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Rikhotso, Siviwe

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Promoting African Agency in International Security: A look at how the African Union Peace and Security Council (AU PSC) is influencing decision-making of resolutions within the United Nations Security Council (UNSC).

A research report presented to

The Department of International Relations

School of Social Sciences

Faculty of Humanities

University of the Witwatersrand

Under the supervision of Prof Malte Brosig

In partial fulfilment of the requirements for the Master of Arts degree in International Relations

By

Siviwe Rikhotso

1604081

September 2022

DECLARATION

I hereby declare that this research report is my own work and that I have given full acknowledgements to all sources utilised.

Siviwe Rikhotso **09/09/2022**

Siviwe Rikhotso Date

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

A3 – Africa three

AA – African Agency

AMIB – African Union Mission in Burundi

AMIS – African Union Mission in Sudan

AMISOM – African Union Mission in Somalia

APSA – African Peace and Security Architecture

ASF –African Standby Force

AU – African Union

AU PSC – African Union Peace and Security Council

AUC – African Union Commission

AUHIP – African Union High-level Implementation Panel

AUHR – African Union High Representative

AUMSU – African Union Mediation Support Unit

AUPOM – African Union Permanent Observer Mission to the UN

BINUB – United Nations Integrated Office in Burundi

C4 – Cotton four

CAR – Central Africa Republic

CEN-SAD – Community of Sahel-Saharan States

CEWS – Continental Early Warning System

CNPC – China National Petroleum Company

COMESA – Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa

DRC – Democratic Republic of Congo

DV – Dependent Variable

E10 – Elected ten

EAC – East African Community

ECCAS – Economic Community of Central African States

ECOWAS – Economic Community of West African States

EU – European Union

FemWise – Network of African Women in Conflict Resolution and Mediation

FIB – Forced Intervention Brigade

GoS – Government of Sudan

ICC – International Criminal Court

ICGLR – International Conference on the Great Lakes Region

IGAD – Intergovernmental Authority on Development

IR – International Relations

IRT – International Relations Theories

IV – Independent Variable

MDC – Movement for Democratic Change

MINUSMA – United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali

MONUSCO – United Nations Stabilisation Mission to the Democratic Republic of Congo

NATO – North Atlantic Treaty Organisation

NDZ – Nkosazana Dlamini-Zuma

OAU – Organisation for African Unity

ONUB – United Nations Operation in Burundi

P3 – Permanent three

P5 – Permanent five

POW – Panel of the Wise

R2P – Responsibility to Protect

REC – Regional Economic Community

RM – Regional Mechanism

RSF – Rapid Support Forces

SADC – Southern African Development Community

STG – Silencing the Guns

TCC – Troop Contributing Countries

TCPA – Transitional Civil-led Political Authority

TMC – Sudan Transitional Military Council

UK – United Kingdom

UMA – Union de Maghreb

UN – United Nations

UNAMID – United Nations–African Union Mission in Darfur

UNCTAD – United Nations Conference on Trade and Development

UNEP – United Nations Environmental Programme

UNGA – United Nations General Assembly

UNITAMS – United Nations Transition Assistance Mission in Sudan

UNOM – United Nations Office in Mali

UNSC – United Nations Security Council

UNSOA – United Nations Support Office to the African Union in Somalia

US – United States

VTC – Video Tele-Conferencing

WTO – World Trade Organisation

ZANU-PF – Zimbabwean African National Union-Patriotic Front

ABSTRACT

This research report aims to engage with International relations insights, particularly non-western scholarship on highlighting Africa's role in International peace and security through the African Union Peace and Security Council (PSC) and its influence in the adoption of resolutions within the United Nations Security Council (UNSC). Examining the three hypotheses and their assumptions, the research report explores the actions of African actors (A3, AU, PSC, hegemonic state) and opposing members of the council (the P5, P3, Sino-Russian coalition) to reinforce arguments for greater or diminished agency exerted by the Africa group at the UN Security Council.

Second, the report unveils that the internal structure, institutional working methods, informal practices, and special powers by some members of the UNSC that manifest as external opposition, present significant challenges to the promotion of AA. The presence of dominant power rivalry, conflicting views, and divergent interests, as well as bureaucracy and politicisation at the UNSC, determine this external opposition.

Third, considering hegemony in international relations and the Security Council, the report argues that the presence of a perceived continental hegemon that will dedicate its terms at the council to the advancement of African common positions plays a great deal in the promotion of AA. To make its case, the report selects South Africa, in its role as a perceived norm entrepreneur and symbolic hegemon, as well as endeavours inside and outside the council, as Africa's regional hegemon through which to promote AA.

Lastly, the report concludes that the presence of external opposition is far more influential than the presence of internal cohesion, in the promotion or curtailment of AA. The reason is that the structural tools and powers at the disposal of the permanent faction at the UNSC, which the African bloc simply does enjoy.

Keywords: International Relations, African Agency, PSC, UNSC, hegemonic state, A3, P3, P5, resolutions, ideology, identity, culture, interests, collectivity of efforts.

Chapter 1

Introduction: international relations and African agency

Introduction

Theoretical inquiry into Africa's International Relations (IR) has always lagged behind when compared to that of the global north's international relations, understandably so, because the three grand IR Theories [IRT] (Liberalism, Realism, and Constructivism) are most useful and accurate when applied in western contexts, and so marginally consider Africa as a problem to international relations. Smith (2018: 1) and Bischoff et al. (2016: 1) highlighted the dissatisfaction with contemporary western international relations theory and its narrow engagement with the African continent, and thus there has been an increase in the amount of Global South-centric literature and the need for the field of international relations to engage with voices from outside the West. African Agency, the 'new' kid on the block, became significant in explaining Africa's increased role and importance to international relations, and thus it is chosen for the research.

Through African Agency (AA), the research report unpacks and analyses the role of the AU Peace and Security Council (PSC) through the Africa three (A3), African Union (AU) office to the United Nations (UN) and other channels, in influencing decision-making processes at the UNSC. The report is guided by three independent variables on the ability, the varying degrees to which Africa (PSC, A3, AU) influences voting, drafting, and adoption of resolutions as well as obstacles (United Nations Security Council [UNSC] permanent members, veto, pressure on A3 and other elected members of the council) that curtail the adoption of African-sponsored resolutions or 'African drafted' resolutions. The sections that follow in this chapter provide a theoretical point of departure through literature review, methodology and a roadmap on the structure of the report.

Literature review

As noted in the introduction to the chapter, Africa's international activities are at times considered to be scholarly irrelevant to the contributions of mainstream IR, unlike those activities of dominant [largely western] powers as individual actors or within multilateral fora. Thus, wherever inquiry into the continent's international affairs is conducted, it largely leans on how external players influence the domestic landscapes and how their 'saviour-like' activities contribute to the continent's development.

When using traditional IR theories to examine Africa in multilateral fora, they are viewed as less capable as actors who seek to influence policy positions with the intent of implementation. Thus, mainstream IR inquiry lacked the analytical lens needed to study Africa. There has, however, been one noteworthy breakthrough, at least from this research report's perspective, of an analytic lens to navigate Africa's processes and contributions to international peace and security, and that was African Agency. On the surface – level, AA refers to the ability of African actors (whether state or non-state) to reap political and economic benefits from unequal partnerships with dominant powers in an unequal international system. For Corkin, (2013: 27), the very concept of African Agency is rooted in the understanding, by various scholars, that the post-independence African state surviving in a changing system is a manifestation of this agency.

While AA has done justice in analysing the events of Africa's interaction with the international system, two problems confront this concept. The first, noted by Herman and Brown (2013: 71), is that the concepts of state formation - statehood, civil society, political processes and rationalities – are related to western grand theories of IR (liberalism, realism, and constructivism) because they are based on western historical processes, thus meaning that Africa has had no place for analysis from such perspectives and concepts.

African states have tried to assimilate western processes of state formation into their societies and have had a rather unique outcome than that of the progenitors of these processes. Hence, one would be correct in agreeing with Corkin (2013: 27) that African states have managed to assume a 'de jure' form of statehood as opposed to the 'de facto' nature, and this is due to their ability to maintain their existence and sovereignty to negotiate for a better position in international negotiations. This in turn makes for this lack of analysis of Africa because their position and, by extension, their agency are considered inconsequential.

Thus, by moving away from western processes of state formation, perhaps Africa's analysis becomes more interesting, more relevant and consequential for IR, particularly International security. This then brings to the fore, the second problematic encounter for African agency. Briefly, AA is an analytical lens that seeks to describe Africa's own unique processes of state formation as established by African states, rather than what they should be [at least according to the global north]. More than this, perhaps it helps to understand that AA does not consider western concepts and processes of state formation, mentioned above, irrelevant for analysing Africa but acknowledges that Africa's processes of state formation are unique and valid.

The second problem is with the general concept of agency. Particularly problematic here is IR's difficulty in systematically grappling with agency (Wight, 2006: 178), specifically in terms of what agency is, who agency is for, and what agency does. In IR, actors and agents are seen as the same, as with the 'state-as-agent' thesis which according to Wight (2006: 177) has been widely accepted. To comprehensively unpack agency, especially AA, there are certain dimensions, levels, and meanings one must address before proceeding further (Brown, 2012: Fisher, 2011), as is done below in the literature review.

Resolving the second problem may well help understand Africa's processes of state formation (part of the first problem), thus allowing for better conceptualisation of these processes in a manner that suits the African context but keeping it in mainstream IR as a capable actor with consequential actions. The concept of AA remains the suitable analytical lens through which to navigate Africa's engagement in international security and global politics because it focuses more on the contributions of African actors (more often state actors).

Africa's activity in international relations occurs individually (through bilateral relations with outside powers) and as a cohesive unit in multilateral fora like the Africa group (Lee, 2012: 83-101) and the C4 (Cotton four) countries (Heinisch, 2006: 251-274) in the WTO (World Trade Organisation) or as individuals in bilateral aid relations with western aid donors (Fraser, 2011, in Brown, 2011: 4). Moreover, AA displays these contributions without disregarding structural limitations faced by African actors in these engagements. Supporting the first hypothesis on the internal unity between African member states in the UNSC), Welz (2013: 425 - 441) makes a compelling argument by noting that the key to achieving this African Agency is unity among the Africa 3 representatives in the UNSC, within the AU and by extension the PSC.

Similarly, because such internal unity thrives on common positions from culture, values, economies and politics to national interests, all these positions require a common identity that African states share, which is being African. Achieng (2014: 52) termed this common identity, which is the root of AA's uniqueness, the 'African qualification' of AA. From this, the report asserts that AA is how states who identify as African have managed to influence change in the International system's structure (by leveraging their position in the International System for benefits).

Even before the clinical use of African agency to navigate and analyse Africa's contributions to the international system, scholars like Cohen (1987: 302, in Chipaike & Knowledge, 2018: 4) argued that African actors could significantly contribute to the international system and are not just "cultural dopes" or "structural idiots" of the international system.

To compound this line of argument, Harbeson and Rotchild (2009, in Aning & Edu-Afful, 2016: 121) note that in its weakened state and position due to its wealth and strength or size and collectivity (or lack thereof), Africa's contributions to securing international peace and security cannot be overlooked. It is with this reason that various notable scholars (Lala, 2018; Chipaike & Knowledge, 2018; Aning & Edu-Afful, 2016; Evans, 2015; Shaw, 2014; Beswick & Hammerstad, 2013; Kasaija, 2013; Brown, 2012, Lee; 2011; Fisher, 2011; Williams, 2009; Murithi, 2008) acknowledge Africa's multifaceted nature when engaging external powers in international security.

Africa has been minimally influential in the adoption of resolutions in the international peace and security arena. For instance, in 1969 the Africa group guided the UN General Assembly to declare Apartheid a crime against humanity in resolution 2202 (xxi), through collectivity (Nkiwane, 2001: 29 in Chipaike, 2016: 285). Similarly, with the transition from the Organisation of African Unity (OAU) to the AU, African heads of state and government realised that the mounting pressure of conflicts in the continent required stronger mechanisms designed specifically with the purpose of conflict prevention and resolution, peacekeeping and peacebuilding, as well as post-conflict reconstruction and development.

With this, African leaders implemented the African Peace and Security Architecture (APSA), which had at its core, the African Union Constitutive Act of 2000 and the 2002 protocol on establishing the PSC, which entered into force in December 2003. APSA seeks to show the instruments and tools that the AU, Regional Economic Communities (RECs), and Regional Mechanisms (RMs) can use to fulfil their conflict prevention, management and resolution roles (APSA Roadmap: 2015, 12). This perhaps is one of the first actions taken by African nations to show their commitment towards a common African position, and a significant display of increased agency in seeking to take a substantial leadership role in responding to the continent's insecurities.

As one of the PSC protocols, APSA encompasses a comprehensive continental peace and security agenda inclusive of direct (PSC) and structural (RECs and external partners) conflict prevention, early warning and preventative diplomacy, peacekeeping and peacebuilding, disaster management, humanitarian intervention, and promotion of democracy. As the core of APSA, the PSC is further backed up by a number of APSA pillars that include the Panel of the wise, the African Standby Force (ASF), as well as the Peace Fund (APSA Roadmap, 2015: 13). To highlight African agency, APSA has made progress with the PSC by contributing to conflict resolution in Somalia, Burundi, Mali, Democratic Republic of Congo, Comoros, Madagascar, and Cote de Ivoire (APSA Roadmap, 2015: 14).

Furthermore, the PSC is actively involved in addressing threats in the Central African Republic, Sudan and South Sudan, Guinea and Guinea Bissau, Niger, Kenya, and Mauritania, by collaborating with relevant RECs. RECs recognised by the AU and subsequently, the PSC are the Southern African Development Community (SADC), the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA), the Community of Sahel-Saharan States (CEN-SAD), the East African Community (EAC), the Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS), the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD), and the Union du Maghreb Arabe (UMA). These regional bodies have become important structures for coordinating responses to Africa's conflicts and instability, whether at the level of regional responses, continental responses (through the AU), or international responses (with the assistance of external powers).

The last three paragraph aim to highlight the important role the PSC has come to play in Africa's conflict resolution processes. As is further detailed in the chapters below, the PSC's increasing active role signifies the agency the African nations have exerted to peace engagements globally – especially when considering that several rifts that have occurred between the PSC and the UNSC have been due to the fact that the PSC wants planned UNSC intervention in the continent to be run through its mechanisms prior to implementation. However, while African agency is considered important in navigating Africa's participation in global affairs, the question of whether AA still matters in a changing global order (Lala, 2018) is evidenced by the resurgence of an increasingly multipolar, if not an interpolar system (Grevi, 2009), is very relevant. The PSC itself has sought to assert itself as a major player in Africa's conflict resolution agenda and perhaps the main body where African peacekeeping is concerned, although without much success as the UNSC refuses to relinquish institutional primacy on African peacekeeping.

By highlighting the role of Africa's regional and continental bodies in international peace and security, the research report shows the importance of collective African agency in a changing global order (Lala, 2018). Continuing with the collective agency rhetoric, Brown (2012: 1891) notes that speaking of African agency as encompassing one singular actor is misleading and could cause significant confusion, considering Africa's diversity. Hence, Brown (2012), Fisher (2011) and Wight (2006: 177-179) assert that when defining agency, particularly in an African context, one needs to address several dimensions.

For Wight (2006) however, to give a comprehensive account of agency, one needs to be wary of the context in which it is utilised, the subject to which the concept of agency is given, as well as the specific role that the agent plays in displaying agency. The first dimension to address for Wight (2006: 180) is to distinguish between state and non-state actors. This is because any form of social agency is three-fold in nature (Wight, 2006: 180): that is social agency is based on freedom, meaning, and intent, and for Brown (2012: 1894), this is the human aspect given to agency.

Similarly, Wendt (1999: 215) notes that by granting states and other corporate structures a personality (because it is synonymous with a person), they form part of this accepted point of departure. Hence, for IR, limiting the concept of agent to the state actor disregards the tripartite character of agency, and in the African context, this fails Africa's non-state actors. Because states are capable of exercising intentional and meaningful agency, as Fisher succinctly puts it (2011: 51), agency cannot be analysed through 'by-chance' or 'random' events. Moving forward with this line of argument, while Wight (2006: 206) shows a willingness to accept Buzan, Little, and Jones' (1993: 103) understanding of agency from an IR perspective, as a "faculty of exerting power", he finds this notion guilty of downplaying the role of meaning and intentionality being displayed by the agent, properties believed to be reserved for humans.

