

# Soft power through Responsibility to Protect: a small state's foreign policy strategy

– A study of Norwegian foreign policy and R2P in the context of the civil wars in Libya and Syria.

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Anne Margrete Slaaen Omtveit

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## **Abstract**

The purpose of this thesis is to investigate in what way the normative principle of Responsibility to Protect (R2P) is reflected in Norwegian foreign policy. It is also an aim of this thesis to look at how the different actors, internal and external to Norway, affect foreign policy behaviour. The nature of the study is qualitative, and its data are gathered from document analysis from the government, media and civil society. The research has been approached through a theoretical framework based on globalization, soft power theory and small state foreign policy behaviour. Due to the lack of material capabilities, soft power is the main strategy available for Norway. Small state foreign policy behaviour theory emphasises that small states must take into account certain considerations due to being small. The two theories help to explain Norwegian behaviour towards the civil wars in Libya and Syria.

The main argument of the thesis is that due to Norway's self-image as a humanitarian super power and a human rights advocate, the principle of R2P should in theory be embraced in all foreign relations situations. However, as the cases of the civil wars in Libya and Syria show, this has not been the case. This is explained by the fact that Norway is a small state that behaves accordingly in international relations. Instead, Norway follows the decisions made at the UN level due to the fact that Norway depends on multi-lateral organizations when conducting foreign policies, and hence when participating in humanitarian interventions legitimized by R2P.



## **Acknowledgments**

It is with great pride and excitement that I now hand in my thesis. It has at times seemed impossible, and it has not been without its challenges. However, the result and the experiences made on the way have given me great lessons for the future.

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I take full responsibility for the thesis, its content and the conclusion.

Anne Margrete Slaaen Omtveit

Trondheim



## **Abbreviations**

AP – Arbeiderpartiet (Labour Party)

DUUK – The extended foreign policy committee

FrP – Fremskrittspartiet (The Progress Party)

H – Høyre (The Conservative Party)

HRC – Human Rights Council

ICISS – International Commission on Intervention and State Sovereignty

ISIL - the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant

IDP – Internal Displaced People

IMF – International Monetary Fund

KrF – Kristelig Folkeparti (The Christian Party)

MDG – Miljøpartiet De Grønne (The Environmental Party)

MOD – The Ministry of Defence

MFA – The Ministry of Foreign Affairs

NATO – North Atlantic Treaty Organization

NDUC - Norwegian Defence University College

NGO – Non-Governmental Organization

R2P – Responsibility to Protect

Sp – Senterpartiet (The Norwegian Centre Party)

SV – Sosialistisk Vestreparti (Socialist Left Party)

V – Venstre (Left Party)

UN – United Nations



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# **1. Introduction: Norway's foreign policy and the Responsibility to Protect**

## **1.1 Introduction**

In 2011, the Security Council did something it had never done before. It legitimized a humanitarian intervention on the grounds of the normative principle, Responsibility to Protect (R2P). The military operation in Libya was given its mandate due to the human rights abuses by the Libyan state against the Libyan people. During the mission, named Operation Odyssey Dawn, Norway contributed with six F-16 Fighting Falcon aircrafts which in total dropped 588 bombs over Libyan territory (Leraand 2013).

Norwegian participation in the military operation is part of a tradition in Norwegian foreign policy where global engagement is highly valued. As a self-declared human rights advocate and a humanitarian super power, Norway has put human rights as a main pillar in its foreign policy (Meld. St. 10 2014-2015). Norwegian foreign policy has for decades followed a line of humanitarian engagement whereby it actively goes directly into conflicts either to be part of the diplomatic solution or to help through economic aid. This has given Norway an international status that many small states only can dream of. In 2015 the total budget of Norway's foreign affairs is 37 504 556 000 NOK (Prop. 1 S (2014-2015) – a staggering sum that reflects the importance of Norwegian foreign relations. The budget also enables Norway to take part in international relations as a significant actor despite its small size.

The world in which Norway is part has changed radically since the Cold War. The forces of globalization have made the world feel smaller. Humanitarian crises, civil wars and terrorism are suddenly at our doorstep. Norwegians are travelling to Syria to either fight for or against the ISIL; refugees are seeking asylum in Norway; Norwegian reporters are kidnapped in the field – these are only few examples of how situations abroad affect Norway both directly and indirectly. In this rapidly changing world, human rights increasingly has been given more attention in international relations, and is often used as justification for humanitarian interventions or humanitarian relief to maintain international peace and security.

Globalization has, as mentioned above, brought the world closer. International peace and security have increased in significance. More and more attention is given to the protection of democracy and human rights to achieve such international peace. In 2001 Responsibility to Protect (R2P) was introduced to the international system as a response to the genocides and ethnic cleansing that took place during the 1990s in the Balkans and Rwanda. These were

horrific situations where hundreds of thousands human beings were victims of state abuse, where the international community in many ways were too late to respond and without the legal mandate to do so. When the Arabic Spring flashed over the Arab world in 2011, civil wars broke out and the international community felt inclined to take action, and did so in Libya backed up by R2P. Lessons had been learned from the 1990s.

The lesson seemed to be short-learned however. In Syria the civil war has raged for over four years, without any Security Council resolution legitimized by R2P giving mandate for a humanitarian intervention to stop the atrocities performed by Bashar al-Assad. Discussion has been raised over the value, appropriateness and future of R2P, and in what way it will affect future humanitarian crisis. The same has been the issue in Norway. While there was no doubt among Norwegian politicians that a humanitarian intervention was the way to go in order to stop Muammar al-Gaddafi from killing and torturing Libyan citizens, the same determination of using force to stop Bashar al-Assad has not been present.

## **1.2 Research question**

The research question of the thesis is

*In what way is Responsibility to Protect reflected in Norwegian foreign policy?*

This question is important because R2P is a principle that was used as legitimation for the Norwegian contribution to the military mission in Libya in 2011. It is also important because if R2P becomes a norm it could change the way in which Norwegian foreign policy is legitimized and exercised. To investigate the role of R2P is therefore of great value for future international issues that Norway has to take a stand towards. When asking this question, other questions naturally come up as well. For one, how does R2P fit into the Norwegian foreign policy tradition? Norway has portrayed itself as a human rights advocate and a humanitarian super power, and as such R2P should be a natural extender of this policy line. Or is it conflictive to Norwegian global interests, as not all other states has embraced human rights in the same manner. Another question is: how is the process of making foreign policy decisions in Norway organized? who participates in it? and who influences it? There are both internal and external actors which are part of the process, and which of these possess the strongest influence besides the government is interesting. An especially important external actor in

Norway's foreign policy is the UN. Norway as a small state strongly depends on multi-lateral organizations in international relations issues, and in this respect the UN stands out as the main organization. The way in which the UN affects the position of R2P both internationally and in Norway is interesting, and consequently the UN will be given much space in the thesis. These are questions that will be touched upon during the research.

R2P is a principle that legitimizes military humanitarian interventions. Martha Finnemore stands out as one of the leading scholars on the subject of the history of humanitarian interventions. In her book, *The purpose of intervention* (2003) she looks at different changes in history that has led to the international accept of use of force in the name of humanity. Her conclusion is that there has been a change in the reason for why states intervene. There has been a change in who deserves to be protected, how interventions are performed and that they now have to be multilateral to be considered legitimate (Finnemore 2003:3,4). R2P joins the ranks of the development of both human rights and humanitarian interventions, a development Norway has been actively part of. Another scholar working on the subject of human rights is Kathryn Sikkink. She has through several contributions explained the global diffusion of norms, and especially the global diffusion of human rights. Her main theory is that norms such as human rights is fundamental ideas that lies within human beings and when these ideas are globally campaigned they can become internalized within all states (Sikkink 1998; Finnemore & Sikkink 1998).

Alex J. Bellamy has written a number of articles concerning the topic of R2P. He looks at the problematic aspects of military interventions (2008) and at the new politics that comes out of the principle (2011). Bellamy is together with scholars such as Ramesh Thakur (2003), Edward C. Luck (2011) and Alan J. Kuperman (2013) advocates of the principle, but who also see obstacles in the principle's future. R2P is a highly debated, and its consequences are still not fully known. However, there is a fear of the principle backfiring by making things worse or it being abused by strong states as alibi for self-interest (Kuperman 2013:134; Luck 2011: 387).

A number of research projects on the issue of Norwegian foreign policy have been conducted. However, due to the tradition of holding broad consensus in Norwegian foreign policy, it is difficult to find any real discussion over the issues that are debated in Parliament or within the political parties. Hence, the field of Norwegian foreign policy studies might appear rather superficial and more concerned with the institution and processes in which foreign policy

decisions are being made than about what was actually said or done. Here, authors such as Fonn, Neumann and Sending (2006) and Lange, Pharo and Østerud (2009) have contributed to the field. The problem with these studies is the lack of focus on special cases. This study builds on these contributions with a specific application to the case of Norway, further strengthened by theories of power and foreign policy behaviour.

Previous research has looked upon the role of R2P in international relations, the consequences of it and why it was used in Libya and not in Syria. What is lacking, however, is a narrower and more concentrated view of the principle and the consequences it has on individual states' foreign policy behaviour. Previous research is therefore limited to a quite broad point of view. The goal of this research is thus to fill this gap and to widen the research over R2P by looking into the consequences of R2P on Norwegian foreign policy.

### **1.3 Structure of the thesis**

The thesis has seven chapters. In chapter 2 the methodological choices and considerations are presented. In chapter 3 the theoretical framework is outlined, which will further be used in the analysis. The chapter begins with the theory of globalization and how this has influenced the diffusion of norms. Then, the theories of soft power and small state foreign policy behaviour follows. Chapter 4 looks into the principle of Responsibility to Protect, and how it has been used in Libya, Syria and Norway.

In chapter 5 the history and framework of Norway's foreign policy is presented. Then, the analysis is provided in chapter 6. Here, the two cases of Libya and Syria is analysed in separate sections, and then put in the context of the theoretical framework in a final section.

Finally, the findings are concluded in chapter 7.

## **2. The methodological approach**

This chapter looks closer at the methodological approach chosen in the thesis, and how this makes the process of analysis possible. In order to answer the research question, I have chosen a qualitative research approach with a case study using process tracing techniques as the research design, and qualitative content analysis will be the research method. This will make it possible to look at how R2P and human rights is or is not reflected in the Norwegian foreign policy.

### **2.1 Qualitative research approach and research design – case study and process tracing**

Choosing a research design and method is important. It provides tools and guidelines in the research process. The thesis is based on qualitative research. Hence, the data used will be words rather than quantification. To choose a qualitative strategy is however not equal to eliminating quantification completely (Bryman 2012:36, 380). Normally there are some set steps in the execution of a qualitative research. First, a main general research question is made with some sub-questions in order to support the main research question. Second, a selection of subject(s) and a relevant site is chosen. Then, third, a collection of relevant data is made which is, in the fourth step, interpreted. This is conceptualized and concluded in a theory (Bryman 2012:385-386). These steps are meant as guidelines, and often one needs to go back and find more data in order to end up with a reasonable conclusion and/or theory.

#### **2.1.1 Case study**

The purpose of using a case study is to provide an intense and detailed analysis of a single case (Bryman 2012:66). R2P is a thoroughly examined principle, but providing a new angle to the subject through a case study might provide new insight as to what implications R2P has for states which operate in the international system. Here, the civil wars in Libya and Syria are chosen as cases to be compared in order to investigate how R2P has or has not influenced the Norwegian foreign policy behaviour. As such, Norway is a case in itself as it is the state in question, but Libya and Syria will also be treated as the cases to be analysed. Libya was chosen for the apparent reason that it was the first case where R2P was used as justification by the Security Council for a humanitarian intervention and the Norwegian contribution of F-16 air force to the coalition. Syria was chosen in contrast due to its similarities to the case of



Libya in terms of how the civil war was triggered by the Arab Spring revolution, the international attention and its ramification for the international community in terms of refugees and economic aid. In order to analyse the case of Norway, three levels of analysis are examined. The first is the political level in which the government and the oppositional political parties are represented. The second level is the Norwegian military. Finally, the third level of analysis is the civil society. Norway as a case is suitable for providing new insights to the issue of R2P because Norway for one has a long tradition for supporting human rights. Second, Norway was one of the main participants in the military operation in Libya as well as it paradoxically consider and identifies itself as a nation of peace.

However, a state is never immune to outside forces. It is influenced by a vast number of actors, institutions, organizations and so on, in addition to being influenced by external factors. Hence, a number of actors and factors participates in the process of creating Norwegian foreign policies. Here, the analysis of the Norwegian foreign policy investigated from two perspectives. One is from the system perspective in which external influences might shape the policies made and the behaviour of the state. Membership in international organizations, international economic crisis, civil wars and so on are examples of external factors that influences Norwegian foreign policy. The second perspective is the state in which the actors within Norway are what determine the Norwegian foreign policy (in other words the three levels of which Norway is constituted of). Here, the political parties in government will be of importance, as well as those in opposition together with the civil society. Examples of external influences that might influence Norwegian foreign policy are UN decisions, NATO policies, international law, wars and terrorism. When Norwegians leave the country to fight for the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) in Syria and Iraq it has implications for both national security and how Norway should respond internationally. We are dealing here with factors and actors outside the state that determine Norwegian foreign policy.

At the state perspective of the analysis we look at internal factors influencing the Norwegian foreign policy. Public pressure, a strong political opposition, civil society and so on can determine the direction of policies. For example, as different parties take government one can expect different approaches to foreign affairs and the policies made. When the civil wars in respectively Libya and Syria began in 2011 Norway's government was made out of Arbeiderpartiet (Ap), Sosialistisk Venstreparti (SV) and Senterpartiet (Sp). In 2013 Høyre (H) and Fremskrittspartiet (FrP) took over. Did a shift in the attitude towards the ongoing war in Syria shift? R2P was used to legitimize the contribution of military air force in Libya by the

Stoltenberg-government, how do today's government position itself when it comes to human rights and R2P in international conflicts? It is here the three levels of analysis come to play, that is the political level, the military level and the civil society level.

For this purpose the Norwegian state will be conceptualized as consisting of the government, the Parliament, the military and civil society. Norwegian multi-national companies and state-organizations do play a role in foreign affairs as it is in Norway's interest that they are successful internationally. Interesting as it is to look at the economic interests Norway has internationally, it is however a different discussion, and will not be part of this analysis. The governments in focus will be the Stoltenberg-government from 2005 to 2013 and the Høyre-FrP-government from 2013 until present. Hence, the time frame of the research will be from the Libyan civil war in 2011 when Norway contributed with military to today. By making such limitation it also makes it easier to find relevant data.

A case study focuses on single entities, such as individuals, groups, communities, events, policy areas, countries and institutions. Furthermore, it enables the researcher to study the case in depth (Burnham et. al 2008: 63). What is highlighted as important is the intensive examination of the setting in which the case is situated. Further, case study design is mostly associated with qualitative research, but that does not mean it is inappropriate to use it in quantitative research. As the goal of the thesis is to gain a deeper understanding of what implications the phenomenon R2P have on Norwegian Foreign Policy, a case study design is well suited and this thesis will be a qualitative research with a case study design. Through breaking down the case into three analytical levels it is the goal to gain a deep and fully understanding that can be generated to other cases similar to Norway. A goal should be to view the three analytical perspectives combined and how they function as a whole in order to gain a full and comprehensive picture. A weakness of the case study approach is the problem of generalization (Burnham et.al 2008:64). As the research focuses on one unique case, it will not be representative for all states in the world. However, Norway does represent the reality of many small states trying to survive in a complicated world and hence the case study will provide valuable information.

A case study often takes an inductive approach when it is based on qualitative research. An inductive approach entails that the relationship between theory and research; that is, theory is generated from the research, but also that a theory is not necessary the goal. It is the case in itself that is of importance (Bryman 2012: 69, 712). Here, this means that the data in the

research will end up in general reflections and possibly a theory. However, as it is the study of a single country it might be a too unique case for comparison with others to be generalized.

