

**THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE UNITED NATIONS
SECURITY COUNCIL IN MAINTAINING PEACE AND
SECURITY IN THE MIDDLE EAST: THE CASE OF SYRIA
(2011 – 2016)**

BY

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**A DISSERTATION SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT OF THE
REQUIREMENTS OF THE MASTER OF SCIENCE DEGREE IN INTERNATIONAL
RELATIONS**

DEPARTMENT OF POLITICAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE STUDIES

FACULTY OF SOCIAL STUDIES

UNIVERSITY OF ZIMBABWE

15 MAY 2017

DEDICATION

I dedicate this dissertation to my family. A special feeling of gratitude goes to my loving husband, Kudzai Hwindingwi for the support rendered throughout my study. The road has not been easy but the good Lord made it easy for us. To my three princesses, Samantha, Nicole and Natasha, thank you so much for being so understanding, I promise to make up for everything. To sekuru Tanaka, thank you so much for the internet connection and lastly to my sister Precious, thank you for being a inspiration. I love you all!

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I want express my sincere thanks and appreciation to all those who individually or collectively contributed to make this study possible. A special mention goes to the Zimbabwe Peace and Security Programme (ZPSP) management for giving me time away from work, which greatly enabled me to compile this study.

My sincere gratitude goes to my Supervisor Mrs Mazando who put in her valuable time by advising and guiding me throughout the research. I would like to thank her for the support that she gave me. Her door was always open when I needed guidance and for that I am very grateful. I would want to thank her for being generous with her expertise and her precious time.

Above all, I thank the Lord almighty for taking me this far. To God be the Glory!

ABSTRACT

The general objective of this study was to assess the effectiveness of the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) in resolving conflicts in the Middle East with a particular focus on the Syrian crisis. What prompted the study is the fact that since the beginning of the conflict in March 2011, no robust action has been taken by the UNSC in response to the situation, which clearly poses a threat to international peace and security. It is on this basis that the study aimed at establishing the mandate of the UNSC, the role it has played and the facilitating and inhibiting factors towards the resolution of the civil war in Syria. Data for this qualitative case study were collected through interviews and document analysis. The twelve participants for the interviews were drawn from Colonels in the Zimbabwe Defence Forces (ZDF), Embassies, Security Analysts and Academics from the University of Zimbabwe. Documents such as published books, journal articles and unpublished dissertations/ theses, newsletters, newspaper articles, policy briefs amongst other documents were used to illustrate the UNSC's response to the Syrian conflict as well as the challenges faced in resolving the conflict. The study established that in response to the crisis, the UNSC inter alia, called for the implementation of the Geneva Communiqué, a six-point peace plan of the joint special envoy of the UN and the League of Arab States (LAS); it established a supervision mission in Syria (UNSMIS); it has condemned the use of chemical weapons and endorsed the removal and destruction of Syria's chemical weapons; it has urged the international community to suppress funding of terrorist activities in Syria; it has urged all parties to the conflict to allow and facilitate humanitarian relief; and it has repeatedly stressed that the warring parties must stop all violations of international humanitarian law and human rights. The main findings in this research revealed that the UNSC has been rendered ineffective due to the meddling of external actors such as Russia and China who are pursuing their national interests at the expense of the peace and security of the Syrian people. From the respondents' perspective, it is only when the external actors stop meddling in the Syrian crisis that a solution can be found. The study recommends that there is need for national ownership if the mediation efforts of the UNSC are to be successful. Labeling and hate speech should not be used if the UNSC wants to get cooperation from the Assad regime. There is need for an expansion of countries that wield veto power to enable a wider representation and the external actors involved in the conflict must withdraw their support from either side and leaving the warring parties to fight until a victor emerges. This might force the warring parties to go on the negotiating table.

LIST OF ACRONYMS

AQI	Al-Qaeda in Iraq
BRICS	Brazil, Russia, India, China, South Africa
EU	European Union
FSA	Free Syrian Army
GA	General Assembly
GCC	Gulf Cooperation Council
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
HDI	Human Development Index
IAEA	International Atomic Energy Agency
ICC	International Criminal Court
IDP	Internally Displaced People
IHL	International Humanitarian Law
ISSG	International Syria Support Group
ISIS	Islamic State of Iraq and Syria
LAS	League of Arab States
LNTC	Libyan National Transition Council
MENA	Middle East and North Africa
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organisation
NCSROF	National Coalition of Syrian Revolution and Opposition Forces
NDF	National Defence Forces
OPCW	Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons
R2P	Responsibility to Protect
SNC	Syrian National Council
UK	Unite Kingdom
UN	United Nations
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNGAR	United Nations General Assembly Resolutions

UNSMIS	United Nations Supervision Mission in Syria
UNSC	United Nations Security Council
USA	United States of America
USSR	Union of Soviet Socialist Republics
WMD	Weapons of Mass Destruction
ZDF	Zimbabwe Defence Forces

Table of Contents

DEDICATION	II
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	III
ABSTRACT	IV
LIST OF ACRONYMS	V
TABLE OF CONTENTS	VII
CHAPTER ONE	1
INTRODUCTION.....	1
1.1 BACKGROUND TO THE PROBLEM.....	1
1.2 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM.....	3
1.3 OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY	4
1.4 LITERATURE REVIEW	4
1.4.1 <i>The Concept of Peace and Security</i>	5
1.4.2 <i>The UNSC and its Role in the Syrian Conflict</i>	6
1.5 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK.....	7
1.5.1 <i>Realism</i>	8
1.5.3 <i>Liberalism</i>	8
1.5.2 <i>Constructivism</i>	9
1.6 JUSTIFICATION OF THE STUDY	9
1.7 METHODOLOGY	10
1.7.1 <i>Research Design</i>	10
1.7.2 <i>Population</i>	11
1.7.3 <i>Sampling</i>	11
1.7.4 <i>Data Collection Methods</i>	11
1.7.5 DATA ANALYSIS	12
1.7.6 LIMITATIONS	12
1.7.7 DELIMITATIONS.....	13
1.7.8 STRUCTURE OF THE DISSERTATION.....	13
1.7.9 CHAPTER SUMMARY.....	13
CHAPTER TWO	15
THE SYRIAN CONFLICT: CAUSES AND EFFECTS	15
2.0 INTRODUCTION.....	15
2.1 HISTORICAL OVERVIEW OF SYRIA BEFORE THE CRISIS.....	15
2.2 THE EMERGENCE OF THE SYRIAN CRISIS.....	17
2.3 THE SYRIAN GOVERNMENT’S RESPONSE TO THE CRISIS.....	18
2.4 OTHER ACTORS IN THE CONFLICT.....	20
2.4.1 <i>Anti-Government Forces</i>	20
2.4.2 <i>Pro-Government Forces</i>	21
2.5 IMPACT OF THE CONFLICT ON THE SYRIAN PEOPLE.....	22
2.6 IMPACT OF THE CONFLICT IN THE REGION	23
2.7 GLOBAL IMPACT OF THE CONFLICT	24
2.8 REGIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL RESPONSE TO THE CRISIS	25
2.9 CHAPTER SUMMARY	26

CHAPTER THREE	27
THE UNSC’S RESPONSE TO THE SYRIAN CONFLICT	27
3.0 INTRODUCTION.....	27
3.1 AN OVERVIEW OF THE ROLE OF THE UNSC	27
3.2 THE UNSC INVOLVEMENT IN THE SYRIAN CRISIS	29
3.2.1 UNSC’ S NEGOTIATION AND MEDIATION EFFORTS.....	30
3.2.1.1 <i>Kofi Annan’s Six-Point Plan</i>	30
3.2.1.2 <i>The Geneva Conferences</i>	31
3.2.1.3 <i>The Chemical Weapons Attack</i>	33
3.2.1.4 <i>Humanitarian Access</i>	34
3.3 REFERRAL OF THE SYRIAN SITUATION TO THE INTERNATIONAL CRIMINAL COURT (ICC).....	35
3.4 TERRORISM.....	36
3.5 CRITICISM OVER THE USE OF VETO BY RUSSIA AND CHINA	36
3.6 CHAPTER SUMMARY	37
CHAPTER FOUR	38
THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE UNSC IN RESOLVING THE SYRIAN CRISIS	38
4.0 INTRODUCTION.....	38
4.2 INTERVIEWEE/ RESPONDENT RESPONSE RATE	38
4.3 ANALYSING THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE UNSC	39
4.3.1 INTERPRETING THE CONFLICT.....	39
4.3.2 THE RESPONSIBILITY TO PROTECT (R2P).....	40
4.3.4 THE USE OF VETO.....	41
4.3.5 NATIONAL INTERESTS.....	42
4.3.5.1 <i>Russia</i>	42
4.3.5.2 <i>America</i>	43
4.3.5.3 <i>China</i>	43
4.3.5.4 <i>Regional Interests</i>	44
4.3.6 ASCERTAINING EVENTS ON THE GROUND IN SYRIA.....	45
4.3.7 MEDIATION EFFORTS.....	45
4.3.8 CHAPTER SUMMARY.....	47
CHAPTER FIVE	48
SUMMARY OF FINDINGS, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS	48
5.0 INTRODUCTION.....	48
5.1 SUMMARY OF MAJOR FINDINGS.....	48
5.1.1 <i>The Syrian Conflict: Causes and Effects</i>	48
5.1.2 <i>The UNSC’s Response to the Syrian Conflict</i>	49
5.1.3 <i>The Effectiveness of the UNSC in Resolving the Syrian Crisis</i>	50
5.2 CONCLUSION.....	51
5.3 RECOMMENDATIONS.....	52
BIBLIOGRAPHY	54
APPENDIX A: INFORMED CONSENT FORM	61
APPENDIX B: IN-DEPTH INTERVIEW GUIDE.....	62

List of Tables

Table	Description	Page
Table 1	Sample size	39

CHAPTER ONE

Introduction

This research seeks to analyze the effectiveness of the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) in resolving the Syrian conflict. The research will assess the causes of the Syrian uprising, the impact it has had on the people, neighbours in the region as well as the global effects of the conflict. The UNSC has the sole mandate of maintaining international peace and security. The research will examine the UNSC's compliance with its primary responsibility of maintaining international peace and security in the aftermath of the Syrian war. The research will highlight the actions taken by the UNSC in resolving the conflict, which include press statements, presidential statements, mediation efforts, resolutions that were passed and those that were vetoed. The research will assess the effectiveness of the UNSC's response to the Syrian crisis by analyzing its responses and evaluating whether these were successful or not. The facilitating and inhibiting factors to the successful implementation of the UNSC's responses to the conflict will be discussed.

1.1 Background to the Problem

The Syrian uprising was triggered by the Arab Spring, which had swept across the region and affected countries like Egypt, Tunisia and Libya among others. However subterranean tensions already existed in the country due to repressive regimes of the two Assad governments. The Arab Spring only acted as catalyst to the turmoil. The protests were peaceful at first as people demanded for concrete political and economic reforms. Protesters demanded for the release of all political prisoners, the abolition of Syria's 48-year emergency law; more freedoms; and an end to pervasive corruption and halting harassment by the security forces. The Syrian government initially responded to the calls for reforms but these were not enough to pacify the uprising. Later on the Syrian government resorted to the use of extreme violence against civilians and civilian areas to suppress protests (Adams 2015:13).

The heavy handedness of the Syrian government in responding to the crisis led to the degeneration of the peaceful protests into a fully fledged civil war as well as the creation of opposition groups fighting against the government (Ibid: 13). This led to the interference in the conflict by external actors such as America, Turkey, Saudi Arabia, Qatar and Jordan

supporting the opposition or rebel groups and Russia, China, Iran and the Lebanese Hezbollah supporting the Assad government thereby turning the conflict into some kind of proxy war as external countries are fighting each other through the various groups that they are supporting.

The impact of the conflict on the Syrian people has been devastating as it displaced half the population internally and externally and close to 480 000. The actual death toll cannot be ascertained as the conflict is still ongoing and people continue to die on a daily basis but the numbers have been alarming. Civilians have been targeted in the war in Syria as some have been used as human shields by the opposition groups and the Assad regime continued to use hunger as an effective strategy to subdue the rebels and enforce local truces (Muditha 2016:220).

Both the Assad government and the opposition have been committing war crimes in Syria. Chemical weapons have been used on civilians in the conflict and humanitarian access has not been easy. The UNSC has been deeply divided over how to respond to the crisis in Syria as national interests took precedence. Disagreements over what action to take have resulted in some draft resolutions being vetoed. The first UNSC resolution (2042) was passed thirteen months after the crisis began. The UNSC's mediation efforts have been hindered by the fragmented nature of the opposition. However, the efforts of the UNSC lacked the enactment of the provisions of Chapter VII of the UN Charter, which allows it to enforce its decisions through various sanctions and embargoes (Article 41, UN Charter) as well as through the use of military force (Article 42, UN Charter), (Einsiedel et al 2015:12). Throughout the stalemate in the UNSC violence against Syrian civilians continued to escalate.

This is not the first time that the UNSC has failed to act in the Middle Eastern region. The civil war in Yemen, which began on 19 May 2015, is very similar to what is happening in Syria. Both countries experienced uprisings against repressive regimes, they have opposition groups fighting against the government, UNSC mediation efforts have failed and the same external actors involved in the Syrian war are the ones involved in the Yemeni war. The UNSC has not managed to resolve the Yemeni crisis due to external meddling and national interests (BRATMUN 2016:7). The Israeli-Palestinian conflict is another case in point whereby the UNSC is facing a deadlock as America keeps on blocking any action against Israel thereby rendering the UNSC ineffective.