Similarly, Jessop (1990: 367, in Wight, 2006: 187-188) argues that it is not states but specific sets of heads of states, diplomats, negotiators, soldiers, and politicians in a system that acts. However, because this is an International Relations research report, it would make sense to focus on the power exerted by states. While the classical notion of power has been understood as 'the ability of A to make B do something that B would not otherwise do' suffices, in the context of agency, it can only navigate the actions of dominant power, giving little room for analysis for the influence and power exerted by middle and small powers.

Thus, in the context of AA (specifically the one configured for this research report), it is proposed that using Fisher's (2011: 49) 'reverse definition' of power as the '*ability of a weaker, smaller power to establish policy positions with the intent of implementation in a space that guarantees little to no success'* is much more suitable than the classical explanation.

This notion of AA details more the methods of influence through diplomacy, discussion, lobbying, and consultation, a property that Africa possesses especially where actors such as South Africa are concerned. The second dimension of agency, as is argued by Wight (2006, in Brown, 2012: 1895), accounts for agency as "an of something" or "bearers" of the context they originate from, a characteristic often cited in agency-structure problem on how these two reproduce one another.

Of course, personal histories, social conditioning, and cultural backgrounds are said to shape this agency, hence from an African perspective, such shared personal colonial history, visible social cleavages, and a communal cultural background all account for this 'common position' (Zondi, 2014: 21) through which agency is exercised.

The third dimension is the formal or informal allocation of specific roles to agents, which could restrict or empower agency to the agent (Brown, 2012: 1895). Of importance here, is the distinction between the formal roles played by heads of states, diplomats and representatives, and informal roles ascribed to advocates and demonstrators. Immediately when addressing these three dimensions, it is not difficult to get the sense that more than one actor can exert agency, and this agency is not limited to the state actor-level, but to three other levels as noted by Chipaike & Knowledge (2018), as well as Brown (2012). Starting from the bottom-up, other levels of African agency include sub-state or non-state actors (Chipaike & Knowledge, 2018; Brown, 2012).

These mainly constitute advocacy groups, protestors – South Africa's 'fees must fall movement' to bring reforms on tertiary education fees (Zondi, 2018), activists, and civil society organisations – who influenced reforms in Zimbabwe and Malawi's climate change foreign policies. Moreover, political and social movements are also part of this category, such as the ANC's instrumentality in orchestrating a regime change in South Africa and ushering in a new democratic South Africa (Chipaike & Knowledge, 2018). The next level of agency is state-based or exercised on the behalf of states, usually by actors such as heads of states and their representatives (Chipaike & Knowledge, 2018; Brown, 2012).

The ‘African renaissance’, which was led by Thabo Mbeki emphasised Africa’s ownership of the continental agenda and policy autonomy, as well as challenging global north hegemony (Lala, 2018: 6). Similarly, Kwame Nkrumah and his ‘Casablanca’ group, which called for Unity and the subsequent formation of the OAU, as well as Julius Nyerere and his ‘Monrovia’ group (Moller, 2009: 5), display agency mustered by state leaders acting on behalf of states.

Moving upward, national state agency exercised by the state itself (Brown 2012: 1895) is crucial to the argument of the research report in highlighting South Africa’s pivotal role in navigating the AU’s agency in the UNSC. For instance, South Africa joining the BRICS (Brazil, Russia, India, China, South Africa) coalition (Shaw, 2015: 255-268), Uganda’s agency in influencing donors not to attach conditionalities in aid between 1985-2010 (Fisher, 2011: 1-356), and the Africa Group in the WTO and (Lee, 2012: 83-101) are examples of such national state agency. South Africa’s significant role as a norm entrepreneur, a hegemon or a pivotal state in Africa, defining regional and continental hegemon contexts (Blaauw, 2016; Louw-Vaudran, 2016; Prys, 2007; Geldenhuys, 2008; Geldenhuys, 2006; Nel, 2006; Habib & Landsberg, 2003), the Ezulwini consensus to bring about reforms in the UNSC (Murithi, 2014) are other examples of this.

The top-level, which is the purpose of inquiry for this research report, is the agency exercised collectively through intergovernmental fora like the AU and its peacekeeping missions in Burundi, Libya, Somalia, Sudan, and Comoros (Kasaija, 2013; Murithi, 2008; Williams 2009), or the AU-European Union (EU)-UN tripartite alliance or coordinated peace operations in Africa (Derblom, Frisell, & Schmidt, 2007: 7-75). Sub-regional intergovernmental bodies such as ECOWAS, SADC, and EAC, either when enforcing the R2P (Responsibility to Protect) principle in Mali, Cote de Ivoire, and Libya (Aning & Edu-Afful, 2016: 120-133), the triangle (AU-ECOWAS-UN) for peace and security in West Africa (Ajayi, 2008: 2-9), SADC-minus negotiating an Economic Partnership Agreement with the EU (Murray-Evans, 2015: 1845-1865) show how African agency is exercised at the top level.

While agency has become important to navigating some of Africa’s international relations, the question of its relevance in the current international system (Lala, 2018) remains pertinent. Hence, this research report agrees with Lala (2018) that it is relevant because, without African Agency’s analysis, Africa’s international relations will remain perceived as the problem child of global international relations, and Africa the ‘dark continent’ (Chipaike & Knowledge, 2018) with no substantive contributions to global politics.

Furthermore, de Bruijn, van Dijk, and Gewald (in Beswick & Hammerstad, 2013: 476) succinctly reinforce this view by noting the unique capacity of African Agency in "exploding the often-victimising approaches in exchange for a much more balanced understanding of the local processes at work in Africa".

Key to this research report is the partnership between two intergovernmental organisations, the AU and the UN, in coordinating peace operations. For instance, the 'hybrid' United Nations-African Union in Darfur (UNAMID) (Spandler, 2020: 187-203), shows how a particular type of agency is exerted by one organisation (AU) on the other (UN). To be precise, this report navigates African agency through PSC's engagements with the UNSC regarding conflict resolutions in international peace and security. Here, the research report examines the local processes of decision-making and explains how these are influenced to show causality between PSC's suggestions and the UNSC's conflict resolutions on Africa's and the rest of the world's security issues.

This requires the analysis of an AU-UN evolving partnership in peace and security (Williams & Dersso, 2015: 3; Boutellis & Williams, 2013), challenges and constraints of the partnership, as well as opportunities presented for African agency presented by the partnership, and the opportunities it presents for the African Union and African Agency.

Such relations have, for instance, enabled the PSC to instrumentalise its annual open session and participate in the passing and implementation of UNSC resolution 1325 on Women's peace and security (Sawers, 2015: np). For this research report, the definition of agency as *'the ability of the PSC to influence decision-making processes of UNSC for the desired outcome'* is suitable because the focus is on the UNSC/PSC in international security.

Taking from the above definition, a lucid explanation of this kind of agency becomes necessary in order to separate it from the more general understanding of agency as is noted in the previous definitions and explanations above. The questions now beg, "why African Agency in International Relations"? "Why does it matter" and "why and how is Africa relevant to all this"? The answer is that Africa is host to many of the world's security challenges that are key to the United Nations Security Council –with 27 out of 53 regional security issues discussed in 2018 concerning Africa, and 7 of 14 UN peacekeeping operations situated across Africa (De Carvalho, Gruzd, Mutangadura, 2019: 6-7; Brosig, 2018: np).

It then makes sense to direct theoretical inquiry into Africa's role within the UNSC in solving these and other global security challenges, how it is asserting influence in many decisions on global security, the direction that the Council is headed, the structural reform within the council which currently non-permanent states will receive permanent membership and veto privileges.

Because Africa's security environment is a hot topic globally, particularly in international security agencies such as the UNSC, there has been a noticeable shift in discussions about how Africa had been 'acted upon' to how it has become an 'active' participant in security matters concerning its 'backyard'. Academic literature on Africa's activism, particularly in the security environment is sufficient to the extent that it mainly describes how outside powers intervene in Africa's insecurity issue, on Africa's behalf, with Africa as a bystander that is either unable or unwilling to solve its problems. However, the last two decades convey an entirely different story about Africa's participation in curbing its security issues and security issues from abroad, framing it as a 'Resurgence and Renewal' of Africa's activism at the global level. Since the 21st century, Africa's foreign policy towards the UNSC has become just as important as its domestic policies if not more important, with many African states seeking active participation.

This is evidenced by the active advocation of permanent membership by the A3, with Brosig (2018: np) terming it "the ultimate foreign policy prize". While it cannot be ignored that Africa is still stifled by conflict, economic underdevelopment, poverty, natural disasters, and fatal diseases, pessimistic perceptions and views of Africa as a burden have changed to slightly more optimistic, especially the continent's activism for greater recognition as an actor instead of a subject of the international society. In particular is Africa's activism (agency) in combatting conflict, which has become one of the most corrosive ills in the continent, especially across the Sahel region and central Africa. Unilaterally, bilaterally and multilaterally, African states have participated in peacekeeping and conflict resolution operations within the continent and have had considerable representation in the UNSC, one of the most effective security organs globally.

While theoretical inquiry has answered the call to explain the rapidly growing role played by Africa in international security, grand theories have failed at comprehensively explaining why some African states act in the manner that they do. African agency seeks to continue this culture of emphasising Africa's rising active participation in the international system despite the structural limitations imposed by this very system on the continent and its actors. Concisely, AA, in this report, answers the *what, who, why,* and *how* questions of African agency.

With other research studies conceptualising AA through analysing trade policies (Samuda, 2018; Corkin, 2013; Mohan & Lampert, 2012) or enforcement of the R2P principle (Anning & Edu – Afful, 2016), this research report considers AA in international peace and security, probing Africa's relations with the UNSC, within the UNSC, as well independent of the UNSC. The knowledge gained from the research report unpacks the ways in which Africa, as a cohesive unit, influences important international security decisions within the UN Security Council. Moreover, this has the potential of unearthing new avenues for Africa to exert more and substantive influence in international security matters, peacebuilding and peacekeeping as well as reform within the United Nations Security Council. This, in turn, adds to the growing academic documentation and knowledge production on the concept of African Agency and its place in international relations. Similarly, an African position on the continent's complex peace and security landscape shows Africa's efforts and activities in conflict resolution, peacebuilding, and peacekeeping.

To reinforce assumptions for greater levels of agency proposed by two of the three hypotheses, the research report uses actor-based identification of cases by focusing on the African group inside and outside the UN Security Council – the A3, the PSC, and the continental hegemon signalling a common African position – and the opposing members at the council – the P5, the P3, Sino-Russian coalition – for diminished levels of agency. Considerations to peacekeeping missions in several African countries are made to the extent that they reinforce Africa's involvement (as the AU) in responding to insecurity issues, thus contributing to the agency debate.

Since 2004, peace operations in Africa with a transitional character, changing 'hands' from the AU to the UN have taken place in Burundi, Mali, and CAR. In Darfur, the AU Mission in Sudan (AMIS) was rehatted to the hybrid AU-UN Mission in Darfur (UNAMID) at the start of 2008 (Williams & Dersso, 2015: 4b). In some of these operations, the UN provided support packages to AU missions, as was the case for Darfur and Somalia. This is caused clear financial short falls from the AU to complete long-term peacekeeping efforts on the continent. Following the UN's determination that the situation in Burundi continued to constitute a threat to international peace and security in the region and acting under Chapter VII of the UN Charter, AMIB (African Mission in Burundi) was finally rehatted to the United Nations Operation in Burundi (ONUB), under UNSC resolution 1545 of 2004 (UNSC, 2004: 1-7), completed its mandate in 2006.

The operation was succeeded by another UN operation named the United Nations Integrated Office in Burundi (BINUB), established through the passing of Security Council resolution 1719 of 25 October 2006 (UNSC, 2006: 1-4b). The establishment of the UN's Support Office to the African Union Mission in Somalia (UNSOA) in 2009 was a particularly notable milestone in the AU-UN partnership for funding the logistical support package provided to AMISOM (African Union Mission in Somalia), through the UN assessed peacekeeping budget (Williams & Dersso, 2015: 4-5b).

Darfur, Sudan, saw the birth of a hybrid AU-UN operation (UNAMID) since the adoption of resolution 1769 in 2007 (Aboagye, 2007: 1 – 14). UNAMID are one of the more successful peace efforts from both the African Union and the United Nations, and it is this partnership that has allowed for more African participation not only in resolution showing a balance between resolution adoption and implementation, making the case for AA. The joint communique from both the UNSC and PSC has stated the tremendous progress in Sudan because of the partnership between the two organs (UNSC, 2018: 3).

Prior to the joint hybrid mission in Darfur, the AU (on its own), through the PSC, launched its second mission, AMIS in 2004 (Dobbins, Machakaire, Radin, Pezard, Blake, Bosco, Chandler, Langa, Nyuykonge, Tunda, 2019: 91). The AU, with its AMIS operation, appeared to be under-resourced to make any kind of impact resolution of conflict in Darfur.

After a joint assessment from both the AU and UN in early 2005 noting the logistic limitations that confront the AU commission, combined with the mounting pressure on the UN by the international community, negotiations on a transfer of the operation from the AU to the UN were underway (Dobbins, *et. al.,* 2019: 77 - 94). GoS (Government of Sudan) decided to agree on this transfer contingent on the following factors: the hybrid mission would be "African in character", the forces would be predominantly African, and there would be AU-UN joint leadership appointments from African countries, although command-control structures and other logistics would be UN responsibilities (Dobbins, *et. al*., 2019: 97).

While the UN played a more materialistic role, as it was responsible for the command and control of forces, the AU played a more political and diplomatic role, displaying its most common form of agency – diplomacy. This kind of AA is rooted in the relationship between the AU and the UN, as noted in the first point of hypothesis three. However, in this case, unlike that of Somalia is used to argue how the evolution of the AU-UN relations up to now and beyond, could promote AA.

The crisis in the DRC saw the authorisation of the Forced Intervention Brigade (FIB), in 2013, as part of the UN Stabilisation Mission to the Democratic Republic of Congo (MONUSCO) by the council, with the mandate of neutralising the M23 and rebel groups in the region (De Coning, 2017: 148). The authorisation of the FIB (whose troops majorly came from African nations) was considered a rare occurrence as UN operations in the region rarely do peace enforcement, but show how involved African nations are in the continent's conflict resolution missions – albeit taking direction from the P5 (Karlsrud 2015, in De Coning, 2017: 148).

As a peace enforcement operation, the FIB had the explicit mandate to offensive force to neutralise the rebel groups, thus the mission is not impartial (Peter 2015, in De Coning, 2017: 148). FIB is considered to have moved beyond UN limitations of peace enforcement operations it had explicit political support from regional key stakeholders (AU, UN, SADC, DRC, International Conference on the Great Lakes Region [ICGLR]) to use force; Troop Contributing Countries (TCC's) were SADC members involved in joint training and exercises under the SADC Standby Arrangement of the ASF.

Methodology

Because this report utilises a controlled comparative study method as well as an actor-based identification of cases (as noted in the above section), the process of controlled comparative analysis is most suitable as the research report looks at two outcomes, one with 'successes' or empowered agency, and the other with 'failures' or restricted agency, so becomes a small-N qualitative study. This is a deductive research report that follows an explanatory (y-centred) research design seeking to test the explanatory reach of the chosen theoretical lens (Panke, 2018: 6-10). Furthermore, this report does not make use of any field research as it is a desktop-conducted report, and thus it does not rely on any interviews for any kind of data.

Data collected for this report is mainly primary and ranges from academic documentation and journals on the phenomenon of African Agency, UN reports, communiques and adopted resolutions.

Furthermore, data on recommendations from the UN secretary-general on strategic decisions for strengthening AU/UN relations, and presidential statements from the UNSC explaining why member states supported or rejected resolutions, were collected and used in the report.

Resolutions, communiques, press briefings after the success or failure to adopt a resolution, and the forecasts from peace and security institutes and organisations and experts on the international peace and security and actors (in this case, the PSC and UNSC) that play a significant role in upholding its constitutional order, also constitute the primary data collected.

The first hypothesis proposes that with strong unity from the Africa 3 representatives and PSC members, there is a correlating strong exertion of AA. The Independent Variables (IV) such as the presence of internal unity, or a common African position, from the A3 and PSC demonstrated by a collectivity of efforts, identity, culture and ideology, and interests, inform the Dependent Variable (DV) which is the level of agency exerted.

