

Fall 2010

Reform of the United Nations Security Council: A Rope of Sand

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Reform of the United Nations Security Council: A Rope of Sand

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Fall 2010

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Preface and Acknowledgements

Coming to Geneva, I knew I wanted to conduct a research project that would allow me to take full advantage of the resources utterly unique to Geneva: namely, the UN repository and the vibrant community of diplomats. I am convinced that the best way to understand an issue is to listen and engage with as many viewpoints as possible. Every diplomat here in Geneva carries piece of his or her homeland's political and social values. My goal was to find a topic that would allow me to interact with many of those philosophies.

Throughout every briefing and reading with SIT related to the UN I was fixated on the inequality underlying our entire system on multilateral governance. Not knowing anything about the Security Council reform debate, I was certain that if I dug deeply enough I would be able to find viable proposals from various groups. The results have been sometimes intellectually discouraging but always fascinating. Just as I had hoped, my meetings with high-ranking diplomats were certainly some of the highlights of my semester in Switzerland. My sincerest gratitude to Michiel Combink, Peter Gooderham Toni Jacques, and Amr Roshdy for taking time out of their busy schedules to meet with me. Thank you, Mr. Roshdy, for your continued encouragement and willingness to answer my further questions after our interview. I would like to extend my thanks Sammy Yaish who encouraged me to undertake this topic even though I had already initially proposed a completely different project. A final thanks to my parents who support my every adventure: including this one.

Abstract

For nearly two decades the international community has debated how to address reform of the United Nations Security Council. Many argue that it is imperative that the United Nations Security Council be reformed for the body to maintain its relevance and legitimacy in the Twenty-first Century. The original United Nations Charter endowed special voting privileges and permanent membership to the five powers that emerged victorious from World War Two. These five powers no longer describe the international world order. Various reform groups such as the Group of Four, The United for Consensus movement, and the Africa Group have proposed reform resolutions to address this discrepancy. Whatever shape reform takes will impact the future of the United Nations and the international world order.

1. Introduction

“With all its defects, with all the failures that we can check up against it, the UN still represents man’s best-organized hope to substitute the conference table for the battlefield¹.” However often quoted and referenced, these words of Dwight D. Eisenhower hold as true today as when first uttered in 1961. The United Nations remains the closest approximation of a democratic parliament representing the views of nations from all corners of the globe. It is arguably closer today to global representation than during Eisenhower’s time. Over the next fifty years, the world would witness an enormous shake-up of the 1945 world order, including decolonization, the break-up of the Soviet Union, and the subsequent creation of many newly independent states. The overall composition of the United Nations’ General Assembly has thus shifted markedly. Despite these shifts and others, the Security Council of 2010 remains virtually unaltered from its conception in 1944.

The need for United Nations Security Council (UNSC) reform is hardly a novel conception. Rather, as Philip Gordon of the Brookings Institute explains, “reform of the Security Council has long been high on the international agenda, but the only thing everyone agrees upon is that the current arrangement is deeply flawed”. Why then, has Security Council (SC) reform for so long stagnated? What is at stake if the Security Council fails to keep pace with the geopolitical realities of the 21st Century? Many posit that the United Nations itself will become antiquated unless the gross imbalances of the Security Council are effectively addressed. Yet what would constitute a “fair” and

¹ Dwight D. Eisenhower, 1961.

“representative” Security Council? Unfortunately, reaching a consensus on these essential points remains fantastically out of reach. This paper puts forth the views and arguments of several major emerging economic and political powers as well as their regional contenders. These emerging powers share many ideological claims to Security Council representation: it is these powers that are now rising to challenge the Charter-enshrined power of the Permanent-5 (P5). P5 is the commonplace term for the five nations (The People’s Republic of China, France, Russia, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, and the United States) that won World War Two (WWII) and were thence given permanent seats on the Security Council. This paper also addresses the interests and rights of developing nations as well as middle-sized powers. What solution can be reached when the P5 hold the ability to prevent any change and do not wish to share their privileges with other nations?

The stated purpose of the United Nations is commendable indeed: to rid the world of war, preserve fundamental human rights, further freedom and living standards for all, strengthen international peace and security, and to accomplish all these ends through tolerant and democratic means². Paul Kennedy provocatively concludes his book, *The Parliament of Man*, with the following question; “The original preamble to the Charter of the United Nations had it right. The question is, can we do it?³” Indeed the onus for responsible reform lies with the international community as a whole. It remains to be seen if the demands of emerging powers will be sufficiently met in order to preserve the original aspirations of the United Nations.

² qd. Paul Kennedy, *The Parliament of Man: The Past, Present, and Future of the United Nations* (New York: Random House, 2006), United Nations Charter

³ *Ibid.* Paul Kennedy, 279.

2. The Roots of the United Nations Security Council

a. The League of Nations and World War One

Before the views and arguments of these emerging powers can be adequately analyzed, we must turn our attention to the foundation and history of the Security Council in the Twentieth Century. Above all, it is imperative that one bear in mind that the Charter of the United Nations still in effect today remains rooted in the dual legacies of the failed League of Nations and the post- WWII world order from which it arose. It is commonly believed that the League of Nations was already doomed when the United States' Congress refused to allow the US to become member to the organization. The United States emerged from World War I unrivaled by the countries of most of the world and, crucially, politically determined to avoid future entanglement with "European problems." This sentiment of isolationism thus prevented the US from joining the League of Nations, greatly weakening the League's legitimacy and international power projection capability. Furthermore, Russia, Italy, and Germany had little incentive to remain in the League and thus revoked their membership believing that it was no longer politically fruitful. At the outbreak of WWII, the League of Nations was a moribund institution, totally incapable of protecting the world from the "scourge of war". Therefore the United Nations, and particularly the United Nations Security Council UNSC, was formed with the aim of retaining the most powerful post-WWII powers in the UN to prevent a breakdown of world order such as that which transpired after WWI.

The desire to retain the emergent victorious powers of WWII within the UN system manifested itself in the structure and generous mandate given to the Security Council. The Republic of China, France, the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, and the United States of America were given both permanent Security Council membership and the de facto power of a veto because all decisions require consensus from the P5. What is often forgotten is that veto power was given with the express directive that it should not be used unless international peace and security is at risk. In other words, the P5 weren't intended to use the requirement of P5 consensus to promote their national political stances of the permanent five members⁴. The Security Council is also comprised of ten nonpermanent members that are elected from the General Assembly and serve two-year terms that are not immediately renewable. Over time it has been established through precedent that of these ten nonpermanent members three are from Africa, two from Asia, two from South America, two from the "Western Europe and Others Group", and one from Eastern Europe.

