the use of force can be found in article 2(4) of the UN Charter. Here it is stated that *"all members shall refrain in their international relations from the threat or use of force against the territorial integrity or political independence of any State, or in any other manner inconsistent with the purposes of the UN"* (Scott, 2006, p. 5). Thereby, article 2(4) underlines the prohibition of the use of threat or force among states (Hurd, 2011, p. 295). According to Scott (2010, p. 99), article 2(4), as determining the prohibition on the use of force, is so widely accepted that many consider it to be a *"preemptory norm of international law"*, meaning that no exceptions can be made, nor accepted. Only two exceptions hold, which is the right to individual or collective self-defense as seen in article 51, and intervention authorized by the UNSC through Chapter VII of the UN Charter. Thus, there are no mentioning of a direct right to intervene on humanitarian grounds.

Furthermore, it has been discussed that if states were to agree on making formal exceptions on the use of force in order to achieve certain aims, it would most likely create incentives for those exceptions to be abused, which would especially pose a threat to weak states (Hurd, 2011, p. 298) This argument could further be supported by those opposing R2P. Opposite this stance, those in favor of humanitarian intervention on the other hand, argues that there should definitely be a legal exception in place that could allow states to use force on humanitarian grounds, despite article 2(4) that clearly underlines the illegality of such interventions without the authorization of the UNSC.

That is not to say that military intervention on humanitarian grounds are completely prohibited. The primary function of the UN, as spelled out in the UN Charter article 1(1), is to *"maintain international peace and security"* (Scott, 2006, p. 4). Should the UNSC therefore conclude that a threat to peace, breach of peace, or act of aggression has occurred (Scott, 2006, p. 13), states can be permitted the use of force against one another. Thus, military interventions on humanitarian grounds can be legal and legitimate, as long as they are authorized by the UNSC.

According to Scott (2010, p. 106), there currently seems to be a debate going on, regarding international law as it currently stands, and law as it should be. It has thus been argued whether international law is compatible with today´s standards of morality, including the concept of the R2P. Nevertheless, it is a fact that with unauthorized humanitarian interventions as those in Kosovo in 1999, the 2003 invasion of Iraq, and humanitarian crises missing international response, as in Rwanda and Srebrenica, recent state practice has highlighted the tensions between humanitarianism and sovereignty. In relation to this, some argue that the law is changing, mainly due to the power of norms and state practice, and thus the UN Charter has become subordinate when it comes to determining the legality of an intervention (Hurd, 2011).

As previously argued, humanitarian intervention is highly controversial, and the legal aspect is not an exception. Thus, the question of whether humanitarian interventions are legal seems to be a common question. The answer, however, differs significantly. On one side, it is argued that law remains law, independent of state practice or emerging norms. On the other side, it is argued that state practice is indeed a legitimate reason for legalization on the matter (Hurd, 2011, p. 307). On one side, humanitarian intervention is therefore a widely accepted concept, on the other it is regarded to be a violation of international law and thus not accepted. Consequently, the legal status of such interventions still remains to be determined, and it is indeed questionable if it ever will.

4.4 Institutionalizing the Responsibility to Protect

Since the adoption of the R2P in the 2005 UN World Summit Outcome Document, R2P has been invoked in over 50 resolutions by the UNSC (Global Centre for the Responsibility to Protect). United Nations Security Council Resolution [UNSCR] 1653[1] concerning the Great Lakes Region and UNSCR 1674[2] regarding the prevention of armed conflict and the protection of civilians in armed conflict both reaffirms para 138 and 139 of the UN World Summit Outcome Document (Global Centre for the Responsibility to Protect). Both resolutions were adopted early in 2006 and as such determines the significance of R2P recognized by the UNSC, including the P5. In 2009, former UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-Moon released a report with the title *Implementing the Responsibility to Protect*. In the report, Ban Ki-Moon stressed the importance of implementing the principle in a *"fully faithful and consistent manner"* (United Nations, 2009, p. 4), and acknowledged that he had high hopes regarding the institutionalization of the principle. The report was followed by a debate on R2P in the General Assembly, in which member states could debate the views and different opinions on the issue. Furthermore, on 6 September 2017, UN Secretary-General António Guterres, in a speech before the member states at a General Assembly interactive informal dialogue on the Responsibility to Protect emphasized the importance of R2P, and underlined that it was once again time for strengthened efforts to prevent populations from mass atrocity crimes. Furthermore, he underlined *"we [the UN] must do more and we must do better"* (United Nations Secretary-General, 2017). All member states reiterated their commitment to para 138 and 139, although some states, including China, expressed continued concern over implementing the concept as there still seems to remain deep controversy over the meaning and application of the concept, including humanitarian intervention.

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[1] (Great Lakes Region) S/RES/1653

[2] (POC) S/RES/1674

5. The structure and role of the United Nations Security Council

The UN was established in 1945 shortly after World War II by 51 countries. Today that number has increased to 193 member states. The UN consists of six main organs, including the UNSC (United Nations, n.d. (c)). The UNSC comprises of 15 states, 5 of which are permanent members, namely the U.S., The United Kingdom, France, Russia, and China. The rest of the UNSC are considered non-permanent members and they are elected for a two-year-term (Taylor & Curtis, 2014).

According to article 27 of the UN Charter, each member of the UNSC has one vote. When dealing with a matter besides procedural ones, it must be passed by a majority representing at least nine out of the 15 members, including the concurring votes of the P5. However, according to the UN Charter the P5 have the option to abstain from voting, if being a party to a dispute (Scott, 2006, p. 10).

All decisions agreed by the UNSC are binding, and can as such not be overturned. Besides the right to abstain, the P5 also have the possibility to veto a resolution. This right has been a very contested issue throughout the years, and some believe it to reflect a very undemocratic side of the UN, as it in some cases, provides the P5 with crucial power.

The main responsibility of the UNSC is to maintain international peace and security. Thus, when the UNSC consider a threat that could possibly disrupt the international peace, the council has different means to act by, which also includes the use of force. So, what does the UNSC perceive to be a threat towards international peace and security? Throughout the years there have been various changes to this, but especially after the Cold War ended, the international community witnessed a shift in focus. Before, the UN had predominantly been concerned with war between states. However, in the 1990´s the UN began to perceive the "*lack of internal justice*" as a threat towards international peace (Taylor & Curtis, 2014, p. 311). Hence, the UN sought to introduce a new way of looking at peace and security.