Similarly in Iraq in 2003 national interests took precedence and the UNSC was bypassed by the coalition of the willing which included America, Britain and France and they invaded Iraq

after the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) had certified that there were no Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMDs) in Iraq. The coalition of the willing turned around and said Saddam Hussein was a dictator and they went into Iraq to remove Saddam. In September 2004, the then UN Secretary General Kofi Annan declared explicitly for the first time that the US-led war on Iraq was illegal. Mr Annan said that the invasion was not sanctioned by the UN Security Council or in accordance with the UN's founding charter (MacAskill and Broger in *The Guardian* of 16 September 2004). In 2016 Tony Blair was on television shedding tears regretting the operation of 2003 saying that he was misled (Mason et al in *The Guardian* of 6 July 2016). This shows that the UNSC is not taking time to investigate issues and is allowing national interests to meddle with its work thereby compromising its credibility in the Middle East.

As in the case studies highlighted above, the permanent five members of the UNSC (Russia, United Kingdom (UK), America, France and China) have been blamed for inadequate support in finding a political solution to the conflict in Syria (Cruetz 2015:10). The criticism leveled at this organ is unprecedented in the twenty-first century and is obviously not without justification. It is against this background that this research seeks to explore the reasons behind the seemingly passive attitude of the Security Council in resolving the Syrian conflict.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

The Syrian conflict has been on the UNSC's agenda since March 2011. Yet the UNSC has failed to undertake robust action in response to the situation, which clearly poses a threat to international peace and security. Under mediation many resolutions were passed (2042, 2043, 2059, 2254, 2268 and 2336) but these have not produced any meaningful results due to the complicated nature of the conflict. Resolution 2118 on chemical weapons enabled the destruction of some of Syria's chemical weapons by the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW). To ease humanitarian access, resolutions (2139, 2165, 2191, 2332) were passed but the people of Syria continue to suffer. Efforts have been made by France to draft a resolution to refer the Syrian government to the ICC but this was vetoed by the supporters of the Assad regime, Russia and China. Several resolutions (2170, 2178, 2199, 2249, 2253) were also passed to curb the operations of terrorist groups in Syria through initiatives such as suppressing their funding etc, (Cruetz 2015:15).

The UNSC has also issued presidential statements, press statements and even reports on the

situation on the ground in Syria which were produced by the Colonel in charge of the United Nations Supervision Mission in Syria (UNSMIS) in 2012. All of these efforts by the UNSC have not yielded any positive results due to the meddling of the external actors in the Syrian conflict. Despite numerous calls from the international community which includes the League of Arab States, the Friends of Syria Support Group, European Union, the General Assembly and the International human rights watch dog, Amnesty International among others for the UNSC to act to prevent the mass atrocities happening in Syria, the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) has taken long to resolve the crisis (Ibid: 15).

It is on this basis that the study aims to establish the extent to which the role played by the UNSC in resolving the Syrian crisis has been effective by analysing the facilitating and inhibiting factors towards its resolution.

1.3 Objectives of the Study

General Objective

The General objective of the research is to assess the effectiveness of the UNSC in resolving conflicts in the Middle East with a particular focus on the Syrian crisis.

Specific Objectives

The specific objectives of the study are to:

- Examine the underlying factors precipitating the Syrian Crisis
- Analyze the facilitating and inhibiting factors towards the resolution of the Syrian Crisis
- Assess the UNSC's response to the Syrian crisis
- To suggest recommendations on improving the effectiveness of the UNSC in resolving the Syrian crisis and in similar crises in future.

1.4 Literature Review

Most research (Rothwell 2014, Ivanciu 2016, Amnesty International 2015, Haran 2016) and has focused on detailing the atrocities being committed in the Syrian conflict and their violation of International Humanitarian Law (IHL). There has been minimum comprehensive

research on analyzing the effectiveness of the UNSC in resolving the conflict, as most research has been thematic and mostly concentrated on the failure by the UNSC to exercise the Responsibility to Protect (R2P). A study carried out by Gowan (2011), argues that the UNSC has the responsibility to protect the people of Syria. The study analysed the R2P, its implementation in Libya and its neglect in Syria. Most studies however focus on what the UNSC ought to do and do not go a step further to examine the inhibiting factors that hinder the UNSC from resolving the Syrian crisis.

1.4.1 The Concept of Peace and Security

The quest for peace and security has dominated international thought since the earliest times of the history of international politics. Peace is a social and political condition that ensures development of individuals, society and the nation. It is a state of harmony characterized by the existence of healthy interpersonal or inter-group or inter-regional or inter-state or international relationships, prosperity in matters of social or economic welfare, the establishment of equality, and a working political order that serves the true interests of all. In the context of intra-national and international relations, peace is not merely the absence of war or conflict, but also the presence of socio-cultural and economic understanding and unity. There is a sense of tolerance in relations for the realization of true peace (Kikkawa 2009:5).

Security has traditionally been defined as the protection of the territorial integrity, stability, and vital interests of states through the use of political, legal, or coercive instruments at the state or international level. In the 1990s the definition was broadened to include nonmilitary threats that lead to violent conflict and affect the security of individuals, communities, and states. Such threats range from civil wars and resource conflicts to transnational crime and population movements. ‘Security’ therefore refers to the search to avoid, prevent, reduce, or resolve violent conflicts, whether the threat originates from other states, non-state actors, or structural socioeconomic conditions (Tavares et al, 2013:92).

It is therefore evident from the definitions above that peace and security are inseparable. Peace and security combined is a condition where individuals, institutions, regions, nations and the world move ahead without any threat. Under such a condition regions or nations are generally more stable domestically, likely to be democratically governed and respectful to human rights. Conflict not only generates threat and fear, but also impedes economic, social, or political advancement (Ibid: 92).

Throughout the history of states, each has been made insecure by the existence of others. The military and economic actions of individual state in pursuit of their own national security have frequently combined with those of others to produce economic dislocation and war. Thus the quest for security by individual states can threaten international security. In addition, peace at the international level does not necessarily guarantee peace at the national or social levels. Even when international relations are at peace, people can still be suffering from poverty or oppression as was happening in Syria before the uprising. (International Peace Academy (IPA) 2004:2).

In order to ensure lasting peace, states in the international community agreed to collective security which would take action against any state, which breaks the peace and this saw the formation of the League of Nations in 1920, which was later replaced by the United Nations (UN) in 1945 after it had failed to prevent world war two (Webel and Galtung 2007:67). One of the organs of the UN is the UNSC, which is mandated with maintaining international peace and security and has the authority to resolve the Syrian conflict that is threatening international peace and security.

1.4.2 The UNSC and its Role in the Syrian Conflict

Article 24 of the UN Charter grants the UNSC the primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security on the understanding that in carrying out its responsibilities, the UNSC acts on behalf of the members of the UN. Its powers include the establishment of peacekeeping operations, the establishment of international sanctions and the authorization of military action through resolutions; it is the only UN body with the authority to issue binding resolutions to member states. The large number of people affected by the war in Syria combined with a massive population being displaced from the country has been categorized as a threat to international peace and security. In light of Syria, the UNSC has had draft resolutions being vetoed by Russia and China and the resolutions that were passed did not produce the intended result as the conflict became more and more intractable (Kramer 2015:48).

In its resolutions on Syria, the UNSC has inter alia called for the implementation of the Geneva Communiqué, a six-point peace plan of the joint special envoy of the UN and the Arab League; it has established a supervision mission in Syria (UNSMIS); it has condemned the use of chemical weapons and endorsed the removal and destruction of Syria's chemical

weapons as agreed between the United States and Russia; It has urged the international community to suppress funding of terrorist activities in Syria; it has urged all parties to the conflict to allow and facilitate humanitarian relief; and it has repeatedly stressed that the warring parties must stop all violations of international humanitarian law and human rights (Ibid:49). It cannot be said therefore that no action was taken by the UNSC regarding the Syrian crisis. What can be argued is whether these actions were successful or not.

McGreal in The Guardian of 7 September 2015 reported that the UN secretary general, Ban Ki-moon had admitted that the UNSC had failed Syria because of big power divisions which had prevented action to end a conflict that had cost hundreds of thousands of lives and driven the biggest refugee exodus in a generation. The UN secretary general told that Guardian that these big powers should “look beyond national interest” and stop blocking security council action on the conflict in Syria as the flow of refugees to Europe had reached unprecedented levels. Gowans (2016:11) concurs and notes that the consensus among scholars is that the Russian and Chinese veto is the main political obstacle that is restricting the Security Council from intervening and stopping the civil war in Syria.

The UNSC has been criticised by international organisations such as Amnesty international (2015), World Vision (2017) and the international community at large for insufficient action and of failing to implement resolutions that had already been adopted. Enforcing its resolutions has been a challenge in the Syrian crisis as all the actors involved in the conflict (permanent five members, opposition groups and regional actors) have all employed realist tendencies of pursuing national interests at the expense of international peace and security (Kramer 2015:46).

1.5 Theoretical Framework

This study will make use of three broad and contrasting theories of realism, liberalism and constructivism to explain how they are perceived in international relations in light of the Syrian conflict. These divergent theories will be discussed with respect to peace and security and they have different viewpoints as to what peace and security entails, and together they provide a more balanced view of the effectiveness of the UNSC in the Syrian conflict. The purpose of this study is therefore to explain the status quo of the situation in Syria when it comes to compliance with the UNSC using realist, constructivist as well liberalist ideals.

1.5.1 Realism

Realists tend to be pessimistic about human nature, seeing individuals and governments as motivated primarily by self-interest and inescapable competition. For classical realists like Hans Morgenthau, the “will to power” is innate in human nature and it is this drive that determines the national security policies of states. It follows that each state will seek to aggrandize power at the expense of other states. The resulting power struggles will sometimes culminate in war (Bull, 1977:78). This is evident in the Syrian conflict as great powers such as Russia and America fight for dominance in the Middle East at the expense of the Syrian masses.

Neo-realists like Kenneth Waltz and John Mearsheimer focus not on human nature, nor the political make-up of individual states, but on the anarchic nature of the international system. By anarchy neo-realists do not mean chaos but rather the absence of any form of global government. Without effective international governance, there are no institutions that can authoritatively resolve disputes and provide security to individual states the way that national governments can provide security for individual citizens. Neorealists are profoundly skeptical that the UN might ever play such a role. In such a system it follows that states have no choice but to resort to ‘self-help,’ i.e., they must provide for their own security. Hence, the strategic maxim, “If you want peace, prepare for war,” (Dornan 2011:13). This explains why there is a lot of meddling by external actors in the Syrian crisis who are advancing their interests. They all believe that they know what is best for Syria and not the UNSC.

1.5.3 Liberalism

In their philosophical foundations, liberals are inspired by the ideas of John Locke (Wendt 1992:398). Liberals are less pessimistic about human nature, and the prospects for peace between states, and believe that the surest path to avoiding deadly international conflict lies with increasing economic interdependence between states, their growing enmeshment in international institutions, and the spread of democracy. Liberals do not abstain from the use of force and they have been the major supporters of using military force to prevent gross violations of human rights. But when it comes to reducing the risks of war, they have a clear preference for nonmilitary means, from quiet diplomacy to economic sanctions. Adhering to a liberal-institutionalism perspective, the UNSC is supportive of “democratic governments”

and “collective security alliances” as a means to overcome the peace and security dilemma of the international system.

It is important to note that the liberalist perspective is the one that is being disputed by Russia and China as they veto for any efforts to invoke military intervention or sanctions on Syria thereby hindering the effectiveness of the UNSC. They do not believe in the same values as the liberals and instead are employing realist actions of fighting to protect their ally and interests in the Middle East.

1.5.2 Constructivism

Constructivists such as Wendt (1992:391) posit, “Anarchy is what states make of it.” In this sense Wendt is arguing that “people act towards objects, including other actors, on the basis of meanings objects have for them.” This demonstrates that our approach to anarchy depends on the meaning we attach to it and it is possible to think of anarchy as having multiple meanings for different actors. Central to the constructivist approach to anarchy is that international relations are socially constructed and ingrained with social values, norms and assumptions.

The behavior of a state or non-state actor is determined by their understanding of anarchy in the social context of international politics. Anarchy can be recognised as an ‘imagined community’ where a “continuum of anarchies is possible”. Therefore, constructivists dispute the realist assumption that self-help and power politics are essential features of anarchy but rather that they are institutions that affect the process rather than structure of international relations. The effects of anarchy can be minimised through the creation of institutions such as the UN and these can help recreate identities (Ibid: 396). The actions of the different external actors involved in the Syrian conflict are shaped by their worldviews, the socially constructed characteristics that the international community has bestowed on them, and how they want to uphold them.

1.6 Justification of the Study

- This research is important as the recommendations from the findings of the research may assist the UNSC to come up with a different approach to resolving the Syrian crisis and other similar crises in the Middle East region like the Yemini and the

Israeli- Palestinian conflicts. The recommendations will also assist the UNSC to resolve similar cases in future.

- Other researchers will use this information from this study as part of their literature review; furthermore the study findings will contribute immensely to the knowledge bank, thus bridging the knowledge gap.

1.7 Methodology

This study will utilize the qualitative research method.

