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THE EFFECTIVENESS OF UN SECURITY COUNCIL IN RESOLVING INTERNATIONAL CONFLICTS

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In the context of effectiveness of United Nations Security Council in finding successful ways to resolve global conflicts and keeping peace in the world has been a major and argumentative topic of debate among many political scholar and policymakers alike. Since the establishment of UNSC when the deadliest war ended, this organization has been the primary institution that addressed international problems and its main emphasis was on to security and peacemaking. After many years of grounded participation in international relations and so-called global institution lose its significance and capabilities in finding solutions to international wars. Contemporary conflicts which took place in Ukraine, Syria, Gaza and Sudan showed that Security council no longer that powerful like before and the world is rapidly changing dangerously with a great amount of nuclear powers and military forces. The main purpose of this research is to carry out and analyze all-inclusive analysis of the role of UN Security Council in resolving the international conflicts and its effectiveness in this political field. In spite of the numerous academic fieldwork in this political sphere, there remains insufficiently addressed part, including multidimensional and comprehensive investigations that simultaneously address structural, operational and representational failing of the council. This aforementioned gap restrict people's understanding why peace-making reforms stalled and what changes can be most effective in that sphere. In this regard, an important question is why has the UN Security Council lose its power and failing to resolve major conflicts in the last decade and of course which institutional factors are more responsible for this? So as to achieve this aim, research includes some objectives: demonstrate the causes of decline in power in UNSC, address exact cases associated to UNSC's uneffectiveness, decay and to analyze this institution's real role in today's extreme political condition and to weigh operational mismatch. As a first hypothesis of this important study is that UNSC's decline of power in effecting global situations is not coming from a single flaw but a mix of overlapping institutional weaknesses that collectively weaken its conflict-resolution capacity. The second hypothesis is that the diplomatic paralysis within the Council is driven by an institutionalized ideational deadlock between contrasting norms of absolute national sovereignty and norm-based humanitarian intervention.

For the last decade, our world experienced couple of problems including international and local conflicts and UNSC could not handle most of them. This quite argumentative topic was researched by many scholars and examined within both classical and contemporary theoretical frameworks. [1]One

[1] https://www.researchgate.net/publication/347090016

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of many who put their interest in the role of UNSC and its working process Badache, Hellmuller, and Salaymeh's large-scale content analysis which was published in Third World Quarterly. This coded all related speeches delivered at the Security Council from 1991 to 2020 by the P5 as well as rising regional powers which includes Brazil, South Africa and Turkey. The UNSCPeaS corpus demonstrates real false statement not in what tasks states wants the UN to act but in how norm-based, conditional interventionism bea dvocated western permanent members. However, China, Russia and rising powers like Brazil, turkey and South Africa they prioritize national sovereignty and demand that actions only can be taken with the agreement of the countries involved in it. Though this one can understand existing deadlock is not just about countries clashing over and over specific crises, instead, we can see the reflection of a deep ideological disagreement which was built into institution's daily operations. The gap in this study is the role of ten non-permanent members. Significantly their voices are almost entirely missing from the given data, although they are very regions tht were affected by global conflicts. [2]A 2022 study held by Di Salvatore and his colleagues shows a new dataset (PEMA) that notes every peacekeeping tasks done from 1945 to 2002. Over the decades, missions aimed to keep peace in the world have moved far beyond just monitoring ceasefires to include hard tasks including supervising elections, protecting civilians and never forgetting, rebuilding entire states. The struggle to achieve peace is associated with mismatch between mandate scope and operational capacity. To be clear, resources and enforcement authority have not kept pace. Essentially, humanity asking peacekeepers to utilize less and with this less do more, but there is no any clear evidence that these broader mandates actually work and lead to long-lasting peace in the world. [3]Noor, Khan, Ruja (2025) investigated the UN's role in these three major circumstances (Ukraine, Syria and Afghanistan) from 2020 to 2024. According to their analysis, the institution had done a grounded work in providing humanitarian aid to these countries, but struggled and failed stopping the political and military force. To Afghanistan, UNSC delivered aid under Taliban rule but could not find a way to influence the governance itself. Their hands were tied in solving diplomatic deadlock, meaning their help had limits with only humanitarian corridors in Syria. In General Assembly Council only gave grounded speeches , targeting the international law and resolutions, instead real serious acts like enforcing anything against Russian remained outstanding. [4]Another researcher called Anyalebechi (2025) examines UNSC and its role through a constructivist lens and that argues that the P5 veto power and outdated structure of membership make it complex to address contemporary crises such as Syria, Ukraine and Yemen. The highlighted failure of non-traditional threats like climate change, cyberattacks, terrorism, and the institution could not respond