Additionally, the Charter of the United Nations expressly states that military action taken at the behest of the Security Council should only take place in collaboration with the Military Staff Committee. Members of the Military Staff Committee were intended to be chosen democratically however the body was defunct practically before it was implemented. The Charter included no means for either limiting the use of the veto by consensus voting or ensuring the inclusion of the Military Staff Committee and thus the Security Council took on a political life of its own. Once again, this leeway resulted from the belief that a UN that included and was somewhat controlled by the major world

⁴ Ibis. Paul Kennedy, 62.

powers was far more effective than a perfectly democratic UN body absent the world powers⁵.

b. Cold War Power Plays

Cold War enmity between the US and the USSR dictated the agenda and role of the Security Council during that period. It also had a profound impact on setting precedent for the usage of the veto power. Neither the US nor the USSR wanted to commit troops to a military action that would be under joint command with the Military Staff Committee therefore that body was sidelined. In moves that could be considered to be contrary to the original vision of the Charter, the USSR began to use its veto power with purely political motivations. The only reason the US was less engaged in this activity was that it benefited from broader support on the SC and generally did not come up against resolutions that it needed to veto for its personal political benefit⁶.

c. Post-Cold War 1990s Security Council “Activist” Voting

The breakup of the Soviet Union led to a new period in Security Council behavior. With the Cold War over, Russia (who formally replaced the USSR on the Security Council) was far too weak to pose any threat to the US. Without these two powers checking each other, it became much easier for the Council to authorize more and

⁵ Jose Alvarez “Judging the Security Council” *The American Journal of International Law* (Jan 1996), 21

⁶ Op. cit. Paul Kennedy, 47.

more peace enforcement missions. Of the P-5, only China resisted this new wave of so-called “activist voting” on the Security Council⁷.

The peacekeeping missions of the 1990s took place almost exclusively in the developing global South whereas the P5 states are all industrialized nations and predominantly Western. This discrepancy has fueled much of the discussion about the need for reform of the Security Council. As South African Counsellor of Disarmament Michiel Combrink phrases the point, “The global South is left wondering who is making the decisions and on *whose behalf*”⁸. The Security Council’s failure to act in the atrocious African Great Lakes (Rwanda & Burundi) genocide is a particularly poignant illustration to some of how the political agendas of the P5 states have too much sway on where the Security Council chooses to act. Many in Africa believe that if an African nation had been a permanent Security Council member at that time, hundreds of thousands of African lives would have been saved⁹.

As a greater number of states grow economically and politically, these players have begun to express their lack of trust in the ability of the Security Council to fairly and responsibly deliver resolutions¹⁰. These states speak of their deservingness of a permanent SC seat in terms of the “legitimacy” that their presence would offer. The common discourse is that if the Security Council is *not* reformed soon such that it reflects 21st Century geopolitical realities, UN member states will cease to take its decisions seriously and SC resolutions will be much less enforced. Academic Ian Hurd, however, proposes that states speak in terms of Council “legitimacy” as a universal cover for their

⁷ Linda Melvern “The Security Council: Behind the Scenes,” International Affairs (Royal Institute of International Affairs 1944-), Jan 2001: 107.

⁸ Interview with Michiel Combrink, Counsellor of Disarmament at the Permanent Mission of South Africa to the UN in Geneva, 16 November 2010.

⁹ Op. cit. Interview with Michiel Combrink

¹⁰ Jose Alvarez “Judging the Security Council” The American Journal of International Law, Jan 1996: 17.

real particularistic, national interests in gaining a permanent seat. He goes on to conclude that the legitimacy rhetoric, while perhaps not the true concern of states contending for a permanent seat, is a highly effective moral argument¹¹.

d. The Security Council in the Twenty-First Century: P5 Domination

Calls for reform of the UNSC center around two major flaws in the current system: the makeup of the SC body and the working methods of the SC.

The permanent five members of the Security Council indisputably continue to maintain a stronghold on the decision making of the Council body. To begin with, the practical experience of continuous membership for the past 65 years endows them with a well-run bureaucratic team on the Security Council. Each time a nonpermanent member begins its term, it much integrate into the Council whereas the P5 are continuously central to its operations. Even more significantly, the veto power means that the P5 are vital to every decision taken on by the Council, even if it is unrelated to their national or regional interests. Though the UN Charter confers on the Security Council “the primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security¹²,” there are no explicit limits on veto usage. Academic discourse surrounding the veto has become increasingly critical in the past decades; Nirupam Sen aptly describes general (non-P5) sentiment when she writes, “the veto was designed to protect national interests and logically has no place in the protection of individual rights¹³.” There is a growing consensus in the international community that the P5 has cast the veto far too often and

¹¹ Ian Hurd. “Myths of Membership: The Politics of Legitimation in UN Security Council Reform” 213.

¹² qd. Paul Kennedy “The Parliament of Man”, *The Charter of the United Nations*: 321.

¹³ Nirupam Sen “Nonstate Threats and the Principled Reform of the UN” *Ethics & International Affairs*. 2006: 232.

inappropriately. Consider the following statistics: since the inception of the UNSC, 59 vetoes have been cast to block the admission of member states to the UN and 43 have been cast to block nominees for Secretary General. At the same time, no veto has ever been cast to stop a war. Many UN member states object to the mentality that the preservation of international peace and security has been interpreted militarily almost exclusively¹⁴. Of the 186 countries eligible for nonpermanent membership in the Security Council, 77 countries have never been able to serve – that is over 41%. The permanent members are able to block any state they do not wish to serve with on the UNSC. Additionally, the veto power has enabled the permanent members to maintain *de jure* or *de facto* membership in almost every principle UN body and organ. In other words, the P5 hold special status and power throughout the entire UN system because of the veto.¹⁵

The veto has led not only to the P5 stranglehold on UNSC decisions, but also has contributed to the lack of transparency in the working methods of the Council. Currently, the UNSC functions as follows: the P5 discuss an issue behind closed doors, when they have made their decision they invite the nonpermanent members to read the resolution and in certain cases make a comment, then, the entire Council signs the resolution in the large conference hall open to the press.¹⁶ What goes on behind those closed doors is entirely unknown because full records are not kept of the proceedings and the P5 are not required to submit an explanation for their vetoes. Amr Roshdy highlighted this point in his 2005 address at the “UN @ 60” Conference in Pretoria, South Africa; “no researcher will, ever, be able to study the records of deliberations of Security Council members.