### **2.1.2 Process tracing**

In order to conduct a case study, process tracing is chosen as the case study method technique. The main task of the research is to trace the process and dynamics in Norwegian foreign policy, and the way in which R2P has influenced Norwegian foreign policy behaviour. The aim is to discover the process and causal mechanisms that possibly lie behind the dynamics of Norwegian foreign policy. As such, process tracing as presented by Jeffrey T. Checkel (2008), is a valuable tool. According to Checkel process tracing traces the causal mechanism(s) at work in a given situation in which one maps the processes at work (Checkel 2008:116). To understand a process is to understand a theory, which is based on causal mechanisms. A mechanism is a set of hypotheses that has the possibility of explaining a social phenomenon. Mechanisms have the ability to connect things, including actors or social structures. The objective as such is to look for cause and effect (Checkel 2008: 114, 115), which here is translated into the effect of R2P on Norwegian foreign policy.

Process tracing uses qualitative data, and often includes interviews, press accounts and documents – all applicable in the thesis. It further has the feature of being compatible with other methods (Checkel 2008: 116), which in this thesis will be document analysis. The combination of the different methods will strengthen the analysis as it gives the possibility of searching deeper into the data and look further into the dynamics of Norwegian foreign policy and the mechanisms that cause different foreign policy behaviour.

Process tracing has its positive and negative aspects. On the positive side, process tracing encourages the researcher to consider new theories and alternative explanations. It is also a method that captures and explains how the world works through the focus on mechanisms. On the negative side, a researcher using process tracing relies on proxies. To rely on proxies means that a researcher use an entity or variable that is assumed to be similar of the entity or variable she or he actually seeks to explain, but which is assumed to be too difficult to research. In other words, the researcher looks for similar cases to explain what she or he actually wants to explain. It therefore becomes important for the researcher to think advance as to how the variables are to be conceptualized and what would be reasonable proxies to measure them. Another downside to process tracing is that it is rather time consuming. For

some research projects it can take years to collect enough data to be able to explain the processes in question (Checkel 2008: 120-125). For this thesis' purpose however, it is limited to Norway and to two cases of civil wars and as such the limitations have made it less time consuming. This, however, is an issue not reserved for process tracing only. Most case study methods have the possibility of being too time consuming, and hence this is not a negative side that should intimidate researchers from conducting a case study using process tracing.

## **2.2 Reliability, replication and validity**

In social science there are three important criteria in order for evaluation: reliability, replication and validity. A high level of these three criteria gives the research credibility in terms of the results achieved in a study.

When one is conducting research the idea of repetition, or reliability, is important. It is however more important in quantitative research than in qualitative, as the former is more concerned with whether something is stable and repetitive, than a researcher aiming to study a phenomenon. Hence, reliability is not a big concern in this thesis as it is a qualitative case study, especially considering the low number of cases to be studied. The second criterion is replication. Here, the point is that a study should be possible to be replicated by others later. It becomes crucial then that the researcher explained in detail how the study was conducted. Finally, and most important, is the criteria of validity. Here, the issue of the integrity of the conclusions generated from the study is of importance. One speaks of measurement validity, internal validity, external validity and ecological validity. Questions such as whether one is measuring what it aims to measure, causal relations between two or more variables, generalization and applicability to everyday life is here questioned (Bryman 2012: 46-49, 390).

Internal validity deserves some elaboration as it will be the main issue in this research. Internal validity deals with the issue of whether a conclusion that looks at causal relationship between two or more variables can stand towards critical examination (Bryman 2012:47). For a conclusion to hold water, you must be able to say that no other factors can explain  $y$  than  $x$ . Case studies, and process tracing in particular, is good at securing internal validity as it aims at tracing the mechanism that causes a social phenomenon (Checkel 2008:114, 115). Hence, the aim is namely to see if  $x$  causes  $y$ . Further, when one is attentive to the causal relationship between different mechanisms at play, the development of theory becomes both easier and the

theory in itself becomes more robust. Consequently, the criteria of validity, specifically internal validity, will be most significant in the process. To look for the right and important data and whether human rights does or do not have a causal effect on Norway's Foreign Policy are questions that needs to be kept in mind. The examination of causal processes is the key issue in this research, and also the advantage of it due to the fact that internal validity is what strengthens it. As for the other two criteria reliability and replication seem less useful as Norway is a unique case in the international context. It is a small and wealthy country with a long tradition for peace and human rights, and as such it is hard to replicate the findings to other states' reality. As such, this study will rather explore the larger context in which comparison with other states might be useful.

### **2.3 Data collection**

There are many sources of data when one is doing research. One can observe, conduct interviews or look into documents. In the study, documents will be the main source of data. Hence, analysing documents and analysing statements will be the foundation of the data in the study, together with previous research conducted by others.

#### **2.3.1 Accessibility**

Documents are divided in to two categories; primary and secondary sources. For this purpose official state documents from the Parliament and the government and interviews will constitute the primary type of data, while news articles, media statements, articles and such will serve as secondary data sources. While primary data has a high level of validity, secondary data should be treated a bit more cautious as they might be more biased which gives it a lower level of validity.

#### **2.3.2 Documents**

Documents come from a variety of different sources. While it might appear to be an easy and unproblematic task to use documents as source in research it is quite the opposite. It is a long process to search for relevant documents and an even more time consuming process to analyse it in order to gather some relevant information. Documents can be read, have not been produced specifically for the purpose of social research, are preserved so that they become

available for analysis and are relevant to the concerns of the social researcher (Burnham et. al. 2008: 49,50; Bryman 2012: 543). This includes official state documents, documents produced by private sources such as NGOs, mass media, and internet sources. Personal documents are another type of document, but will not be used in the analysis and thus will not be explained any further. Primary and secondary sources which will be used in this thesis are much more reliable than biographies and diaries as they give a direct look at the political framework and often are the result of a political process (Burnham et.al 2008:190-196; Burnham 2008: 194, 195).

In order to assess the quality of documents, there are four criteria to look for. Authenticity addresses whether the document is genuine and has an unquestionable origin. Credibility addresses if the document is free from error and distortion. The third criterion is representativeness, and deals with whether the document is typical of its kind, and, if not, the extent to which the “untypicality” is known. Finally, the criterion of meaning addresses whether the document is clear and comprehensible (Bryman 2012: 544).

### **2.3.3 Document analysis**

In the analysis of the Norwegian foreign policy process official documents deriving from the state, media and NGOs will be the primary source of evidence. The state, for one, is a producer of a vast amount of information. The state is obliged to make public statements, meeting records, hearings and so on as long as it is not important for state security to keep it secret. An issue of using state documents or NGO documents is the danger of bias (Burnham et. al 2008: 190-195; Bryman 2012: 549). Many documents are published with the purpose of persuading the public of what the government is working for. This could decrease the credibility of the document, but it might also be the reason of why it is interesting. The document gives a picture of the reality and how a source is trying to persuade the receiver, and this could be important data for the analysis.

When it comes to official documents deriving from private sources, such as organizations there is no obligation to make these public. However, NGOs are in a special position because they usually work to achieve results in the public area. This is often done through distribution of information. Hence, the access to documents produced by NGOs such as Amnesty International and the Association of NGOs in Norway are quite accessible, at least to some degree. One should assume that even NGOs does not make public every statement or opinion

that they have. As the information from NGO often is directed to individuals, these documents are often easy to comprehend, and they are often perceived as meaningful and authentic. In terms of representativeness documents from NGOs are more complex as they are in a sense more unique (Burnham et. al 2008: 190-195; Bryman 2012: 549-551).

Different types of documents brings with them different considerations. Another question concerning documents, in addition to the four criteria mentioned above, is the reality of documents. The hope of a researcher is that the status of documents will reveal something about the underlying social reality of which it exists in (Bryman 2012:554). So, when we investigate documents from Amnesty International, the hope is that these documents will tell something about what is going on in that NGO. There is, however, been some scepticism amongst some writers over whether this is the reality. This criticism argues that instead, one should view such documents as a distinct level of reality in their own right. Hence, instead of documents revealing the social reality they should be interpreted in the context they are written, by whom it is read by and in the context of what it is supposed to accomplish (Burnham et.al 2008:208-212; Bryman 2012: 554, 555). In order to solve this problem of document reality, the researcher needs to strengthen the documents by adding other sources of data. In that way one gets a fuller picture.

When using documents as the main source of data, interpretation of these is important. It is through the analysis and interpretation of what is written in these that will be the basis of the data. How you interpret then becomes essential for the research and the conclusion.

Traditionally there are three approaches to how to interpret documents. These are qualitative content analysis, semiotics and hermeneutics. The first approach is the most popular approach, and will also be the chosen one in this research. In qualitative content analysis one searches for underlying themes in the documents and then analysed. This process of discerning themes is not pre-given, and there is no “recipe”. It is however normal to generate some categories that will guide the collection of data. This can be categories of words, subjects and/or themes (Matthews & Ross 2010: 373-381; Bryman 2012: 295-299, 556-559). In this thesis, categories such as “human rights”, “UN”, “humanitarian” and “R2P” will be used in the analysis of the official documents. Further, it is important to remember what the research question is. If this is clearly articulated and followed throughout the process, it is less of a chance that important information is lost. Content analysis is also a good method when analysing the content of statements, and the categories mentioned will be used in these cases as well.

Content analysis is a good research method as it is very transparent and it is easy to replicate it as one can use the categories in another setting, which also makes it highly flexible. It can be used in a variety of information, from mass-media to official documents. On the negative side, content analysis is very dependent on the documents analysed. Thus, authenticity, credibility and representativeness of the data sources become important. Another factor to take into account is the fact that some interpretation of the researcher will always be present (Burnham et.al 2008: 208-212; Bryman 2012: 304,305). However, if one has these in mind and strives for making the research both credible and representative, content analysis is a good method that will make it possible to conduct research with documents and official statements.

While process tracing is the chosen case study technique in the research, document analysis will be the method chosen to analyse the data. Hence, to trace the processes operating within the Norwegian foreign policy process, document analysis will provide the data that is necessary to do such a process tracing. Combined, these two different methods will make possible an in-depth case study dealing with the processes at play in the Norwegian foreign policy process.

## **2.4 The validity of the research**

The documents that have been chosen for the research are relevant for answering the research question. As the focus is the trend of human rights shaping Norwegian foreign policy, the focus has been more on reports and priorities of the given government at the time showing political continuity. Hence, only radical and unforeseen events could change the political picture and priorities that the documents chosen would lose its significance. During the timeframe chosen, no such radical event seem to have taken place.

A weakness that can be argued concerning the research is the lack of interviews and direct contact with state officials and NGO members. Attempts to obtain interviews with civil society representatives have been made, but there was little response and one NGO representative refused on the grounds that they did not do politics. Obviously, the thesis deals with a controversial subject. As such, the thesis is deprived of a primary source where direct questions concerning the research question is dealt with. However, the official documents from the Parliament, NGOs and media do reflect the opinions of those actors important in the debate in Norwegian foreign policy and therefore the research does reflect the different voices



in Norway. The validity of the secondary sources in the research can be argued to be high, as it derives from reliable and recognized authors. The secondary sources in the research are compiled by research done by others concerning Norwegian foreign policy and theoretical framework. As such, these contributions have supported the analysis of the research greatly.

### 3. Theoretic framework

Theory can be understood as a set of assumptions and as a conceptualization where one theorize about a particular way of thinking about the world and as hypothesis or explanation (Burnham et.al 2008:3). Hence, the theories chosen are theories that explain the world (globalization), and theories that provides hypothesis of expected behaviour (soft power and small state foreign policy behaviour).

The research questions in the thesis opens up to a range of theories of how the world is to be conceptualized and understood. The theories presented in this chapter are what make out the theoretical framework in which the analysis of the Norwegian foreign policy is to be understood, and as such helps us trace, understand and explain the process. First, a presentation of globalization and how norms are diffused at a global scope will be given. This is followed by a discussion of the theory of soft power. Finally the chapter looks into the theory of small state foreign policy behaviour, especially as it relates to the theory of soft power.

#### 3.1 Globalization and the diffusion of norms

Few today have not picked up the word globalization. It is used to explain the vast changes that the world has experienced since the industrial revolution, and it has especially been given its momentum after the development of the internet. For every area (economy, politics, culture and so on) the concept is used to explain, there is a different definition of it. Claes et. al. define globalization as *processes which at a global level shapes events and phenomena at underlying levels and which is affected by this* (Claes 2007:17). Another definition focuses on globalization as *a generic term referring to a number of explicitly describable structures and interactions with a planetary range. (...) not to be thought of as an autonomous process, an unstoppable historical movement, and an imperative political necessity* (Osterhammel 2005:151). What most definitions share is the focus on the global range of aspects in human life which includes the economy, politics, technology, social life and cultural life.

Globalization is a global process that has affected humans since the industrial revolution and continues to impact human life.

What these different definitions show is that there are two aspects of globalization which are deeply intertwined. The first is the material aspect. Here, people, products and capital move

with ease across borders. The second aspect is what will be the scope of this analysis. It is the aspect that reflects what in the globalization concept that is important to the analysis. This aspect of globalization concerns communication and information that floats across borders and makes possible exchange of culture, values and ideals (Kalnes 2010: 90). Here lies exchange of different cultures, norms, values and politics, all factors that complicates international politics. The norm of human rights for example is to some countries not obvious or part of their history and tradition. Hence, it becomes problematic when these countries are to interact with much more democratic countries that take human rights as a given.

Globalization has made possible communication and a rapid spread of information that a century ago would be impossible. This is a side to globalization that bring with it problems for states. Every move that a state makes is quickly registered by other states and information is passed just as quickly. This becomes consequential because every move then becomes transparent to the rest of world. As such it becomes an issue for both the state doing an action and for the states witnessing the action. Hence, when there are riots, terrorism or civil wars in the Middle East it affects Norwegian Foreign Policy both directly and indirectly. In White Paper number 10 from 2014-2015 about human rights it was argued by the Norwegian government that globalization had increased international cooperation and interdependence between states. Especially was the threat against Norwegian security highlighted together with threats against human rights which was made possible by globalization (Meld. St. 10 2014-2015: 43). Hence, we see that even though globalization has provided Norway with opportunities, it has also brought international unrest closer to home. When Norway is asked to contribute in international missions abroad, as in Afghanistan and Libya, we see how those far-away conflicts suddenly become quite real.

Another consequence of globalization has been the diffusion of human rights. It is not easy to explain how human rights have become so globally important and valued in international relations in such a way that it sometimes overrides the principle of sovereignty. According to Kathryn Sikkink (1998) one must take into account the power of norms and ideas and the transnational manner in which these norms are diffused at a global scope (Sikkink 1998: 517). The fact that human rights violations become an international relations issue and is on the international relations agenda is an indicator of how human rights does influence foreign policy. However, there is a need to explain *how* they come to influence international politics. One explanation is that the origins of normative principles, such as human rights, come from strongly held ideas and a want to diffuse these ideas to others. This is done through global

campaigning, transnational coalitions and global networking. The norm influence has three stages, in which the first is “norm emergence”, the second is “norm cascade” (or norm acceptance) and the third stage is internalization. The three stages makes out the norm life cycle (Sikkink 1998: 518,519; Finnemore & Sikkink 1998: 895). Finnemore and Sikkink suggest that globalization in the later part of the twentieth century has been a part of the increased the speed of normative change (Finnemore & Sikkink 1998:909). In order to spread the ideas through campaigning and global networking there is no doubt that the new information technologies have been a huge advantage in the process.

Hence, due to all the changes globalization has made in terms of information, making the world smaller, diffusion of norms and so on; globalization is definitely present in Norway’s foreign policy reality. Daily Norwegian politicians have to take a stand in international matters directly or indirectly because of for example UN legislations, oil prices, civil wars or terrorism. International issues, situations, obligations and law does influence the Norwegian state’s behaviour. One of the most highly valued and regarded principles in the international system, aside from the sovereignty principle, is human rights. Globalization has in many ways increased the importance of this norm. The international system can no longer stand by and watch people suffer from natural disasters, war or human rights violations by a state.

Accordingly, Norway is affected by this and has an obligation to take responsibility. This obligation stems from both international law and institutions, but it is also a self-declared goal from the Norwegian state over the last few decades that it will be a promoter of human rights.