1.7.1 Research Design.

A research design is the plan for the study, which provides the overall framework for collecting data. It is further argued that, a research design is the general plan of how one will go about answering research questions (Thornhill 2009:25). A research design is a programme that guides the investigation in the process of collecting, analyzing and interpretation of observations and data. In this regard, the researcher used the explanatory research design, which is qualitative in nature. An explanatory research design is a design that seeks to explain a phenomenon and focuses on the why question. A good explanation tells one which specific causes produce a certain phenomenon and it also identifies a general phenomenon of which the specific phenomenon is an example. In the present case, the research will explain the role that the UNSC has played in the Syrian conflict as well as the challenges faced in resolving the conflict.

Different design logics are used for different types of study and this research shall make use of the case study approach. Creswell (2009:15), explains that case study refers to a detailed analysis of an individual case supposing that one can properly acquire knowledge of the phenomenon from intensive exploration of a single case. The case attempts on the one hand to arrive at a comprehensive understanding of the event under study but at the same time to develop more general theoretical statements about regularities in the observed phenomena. The study will focus on analyzing the effectiveness of the UNSC in resolving conflict in the Middle East region with a particular focus on the Syrian conflict.

1.7.2 Population

A population is a group of people, objects, houses or records that meet the designated set criteria established by the researcher (Leedy and Ormrod 2010:155). In this study, the population for primary research will consist of international relations experts, Academics/scholars, security analysts and ambassadors/diplomats because they are conversant with issues to do with international peace and security and one is guaranteed of getting meaningful contributions from them.

1.7.3 Sampling

Neuman (2003:72), states that a sample is drawn from a target population and is representative when it actually represents the distribution of relevant variables in the target population. In this study, the researcher used the non-probability sampling technique, purposive sampling.

Purposive sampling is when you select your sample on the basis of your knowledge of the population, its components and the nature of the research aims, in short based on the judgment and the purpose of the study (Ibid: 72). The purposive sampling technique was chosen because it sought to identify individuals who, because of their experience, have special insights into the research question and these include international relations experts, Academics/ scholars, security analysts and ambassadors/diplomats.

1.7.4 Data Collection Methods

There are a number of instruments that can be used for data collection. In this study, the researcher used document review and in-depth interviews.

1.7.4.1 Document Review

Document review is a way of collecting data by reviewing existing documents. These documents may be hard copy or electronic and include published books, journal articles and unpublished dissertations/ theses, newsletters, newspaper articles, policy briefs amongst other documents. Document review in this case was selected because this is where most of the literature on Syria and the UNSC is located. Various literature on the crisis in Syria and the UNSC's response were analysed to be able to achieve the objectives of the research.

1.7.4.2 In-depth Interviews

The research also made use of in-depth interviews and (10) ten respondents from international relations experts; Academics/ scholars, security analysts and ambassadors/diplomats were selected. According to Babbie and Mouton (2001:356), an in-depth interview is a deep analysis and discussion of information. It is a technique used to open up respondents' deeper attitudes by asking them to project their feelings into hypothetical situations. In the research, in-depth interviews were used to probe the interviewees' deeply on the underlying causes of the Syrian uprising, the UNSC's response to the Syrian crisis as well as its effectiveness in resolving the crisis.

1.7.5 Data Analysis

The first step in analyzing the data collected from the field was data coding through which the raw information was organized and packaged so that it could be analyzed. O'Leary (2004:184)) states that data coding is the systematic way in which to condense extensive data sets into smaller analysable units through the creation of categories and concepts derived from the data. Data were categorically recorded in line with the themes the questions were meant to address.

Information obtained from the interviews was rewritten to produce more meaningful notes and similar occurrences in the data were grouped. The presentation of the qualitative data is mainly in descriptive narrative form because it best fits the purpose of explaining the phenomena under study. Descriptive presentation methods were used to present some of this information, especially that which is related to the statistics so that trends could be easily studied (Ibid:184). Charts and graphs were used to present some of the qualitative data where it was quantified in order to show the most frequenting responses. The analysis attempted to address the objectives of the study and answer the research questions.

1.7.6 Limitations

A major limitation of this study was the inability to collect firsthand accounts from the key leaders of the UNSC or the affected people of Syria. The study relied heavily on the interpretations of published books, journal articles and unpublished dissertations/ theses, newsletters, newspaper articles, policy briefs amongst other documents as well as interviews

with international relations experts, Academics/ scholars, security analysts and ambassadors/diplomats who have had the opportunity to interview the various key leaders in the UNSC or who have witnessed the war in Syria. However, this limitation has not hindered the ability to derive solid conclusions based on facts gathered throughout the research process.

The researcher had limited time and had to balance between work, writing the dissertation and physical interviews. The researcher had to create extra time to overcome this challenge.

1.7.7 Delimitations

In terms of geographical coverage, this study is specifically confined to Syria. The research will center on the role that the United Nations Security Council has played in the Syrian Conflict. The study does not include any other part of the UN that is working with the crisis such as the General Assembly (GA) or the Human Rights Council as it might be too comprehensive to cover. They contribute to resolve the crisis through their own procedure and are therefore not necessarily relevant for the study.

The Study covers the period between 2011 and 2016. This enables the researcher to carry out an in-depth analysis of the effectiveness of the UNSC in resolving the crisis over a period of almost five years. The conflict in Syria is still ongoing and going beyond 2016 might be a challenge for the study in terms of keeping up with the unfolding events.

1.7.8 Structure of the Dissertation

Chapter 1: Introduction

Chapter 2: The Syrian Conflict: Causes and Effects

Chapter 3: The UNSC's response to the Syrian Conflict

Chapter 4: The Effectiveness of the UNSC in resolving the Syrian crisis

Chapter 5: Summary, Conclusion and Recommendations

1.7.9 Chapter Summary

This chapter covers some of the essential parts of the research, which are the introduction to the research, background of the study, Statement of the problem, objectives of the study, Literature review, theoretical framework, justification of the study, methodology, limitations

and delimitations. The next chapter looks at; The Syrian Conflict: Causes and Effects.

CHAPTER TWO

The Syrian Conflict: Causes and Effects

2.0 Introduction

This chapter will analyse the causes of the Syrian conflict and its effects on the people, Middle Eastern region and the globe. The chapter will begin by examining the historical overview of Syria before the crisis to enable the reader to understand the civil war in Syria today. The chapter will also assess the causes of the rise of the Syrian conflict, the government's response and other actors involved in the conflict. Lastly the chapter will highlight the international responses to the crisis.

2.1 Historical Overview of Syria Before the Crisis

Before its independence from France in 1946, Syria had never constituted a unified state or separate political entity. Syria had always been part of various empires or controlled by external rulers such as the Persians, Greeks and Romans. From 1516 to the end of World War I, Syria was part of the Ottoman Empire. Between 1920 and 1946, the French prevented the development of the Syrian national community by dividing the country into several administrative and political units along regional and sectarian lines. The French also fostered sectarian, class and communal separatism, widening the gap between the majority Sunnis and various minorities by recruiting members of the Alawite and Druze minorities for its "*Special Troupes of the Levant*," (Berzins 2013:4).

Therefore, at independence in 1946, Syria lacked an exclusive central authority that could serve as a focus of identity and loyalty for the whole population; instead, Syria was a geographical expression with no unified political identity or community. As a result, modern Syria was partitioned to half (185, 000km²) the size of its original land (300, 000km²) leaving most of its traditionally "Syrian" areas in neighbouring states. About 74% of the population is Sunni Muslim, 13% are various forms of Shi'a including the Alawite community, 3% are Druze, and 10% are Christian (Ibid:4.).

Since its independence in 1946, the average lifespan of a government in Syria was less than one year and the country experienced 10 successful coups, till the then minister of defense in the Ba'ath party, Hafez al-Assad captured power in 1970. Hafez al-Assad quickly moved to

establish an authoritarian regime with power concentrated on him. The regime's stability was ensured by the authority of the Baath Party; the socialist structure of the government and economy; the military support of the regime; the dominance of members of the Alawite sect, to which Assad belonged, in influential military and security positions and the state of emergency imposed as a result of the conflict with Israel. Protests were harshly eliminated, the most extreme example being the brutal suppression in February 1982 of the Muslim Brotherhood, which challenged the state's secularism and the influence of the "heretical" Alawites (Mariwala 2017:5). Even though Syria was a secular state, there was opposition within the state to this kind of arrangement as the majority of the population within it, the Sunni's would have wanted it to be an Islamic state.

The modern Ba'ath party is currently led by Bashar al-Assad, who assumed power after the death of his father, Hafez al-Assad on 10 June 2000 (Ibid:6). Although in the beginning Bashar Al-Assad's economic policies seemed to be progressive and more liberal, it later on became clear that Bashar was devoted to holding onto political power by means of the repressive system built by his father. Assad's regime constructed three important reservoirs of power for its preservation; a cohesive elite structure of power in direct control of state institutions; an indivisible business sector dependent on the regime and the adoption of violence as a modality of governance. In most cases such kind of governance breeds discontent within the people which when provoked by the slightest incident such as a protest may blow the situation out of control.

Although the regime claimed to be fighting sectarianism and that Syria was a secular state, in reality it followed a policy of "divide and conquer" towards the ethnic groups in Syria as there was a sense of distrust amongst the groups and the regime was therefore considered to be the lesser evil. Bashar Al-Assad's economic reforms to promote economic stabilization and strengthen the private sector resulted in the reduction in subsidies for most goods and services, unemployment which was at 22-30% at the beginning of the uprising, and loss of incomes for the general public. Added to this, 1 million Iraqi refugees who came to Syria in 2006-2007 (around 7% of the total Syrian population), were residing in the country. Syria had also been home to large groups of Palestinians (560 000) and Armenians (100, 000). In addition to raising housing costs and straining public services, this greatly increased competition for jobs in the informal sector, which already accounted for a third of the labour force (Haran 2016:10).

Because of the economic problems experienced by the country, such issues as corruption, lack of adequate infrastructure, and the public perception that the Ba'ath regime was privileging the minority Alawite community made Syria a cauldron of social and economic tension ready to boil over (Dwarisheh 2013:8). While the situation was smooth on the surface, there were subterranean tensions and these tensions were kept in check via a series of live-and-let-live arrangements to prevent them from affecting societal peace and security. It is against this historical backdrop that one may seek to understand the civil war in Syria today and the sectarian dimension that threatens to ruin the country for an extended period

2.2 The Emergence of the Syrian Crisis

In 2011, a series of revolutionary anti-government uprisings spread across the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region and these were referred to as the Arab Spring (Demir and Rijnoveanu 2013:57). The Arab Spring was a wave of demonstrations and protests, beginning in December 2010, which led to the overthrow of regimes in a number of countries in the region. The kick-off incident was the Tunisian Revolution in December of 2010, which emboldened anti-government rebellions throughout other Arab countries like Oman, Morocco, Libya, Yemeni and Egypt. The Arab Spring can be attributed to the demands of people in the region for democracy, freedom, liberty, rule of law, and fairness against the repressive regimes of the aforementioned countries.

Influenced by the developments in the region in the context of the Arab Spring, on March 15 2011, the people of Syria expressed their democratic demands through non-violent protests and called for reforms (Ibid:58). People demanded real and concrete political and economic reforms for the first time in Syria's contemporary history. Protesters demanded for the release of all political prisoners, the abolition of Syria's 48-year emergency law; more freedoms; and an end to pervasive corruption and halting harassment by the security forces. This must have come as a surprise for the regime as Syria was better off economically compared to the other countries that had been affected by the Arab spring.

In its initial stages the uprising was primarily non-sectarian in nature, focusing on the regime's corruption, repression, economic mismanagement, and contempt for its subjects (Hof and Simon 2013:16). Indeed, protesters early on rejected sectarian designations with slogans such as "*No Sunni, no Allawi, no Kurd and no Arab, we all want freedom.*" Yet the conflict has increasingly become sectarian, with a Sunni-dominated opposition facing off

against an Alawite-heavy regime. The regime and its supporters characterize the rebels as primarily foreign Sunni Islamist fanatics, bent on imposing Sharia law and attacking religious pluralism, while portions of the opposition have come to associate the crimes of the regime with the Alawite community at large. A dynamic of polarization has emerged, in which Sunnis and Alawites increasingly hold one another collectively responsible for violations real and perceived. This dynamic has given rise to a grim, self-perpetuating cycle of sectarian violence with civilians increasingly suffering on both sides, and fault-lines deepening every step of the way (Ibid:16).

Haran (2010:11) observes that Syria's uprising has developed into a civil war fueled by external actors' strategic, and at times existential, interests and meddling. The media has also been accused of playing a huge role in the protests spreading fast through grossly exaggerated versions on protests and inflated casualty figures with the sole purpose of inciting Syrians to rise up against the regime. As a result, international, regional and subnational conflicts are being fought in Syria. The conflict has been turned into some kind of proxy war as external parties are now fighting against each other by either supporting the Assad government or the opposition forces to further their interests, for example, Russia and America and Iran and Saudi Arabia.

2.3 The Syrian Government's Response to the Crisis

As the protests spread, the regime in Damascus tried to give in to the demands for reform but at the same time increasing repression. The President abolished martial the law of April 2011 and replaced it with a new counter-terrorism law, he indicated his intention to launch a 'national dialogue' in May 2011 and promised 'reforms'. These 'reforms' included a new electoral law of July 2011, banned the creation of parties based on ethnic, religious and tribal groups thereby excluding the Kurds and the Muslim Brothers, among others, from ever forming legal political parties (Gowans 2016:9).