In short, actions from the A3 and the PSC through common African positions, in the pursuit of influencing the council to adopt resolutions that favour Africa with the intent of implementation signal greater exerted agency. Conditions assumed necessary for greater agency include unity in interests, ideology and goals, and a collectivity of efforts. Unity among A3 members in the UNSC, the presence of A3 advocation of common African positions similar to those espoused by the PSC is highly significant in assessing the amount of AA exerted.

The second hypothesis assumes that strong opposition from other UNSC members, particularly the P5, results in weakened agency by the A3. The IV is the presence of external opposition (rivalry) from the P5, and the DV is the level of agency exerted by the Africa group. Conditions necessary for weakened agency are polarised views, competing interests, bureaucracy and politicisation of topics and other methods contribute to the UNSC's continued disregard of African involvement in important decision-making practices such as penholding, veto and permanent seats, as well as closed-door sessions. Thus, the report acknowledges the structure and its overarching power to weaken AA. Similarly, a lack of consensus among the A3 weakens the African position and issues central to Africa within the UNSC.

The third hypothesis assumes that the presence of a continental giant like South Africa contributes to greater exerted agency. In this hypothesis, the presence of a perceived hegemonic state is the IV and the DV is the level of agency exerted in the UNSC. On the presence of a hegemonic state, South Africa as a continental giant and regional hegemon is pivotal considering that since late 2018, it replaced Ethiopia in UNSC A3 and was poised to continue with the priorities of its previous terms in the UNSC. SA, along with A3, can be considered bridge-builders to restore consistencies in views held by the PSC in Addis Ababa and views voiced by the A3 in New York.

To recap, IV's of the report are internal unity, external opposition, the presence of a perceived hegemon, the degree of bureaucratisation and politicisation, and the DV's being strong or weak AA. For the research report, *AA is defined as the ability to participate in, convince, and support the UNSC to adopt AU PSC-aligned positions for conflict resolution.* In this sense, AA is largely diplomatic. The presence of these IV's will prompt an outcome from the DV which will be the varying levels of agency exerted. Causality (strong or weak agency) and causal relationships are identifiable through the presence of IV's (unity, bureaucratic engagements, fragmentation, and the hegemonic state) and their conditions (either as necessary or sufficient) to show linkages between the IV and the DV.

Road map

The research report constitutes five chapters. The first chapter introduces the topic, relevance for conducting the research, and the literature on African agency. Sections covered in this chapter include what agency is in the African context, the relevance and significance of AA in Africa's international relations, the manifestations of AA given Africa's complex local processes, and conclusions about the applicability of Agency in the African context.

The second chapter focuses on the structure of the PSC, and its role in the adoption of resolutions (within the UNSC) on some of the missions undertaken in international security (in Africa and elsewhere) to reflect the level of internal cohesion, common ideology, culture and identity, and collectivity of efforts by member states in missions. For this chapter, the cases analysed serve to assess the level of unity by African actors (the PSC and the A3) when supporting or rejecting resolutions within the UNSC.

While this research report mainly considers AA from the perspective of African unity in the adoption of resolutions, cases where the 'African bloc' oppose the draft resolutions are also significant. This is to show that AA is not only strong when there is support for the signing of resolutions, but that it could also be strong in the rejection of proposals to pass resolutions within the UNSC. The third chapter focuses on UNSC dynamics, institutional working methods, and practices of the UNSC, as well as the nature of relations between the UNSC and the PSC.

In this analysis, the degree of opposition it has expressed to some of the A3's proposals and suggestions in resolutions and council dynamics, instances where rivalry (in the form of vetoes and abstentions) from and among P5 members on resolution drafts were visible, instances where it was and was not willing to listen to the PSC on conflict resolutions, and the results thereof on AA, are considered. Also important is the assessment of the kinds of issues addressed by the Security Council.

Moreover, this chapter considers the evolution of relations between the PSC and the UNSC, which allowed for AA, the coordinated peace operations conducted by the two organs in Africa, and analyses on the most recent cases where was agency augmented, and which it was not. Of importance in AU-UN relations is the degree of bureaucratisation and politicisation to curtail AA. Looking at multiple cases to explore opportunities to exert AA in AU-UN relations, and to a lesser extent, the case of Somalia to display how the relationship between the AU and UN can hinder the exertion of AA is vital for this chapter.

The fourth chapter focuses on the role of a hegemonic state as pivotal in the advancement of AA. South Africa as a prominent actor in Africa's international relations, and within the UNSC since the early 2000s, as well as how the state has been pivotal in unifying the 'A3', is analysed as a potential regional and continental hegemon.

Analysis includes South Africa's foreign policy in relation to its roles at the UNSC, outside the UNSC, towards regional integration, promotion of common African positions and south-south (intra-Africa) cooperation. The reason for the selection of South Africa for the role of hegemon resides in the understanding that it is considered to possess 'symbolic hegemony', it is a norm entrepreneur, and that prominent South African heads of states have considered the republic a representative of the continent when engaging external players.

Integral in this analysis is to convey why South Africa was selected as a continental hegemon when this role is contested by numerous other African states. This section also considers which issues are more thematic and likely to be addressed and issues considered 'political hot potatoes' and less likely to be addressed. The objective of looking at these issues could possibly highlight why external opposition is strong when specific issues are brought to the UNSC agenda. Finally, the chapter concludes by noting on what terms South Africa is a regional hegemon, and what kind of Agency it brings to the AU, and by extension the PSC, as well as whether the next 'A3' will display considerable unity within the UNSC as was seen when South Africa was part of the A3.

The fifth and final chapter is a composite of chapter summaries, limitations of the report, recommendations for potential opportunities for greater augmentation of African agency by African representatives and their respective supporting African agencies.

Conclusion

This chapter, as the introductory chapter serves the purpose of laying out the entire structure for the research report, while similarly beginning the work of the report, which is to unpack the problem statement, and conceptualise the analytic lens through which it seeks to answer the problem statement. As the conceptualisation of AA still stands as *the ability to participate in and convince the UNSC to consider A3 and AU PSC advice, and suggestions on matters of international security*, it is subject to change throughout the chapter for contextualisation of the continent's activities within the UNSC, A3, PSC, and as individual state actors such as South Africa.

Chapter 2

Hypothesis one: African position in consolidating and exerting agency at the UNSC

Introduction

African unity or the common African position, as it is famously referred to, in the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) has been the subject of great interest for scholars with an interest in Africa's international relations and security landscape. Similarly, the common African position is of significance for this research report as the first of the three hypotheses proposed, suggests that through such a position, AA can be greatly increased and exerted within the UNSC by African representatives. For this to happen, processes of policy harmonisation at national, regional, and continental levels, consistent communication and meetings, between the Africa 3 (A3) within the UNSC, the African Union Peace and Security Council (PSC) and the AU Commission, need to be consolidated.

In this chapter, common African positions are informed by political, ideological, economic, and identity convergence between African members at the council, agencies, and groups outside and within the UNSC. Discussions deemed suitable for testing this hypothesis consider the important role of the A3, the AU, PSC, the AU Commission, and their subsidiaries in strengthening and maintaining a level of AA within the UNSC and provide incidents that support the hypothesis.

The Africa 3 (A3)

In their long history with and in the UNSC, the three African members (A3) have tended to vote separately, without consultation or discussion with one another as a bloc. This, however, changed with the establishment of the AU. Africa has now changed course and furthers a quest for a more institutionalized representation of its collective voice in the decision-making of the UNSC. The establishment of the AU and the subsequent active engagements to address peace and security challenges on the continent marshalled a new era in Africa's role in peace and security diplomacy – an active era expressed by agency (Amani Africa, 2021: 1). Two approaches, of the many that the AU, particularly through PSC, have utilised to transform peace and security landscape, and by extension diplomacy, in Africa are observable.

The first is Africa increasingly directing the engagements of international actors on issues of peace and security in the continent, through assuming increasing responsibility in peacemaking, mediation and peace support operations (Amani Africa, 2019: 1). It has thus become commonplace to find international actors considering African inputs and leadership when addressing peace and security concerns of continental and global significance.

Secondly, the PSC has cemented its role as the sole platform for which an African common position can be expressed to reflect the continent's unity in global security multilateral fora most notably in the UNSC, and hence the instrumentality of the A3. Based on endorsement by the AU Assembly, the A3 within the UNSC are elected to serve a two-year term, through the usual representation of three of the five regions in Africa, at least according to the principle of regional rotation in the AU, is observed.

While not legally bound by any protocol or resolution, or statement to support PSC positions (PSC report, 2019: np), the legal foundation for the A3's role may be found in article 17 of the PSC Protocol (AU protocol on the establishment of the PSC, 2002: 25), and this together with the AU Assembly's decision (2015: 8) to sustain the special responsibility of the A3 is to ensure that the decisions of the PSC are well reflected in the decision making process of the UNSC on peace and security issues of concern to Africa (Amani Africa, 2021: 2). For Africa, which has a rotational non-permanent membership in the UNSC, the role of the A3 has become strategically important because security issues in Africa continue to dominate the UNSC agenda. Almost 50% of 170 country-or-region-specific issues were on Africa, with a further 65% of decisions within the UNSC in 2020 on Africa (UN, 2020: np).

The consequence of the above data strongly alludes to the significance of the UNSC as the primary global platform for which peace and security issues can be discussed and addressed. Amani Africa's 2021 report (2021: 4) rightly notes the importance of A3 acting in concert as a unit, but also in coordination with the AU and its subsidiaries, to pursue an African common position to African files on the UNSC agenda, as well as security issues of global concerns. A significant turning point in the increased acknowledgement of the role of the A3 was the tenure 2007-2008 (dfa.gov, 2009: 10), during which South Africa was a member at the UNSC accompanied by the beginning of the PSC – UNSC annual consultative meetings, although this is discussed in detail in later chapters.

In recent years, the consistent meetings and unity among A3 members at the UNSC have culminated in practices and procedures that saw the A3 emerging as a power bloc with considerable significance in terms of voting and diplomatic resources for both the permanent and non-permanent members of the council. For instance, the A3+1 (South Africa, Niger, Tunisia, with Saint Vincent and the Grenadines) deliberated and produced no less than 35 joint statements in council and country-specific African files on the UNSC agenda, inclusive of peacekeeping operations, children and armed conflict (UN, 2020: np).

This is a step up from the 16 joint statements in 2019 by the A3 alone (De Carvalho & Forti, 2020: np), which in and of itself was a record number for joint statements from the A3. Similarly, in 2019, the A3 displayed perhaps what can be considered the most clear (Singh & Forti: 2019, np) united stance on a country-specific file at the UNSC where the political crisis in Sudan and the subsequent issue of withdrawing UNAMID were on the agenda.

The group of three retained unity in support of a position pursued by the PSC, to which the former convened a joint media stakeout to provide an assertive statement of their decision on a country-specific issue. In 2021, the A3 +1 coalition in the UNSC issued well over 15 statements on issues of concern to Africa (Amani Africa, 2021: 6). These issues related to the situations in South Sudan, Ethiopia, the Central African Republic, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Mali, the Great Lakes, the Sahel, Somalia, and Haiti.

In 2020, the A3 also took a common negotiation position on two resolutions, 2525(2020) and 2524, which limited the mandate of UNAMID, and establish a successor UN Transition Assistance Mission in Sudan (UNITAMS), predicated on chapter IV of the UN requested by the A3 (Amani Africa, 2021: 6). Similarly, resolution 2568 (UNSC, 2021: np), which was adopted in 2021 through unanimous support from the council members, saw the A3 negotiating as a cohesive unit, for the reauthorisation of AMISOM.

The A3, through the AU permanent observer mission channel, began participating in joint briefing meetings with the UN Departments of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs and Peace Operations senior officials to access substantive information on the African files on the USNC agenda (Amani Africa 2021: 7). The PSC's internal sessions, as well as the format of these sessions, have been a primary resource for A3 in terms of extracting PSC perspectives and taking from these those that are focussed on African files on the UNSC agenda, which in turn gives the African group a role of being a bridge builder between the PSC and UNSC (Amani Africa, 2021: 7; PSC report, 2019).

To this extent, the PSC's communique on the 983rd session (PSC communique, 2021: np) of the council, paragraph 4, commended the A3s efforts to lead as pen holders on matters relating to African files on the UNSC agenda, and further encouraging a division of labour among A3 members in coordinating and leading the pen-holding of African files on the UNSC agenda. The above communique on A3 efforts stands true to the extent that the A3 has been supporting preparations for conducting annual consultative meetings between the UNSC and PSC, through coordination with the UNSC's ad hoc working group for Africa's conflict prevention and resolution.

Similarly, the UNSC's ad working group on conflict prevention and resolution in Africa has been instrumental in its coordination with the A3 and AU Commission to the extent of instigating the shift from less ad hoc partnerships into solid and strategic coordinated efforts such as the Silencing of The Guns (STG) agenda as part of the AU's Agenda 2063 framework, albeit with minimal success (Forti &Singh, 2020: np). To this extent, the result of these high-level meetings are considered integral parts of the PSC's activities towards the AU Assembly, which endorses and welcomes the conclusions of the last meeting in Libreville under the STG theme.

To this end, The AU High Representative (AUHR) mobilised stakeholder contributions to implement the AU Master Roadmap for Silencing the Guns. Under the presidency of Equatorial Guinea in February of 2019, the UNSC adopted Resolution 2457, which prompted the UNSG to establish a UN task force for mobilisation of wider UN support to implement the STG roadmap and AU Commission action plan. Meeting with the STG unit, the UN task force and the STG unit have recommended several areas of support such as disarmament, women and youth in peace and security, counterterrorism, peacebuilding and conflict prevention (UNSC, 2019: np; NEPAD, 2019: np).

Thus, from the above there is a clear indication of the A3's coordinated and cohesive efforts to promote the STG agenda, leading to the adoption of the resolution. The 2020 AU Summit in February adopted the "STG: creating conducive conditions for Africa's development" theme for the year (Prah & Matambo, 2020).

The various support provided by the UN included technical advice to the AU Mediation Support Unit (AUMSU) and the Network of African Women in Conflict Prevention and Mediation (FemWise), technical assistance on disarmament demobilisation and reintegration, mine action and small arms control at ECCAS, capacity building for youth leaders on unarmed civilian protection, as well as raising awareness at high-level events like the African Dialogue Series (Prah & Matambo, 2020).

The A3's group cohesion or unity where voting in the UNSC is concerned, has been supported by the stats on voting practices of the A3 in the UNSC as Forti and Singh (2019: 7; Amani Africa, 2021: 9) highlight that at the time of drafting the paper, 8 out of 300 votes between 2009-2019 were split (resolution 2303 in 2016 on the situation in Burundi, 2304 in 2016 on the situation in UN mission in South Sudan, 2385 in 2017 on UN sanctions in Somalia and Eritrea, 2414 in 2018 on the UN mission for the referendum in Western Sahara, 2418 and 2428 in 2018 on UN sanctions on Sudan, as well as 2440 and 2468 in 2018 and 2019 on UN mission for referendums in Somalia).

The most recent A3 division on voting was on the renewal of sanctions on South Sudan (resolution 2633) as well as the extension of the mandate of the pester panel in the nation until 2023, where Kenya and Gabon abstained and Ghana voted yes (UNSC 2022: np). However, still in 2022, the A3 displayed voting coherence on resolutions 2641 (on the renewal of an arms embargo against the DRC) where the A3 abstained and 2640 (on the extension of the mandate of MINUSMA) where the A3 voted in favour (UN digital library, 2022).

Amani Africa's special report no.9 (2021: 5) notes that in its quest to increase intra-A3 coordination, rotational A3 members have since 2018 opted for the monthly high-level ambassadorial meetings, a shift from the quarterly meeting they had initially settled on. Similarly, meetings have now transitioned from the traditional political practitioners to include political coordinators, experts, and enthusiasts with a wealth of knowledge on matters of A3 endeavours and activities in the UNSC, to share and compare notes and information with a focus on policy harmonisation within and among the A3 in the UNSC.

It is worth noting that none of the African nations, whether a part of the General Assembly or the Security Council, are not in the top ten financial contributing nations – United States 27.89%; China 15.21%; Japan 8.56%; Germany 6.09%; United Kingdom 5.79%; France 5.61%; Italy 3.30%; Russian Federation 3.04%; Canada 2.73%; Republic of Korea 2.26% - (UN A/73/350/Add.1, 2022: 2), but are however among the top ten troop contributing countries

– Rwanda 5227; Egypt 2815; Ghana 2751; and Senegal 2457 personnel – (UN peacekeeping 2022: 1).