[2] https://journals.sagepub.com/home/jcr.

[3] https://peacekeeping.un.org/en/open-peacekeeping.

[4] https://pubjournals.com/ijdpr/article/view/132.

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these global challenges. This demonstrates the UN encounters a fundamental design crisis rather than mere political failure. Most notably the less-attentioned gap from Anyalebechi is the key role of non-permanent members and regional organizations, they are largely unexplored. The huge focus tailored on P5 dynamics only. [5]Mahmood's investigations (2025) emphasize on how great powers, especially USA and China influence UN and its role in conflict resolution. In that point, geopolitical interest plays crucial role in it, undermining its effectiveness. Significantly this research shows how badly these great powers exploit Council for strategic legitimatization than strategic genuine peacebuilding. These acts were done via selective votes by USA and peacekeeping contributions derived from soft powers ambitions by China, neglecting neutral principles. The study overlooks Global South's Agency within the council, how other elected members fight against and push back against the dominance of great powers in political field.

Theoretical framework

To comprehensively explain why the UN Security council systematically fails to resolve major conflicts, this study integrates three distinct international relation lenses: Realism, Liberal Institutionalism and Constructivism. In that study, Realism directly make it understandable the primary structural paralysis of the UNSC. As Mahmood(2025) argues, the institutional design of the Council- specifically the permanent membership and the veto power of the P5 (USA, Russia, China, UK, France)- they cat like an arena for great power rivalry. The moment when great major geopolitical crises starts, that membership weaponize their veto capability just not to maintain collective global security, but as a mechanism for strategic legitimization of their own foreign policy or to shield their own strategic allies from international accountability. The realist perspective reveals that The Council's repetitive failings in stopping military force(Ukraine, Syria) are a direct consequence of states prioritizing their national security over multilateral legal norms. Whereas realism successfully diagnoses the topic and structural reasons behind the veto, it also treats state's interests as purely material and some kind of fixed. So as to complement this, constructivism is utilized as the first auxiliary theory in order to analyze how shifting ideas, values and norms shape those national interests. International relations are socially constructed and institutional behavior is driven by the identities and norms that actors hold, these were emphasized in constructivism. By integrating empirical findings of Badache, Hellmuller and Salaymeh (2022) demonstrates that the gridlock within the UNSC is reinforced by a profound ideational deadlock. There can bee seen 2 irreconcilable normative frameworks of P5 separation. Western permanent members champion the norm of "conditional interventionism" based on global human rights protections, while eastern powers like China and Russia strictly adhere to the norm of absolute "state sovereignty" and non-interference. That is why Constructivism serves as crucial supporting lens, proving that the Council's paralysis is not just a clash of military or economic interests, but a deeply institutionalized battle over the very definition of international law and sovereign authority. [6]Quantifying that divide through

[5] https://sdgsreview.org/LifestyleJournal/article/view/6907.

