

# GLOBAL TRENDS ANALYSIS



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The UN Security Council:  
From a 20th century  
relic to effective  
security governance



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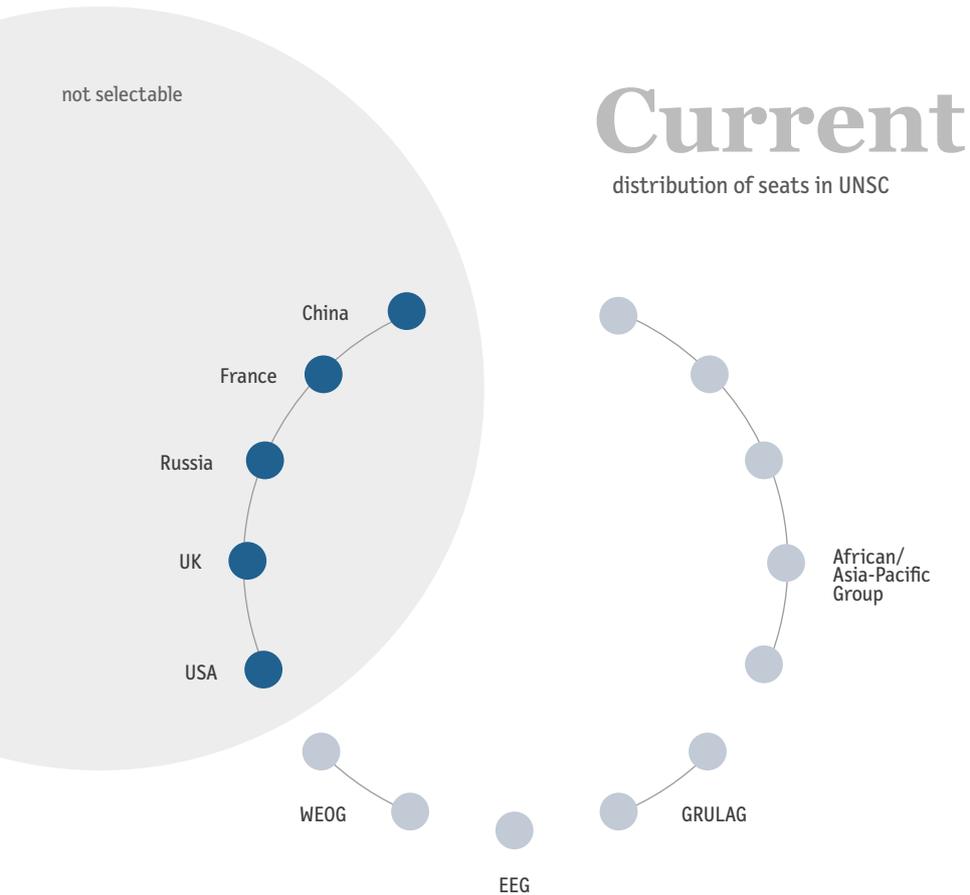
## INTRODUCTION

The United Nations Security Council lies at the heart of the global security architecture. It was established in 1945 to maintain international peace and security, but reform has been stuck for decades. Beyond a nuclear conflagration and the enduring challenge of interstate conflict, future global security challenges include the impact of climate change, the threat of pandemics, dirty bombs, nuclear terrorism and cybercrime. These risks are exacerbated by the rise of new nationalism in the West with countries such as the USA turning away from multilateralism, eschewing collaboration and accelerating change away from a global system hitherto dominated by the West. At a time of great power transitions, multipolarity without sufficient multilateralism is a dangerous trend. Without comprehensive change that includes the end of permanent seats and the veto, the Council is fading into irrelevance. Such reform is possible, but requires a very different approach compared to efforts to find a compromise between different negotiating blocks in New York. Instead, detailed proposals should be agreed upon amongst like-minded states outside of the intergovernmental negotiating process and tabled in the General Assembly as a non-negotiable amendment to the Charter of the United Nations (UN). Even then only the threat from key countries to withdraw cooperation from the UN is likely to change things.