¹⁴ Op. cit. Interview with Michiel Combrink; Op. cit. Interview with Aditya Desai, Indian businessman, at a café in Geneva, 5 November 2010

¹⁵ Amr Roshdy, “Why the Security Council could not be reformed” Enough will was not enough,” Paper prepared for UN @ 60 Conference. Pretoria, South Africa. Oct 2005: 3

¹⁶ Op. cit. Interview with Michiel Combrink; Op. cit. Interview with Amr Roshdy

There are no such records”.¹⁷ The only records of UNSC discussions are short summaries sent to the Secretary General for his eyes only. “The Security Council is not accountable to the General Assembly, the “popular” chamber [of the UN]. Furthermore, the Security Council cannot be checked in its decision making by the International Court of Justice¹⁸.”

3. Regional Security Council Contenders and their Detractors

The one fact that practically every diplomat and political observer can agree to (at least on the surface) is that the UNSC must be reformed. Unfortunately, there is zero consensus on what shape that reform should take or even on basic considerations such as how SC actions should be different, what should be the metric for measuring representativeness, what will make the UNSC maximally legitimate in the eyes of the world? One obvious yet oft overlooked setback is that there is no such entity as “the eyes of the world”¹⁹. There is no panacea for the Security Council quagmire that could possibly satisfy the national interests of all states. Whatever reform does eventually come to pass, it is inconceivable that every contending nation will be satisfied. In brief, here are some examples of various contenders and their detractors for *permanent* Security Council seats.

a. Europe

¹⁷ Amr Roshdy, “Why the Security Council could not be reformed” Enough will was not enough,” Paper prepared for UN @ 60 Conference. Pretoria, South Africa. Oct 2005: 1

¹⁸ Albert Venter, “Reform of the United Nations Security Council: A Comment on the South African Position,” International Journal on World Peace, 2003: 40.

¹⁹ Ian Hurd. “Myths of Membership: The Politics of Legitimation in UN Security Council Reform” Global Governance (Apr-June 2008)

Two of the P5 members herald from Europe: France and the United Kingdom. Though these two nations have long held great power on the world stage, their economies today are not nearly as dominant as they were coming out of WWII. In 2009, the United Kingdom contributed 6.6 % of the annual budget while France contributed 6.3 %. They were the fourth and fifth highest contributors to the United Nations behind the US (22%, the maximum allowed) and nonpermanent members Japan (16.6%) and fellow European state Germany (8.5%). France and the UK enjoy the highest level of international power projection of any European states, largely because of their status within the UNSC. To Germany, this modern reality is wholly unfair and outdated.

Germany argues that its booming economy – far more powerful than current European SC members France and the UK – merits it a spot on the council. Additionally, Germany argues that its exclusion is an unfair relic of post WW2 world order. Germany's candidacy dates back to the early 1990s. Though much diplomatic progress has been made towards a German permanent seat, not official advancement has been made apart from submitting an unsuccessful resolution to the UN General Assembly. Italy and Spain object to any scheme favoring Germany over themselves.²⁰ These countries would rather see an increase in non-permanent seats for which all Western European states would compete. They have helped create the United for Consensus movement to achieve these aims. Furthermore, the European Union body would like to instead see a permanent EU seat, further complicating the politics of that region. This is unlikely to take place in the near future given the EU's surfeit of internal turmoil.

b. Asia

²⁰ Interview with Toni Jacques, First Secretary of the Mexican Permanent Mission to the UN in Geneva, 10 November 2010.

Japan has long argued that as the consistent second ranking contributor to the UN preceded only by the US, along with a track record of nuclear disarmament and peace building, its inclusion as a permanent UNSC member would be logical²¹. Permanent member China, however, balks at the suggestion that Japan has paid its dues for the atrocities of WW2II (a sincerely felt argument that nonetheless likely masks the additional fact that China simply wants to remain the only Asian SC permanent member)²². Under the Charter, the Security Council structure cannot be altered if any permanent member vetoes the proposed change. Therefore, as long as Japanese membership remains anathema to China's interests, nothing will move forward. Additionally, Japan has essentially no support from its Asian neighbors. North and South Korea are both fundamentally opposed to Japan gaining a permanent seat as they continue to view Japan as their enemy²³.

India also stakes claim to a seat as one of the most populous nations in an under represented region, one of the world's fastest growing economies, representing a sixth of the world's population. Pakistan has long stood in opposition of India gaining a permanent seat citing obvious fears for its own national interests. President Barack Obama's November 2010 endorsement of India for a permanent SC seat stoked the rhetorical flame about India's candidacy. In the eyes of Egyptian diplomat Amr Roshdy, the endorsement was a well calculated political move because it cost Obama and the United States very little and gained Indian support leading up to the G20 summit in

²¹ Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan, "Japan's Role in the Maintenance of International Peace and Security" (Tokyo, Japan, 2004), 7.

²² Interview with Amr Roshdy, Foreign Ministry of the Arab Republic of Egypt, The Mission of the Arab Republic of Egypt to Geneva, 2 November 2010.

²³ Yehuda Blum. "Proposals for UN Security Council Reform" *The American Journal of International Law*. 646.

Seoul. Though Pakistan was enraged and alarmed by the endorsement, it is still fully reliant on US aid and could not retaliate with anything beyond rhetoric²⁴.

In the late 1990s and early 2000s Japan and India, along with Germany and Brazil, began to support each other's bids for permanent seats in an grouping known as the "G4". (See Section 4a for more information).

c. Latin America

In Latin America, Brazil echoes similar claims as India; it is a booming economic power and could represent a region that currently has *no* permanent representation. Both Argentina and Mexico object to the claim that Brazil is the natural candidate to permanently represent their diverse region. One example of Mexico and Brazil's diverging foreign policy agendas cited by Toni Jacques, representative to the Conference on Disarmament in Geneva pertains to weapons controls. While Brazil and Mexico share the conviction that the world should be a nuclear free zone, Brazil is a major producer of small arms. Disarmament is central to the Mexican foreign policy vision and Mexico is not convinced that Brazil would represent its interests in that realm were it elevated to permanent UNSC status²⁵.

