

Kaleidoscopic Patterns of Development

The Implications of Power Politics on the UN Human Rights Council

Andreas Gahr Brunsvig

Abstract

This thesis is a study of the development of the debate in the United Nations Human Rights Council, from its establishment in 2006 until the end of 2016. The aim of this study is, first, to detect the development of the debate, and second, to explain what drives this development. This is conducted on the basis of a twofold research question: (1) What is the development of the debate in the UN Human Rights Council, and (2) why has the conflict among states increased? Both the statistical findings and the qualitative data gathered through interviews with key actors in the Human Rights Council – diplomats, civil society representatives, and UN staff – indicate that the debate has become more conflictual, especially since 2013. I argue that the Human Rights Council's development is driven by the UN member-states power-political interests, in particular by the interests of powerful groups and alliances, as well as the major states. These interests are, in turn, shaped by events taking place outside the Human Rights Council, such as government changes and geopolitical events. Thus, the development in the Human Rights Council reflects the development in international politics – it is a microcosmos. When the international system is shaken – the patterns within the UN Human Rights Council change.

Sammendrag

Denne masteroppgaven tar for seg debattutviklingen i FNs menneskerettighetsråd fra opprettelsen i 2006 til 2016. Ved å innhente både kvantitative og kvalitative data, gjennom å operasjonalisere "debatten" og måle denne statistisk, samt ved intervjuer av nøkkelaktører i Menneskerettighetsrådet, finner jeg at uenighetene mellom statene i Menneskerettighetsrådet har økt, særlig siden 2013. Dette indikerer at statene i mindre grad klarer å enes om de internasjonale menneskerettsstandardene. Videre argumenterer jeg for at endringene i Menneskerettighetsrådet er drevet av statenes maktpolitiske interesser, særlig interessene til sterke allianser og de mest innflytelsesrike statene i det internasjonale systemet. Deres interesser blir videre formet av endringer utenfor Menneskerettighetsrådet, blant annet regjeringsskifter og geopolitiske hendelser. Endringene i FNs menneskerettighetsråd reflekterer dermed endringer i internasjonal politikk – Menneskerettighetsrådet er et mikrokosmos. Ved større endringer i det internasjonale systemet, endres mønstrene i FNs menneskerettighetsråd.

Preface

This thesis marks the end of six years of studies at NTNU, in California, and in Madrid. It has been a very meaningful, although challenging process to write this thesis. Had it not been for the advice and assistance of several persons, it would have been nearly impossible. First, I would like to thank my supervisor, professor Torbjørn L. Knutsen, for very valuable advice, suggestions, and conversations. Your knowledge has been of immense help during this process. Furthermore, I owe The Fritt Ord Foundation and the Norwegian Centre for Human Rights great thanks for granting me a substantial scholarship, giving me the opportunity to travel to conduct the interviews.

My interest for the topic evolved when I worked as a trainee in the human rights team at Norway's Permanent Mission to the UN in Geneva, in the spring of 2016. This thesis would not have been possible to write without the knowledge and experience I gained during those six months. I owe my former colleagues in the team and at the Mission, as well as those in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs which have showed interest in this thesis, great thanks. Moreover, I am very grateful to all interviewees and interlocutors, named or not, who were willing to speak with me during this process. Your views, suggestions, recommendations, and assessments have been invaluable when writing the thesis.

Finally, I would like to thank my parents and Naomi for always supporting.

Needless to say, the shortcomings of this thesis are my own.

Andreas Gahr Brunsvig

Trondheim, May 2016

Table of contents

Abstract	iii
Sammendrag	v
Preface	vii
Figures	x
Abbreviations	xi

- PART ONE -

1 Introduction	3
1.1 Relevant literature	5
1.2 The research approach	9
1.3 Findings and thesis structure	13

- PART TWO -

2 The UN Human Rights Council	17
2.1 The structure	17
2.2 The negotiation process	19
2.3 Members, groups, and alliances	21
3 The development	23
3.1 The development in the Council	24
3.2 The validity of the statistical findings	28

- PART THREE -

4 A nuanced description of the Council's development	33
4.1 The first phase	34
4.2 The second phase	38
4.3 The third phase	43
5 The implications of power politics	49
5.1 The dynamics and development	49
5.2 Why has the conflict in the Council increased?	54
5.3 Reflecting the evolution of a new world order?	56

- PART FOUR -

6 Conclusions	63
6.1 Conclusion and value added	63
6.2 Limitations, alternative explanations, and further research	64
Afterword	69
Bibliography	73
Appendices	83
Appendix 1: Dataset on adopted resolutions and amendments	83
Appendix 2: List of interviewees	84
Appendix 3: Interview guide	86
Appendix 4: Voting studies procedure	88
Appendix 5: Datasets voting patterns 2006-2009	90
Appendix 6: Datasets voting patterns 2013-2016	96

Figures

Figure 1: Illustration of the balance between substance and support.

Figure 2: Number of adopted resolutions (year by year).

Figure 3: Percent of non-consensual resolutions (session by session).

Figure 4: Percent of non-consensual resolutions (11 sessions grouped).

Figure 5: Number of amendments divided by number of resolutions (year by year).

Figure 6: World map with categories based on voting patterns on OIC/NAM/Arab/African resolutions.

Figure 7: World map with categories based on voting patterns on WEOG resolutions.

Figure 8: The explanatory model.

Abbreviations

CCP	Chinese Communist Party
CHR	Commission on Human Rights
ECOSOC	Economic and Social Council
EEG	Eastern European Group
EU	European Union
GA	General Assembly
GRULAC	Latin American and Caribbean Group
HRC	Human Rights Council
HRHF	Human Rights House Foundation
HRW	Human Rights Watch
ISHR	International Service for Human Rights
LMG	Like-Minded Group
MENA	Middle East and Northern Africa
MFA	Ministry of Foreign Affairs
NAM	Non-Aligned Movement
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organization
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
OHCHR	Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights
OIC	Organisation of Islamic Cooperation
OPT	Occupied Palestinian Territories
OSCE	Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe
P5	Security Council's five permanent members
R2P	Responsibility to Protect
UK	United Kingdom
UN	United Nations
UPR	Universal Periodic Review
URG	Universal Rights Group
US	United States
WEOG	Western European and Others Group
WTO	World Trade Organization

- PART ONE -

1 Introduction

[T]hey may be unequal in strength or intelligence, but all become equal through agreed convention and by right (Rousseau, [1762] 2008: 62).

The ideas of Enlightenment philosophers Voltaire and Jean-Jacques Rousseau are noticeable in what became the *French Declaration of the Rights of Man and Citizen*, and later influenced the *Universal Declaration of Human Rights*, adopted by the United Nations (UN) in 1948 (Hunt, 2007: 17). Expressions such as "rights of humanity," "rights of the citizen," and "rights of man" (*droits de l'homme*), became prevalent from 1762 with Rousseau's *The Social Contract*. "Human rights," as we know the term today, first appeared in French in Voltaire's *Treatise on Tolerance*, published in 1763 (Hunt, 2007: 23).

With Voltaire and Rousseau in the forefront, the city of Geneva was a focal point for ideas and debates on human rights already in the midst of the eighteenth century. While Rousseau was born in the city and was a proud "Citizen of Geneva," Voltaire spent several years there, before settling in the nearby French town Fernex (today Ferney Voltaire). Since 1946, Geneva has continued to be a centerpiece for debates and negotiations on human rights, in the UN headquarter *Palais des Nations*. For the first 60 years, the Commission on Human Rights (the Commission) was the arena for these debates. 2006 marked the end of the Commission, when the UN member-states decided to replace it with the UN Human Rights Council (the Council). This intergovernmental body overtook the responsibilities and role of its predecessor, however with a stronger mandate and a more authoritative position in the UN system. This to defeat the flaws of the Commission, which ultimately caused its abolishment (Terlingen, 2007; Freedman, 2013).

For three sessions a year, 10 weeks in total, diplomats from the UN member-states meet in the Council to negotiate and adopt human rights resolutions. The resolutions are legally non-binding statements on human rights topics and country situations, aimed at establishing standards, principles of conduct, and ideally influencing domestic legislations. These resolutions may be adopted by consensus or by vote, or rejected by the Council (General Assembly resolution, 2006: 4; United Nations, 2017d; Permanent Mission of Switzerland, 2015: 18).

During the course of the Council's years, no resolution has ever been rejected. A principal division between resolutions is, therefore, whether they are adopted by consensus or by vote,

where the strongest outcome would be a consensual adoption. A resolution that is subject to a vote indicates that the states are unable to fully agree on its content or formulation. In other words, the proportion of non-consensual resolutions can work as a benchmark for the level of intergovernmental conflict in the Council. Hence, an increasing proportion of non-consensual resolutions would indicate a falling degree of agreement. An additional indication of conflict can be found in the number of amendments proposed to a resolution text. If one or more states disagree with certain parts of a resolution, they can propose amendments to delete, add or revise parts of the text. These are popularly known as "hostile amendments." Thus, the more amendments proposed to a text, the less agreement there is among states on its content.

With the proportion of non-consensual resolutions and of proposed "hostile amendments" as measurements of the debate in the Council, part one of the twofold research question is: *What is the development of the debate in the UN Human Rights Council?*

Over the 33 sessions included in this study, from the establishment of the Council in 2006 until the end of 2016, the amount of adopted resolutions has proliferated. At the same time, the proportion of non-consensual adoptions has increased through the years. In other words, the disagreements on the topics discussed are growing. Moreover, the number of "hostile amendments" proposed to resolutions has increased colossally since 2013. In sum, this suggests that conflict between states in the Council is on the rise, and that it has been so for several years. The second part of this twofold research question is therefore: *Why has the conflict among states in the Council increased?*

This is investigated based on qualitative data from interviews with key actors in the Council, including diplomats from a cross-regional selection of states, civil society representatives following the Council, and a senior official from the UN's human rights agency, the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR). Furthermore, the interview data are supported by relevant literature on the dynamics in the Council, as well as observed through the optic of international relations theory on what drives states' behavior in the international system.

The remainder of the introductory chapter is as follows. First, existing literature on the Council, as well as research dealing with states' behavior in the international system, are outlined. Then, the research approach is presented, including the various methods used to investigate and explain the development in the Council. Finally, the findings and conclusions of the research are summarized.

1.1 Relevant literature

Relatively few studies are conducted on the Council. The majority of those published are articles and reports by civil society representatives, think tanks, or scholars following the Council closely. Few of these have studied the dynamics of the Council in an exhaustive manner, with an aim to explain the development within it. Scholars have to a greater extent focused on the reasons for the Commission's abolishment, the reform process leading to the establishment of the Council, as well as how the Council's structure shaped its early life and ability to achieve its aims (Alston, 2006; Ghanea, 2006; Lauren, 2007; Scannella and Splinter, 2007; Terlingen, 2007; Short, 2008; Cox, 2010; Freedman, 2013; Mallory, 2013; Chilton and Golan-Vilella, 2016).

A goal with the new Council was, to many states, to create a powerful body with more autonomy than the predecessor. However, there were steep fronts already during the negotiations over what the architecture of the Council should be. Alliances played a significant role in this reform-process. The role of regional and political groups and alliances in shaping the Council's work has been touched upon by a few scholars before (Cox, 2010; Rathgeber, 2012; 2013; 2014; Freedman, 2013; Houghton, 2013; Wouters and Meuwissen, 2013). According to Freedman, the fact that politics, rather than the topics discussed, influence the dynamics within the Council, contradicts with the aim of the *Universal Declaration on Human Rights* and the instruments set out to fulfill this: "The UN sought to prioritise human rights as separate and superior to politics, giving them a higher-order status to competing political interests. It is that superiority which dictates that those rights be upheld universally" (Freedman, 2013: 211). Her study shows, however, that human rights is not "above politics."

That politics – in forms of regional and political groups and alliances – play a significant role in the Council, is not surprising. Given that it is "a political body made up of governments, the Council will be inherently political" (Scannella and Splinter, 2007: 72). Consequently, "[t]o suggest it should be apolitical is somewhat akin to criticizing spring for coming after winter," as expressed by a former UN High Commissioner for Human Rights (Arbour, 2005). Henceforth, it is relevant to turn to literature dealing with the implications of politics on intergovernmental organizations – often referred to as politicization.¹

¹ According to Lyons, Baldwin and McNemar (1977), politicization of intergovernmental organizations is "that agencies are being used as forums for political debate rather than the functional tasks for which they are founded" (Lyons, et al., 1977: 81).

Freedman (2013) touches upon politicization in the Council and highlights the importance of regionalism. The membership in the Council is distributed based on the UN regional groups, and some regions have considerably more seats than others. This opens for some regional groups having much influence in the Council, if able to find common stands.² Moreover, when these groups and alliances are able to unite in negotiations on certain topics, a "West against the Rest"-dynamic may come into play (Freedman, 2013: 212-215; Wouters and Meuwissen, 2013). However, the strength and cohesiveness of these regional and political groups have varied greatly during the course of the Council's years.

Given the significant role of politics in the Council, it is necessary to draw knowledge from literature on how states' political interests determine their behavior, both in the wider international system and in intergovernmental organizations. In this study, the existing literature and the empirical data gathered through interviews led to the choice of which theory to apply. The interviewees described a development, and suggested reasons for this development, in line with classic Realist thinking. It may at first glance appear odd that a discussion on human rights and the development of the debate in an intergovernmental organization – both concepts based on liberal ideas – proceed from a Realist vantage point. However, given the interviewees' descriptions and assessments – that the Council is dominated by the states, either acting individually or in alliances, and that these states' political interests permeates the Council debates – the classic Realist approach appears to have the most explanatory power to illuminate and explain the phenomenon. Thus, in order to increase the knowledge and eventually explain the dynamics that shape the development in the Council (and in other norm-establishing intergovernmental organizations), classic realism as outlined by Hans J. Morgenthau is applied.³

Morgenthau's masterpiece, *Politics Among Nations: The Struggle for Power and Peace*, is considered a seminal work on classic realism. There, he offers an intellectual framework through which states' behavior on the international scene should be understood (Morgenthau, 1985). Morgenthau developed several core principles of the Realist theoretical approach, including that: politics (and society in general) is built on objective laws rooted in human

² While the African and the Asia-Pacific Group together holds 26 seats, the Western European and Others Group (WEOG) has seven seats. The ability of *e.g.* African and Asian states to find common stand on issues, occasionally also with like-minded states from other regional groups, is henceforth a defining factor in the Council's work.

³ Hans J. Morgenthau's *Politics Among Nations: The Struggle for Power and Peace* was first published in 1948. The sixth edition, published in 1985, is the basis of this research.

nature; states are the main unit on the international scene; and power is the main interest and aim of all states (Morgenthau, 1985: 4-13).⁴

By power as political interest, Morgenthau is not referring to a narrow concept. Rather, his definitions of both *interest* and *power* comes close to encompassing, stating that the first "can run the whole gamut of objectives any nation has ever pursued or might possibly pursue," and the latter "may comprise anything that establishes and maintains the control of man over man" (*ibid.*: 11). Moreover, the specific type of power-political interest of a state is not constant – it varies depending on time and circumstances: "the kind of interest determining political action in a particular period of history depends upon the political and cultural context within which foreign policy is formulated" (*ibid.*). As states are driven by their power-political interests, "[i]nternational politics, like all politics, is a struggle for power. Whatever the ultimate aims of international politics, power is always the immediate aim" (*ibid.*: 31).⁵ A state's goal may be defined as freedom, security, or wealth, but "whenever they strive to realize their goal by means of international politics, they do so by striving for power" (*ibid.*).⁶ Furthermore, Morgenthau underscores that not all states participate in international politics at all times: "the relation of nations to international politics has a dynamic quality" (*ibid.*: 32).

How is this theoretical approach useful when investigating the dynamics and development in the UN Human Rights Council?

Morgenthau argues that the "contrast between constitutional intentions and political reality has transformed the United Nations into something different from what it was intended to be" (Morgenthau, 1985: 506). Whereas the goal of the Council is to universally promote and protect human rights, political interests – in terms of power – may have obfuscated this. As the promotion and protection of human rights can come in conflict with states' interests, the Council largely reflects the states' struggle for power, rather than the debates over human rights *per se* (*ibid.*: 277). Henceforth, in a political body such as the Council:

states are mainly driven by their national interests and see human rights as vectors to defend their own interests (including when their own interest are closely linked to the defence of human rights,

⁴ "We assume that statesmen think and act in terms of interest defined as power" (Morgenthau, 1985: 5). Whereas the implication of the statesman's motives and ideological preferences may have a role in the making of a state's foreign policy, it is not directly shaped by it in any way. Rather, foreign policy follow rationality and objectivity. It makes "a sharp distinction between the desirable and the possible" – the ideal and the real (*ibid.*: 7)..

⁵ Similar to international politics, also domestic politics are a struggle for power. In fact, Morgenthau argues that all relations, from personal and family level up to international politics are permeated by power (*ibid.*: 39).

⁶ As human nature is the base for politics, struggle for power between states is explained as man's urge to dominate other men, where the state is a collective reflection of man.

where then a situation of *dédoublement fonctionnel*⁷ occurs); their approach of human rights is thus mainly politicized – and not legal – and the debate they have on human rights has a political character and find its conclusion in political compromises (de Frouville, 2011: 257).

Moreover, Morgenthau argues that whereas in the UN all states are equal in theory, this is not true in practice. On the international arena, there are more and less powerful states. Therefore, states are led to form alliances in order to balance other powerful units in the struggle for power (Morgenthau, 1985: 8, 201). This Realist approach on what drives states' behavior in international politics, will be a recurring perspective in the analysis.

Towards the end of the analysis, the current state and close future of the Council is discussed, and linked to the development in the wider international system, as well as the challenges facing the liberal world order. Henry Kissinger, a carrier and conductor of Morgenthau's ideas, argues in his latest book *World Order* that the liberal ideas of norm-based cooperation between states, which the Council is built on, is currently under threat (Kissinger, 2015). What today may count as the "world order," rests on ideas established by European states which negotiated the Peace of Westphalia.⁸ However, these ideas conflict with the views of states in other regions, which never got to play a role in their original formulation (*ibid.*: 2).

The threat towards universal human rights and intergovernmental cooperation has most definitely been picked up in the Council. In 2016, the current UN High Commissioner for Human Rights stated: "The Council enters its second decade in a world of turmoil, with sharpening signals of faltering commitment by States to fundamental human rights norms" (Al Hussein, 2016).

All the aforementioned studies point at various aspects relevant to this research. Some are discussing the establishment, the early days, and the dynamics in the Council, others the role and impact of power-political interests both in the wider international system and in intergovernmental organizations. Based on these studies and the theoretical approach, combined with empirical data, this thesis will investigate and explain the dynamics and development in the Council. This is yet to be done in an exhaustive manner. It is a *lacuna* in the literature field that this study seeks to fill.

First, however, the methodology and methods this study rest on, is discussed.

⁷ *Dédoublement fonctionnel* refers to those instances where the national priorities of a state coincide with international interests, and the state appears as 'organs of the society' (de Frouville, 2011: 257).

⁸ A world order may be defined as a "concept held by a region or civilization about the nature of just arrangements and the distribution of power thought to be applicable to the entire world" (Kissinger, 2015: 9).

1.2 The research approach

"[The] understanding of the nature of the world and how it should be studied," are central issues in social sciences (Moses and Knutsen, 2012: 1). A traditional methodological divide is whether researchers employ a naturalist or a constructivist perspective.⁹ As with most studies in social sciences, this research is neither placed strictly within the naturalist nor the constructivist methodological tradition. Rather, it has one leg in each camp.¹⁰ On the one hand, this research is conducted from an understanding that there are certain general observable patterns in the Council which would be applicable to more cases within the same universe. This inclination to generalize gives associations to the naturalist tradition. On the other hand, the aim is to detect the development in the Council largely based on qualitative data gathered through interviews. There are informants' understandings, experiences, and assessments which work as foundation for much of the discussion. Inevitably, these interviewees' perceptions are influenced by their own background and presuppositions, giving associations to the constructivist tradition.

The principal objective of all social sciences, independent of methodological perspective, is to detect, understand, and explain patterns. The objective of this research is, first, to detect the development of the debate in the Council and, second, to explain what drives this development. Moreover, this is a study of the development within an intergovernmental norm-establishing organization, belonging to a universe of all such organizations – it is "a case of something" (Moses and Knutsen, 2012: 119).¹¹ On this basis, it should be considered a case study.

For a constructivist, the aim of a case study would be to understand and interpret the internal dynamics and development in the Council, what Lijphart (1971) would term an "interpretive case study." In addition to that, this study is also "interested in the *why*:" it seeks to "spark more general questions or hypotheses," and "move from a purely empirical level of exposition to a

⁹ *Naturalism* and *constructivism* are also known by several other terms. The first is often referred to as *positivism*, *empiricism*, or *behaviouralism*, while the latter also goes by the names *interpretivism*, *hermeneutics*, and *critical theory*. There are distinct differences between the ideal types of these two prominent methodological traditions. Naturalists, inspired by natural sciences, argue that there exists an objective 'Real World' with patterns independent of the actor observing. In order to detect knowledge, the preferred approach is through direct observation. Constructivists, however, is a more diverse group, in general viewing the world as constructed by the actors in it. Everyone observes different facets of the world, and these observations are interpreted based on the observer's background and presuppositions – it is "a world of our own making" (Moses and Knutsen, 2012: 8-10; 29; 69).

¹⁰ These definitions are the ideal types of each tradition. Accordingly, it is useful to consider the two methodological camps as the "end points on an imaginary continuum" (Moses and Knutsen, 2012: 8, 10). Consequently, most authors and their studies can be placed somewhere in between the two end points.

¹¹ Examples of other cases possible to generalize the knowledge from this study to, is the UN General Assembly, the UN Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC), the World Trade Organization (WTO), and the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE).

level of general statements," typical of a naturalist approach (Moses and Knutsen, 2012: 136, 140, 143). Consequently, as this study intends to produce knowledge applicable to other cases in the universe, it falls closer to the naturalist end of the methodological continuum.

In order to detect and explain the development in the Council, various methods are applied. Quantitative method is used to gather statistical data, in order to detect the development of the debate in the Council. The debate is operationalized as the proportion of non-consensual resolutions adopted and the proportion of proposed "hostile amendments" to resolutions. In order to detect the general development in the Council and to produce the graphs illustrating this, it has been necessary to create a dataset in Microsoft Excel based on the data provided by the OHCHR.¹² The validity of these findings is discussed after the presentation of the graphs in chapter 3.

In part three of this thesis, data from interviews with observers and participants in the Council are used to nuance the development of the debate. Moreover, the interview data form the basis of the analysis, which seeks to explain the dynamics and development within the Council. The inductive method's spokesman Francis Bacon, argued in a true naturalistic formulation that "only direct observations supply us with statements about the world" and further that "true knowledge is derived from observation statements" (Moses and Knutsen, 2012: 23). The reason for relying on interview data is, first, the advantage of gathering information from the horse's mouth: from primary sources with in-depth knowledge and experience from the Council. Second, the lack and limitations of existing literature makes it necessary to get in-depth assessments elsewhere.

A good deal of scholars has discussed the advantages, challenges, and potential pitfalls of interview-based research (King, Keohane and Verba, 1994; Berry, 2002; Leech, 2002; Tansey, 2007; Moses and Knutsen, 2012; Hancké, 2013).¹³ With regard to the different approaches to select interviewees, a general divide goes between probability and non-probability sampling.¹⁴

¹² After every session, the OHCHR releases a session report including summaries of the general debates, panel discussions, interactive dialogues, and meetings in the Council, as well as the *verbatim minutes* from the consideration and adoption of all resolutions. These session reports can be accessed through their website: <http://www.ohchr.org/EN/HRBodies/HRC/RegularSessions/Pages/RegularSessions.aspx>. The constructed dataset is attached in appendix 1.