FIGURE 1

## FROM A POST-WORLD WAR II ORDER TOWARDS A LEGITIMATE UN SECURITY COUNCIL (UNSC) FOR THE 21ST CENTURY

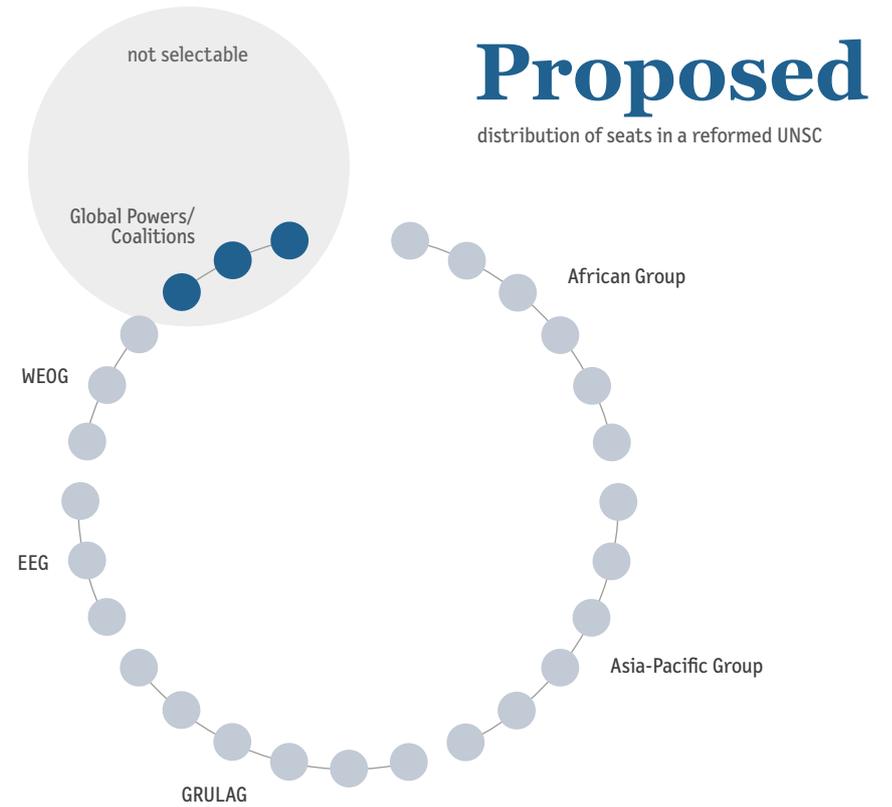
In the reformed UNSC, all regional seats are elected seats for 3 years; one third of these seats are renewable.



## Current

distribution of seats in UNSC

- WEOG Western Europe and Others Group
- EEG Eastern European Group
- GRULAC Latin American and Caribbean Group



## Proposed

distribution of seats in a reformed UNSC

The Global Powers/Coalitions are not elected but defined by specific criteria (e.g. share of global economy, UN contributions, global population). They have no veto but enhanced voting power (counting for three).

## 1. A HISTORY OF FAILED REFORM

The last reform of the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) was more than 50 years ago when in 1965 the number of non-permanent seats increased from six to ten. More substantial reform has been on the agenda of the General Assembly of the United Nations (UNGA) since 1979 without progress despite dedicated attention from the world's top diplomats.

Formal discussions about UNSC reform began with the 1993 establishment 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". After more than a decade of further discussion but no progress, member states decided, in September 2007, to accord the discussions the title of intergovernmental negotiations. The change of name did little to improve things and the impasse between key negotiating blocks is as intractable as it had ever been. The intransigence of the five permanent members (the P5, consisting of China, France, the United Kingdom, the USA and Russia), vested interests and national rivalries ensure that reform is blocked. There is no prospect of a negotiated compromise in the Intergovernmental Negotiations (IGN) sub-committee of the UNGA in New York that is tasked with UNSC reform.

For example, in April 2015 the chairperson of the IGN process, Jamaican Ambassador E. Courtenay Rattray, circulated a one-page Framework consisting of various headings that member states were requested to populate with their suggestions on reform. By mid-May, Rattray had received inputs from states and groups that represented close to two-thirds of the member states of the United Nations, subsequently summarised in a 24-page consolidated framework document (Kutesa 2015c). But opposition remained strong. Several blocks and states – namely the Arab Group, Uniting for Consensus (UfC) led by countries such as Italy, Argentina, Mexico and others, China, the Russian Federation, the US and the Lao People's Democratic Republic – did not want their proposals to be included in the body of summarised text, while a number of states appeared to be members of two or more negotiating groups and apparently supported different proposals.

Eventually Rattray's reappointment was prevented by pressure from P5 members on the government of Jamaica effectively scuppering the process. On 17.05.2016, the president of the UNGA, Mogens Lykketoft, abandoned

this most recent effort to develop a text for negotiations (there have been a number previously) and started afresh by circulating a letter and a short attachment called "Elements of convergence on two key issues of Security Council reform: the relationship between the Council and the General Assembly, and the size of an enlarged Security Council and working methods of the Council" (Lykketoft 2016). Two co-chairs were subsequently appointed for the IGN process and ahead of the third IGN session early in April 2017, the co-chairs circulated a short document on elements of convergence, commonalities and issues for further conversation, known as "Food for Thought" (Thomson 2017a). The African Group – one of the five United Nations Regional Groups – subsequently rejected "Food for Thought" and reaffirmed its support for the text circulated by the president of the UNGA in August 2015 (cf. African Union Committee of Ten 2017). Despite these objections, by June 2017 the Food for Thought document had morphed into a six-pager that concluded with a list of 22 "issues for further consideration" (Thomson 2017b). This list includes every possible aspect of a reformed UNSC and fully reflects the absence of progress since 1979. In summary, after 38 years, diplomats in New York have not even been able to produce a text upon which to start a negotiating process.