In a chronicle in *Aftenposten* 01.12.2014 foreign minister Børge Brende wrote about the new threat situation that Norway has to deal with. Here, globalization and its implications was argued to continue to bind us all together even more intensely as well as we are experiencing a geo-political reality that is out of balance simultaneously as global organizations are proving to be weak and without the ability to solve problems (Brende 2014). What this chronicle show is that the government, here represented by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, continues to link globalization with Norwegian Foreign Affairs and that this link is becoming increasingly stronger.

Globalization will not be the main focus of the thesis, but it is however the assumption here that without the forces of globalization we would see a rather different reality in not only international relations, but also in Norwegian foreign policy. Globalization thus becomes an underlying premise of how and why Norway’ s foreign policy is the way it is and as such

there is a causal link between globalization and Norwegian foreign policy outcomes. The need for R2P would probably be non-existing if the forces of globalization had not made it necessary.

### **3.2 Power in international relations**

Norway is a very small state compared to states such as the US, Russia, India, China, and is hence weaker in terms of power in the classical sense. Power is a concept that has many interpretations and that can be used in several situations and at different levels. Power is present in everyday life and at state level, and it is a crucial feature of political actors in international relations. Power is here understood as “the ability to influence the behaviour of others to get the outcomes one wants” (Nye 2004:1,2; Kalnes 2010:21). This influence is not attained in only one way; there are several ways of influencing the behaviour of others. This is often dependent on the capabilities of the one who exerts the power. As this thesis is at state level we are thus talking about state capabilities. If a state can influence another state’s behaviour because of its capabilities, we are talking about *hard power*. Hard power is thus when a state is realizing its resources (its capabilities), then to use it to get what it want, often in the form of threats or payoffs. Usually a state’s capabilities entails population, natural resources, economic strength, military force and social stability (Nye 2004:3). However, there are only a few states that have such capabilities that it can shape the behaviour of the international community. A different strategy is thus needed for states such as Norway.

This point is best made by Joseph Nye, who in 1990 coined the concept of *soft power* in his book “*Bound to Lead: The changing Nature of American Power*”. He developed the concept further in 2004 when he wrote “*Soft Power. The Means to Success in World Politics*”.

According to Nye, soft power is defined as “the ability to get what you want through attraction rather than coercion or payment” (Nye 2004: x). By introducing soft power, he separated this kind of power from classical understood hard power where influence is made through more direct ways. Soft power can be done through framing, agenda setting, attraction, and so on. In other words, we are speaking of co-opting rather than coercion (Nye 2004:5). The foundation of exerting soft power is the ability to shape the preferences of other states, exhibited in terms of moral, values or behaviour. In the West, where democracy is highly valued, soft power is a much more accepted way of persuasion as it is not forced upon states, but rather behavioural change through an attraction. Norway is small in population size,

natural resources (except from oil and gas, but even here Norway remains small compared to other oil producing states), military force and economy (again, Norway is a wealthy country per capita, but compared to the size of the economy Norway remains quite small). Still, Norway enjoys a political legitimacy that is quite unproportioned with its capabilities compared to other states. This can be explained by the fact that Norway has made peace making, economic aid and democracy its national interest and image (Nye 2004:9).

However, to claim that a state either exerts hard- or soft power would be a mistake. For one, they are highly related as they are both aspects of making others do as you want. Even if soft power is done without force, it is still the result of tactics and strategies calculated in order to achieve a goal. Hence, the difference between the two is a case of degree. In one end there is the extreme form of coercion whilst in the other is attraction. While hard power mostly finds itself in the coercion end of the scale and soft power in the other, it is not unusual that a state lingers in between the two forms (Nye 2004:7). This acknowledgement that a state rarely performs a pure form of either soft- or hard power did in the early 2000 produce a new concept coined *smart power*. It was again Joseph Nye that introduced a new aspect of power as he wanted to “counter the misperception that soft power alone can produce effective foreign policy” (Nye 2009). Smart power is the combination of hard and soft power. To use power smart is to know how and when to combine the resources of both soft and hard power in strategies that is best for a given context. Nye calls this contextual intelligence (Nye 2009). In this sense, it is the states that manage the art of figuring out what strategy of persuasion best that have the best starting point of exerting power over others.

Soft power appears essential when discussing and analysing Norwegian foreign policy. The lack of economic and military stamina compared to super-powers such as the USA, Russia and China forces Norway to strategize differently than those that have the capabilities to force a certain behaviour. Soft power rests on three resources: a state’s culture, political values and foreign policies. Common for all three is that they become attractive when viewed by other as legitimate and morally good (Nye 2004:11). This is also the problem of exerting soft power; soft power is dependent on the acceptance by the receiving audience. This implies that it is difficult for a government to control the outcome as the resources of soft power often lies outside the state. For example can other states counter the image-building efforts with the goal of decreasing or eliminating the image-building. In addition, the effect of soft power might take years before it starts producing desirable results (Nye 2004: 99; Nygård & Gates 2013:238). To use soft power as strategy can thus be a tiring process which might not even be

received by the audience in a sufficient way, especially when compared to the use of hard power. However, for most small states it might be the only reasonable survival strategy in the international system as attempts of force will not be well-received in the international system if you do not have the capabilities to back it up.

Soft power is persuasion, and persuasion is an aspect of power that fundamentally affects perceptions. When a state use soft power as strategy it can be with an idea of it being a political investment in which what a state put in today (as economic resources or other resources) can turn into influence later (Nygård & Gates 2013:235, 237). Hence, when Norway spends up to one per cent of GDP on economic aid, it can be argued that besides being “the right thing to do”, it is also with an idea of it paying off in other ways later on. Hence, economic aid, focus on human rights and peace diplomacy becomes tools to acquire soft power in which these activities are mechanism that are linked to international legitimacy (ibid). Mechanism follows Checkel’s understanding of the concept, that is, “a set of hypothesis that could be the explanation for some social phenomenon” (Checkel 2008: 115). That means that in the analysis when the debate in Norway over Libya and Syria is analysed it is the mechanisms or the process we study. As such it is the process in which Norway is aiming at achieving international legitimacy by influencing the international community’s perception of it so it can exercise soft power in the future that is investigated. Here, the main focus is image-building by investing in political capital.

The main strategy in exerting soft power is to promote good images of one’s country, in other words image-building. This has been done at all times through history, but after the industrial revolution and the new possibilities of information exchange because of globalization, there has been a radical change in how this is done. Information has always been power, and in today’s online-based world where information flows with a massive speed, everyone can get hold of huge amounts of information. Both governments and individuals are now getting access to internet and mobile phones with the consequence of smaller states and poor people now are much more updated in international matters. Politics have thus become a contest of credibility, in which no longer only the powerful states decides. Governments compete with each other for credibility and thus weaken the image of others (Nye 2004: 106). The winners in the international system are hence those that gain the most international legitimacy. This is also true of those that are powerful in the traditional sense with huge capabilities. USA is much more open to criticism and loss of international legitimacy than before. The example of

the pictures from the prison Abu Grahیب in Iraq where American soldiers tortured and abused Iraqi prisoners led to a massive global criticism of the USA.

While Joseph Nye looks at values, culture, institutions and past policies as currencies of soft power, Goldsmith and Horiuchi (2012) have a different approach. They look at foreign policy views within the public of a given country. As such they argue that what people think of a state's foreign policy is crucial for the country as it attempts to use soft power to affect policy outcomes in a favourable matter. This means that soft power is affected in international relations directly by the view among country B's public about country A's foreign policy (Goldsmith & Horiuchi 2012:4). Hence, for Norway, this means that what for example the mass public in the USA think about the Norwegian foreign policy could be decisive for whether the Norwegian foreign policy will be successful. As such, Goldsmith and Horiuchi develop the soft power concept by Nye, and add new valuable insight to the mechanisms and process of soft power.

There is no lack of examples of Norway's role as a peace maker or as an economic aid heavyweight. Norway has played a significant role in solving conflicts in the Israel-Palestine conflict, Sudan, Sri Lanka, the Balkans and Colombia, to name a few. Furthermore, Norway has been one of a few states that have had 1 per cent of GDP going to aid. Jan Egeland labelled Norway in the early 1990s as a humanitarian superpower, a label Norway has proudly hold on to since. When Norway once a year awards the Nobel Peace Prize, it is a moment in which the whole world has its attention towards Norway. According to Nygård and Gates (2013), these types of events are a way of which regimes can mobilize capital and human resources in a very short period of time. It is an example of political investment where the (intended) result is image-building (Nygård & Gates 2013: 238). The Nobel Peace Prize is one example of Norwegian image-building. A second example is the focus on the UN in which Norway has gained influence through its economic support, neutral role in terms of avoiding being locked into groupings, and its focus on human rights. A third one is participation in humanitarian interventions, which can be argued to be an example of a situation in which the whole world is watching those states that are acting. Being an advocate for human rights within the UN system and through humanitarian interventions is an excellent way of building one's image as human rights is a universal principle all states have ratified, and thus it is hard for other states to be critical or work against such efforts. The lack of material capabilities (hard power) and the focus on human rights and the UN is thus the reason of why soft power is the chosen approach to analyse Norwegian foreign policy. With



these characteristics it appears clear that Norwegian power in international relations rest on humanitarian culture with political values such as human rights. Hence, Norwegian foreign policy should be approached from a soft power angle, rather than from hard power because of its chosen strategies to gain more power in the international system.

### **3.3 Small state behaviour**

Globalization has definitely changed the world. This is also true in terms of the structure in the international community and the interaction between states. Globalization has gradually changed the international system into a more complex one in which states, international organizations, NGOs and international institutions operates. This has had strong implications for small state foreign policy. The changes have led to a higher international prestige and visibility for small states than ever before. One reason for this is the fact that the growth of international organizations and institutions have given small states a greater footing in international relations on a more equal basis with much larger states (Hey 2003:1). Norway is member of several institutions and organizations, such as the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), the United Nations (UN), the World Trade Organization (WTO), the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank. These institutions safeguards Norway a voice, but also security (NATO and UN are the most important as such in guaranteeing Norway's safety). Simultaneously as small states have become more important in international relations, it has also become harder as the complexity of the system and the power of some states have increased radically.

As we here seek to investigate the foreign policy of Norway, it is interesting to look at some generalizations about small states in order to have some tools in the analysing process. What can we expect? Generalizations are useful, but it is important to notice that there are huge variations between small states. Norway is in a special position as it is extremely wealthy, is situated in the North of Europa which is an especially peaceful part of the world, it is a relative young state with a peaceful history and it has a tradition for democracy. In comparison is a state such as Gambia which has a population of ca 1,8 million and it is situated in Africa which is a part of the world that has been characterized by wars, civil wars, coups, poverty and undemocratic political traditions. However, it can be argued that there are some generalizations to be made of small state behaviour in international relations, and that these can provide some analytical tools.

To define a small state is not an easy task as there are numerous ways of measuring. One can measure from population size, GDP, geographical size, international influence and so on. Some argue that there is no satisfactory definition, whilst others argue that a strict definition is not needed when conducting research on small state foreign policy (Neumann 2004:7; Hey 2003:2). In order to provide some generalization about small state foreign policy this thesis will follow the definition and research by Jeanne A. K. Hey (2003). She defines small state from the idea of perceptions. That entails that a state is small if it perceives itself as such (Hey 2003:3; Neumann 2004:5). This is a loose definition, but it holds several aspects of what it entails to be a small state such as geography, population and economy. According to Hey, this way of defining small states reflects the world in which these states operate as it is their perception of themselves that steer their behaviour (Hey 2003:4). Hence, both Gambia and Norway can be included in this definition despite their obvious differences, because they both perceive their role in the international hierarchy as small states.

Besides being hard to define, small states are also often considered to be powerless. But being small does not necessarily correspond to being weak. Neumann and Gstöhl (2004) argue that while small versus great tell us something about quantity, is the distinction between weak versus strong a case of quality. A state can be powerful in specific “issue areas”, that is an area in which a state holds a specific expertise (Neumann & Gstöhl 2004: 4). This is definitely the case of Norway as it is both small and holds a considerable big amount of legitimacy and power in certain international issues, such as in diplomatic- and economic aid issues. There are not many other small states that enjoys same amount of international recognition as Norway.

The debate over whether one can generalize about certain expected small state foreign policy behaviour is comprehensive and divided, and often contradictory. An example is while some argue that small states rely on superpowers for protection in alliances, others argue that small states in general choose to be neutral. What most scholars can agree upon is the assumption that small states are insecure, has limited resources in foreign policy and that they seek to influence foreign policy as much as possible in a system where they definitely find themselves at the losing end. Further, most scholars agree with the assumption that the best way to explain small state foreign policy behaviour lies at the system level of analysis. As small states have relatively weak foreign policy resources compared to bigger states they will act thereby. This will in most cases result in weak and passive modes of action (Hey 2003:6).

In the case of Norway this would translate into a more passive behaviour in international relations because Norway's weak power in the international system forces it to be more protective and not be an aggressive actor. The traditional Norwegian foreign policy behaviour fits this generalization well, as Norway for the most part has been a keen advocate of the UN, human rights, international law and has had engagement as a foreign policy goal. These are not highly disputable ideals in international politics, and thus one can argue that Norway thereby have followed the assumption that its weak power basis have been decisive in its foreign policy behaviour. However, its weak power basis has been counterbalanced by a strategy of gaining soft power, as discussed in the previous section. To focus on image-building through its advocacy and humanitarian engagement has in some respect equalized the lack of hard power and given Norway a high level of legitimacy in the international system. The Norwegian foreign policy tradition will be elaborated more thoroughly in a later chapter.

In addition to the weak resources, has also the increased insecurity in international relation been crucial for small state foreign policy behaviour. After the end of the Cold War the world is increasingly perceived as more dangerous. Threats of global economic crisis, terrorism and civil wars have complicated the system in which small states have to survive. Norway's neighbour Russia have over the past year annexed Crimea despite international opposition, Norwegians are fighting for ISIL in Syria bringing the war close to home, falling oil prices have shaken the economy and not least did the terror attack at Utøya show that Norway is not sheltered from such horrible actions.

Neumann and Gstöll (2004) suggest three approaches in the study of small states: capabilities, institutions and relations (Neumann & Gstöll 2004:13). Capabilities, or the lack there-of, have already been mentioned. Small states can be expected to behave in a certain way due to its weak capabilities, and is thus a good starting point in studying small state behavior. The problem of studying small state foreign policy behavior on the basis of capabilities (especially military and economy) is that it demands a structural precondition – that is that power is limited to military strength in an anarchic system. This seem simplistic, and does not reflect the world system today in which for example human rights and legitimacy associated with this is highly ranked in the international system (Neumann & Gstöll 2004:15). Still, it does say something about the position of a given state in international relations as military and economic strength do go a long way in international relations.

If one were to examine capabilities rather than look at institutions, we get a different relationship between small and great states. In institutions, great powers are often given powerful roles, as in the Security Council in the UN, and hence the effect of “greatness” makes powerful states even more powerful. This again makes the differences in power more visible, and hence, more open to debate. It becomes important to small states to participate in the political language in international relations as they have limited foreign policy resources. This is made possible in forums such as the UN (especially in the General Assembly). Hence, even if powerful states often are given more power in international institution, there is also provided a space in which small states can participate. As such, institutions become a structural factor that might incline small states to favor discourses that institutionalize rules and norms. This be international law, international regimes and international organizations (Neumann 2004: 16, 17). In the case of Norway there is a long tradition of supporting UN, international law and human rights and to focus on institutions when explaining Norwegian foreign policy behavior thus makes sense.

A third way of approaching the study of small state behavior is through relations. This rests on the fact that without small states, there would be no strong states. Hence, the relationship between the two types becomes mutually constitutive (Neumann 2004: 18). For our purpose this will not be a relevant approach, but it is definitely present in the Norwegian foreign policy behavior as well. The relationship between Norway and USA for example is a relationship in which both view it as valuable. Norway supports the US in most cases, while the US provides security to Norway.