¹³ Several of these studies discuss challenges related to *elite interviews*. These are interviews with persons influencing or taking part in political decision-making. Several of the conducted interviews may be considered elite interviews, as the interviewees hold decisive positions at their mission or in their organization. Nevertheless, the majority of the interviewees, being diplomats in the Council, are placed closer to the executive than the decision-making end of the process, given that most political decisions are taken in capitals.

¹⁴ Through probability sampling, you avoid selection bias and allow for generalization from the sample, while increasing the risk of leaving out important respondents. With non-probability sampling, you ensure control over

I used former colleagues in the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA), as well as my network in Geneva from when I worked there for the Norwegian MFA, to identify and select interviewees. This method comes close to "purposive sampling," a type of non-probability sampling preferred when the researcher has knowledge about the topic and the population on beforehand, and decides which interviewees are the most appropriate (*ibid.*: 770).

There are several circumstances that might influence interviews and thus the information gathered from them.¹⁵ *Quellenkritik* – a critical study of the sources – as introduced by Leopold von Ranke, is therefore imperative when basing studies on interview data (Moses and Knutsen, 2012: 121). To strengthen the validity and reliability of the findings,¹⁶ I interviewed diplomats from close to all regions in the world, civil society representatives working in different Non-Governmental Organizations (NGO), as well as a UN senior official. By relying on more than one type of interviewees, the dynamics and development in the Council is illuminated from several perspectives. Moreover, these exact respondents were chosen as it was believed they have vast experience and therefore profound knowledge on the topic. In order to further support and strengthen the findings of the interviews, it is valuable to turn to secondary sources such as relevant literature and reports. Although there is limited research on the topic, relevant literature will be used, where possible, to support or nuance the information gathered through the interviews.

With regards to replicability, this is potentially a much more difficult condition to fulfill when basing research on interviews. When push comes to shove, to replicate a semi-structured interview,¹⁷ unfolding as a conversation based on a set of open questions, is close to impossible (Hancké, 2013: 103-104). To make it even more difficult, in this case several of the interviewees are anonymized. Henceforth, to ensure replicability, it is necessary with transparency in the

the selection of respondents and can assure the inclusion of important respondents, while limiting the opportunity to generalize (Tansey, 2007: 768-769).

¹⁵ For example, the interviewees may have a specific purpose for saying what they are saying (Berry, 2002: 680). Moreover, they may have been influenced by their relationship to or knowledge about the interviewer. These are important aspects to be aware of when interpreting the answers, although circumstances which are difficult to neutralize.

¹⁶ Validity refers to whether the questions asked are able to measure the actual phenomenon studied – if they "are able to accurately describe the world as it really is" (Moses and Knutsen, 2012: 132). Moreover, if using a reliable measure, other researchers would be able to do the same procedure and end up with the same results (King, Keohane and Verba, 1994: 25).

¹⁷ Semi-structured interviews "allow respondents the chance to be the experts and to inform the research" (Leech, 2002: 665, 668).

questions asked, the circumstances of the interviews, and who the respondents are (as far as it is possible when anonymizing).¹⁸

In part three of this thesis, two voting maps are presented. These maps illustrate member-states' voting patterns on a set of resolutions, thus showing the general conflict lines between groups of states in the Council at certain times. With the establishment of the UN, combined with great progress in quantitative methods, the research field on states' voting patterns unfolded in the 1950s. Since then, there has been published a good deal of such studies (Ball, 1951; Lijphart, 1963; Russet, 1966; Keohane, 1967; Newcombe, Ross and Newcombe, 1970; Hurwitz, 1975; Holloway, 1990; Kim and Russet, 1996; Voeten, 2000; 2013; Luif, 2003; Hosli, van Kampen, Meijerink and Tennis, 2010; Boockmann and Dreher, 2011; Bailey, Strezhnev and Voeten, 2015). Only a few scholars have conducted similar studies on the Council or its predecessor (Lebovic and Voeten, 2006; Seligman, 2011; Hug and Lukács, 2014). The logic and approach applied in these studies, work as a basis for the creation of the voting maps to be presented in this.

There are copious amounts of data on states' voting on Council-resolutions. This is made available by the OHCHR and presented in a "resolutions portal" by the Geneva-based think tank Universal Rights Group (URG).¹⁹ Given the fact that the datasets must be created from scratch, it would be an utterly time-consuming activity to analyze states' voting on all non-consensual resolutions during the course of the Council's life. Neither would it provide a meaningful image of the conflict lines in the Council. Thus, a few choices have been made to reduce the number of included resolutions to a manageable size.²⁰

In order to create voting maps, it is necessary to code the states' voting on each resolution, aggregate this, and then categorize the states based on their voting patterns. This process is comprehensively described in appendix 4. There are, however, certain challenges with the applied procedure. The results "do not provide adequate detail and differentiation:" the final score of each state – which the states are categorized based on – neither says anything about their reasons for voting, nor tells the reader on which of the resolutions the states vote similarly or different (Langford and Fukuda-Parr, 2012: 435). Moreover, the variation in the number of

¹⁸ For that reason, this information is attached in appendix 1 and 2.

¹⁹ The URG presents the voting and outcome of all Council resolutions in their UN Human Rights Resolutions Portal: <http://www.universal-rights.org/human-rights/human-rights-resolutions-portal/>.

²⁰ States' voting patterns on a number of topics, both on a variety of rights and of country situations, are the basis of the two voting maps. These exact resolutions were chosen as it is believed they best illustrate the conflict lines in the Council at certain times, complementing the interviewees' descriptions of the Council's dynamics. The datasets which the voting maps are based on, are attached in appendix 5 and 6.

resolutions each state has voted on, is a weakness, yet a non-avoidable consequence of the Council's membership-system.²¹ "Reducing systemic error can be achieved through various methods such as repetition, using complementary indicators and testing the measuring instruments under different conditions" (*ibid.*: 435). To ensure a sufficient degree of reliability and validity, comparing the results with similar studies, or conducting similar studies based on other selections of resolutions, are viable solutions.²²

Thus, given the degrees of inaccuracy in the voting maps, they have to be taken for what they are: a tangible, general illustration of the groups of states voting differently, and hence the conflict lines these groups create. The maps are only meant to complement the data provided by the interviews. Consequently, they do not stand alone as the findings of this study.

1.3 Findings and thesis structure

In its entirety, the twofold research question to be investigated sounds:

(1) What is the development of the debate in the UN Human Rights Council, and (2) why has the conflict among states increased?

The statistical data suggests an increase in intergovernmental conflict in the Council: the states are to a lesser degree able to find compromise during negotiations, and the number of non-consensual adoptions have increased. Moreover, to propose "hostile amendments" to resolutions is a fast-moving trend, particularly since 2013, also indicating a continuously more conflictual Council. Qualitative data from interviews with key actors in the Council, nuance this impression. Still, the interviewees largely agree that the Council currently, and for the recent years, have been dominated by more conflict

Further, the reasons for this development is discussed based on the interview data, observed through Morgenthau's Realist lenses. The analysis argues that the driving force behind the Council's development is states' power-political interests. These interests are in turn shaped by changes outside the Council, such as government shifts and geopolitical events. Thus, the

²¹ As a membership lasts for three years, and there are elections each year to change one third of the members, some states have been a member for all the years included in the selection and hence voted on many resolutions, while others have only been a member for one year and hence voted on few.

²² Such studies could be those researching states' voting on human rights resolutions in the General Assembly Third Committee. The validity of the findings would be strengthened if the findings – the maps – are the same. That is to say, similar outcome would reinforce the findings of this study, while different outcomes would weaken it. Reliability of the findings is high if repeating the process several times under the same conditions, and reaching the same conclusions.

Council reflects the wider international system, as changes outside the Council cause new dynamics within it. When you shake a kaleidoscope, the patterns in the optic change. When the international system is shaken, the patterns within the UN Human Rights Council change.

A twofold research question causes a twofold thesis. This marks the end of the first introductory part. Part two offers a more detailed introduction of the Council, before statistically illustrating the development of the debate in the Council, and through that answer the first part of the twofold research question. In part three, the statistical data are nuanced based on the interviews with key actors in the Council. Moreover, the second part of the twofold research question is answered on the basis of the interview data, combined with relevant literature and in light of the chosen international relations theory. Furthermore, the current state and future of the Council is discussed, as well as connected to the future of the international system and the challenges facing the liberal world order. The last part, part four, summarizes and concludes this research, suggests alternative explanations, and proposes further studies on the topic.

- PART TWO -

2 The UN Human Rights Council

We have created this new institution to further strengthen the United Nations human rights machinery and to enhance the promotion and protection of all human rights for all (Eliasson, 2006: 5).

It was with lofty expectations that the then President of the UN General Assembly, Jan Eliasson, spoke to diplomats, UN staff and civil society representatives during the first session of the UN Human Rights Council, in June 2006. The establishment of the Council marked the end of the UN Commission on Human Rights. The latter's high levels of politicization and polarization caused a lack of efficiency and weak impact, harming the credibility of the UN. The Commission was no longer found bearable to human rights advocates – whether they were from Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs), governments, or the UN. With the new structure, the aim was to prevent and dodge the problems experienced in the predecessor (Annan, 2005; 2006; Rahmani-Ocora, 2006: 15; Terlingen, 2007: 167-170; Freedman, 2013: 209).

Human rights is one of the three main pillars of the UN – peace and security, and social and economic development being the two others. The General Assembly, with its subsidiary boards, commissions, committees, assemblies, and councils, deals with the whole range of issues. The Security Council and the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) only treat matters related to peace and security, and economic and social development respectively. All of these are New York-based principal organs. The human rights machinery of the UN is, however, mainly situated in Geneva, Switzerland. The Council, being a pivotal part of this machinery, is not a principal organ, despite the then UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan's wish to make it so. Due to heavy opposition from some states to make the Council an authoritative body in line with the General Assembly, the Security Council and ECOSOC, compromise was found in creating the Council as a subsidiary organ of the General Assembly. Still, the compromise was a strengthening of authority compared to the Commission, and the Council still enjoys a substantial amount of autonomy (Terlingen, 2007: 170; Permanent Mission of Switzerland, 2015: 5; United Nations, 2017b; United Nations, 2017c).

2.1 The structure

Formally, as expressed in the General Assembly resolution establishing the Council, its overarching goal is to ensure "universal respect for the protection of all human rights and fundamental freedoms for all, without distinction of any kind and in a fair and equal manner"

(General Assembly resolution, 2006: 2). In practice, the Council's tasks are to be a forum for dialogue and debate, to universally review all UN member-states on their human rights record,²³ to address systematic and gross human rights violations, to appoint and interact with special procedures,²⁴ and to set international standards by adopting human rights resolutions (*ibid.*: 2-3).

Three times a year,²⁵ for a total of 10 weeks, diplomats and civil society representatives meet in the UN headquarters in Geneva to negotiate and adopt human rights resolutions. In contrast to the General Assembly where all 193 UN member-states have a seat and a vote, the Council is comprised of 47 member-states. The member-states are elected directly and individually by a majority of the General Assembly, and each member sits for a period of three years. Elections are held every year to change one third of the member-states. A state may be a Council-member for two consecutive periods before having to take a gap year. Moreover, the General Assembly may also decide to suspend a Council-member if proven that it has committed gross and systematic human rights violations (General Assembly resolution, 2006: 3-4; Permanent Mission of Switzerland, 2015: 6).

During the three annual sessions, the states spend much time negotiating and adopting human rights resolutions. These resolutions aim to develop international standards and norms. Ideally, they should also influence national legislation. Even though the resolutions are legally non-binding, states still put much effort into influencing the drafting of resolutions by engaging in negotiations, to ensure that the final texts are in line with their political priorities. Most of the resolutions are recurring, meaning that they are introduced every session, once a year, biennially, or triennially. The specific topic of such recurring resolutions may vary from time to time, but the overall theme – meaning the rights, groups, or country situation they address – is the same. Furthermore, some resolutions are introduced both in the Council and in the General Assembly Third Committee.²⁶

²³ The Universal Periodic Review (UPR) is a state-driven process taking place three times a year in the Council. Each time, the human rights records of about 14 states are reviewed. On average, each of the 193 UN member-states is reviewed every three and a half years. During a review, states and NGOs make recommendations and comment on the human rights situation in the states under review (OHCHR, 2017c).

²⁴ The special procedures are independent rapporteurs and experts who has a mandate to review and report on human rights matters, either thematic or related to specific country situations (OHCHR, 2017d).

²⁵ There are three regular sessions each year, in March, June, and September. However, special sessions are also arranged when there are especially grave situations which needs to be debated (General Assembly resolution, 2006: 4).

²⁶ There is in practice a certain degree of duplication of work between the Council and the Third Committee, as proven by a policy report by the Universal Rights Group (Gujadhur and Lamarque, 2015: 36-37).

2.2 The negotiation process

Whereas the negotiations occur in various rooms in the basement and on the 1st floor of the *Palais des Nations*, the considerations and adoptions take place in the actual Council – also known as "Room XX". Resolutions are either on thematic issues or on country-specific situations. Thematic resolutions address both specific rights – such as freedom of expression, freedom of assembly and association, women's rights, the right to food, or freedom of religion – and more complex and sometimes vague issues, such as business and human rights, protection of human rights while countering violent extremism, or human rights and international solidarity. Country-specific resolutions either address grave and deteriorating human rights situations in a particular country, or focus on technical cooperation and capacity-building to improve country- situations (Permanent Mission of Switzerland, 2015: 18-19; Universal Rights Group 2016).

Any UN member-state may introduce and lead negotiations on resolutions. Resolutions are either introduced individually by a state, or by a group of states – usually referred to as a "core group." If no state come forward to introduce and lead on a resolution, there will be no progress. In other words, it is not in the hands of the OHCHR or any other institution to take initiative, this is up to the states. Although any UN member-state may introduce a resolution, only the 47 Council-members are entitled to vote. Resolutions can be adopted by consensus, adopted by vote, or rejected by the member-states. During the course of the Council's years, no resolution has ever been rejected.

There are two main ways of measuring the strength of a resolution. First, in terms of the degree of support from states, meaning the number of votes in favor of it, where a consensus is the ideal. Second, the strength must also be measured in terms of what it actually expresses. Here is the tension for states or core groups introducing and leading negotiations: they want to gain support from as many states as possible, and at the same time adopt a substantial text. A well-used approach to ensure broad support, is to introduce resolutions together with a cross-regional core group. If having states from several or all regions in the core group, the certainty of mobilizing broader cross-regional support for the resolution increase (Permanent Mission of Switzerland, 2015: 24; Sjøberg, 2017).

The effort to find the perfect balance between a strongly formulated resolution and broad support from states, takes place during the negotiation processes. The scope of a negotiation process varies depending on the state or core group in lead. Negotiations are divided into closed

meetings for those states co-sponsoring a proposition ("co-sponsor meetings"),²⁷ and informal consultations open to all states and the civil society ("informals"). Whereas some states strive to have several open informals, others stick to a minimum of one. The majority of these meetings take place before the resolution has to be formally submitted to the Council, about 10 days before consideration (Permanent Mission of Switzerland, 2015: 21).

Although the drafts are submitted, negotiations continue to adoption day. In instances where the states cannot agree on the text, dissatisfied states have the opportunity to propose revisions or re-formulations of paragraphs, or ask to delete or add new paragraphs to the draft. Such proposed revisions to a resolution are termed amendments, popularly known as "hostile amendments." Up to adoption day, the drafts continue to be passed back and forth between the co-sponsors and other states participating in informal consultations. Still, if the proposed amendments are not sufficiently reflected in the final draft, the amendments, specific paragraphs, or the entire resolution may be subject to a vote. Considering that a resolution is legally non-binding to states, the chances of it being implemented by national legislators are better the more support it gains in the Council. To ensure a powerful resolution, the state or core group leading the process therefore strives for consensual adoptions (*ibid.*: 20-23).

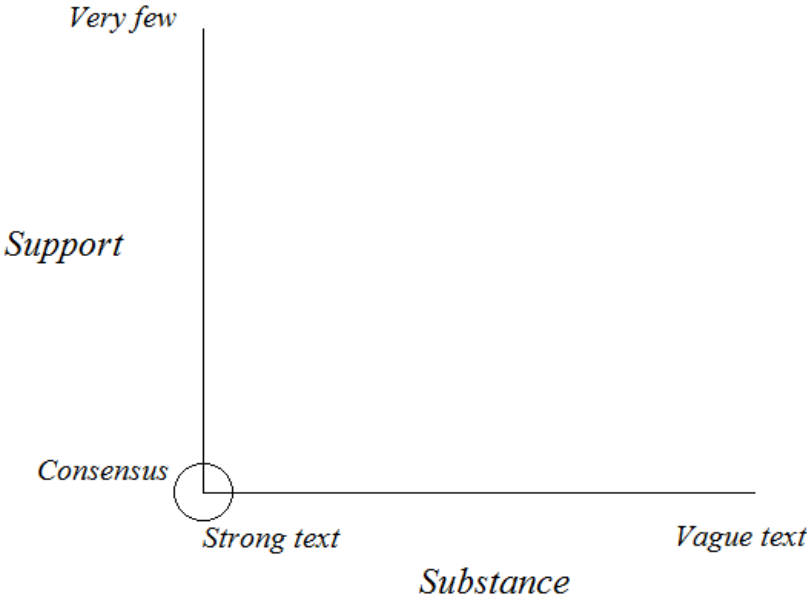


Figure 1: Illustration of the balance between substance and support.

²⁷ To co-sponsor a resolution means that the state is clearly in support of the initiative. States may co-sponsor a resolution before it is formally submitted, after it is submitted, or after it has been adopted (Permanent Mission of Switzerland, 2015: 20).

Figure 1 illustrates, in simplified terms, the struggle for many states and core groups leading negotiations. The aim of most states and core groups is to move the resolution as close to *origo* as possible: a strongly formulated resolution achieving consensual support. The reality in most cases is, however, that the more substantial the content and formulation of the text, the more challenging is it to achieve broad support. The outcome would therefore usually be either further to the right on the x-axis if prioritizing consensus, or higher up on the y-axis if prioritizing substance.

2.3 Members, groups, and alliances

The membership in the Council is geographically distributed on the basis of the five UN regional groups. Each of these groups have a set number of seats in the Council, relative to their size (United Nations, 2017a).²⁸ However, the regional groups "are not the only form of alliances at the UN. Political blocs and alliances play a fundamental role" (Freedman, 2013: 212-213). Several of these formal and informal groupings are usually active also outside the UN and the Council. Among the formalized and lasting groups are the European Union (EU), the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation (OIC), and the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM). What is common for these are their internal cooperation based on equivalent interests and their efforts to promote these interests.

Some of these aforementioned groups have permanent missions in Geneva with observer status and their own seat in the Council. They often exchange information, deliver joint statements, introduce resolutions and lead negotiations, as well as coordinate stands and votes on resolutions. As such large political groupings are not always able to find common ground on all issues, the forming of informal alliances has increased through the years. Such alliances are usually based on common values and attitudes towards certain rights, rather than geography. Among the most active informal groupings are the Article 4 Dialogue and the Like-Minded Group (LMG). In sum, all these groups influence the balance of power in the Council through their joint initiatives and coordination (Permanent Mission of Switzerland, 2015: 25-26).

In addition to the states, the civil society plays a significant role in the Council. The NGOs participate in both formal and informal processes: advocating and consulting with diplomats, engaging in negotiations with proposals to resolutions, contributing with reports when the

²⁸ The number of Council member-states from each regional group: African Group: 13 seats, Asia-Pacific Group: 13 seats, Latin-American and Caribbean Group (GRULAC): 8 seats, Western European and other States Group (WEOG): 7 seats, and Eastern European Group (EEG): 6 seats (OHCHR, 2017b).

Council review states' human rights records, and voicing their opinion in the Council during sessions (General Assembly resolution, 2006: 3; Permanent Mission of Switzerland, 2015: 6, 11, 18). Among the most active NGOs in the Council are Human Rights Watch (HRW), Amnesty International, CIVICUS, International Service for Human Rights (ISHR), Article 19 and the Human Rights House Foundation (HRHF).

When the Council was established in 2006 to replace the Commission, it brought with it both hope and skepticism. Hope was expressed by Kofi Annan, Jan Eliasson, and others. Skepticism was expressed by several states – with the then United States ambassador to the UN, John R. Bolton, at the forefront. The colorful ambassador argued that with the UN Human Rights Council "we want a butterfly" and not "to put lipstick on a caterpillar and call it a success" (The Economist, 2006). Kofi Annan, however, stated that "this is not old wine in new bottles," claiming that the new establishment would help to overcome most of its predecessor's flaws, as well as recognize "the importance of universality, objectivity and non-selectivity, and of eliminating double standards and politicization" (*ibid.*; Annan, 2006). To answer whether Ambassador Bolton or Secretary-General Annan's words was most to the point, it is necessary to investigate the development of the debate in the Council.

3 The development

Rights remain open to question because our sense of who has rights and what those rights are constantly changes. The human rights revolution is by definition ongoing (Hunt, 2007: 29).

The nature of human rights cause continuous debates, and tough negotiations on human rights issues are not exclusive to the UN Human Rights Council. Already in the summer of 1789, there were protracted negotiations on what should be the content of the French Declaration. After "tumultuous debates and endless amendments" with little noticeable progress, the negotiations were adjourned, and the already agreed-upon seventeen articles was adopted as the *French Declaration of the Rights of Man and Citizen* (*ibid.*: 16). Roughly 150 years later, 51 states signed the UN Charter, including statements regarding human rights – many with remarkable similarities to those of the French Declaration. To further work on formulating the content of human rights, and eventually prepare a declaration, a commission was set up with former First Lady Eleanor Roosevelt in lead.²⁹ The first draft of the declaration met heavy resistance in several UN bodies: "Soviet Union proposed amendments to nearly every article. Eighty-three meetings (of just the Third Committee) and nearly 170 amendments later, a draft was sanctioned for a vote" (*ibid.*: 202-203). On December 10, 1948, the *Universal Declaration of Human Rights* was adopted by the UN General Assembly, introducing a new chapter in the history of human rights.

From 1946 and for the following 60 years, the UN Commission on Human Rights was the main arena for negotiating human rights resolutions. Nevertheless, by 2006 it was universally agreed among the UN member-states that the Commission had "brought discredit upon itself and had largely failed," mainly due to lack of efficiency and relevance (Alston, 2006: 1). The old body could no longer sufficiently fulfill its mandate and was therefore replaced by a new one (OHCHR, 2017a). During the opening speech in the new Council, it was underscored that the new establishment was "a victory for multilateralism" that would "further strengthen the United Nations human rights machinery" (Eliasson, 2005: 5-6). This is now roughly a decade ago. Has the prophecy come true?

²⁹ The UDHR Drafting Committee was a cross-regional group of representatives from Australia, Chile, China, France, Lebanon, Soviet Union, United Kingdom, and the United States.

3.1 The development in the Council

The debate in the Council may be operationalized and hence measured in several ways. An obvious measurement is the number of resolutions in which states are able to agree upon and adopt. This displays the actual outcomes of the intergovernmental negotiations. Data on all resolutions considered by the Council is available in the session reports produced by the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) – the UNs human rights agency. The Universal Rights Group (URG), a Geneva-based think tank, has organized this data into a resolutions portal, offering an overview of the outcome of the resolutions, as well as on the states' voting on these (OHCHR, 2016a; Universal Rights Group, 2016).