6. The Syrian Civil War

Syria has for many years been considered an authoritarian state, however, since the Ba´ath party took over power in 1962, the state has become more sultanic, characterized by its lack of institutions and its strong presence and ruling of the Assad family (Schmidt, 2015, pp. 20-21). In 2000, Bashar Al-Assad followed his father Hafiz Al-Assad and became the new President of Syria. With the insertion

of Bashar, the Syrian population saw an opportunity for long-expected reforms, it did however not take long before this was dismissed by the Assad family, who carried on like Hafiz Al-Assad had left it. From 2007 to 2010, Syria experienced a severe drought which increased poverty and social inequality, and further increased the Syrians´ dissatisfaction with the government, in that the Assad regime failed to act. Thus, approaching 2011 and the "Arab spring", Syria had become characterized by its lack of freedom for the Syrian civilization and crucial economic woes (Aljazeera, 2017). As such, in the spring of 2011, demonstrations prompted by the "Arab spring" finally reached Syria, but the scale of the demonstrations and the following developments came as a surprise to most people. It all accumulated when a group of young boys wrote on a wall *"The Government must go"*. The message was an outcry, signaling the desire for regime change. As stated, the view was not only expressed by the young boys, but shared by a majority of the population, who for years had been suppressed and neglected by the Alawite-led government led by President Bashar Al-Assad (I am Syria, n.d.). The young boys were treated with heavy handed force by government forces, and subsequently a 13-year-old boy was killed by the injuries inflicted upon him (Aljazeera, 2017). Eventually, this became the straw that broke the camel´s back and sparked public demonstrations against the government (I am Syria, n.d.). In the following weeks, the Syrian government killed numerous demonstrators alongside imprisoning hundreds of people.

Eventually, what started as a demonstration for democracy and regime change in the city of Daraa, soon turned into a multifaceted war, which has involved government forces, rebel groups, jihadist groups, the Islamic State in Iraq and Syria [ISIS], and regional as well as world powers. Several international norms have been breached, such as the protection of human rights, the protection of non-combatants, and the use of chemical weapons, which has led to devastating consequences for Syrian civilians. This was last seen in April 2017, where over 80 people were killed due to a sarin attack in Khan-Sheikhun. In the aftermath, it was determined that the Syrian regime was responsible for the attack (Roth & Gray, 2017). Since 2011, the civil war has left Syrian civilians in crucial pain, and as a result, according to the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR, n.d.), an estimated 5,4 million people have fled to neighboring countries like Lebanon, Turkey, and Jordan, along with the more than 6 million people that are believed to be internally displaced [IDP´s], due to the continuing fighting taking place in Syria. Thus, Syria is experiencing one of the worst humanitarian crises yet seen. Nevertheless, intervention by the UNSC in Syria has been missing.

7. Analysis

This chapter will analyze why intervention by the UNSC has been missing in Syria, despite their Responsibility to Protect as agreed upon at the UN 2005 World Summit. The chapter will begin with two paragraphs examining the military interventions of Iraq and Libya and the dilemmas concerning humanitarian intervention and the Responsibility to Protect that derived thereof. These findings I will use to further conduct the following paragraph investigating whether or not the missing UNSC intervention has been due to a Russian distrust towards humanitarian intervention, hence R2P. The following paragraph will look into cooperation between the UNSC on the situation in Syria. Here, I will analyze why the UNSC has been able to adopt some resolutions, and continue to disagree on most others, and how this can be explained with theory. Finally, I will finish the analysis with a paragraph concerning the influence of the emerging powers, and how this has influenced the changing world order and thereby the role of the Responsibility to Protect in regard to the Syrian civil war.

7.1 The echoing voices of Iraq and Libya

In the following part I will seek to explore whether the implementation of UNSC resolution 1973 in Libya and the illegitimate U.S. led invasion of Iraq in 2003 have affected the discussions regarding Syria and the Responsibility to Protect in the UNSC. Thereby, I will attempt to provide an overview of the two cases and the course they took. Specifically, I will look into the diverting perceptions of the two interventions, particularly those of Russia and the U.S. Subsequently, I will examine three selected draft resolutions that Russia and China have vetoed in the council, with the purpose of investigating and discussing how this has formed the debates on Syria in the UNSC. This I will do in order to examine why the UNSC has not been able to reach any major resolutions on Syria, despite the Responsibility to Protect.

7.1.1 Case one: The invasion of Iraq in 2003

When U.S. President George W. Bush declared war on Iraq in March 2003, he referred to it as freedom´s war, aimed at liberating the Iraqi people and defend the world from the danger posed by an Iraq ruled by Saddam Hussein (White House, 2003). The primary justification was the assumption that the regime was hiding Weapons of Mass Destruction [WMD], and further had established links to Al-Qaeda, and therefore the aim of the U.S. was to take down the regime of Saddam Hussein in order to provide freedom for the Iraqi population and secure the world from great danger. Eventually, the initial claims of the Saddam regime storing WMDs proved wrong and the U.S., the U.K, and its

allies conceded previous arguments. Subsequently, in 2005, a U.S. Presidential commission concluded that "*not one bit of prewar intelligence*" concerning Iraqi WMD´s proved right (Council on Foreign Relations, n.d.). However, the actions of the U.S. and the U.K. along with their allies, carried out through Operation Iraqi Freedom [OIF], clearly indicated a wish for regime change in Iraq, along with the transportation of liberal values, including democracy, freedom, and peace. As President Bush noted in 2002 prior to the invasion "*regime change in Iraq is the only certain means of removing a great danger to our nation*" (White House, 2002). Thus, in December 2003, Saddam Hussein was captured by U.S. troops and in 2006 he was sentenced to death on the verdict of "*guilty of crimes against humanity*" (Council on Foreign Relations, n.d.). One month later, Saddam was executed. Nevertheless, on what grounds this regime change was legitimized seems to be indistinct.

After the failure to detect WMD´s in Iraq, the initial justification for the invasion did simply no longer exist. Therefore, the primary justification rather quickly became solely focused on a humanitarian aspect, on which the U.S. and the U.K stated they had a responsibility to act. The claim, however, served *ex post facto*, and has therefore been highly questioned (Weiss, 2016, p. 167). Before initiating a humanitarian intervention, one must ask the following: "*what kind of harm is sufficient to trigger a military intervention overriding the non-intervention principle*" (ICISS, 2001, p. 32). According to the director of the Human Rights Watch, Kenneth Roth, at the time of the invasion in 2003 there was no "*ongoing or imminent mass slaughter*" present in Iraq, nor was there before the war any accusations or evidence that the regime of Saddam Hussein was planning such (Roth, 2006, pp. 84-86). So why did the U.S. and its allies claim that the invasion was based on humanitarian grounds? According to a poll conducted in Iraq in September 2003, only 5 percent of the Iraqi population truly believed that the invasion had been launched on a desire to "free" the Iraqi people. Rather, over half of the respondents replied that they believed that the intentions behind the operation were primarily based on Iraq´s oil (Hehir, 2013a, p. 250). Furthermore, after the war, Russian President Vladimir Putin claimed that the military intervention in Iraq was a "*pointless battle against the Iraqi people, aimed in part at seizing the country´s oil reserves*" (CBS NEWS, 2007). Thus, the invasion of Iraq exposed a crucial link between power politics and humanitarian intervention, as there did not seem to be any clear arguments for humanitarian intervention. Rather, the claims that the U.S. and its allies were pursuing national interests through regime change in Iraq seemed rather valid.