A new media law was passed in August 2011, which maintained restrictions on local and foreign journalists meaning that it was indifferent from the one that had been there as the restrictions had not been removed. The constitution was reviewed in February 2012 and it confirmed that the Head of State had to be male and Muslim, thereby excluding women and all non-Muslim religious communities. The Baath monopoly was abolished in the new text, ironically, it confirmed that at least half the seats in parliament would be occupied by peasants

and workers, whose candidates were to be chosen by the party's regional branches. However, these reforms were not enough to pacify the uprising as repression continued to exacerbate the situation (Ibid:9).

According to Mariwala (2017:9), the Syrian national security forces responded to widespread, initially peaceful demonstrations with brutal violence on civilians through arbitrary detention, torture, sexual violence, murder, deployment and use of heavy artillery including the use of chemical attacks in August 2013. There were reports of door-to-door arrest campaigns; the shooting of medical personnel who attempt to aid the wounded; raids against hospitals, clinics and mosques and the purposeful destruction of medical supplies and arrest of medical personnel.

The Syrian government also sealed off any access to civilians by international monitors, humanitarian groups and human rights organizations. Social media communications were shut off as they aided in spreading discontent amongst civilians (Ibid:9). The Syrian people were also subjected to a heavily armed state-sponsored militia (*Shabiha*) fighting alongside security forces. The Assad regime has consistently denied any responsibility for these crimes and has blamed the violence on armed groups and terrorists. The conflict had long been suspected of having external influence by the Assad regime and so by shutting out various external humanitarian groups, the regime might have been trying to figure out how to handle the situation. At the same time this move played out against them as it was in violation of International Humanitarian Law (IHL), which stipulates that civilians should not be denied access to humanitarian aid.

State violence however, failed to crush the nascent uprising (Slim and Trombetta 2014:24). On the contrary, regime heavy-handedness played out against it as it led not only to the protest movement's spread, but also, over time, to its militarization as opposition groups were formed to fight against the regime. This shift from peaceful protest toward armed resistance occurred gradually throughout the first year and a half of the uprising until, in summer of 2012 when the international community acknowledged that Syria had reached a state of civil war.

2.4 Other Actors in the Conflict

2.4.1 Anti-Government Forces

The escalation of the crisis led to the creation of several organizations or groups opposed to the Assad regime. There are reportedly hundreds (by some accounts approximately 1,500) of armed rebel groups and militias active in the Syrian conflict but this study will only highlight the main groups. The National Coalition for Syrian Revolutionary and Opposition Forces (NCSROF) represents the majority of the rebel fighters, including the well-known Free Syrian Army (FSA). There are also various extremist Islamist brigades (comprising both local and foreign jihadists) with the most prominent being the large and well-resourced Al-Nusra Front, which is partially aligned to Al-Qaeda in Iraq (AQI) and the Islamic State of Iraq (ISI). The Friends of Syria, a group of over 90 countries, including the United States was also formed and recognized the National Coalition as Syria's legitimate government (Gill 2016:357).

Kurd factions in the northeast have also armed and are generally supportive of the rebellion; however, they are largely motivated by independent goals and disagree with the Islamists and the NCSROF about their post-conflict political vision. As the conflict wears on, without distinctive action from international organizations such as the UNSC, several national actors have also increased their support to the Syrian opposition politically, economically and militarily. The Free Syrian Army received a steady stream of non-military assistance (financial, logistical and political) and then non-lethal (non-nuclear) military equipment and funding from several governments, including the United States, United Kingdom, Turkey, Saudi Arabia and Qatar, beginning in June 2012 (Hof and Simon 2013:31).

In addition, a number of States have directly intervened in Syria, some with, others without, Syrian government consent for example the United States led anti-ISIS coalition, which consists of Australia, Bahrain, France, Jordan, the Netherlands, Saudi Arabia, Turkey, United Arab Emirates and United Kingdom which is actively engaged in conducting airstrikes against ISIS within Syria (Ibid: 31). The coalition commenced operations in August 2014 at the request of the Iraqi government following the advance of ISIS forces deep into Iraqi territory.

The members of the coalition have based their use of force inside Syria on the right of (collective) self-defense in response to the advance of ISIS into Iraq and in response to terrorist acts attributed to ISIS in a number of States, including Turkey and France (Slim and

Trombetta 2014:32). The United States informed the UN Security Council in September 2014 that it relied on Article 51 of the UN Charter as the legal basis for conducting airstrikes against ISIS in Syria in support of Iraq. Although it has not actively opposed the operations (air strikes) of the coalition, the Syrian government has not consented to the coalition's operations within its territory and has characterized them as a violation of its sovereignty and as unlawful.

2.4.2 Pro-Government Forces

A large pro-government militia known as the National Defense Forces (NDF), which has been organized by the government with Iranian assistance (Gill 2016:359), supports the Syrian government within the country. It participates in both defensive and offensive operations against opposition forces under the overall coordination of the armed forces. In addition to these indigenous forces, there are also a large number of foreigners fighting on behalf of the government, these include the Lebanese Shiite militia Hezbollah, Iraqi and Afghan Shiite fighters.

Two States are known to have military forces active in the conflict in support of the Syrian government (Ibid: 359). These are Iran, which has close ties with the Assad government and has reportedly deployed several thousand members of the Revolutionary Guard in direct support of Syrian military operations, in addition to providing training, military advice and substantial financial support, and the Russian Federation, which had approximately 15,000 personnel deployed in Syria as of December 2016. Both Russia and Iran have, alongside other aims, the shared objective of shoring up their common ally the Syrian government, aiding it in regaining some of the strategic areas it has lost, and ensuring the inclusion of the government and its supporters in any overall peace agreement that may emerge. For its part, the Syrian government is intent on retaining as much power as possible and not being excluded from any settlement that may be reached.

The West (America, France and Britain) has been backing the rebel groups in what is seen as a window of opportunity to normalize the political situation in Syria, but the instability in the country still continues. How the unrest will further evolve is still unknown. However, the support provided by Russia and China to the Assad regime complicates even more the internal dynamics and makes a possible external intervention remote. Russia's stance towards Syria is rooted in particular strategic interests (Demir and Rijnoveanu 2013:67).

The situation is fluid and characterized by a shifting pattern of alliances, cooperation and clashes between the various groups. It would be impossible to draw a coherent picture of the entire mosaic of armed groups and their aims, actions and alignments. Nevertheless, this research has identified the main parties and given an overall picture of where they stand in the conflict.

2.5 Impact of the Conflict on the Syrian People

Armed-conflict, economic disintegration and social fragmentation have transformed the human geography of Syria. This resulted in a hollowing population as it fell from 20.87 million persons in 2010 to just 17.65 million people by the end of 2016. Over half the population (52.8 per cent) was dislodged as they left their homes looking for safer places to live or better living conditions elsewhere. Some 6.80 million persons from this population-in-movement (58 per cent) continue to live in Syria as Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs), with many displaced numerous times (United Nations Development Programme (World Vision 2017:6).

Refugees from Syria now constitute the second largest refugee population in the world with an estimated 4.8 million refugees fleeing Syria by the end of 2016. Syrian refugees are living in Lebanon, Jordan, Iraq and Turkey has the largest number with 35.1 percent of refugees living there. Iraq has the least number of refugees at 6.9% due to the internal conflict in that country. Many Syrians have started the great trek to Europe hoping for a better future but not all of them make it as some die along the way as they attempt the dangerous trip across the Mediterranean Sea from Turkey to Greece. Those who make it to Europe also face challenges as resources are strained and much of the route into Western Europe has been closed (Ibid:6).

According to (UNDP) 2015:8), the ruinous descent into poverty in Syria has continued with four in every five Syrians lived in poverty. While poverty varies among regions, those that witnessed intensive conflict and had higher historical rates of poverty suffered most from poverty. Under these conditions human development is rapidly regressing, with the UN Human Development Index (HDI) highlighting the appalling deterioration of Syria's human development record as it tumbled from the medium human development group into the low human development group during the course of the conflict as the key education, health and income indicators withered. Thus, the HDI of Syria is estimated to have lost 32.6 per cent of

its pre-conflict value, while falling in global ranking from 113th to 173rd out of 187 countries.

According to World Vision (2017:7), education is reportedly in a state of collapse with half (50.8 per cent) of all school-age children no longer attending school, with almost half of all children losing three years of schooling. The appalling loss of life continues to be among the most horrific feature of the armed-conflict, as the death toll increased by the end of 2016 to reach 470,000 persons killed. The death toll however, is difficult to keep track as people are dying on a daily basis in the conflict. Equally horrendous is the silent disaster that has reduced life expectancy at birth from 75.9 to an estimated 55.7 years reducing longevity and life expectancy by 27 per cent.

Environmentally, the war will leave behind a toxic footprint resulting both directly and indirectly from military origin contamination, such as by heavy metals in munitions, toxic residues from artillery and other bombs, the destruction of buildings and water resources, the targeting of industrial zones and the looting of chemical facilities (Ibid: 7). The scale of military activity in Syria over the past years suggests that contaminants and indirect pollution will have a long-term toxic legacy for the environment and can contribute to widespread public health problems for years to come.

2.6 Impact of the Conflict in the Region

The constantly rising number of Syrians fleeing the violence, which currently stands at 4.8 million, has put an enormous strain on neighbouring countries, particularly Lebanon (34.5%), Turkey (35.1%), Jordan (18.7%) and Iraq (6.9%), with regard to providing adequate shelter, health services and supplies (Berzins 2013:4). In addition, fighting has spilled over into Lebanon and Iraq fueling sectarian strife in these already destabilised states, both of which have a history of civil war (Mariwala 2017:12). There is a real danger that both countries will be severely destabilised by Syria's civil war.

From the perspective of the Arab Gulf states, Saudi Arabia and Qatar, the Syria crisis has offered an opportunity to reverse Tehran's considerable growth in influence since the 2003 Iraq War and to strengthen their own positions. Some US and Israeli strategists have also seen the Syrian civil war as an opportunity to decisively weaken Iran, hoping that defeat in the Levant would force Tehran to give ground on other issues such as its nuclear programme. They also expect that the Lebanese Hezbollah will be weakened by regime change in Syria,

which serves as its main transit route for arms supplies. On the other side, Iran has regarded the power struggle in Syria, much like the international sanctions against the Islamic Republic as an element of an American and Israeli driven policy of isolation that ultimately seeks regime change in Tehran. The Iranian leadership sees itself at the forefront of a strategic and ideological conflict about nothing less than liberating the region from American and Israeli hegemony (Shabaneh 2013:3).

According to Chovichina (2017:2) so far, as a result of the Syrian civil war, the economies of Turkey, Syria, Lebanon, Jordan, Iraq, and Egypt summed together have lost close to US\$35 billion in output, measured in 2007 prices and this figure is rising. However, these losses have been unevenly distributed. Those countries most affected by the war, Syria and Iraq, have borne the brunt of the direct economic costs of it, as well as of losing out on what could have been much more formal economic integration. Other countries in the Levant region have incurred average per capita income losses but not GDP declines due to the direct effects of war. Influxes of refugees into Lebanon, Jordan, and Turkey have boosted consumption, investment and labor supply and the size of these refugee-receiving economies. But, in all cases, aggregate incomes have increased less than the size of the population, so the war has hurt the standards of living there, with per capita average incomes declining by 11 percent in Lebanon and 1.5 percent in Turkey, Egypt, and Jordan relative to levels that could have been achieved had the war been avoided.

The Syrian war runs the risk of destabilizing the whole region militarily, economically and politically. The people of Syria will continue to face resistance wherever they go due to the limited resources, which they have to fight for with the locals of the host countries. If the conflict is not abated, the whole region is at risk of sliding into a war.

2.7 Global Impact of the Conflict

In 2015, the ripples from the Arab Spring spread globally as acts of terror directed or inspired by the Islamic State caused carnage far and wide with attacks on France and Belgium. Some of the attackers allegedly slipped into Europe via Greece by posing as refugees. About 1 million migrants poured into Europe. Italy was the main point of entry, then Greece as people crossed over from Turkey, then trekked through the Balkans and across Hungary to Germany and Sweden. Plans to take in more refugees met political resistance in America, less so in Canada. Turkey secured promises of more European aid to cope with the 2 million Syrian

refugees on its soil (Asseburg and Wimmen 2012:3). The world has witnessed the worst refugee crisis since world war II and this has had great economic consequences in other parts of the world that are in need of aid like Africa as all aid has been channeled towards the refugee crisis.

2.8 Regional and International Response to the Crisis

A peace plan was introduced by the League of Arab States (LAS) which called on the government to stop violence, release prisoners, allow for media access and remove military presence from civilian areas (Gowans 2016:15). The Syrian government's failure to uphold the plan despite its initial agreement to do so led to the suspension of its membership from LAS on 12 November 2011. Economic sanctions were also imposed on 27 November 2011. After the failure of the peace deal signed between Syria and LAS on 19 December 2011 which mandated an Arab League mission to observe and report on the crisis, the League then advised the UNSC to take further action and aided in the appointment of a Joint Special Envoy with the UN to facilitate a political solution to the crisis.