The G4 (Germany, Japan, Brazil and India) struggles to excite others about their ambitions for permanent seats. Some P5 members, the UK and France in particular, claim that they are open to expansion but disagree on which states to support. The UfC struggles to move beyond broad principles involving longer-term seats and a commitment to an increase in size. Africa has backed itself into a corner with its Ezulwini Consensus demanding for two permanent seats endowed with veto power as well as five non-permanent seats. Besides its marginal prospects, the Consensus is unable to hide the deep divisions amongst its members. The Arab Group wants its own permanent seat, the East Europeans have advocated a second dedicated non-permanent seat for themselves, and the Small Island and Developing States (SIDS) group wants a dedicated cross-regional seat in return for its support for additional permanent seats.

The permutations of possible reform become more complicated with each new round of negotiations and the result is a reform process that is effectively moribund. The prospects for progress within the IGN process are non-existent. That alone makes the argument for a fresh approach and new thinking.

## 2. WHY REFORM IS OVERDUE

The world has experienced massive and rapid change since 1945 when the UNSC, charged with the maintenance of international peace, was established. That event occurred after six years of unprecedented global conflict and many believe that it will require another global crisis before reform of the current Council could occur. That may be too late. Avoiding war between states was the primary concern of the drafters of the UN Charter. Interstate war has declined sharply for decades, leaving social turbulence within countries as the dominant form of political violence today. According to the Center for Systemic Peace (n.d.), levels of interstate and societal warfare declined dramatically through the 1990s to the early 2000s, falling over 60% from their peak levels in the 1980s. But this appears to have changed in the mid-2000s back to an increasing trajectory. Most of the increase has been in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) where Western and Russian interventions have made things worse during and in the aftermath of the Arab Spring. In 2017 there were 28 states directly affected by ongoing wars, of which half are protracted conflicts that have persisted for more than ten years. These include Afghanistan, Colombia, the DR Congo, India, Iraq, Israel, Myanmar, Nigeria, Pakistan, the Philippines, Somalia, Sudan and Turkey (Center for Systemic Peace n.d.).

The UN system has for more than seven decades driven substantial improvements to the daily lives of the world's people. Despite its many flaws, the UNSC has contributed immeasurably to the management of global conflict, including the avoidance of a nuclear conflagration. UN peacekeepers and observer missions have stabilised dozens of conflicts and helped to establish the foundations for peace and development in many fragile and conflict-torn countries. Despite frequent rumblings of discontent, no country even if being placed under sanction, or subjected to armed action authorised by the Council has ever felt strongly enough about its treatment at the hands of the UNSC to leave the UN. The only exception is Indonesia which did so briefly in 1965 in protest at Malaysia assuming a seat on the UNSC. And it is important to note that the UN Charter does not provide for withdrawal, exactly to avoid countries resorting to blackmail. But the Council did not build in mechanisms for its own evolution. It has not kept pace with a changing world to account for future shifts in global power and is steadily losing relevance.

An unreformed UNSC is merely a relic of a bygone era. High income states are frustrated by perceptions of waste and inefficiency in the UN forgetting how miniscule its financial and material capabilities are when compared to its expansive mandate. Poor states complain about lack of representation in the UNSC making the obvious point that since they are often the subject of UN decisions, their role in the oversight and management of mandates and decisions needs to be significantly larger. The result is a debate that is often dominated by the purported dichotomy between effectiveness and participation/representation. To a large degree, greater effectiveness and enhanced legitimacy are, however, two sides of the same coin. The one cannot be achieved without the other. The UNSC and the international community already pay a huge price for the maintenance of an anachronistic system that lacks legitimacy and that is unable to constructively engage in big and sometimes even smaller crises.

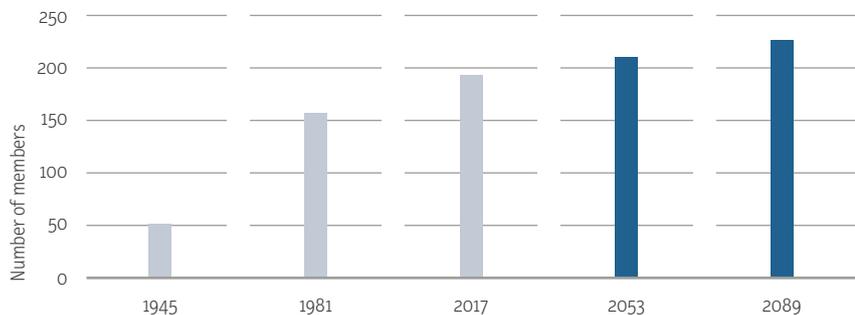
Among recent examples of UNSC dysfunction is its inability to effectively address the crisis in Syria where more than 400 000 people have died so far, 5 million are refugees and a further 6.3 million are internally displaced. This is the most severe conflict of the 21st century; yet the UNSC has been impotent, largely because of the veto power wielded by the P5 which is undoubtedly the most serious impediment to the UNSC's future ability to fulfil its global security mandate. The veto by the US has also blocked multiple resolutions on Israel, and Russia's veto power stood in the way of UNSC action when it annexed Crimea.