#### **4. Responsibility to Protect**

Responsibility to Protect, R2P, is a principle in international relations concerning the “right of humanitarian intervention” (ICISS 2001: VII) and it states that

*“Where a population is suffering serious harm, as a result of internal war, insurgency, repression or state failure, and the state in question is unwilling or unable to halt or avert it, the principle of non-intervention yields to the international responsibility to protect”*

(ICISS 2001: XI).

The foundation of R2P is human rights, and the protection of these. Human rights are a concept which is not easy to define as it holds a vast amount of meanings, rules, customary rules, norms and values. The basis of the concept, however, revolves around a set of fundamental rights, which are essential to individual’s freedom and life. Human rights are rights one has simply due to being a human being (Ruud & Ulfstein 2006: 233). There are numerous understandings of what rights belongs under the label of human rights, but when we speak of human rights in international relations it is usually those ratified in different international conventions and in international law and customary law. The development of a legal framework of human rights reached a peak in 1945 when the UN charter was adopted, and a link between peace and security and human rights was made (Ruud & Ulfstein 2006: 207). The connection between human rights and peace and security is important. This explains some of the reasons of why states make it their business to intervene in states where humanitarian abuses are happening. Local conflicts are thus assumed to have international implications that have the possibilities of disturbing international peace and security. Not least have this fear been reinforced with the increase of terrorism after the terrorist attack in New York 11<sup>th</sup> September 2001. Hence, a conflict in the Middle East can easily spread to the rest of the world and hence be a threat to Norway as well. Consequently, no state can stay ignorant to what is happening in the rest of the world.

While all human beings holds certain rights, states also has a right of being sovereign. That means that states have, by the virtue of being sovereign, the right of choosing foreign policies and the right of other states not interfering with internal issues. The ban against intervention in other states’ internal affairs is foundationally challenged by R2P, and the argumentation behind it is that protection of human rights is of international concern, and a threat towards international peace and security (Ruud & Ulfstein 2006:191). In these cases, humanitarian intervention can be used as a means to stop violations of human rights. Humanitarian

interventions can be understood as the military intervention by one or several states in another state to protect fundamental human rights (Ruud & Ulfstein 2006: 202). The relationship between human rights and sovereignty is one of the biggest factors in the debate over whether R2P should have a place in international relations or not.

R2P did not evolve in a vacuum or from a specific moment in history. Rather, it was the result of a number of factors over time which, when combined, triggered the international community to, at least in a theoretical matter, take action. The concept of human rights is one factor. Secondly, R2P is the consequence of how the norms of humanitarian interventions have developed through history. Martha Finnemore (2003) points to the fact that since the Cold War states have been much more than before expected by the international community to intervene militarily to protect other citizens outside their own territory from humanitarian disasters (Finnemore 2003: 52). In the 1990s, citizens in Kosovo, Somalia and Rwanda became subjects of horrific abuses. In all three cases the international community through the UN and NATO did try to stop the atrocities, but with little or no success. However, what was different from earlier was the fact that there were attempts to intervene in order to stop state violations. Finnemore highlights three factors that have been essential for this change in international humanitarian interventions to be possible. First, who is perceived as human has changed. Previously, only white Christians have been viewed as “deserving” humanitarian protection. In the twentieth century more and more non-white and non-Christian groups were those that received such protection. Second, the way interventions are done has changed. Today, all humanitarian interventions need to be multilateral in order to have legitimacy. Third, the military goals and definitions of success have changed. Before, the intervening states would replace the old government with the one they preferred. Now however, the legitimate and acceptable solution is to install and facilitate election processes in which the people themselves chose the new government (Finnemore 2003: 53).

What Finnemore here provides is an historical explanation of how the change towards pure humanitarian interventions has been possible. The history is full of examples of situations in which people have been in desperate need of protection against atrocities without any reaction from the international community. Today however, it is viewed as quite unacceptable to stand by and watch people suffer, even though there are enough examples of this today as well. Syria is a good example of this. Further, as the intervention in Libya showed, the international community is capable and willing to stop state leaders from breaking human rights. All three factors mentioned by Finnemore can be argued to be the basis of R2P. The change in when it

is legitimate to act, who deserves to be protected and how it should be done are all three important pillars in R2P. The development of human rights and the protection of these are hence crucial in the understanding of R2P. In addition to the development of human rights and humanitarian interventions, there has also been a parallel development of a legal frame in which these are embedded. International law has increasingly codified the normative changes in human rights, together with the increasing importance of international organization mandates such as in the UN (Finnemore 2003:72). Here lies both the possibilities and limitations of humanitarian interventions and R2P. International organizations have made possible the multilateral interventions needed for legitimacy, but it also puts limitations on such actions as full consensus have made it hard to succeed. As in the example of the Syrian case, the two blocks in the Security Council continues to hinder a multilateral humanitarian intervention to protect the Syrian population.

A second factor making R2P possible has to do with more direct efforts towards making a principle such as R2P a reality. While the development of human rights and humanitarian interventions deals with processes making the idea of R2P possible, there had to be initiated more direct efforts to make R2P possible. The appointment by UN Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali of a Special Representative on Internal Displaced People (IDPs), which was the direct response towards a growing problem of more civil wars and hence internally displaced people being violated by their own governments, was the beginning of R2P. As these refugees were situated within their own state borders, no protection was offered by the international community. Hence, IDPs became the victims of violence, high mortality and abuse from the government supposed to protect them. This development induced a concept stating “sovereignty as responsibility” introduced by the Special Representative on Internal Displaced People Francis Deng (Bellamy 2008: 618-619). What the IDP situation showed was that there was an essential need to be able to override state sovereignty in order to protect IDPs against violence from the government which was supposed to give them security and protection.

The need for an international consensus on how to respond to these types of situations rose on the international agenda in the 1990s, and resulted in a commission named the International Commission on Intervention and State Sovereignty (ICISS) in 2001. ICISS came together at the initiative from the Canadian Foreign Minister Lloyd Axworthy as a response to the wishes of UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan to solve the challenges of humanitarian interventions and state sovereignty. The result of the work of the ICISS was a new principle named



Responsibility to Protect (R2P). International consensus over R2P was reached in 2005 at the World Summit, and then reaffirmed by the Security Council in 2006. Here, the international community committed to the responsibility to protect their own citizens from genocide, war crimes, crimes against humanity and ethnic cleansing. Further, states committed to the responsibility to assist other states in keeping their commitment towards their own citizens. If states fail at protecting their citizens, it is the international community's responsibility to use all peaceful means to protect the population in question. If these peaceful means were to fail, it is the responsibility of the Security Council (and hence the international community as a whole) to use all means needed to stop human rights abuses. This includes military intervention (Bellamy 2008: 623). As an active member of the UN and advocate of human rights, Norway was quick to support the initiative and was one of the first nations to support the Global Centre for the Responsibility to Protect, which was established in 2008. The centre was created to promote R2P internationally and to implement it into action and not let it remain a good intention.

#### **4.1 Libya, Syria and R2P**

R2P was a reaction to the atrocities of the 1990s. It was created with the goal of never again would the international community stand by and watch people being killed and abused by their own state. In 2011 the Arab Spring spread throughout the Arab world and citizens demonstrated against their respective leaders. In Tunisia the people were heard, and democratic processes were initiated. In Syria and Libya however, the situation were quite different. The government in both countries struck back hard, and the number of dead increased quickly. On the basis of the criteria behind the R2P the Security Council in 2011 through resolution 1970 and 1973 did give mandate to a humanitarian intervention in Libya led by NATO forces. Norway was one of the participants by providing NATO with air force, a key tactic in the mission. The conflict began in February 2011 and after an intensive NATO offensive Muammar al-Gaddafi was killed on 20<sup>th</sup> October.

The case of Libya could have been the beginning of a new practice where the Security Council without hesitation gives mandate to humanitarian interventions when clear state violations against people are being made. It was not. The case of Syria is becoming a stain in the history of human rights as the conflict now is in its fourth year, more than 200,000 people have been killed and over 7.6 million people have been internally displaced. It is an enormous

humanitarian catastrophe and the Syrian President Bashar al-Assad is still not backing down to its citizens' demands or to the international critique. Still, despite the horrible situation in Syria, the UN Security Council does not agree on a resolution that would give mandate to a humanitarian intervention.

## **5. Norway – a small state with grand foreign policy goals.**

Norwegian foreign policy can best be described as consensus based. In most cases there is broad political consensus amongst both the government and the opposition. The first fulltime Norwegian foreign policy politician C. J. Hambro argued that foreign policy consensus would function as a survival strategy for the small state Norway (Sjaastad 2006:20). As such, it is easy to say that it is “Norway” as a whole that acts alone in shaping its foreign policy behaviour. Consequently it becomes easy to forget all the actors that actually are part of the foreign policy structure and process. However, even if it appears as if Norway is an indivisible unit, several actors do take part in the policy making process of Norwegian foreign policy. In order to analyse the Norwegian foreign policy in the light of human rights and R2P, a review of the historical tradition of foreign policy and its framework will be useful.

### **5.1 The history of Norway`s foreign policy**

The Norwegian state is quite young. The constitution was born in 1814 and not until 1905 was Norway free from Sweden, particularly with regard to foreign policy. Hence, a foreign policy tradition was lacking and had to be made. An idea of a need to create a policy for which all parties could stand by and which would keep Norway out of dangerous situations led to the consensus based foreign policy strategy which has lasted to this day. As the strategy became consensus, agreement had to be created and an opposition to the government and its foreign policy service never came into life (Sjaastad 2006:20).

The Norwegian foreign policy post-Cold War has some distinct characteristics. The Cold War did in many ways become a turning point, as the new governments started viewing Norway as a peace nation with the possibilities and duty of playing an active role in the world. This line of thought has been coined “the Norwegian engagement policy”. Key words here are peace initiatives, human rights, economic aid and environment. However, this idealism is not,

according to Norwegian politicians, equal of ignoring national interests. It is quite the opposite: idealism is a real-political necessity (Lange 2009: 7, 10).

The idea of Norway being a nation of peace can be traced far back in history. For one Norway was given the honour of awarding the Nobel Peace Prize. Further Fridtjof Nansen's work for refugees after the First World War serves as a great memory in Norwegian history. Several initiatives for solving war and other conflicts also adds to the Norwegian peace tradition. Finally, the commitment and engagement in institutions such as League of Nations and the United Nations often has been used as proof of the Norwegian label as an active and engaged peace nation.

After the end of the Cold War, Norway's engagement policy gained momentum. The world was no longer divided into two blocks and it appeared even more unpredictable than before. As such, the engagement policy functioned as a way of gaining more capital in terms of position and goodwill in international relations (Østerud 2006:304). The engagement policy has not become any less relevant since the 1990s. In 2006, at that time, foreign minister Jonas G. Støre gave a speech about Norway as a peace nation in which he summarized the key points of Norwegian foreign policy. In short, what the foreign minister claimed was that Norway would increase its engagement in the UN as the organization is a tool for peaceful and just development, and that the work for peace, reconciliation and human rights in conflict areas would be intensified. Further, the joint efforts of public actors and private actors were highlighted as vital for solving the global issues (Støre 2006). Øyvind Østerud argues that what the engagement policy represents is a small and harmless state's world mission (Østerud 2006:304). It does not conflict with international law or norms and it provides economic and political possibilities and security. Hence, the Norwegian foreign policy tradition appears to both serve the international community and national interests. Ideals and interests hence are paired; one does not eliminate the other.

The most important international organization in the Norwegian foreign policy is and has been the UN. This is especially true when it comes to promoting itself as a peace nation. The UN is a clear actor in shaping Norwegian foreign policy. The UN is a forum in which Norway can mark itself and raise its voice in international issues (Knutsen 2006:264). It has been argued by several governments that the UN is essential in Norwegian interests as it prevents an international anarchical system where states can behave as they please. For a small state as Norway this makes the international system more secure. In 2012 presented the government a

white paper about Norway and the UN (Meld. St. 33. 2011-2012). Here, the Norwegian emphasize on the UN was based on the foundation of Norwegian foreign policy, that is international law, human rights and an international law system where force is regulated. The white paper thus argued that the support of the UN concerns both Norwegian interests and values, and that the Norwegian UN engagement is a tradition that has lasted for decades and which will continue in the future (Meld. St. 33. 2011-2012: 5, 106).

During the Cold War another international organization became important to secure Norwegian interests, namely NATO. Norway became a member in 1949 where its membership has been consistently solidary and unified. In 2003 the Bondevik II- government claimed that NATO was one of the keystones in Norwegian security policy (Regjeringen.no 2003). The same reassurance was made by the Ministry of Defense in its proposition to the Parliament in 2012 where it was argued that “*severe threats or estimates against Norwegian or allied security shall be dealt with within the framework of NATO’s collective defense. NATO is the most important conflict preventive threshold in our neighboring areas*” (Prop. 73 S 2011.2012). Skeptics at the time argued that NATO would lose its relevance after the breakup of the Soviet Union, but that obviously was not the case. NATO has upheld the relationship between Europe and the USA, but the recent developments of Russian expansion has shown that there is present relevance for NATO’s existence due to security reasons as well (Melby 2009: 119). Norway adapted to the changes of NATO after the end of the Cold War, and has shown great will to contribute to the international engagements. Through the support of NATO, Norway as a small state can secure a collective security in Europe and an international institution which is both an important instrument for the great powers as well as put limitation on them (Melby 2009:148).

Hence, NATO is viewed as the most important protection against threats and to strengthen Norwegian security close to home while the UN is considered to be more important for maintaining international peace, promoting values and norms such as human rights and to the international security in terms of giving clear rules. One factor explaining how such a small state as Norway can contribute as much as it does to NATO and the UN is the wealth originating from oil. The black gold from the bottom of the ocean has been a precondition for the engagement policy in which Norway has been one of the leading aid givers in development and peace initiatives (Tamnes 2009:259). Without it, the identity as a humanitarian super power would not have been possible.

## **5.2 The framework of Norway's foreign policy**

The development of Norwegian foreign policy is a traditional one, with little change to the consensus strategy. As mentioned, even if it appears that Norway always acts as “one” in international issues, there are several actors involved in the process. In addition to the government and the parliament, there is also the extended foreign policy committee (DUUK), the Ministry of Defence (MOD), the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA) and the civil society. This interaction of public and state actors is called *The Norwegian Model*, and the idea behind it is to extend the capacity of the foreign policy (Østerud 2006: 303; Lange et. al. 2009: 11). The background of this “collaboration” is for one, a natural development towards this arrangement, but also secondly, a change of thought by the state in the early 1990s when a shift in the international system forced the state to think differently. The result was the Norwegian Model and a project of being a humanitarian superpower (Lie 2006:138). In order to analyse how Norwegian foreign policy is organized, a look into the influence, impact and role of the different parts of the Norwegian society have in the policy making process will be fruitful. For our purpose, the government, the Parliament, the MF, the MOD and civil society are the actors deserving of a more thorough and comprehensive examination.

### **5.2.1 The Parliament and foreign affairs**

The role of the Parliament in the foreign policy process is different than in the domestic policy making process. In the latter, the Parliament functions as an unit that performs a constitutional control over the government , whilst in the former does consensus precedes debate and criticism (Sjaastad 2006: 19). Hence, the task of the Parliament appears to be a supporter of the politics of the government.

To appear to be unified in foreign policy is not controversial. If a state seem to be divided in international issues it might make them look weak in the international system and hence to strive for consensus is therefore a good strategy in terms of international status and legitimacy. However, achieving such a consensus does demand practice, structure and institutions that facilitate such a process (Sjaastad 2006:19, 20). When the Parliament has foreign affairs debates it is either because of the government's proposals, oral reports from the foreign minister or because the Parliament has asked for it itself. In addition, there is the ordinary parliamentary question meeting, spontaneous questions or written question to the MFA or the MOD. What often characterizes foreign affairs debates is the number of

participants, which normally is quite low. This is also true of the presence of the media. From the look of it, the consensus tradition makes both the politicians and the media less interested in foreign affairs and this simplifies the process of producing a foreign policy that all can agree upon. However, this is a simplified picture. For one, each party has its own foreign policy program. Second, the media has on several occasions functioned as a watch dog when it comes to foreign policy decisions. Finally, some politicians have criticised this tradition and argued that the consequences of such a practice is less democratic. This criticism has been raised jointly by voices in the civil society (Sjaastad 2006:23-25). In 2011 the government over a phone call decided to inform the leaders of the parties in opposition that they had decided to send military air force to Libya. The decision was made without any formal meeting in Parliament or within the government itself. *Aftenposten* and other media would a few days later inform the public that several politicians in the opposition were critical of the way the issue was dealt with, and that such a critical issue should have been debated in Parliament (Aftenposten 19.04.2011). In this event, both the media and politicians were critical of the way the government acted in a foreign affairs situation and thus we see an example of the foreign policy process not always being as clear-cut as it might appear. Still, all parties (except from certain parts of SV) stood by the decision, though not the process.