France, Turkey and the states of the Gulf Cooperation Council explicitly recognised the National Coalition of Syrian Revolutionary and Opposition Forces (or: Syrian National Coalition) in mid-November 2012. This coalition was founded in Doha under massive external pressure, as the sole legitimate representative of the Syrian people, and the EU foreign ministers expressed their agreement with this line. On the other side Russia, China and Iran had proposed a "dialogue" involving the present rulers. Such an initiative was clearly designed to shore up the Assad regime's legitimacy by co-opting individual opposition figures in an essence to preserve the regime's monopoly of power. With no room for compromise between these opposing stances, diplomatic initiatives presently enjoy practically no prospect of success (Asseburg and Wimmen 2012:5)

The Syrian National Coalition was recognized by the LAS alongside the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) and it officially took Syria's seat at the summit of the Arab League in March 2013. On 28 August 2013, the Arab League blamed the Syrian government for the chemical attack of 21 August and urged the international community to take action to deter further chemical weapons use on 2 September 2013 (Gowans 2016:16).

According to Shabaneh (2013:8), internationally; the harsh and brutal response of the regime

against its own people delegitimised it with many key players in the international community. For example, America and many European powers have been calling for the removal of the regime and its symbols from any future government in Syria. In addition, western voices have suggested sending Assad and his men to stand trial at the International Criminal Court (ICC). Furthermore, the majority of countries have pulled their ambassadors from Damascus, and have asked Syrian ambassadors to leave their countries. Moreover, several United Nations General Assembly Resolutions (UNGAR) have been passed to condemn the regime, and have recognised the human suffering of the Syrian people and demanded that the regime open the country for Human Rights Groups and International Organisations to have unfettered access to the country to protect and document abuses.

The international response to the crisis in Syria has failed to stop the war in Syria. This reinforces the realist perspective of states pursuing their own interests in an anarchic world as is being portrayed by Syria and the external actors involved in the conflict. Given such actions, the liberalist notion of international organisations that maintain order in the international community is also called into question.

2.9 Chapter Summary

The chapter has noted the Syrian uprising was motivated by the Arab Spring and that the heavy-handed response of the Assad regime to the initially peaceful protests contributed to the degeneration of these demonstrations into a fully-fledged civil war that no amount of reform could pacify. The chaos created by the civil war led to Syria becoming a breeding ground of various opposition groups and terrorist groups which in turn provided an opportunity for external actors to meddle in the conflict as they supported different groups including the Assad regime thereby turning it into a proxy war. The conflict has had devastating consequences as many have been displaced and sought refuge in the region and globally. Terrorist groups have taken advantage of the movement of refugees to spread their Islamic fundamentalism and the world witnessed Islam related attacks in France and Belgium. International response has done little to contain the conflict; rather it has only hardened the position of the Assad regime as well as that of its supporters as they have employed realist tendencies of fighting “*till the last man standing.*” The meddling of the external actors have contributed to the intractability of the conflict with no hope to an end of the conflict in sight. The next chapter looks at the UNSC’s response to the Syrian conflict.

CHAPTER THREE

The UNSC's Response to the Syrian Conflict

3.0 Introduction

This Chapter will begin with a general overview of the role of the UNSC in maintaining international peace and security. The chapter will then zero in on the UNSC's response to the Syrian crisis by outlining the major resolutions, press statements, presidential statements as well as diplomatic initiatives that were adopted. The last section of this chapter will highlight the criticism of the veto power by Russia and China followed by a conclusion of the chapter.

3.1 An Overview of the Role of the UNSC

The United Nations (UN) is the largest legitimate international organization that is constitutionally dedicated to maintaining international peace and security under Article 24 of the UN Charter (Khallaf 2016:3). The UN is not only a diplomatic forum, but also a security maintaining institution. Since the establishment of the UN, the Security Council has been known as the most important UN body and the world's most powerful institution; it is comprised of the Permanent Five (P-5) (Russian Federation, China, United States of America, the United Kingdom, France) and the Non-permanent Ten (N-10) (Japan, Egypt, Senegal, Ukraine, Uruguay, Sweden, Bolivia, Ethiopia, Kazakhstan, Italy) that not only speaks and decides on behalf of the 193 UN Member States, but also ratifies legally binding resolutions.

The N-10 members are elected by the General Assembly to a two-year non-renewable term. These seats are selected regionally to ensure representation in the Council, such that three members are from Africa, two members each from Asia, Latin America, Western Europe, and one member from Eastern Europe. The P-5 members are the victors of the Second World War. These five permanent members make up the core of the Security Council and therefore, are conferred with veto power, which allows any one member to veto or overrides any resolutions or decisions proposed by the Council regardless the majority's perspective (Ibid: 3).

According to article 27 of the United Nations Charter, each member of the UNSC shall have a vote and the decisions of the UNSC on procedural matters shall be made by an affirmative vote of nine members and decisions of the Security Council on all other matters shall be made by an affirmative vote of nine members including the concurring votes of the permanent members. This is possible provided that, in decisions under Chapter VI, and under paragraph 3 of Article 52, a party to a dispute shall abstain from voting. Although the power of veto is not explicitly mentioned in the UN Charter, the fact that substantive decisions by the UNSC require "the concurring votes of the permanent members", means that any of those permanent members can prevent the adoption, by the Council, of any draft resolutions on "substantive" matters. For this reason, the power of veto is also referred to as the principle of great power unanimity and the veto itself is sometimes referred to as the great power veto (Ibid:3).

Member states committed themselves in Article 1(1) of the UN Charter to "*take effective collective measures for the prevention and removal of threats to the peace.*" While the Charter does not contain the term "collective security," the concept is nevertheless firmly enshrined in Chapters I, V, and VII of the Charter. As the primary UN organ concerned with the maintenance of international peace and security, the Security Council can invoke the collective security mechanisms of the Charter, including the coercive measures of Chapter VII, when it determines the existence of a threat to international peace and security. Additionally, according to Chapter V, Article 24 (1) of the Charter of the United Nations, the Security Council has the absolute right to determine what constitutes a threat to peace and security (Ibid: 4).

The UN Charter allows the UNSC to make decisions that are legally binding on concerned member states. The Charter, according to Article 25, commits concerned member states to carry out all decisions the Council adopts, not just those under Chapter VII. Chapter VII allows the UNSC to enforce its decisions through various sanctions and embargoes (Article 41, UN Charter) as well as through the use of military force (Article 42, UN Charter). The Charter also foresaw the establishment of a standby system under which member states would make available earmarked military forces for Council-mandated operations. However, no member state showed any interest in entering into such arrangements, dooming the UN to this day to rely on self-appointed groups of states for enforcement action (Einsiedel et al 2015:10).

According to Khallaf (2016:4), in 2005, world leaders at the United Nations World Summit embraced a new doctrine called the "Responsibility to Protect", which acknowledges that the

responsibility of protecting human rights and innocent civilians from genocide, war crimes, ethnic cleansing and crimes against humanity belonged first to the nations in which violations occurred, but when nations failed to protect such rights from mass atrocities, the international community could take on the responsibility itself. Nonetheless, scholars such as Kramer and Killean (2012:130) and Moore (2013:100) have questioned the effectiveness of the Responsibility to Protect, particularly in the case of the Syrian Arab Republic region in the Middle East.

3.2 The UNSC Involvement in the Syrian Crisis

According to Gifkins (2012:7), in the first thirteen months of the conflict in Syria, the UNSC seemed inactive, as they were disagreements on how to resolve the conflict. Disagreements over Syria centered on two key issues: first, how to interpret events on the ground, and second, how to respond to the violence. In the early stages of the conflict Western powers characterised the situation as brutal repression of pro-democracy protesters by the Assad regime. In contrast, Russia and China emphasised that violence was occurring in the context of a legitimate government response to attacks on state infrastructure by armed opposition groups. These divergent perspectives on the factual situation on the ground undermined attempts to reach agreement on appropriate responses. While Western states, and subsequently the Arab League, have called for President Assad to step aside, Moscow and Beijing have been strongly opposed to any external pressure aimed at changing the regime in Damascus.

The Security Council made three attempts to adopt a legally binding Chapter VII resolution on Syria: on 4 October 2011, 4 February 2012, and 19 July 2012. The draft resolution of 4 October 2011 envisaged “unspecified measures” against the regime after thirty days if the government failed to end the violence, underlining the possibility of economic and diplomatic sanctions. The text of the 4 February 2012 resolution was drafted along similar lines, this time setting a deadline of twenty-one days before the authorization of “further measures.” The third and final draft resolution clearly acting under Chapter VII encompassed a wide range of issues, and this time included accountability, set forth a transition process, and endorsed the Geneva Communiqué to make its implementations binding (Blewit 2013:41).

However, all three resolutions were vetoed by Russia and China, who made it clear throughout the whole period of the Council’s handling of the Syrian crisis that they would not

allow the Libyan scenario be repeated in Syria (Ibid: 41). All three drafts were highly critical of the Syrian government and put the onus of responsibility for the violence in the country and the dismal conditions of the Syrian people primarily on the Assad regime. The vetoes were met with strong condemnation internationally by the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, Navi Pillay, Guatemala, and all the other thirteen members of the UNSC. In a way, the vetoes contributed to the escalation of the violence.

3.2.1 UNSC' s Negotiation and Mediation efforts

3.2.1.1 Kofi Annan's Six-Point Plan

After a series of failed attempts to resolve the crisis and an escalation in the violence, in February 2012 the League of Arab States and the UNSC appointed former UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan Joint Special Envoy to Syria. After conducting negotiations in Syria he outlined a six-point plan to the UN Security Council on 16 March 2012. Annan's six-point plan called for a Syrian-led political process, ending violence and pulling back the military from civilian areas, ensuring access for humanitarian workers and journalists, releasing those arbitrarily detained, and respecting the right to peaceful demonstration. The Security Council quickly issued a Presidential Statement on the 21 March 2012 expressing full support for Annan's mediation efforts and his six-point plan. The plan was accepted by Syria less than a week later. Syrian consent for Annan's plan meant that it was easier for the Security Council to find consensus during the next round of drafting, as they were not discussing coercive measures. Alongside the Presidential Statement, the UN Security Council also issued a Press Statement on 21 March condemning terrorist attacks in Damascus and Aleppo. These attacks were reported to have been against government facilities. This statement was drafted by Russia and is indicative of Russia's emphasis on terrorism in this conflict (Gifkins 2012:12).

On 12 April 2012 Annan's negotiated deadline for a full ceasefire passed and violence against civilians continued (Ibid; 12). To monitor the ceasefire competing drafts resolutions again emerged in the UN Security Council. The US draft was put to a vote on 14 April 2012 and passed with the support of all Security Council members as resolution 2042. This was the first resolution the Security Council passed addressing the situation in Syria, 13 months after the uprising and violent repression began.

Resolution 2042 authorized the dispatch of an advance UN supervision team to Syria. A

week later on 21 April, the council adopted its next resolution. Building on the objectives of the preceding resolution 20142, Resolution 2043 unleashed a full fledged UN mission on the ground for an initial period of ninety days, formally established the United Nations Supervision Mission in Syria (UNSMIS), and set up a reporting period of fifteen (15) days' interval. The resolution required the deployment of *“up to 300 unarmed military observers as well as an appropriate civilian component as required by the mission to fulfill its mandate,”* (Jafarova 2014:31)

Violence in Syria continued to escalate from May to June 2012 even after the authorization of the observer mission and this rendered the full-fledged operationalization of UNSMIS impossible. In May 2012 the Colonel in Syria issued an update report, which expressed extreme concern *‘about the human rights situation in the country where gross violations continue unabated in an increasingly militarised context.’* The UN Security Council issued two Press Statements expressing concern at the deteriorating situation in Syria in May 2012. At this time the UK, the US and France wanted the Security Council to consider issuing sanctions against Syria if they did not comply with resolutions 2042 and 2043, but this was rejected by Russia and China (Einsiedel et al 2015:15).

The absence of a propitious security setting made the full-fledged operation of the UNSMIS impossible, and forced it to limit its monitoring activities. The mission had to sustain its operations following resolution 2059, which on 20 July 2012 decided to renew the mandate of UNSMIS for a final period of thirty days, and conditioned the subsequent renewal *“only in the event that the Secretary-General reports and the UNSC confirms the cessation of the use of heavy weapons and a reduction in the level of violence by all sides sufficient to allow UNSMIS to implement its mandate.* The UN presence on the ground in Syria thus came to an end, depriving the UNSC of the only independent source of on-site information on the events in the country (Jafarova 2014:32). The Kofi Annan Six- Point Plan was thus a failure.

3.2.1.2 The Geneva Conferences

Against all odds, the search for a solution continued with the earnest mediation efforts of Kofi Annan. He convened an Action Group for Syria that released the Geneva Communiqué of June 2012, which emphasized the need for a transitional government body that could include members of the present Syrian government and of the opposition. The adoption of the Geneva Communiqué on 30 June 2012 marked the first consensus outcome of the

international community that laid out a set of principled objectives for the Syrian-led political transition process. For the first time since the outbreak of the conflict, the Geneva Communiqué "*formed on the basis of mutual consent*" seemed to offer a light at the end of the tunnel, which unfortunately became dimmed by frictions and efforts to achieve maximum unilateral gains. However after the failure by the UNSC to adopt a supporting resolution under Chapter VII that would make the implementation of the Geneva document binding, Kofi Annan felt abandoned and not receiving adequate support from the UNSC and at the end of August 2012 he resigned from his position as joint special envoy (BBC 13 May 2017, File Copy).