[6] https://www.researchgate.net/publication/347090016

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diplomatic archives reveals that over 70% of dropped or deadlocked resolution drafts during humanitarian crises directly stem from disputes over state consent and intervention clauses. And finally, Realism and Constructivism put their focus heavily on conflict and obstruction, which leaves a significant analytical gap regarding the functional, practical output of UN missions the moment when the cooperation is achieved. To address that, liberal institutionalism is applied as the second auxiliary theory which argues that international institutions can mitigate anarchy, facilitate cooperation and achieve positive outcomes through structured rules, data- sharing and of course, clearly defined mandates. In this grounded research, this type of lens operationalized by Di Salvatore et al. (2022) and their Peacekeeping mandates (PEMA) dataset. Analytical tools of liberal institutionalism evaluate the operational capacity of the UN on the ground. This theory portrates that when the council manages to bypass the realist veto (particularly in localized humanitarian crises) it can establish vital structural mechanisms including humanitarian corridors or ceasefire monitoring. However, it also highlights the systematic institutional failure where the Council continuously passes expanded, complex state-building mandates without even providing the corresponding material resources or enforcement authority. All in all, Liberal institutionalism gives a helping hand to measure the exact functional gap between the Council's diplomatic rhetoric and its actual operational execution.

Research methodology

That study makes use of a rigorous qualitative research design to examine the declining effectiveness of the UN Security Council. A qualitative framework is highly appropriate because the core research objectives require an in-depth understanding of complex political mechanisms, institutional behavior, ideological discourse and norm-based influence, all of which evade accurate quantitative measurement or purely statistical representation. The research relies on not only the secondary data collection but the primary data collection too. The empirical and theoretical data is gathered from highly reliable, peer-reviewed international relations journals, academic books, policy reports and official indices published by international bodies. Key dataset and literature utilized include the PEMA dataset (Di Salvatore, 2022), the UNSCPeaS speech corpus (Badache et al, 2022) and contemporary conflict resolution case reviews (Noor et al.,2025; Anyalebechi, 2025)

To organize and analyze the collected data systematically, the study employs a qualitative case study selection strategy. Rather than limiting the focus to a single country, the exact cases are chosen based on specific types of operational and structural crises within global politics. The case od institutional deadlock was examined through the lens of the Ukraine crisis (2020-2024). The case of limited humanitarian mandates was examined through the Syrian civil war and access corridors. The case of Non-Influence on De Facto Governance was examined via the post-2021 UN aid operations in Taliban ruled Afghanistan.

The collected qualitative data and materials are valuated using two primary methods. The first one is Content analysis: Applied to examine academic literature, policy documents and official P5 speeches to identify recurring patterns, normative farming and never forgetting ideational shifts over time. And the second, most important one is comparative analysis. This methos used to evaluate

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structural and operational differences in how varying types of conflicts are addressed, contrasting the limits of P5 geopolitical interventions against the actions of non-permanent Council members. Drawing on historical PEMA metrics, the research contrasts narrow, traditional Cold War-era peacekeeping operations against highly expanded-, modern twenty-first-century multidimensional deployments. This is used to demonstrate the widening gap between complex mandate goals and stagnant physical recourses.

Anaysis

The qualitative analysis reveals that the twenty-first-century security environment has severely exposed the institutional weaknesses built into UN Security Council's daily operations. The primary factor behind the decline of UNSC effectiveness is the explicit exploitation of structural design features by permanent members. Realist theory is strongly vindicated by the behavior of the P5 during major geopolitical crises. Instead of acting as neutral arbiters or guardians of global peace, states like the USA, Russia and China treat the Council as an arena for strategic legitimization. Any binding enforcement action against a permanent member or its strategic allies is rapidly neutralized, as observing the absolute diplomatic gridlock over Ukraine from 2022 to 2024. This structural design crisis means the UN encounters a fundamental limitation: it is legally and operationally incapable of constraining great powers the moment when they violate international law.

The content analysis of the UNSCPeaS corpus from 1991 to 2020 provides profound insights into ideational paralysis of the Council. The ongoing deadlock is nor merely a superficial disagreement over policy tactics, it reflects a deep, unyielding ideological fault line connected to the identity of the states. Western members which include USA, UK, France, their core normative alignment is norm-based conditional interventionism, while Eastern members including Russia and China's core normative alignment is that they demand absolute national sovereignty. This ideational split creates a permanent state of crisis. When a humanitarian catastrophe occurs, the Western block pushes for intervention, whereas the Eastern block implicates sovereignty to veto resolutions, causing the Council incapable of responding to non-traditional or human security threats effectively.