Lastly, the A3's role in the authorship of resolutions at the council is well underwhelming when compared to that of the permanent members of the council, as well as other regional groupings at the council. For instance, Brosig and Lecki (2022: 1-30) compiled UNSC resolution data and tallied the number of times that A3 members authored a resolution and assessed this according to A3 involvement in single-authored, co-authored, as well as multiple-authored resolutions. Using the collated data from Brosig and Lecki (2022: 16-20), the report explains that over the two decades, only seventeen resolutions were solely authored by A3 nations, while also noting an increase from three to thirty-one co-authored resolutions between 2007 and 2014. More importantly, however, is that of the seventeen resolutions authored solely by the A3, ten of those were drafted over the last decade (Brosig & Lecki, 2022: 16).

This shows an increase of activity in the second decade of the AU's formation, although the overall number is relatively very low and inconsequential when compared to other groupings such as the P5 (449), the E10 (119), European group (over 280), South and Central America (17), Asia groupings (32) (Brosig & Lecki, 2022: 16). This is concerning, considering that 688 out of the 1391 adopted resolutions since 2000 were related to Africa. Translated to percentages, this would mean the A3 were solely responsible for about 1,2% of overall resolutions and only 2,5% of resolutions related to Africa. Now there is the understanding that not all resolutions drafted by the A3 and adopted by the council were related to Africa but even the annual figures from the UN showing resolution data convey that the P3 (more so the UK and France) were involved in all resolutions related to Africa.

In fact, between January and August 2022 (at the time of conclusion of the report), UN data shows that all adopted 16 resolutions (S/RES/2648; S/RES/2647; S/RES/2644; S/RES/2641; S/RES/2640; S/RES/2636; S/RES/2635; S/RES/2634; S/RES/2633; S/RES/2632; S/RES/2630; S/RES/2629; S/RES/2628; S/RES/2625; S/RES/2620; S/RES/2619) related to Africa's peace and security, were drafted with the P3's involvement – several are co-authored with other non-A3 nations and one multiple-authored (UN digital library, 2022). This is a slight increase from the previous year at this time (four more resolutions were authored in 2022) where a total of 25 resolutions were submitted by the P3 and adopted by the council (UN digital Library, 2022).

APSA and the AU PSC

The beginning of the 21st century was a turning point for Africa and its role in conflict prevention and resolution. The AU constitutive act of 2000, which allowed for a transition from the Organisation of African Unity (OAU) to the African Union (AU), saw a shift in the founding principles of sovereignty and non-intervention under the OAU to emphasising non-indifference and R2P under the AU. This massive shift culminated in the establishment of the African Peace and Security Architecture (APSA) in 2002 (Desmidt, 2019: 1-15; Desmidt, 2016), from which Africa began its active role as a conflict prevention and resolution bloc, under the umbrella of APSA and its institutional pillars.

As the official statement of the blueprint of the APSA reads, "The African Peace and Security Architecture (APSA) is built around structures, objectives, principles and values, as well as decision-making processes relating to the prevention, management and resolution of crises and conflicts, post-conflict reconstruction and development in the continent" (AU, 2012; np). Of the institutional pillars of APSA (PSC, the PoW, The ASF, CEWS, AU Commission, and the Peace Fund), the PSC features most as it is one of the main actors involved in exerting AA, and the primary player in AU-UN relations, with its counterpart, the UNSC.

The PSC, almost identical to the UNSC, is a rotational 15-member council, with members elected by the AU Executive Council and endorsed by the AU Assembly at its next session (PSC, 2015: np). Five nations are elected for three-year terms and ten other nations for two-year terms, usually to take up office on the first day of April following the election from the Assembly. The principle of equitable regional representation and national rotation governs the election of member states into the PSC.

National rotation is agreed upon within Africa's regional blocs and representation is shared in the following manner: central bloc with three seats; eastern bloc with three seats; northern bloc with two seats; southern bloc with three seats; and the western bloc with four seats. As the standing body of the AU for the prevention, management and resolution of conflicts, the PSC was established to be a "collective security and early warning arrangement with the ability to facilitate timely and efficient responses to conflict and crisis situations".

With its support being vital for peace-building operations, post-conflict reconstruction responsibilities, humanitarian assistance, and disaster management, the council derives its authority from article 20 (para.14) of the 2000 Constitutive Act, which was amended under article 9 of the Constitutive Act in 2003 (para.5) together with article 2 of the 2002 protocol concerning the PSC's establishment.

Article 7 of the Protocol relates to the powers of the PSC which include: "*anticipating and preventing disputes and conflicts, as well as policies, which may lead to genocide and crimes against humanity; undertaking peace-making, peace-building and peace-support missions; recommending intervention in a member state in respect of grave circumstances, namely war crimes, genocide and crimes against humanity; imposing sanctions; implementing the AU's common defence policy; ensuring implementation of key conventions and instruments to combat international terrorism; promoting coordination between regional mechanisms and the AU regarding peace, security and stability in Africa*" (AU protocol on PSC, 2003: 9-10).

The article further tasks the council with the responsibilities of following up on the promotion of "democratic practices and good governance, the rule of law, protection of human rights and freedoms, respect for international humanitarian law; promoting the implementation of treaties on arms control and disarmament; examining and taking action in situations where the national independence and sovereignty of member states is threatened by acts of aggression, including by mercenaries, as well as supporting and facilitating humanitarian action in situations of armed conflicts or major natural disasters" (AU protocol on PSC, 2003: 10).

As the AU's main, if not only, decision-making organ on matters of conflict prevention and resolution in Africa, the PSC is regarded as the cornerstone of APSA, and this for the research report implies the significance held by the PSC, especially when it comes to influencing the UNSC decision-making practices and structures.

Over the last two decades since its establishment, PSC as the first responder to conflict in Africa, has set the tone for the response to the conflict in Africa, and has shifted from externally influencing UNSC response to African conflict situation towards internal manoeuvring through the A3, the AU permanent observer mission to the UN, through annual PSC-UNSC meetings, and by emphasising strong African unity between the A3 in the UNSC and the PSC member states.

This chapter, for proper validation of the assumption, examines at the role of the PSC and its endeavours with the UNSC, through coordination with the A3 and press states and communiques on UNSC resolutions. For the advancement of AA, the PSC has an important role to play in the sense of coordinating with the A3 in the UNSC. Similarly, such coordination takes place in the form of interactive sessions between the PSC and A3 in which the latter reports to the former on its activities in the UNSC. This largely happens through the established A3 permanent representatives in Addis Ababa (Amani Africa, 2019: 21).

During Covid-19, PSC-A3 annual high-level seminars were institutionalised and carried out through video teleconferencing (VTC). The stipulations as per the PSC communique of the 397th session, emphasised the deepened relations with the A3 to enhance its role within the UNSC. Paragraph eight of the communique highlighted the need for consistent, systemised meetings between the PSC and the UNSC; to implement agreements on joint field missions between the two councils for better synergy and comprehensive solutions to peace and security challenges in Africa (Para 8 I/VI, 2013:3).

Furthermore, on the need for consistent, systemised meetings, the paragraph noted that substantive involvement from African representatives in the UN Security Council, with emphasis on the issue of African members becoming pen/co-pen holders on matters of concern to Africa, as well as the fair discussion of thematic issues in the council as is the council's tendencies to avoid deliberation on matters deemed sensitive and 'political hot potatoes' by P5 members (Para 8 I/VI 2013:3). The PSC, along with the A3 and other channels available to African members in the UN, has made significant strides in institutionalising and operationalising the mechanisms as emphasised in the communique of the 397th session. One main channel to instrumentalise this is the A3 coordinator, which allows for enhanced intra-A3 coordination.

AU Assembly, AU Commission, and the AU Permanent Observer Mission in the UNSC

Apart from the highly observed A3 and the PSC, there are perhaps smaller and yet very important actors that serve as more than a bridge between the AU and the UN, but also serve as a bridge between the A3 and PSC, ensuring that the A3 expresses African common positions in the UNSC as it is an advocate of such positions, ensures synergy between PSC 'mandates' to the A3 and A3 reports to the PSC on its activities in the UNSC. The AU Assembly is the supreme body within the AU and is convened by heads of states from all member states.

The Assembly establishes the union's policies, determines priorities, develops annual programmes and monitors the implementation of established policies and decisions. This body is tasked with accelerating political and socio-economic integration in Africa. , and does this, partly, by issuing directives to the AU Executive Council and the PSC on the management and prevention of conflict, war, terrorism, emergency situations and peacebuilding and peacekeeping.

The AU Constitutive Act gives the Assembly authority to determine courses of action related to intervention or sanctions against member states found to be in breach of treaties, resolutions, accords, values, and principles that govern AU member states under the union. Furthermore, the Assembly delegated this responsibility to the PSC in 2004, when it began operations. Apart from this, the Assembly is responsible for appointments in the chairmanship and commissionership of the AU Commission, has the authority to approve or reject requests for AU membership and determines AU annual budgets.

Perhaps of the most important mandates it has, at least for the research report, is that of being an unofficial nucleus of the AU, linking all other organs to each other seeing that it can establish committees, agencies, commissions, working groups, give mandates to other organs (executive council and the commission) of the union, interpret and amend the constitutive act.

Towards enhancing greater AA within the UNSC, the Assembly plays a significant role in that the A3 members in the UNSC gain membership through the Assembly's endorsement. In 2016, the Assembly (paragraph 24 of decision Assembly/U/Dec.598 [xxvi]), having noted the much-needed synergy among A3 members as well as between the A3 and the PSC, in its 26th ordinary session held in Addis Ababa, stressed and emphasised the special responsibility of the A3 to ensure that PSC decisions on African files on the UNSC agenda are well reflected. The paragraph (AU Assembly. 2016: 8) further stresses that:

> "*the African members of the United Nations Security Council (A3), working with the Commission, including the AU Permanent Mission to the UN, to present reports through the PSC to Assembly, on their efforts within the Security Council and the extent to which they managed to promote African positions as articulated by the PSC*".

The Assembly further encouraged the PSC to provide timely guidance to the A3 in facilitating consistent promotion and defence of common African positions on issues of concern to Africa. The AU Commission (AUC), as the secretariat of the union, is responsible for the day-to-day activities at the AU.

While receiving the title of secretariat, its functions and powers make it something more than that as it shares some responsibilities with the PSC as provided for by article seven of the protocol relating to the establishment of the PSC. Article 10 provides specific relevant rights to the AUC chairperson on managing, preventing, and resolving conflicts. The AU commission holds significant influence on decisions made at the PSC level, which are then communicated to the A3 via the African Permanent Observer Mission to the UN.

Moreover, the AU commission plays a larger role in coordinating meetings between the AU and UN, in tandem with the UN Secretariat. Among its many powers, the chairperson of the commission has the authority to appoint the head of the African Mission to the UN, currently Fatima Kyari Mohammed, as this and other permanent representational and specialised offices fall under the structure of the AUC (AU handbook, 2021: 111). One of the AUC's core functions, involvement in drafting common African positions and coordinating member states in international negotiations is perhaps one worth highlighting for the research report.

Similarly, the AUC ensures that Africa speaks with one voice through various channels by encouraging timely and close communication between AU organs for guided performance, which in turn secures harmonisation of agreed policies, strategies, programmes and projects (AU handbook, 2021: 94). The AU Commission also plays a larger diplomatic role in the sense that it has nurtured a considerably strong partnership with the UN Secretariat that has defined institutional tools such the Joint Task force on peace and security, the UN-AU annual conference, and the AU permanent observer mission to the UN with the UN office to the AU (Forti & Singh, 2019: 1; Forti & Singh, 2020: np).

The African Union Permanent Observer Mission (AUPOM) in the UNSC offers a significant avenue for promoting and defending common African positions (thereby promoting greater AA) in the UNSC, by serving as a coordinating secretariat for the A3 at the UN in terms of organising meetings, providing support to the chair of the AU commission, and providing general logistical and administrative assistance. Currently headed by Ambassador Fatima Kyari Mohammed, AUPOM coordinates the communication flows at an Ambassadorial level with African nations' Permanent Missions to the UN, and also serves as a direct representation of the AU Commission to the UN.

Amani Africa's special report no.9 (2021: 5) notes that a necessary step of institutionalising the role of the AUPOM on a consistent basis has been achieved and thus the coordination of meetings and actively participating in deliberations relating to African issues on the UNSC agenda upon invitation, as is the role of the secretariat, the AUPOM has cemented its integral role by becoming the A3's institutional memory. Moreover, as was noted above, the AUPOM also plays a role in bridging communication channels between the A3 and PSC by ensuring that A3 is able to receive conclusions and decisions on PSC sessions and information deemed necessary from the AU Commission.

In 2020, AUPOM initiated a retreat for supporting the preparation of newly elected A3 members. It is necessary to note, however, that AUPOM is facing issues of legality as an AU mission in New York as well as the fact that it is understaffed (Amani Africa, 2019: 6) which affect its ability to efficiently carry out its duties in supporting the A3, PSC, broader AU-UN relationship by understanding the dynamics at the UNSC and timely communication between the A3 in New York and the PSC in Addis Ababa.

In exploring how the various levels of agency can be observed as per the first hypothesis of the research report, the following section switches focus to the values of identity, interest, culture and ideology, and collectivity of efforts and how they play a role affecting increased agency from African actors.

Identity

Identity determines one's description of the self in relation to others. On the core of identity, constructivists understand identity to be an actor, or from a constructivist rationale, an agent's recognition of itself coupled with its position in the social world, as well as its relations with other agents (Flockhart, 2012: 85). For instance, South Africa's identity in the AU or SADC is that of a continental giant promotes its own individual interests, and when serving its terms in the UNSC, SA's identity changes to a non-permanent African state when part of the A3.

Thus, in this respect, identities inform and explain certain rivalries that stand the test of time (e.g. the Cold War), the formation of security communities (e.g. the PSC), cooperation matters of security (A3+ coalitions as non-permanent members) and non-security (UN-AU on climate, food, women, children, gender, and development), as well as failures to reach consensus on issues (the UNSC and PSC on the funding of joint peacekeeping efforts between the two councils). Amani Africa succinctly noted the duality of the A3s identity. This speaks to the understanding that identity is multi-layered (Wendt, 1992: 224) with at least four categories

applying to the A3/PSC in the UNSC. Among the A3, national identity often competes with group identity.

National identity speaks to sovereignty and the ability to self-determine even in international fora, while group identity sometimes forgoes this sovereignty in the form of compromise when pursuing common positions. Looking at the voting behaviour of African states at the UNSC, group identity has been favoured over national identity reflected in the voting cohesiveness as well as the joint communication adopted by the A3 at the council. Even rising powers such as South Africa have to sometimes forego their national ambitions in the pursuit of common positions as this proven mechanism for advancing Africa-centric positions at the council.

These common positions are empowered by group cohesiveness, with group identity at the core even when it means backing down from resolutions drafted by a member of the A3 and rejected by the PSC. When South Africa drafted a resolution on the Peace Fund, it was rejected by the PSC before reaching the members of the council and the rising power had to abandon the draft for a later stage to be determined by the PSC. The role of the A3, under the framework of the AU, is perceived as the representative of Africa as the election of A3 into the UNSC is a consequence of the endorsement from the collective AU membership. It is thus a rare occurrence that A3 elections are contested when endorsed by the AU.

With the exception of the 2000 (Mauritius contested the election of Sudan into A3 and won the seat instead) and 2011 elections (Mauritania contested the election of Morocco but lost the election as Morocco won), A3 elections have always agreed selected states to represent Africa in the UNSC (UNSC report, 2020: 8). Despite the collective identity, that the A3 displays, courtesy of the election system and the special responsibility given to it by the AU Assembly, these states are well within their rights to utilise opportunities and vantage points afforded by membership into the UNSC and advance their national interests. Perhaps this is one identity A3 members share with the rest of the UNSC members. Taking the above practices and functions of African actors in the coordination of activities in the USNC, it is clear from the channels and mechanisms set up by Africa that a group identity is necessary for advancing a common African position.

Interests

Interest and identity influence each other. Without interest, identity has no motivational power; without identity, interest has no direction. Following the Ezulwini Consensus of 2005 (AU, 2005), Africa has come to strongly push for collective interests as opposed to individual interests, within the UNSC.