Granting Brazil permanent membership, in the eyes of many Latin American and Caribbean nations, would impair the ability of other Latin American nations to break into the elite SC circle in the future. Not only would regional contenders such as Argentina and Mexico be unable to gain a permanent seat if Brazil gains exclusive right to that

²⁴ Op. cit. Interview with Amr Roshdy

²⁵ Op. cit. Interview with Toni Jacques.

privilege, but one less nonpermanent seat would be allocated to the region. The many small island states of the Caribbean have long felt under represented on the UNSC: these small island states make up a huge number of the 77 states that have never served on the UNSC. Many of these small states fear that far from bringing representation to their region, Brazil as a permanent member would actually limit the likelihood that their voices would be heard on the Council.

d. Africa

All African nations agree that their continent deserves far greater representation on the Security Council. Africa is, in fact, the only continent with a unified proposal for reform; the Ezulwini Consensus, adopted in 2005. Africa will not settle for less than two permanent seats with veto powers and five nonpermanent seats: one allocated for each other five regions of Africa on a rotating basis. Ezulwini has been reaffirmed at every biannual summit of the African Union since its adoption. The three major points of tension between the Common African Position and the G4 proposal relate to: 1) the veto rights of new permanent members, 2) the proposed number of permanent African members, and 3) the proposed number of non-permanent members.

Africa believes that without the veto power, new permanent members would be ineffective and unimportant in relation to the current Permanent Five; in other words, the current power balance would remain unaltered²⁶. The Ezulwini Consensus explicitly states that, “even though Africa is opposed in principle to the veto, it is of the view that

²⁶ African Union Executive Council, 7th Extraordinary Session. “The Common African Position on the Proposed Reform of the United Nations: “The Ezulwini Consensus” (Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. 2005), 2.

so long as it exists, and as a matter of common justice, it should be made available to all permanent members of the Security Council”²⁷. With most proposed schemes, Asia would receive three permanent seats and Western Europe alone three permanent seats – not to mention Western-bent USA. Africa believes it is already a major concession to ask for just two permanent seats out of a 11 permanent seats proposed by both the G4 and one of the two UN High-Level Panels on reform. Africa makes up more than 27% of UN General Assembly membership but would only receive 18% of UNSC seats. The P5 also object to the Ezulwini Consensus proposed method of selected Africa’s permanent members. The African Union would like to select a group of candidate states to then be sent to the General Assembly for a vote. This is how *non-permanent* members are currently selected.

Latin America and Africa are the only continents with no permanent member on the Security Council but Africa, furthermore, has no representative amongst the G4 hopefuls while Latin America at least has aspirant Brazil. African sentiment seems to be that they are the least represented in the current UNSC format and in most reform schemes²⁸. Much of the tension related to Security Council reform in Asian, European, and Latin America relate to the fear of mid-sized states who believe that elevating the status of their large neighbors will *not* help represent their needs but would simply lower their international status in comparison. Africa, with no current representation, feels that it can only stand to gain with the addition of African seats.

When the United Nations was conceived the vast majority of Africa’s modern nations were not yet decolonized, independent states. The make-up of the General

²⁷ *Ibis*. African Union Executive Council, 1.

²⁸ *Op. cit.* Interview with Michiel Combrink; *Op. cit.* Interview with Amr Roshdy.

Assembly has thus changed immensely and the Security Council has not followed suit. According to Ambassador Roshdy of Egypt, African delegates are currently focusing on ensuring two permanent seats for Africa and have not yet opened discussions on *which* states those will be²⁹. It is most advantageous to Africa to postpone that discussion in order to maintain a united front wherein all African states agree that more permanent African representation is vital. In international discussion, South Africa has garnered the most attention for a permanent seat given its rapidly advancing economy. South African Counsellor Combrink explained that when informal discussions about which African states would hold the permanent seats, South Africa was not initially convinced it wanted to take up the mantle³⁰. Holding a Security Council seat *does* bring prestige to a country but it is also time-consuming, costly, and places states in a position where they are bound to make unpopular decisions. Furthermore, South Africa was not convinced that any state without permanent status and veto power could actual make an impact³¹. South Africa believes strongly in the UN body, particularly given its creation in the wake of the apartheid regime. “South Africa is a creation of the international community” and that origin continues to impact the way South Africa approaches international relations; with extreme emphasis on multilateralism and cooperation³². After South Africa served on the SC as a non-permanent member from 2006 to 2008, the tide of national political opinion began to shift in the direction of pursuing a permanent seat. South Africa saw that it could be incredibly useful in areas related to economic recovery and peacekeeping given its recent history³³. According to South African Ambassador Combrink, South Africa

²⁹ Op. cit. Interview with Amr Roshdy

³⁰ Op. cit. Interview with Michiel Combrink

³¹ Op. cit. Albert Venter, 34-35.

³² Op. cit. Interview with Michiel Combrink.

³³ *Ibis*. Interview with Michiel Combrink.

believes its major achievement during the '06-'08 term was strengthening the relationship between the Security Council and the African Union Peace and Security Council – the regional body responsible for the same objects as the UNSC³⁴. Additionally, South Africa now believes that it can offer legitimacy to Security Council measures and actions in Africa, which are disproportionately prevalent Security Council issues.³⁵ South Africa believes, Combrink added, that other strong African nations such as Nigeria and Egypt could also offer this critical credibility to the Security Council³⁶. Nigeria holds Africa's largest population and is one of the continent's fastest growing economies. Given international involvement in the oil industry in Africa, many believe that oil-rich Nigeria could offer crucial perspectives to the Council. Egypt believes that its combined associations with Africa *and* the Middle East/Muslim culture merit it a permanent seat on the Council. Ambassador Roshdy opined that ignoring the fact that 1,100 million of the world's citizens are Muslim and 400 million are Arab when envisioning the permanent Security Council members would be not only immoral, but also shortsighted and sure to back fire.³⁷

The P5, however, are uncomfortable accepting new permanent members into their fold without knowing who they are. When asked why this was the case given the fact that the Security Council is a body designed to represent the interests of the General Assembly, UK ambassador Peter Gooderham responded that the UK would indeed be very uncomfortable with that scenario because a state like Libya could be given a seat³⁸. Still, with 53 votes in the General Assembly, the continent of Africa remains an elusive

³⁴ *Ibis*. Interview with Michiel Combrink

³⁵ *Op. cit.* Albert Venter, 34-35.

³⁶ *Op. cit.* Interview with Michiel Combrink.