The UNSC also faced severe criticism from human rights groups in 2016 when it failed to impose an arms embargo on South Sudan (Human Rights Watch 2016). This is a country where African Union and UN investigators have documented war crimes, including mass killings and rape of civilians, and forced recruitment of children by warring parties. Among other tragedies where the UNSC failed to take effective steps are the genocides and humanitarian crises in Rwanda, Darfur and South Sudan, with a combined death toll of 1.5 million (Genocide Watch n.d.). Some parts of the world will be placed at great risk without the potential of UNSC support and intervention. Africa and the Middle East are two regions with the highest armed conflict and terrorist burden globally, enabled by weak governments, porous borders and the rapid rise of violent extremism. The drivers of instability in these two regions differ quite fundamentally, but both will very likely need sustained UNSC support and engagement in the future. There is also a large challenge of national consolidation that will continue to require the attention of the international community.

### 3. SECURING A CHANGING WORLD

A mere 51 states signed the founding charter of the United Nations 72 years ago. The UN now has 193 member states in a world that is very different from the circumstances at the end of the Second World War (WW II). Although the world is unlikely to witness the rapid increase in UN members that followed the end of colonialism in the 1960s, and the dissolution of the former USSR in the 1990s, the trend towards greater assertion of national identity is likely to continue. This is expected to further increase UN membership. Secession is likely in large countries such as Nigeria, and the demands for independence by ethnic groups such as the Kurds could affect a large neighbourhood. The rise of sub-national identities is also evident in richer countries, as seen in Canada, Belgium and currently with Catalonia in Spain. Yet borders are most likely to be redrawn in the Middle East and Africa, two regions that face the most intractable state consolidation and state formation challenges.

FIGURE 2  
History and forecast of the number of UN member states



Source: Author

A modest trend forecast [see Figure 2] would expect around 210 members in 2053 and 226 members by 2089. The expected increase in the number of states is likely to be matched by the continued push for more autonomy and decentralization of power to sub-state and city level. The result is a continued, if slower, momentum towards global fragmentation. The steady increase in the number of states will accentuate the large deficit in the representation of

the UNSC. In addition to global fragmentation, the relationship between four core challenges motivate for much greater urgency in efforts to reform the Security Council.

#### 3.1 MIND THE INCOME GAP

Inequality between and within countries and regions is emerging as the primary deep driver of global tensions. Africa's total population in 2015 was two and a half times the size of that of Europe and by 2053 will be five times larger. These discrepancies in numbers would not matter were it not that the average income of Africans is only 13% that of Europeans. The number of Africans that live in extreme poverty (below 1.90 US-\$ per person per day) is likely to exceed the entire population of the European Union with its current 28 members by 2022 (International Futures v 7.31). The large income disparities on top of its much younger population will change over time, but not significantly and will inevitably drive migration as well as instability since youthful populations are also more socially turbulent. This is just one example but migration and the movement of populations have steadily demanded more attention from the UNSC in a trend that is likely to continue to intensify.

#### 3.2 RESOURCE COMPETITION AS A DRIVER OF CONFLICT

Global peace after 1945 unleashed unprecedented economic growth. However, the trend in increased wealth is not sustainable. Growing populations and expectations of prosperity require resources in some regions that may not be available for future generations. And while resource competition has often resulted in cooperative solutions, it is also a driver of conflict that will demand the attention of the UNSC.

#### 3.3 NEW THREATS

In general and aside from post-2010 developments, the world is a more peaceful place than it has ever been before. Yet that comfort needs to be balanced with the potential impact of armed conflict amongst nuclear armed states. Although nuclear proliferation has proceeded more slowly than most analysts expected, analysis by think tanks such as that done by the James Martin Center for Nonproliferation Studies are that the current nine nuclear weapon states (the USA, Russia, UK, France, China, India, Pakistan, Israel & North

Korea) could be joined by a number of others such as Iran, Saudi Arabia, Egypt and Turkey over time (Potter/Mukhatzhanova 2010). Although fears about nuclear terrorism have declined, the prospects of a dirty bomb – a conventional bomb that spreads radioactive material over a large area – is probably within the reach of groups like the Islamic State. Already 26 countries have weapons grade fissile material and further leakage from countries like Pakistan and North Korea (both known proliferators) is very possible.

