

Power Politics and the Locked-in nature of the United Nations Security Council: A view from Nigeria and India

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Abstract

Almost eighty years after the creation of the UN very little has changed. While the organization has prevented global conflagrations as devastating as WWII, the world still suffers from incessant conflicts across continents. This has elicited a debate as to whether or not there is need for a reform of the UN's most powerful organ, the UNSC; and what manner of modification such a reform should take. The study shifts the debate to the practicality of such a reform in the first instance, particularly in the face of the diverse interests that conflict with each other, not just from those competing for a slot in the reformed UNSC, but also regional rivals and existing members of the Council? It is against this background that within the analytical purview of the realist theory and a qualitative methodology that relies heavily on secondary sources and primary sources sourced from declassified UN documents, the study uses the case study of Nigeria and India to investigate how power politics has ensured that the UNSC has remained unchanged after so many years. The study concludes that while these countries are prime candidates for the coveted position, realism suggests that they are unlikely going to become permanent members in the foreseeable future.

Keywords

UNSC, Reform, Power Politics, Nigeria, India

Introduction

When the League of Nations was formed in 1919 not many people envisaged that the world was going to experience another catastrophic war barely twenty years after. The outset of WW II drew the Great Powers' attention to the shortcomings and gaps of the League. They thus had to rework the terms for a more enduring peace that would prevent the world from experiencing such a global

conflagration any time soon. Consequently some of the great powers of the time—United States, Britain, France, Soviet Union and China—who had also fought together as allies and had emerged victorious as 'Allied Powers' during WWII, effectively formed the United Nations (UN) in October 1945. Its Charter empowered the five founding members to have a permanent seat within the UN Security Council (UNSC) that also served as the executive arm of the organization.¹ These permanent seats also came with a guaranteed veto power, which meant that the interests of the five permanent members (P5) would always be protected.

With the wave of decolonization countries in Asia and Africa experienced between 1945 and 1960 the total number of UN members multiplied significantly. By 1963, the number of UN members had increased from 51 to 114.² In 1945 only six countries from Africa and Asia had been members, but barely two decades later more than half of UN's membership had come from these developing continents. Consequently, new members of the organization wanted the UN to better reflect their numbers and interests in the UNSC and the UN in general. Such agitations have called for reforms of both the UN and the UNSC.³ The idea of a reform is not merely for the purpose of better geographical representation, but more effectiveness in guaranteeing world peace. For these reasons, there have been agitations for the restructuring of the UNSC. Ramesh Thakur notes that there are a number of options to make the Council more representative including regionalism, population, economy, democracy and culture/ religion/civilization.⁴ Benjamin MacQueen, for instance, captures the agitation of Muslim societies to become members of the UNSC, but recognizes that

such ambitions are hindered by an inability of these states to coordinate a unified reaction.⁵ A number of other reasons have been adduced for the lack of inclusiveness of the Council. Bourantonis and Panagiotou, for instance, suggest that one major reason for this is that members of the P5, particularly Russia, maintain a status quo policy that is averse to an expansion of the P5.⁶

It is not just some members of the P5 that are opposed to reforms, members of the academia have lent voice to the debate as well. For instance, Mariana Baccarini maintains that the UNSC has engaged in informal reforms over the years, thereby evolving without necessarily expanding; and this model has yielded positive results.⁷ Hosli and Dörfler (2015), on their part, argue that countries within the Global South like BRICS members such as China and Russia have been members of the P5 since inception and therefore the UNSC is not a Western (or Northern) institution, but more culturally /economically inclusive and therefore does not necessarily need expansion.⁸

We argue in this paper that both sides of the debate miss the point; it is not a question of whether or not reform is necessary, it is about how practicable it is, particularly in the face of contending powers within the UNSC and regional rivals of the intending additions. This study therefore argues that while there is the need to expand permanent membership of the UNSC to include influential actors from other geographical and cultural locations, power politics will make this impossible.

Theorizing Power Politics in UNSC Reform Agenda

A discussion on whether or not there is a need for reforms of the UNSC (or whether such need is viable) needs theoretical foundations. The theory of political realism is adopted as our analytical framework. The UN idea of Collective Security is largely rooted in liberalism. Proponents of this school of thought believe the international institutions, international law and morality should be placed above power struggles in the international system.⁹ Advocates of the Liberal theory, therefore, lay claim to the fact that we currently live in an international

system structured by the liberal world order that was formed after the Second World War, which made power more diluted and dispersed internationally among states. But the theory of political realism will disagree with this position on the evidence that even these international organisations are determined by power politics.