During the course of the 10 years included in this study, a grand total of 844 resolutions have been adopted by the Council. The topics of these resolutions range from civil and political rights, economic, social, and cultural rights, as well as rights of specific groups, to specific country situations or technical support and capacity building in countries. As *Figure 2* reflects, only 14 resolutions were adopted during the first year of the Council, while a grand total of 100 resolutions were adopted in 2016. Hence, the workload of the Council has increased tremendously over the years, although there are still only 10 weeks a year of regular sessions.

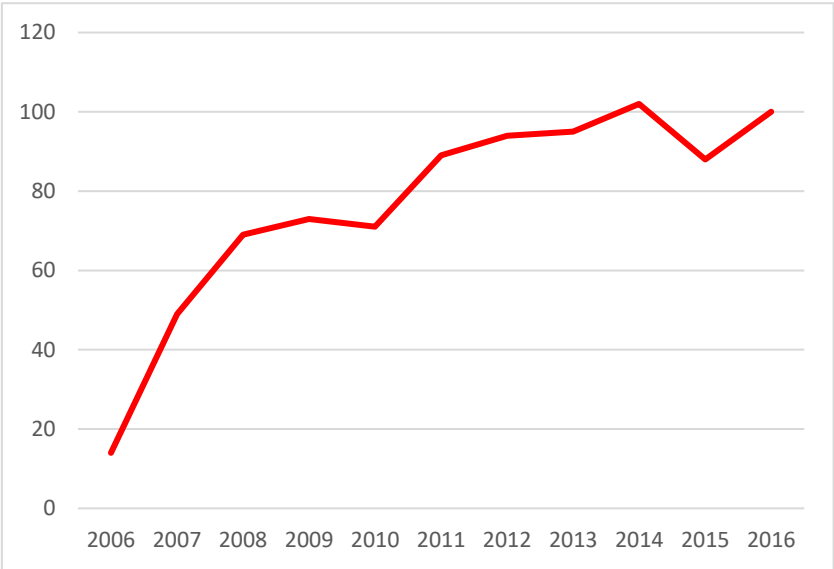


Figure 2: Number of adopted resolutions (year by year).

In addition to the proliferation in resolutions adopted, the workload of the Council has expanded in other ways as well. One way is the increase in the number of special rapporteurs, independent experts, fact-finding missions, and commissions of inquiries. Such special procedures mandates are established through resolutions. The special procedures report and advise on human rights by, among other things, undertaking country visits, establishing dialogue with governments and

the civil society, as well as preparing reports on certain topics and situations. On the basis of this work, discussions are held in the Council during the regular sessions, where the special procedures present their findings and conclusions while all UN member-states and the civil society may engage in dialogue on these (Limon and Power, 2014; OHCHR, 2017d). Consequently, the proliferation in rapporteurs, experts, and commissions has further led to a corresponding increase in discussions in the Council.

A proliferation in the Council's work and the increased number of adopted resolutions may indicate much agreement and efficiency in the Council. That is, however, highly debatable. With regards to adoption of resolutions, the means of adoption is a necessity to study. As expressed, states leading negotiations usually put much effort into finding compromise, in order to reach a consensus on the resolution. As a non-consensual resolution indicates that the states are unable to find such compromise, the percent of non-consensual adoptions works as a yardstick for the level of conflict in the Council. *Figure 3* shows the proportion of resolutions adopted by vote, session by session – from the first one in 2006 to the 33rd and final session of 2016. This gives a somewhat unclear presentation of the development. Still, a slight upward trend in the graph is visible from 2007 and onwards. This indicates that disagreements between states in the Council is on the rise.

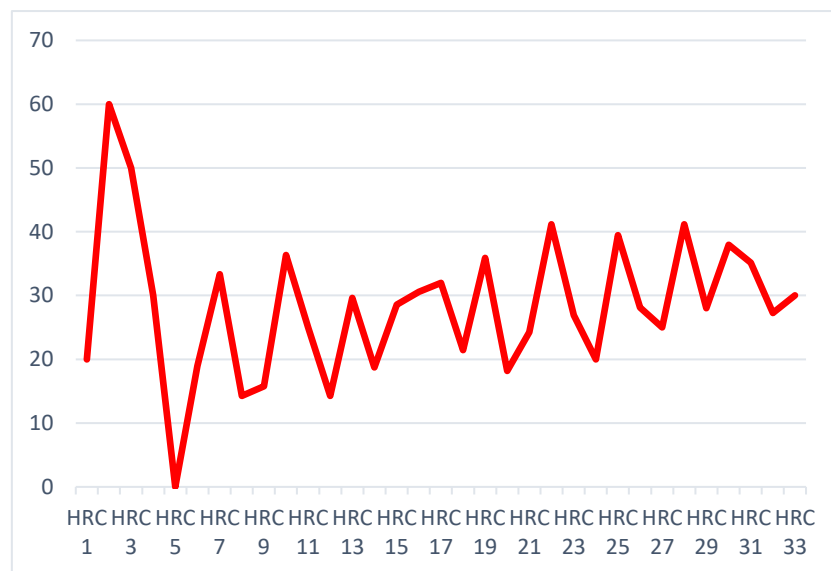


Figure 3: Percent of non-consensual resolutions (session by session).

As explained, some resolutions are introduced, negotiated, and adopted every session, others as seldom as once every three years. In addition to a varying number of resolutions adopted during each session, the topic and thus level of controversy differs too. By dividing the 33 sessions

completed between 2006-2016 into three groups, these challenges are largely bypassed. The aggregation of sessions means that some topics are represented many times in each group, as there are frequently introduced resolutions addressing these, but at the same time it ensures the inclusion of (close to all) topics in each of the three groups. Moreover, these are three symmetric groups, with regards to the number of sessions in each, and it offers a clearer image of the development. *Figure 4* shows the percent of non-consensual resolutions adopted during session 1-11, session 12-22, and session 23-33.

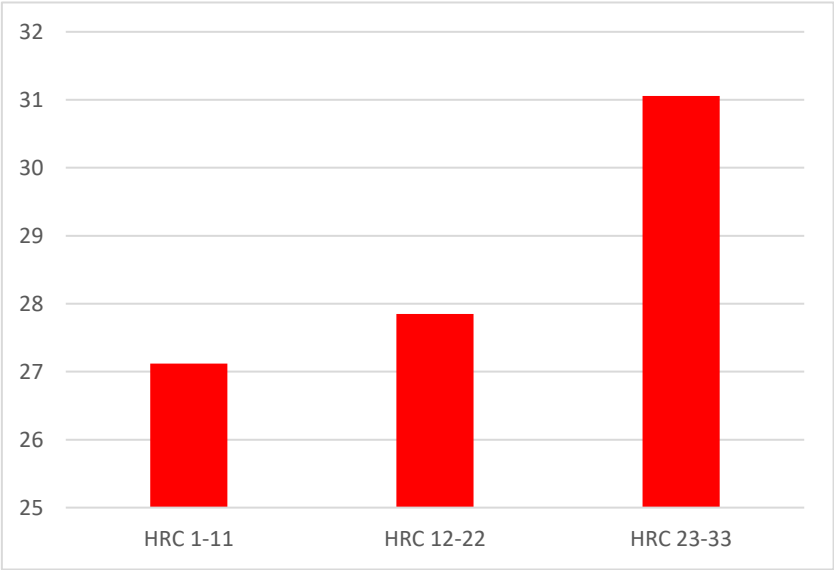


Figure 4: Percent of non-consensual resolutions (11 sessions grouped).

In sum, 245 of the 844 resolutions adopted between 2006 and 2016 were non-consensual. The topic of these non-consensual resolutions varies, but generally speaking 59,2 % of these were thematic resolutions, 39,6 % were country-specific ones, while the remaining few were on procedural matters. During the first eleven sessions, 27,1 % out of the 177 adopted resolutions were non-consensual, meaning one or more states disagreed with its content and subject them to a vote. This slightly increased to 27,8 % during the next eleven sessions, when 316 resolutions were adopted. During the last eleven sessions studied, from June 2013 to the end of 2016, 31,1 % of the 351 adopted resolutions were non-consensual. This relative increase in non-consensual adoptions indicates a continuous, although not massive, increase in intergovernmental conflict in the Council, from its establishment in 2006 to the end of 2016.

The impression of increased conflict is strengthened when analyzing the development in so-called "hostile amendments" proposed to resolutions. States propose amendments to draft resolutions when they are dissatisfied with the formulation or content of the text, usually meaning that parts of the current draft are not in harmony with the states' political interests. Henceforth, when amendments are proposed to a resolution, it signals lack in agreement among the states (even though the resolution may be adopted by consensus in the end). To propose "hostile amendments" is not a modern technique of negotiating human rights standards, as proven by the anecdote from the negotiations of the 1789 French Declaration and of the 1948 Universal Declaration. The habit of proposing amendments to resolutions was, however, close to non-existing for many years in the Council.

During the first eleven sessions of the Council, a total of only 10 amendments were proposed. Then, the amount of amendments decreased until the end of 2012, despite the fact that the number of non-consensual adoptions increased those years. At the first session in 2013, the 22nd in the series, the habit of proposing amendments suddenly changed. In total, 39 amendments were proposed to resolutions this year. The year after, this increased to 46 amendments, before witnessing a slight decrease in 2015. However, in 2016, the number of proposed "hostile amendments" skyrocketed with 126 amendments proposed over the three sessions. Nevertheless, in order to get a more valid picture of the development, it is necessary to standardize the number of amendments, as the number of resolutions proposed each year varies. By dividing the number of proposed amendments each year on the number of adopted resolutions that same year, a standardization is achieved. *Figure 5* illustrates this.

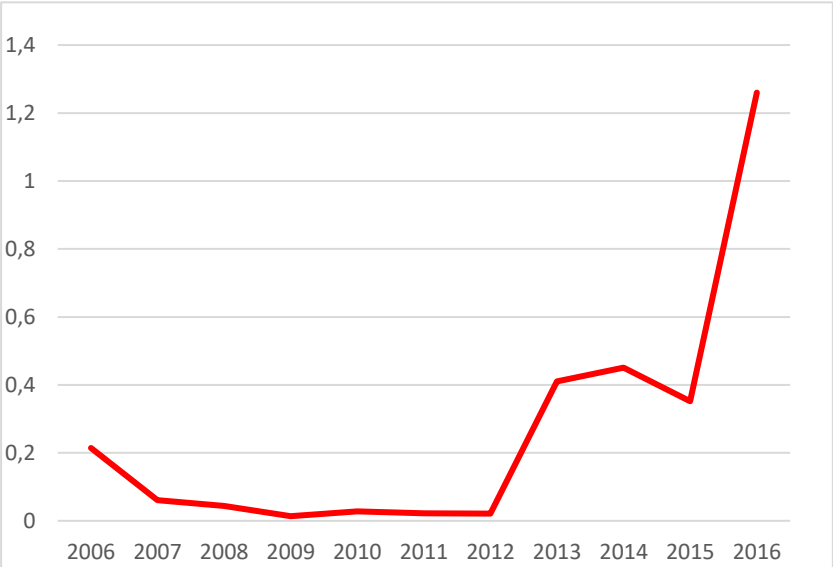


Figure 5: Number of amendments divided by number of resolutions (year by year).

Even when standardized, the trend is evident. Apart from in 2006, when only ten resolutions were adopted and a total of three amendments were proposed, the average number of amendments per resolution were close to zero until 2013. From that year and onwards, the average number of amendments per resolution increased: from a little below 0,5 in 2013 to 1,26 per resolution adopted in 2016. It is necessary to underscore that amendments tend to be proposed to a rather small number of resolutions. In other words, a few of the resolutions receive the majority of the amendments. Nonetheless, the general trend in proposed "hostile amendments," as displayed in figure 5, demonstrates a growing inability to find common ground on certain human rights issues.

In sum, all these data suggest an increased level of conflict among the states in the Council, indicating inability among the states to find compromise in negotiations on what should be the international human rights standards. Whereas the number of non-consensual resolutions has steadily grown since the establishment of the Council, however somewhat sharper increase since 2013, the number of proposed "hostile amendments" has expanded tremendously since 2013, reaching an all-time high in 2016.

These statistical findings clearly indicate that *something* has happened with the debate in the course of the Council's 10 years, suggesting an increasing level of disagreements between states. However, is this also the impression of those actively involved in the Council's work – diplomats, civil society representatives, and UN staff? In order to nuance and complement the impression given by the statistical data, interviews with such key actors will form the basis of the next chapter.

First, however, it is necessary to discuss whether the statistical findings can be trusted – are they valid?

3.2 The validity of the statistical findings

"[A] simple rule emerges when it comes to handling data: get as close to the production of the data as you can" as that "allows you to discover the underlying biases in the data, their weaknesses and strengths, and then the gaps," Hancké writes (2013: 99). In this case, it is difficult to get much closer, given that the dataset was created from scratch based on publicly

available information published in the OHCHR's session reports.³⁰ The main challenge here is, therefore, connected to the very operationalization of "the debate" in the Council, and further to the validity of the findings. These two challenges – operationalization and validity – are closely intertwined. Validity concerns whether the concept that is to be measured, is precisely expressed in the chosen measurement (*ibid.*: 87). In other words, is the operationalization of the concept allowing me to measure what I ought to measure? And are the findings accurately describing the actual development in the Council?

There are several ways to operationalize the debate in the Council.³¹ The chosen indicators capture both the process and the outcomes of intergovernmental negotiations. By using "hostile amendments" as an indicator, it measures the *process* of negotiating – the debates – as it should be considered a negotiation technique, while by using the outcomes of the negotiations – whether the adoptions are consensual or non-consensual – it measures the *consequences* of the debates. The robustness of these findings is high if other measurements give equivalent results. For that very reason, interview data are used to illuminate the development, and through that most accurately describe it.

In the following part, the dynamics and development in the Council will, first, be accounted for based on qualitative data gathered through interviews with a collection of key actors in the Council. Second, supplied by the theoretical approach, the following analysis seeks to explain the dynamics and development in the Council, and thus answer the second part of the twofold research question: why there is an increase in conflict among states in the Council.

³⁰ As the data are easy-accessible through the OHCHR websites and the dataset developed to create the graphs is attached as an appendix (appendix 1) to this thesis, a sufficient degree of replicability should be ensured. This transparency in the proceedings offers an opportunity to replicate the study.

³¹ Different operationalization may give different results. The development in the workload could be a measurement in itself. Then, a proliferation in work could indicate a shared willingness among states to expand and progress on human rights. However, states may introduce new initiatives with hidden agendas, *e.g.* trying to increase the workload of the Council in order to prevent that more time is devoted to certain other topics. Another potential approach is to analyze what states actually express in the open informal negotiations, as well as in statements during discussions and debates in the Council. This would, however, be an analysis of a more qualitative nature – a discourse analysis. The obvious downside to that would be that it is less able to produce a general presentation of the development of the debate.

- PART THREE -

4 A nuanced description of the Council's development

Statistical data and illustrations are useful because they show the development in a clear and tangible way. Notwithstanding, they fall short in explaining more in depth the internal dynamics in the UN Human Rights Council (the Council), as well as what drives the development within it. In order to gather such in-depth information, and thus be better prepared to analyze the *why* – the *reason* for the development in the Council – assessments by experienced key actors in the Council is valuable.³² The following subchapters tell the story of the Council, from 2006 to 2016, based on interviews with such key actors. Included is a handful of examples of specific situations occurring in the course of these 10 years. Moreover, the story is supplemented with maps on states' voting patterns on certain thematic and country-specific resolutions, which illustrate the conflict lines between (groups of) states at various times in the Council.

First of all, the Council certainly matters to the states. All the major powers, including the five permanent members of the Security Council (P5), show great interest in being a member. Furthermore, the proliferation in resolutions, special procedures mandates, in mechanisms such as fact-finding missions and commission of inquiries, in reports published and in panel discussions held, indicate that the states put a good deal of work into the Council. Nevertheless, as any other body – physical or intergovernmental – the Council has gone through distinct stages in its early life. The interviewees agree that the Council has evolved over time, but they differ as to the number and nature of the phases (WEOG diplomat, 2017; Ineichen, 2017; Limon, 2017; Senior OHCHR official, 2017). A Russian diplomat divided the time of the Council into two phases: the first five years and after that. A Pakistani diplomat made a somewhat similar division: from 2006 to 2010 and since then (Russian diplomat, 2017; Pakistani diplomat, 2017). Several others, however, point at a three-phased Council: "there is a division into three periods of time," possibly moving into a fourth in 2017, a senior OHCHR official argued (2017). The number of phases is, however, not the principal issue here. Rather, the fact that it changes is of greater interest. Is there a pattern to it? How can we understand the development in the UN Human Rights Council?

The statistical data suggest that the Council's development can be divided into three phases – a pattern which is in line with the majority of the interviewees.

³² These data are based on interviews with 12 key actors in the Council, including diplomats, civil society representatives and a UN official, conducted in Oslo, in Geneva and on Skype/email between January and April 2017. More information about the interviews in appendix 2.

4.1 The first phase

The data show that there was a relatively low level of intergovernmental conflict during the first years of the Council: hardly any "hostile amendments" and roughly one fourth of the resolutions were non-consensual. However, in the words of a senior OHCHR official, this first phase "was extremely tense, much more tense than people seem to realize and remember" (Senior OHCHR official, 2017). However, "the data does not really cover this" (*ibid.*).

In order to explain the background for the tension, it is meaningful to go back to the negotiations on the establishment of the new Council. During the reform process, when negotiating the Council, there were major disagreements over what should be its mandate, especially on whether the Council "should be able to look at country situations" (Limon, 2017).³³ Whereas the states in the Western European and Others Group (WEOG), among others, were in favor of continuing this mechanism from the Commission, other groups of developing states, the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation (OIC), the Arab Group and the African Group in particular, strongly opposed this.³⁴ A Pakistani diplomat confirmed this view, stating that the Council should focus on thematic issues as country-specific resolutions cause polarization and a more noticeable "us" and "them"-dynamic between those in favor and those against (Pakistani diplomat, 2017). This divide, as well as disagreements over membership composition and criteria, were "the context in which the Human Rights Council was established" (Limon, 2017).

While the mandate to consider country-specific initiatives remained with the new Council, the composition of members changed (Alston, 2006; Cox, 2010; Freedman, 2013; Houghton, 2013). Moreover, President Bush decided at the time that the United States would withdraw from the Council – after voting against the resolution establishing it. The United States did not

³³ This was a highly controversial issue also during the Commission's days. There were, however, a group of developing states (those that fell between the Soviet Union bloc and the United States bloc, which later became known as the Non-Aligned Movement, NAM), that used the UN to break the bipolar dynamic by proposing country-specific resolutions (Limon, 2017). Steven L. B. Jensen (2016) has written more comprehensively on the role of small, developing states in the making of international human rights. Moreover, Alston (2006), Cox (2010: 100-101), and Freedman (2013: 220-222) all discuss the divisions over country-specific mandates during the reform process.

³⁴ It is necessary to nuance this divide. While WEOG-states, together with many Latin-American states and Eastern European states, as well as some African and Asia-Pacific ones, in general are in favor of country-specific initiatives, many are against those addressing Israel (or the Occupied Palestinian Territories, OPT), with the United States at the forefront of this opposition. This is reversed with regards to the OIC and the Arab Group which in general oppose country-specific initiatives, except for those addressing Israel. The issue of politicization of country-specific initiatives, as well as politicization regarding Israel (with the situation in the OPT being a permanent issue on the Council's agenda) have been discussed by several scholars before (Scannella and Splinter, 2007; Terlingen, 2007; Cox, 2010; Seligman, 2011; Freedman, 2013; Houghton, 2013). Power-political alignments are, in other words, clearly visible inside the Council on this issue.

seek membership again during the Bush presidency (Lauren, 2007: 339-340; Lynch, 2009; Freedman, 2013: 250). These were some of the controversies which defined the Council's first years. The WEOG, with only seven members in the Council and suffering from the United States disengaging, was struggling in isolation against a group "composed of the OIC, the Arab Group, and the African Group" (Senior OHCHR official, 2017).³⁵ The states from the latter groups "conglomerated on all the issues," gaining a majority power during voting on resolutions, according to the senior OHCHR official (*ibid.*). Among the states that, to a substantial degree, controlled the Council at that time, were "Egypt, Pakistan, Algeria, Cuba, to an extent Saudi Arabia" and a few others (Limon, 2017). Although this were relatively few states to be dominating a body of 47 member-states, they managed to do so by having control over their respective groups (political and regional) and then by coordinating stands between these groups.³⁶ This dynamic was precisely summarized by an interviewee: If they "control the relevant regional and political groups, they control everything" (*ibid.*). The ability to control outcomes was reinforced by the fact that these key states' interests often coincided with those of powerful states such as Russia, China, and India. Together, all these states had the necessary strength, in terms of experienced and active diplomats as well as a majority of votes, to direct the Council's debates and the outcome of these (*ibid.*).

To illustrate the conflict lines between states in the Council during this phase, a map of member-states' voting patterns on a selection of non-consensual resolutions is valuable. During the first ten regular sessions of the Council, between June 2006 and June 2009, 48 resolutions were non-consensual.³⁷ Out of these, 25 were introduced by one or more of the aforementioned groups – the OIC, the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM), the Arab Group, or the African Group. Member-states' voting patterns on these resolutions are illustrated in the following voting map.

³⁵ This is touched upon by Cox (2010) too: "the voting power of developing states allowed them to significantly shape the final structure of the HRC. Although the HRC is able to pass country-specific resolutions – a major goal for the United States and Western Europe – its institutional structure permits non-democratic states with poor human rights records to affect significantly the outcomes in the HRC. This influence is possible because the final size of the institution, 47 states, is not significantly smaller than the 53 that comprised the CHR, and the seats continue to be distributed regionally with no formal human rights standards serving to bar states with poor human rights records from participating" (Cox, 2010: 89).

³⁶ Many states are a member of several of these groups, *i.e.* membership in groups are not mutually exclusive. This makes it easier to coordinate between groups as well.

³⁷ During the first five years of the Council, it changed membership every June, as the first session took place in June and the members sat for at least 12 months. After the review process in 2011, it started changing members at the end of each year.