Moreover, the invasion was initiated without the authorization of the UNSC, and has thereby, by many, been perceived as illegitimate and illegal. Thus, one year after the war began, UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan explicitly declared that the U.S. led invasion of Iraq was illegal: "*I have indicated it was not in conformity with the UN Charter, from our [the UN] point of view, and from the Charter point of view it was illegal*" (MacAskill & Borger, 2004). The U.S. and the U.K. tried on various occasions to gain the approval of the UNSC prior to the invasion, but failed, and through the invasion they thereby confirmed the at times selective use of the UNSC by the P5. The invasion thereby showed significant signs of the U.S. acting based on self-interests. Furthermore, as the U.S. and the U.K. did not manage to get the authorization to the use of force in Iraq, but chose to invade anyway, it can be argued that after the Iraq war the role of being a moral authority is simply not something the U.S. nor the U.K. can claim any longer, as they abused the concept of humanitarian intervention. As Hehir notes, and as I believe to be accurate based on the nature of the case, "*the fact that the coalition portrayed their intervention as motivated to a significant extent by a desire to aid suffering Iraqis has significantly undermined the status of "humanitarian intervention"*" (Hehir, 2013a, p. 262). In regard to the R2P, at the UN World Summit in 2005, the skepticism surrounding humanitarian intervention post 2003 invasion of Iraq, surely was further expressed by many governments when endorsing the new concept, and already at that point, it showed that the echoes of Iraq could be devastating for people in need of protection in the future (Roth, 2006, pp. 91-92).

To briefly sum up, the grounds on which the U.S. led coalition went into Iraq have been questioned, as still are. As stated, Russia was very dubious towards the rationale behind the intervention, and therefore I can further use this in my analysis of Russian behavior in regard to the situation in Syria and the continuous Russian veto hereof.

7.1.2 Case two: The military intervention of Libya in 2011

Early 2011, protests arose in the Libyan capital of Benghazi against Colonel Muammar Gaddafi who, at the time, had been in power for 42 years (NATO, 2015). The protesters were met with violent responses by the Libyan regime, which eventually led to a joint press statement by the UNSC calling upon the Gaddafi regime to comply with the responsibility of the state to protect its population (Brockmeier, Stuenkel & Tourinho, 2016, p. 115). Subsequently, on 26 February 2011, the UNSC unanimously passed resolution 1970, which expressed grave concern over the recent developments in Libya and further condemned the use of force against Libyan civilians (NATO, 2015). Despite UNSCR 1970, Gadaffi continued the suppression of and violence against the Libyan population.

Several state leaders expressed concern over the continued acts, including former U.S. President Barack Obama who urged the Libyan regime to show restraint, and further "*respect the rights of their people*" (Sullivan, 2016). Subsequently, on 17 March 2011, the UNSC passed resolution 1973. The resolution was passed with 10 votes in favor and five abstentions by China and Russia, along with India, Brazil and Germany who were non-permanent members at the time (Brockmeier et al., 2016, p. 116). The resolution reiterated the responsibility of the Libyan regime to protect its population and determined that the situation constituted a threat to international peace and security (United Nations Security Council S/RES/1973). Specifically, resolution 1973 imposed a no-fly zone over Libyan airspace and authorized member states "*to take all necessary measures…to protect civilians and civilian populated areas under threat of attack in the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, including Benghazi...*" (UNSC S/RES/1973, para. 4). Thus, the UNSC authorized chapter VII measures[3], including the use of force by member states against the Libyan regime and the resolution thereby came to mark the first time the UNSC legitimized the use of force under the concept of the R2P, in order to prevent mass atrocity crimes within a sovereign state. Two days after the UNSC passed resolution 1973, a U.S. led coalition under the name "Operation Odyssey Dawn" [OOD] took military action in Libya and successfully destroyed Libya´s air defenses. The operation did however not stop at that, and after a few days, NATO officially took over control of the military campaign, under the name "Operation Unified Protector" [OUP]. NATO continued enforcing the UNSCR through the no-fly zone and conducted air and naval strikes against Gaddafi´s security forces until 31 October 2011, after Gaddafi had been removed from power and subsequently killed by rebel forces (NATO, 2015).

The swift response by the UNSC to pass resolution 1973 came as a surprise to many, and has been seen as a significant result. Some argued that the fact that the UNSC had been able to successfully pass the resolution demonstrated "*a key turning point in the history of R2P*" (Brockmeier et al., 2016, pp. 113-114). The co-chair of the ICISS, Gareth Evans, argued that the intervention in Libya represented a "*textbook case*" of how the R2P should work. Furthermore, UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-Moon went on to say that "*by now it should be clear to all that the Responsibility to Protect has arrived*" (Hehir, 2013b, p. 137). Looking at resolution 1973 on Libya, it was determined by the UNSC that the situation clearly did constitute a threat to the international peace and security (UNSC

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[3] UN Charter articles 39-51, targeting "*Action with Respect to Threats to the Peace, Breaches of the Peace, and Acts of Aggression*" (Scott, 2006, pp. 13-15).

S/RES/1973), and it was further agreed among the UNSC that action was necessary. Nevertheless, the subsequent actions taken by the U.S. led coalition and later NATO, has been discussed in great depth and subsequently led to crucial divisions among the P5, including their perceptions of the R2P and once again the notion of humanitarian intervention has shown to stipulate a crucial dilemma.

In a speech by U.S. President Barack Obama on 28 March 2011 addressing the American people on the Libyan intervention the President stated, "*when our interests and values are at stake, we have a responsibility to act*" (White House, 2011). However, when western states went into Libya under the banner of the R2P, Russia openly criticized the way in which the military intervention had been carried out (Averre & Davies, 2015, p. 818). Thus, Russia subsequently accused the intervention of being illegitimate in the sense that it went beyond the mandate officially sanctioned by the UNSC in resolution 1973, as it did not only enforce a no-fly zone, but further went for a regime change. In relation, Russia stated that "*humanitarian intervention under the banner of R2P in Libya…was ultimately an elaborate cover for regime change, perceived by Moscow as illegitimate*" (Averre & Davies 2015, p. 818). Thus, it can be stated that Russia was firmly against regime change in Libya, and argued that this act had indeed been contrary to the primary goal, which was the protection of civilians (Brockmeier et al., 2016, p. 122). It can further be argued that Russia once again believed that western states had misused the concept of humanitarian intervention, but this time under the Responsibility to Protect.

Russia was not the only member state that abstained from the resolution. China, Brazil, India and Germany chose to abstain as well. Most importantly was the abstention of China, being one of the P5. China, however, put up the simple argument that they were "*always against the use of force*" (Morris, 2013, p. 1272), and further stated that they feared the ambiguity surrounding the authorization of the use of force in Libya (Morris, 2013, p. 1272). Thus, the implementation of the R2P in Libya once again caused great tensions between the members of the UNSC, and as such, humanitarian intervention once again became perceived as a western led group aiming for regime change, against a group of states opposing regime change. Furthermore, this once again created an argument based on western states, in this case NATO, putting up a humanitarian cause for the protection of civilians, covering the political aim of coercive regime change in another state.