The theory of political realism argues that the struggle for power is a constant feature of international relations. Spanier, for instance, contends that 'cooperation is possible in international politics but only when it serves the national interest defined in terms of power'.¹⁰ In other words, within the international system that liberalist would like to think of themselves as having created through international organisations like the UN, it is still power and interest that dominate therein. In this sense, political realism suggests that legal and moral constraints do not play a significant role in international politics. This position aligns with Molloy, who argues that with realism every political act is perceived as aiming at preserving, increasing, or displaying power.¹¹ Again, Rourke agrees that the animal instincts or desire to dominate is the driving force behind political activities. This theoretical framework is suitable for this study as it seeks to demonstrate that power politics is at the heart of the delayed reform of the UNSC.¹²

Reform Agenda of the United Nations Security Council

While many believe that the UNSC needs reform, there is no consensus on how to do so. The major contending issues are the use of the veto power and how such power is granted to a limited number of countries; and secondly, and how to manage the geographical composition of the Council. Indeed, as previously mentioned, the victors of WW2 had largely drawn the UN charter and, by so doing, they allotted themselves powers that elevated them above any other member of the organisation by becoming permanent members of the UNSC and having veto powers. This privileged status did not resonate with every country, but many countries ratified the charter only as a means

towards pacifying the victors of the war and to encourage them in partaking in the new international peace.¹³ The composition of the UNSC has therefore been contested from the beginning. This section assesses the major proposals advancing a reform of the Council since inception.

Before 1993, the only substantial change to the Council since its creation in 1945 came through the UN General Assembly resolution in 1965, which extended the number of non-permanent members from six to ten to make fifteen members in total. In the 1990s there were cries, more than ever before, for the Council to be reformed to reflect a growing number of independent nations and emerging economies. Consequently, through a UN General Assembly resolution in 1993 'the Open-Ended Working Group on the Question of Equitable Representation on the Increase in the Membership of the Security Council and Other Matters Related to the Security Council' was formed to look into the possibility of reforming the UNSC to become more representative. The working group was headed by Razali Ismael of Malaysia. The Razali Plan, as it came to be known, proposed the addition of five permanent members as well as four non-permanent members to make a total of 24 Council members. In terms of geographical representation, three of the new permanent members would have to come from Latin America, Asia and Africa. The industrialized world would produce the remaining two permanent members. The non-permanent members were to be composed of countries from Eastern Europe, Asia, Latin America, Africa, and the Caribbean. An important element to the plan, however, is the elimination of the veto power for the permanent members. However, there was no agreement as to the exact terms of this proposal. And after numerous meetings, the group failed to achieve any meaningful result on the mode of restructuring of the council.¹⁴

In 2003, the then UN Secretary General, Kofi Anan mooted another model to reform the UNSC. He constituted a high level panel headed by Anand Panyarachun, the former Prime Minister of Thailand. Certain principles shaped their deliberations on the manner of

reforms. This included making sure that any additional member to the UNSC would be a country that has made significant contribution to UN objectives through financial and military aid, as well as one whose addition to the Council would make the body more representative enough to enhance its legitimacy.¹⁵ Even so, members of the panel did not have a consensus as to the exact manner of reform. Thus, two models were proposed. Model A suggested the addition of six permanent members to the Council in addition to three non-permanent members. The new permanent members should be two countries from Africa, two from Asia and the Pacific, while there would be one each from both America and Europe. Model B, on the other hand, did not suggest any inclusion to the permanent seats. It, however, suggested a new category of eight four-year term that is renewable for as long as possible and another category of two-year non-renewable seat, available to different regional representations.¹⁶ The disagreement on whether to opt for Model A or B put paid to this particular proposal.