The situation described above is an example of a tendency over the last few years whereby critique has been raised towards the Parliament's handling of foreign affairs. The demand is for more openness and more public debates in critical foreign affairs. The critique has come from both the media and politicians (Sjaastad 2006:34.). As this debate continues, it seem even more appropriate to look at different actors in the foreign policy making process

### **5.2.2 The government – Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Ministry of Defence**

When it comes to making foreign policy, the government naturally plays an essential role. Especially important are the two departments Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA) and Ministry of Defence (MOD). Each has its own responsibilities in foreign affairs, though they are not separate as they have to work together.

The MFA is relatively new in Norwegian history and is active in a broad set of policy making processes. The MOD on the other hand is smaller, older and more specialized which makes it less active and more engaged in certain issues. They both function as investigation apparatuses and sources of expertise for the ministers who again are part of the government in

foreign affairs issues. It is further quite normal to think of the MOD as subject to the MFA. The Foreign Minister has the main responsibility for the Norwegian foreign policy which consequently has put some constraints on the Norwegian defence policy (Græger 2006:67, 72).

In addition to the Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs, there has also been established a consulting committee named The Enlarged Foreign Affairs Committee (DUUK). They are highly connected as they have the same leader, and the former is part of the latter. DUUK is not like the other traditional committees at the Parliament as it only consults, and do not make decisions or control what the government is doing. What is debated and said during the meetings is secret, in order to facilitate an open debate over sensitive issues (Sjaastad 2006:30, 31). The secrecy and the committee in itself is a consequence of the longstanding tradition to the commitment to a unified foreign policy in Norway. DUUK contributes to create a national, unified perspective (Sjaastad 2006: 32). That was one reason of why the decision process to be part of the Libya mission was so criticized as the DUUK never was invited to a meeting over the issue.

The government's power in foreign affairs is of course not absolute. The government can elect who they want and choose their policies, but they are still dependent on the Parliament's accept. It is further influenced by the media and the public. By law is the government obliged to give the media access in documents, letters and e-mails, but this is often circumvented by the two ministries as access is often denied due to exception clauses (Græger 2006:78, 79). Another issue of Norway's foreign policy is its focus on consensus which can be argued to be "undemocratic". This is because the consensus might hinder debate – even at the Parliament, which was the case in the decision process of the Libyan mission contribution. When there is an expectation of consensus, critical voices might be overlooked and marginalized. However, the consensus tradition lives strongly still in Norwegian politics, something the case of Libya will show.

### **5.2.3 Civil society and foreign affairs**

While foreign affairs have traditionally been viewed as belonging to the government and especially MFA and MOD, civil society (mainly represented by NGOs) has also influenced Norway's foreign policy. After the Cold War, the state included civil society much more and the result was the Norwegian Model. The consequence of this inclusion of civil society has been a decentralisation of foreign policy practice. One link between the state and civil society is funding through Norwegian Agency for Development (NORAD). In the year 2015, 64 NGOs applied for a combined amount of funding worth 665 million Norwegian kroner (Lie 2006:139; NORAD 2015). NORAD is a part of the MFA, and thus through funding the government can control to some degree what type of NGO initiatives should be on the agenda. The "big five" NGOs that continue each year to receive a big portion of the funding include Norwegian Church Aid, Norwegian People's Aid, Red Cross, Norwegian Refugee Council and Save the Children. What is interesting about this link between civil society and the state through funding is the premise of the civil society being independent from the state. The democratic legitimacy of the state rests on this, and hence it becomes important to be critical of such management and control from the state. The Norwegian Model is nonetheless promoted by the state as strength to Norwegian foreign policy because it utilizes the experience, contacts and knowledge that the NGOs possess (Lie 2006: 139, 145).

The Norwegian Model is founded on four pillars. For one, it rests on the relationship and cooperation between the state, research institutions and NGOs. Second, Norway's reputation as a peacemaker and peace mediator is an important aspect of the model. Thirdly, important key people within NGOs, research institutions and the state have been important for the model. Finally, the tradition of having the will and ability to think long term and also the link between emergency relief and long term development aid has been a basis for the model (Lie 2006: 145). These four pillars summarize more or less the characteristics of Norwegian foreign policy, as they show the relationship between state and civil society with a common ground in the tradition for peace making and aid. State funding is however not purely positive. Often foreign policy comes into conflict with the goal of the NGOs in their work towards helping those in need. While the collaboration with civil society can increase the state's possibilities in terms of access, knowledge and influence it can as well be regarded negatively by other states as the NGOs might not be recognized as legit (Lie 2006:147, 151).

What the Norwegian model makes possible is a direct channel for civil society in which they can be influential in foreign affairs issues and thus NGOs can have a say in the foreign policy



process. This is at least true in theory – whether it is reality is a different matter and is one of the questions this thesis aims to investigate.

### **5.3 White Papers**

During the time-period from 2005 to 2015 there was a shift in governments from a more left-winged to a more centre-right winged in 2013. When the civil war in Libya began in 2011 it was Jens Stoltenberg who was Prime Minister in a Labour-Socialist Left-Centre government. The Libyan civil war was the first time in which the concept of R2P was used as legitimacy for a military humanitarian intervention. Prime Minister Erna Solberg leads the new centre-right government that took office in 2013.

In both the Stoltenberg-government and in the Solberg-government a White Paper on foreign affairs objectives had been issued. White papers are reports concerning complex issues, and in which the government can give their ideas, goals, concerns and solutions to these issues. Consequently, these documents can be read as the two governments' political programs and ideologies and provide some insights to the fundamental ideology behind the two different governments' foreign affair behaviours.

#### **5.3.1 White paper: “Norway and the UN: common future, common solution”**

In 2012 the MFA presented a white paper concerning Norway and the UN (Meld. St. 33 2011-2012). Titled “*Norway and the UN: common future, common solution*”, it highlighted the importance of the relationship between the UN and Norway and how the organization is key in promoting human rights. It stated that

*“Norwegian UN-support is about both interests and values”* (Meld. St. 33 2011-2012: 5) and *“Promotion and protection of human rights is a central part of Norwegian foreign policy and development policy and the UN is our foremost platform for this work”* (Meld. St. 33 2011-2012: 106).

The UN was thus given the main role of maintaining and promoting international legal order, human rights and peace (ibid). This is of course in the interest of Norway as a small state dependent on a peaceful world that is regulated by law. The normative role of the UN is given great significance of taking care of Norwegian interests as it is a global forum that deals with

the challenges to come and which it helps solve (Meld.St. 33 2011-2012: 79,80). The great emphasis on the UN is argued to be fruitful because the organization is a place in which Norway is heard. Norway has according to the government substantial influence at the UN-level due to its long history of being a strong supporter of the organization without any hidden agendas and with great financial capabilities (Meld.St. 33 2011-2012:108).

The cases of Syria and Libya show, according to the white paper, that the UN continues to be the only global institution that has the power to authorize the use of force. The global community turns towards the UN when a humanitarian crisis develops, and its course is consequently dependent on what the Security Council decides. International peace and security thus rests on the shoulders of the Security Council, and the same is true of the future of human rights. In the white paper, the UN is given a normative role in the international system concerning human rights and the responsibility of developing and promoting them. A focus of the government continues therefore to revolve around strengthening the focus of the UN on human rights (Meld. St. 33 2011.2012: 6,7).

In the white paper R2P is given a special concern. As the principle of state sovereignty at several times have forced the international community to watch genocides, ethnic cleansing and humanitarian abuse, Norway highly supports the concept of R2P:

*“Norway supports the range of tools that R2P prescribes, especially the preventive measures and use of peaceful means. Norway will work to make legitimate use of force builds on the safeguarding of citizens’ fundamental rights (...) (Meld. St. 33 2011-2012:35).*

R2P thus appears to be well within the values and interests of Norwegian foreign affairs, and part of the future focus of the Norwegian foreign affairs strategy. The justification of the Norwegian support of the principle is (as it can be read) the focus on the safeguarding of citizens fundamental rights. In other words, the reasoning is based on the need to protect human rights. Human rights, as argued in the white paper, are under pressure. The strengthening of these is therefore an important priority in Norwegian foreign policy, and the goal of Norwegian membership in the UN is for one to defend the universal human rights (Meld. St. 33 2011-2012: 58). Hence, the government is through this saying that human rights will shape the foreign policy behaviour and decisions in the future.

The focus on the UN is no surprise as the organization has the potential of creating a stable world and it is a forum in which Norway can raise its voice. The attention towards the UN

clearly coincides with the long tradition in Norwegian foreign policy in working for human rights. The white paper on the UN provides insights to how the government perceives the link between the UN, human rights and Norwegian foreign policy. The UN is explained to both be an international organization that secures Norwegian security as well as it is a space in which Norway can perform power in terms of working towards strengthening human rights. As such, R2P is in the white paper welcomed as a new tool towards this goal. Human rights appear quite repetitive throughout the document, and it follows thereby the longstanding tradition of the human rights focus in Norwegian foreign policy.

### **5.3.2 White Paper: Possibilities to all – human rights as goals and means in foreign- and development policies**

In 2014 the new Solberg-government presented the Parliament with a new white paper. This was named *Possibilities to all – human rights as goals and means in foreign- and development policies* (Meld. St. 10 2014-2015). The need for a white paper especially on the subject of human rights was argued by the increased global pressure on human rights. The white paper begins by stating that the level of respect for human rights has decreased and that therefore, there is a need to work for a higher compliance of these fundamental rights. In order for this to happen, the government aims at using several instruments in multilateral organisations, in direct contact with single countries and in cooperation with civil society. The government further promise to advocate human rights (Meld. St. 10 2014-2015: 9,10).

A huge commitment was made by the government as it said it would:

*“(...) lead a coherent policy in which work to promote and protect human rights will be incorporated in all parts of foreign policy and development policy. Respect of human rights is a foreign policy goal, but also a means to achieve permanent development and security”* (Meld. St. 10 2014-2015: 10).

Consequently, what this means is that in every foreign policy decision, the government will behave on the basis of human rights. It also continues the attitude of the previous government where human rights is linked to global peace and security, and following human rights need to be a key issue in Norwegian foreign policy. Human rights continues to be in the interest of Norway. In the white paper the government argues that human rights is the fundamental pillar

in a democracy which again is associated with stable states in a safe world system (Meld. St. 10 2014-2015).

As the former government did in the white paper on the UN, this government emphasized how the Norwegian engagement in human rights questions gives it international credibility. The political weight of human rights thus remains heavy in Norway's foreign policy. The long tradition of Norwegian efforts in diplomacy and peace initiatives can be seen in this context. According to the government is the peace efforts in single states and the efforts in international organizations part of the contribution in establishing national and international human rights frameworks (Meld. St. 10 2014-2015: 46). Again, we see a continuation of the foreign policy of the previous government in terms of active peace engagement and focus on human rights being the main line of strategy in Norwegian foreign policy. This is followed up through an affirmation of the link between human rights and humanitarian efforts (Meld. St. 10 2014-2015: 48).

The UN continues to be the main space in which Norway can advocate human rights and to be the international organizations that keep the international system secure in terms of binding obligation of each member state. As the UN is given a big role due to how beneficial the organization is to Norway, the white paper also argue over what Norway's role in it should be. Human rights ought to continue to steer Norway's behaviour, position and decisions both normative and operational within the organization, especially if Norway were to begin to make the human rights framework in the UN a reality in action as well, and not only empty words (Meld. St. 10 2014-2015: 59, 60). The Syrian case is used as a horror story of how consequential international paralysis in terms of stopping human rights abuses can be. The Security Council is by the Solberg-government left with little respect in terms of action and determination to stop the atrocities taking place in Syria. This is also the downfall of putting as much investment into the UN system as Norway does. When the UN cannot agree Norway is left with little very little leeway in terms of forcing action.

However, a tool the Security Council and the international system can use when the Security Council comes to an agreement, in order to stop situations such as the Syrian civil war, is R2P. In the same matter as the Stoltenberg-government, R2P is welcomed as a positive instrument and alternative to stop human rights violations (Meld. St. 10 2014-2015: 63,64). In fact, in the introduction of the white paper, the government states that:

*“human rights is an individual’s rights from the government in a state, and it is the state authorities’ responsibility that these rights are taken care of”* (Meld. St. 10 2014-2015: 7).

This quote can be argued to have clear references to the substance of R2P, that is, the protection of human beings against state authority abuse. If so, R2P should be treated as a concept that the government fully supports and that it will behave accordingly from.

In the concept of R2P lie both military and non-military measures to help people that are being violated by their own state. In terms of non-military measures humanitarian help is an alternative. One of the big consequences of humanitarian violations and civil wars is the devastating number of individuals becoming refugees or internally displaced. In these cases human rights are broken every day as they are living in fear of their own state. Hence, as Norway supports the concept of R2P support to those who are fleeing should be given. In the white paper the Solberg-government claim that Norway has been a leading country in terms of working to improve the legal protection of refugees and internally displaced people through keeping the issue at the international agenda (Meld. St. 10 2014-2015: 48). Refugees are given considerable attention in the white paper, but never is the issue of taking refugees to Norway and giving them asylum mentioned. The issue of Syrian refugees has been highly criticized by Norwegian NGOs, which will be addressed in the analysis chapter about the Syrian civil war and the Norwegian civil society. It appears however, that there is a gap between stated concerns over refugees and the protection of their human rights and the depth of the help given by the Norwegian state.

In terms of reactions to human rights violations, the white paper argues that this has to be done through some trade-offs. Human rights issues often bring dilemmas concerning the considerations that they demand. Some human rights are absolute and one cannot accept violations of these, such as ethnic cleansing. Others can in some situations be limited, such as surveillance, but even such limitations need rules (Meld. St. 10 2014-2015: 95). Here lies the dilemma for the Solberg-government; when to react and how to react to human rights violations. As repeated several times throughout the document is respect of the human rights linked to Norwegian interests and security and as such should it be expected that the government would protest against any such violations. However, in the white paper the Solberg-government argue that in some situation vocal objections against states might be more damaging than fruitful and provoke more than hinder state violations against human beings (Meld. St. 10 2014-2015: 96). Hence, it appears that in some situations human rights

must yield to other considerations. Arguably, one could question this to be an excuse and alibi in cases where it is in Norway's interest to keep good relations with the state in question.

### **5.3.3 Lessons to be learned from the white papers**

Overall, even though the two white papers deal with two separate subjects, they both address human rights. In both white papers, human rights is dealt with as a natural part of Norway's foreign policy tradition, and that the future of human rights is essential for Norwegian security in the international system. Human rights concerns both interests and values. Further the UN in both white papers is declared as the main organization that has the power to secure international respect of human rights and the organization in which Norway can use its voice to advocate human rights. Norway's long tradition for peace diplomacy and human rights advocacy has given it a special position in the UN system, a position both the Stoltenberg-government and the Solberg-government express it is important to take advantage of. The membership in the UN Human Rights Council (HRC) is an example of this attitude. The membership in the HRC will be treated in the next section. However, the issue of a paralyzed Security Council in certain issues, such as the Syrian civil war, portrays how problematic the reliance on the UN can be for Norway. The loyalty to the UN and the inability of the Security Council to address human rights violations contradicts the self-image Norway has as a human rights advocate.

Arguably the white papers on human rights and the UN sum-up the traditional self-proclaimed Norwegian identity as a humanitarian super power that advocates human rights, mediates in war-zones and applauds all UN-initiatives. Even though little new as such could be retrieved from the documents, they are proof of the longstanding traditions in Norwegian foreign policy in terms of the focus on being a normative advocate state in the UN system that considers an effective UN led world to be in the interest of the Norwegian state.