Lakhdar Brahimi replaced Kofi Annan in August 2012 (Ibid.). He led the Geneva II conference on Syria in January and February 2014, which was successful in convening Syrian delegations from the government and the opposition for the first time since the outbreak of hostilities but yielded no tangible results as it broke down after only two rounds, with the USA and France blaming the Syrian government's refusal to discuss opposition demands as the cause for the failure of the talks. The Geneva II conference aimed to provide implementation of the 2012 Geneva Communiqué with new impetus, but the talks broke down only a month later. Lakhdar Brahimi resigned in May 2014 and was succeeded by Staffan de Mistura in July 2014. Staffan de Mistura focused on de-escalating violence in Syria through localized ceasefires intended to alleviate civilian suffering as well as pave the way toward a more comprehensive peace process. In July 2015, the UN Security Council (UNSC) endorsed a new approach presented by the UN's current special envoy for the Syrian crisis, Staffan de Mistura.

On December 18 2015, the Security Council adopted unanimously resolution 2254 approving the roadmap, which had emerged from International Syria Support Group's (ISSG) Vienna meetings of October 30 and November 14, 2015. Through Resolution 2254, the Security Council endorsed the Geneva Communiqué of June 30, 2012 and the two Vienna Statements as the basis for a Syrian-led and Syrian-owned political transition. It acknowledged the role of the ISSG as the central platform to facilitate the United Nations' efforts to achieve a lasting political settlement in Syria. Resolution 2254 set out a roadmap for a peace process in Syria with a clear transition timeline, six months to create a transitional, united Syrian government and 18 months for a new constitution and democratic elections. However, resolution 2254 offered new hope but failed to produce the intended results as the Assad regime resisted the notion of a political transition and went on to hold general elections in regime-held parts of

Syria, even though the resolution stipulated that polls, backed by the UN would be held in mid-2017 (Jafarova 2014:35).

The US and Russia persuaded representatives of the warring parties to attend "proximity talks" in Geneva in January 2016 to discuss a Security Council-endorsed road map for peace, including a ceasefire and a transitional period ending with elections. The first round broke down while still in the "preparatory" phase, as government forces launched an offensive around Aleppo. The talks resumed in March 2016, after the US and Russia brokered a nationwide "*Cessation of Hostilities in Syria*," (resolution 2268) that excluded jihadist groups on February 26, 2016, which demanded that all parties end the attacks and airstrikes in Syria to ease access for United Nations humanitarian aid (Khallaf 2016:26).

According to UN Special Envoy for Syria, Staffan de Mistura resolution 2268 was a "major achievement" after prolonged discussions and intense negotiations with all parties. However, even after the "*cessation of hostilities agreement*" scattered violence between militants and rebel groups were reported around the nation (Adams 2015:13). The attempt by the first two UN envoys to broker peace where unsuccessful and it remains to be seen if Staffan de Mistura will be any different.

After several failed attempts at a cessation of hostilities, the ceasefire brokered by Russia and Turkey in December 2016, including a monitoring mechanism for violations, opened the way for a new UN Security Council Resolution 2336 which was adopted unanimously on 31 December 2016 (Ibid:13). The resolution provided an impulse for re-booting the political process during the talks in Astana at the beginning of 2017 and to resume intra-Syrian talks under UN auspices in February 2017. At the same time, the discussion about the future of Syria revolves around questions linked to the future of the Assad regime, territorial integrity of Syria, political accountability, the creation of safe zones, and the reconstruction work that will follow a potential peace agreement.

3.2.1.3 The Chemical Weapons Attack

According to Jafarova (2014:37), the deadly events of 21 August 2013 involving the use of chemical weapons in an attack on Ghouta, on the outskirts of Damascus, that killed approximately 1,400 civilians sparked international outrage and became another challenge for the Security Council in taking a united stand. Global revulsion at this war crime, combined

with the credible threat of retaliatory military strikes by the United States and France, led to a diplomatic breakthrough at the Security Council and resolution 2118 was adopted. The resolution maintained the clear objectives and deadlines of the 14 September Geneva agreement regarding the process for the elimination of Syria's chemical weapons stockpiles and supported the relevant decision of the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) of 27 September 2013, which laid out special procedures for the destruction of Syria's chemical weapons stockpiles. Moreover, the resolution also authorized the dispatch of an advance UN team to assist the OPCW efforts on the ground.

Resolution 2118 was later on replaced with resolution 2209 of 6 March 2015 which condemned the use of toxic chemicals such as chlorine, without attributing blame; stressed that those responsible should be held accountable and recalled resolution 2118. Although Resolution 2118 formed part of the diplomatic solution to the chemical weapons problem, the resolution paid little attention to the accountability dimensions of the alleged use of chemical weapons. The resolution addressed the use of chemical weapons primarily through disarmament obligations and enforcement measures under Chapter VII of the UN Charter. The resolution did not include any concrete options for the exercise of criminal jurisdiction, which prevents any referral to the ICC (Muditha 2016:234).

3.2.1.4 Humanitarian Access

The Security Council's 2 October 2013 Presidential Statement on the need for urgent humanitarian access was a promising indicator of further progress, coming less than a week after the chemical weapons resolution (Egeland 2015:15). The statement emphasized the obligation to distinguish between civilian populations and combatants, the prohibition against indiscriminate attacks, the responsibility to protect by the Syrian government and the facilitation by all parties of safe access to populations in need of assistance in all areas under their control and across conflict lines. Despite this statement, the siege of Syria's civilians continued and the overall situation remained dismal.

After further torturous negotiations, the Security Council unanimously adopted Resolution 2139 on 22 February 2014, whose contents were the same with the presidential statement of 2 October 2013 above. When the Syrian government failed to comply with resolution 2139, the Security Council adopted Resolution 2165 in July 2014, which authorized the delivery of humanitarian aid across borders and conflict lines by the UN and its implementing partners

with or without consent from the Syrian government. Resolution 2191 of 17 December 2014 renewed authorisation for cross-border humanitarian access until 10 January 2016 and resolution 2332 of December 2016 renewed the authorisation for cross-border aid delivery until 10 January 2018 (Ibid: 16).

Together the aforementioned resolutions (2139, 2165, 2191, 2332) provide a framework for alleviating the suffering of civilians in Syria. Meanwhile, the Resolutions have not brought the success many had hoped for as the Assad regime continued to use hunger as an effective strategy to subdue the rebels and enforce local truces (Muditha 2016:222). With the rise of ISIL and no sign of the civil war abating, the humanitarian situation has continued to deteriorate despite the UN's best efforts to bring increased aid to starving, sick and displaced Syrians.

3.3 Referral of the Syrian Situation to the International Criminal Court (ICC)

In early 2014, more than 55,000 sickening images of 11,000 prisoners who were allegedly tortured to death or executed were revealed via a source that claimed to have gathered them while working as an official photographer for the Syrian security forces. A team of international experts analysed the photos and made a presentation of the so-called Caesar Report to members of the Security Council on 15 April 2014 leading to renewed calls for the Syrian situation to be referred to the ICC. It is important to note however that calls to refer the Syrian situation to the ICC had been made since 2011. Only the UNSC can refer this case to the ICC because Syria is not a signatory to the ICC (Adams 2015:19).

On 22 May 2014 a French draft resolution calling for the Syrian situation to be referred to the ICC for investigation was vetoed by Russia and China. Russia had condemned the resolution, which focused on perpetrators from all sides of the conflict (including ISIL), as an *“attempt to use the ICC to further inflame political passions and lay the ultimate groundwork for eventual foreign military intervention.”* This was despite the fact that the draft resolution was co-sponsored by 65 states and that more than 100 international NGOs supported the resolution and advocated for its adoption. All efforts by the UNSC have thus far been fruitless and the Syrian civilians continue to suffer (Ibid:19).

3.4 Terrorism

A number of resolutions have been passed to curtail the operations of terrorist groups in Syria. Resolution 2170 of 15 August 2014 condemned the recruitment by ISIS and Al-Nusra of foreign fighters and listed six individuals affiliated with those groups under the 1267/1989 Al-Qaida sanctions regime. Resolution 2178 of 24 September 2014 expanded the counter-terrorism framework by imposing obligations on member states to respond to the threat of foreign terrorist fighters. On 12 February 2015 resolution 2199 was adopted condemning ISIS and Al-Nusra's illicit funding via oil exports, traffic of cultural heritage, ransom payments and external donations. Resolution 2249 of November 2015 called for member states to take all necessary measures on the territory under the control of ISIS to prevent terrorist acts committed by ISIS and other Al-Qaida affiliates. With the united voice of the Security Council, all members agreed to fight the unparalleled terrorist threat that is ISIL/ISIS (Khallaf 2016:20).

On December 17, 2015 the UN Security Council unanimously adopted Resolution 2253 to suppress the financing of terrorism. The 28-page resolution covers travel ban, arms embargo, asset freeze and listing criteria for ISIL, Al-Qaida and "*associated individuals, groups, undertaking and entities*". It reaffirmed that those responsible for committing, organizing or supporting terrorist acts must be held accountable (Ibid.). However this resolution, like all the other resolutions on terrorism listed above, has been a failure as terrorists continue to thrive in Syria through funding and are gaining ground as they now occupy large swathes of land with a base established at Raqqa. Another problem is that the criteria for determining terrorist groups in Syria has never been unanimously accepted due to the fragmented nature of the opposition groups fighting in Syria which are being caused by the external actors supporting them.

3.5 Criticism Over The Use Of Veto By Russia And China

A UN military action has not yet taken place because of the deep disunity among the P5. After the third Security Council veto in July 2012 a growing number of UN member states started to not only question Russia's impartiality with regard to Syria, but also the legitimacy and efficacy of the Security Council itself. In particular, the veto rights of the five permanent members came under increased scrutiny. There have been calls for restraint on the use of

veto in mass atrocity situations (Muditha 2016:240). Partly in response to such criticisms, France proposed that the Security Council “*develop a code of conduct whereby the permanent members of the Security Council collectively agree to refrain from using their veto with respect to mass atrocity crimes, which the responsibility to protect is supposed to prevent.*” Other countries such as Mexico and Liechtenstein have also supported France’s proposal.

The use of the veto in a mass atrocity situation is inconsistent with the aspirations of a 193-member General Assembly that no longer believes that sovereignty should constitute an unrestricted license to kill, nor accepts the right of the five victors from 1945 to maintain special privileges if these prove inimical to the protection of the most fundamental human rights (Gifkins 2012:14).

In particular, there is growing pressure to uphold the UN’s 2005 commitment to prevent genocide, crimes against humanity, war crimes and ethnic cleansing (Ibid:14). The Responsibility to Protect means that the permanent members of the Security Council have a responsibility not to veto when the world is confronted by these most heinous crimes. From all the responses by the UNSC on the Syrian conflict highlighted above, it is therefore evident that the UNSC has been ineffective in resolving the Syrian crisis, as most of its interventions have been mostly rhetoric with no stringent mechanisms for monitoring and ensuring implementation.

3.6 Chapter Summary

The Chapter has highlighted the role played by the UNSC in resolving the Syrian crisis. It has noted that the UNSC is the sole organ mandated with maintaining international peace and security and as such it has the authority to resolve the Syrian crisis. The role of the UNSC was assessed through highlighting its responses which included presidential statements, resolutions, mediation efforts and attempts to refer the Assad regime to the ICC. Indeed the UNSC has responded to the Syrian crisis as evidenced in this chapter but at the same time it has been weakened by the interests of its P-5 members thereby affecting its effectiveness. The next chapter examines the effectiveness of the UNSC in resolving the Syrian crisis.

CHAPTER FOUR

The Effectiveness of the UNSC in Resolving the Syrian Crisis

4.0 Introduction

The chapter presents an analyses and interpretation of the data obtained from the data collection process. As highlighted in the methodology section, these results were obtained through the use of qualitative data collection instruments such as in depth interview guides for primary data and published books, journal articles and unpublished dissertations/ theses, newsletters, newspaper articles, policy briefs amongst other documents for secondary data. The data is presented in narrative form supplemented by tables. The chapter also discusses and analyses the collected data so as to come up with the major findings of the study. Content analysis is utilised in the chapter as the data analysis instrument. Secondary data from both published and unpublished documents is also used to validate the study's major findings. Data presentation, analysis and discussion are arranged according to research study objectives as outlined in the introductory chapter of the study. This chapter analyses the effectiveness of the United Nations Security Council in resolving the Syrian crisis.

4.2 Interviewee/ Respondent Response Rate

10 key informants were interviewed using the in-depth interviewing technique. All the key informants drawn from the ZDF, Embassies, International Relations Experts and Academics were chosen on the basis of their knowledge and experience in peace and security matters especially in the context of the UNSC and the crisis in Syria. The lowest academic qualification for all the interviewees was a master's degree, while the others were doctoral candidates in International Relations with various South African Universities and as such they could be designated as academics or peace and security analysts. However, they chose to be designated as international relations analysts.

Table 1 below shows a cross tabulation of the in-depth interview respondents and their designations.

Table1: Summary of In-depth Interview Respondents - Designation Cross Tabulation

Designation	Number of People Interviewed
International Relations Experts	3
Ambassadors/ Diplomats	3
Security Analysts	3
Academics/ Scholars	3
Total	12

n=10

Source: compiled by researcher, 2017

4.3 Analysing the Effectiveness of the UNSC

The overall aim of the study was to assess the effectiveness of the UNSC in resolving conflicts in the Middle East with a particular focus on the Syrian crisis. For this aim to be achieved, the study had to fulfill three specific objectives related to the UNSC in the context of the Syrian crisis. One of these objectives was to analyze the facilitating and inhibiting factors towards the resolution of the Syrian Crisis.