As noted above, interests and identity are inter-related to the extent that the special responsibility given to the A3 by the PSC has obligated the African representatives in the UNSC to forgo individual interests for collective interests relayed to the A3 by the PSC and the AU, through the African caucus in New York as well as ambassadorial meetings between the PSC and the UNSC. Furthermore, seeing the increase in the number of joint decisions from the A3, in 2019, 2020, and 2021, suggests that collective interests are taking centre stage where African files on the UNSC agenda are under discussion.

More than anything, it seems to have become an imperative that African representatives in the UNSC align their interests with those of the PSC and the AU, as is the case with famous collective interests of permanent representation for Africa in the UNSC, as well as the promotion of the Agenda 2063 initiative and the silencing of the guns agenda, which led to the adoption of UNSC Resolution 2457, under the chairmanship of the Guinea Bissau.

It can, and should be noted that while African representatives (the A3, PSC, AUPOM, AU Assembly, AU Commission) relay through various channels, common interests to be promoted in UNSC, the rate at which said interests are successfully promoted and achieved, and implemented is very slow and almost non-existent. However, as with other variables, the purpose of noting this variable is to show that the extent to which interests make their way to the UNSC agenda and are discussed, Africa has exerted minimal agency as its position is continuously strengthened by group cohesion.

Culture and Ideology

Africa's culture on matters of peace and security, while not as heavily emphasised as the identity and interests, has a role to play in Africa pushing for common positions in the UNSC. It should be noted that Africa has come a long way in its responses to conflict on the continent, and two fundamental changes signal this. The first is the emphasis on, embracement, and affirmation by the AU, Regional Economic Communities, and governments' R2P principles (Siebert, 2009: np).

Certainly, article 4 of the AU Constitutive act embedded principles similar to R2P by affirming that the Union has the right to intervene in affairs of member states, in accordance with the AU Assembly decisions, with respect to grave circumstances relating to war crimes, crimes against humanity, and genocide. More than this, the Union displayed a further explicit commitment to the R2P principles when it, in 2005 at the Ezulwini Consensus, reiterated the need for member states' responsibility towards safeguarding the rights of citizens within and beyond their territorial borders. Similarly, the establishment of the African Standby Force (as one of the pillars of APSA) in 2004, to coordinate peacekeeping efforts with African RECs as well as UN missions in Africa, furthers the discourse on Africa's security culture, albeit never having been deployed yet. From the Ezulwini consensus, emphasis on the R2P principle, the principle of non-indifference, and Agenda 2063 with the STG 2020 as the flagship of this initiative, Africa has displayed over and again a security culture of consultation through monthly, quarterly, and annual meetings where dialogue, deliberation, and negotiation are the order of the day.

Africa's culture is built on negotiation and diplomacy as this has the main tool its soft power, and one that has allowed it to make considerable contributions to peacekeeping efforts, at the level of the PSC and UNSC. It is through this culture of negotiation that the A3 has been able to adopt a collective identity, me the special responsibility, and advance the positions of the PSC to the UNSC, through the culture of consultation and negotiation. It is understood that exerting influence in the UNSC requires a lot more than diplomacy and negotiation skills, but that is a matter for another report. Apart from culture to shape identity and interests, the shared ideas that inform a philosophical stance, are ultimately important and must be overlooked.

For proper functionality of the A3 as a cohesive unit in the UNSC, association between the three elected members and the PSC, AU assembly, and regional blocs supporting the position of the PSC as represented by the A3 in the UNSC, needs to transcend from the material forces and to shared ideas, or ideology. Pan Africanism, Afrocentrism, and the African renaissance, are among these shared ideologies displayed by Africa when interacting with the world. Thus, even in the UNSC, the A3 have gravitated towards these shared ideologies, which speaks to the primacy of African preferences on African files on the agenda or files of concern to Africa. Except for the eight instances noted above when A3 diverged in its decisions, the group of three have over the years displayed behaviours informed by shared ideology.

Collectivity of efforts

For African members at the council, any chance at pushing for policy positions that look likely to be implemented, they had to first have consensus among themselves and then lobby the other member to vote in their favour. Suffice it to say that this is probably true for all members at the council, first consensus amongst a few is reached, and then only after then can council members bring their drafts forward. Collective coordination has been present within the A3, which has enabled the bloc to push for African positions, and similarly reject views contrasting with their own.

The joint statements among the A3 evidence this over the last five years, adopting similar stances on draft positions proposed by council members. Throughout the first sections of this chapter, it has been clear that a common African position needs be to reached before pushing Afrocentric policies with the intent of implementation at the council, which alludes to collective efforts from those within and outside the UN Security Council.

The A3 makes use of the avenues unveiled by the PSC and its channels, such as the PSC's internal sessions, as well as the format of these sessions, which are a primary resource for A3 in terms of extracting PSC perspectives. Thus, AA here is not only measured by the success of policy positions with African preference and likelihood of implementation, but also by African coordination in all files relating to the continent, or are of African interest.

While these cases noted here argue for the collectivity of efforts from African representatives and all actors that play a role in realising African preferred policy positions at the council, AA has been curtailed by a lack of this collectivity of efforts (noted in the next chapter), and thus the African representatives need to work on better coordination of efforts and consistent communication if they seek to influence decision making at the council.

Policy dissonance and Inconsistent coordination

While this chapter focuses on elements supporting AA, there are instances where African representatives have had divergent policy positions that hinder AA. Although not a very common feature among the African representatives at the council, policy dissonance does occur when a member of the A3 adopts a policy position decided (through a majority, if not unanimous, vote) by the REC to which it belongs, and when that particular position contrasts with the position adopted by the AU. These divergent policy positions are observable among RECs and the AU, which move up to the A3 at the council.

This divergence of policy positions stems from the inability between African organisations, to coordinate views and perceptions on specific crises in a timeous and explicit manner, supporting the assumption that a common African position from the regional and continental consensus from which international support can be attained (Amani African 2021: 11). This divergent policy position is at one time the result of regional geo-strategic tensions and at other times the result of individual member states' historical international relations. Furthermore, the ability of the A3 to defend and articulate African positions is contingent on the presence of explicit guidelines from the PSC. In 2019, a recurrent issue of dissatisfaction was that the PSC had failed to respond to requests from the A3 on reactivating the draft resolution on financing AU missions by the UN, which saw last minute voting suspension in 2018 (Amani Africa, 2021: 12). This displays serious cracks in the African representatives' cohesion. Without this clear PSC position and timely response to the A3, the latter is unable to develop a unified position and is left vulnerable to the pressures exerted by the permanent faction at the council.

Thus, a combination of lack of internal cohesion, and external pressure by permanent members increases the risk of policy dissonance at the council. Amani Africa (2021) further notes that the situation in Sudan in 2019, wherein there was a lack of internal cohesion and external pressure displayed the importance of a clear policy position from the PSC and A3. Confronted by a lack of willingness by the council to support a PSC position, which included the call for a transfer of power from the army to civilian authority in Sudan. The A3 held a joint press conference conveying the unanimous support for the PSC position, and praising the PSC's leadership on the issue. Moreover, fortunately for the A3 at the council, suggestions to achieve benefits for strong common positions, is the ability to unanimously agree on modalities for managing divergence without affecting cooperation in pursuit of a common position in all areas relating to African files at the PSC and the UNSC.

Similarly, establishing a firewall between issues of deep divergence and issues on the council's agenda has been established as another suggestable solution. At the very least, African representatives should be able to coordinate to minimise the negative effects of policy dissonance, where the role of the A3 at the council is concerned (Amani Africa, 2021: 12). This is contingent on candid conversations between states involved and the willingness to coordinate without forgetting positional divergence. For instance, the cooperation between Ethiopia and Egypt during tenure at the council, while at the same knowing they are at odds on the Nile dam expansion.

Assessment of the chapter

At first glance, this chapter finds that the exertion of AA is indeed subject to the presence of a number of factors: Identity, culture and ideology, interests, and collectivity of efforts. This section categorises the degree of influence that IVs have on DVs into minimal, average, and great, and the importance of the presence or absence of IVs is determined by how the DVs react (lack of or observable at the council). Furthermore, to state early on that during testing the hypothesis, elaboration on the degree of AA exerted is important, and the last paragraph speaks to this. Prior to discussing the IVs and their links to AA, the chapter finds that a very integral but under-utilised element in the promotion of AA is the role played by the AU Permanent Observer Mission in the UNSC as a gap filler in the knowledge and expertise of the UNSC's working methods, culture and topics that dominantly prevail on the council's agenda.

AUPOM is integral to the new members assuming a seat on the council and representing the A3, especially when the outgoing and incoming members do not have consultations with one another on how the former faired in promoting certain African positions. Furthermore, the AUPOM has the potential of acting as an institutional memory by retaining information on the outgoing member's activities, and the probability and likelihood of common positions to gain traction and support from other members of the council. AA has been observable from instances where African members at the council displayed group identity of the African bloc, despite national identities as sovereign states.

However, national identities cannot be overlooked considering that these nations also represent their respective regions, which themselves have bodies to address conflict matters and have their own views on how these should be handled. With these multiple identities, African representatives at the council have the fortune of communicating PSC decisions at the council. The reason why this is considered a fortune is that the various regions, represented by member states at the PSC converge their views into common positions, which can then be translated to the A3 to push at the council.

There are few cases where African representatives at the council vote based on national identities or representing a specific region on the continent, since 2007. The presence of identity thus plays a role in ensuring that African nations are on the same page where draft resolutions from council members are concerned and thus measurable impact on AA.

The degree to which the presence of identity influences the ability to exert AA is average in that neither the presence nor absence of identity alone can cause significant change to the IV – there are other elements that supersede identity, such as mandate, interests, culture and ideology, as well as collectivity of efforts. Thus, identity is likely a part of or the culmination of culture and ideology as well as collectivity, which means actions of the A3, cannot be solely determined by the presence or absence of an African identity at that particular time.

Interests should be considered from multiple angles where the nation state does not only consider the interests of the wider continental bloc, but the interests of the region and those of its own as a nation state. While African nations have national interests, it has become clear that the UNSC may not be the vehicle where these interests are realised over those of others, so the best avenues to pool national interests into common positions which, by virtue of African numbers at the council and the understanding that they have on the ground knowledge on conflicts in the continent, have a better chance at success.

As observed in the chapter, African interests can be summarised into three broad categories: fair representation at the council, to have influence over African files on the council's agenda, and to have the UN fund African-led peacekeeping missions on the continent. It is certainly true that most, if not all African policy positions are driven by interests and Africa has seen some successes and failures in attempting to have UNSC resolutions convey African interests and preferences.

Thus, the degree to which national, regional, and continental interests influence the exertion of AA is great. This is because many, if not all, African representatives share the interest of being primary actors on security responses on the continent seeing that these theatres of operations are their own front or back yards and thus directly affect their stability (and that of their respective regions).

Unlike other members at the council who are spared by geo-spatial positioning, the fear of spillover from security concerns of neighbouring states fuel African interests and policy positions to have control over the unstable region or state. Culture and ideology have been difficult factors to assess in African activities at the council, in that the permanent faction at the council largely dictates the culture of the council and their ideology gains prominence over the A3, thus the African representatives have little room to display their culture of decision-making and what ideologies influence policy positions.

Explicitly looking at the UNSC and the purpose of the council, one immediately observes that intervention through mediation and negotiation, peacekeeping and confronting armed groups, as well as assisting post-conflict nation-building are deemed appropriate. This, for many nations in the global north and south seems the appropriate response to international crises, but these nations differ on the level of intervention necessary.

For instance, the Sino-Russian coalition as well as African members at the council considered NATO's (North Atlantic Treaty Organisation) intervention in the Libya crisis of 2011 as overreach, when the P3 deemed it a necessary response. It seems that the value placed on sovereignty (where African files on the agenda are concerned) by members of the council varies with the A3 feeling that it still matters and should be respected regardless of the situation, and the P3 viewing it as compromised by some nations.

The presence of collectivity of interests has had significant impact on the exertion of AA, as African members at the council formulate the hypothesis around the push for a common policy position. It is worth noting that not all situations where African members at the council displayed collective efforts were successful in ensuring policy positions with the intent of implementation, but its absence certainly results in the inability to exert AA at the council.

The degree to which culture and ideology positively influencing the exertion of AA is considered minimal, and rather great to the extent that the dominant culture and ideology at the council (belonging to the P3 coalition) inhibit African representatives from meaningfully participating and subsequently influencing the decision-making process of the council. Thus, the prevailing presence of collectivity of efforts even in the face of internal differences and external pressures is a very defining feature in Africa's ability to consolidate and pursue common policy positions with the intent of implementation.

The degree to which collectivity of efforts influences the IV (exerting AA at the council) is significantly great in that for there to be collective efforts, all the other elements need to be present and African representatives agree on particular courses of action. Similarly, an absence of collectivity of efforts means African representatives diverge on specific policy positions and have taken the option of going it alone, which further decreases the chances of exerting AA at the council. Collectivity of efforts can be considered the ultimate IV to cause a change in the DV in that it is the last step (at least for this chapter) that African representatives need to take to consolidate common positions that they can then push with the intent to implement, at the council.

This then brings to the fore the subject of the degree of AA exerted towards influencing decision-making at the council. This chapter has found that Africa, through displaying the IVs noted above, as well as through analysing the number of resolutions adopted by the council on African files, is significantly involved in the council's resolution. A large of those resolutions have African endorsement which could either suggest on the one end that African representatives raised, proposed and drafted the resolutions, or on the other end supported these resolutions because they are in line with African policy positions on particular situations.

Conclusions

The visibly increased cohesion, cooperation and coordination among the A3 in the last decade, including issuing joint statements and addresses at the council, is very encouraging in the pursuit of strengthened common African positions on African files on the council's agenda. It is imperative to note at this point that the internal unity required for strong AA does not only reside within the PSC members but a very large and significant part of resides in the cohesive actions of the PSC, the A3, AUPOM, the AU Commission, the AU Assembly, as well as the coordination with other necessary APSA pillars.

The presence of all the above note the IV's significant effect (with varying levels) on Africa's ability to push for a common policy position with the intent of implementation. Except for collectivity of efforts, it cannot be said that the absence of other IVs such as culture and ideology (individually) significantly hinders the ability to push for common positions and exert AA. This then speaks to the question of whether or not increased cohesiveness translates to increased influence over decision making processes.

Lastly, the permanent faction at the council and the PSC (through the A3, AUPOM, AUC, AU assembly, and APSA) might diverge on their perceptions and understanding of strong AA, considering that the former sees influence being heavily attached to the material position and the latter perceiving influence from a diplomatic standpoint. However, the chapter still maintains that the PSC and Africa at large, through the various available channels to the UNSC, has displayed AA and on a few occasions, been able to influence the decision-making structures of the council. Needless to point out that there is a long way to go for the A3 to cement its place as a power bloc at the council, and as the fourth chapter will show, the A3 is aware and very active in addressing the differences between and among the permanent and non-permanent members at the council.

Chapter 3

Hypothesis 2: Dominant power rivalry at the UNSC to curtail African agency

Introduction

The UN Security Council (UNSC) is considered the primary institution to respond to international peace and security issues (Lei, 2014). In Africa, the UNSC had authorised over 30 peacekeeping missions between 1990 and 2013, in over 18 African nations (Williams, 2013: 1)), regardless of whether it was at the behest of the African representatives or the dominant powers.

The second chapter notes the advancement of AA through shared identity, ideology and culture, and collectivity of efforts. This chapter postulates the curtailment of AA through rivalry (or opposition) from dominant powers in the form of conflicting views, competing interests, bureaucracy and politicisation coupled with veto privileges, permanent seating, and penholdership. Thus, sections of the focus on the variables and factors that curtail AA at the council.

The P5

In the 1944 Dumbarton Oaks Conference, the United States, the UK (United Kingdom), the Soviet Union, and China worked out the draft Charter of the United Nations, which was finalised at the San Francisco charter of 1945 (Lei, 2014: 3). The council consisted of eleven initial members (later to be increased to fifteen), of which China, France, the Russian Federation, the UK, and the USA, are permanent members of the council. The non-permanent 10 members at the UNSC are elected by UNGA (United Nations General Assembly).