Conventional war in a defined battlefield has declined, but the current cycle of ongoing political violence of fluctuating intensity and shifting locality means that no state is immune from attacks on civilians. In one sense the entire world is the future battlefield.

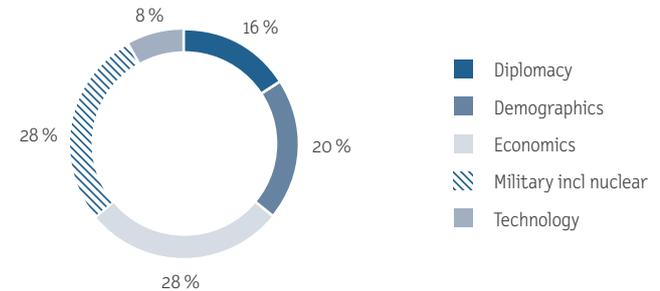
The world also faces many new challenges which the founders of the UN in 1945 could not have foreseen. Population and economic growth already impacts on climate, agriculture, political stability and where people can live. These developments will put new pressures on global leadership and the ability to respond to threats such as pandemics. The UNSC is not designed or intended to deal with developmental issues, but it will inevitably have to deal with the impact of climate change and resource competition on top of new and traditional security threats. Other transnational threats such as terrorism and cybercrime are already straining national capacities whilst the impact of cyber-attacks and global pandemics all present a clear and present danger. The world is vastly more interconnected, and the surge in physical and digital communication has created new global security risks.

### 3.4 POWER TRANSITIONS UNDERWAY

Today, only the USA and China occupy a global leadership role. The other P5 members no longer represent the primacy of economic and military power, population size or technological leadership. Even in Europe, France and the UK have steadily had to cede regional leadership to Germany, a country that is reluctant to assume a leadership role given its history as aggressor in WW II. In the years after WW II, the relative ‘power potential’ of individual states was measured with reference to factors such as population size, iron/steel production and the size of armed forces. Today, we have more granular measures of relative power, including technological sophistication, economic size, number of nuclear warheads and ability to project soft power through diplomatic engagement, trade and investment. The International Futures (IFs) system that

is used for most of the forecasts in this paper (see references section) includes efforts to account for technological sophistication as well as other measures of soft power in its Hillebrand-Herman-Moyer Index of power potential.

FIGURE 3  
Composition of Hillebrand-Herman-Moyer power potential index



Each of the five categories has a number of sub-categories that in turn draws its data and forecasts in International Futures not shown here

Source: International Futures v 7.31

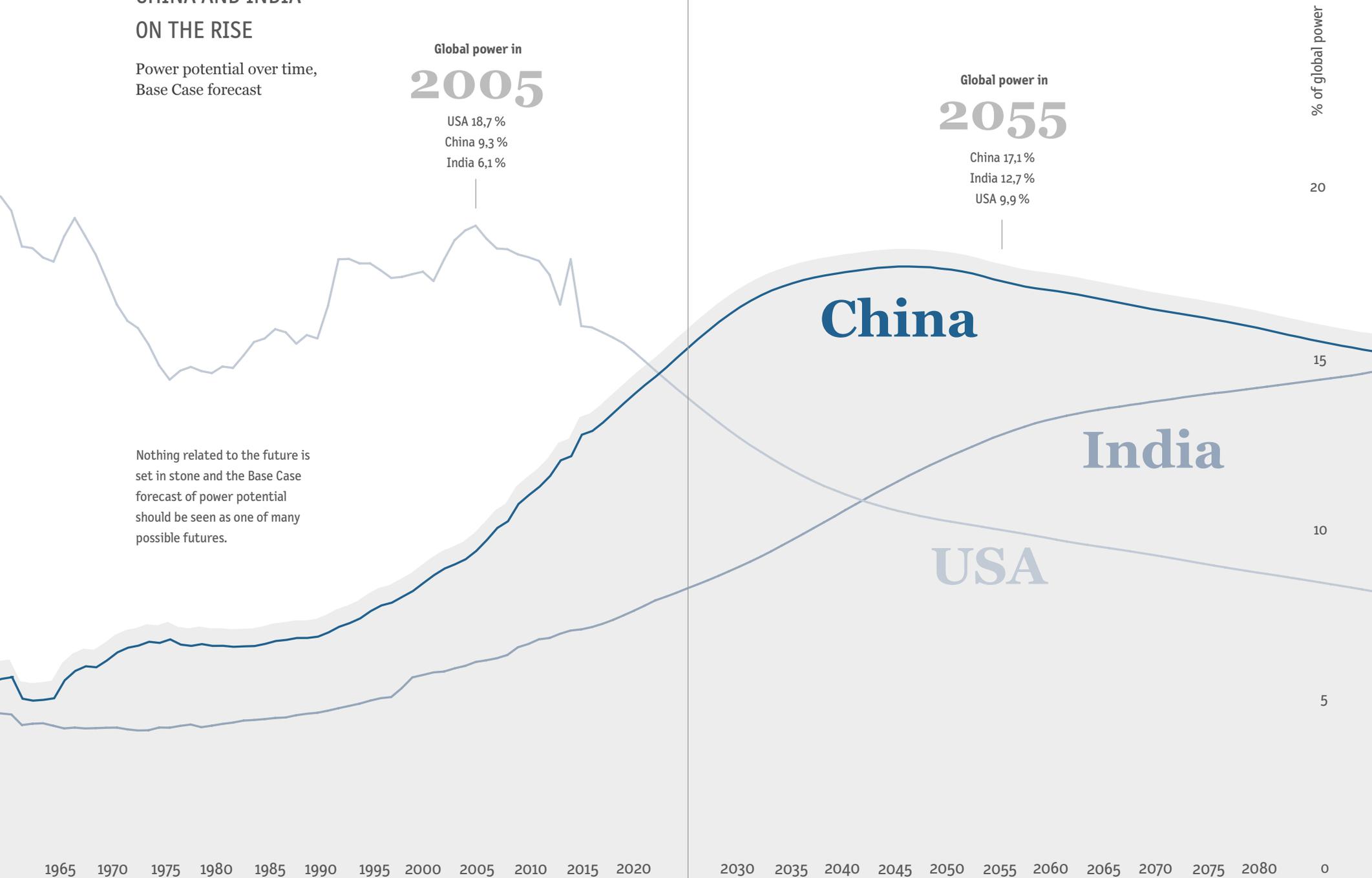
The index suggests that by the early 2020s, China will have a larger percent of global power potential than the USA. India would overtake a declining USA shortly after 2040, inching up on China over subsequent decades [see Figure 4]. Beyond the possible shifts in power potential in future decades, this forecast of power reflects a distinctly two-tiered world within which two, eventually three countries alone would collectively account for 30-40% of global power potential. Beyond the need for greater proportional representation, a reformed council should ensure that these inordinately powerful and influential countries are included in the council.