7.1.3 First Iraq, then Libya, but not Syria?

The situation in Libya in 2011 bear striking resemblance to the situation that evolved in Syria in 2011, and it has therefore caused many to question why the UNSC did not, and has not yet, authorized any major resolutions on Syria and the Assad regime, as it initially managed to do in Libya. Thus, what can explain why the members of the P5 remain paralyzed in carrying out resolutions that could halt mass atrocity crimes in Syria? As stated in previous chapters, the implementation of the R2P and humanitarian intervention, including the coercive use of force against sovereign states, has for long been a very contested subject, and through the cases of Libya and Iraq a fierce debate on the subject was again ignited in the UNSC (Adams, 2015). In relation to this, Russia expressed grave concern and distrust towards the implementation of humanitarian intervention and the subsequent regime change, and further claimed that it was merely based on the interests of western states. Thus, the debate became heavily focused on the relationship between R2P and regime change (Adams, 2015). Based on this, I will now investigate whether the UNSC has been unable to carry out their Responsibility to Protect in Syria, due to a Russian distrust towards humanitarian intervention and the concept of the R2P.

7.1.3.1 Draft Resolution S/2011/612

Six months after the demonstrations against the Syrian regime began, Russia and China [P2], vetoed their first draft resolution on Syria. Primarily, the resolution stresses the Syrian regime´s primary responsibility to protect its population, and recalls that those responsible for the ongoing violence and human rights violations in Syria shall be held accountable (UNSC S/2011/612). By vetoing the draft, Russia and to some degree China, indicated that they were not willing to pass the same language as that of UNSCR 1973, i.e. referring to the R2P. This can further be supported, as Russia following the veto stated that it was important not to ignore the experience in Libya when looking at Syria, and that the model used in Libya should not be used as "*global practice*", which again indicates that Russia still questioned the implementation of R2P in Libya. Furthermore, Russian representative to the UN, Vitaly Churkin, stated that the draft failed to include the Russian emphasis on the "*non-acceptability of military intervention*" in Syria (United Nations, 2011). In relation to this, Russia stated that they would continue to work with other "*patriotic*" groups that likewise were against foreign intervention in Syria (United Nations, 2011). Based on the above I therefore argue that the Russian veto was primarily based on a fear that western states and allies would implement means similar to those used in Libya, if the resolution was to be passed by the UNSC. Furthermore, from the following statements

on the draft resolution, it shows that Russia was not interested in implementing Chapter VII measures of the UN Charter, that could possibly lead to a humanitarian intervention under the R2P.

7.1.3.2 Draft Resolution S/2012/538

On 19 July 2012, several states including the U.S., the U.K., and France [P3], put another draft resolution up for vote in the UNSC. The draft condemns the violations of human rights by the Syrian regime, and further states the need for the regime to be held accountable (UNSC S/2012/538). Nevertheless, the draft was vetoed by Russia and China. In relation to UNSC S/2012/538, Russia argued that once again the drafting states, i.e. the western states, failed to exclude UN Charter chapter VII means in the draft, which could not be accepted by Russia, as this could possibly lead to military intervention and sanctions on Syria (United Nations, 2012). Moreover, Russia stressed that it would not support western initiatives that were put there to further their own geopolitical designs (United Nations, 2012). Looking at China, they noted that they had no self-interests in Syria, but that it was a matter reserved for Syria only. China thereby indirectly stressed its support for the principle of *self-determination* in Syria (Lombardo, 2015), which indicates that China is generally a great advocate of the principle of non-interference (Ikenberry & Etzioni, 2011), as was further stated when they chose to abstain on UNSCR 1973 regarding Libya. Thus, once again, due to the vetoes by Russia and China, the UNSC failed to pass a resolution in Chapter VII of the UN Charter. The U.S. replied by emphasizing that the veto now constituted the third time that a draft resolution on Syria had been vetoed by the P2, and that this would have crucial consequences for the Syrian people, along with preventing the UNSC from carrying out its responsibility to protect in the Syrian conflict. In relation to this, UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-Moon stated that the UNSC had an "*inescapable responsibility to react*" (United Nations, 2012). Russia indicated that it would neither be willing to impose military intervention nor sanctions on Syria. Russia thereby ruled out acting through the third pillar of R2P and humanitarian intervention. Furthermore, Russia insinuated that possible military intervention in Syria would only further the geopolitical designs of the West, which again draws reference to the two cases of Iraq and Libya and the Russian perception hereof. Thus, through this example, Russia once again expressed its reluctance to implement resolutions containing any reference to Chapter VII of the UN Charter.

7.1.3.3 Draft Resolution S/2014/348

In 2014, yet another draft resolution failed to pass. Here, thirteen states voted in favor, whereas Russia and China yet again cast their vetoes. The resolution was drafted by 65 UN member states, including

the P3, and determined that the situation in Syria constitutes a threat to international peace and security. The draft further recalled the claims by the UNHCR that "*crimes against humanity and war crimes are likely to have been committed in the Syrian Arab Republic*" (UNSC S/2014/348). As such, the draft includes two of the four crimes constituting the R2P, as spelled out in the 2005 UN World Summit Document, cf. para. 138., and thereby constitutes that the Syrian regime does not comply with its responsibility to protect its population. Furthermore, the draft refers the Syrian regime to the International Criminal Court (UNSC S/2014/348). In this context it is especially noteworthy, that the Russian representative questioned whether the draft proposed by western states, among others, aimed at changing the Syrian regime by force, as there had been no references to other actors in Syria committing violent actions, which could further explain why the IC had not yet reached a political solution on Syria (United Nations, 2014a). Thereby, Russia directly questioned if the P3 was merely aiming for a regime change in Syria.

Based on the analysis of the three draft resolutions vetoed by Russia and China, I argue that it can be stated that Russia did not approve of the way in which Western states implemented the R2P in Libya, and that they fear this will be the case in Syria as well (Averre & Davies, 2015, p. 814). Furthermore, it indicates that Russia is not willing to pass any resolutions that would hold the Syrian regime accountable in any way. Additionally, it is especially noteworthy that the three cases clearly indicate that Russia from the beginning, as per draft resolution S/2011/612, has been countering any suggestions of a solution based on Chapter VII measures (Averre & Davies, 2015, p. 819). As Chapter VII authorization by the UNSC constitutes the only legitimate way for states to launch a humanitarian intervention, it indicates that the primary reason for the continuous Russian vetoes has been the fear of the P3 abusing humanitarian intervention for geostrategic purposes (Janik, 2013, p. 70). But how can this be explained?

Ever since the Cold War ended, Syria has remained a close strategic ally to Russia (Adams, 2015). In the initial fase of the conflict in 2011, it was reported that Russia had established contracts with Russian arms dealers, worth around $4 billion, which accordingly made Syria one of the largest buyers of Russian weaponry (Adams, 2015, p. 14), and the arms dealing with Syria thereby represents a highly lucrative business for Russia. Furthermore, Russia holds a naval base at Tartus, which is located on Syria´s Mediterranean coast. In relation to this, in 2012 Russian Commander-In-Chief Viktor Chirkov announced that the Tartus naval base is "*essential to us*" (Adams, 2015, p, 15), which

indicates that Syria is of geopolitical importance to Russia. Last, it has been reported that Russia has been supporting the Assad-regime economically (Adams, 2015). Based on this, it becomes clear that it is highly beneficial for Russia to maintain its close ties with Syria and the Syrian regime, as in relation to Russian national security interests and maintaining Russian influence in the Middle East. By continuously supporting the Assad-regime and by justifying their vetoes with the claim that the West is aiming for regime change in Syria, Russia sends a strong signal to the Syrian government that it is a trustworthy ally (Janik, 2013, p. 82), which further indicates that Russia would not be willing to allow for the Assad regime to step down, nor allow foreign intervention in Syria, as it could possibly inhibit Russian influence in Syria and the Middle East.