What is interesting is the link between Norwegian interests and values as not conflicting but as two sides of the same coin. This is an argument set up by both governments, and it has been a stated view within the Norwegian state over the last decade that there is clear self-interest in the global engagement and as such there is no neglecting of Norwegian interests. Due to the oil, Norway can afford humanitarian engagement. Hence idealism does not work at the expense of *realpolitik*, or vice versa. Rather, the Norwegian idealism is a *realpolitik* necessity (Lange et. al. 2006: 10). This relationship and mutual reinforcement between the

two is clearly stated within the two white papers and therefore it is an idea that has been continued from the Stoltenberg-government to the Solberg-government.

The link between the UN and Human Rights is apparent, and consequentially the decisions of the UN will be decisive for Norwegian foreign policy behaviour. If human rights initiatives are blocked by the Security Council this will be consequential for the Norway's foreign policy. As such a paralyzed UN hinders Norwegian foreign policy goals and self-interests. This conflictual relationship between the emphasis on the UN, the inability of the Security Council and the goal of being a human rights advocate is an aspect of Norwegian foreign policy that appears somewhat puzzling. Especially as Norwegian politicians argue that the human rights goal in no way become conflictual to Norwegian state interests. This conflictual relationship between the loyalty towards the UN and the human rights focus will become apparent in the comparison of the Norwegian behaviour in the two cases, Libya and Syria, in the analysis.

#### **5.4 The Human Rights Council**

In 2009 Norway was once again elected to sit in the Human Rights Council (HRC). HRC's main tasks is to secure further development of human rights norm and rules, control the implementation in states concerning human rights obligation, contribute to an effort of integration of human rights in all aspects of UN initiatives and address acute situations in which grave atrocities against human rights are taking place (regjeringen.no 2014). Norway was elected for a three-year period. Norway applied for the HCR on the basis of human rights being in Norway's interest and that the UN is the best organ in which the strengthening of these rights can be done.

According to the Stoltenberg-government HRC opened more opportunities for Norway to contribute to the development and implementation of human rights. It has also been an UN organ in which Norway has been able to work on its foreign policy goals at an international level through cooperation across set alliances. This strategy has become a trademark of Norway amongst the other member states in the HRC (Meld. St. 33 2011-2012: 68,69). It becomes clear that the government view the HRC as a space in which Norwegian interests can be lobbied and international legitimacy for its neutral human rights focus can be achieved.

Also the Solberg-government promoted the HCR as the most important arena where debates over human rights can be held. In combination with pressure from the civil society HRC has become a forceful and relevant agency (Meld. St. 10 2014-2015: 63,64). During the Solberg-government period, Norway has been elected by the UN member states into the HCR as an observer. Norway has thus lost its right to vote, but the Solberg-government argues that “*this gives the possibility of an active profile in single cases*” (ibid). As it appears is the new government continuing the attitude and work of the former government in the HRC.

## **6. Analysis of R2P in Libya and Syria: the Norwegian debate**

In this chapter the Norwegian reaction to the two cases of Libya and Syria will be discussed. This will be done in two sections, where each section will look into the reaction of the actors in Norwegian foreign policy. The actors are, as discussed in the introduction, the Government and Parliament, the military and civil society. The three actors are what constitute the Norwegian foreign policy, and this chapter will as such look into how these actors influence foreign policies in relation with R2P and human rights. Finally, the two cases will be compared in the light of power theory and small state foreign policy behaviour theory. Combined, these will shed light over the research questions.

### **6.1 Norway, Libya and R2P**

*“It is not a country’s internal affairs when there are massive abuses taking place against civilians”* (Stortingsmøte 29.03.2011).

This was stated by the Prime Minister Jens Stoltenberg in his report over the Norwegian participation in the military operation in Libya. The Norwegian contribution was a response to the killings of civilians at the order of colonel Muammar al-Gaddafi and the UN Security Council Resolution 1973 which gave mandate to use force in order to protect the Libyan civilians.



The Prime Minister stated in a press release 19.03.2011 that Norway was prepared to send six F-16 combat aircraft to Libya to help in the enforcement of the Security Council Resolution 1973 (Stoltenberg 2011). The process of this decision was later revealed to be the outcome of cell-phone conversations between the leaders of the political parties in the government and without any contact with the Parliament (Aftenposten 11.03.2011).

### **6.1.1 Government and Parliament**

On 16<sup>th</sup> March 2011 was the Minister of Foreign Affairs Jonas Gahr Støre questioned by the Parliament on the situation in Libya, three days before the decision to contribute in the NATO-led mission in Libya. Erna Solberg (H) asked Støre whether Norway had said yes to a no-fly zone in Libya, as *“it at the moment is taking place a massacre that in the opinion of many meet the demands of R2P”* (Stortingsmøte 16.03.2011). This was followed up by Ine E. Søreide (H) who argued that a Norwegian “no” to a no-fly zone would *“be a catastrophic signal to other present and potential despots in the region in that they see that it is possible to cling to power through bombing its own population”* (ibid). Støre was on his part reluctant to jump on a mission that had the possibility to do more harm than good. However, he did say that if the Security Council put forward a UN mandate for a military mission in Libya, then Norway would fully support this. 17<sup>th</sup> March such an UN mandate was approved by the Security Council and two days later the Norwegian contribution was a fact. Apparently, Støre had changed his mind.

At a Parliament meeting 23 March, four days after the government had decided to contribute to the NATO-led mission, the political consensus over the Norwegian contribution was strong. FrP’s leader Siv Jensen expressed that *“It is a military contribution that has gotten support from all parties at the Norwegian Parliament, and I find it important to emphasize this (...)”* (Stortingsmøte 23.03.11), and she was followed by similar consent from the rest of the political parties. Trine Skei Grande (V) expressed content with the Prime Minister Stoltenberg’s argumentation of the military contribution as *“it is a more value based foreign policy, which we in Venstre is concerned with and stand for”* (Stortingsmøte 23.03.11).

During the Parliament Meeting 23 march 2011 Prime Minister Stoltenberg also referred to R2P in his report of the military contribution in Libya. According to Stoltenberg was a quick decision crucial to *“save the citizens in Benghazi”* – a clear reference to the core principle in R2P which puts the responsibility of protecting people against human rights violations on the

international community's shoulders. This was further emphasized in the Prime Minister's account of the Norwegian participation in Libya on the 29<sup>th</sup> March 2011. Here, Stoltenberg said that Norway contributed political, humanitarian, economic and military, and that the Norwegian engagement *“underpins a long line in Norwegian foreign policy, that is support to an UN-led world order in which the use of force is regulated by the UN Charter and Security Council Resolutions. (...) it is all about protecting civilians. (...) For the first time does the Security Council refer to the principle of R2P in connection with the use of force”* (Stortingsmøte 29.03.11).

Clearly, did the two Parliament meetings on the 16<sup>th</sup> and 23<sup>rd</sup> March 2011 and the Prime Ministers account on 29<sup>th</sup> March refer to R2P, and as such it appears as if the concept was decisive of Norwegian foreign policy. All the arguments from the different political parties seem to bring evidence of the premise and assumption of Norwegian foreign policy being consensus based and with a human rights focus. This was in the beginning of the situation in Libya, and the interesting part is whether R2P was an immediate thing, or if it was the beginning of an even more deeply focus on human rights in Norwegian foreign policy. This is where the Syrian case becomes interesting, as no military mission has been conducted in that case.

The two meetings revealed a shift in opinion from the government as of whether Norway should be part of an international humanitarian intervention. Støre's sudden shift can be explained by the emphasis on the UN as the foundation for Norwegian foreign policy in which all use of force is legitimized by the UN (Meld. St. 33 2011-2012: 5). While the opposition at the Parliament demanded action, Støre continued to argue that an UN-mandate was necessary for a Norwegian contribution to be possible (Stortingsmøte 16.03.2011). When the contribution was a fact, the political opposition was quick at reminding Støre of his previous statements and point out his sudden change of view (Stortingsmøte 23.03.2011). However, the critique remained low as the government actually had decided to contribute in the intervention, and thus the criticism lost somewhat of its edge.

As for the lack of critique that was further raised in the political debate, apart from that directed at Støre, it appears to have belonged to individuals within SV. The leader of SV's international committee Petter Eide argued that the killing of Gadhafi's grandchildren was against international law, and that Norway needed to back out of the mission (nrk.no 07.05.2011a). Another prominent member of SV, State Secretary in the Ministry of Foreign

Affairs Ingrid Fiskaas said during a SV party meeting that *“the bombing needed to stop immediately and that the situation in Libya probably will not be any different if Norway continues to bomb for six more weeks”* (nrk.no 07.05.2011b). The internal conflict within SV did not go unnoticed by the opposition at the Parliament. Siv Jensen (FrP) argued that *“it is the government party SV that now is creating an uncertainty concerning what up till now has appeared to be an unified Parliament, an unified political milieu of how we should operate in Libya”* (Stortingsmøte 23.03.2011). Ine E. Søreide (H) expressed that *“it is with somewhat puzzlement that one can read the rapports from SV’s National Board Meeting (...) where there have been many and clear statements of SV wanting to withdraw the air crafts from the operation immediately (...)”* (Stortingsmøte 09.05.2011). The seemingly collective shock over the critical voices within SV can be explained by the traditionally consensus based foreign policy in Norway. When suddenly a government party starts questioning its own government foreign policy decisions, in a case as dramatic as Libya, it will likely be met by opposition by the Parliament.

### **6.1.2 Military**

As tradition dictates, members of the military seldom comment on political decisions or missions it is set to do by the state. Hence, finding information on what military people think of the mission in Libya, the lack of action in Syria and human rights issues in general have been hard to come by.

However, in a NRK documentary two of the most central pilots in the NATO-led mission in Libya told about their experiences from the mission. In the documentary, the pilots express their surprise over the lack of debate before and during the mission. Colonel Bård Solheim, who was the head of the Norwegian F-16 operations told that *“when I stood in the middle of it and represented Norway and used so much armed force, it puzzled me a bit that it was not debated more. I believe you have to look quite extensively to find another situation where the little peace nation Norway has used such an amount of force”* (NRK Brennpunkt: De gode bombene 2013). In a master thesis written for the Norwegian Defence University College (NDUC) one of the pilots in an interview on the subject of the Norwegian contribution said that *“to me it seemed strange that, if it was as the Minister said that we are continuing the Norwegian contribution by being part of the staff, without having any national considerations to protect. What policy were we really suppose to lead? There was no one giving any such instructions”* (Henriksrud 2012:64).

The interview with the anonymous pilot showed that the Norwegian participation was somewhat unclear in terms of what politics the intervention was built on. Who were they suppose to protect, and to what extent? Major Paal Henriksrud concluded in his thesis that as Norway was part of a NATO-led operation that extended its mandate from protection of civilians to a mission which led to a regime change (Henriksrud 2012:81). Hence, even though no top-leaders within the military have publicly criticized the Norwegian participation in the Libya operation, it appears that within the military there was confusion over the lack of national public debate and realization of the fact that Norway was at war and thereby contributed to the murder of Gadhafi and civilians.

### **6.1.3 Civil Society**

Civil society is, as mentioned previously, included in the Norwegian Model that makes out Norwegian foreign policy. In the case of Libya was the civil society somewhat split between the need to protect the civilians and how far the international community should go to do so. When the Norwegian mission was a fact however, no big voices were raised against it (NRK Brennpunkt: De gode bombene 2013).

However, one NGO that criticized the government strongly was Amnesty International Norway. In September 2011 could Amnesty International document that at least 55 civilians had been killed during NATO bombing attacks that did not have clear military targets. The Secretary General John Peder Egenæs argued that NATO must investigate these findings to see if they are international law violations (Amnesty.no 2012). In a chronicle Egenæs argued further that the Norwegian authorities had to stop closing its eyes to the fact that Norway had participated in a military operation in which civilians had been murdered and mutilated, probably in violations of international law (Egenæs 2014). According to Egenæs Amnesty International can document that civilians were killed because of NATO-bombs, and therefore concessions should be made and more attention to the consequences of such military participation should be given before repeating history in Syria (ibid). This was supported by the Red Cross Norway, who was prepared to take the question to the MOD (rodekors.no 2012).

Jan Egeland, at that time director of NUPI, was on his side more critical of the decision process in the case of Libya. In an interview with Aftenposten (2011) he questioned the fact that the Parliament did not take time to discuss the matter more. *“Even if there was political*

*consensus over the decision to participate, it is as important to discuss how one conduct things*” (Aftenposten 12.10.2011). The article further informed that several scholars had been critical and meant that it was too late to react, and that an air force mission would be insufficient. The article also interviewed Bjørn Erik Rasch, professor at the University in Oslo, who argued that the lack of a political opposition made it hard to shed light on the issue. Hence, the Norwegian state did not know completely the possible consequences of its decision (ibid).

Asle Toje, a frequent commentator in Norwegian media, was also critical of the uncritical consensus over the Norwegian military contribution in Libya. He wrote a chronicle in the newspaper *Dagens Næringsliv* arguing that the war in Libya revealed a new security policy reality. He argued that the reality now was “in Norway and for Norway”. The war showed that a Norwegian majority government more or less stands free to command limited interventions abroad without any resistance in Parliament (Toje 2011).

The Church, another actor in the Norwegian civil society, represented by Bishop Helga Haugland Byfuglien, said in 2011 that “*the church has complete confidence in that the government has made a correct assessment in sending Norwegian air craft to Libya* (NRK Brennpunkt: De gode bombene 2013). Hence, the Church showed full support of the decision to contribute in the mission, and as such expressed little critical opposition towards the state in the matter. This is somewhat surprising as the church in most cases condemns use of violence, murder and war.

These examples does show that while there is some criticism within the civil society of what happened before and during the Norwegian participation in Libya, there is little criticism of Norway deciding to join the humanitarian intervention. It is not the military contribution per se that is under questioning, but rather criticism of the political decision process and the consequences of the bombing on civilians.

#### **6.1.4 Conclusion of the situation in Libya**

After the decision was made by the Norwegian government to support a NATO-led humanitarian intervention in Libya, little criticism was directed towards the state. Consensus over the contribution characterized the Parliament, and civil society appeared to stand by the decision. In the aftermath of the intervention critical voices have been raised against the

political process, lack of debate, the overthrowing of al-Gaddafi and bombing of civilians, but still it appears as if the mission in itself and the decision to contribute to it stands out as a successful one. As for the mechanisms at play from a state perspective, the Norwegian foreign policy process is highly consensus-based, a political dynamic that shapes the decision process by making it easier for the government to participate in humanitarian interventions. Neither of the three analytical levels investigated can be said to be very critical of the decision to take part in the military operation. Furthermore, the United Security Council's resolution pushed the government towards such a decision, and arguably the Security Council's agreement is a mechanism in Norwegian foreign policy. When the Security Council makes possible a humanitarian intervention it influences Norwegian politics in such a degree that few internal actors in Norway are critical of such participation.

## **6.2 Norway, Syria and R2P**

Around the same time as Muammar al-Gaddafi began using force against his population to stop the demands of democracy, riots grew in Syria as well. The situation quickly escalated, and reports of killings, torture and use of chemical weapons against civilians reached the international society. The members of the Security Council has tried to agree on a resolution giving mandate to stop the abuses against the civilians, but the efforts continues to be blocked by Russia and China.

Norway has since 2011 several times condemned the Syrian government in international forums. During the civil war in Syria, there was also a change of government in Norway, in 2013, when Høyre and FrP took over.