The study utilized several parameters as yardsticks for determining whether the UNSC had been effective in resolving the Syrian crisis. The following sections of this chapter will look at some of the facilitating and inhibiting factors towards the resolution of the Syrian Crisis.

4.3.1 Interpreting the Conflict

The different interpretations of the situation in Syria have made it difficult for the UNSC to find consensus on condemning the violence as well as putting in place effective measures to resolve the crisis. According to Gifkins (2012:1), western members of the UNSC such as America, Britain and France have described the conflict as violent repression of protestors

and mass human rights abuses perpetrated predominately by the Syrian Government. While Western countries have framed the Syrian Government as the aggressor, the Syrian Government has framed itself as a victim of terrorism and violence. Syrian President al-Assad has consistently argued that his government is fighting ‘terrorists’ and is the victim of ‘foreign conspiracies’. Similarly, Russian and Chinese state-owned media have consistently argued that the Syrian Government is legitimately suppressing a violent insurgency of terrorists and criminals.

All the interviewees agreed that labeling and hate speech directed towards Assad and his government will not help in resolving the crisis as it only hardens his stance as well as that of his backers thereby complicating the efforts of the UNSC as is being evidenced. All the respondents concurred that it is only when the western members stop viewing the Syrian government as the aggressor that the UNSC may make headway in the matter.

4.3.2 The Responsibility to Protect (R2P)

The UNSC has failed to invoke the Responsibility to Protect due to the fall out from the Libyan intervention which has undermined trust between Western and non-Western members (Russia and China) of the UNSC. The way the R2P and the UNSC mandate were abused during the Libyan operation has hardened the positions of non-western countries such as Russia. Blocking action on Syria can therefore be viewed as a Russian and Chinese diplomatic riposte to the West for what they perceive was NATO’s use of Resolution 1973 as a pretext for removing the Gaddafi regime. These post-Libya tensions within the UNSC have hampered efforts to generate political consensus on appropriate responses to Syria leading to the UNSC’s ineffectiveness in resolving the crisis (Garwood-Gowers 2013:595).

Although debates over R2P do not fit neatly into a Western versus non-Western or North–South categorisation, Syria nevertheless highlights conflicts between UNSC members over both principle and political strategy (Ibid: 595). Russia and China, as well as the other BRICS members, remain reluctant to depart from their traditional foreign policy emphasis on non-intervention and non-use of force opting instead for dialogue and negotiation, rather than coercive measures involving sanctions or military force. This has been the position of Russia, China, and to a lesser extent, the other BRICS states during the Arab Spring, indicating that fundamental differences of principle and political approach continue to divide the major Western and non-Western powers leading to a stalemate in the UNSC.

9 out of the 10 interviews agree with the view of the non-western states that military intervention will not resolve the crisis as it will only destroy, kill, maim and leave scars and may be a recipe for future instability. They believe that a political settlement will resolve the crisis. On the other hand, respondent D is of the view that the people of Syria have suffered enough and that military intervention is required, as a political settlement has taken too long to negotiate with no positive results achieved.

4.3.4 The Use of Veto

The consensus among scholars is that the Russian and Chinese veto is the main political obstacle that is restricting the UNSC from intervening and stopping the civil war in Syria. The Security Council is typically able to agree upon only on the matters that are acceptable to all five of its permanent members and so initiating stronger actions that would require activating the existing Chapter VII instruments has proved to be nearly impossible due to the institutional make-up of the Security Council. This is despite the fact that America and its allies have taken action in the past without the UNSC's approval in Afghanistan and in Iraq (2003). Syria is of geostrategic importance to Russia and China in the Middle East and as such they veto any resolutions proposed by the Council that would be detrimental to the Assad government. The inability to agree on the issues of hard politics has gradually diminished the overall level of discussion within the Security Council about potential paths to a political solution to the conflict in Syria (Adams 2015:14).

According to Khallaf (2016:15), Amnesty International argues that the Security Council's biggest failure of the UNSC is not bypassing Russia and China's veto on the resolution to refer the situation in Syria to the Prosecutor of the ICC, which was the only way that would have made this referral possible. In addition, Ban Ki-moon has acknowledged that the Security Council is absent of its power to intervene in Syria due to the disagreement among the P-5 members, which have extremely complicated the issue and resulted in the biggest refugee crisis in a generation. He went on to mention that when the P-5 members are divided, it is extremely difficult for the UNSC to deliver and he urged them to look beyond their national interests. The continued use of the veto has paralysed the work of the UNSC and its credibility has suffered as a result.

In contrast however, 9 out of the 10 interviewees were of the view that the use of veto was good as it ensured a balance of power by keeping at bay the west's hegemonic tendencies as they seek to spread their influence in the Middle East. Respondent E noted that:

Veto is a very powerful instrument, which is very necessary because if not, some countries would override other countries. The US does not like other countries to use the Veto but it uses the veto thereby creating double standards. They feel justified when they use the veto but when other countries use the veto it is unjustified.

However, Respondent D noted that *"the use of veto is good but the UNSC has not been using it in good faith."*

On the Issue of referring the Assad regime to the ICC, respondent C was of the view that this cannot be possible at the moment as there were no strict definitions in place and it is only feasible when these are in place. Respondent A concurred as he noted that first the UNSC had to refer George Bush and Tony Blair for the atrocious operations they committed in Iraq and are therefore also war criminals. The UNSC was accused of double standards on the issue as it appears that there are some countries or people who are 'immune' to the ICC compared to others especially those from developing countries.

4.3.5 National Interests

4.3.5.1 Russia

All the interviewees were of the view that national interests were obstructing the effectiveness of the UNSC in resolving the Syrian crisis. According to Gifkins (2012:17), the reasons why Russia has been diplomatically shielding the Syrian republic is because the alliance between Russia and Syria goes back to the Cold War, when Damascus was supported by and allied with the former Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR). Russia lost billions of dollars due to the overthrow of President Muammar al-Gadhafi in Libya and the implementation of the new Iranian sanctions and so it began focusing on selling more weapons to Syria, which has become Russia's seventh biggest weapon buyer, accounting for approximately 10% of Russia's arms sales. Syria is also important to Russia geographically because it is home to Russia's last Mediterranean naval base, located in the port city of Tartus, which is the last Russian military installation outside the former Soviet Union's geographic area. Moreover, this base represents a symbol of the Soviet Union in the Middle East, counterweighting U.S. influence in the area.

However, Khallaf (2016:10) on the other hand argues that Syria is not as crucial to Russia's economic interests as some scholars believe. Instead, what is behind Russia's firm support of Syria is politics. One of the main reasons Russia has resisted calls to demand the overthrow of Assad is that it sees such demands as an imposition of western desires over national sovereignty. Russia believes that if it were to give in to such demands, it would set a precedent, which could mean domestic turmoil in Russia if the Council were to demand a Russian regime change or regime change in another country that is vital to Russia's political or economic interests.

4.3.5.2 America

On the other hand, the USA strongly criticized Russia's military support for the government. The USA and Russia's tensions inflamed the development of the war. Moscow distrusts America's intentions in the area, Putin believes that any proposal coming from the USA is meant to advance its influence in the Middle East area. Russia's policy is to obstruct any American effort to take over the region. The USA is seeking to limit the influence that Iran has in the region and is of the view that this can only be done through the toppling of the Assad government. However the conflict has magnified as none of the two big powers wishes to undermine its standing in the area (Hinnebusch et al 2016:16).

4.3.5.3 China

China's prior interest in the Middle East is in the economic arena. The Middle East is the largest crude oil exporter to China. In 2010, the largest crude oil exporting supplier to China was Saudi Arabia, and Iran ranked third (Ren 2014:265). The instability in the Middle East directly impacts China's resources and its economic development in general. Therefore, China insisted that military action in Syria would produce a negative result, which could lead to an escalated conflict or even a regional war. Besides, from China's perspective, the Iranian regime could be the next target that the US sets out to overthrow after the Assad government. If Western countries overthrew the Iran regime, the strategic structure in the Middle East would be entirely altered, which may severely affect China's interest in this region.

4.3.5.4 Regional Interests

The fragile politics of the region makes it especially difficult to forge an international consensus. Within the region there are strong divides between support for the Syrian regime and support for the Syrian opposition, Syria's allies, Iran and Hezbollah in Lebanon have shown strong support for the Syrian regime. Conversely, Saudi Arabia, Jordan and Qatar have been providing financial and military support to the predominately Sunni opposition in Syria. Early in the uprising Turkey put pressure on the Syrian regime to implement reforms, but when these calls went unheeded Turkey became a supporter of the Syrian opposition who have been hosted in Turkey (Mostafiz 2013:6).

The former UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, Navi Pillay, has blamed the permanent members of the Council in particular for failing to attend to their collective duties (Cruetz 2015:16). The UN Secretary General Ban Ki-Moon urged all the P-5 members to look beyond their national interests so as to enable the UNSC to find a solution for Syria. Respondent A concurred as he postulated that the war in Syria had become a sort of a proxy war of the Russian interests and the American interests.

In the words of respondent A:

We have witnessed the resurgence of the cold war in Syria. The civil war has been turned into a proxy war where external parties are now fighting each other. It has been turned to 'mine is right and yours is wrong' but in a cold war fashion.

Respondent A goes on to say that:

What the Americans and Allies must learn is that you do not resolve conflict by arming rebels. It is a violation of territorial integrity and sovereignty, I don't agree and even believe that Assad could have continued to kill his own who are not armed had the rebels not been armed, he could have exercised restraint.

Respondent F stated that the governments of the other countries like Jordan, Saudi Arabia and Qatar that are supporting the opposition groups in Syria are puppets of America and accordingly they dance to the tune of their master. The different groups that have formed are bankrolled by money sponsored by America and its western allies and Saudi Arabia and Qatar have all given operational bases to these groupings. According to respondent B:

The solution lies with Russia and America withdrawing their support from either side and leaving the warring parties to fight until a victor emerges. This might force the warring parties to go on the negotiating table.

4.3.6 Ascertaining Events on the Ground in Syria

Another problem for the UNSC is that there has been difficulty in ascertaining exactly what is occurring in Syria, which has enabled a situation where Security Council member states have represented the conflict differently (Jafarova 2014:41). The Syrian government has waged a systematic campaign to restrict and intimidate foreign journalists, to limit internet access within Syria, and to use Syrian media to praise the government and discredit foreign media sources. Media restrictions were compounded by restrictions to the Colonel and to UN observers. After conducting preliminary investigations into the massacre at Houla the Colonel chairman reported that inconsistencies in evidence meant they were unable to determine who had committed the massacre, although they suspected government forces. Similarly, UN observers have been denied access to areas where extreme violence was reported with restrictions by army checkpoints and threats to observers.

However Respondent D noted that:

The Syrian crisis does not need observers on the ground. With sober minds, people should just see that what is happening in Syria is bad and action should just be taken. There is a lot of suspicion on the issue of observers on the ground as the Russians were blaming the white helmets for being biased towards the opposition. Observers do not solve the situation.

This remark therefore means that observers on the ground or not, the UNSC should just take action as the war has taken long with grave consequences.

4.3.7 Mediation Efforts

The conflict in Syria has proven particularly resistant to mediation. The regime, made up of hardened Machiavellians, has been prepared to do whatever necessary to survive, whatever the cost to the country; constituted along neo-patrimonial lines, it would find it very hard to share power or to remove the president without risk of collapse. The presence of multiple groups, challenging the government, poses obstacles to the UNSC in trying to resolve the Syrian crisis. Their complicated nexus, at some times cooperating while some other times competing, makes them unpredictable actors that easily endanger a progress in the war against Assad's regimen and complicates the process of a settlement (Field 2016:20).

As the Syrian opposition is highly fragmented, cooperation is a sensitive issue both on the

ground and politically. The fact that the Syrian rebel groups cannot cooperate properly raises credibility concerns as it is uncertain whether one rebel group can abide to the terms of the negotiated agreement set with the state. The fragmentation among the opposition is further encouraged by the involvement of external actors, as the USA chooses to provide political or military support to some Syrian rebel groups. In exchange, these actors use material assistance in order to gain leverage over some of the rebel groups thereby obstructing any hope for a peaceful settlement (Ibid: 20).

Jenkins (2014:16) posits that a peaceful settlement of the Syrian conflict would lead to an endpoint where regional and international actors would not benefit equally. Similar thoughts may apply to both Assad regime and opposition rebel groups directly involved in the conflict. That's why fear of peace is a consequence in the conflict. Rebel groups who have been fighting for last three years might wonder what would happen if they sat for the negotiation, they might not get what they have been fighting for. Some of the videos appearing online show rebels eating internal organs of a government military and another video shows rebels burying alive regime soldiers. These videos tell how intractable the conflict is. When a conflict is intractable, conflicting groups may not negotiate. For them winning is the only goal, because they are fearful of peace. Even the fall of Assad will not end the conflict. All of the elements might continue to fight and are likely to do so to achieve their own ends as none believe they can survive in a Syria led by their foes, so Syria itself cannot survive. A peace agreement for the rebels may seem like they lost the fight and this works against the negotiation and mediation efforts of the UNSC.