Without reform it is just a matter of time before the UNSC becomes fully irrelevant as international frustration grows at the lack of UNSC legitimacy and impact, as has already been the case with international financial institutions. And it is not unlikely that large countries that should legitimately be counted as part of the P5, such as India, commit to alternative structures, obstruct or ignore decisions, as the USA and Russia already do, should this impasse not be addressed. Further fragmentation in global security governance would bring great uncertainty to an already fragile world. It is a dangerous and unnecessary risk.

FIGURE 4

## CHINA AND INDIA ON THE RISE

Power potential over time,  
Base Case forecast



## 4. THINKING DIFFERENTLY

A political and intellectual leap is required to overcome the current frustrating impasse between various negotiating positions and groups. Reformers probably only have a window of a few years before the rise of China cements a bi-polar configuration that in some respects may be reminiscent of the Cold War era, but this time locking out contenders such as India whilst continuing to marginalise the rest. This is crucial because India is likely set on a pathway towards great power rivalry with its neighbour China.

In previous centuries, great power rivalry within a region has repeatedly resulted in war. This time such conflict would be between nuclear-armed states each of which possesses the destructive capacity to obliterate its opponent if it strikes first. Ahead of that development, reform of the UNSC should create a system that represents states on a proportional basis and in this manner shift power from the great powers of yesterday to reflect the changes and dynamics of the 21st century.

## 5. TOWARDS A UNSC FIT FOR THE FUTURE

### 5.1 BALANCE OF TENSIONS

Any realistic prospect for more effective global security governance needs to accommodate a number of challenges, each of which is discussed in more detail below:

- the constraints of the current system – in particular the intransigence of the P5 and their desire to retain their veto power – implying that states in favour of reform will have to go beyond playing musical chairs in the IGN,
- the need for greater UNSC effectiveness and capacity that likely implies the need for regions to consider minimum criteria in proposing states for elections to the UNSC,
- the need for increased legitimacy and representation – a requirement that can only be met with the expansion of the size of the Council based on a system of proportional elections,
- the importance of ensuring that the great powers of the future are included in a reformed UNSC in a manner that it does not hamstring the Council – implying the end of permanent seats and the veto,

- providing for the desire of groupings such as Africa, Europe and others to act as coalitions within the Council should they so desire,
- that UNSC reform should unfold gradually, and reflect/accompany the likely shifts in states' power and influence,
- measures to remove particularly contentious issues that could inhibit reform from the agenda of a reformed Council as well as measures to break procedural deadlocks, largely relying on the International Court of Justice in this regard and
- a system of regular review.