### **6.2.1 Government and Parliament**

While Libya naturally occupied considerable political discussions in Norway in March 2011, the situation in Syria did not go completely unnoticed. In his report to the Parliament 6<sup>th</sup> May, Støre explained to the Parliament that Norway had condemned the use of violence in Syria, and that *“regimes that use their military apparatus against civilians, lose their legitimacy. The international society must in such situations consider to initiate sanctions”* (Stortingsmøte 09.05.2011). The other political parties represented at the meeting also expressed the same worries as Støre (ibid). In a written question to Støre in August 2011

Karin S. Wolseth (FrP) asked what the Minister of foreign affairs had done in connection with the ongoing situation in Syria, and what measures he can imagine that Norway can use to stop power abuse from the Syrian authorities against its own population. In his answer, Støre repeated that Norway has condemned all violations of human rights and that Norway has asked Assad to resign. In terms of measures used by Norway, Støre pointed at economic sanctions and contributions in the HRC to establish an investigation committee (Skriftlig spørsmål 2011).

In an open debate in 2012 Ine E. Søreide (H) argued that unlike in the case of Libya *“Norway has remained silent”* in terms of recognizing the Syrian national opposition which is fighting against the Syrian government. She was followed by Peter S. Gitmark (H) who asked how the Norwegian government will be part of cooperation with the opposition in Syria to make a better and more democratic state. Prime Minister Stoltenberg replied that *“we play a more central role in other peace processes and conflicts than we do in Syria. (...) it is not an expression for that we are not concerned with the conflict, but I believe it is right that there is an division of efforts amongst different countries in different conflicts, and that all countries are not as central in all conflicts”* (Spørretime 21.11.2012).

In the analysis of documents from the Parliament, only once did a direct reference to R2P come up in connection with the civil war in Syria. In 2014, in connection with a debate over Norway's participation at the 67<sup>th</sup> UN General Assembly, Kåre Simonsen (Ap) raised concern over the enormous humanitarian sufferings in Syria, and how the world in this case is on the fence with little ability to do anything. Simonsen told the Parliament that *“we have a principle of Responsibility to Protect, and on the basis of this I find it difficult to accept and understand the veto decisions of the Security Council. I hope that we, as strong contributors to the UN system, puts this issue on the agenda in our own parliament, but also strive to bring these types of discussions to a higher degree in the UN fora”* (Stortingsmøte 25.02.2014).

This single reference to R2P reveals that R2P in many ways seem to have lost its momentum in Norwegian politics, and also that Norway is very much tied down by the UN. However, it also reveals an attitude of Norwegian politicians that as a strong economic contributor to the UN, Norway should and must use its leverage to put important issues on the agenda.

What is interesting to see in these debates is the lack of mentioning humanitarian interventions. Instead, the focus lies on supporting the Syrian opposition and an attitude from the government that Norway cannot be present in all conflicts. A rather different attitude than

the one in Libya where it was argued that the international community could not stand by and watch human rights violations from a state against its population. In a later meeting in Parliament, the issue of Syria was again raised, but the focus lied on the incompetence of the Security Council and the need of a UN resolution to put an end to the humanitarian sufferings (Stortingsmøte 14.02.2013). Snorre Valen (SV) argued at the meeting that *“it is more important than ever to try to achieve a political solution to the conflict (...)”* (ibid). Trine S. Grande (V) expressed grave concern over the humanitarian situation in Syria and argued that *“Norway must therefore use all its influence towards the members of the UN Security Council and wherever else we can, to get an end to this”* (ibid). Hence, it becomes naturally to question what is different in Syria from Libya. In both cases civilians were targeted by their government and in both cases Norwegian politicians have condemned the action of the leaders. What seem apparent is the focus on the UN and the lack of consensus in the Security Council.

In 2014 the new Minister of foreign affairs, Børge Brende (H) reported on the situation in Syria and the Norwegian engagement there. Brende told that 9.3 million Syrians were in need of humanitarian help, 6.5 million people are internally displaced and almost 2.5 million people are registered as refugees in the neighbouring countries. Further Norway is the sixth biggest humanitarian aid giver, as well as contributor to the transportation of chemical weapons out of Syria to prevent it from being used against the Syrian population (Stortingsmøte 11.02.2014). Brende stated that *“the war in Syria is led by brutality and without respect of humanitarian law and principles. (...) we still see daily attacks directed against civilians”* (ibid). Clearly the government considers the situation in Syria as abuse of civilians. There was however no mentioning of a humanitarian intervention in the rapport given by the Foreign Minister. Astrid A. Byrknes (KrF) said in her follow-up to Brende that *“Norway should stand in the forefront in this humanitarian aid effort”*. Ola Elvestuen concurred: *“it is important that Norway holds on to the commitment in humanitarian help as much as we do”* (ibid).

Political consensus appears to be the case also in the issue over Syria, and no new approach towards the civil war took place when Norway got a new government in 2013. Anniken Huitfeldt (Ap) noted this after a foreign policy report by Brende in March 2014, when she said that *“the report of the Minister of foreign affairs does not contain any shift in Norwegian foreign policy”* (Stortingsmøte 27.03.2014). As such it is tempting to argue that it might be exactly this consensus that hinders debate or proposals of intervention without an UN



mandate. This however remains speculative, and only a hypothesis based on the lack of evidence of the opposite.

Some statements concerning humanitarian intervention without a UN mandate has come from some politicians. In a Parliament meeting in November 2014 did Anniken Huitfeldt (Ap) question the statement of Per Sandberg (FrP) in a NRK debate of international interventions in Syria where he stated that *“there is Norway soon alone, then, in terms of international law. I am more concerned with using the peoples’ law here”* (Stortingsmøte 05.11.2014). In a response Brende emphasized that the government stresses the respect of international law and that the UN plays an important role in protecting and conducting international law (ibid).

Hence, humanitarian intervention without a UN mandate seems to be an issue that is quickly rejected at the political level in Norway. Rather, the debate has turned to be about humanitarian aid instead. Ola Elvestuen (V) insisted that *“Norway must use the economic opportunity we have to support all kinds of humanitarian relief. This concerns Syria, it concerns the countries around, and it concerns taking quota refugees to Norway”* (Stortingsmøte 11.02.2014). A statement Bård Vegard Solhjell agreed upon (ibid). The debate over accepting more Syrian refugees did become more and more prominent over the next year, and in March 2015 Rasmus Hansson from the Environment Party (Miljøpartiet De Grønne -MDG) asked the Minister of Justice, Anders Anundsen, about what he will do to give more protection to Syrian refugees, and to make sure that Norwegian communities will and can accept them. Hansson’s question was a consequence of the pressure from NGOs to accept more Syrian refugees into Norway. Anundsen replied that Norway already have expanded the quota for Syrian refugees with 1000 people (Spørretimespørsmål nr.10 18.03.2015). The issue of Syrian refugees became important within political parties as well, and in April 2015 did Arbeiderpartiet at their annual national convention that Norway should open up for receiving 10 000 Syrian refugees within 2016. Støre argued that Norway has to help those in need and show solidarity and humanity (arbeiderpartiet.no 2015). The same decision was made by Venstre at their annual national convention (adresa.no 2015), while Fremskrittspartiet refused to do the same at theirs (aftenposten 02.05.2015).

This is, however, not the perspective of the government. According to Mayzar Keshvari (FrP) such a policy would have serious consequences for Norway. *“It also shows that Ap don’t have a restrictive immigration policy and that they don’t have any credibility. They are as unserious as SV. This is raw populism of the worst kind (...)”* (vg.no 16.04.2015). The attitude

of the government was put on the spot by three SV politicians in a representative suggestion of the issue of Syrian refugees. In the suggestion it is argued that Norway as one of the wealthiest countries in the world and with the highest decrease of asylum seekers, can contribute. Norway has, according to the three Parliament representatives, the resources and capacity to contribute more than it is doing today. The government is criticized for prioritizing economic aid to the neighbouring countries rather than opening for more refugees to come to Norway (Representantforslag 95 S 2014-2015). Hence, there is a clear divide between the government and the opposition in the case of Syrian refugees.

The political debate in Parliament and in the media reveals two things. For one, a humanitarian intervention in Syria is out of the question without a Security Council mandate. Out of the question it also appears to remain as Russia and China continues to block any attempts of overthrowing al-Assad. It is natural to assume that there was a lesson to be learned for Russia and China after the overthrowing of al-Gaddafi. Despite the fact that the UN resolution only gave mandate for a no-fly zone mission it quickly became a regime changing mission. As a consequence of the lack of a UN resolution, a second characteristic of the Norwegian political debate is revealed. When the international community is hindered by the Security Council and Norway as such lose its influential power within the UN, Norway turns to its strongest capability: economic capabilities. The debate at the Parliament has turned from R2P and humanitarian intervention in Libya to economic aid and questions over refugee quotas in Syria. From 2011 to today minimal space in the Norwegian political debate has been devoted to discussions of military contribution. Rather, it has been economic questions that have characterized the debate.

### **6.2.2 Military**

As Norway has not contributed to the Syrian civil war with military force, there has thus not been much debate amongst the Norwegian military. However, Norway was represented in Syria when General Robert Mood was sent to Syria as head of the UN observer force in Syria for three months.

In 2013 General Mood expressed grave concern over the situation in Syria and argued that *“the international society must consider using measures such as a no-fly zone and provide some more direct support, so that the relative strength evens out”* (Mood 28.04.2013).

General Mood also said that the Syrian people feel let down by the UN and the West as they

are not intervening as they did in Libya (ibid). In a comment regarding a statement from Amnesty International wanting to remove the Security Council due to it being unable to stop the Syrian civil war, Mood agreed that it is justified to criticize the UN and the international community for not intervening. He was however sceptical of any changes in the Security Council taking place (Mood 25.02.2015).

Lieutenant Colonel Tormod Heier answered in an interview over the issue of sending Norwegian troops to Iraq and Syria to stop the emergence of ISIL that *“there is a huge lack of self-criticism in Norwegian and western media. I believe that the most healthy for Norway is that one have corrective in the debate which can see the issue with new eyes. In Norway and the West we are way too focused on the excellence of military force and quick military solutions. We could need more critical voices from the political left side (...) military force is a temporary solution”* (Bergens Tidene 15.09.2014). Lieutenant Colonel Heier is not talking about the civil war in Syria in specific here, but the situation of ISIL has everything to do with Syria, as ISIL has become a part of the civil war. On the question of whether it would have been better to have supported the Assad-regime in Syria, Lieutenant Colonel Heier answered that *“Assad stands for the most stable and secular regime. However, because he used weapons of mass-destruction he made himself inedible to the West”* (ibid).

General Mood is the only individual representing the military aspect of Norwegian foreign policy that has actually been to Syria. He is however only one individual and as such he cannot be said to represent the Norwegian military attitude towards the Syrian question. He is however not a “whomever” within the Norwegian military. With his experience and his role in the UN operation in Syria, he does have some legitimacy in his statement and a solid foundation to argue as he does. Lieutenant Colonel Heier argues completely different than General Mood, and warns against a military intervention. Hence, it appears as if the Norwegian military is divided over the best solution to the Syrian civil war. However, unlike the politicians, General Mood and Lieutenant Colonel Heier actually discussed the matter of humanitarian intervention.

### 6.2.3 Civil Society

While in the case of Libya where the humanitarian intervention was welcomed and only partially criticized, has the civil society been rather quiet over the issue of an international humanitarian intervention and Norwegian participation. Just as the political debate has been concerned with aid and refugees, so has the civil society.

In 2012 the Norwegian church demanded that Norway accepts more Syrian refugees and give more economic aid for humanitarian purposes and that the situation would be solved through peaceful means (Mellomkirkelige råd 30.05.2012). A quite different position than the one taken in the issue of Libya is seen when the Church supported the Norwegian decision to participate in the military operation. This was again an issue for the Church in 2014 when once again they demanded that Norway need to open up for more refugees to come to Norway. The church stated that *“the government’s sorting of human beings in need from a cost-benefit-perspective is ethical despicable (...) to view human beings as cost items we cannot afford, is undignified (...)”* (Mellomkirkelige råd 11.09.2014). As such, the church goes quite far in their criticism of the government and in their argumentation on the issue.

In March 2015 a collective civil society initiated a “National voluntary effort for Syrian refugees”. The eight NGOs Amnesty International Norway, CARE, Norwegian refugee council, Norwegian Church Aid, NOAS, Red Cross Norway, Norwegian People’s Aid and Save the Children wrote a chronicle in VG 11.03.2015 where they accused Norwegian politicians of being remarkable quiet towards the situation that is increasingly getting worse. The eight NGOs wanted more political leadership and humanitarian engagement that reflected the brutality of the crisis. Because of this the NGOs invited *“Norwegian politicians, communities, organizations and enthusiasts to a national voluntary effort for Syrian refugees”* (vg.no 11.03.15). The NGOs further claimed that Norway has the capacity to take more of the Syrian refugees and give more aid to states such as Lebanon which is bursting. They argued that Norway must accept 10 000 Syrian refugees over the next two years (ibid).

Seemingly it appears that at least some of the political parties have listened to the demands of church and NGOs. As described previously have SV, Ap and V opened up for bigger Syrian refugees quotas. This means that there is now political majority in Parliament for expanding the Syrian refugee quotas, although this does not include the government.

#### **6.2.4 Conclusion of the situation in Syria**

The analysis of Norway's debate over Syria reveals a quiet different attitude than the one in Libya. The focus is in this case on economic aid and refugee relief, and not on a humanitarian intervention. R2P is more or less left outside the debate over the situation in Syria, and the lack of action is explained by the paralysis of the UN Security Council. As the Parliament argues over who is willing to do the most for Syrian refugees, civil society is demanding more help directly in Syria and bigger refugee quotas here in Norway. As a military intervention is out of the question, the military in Norway remains quiet with the exception of General Mood who is clear on the need for international action to stop the terrible situation. The Syrian case show even more than the Libyan case that the political process in Norway clearly is influenced by the dynamics in the international society. When the mechanism of the UN becomes a hinder to the mission of being a human rights advocate, it has an effect to the political milieu in Norway in such a way that it blocks a political process in Norway where R2P can be influential.

#### **6.3 Norway's soft power through R2P: a small state's foreign policy strategy**

The analysis and the review of the Norwegian foreign policy debate over Libya and Syria has shown that there has been inconsistency in terms of using and acting on the principle of R2P. As such, it appears that R2P is situational and dependent on the UN Security Council. Not only in terms of approving a humanitarian intervention for Norway to be part of, but also in terms of what the foundation of the debate is. Hence, the Security Council becomes a mechanism that highly influences the Norwegian foreign policy decision process. In the period from the demonstrations began in Libya to the intervention was initiated, R2P was referred to several times in the political debate, while in the case of Syria there has been little to no such reference in the Norwegian political debate. The hope of many was that the use of R2P in Libya would be the principle's breakthrough and the beginning of a norm in which the international community would intervene in situations where human rights is being violated by a state against its own population. The Syrian civil war is so far destroying this hope.

In the case of R2P in Norway it therefore appears as if R2P is dependent on the international consensus on the issue, even though Norway has declared itself as a humanitarian super power and a state that always has human rights on the agenda. The process of foreign policy in Norway can therefore be argued to be more or less steered by the dynamics in international

relations, and especially does the Security Council appear to be an important mechanism in this process due to the expressed loyalty towards it by the different Norwegian governments. After presenting a white paper on the issue of human rights in which R2P was declared as a tool that the government supports (Meld. St. 10 2014-2015: 63,64) it comes natural to expect a higher degree of reference to the principle in the Norwegian debate.

The next part will try to explain why Norway emphasized the R2P in the case of Libya but has so far not done the same in the case of Syria. This will be done through the theories of soft power and small state foreign policy behaviour, as explained in previous chapter.

### **6.3.1 Norway, R2P and soft power**

According to the understanding of soft power as presented by Joseph Nye soft power is the ability to get what you want without the use of coercion (Nye 2004: x). One way of achieving soft power is through image-building, and the idea is that what you invest today might pay off later in terms of political influence (Nygård & Gates 2013:235, 237). Norway does not have the material capabilities that is needed to force other states to do something or to appear terrifying enough for it to feel secure in the international system. Hence, Norway has chosen a foreign policy strategy where influence stems from soft power and image-building. The identity that Norway has developed and strategized is as a humanitarian super power, a nation of peace, a human rights advocate and an active UN member. The investments Norway invests in terms of funding and aid has very much translated into political influence and legitimacy in international issues that are much higher than most small states have in international relations. When Norway speaks in the UN, other states listen.