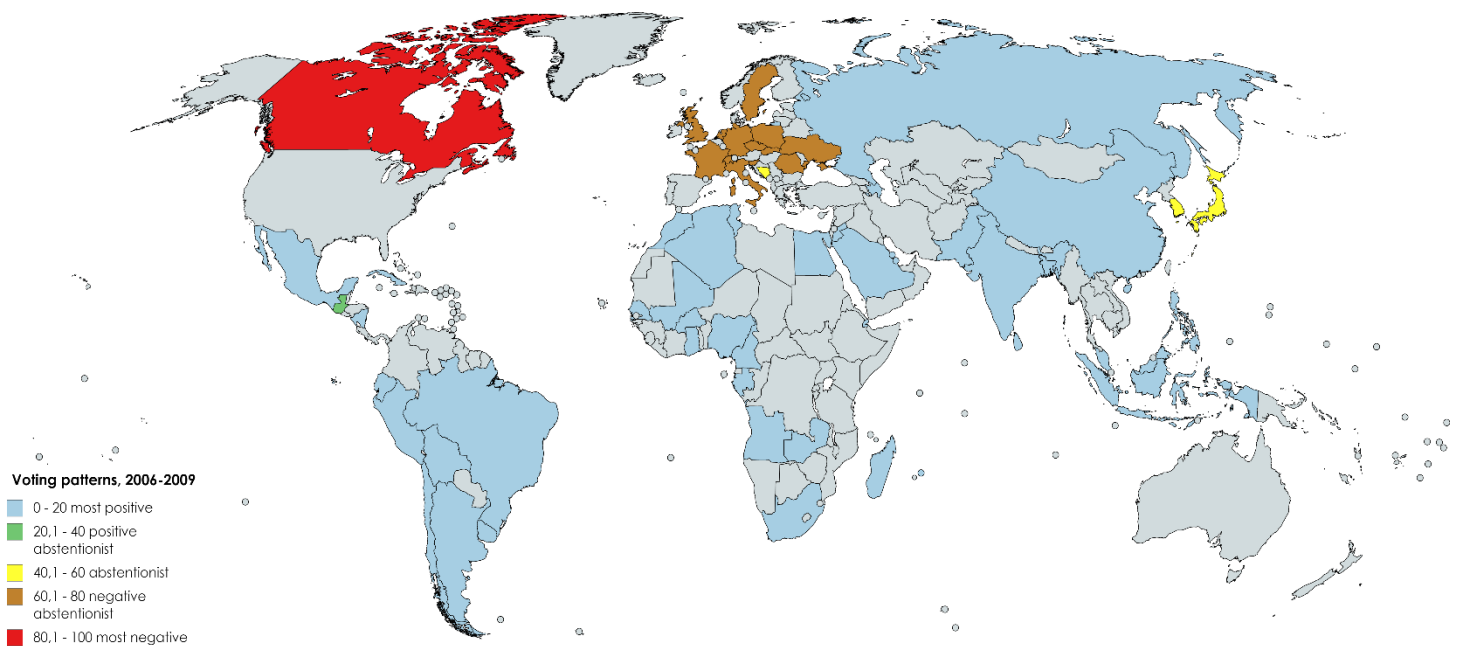


Figure 6: World map with categories based on voting patterns on OIC/NAM/Arab/African resolutions.³⁸

During the initial three years, 59 different states were members of the Council. These are categorized based on their voting patterns on the resolutions in the selection.³⁹ The map indicates a relatively polarized Council. There are only the states from the WEOG and the East European Group (EEG), except for Azerbaijan and Russia, which lean towards the negative end of the scale, meaning that they mostly voted against or abstained on the resolutions introduced by the OIC, the NAM, the Arab Group, or the African Group. There were, however, a considerably higher number of states which were positive to the introduced resolutions. This clearly indicates the power of the traditional political and regional groups, as pointed out by the interviewees. By coordinating votes, as well as getting support from states in all regions except for in the WEOG and the majority of the Eastern European states, they could quite easily gain a majority on resolutions.

With such an imbalance in the Council, why is the conflict not captured in the statistical data? The senior official from OHCHR suggested that the reason may be that the WEOG member-states, which were a minority at the time, "are always against procedural motions, like

³⁸ The world maps are created on the website <https://mapchart.net/>.

³⁹ The full voting studies procedure is attached in appendix 4, but in short: voting in favor of a resolution is coded 0, abstaining is coded 50, and voting against is coded 100. Each state's voting is aggregated and divided on the number of resolutions they have voted on, each state then ending at a final score between 0-100. Those most positive to the introduced resolutions are coded with the *blue* color (total sum between 0-20), those mostly voting in favor or abstaining are coded *green* (20,1-40), those in aggregate abstaining are *yellow* (40,1-60), while the states coded *brown* are those either abstaining or voting against (60,1-80). The states coded *red* have voted against on close to all of the resolutions (80,1-100).

amendments" (Senior OHCHR official, 2017). Thus, the chosen indicators measuring the development of the debate, are not able to fully catch the actual state of affairs. Nevertheless, the OHCHR official suggested that an indication of conflict may be found in data on the number of special procedures' mandates on country situations that was adopted during these years, as the powerful groups were against such mandates.⁴⁰ Limon and Power (2014) have studied this and find that despite a steady increase in the total number of special procedures' mandates between 2006-2009, the number of country-specific ones decreased notably (Senior OHCHR official, 2017; Limon and Power, 2014: 10-11).

A more specific example of the tension during this phase, pointed out by the OHCHR official, was when the member-states were to negotiate the mandate of the special rapporteur on the human rights situation in Sudan. This situation was at the time (and to a considerable degree still is) grave and deteriorating.⁴¹ The OHCHR official stated: "a crucial moment was when the Sudanese mandate came for renewal and it was almost lost ... I considered that in those years [2008-2009], if we lost Sudan, the *raison d'être* of the Council was lost," as the Council would lose its legitimacy if not able to react to the massive violations taking place (Senior OHCHR official, 2017). In the end, through comprehensive work by among others the United States,⁴² the resolution renewing the mandate was just adopted by vote, with 20 in favor, 18 against, and nine states abstaining (Human Rights Council resolution, 2009).

The majority of the interviewees termed the first phase "a disastrous era for the Council" and "the years of depression," even stating that "at one stage, everyone came to the conclusion that the Council was much worse than the Commission ever was" (Senior OHCHR official, 2017). However, not everyone holds this view. A Russian diplomat referred to the first phase of the Council as "the constructive years" (Russian diplomat, 2017). Although the regional and political groups were visible, and to a certain degree directed the dynamics in the Council, the diplomats showed more flexibility and willingness to find common stands when negotiating during these years. A reason for this was, according to the Russian diplomat, the states and their diplomat's interest in showing that the new establishment was working – that there was a future for the Council (*ibid.*). A stark contrast to the statement from the senior OHCHR official.

⁴⁰ Limon and Power states that "securing the votes to establish country mandates has always been a challenge, often falling along geopolitical fault lines" (2014: 11).

⁴¹ The special rapporteur on the human rights situation in Sudan published a report with devastating descriptions of the situation in the country (report A/HRC/11/14).

⁴² "... the Americans, as observers, managed to do what they are very good at: the bilateral relationship capital to capital" (Senior OHCHR official, 2017).

Nevertheless, this first phase suddenly came to an end. Most of the interviewees point to two relatively concurrent factors contributing to this change: (1) the reengagement of the United States and (2) the Arab Spring (Ineichen, 2017; Senior OHCHR official; WEOG diplomat, 2017). "The moment we reached the end of that period, was when Obama was elected and [the United States] started to be actively engaged as an observer" (Senior OHCHR official, 2017). In March 2009, two months into his first period as president, Obama decided that the United States were to seek membership in the Council again. This met heavy resistance from, among others, the still colorful (but now former) ambassador Bolton who stated: "This is like getting on board the Titanic after it's hit the iceberg" (Lynch, 2009). Still, the United States "decided that they really wanted to invest in the Human Rights Council" (Ineichen, 2017).

Soon after, the Arab Spring broke out.⁴³ "The Arab Spring kind of shook up some of the geopolitics on human rights. It fundamentally changed the positions of some states such as Libya, Tunisia, and for a very brief moment also Egypt," stated Ineichen from the International Service of Human Rights (Ineichen, 2017). There were "suddenly no agreement whatsoever within that group [the OIC]" and the cohesiveness and influence of the traditional political groups, such as the Arab Group, the NAM, and the OIC were significantly weakened (Senior OHCHR official, 2017). In addition, the African Group "did not have Egypt or Algeria leading the processes, because they were taken by other issues, so they started to be led by other coordinators much more cooperative and constructive," the senior OHCHR official argued (*ibid.*).

4.2 The second phase

With the reengagement of the United States, combined with geopolitical events harming the cohesiveness of certain groups, the dynamics of the Council changed. Again, the interviewees' characterization of the phase varies substantially. According to the Pakistani diplomat, the Council became increasingly politicized around 2010, and it has increased since then. The Russian diplomat agrees, stating that polarization grew from around 2011 (Pakistani diplomat, 2017; Russian diplomat, 2017). In contrast, other interviewees, both from NGOs and from

⁴³ The Arab Spring was triggered by the overthrow of the Tunisian president in December 2010, which further inspired pro-democracy uprising in the Arab World (states in the Middle East and North Africa) in the following years. This included protests, riots, coups, and even civil war in states such as Algeria, Bahrain, Egypt, Jordan, Libya, Morocco, Oman, Saudi Arabia, Syria, Tunisia, and Yemen (BBC, 2017).

WEOG member-states, stated that this second phase was "sort of the glorious days," and moreover, it was "the golden age of the Human Rights Council" (Ineichen, 2017; Limon, 2017).

Several of the interviewed Council-actors point to the importance of small and middle-sized, moderate states in shaping the dynamics in the Council during the second phase. This was "the era of the moderates," said a senior OHCHR official (2017). From 2009 and for the following years, several moderate states were elected as members or took a more forward position in the Council.⁴⁴ These "had diplomats here who were very proactive," further influencing the dynamics in the Council (Limon, 2017). "These countries, covering all the regions, started interacting quite regularly ... this was the start of the Article 4 Dialogue," the former diplomat and now Executive Director of Universal Rights Group stated (*ibid.*).⁴⁵

How were these smaller and middle-sized states able to gain such power in the Council? A diplomat from one of these moderate "bridge-building" states, said that this phase – the period of the Arab Spring – opened "a real window of opportunity" in the Council (WEOG diplomat, 2017). The traditional strong groups, including the OIC, the African Group, the NAM, and the Arab Group "could not find common position on [close to] anything anymore" (WEOG diplomat, 2017). With considerable challenges domestically, the focus of many of the Middle East and Northern African states was elsewhere – the Council was not a prioritized arena. Additionally, Russia and China had not yet found great interest in engaging actively in the Council, and the initiatives from the WEOG- and moderate states were therefore met with limited opposition. According to a civil society representative, it took some time for several of the states to gain "an understanding of the beast that the Human Rights Council is" (Irminger, 2017). "Cuba understood it very quickly ... it took China quite a few years to understand ... it took Russia to the 2012 election of Putin to understand" (*ibid.*).

With the decreased influence of the traditional groups and the relatively disengaged Russia and China, the role and power of the moderate states grew. These states were "often the swing-votes

⁴⁴ This included states such as the Botswana, Chile, Costa Rica, Côte d'Ivoire, Ghana, Jordan, Maldives, Mauritius, Mexico, Morocco, Norway, Peru, Philippines, Thailand, Turkey, and Uruguay (Limon, 2017).

⁴⁵ The Article 4 Dialogue is an informal coalition with experienced diplomats from relatively like-minded states who want to play a bridging role in the Council. From the very beginning (around 2010), the Dialogue was designed to be an informal platform or space (not a group) for dialogue and discussion among a cross-regional group of diplomats committed to strengthening dialogue and cooperation at the Council - generally from middle-ground or 'bridge-building' states. Invitations have always been on an individual or personal basis rather than a state basis, which means that it is not automatic that a state continue to participate when its diplomat leave. The focus is on trying to identify common ground between states, regional and political groups, while supporting the mandate and the objectives of the Council as set down in its founding documents. In particular, the Dialogue is guided by paragraph 4 of General Assembly resolution 60/251 (Berg, 2017).

on big resolutions" (Limon, 2017). It was also in this period "the idea of establishing core groups of states" which introduced and led negotiations on resolutions, was born. The moderate states often "became members of the core group on key issues ... [and] most importantly, these countries were willing to break group positions" (Senior OHCHR official, 2017; Limon, 2017). What pushed several of the moderate states to break with the stand of their regional and political groups, *i.a.* the OIC, the NAM, and the African Group, was, according to the former diplomat Limon, because for quite a while the most powerful states in these groups had been delivering joint statements and tabling amendments on behalf of their group, without all members having seen and agreed upon these on beforehand. "This is also why Turkey, Jordan, Morocco, the Maldives [among others] all started getting pissed off" (*ibid.*).

On several issues, the Council had been stuck for years. However, by establishing cross-regional core groups, things started moving again, stated the senior OHCHR official (2017). These different coalitions of moderate states began to find common positions on issues where they were often "caught in the middle between the hardline developed countries and [the hardliners in the] OIC, the African Group, and the NAM" (Limon, 2017). This included on both thematic issues and key country situations. During this "golden age," the Council suddenly did not seem like the sinking Titanic that ambassador Bolton had predicted. Rather, "very ambitious thematic resolutions, like on freedom of religion, freedom of expression, freedom of assembly mandate, [and a] very ambitious Norwegian text on human rights defenders were adopted by consensus," Limon stated (2017). With more power in the hands of the moderate and the cohesive WEOG member-states, the adoption of country-specific resolutions also became more apparent. "That was the second period of time, where we felt that the Council was going through an ascending phase and a positive trend," the senior OHCHR official expressed (2017).

The statistical data measuring the development of the Council debate is relatively unchanged during this phase, compared to the first. The proportion of non-consensual adoptions were stable, only growing with 0,6 percent points from 2009 to the beginning of 2013 (session 12 to 22), while "hostile amendments" were close to non-existing between 2009 and 2012. Thus, the statistical findings and the interviewees' descriptions generally coincide.

Limon exemplifies the Council's ability to adopt strong resolutions during this phase, with the unanimous adoption of a resolution during a special session on the situation in Libya in 2011. "It was a big part of the golden period, when things were going really well" (Limon, 2017). This resolution further led to action by the Security Council causing the NATO mission and

eventually the overthrow of the Gaddafi regime.⁴⁶ This was regarded by many as a triumph for the Council at the time – finally showing relevance and efficiency. However, it met considerable opposition in the Council in the aftermath, especially from states eager to hinder that a Council-resolution ultimately can lead to intervention in another state (*ibid.*).⁴⁷

The political atmosphere of the debates was about to change again. Dark clouds were approaching the Council's days of glory, ushering in a new phase. But what led to the end of this phase – the "glorious days"?

The development – an increasingly well-coordinated group of moderate states – "obviously raised a lot of concerns ... for countries like Egypt, who despite everything and despite the Arab Spring ... still very much wanted to keep their role as leader of the region and leader of the African Group," the WEOG diplomat stated (2017). Moreover, "the Arab Group and the OIC were facing the backlash of the Arab Spring ... we entered into the Arab Winter" (Senior OHCHR official, 2017). Consequently, several African and Arab states "started reacting on societal issues [that was introduced in the Council], such as reprisals and human rights defenders, as a reaction to reports and pressure from NGOs on what was happening in states" in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region (*ibid.*). The situation in the Council – that Western and moderate states had such a powerful role – was no longer found bearable to several states which previously had enjoyed such great power. Moreover, with the Arab Spring moving towards winter, some of the MENA-states again found interest and ability to act in the Council.

⁴⁶ The NATO-led military intervention in Libya began on 19 March 2011, implementing the Security Council resolution 1973 (S/RES/1973). The resolution was adopted with 10 votes in favor and five abstaining (United Nations, 2011).

⁴⁷ A more exhaustive description of the process from the Council called a special session on Syria, to the resolution was adopted in the Security Council and then enacted by NATO and aligned states: "What happened around this time [2011] was the Libya resolution. It was a big part of the golden period, when things were going really well." With regards to the deteriorating situation in Libya, "the Security Council was not able to do anything, so the Brits [United Kingdom] called a special session of the Human Rights Council on the situation in Libya." As no states supported the Gaddafi-regime, the Council managed to adopt its "strongest country resolution ever, which basically said it was war crimes and crimes against humanity happening, [and] called on the General Assembly to kick Libya off the Council (the only time this ever happened) and set up Commission on Inquiry. Then, the Council "transmitted this to New York, and the Brits and the Americans 'pulled a fast one' in New York. Before the Chinese and the Russians knew what was happening, the UK used this very strong consensus resolution [from the Council] ... and called an emergency session in the Security Council and tabled a resolution, referring to the Human Rights Council resolution, saying that if we do not do something, crimes against humanity and war crimes will be committed." This led to the Security Council resolution welcoming the establishment of a commission of inquiry and referring the situation to the International Criminal Court. It ultimately led to the NATO mission in Libya. "This was considered one of the Human Rights Council's finest moments. It was inertia in New York, and yet here we took very strong action and it catalyzed the Security Council to do something to protect human rights. Now, it is considered an embarrassment" because of the chaotic aftermath (Limon, 2017; Wouters and Meuwissen, 2013: 17-18).

Another factor influencing the dynamics in the Council is, as pointed out by several of the interviewees, the role and impact of the major powers: "globally the rise of assertive positions of China and Russia, clearly contribute to the polarization becoming more visible," Ineichen argued (2017). It was around the time of the Libya-resolution that Russia, Egypt, and a few others (again) found interest in the Council: "some of these countries came in and said; this system, we do not want it, and we are going to mess it up" (*ibid.*). In May 2012, Putin was again elected president, after a four years' period with Medvedev by the steering wheel (BBC, 2012a). The very same year, at the 18th Party Congress in China, Xi Jinping replaced Hu Jintao as Secretary General of the Communist Party (CCP) (BBC, 2012b). Furthermore, the situation in Syria were deteriorating, and the conflict between the major powers intensified. Knowing the consequences of the unanimous Libya-resolution two years earlier, Russia and China voted against those Council-resolutions dealing with the human rights situation in Syria, and vetoed several Security Council resolutions aiming at putting the Syrian government under pressure (United Nations, 2017e).⁴⁸ The tension between the global powers was on the rise.

Other changing dynamics visible inside the Council at the time, as pointed out by Limon, was: "first, key diplomats who had really formed the Article 4 Dialogue and were really ambitious, reached the end of their terms. Secondly, Cuba, Russia and China, and a few others, dropped off the Council" (Limon, 2017). By the end of 2012, these states needed to have their gap year after two consecutive terms. In their absence, "very foolishly, the West got greedy [and began to be] very aggressive on mainly thematic issues. The key issues here were freedom of assembly and human rights defenders." Western states tried to propose "even more ambitious texts, which already then started to annoy [some states]" (*ibid.*). This was expressed also by a Western European diplomat, stating that some states "took a bit advantage of the situation" (WEOG diplomat, 2017). However, what was "really the straw that broke the camel's back, [was when] Hungary came forward with a resolution on reprisals ... The core developing countries [such as Pakistan, Egypt, Cuba] became very, very angry."⁴⁹ They were already angry because the political groups that they used had broken" and they therefore decided to reorganize in order to find new strength (Limon, 2017). The changes in geopolitics, as well as changing political priorities of some key states, combined with more ambitious resolutions proposed by Western

⁴⁸ China and Russia vetoed two draft resolutions in the Security Council in 2012: S/2012/77 and S/2012/538 (United Nations, 2017e).

⁴⁹ A resolution titled "Cooperation with the United Nations, its representatives and mechanisms in the field of human rights" (resolution A/HRC/24/24) that strongly rejected any act of intimidation or reprisals against individuals and groups who cooperate with the United Nations (United Nations, 2013).

states, pushed several other states over in a more asserting mood, leading to "a terrible pushback" (*ibid.*).

As summarized by Limon: "In the first three years, it was the West that said the Council was politicized and was not working. Then, it changed and it started to be the hardcore developing countries that started saying it was politicized and selective ... that continued until 2012/2013" (*ibid.*). This takes us into the third phase of the Council – when the statistics begin to indicate increased conflict among the states in the Council.

4.3 The third phase

Approaching 2013, "the situation [again] started changing" (Senior OHCHR official, 2017). "In part, because the Arab Spring stalled and a lot of what was hopeful cases kind of descended again into conflict, and the Human Rights Council showed that it was completely ineffective in responding to the situation in Syria. That was kind of a reality-check" (Ineichen, 2017).

As expressed, "2013 was the year when they were all out," meaning that influential states such as China, Cuba, Russia, Saudi Arabia, Egypt, and South Africa were not members (WEOG diplomat, 2017). Consequently, "we started seeing this group of states being a bit more coordinated, deciding that since they could not influence the Council from within, because they were no longer members and would not have capacity to say much on the results, they started to table amendments and started showing their opposition from the outside as observers," the WEOG member-state's diplomat stated (*ibid.*). Since that year, the Council has only become "more and more politicized, [with] more and more votes, more and more hostile amendments, [and] more and more antagonism between delegations," as reflected in the statistical findings (Limon, 2017).

This group of increasingly more coordinated states, which previously were active in traditional groups such as the OIC, the NAM, the Arab Group, and the African Group, were soon to be known as the Like-Minded Group (LMG).⁵⁰ In the words of an Egyptian diplomat who served

⁵⁰ According to Essam (2016), a joint statement held by the Egyptian ambassador during the last meeting of the 25th session of the Council in 2014, is considered the group's charter. Among other things, this states that: "We still see the Council, and after nearly 8 years since it started its work, standing at this juncture to choose between: protecting the principles of the work of the Council, especially universality, objectivity, non-selectivity, cooperation, and non-politicization of its work, and also the goal of fulfillment of the State's human rights responsibilities on one hand, or allowing, on the other, the Council to be more dragged to the path of politicization, polarization, selectivity and double standards. Unfortunately, recent events have shown that the Council is leaning to the second path, and we have the concern that the experience of the former Commission on Human Rights might get to be repeated" (Permanent Mission of the Arab Republic of Egypt, 2014).

in the Council until recently, and thereby was an active participant in the LMG, the main aim with this group was to establish "a new and effective platform to share information and coordinate positions, until such a time as the more traditional groups would be able to rebuild their former cohesiveness" (Essam, 2016). Although they sought together in the Council around 2011, it was not until 2013 that the LMG-states increased their internal coordination. This was a consequence of what they argued to be "the year when the Council experienced its least-balanced membership," and when some states started to "test the limits of the capacity of the Council to absorb divisive ideas, many of which sought to destabilize the delicate balance achieved during the early years of the Council" (*ibid.*). To combat this, "many voiceless or under-resourced delegations needed to pool efforts to confront this unprecedented challenge," Essam argue (*ibid.*).

The Egyptian diplomat underscores the success of the LMG, with its 52 member states from all regions, naming it "one of the most visible and influential political groups in the Council" (*ibid.*). In contrast, a diplomat from a WEOG state argues that: "Egypt [is] trying to legitimize the LMG as a political group, as a valid group" (WEOG diplomat, 2017). However, it "is not a real group, it is an informal coalition that varies from one theme to the next" (*ibid.*). This view has support from another interviewee as well: "The LMG is not a formal group, and I think they took the idea from the Article 4 Dialogue, because the Article 4 Dialogue was not a group either. It was a coalition of the willing in a sense. It depended on the issue. It was an informal grouping, very difficult to pick off states, because no one knew who was in the Article 4 Dialogue. That is the same approach LMG took" (Limon, 2017).⁵¹

Nevertheless, the LMG quickly became a visible force in favor and against certain topics in the Council. Russia played an important role in this. When the Russians re-entered the Council after their gap year, they "decided that for their own reason, they had to take the flag and lead the process" (Senior OHCHR official, 2017). Unlike earlier years, "Russia realigned itself fully with these countries. Up until then, Russia had been a bit like China, in the orbit of the hardcore developing countries ... but once the LMG was established, Russia was a central part of it" (Limon, 2017). This is a factor pointed out by several observers: "What I think has changed a bit is, I really see Russia coming in as a disruptive player. They do not want this [the Council]

⁵¹ The composition of the LMG varies. While Essam (2016) mentions 52 member-states, India's ambassador to the UN mention 30 member-states in a more recent statement on behalf of the LMG (Permanent Mission of India, 2016). This fluctuating nature of the LMG – where the number of aligned states, and which states these are, varies depending on the topic that is debated – indicates that this is more of an informal coalition than a formal group.

to function" (Irminger, 2017). This began already the year Russia was out of the Council, and certainly continued for the following years when they were back as a member. "I think we were hoping that this dynamic would disappear once those same countries were back in the Council, which was the case from 2014 onwards, but that was not what happened," stated the diplomat from a WEOG member-state (2017).