Starting in 2005 Germany, Brazil, India and Japan formed the G4 (Group of 4), a joint proposal of bids from these four separate countries in their individual bids to become permanent members of the UNSC. The G4 proposal advanced an increase in the geographical representation of permanent members of the Council, while paying attention to the economic strength of the proposed additions as well as their financial and military contributions to UN's mandate in maintain global peace and security.¹⁷ Basically, the G4 plan sought an expansion of the Council with the inclusion of six new permanent members to the UNSC. Two countries from Africa were to join were to join the original four countries as part of the reformed UNSC. The major problem with the G4 proposal, however, is that regional rivals of the prospective additions to the UNSC are firmly against the plan. For instance, countries such as Argentina and Colombia have opposed Brazil's candidacy, citing the lingua franca of Brazil, Portuguese, as being an

unpopular language in Latin America and therefore making Brazil not representative of the largely Spanish-speaking continent.¹⁸ China too has opposed Japan's candidacy citing the latter's destructive role in WW2. Spain and Italy also are not favourably disposed towards Germany's candidacy, fearing a coalition of power among the three European Union's most powerful nation (the UK, France and Germany).¹⁹ These oppositions are indeed a reflection of the centrality of power politics to debates surrounding UNSC reforms.

Such was the staunch resistance of regional rivals to the G4 proposal that Pakistan, Argentina, Colombia and Italy—among other countries such as Canada, Mexico, Republic of Korea, Spain and Turkey—drafted a UNSC reform proposal in direct response to the G4 bid, which they named 'Uniting for Consensus'. Their plan did not propose to alter the composition of the P5, but recommends increasing the number of non-permanent members from 10 to 20, which would increase the total number of UNSC members to 25 as well as bring the voting majority to 15 as opposed to 10.²⁰ The plan suggests that the non-permanent member seat should be distributed in this manner: six countries from Africa, five from Asia, four from Latin America and Caribbean States, three from Western Europe, and two from Eastern Europe. The plan was revised in 2009 to include another category of non-permanent members who were to serve for three to five years each. Members of this group were to be given to regional groups on a rotational basis. The plan also did not alter the P5 or their veto powers, but encouraged a veto restraint and proposed that such powers were only exercised in matters of extreme importance. While this had the potential of reducing arbitrary use of veto power, it did not receive the support of the P5 ostensibly because it will limit their influence.

Similarly, Africa also demonstrated power politics when the continent came up with a hard-line stance in their proposed reform to the UNSC. Their plan, the Ezulwini plan—drawn by Nigeria, South Africa,

Senegal and Ghana in 2005—suggests two additions to the permanent seat which were to come from Africa. There was a further recommendation of an additional five non-permanent member inclusions to the Council with two coming from Africa and one each for Asia, Eastern Europe and Latin America and the Caribbean states.²¹ The P5 were also to retain their veto, and such privilege was also to be extended to the new two additions from Africa. Unsurprisingly, the proposal received limited support from outside Africa. Moreover, the selection process of the countries to represent Africa represents a huge challenge and bred animosity among the African states. For instance, Nigeria, South Africa and Egypt have coveted that position for a long time.

In sum, despite the variety of proposals to reforming the UNSC, there is yet to be any reform to the Council. This begs the question why? Who exactly is afraid of a UNSC reform and why is there yet to be a change. As we have seen, interest plays a part in determining who proposes a reform and what others make of such a proposal. The next section drives home this point using the case studies of Nigeria and India.

Nigeria's bid towards Permanent Membership of the Council

Nigeria joined the UN in 1960 as the 99th member of the organization after only attaining independence that same year. Having only recently achieved independence after decades of colonialism and being only a new nation trying to find its feet economically and politically, Nigeria could not, and did not, aspire to become a permanent member of the Council. Even so, the country under its first Prime Minister, Tafawa Balewa, pursued a foreign policy that demonstrated that Nigeria had intentions of becoming global players in the future. More so, being the most populous black nation in the world, it felt a special responsibility to correct the legacies of slavery and colonialism. Consequently, the commitment to eradicate colonialism from the face of earth, particularly in Africa, dominated Nigeria's foreign policy between 1960 and

1980.²² Nigeria, therefore, pursued the view that self-determination was not just a political right but a legal right for all colonised people within the United Nations. Nigeria used this strategy in successfully combating all forms of colonialism on the African continent, including in South Africa, Zimbabwe and Angola, among others.