According to the realist view, states operate in a system of self-help and therefore have to protect their own security and interests. When applying the data above it can be argued that Russia, through the UNSC, has been trying to secure its own interests by vetoing draft resolutions that were not in alignment with their national strategic interests in Syria. Furthermore, it seems as though after the U.S. invasion of Iraq and the Libyan intervention, Russia´s perception of a Western led/liberal interventionist group has been strengthened, and Russia´s stance on humanitarian interventions, the R2P, and the subsequent behavior in the UNSC thereby follows the view of realism which stipulates that one should *"beware whenever states claim they are doing something for someone else. Such claims are mere smokescreens, ideological props that are intended to legitimate their more primeval foreign policy goals" (*Barnett, 2012, p. 226). From a theoretical point of view, it can thereby be argued that Russia has sought to protect own interests in Syria and maintain its middle eastern sphere of influence in order to maintain power and survive.

7.1.3.4 *Summary of findings*

To sum up, Russia has for many years been critical towards the notion of humanitarian intervention, as it believes that it is merely a cover up for western liberal states to seek national interests and promote liberal values, and after Iraq and Libya this position has only been strengthened. In Iraq, Russia accused the U.S. of going for oil and democracy, whereas in Libya it was an attempt to take down the regime of Gaddafi and impose democracy. Accordingly, the U.S. led invasion of Iraq in 2003 *"greatly tarnished humanitarian intervention by exposing its relationship to power and realpolitik…there was no guarantee that humanitarian norms like R2P could be realized consistently and not misused"* (Murray & Hehir, as cited in Averre & Davies, 2015, p. 818). Thus, one can argue that the *Liberal imprudence* has constituted a crucial problem when seeking consensus on

intervention into Syria. Furthermore, in Libya the humanitarian intervention was launched under the R2P, which has also caused harm to the implementation of that specific concept. Based on this and from a theoretical stand point, I believe that Russia cannot "afford" to trust the West, as they do have great national interests at stake in Syria, and based on previous state practice, these interests could be damaged if Russia were to allow the West to act under humanitarian intervention and the R2P in Syria.

7.1.4 Cooperation between the UNSC on Syria

So far, Russia has cast 11 vetoes since the Syrian conflict began in 2011. Thus, 11 times the UNSC has been unable to cooperate and reach mutual agreements between them in relation to Syria. Nevertheless, there have however, been few cases in which the UNSC has been able to adopt resolutions on Syria. When looking at the paragraph above, it was concluded that Russia and China have mainly been vetoing draft resolutions due to a crucial scepticism and distrust towards humanitarian interventions, including through the R2P, and great Russian interests in Syria. Nevertheless, cooperation has occurred. So why can the UNSC agree to adopt some resolutions, and disagree on others, considering the impact this has on Syrian civilians? According to liberalism states are able to transcend the power relationships that occur between them, and instead pursue cooperation. One way to do this is through international institutions built on a rule-based international order, such as the UN (Ikenberry, 2011). In the following part, I will therefore investigate two of the resolutions that the UNSC has adopted unanimously, and analyse if a rule-based international order through the UN has stipulated the reason for this.

7.1.4.1 *UNSC Resolution S/RES/2118*

On 27 September 2013, the UNSC unanimously adopted resolution S/RES/2118, following a chemical attack in Rif Damascus which caused several civilian deaths. The resolution stresses that the proliferation and use of chemical weapons in Syria constitute a threat to international security and peace (UNSC S/RES/2118), and thus enables the destruction of Syria´s chemical weapons. The resolution further allowed for the Organization for the Prohibition on Chemical Weapons [OPCW] and UN experts to oversee the removal of the chemical weapons. Moreover, according to para. 21 of the resolution, in the event of non-compliance to the resolution, the UNSC agreed to consider measures taken under Chapter VII of the UN Charter (UNSC S/RES/2118). In relation to the resolution on Syria´s chemical weapons Russian Foreign Minister Srgey Lavrov stated that the work carried out by the OPCW and the UN "*would act impartially in Syria in full respect of its sovereignty*"

(United Nations, 2013). He further stressed that the resolution was not adopted under Chapter VII measures, and did therefore not allow coercive measures. Nevertheless, he stated that the UN would stand ready to take such measures, but only if violations to the agreement could be proven one hundred percent (United Nations, 2013).

7.1.4.2 *UNSC Resolution S/RES/2165*

On 14 July 2014, the UNSC once again unanimously adopted a UNSCR and thereby authorized the UN to deliver cross-border humanitarian aid to the suffering Syrian civilians, without the consent of the Syrian government. Furthermore, according to para. 3 of the resolution, it was decided to install a UN monitoring mechanism to assure the compliance of the resolution. Moreover, the resolution once again reaffirms the primary responsibility of the Syrian authorities to protect its population (UNSC S/RES/2165). The measures in the resolution was set to apply for 180 days, and following it would be "*subject to review*" by the UNSC. (UNSC S/RES/2165). In relation to the resolution the Russian representative stressed that prior to the adoption of the resolution, they had been assured by the office for the coordination of humanitarian affairs that the resolution would maintain respect for the "*sovereignty, independence, and territorial integrity of Syria*" (United Nations, 2014b). He thereby highlighted this as crucial for a Russian vote in favor. Furthermore, he stressed that the resolution did not contain any mechanism that would allow for the use of force to ensure successful implementation (United Nations, 2014b). China further added that a resolution aiming for the assurance of humanitarian aid and relief, would still respect state sovereignty, thereby emphasizing their prerequisite for voting in favor.

Through the two resolutions and the statements expressed by Russia in the meetings, it becomes clear that Russia, and to some degree China, have had some reservations towards the resolutions, but that these have been implemented. As an example, in resolution S/RES/2118 regarding chemical weapons, Russia has made sure, that a monitoring mission was in place, and would make sure to act impartially and maintain the sovereignty of Syria. In resolution S/RES/2165, a monitoring mechanism was put in place, which is obligated to notify the Syrian authorities "*in order to confirm the humanitarian nature of those relief consignments*" (UNSC S/RES/2165). In relation to this, it was stated by the Russian representative, that the resolution "*had taken into account his countries concerns*". Thus, both resolutions were adopted, but both required that a group of observers would

be sent to oversee that the commitments of the resolutions were respected (UNSC S/RES/2118; UNSC S/RES/2165; Lombardo, 2015, p. 1194).