Non-permanent membership is rotational on a two year service term for the elected nations, with the first election after the having two of the four members elected for a one year term. Retiring member states cannot be nominated or endorsed for immediate re-election (Chapter 5, article 23 of the UN Charter), and every member of the council, permanent and non-permanent, are only allowed to have one representative in the council (UN, 2022: np). Where meetings are concerned, the council is regulated by five rules on the procedure and working methods for meetings. The meetings are held at the call of the president at a time deemed necessary by the president, request made to the president by member states, issues brought to the council's attention under article thirty five of the UN charter, or through recommendations made by the UNGA (UNSC handbook, 2021: np).

P5 members, granted special veto powers in 1945, were world war to allies with nuclear capabilities. The P5's status and veto privileges are rooted in the United Nations' founding in the aftermath of the Second World War (Bussemaker & Rosenthal, 2021: np).

The permanent members of the council have been responsible for funding over between 45 and 58 percent (China 10-15 percent; France 4-6 percent; Russia 2-3 percent; the UK 4-5 percent; US 22-28 percent) of the peacekeeping budget from 2018 to 2022 (UNSC, 2022: 2), which (according the levels of categorisations) places the permanent faction at the level of funding (level A) of the ten levels (A-J), and with Africa occupying the lower three levels (H-J) based on their contributions. This percentage is out of a $6 billion plus annual budget from 2018 to 2022 (GA/AB/4388, 2022: np).

The P3

The permanent three members, consisting of the United States (largest contributor to UN peacekeeping), the United Kingdom (third largest contributor), and France (fourth largest contributor), commonly recognised the western powers at the UNSC share a number of values, ideals, perceptions, and practises. Perhaps, two of the most important of these commonalities are the fact that they are all democracies and are member states of NATO. Besides being charter members, world war two allies, and nuclear capable nations, the permanent three are among the five largest economies in the world, play a role in regional and continental hegemony and the stability and sustainability of a liberal international order.

The US, was a global hegemon after having emerged as a superpower following the Second World War and reshaping the world order after the fall of communism. The US is also the first nation to develop a nuclear arsenal, a principal instigator of the establishment of UN, which replaced the dilapidated League of Nations, and serves as host to the headquarters, UNGA and UNSC. Moreover, the US enjoys unchallenged military supremacy that plays a large role in the UN's peacekeeping efforts (Kiprop, 2019: np), considering that it is the largest donor at the UN.

The UK, as a founding member of the UN, is one of the two most noted powers of Europe, and ally of the US as it was during the Second World War. As the fifth largest contributor of the UN budget, the UK also enjoys the special veto powers at the council (although rarely using the veto), and a nuclear capable state (Kiprop 2019: np).

As with the UK, France is another UN founding member, and allied forces of the Second World War with nuclear capabilities. Similarly, France is not known for using its veto with the last recorded time France vetoed a draft resolution being 1989 (Kiprop, 2019: np), but is a frequent penholder on conflict surrounding the Sahel and francophone nations. The three western powers' security relations are further strengthened by their membership in NATO. The P3 draft most council resolutions, although the UK and France hardly use vetoes.

Sino-Russian coalition

Sino-Russian coalition or the Russia-China cooperation has grown considerably over the last decade and a half at the UNSC. The Russian federation, a UN charter member was a cold war super power and a member of the allied forces of the Second World War (Kiprop, 2019: np). After 1989 and the fall of communism, the USSR dissolved and became the Russian federation and lost its super power status, becoming a rising power and a known opposition of the western powers at the UNSC.

As one of the allied forces that went to war against the axis powers, China was the first signatory of the UN charter, making it a charter member (Kiprop, 2019; Lei, 2014; UN, 2022). Notwithstanding close historical ties to the UN, China received formal recognition from the UN as a legitimate government of China, and subsequently its seat reinstalled, in 1971 (Lei, 2014: 3). In the same year, UNGA passed Resolution 2758, which restored the lawful rights of the PRC at the UNSC through acknowledging the representatives of the Government of the People's Republic of China are the only lawful representatives of China to the UN PRC as one of the five permanent members of the Security Council (Lei, 2014: 3). As is shown below, Russia is most frequent user of the veto (with at least 26 vetoes between August 2012 and July 2022), as well as China joining in the use of the veto (12 joint vetoes with Russia over the time specified before).

The elected 10

As elected members, the non-permanent cohort at the council only get membership for two-year terms, unlike their permanent counterparts who have served at the council since its inception. The non-permanent seats, currently at 10, were only six for the first two decade following the council's establishment and functioning, and represent the African, Latin American, Asian, and Eastern and Western European regions of the world. This change, emanates from UNGA resolution 1991 of 1965 focussed on expanding non-permanent seats and further outlined a process (Five seats for African and Asian states, one from Eastern

European states, two from Latin American nations, two from Western European and other nations [Caribbean and Arab]) for electing non-permanent members. Africa seats three of the non-permanent representatives, with Asia, Latin America, the Caribbean, and Western Europe sharing two seats each, and Eastern Europe having only one seat. Every two years, an Arab nation is endorsed to replace an African or Asia Pacific member.

Even numbered two-year terms see two African nations, one European, Asian, Latin-American, and Caribbean nations. Western European nations receive two seats, while Africa, Latin America, the Asia Pacific, and the Caribbean receive one seat each on odd numbered year terms. Of the 193 nations with UN membership, 188 are represented by the non-permanent membership who serve two-year terms, with the last five nations (USA, UK, France, Russia, China) making up the permanent members of the council. Moreover, for a resolution to be adopted by the council, a number of nine votes from the fifteen are required, with the catch of veto powers able to prevent adoption of resolution regardless of majority voting in favour. As is the norm, non-permanent members or the E10, do not have much sway and influence in the council, due largely to the lack special vetoes and the non-permanent membership which leaves little time to push for agenda and influence on issues of significance to Africa (Farrall, Loiselle, Michaelsen, Prantl & Whalan, J, 2018: 2).

Additional to the limit of influence from the E10 due to procedural voting requirements which set the playing against non-permanent members, informal and institutional working methods including diplomatic missions and personnel resources, experience, the pen-holder system, and expansive list of issues, disadvantage the E10's ability to exercise influence over the council. Due to smaller, weaker economies and non-permanent membership, the E10's influence on the council is stifled by under resourced missions short of council experience (Farrall, et al. 2018: 4).

Additionally, two year terms do not realistically suffice for E10 members to raise issues, make representations and advocate, as well as push for united votes (at least from the permanent members) towards resolution adoption, considering that the list of agendas at the council is expansive enough to outlast two year terms. The pen-older system also plays a large role in subverting E10 attempts at exerting influence on council issues on the agenda because the P5 have been known to hold closed door discussions on matters up for discussion at the council, providing an opportunity to script decisions prior to voting sessions (Farrall, et al. 2018: 4).

Furthermore, due to the heavy agenda convened at hectic work speeds of the council, which provides little opportunity for the 188 members of UNGA and subsequently the E10 and A3 to lobby and coalesce on decisions (Farrall, et al. 2018:4).

Meetings, voting, and the presidency

Working methods and procedures of the council are crucial for revealing how the council members endeavour to exert influence on issues on the agenda. This section considers the unequal dynamics between the permanent and elected members of the council with emphasis on both the institutional and informal practices that entrench this 'difficulty' of the elected members and by virtue of this, the African representatives at the council, due to voting powers, the presidency, terms (permanent and non-permanent), as well as the penholder system.

Rule four of chapter one of the provisional rules of procedures of the UNSC, highlight and consider that meetings are conducted as the behest of the president at any point where it is deemed necessary with the condition that meetings are at least fourteen days apart (UNSC provisional rules of procedures [s/96/Rev.7], 2022: np). In this instance, it probably makes sense to highlight that where meetings are concerned, permanent and non-permanent members share equal responsibilities and powers except for the fact that due to elective terms, the E10 do not have long to push and advocate for issues of concern for Africa.

However, considering that article two (point 2), article eleven (point two), as well as article thirty-five of the UN charter (UNSC provisional rules of procedures [s/96/Rev.7], 2022: np; UN charter, 2022: np) provide an channel for non-permanent members to lobby UNGA or the Secretary General of UN on issues that it consider significant and is sure can be successfully recommended to the council for discussion and debate. Where voting is concerned, every member has a single vote, with the P5 possessing special veto powers that give each of them exclusive ability to overturn a decision regardless of how other member states have voted. Furthermore, while article 27 of the UN charter (Chapter V: Security Council, on voting) states that:

> "*Each member of the Security Council shall have one vote. Decisions of the Security Council on procedural matters shall be made by an affirmative vote of nine members. 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; provided that, in decisions under Chapter VI, and under paragraph 3 of Article 52, a*

party to a dispute shall abstain from voting.", the language does not explicitly discuss and explain veto use.

This can create the impression that permanent and non-permanent members possess same powers or vetoes are non-existent. As noted above on the dominant power rivalry and ability to veto, Russia and the US are two most frequent users of veto capability. This becomes problematic when international and African files are on the agenda, which as noted above, make up for the majority of the council's agenda. For instance, whenever the Syrian files come up the agenda, Russia has grown increasingly opposed (Middle East monitor, 2016: np) to proposed draft resolution or decisions taken by the council, led by the permanent five members (ICG special briefing, 2019: 7).

Moreover, between October 2011 and July 2022, Russia with China, have vetoed 12 draft resolutions – S/2011/612; S/2012/77 [Astrasheuskaya, 2012: np]; S/2012/538; S/2014/348; S/2016/1026; S/2017/172; S/2019/186; S/2019/756; S/2019/961; S/2020/654; S/2020/667; S/2022/431 – (UNSC, 2022: np). The Russian Federation has alone, vetoed at least ten draft resolutions – S/2014/189; S/2015/508; S/2015/562; S/2016/846; S/2017/315 [McKirdy, 2017: np]; S/2017/884; S/2017/962; S/2017/970; S/2018/918; S/2018/321; S/2021/990; S/2022/155; S/2022/538 – (UNSC, 2022: np). Similarly, Russia had moved to reject a draft resolution by the UNSC on a ceasefire in Libya, following an offensive by General Khalifa Haftar's forces in April 2019 (ICG, 2019: 7; Internet source, 2019: np), refuting the UK-led draft blaming Haftar's Libyan National Army (LNA) for the violence in Tripoli's outskirts.

Russia and Libya have developed friendly relations over the years and it would make sense why Russia endeavoured, through its veto, to 'protect' its friend from UNSC resolutions. Surprisingly, the US abstained from the draft without any specific reason as why it did not support the move by other western powers at the council.

The United States' UN mission declined to comment and the Russian UN mission did not immediately respond to a request for comment (Internet source, 2019: np). It should be noted, however, that there have been instances where dominant power rivalry and vetoes had positive outcomes for African positions at the council. For instance, Russia blocked (in line with an African position) German and UK proposals for UN statement following Omar al-Bashir's ousting in Sudan (ICG, 2019: 7). The reason for aligned reactions to this proposal may have more to do with Russia's relations with and interests in Sudan, than simply siding with Africa or advancement of an African position.

Agenda setting considers the meetings of the council held twice a year at UN headquarters in New York, at the behest of the council, the presidency, are outlined in article 28 of the charter (UN Charter, Chapter five: the Security Council, 2022: np). Council members or the Secretary-General can recommend that meetings be held elsewhere, given that the members will unanimously decide what the location should be. The presidency, which is closely related to agenda setting, is rotational on a monthly basis and changes in alphabetical order (UNSC, chapter four – presidency, 2022: np). The president presides over proceedings and issues and here the president acts as a representative of the council first, than a member state.

African nations have presided over issues at the council for at least forty nine times over the last two decades split among the twenty-two nations to represent Africa on a continental and individuals basis, also considering that African files have increased on the agenda of the council. Because a number of issues on the council's agenda may have direct connections to any member states, the president presiding over a particular issue may relinquish the chair to the next member set succeed it as per adherence to the provisional rules of council.

The Penholder System

The penholder system, which determines who drafts council outcomes such as resolutions, presidential statements, and press statements is seldom discussed beyond member states, and thus the P3 members have appointed themselves penholders and drafters of council outcomes, specifically conflict-related issues (UNSC research report, 2018: 1). Since the fall of the USSR and communism, the council's activities had significantly increased and the P3 collectively 'took responsibility' for drafting outcomes.

Fundamentally important to understand here is that despite the P3 as self-appointed penholders and because of the lack deliberation on the penholder system, there is no formal agreement on allocations for drafting responsibilities for country specific situations, thus permanent and non-permanent delegates take the lead country specific issues. Due largely to this informality of the issues of who drafts council outcomes, this system has continued and firmly rooted into council working methods with the P3, as the most active nations where international law and governance are concerned, took it upon themselves to share penholder responsibilities for country-specific and thematic issues on the council's agenda.

P3 members have since 2010, served as penholders of country-specific situations including Libya, Yemen, South Sudan, and Colombia, with the US, China and Russia serving as co-penholders on non-proliferation in North Korea and the Golan Heights (UNSC research report, 2018: 2). The fact that this informal penholder system continues with direct challenge and confrontation from the non-permanent members of the council is reflective of the position of the elected members in contrast to their permanent counterparts. For the last three decades, the permanent members of the council had established penholder system, as an unofficial practice, by which closed-door discussions on draft resolutions are held weeks prior to circulating the draft the elected members of the council.

Interesting in this practice is that the P3 nations first establish and discuss the draft among themselves and then circulate it to the sino-russian coalition, and only after it has gone through these two permanent member factions, does draft make it to the non-permanent members of the council, thus in this chain of hierarchy at the council, certain permanent members are considered inferior where draft resolutions and penholding is concerned.

With fears of disturbing the consensus made by permanent members of the council, the elected members are further discouraged to amend the draft resolutions and are thus confronted by rivalry of dominant powers and fragile consensus that is a consequence of the growing rift among the P5. Because the functions of the penholder often go beyond the definitions and descriptions of the term, it is not surprising that the elected faction of the council have attempted to secure penholdership over issues of interest the council. The reason for this is that by becoming a penholder over specific issues, members become active and initiative on all necessary activities including, but not limited, to call and calling and presiding over emergency meetings, coordinating council discussions, as well as assuming a leadership role on visiting missions (UNSC research report, 2018: 2).

The penholder usually opens the discussion on the specific issue at the council, and the penholder can choose to share (although this propensity is common among the permanent faction at the council) its resolution draft with the council members at a later stage, preferably (for the penholder) close to the adoption dates. This is quite effective as it opens a very small window of opportunity for deliberations and negotiations over the specific issue, among council members.

To this end, the E10 along with the larger UN representation of UNGA, have interrogated the legitimacy and fairness of the penholder system, emphasising the disparities of being penholders between the permanent and non-permanent factions of the council. One of the issues with the term is that it is widely ununderstood by council members, particularly the E10, as to why certain members are penholder on specific issues, and why the [western] permanent faction at the council monopolises the system (UNSC S/PV.6672, 2011: 12). From 2011 onwards, E10 members at the council have been observed to be looking at the penholding arrangements at the council more and more suspiciously, and have noted the negative effects of the system on the council's mandated responsibility and dynamics, as per the dictates of the charter.

Between 2015 and 2018, the penholder topic was one of the most discussed issues at the council as Angola's representative (Ismael Gaspar Martins) arguing that because of the penholdership, council-wide discussions at the council have been limited for the elected faction, increasingly pushing the narrative that council resolutions and statements serve the permanent member interests (UNSC S/PV.7539, 2015: 7). This has certainly seemed the case for many of the African resolutions as many of these issues have permanent members (particularly the P3) as penholders, or P3 affiliates. Moreover, Martins added that penholding contradicts and disputed council principles on collective reasonability, which reinforce the charter (UNSC 2018: 3).

Some key considerations of the letter noted that the council should make committee chairs of specific issues or discussions the penholder as they possess expertise on what activities should be taken (UNSC, S/2018/1024). The penholder system, which has mainly seen France covering Francophone African files, the UK and US leading on Somalia and the Sudans files at the council, has left the African representatives with little room to manoeuvre and have input on resolution drafting and adoption (ICG, 2019: 6). The P3 have been observed to display an unwillingness to give up the penholder privilege to the elected faction at the council. Thus, in practicality, African inputs on draft resolutions that were proposed and drafted by the permanent members of the council, have little utility because of this penholdership.

Currently (2022), the P3 had filled penholder positions on most themes and files relating to Africa. France is penholder on Burundi, DRC, CAR, and Libya on the authorisation to inspect vessels on high seas off the coast of Libya, as well as Mali files (UNSC 2022: 1).