By the time calls for UNSC reforms started gaining impetus in the early 1990s, therefore, Nigeria saw itself as having a legitimate claim to a permanent seat within the Council. To be sure, the nation had just played a prominent role in ending Apartheid in South Africa in 1991. It was only a few months later that the Razali Plan was proposed. Nigeria threw its weight behind this plan and campaigned that in view of its representation through its large population and big-brother role to other African states, it deserved the sole seat the Razali plan had promised Africa.²³ But Nigeria was under a military administration throughout the duration of the 1990s when the Razali proposal was popular. Its claim to the coveted position was therefore weak since the UNGA or UNSC could not promote the inclusion of a military administration within the Council.²⁴ Nigeria was, however, able to resume active pursuit of permanent membership of the UNSC after it returned to civil rule in 1999, particularly after Kofi Annan had initiated another reform plan in 2003 as discussed above. Many of the reform proposals support the inclusion of at least one African country within the Council. However, Nigeria's preferred reform proposal is the Ezulwini plan. Since many reform proposals, on the basis of representation, favour the inclusion of at least one African country in the Council, the question is not just about an advocacy for Africa, it's a question of which African country qualifies, with at least seven other African countries interested, South Africa, Egypt, Algeria, Ethiopia, Kenya, Libya and Senegal interested in this position.²⁵

What makes Nigeria a Prime Candidate for the UNSC?

Nigeria has a peculiar status among

African countries, which gives it a legitimate claim to represent the continent as a permanent member of the UNSC. With a population of about 200 million people, it is the most populous black nation anywhere in the world, with one out of every four African being a Nigerian. The West African nation has the largest economy in Africa and the 27th largest economy in the world, with a \$514 billion GDP as at 2021.²⁶ Nigeria's GDP at purchasing power parity (PPP) tripled from \$170 billion in 2000 to \$451 billion in 2012.²⁷ All these make Nigeria the strongest economy in Africa, probably with the exception of South Africa. This becomes all the more important considering the fact that the country is projected to have the highest average GDP growth in the world between 2010 and 2050.

Nigeria's relative economic strength has over the years been channelled towards making a global impact in Africa and beyond. For instance, Nigeria is involved in assisting needy countries in Africa through what is referred to as the Technical Aid Corp (TAC), which was introduced in 1987. TAC helped African states with needed manpower—such as lawyers, doctors and other professionals—to aid their socio-economic and cultural transformation.²⁸ Nigeria has also invested its resources in strengthening its military such that the country boasts of being the best in sub-Saharan Africa and being one of the best in the entire continent, behind South Africa and Egypt. With a force of close to 250, 000 Nigerian military has featured prominently in peacekeeping activities on the continent and beyond, with over 200,000 military personnel serving in one form of peacekeeping or the other, more than any other African country.²⁹

Nigeria's peacekeeping efforts started almost as soon as it joined the UN in 1960, forming an important part of the UN mission to Congo between 1960 and 1964. In fact, Nigeria once provided a commander of the force, Major-General J.T.U Aguyi-Ironsi.³⁰ It subsequently served in other distress areas including during the India-Pakistan conflict (1964-65), Tanzania (1989-90), Mozambique (1992-94), Sierra Leone (1999-2002) and Haiti (in 2004), among others.³¹ While these

peacekeeping missions are varied and geographically mixed, Nigeria's involvement in the sustenance of peace at the regional level is exceptional. Nigeria shoulders about 75% of the security challenge in the West African sub-region.³² For example, Nigeria offered military assistance to Guinea Bissau in 1970, and to Chad in the fight against FROLINAT that same year. There was also the intervention in Guinea and alliance between Cote d'Ivoire and Senegal in 1974.³³

Beyond the UN peace missions to which Nigeria committed its force and its sub-regional policing, the country has also contributed to the UN in other capacities. For instance, the country was pivotal in the role the UN played in bringing apartheid to an end in South Africa and the liquidation of white minority rule in that country. To this end, successive Nigerian permanent representatives to the UN chaired the UN Special Committee against Apartheid for twenty years consecutively until apartheid ended in 1994.³⁴ Such was the commitment of Nigeria towards the plight of South Africans that in April 1977 all civil servants were required to pay 10% of their salaries in order to pull resources for the South Africa Relief Fund, which was targeted at ending apartheid in that country. This venture alone generated \$15 million dollars.³⁵ In fact, between 1960 and 1994 Nigeria had committed over \$1 billion dollars in fighting apartheid in South Africa and other frontline states such as Botswana, Zambia and Zimbabwe.³⁶