A particular example of the LMG-states approach is when they used the alliance as "a vehicle" to block the aforementioned Hungarian resolution on reprisals in New York. "It had been adopted [in Geneva], but then [they] blocked it in New York in the Third Committee" (Limon, 2017). This was the first time that states had taken a resolution adopted in the Council to the General Assembly with an aim to block it (*ibid.*).⁵² It was a definite turning point, which changed a lot of the dynamics also when negotiating other topics in the Council. "Previously, civil society resolutions, freedom of assembly resolutions, and human rights defenders resolutions were uncontroversial ... it was those resolutions going through at the beginning with a lot of co-sponsors," Limon stated (2017). After this, however, they said "let's hit them with as many amendments as we can, because then we can bring the matter to New York and we can try to kill it" (Senior OHCHR official, 2017).⁵³ "And that [new Russian approach] is why we are now lost in in total confusion and chaos when we get into these sorts of texts" (Senior OHCHR official, 2017).

Since 2013, the coordination of the LMG has been led by Russia, China, and Egypt (Essam, 2016). The Russian approach has been particularly visible in the Council. According to Irminger from the Human Rights House Foundation, a reason for this strong opposition may be that Putin "really did not like demonstrations after his election [in 2012] ... and he was not going to allow the international system to say that protesting against him is fine" (Irminger, 2017).

Moreover, the role and importance of China in the Council was changing in this third phase, although described differently depending on whom you ask. In the words of an interviewee,

⁵² The General Assembly decided to "defer consideration of and action on Human Rights Council resolution 24/24 of 27 September 2013 on cooperation with the United Nations, its representatives and mechanisms in the field of human rights, in order to allow time for further consultations" (United Nations, 2013). What makes this possible is the position of the Council as a subsidiary body to the General Assembly. Moreover, the universal membership in the Assembly – one vote per state – changes the dynamics from the Council where only the 47 member-states can vote. Thus, it was possible to end at another result.

⁵³ The logic is that the more amendments a resolution receives in the Council, although it is adopted in the end, the easier it is to have it reconsidered in the General Assembly, given the controversy of it.

China is "a free rider. They are on the bus, but they do not pay a ticket and do not get caught" (Irminger, 2017). At the same time

in a way, as bad as the situation is on many fronts in China ... their position is being quite honest [compared to] the one of Russia, Venezuela, and Cuba ... Russia has actually ratified almost everything when it comes to international human rights, China has not ... When you have not ratified the Covenant on civil and political rights, it is actually quite legitimate to be saying; you are trying to impose stuff on us that we have never said we agree on ... So, they come from a different angle than Russia (*ibid.*).⁵⁴

However, according to the WEOG-state diplomat, China's activity in the Council changed during the third phase, to suddenly becoming more active in negotiations and by proposing joint statements themselves. "They are becoming more visible" (WEOG diplomat, 2017).

In addition to certain major states becoming more active, several geopolitical events took place in these years – increasing the tension in international politics: "When did Syria start to heat up, [as well as] Ukraine [and] Crimea?⁵⁵ ... I wonder how much of that [the Council's development] has been a reaction to geopolitical events" and that states "use the Council to express dissatisfaction with the West and the Western agenda" (Splinter, 2017). Moreover, another interviewee stated: "there is clearly the impact of geopolitics, I mentioned the Arab Spring but also the 2014, the year of Ukraine, Venezuela,⁵⁶ Egypt again,⁵⁷ so there is quite a lot of things that happened" (WEOG diplomat, 2017).

In 2016, the development reached "a new high in terms of the polarization," Ineichen argue (2017).⁵⁸ At the same time, "the United States, towards the end of the Obama administration, was moving into a "lame duck mode", so they were not able to fight back" and the LMG member-states were "very effectively using this new vehicle to assert themselves, they got many countries to start joining the LMG, like South Africa and India ... On the whole, the

⁵⁴ The OHCHR has published an overview over which states have signed and/or are party to the different international human rights treaties (OHCHR, 2017e).

⁵⁵ The interviewee refers to Russia's annexation of Crimea in 2014 and the following conflict between Russia and Ukraine.

⁵⁶ Since 2014, there have been continuous protests, riots, and public unrest in Venezuela related to the economic situation, the high crime rates, and the government's policies.

⁵⁷ The situation in Egypt since the Arab Spring has been chaotic with protests, public unrest, and a *coup d'état*.

⁵⁸ A clarification by the interviewee: "What I do not like about the [term] polarization ... is that polarization puts an equal blame on the two poles. From my perspective, it is the wrong word. What happens is that some states are trying to undermine the utility of the Council by seeking to 'bully' more progressive states into developing resolutions that does not really reflect the reality on the ground. It is kind of one pole trying to pull the Council away from what it should be doing" (Ineichen, 2017).

results of the Council went down too much. Key resolutions were still adopted, but you started seeing things like Egypt coming up with family and terrorism [a resolution on protection of the family and a resolution on the effects of terrorism on the enjoyment of human rights] and these being adopted by a big number, which would not have happened previously" (Limon, 2017). Moreover, "last year, for the first time, some of the "hostile amendments" were adopted and that was very significant," stated Limon (2017).

The increased conflict in the Council can be illustrated by a voting map. Given the description by several of the interviewees, emphasizing both that some Western states became more forward in introducing substantial resolutions, as well as that several states used the Council to express dissatisfaction with the "Western agenda," states' voting on the non-consensual resolutions introduced by one or more states from the WEOG is illustrated in the following voting map (figure 7). During the 12 regular session taking place between 2013 and the end of 2016, WEOG member-states proposed, sometimes together with a cross-regional group of states, a grand total of 37 resolutions which were adopted by vote.

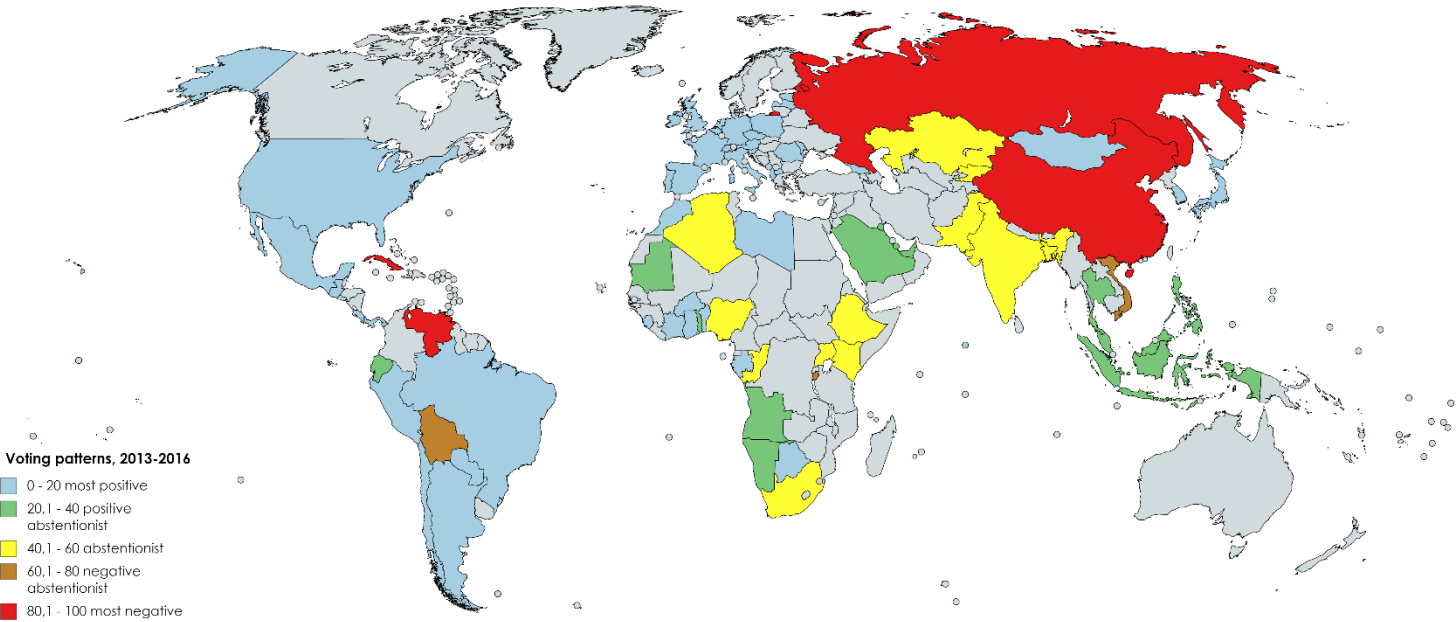


Figure 7: World map with categories based on voting patterns on WEOG resolutions.

As the map illustrates, all states from the WEOG and from the Eastern European Group, except for Russia, voted in favor on close to all resolutions introduced by one or more WEOG states. The same applies to the majority of the Latin American states, as well as a few Western and Southern African states, and Japan, Republic of Korea, Mongolia, and the Maldives. At the opposite side of the scale, you find Cuba, Venezuela, China, and Russia, which all vote against the majority of the resolutions. In between these two poles – one large and relatively cross-

regional group, but with a definite emphasis on Western states, and one small group of four states – the remaining states took a more fluctuating stand. The general impression is that the Council was more fragmented during this third phase. Whereas the voting map from the first phase (*figure 6*) illustrate a relatively polarized Council, with the majority of the states close to the two poles – voting more consistently in favor or against, this map illustrates a substantially more fragmented Council, with many states spread on the categories, varying between voting in favor, against, and abstaining depending on the topic negotiated. Still, the two extremes are obvious, where Cuba, Venezuela, China, and Russia – the driving forces of the LMG – have a coordinated stand against the Western states and their allies – as described by several interviewees.

According to one interviewee, the increasingly offensive Russia has led to a less coherent LMG: "Last year [2016], the one driving it really, was Russia. And that was it. Cuba was much more moderate ... [they] had concerns on many issues, but did not sign onto everything Russia did" (WEOG diplomat, 2017). "The fact that it ended up with this kind of extremist position, changed the nature of the group – changed the value of the group for some ... so I do think [LMG] is not as important as it was" (*ibid.*). Still, with Russia continuing to be combative, it is "a whole different ball game and it has nothing to do with whether Russia is right or not, or whether they [other LMG-states] share their concerns. It becomes purely politics ... and that is where the problem is," the WEOG-state diplomat argued (2017).

From a Russian point of view, for the last years the level of conflict has grown in the Council (Russian diplomat, 2017). And in contrast to the characterizations of the two former phases, all interviewees seem to agree with this view: that the recent years and current state of affairs in the Council is characterized by a significant level of conflict among states.

5 The implications of power politics

5.1 The dynamics and development

Why has the conflict among states in the Council increased? To answer the question fully, it is necessary to understand what drives the development in the intergovernmental organization. Here, it is proposed, that driving force is best observed through a Realist lens. The reason for applying the classic Realist international relations theory, derives from the Council actors' assessments of the development of the Council debate. The interviewees devote the states – particularly those most powerful in the international system – the starring role in the Council's development. Moreover, they say it is the political interests of states which are the main drivers in the development, and they describe how the less powerful states form alliances to maximize their interests in the struggle for power. Hence, the theory evolved from the empirical data. Even though the Council has progressed in an international system based on liberal ideas, the interview data suggest that realism permeates its dynamics and development. Realism dominates on the liberal scene.

Thus, the development in the UN Human Rights Council – both as illustrated by the statistical data and as nuanced through the interviews – will be observed through the classic Realist optic of Hans J. Morgenthau's *Politics Among Nations* (1985).

This analysis will, based on a Realist view on the nature of international politics, discuss the dynamics within the Council – the influence of powerful states and alliances – as well as suggest an explanatory model of how the development in the Council is driven. On the basis of that knowledge, the second part of the twofold research question is answered. To conclude the chapter, the current state and close future of the Council is reflected upon, as well as connected to the larger debate on the development in the international system and the future of the liberal world order.

In the eyes of Morgenthau and his fellow realists, states are the main unit in the international system, and states' behavior is driven by their political interests, which is understood in terms of power. The Council, as an intergovernmental organization, is composed of delegates from states. Consequently, given that these states are driven by their power-political interests, the delegates reflect these interests and the Council is necessarily politicized. A OHCHR official stated: "I hold a view that it [the Council] will always be politicized and polarized. It is impossible to deal with human rights in a de-politicized manner ... If you deal with real issues

– country or thematic issues – you cannot avoid politicizing the matter" (Senior OHCHR official, 2017).

As the Council negotiates and adopts human rights resolutions, which seek to formulate the universal rights of citizens in all states, it is quite natural that the governments' political interests play the starring role in the negotiations over what these standards shall be. States therefore struggle to ensure that the outcomes of negotiations are in line with national interests. This means that the results – in this case the adopted resolutions – are political compromises between the participating states. This view is expressed by several interviewees. A diplomat from a Southern African state argued that political factors play a significant role in an intergovernmental body such as the Council. The political interests of the governments are visible in negotiations and ultimately reflected in the adoptions (Southern African diplomat, 2017). Moreover, the Pakistani diplomat stated that there are, to a large degree, political factors and not human rights arguments which dominate the negotiations, while a Russian diplomat said that the politicization of the Council is both natural and unavoidable (Pakistani diplomat, 2017; Russian diplomat, 2017).

Thus, in the Council, there is a continuous struggle for power, in the broad "Morgenthauian" definition of the term. In all intergovernmental norm-establishing organizations, the struggle to fulfill your political interests in practice unfolds as a struggle to get the majority of the votes in favor of your view. In other words, rather than the states using military or economic means to promote their political interests, they have to master the game of diplomacy. "[T]he task of the new United Nations diplomacy is not so much to build an alliance with a maximum of political and military power as to form a majority with a maximum of voting strength" (Morgenthau, 1985: 517). Considering that the vote of all member-states is of equal value, more power is left in hands of smaller states compared to in other international political settings. Hence, it is the ideal arena for states wanting to challenge the major powers, exemplified by Cuba who for once is in a position to challenge a state like the United States (Limon, 2017). "Here lies the important distinction between the techniques of traditional and United Nations diplomacy: the latter is compelled to persuade where the former could afford not to care" (*ibid.*: 517). Consequently, diplomats put much effort and patience into influencing and persuading other states around the oval tables in the Serpentine Bar – a café on the ground floor of *Palais des Nations* where many informal talks take place – as well as in the corridors of the UN building.

Still, although all member-states in theory are equal – as set out by the resolution establishing the Council – and despite that the smaller states may have more influence in an intergovernmental norm-establishing body than in other segments of international politics, the influence of all states in the Council is not equal in practice. "Some states are more equal than others," Limon points out (2017). This is also eloquently described by Morgenthau: "It stands to reason that the power of the big nation is still felt, as is the weakness of the small one; for the former speaks in the persuasive voice of power to which the latter can reply only in the whisper of weakness" (1985: 517).

When the interviewees point to which factors that have been driving the changes in the Council – when moving the debate from one phase to the next – they invoke international events and identify the behavior of particular states. The election of Barack Obama was identified by several interviewees to be one, if not *the*, defining factor moving the Council from its first phase to the second. Obama's foreign policy emphasized diplomacy, international engagement, and human rights far more extensively than his predecessor, and the then Secretary of State Clinton once stated that "we will engage in the work of improving the UN human rights system" (White House, 2010; Lynch, 2009). And so they did. With many and experienced diplomats, they were a driving force during Obama's presidency.

Another important change-maker was the re-election of Vladimir Putin and the re-entry of a more self-conscious Russia to the Council. It was generally agreed by interviewees that when Putin was elected after four years of Medvedev, Russia's engagement on human rights increased substantially. During the first months of his new presidency, Putin showed a new and more opposing attitude towards human rights domestically.⁵⁹ In the words of the senior OHCHR official, Russia decided that they would "take the flag and lead the process" also in the Council. As the statistical data and most recent voting map illustrates, Russia was the state most negative to resolutions proposed by states from the Western region, and they stood for close to 60 % of all "hostile amendments" in 2016. Thus, by aligning with other like-minded states, and by taking an increasingly more decisive role in this cooperation, Russia has become one of the loudest and strongest voices of the Council since 2013, strongly influencing its dynamics.

The same year as Putin assumed power, Xi Jinping was elected the new chief of the Chinese Communist Party (CCP), *i.e.* the new president of China. Short time later, the new Chinese

⁵⁹ After Putin's return to the presidency in May 2012, the Russian authorities have introduced several restrictive laws, as well as arrested, harassed and intimidated activists, human rights defenders and the civil society, creating a much more difficult environment for NGOs to operate in (Human Rights Watch, 2013a).

presidency released a human rights action plan for the following three years, with a vaguer rhetoric: international human rights obligations were now to be considered with a "principle of practicality" – putting more weight on their national interests than international standards and the universality of these (Human Rights Watch, 2013b). The role of China in the Council is debatable, as indicated by the diverse assessments of the interviewees. However, a few of the interviewees argue that China has "upped their engagement in human rights diplomacy" (Splinter, 2017). Moreover, in 2016 China was the second most active state in proposing "hostile amendments," and their voting patterns are close to identical to those of Russia. By joining Russia and other allies in their crusade in the Council, China has contributed to changing the dynamic within the intergovernmental body in the latter years, being more actively engaged in the Council's power struggle.

More states have proven to be influential in shaping the dynamics and driving the development in the Council as well. Several interviewees stated that these include among others, and at various times, Egypt, Algeria, Nigeria, South Africa, Pakistan, Saudi Arabia, India, the other permanent members of the Security Council – United Kingdom and France – as well as Cuba and Venezuela. However, these have mainly been influential when forming alliances with other states. Morgenthau argues that in order for the small and middle-sized states to compete with the most influential ones in the struggle for power, states employ the strategy of "balancing" – a key component of the Realist theory. "The aspiration for power on the part of several nations, each trying either to maintain or overthrow the status quo, leads of necessity to a configuration that is called the balance of power" (Morgenthau, 1985: 187). Such balance of power can play out in different patterns and through different methods: (1) by divide and rule, (2) through compensations, (3) by armaments, or (4) through alliances (*ibid.*: 198-201). In the Council, where diplomacy and the game of negotiating are the core means to reach the end – the fulfillment of political interests – forming alliances are the most common method of balancing other units.

Several of the interviewees refer to the importance of the traditionally strong political and regional groups of the Council – the OIC, the Arab Group, the NAM, and the African Group – which were cohesive and through that powerful during the first years of the Council. By tilting the balance in their favor, and without a cohesive and powerful opposition – *e.g.* with the United States disengaged – the proportion of non-consensual adoptions and "hostile amendments" stayed relatively low during the first phase of the Council, even though this was not considered a harmonious phase by several of the interviewees. Still, as the development in the Council

shows, alliances are not everlasting. "Whether and for how long it will be operative depends upon the strength of the interests underlying it" (*ibid.*: 203-205). Constant alliances, those based on more general mutual interests as well as geography, are able to stay aligned as long as their interests are "mutual enough." However, as pointed out by Morgenthau, states' interests vary depending on the circumstances, and if the interests of some change, it may cause the end of an alliance. In their assessments, several of the interviewees point to how a geopolitical event like the Arab Spring led to a weakening of the powerful OIC, NAM, Arab Group, and African Group. The Arab Spring, which began in Tunisia towards the end of 2010 and spread as a wave of uprisings in many surrounding states in the region, influenced the impacted states' political interests and further the cohesiveness of the regional and political groups they were a part of. In the words of an interviewee, it "shook up the geopolitics on human rights," and much of the breeding ground for these alliances withered.

However, the descriptions of the Council show that an alliance does not necessarily have to be formal, as in established through a treaty or based on regionalism, to play an influential role. As pointed out by the Russian diplomat, in the recent years, states to a larger extent "fall in love over topics," and form different alliances based on what is discussed (Russian diplomat, 2017). In the second phase of the Council's development, a more informal and fluctuating coalition of states from all regions became influential. By taking on a "balancer"-role between Western states on one side and the OIC and African and Arab states on the other, the cross-regional, "bridge-building" alliance managed to influence the Council's dynamics and have substantial resolutions adopted on several thematic and country-specific initiatives.⁶⁰ At the same time, by being a "balancer," it avoided creating heavy polarization and increased intergovernmental conflict. As the statistical data show, the level of non-consensual adoption was quite constant through these years, and the proportion of "hostile amendments" even decreased compared to the first phase.

The trend of informal, but influential alliances continued in the Council. While the aforementioned "bridge-building" alliance lost influence when key diplomats left the Council, another cross-regional alliance of states emerged. And according to the Egyptian diplomat, this emerged as a reaction to the influence of the Western states, including the United States, the EU, and other allies (Essam, 2016). The leading states of the new informal alliance, the LMG

⁶⁰ In a balance of power-system, the "balancer" is a third element (in addition to the two poles) which "is not permanently identified with the policies of either nation or group of nations," but rather aims to uphold the balance by *e.g.* employing a bridge-building role (Morgenthau, 1985: 213).

– Russia, China, Cuba, Pakistan, and Egypt – found that by uniting, they could better balance the Western states and hence be a stronger unit in the power struggle. The method they applied to do so was, however, a more conflictual one. Knowing that it was difficult to form a majority alliance, diplomacy was sacrificed for a hardliner-approach. If not able to hinder decisions from being taken, the idea was to at least weaken them by proposing "hostile amendments" and subjecting resolutions to a vote. By enjoying "success" with the approach, *e.g.* when reopening negotiations on the Council-decision on reprisals in the Assembly's Third Committee, it gave Russia and their allies momentum to continue down the same path.

More recently, the LMG is no longer as coherent as before. This is, according to one interviewee, because of Russia's offensive approach. The Russian style – reflected in the statistical data on "hostile amendments" – may remind more of a "divide and rule"-approach in the struggle for power. The Russians have done (and still do) what they can to divide or at least weaken the opposition – which in the Council primarily is by proposing amendments and vote against resolutions. To summarize: whereas a middle-ground, "bridge-building" alliance enjoyed success in the second phase, the recent years have been dominated by a dynamic where it is "the extremes trying to pull the middle countries towards them, as opposed to the middle trying to pull the extremes into the center" (Splinter, 2017). Consequently, conflict rise.

The history of the Council – as described by key actors operating in it – reveals that the political interests of states determine the development in the Council. This is either because states individually are powerful enough to change the dynamics, or because they align to pursue their common interests, and through that become a powerful unit in the struggle for power. But what is shaping the states' interests, ultimately determining the development in the Council?

5.2 Why has the conflict in the Council increased?

The interviewees' assessments indicate that there are extraneous events which form the various units' interests. Whether it is more or less democratic government changes in key states or geopolitical events such as the Arab Spring, these factors shape states' interests and further their opportunity and willingness to influence the Council. Consequently, the Council reflects the state of affairs in international politics.

The Human Rights Council, with some delay and some skewing, more or less depicts the state of the world in the sense that it does pick up, to some degree, the geopolitical moods. In that sense, I think the increased tension in the Council, including in relation to some thematic resolutions,

also reflects the increased level of uncertainty globally. That is the biggest factor determining the evolution of and the political dynamics within the Council (Ineichen, 2017).

This view is also expressed by several other interviewees, including a North African diplomat who said: it is a fragmented Council, and that may indicate a more chaotic international political system (Northern African diplomat, 2017). Furthermore, in the words of Irminger from the Human Rights House Foundation: "The international system is at an edge, and the Human Rights Council is just a part of that ... Human rights is often the thing where the states put on their masks" but the Council still reflects the state of affairs in international power politics "surprisingly well" (Irminger, 2017).

These indicate, then, that the Council may be considered a microcosmos: a world in miniature. Although there are only 47 member-states in the Council, the key actors in international politics are nearly always members, hence also key actors inside the Council. Consequently, it is the same states that in general determine the dynamics and development both outside and inside the Council, either alone or through groups and alliances. Thus, the proposed explanatory model is as follows: The development in the Council – the dependent variable in this analysis – is determined by the political interests of the states operating in it (either alone or through alliances). Hence, the independent variable is states' political interests. The states' interests are, in turn, shaped by events and changes outside the Council. This in line with Morgenthau's argument that the circumstances influence states' interests, although the immediate interest always is power – in some form or other. Moreover, there are both necessary and sufficient conditions that must be present for this mechanism to play out. Changes in the political interests of states being a necessary one, and the wish of these states to influence the Council being a sufficient one.