The UK is penholder to CAR (UNOCA/LRA), Libya, Somalian piracy (along with the US), Sudan, and thematic issues such as peacekeeping, protection of civilians in armed conflict (UNSC, 2022: 1). The US is the penholder for Liberia, South Sudan, Western Sahara, as well as thematic issues on counter terrorisms (UNSC, 2022: 1).

Gabon has filled the penholder position on the "International Residual Mechanism for Criminal Tribunals" theme, while Ghana and Northern Ireland are co-penholders on files concerning Western Africa and the Sahel (UNSC, 2022: 1). Similarly, African representatives have only filled five of the twenty five chair positions relevant to the subsidiary council bodies presiding over the country specific or thematic issues at the council (UNSC, 2022: 1). There have, however, been unicorn scenarios where the US collaborated with Ethiopia on the Abyei peacekeeping in 2018, and France consulting with South Africa on the UN mission in the DRC (ICG, 2019: 8).

PSC – UNSC partnership: challenges and opportunities

A partnership of councils, the two apex bodies for peace and security where African peace and security files are concerned, is the cornerstone of AU-UN relations on peacekeeping, peace building and post-conflict nation building. With the transition from the OAU to the AU, came the protocols for the establishment of the Peace and Security Council that began operations and offered Africa, as a collective and cohesive unit, an opportunity to become active role players in international security, thus giving weight to the phrase "African solutions to African problems", which has become much more of a mantra for Afrocentric leaders, scholars and political enthusiasts.

The peace and security partnership between the AU and UN has gone through significant evolutionary phases to the extent that there are now annual meetings between PSC members and UNSC members, with the A3 (as stated above) taking on the role of 'bridging' communications between the two councils during the year (Forti & Singh, 2020:np). The PSC as first responder has the responsibility to deescalate the situation, understand the dynamics of the conflict (the players, the cause, and a possible solution), while the UNSC as the well-resourced of the two councils, bares the reasonability of providing better human, financial, and digital resources for intel generation, knowledge on the situation and personnel in the case of violent outbreak.

Thus, neither feels they should be the secondary actor, and further divergence occurs at the discussion level where sensitive cases (the Libya and Cameroon files) are made part of the agenda (at least at the level of the UNSC). Obstacles to cooperation in the form of pride also confront the two councils when it comes to institutional interests of deferring to each other in instances when such deferrals are necessary. This happens at both the institutional and ambassadorial levels. Moreover, a lack of knowledge of each other's institutional endeavours and working also poses a challenge to the cooperation between the two councils, especially where the PSC is concerned seeing that the UNSC has more channels, staff, and liaison mechanisms.

Lastly, the lack of existing protocols, treaties and constitutive acts on operational cooperation and joint problem solving presents a further obstacle to coordination between the two councils (ICG, 2019: 11). Furthermore, the issue of the stalemate on discussions relating to the PSC Peace Fund contributions dominated by the UNSC has also put significant strain on the PSC-UNSC relations. Ironically, while both councils battle it out for institutional primacy and leadership, burden sharing in peacekeeping and counter-extremism efforts have surfaced as a challenge between the PSC and UNSC.

The AU-UN relationship has found it difficult to move beyond the race for primacy as was the case in 2009, during a joint UNSC-AU consultation, UNSC members pursued individual positions rather than the council's. UNSC members acted in this manner to change perceptions of the two councils being equal partners, and that UNSC was primary to discuss and adopt resolutions, even on African files. Unsurprisingly, some AU representatives took this act as a diplomatic snub, while other AU representatives took a similar position to that of UNSC members and argue that the PSC should not align its positions to the UNSC but rather UNSC should align its positions with those of the PSC (ICG, 2019: 11).

As with the issue of consistent and timely communication between the A3 and the PSC, the two councils are also struggling to keep up with the day-to-day discussions of the other, and this is exacerbated in times of crisis, as evidenced in Sudan. Discord between the two councils revealed fault lines in efforts to stabilise the nation. The PSC had responded to the most recent crisis that preceded the power-sharing arrangement and issued at least four communiques since April of 2019 condemning the actions of the Transitional Military Council (TMC) and encouraged power to be conferred to the Transitional Civil-led Political Authority (TCPA) instead.

On this matter, the A3 (on behalf of the PSC) supported the extension of UNAMID (a view held by the P3 – USA, France, UK) which was set to be withdrawn and power as well as assets handed over to the Sudanese peoples, by four months only to be opposed by the Russia-China coalition (Singh & Forti, 2019). This difference between the PSC and the UNSC conveyed the difference in understanding the link between the withdrawal of UNAMID and Sudan's political crisis. Just this example conveys such an inability to follow events in both councils and makes the job harder for diplomats to possess insight on decision-making, thus leaving large room for misinterpretation.

Perhaps another clear incident was the controversy surrounding the draft resolution by the PSC supported by the A3 at the UNSC, for the UN to fund AU peace efforts. Seemingly, it appeared as though the PSC and A3, upon drafting and presenting the Security Council draft resolution, were unprepared for the hard diplomatic negotiating, bartering, and bargaining that followed at the UNSC by members of the council, because the A3 had not received any negotiating instructions from the PSC to bargain through and alleviate concerns put forward by UNSC members (ICG, 2019: 12).

It seems, as it were, that certain PSC members expected UNSC counterparts to accept the draft resolution without question. Despite the usefulness of the joint consultative meetings, diplomats on both councils have shared concerns about unnecessarily long agendas, and little preparations without any actionable decisions after the meetings for the two councils to collaborate on and deepen the AU-UN, via security councils, partnership. Finally, the internal political dynamics within the councils, member states' asymmetrical diplomatic capacities, and lack of agreement on larger issues of political primacy and subsidiarity have displayed a potential to stifle collaboration between the two councils

Rivalries

The falling out of the P5 was extradited and exacerbated by the Arab spring of 2011, and permanent members at the council disagreed on NATO's response and what was termed an overreach by the organisation when it implemented the 2011 council mandate for intervention in Libya, as per resolution 1973 (von Einsiedel, Malone & Ugarte, 2015: 2). The P3 and the Sino-Russian factions have further diverged on the appropriate response to the Syrian civil war crisis, as each faction's perceptions on the response are informed by interests [that tend to be in competition] in the region, as well as due to the Russian annexation of Crimea in 2014 which had a serious influence on the visible deterioration of East-West relations outside of the council

(von Einsiedel, et al., 2015: 3). The division among the permanent faction at the council goes beyond traditional tensions between the P3 and Sino-Russian coalition, but also among the western permanent nations themselves (Amani Africa, 2020: 8). ICG (2019:3) notes that P3 relations had worsened in 2017, during Donald Trump's tenure as US and Nikki Hayley as the first Trump appointed ambassador to UN.

Ambassador Hayley questioned Paris' budget priorities towards the UN in that Central African Republic and the Democratic Republic of Congo remained central, which in turn angered France. To further aggravate tensions among the P3, the US continued to prioritise the cutting costs of peacekeeping missions in the DRC. Mali and the G5 force had also become issues of contention at the council as US diplomats displayed a willingness to cut troop deployment to UN mission in Mali (MINUSMA) while also threatening to veto advances towards increasing significant UN support to the G5 force (ICG, 2019: 5). Furthermore, Hayley fell out of favour with both the British and French representatives after Trumps decision to move the US embassy from Israel to Jerusalem in December 2017 (ICG, 2019: 3). The divisions were so clear that by late 2017, a French diplomat was described to be willing to declare P3 alliance as dead.

In 2019, The US failed to coordinate with the UK over calls for ceasefire in Libya, following the infighting of April (ICG, 2019: 3). The US and France have been engaged in arguments concerning the Sahel's increased insecurity landscape, which have in turn caused mistrust between the two nations. While France has advanced for council reinforcement of MINUSMA and practical support to the G5 Sahel, the US questioned this on priority and cost basis (ICG, 2019: 5). The US had remained adamant of its commitment to block any assistance to the G5 Sahel, and further threatened to cut MINUSMA costs if the Mali refused to push for political reforms and re-establish state services in the northern territories of the nation.

Due to the G5 Sahel's sketchy military and human rights records, council members have often criticised and remained suspicious of the over the effectiveness of MINUSMA and the understanding that Franco-American disputes over financial and diplomatic priorities (because of national interests) may hinder the effective responses to the advances made by jihadists in Burkina Faso. In the first four months of 2019, the council was confronted by a series of significant crises in the world – and failed to make a significant impact on any of them.

The council remained divided over responses to crises in CAR, Venezuela, Syria, Sudan, and Yemen, and Libya. In 2018, when the council adopted a resolution on the renewal of UN stabilisation mission in CAR, which ignored Russia's mediation efforts through the Khartoum process, Moscow responded by vehemently objecting and abstaining from the vote. In March of 2019, Moscow abstained again in resolution for a new mandate for the UN mission South Sudan, citing language in which the resolution is drafted as a problem (IGC, 2019: 7).

Similarly, China, known for its cautious positions on council matters, has been recorded for blocking P3 drafts seeking to put pressure on friends Sudan, South Sudan and Burundi through supporting Burundi's demand that it be removed from the Security Council agenda, asserting that the situation in the nation does not constitute a threat to international peace and security (UNSC S/PV 8408, 2018). Moreover, China, with Russia are common abstainers on P3 drafts and resolutions on African files at the council, to voice out displeasures over selected choices of response. Interestingly, none of the two permanent members has recorded a veto on resolutions relating to African files at the council since last blocking criticisms of former Zimbabwean president the late Robert Mugabe, by the council in 2008 (ICG, 2019: 8).

The P3, have shown little willingness to consult African representatives at the council when pushing for resolutions concerning the continent, as is evidenced by the US-lead arms embargo on South Sudan in 2018 and 2019. Where there is dominant power rivalry over African files at the council, the obvious unfavourable consequences on UNSC responses and the cohesiveness of the A3 underpin the curtailment of AA. African representatives at the council are often under pressure of being divided by the permanent faction, especially where colonial ties are present. This is evidenced by the arms embargo resolution by the council, where the US secured Niger and Tunisia's vote and South Africa having abstained just as Ethiopia did in the previous year (Amani Africa 2021: 8).

The United States follows Russia as the second user of the veto at the council, having last blocked a decision in 2020 to reject a resolution that called for the prosecution, rehabilitation, and reintegration of those engaged in terrorism-related activities. This highlights the necessity that African representatives should collaborate beyond the A3 bloc and to mobilize support for African positions at the council that may have a chance of implementation

Conflicting views

Having read the last twenty-one pages, it is clear that the permanent faction at the council displays multiple centres of power through the processes of cooperation and separation. Initially, the western powers cooperated against their Russian and Chinese counterparts, forming the P3 alliance and Russia and China forming the Sino-Russian alliance.

This cooperation from both factions, emanates from conflicting views on how, where, when, and why the UNSC should intervene in conflicts. Moreover, these differing views stem from the observation that only three of the five permanent members seem most involved in defining and directing formal and informal working methods of the council, thus giving them an upper hand over the elected members.

The first issue of contention is that the P5 disagrees on how to approach international crisis with the P3 believing in the principle of responsibility through non-indifference which means when capable, the council should intervene in most, if not all conflict matters in the world. The Russian and Chinese counterparts contrast this view by asserting that nations have the right to sovereignty and thus resolve their issues internally and that the council has no exclusive right to intervene. This is truly the case of the Sudans where China blocked a proposal to institute an embargo on Sudan, while Russia blocked (in line with an African position) German and UK proposals for a UN statement following Omar al-Bashir's ousting in Sudan. In 2020, Russia and China abstained from a French proposed resolution on extending an arms embargo in CAR, with the Russian permanent representative quoted describing the embargo (UN news, 2020: np).

Competing interests

P5 interests have tended to take precedence over those of the elected members at the council due to their influence and privileges over the elected members at the council. This has in turn contributed greatly to the rivalries among the permanent members at the council, especially in files on security crises in resource rich nations, commonly in Africa and the Middle East. For instance, China and the US disagreed greatly on the council's response to the Sudanese crisis of the Darfur genocide.

While the US first responded by imposing a unilateral sanction on the nation, as means for encouraging an international and UNSC arms embargo, China pressed the larger UN to exercise patience and stepped up its efforts to support this by abstaining on a council vote to impose the arms embargo, which was the decider on the draft resolution (Akoyoko, 2011: np). Chinese economic interests in the Sudanese oil industry have largely been cited as crucial in its decision not to vote with its P5 counterparts.

The Libyan intervention is also another example of certain council members, particularly France, acting out of national interests rather than the responsibility to protect. The official rationale around the Libyan intervention was protecting civilians from oppression that would further prevent "a new Srebrenica" (Davenas, 2018: 28). Security Council resolution 1973, which called for an immediate ceasefire and promised not to deploy troops on the ground, was adopted with the P3 vote with many developing nations, except for the abstentions of Russia, China, Brazil, Germany, and India. The resolution further authorised a no-fly zone over Libyan air spaces and all necessary means for civilian protection, except for foreign occupation forces.

While the Libyan intervention was positively interpreted under the basis of the R2P (Responsibility 2 Protect) that was even endorsed by the SG of the UN, there is still contestation over the issues of legitimacy and the reality of the humanitarian justifications. For instance, the question of whether the intervention was purely motivated by humanitarian objectives or the justifications to make it appear clean even when motivated by national and sometimes personal interests, came up in discussions surrounding the intervention.

A conversation between a French intelligence service representative and a member of the Obama administration revealed, in line with the Freedom of Information Act, that national and personal interests (Davenas, 2018: 28) motivated French actions around advocating for and endorsing the intervention. The desire, from the French president, was to acquire greater a piece of the Libyan oil industry, to increase French influence in North Africa, increasing the president's political credibility and legitimacy at home, and creating an avenue for the French military to display assertiveness in the world (Davenas, 2018: 28).

This was certainly the case for Darfur as mass atrocities and crimes against humanity unfolded, and the council displayed hesitancy and indecisiveness in acting, as was evidenced by China's efforts to shield the Al Bashir regime from overly coercive measures, and the P3's unwillingness to invest the resources required to mount an effective intervention outside the Council framework (von Einsiedel, et al., 2015: 8).

Moreover, competing interests involved the security-economic dynamics where Russian-linked entities and France had competed in the Sahel region, particularly in Mali in which the Wagner group – a Russian private owned military contractor – contributed to and replaced the French military. Wagner has also been deeply involved with Libya, Madagascar, Mozambique, CAR, and Sudan through conducting military training exercises, combatting anti-state forces, and violent retaliation toward demonstrators (Parens, 2022: 4).

The military group's activities often align with some of Russia's foreign policy interests, but its status as an independent contractor provides Russia with reasonable deniability of any alleged links. Without direct links to Russia, the Wagner group provides Russia with an important foreign policy tool in which new environments were the testing grounds for security cooperation without any active involvement or heavy handedness from Russia (Parens, 2022: 4). In CAR and Sudan, Wagner had established a pattern of political, economic, and military presence since 2015, and subsequently applied this to the Malian context successfully (Parens, 2022: 4).

Furthermore, Harding and Burke (2019: np) highlight that there are leaked notes that reveal Moscow's true reasons for maintaining a peacekeeping military presence in CAR was largely because the nation is perceived as "strategically important and a buffer zone between the Muslim north and Christian south", thus giving Moscow expansion opportunities across the continent, and Russian companies more access to natural resources.

Bureaucracy and politicisation of issues

Often visible in inter-agency exchanges, bureaucracy plays a role in the council's suppression of African voices where African files and files of interest to Africa are on the council's agenda. From the above, it is clear that the council displays these elements of negotiating for positions [national interests], internal closed-door [pen-holding] discussions, negotiating from positions of [veto] power, and protecting their own interests.

The understanding that before the UN can deploy peacekeeping missions to regions embroiled in security crises requires the council der first determine whether a certain set of conditions are visible hinder the council from effectively reacting in a timeous manner to the security crisis. Issues of special powers, gaining influence through extorting ties (using relations outside council perimeters to gain influence over internal council files on the agenda) with weaker partners in the council, and term lengths that allow the permanent faction more time with council files and issues.

All these bureaucratic elements play a role in subduing African agency or the ability of African members at the council to effectively push for policy positions with the intent of implementation. Politicisation of issues and political contestation at the council, which for the purpose of the research report, are considered significant in bureaucracy, are also quite evident where discussion of files of interest to council members, is concerned. Davenas (2018: 5) compellingly points to the inevitability of political contestation in international organisations, whereas noted above, bargaining and compromising are the order of the day.