Data extracted from the PEMA dataset highlights a severe systematic error in the operational execution of UN peace missions. Over the last few decades, the Council has systematically expanded peacekeeping mandates to include highly complex, non-traditional state-building objectives. But, there is a profound disconnect between what is mandated and what is provided. Humanity is effectively asking peacekeepers to do significantly more with less, which explains the operational failure of missions when confronted with active military combatants. The absolute breakdown of conflict-resolution capacity is made clear through the empirical cases analyzed by Noor, Khan and Shuja (2025): Because Russia holds a structural veto, the Security Council lost his ability of enforcing international law or stopping military force. The Council was reduced to deliver grounded but physically ineffective speeches within the General Assembly, at the same time, zero enforcement measures could be made use of against the aggressor, which means the Council lack effective practical approaches. Due to repetitive, strategic vetoes by competing great powers, the UN could not broker a political or military resolution. [7]Between 2010 and 2024, the veto was weaponized more

[7] https://research.un.org/en/docs/sc/quick.

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than 40 times to completely lock critical security resolutions. Its operations were fundamentally limited to negotiating localized humanitarian corridors, managing the symptoms of the conflict rather than resolving its root cause in Syria. Following the 2021 geopolitical shift, the UN maintained a presence to distribute critical food and medical aid, yet it proved totally powerless to shape the actual domestic governance, human rights standards or political structure of the regime of the Taliban.

An eventual critical finding of this analysis addresses the prominent literature gap, directing the systematic exclusion of the ten temporary members(E10) and regional bodies. Because the structural design concentrates absolute power in the P5 veto, the E10 members who frequently represent the exact Global South regions devastated by these conflicts are denied meaningful agency within the Council's decision-making architecture. Their capacity to push back against great power dominance is severely restricted, proving that UNSC functions primarily as an oligarchic geopolitical tool rather than a representative organ of global governance.

Conclusion/Discussion

This research has conducted a comprehensive, multi-dimensional investigation into the factors driving the decline of the United Nations Security Council in resolving modern international conflicts. The analysis offers strong empirical and theoretical validation for all three proposed hypothesisъо First, the structural analysis confirms that the P5 veto power is systematically exploited as a weapon for strategic legitimization and national interest rather than collective global security, validating the realist perspective. Second, content analysis of diplomatic speeches proves that the Council is trapped in a permanent state of paralysis caused by an institutionalized ideational deadlock between the irreconcilable norms of absolute sovereignty and conditional interventionism. Third, historical data verifies that modern UN field missions are undermined by an operational mismatch, where the Council routinely approves expansive, difficult state-building tasks without providing the necessary physical resources or robust enforcement authority. Furthermore, by applying a comparative approach across multiple case studies , that research paper has demonstrated that the operational success of the council is not a product of international legal norms, but solely a dependent variable of great power consensus. When the vital interests of the P5 clash, the Council is structurally paralyzed. While providing deep insights, this research acknowledges certain structural boundaries. Relying solely on qualitative evaluations and secondary source documents limits the capacity to mathematically model or statistically project the precise probability of a veto based on changing economic or military metrics. Moreover, because the empirical focus was concentrated on major global flashpoints, the exact findings can not automatically generalized to all minor, localized or regional UN monitoring deployments. To expand upon these findings, future academic studies should explore how the UN's rigid architecture can adapt into handle modern, non-traditional security threats, such as transnational cyberwarfare, artificial intelligence manipulation and climate-induced migration corridors. Besides from this, further research should utilize mixed method modeling so as to analyze if ad-hoc coalitions and regional organizations such as (NATO or the African Union) are becoming more effective alternatives for conflict resolution rather than the paralyzed machinery of UNSC.

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