In simplified terms, the suggested explanatory model is illustrated in the following figure.

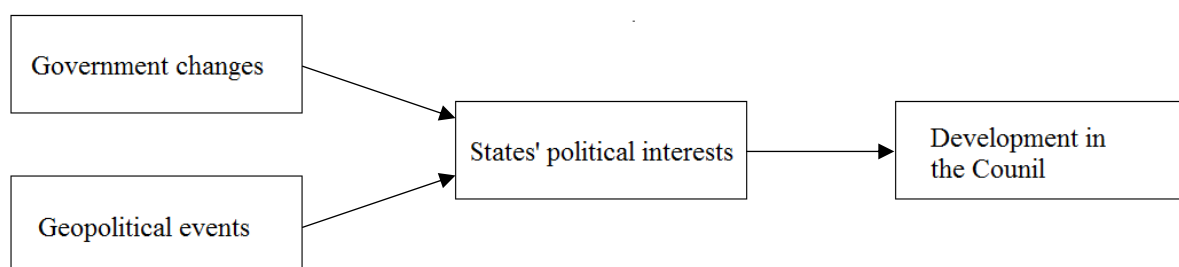


Figure 8: The explanatory model.

In metaphoric terms: When you shake a kaleidoscope, the patterns in the optic change. When the international system is shaken – whether by geopolitical events or government shifts – the patterns within the Council change. The Council's life from 2006 to 2016 – through its distinct phases – may thus be understood as "kaleidoscopic patterns of development."

The statistical data, as well as the unison assessments of the interviewees, leave no doubt that the debate climate within the Council has been "hotting up" since 2013. The Council's ability to agree upon what should be the international human rights standards, has severely decreased. Based on the proposed explanatory model, and the logic that the Council reflects the state of affairs in the wider international system, this may not come as a surprise. As argued by the senior OHCHR official: "If you have a world which is in chaos, how can you expect these 47 members to suddenly raise their hands and say peace and love?" (Senior OHCHR official, 2017). Thus, to explicitly answer the second part of the twofold research question: There are more disagreements, more uncertainty, more fragmentation, and more power politics in the international system, and this is reflected inside the Council as greater tension and more irreconcilable debates.

One interviewee paints a picture of a Council where political interests and antagonism currently, and for the recent years, have dominated at the expense of serious human rights discussions:

The Council is like a school playground in which many excited adolescent boys are engaged in seeing who will be the king of the castle. Too much of what is done in the Council is like adolescent gamesmanship, rather than serious diplomacy pursuing potentially important outcomes (Splinter, 2017).

Many states are seemingly less interested in engaging in serious discussions on human rights, than they are in ensuring that their political interests are heard, and ideally reflected in the adoptions. With less willingness to negotiate, the chances of reaching consensus falter, as the statistical findings illustrate.

5.3 Reflecting the evolution of a new world order?

More than reflecting upon the past 10 years of the Council, the interviewees also shared some thoughts on the Council's state of affairs *anno* 2017, as well as on its near future. Whereas the Commission underwent "five or six periods of time in 60 years," the Council has already gone

through three phases in ten years: "it is changing so incredibly quickly now," argued the senior OHCHR official (2017). Furthermore:

Now, we are probably getting into the fourth segment, which is totally different. It will be *the era of unpredictability* ... this may lead in many different directions and we will have to adjust ourselves, but that may be the final blow ... This could be the last one [phase of the Council] (*ibid.*).

A remarkable view from one who has followed the Council for its entire life, and a signal of the vibe that is currently spreading in parts of the Council. Moreover, the prediction is in line with a Realist view on the Council's future, which would be that it is viable as long as it coincides with the interests of the states taking part in it. Consequently, when it no longer corresponds to states' interests, it will wither. As stated by Irminger (2017), "the fear now is that the Council will become a weaker institution, and that will weaken the Office [OHCHR]", a development which would weaken the entire UN human rights machinery. "We need to look into how we are going to defend the legitimacy of not only the Council, but the international system" (*ibid.*).

Given the proposed causal chain – that the Council reflects the state of affairs in the wider international system – the development in international politics may indicate a pessimistic outlook for the Council. The long-governing order of the international system, based on liberal values, international law, and intergovernmental cooperation, as well as the challenges it faces, are comprehensively described and reflected upon by United States' former Secretary of State, the political strategist and realist Henry Kissinger in his most recent book.

The contemporary, now global Westphalian system – what colloquially is called the world community – has striven to curtail the anarchical nature of the world with an extensive network of international legal and organizational structures designed to foster open trade and a stable international finance system, establish accepted principles of resolving international disputes, and set limits on the conduct of wars when they do occur. This system of states now encompasses every culture and region. Its institutions have provided the neutral framework for the interactions of diverse societies – to a large extent independent of their respective values (2015: 7).

All United States' presidents since Harry S. Truman (1945-1953) have to different degrees made efforts to uphold "an inexorably expanding cooperative order of states observing common rules and norms" (Kissinger, 2015: 1). Furthermore, these presidents, regardless of party-affiliation, "have continued to urge other governments, often with great vehemence and eloquence, to

embrace the preservation and enhancement of human rights" (*ibid.*: 1-2). In 2017, however, the Council and the liberal order face more uncertainty and more unpredictability than in decades. In an article published on the first day of the 34th session of the Council in March 2017, *Politico* wrote that Secretary of State Rex Tillerson considers withdrawing the United States from the Council (Toosi and Johnson, 2017). Moreover, United States' current ambassador to the UN, Nikki Haley, recently called the Council "so corrupt" (Sengupta, 2017).

The political interests of the United States – which still should be considered a hegemon – are in change. The EU – which has been the main ally of the United States in the promotion and protection of the liberal order – is not as cohesive neither outside nor inside the Council anymore: "the dynamic of the 28 has really changed" (Irminger, 2017). In other words, the views and coherence of the traditionally strong proponents of the liberal world order are transforming. Kissinger states:

In the world of geopolitics, the order established and proclaimed as universal by the Western countries stands at a turning point. Its nostrums are understood globally, but there is no consensus about their application; indeed, concepts such as democracy, human rights, and international law are given such divergent interpretations that warring parties regularly invoke them against each other as battle cries. The system's rules have been promulgated but have proven ineffective absent active enforcement. The pledge of partnership and community has in some regions been replaced, or at least accompanied, by a harder-edged testing of limits (Kissinger, 2015: 364).

Kissinger emphasizes the importance of the United States continuing to be engaged at the international scene, to balance other units which are less interested in keeping or reinforcing the liberal world order. Nevertheless, the signals from the White House have so far indicated less international engagement from the United States, leaving more room to China, Russia, and other powerful (groups of) states to influence and direct the international system.⁶¹ If taking the chance to predict the development in this fast-paced climate, the Council may face a tough future. Whereas Russia, China and several of their like-minded states find little interest in progressing on human rights, and without a powerful and coherent EU or United States to balance these states, the UN human rights system may be heading for a recession.

Some of the interviewees did, however, suggest viable solutions to limit or at best reverse the current development in the Council. As in 2010, when the Council in many eyes was moving

⁶¹ Walter Russell Mead (2017), Stephen M. Walt (2016), and Stewart M. Patrick (2017), among others, have recently written articles on the Trump administration's foreign policy and the future of the liberal world order.

in an ascending direction – in terms of less conflict and more substantial adoptions – it is once again "time for the moderates to come back ... and we need to empower "the middle" ... we need the next generation of "a strong middle" and of strong diplomats" (Limon, 2017). And it is certainly in the interest of the small and middle-sized states to work as a "balancer" to decrease conflict and polarization, and to strengthen the Council and the UN. "If the big players are going to be disrupting the international system, what do the small countries do? It is in the small countries interest to have a system that is run by law, [rather] than a system that is run by power" (Irminger, 2017). Henceforth, they should "be defending the system, not status-quo, but defending the idea that this [the Council] is where things have to be negotiated and discussed" (*ibid.*). Given the decline and disinterest from some major powers, "there will be no leader [in the Council] anymore," and the room for a new cross-regional coalition of small and middle-sized states to take initiative, is wider (Senior OHCHR official, 2017).⁶²

This development in the Council – with more intergovernmental conflict and a tougher debate climate – is only one symptom of the challenging period for the liberal world order. The international system is pushed towards a state of more chaos, more fragmentation, and a tougher struggle for power, which is visible also inside the Council, and ultimately may harm the strength and universality of human rights. Irminger states that "in a way, we are in a time where we have to accept that the UN, unlike other regional mechanisms, is going to be one where decisions are actually not universal. But that threatens the universality of human rights, so that is the big issue here" (2017). Human rights and liberal values in general are meeting opposition from nationalism, populism, more autocratic state leaders, and geopolitical tension (Alston, 2016). Are we moving towards a new world order? In the words of the senior OHCHR official, we are at least moving into the era of unpredictability and uncertainty.

The kaleidoscope is shaken more often and harder than before. Frequently, new bizarre patterns unfold. A more fragmented, multifaceted system come to sight, outside as well as inside the UN Human Rights Council. There are solutions to reverse the development, but it takes the interest and effort of several states to make it. The question is whether such interests currently exist. As recently stated by the current High Commissioner for Human Rights: "Are we all together, or do we fall together?" (Al Hussein, 2017).

⁶² Both Jensen (2016) and Egeland (1989) have studied the potential and impact of small and middle-sized states in human rights work.

- PART FOUR -

6 Conclusions

6.1 Conclusion and value added

The rationale behind this research is to uncover and explain the development of the debate in the Council. This has been conducted on the basis of a twofold research question: *(1) What is the development of the debate in the UN Human Rights Council, and (2) why has the conflict among states increased?*

It started with an impression – that the debate climate in the Council had become increasingly tougher in the latter years. Quantitative method was used to investigate this further. By operationalizing "the debate" as the proportion of non-consensual adoptions and of "hostile amendments" proposed to resolutions, the statistical findings indicate that the debate in the Council has become more conflictual through the years, especially since 2013. Intergovernmental conflict is on the rise. Thus, the quantitative method helped formulate and concretize the second part of the research question: why the conflict among states have increased.

Qualitative data gathered through interviews with key actors in the Council – diplomats from a cross-regional selection of states, civil society representatives, and a senior OHCHR official – help nuance the impression given by the statistical findings. The interviewees describe a Council that always has been subject to some levels of conflict. However, they were in unison that the recent and current state of affairs in the Council is more conflictual than earlier. Moreover, through the interviewees' descriptions, experiences, and assessments of the Council, the theory evolved. They describe how the states' political interests dominate the debates. In particular, strong groups and alliances, as well as the most powerful states in the international system – when deciding to engage – have been the key factors in changing the Council's dynamics. In order to more thoroughly analyze this, thus answer the second part of the research question, the Realist theoretical approach as outlined by Hans J. Morgenthau was applied.

In the analysis, I argue that the development of the Council debate is determined by the states' power-political interests and their willingness to pursue these in the Council, either by themselves or through forming alliances with other states in the struggle for power. Furthermore, the states' interests are shaped by events taking place outside the Council, such as government changes or geopolitical events. Consequently, the Council reflects international politics – it is a microcosmos. Moreover, the changing patterns in the Council – through its

distinct phases – may be regarded as kaleidoscopic patterns of development: When the international system is shaken, the patterns within the Council change. Thus, as the international system is currently, and has been for some years, dominated by more uncertainty and fragmentation, more geopolitical tension and power politics, as well as larger challenges to the liberal world order, this development is reflected in the Council debate becoming more conflictual.

In other words, when the then United States' Secretary of State Cordell Hull, in November 1943 after the Moscow Conference, argued that the establishment of the UN would signify the end of power politics, he was undoubtedly wrong (Morgenthau, 1985: 38). Rather, it is evident that power politics would come to form the dynamics and drive the development in the intergovernmental organization.

Furthermore, there are published few comprehensive studies on the UN Human Rights Council. This thesis responds to that gap in the literature field. It both provides an in-depth analysis of the key actors and dynamics in the Council through its first 10 years, as well as offers a streamlined explanation for what drives the development within the Council. It is both important and relevant to understand the dynamics and development in the Council, not only to scholars with an interest in international relations, but also to those seeking to influence the making of international human rights standards, and those taking part in the drafting and negotiations of these.

As argued in the introductory chapter, this is a case study of what drives the development in intergovernmental norm-establishing organizations. The aim of a case study in the naturalist methodological tradition, is to create knowledge applicable to the broader universe in which the case belongs. In other words, the aim is to move "to a level of general statements." This thesis has sought to systemize the data gathered through both quantitative and qualitative methods in a theoretical framework – producing a general statement explaining the patterns in the studied phenomenon. Thus, the explanatory model offered in this thesis, may be regarded as such a general statement.

6.2 Limitations, alternative explanations, and further research

There are certain limitations of this research. These apply both to the methods used to gather data, as well as to the chosen theoretical approach. Still, where there are limitations and potential alternative explanations, there are also more research to be conducted.

There are both quantitative and qualitative methods applied to answer the research question. The contrast between the development as illustrated by the quantitative data – the statistical findings – and the qualitative data – the descriptions offered by the interviewees – is at times striking. Although both indicate increased intergovernmental conflict in the Council in the latter years, the statistics indicate that the first phases of the Council were relatively harmonious. On the other hand, several interviewees describe the first period as polarized and conflictual. In other words, the operationalization of the debate, which the statistical data rest on, are in compliance with the interviewees' assessments in some phases, but not in others. Where the statistical data provide a tangible, however oversimplified image of the development, the qualitative data offers more nuances, but at the same time rest on subjective impressions. Consequently, the phenomenon is best illuminated when relying on both types of data, while being aware of their respective strengths and weaknesses.

Furthermore, as expressed in the introductory chapter, there are potential challenges and pitfalls of interview as method. One is the validity of the findings. After all, the information that interviewees offer is based on their personal impressions and assessments of the Council, and the interviewees' presuppositions and memory comes into play. In other words, there may be human constraints affecting the data and thus the analysis and conclusions of this research. Still, by gathering information from primary sources, and by interviewing people with diverse backgrounds and perspectives on the Council's dynamics, I argue that the advantages trump the challenges of the method. There are, however, room for improvement in the number of interviewees which the research rest on. More interviewees, with other perspectives than those included, would provide even more details on the Council's work, procedures, and dynamics, potentially strengthening and enriching the findings.

With regards to the theoretical approach, the phenomenon is only observed through one theoretical lens. The classic Realist theory assume that all states are driven by power-political interests, neglecting the implications of states' diverse aims and thus their behavior. However, the Liberalist approach, as outlined by among others Andrew Moravcsik,⁶³ take such factors into consideration, emphasizing the diverse "national character" of states. Liberalist international relations theory also opens for the importance of other actors on the international scene, such as individuals, groups, institutions, and organizations. The potential role of the civil society in shaping the dynamics in the Council would thus be better illuminated if applying

⁶³ See *e.g.* Andrew Moravcsik's "Taking Preferences Seriously: A Liberal Theory of International Politics" (1997).

such a theoretical approach. Furthermore, the neoliberal institutionalist tradition – with Robert O. Keohane in the forefront – share the Realist view that international system is dominated by uncertainty and states' self-interests. However, they believe that intergovernmental cooperation through institutions and organizations – with the rules and procedures that include – can help overcome this uncertainty.⁶⁴ Consequently, such a theoretical lens would observe the data differently, putting more faith in the Council's role and influence as an organization. Nevertheless, the empirical data gathered in this research come in conflict with such a view. The diverse dynamics and distinct phases of the Council's life indicate that the Council in itself – as an organization – has little influence on the dynamics and development within it. Rather, in line with a classic Realist view, the Council is an arena shaped and directed by the states acting in it.

The Realist view does, however, have Constructivist elements. The Constructivist international relations theory (not to be confused with the methodological tradition constructivism), as outlined by among others Alexander Wendt,⁶⁵ emphasize that the international system – its rules, norms, and characteristics – are constructed and thus possible to change. This perspective would, in this thesis, be meaningful to explain how groups and alliances are formed based on the states' common perceptions of how the international system is and should be, further influencing them to work coherently in the Council to pursue these common interests and beliefs. Kissinger's description of how different orders – with distinct views and perceptions of the international system – challenge each other, has definite Constructivist components. However, the Realist argument for how states' interests shape the Council, is more in line with the interviewees' assessments, as well as the existing research on the Council, all pointing in a direction of the implications of power politics on the human rights debate.

Further research in the field may take various directions. In addition to observing the Council's development through other theoretical lenses, an alternative may be to use the explanatory model as a hypothesis for studying the dynamics and development in other intergovernmental organizations, such as the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE), the World Trade Organization (WTO), or other UN norm-establishing bodies. Another possibility would be to conduct a comparative case study of the Council and another intergovernmental

⁶⁴ See e.g. Robert O. Keohane's *After Hegemony: Cooperation and Discord in the World Political Economy* (1984).

⁶⁵ See e.g. Alexander Wendt's "Anarchy is What States Make of It: The Social Construction of Power Politics" (1992).

norm-establishing organization. Such a study would increase the potential for generalizing, alternatively problematize, the findings in this study. Ultimately, studying the fourth phase of the Council, as some argue that it now enters, is a potential future study. The liberal order, which both human rights and the Council rely on, is currently facing challenges – of diverse nature from diverse actors. Consequently, such a study would be highly relevant, considering the uncertainty and unpredictability in the future of the international system and the UN Human Rights Council.

Afterword

Jack Donnelly opens his article "Human Rights in the New World Order," published in 1992, with the following paragraph:

A climate of optimism pervades discussions of human rights today. The end of the Cold War, the wave of democratizations and liberalizations in the Third World, and the collapse of rights-abusive regimes in Europe and the Soviet Union have contributed to a sense that human rights will be better protected in the new (and still emerging) world order than in the old (Donnelly, 1992: 249).

A quarter century later, you can sense that the climate of optimism has changed to a climate of pessimism. But where Donnelly, in his article, argues for why the optimism in 1992 was unjustified, I will do the reverse exercise here: argue for the necessity of staying optimistic and committed to the task of promoting and protecting human rights, as well as the liberal world order.

One returning aspect of the interviews I conducted, was when the interviewees made sure to underline that there are positive developments and important decisions made by the Council. As stated by the OHCHR official, "it is incredible to see the world in a state of complete confusion and chaos with civil conflicts and wars, and nevertheless, you still have major breakthroughs [in the Council]" (Senior OHCHR official, 2017). Although the Commission left pitfalls the Council has not managed to avoid, both bodies have made substantial achievements. If "zooming out," several things are going in the "rights"-direction. Progress on thematic issues, such as the resolution adopted in 2016 establishing the first ever special procedures mandate on the protection against violence and discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity, works as a recent and valid example. In addition, fairly strong resolutions on reprisals and intimidation, on civil society and on human rights defenders are noticeable improvements (Irminger, 2017; Ineichen, 2017). Irminger from the Human Rights House Foundation further states:

Over the years, the Council has become much tougher in saying what it means in a clear way, and setting standards in an understandable, principled and clear way. Sometimes that means it is going to be a vote ... but compared to the language used eight years ago or even at the time of the Commission, you can go back to resolutions and really wonder what it means ... [Now] it has gained clarity (Irminger, 2017).

After all, clarity in the formulations of international human rights standards is key, considering that they apply to everyone and hence must be understandable. Furthermore, the ability of the Council to look at more country-situations, the conduction of emergency sessions, as well as giving human rights dimensions to conflicts, are stressed by several as positive developments. So are the special procedures mandates and the impressive building-up of the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), taken into consideration the general slowness of the UN system (Irminger, 2017). Above everything else, the Universal Periodic Review (UPR) is frequently highlighted as a success-story, and as the last non-politicized part of the Council's work. The truth regarding the latter may be discussed, but the UPR is still a procedure where most, if not all the states "put their mask on" and display their domestic human rights situation from its finest side.

A recurring criticism of the Council is its membership composition. At all times, there are member-states which show little interest in promoting and protecting human rights, both domestically and through the UN system. Thus, the Council is often argued to be an arena where human rights violators engage in order to control which decisions are taken, as well as to use the Council as a smokescreen for their domestic human rights situations. Notwithstanding, given that the Council's membership is distributed on all regions, with all sorts of states participating, its adoptions should be granted substantial legitimacy.

Furthermore, as the connection between the development in the Council and in the wider international system is drawn continuously throughout this thesis, it is important to nuance the changes that the international system is currently going through. Solely based on media coverage, it seems we are witnessing a dramatic period – a rather exceptional age. It is true that we may be at a juncture. This could be a watershed, given the many political changes challenging the liberal order, including global pushbacks on human rights. Still, in a historical perspective – including the Hundred Years' War, the development of the Westphalian state, the American and French Revolution, the emergence of industrialism, as well as two World Wars and a lengthy Cold War in the twentieth century – it might be that we now only face a medium sized wave of change, and no rogue one.

To conclude, human rights and liberal values are currently meeting heavy opposition from populism, nationalism, and state leaders convinced that security must trump fundamental rights. That is, however, not a trade-off necessary to make. And although it is easy to draw the comparison to the 1930s and the interwar period, it is more important than ever to avoid being

overly pessimistic, in worst case causing a self-fulfilling prophecy. After all, human rights has always been a struggle – it "has never been a consensus project" (Alston, 2016).

Thus, leave it no doubt: Promoting and protecting human rights is still the best approach to strengthen human rights. There is no need for a new invention to fulfill that task.

Bibliography

- Al Hussein, Z. R. (2016). "Strengthening the Human Rights Council's focus and impact on implementation and accountability," *International Service for Human Rights (ISHR)*. Available at: <https://www.ishr.ch/news/strengthening-human-rights-councils-focus-and-impact-implementation-and-accountability> (accessed April 2017).
- Al Hussein, Z. R. (2017). "High Commissioner for Human Rights on the activities of his Office and recent human rights." Available at: <http://www.ohchr.org/EN/NewsEvents/Pages/DisplayNews.aspx?NewsID=21316> (accessed May 2017).
- Alston, P. (2006). "Reconceiving the UN Human Rights Regime: Challenges Confronting the New UN Human Rights Council," *Melbourne Journal of International Law* 7.
- Alston, P. (2016). "The Populist Challenge to Human Rights," *London School of Economics and Political Science*, public lecture 1 December 2016. Available at: <http://www.lse.ac.uk/website-archive/newsAndMedia/videoAndAudio/channels/publicLecturesAndEvents/player.aspx?id=3667> (accessed May 2017).
- Annan, K. (2005). *Address to Geneva Human Rights Commission*. Available at: <http://www.un.org/press/en/2005/sgsm9808.doc.htm> (accessed January 2017).
- Annan, K. (2006). *Message to the second session of the Human Rights Council*. Available at: <http://www.un.org/press/en/2006/sgsm10641.doc.htm> (accessed January 2017).
- Arbour, L. (2005). *Time for new UN rights body is now as status quo cannot continue, says top official*. Available at: <http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=14053#.WL1ZBDs182x> (accessed March 2017).
- Bailey, M. A., Strezhnev, A. & Voeten, E. (2015). "Estimating Dynamic State Preferences from United Nations Voting Data" *Journal of Conflict Resolution*: 1-27.
- Ball, M. (1951). "Bloc Voting in the General Assembly" *International Organization* 51 (1): 3-31.