However, by adopting the resolutions, both China and Russia, express that they are willing to adopt resolutions regarding the protection of civilians and resolutions containing the R2P, with the exception that this takes into account the concerns of the countries. Hence, it indicates that Russia and China are not directly aiming to leave the Syrian civilians in need. This was also established when Russia and China chose to abstain on UNSCR 1973, even though it entailed the use of force. As Brockmeier et al. emphasize, "*the idea that the international community had a role to play in protecting Libyan civilians, against the states wish of a functioning government, went remarkably undisputed*" (Brockmeier et al., 2016, p. 115). However, according to Hehir (2013b), when the UNSC adopted UNSCR 1973 it was a decision "*impelled by the rare confluence of interests and humanitarian need*" and further stated that it was "*consistent with the Security Council′s record of inconsistency*" (Hehir, 2013b, pp. 137-138). When looking at the resolutions above, compared to the draft resolutions analyzed in paragraph 7.1.3, it becomes clear that in the adopted resolutions, Russia did not have any major reservations, and those they had, were accommodated. This was however, not the case in regard to the vetoed draft resolutions, which may indicate that Chinese and Russian cooperation was due to a confluence of interests within the UNSC. To provide an example that could back this view, on 16 November 2017 Russia vetoed their latest draft resolution, i.e. S/2017/962 that were to extend the mandate to investigate chemical weapons attacks in Syria as lined out above. Prior to the veto, in April 2017, over 80 people were killed due to a sarin attack in Khan-Sheikhun in Syria. In the aftermath, it was determined by a UN report that the Syrian regime was responsible for the attack (Roth & Gray, 2017). However, following the veto on 16 November Russia stated that "*it was not dignified for the Council to rubberstamp baseless accusations against Syria*" (United Nations, 2017). In relation, the U.S. representative to the UN Nikki Haley stated that "*they [Russia] want reporting, but not if it blames Syria*" (United Nations, 2017). Moreover, on 23 January 2018, in a UNSC meeting called by Russia, the Russian representative stated they had been "*unfoundly accused*" of hindering an investigation that could verify the use of chemical weapons in Syria (UNSC S/PV.8164, p. 2/11). The U.S. replied by stating that "*Russia is again doing what it does best with regard to chemical weapons. It is running from the facts*" (UNSC S/PV.8164, p. 3/11).

As for resolution S/RES/2165 that was also adopted regarding cross-border aid deliveries, on 19 December 2017 the UNSC adopted a resolution extending this particular mandate. As such, it can be argued that the UNSC, including Russia, will only be able to cooperate when the interests of the P5

align, and thus a rule-based international order has not been able to foster the cooperation of the UNSC in the matter of Syria. Furthermore, the inconsistent voting track of the UNSC may indicate that the concept of the R2P has been made flexible and will only be implemented on those cases where mutual interests between the P5 align (Lombardo, 2015).

7.1.4.3 Summary of findings

In the previous paragraph I have looked into how cooperation between the UNSC on Syria on some issues have been possible. In the analysis of the two selected UNSCR I found that the P3 and the P2 have been able to cooperate on the removal of chemical weapons in Syria and the access of cross-border humanitarian aid for the Syrian civilians. Nevertheless, throughout the analysis it became clear that these have only been possible due to an accommodation of Russian requests. Furthermore, in November 2017, Russia vetoed a draft that were to extend the mandate of investigating the use and possession of chemical weapons in Syria. In relation to this, in UNSCR S/RES/2118 Russia expressed that it would not be willing to impose Chapter VII measures unless violations of the agreement could be one-hundred percent proved. However, prior to the veto, a UN report had found that the Syrian regime was responsible for a chemical attack on Syrian civilians conducted in April 2017. Based on this, I argue that Russia was only willing to adopt the two resolutions, due to the fact that these did not impose any measures that would infere with Russian interests in Syria, and the resolution was thereby the result of a rare confluence of interests between the P5. Furthermore, I argue that the P2 does not directly oppose the first two pillars of the R2P, but it is the third pillar that represent the largest obstacle, as such it is not so much the core principles of the R2P, but rather the implementation hereof. This will further be discussed in chapter 8.

7.2 The influence of the emerging powers

The following paragraph seeks to examine the relationship between the P3 and the P2 in relation to the shift from a unipolar to a more multipolar world. Specifically, I will look into how this have had influence on the behavior of the P2 in the UNSC and on the situation in Syria in regard to the Responsibility to Protect. Even though there are several emerging states, including the BRICS, this paragraph will, however, aim to focus on Russia and China only, as they are both permanent members of the UNSC and therefore carry the right to veto resolutions, as opposed to the remaining three states, who can only strive to become non-permanent members on a two-year basis. Moreover, focus will be on the U.S. as it has been perceived as the main advocate and carrier of the liberal world order and

the unipolar power since the end of the Cold War. This I will examine as the main focus of this paper is the UNSC and their missing response to the situation in Syria. Therefore, as the UNSC is supposed to represent the five greatest powers of the world, this paragraph has deemed relevant in order to answer the research question asked for this dissertation. Finally, in the second paragraph, I will look into whether or not the lack of consensus between the P5 can be considered as a Russian and Chinese attempt to balance the West, hence the P3.

7.2.1 A changing world order and the role of the Responsibility to Protect

Today the Responsibility to Protect has been formally acknowledged for over 12 years, but the case of Syria so far indicates that the concept is not considered as powerful as it was first set out to be when introduced at the 2005 UN World Summit. One of the reasons for this could be the relationship between R2P and the emerging powers (Thakur, 2013). Since the Cold War ended, the world has been considered unipolar, due to the dominating power of the U.S., and as previously stated the U.S. has steered a liberal world order by incorporating *"fundamental liberal principles into the regulatory rules and institutions of international society"* (Dunne, 2014, p. 121). So, what has changed within this liberal order that has made it impossible for the UNSC to invoke major resolutions on Syria, regarding the protection of Syrian civilians? Russia and China both belong to a category of emerging states, due to their changed power positions in the world. Specifically, they are part of the term the BRICS, consisting of Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa. Throughout the last two decades, the BRICS have experienced massive growth and thus emerged as important states in the world (Thakur, 2013, pp. 61-62). Hence, we are witnessing a shift towards a more multipolar world, in which the U.S. can no longer be considered the only power in the system, although it may still be the largest, and it therefore seems as though the U.S. is now becoming one among many global actors (Stuenkel, 2014, p. 8; Ikenberry, 2011). But how can this add to the question of paralysis in the UNSC and the failure of the Responsibility to Protect? In order to answer this, I believe we need to look into the relationship between the P3 and the P2 in relation to the current liberal world order, and how this has influenced the Responsibility to Protect.

As stated in previous chapters, humanitarian intervention and thereby the third pillar of R2P pose a direct challenge to the Westphalian Sovereignty, as it directly violates the principle of non-intervention and non-interference (Bellamy & Wheeler, 2014, p. 480). In relation to this, I have argued that Russia in general perceives intervention under the flag of R2P as a Western attempt to

seek own national interests, often through regime change, and thereby transport liberal values. Moreover, China has on several occasions openly stated their reluctance towards intervention in other states´ sovereign affairs (Ikenberry & Etzioni, 2011). Nevertheless, the adoption of some resolutions on Syria, shows that China and Russia are not directly against the principles underlying the concept, except when these go against the interests of the P2. As such, it can be argued that the protection of civilians does not constitute a primary feature of Russian and Chinese foreign policies (Ignatieff, 2011; Thakur, 2013), nor the liberal idea that the major purpose of states is to protect and secure human rights, and that states have a duty to assist wherever these rights cannot be sustained (Téson, 2003). This, I argue, has especially been proved through the missing UNSC intervention in Syria.