The IGN is stuck and the only sensible approach is to develop detailed proposals outside it and to confront the P5 with a proposed amendment to the Charter within the General Assembly that is supported by the required two-thirds of states. For this to succeed, groupings such as Africa and Latin America need to agree while key countries such as India would need to be prepared to suspend their collaboration with the UN should the P5 block such an amendment.

### 5.2 THE PROBLEM OF THE VETO

It is largely the veto that makes the UNSC dysfunctional. Therefore, it is illogical to argue for an increase in the number of states with veto power, or for its retention by the current P5. The veto has even been singled out as a threat to human rights, with Amnesty International claiming that the P5 had used their veto to 'promote their political self-interest or geopolitical interest above the interest of protecting civilians' (BBC 2015). Instead of protecting the weak against the strong, the anachronistic privilege of the veto undermines principled consensus. The veto affords the P5 inordinate influence, including the appointment of the UN Secretary General and amendments to the UN Charter. It detracts from the legitimacy and effectiveness of the UN system, and has hamstrung effective reform of the UN Human Rights Council, the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) and the multitude of other UN agencies and bodies.

### 5.3 EXPANDED UNSC MEMBERSHIP

Based on several years of discussions of the civil society initiative "Elect the Council" the paragraphs below set out some of the key details that could be included in an amendment to reform the UNSC, starting with the size and basic composition of the UNSC.

There is general consensus that a more effective and representative UNSC would need to expand from its current 15 members. This would enable equitable representation by those countries and regions that are underrepresented – such as Africa and Latin America – while accommodating the need for greater representation on a proportional basis. This is relatively easy to achieve by allowing each of the five regional groups that currently elect the non-permanent members of the UNSC to nominate three countries for election to the UNSC in the General Assembly for every 22 members within that electoral group. This gives a UNSC membership of 24 elected seats instead of the current 10. The regional groups are the African Group, Eastern European Group (EEG), the Latin American and Caribbean Group (GRULAC), the Western European and Others Group (WEOG), and the Asia-Pacific Group.

Since a distinction needs to be made between regional leaders and other states desiring to serve on the UNSC, one of the three seats per 22 members could be designated as a regional leaders' seat where states could be immediately reelected, as determined by that region. The terms for all elected countries should be extended from the current two to three years, to provide for greater continuity that will be lost with the phasing out of the P5. As the number of states in any regional group increases or decreases, this will automatically affect the allocation of seats in the UNSC, thereby accommodating changes in the membership of the various voting regions.

TABLE 1  
Example of elected seats per voting region in the UNSC

Regional group	Current number of member countries	Current % of UN members	Proposed renewable 3-year seats on UNSC	Proposed non-renewable 3-year seats on UNSC	Proposed total elected seats on UNSC
Africa	54	28.0	2	4	6
Asia-Pacific	53	27.5	2	4	6
EEG	23	11.9	1	2	3
GRULAC	33	17.1	2	4	6
WEOG	30	15.5	1	2	3
<b>Total</b>	<b>193</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>24</b>

The USA is counted as a member of WEOG, currently it has observer status

Source: United Nations Department for General Assembly and Conference Management 2014

## 5.4 CRITERIA FOR UNSC MEMBERSHIP

UN member states have vast discrepancies in population, economic heft, military power and diplomatic influence. This must be balanced with appropriate proportional representation on a reformed UNSC. Smaller states are particularly concerned that a Council composed of only larger states will not serve their interests. Yet it seems self-evident that states that serve on the UNSC should have a minimum capacity and track record if they are to contribute to global peace and security issues. This implies the need for minimum criteria for candidacy. Examples of such minimum criteria include:

1. experience – peacekeeping deployment, engagement in humanitarian support, conflict resolution and participation in peacebuilding,
2. capacity – resources such as diplomatic missions globally, in New York, Geneva and Nairobi, and in conflict-affected regions,
3. financial good standing with the UN and its agencies,
4. willingness to shoulder additional financial contributions to UN efforts on international peace and security, as determined by the UNGA,
5. respect for open, inclusive and accountable governance, the rule of law and international human rights standards.

Given the challenge for the General Assembly in applying these criteria, the logical approach is to leave it to each region to monitor and apply as they see fit.

## 5.5 RECOGNISING GLOBAL POWER

A future UNSC that does not include the global powers of the 21st century will suffer from a lack of political and military clout. In addition to the expansion of the UNSC based on a proportional system, room must be made to include these global powers. To avoid a repeat of the current situation with the P5, such inclusion cannot be permanent nor can seats be allocated to specific countries. For example, an amendment to the Charter could include a provision that countries that meet three simple yet measurable criteria should automatically qualify for UNSC seats. An example of these criteria would be states that constitute at least 5% of the global economy, contribute at least 5% to the UN budget, and have more than 3% of global population. In recognition of their potential contribution to global peace and security these global powers should be allocated enhanced voting powers (in that their votes would

count for three – but no veto). Groups of states, such as a future EU with a common foreign and security policy, or African states acting collectively, may wish to have their engagement with the UNSC reflect deeper regional integration. A reformed Council should therefore allow coalitions to qualify for such a global powers seat, so long as they meet the three criteria set out above. This configuration would trigger welcome changes in the composition of the current voting blocks [see Table 1]. Both substantive and procedural decisions within the UNSC should require a two-thirds affirmative majority.