In addition to the efforts of image-building, the way in which these efforts are translated and perceived by other countries is of great importance. As Goldsmith and Horiuchi (2012) argued, has the way in which efforts are translated direct implication of how effective these efforts are. When public opinion of a state is positively strong the leaders of that state pay attention to this when they make decisions (Goldsmith and Horiuchi 2012:37, 38).

Consequently, it becomes important for the Norwegian government to maintain the image of Norway as a peace and human rights nation, because if translated as such, it will give Norway positive influence in international relations. R2P fits the Norwegian strategy has a human rights advocate well. Hence, to contribute to a military mission that is based on human rights protection can be argued to be a political investment that can give the outcome of more

political influence and legitimacy later on because it is translated by the international community as a positive contribution to international peace and security. This again raises the amount of soft power influence later on. Hence, to contribute military to the humanitarian intervention in Libya which was justified by R2P can be translated as a political investment by the Norwegian government. As such Norway “collects” good-will that can be used as soft power to persuade certain behaviour of other states later.

When the UN is blocked over a decision in the case of Syria, Norway has some influence to speak up within the UN system, which it does. However, it does not go around the UN Security Council and attempt any military mission on its own. For that, it lacks both the hard power and the soft power. Instead, Norway has chosen to strengthen its image as a humanitarian super power through economic aid to the Syrian people. However, as we see in the latest political debate in Norway, the government is strongly criticized for not taking enough responsibility and bring Syrian refugees to Norway. While the political opinion and the civil society demands bigger Syrian refugee quotas, the government holds back and rather promise more aid to the neighbouring countries surrounding Syria.

As the case of Syria shows, it seem that Norway does not view human rights as bringing soft power in itself, but rather that the legitimation it gets from the UN is more important. For that is the Norwegian contribution in Syria a far cry from that in Libya. Therefore, the UN appears as more leading of Norway’s foreign policy behaviour than human rights (and R2P) itself. The dynamics surrounding Norwegian foreign policy decision process are thus highly based on the need Norway has to gain power in international relations. The image-building and political investment that Norway does within the UN system seem to be of high priority, which was further shown by the Stoltenberg-government when it presented a white paper on the relationship with the UN. Image-building thus becomes a mechanism that has a causal link towards whether R2P is used by the Norwegian state. If it will harm Norway`s image to use R2P then R2P is rejected. And vice-versa. A question rising in that context is if Norway deliberately uses a normative principle as a way to gain influence without really supporting its essence. If that is the case, then R2P becomes a Trojan horse for Western interests rather than a universal principle with a cosmopolitan understanding. It becomes an alibi for Norwegian interests. What speaks in favour of the Norwegian government is the statement of global engagement being in the interest of Norway. That means that according to the Norwegian state there is no confliction between interests and values. However, it becomes questionable when a principle such as R2P is applicable in one situation (Libya) but not in another quite

similar situation (Syria). The analysis of the political debate from 2011 to today definitely reveals an inconsistency in the use of R2P, and hence the implication of the principle does not appear to be a big part of the focus of Norwegian politicians when it is not raised as an issue by the UN. Image building as strategized by Norwegian politicians can thus be linked to the UN and not human rights.

The question of whether R2P is an alibi for Norwegian (and Western states) interests is important. If that is the case, then the identity and role as a humanitarian super power will be weakened, and consequently its role within the international system. Credibility is an important factor in international relations, and to use R2P as a disguise to legitimize military force and to promote self-interests can end up with reducing the level of credibility. To use values and norms as alibi for self-interests are not new, and von der Lippe and Stuvøy (2013) argue in an article about feminism in international relations that some issues, principles, resolutions and actions which are grounded in an idea are problematic to be critical of (von der Lippe & Stuvøy 2013:49). Hence, when a certain action or behavior is legitimized on values such as human rights, women`s rights, environment and so on, it becomes hard for other states to criticize these actions and hence the values and norms becomes alibies to conceive intentions for the use of force or promotion of self-interest. This then, has the potential of decreasing both the legitimacy of Norway, but also of the legitimacy of R2P itself. Arguably, this is the reason for why it has been hard to use R2P as justification for a humanitarian intervention in Syria; the principle has been proclaimed by some states to be a Trojan horse for the interests of Western values and interests.

However, alibi or not, the Norwegian contribution to the military operation in Libya definitely gave the state an increased status in the international system. As long as it is the UN Security council that is holding back in terms of a new intervention in Syria, no one can blame the small state Norway of not doing enough. Norway continues to be one of the biggest contributors in terms of aid to Syrians in need, and hence the role as the humanitarian super power is maintained. As Nye argued, soft power rests on three resources: a state`s culture, political values and foreign policies. The way in which these are perceived as legitimate determines whether they become attractive or not (Nye 2004:11). Norway can tick of all these three boxes as being positively viewed in the international system, mostly because of its global engagement in humanitarian issues.



To have the power to persuade states into doing what one wants is of course important to a small state such as Norway. In future international meeting, the amount of credibility and influential power that Norway has gained can be used to tip a decision in Norway's favour. The amount of (soft) power that Norway has is very much connected to its role as a small state in the international system. Hence, the fact that Norway strives for international legitimization in the shape of image-building can only be said to be an assumed behaviour for a small state in international relations.

### **6.3.2 Norway, R2P and small state foreign policy behaviour**

Small states do have to behave differently in international relations than super powers such as USA, China and Russia. The low level of material capabilities forces small states to strategize in other ways than bigger states. Usually, this is done through image-building (in other words, soft power). As such, the strategy of soft power is part of the expected small state foreign policy behaviour. However, as mentioned previously, the wealth deriving from oil has situated Norway in a position where it can do a bit more than poorer and less developed states. This has enabled Norway to contribute with huge sums in economic aid, humanitarian emergency relief and financial support to international organizations.

In the theory chapter, three "expected" assumptions of small state behaviour in international relations were provided. The first assumption of small state foreign policy behaviour is that they are insecure and seek protection from stronger states (Hey 2003:6). To explain why R2P was used as legitimization for why Norway chose to participate in a military humanitarian intervention with an UN mandate and led by NATO in Libya, one can argue that through participating Norway showed that it is one of the states willingly to take responsibility, it has the capabilities to do so and that it supports both the UN and NATO. When the UN uses R2P as justification for a humanitarian intervention, it is "safe" for Norway to stand behind this justification. Also, as NATO remains as the most important security to Norway's safety, it is important to take part of its actions. As such, R2P is only decisive for Norwegian foreign policy when it is given strength by the UN. Again, there is apparent signs of international organizations being the main mechanism in how the Norwegian foreign policy process evolves. When the UN used R2P as justification, Norway was one of the biggest contributors to the military operation. Consequently, when the UN is locked by the veto states in the

Security Council, Norway is tied down. The participation thus can be viewed as political investment for future support if Norway was to be threatened.

A strong status within the UN is clearly a huge advantage for Norway. With its small military and relative small economy, it is a huge accomplishment to have a voice that is listened to in international matters. As the five permanent members of the Security Council show strong states are given huge power within international organizations, and hence it becomes important to be able to influence what is decided there. This is in line with the second assumption of small state behaviour, which assumes that because small states have limited resources which limits their options they therefore seek to influence foreign policy as much as they can (Hey 2003:6). It is therefore not a big surprise that when the UN is unwilling to agree upon a humanitarian intervention, Norway uses its legitimacy within the organization to put pressure on it by helping the Syrian people through aid, but not overstepping against it. This point also leads to the final assumption of small state behaviour. As small states are “weak” they often take on passive modes of action (ibid). Clearly, it is not in Norway’s interest to defy UN decisions by initiating a humanitarian intervention on its own. This was reflected in the political debate over the civil war in Syria. When Per Sandberg (FrP) opened up for a humanitarian intervention without a UN mandate Børge Brende was quick to deny any such possibilities. It becomes clear that as a small state Norway has to behave accordingly. Even though it portrays itself as a human rights advocate the political reality constrains what Norway can do. The underlying dynamics of the foreign policy process in Norway can therefore be explained by the fact that Norway in its nature is small and it has to strategize consequently.



## 7. Conclusions

Throughout the thesis the dynamics and mechanisms at work in the Norwegian foreign policy process has been investigated. In this respect, the thesis contributes to a deeper understanding of Norwegian foreign policy and what internal and external actors are influential to the decisions made. The thesis also provides a fuller understanding of what R2P means directly for states' foreign policy, and in this case for Norwegian foreign policy. For one, Norwegian foreign policy is strongly affected by international relations, and especially those decisions made in the UN Security Council. The influence by the UN is equally important to the R2P politics in Norway, but only when the Security Council opens up for R2P to be used as legitimation for humanitarian interventions. Another contribution of the thesis is that it gives insight to the theory of soft power and the theory of small state foreign policy behaviour. As the Norwegian case shows, the nature of being a small state with limited state capabilities does have implications for how a state strategize in international relations. R2P in Norway becomes influential to Norwegian foreign politics when it increases the image and the political investment. Combined, these contributions give a deeper understanding of Norwegian foreign policy and the role of R2P in it.

The two theories chosen to explain Norway's foreign policy behaviour and the role of R2P in it, operates more or less as unified due to the fact that soft power usually is a small state foreign policy strategy. Soft power also usually is the only way to strategize as small states lack the capabilities to exert hard power. What these two theories provides in the thesis is an explanation of the dynamics within the Norwegian foreign policy. The need to mix the two theories is grounded in the fact that Norway legitimizes its foreign policy behaviour through the UN as well as the UN functions as the source of gaining power in international relations. When Norway contributes military in Libya based on R2P, but not in Syria, it is very much grounded in the fact that Norway gains soft power through the UN system. Hence, when the Security Council initiates a humanitarian intervention Norway grabs the opportunity to increase its image as a humanitarian super power and consequently invest in future political power. R2P does fit the identity of the Norwegian foreign policy. However, there is little evidence of it being reflected in the foreign policy behavior after the Libyan civil war. Rather, it has turned out to be a situational principle and not the new norm for how Norway and the international community responds to genocide, ethnic cleansing and other forms of state violations of human rights. The dichotomy of human rights and state interests (sovereignty) appears to remain too great to overcome in certain situations. As such, it appears that R2P

becomes a situational principle with the possibility to function as an alibi for some states' interests, and that the future of human rights continues to be relatively unsure. Here, both the theory of soft power and small state politics are applicable as the dilemma of a small state such as Norway might want to make R2P a universal principle in international relations, but its small state limitations hinders it from criticizing the UN as the organizations both secures its safety and provides a space in which it can gain and increase its soft power.

The methodological choices of the thesis made possible an in-depth investigation of the mechanism at work within the Norwegian foreign policy process and in what way this affected the role of R2P in it. To choose case study design and process tracing techniques enabled to find the mechanisms that had a causal effect on the view of Norwegian politicians on R2P. Through document analysis, data supporting the conclusion could be traced. Through focusing on the causality between different factors the thesis gained a high level of internal validity. The thesis has not been without its limitations. For one, interviews with individuals representing civil society and the military proved to be difficult. Hence, a direct information source is missing. However, through analyzing interviews in the media this issue was somewhat solved as they gave an insight to the official opinion of individuals and NGOs concerning the issue of Norwegian foreign policy. However, there are limitation in relying on interviews in the media as well when studying contemporary and controversial policies. Often, official statements and interviews are biased because the individual giving the statement or interview has an agenda or an opinion she or he wants to promote. Interviews in the media also have the potential of being taken out of context and given new meaning by the interviewer. Although this issue might decrease the level of internal validity of the research, official statements and interviews provides valuable information. With the potential problems in mind, through making sure that the statements were repeated several times in different media sources this was avoided. For future research on the subject of the thesis a way to make it even more in depth would be to do interviews directly with individual within the three levels of analysis.

The lesson from Rwanda and the Balkans was that the international system no longer can stand by and watch a state abuse, torture and kill its own population. R2P became the normative principle the international system hoped would stop such actions from happening in the future. However, after the intervention in Libya, no other interventions have been initiated on the basis of R2P. That is not due to the lack of humanitarian catastrophes. Syria is quickly becoming a humanitarian disaster. Norway has proclaimed itself as a protector of

human rights and a humanitarian super power, and together with its binding obligations through international law, Norway has definitely set itself up as a nation that should be advocating R2P both nationally and internationally.

However, R2P has shown to be a situational principle and thus not decisive of Norwegian foreign policy behaviour. Rather one can conclude that as a small state Norway benefits from following the UN in which it gains legitimacy and influence. Rather than R2P being decisive, it was a tool in which Norway put in political investment with the goal of gaining more influence in international relations. As R2P still have not been used by the UN Security Council to stop the civil war in Syria, it becomes clear that it is the UN that is decisive of Norwegian foreign policy behaviour and not R2P alone. Hence, even if R2P is referred to as a good tool for the UN in the two white papers by the two Norwegian governments, clearly there is a difference between action and words.

The Norwegian debate and foreign policy behaviour shows five things. For one, the Norwegian foreign policy is still characterized by a strong consensus in international issues. The political debate in Parliament reveals little criticism against government decisions, and the consent of the military contribution to the humanitarian intervention in Libya was striking. In the case of Syria the debate has turned into a more populist one, in which the political parties compete over which party is willing to accept the most Syrian refugees. Secondly, when a humanitarian intervention is out of the question, Norway quickly throws itself over the aid-mission. However, taking refugees back to Norway has shown to be quite a political pain for the Solberg-government. A third lesson from the analysis is that humanitarian intervention, which is the last resort in the R2P principle, appear to only be a situational form of action in the UN system, hence R2P became situational for the Norwegian state as well. That is also the fourth lesson to be drawn; the UN is the main organization in which Norway can exercise power, in terms of persuasion and influence. Consequently, as a small state, Norway is not keen on criticizing the UN too much either. The fifth and final point to be made is that as R2P has proven to be situational, it can be argued to be more an alibi for Norwegian interests, such as image building, than it being a norm that is decisive for all Norwegian foreign policy behaviour in the future.

It is difficult to provide a definitive conclusion on what lies behind foreign policy decisions as the public rarely get complete insight to what factors it was founded on. Also, with a normative principle to be used in situations as complex and unique as civil wars, nothing is

given in beforehand and different factors might come to play a role. As such, it becomes difficult to decide whether R2P was an alibi for Norwegian interests. However, what is possible to say is that R2P is not the universal principle one had hoped. Hence, it cannot be concluded that R2P is decisive for Norwegian foreign policy behaviour. Rather, it appears that as a small state Norway's foreign policy behaviour is shaped by the UN, a strategy common for small states in international relations. Small states feel insecure, and consequently they wish to increase their safety.

Part of the premise of the thesis was that the Norwegian foreign policy is influenced by both external and internal actors. So far, the conclusion is that external actors such as the UN has great influence over the Norwegian foreign policy. What about the internal actors? Individuals within the military rarely criticise the state for the missions they are set out to do. In the case of Libya however some of the soldiers participating criticized the government for not admitting that it had gone to war, and for not stating clearly who they were there to protect. In the case of Syria the voices within the military were even less noticeable, but two prominent individuals within the military argued both for and against a humanitarian intervention in Syria. As for the civil society it was remarkable how little criticism there was against an intervention in Libya. Rather, the criticism was directed towards the decision process.

Hence, the conclusion becomes that R2P is reflected in Norwegian foreign policy, but not as a decisive principle that forces the Norwegian state to act in a certain way. For that, the principle is too situational and un-tested. It is also not easy to give a blue-print answer to a question concerning a normative principle as many factors affect its status. No situation is identical to another. However, one assumption that can be made is that R2P is rather one of the tools available to the UN in situations when the organization manages to come to a joint decision to act on state violations of human rights against the state's population. As such, R2P is decisive for and reflected in Norway's foreign policy *because* the UN is the main institution in which Norway can play out its role as a humanitarian super power and a human rights advocate. The UN is the premise for the principle of R2P to have an effect on Norwegian foreign policy behavior, in other words, there is a causality between the UN and whether R2P is reflected in the Norwegian foreign policy or not. Thus, R2P in the Norwegian context lingers in a challenging and inconsistently manner between moral considerations as well as real-political issues in cases when the UN becomes paralyzed.

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