According to former Canadian politician Michael Ignatieff, "*Syria is the moment in which the West should see that the world has truly broken into two*" (Ignatieff, 2011). In the UNSC the situation in Syria has indeed reflected a divide between the P3 and the P2, and some would argue that this divide is the result of a world order out of balance, a liberal world order in demise, because not only is the West experiencing a change in power position, there also seems to be a transition in the ideas and principles that make up this order (Ikenberry, 2011, p. 57). Specifically, this can be seen in the resistance of Russia and China in the UNSC to take on the responsibility to protect Syrian civilians, but also through the resistance towards western policies. To provide an example, in a UNSC emergency briefing on the situation in Syria, former U.S. ambassador to the UN, Samantha Power, in a question directed at Russia, Syria and Iran asked whether the three UN member states were simply "*incapable of shame*", and if there was simply no execution of a child that could get under their skin? She further stressed that they (Russia, Syria, and Iran) were all responsible for the atrocities that had been carried out in Syria (Killalea, 2016). To the accusations, Russian UN representative at that time, Vitaly Churkin, replied "*Please remember what country you´re representing – remember your own country´s track record and then you can start opining from the position of moral supremacy*" (Killalea, 2016). With the reply, Russia makes clear that the U.S. cannot intimidate their position on Syria by using moral grounds, as the U.S. have proved themselves not always to be on the moral side, as was especially witnessed through the case of Iraq. Moreover, the reply indicates that Russia does simply not share the same concerns as the West, nor the P3, when it comes to the humanitarian situation in Syria. Thus, I argue, that there is a current split between a western-led humanitarian interventionist group and a sovereignty bloc reflected by China and Russia and their behavior in the UNSC. When the Soviet Union collapsed in 1991, the U.S. gained unipolarity, and

with that a system of western values and ideas became the guiding order, and along with it the emphasis on individual human rights. In the case of Syria there have been no indications that China and Russia are willing to take on the liberal world order, in relation to individual human rights, etc. It can thus be argued, that Russia and China believe the Westphalian Peace to be sufficient when it comes to the process of managing the international system, and world order (Harris, 2015). Thus, it seems as though Russia and China are tilting towards a more realist perception of the international system, in which the Westphalian system is believed to maintain international peace and security.

As such, it becomes clear that the liberal states that once were the leading forces within international relations, primarily the U.S., are no longer the only powers within international relations (Dunne, 2014, p. 115), and therefore states that are capable and willing to lead the path of liberalism and the world order associated with it, have become absent. Nevertheless, it is not only the changing role of the U.S., but also the increasing influence of the emerging powers that have changed. Thus, "*as we move through the second decade of the twenty-first century, there is a crisis of both leadership and followership in world politics*" (Dunne, 2014, p. 115). Therefore, it becomes clear that emerging states, such as China and Russia, are beginning to advance their own ideas and agendas for global order, and a weakened western front will find it harder to defend the current system (Ikenberry, 2011). When looking at the concept of the Responsibility to Protect and the implementation of such in Syria, it becomes clear that in order for the concept to work, the P5 should all act on the assumption that all states want people to live in countries that are willing to protect their populations from mass atrocity crimes, including genocide, ethnic cleansing, war crimes, and crimes against humanity. Based on the above, this does however not seem to be the case, and it may therefore be argued that the global diffusion of power being witnessed in contemporary international politics, have caused a decrease in western influence and thereby the West´s power to continue setting "*global standards and rules of behavior*" (Thakur, 2013, p. 61). The P2 is simply not willing to follow, unless it adds to their own agenda or interests.

7.2.2 A Russian and Chinese attempt to balance the West?

Throughout the process in the UNSC on the situation in Syria, Russia and China have on numerous draft resolutions cast a double veto, and thereby prevented the UNSC in adopting resolutions on Syria and the protection of Syrian civilians. Russia and China have been particularly sensitive when it comes to humanitarian intervention, hence R2P, in Syria as this could possibly harm respectively Russian interests and the sovereign values of both Russia and China. Based on this, it can be argued

that the P2 will go very far in protecting their own interests and influence and thereby maintain their relationship with Syria. According to Waltz (2000, p. 38), the initial goal of balancing is for a state to be able to protect its interests by balancing and thereby maintain power. One of the ways in which states can balance is by forming defensive alliances with each other. Based on this, I argue that Russia and China have been balancing the P3 in the UNSC by imposing their veto power, and thereby maintain power and influence in Syria. Hence, the P2 has created a defensive alliance against the P3 and thereby sought to balance power among them. Moreover, defending Syria in the UNSC can be seen as an essential part of maintaining the balance of power in the international order (Adams, 2015, p. 15). As I have just argued, the world is changing, and the system has broken in two (Ignatieff, 2011). I therefore believe that balancing the West in the UNSC is another indicator hereof. Thus, I argue that the veto power, in relation to the situation in Syria, has come to signify an arena of power relationships between the P2 and the P3, and Russian and Chinese double vetoes in the UNSC can therefore in regard to the situation in Syria, be perceived as a strategy for survival and a way in which the P2 can sustain and secure interests and thereby maintain power.

7.2.2.1 *Summary of findings*

In the analysis of the above I found that there seems to be a crucial lack of leadership and followership in contemporary world politics. The world is changing and new powers are arising, including the P2. Therefore, the current order has in the case of Syria not been sufficient to create consensus between the P5. Rather, the behavior of the P2 has showed that the P5 has broken into two. As goes for the Responsibility to Protect and the implementation of such in Syria, it becomes clear that in order for it to be implemented all parties need to share the same assumption and concern of human rights. This has however not proved to be the case in Syria, and therefore I argue that Russia and China does simply not share the same concerns when it comes to the humanitarian situation in Syria, or the world. Rather, it seems as though the P2 believes the Westphalian Peace should remain the guiding principle. Finally, I have found that the P2 has been balancing the West and are thereby showing their reluctance to impose western principles on Syria that could lead to a decrease in their own power and influence in regard to Syria. Therefore, the changing world order has had influence on the behavior of the emerging powers and has further made a difference when it comes to Syria and the Responsibility to Protect.

8. Discussion

This chapter will discuss the overall findings from the previous sections and evaluate how these can explain why there has been no UNSC intervention into the Syrian civil war, despite the UN´s concept of the Responsibility to Protect.