In the words of respondent A:

Mediation failed because all the mediators go to the negotiating table with an American mandate or position and this creates problems. They go to negotiate with the message that 'Assad must go' which creates problems. Why do they say no to something that exists? Anything, which benefits Syria, should look at all the concerned parties without external stimuli or external influence. Libya degenerated into what she is today because there was too much interference, the Libyan National Transition Council (LNTC) was formed from outside and hence it did not represent the interests of the Libyan people so likewise the FSA was formed from outside. How does the FSA become a Syrian army when it is composed of outsiders (Afghans, Moroccans, and mercenaries)? How can outsiders have a huge stake against the Syrians themselves? For the Syrian conflict a huge stake must come from the Syrians. They know who represents what, who does what. The problem is that the leaders of the opposition are selected from outside by America and they are imposed. America is bringing its interests to these groups thereby

creating problems, which are affecting any political settlement for Syria. Syrians should be allowed to deal with their own problems.

Respondent G concurs with respondent A as he explains that:

Assad has his own weaknesses but nonetheless, the opposition also has their own weaknesses and there is need to look at the strengths of the two contending parties. The solution can only be achieved through cooperation with Assad. Remember there was no Al-Qaeda or ISIS when he was in power so why not cooperate with him? Who is a greater threat to the world, Assad or Isis?

4.3.8 Chapter Summary

The chapter presented and discussed the major findings of the study. The chapter initially discussed the designations of the various participants of the study. The chapter discussed the inhibiting factors towards the resolution of the Syrian crisis and these included differences in interpreting the conflict, the failure of the responsibility to protect, the use of the veto, national interests, the difficulties experienced in ascertaining the actual events on the ground in Syria as well as the causes for the failure of the mediation efforts by the UNSC. The next chapter provides the conclusions as well as the recommendations of the study

CHAPTER FIVE

Summary of Findings, Conclusion and Recommendations

5.0 Introduction

This chapter focuses on summary of research findings, conclusion and recommendations. The General objective of this study was to assess the effectiveness of the UNSC in resolving conflicts in the Middle East with a particular focus on the Syrian crisis. In addition the study sought to examine the underlying factors precipitating the Syrian uprising as well as analyze the facilitating and inhibiting factors towards the resolution of the Syrian Crisis. In doing so the research attempted to assess the UNSC response to the conflict.

5.1 Summary of Major Findings

The major findings in this section are presented in the order of the research objectives set out in chapter one of the study.

5.1.1 The Syrian Conflict: Causes and Effects

It emerged that the Syrian conflict was triggered by the Arab Spring, which had swept across the region and affected countries like Egypt, Tunisia and Libya among others. However subterranean tensions already existed in the country due to the authoritarian rule by the two Assad governments and the Arab Spring only acted as a catalyst. The heavy handedness of the Syrian government in responding to the crisis led to the creation of opposition groups as well as the degeneration of the peaceful protests into a fully fledged civil war. This led to the interference in the conflict by external actors such as America, Turkey, Saudi Arabia, Qatar and Jordan supporting the NCSROF and Russia, China, Iran and the Lebanese Hezbollah supporting the Assad government thereby turning the conflict into some kind of proxy war.

The study noted that the impact of the conflict on the Syrian people has been devastating as it displaced half the population and killed close to 480 000 people. The war has affected education, health, human development index, the environment and has caused the ruinous decent into poverty of the Syrian people. The Middle East region experienced spill over effects of the conflict as the Syrian people sought refuge in neighboring countries such as

Turkey, Jordan, Iraq and Lebanon thereby constraining the social and economic resources of the host countries. Globally other countries such as America, Germany, Sweden and Canada have also taken in the refugees and terrorists in Syria have taken advantage of this situation to spread Islamic Fundamentalism and the world has witnessed the bombings and shootings in France and Belgium. International responses at the beginning of the conflict such as the suspension of Syria from the League of Arab States, suspension of Syrian ambassadors from other countries as well as the withdrawal of embassies from Damascus by countries such as America, Netherlands and Denmark amongst a whole host of other countries, calls for Assad to step down especially by the west, calls for the Assad regime to be referred to the ICC as well as press statements and presidential statements by the UNSC condemning the violence failed to stop the initial uprising.

5.1.2 The UNSC's Response to the Syrian Conflict

The research established that the UNSC is mandated with maintaining international peace and security and as such it is mandated to resolve the Syrian crisis. A regional body, the League of Arab States, has also been instrumental in trying to resolve the conflict as it introduced a peace plan, sanctions, suspended Syrian membership and aided the UNSC in appointing Kofi Annan as the joint special envoy. The efforts by the LAS are worth noting even though they did not produce the intended result of resolving the conflict. The UNSC on the other hand was inactive in the first thirteen months of the conflict in Syria as they were disagreements on how to resolve the conflict due to differences in interpreting the conflict, which were fuelled by national interests. For example, the UNSC made three attempts to adopt a legally binding Chapter VII resolution on Syria: on 4 October 2011, 4 February 2012, and 19 July 2012 but to no avail as these were vetoed by Russia and China.

The study noted that the UNSC's mediation efforts with the hope of finding a political solution to the Syrian crisis has had three envoys trying to negotiate with the warring parties since the beginning of the conflict to no avail. Under mediation resolutions 2042, 2043, 2059, 2254, 2268 and 2336 were passed but these have not produced any meaningful results due to the complicated nature of the conflict. Resolution 2118 on chemical weapons enabled the destruction of some of Syria's chemical weapons by the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW), which was an achievement on the part of the UNSC.

It emerged that the intractability of the Syrian conflict has made humanitarian access difficult and despite resolutions 2139, 2165, 2191 and 2332 passed to ease this problem; the people of Syria continue to suffer. Efforts have been made by France to draft a resolution to refer the Syrian government to the ICC but this was vetoed by the supporters of the Assad regime, Russia and China. Several resolutions such as 2170, 2178, 2199, 2249 and 2253 were also passed to curb the operations of terrorist groups in Syria through initiatives such as suppressing their funding etc. However these resolutions were a failure as terrorists continue to receive funding and are thriving in Syria as they are gaining ground on a daily basis occupying large swathes of land in the process.

The study noted that there has also been an international outcry over the use of veto by Russia and China, which has inhibited progress at the UNSC. There have been calls for restraint on the use of veto in mass atrocity situations but these have fallen on deaf ears as no meaningful action has taken place since the beginning of the conflict in 2011 to date.

5.1.3 The Effectiveness of the UNSC in Resolving the Syrian Crisis

The study established that the effectiveness of the UNSC in resolving the Syria crisis has been hampered by a number of factors. Interpreting the conflict to be able to come up with a viable solution has been a challenge for the UNSC due to conflicting interests of the P-5 members. It has been difficult for the UNSC to invoke the Responsibility to Protect, as it is viewed with suspicion by non-western countries like Russian and China due to its abuse in the Libyan case. However, most of the respondents interviewed were of the view that a military intervention will not resolve the crisis in Syria but only escalate it.

The research observed that the use of veto by the P-5 members has been abused to protect national interests and this has largely inhibited the functioning and legitimacy of the UNSC in resolving the Syrian crisis. These national interests have been identified as disabling the UNSC thereby rendering the UNSC ineffective. However the interviewees are of the view that the veto is a good thing as it ensures a balance of power and rids of hegemonic tendencies. Another inhibiting factor to resolving the crisis identified by the study is the UNSC's inability to ascertain the actual activities on the ground in Syria but one respondent noted that what is happening in Syria does not need observers on the ground and the UNSC should just act.

The study noted that the mediation efforts of the UNSC have been rendered ineffective due to the fragmented nature of the opposition and the hate speech directed at the Assad regime. The continued meddling of external actors through the funding of the Assad government and the opposition and pushing for national interests were identified as a contributing factor to the failure of the UNSC's mediations efforts.

5.2 Conclusion

The Security Council has unfortunately not achieved any positive outcome to end the Syrian conflict and facilitate a political transition in the country through a meaningful political process or military intervention. This is not to suggest that the Security Council stood completely idle when the flames of the Syrian war were first springing up. The study noted that the effectiveness of the UNSC was hampered by the differences in the interpretation of the conflict with America and its allies, the UK and France describing it as a violent repression of protestors and mass human rights abuses by the Syrian government. On the other hand Russia and China believe that the Syrian government is legitimately suppressing a violent insurgency of terrorists and criminals. These differences in the interpretation of the conflict have deeply affected the effectiveness of the UNSC, as it has not been able to adopt resolutions that invoke the enactment of the provisions of Chapter VII of the UN Charter, which could have had an effect in trying to resolve the conflict.

The study established that the fallout from the Libyan intervention also contributed to the UNSC's ineffectiveness, as it could not invoke the Responsibility to Protect due to the mistrust that exists between the permanent five members. These post-Libya tensions within the UNSC have hampered efforts to generate political consensus on appropriate responses to Syria.

The study noted that the national interests of all the members of the permanent five and some countries in the Middle East region such as Iran, the Lebanese Hezbollah, Saudi Arabia and Qatar have hindered the effectiveness of the UNSC in resolving the Syrian conflict. Russia and China have vetoed all the resolutions that might affect their interests while America and its allies, Qatar and Saudi Arabia have meddled with the opposition groups leading to the fragmented nature of the opposition groups involved in the conflict which has also negatively affected the mediation efforts of the UNSC and led to the intractability of the conflict.

The description and analysis presented in this research show that in fact the Security Council produced several resolutions and presidential statements on Syria from 2011 to December 2016, some of which contain crucial political elements that support the negotiated solution of the conflict and the subsequent political process in the country. However, all those outputs of the UNSC on Syria were lacking the enactment of the provisions of Chapter VII of the UN Charter and that influenced negatively on the Council's overall ability to bring about a solution to the Syrian case. Therefore, in conclusion, the UNSC has been ineffective in resolving the Syrian crisis.

5.3 Recommendations

The following are recommendations offered to assist the UNSC in resolving the Syrian Crisis;

- There is need for national ownership in the mediation efforts of the UNSC and so the Syrian people should be at the forefront of the negotiations as they are the ones who know what they want. External influence in the negotiations will not work, as it will only exacerbate the conflict. Regional bodies such as the LAS should also be involved in the mediation efforts as they are closer to home and may bring beneficial ideas to the talks.
- There is need for the expansion of the UNSC so that it is representative of the international community. Countries from the Middle East and Africa should be included in the permanent five. The lack of geographical spread of members of the Security Council, no doubt, has a negative effect on the function and strength of the Council on the role of maintenance of global peace and security. The major issue here is that such members that feel their voices are only heard but of no policy consequence in protecting their interest feel withdrawn in UN actions of collective security thereby affecting the credibility of the UNSC.
- The great powers fighting for dominance in the Middle East should accept the fact that the Syrian conflict requires a political solution and hence, begin the engagement process rather than stick to conflict-deepening strategies, such as providing weaponry to the rebels and the government. The great powers such as Russia and America must

withdraw their support from either side and leaving the warring parties to fight until a victor emerges. This might force the warring parties to go on the negotiating table.

- Labeling and hate speech directed towards Assad and his government will not help in resolving the crisis as it only hardens his stance as well as that of his backers thereby complicating the efforts of the UNSC as is being evidenced. It is only when America and its allies such as France and the UK stop viewing the Syrian government as the aggressor that the UNSC may make headway in the matter.
- There is need for the UNSC to have a standby force to enforce its will so that the international community abides by its resolutions. With no army to enforce its will, the UNSC's authority, like that of the League of Nations before it, will last only as long as the willingness of the overwhelming majority of the international community accept it. If the Security Council does not look the part in terms of its institutional structure, and if it regularly fails to act the part in exercising its global responsibilities, with narrow self-interest being seen to trump cooperative commitment, it's only a matter of time before its authority slides away.

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Appendix A: Informed Consent Form

INFORMED CONSENT

I introduce myself and give an overview of the research. I explain that they have the right to choose to participate or not. If they are willing, I give them the consent form to read and ask for clarification.

The purpose of this study is to analyse the effectiveness of the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) in resolving the Syrian crisis by examining the causes and effects of the conflict, the role that the UNSC has played in response to the crisis as well as the effectiveness of its response.

In our discussions/findings, we will not make use of your name, a number or pseudonym will be used instead. What this means is what we discuss cannot be linked to your name.

You are not forced to participate, but please note that whatever information you may have is very important for the study. Even if you choose to participate you may choose to withdraw without any loss. There is no reward for participating except that you will be acknowledged by the researcher. Recommendations might influence changes here and there.

If you are willing to participate you can show by signing below.

Thank you.

Signed:.....

Witness:.....

Date:.....

Appendix B: In-depth Interview Guide

I establish rapport by saying out my name, where I come from, purpose and objective of the research. I also mention how they come in as valuable participants. I tell them that I need to take notes or record during the course of the discussion.

- [1] Do you think the Arab Spring had anything to do with the Syrian uprising?
- [2] How do you think Assad should have responded to the initial uprising?
- [3] What is your analysis of Russia and Iran's support of the Assad Regime?
- [4] What is your analysis of America, Turkey and other countries' support of the opposition?
- [5] What is your analysis of the way Resolution 1973 was applied in Lybia?
- [6] Was the international response to the conflict adequate, if not how do you suppose it could have been done?
- [7] Do you think the use of veto should be allowed under such circumstances as the Syrian conflict
- [8] What is your analysis of the UNSC's mediation efforts in Syria?
- [9] What do you think the UNSC should do regarding chemical weapons in Syria?
- [10] Interpreting the conflict in Syria has been a challenge which has also affected any intervention that might resolve the crisis. What is your interpretation of the conflict in Syria?
- [11] Will a military intervention solve the Syrian crisis?
- [12] What is your analysis of the impact of national interests on the crisis?
- [13] What do you think can be done to ensure that the international community gets accurate reports of the happenings on the ground in Syria?
- [14] What is your overall assessment of the UNSC's efforts in Syria?