Nigeria has also served five times as a non-permanent member of the Council: in 1966-67, 1978-'79, 1994-'95, 2011-'12 and 2014-'15. This is more than any other African nation in history. It has also generally used these terms to promote world peace, particularly as it relates to the African continent.³⁷ For instance, it vehemently opposed Portuguese aid of mercenaries in Angola against the people of DRC Congo, which led to UNSC resolution 226 of 1966 that told off Portugal and Angola in this regard.³⁸ This is also similar to resolution 453 of 1979, which opposed South Africa using Namibia as a springboard to attack Angola.³⁹ In Nigeria's 1994/95 term, Nigeria was also one of the most vocal in terms of UN relief to

the people of Rwanda after genocide had ravaged the country.⁴⁰ Nigeria was also one of the chief proponents of the UNSC finding lasting peace in both South Sudan and Guinea Bissau when it served on the Council between 2014 and 2015.⁴¹ This led to resolutions 2186 and 2170, which recommended drastic steps in putting these crises to an end.

It is also worth pointing out that, perhaps because of the country's past experiences in important UN functions, Nigeria is blessed with personalities that have distinguished themselves in various capacities. There have been Simeone Adebó (Under-Secretary-General, 1969-72); Eyitayo Lambo (WHO Regional Adviser for Africa, 1990-99); Teslim Elias (President of the International Court of Justice, 1982-85), Amina Mohammed (Deputy-Secretary-General of the UN, 2017-present) and Joy Ogwu (President of the UNSC in 2010). No other African nation boasts of as many eminent personalities that have served the UN with distinction.

Power Politics and Opposition to Nigeria's Permanent Membership

There are some militating factors against its candidacy as a permanent member of the UNSC. For instance, within Africa there is conspiracy against its candidacy. Libya and Morocco, for example, are not considered serious candidates for the position, but spoilers by entering the fray at all. The calculation is that when it is time for a decision to be made they might withdraw in favour of their big-brother in the sub-region, Egypt.⁴² Even within West Africa there are indications that Francophone West African countries such as Senegal and Cote d'Ivoire with other French-speaking countries within the sub-region will vote against Nigeria. By implication therefore, Nigeria is not certain of a bloc vote within its sub-region.⁴³ This dynamic and permutations suggests that Africa does not have a united front in terms of their bid to be represented within the Council on permanent basis, because of selfish interests of regional rivals.

Power politics also suggests that, beyond Africa, current permanent members of the P5

are unwilling to admit more people into that elite class despite what they openly confess. For instance many world powers have expressed their desire to see Nigeria become a permanent member of the Council, including U.S.⁴⁴ But none is yet to make a move towards this end. There is also the added dimension that given how much Nigeria ruffled many feathers in the West in defence of African interests only as a peripheral member of the UN, what would it do if it attains such elevated position? Is the West ready for this?

It must also be mentioned that internal problems also militate against Nigeria's candidacy, including high rate of poverty which is a contradiction to what is being reported as the largest economy in Africa. The poor living the condition in the country is also made worse by endemic corruption. Transparency International has for instance consistently rated Nigeria as one of the most corrupt countries in the world.⁴⁵ This scenario has also partly exacerbated another problem that greatly counts against its candidacy: militancy and terrorism. There is Boko Haram insurgency in the North-East, ethnic militia in the Niger Delta region, Fulani herdsman attacks in many parts and secessionist agitations in the South-East.

The quest for permanence in the UNSC: The case of India

India has a long history with the UN that predates even the existence of the organisation. It was one of the original members of the League of Nations despite being under British colonialism. When the UN was formed in 1945 India was also one of the founding members and represented one of a handful of countries that started the organisation as a dependent nation. Even so, India's earliest leaders wanted the country to be included as a permanent member of the Council. Jawaharlal Nehru, the Indian leader, had for example proclaimed in 1946 that India was one of four great powers, the others being U.S., Russia, and China.⁴⁶ India was, however, too preoccupied with independence struggles and partitioning of the country to actively pursue the idea of a permanent seat within the

UNSC. It was not until India gained independence in 1947 and was partitioned the same year that India started pursuing a foreign policy that lobbied for a permanent place within the UNSC. However, they had to make do with only a non-permanent seat, which they enjoyed a number of times in the decades succeeding independence.