The result of these proposals would be a simple, equitable and flexible structure that is representative of the various regions and of the membership of the UN generally. It balances the need for an increase in size with the need for effectiveness and efficiency whilst accommodating the great powers of tomorrow.

## 5.6 THE NEED FOR A PERIOD OF TRANSITION

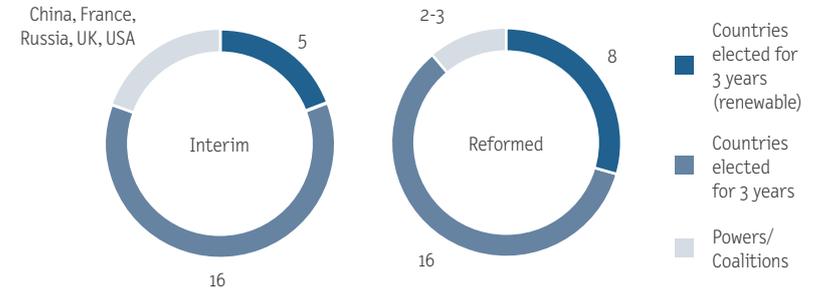
The current five permanent UNSC members have unprecedented privilege that they would not otherwise obtain, and will not readily agree to changes that dilute their power and status. Rather than move immediately from the current antiquated system to a fully reformed Council, it would be useful to include a transition period during which the P5 would remain members of the UNSC for up to two decades with additional voting privileges such as having their votes count for more (that are wound down over time) but without the veto. After reform, the current P5 members would only serve on the UNSC if elected by their respective regions or if they qualify in terms of the global powers criteria.

## 5.7 REMOVING OBSTACLES

Beyond the veto and permanent seats there are a number of issues that could prohibit reform, such as matters around Israel and Palestine. One way out of this impasse could be to ask the outgoing UNSC to compile a list of, for example, five intractable issues that, for a period of up to 30 years, may not be subject to an additional Chapter VII UNSC resolution beyond the renewal and revisions of existing mandates. Under dire and specific circumstances this provision could be overruled by a supermajority.

Finally, there must be a mandatory review of the functions, role, composition and rules of procedure of the UNSC every 30 years.

FIGURE 5  
Example of an interim vs a reformed UN Security Council



During the transition period China, Russia and the US/UK or France would occupy one of the three-year renewable seats for the Asia-Pacific Group, EEG and WEOG respectively, hence the difference in the number of renewable seats between the interim and reformed UNSC

Source: Author

## 6. CONCLUSION

We will likely never rid the world of narrow national interests. But an integrated and interdependent world needs an enlightened approach that prioritises global concerns when responding to global threats. There is a clear requirement for a Council based not on historical precedent but on principle and electoral mechanisms reflecting today's power and population dynamics. It will likely result in a more cautious UNSC than one dominated by Western powers, but one whose authority and decisions will carry far greater force and legitimacy in the 21st Century.

UNSC reform is not an easy or a comfortable process. Various states, coalitions and interest groups will actively oppose and even undermine an agreement that weakens their advantage. But it is possible to reform the UNSC based on a comprehensive set of detailed proposals. Such reform requires states to embrace an enlightened vision of national interests and leadership. An appreciation of the extent to which the world of tomorrow presents many opportunities as long as we are able to manage the associated risks is needed.

It requires a region such as Africa to be prepared to step away from the Ezulwini Consensus on condition that agreement on such an amendment is achieved. It requires others to also enter into discussions outside of the

IGN process in New York on a draft amendment to the UN Charter based on specific proposals, not principles open to national interpretation. Once 129 countries support such an alliance (the required two thirds majority), the alliance would table a non-negotiable amendment to the UN Charter in the General Assembly backed by the threat from key countries to withdraw from cooperation and support to the UN. Such an effort would likely require substantial support from civil society globally as well as from business. Even Russia, which has taken to the repeated use of its veto in recent years, would hesitate in alone opposing such a common, global approach.

## ANNOTATIONS

The proposals presented here were developed by the Elect the Council project on UNSC reform, Institute for Security Studies, Pretoria office: [www.electthecouncil.org](http://www.electthecouncil.org).

The forecasts presented in this paper were done using the International Futures (IFs) forecasting system version 7.31. developed and hosted by the Frederick S. Pardee Center for International Futures, Josef Korbel School of International Studies, University of Denver, Denver (CO).

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