- BBC (2012a). *Russia election: Vladimir Putin declares victory*. Available at: <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-17252190> (accessed April 2017).
- BBC (2012b). *China's new party chief Xi Jinping's speech*. Available at: <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-china-20338586> (accessed April 2017).
- BBC (2017). *Arab Uprisings*. Available at: <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-12813859> (accessed April 2017).
- Berg, H. (2017). Email-correspondence. 11 March 2017.
- Berry, J. (2002). "Validity and Reliability Issues in Elite Interviewing," *PS: Political Science and Politics* 35 (4): 679-682.
- Boockmann, B. and Dreher, A. (2011). "Do human rights offenders oppose human rights resolutions in the United Nations?" *Public Choice* 146 (3/4): 443-467.
- Chilton, A. S. and Golan-Vilella, R. (2016). "Did the Creation of the United Nations Human Rights Council Produce a Better 'Jury'?" *Harvard International Law Journal* 58: 7-15.
- Cox, E. (2010). "State Interests and the Creation and Functioning of the United Nations Human Rights Council," *Journal of International Law and International Relations* 6 (1): 87-120.
- de Frouville, O. (2011). "Building a Universal System for the Protection of Human Rights: The Way Forward" in Bassiouni, M. C. and Schabas, W. A. (eds.) *New Challenges for the UN Human Rights Machinery*. Cambridge: Intersentia Publishing Ltd.
- Essam, A. (2016). "The Like Minded Group (LMG): Speaking truth to power," *Universal Rights Group*, 10 May 2016. Available at: <http://www.universal-rights.org/blog/like-minded-group-lmg-speaking-truth-power/> (accessed February 2017).
- Donnelly, J. (1992). "Human Rights in the New World Order," *World Policy Journal* 9 (2): 249-277.
- Egeland, J. (1988). *Impotent superpower – potent small state: potentials and limitations of human rights objectives in the foreign policies of the United States and Norway*. Oslo: Norwegian University Press.
- Eliasson, J. (2006). *Statement by the President of the United Nations General Assembly*. Available at:

http://www.ohchr.org/Documents/HRBodies/HRCouncil/RegularSession/Session1/jan_eliasson.pdf (accessed January 2017).

Freedman, R. (2013). "The United Nations Human Rights Council: More of the Same?" *Wisconsin International Law Journal* 31 (2): 209-251.

General Assembly resolution (2006). *Human Rights Council*, A/RES/60/251 (15 March 2006).

Ghanea, N. (2006). "From UN Commission on Human Rights to UN Human Rights Council: One Step Forwards or Two Steps Sideways?" *The International and Comparative Law Quarterly* 55 (3): 695-705.

Gujadhur, S. and Lamarque, T. (2015). "Ensuring Relevance, Driving Impact: The evolution and future direction of the UN Human Rights Council's resolution system," *Universal Rights Group Policy Report*, Geneva, Switzerland, January 2015.

Hancké, B. (2013). *Intelligent Research Design: A guide for beginning researchers in the social sciences*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Hosli, M. O., van Kampen, E., Meijerink, F. and Tennis, K. (2010). *Voting Cohesion in the United Nations General Assembly: The Case of the European Union*. Unpublished paper presented at ECPR Fifth Pan-European Conference. Porto.

Houghton, R. (2013). "Democracy at the UN Human Rights Council? Yeah Right!" *Annual Conference*, Nottingham 2013.

Hug, S. and Lukács, R. (2014). "Preferences or blocs? Voting in the United Nations Human Rights Council," *The Review of International Organizations* 9: 83-106.

Human Rights Council resolution (2009). *Situation of human rights in the Sudan*, A/RES/11/10 (18 June 2009).

Human Rights Watch (2013a). *Laws of Attrition*. Available at: <https://www.hrw.org/report/2013/04/24/laws-attrition/crackdown-russias-civil-society-after-putins-return-presidency> (accessed April 2017).

Human Rights Watch (2013b). *World Report 2013: China. Events of 2012*. Available at: <https://www.hrw.org/world-report/2013/country-chapters/china-and-tibet> (accessed April 2017).

- Hunt, L. (2007). *Inventing Human Rights. A History*. New York: W. W. Norton & Company.
- Hurwitz, L. (1975). "The EEC in the United Nations: The Voting Behaviour of Eight Countries, 1948-1973," *Journal of Common Market Studies* 13 (3): 224-243.
- Ineichen, M. (2017). Interview on Skype. 6 April 2017.
- Irminger, F. (2017). Interview at Human Rights House Foundation, Geneva. 22 February 2017.
- Jensen, S. L. B. (2016). *The Making of International Human Rights: The 1960s, Decolonization, and the Reconstruction of Global Values*. New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Keohane, R. O. (1967). "The Study of Political Influence in the General Assembly," *International Organization* 21 (2): 221-237.
- Keohane, R. O. (1984). *After Hegemony: Cooperation and Discord in the World Political Economy*. Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press.
- Kim, S. Y. and Russett, B. (1996). "The New Politics of Voting Alignments in the United Nations General Assembly," *International Organization* 50 (4): 629-652.
- King, G., Keohane, R. O. and Verba, S. (1994). *Designing Social Inquiry: Scientific Inference in Qualitative Research*. Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press.
- Kissinger, H. (2015). *World Order*. London: Penguin Publishers.
- Langford, M. and Fukuda-Parr, S. (2012). "The Turn to Metrics," *Nordic Journal of Human Rights* 30 (3): 222-238.
- Lauren, P.G. (2007). "To Preserve and Build on its Achievements and to Redress its Shortcomings: The Journey from the Commission on Human Rights to the Human Rights Council," *Human Rights Quarterly* 29 (2): pp. 307-345.
- Lebovic, J. H. and Voeten, E. (2006). "The Politics of Shame: The Condemnation of Country Human Rights Practices in the UNCHR," *International Studies Quarterly* 50: 861-888.
- Leech, B. L. (2002). "Asking Questions: Techniques for Semistructured Interviews," *PS: Political Science and Politics* 35 (4): 665-668.

- Lijphart, A. (1963). "The Analysis of Bloc Voting in the General Assembly: A Critique and a Proposal," *The American Political Science Review* 57 (4): 902-917.
- Limon, M. (2017). Interview in Palais des Nations, Geneva. 2 March 2017.
- Limon, M. and Power. H. (2014). "History of the United Nations Special Procedures Mechanism. Origins, Evolution and Reform," *Universal Rights Group Policy Report, Geneva, Switzerland, September 2014*.
- Luif, P. (2003). "EU Cohesion in the UN General Assembly," *Occasional Papers* 49 (Paris: European Union Institute for Security Studies).
- Lynch, C. (2009). "U.S. to Join U.N. Human Rights Council, Reversing Bush Policy," *Washington Post*, 31 March 2009. Available at: <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2009/03/31/AR2009033102782.html> (accessed April 2017).
- Lyons, G. M., Baldwin, D. A. and McNemar, D. W. (1977). "The 'Politicization' Issue in the UN Specialized Agencies," *Proceedings of the Academy of Political Science* 32 (4): 81-92.
- Mallory, C. (2013). "Membership and the UN Human Rights Council," *Canadian Journal of Human Rights* 2 (1): 1-37.
- Mead, W. R. (2017). "The Jacksonian Revolt," *Foreign Affairs*, Marc/April 2017. Available at: <https://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/united-states/2017-01-20/jacksonian-revolt> (accessed May 2017).
- Moravcsik, A. (1997). "Taking Preferences Seriously: A Liberal Theory of International Politics," *International Organization* 51 (4): 513-553.
- Morgenthau, H. J. (1985). *Politics Among Nations. The Struggle for Power and Peace*, 6th ed. New York: Alfred A. Knopf.
- Moses, J. and Knutsen, T. L. (2012) *Ways of Knowing: Competing Methodologies on Social and Political Research* (2. utgave). New York: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Newcombe, H., Ross, M. and Newcombe, A. G. (1970). "United Nations Voting Patterns," *International Organization* 24 (1): 100-121.
- Northern African diplomat (2017). Interview in Palais des Nations, Geneva. 1 March 2017.

- OHCHR (2017a). *United Nations Human Rights Council*. Available at: <http://www.ohchr.org/EN/HRBodies/HRC/Pages/AboutCouncil.aspx> (accessed September 2016).
- OHCHR (2017b). *Membership of the Human Rights Council*. Available at: <http://www.ohchr.org/EN/HRBodies/HRC/Pages/Membership.aspx> (accessed January 2017).
- OHCHR (2017c). *Universal Periodic Review*. Available at: <http://www.ohchr.org/EN/HRBodies/UPR/Pages/UPRMain.aspx> (accessed March 2017).
- OHCHR (2017d). *Special Procedures of the Human Rights Council*. Available at: <http://www.ohchr.org/EN/HRBodies/SP/Pages/Welcomepage.aspx> (accessed February 2017).
- OHCHR (2017e). *Status of ratification*. Available at: <http://indicators.ohchr.org/> (accessed April, 2017).
- Pakistani diplomat (2017). Interview in Palais des Nations, Geneva. 28 February 2017.
- Patrick, S. M. (2017). "Trump and World Order," *Foreign Affairs*, March/April 2017. Available at: <https://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/world/2017-02-13/trump-and-world-order> (accessed May 2017).
- Permanent Mission of India (2016). *Statement by Shri Ajit Kumar, Ambassador and PR of India to the UN in Geneva on behalf of Like Minded Group at Human Rights Council*. Available at: <http://www.pmindiaun.org/pages.php?id=1335> (accessed January 2017).
- Permanent Mission of Switzerland (2015). *The Human Rights Council. A Practical Guide*. Available at: https://www.eda.admin.ch/content/dam/eda/en/documents/publications/InternationaleOrganisationen/Uno/Human-rights-Council-practical-guide_en (accessed September 2016).
- Permanent Mission of the Arab Republic of Egypt (2014). *Statement by H.E. Ambassador Dr. Walid Mahmoud Abdelnasser*. The Human Rights Council 25th Regular Session, General Comments.

- Rahmani-Ocora, L. (2006). "Giving the Emperor Real Clothes: The UN Human Rights Council," *Global Governance* 12: 15-20.
- Rathgeber, T. (2012). "New Prospects for Human Rights? The Human Rights Council between the Review Process and the Arab Spring," *Friedrich Ebert Stiftung*. Available at: <http://library.fes.de/pdf-files/iez/global/08961.pdf> (accessed February 2017).
- Rathgeber, T. (2013). "Performance and Challenges of the UN Human Rights Council," *Friedrich Ebert Stiftung*. Available at: <http://library.fes.de/pdf-files/iez/global/09680.pdf> (accessed March 2017).
- Rathgeber, T. (2014). "UN Human Rights Council: Challenges for Its Next Presidency," *Friedrich Ebert Stiftung*. Available at: <http://library.fes.de/pdf-files/iez/global/11142.pdf> (accessed March 2017).
- Rousseau, J-J. ([1750] 2008) in Betts, C. (eds.) *The Social Contract*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Russett, B. M. (1966). "Discovering Voting Groups in the United Nations," *American Political Science Review* 60 (2): 327-339.
- Russian diplomat (2017). Interview in Palais des Nations, Geneva. 3 March 2017.
- Scannella, P. and Splinter, P. (2007). "The United Nations Human Rights Council: A Promise to be Fulfilled," *Human Rights Law Review* (7) 1: 41-72.
- Seligman, S. (2011). "Politics and principle at the UN Human Rights Commission and Council (1992–2008)," *Israel Affairs* 17 (4): 520-54.
- Sengupta, S. (2017). "Nikki Haley Calls United Nations Human Rights Council 'So Corrupt'," *New York Times*, 29 March 2017. Available at: https://www.nytimes.com/2017/03/29/world/nikki-haley-un-human-rights-council-corrupt.html?_r=0 (accessed May 2017).
- Senior OHCHR official (2017). Interview in Palais Wilson, Geneva. 23 February 2017.
- Short, K. (2008). "From Commission to Council: Has the United Nations Succeeded in Creating a Credible Human Rights Body?" *International Journal on Human Rights* 5 (9): 147-156.
- Sjøberg, G. (2017). Interview in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Oslo. 26 January 2017.

- Southern African diplomat (2017). Interview in Palais des Nations, Geneva. 2 March 2017.
- Splinter, P. (2017). Interview at the International Committee of the Red Cross, Geneva. 22 February 2017.
- Tansey, O. (2007). "Process Tracing and Elite Interviewing: A Case for Non-Probability Sampling," *PS: Political Science and Politics* 40 (4): 765-772.
- Terlingen, Y. (2007). "The Human Rights Council: A New Era in UN Human Rights Work?" *Ethics & International Affairs* 21 (2): 167-178.
- The Economist (2006). *A Caterpillar in a Lipstick?* Available at: <http://www.economist.com/node/5577499> (accessed January 2017).
- Toosi, N. and Johnson, E. (2017). "Sources: U.S. considers quitting U.N. Human Rights Council," *Politico*. Available at: <http://www.politico.com/story/2017/02/trump-administration-united-nations-human-rights-council-235399> (accessed May 2017).
- United Nations (2011). *Security Council Approves 'No-Fly Zone' over Libya, Authorizing 'All Necessary Measures' to Protect Civilians, by Vote of 10 in Favour with 5 Abstentions*. Available at: <https://www.un.org/press/en/2011/sc10200.doc.htm> (accessed April, 2017).
- United Nations (2013). *General Assembly Adopts 68 Resolutions, 7 Decisions as It Takes Action on Reports of Its Third Committee*. Available at: <https://www.un.org/press/en/2013/ga11475.doc.htm> (accessed April 2017).
- United Nations (2017a). *United Nations Regional Groups of Member States*. Available at: <http://www.un.org/depts/DGACM/RegionalGroups.shtml> (accessed January 2017).
- United Nations (2017b). *Charter of the United Nations*. Available at: <http://www.un.org/en/charter-united-nations/> (accessed January 2017).
- United Nations (2017c). *Main Organs*. Available at: <http://www.un.org/en/sections/about-un/main-organs/> (accessed January 2017).
- United Nations (2017d). *UN resolutions*. Available at: <http://ask.un.org/faq/15010> (accessed January 2017).

- United Nations (2017e). *Security Council – Veto List*. Available at:
<http://research.un.org/en/docs/sc/quick> (Accessed April 2017).
- Universal Rights Group (2016). *UN Human Rights Resolutions Portal*. Available at:
<http://www.universal-rights.org/human-rights/human-rights-resolutions-portal/>
(accessed September 2016).
- Voeten, E. (2000). "Clashes in the Assembly," *International Organization* 54 (2): 185-216.
- Walt, S. M. (2016). "The Collapse of the Liberal World Order," *Foreign Policy*, 26 June 2016.
Available at: <http://foreignpolicy.com/2016/06/26/the-collapse-of-the-liberal-world-order-european-union-brexit-donald-trump/> (accessed May 2017).
- Wendt, A. (1992). "Anarchy is what States make of it: The Social Construction of Power Politics," *International Organization* 46 (2): 391-425.
- WEOG diplomat (2017). Interview in Geneva. 24 February 2017.
- White House (2010). *National Security Strategy*. 27 May 2010, Washington D.C. Available at: <http://nssarchive.us/national-security-strategy-2010/> (accessed May 2017).
- Wouters, J. and Meuwissen, K. (2013). "The European Union at the UN Human Rights Council: Multilateral Human Rights Protection Coming of Age?" *Leuven Centre for Global Governance Studies*, Working Paper no. 126. Available at:
https://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=2363523 (accessed April 2017).

Appendices

Appendix 1: Dataset on adopted resolutions and amendments

Sessions	Total resolutions	Consensus	Voted	Total amendments
HRC 1 (2006)	5	4	1	0
HRC 2	5	2	3	1
HRC 3	4	2	2	2
HRC 4 (2007)	10	7	3	0
HRC 5	2	2	0	0
HRC 6	37	30	7	3
HRC 7 (2008)	36	24	12	3
HRC 8	14	12	2	0
HRC 9	19	16	3	0
HRC 10 (2009)	33	21	12	0
HRC 11	12	9	3	1
HRC 12	28	24	4	0
HRC 13 (2010)	27	19	8	0
HRC 14	16	13	3	1
HRC 15	28	20	8	1
HRC 16 (2011)	36	25	11	0
HRC 17	25	17	8	0
HRC 18	28	22	6	2
HRC 19 (2012)	39	25	14	2
HRC 20	22	18	4	0
HRC 21	33	25	8	0
HRC 22 (2013)	34	20	14	15
HRC 23	26	19	7	7
HRC 24	35	28	7	17
HRC 25 (2014)	38	23	15	22
HRC 26	32	23	9	5
HRC 27	32	24	8	19
HRC 28 (2015)	34	20	14	8
HRC 29	25	18	7	13
HRC 30	29	18	11	10
HRC 31 (2016)	37	24	13	42
HRC 32	33	24	9	54
HRC 33	30	21	9	30
Total	844	599	245	258

Appendix 2: List of interviewees

Florian Irminger, Head of Advocacy at the Human Rights House Foundation (HRHF). Hired to establish HRHF's presence in Geneva in 2008 and worked there since, overseeing HRHF's Advocacy Programme and its presence in Geneva and Brussels. The interview took place at his office in Geneva on 22 February 2017. The interview was recorded.

Geir Sjøberg, Policy Director for Human Rights, Norway's Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Previously working in the UN Human Rights Council. Conversation at his office in the MFA in Oslo on 26 January 2017.

Harriet E. Berg, Senior Advisor in Norway's Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Former Minister Counsellor and head of the human rights team at Norway's Permanent Mission to the UN in Geneva. Email-correspondence on 11 March 2017.

Marc Limon, Executive Director at the think tank Universal Rights Group (URG). Former diplomat working in the Council. The interview took place in the Serpentine Bar in Palais des Nations on 2 March 2017. The interview was recorded.

Michael Ineichen, Programme Manager and Human Rights Council Advocacy Director at the International Service for Human Rights (ISHR). Worked at ISHR since 2006. Skype interview on 6 April 2017.

Northern African diplomat (anonymized), diplomat from a Northern African state working in the Council. The interview took place in Palais des Nations, 1 March 2017.

Peter Splinter, diplomat in the Commission on Human Rights from 1994 to 1998, the UN Geneva Representative of Amnesty International in the Commission from 2004 to 2006 and in the Council from 2006 to 2016. The interview took place in the cafeteria of the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) in Geneva on 22 February 2017. The interview was recorded.

Pakistani diplomat (anonymized), diplomat from Pakistan working in the Council. The interview took place in Serpentine Bar in Palais des Nations on 28 February 2017.

Russian diplomat (anonymized), diplomat from Russia working in the Council. The interview took place in Palais des Nations on 3 March 2017.

Senior OHCHR official (anonymized), senior official at the UN Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR). The interview took place at Wilson Palace in Geneva on 23 February 2017.

Southern African diplomat (anonymized), diplomat from a Southern African state working in the Council. The interview took place in Serpentine Bar in Palais des Nations on 2 March 2017.

WEOG diplomat (anonymized), diplomat from a state in the Western European and Others Group (WEOG) working in the Council. The interview took place in the diplomat's office in Geneva on 24 February 2017.

Appendix 3: Interview guide

10 out of the 12 interviews (those conducted in Geneva and on Skype) were structured around the following questions. They were all semi-structured interviews, meaning that they unfolded as a conversation with the interviewee. Consequently, not all questions were asked explicitly during each interview, but all topics were touched upon. The interviews lasted somewhere between 20 minutes and an hour.

1. Describe your position in/relation to the Human Rights Council?
2. For how long have you worked in/followed the Human Rights Council?
3. Have you had other positions/jobs working with international human rights/negotiations?
If so, what/which/where?
4. How do you consider the development of the debate in the Human Rights Council since its establishment in 2006? Do you have any examples?
5. From your point of view, how do you regard the current level of agreement/conflict in the Council?
6. Resolution 60/251, establishing the Council, states that "the methods of work of the Council shall be transparent, fair and impartial and shall enable genuine dialogue, be results-oriented, allow for subsequent follow-up discussions to recommendations and their implementation and also allow for substantive interaction with special procedures and mechanisms". How is this reflected in today's negotiation processes?
7. My statistical data suggests that disagreements/polarization between (groups of) states in the Council seems to increase, what is your impression of this?
8. The statistical data further suggests that disagreements/polarization between (groups of) states in the Council increased noticeably in 2013. What happened in 2013 which might have caused this?
9. Why the increased polarization in the Council? Do you have any hypothesis explaining this?
 - *Is it linked to the nature of human rights; universalism vs. cultural relativism?*
 - *Is it caused by the increase in details in the resolution texts?*
 - *Is it caused by the types of rights being negotiated now, and those being more specific and linked to more specific groups than before?*
 - *May it reflect the state of affairs in international politics at large?*
 - *May it be that conflict move in waves/cycles?*
10. Which states do you believe contribute to the increased level of conflict in the Council?

11. Compared to the Commission on Human Rights and the time before its closing down, do you see any similarities with today?
12. How do you believe political factors influence the work and results of the Council, if they do?
13. What positive developments are there in the Council? Is there any progress in the Council's work since the establishment in 2006? Please exemplify.
14. What role does the Human Rights Council have in international human rights, and in your opinion what should the Council's role be?
15. How do you picture the work and role of the HRC to be in the close and long future?
16. Is there something you would like to add that has not been touched upon?

Appendix 4: Voting studies procedure

The method applied to construct the voting maps presented in part three of the thesis is influenced by the approach used by several scholars before. The main logic is "cardinal measures of voting," meaning that the voting alternatives are coded with a number. The coding must include all the options that member-states have when taking action on a resolution: *in favor*, *against*, *abstain* or be *absent*. Absence and abstaining on a resolution is not considered the same. A state's absence during consideration of resolutions does not necessarily mean that the state disapproves of the resolution (Lijphart, 1963; Voeten, 2013; Bailey, Strezhnev and Voeten, 2015). It is simply difficult to know the reasons for a state's absence.⁶⁶ Henceforth, "[t]he best solution is to take absences for what they are – a lack of essential data – and so not use those roll-calls at all" (Lijphart, 1963: 910). Cardinal measures of voting are, therefore, applied only on three of the voting alternatives, while not including absences.⁶⁷

To make the two most obvious positions easily distinguishable from each other, a vote in favor of a resolution, indicating support, is coded with 0 (zero). In contrast, a *no*-vote, signaling disapproval of the resolution, is coded with 100. An abstention is more difficult to code, as a state may abstain on a resolution for several reasons. According to other scholars, abstention should be understood as a weaker signal of disapproval, or as partly approving and partly disapproving of an initiative (Lijphart, 1963; Luif, 2003; Voeten, 2012). "It seems reasonable to credit a partial agreement with half the weight of a complete agreement," Lijphart argues (1963: 910). This logic is applied here, and an abstention is therefore coded with 50.

In favor	0
Abstention	50
Against	100

The next stage of the analytic process is aggregation of the states' voting, in order to find patterns. The voting of each state on all the resolutions is therefore added. As states are only a Council-member for three years, and as there are elections each year to change a proportion of the members, some states have voted on many of the resolutions in the dataset, others have voted on few. To take this into account when aggregating state's voting, the total sum of each state is divided on the number of resolutions they have voted on. Thus, each state end at a score

⁶⁶ It could be uncertain about what to vote and decide not to show, or it may not have the capacity to be present during all considerations of resolutions and choose only to show up for discussions on topics most relevant to their political priorities.

⁶⁷ Absences are illustrated with an *x* in the dataset. See appendix 5 and 6.

between 0-100. Given that each state's voting pattern is based on a different amount of resolutions, the strength of the findings varies some.