It was not until the 1990s, however, when India's active pursuit of a permanent seat in the UNSC began after the UN had demonstrated a commitment towards UNSC reforms. When the Razali Plan was initiated in the early 1990s, India's Prime Minister, Pamulaparathi V. Rao, began to pursue an active foreign policy aimed at securing the single seat that the proposed plan promised Asia.⁴⁷ When the Razali Plan did not yield much by the end of the millennium, India briefly pursued the possibility of gaining permanent membership within the Council based on the Model A version of the UNHLP, which suggested the inclusion of two Asian countries. When the High Level Panel was able to arrive at a timely consensus on whether Model A or B would be followed, however, India joined Germany, Japan and Brazil in drawing another reform plan which they pursued resolutely to date, the G4 Plan.

The G4 was the original platform that India used in campaigning for the permanent inclusion of itself and the other three nations within the Council based on how representative they were and their contributions to the UN. Unlike the remaining members of the group, however, India originally insisted on wielding veto power.⁴⁸ In fact, top ranking officers of the nation's ministry of external affairs have argued that members of the group should refuse a seat in the Council if it is not given to them on a permanent basis.⁴⁹ Although the nation would also be willing to consider a non-permanent position if the 'veto power' is abolished altogether.⁵⁰ Nevertheless, despite relaxing its stance on the veto, India's objective of attaining the coveted seat is yet to materialize. It was as a result of this deadlock that in 2007 India formed the L.69 Group comprising of developing countries from Africa, Latin

America and the Caribbean, and Asia and the Pacific. The aim of the L.69 was to form a united force to agitate for a lasting and comprehensive reform of the UNSC.⁵¹ But even this group is yet to yield any positive result.

What makes India a Prime Candidate for the UNSC?

Like Nigeria, India also has rich credentials as prime candidates for permanent membership of the Council. Chief among these qualifications is its 1.3 billion population, which makes it the second most populous country in the world behind China. This makes India boast of about 15% of the entire world population, a fact that in itself is credible enough to grant India access to the Council on the basis of representation. India's population also makes it the largest functioning democracy in the world having been sustained for over 75 years. It has been argued that this fits into the urgent need for democratising the Council.⁵² This demography is also supported by a strong economy. The IMF records that India's economy is worth \$3.18 trillion and that it was the 6th largest economy by market exchanges, and it's the third largest economy in terms of purchasing power parity.⁵³

The country's relative economic strength has also translated into military capabilities. India, for example, has the world's second largest military in the world with 1.4 million active personnel, and also has the world's largest volunteer army.⁵⁴ To crown it all, India is also a nuclear power like the already existing members of the P-5. It has in fact used its military might to participate actively in peacekeeping thereby enhancing its credentials as a candidate for a permanent seat in the UNSC. India has contributed more than 100,000 personnel to 49 out of the 71 UN Peacekeeping mission as at July 2022.⁵⁵ These have been across continents, particularly in Asia and Africa with the most recent being in South Sudan and the DRC.⁵⁶

Also, with eight tenures, India is one of the countries that have served the most terms

as non-permanent members of the Council. It served as a non-permanent member in 1950-51, 1966-67, 1973-74, 1976-77, 1984-85, 1990-1991, 2011-2012 and currently 2022-23. India has been able to record some achievement in their terms as non-permanent members of the Council. Almost on all occasions that India served in the Council the UNSC was faced with serious challenges to world peace. There was the Korean War 1950/51, Arab-Israeli wars in 1967 and 1973, Israel's invasion of Lebanon in 1977, and the Gulf War in 1991, and the Arab Spring was at its height between 2011 and 2012. In all these instances, India played a neutral and effective role in managing these conflicts. During the Arab Spring, for instance, while India was reluctant in supporting a no-fly-zone in Libya, it joined the condemnation of the brutal force used by Gaddafi against unarmed protesters as well as supporting the imposition of sanctions against the country.⁵⁷ During that same tenure, India used its position to join the campaign against terrorism after it was made the chair of the Counter-Terrorism Committee in pursuance of Resolution 1373, which aims to stamp out global terrorism.⁵⁸