³⁷ *Op. cit.* Interview with Amr Roshdy

³⁸ Interview with Peter Gooderham, Permanent Mission of the United Kingdom to the UN in Geneva, 19 November 2010.

and critical voting bloc for all groups attempting to pass Security Council reform resolutions.

4. Unprecedented Interregional Alliances

What common vision does Costa Rica, Jordan, Liechtenstein, Singapore, and Switzerland share? What unites Italy, Mexico, Pakistan, South Korea, and Spain? Why is the three continent-strong alliance between Brazil, Germany, India, and Japan a commonly accepted international relations reality? Each of these groups, along with the Africa Group, presented a multilateral resolution for UNSC reform to the 2005 UN General Assembly. None of the resolutions even arrived at a vote because they all lacked adequate support. Even the Non Aligned Movement (NAM), with members from 77 countries throughout the globe originally brought together in response to the bipolar Cold War environment, has drafted a UNSC reform proposal. At no other epoch in human history have powers from such disparate lands had the incentive to join together with a common vision.

a. The Permanent Five (P5): China, France, Russia, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, The United States of America

The P5 are very different from the other interregional groups discussed in this section because their common interest is to preserve the national power that they hold

within the existing UNSC system. Each of the five, however, approaches this goal in a very different manner.

The P5 not only dominate the decisions of the Security Council today, but also have the final say in any proposed reform to its makeup. Therefore, even if all of the 187 other countries in the United Nations voted that the P5 should no longer hold the veto right, or that one of the P5 should lose its privileged status, the P5 countries could veto that vote. The conflict of interest inherent to this arrangement is evident to all involved with the UN – even the P5. The P5 are politically unable to openly oppose talks of UNSC reform because it is so flagrantly obvious that the system is outdated and unfairly advantages five nations³⁹; some of whom are far from the major economic and political players of the 21st century⁴⁰ and are certainly not representative of the world population. Therefore, the official stance of all five permanent members is that they are open to negotiations about Security Council reform.

The basic positions of the P5 are as follows. Though the US and Russia outwardly promote reform, they will not accept a Security Council larger than 21 members or any reform plan which eliminates their veto power. The UK and France promote an “interim road map” wherein a new category of members (“semi-permanent”) are elected for longer terms and are eligible to reelection. Ambassador Gooderham of the UK states that his country prefers the G4 plan but believes that an intermediate option has a greater chance of passing⁴¹. China has voiced support for both the African Group and the United for Consensus movement: endorsements that do not at all go hand in hand. According to an African diplomat who chose to remain anonymous, the Chinese only support the African

³⁹ Op. cit. Paul Kennedy, 139.

⁴⁰ Marcus Franda The United Nations in the twenty-first century: management and reform processes in a troubled organization. (Rowman & Littlefield: MD) 2006.

⁴¹ Op. cit. Interview with Peter Gooderham

position because they have strategic economic interest in Africa and are certain that the African proposal won't garner enough momentum to be successful. China has historically abstained more and blocked far fewer votes in the UNSC. The UK and France advocate for an "intermediate solution" to reform; adding non-permanent seats for longer terms that are eligible for reelection. UK diplomat Mr. Gooderham posited that these seats would eventually naturally evolve into permanent seats⁴². Anonymous South Korean diplomat opined that it was no wonder that France and UK vocally increased their support for the "intermediate solution" in the wake of the European economic crisis. Without Germany, the EU would not have been able to bail out Greece. Newly empowered Germany felt even more entitled to a UNSC seat than ever given this overt signal that it was more powerful than France and the UK.

b. The Great Four (G4): Brazil, Germany, India, Japan

Germany and Japan have been campaigning for permanent seats on the Security Council since the early 1990s. Both argue that their financial contributions to the UN budget merit greater say in the primary decision making organ of the body. At 20% of the overall UN budget, Japan's contributions are second only to the United States while Germany contributes the third greatest sum: far more than any of the other permanent Security Council members. During his time in office, President Clinton strongly advocated for the "fast track" solution to the misrepresentative permanent Security Council composition by simply adding Germany and Japan without any other reforms. This proposal never came to fruition because it held no benefit for the majority of

⁴² Op. cit. Interview with H.E. Peter Gooderham

General Assembly members⁴³. Indeed, the amendment process is formidable enough that in the official UN Charter in effect today Germany and Japan, along with Italy, are still referred to as enemy states. Therefore, a full forty percent of the UN budget is funded by states that are officially enemies.

In 2000, Brazil and India joined in discussions with Germany and Japan. Brazil and India boast massive economies that are only projected to grow in the coming decades. Additionally, their presence on the Security Council would greatly increase regional representation. Various members of the P5 have endorsed G4 members at different points of the past ten years. Though endorsement is significant in that the P5 must eventually approve any additional permanent members, the actual act of endorsing leads to no action. The concrete arguments for elevating the G4 to permanent status have not changed in the past decade; they have simply been reiterated in each available forum. The official G4 proposal includes no specific mention of Brazil, Germany, India, and Japan but is submitted in their name and it is widely understood that they would be granted the additional permanent seats apportioned to their respective regions⁴⁴. The proposal allocates new permanent seats to; two African states, two Asian states, one Latin American and Caribbean State, and one state from the Western European and Other Group (which includes Western Europe, Australia, Canada, and New Zealand). In addition to new permanent members, the G4 proposal calls for one new nonpermanent state from Africa, Asia, Eastern Europe, and Latin America and the Caribbean. Virtually all organized opposition to the G4 proposal originates from the regional rivalries explained previously.

⁴³ Op. cit. Interview with Toni Jacques

⁴⁴ Op. cit. Walter Hoffman and Ayca Ariyork, 5.

The scene changed somewhat in 2006 when Japan began to campaign for a seat independent of the other three G4 states. The official comprehensive reform package would include all four states in an attempt to cater to as many regions as possible. Nonetheless Japan is now engaged with both the G4 and its independent route to the Security Council – reminiscent of the 1990s “fast track” approach promoted by former President Clinton.

c. United for Consensus (UfC): Argentina, Canada, Italy, Malta, Mexico, Pakistan, South Korea, Spain, Turkey and others

The United for Consensus group originated from a Thursday morning “coffee club” of delegates to New York from Italy, Spain, Mexico, and Pakistan. These four countries saw the building momentum of the G4 states as a deeply troubling threat to their national interests. None of the United for Consensus nations believed that the G4 member(s) from their region would represent their national viewpoints⁴⁵. Pakistan fears that, far from merely not representing their national interests, Indian inclusion as a permanent member would completely compromise Pakistan’s interests. Mexico is not militarily threatened by Brazil but, according to Secretary Toni Jacques, “It is shocking to assume that Brazil ideologically represents the entire continent”⁴⁶. Currently Italy and Spain occupy a similar rung of power within Europe as Germany. As Germany’s economy continues to grow and even carries the rest of the European Union, one of the only factors preventing Germany from completely dominating European politics is the

⁴⁵ United for Consensus

⁴⁶ Op. cit. Interview with Toni Jacques

permanent Security Council status that separates it from otherwise much less powerful France and Great Britain. Over time South Korea has become integral to the United for Consensus movement, partly in response to fears of neighbor Japan with an elevated status.