In chapter 3, paragraph 2 on liberalism I asked whether the liberal peace can *"be effectively preserved and expanded without provoking unnecessary danger and inflicting unnecessary harm"* (Doyle, 2012, p. 54). In the first paragraph of the analysis it was laid bare that the two cases of Iraq and Libya, in the view of Russia, has been attempts of liberal imprudence, in which the U.S. and allies have been trying to pursue the transportation of liberal values and regime change through humanitarian intervention. This I argue, have been one of the main reasons why Russia and to some degree China have been opposing UNSC intervention and the implementation of the Responsibility to Protect in Syria. Therefore, one can argue that liberal imprudence in the case of Syria, has provoked unnecessary danger and inflicted unnecessary harm. It may however be discussed, that this has not been done directly, but as many have argued, the "*price of Libya has been paid by Syrians*" (Brockmeier et al., 2016, p. 125). The term *liberal imprudence* can thereby be said to have been an indirect cause of the missing action of the UNSC in Syria. Moreover, it has been established that Russia has great interests in preserving influence in Syria and maintaining a good relationship with the Syrian regime. As realism argues, states operate in an anarchic system and is therefore in lack of a world government. States must therefore not guess wrong about the intentions of other states, because there will be no one to help them. The case of Syria, I believe, has reflected this scenario. Russia and China, has not been willing to allow the West to obtain a legal cart blanche, as they did in Libya, to launch a humanitarian intervention in Syria. And this is well-knowing, that we do not know for sure whether the West really has an intention of intervening in Syria, if this were to be mandated by the UNSC. But this again proves my point, that according to the realist thought states can never be certain of other states´ intentions. Russia argued this was reflected through the case of Iraq and Libya. And so, Russia and China, have reflected through their behavior in the UNSC that this is simply not something they can "afford" to guess wrong about in Syria. This is further based off the idea that Russia and China´s primary interests in Syria lie in national interests, Westphalian sovereignty, and regime survival.

In relation to this, one may argue that the protection of civilians is unlikely to be a primary goal for China and Russia in relation to the situation in Syria. The analysis found that China and Russia have

voted in favor of some resolutions regarding the protection of civilians in Syria. But based on the overall findings of the analysis it does seem somewhat plausible that Russia and China have only voted in favor based on an assumption that the resolutions would not affect the overall goal of Russian interests in Syria. It may therefore also be argued that the underlying principles of R2P did not constitute a major influence when deciding to mandate Chapter VII measures in Libya and a cart blanche c.f. "*to take all necessary measures…*" (UNSC S/RES/1973, para. 4). Thus, I argue that the fact that the UNSC was able to successfully pass resolution 1973 on Libya, did not demonstrate "*a key turning point in the history of R2P*" (Brockmeier et al., 2016, pp. 113-114), as the two cases, Syria and Libya, show clear resemblance regarding the crimes against civilians, although in Syria these have escalated massively. Some would maybe argue that R2P changed the decision-making calculus of the Security Council (Hehir, 2013b, p. 146). However, when analysing the behaviour of the council in the case of Libya compared to that of Syria, this seems highly unlikely. Thus, if R2P could generate a basis and legitimate reason for intervention in Libya, this should indeed also have been the case in Syria. However, in Syria, the R2P was not invoked, and it thereby indicates that the concept only becomes useful when it manages to serve the interests of all of the P5, or when it will not get in the way of any vital interests of each of the P5. In relation to this, realism argues that "*all international agreements are provisional and conditional on the willingness of states to observe them… [they are] merely expedient agreements which can and will be set aside if they conflict with the vital interests of states*" (Jackson & Sørensen, 2013, p. 67). This is again based off the idea that the P5 is acting on self-interests.

In 1999, Kofi Annan argued that a "*developing international norm*" was emerging, one that could forcibly protect people who were compromised to genocide and mass killings (Bellamy & Wheeler, 2014, p. 480). He was here referring to what later became known as the R2P. However, through the analysis, one may argue that the R2P cannot be considered a norm within international politics as it is not all aspects of the concept that is widely accepted among states. As argued, the R2P entails the possibility of coercive humanitarian intervention through its third pillar. Throughout the analysis, it has been acknowledged that humanitarian intervention still remains a highly controversial issue within international politics, and the P5 is no exception. One may argue that the main reason for this remain a lack of consensus of if and how humanitarian interventions should be carried out. This is based off the idea that the P5 do not share the same values and ideas, and as the world is turning more and more multipolar, this has become a dominant and crucial factor, especially when concerning the protection of civilians faced with mass atrocity crimes. Through the R2P, the P5 did in theory agree

on a principle that were to guide states on how to respond when faced with gross violations on human rights. Nevertheless, one can argue that when operationalized it becomes less attractive for states. Therefore, I argue that the concept will remain secondary to the UNSC and will only be applied wherever it is beneficial for their national interests. If R2P should become successful, it has therefore become evident that there should be a collective desire among the P5 to implement the principles of the concept, and not just on a case-by-case basis considered through the lens of conflicting national interests. Furthermore, it can be questioned if China and Russia will ever be ready or willing to support the changes in the system that the West has been seeking (Ikenberry & Etzioni, 2011).

9. Conclusion

This dissertation has sought to research why there has been no UN Security Council intervention into the civil war in Syria, despite the UN´s concept of the Responsibility to Protect. In 2001, the International Commission on Intervention and State Sovereignty was given the task to "*develop a global political concensus on how to move from polemics – and often paralysis – towards action within the international system, particularly through the United Nations*" (ICISS, 2011, p. 2), and thereby find a solution on how to overcome mass atrocity crimes conducted within sovereign states. Nevertheless, the task seems to have failed, and political consensus missing. Through the analysis, I have found that Russia has been and remain critical towards humanitarian intervention, and thus the third pillar of the Responibility to Protect. Specifically, Russia believes that humanitarian intervention conducted by western states is merely a cover up for regime change and the transportation of liberal values, and therefore Russia has vetoed draft resolutions in the UNSC aimed at protecting the Syrian civilians. Furthermore, it has been stated that Russia has great interests in Syria, both strategic and economic, and thereby they cannot allow the P3 along with other western states to intervene in Syria, as this may harm these interests. Moreover, I have found that China in general seems to be reluctant towards intervention into the internal affairs of sovereign states, and has thereby shown to be a strong proponent of the Westphalian Sovereignty. Cooperation in the UNSC on the situation in Syria has however occurred. Nevertheless, this has been difficult to achieve and even harder to sustain, and thereby cooperation on Syria in the UNSC have had its limits. I have found this to be based off a rare confluence of interests between the P5. Furthermore, I have found it plausible that Russia and China have only voted in favor based on an assumption that the resolutions would not affect the overall goal of their national interests. Finally, I have found the changing world order to be a crucial factor for the UNSC and their ability to carry out resolutions on Syria and the Responibility to Protect. Specifically,

the increased influence of emerging powers, such as China and Russia, has caused a divide between the P2 and the P3 in the UNSC. As such, it has through the analysis become evident that the UNSC, specifically the P5, does not share the same concerns when it comes to the protection of civilians against mass atrocity crimes in Syria, and therefore there has been no UN Security Council intervention, despite the Responsibility to Protect. Finally, in order for the UNSC to carry out proficient resolutions on Syria there needs to be consensus between the P5, and this factor has been particularly missing in the situation in Syria. All in all, I believe the Security Council is suffering from a dominance of national interests, which makes it impossible for the UNSC to carry out proficient resolutions on Syria in regard to the Responsibility to Protect.

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