Power Politics and Opposition to India's Permanent Membership

It goes without saying that India obviously has a strong claim to a permanent seat within the Council and its candidacy has been supported by many countries within the UNGA and even members of the P-5, including Britain and France. However, there remain stiff oppositions to India's ambitions. The chief opposition to India's claim is from Pakistan, which feels that if India should attain a permanent status within the Council it would use this to its advantage in pursuing its claims to Kashmi.⁵⁹ This is coupled with the fact that both countries are regional rivals. It is therefore not a surprise that Pakistan is the main country leading the opposition to the G4 proposal. It is a member of the so-called 'Coffee Club'(Uniting for Consensus group) whose members are all in opposition to the G-4 proposal. Indeed, Pakistan has openly expressed the fact that an emphasis on UNSC reforms, particularly in the manner the G-4

has proposed, risks hijacking the entire UN reform agenda.⁶⁰

The P-5 is also divided on their endorsement of India's claim to the permanent seat, and power politics is at the heart of the reason. China, for instance, sees India as a regional rival just like Japan and has insisted also on the Uniting for Consensus plan. In fact, only Britain and France have openly supported India's bid. U.S says it supports India, but it expects it to unbundle its campaign from that of the G4, but rather submit an independent bid.⁶¹ Russia on its part had been long term allies of India within the Council and has on a number of occasions within the UNSC vetoed imposition of sanctions against it. But, even so, its position on India's candidacy remains unclear.⁶²

Perhaps, indicative of the role of power politics in this whole episode is the position of African countries. The G4 had proposed that they were going to include two African countries as permanent members of the Council, but in a dramatic U-turn, the African Union came up with a maximalist proposal of theirs, not only demanding for two permanent slots but with veto powers. Africa's perceived 'betrayal' has been interpreted in the light of interest politics. In the first place, the G4 had only included Africa in its plans because it needs the support of all 53 African members of the UNGA. This means that Africa's inclusion was only a matter of convenience for the G4 members. It is for this reason that Africa resisted the offer and instead submitted its maximalist position, the Ezulwini plan, which also seeks to bolster Africa's parochial interest.⁶³

Conclusion

This study has demonstrated that there are many different proposals as to the manner of UNSC reforms and most of these have been motivated by personal (national) interests. For instance, the G4 idea of reform has been tailored to accommodate only the interest of member nations. It is purely on the basis of this interest that they have included in their proposal two seats for Africans. The same can be said of the African Union's proposal which

is a maximalist position that calls for an addition of two African countries not only on a permanent basis, but also with a veto power. Such a maximalist position undermines other countries' legitimate claims to permanent membership as well; and their insistence on veto indicates the inordinate desire for power. It is this same power politics and interest that has prevented the existing members of the P5 from facilitating a swift reform of the Council. The P5 is not ready to forego its privileges of veto power and has opposed any move to eliminate or reduce the use of veto power. They have also moved to block their regional rivals from gaining access to a permanent seat. This is particularly true of their opposition to G4 proposals in its entirety. They have all held the view that the reason behind the move is power-thirst from the likes of Germany and Japan, forgetting that they themselves have always been manifesting power since 1945.

Also worthy of note is the lack of regional cooperation among candidates seeking to belong in the Council on a permanent basis. This again is particularly true of the G4 members whose primary nemesis have been the countries in their region that vehemently resist such inclusion. Pakistan is, for instance, a strong opponent to the candidacy of India. The same could be said of the African Union proposal that that demands two slots. As united as this demand appears among Africans, there is no consensus among members of that continent on which candidates are ideal, with Nigeria having opposition from sub-regional rivals such as Senegal as well as oppositions from other continental rivals such as Egypt and South Africa.

From the foregoing, it seems a pure illusion that the UNSC will ever be reformed in the manner we are hoping for, one which is more representative. Instead we are better suited seeking an evolution as opposed to a revolution, whereby members of the P-5 would significantly reduce their use of veto. Countries outside the P-5 can also in the meantime adopt a pragmatic approach that requires them to form strategic alliances with

non-P5 members by parleying with P5 members so as to defend their country's interest. Indeed, this is what has been happening to an extent. Russia and China have historically tried to protect the global South with their use of veto power. But more often than not, this has been for their own vested interest vis-à-vis their power struggles between them and the likes of the U.S, Britain and France; thereby creating a balance of power of some sort.

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