The United for Consensus proposal calls for an additional ten non-permanent members and no new permanent members. To address the imbalance of power between permanent and nonpermanent the UfC draft suggests requiring a majority of 15 affirmative votes out of 25 members to pass a Security Council resolution⁴⁷. The UfC platform is not explicitly opposed to the veto power – essentially because that is a politically untenable position – but privately, most UfC member states feel the veto is immoral⁴⁸. The UfC proposal submits that if regional groups so decide, their members should be eligible for immediate reelection to the Council in the non-permanent category. The non-permanent seats would be divided as follows; six to Africa, five to Asia, four to Latin America and the Caribbean, three to Western Europe and other states, and two to Eastern Europe. UfC reasoning follows that if nonpermanent seats are eligible for reelection, they will be more accountable to the General Assembly for their actions⁴⁹.

The basic philosophy of the United for Consensus movement is that the UNSC should be as democratic and flexible as possible. As an anonymous South Korean diplomat explained, there is no way to predict future politics, so a democratic, electoral system is the best solution; “international politics is not permanent, and permanent

⁴⁷ U.N. General Assembly. 60th Session. “Uniting for Consensus Draft Resolution: Reform of the Security Council” (A/60/L.44) (New York, 2006), 3

⁴⁸ Op. cit. Interview with anonymous South Korean diplomat; Op. cit. Interview with Michiel Combrink; Op. cit. Interview with Toni Jacques

⁴⁹ Op cit. Interview with Toni Jacques; Interview with anonymous South Korean Diplomat at the Mission of the Republic of Korea to the UN in Geneva. 8 November 2010.

solutions will not work.⁵⁰ UfC members argue that their solution makes the most logical sense from an unbiased perspective and is the only solution that will work in the long term.

e. The Small Five (S5): Costa Rica, Jordan, Liechtenstein, Singapore, Switzerland

Costa Rica, Jordan, Lichtenstein, Singapore, and Switzerland, who call themselves the “Small Five” (S5), have joined together to propose focusing on reform of the working methods of the SC⁵¹. Permanent members can only be added to the SC with an amendment of the UN Charter. To do so requires ratifying the new UN Charter in the Congresses of at least a 2/3 majority of member states; an unwieldy, complex, and expensive proposition. As states that are quite small yet nonetheless regionally influential, these states see themselves as potential losers of a reform scheme that greatly increases permanent membership for larger regional powers. By focusing the debate on increasing the transparency and accountability of the current Security Council, the S5 hope to direct the discussion away from additional permanent members. The P5 have not commented directly on the S5 proposal because it is politically unsupportable for them to outwardly oppose it but not in their interest to increase oversight of their actions. The G4 agree that Security Council working methods should be reformed but are uninterested in the S5 proposal because it does not include additional permanent Security Council members. Egyptian ambassador Roshdy believes that unless the S5 proposal becomes

⁵⁰ Op. cit. Interview with anonymous South Korean Diplomat

⁵¹ U.N. General Assembly 60th Session (A/60/L.49) “Follow-up to the outcome of the Millennium Summit: Costa Rica, Jordan, Liechtenstein, Singapore and Switzerland: draft resolution: Improving the working methods of the Security Council” (New York, 2006), 2

more drastic and substantial it will gain no traction because the General Assembly is interested in comprehensive reform which will address its lack of representativeness⁵².

5. Reform in Sight? The Momentum and Failure of 2005

a. Why so Many Thought the Time Was Right

In the early years of the twentieth Century a concatenation of world events gave momentum to the G4 proposal for Security Council reform. The terrorist attacks on the World Trade Center, the subsequent US invasion of Afghanistan and the unauthorized invasion of Iraq, and Kofi Annan's desire to shape the UN institution before he left office made 2005 a year when many thought the time was ripe for reform.

i. The September 11 attacks and the Wars in Afghanistan and Iraq

In the wake of the 9/11 attacks, the United States launched a counter-offensive on Afghanistan. This war, coupled with the 2003 invasion of Iraq drastically drained the United States' resources. The cost of the wars was exacerbated by the fact that the US, along with a coalition of forces, invaded Iraq without an affirmative resolution from the Security Council. It quickly became clear that the war would not imminently conclude and that the US was accordingly going to require financial assistance from other states. Economic giants Japan and German began to contribute significantly to the US war

⁵² Op. cit. Interview with Amr Roshdy

effort. The G4 felt that this monetary assistance could be used to 1) prove that they are integral to the global system and 2) leverage the US to support their candidacy⁵³.

ii. The end of Kofi Annan's term as Secretary General and the High-Level Panel on UN Reform

The Open-Ended Working Group (OEWG) was established in 1992 but had not achieved any real progress in its first decade. In UN committees, the term “Open-Ended” means that any state or interested organization is free to contribute their opinions to the debate though only members of the UN General Assembly can cast a vote in committee decisions⁵⁴. Given the history of the OEWG of indefatigably sifting through every nicety related to UN reform without producing any proposal of substance, the joke among experts is that the committee is *unending* rather than Open-Ended⁵⁵. Secretary General Kofi Annan would soon conclude his time in office and wanted to first make progress in SC reform. Annan openly expressed his belief that the Security Council specifically needed reform stating that, “a change in the Council’s composition is needed to make it more broadly representative of the international community as a whole, as well as of the geopolitical realities of today, and thereby more legitimate in the eyes of the world”⁵⁶. Annan accordingly commissioned a High-Level Panel to submit recommendations for reform of all branches of the UN, which was published at the end of 2004. The High-Level Panel put forth that; “the effectiveness of the global collective security system [The

⁵³ Op. cit. Interview with Amr Roshdy

⁵⁴ U.N. Secretary General. 61st Session. “Report of the Open-ended Working Group on the Question of Equitable Representation on and Increase in the Membership of the Security Council and Other Matters related to the Security Council” (New York: 2007), 9-12

⁵⁵ Op. cit. Interview with Toni Jacques

⁵⁶ Kofi Annan.