In order to categorize the states, five symmetrical categories are created. The first category consists of a group of states with a final score between 0-20: those most positive to the resolutions in the selection. The second category, termed the "positive abstentionists," are those with a final score between 20,1-40. The third category, the "abstentionists," are those in aggregate abstaining on the resolutions, with a final score between 40,1-60. The fourth category consists of those states either abstaining or voting against the resolutions – the "negative abstentionists." They have a final score between 60,1-80. The fifth and last category consists of the states which are most negative to the resolutions in the selection, with a final score between 80,1-100. In the voting maps to be presented in the analysis, the five categories have been coded with a color each.

Most positive	0-20
Positive abstentionist	20,1-40
Abstentionist	40,1-60
Negative abstentionist	60,1-80
Most negative	80,1-100

Appendix 5: Datasets voting patterns 2006-2009

All OIC/NAM/Arab/African resolutions voted over, 2006-2007.

Topic (#):	Spec. Procedures (2/1)	Israel (2/3)	OPT (2/4)	OPT (3/1)	Racism (3/2)	Religion (4/9)	6
Latin American & Caribbean States							
Argentina	50	0	0	0	0	50	100
Brazil	0	0	0	0	0	50	50
Cuba	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Ecuador	0	0	0	0	0	50	50
Guatemala	100	50	0	0	0	100	250
Mexico	100	0	0	0	0	0	100
Peru	100	0	0	0	0	50	150
Uruguay	50	0	0	0	0	50	100
African States							
Algeria	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Cameroon	0	50	50	50	0	0	150
Djibouti	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Gabon	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Ghana	0	0	0	0	0	50	50
Mali	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Mauritius	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Morocco	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Nigeria	0	0	0	0	0	50	50
Senegal	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
South Africa	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Tunisia	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Zambia	0	0	0	0	0	50	50
Asia-Pacific States							
Bahrain	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Bangladesh	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
China	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
India	0	0	0	0	0	50	50
Indonesia	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Japan	0	50	0	50	100	100	300
Jordan	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Malaysia	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Pakistan	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Phillipines	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
ROK	100	50	0	0	100	100	350
Saudi Arabia	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Sri Lanka	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Eastern European States							
Azerbaijan	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Czech Rep.	100	50	0	50	100	100	400
Poland	100	50	0	50	100	100	400
Romania	100	50	0	50	100	100	400
Russian Fed.	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Ukraine	100	50	0	50	50	100	350
Western European & Others Group							
Canada	100	100	100	100	100	100	600
Finland	100	50	0	50	100	100	400

France	100	50	0	50	100	100	400
Germany	100	50	0	50	100	100	400
Netherlands	100	50	0	50	100	100	400
Switzerland	100	50	0	50	100	100	400
UK	100	50	0	50	100	100	400

All OIC/NAM/Arab/African resolutions voted over, 2007-2008.

Topic (#):	U.C.M. * (6/7)	OPT (6/19)	Racism (6/21)	Racism (6/22)	Racism (6/23)	OPT (7/1)	OPT (7/18)	Religion (7/19)	Israel (7/30)	Racism (7/33)	10
Latin American & Caribbean States											
Bolivia	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	50	0	0	50
Brazil	0	0	0	50	0	0	0	50	0	0	100
Cuba	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Guatemala	0	50	0	50	0	50	0	50	50	0	250
Mexico	0	0	0	50	0	0	0	50	0	0	100
Nicaragua	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Peru	0	0	0	50	0	0	0	50	0	0	100
Uruguay	0	0	50	50	0	0	0	50	0	0	150
African States											
Angola	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	x	0	0	0
Cameroon	0	50	0	0	0	50	0	0	50	0	150
Djibouti	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Egypt	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Gabon	0	0	x	x	x	0	0	50	0	0	50
Ghana	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	50	0	0	50
Madagascar	0	50	0	0	0	0	0	50	0	0	100
Mali	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Mauritius	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	50	0	0	50
Nigeria	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Senegal	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
South Africa	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Zambia	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	50	0	0	0
Asia-Pacific States											
Bangladesh	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
China	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
India	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	50	0	0	50
Indonesia	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Japan	100	50	50	100	50	50	0	50	50	100	600
Jordan	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Malaysia	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Pakistan	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Phillipines	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Qatar	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
ROK	50	50	50	100	50	50	0	50	50	100	550
Saudi Arabia	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Sri Lanka	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

Eastern European States											
Azerbaijan	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Bosnia & Herz.	100	50	100	100	100	50	0	x	50	100	650
Romania	100	50	100	100	100	50	0	100	50	100	750
Russian Fed.	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Slovenia	100	50	100	100	100	50	0	100	50	100	750
Ukraine	50	50	50	100	50	50	0	100	50	100	600
Western European & Others Group											
Canada	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	1000
France	100	50	100	100	100	50	0	100	50	100	750
Germany	100	50	100	100	100	50	0	100	50	100	750
Italy	100	50	100	100	100	50	0	100	50	100	750
Netherlands	100	50	100	100	100	50	0	100	50	100	750
Switzerland	100	50	100	100	100	0	0	100	50	100	700
UK	100	50	100	100	100	50	0	100	50	100	750

**Universal Coercive Measures*

All OIC/NAM/Arab/African resolutions voted over, 2008-2009.

Topic (#):	U.C.M. (9/4)	OPT (9/18)	Israel (10/17)	OPT (10/18)	OPT (10/19)	OPT (10/21)	FoRB (10/22)	Racism (10/30)	DRC (10/33)	9	
Latin American & Caribbean States											
Argentina	0	0	0	0	0	0	50	0	0	50	
Bolivia	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Brazil	0	0	0	0	0	0	50	0	0	50	
Chile	0	0	0	0	0	0	100	0	0	100	
Cuba	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Mexico	0	0	0	0	0	0	50	0	0	50	
Nicaragua	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	50	50	
Uruguay	0	0	0	0	0	0	50	0	0	50	
African States											
Angola	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Burkina Faso	0	0	0	0	0	0	50	0	0	50	
Cameroon	0	50	50	0	50	50	0	0	0	200	
Djibouti	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Egypt	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Gabon	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Ghana	0	0	0	0	0	0	50	0	0	50	
Madagascar	x	x	0	0	0	0	50	0	0	50	
Mauritius	0	0	0	0	0	0	50	0	0	50	
Nigeria	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Senegal	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
South Africa	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Zambia	0	0	0	0	0	0	50	0	0	50	

Asia-Pacific States										
Bahrain	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Bangladesh	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
China	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
India	0	0	0	0	0	0	50	0	0	50
Indonesia	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Japan	100	100	50	0	50	50	50	100	50	550
Jordan	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Malaysia	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Pakistan	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Phillipines	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Qatar	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
ROK	50	50	50	0	50	50	50	100	50	450
Saudi Arabia	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Eastern European States										
Azerbaijan	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Bosnia & Herz.	50	50	50	0	0	50	50	100	50	400
Russian Fed.	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Slovakia	100	100	50	0	50	50	100	100	50	600
Slovenia	100	100	50	0	50	50	100	100	50	600
Ukraine	100	50	50	0	50	50	100	100	50	550
Western European & Others Group										
Canada	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	50	850
France	100	100	50	0	50	50	100	100	50	600
Germany	100	100	50	0	100	50	100	100	50	650
Italy	100	100	50	0	100	50	100	100	50	650
Netherlands	100	100	50	0	100	50	100	100	50	650
Switzerland	100	50	50	0	0	50	100	100	50	500
UK	100	100	50	0	50	50	100	100	50	600

Sum of scores, voting on OIC/NAM/Arab/African resolutions, 2006-2009.

Year (Resolutions)	2006-2007 (6)	2007-2008 (10)	2008-2009 (9)	Resolutions voted	Total sum	Total sum/resolutions voted
Latin American & Caribbean States						
Argentina	100		50	15	150	10,0
Bolivia		50	0	19	50	2,6
Brazil	50	100	50	25	200	8,0
Chile			100	9	100	11,1
Cuba	0	0	0	25	0	0,0
Ecuador	50			6	50	8,3
Guatemala	250	250		16	500	31,3
Mexico	100	100	50	25	250	10,0
Nicaragua		0	50	29	50	1,7
Peru	150	100		16	250	15,6
Uruguay	100	150	50	25	300	12,0
African States						
Algeria	0			6	0	0,0
Angola		0	0	29	0	0,0
Burkina Faso			50	9	50	5,6
Cameroon	150	150	200	25	500	20,0
Djibouti	0	0	0	25	0	0,0
Egypt		0	0	29	0	0,0
Gabon	0	50	0	22	50	2,3
Ghana	0	50	50	25	100	4,0
Madagascar		100	50	17	150	8,8
Mali	0	0		16	0	0,0
Mauritius	0	50	50	25	100	4,0
Morocco	0			6	0	0,0
Nigeria	50	0	0	25	50	2,0
Senegal	0	0	0	25	0	0,0
South Africa	0	0	0	25	0	0,0
Tunisia	0			6	0	0,0
Zambia	50	0	50	25	100	4,0
Asia-Pacific States						
Bahrain	0		0	15	0	0,0
Bangladesh	0	0	0	25	0	0,0
China	0	0	0	25	0	0,0
India	50	50	50	25	150	6,0
Indonesia	0	0	0	25	0	0,0
Japan	300	600	550	25	1450	58,0
Jordan	0	0	0	25	0	0,0
Malaysia	0	0	0	25	0	0,0
Pakistan	0	0	0	25	0	0,0
Phillipines	0	0	0	25	0	0,0
Qatar		0	0	19	0	0,0
ROK	350	550	450	25	1350	54,0
Saudi Arabia	0	0	0	25	0	0,0
Sri Lanka	0	0		16	0	0,0
Eastern European States						
Azerbaijan	0	0	0	22	0	0,0
Bosnia & Herz.		650	400	18	1050	58,3

Czech Republic	400			6	400	66,7
Poland	400			6	400	66,7
Romania	400	750		16	1150	71,9
Russian Fed	0	0	0	22	0	0,0
Slovakia			600	9	600	66,7
Slovenia		750	600	19	1350	71,1
Ukraine	350	600	550	22	1500	68,2
Western European & Others Group						
Canada	600	1000	850	25	2450	98,0
Finland	400			6	400	66,7
France	400	750	600	25	1750	70,0
Germany	400	750	650	25	1800	72,0
Italy		750	650	19	1400	73,7
Netherlands	400	750	600	25	1750	70,0
Switzerland	400	700	500	25	1600	64,0
UK	400	750	600	25	1750	70,0

Appendix 6: Datasets voting patterns 2013-2016

Topic:	Syria	Syria	Belarus	COI Syria	Sri Lanka	Iran	Education	7
Latin American & Caribbean States								
Argentina	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Brazil	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Chile	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Costa Rica	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Ecuador	50	50	50	50	100	50	0	350
Guatemala	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Peru	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Venezuela	100	100	100	100	100	100	0	600
African States								
Angola	0	50	50	50	50	50	0	250
Benin	0	0	0	0	0	50	0	50
Botswana	0	0	0	0	50	0	0	50
Burkina Faso	0	0	0	0	50	50	0	100
Congo	0	50	0	0	100	50	0	200
Côte d'Ivoire	0	0	50	0	0	50	0	100
Ethiopia	50	50	50	50	50	50	0	300
Gabon	0	0	0	50	x	0	0	50
Kenya	50	x	50	0	50	50	0	200
Libya	0	0	50	0	0	0	0	50
Mauritania	0	0	50	0	100	50	0	200
Sierra Leone	0	0	50	0	0	0	0	50
Uganda	0	50	50	50	100	50	0	300
Asia-Pacific States								
India	50	50	100	50	0	50	0	300
Indonesia	0	50	50	0	100	50	0	250
Japan	0	0	0	0	50	0	0	50
Kazakhstan	50	x	100	50	50	x	0	250
Kuwait	0	0	50	0	100	50	0	200
Malaysia	0	0	50	0	50	50	0	150
Maldives	0	0	0	0	100	0	0	100
Pakistan	0	0	50	50	100	100	0	300
Phillipines	50	50	50	50	100	50	0	350
Qatar	0	0	50	0	100	x	0	150
ROK	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Thailand	0	0	50	0	100	50	0	200
UAE	0	0	50	0	100	50	0	200
Eastern European States								
Czech Rep.	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Estonia	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Moldova	0	0	50	0	0	0	0	50
Montenegro	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Poland	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Romania	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Western European & Others Group								
Austria	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Germany	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Ireland	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Italy	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Spain	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Switzerland	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
USA	0	0	0	0	0	0	50	50

All WEOG resolutions voted over, 2014.

Topic:	Syria	Death Penalty	Syria	Belarus	Sri Lanka	Syria	Iran	DPRK	Peaceful Protest	9
Latin American & Caribbean States										
Argentina	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Brazil	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Chile	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Costa Rica	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Cuba	100	50	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	850
Mexico	0	0	0	50	0	0	0	0	0	50
Peru	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Venezuela	100	0	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	800
African States										
Algeria	100	0	100	50	100	50	50	50	50	550
Benin	0	0	0	0	0	0	50	0	0	50
Botswana	0	100	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	100
Burkina Faso	0	0	0	50	50	0	50	0	0	150
Congo	50	0	50	50	100	50	50	50	50	450
Côte d'Ivoire	0	0	0	50	0	0	50	0	0	100
Ethiopia	50	100	50	50	50	50	50	50	50	500
Gabon	0	0	0	0	50	0	50	50	0	150
Kenya	50	50	x	50	100	50	50	50	100	500
Morocco	0	50	0	50	50	0	50	0	0	200
Namibia	50	0	50	50	50	50	50	50	50	400
Sierra Leone	0	0	0	0	0	0	50	0	0	50
South Africa	50	0	50	50	50	50	50	50	100	450
Asia-Pacific States										
China	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	900
India	50	100	50	100	50	50	100	50	100	650
Indonesia	0	100	0	50	50	0	100	50	0	350
Japan	0	100	0	0	50	0	0	0	0	150
Kazakhstan	50	0	50	100	50	50	100	0	0	400
Kuwait	0	100	0	50	50	0	50	50	50	350
Maldives	0	50	0	0	100	0	x	0	0	150
Pakistan	50	100	50	50	100	50	100	100	100	700
Phillipines	50	0	50	50	50	50	50	0	0	300
ROK	0	50	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	50
Saudi Arabia	0	100	0	50	100	0	50	50	50	400
UAE	0	100	0	50	100	0	50	0	50	350
Viet Nam	50	50	50	100	100	50	100	100	100	700
Eastern European States										
Czech Rep.	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Estonia	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Montenegro	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Romania	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Russian Fed.	100	50	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	850
FYROM	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Western European & Others Group										
Austria	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
France	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Germany	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Ireland	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Italy	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
UK	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
USA	0	50	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	50

All WEOG resolutions voted over, 2015.

Topic:	Death Penalty	Syria	Extremism	Syria	Belarus	Rule of law	Syria	Iran	DPRK	9
Latin American & Caribbean States										
Argentina	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Bolivia	0	100	50	100	100	50	100	100	100	700
Brazil	0	0	0	0	0	0	50	50	0	100
Cuba	50	100	50	100	100	50	100	100	100	750
El Salvador	0	0	50	0	50	0	0	0	0	100
Mexico	0	0	0	0	50	0	0	0	0	50
Paraguay	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Venezuela	0	100	100	100	100	50	100	100	100	750
African States										
Algeria	0	100	0	100	50	50	100	50	50	500
Botswana	50	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	50
Congo	0	50	0	50	50	0	50	50	50	300
Côte d'Ivoire	0	0	0	0	50	0	0	50	0	100
Ethiopia	100	50	0	50	50	50	50	50	50	450
Gabon	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	50	50
Ghana	50	0	0	0	50	0	0	50	0	150
Kenya	50	50	0	50	50	0	50	50	50	350
Morocco	50	0	0	0	50	0	0	50	0	150
Namibia	0	50	50	50	50	50	50	50	50	400
Nigeria	100	50	0	50	50	50	50	50	50	450
Sierra Leone	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	50	0	50
South Africa	0	50	0	50	50	50	50	50	50	350
Asia-Pacific States										
Bangladesh	100	50	0	50	50	0	50	100	50	450
China	100	100	50	100	100	50	100	100	100	800
India	100	50	0	50	100	0	50	100	50	500
Indonesia	100	50	0	50	50	0	0	100	50	400
Japan	100	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	100
Kazakhstan	0	50	50	50	100	0	50	100	0	400
Maldives	50	0	0	0	0	0	0	50	0	100
Pakistan	100	50	50	50	50	0	50	100	50	500
Qatar	100	0	0	0	50	0	0	50	50	250
ROK	50	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	50
Saudi Arabia	100	0	0	0	50	50	0	50	50	300
UAE	100	0	0	0	50	50	0	50	0	250
Viet Nam	50	50	0	50	100	50	50	100	100	550
Eastern European States										
Albania	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Estonia	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Latvia	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Montenegro	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Russian Fed	50	100	100	100	100	50	100	100	100	800
FYROM	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Western European & Others Group										
France	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Germany	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Ireland	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Netherlands	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Portugal	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
UK	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
USA	100	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	100

All WEOG resolutions voted over, 2016.

Topic:	Water	Justice	Syria	Burundi	Detention	Syria	Belarus	Civ.Society	Syria	Iran	Defenders	Protest	12
Latin American & Caribbean States													
Bolivia	0	50	100	100	0	100	100	50	100	100	50	50	800
Cuba	0	50	100	100	0	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	950
Ecuador	0	0	50	50	0	50	50	0	50	100	0	0	350
El Salvador	50	0	0	0	0	0	50	0	0	0	50	0	150
Mexico	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Panama	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Paraguay	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Venezuela	0	50	100	100	0	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	950
African States													
Algeria	0	50	100	50	0	100	50	0	100	100	0	0	550
Botswana	0	0	0	50	0	0	50	0	0	0	0	0	100
Burundi	0	50	100	100	0	50	100	50	50	100	100	100	800
Congo	0	100	50	50	0	50	50	100	50	50	0	x	500
Côte d'Ivoire	0	0	0	50	0	0	50	0	0	50	0	0	150
Ethiopia	0	50	50	50	0	50	50	50	50	50	0	0	400
Ghana	0	0	0	0	0	0	50	0	0	50	0	0	100
Kenya	50	50	50	50	0	50	50	50	50	100	50	0	550
Morocco	0	0	0	100	0	0	50	0	0	50	0	0	200
Namibia	0	0	50	50	0	50	50	0	50	50	50	50	400
Nigeria	50	50	50	50	0	50	100	100	50	50	100	50	700
South Africa	0	0	50	50	0	50	50	100	50	100	0	50	500
Togo	0	0	50	50	0	0	50	0	0	50	0	50	250
Asia-Pacific States													
Bangladesh	0	50	50	50	0	50	50	0	50	100	50	50	500
China	0	50	100	100	0	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	950
India	0	50	50	50	0	50	100	0	50	100	0	0	450
Indonesia	0	50	50	50	0	50	50	0	50	100	0	0	400
Kyrgyzstan	100	50	50	50	50	50	50	50	50	100	0	0	600
Maldives	0	0	0	50	0	0	50	0	0	50	0	0	150
Mongolia	0	0	0	0	0	0	50	0	0	50	0	0	100
Phillipines	0	0	50	50	0	50	50	0	50	50	0	0	300
Qatar	0	0	0	50	0	0	50	50	0	0	50	50	250
ROK	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Saudi Arabia	0	50	0	50	0	0	50	50	0	0	50	50	300
UAE	0	50	0	50	0	0	50	50	0	0	50	50	300
Viet Nam	0	50	50	50	0	50	100	50	50	100	50	50	600
Eastern European States													
Albania	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Georgia	0	0	0	0	0	0	50	0	0	x	0	0	50
Latvia	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Russian Fed.	50	50	100	100	0	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	1000
Slovenia	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
FYROM	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Western European & Others Group													
Belgium	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
France	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Germany	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Netherlands	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Portugal	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Switzerland	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
UK	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

Sum of scores, voting on WEOG resolutions, 2013-2016.

Year (Resolutions)	2013 (7)	2014 (9)	2015 (9)	2016 (12)	Resolutions voted	Total sum	Total sum/resolutions voted
Latin American & Caribbean States							
Argentina	0	0	0		25	0	0,0
Bolivia			700	800	21	1500	71,4
Brazil	0	0	100		25	100	4,0
Chile	0	0			16	0	0,0
Costa Rica	0	0			16	0	0,0
Cuba		850	750	950	30	2550	85,0
Ecuador	350			350	19	700	36,8
El Salvador			100	150	21	250	11,9
Guatemala	0				7	0	0,0
Mexico		50	50	0	30	100	3,3
Panama				0	12	0	0,0
Paraguay			0	0	21	0	0,0
Peru	0	0			16	0	0,0
Venezuela	600	800	750	950	37	3100	83,8
African States							
Algeria		550	500	550	30	1600	53,3
Angola	250				7	250	35,7
Benin	50	50			16	100	6,3
Botswana	50	100	50	100	37	300	8,1
Burkina Faso	100	150			16	250	15,6
Burundi				800	12	800	66,7
Congo	200	450	300	500	36	1450	40,3
Côte d'Ivoire	100	100	100	150	37	450	12,2
Ethiopia	300	500	450	400	37	1650	44,6
Gabon	50	150	50		24	250	10,4
Ghana			150	100	21	250	11,9
Kenya	200	500	350	550	35	1600	45,7
Libya	50				7	50	7,1
Mauritania	200				7	200	28,6
Morocco		200	150	200	30	550	18,3
Namibia		400	400	400	30	1200	40,0
Nigeria			450	700	21	1150	54,8
Sierra Leone	50	50	50		25	150	6,0
South Africa		450	350	500	30	1300	43,3
Togo				250	12	250	20,8
Uganda	300				7	300	42,9
Asia-Pacific States							
Bangladesh			450	500	21	950	45,2
China		900	800	950	30	2650	88,3
India	300	650	500	450	37	1900	51,4
Indonesia	250	350	400	400	37	1400	37,8
Japan	50	150	100		25	300	12,0
Kazakhstan	250	400	400		23	1050	45,7
Kuwait	200	350			16	550	34,4
Kyrgyzstan				600	12	600	50,0
Malaysia	150				7	150	21,4
Maldives	100	150	100	150	36	500	13,9
Mongolia				100	12	100	8,3

Pakistan	300	700	500		25	1500	60,0
Phillipines	350	300		300	28	950	33,9
Qatar	150		250	250	27	650	24,1
ROK	0	50	50	0	37	100	2,7
Saudi Arabia		400	300	300	30	1000	33,3
Thailand	200				7	200	28,6
UAE	200	350	250	300	37	1100	29,7
Viet Nam		700	550	600	30	1850	61,7
Eastern European States							
Albania			0	0	21	0	0,0
Czech Republic	0	0			16	0	0,0
Estonia	0	0	0		25	0	0,0
Georgia				50	11	50	4,5
Latvia			0	0	21	0	0,0
Moldova	50				7	50	7,1
Montenegro	0	0	0		25	0	0,0
Polen	0				7	0	0,0
Romania	0	0			16	0	0,0
Russian Fed		850	800	1000	30	2650	88,3
Slovenia				0	12	0	0,0
FYROM		0	0	0	30	0	0,0
Western European & Others Group							
Austria	0	0			16	0	0,0
Belgium				0	12	0	0,0
France		0	0	0	30	0	0,0
Germany	0	0	0	0	37	0	0,0
Ireland	0	0	0		25	0	0,0
Italy	0	0			16	0	0,0
Netherlands			0	0	21	0	0,0
Portugal			0	0	21	0	0,0
Spain	0				7	0	0,0
Switzerland	0			0	19	0	0,0
UK		0	0	0	30	0	0,0
USA	50	50	100		25	200	8,0