Security Council]... depends ultimately not on only the legality of decisions but on common perceptions of their legitimacy”⁵⁷. The report included two proposals for reform of the Security Council: the only area of the report in which an alternative was given.⁵⁸ Model A proposed adding new permanent as well as nonpermanent seats whereas Model B proposed adding nonpermanent seats as well as four-year, renewable seats. Tables detailing the regional distribution of seats of the two models proposed by the High-Panel are included below. The grey shaded areas are the proposed changes:

Table 1: High-Level Panel proposal for reformed Security Council: Model A

Regional Area	No. of States	Permanent Seats (Continuing)	Proposed new		Total
			Permanent seats	Proposed two year seats (non-renewable)	
Africa	53	0	2	4	6
Asia and Pacific	56	1	2	3	6
Europe	47	3	1	2	6
Americas	35	1	1	4	6
Total	191	5	6	13	24

Table 2: High-Level Panel proposal for reformed Security Council: Model B:⁵⁹

Regional Area	No. of States	Permanent Seats (Continuing)	Proposed new		Total
			Proposed four year renewable seats	Proposed two year seats (non-renewable)	
Africa	53	0	2	4	6
Asia and Pacific	56	1	2	3	6
Europe	47	3	2	1	6
Americas	35	1	2	3	6

⁵⁷ U.N. Secretary General. “A more secure world: our shared responsibility: Report of the High-Panel on Threats, Challenges and Change” (New York, 2004), 66.

⁵⁸ Op. cit. Interview with Amr Roshdy

⁵⁹ Walter Hoffman and Ayca Ariyörük “Security Council Reform Models: Model A, Model B, Italian (Regional) Proposal, Blue and Green Models and A New Model C” [Canter for UN Reform Education](#), 7-8.

The G4 reform proposal closely resembles Model A whereas the United for Consensus proposal is more similar to Model B. Each group thus began to champion their respective Model. Model A is almost precisely what the G4 call for though the High-Panel did not state that new permanent members would be granted veto rights. Instead, the report promoted gradually phasing out the veto altogether and not introducing it to any new powers. Specifically, the report stated that, “the institution of the veto has an anachronistic character that is unsuitable for the institution in an increasingly democratic age and we would urge that its use be limited to matters where vital interests are genuinely at stake”⁶⁰. The G4 were willing to cede that power if it meant finally pushing through reform that included their states as permanent members. The United for Consensus movement prefers adding purely nonpermanent, two-year seats with no option for election so as not to create a middle status tier on the Security Council. Even so, Model B provided a solid basis from which the UfC group could promote its proposal, thereby working against the G4.

iii. The Culmination: The 59th Session of the UN General Assembly

The 2005 General Assembly session remains the closest the G4 have come to putting their proposal to a vote⁶¹. The magic number during that 59th General Assembly became 128: the number of states the G4 had to convince to go along with their plan in

⁶⁰ Op. cit. U.N. Secretary General. “A more secure world: our shared responsibility: Report of the High-Panel on Threats, Challenges and Change”, 82.

⁶¹ Amr Roshdy, “Why the Security Council could not be reformed” Enough will was not enough,” Paper prepared for UN @ 60 Conference. Pretoria, South Africa. Oct 2005: 5

order to put it through the General Assembly. No one harbored the illusion that the United for Consensus group would gain enough seats to pass their resolution. To block the G4 from pushing through its reform proposal, the United for Consensus group had to gather 65 votes. Neither group came close to the requisite number of seats to achieve their ends and thus both resolutions were withdrawn before they came to a vote. The dialogue between the G4 and the African Union in the weeks leading up to the 60th Session of the General Assembly in 2005 largely explains why so little was accomplished despite high hopes and momentum.

b. Africa: the Linchpin

During the lead up to the 59th Session of the UN General Assembly, With 53 votes in the General Assembly and a unified continental position on Security Council reform, Africa has emerged as one of the key players in the reform process. The Ezulwini Consensus was reached at the 7th Extraordinary Session of the African Union in March 2005; mere months before the 59th Session of the General Assembly where the G4, S5, and UfC groups presented their reform proposals. The G4 recognized that in order to pass their proposal through the General Assembly, they were going to need to support of Africa's 53 votes. In July 2005, the foreign ministers from the G4 nations met at the Indian Mission to the UN in New York with representatives from fourteen African nations that had been elected by the African Union to represent Africa. Mr. Amr Roshdy, who represented Egypt, recalled that there were far more members of the press present than delegates from Africa; the international community had realized that Africa was

central to this debate⁶². The negotiations faltered over two major points; veto rights for new permanent members and the allocation of nonpermanent seats to Africa.

Though both the Ezulwini Consensus and the G4 reform proposal call for two permanent African seats, the Africans will not settle for new permanent seats without veto powers⁶³. The G4 believed they would gain enough additional influence merely by virtue of permanent status to warrant accepting reform without veto powers. They were also convinced that they would eventually be granted veto powers once they became further integrated into the Security Council structure. Africa objected to this reasoning on two counts. Firstly, Africa believes that without veto powers, permanent delegates would have no more leverage and weight than nonpermanent delegates; the imbalanced scheme wherein the P5 make decisions and ask the others to sign would persist. Secondly, Africans fear the possibility that the G4 nations would be granted veto rights in the future but that those rights would be denied to the two African seats. Detractors would claim that this would never happen because it is morally inexcusable. Regardless, this fear remains part of the African opposition to the G4 plan.

The second point of tension in the dialogue was that the G4 proposed a total of four nonpermanent seats for Africa but Africa will settle for no less than five. Africa is divided into five regions thus Ezulwini proposes that each region would elect one representative. Both South African diplomat Michiel Combrink and Egyptian diplomat Amr Roshdy opined in personal interviews that Africa will not settle for a reform plan that would solve the problems of the G4 but cause internal turmoil and tension in

⁶² Op. cit. Interview with Amr Roshdy

⁶³ Op. cit. Interview with Michiel Combrink

Africa.⁶⁴ Additionally, though the G4 proposal would grant six Security Council seats to every region identified by the High-Panel: Africa, Asia, Europe, and the Americas, the weight of those seats would vary greatly. Asia would have three permanent seats to Africa's two – not to mention Europe with four permanent seats, two of which have veto power. To Africa, this scenario does not provide sufficient representation especially given the incredible diversity of Africa and the fact that so many UN Security Council decisions affect the continent⁶⁵. The G4 are resistant to a sixth African nonpermanent seat because this addition would jeopardize G4 support from their own regions. Already with the United for Consensus movement working to gain votes from Asian, European, and Latin American states, the G4 are hard pressed to maintain regional support. India and Japan in particular would receive harsh criticism from their already skeptical region if Africa were granted five nonpermanent seats but Asia only three. Furthermore, the United States has long insisted that it will not accept a Security Council with more than 21 members. The 24 member Council proposed by the High-Panel would be a tough sell to the US; adding more seats could possibly preclude any successful reform.

Heated discussion continued throughout the day with no compromise from either side. At one point, recalls Ambassador Roshdy, a G4 foreign minister rose from his seat yelling, “If you can't agree to this, then you don't want reform!” To this an African representative responded, “With all due respect, you aren't talking about reform of the Security Council, you are speaking of getting your country a permanent seat!”⁶⁶ These perceptions perfectly illustrate the suspicions each group harbors of the other. In sum, too much was at stake for either party to give ground and the conversation was a complete

⁶⁴ Op. cit. Interview with Michiel Combrink; Op. cit. Interview with Amr Roshdy

⁶⁵ Op. cit. Albert Venter, 43.

⁶⁶ Op. cit. Interview with Amr Roshdy

failure. In a final effort to reach an agreement the same group met a week later in London, but with no further success. On August 4, 2005, the General Assembly received draft resolutions on how to reform the Security Council from the G4, The United for Consensus group, and the African Group.

6. Conclusion

The United Nations Security Council was *not* created to be a democratic institution: it was made to respond quickly and efficiently to issues of international peace and security. Today, a growing number of UN member states are dissatisfied with the lack of broad, democratic representation of states on the UNSC. These groups (notably, the G4, the Africa Group and the UfC) contend that it is time for the UNSC to respond to the zeitgeist of the 21st Century, which may mean fundamentally changing its structure. Before reform is remotely possible, we must come to a collective agreement about *why* reform is necessary, and *how* we can achieve optimum representation, deliberation, and legitimacy in the UNSC body. The answers to these questions may very well lead to a crisis of identity in the UN body. If the UN fails to address this crisis, many believe it risks losing not only its legitimacy but its relevance to the modern international system.

There exists no normative standard for how the Security Council *should* be structured. Inevitably, no constituency involved in the reform debate is without national prejudice therefore every reform package contains elements of self-interest. It is impossible for one group to claim moral high ground because there is no moral standard by which to evaluate UNSC schemes. The High-Level Panel's Report on reforming the

United Nations for the twenty-first Century is the closest approximation to a standard for UNSC reform. Even so, there is no proposal that would satisfy all interest groups. Two fundamental issues are at play here: 1) States on the Security Council are accountable to their state and not their region. It is therefore impossible to create a UNSC fully accountable to the world even if membership is more geographically diverse. 2) Many reform proposals operate under the assumption that the UNSC is flawed because it is not democratic enough. The UNSC was never intended to be a democratic body. Attempting to change it to a democratic body fundamentally shifts the ideology of the UN Charter.

It is not possible to create a completely fair and representative SC membership system if states serving on the Council represent themselves and there is a finite availability of seats. For example, if representation for Latin America and the Caribbean is allocated via a permanent seat to Brazil, Brazil will not act in the interests of Ecuador, the Dominican Republic, and Chile: it will act in the interests of Brazil. No one would suggest that *all* members of the UN should have a seat on the UNSC. This would simply be another General Assembly; too cumbersome and inefficient to effectively tackle issues of international security. One solution possible in the distant future would be to allocate permanent SC seats to supranational regional bodies such as the EU and ASEAN. The bodies are now in place but it takes many decades before nations invest enough power and trust in those regional bodies to merit their seat on the SC legitimately. In the interim, something must be done to address the SC structure disconnected from the realities of the 21st Century.

Long-term reform will require a comprehensive evaluation of the very ideology and purpose of the UNSC and the UN generally. This reflection is essential but will take

several years – even after it has commenced. Intermediate reform must be flexible and nonpermanent if the international community is to avoid augmenting the P5 quagmire in which it already finds itself. Immediate measures should ensure that the UNSC a) does not lose its relevance and b) litigates issues of world security as fairly as possible before true comprehensive reform is implemented.

Immediate reform should accomplish the following: 1) increase the regional diversity of SC seats and 2) limit the grip of the veto on the Council.

Regional diversity, while not the full measurement of diversity that could be considered in UNSC membership, has been commonly accepted as essential to reform. Other components such as religion and size can be incorporated into comprehensive reform in the future. Semi-permanent membership schemes such as those proposed by Model B of the Report of the Secretary-General's High-level Panel, the United for Consensus model, and the UK/France interim approach could suffice as immediate solutions. However, any interim measure must provide clear requirements for periodic review and a deadline for a permanent reform solution. The P5 veto is viewed by many as the bane of the Security Council however, the P5 will never willingly give up their veto power. The best hope for those who oppose the veto is to take measures *now* to begin limiting its influence. These could include requiring the SC to explain the vetoes it casts, pressuring the P5 to self-impose a temporary moratorium on the veto, and pushing for schemes which allow either the rest of the Security Council or the General Assembly to overturn a single veto. The international community cannot afford to put off initiating reform schemes any longer.

The 2011-2012 UNSC term has captured the attention and imagination of those attuned to the SC reform debate because so many of the states vying for permanent status

will be serving together as nonpermanent members. G4 members Brazil, Germany and India will all serve along with South Africa and Nigeria; contenders for any proposed permanent African seats. (G4 member Japan is finishing its most recent term in 2010.) The dynamics and voting patterns that unfold before this Security Council will inform possible future directions of the reform debate. In the meantime, the philosophical and practical debates over what UN member states want from reform will rage onward.

Why is there a United Nations Security Council? According to the preamble to the UN Charter, the United Nations is intended to, “reaffirm faith in fundamental human rights,” promote “social progress and better standards of life in larger freedom,” and “to save generations from the scourge of war.” As an organ of the United Nations, the Security Council was formed to help serve that mission – *not* – to act on its own as a world police. These ambitious goals of the United Nations remain as honorable as when they were conceived of 65 years ago. Eventually we, the people of the United Nations, must determine how to reform the UNSC structure so as to best facilitate these noble ends.

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