Due to the lack of financing, special veto powers and overall influence over regions of discussion at the council, the elected members are often the ones who compromise on decision-making. Moreover, accompanying these elements is the fact that resolutions drafts are commonly developed by the permanent members (courtesy of the penholder system and other elements at the disposal of the permanent faction), whenever a member of the elected faction proposes a draft resolution, they are met with significant contestation, not because of the contents of the draft but first the informal understanding that the permanent members draft resolutions and suggest plans for intervention where necessary.

Rosa Freedman (in Davenas, 2018: 5) highlights that the idea that the UN can take action is misconceived, and that the reality is that states determine when or whether is taken, thus from this perspective it is really a state or group of states that act through the UN, by prevailing at the council (Davenas, 2018: 5). Notwithstanding, the extent to which politicisation of council topics influences decision-making had been ensured. Observing council dynamics, politicisation occurs when decision-making is the result of interests of power rather than humanity, inevitably leads to the benefit of one or a few states and providing a perceived political advantage.

Because the political willingness of states is affected or informed by national interests or agendas, the decision-making process appears biased with advantages the primary concern and resolution of the issue on discussion relegated to a secondary concern. Davenas (2018: 7) thusly notes that the council's objective of ending human rights crimes has been affected by political differences of member states, particularly the permanent faction. The council, particularly the permanent faction, has been guilty of politicising the International Criminal Court (ICC) wherein it referred Darfur and Libya, but did not refer the Burma atrocities. With this, the ICC has been criticised by African states inside and outside the council in that, the only two referrals ever to be exercised by the council have involved African nations.

A concern was raised regarding this, the first being that three of the five permanent members are not signatories of the Rome Statute, and yet are enabled to entrust council matters to the ICC, which is seen by some as a double standard (Aregawi, 2017: np). Thus, the research report concurs with the assertion by Davenas (2018) and Aregawi (2017) that the council is political.

Assessment of the chapter

The chapter finds the validity of the hypothesis that AA is curtailed by the council's structure (working to the benefit of the permanent members), the working methods, institutional, and informal practices. In assessing the literature and findings of the chapter, this section proposes to note a few distinct observations before delving into the hypothesis testing and findings. First, the understanding that the permanent five members of the council are charter members with special veto powers already places the elected members (the A3 included) at a disadvantage in that the veto privileges mean that permanent can at any time stop any resolution draft put up for discussion as evidenced in the chapter.

Furthermore, due to the informal practice of the penholder system (by virtue of the closed-door sessions), permanent members have the ability to stop drafts before they even make it to the rest of the council members. Second, due to the penholder system, the chapter has observed that there are three levels of discussions at the council regarding resolution adoption. Whichever state (likely the P3) is a penholder on certain files on the council's agenda shall draft a resolution proposal that will undergo the first and probably most important level of discussion – the closed-door discussion amongst the three western permanent nations of the US, UK, and France, often defined by coalition and consensus building among the three nations – which has minimal bargaining and negotiation.

Once all three nations agree on the draft proposal, the second level of discussion takes place, largely dominated by negotiation and bargaining largely due to divergent interests in the affected region as well as the conflicting views on international intervention. The first two levels of discussions are private and thus very little information can be attained on them. Should the draft proposal go through the first and second level, the third and last observed level where the draft proposal is brought to the elected faction at the council for discussions and deliberations, is public. This level of discussion is defined by significant political pushing and pulling, bureaucracy and politicisation of files, where two groups will be present, the resolution advocates as well resolutions opponents.

The third level is perhaps of the most interest in the sense that little time is given to council members to carefully discuss, deliberate, and form a consensus and coalition on voting. It should be noted that these three levels of discussion commonly emerge when one of the P3 members draft a resolution (which, from observation, is common) and present it to the council.

Where all five permanent members are resolution advocates, the voting may outcome is largely determined by the numbers' logic. It should also be noted that these three levels of discussions are mainly common where a permanent member (likely one of the P3) is the penholder and drafts the resolution proposal. Where AU-UN partnerships are concerned, the chapter finds that the relations between the two organisations' security councils have strengthened significantly over the last decade and a half but are threatened by the quest for institutional primacy from both councils.

There are only a recorded few times (17) where the A3 drafts a resolution that was adopted. Presence of dominant power rivalry at the council certainly has great influence over the curtailment of AA. The presence of external opposition is far more influential than the presence of internal cohesion, in the promotion or curtailment of AA, all thanks to the position of the permanent members at the council in comparison to their elective counterparts. Moreover, the structural tools and powers at the disposal of the permanent faction at the UNSC, which the African bloc simply does not enjoy. Views and perceptions on international norms largely determine what type of response from the council would be supported or rejected by veto-wielding members at the council.

Thus with two competing international norms of non-indifference and non-intervention supported by the P3 and the Sino-Russian coalition respectively, there is an inevitable clash on when, and how the council should respond (if at all) to international crises. This bears significant consequences for international peace and security as well as African peace and security, especially in situations where urgent action is required from the council. Permanent members' interests are quite worth noting in that where economies are concerned, all dominant powers are striving for global dominance (even among the three western powers), and this pits their endeavours at the council against each other.

Thus, similar interests appear to be competing, which consequently, renders the permanent faction deaf to the voice of the elective cohort, with African representatives being a part of that cohort. At the council, all members have been observed to vote on decisions informed by their national and foreign policy interests in the specific file on the agenda.

Perhaps one of the more observable competing interests at the council relate to territorial expansion among the permanent members at the council and this, along with divergent views on principles of international interventions tended to pit the permanent members against each other as evidenced by Russia's invasion in Ukraine, China's aggression towards Taiwan, as well as France's influence in Francophone nations of Africa.

Often visible in inter-agency exchanges bureaucracy plays a role in the council's suppression of African voices where African files and files of interest to Africa are on the council's agenda. Members' policy positions and bargaining powers are governed by their position within the council and the limitations of their privileges and influence. Members' actions are political and are the outcome of analysing the costs and benefits of available courses of action, hence some council voting outcomes are products of politics and "pulling and hauling" among council members. Each council member pulls and hauls with bargaining powers power at their disposal for outcomes that will advance their policy positions with the intent of implementation.

Conclusion

The permanent members of the UNSC council often referred to as the dominant powers, have displayed a significant amount of influence within the council, courtesy of their financial contributions to peacekeeping, monopoly over the penholdership, special veto privilege, and to a lesser extent instrumentalising informal processes at the council.

From the observations of this chapter, dominant power rivalry is an effective variable in that it is directly and observably linked to the changes in the amount of AA displayed by the A3 at the council. The P5 engages in rivalries with the intent of achieving their national and foreign policy interests, which more often than not compete against and are divergent from each other.

Bureaucracy informed by the ability to influence council members, as well as politicising issues at the council also makes it difficult for the A3 and the rest of the elective members to address issues deemed political hot potatoes and sensitive at the council, often human rights related. Lastly, the AU-UN partnership has yielded observable positives on peacekeeping in Africa, but has been bogged down by the quest, from both councils, to be the primary council to give direction on how to respond to the crisis in the continent. This makes it less easy for the UNSC to regard observations made by the PSC where peacekeeping in Africa is concerned

Chapter 4

Hypothesis 3: The role of a perceived continental hegemon state to advance an African common position at the UNSC.

Introduction

International relations' recent history, characterised by three watershed events of the first and second world wars as well as the Cold War that witnessed the fall of communism, have all birthed various world orders concentrated on a hierarchy of small weak states at the bottom and bigger, stronger states at the top. The stronger nations 'guided' the terms of international engagements between states (bilaterally) as well as among them (multilaterally). These nations were the hegemons that enjoyed leadership perks as well as costs.

Thus, with the ascendance of the US as a global hegemon, much literature and discourse on what constitutes a hegemon and the presence of such a state can spur development and peace in the region – in this case, the world. Considering this, the research report pondered on the possibility of there being a perceived African hegemon (South Africa) which would and could spur development, and advance African positions in international settings.

This hegemon, while not subscribing to the conventional understanding of hegemony, given Africa's slow development when compared to some global north regions, needs to have been involved in augmenting AA through identifying, establishing and legitimising African common positions and terms of engagement, legitimising African contentions and concerns on certain issues in international organisations and for a, as well as be on the forefront in Africa's peacekeeping.

Drawing from the perceptions of Ogunnubi and Akinola (2017), Jeffery Herbst (2014), Amitav Acharya (2013) many other scholars, South Africa is a prime contender for the role of a perceived hegemon, and from the data released by the UN on council activities, the report believes it fits the role within the council. South Africa, in particular, has worked hard to ensure A3 unity and promote positions of the African Union's (AU) Peace and Security Council (PSC) in New York (Gowan, 2019: np).

Hegemony: a summary

The concept of hegemony, associated with the works of Kindleberger (1973), Keohane (1980; 1984), Gilpin (1981;1987), Krasner (1983), Snidal (1985), Strange (1987), Nye (1990;2000;2003), Lake (1993), Gadzey (1994), Flemes (2007), Nolte (2010), Prys (2012), Ogunnubi (2016), Schmidt (2018), and others, is commonly used in contemporary analyses of the distribution of material power between and among nations, in regional, continental, and global structures. Second, hegemony has been an important concept in the hierarchical structures of power politics and international relations particularly in describing the role of the US in the world following the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1989.

From observations, the permanent members of the Security Council have tended to compete for control over raw materials, sources of capital, control over markets, and competitive advantages in the production of highly valued goods – commonly categorised as material resources which are quite significant for the title of hegemon.

Norrlof (2017: np) traces the concept of hegemony back to ancient Greek where it was solely associated with leadership – a position only assumed by a single state or nation with extraordinary capabilities. Thus, while formulated by Kindleberger to examine the rise and decline of the US influence after it surpassed the UK as the leading economic power in the 1980s, the concept still has elements of leadership within a specific region (Norrlof, 2017: np).

When perceived from the liberal perspective, the concept of hegemony suggests that because of the varying trade strategies employed by states (depending on their philosophical bent *vis a vis* trade and economy) to achieve their national interests, the hegemon is charged with retaining trade openness that allows for different strategies and avoids the imposition of trade barriers by states who may feel their economies are under attack (Nkumbe & Njie, 2021: 34).

Needless to say that this type of trade order is associated with the liberal world order of a free market economy. From this perception, a hegemon has a duty to maintain the world order, sometimes at its own disadvantage, thus hegemony is tied to a sense of duty. Another perception, offered by realists, proposes that hegemony, much like power, is associated with leadership, in the sense that the most dominant state dictates the terms of reference and engagement within international relations – emitting a sense of leadership from the hegemon. Both perceptions are intended to convey the need for the hegemon to maintain stability and the international status quo, whether through the creation of international institutions and norms aimed at international cooperation (Nkumbe & Njie, 2021: 34-38).

Contextualising the hegemon in a regional setting, Lemke postulates that the role of a regional hegemon – likely accepted by neighbouring states – is to facilitate local engagements and preserve the regional status quo. The ability to preserve said status quo may be due to relative material and immaterial resources at their disposal ranging from control over markets, natural resources, and influence provided for by their international status and perceived legitimacy (Nkumbe & Njie, 2021:37).

For Flemes, the use of foreign policy tools, claim to leadership and resources, as well as acceptance of leadership are vital and distinguishing factors to regional hegemony. Other identifiers of hegemony include the ability to influence states through threats, defence, denying or escalating violence, and the authority of determination in international institutions (Nkumbe & Njie, 2021:37).

Africa and hegemony

Because much of what is analysed of hegemony has been associated with periods of stability and development, and the fact that almost all the world's perceived hegemonies are geographically located in developed or rapidly developing regions and have robust economies and significant control over hard power and soft power resources, it makes sense to wonder if a hegemon would have a similar impact on African, particularly on peace and security.

Interrogated for all the good it might provide for Africa's stability, Habib and Selinyan (2006), Ogunnubi and Okeke-Uzodike (2016) and Mohammed (2020) were interested in whether a regional hegemon for Africa was feasible, advocated that there were several contenders who qualified for the title of hegemon regardless of whether said contenders had displayed aspirations of being hegemons. For Habib and Selinyan (2006) and Mohammed (2020: np), Africa needs a hegemon for addressing and positioning Africa's security, economic, and political challenges, which would in turn help the continent catch up to global developmental trends and maintain significance in the international arena.

Additionally, Mohammed (2020: np) contends that the continent is inconsistent in its positions, internally and externally, and thus a hegemon would establish the rules of engagement locally and in international arenas and institutionalise these. To contextualise this, the most compelling scenario would be the Cold War in which engagements were established by the US and the Soviet Union.

For Ogunnubi (2016), Ogunnubi and Okeke-Uzodike (2016), the interrogation of a much-needed hegemon is concentrated on the West African region, with a regional 'giant' like Nigeria as a possible candidate – regardless of whether it has ambitions of being a hegemon or not , because a hegemon is necessary for the credibility of policy positions, among other things. The hegemon gives legitimacy to institutions by taking up creation costs and filling the leadership role to give institutional direction while convincing other members (nations) of the institution to buy into the 'vision' of said institution. The UN architecture as well as other institutional structures exist today because of the leadership role and cost carrying of regional, continental and global hegemons.

Available data show that the US has covered between 22% and 27% of UNSC peacekeeping costs (UN, 2021), and in 2018 having covered 28% of the costs. More than this, Mohammed (2016: np) considers the role of the hegemon as being where endorsing the primacy and importance of regional institutions is concerned. This, according to Mohammed (2016: np), helps secure the legitimacy and functionality of said institutions as regional member states may also be convinced to view the institutions as legitimate and participate in the operationalisation of the institutions.

Additionally, the proper functionality of the institutions offer, at least from the rationale of this argument, assistance to the hegemon in shaping the developmental and integrational course of the continent (Mohammed, 2016: np). Keeping this argument in mind and in consideration of the association between hegemony and the ability to institutionalise leadership in international organisations and thereby establishing rules of international engagements between and among states, the path towards integration and development may be synonymous with these established rules of engagement.

Thus, contextualising this to the African continent, it may be why continental organisations such as the AU struggle with resource mobilisation and eventually the proper distribution and implementation of duties (Mohammed, 2016: np). Perhaps to give it a stretch here would be to postulate that this, along with other factors, also contributes to the difficulty of reaching consensus on reaching continental agendas and the lack of common positions when engaging with external partners. Perhaps more interesting is the understanding that even with numerous contenders (South Africa, Nigeria, and Egypt) for the title of continental hegemon, there will be more and more lack of consensus on important continental positions because they may diverge on views and foreign policy priorities.

Similarly, a positive view of the hegemon's intent in the provision of public goods is if it is towards spurring development-oriented projects, whether related to infrastructural or technological capacitation of the weaker less developed states, thus giving pathways for thriving economies that are stifled by lack of infrastructure or technological advancement.

Taking from hypothesis one and the advancements of AA at the council, whenever, the hegemon is elected to serve on the council, it better facilitates shaping the identity of the African bloc (A3) as a single cohesive unit while ensuring that national identities of African members at the council are not subsumed within the broader A3 identity – as this was alluded to by the Amani report on the multiple identities of African representatives at the council.

The hegemon would further align this identity to the one already established at the AU and by extension, the PSC. This in turn strengthens African common positions and increases the frequency with which common positions are reached, compared to the current frequency (or lack thereof) of reaching a common position among African nations – partly attributable to the lack of a continental hegemon. The scarcity of reaching a common position has often led to the undoing of the continent when engaging with other regional powers and blocs – for instance when the EU engaged in trade negotiations with ECOWAS, the EU devised the divide-and-conquer tactic and UNSC officials representing permanent members of the council also stated (chapter two and three) that due to the fragility of the positions adopted by the A3, they pick A3 members one by one, instead of as a unit (Amani Africa special report, 2021).

Of course, two nations have been popularly analysed as possible contenders for African hegemony, Nigeria which has never directly indicated ambitions towards hegemony nor showed explicit interest in security and peacekeeping responsibilities towards the entire continent, and South Africa, which has, on several occasions (largely associated with presidencies of Nelson Mandela and Thabo Mbeki), presented itself as Africa's chief representative of on international engagements.

The interest for this research focuses on South Africa for its role in peacekeeping in Africa, its role in regional integration and at the council. South Africa, while not classified as a hegemon in the classic sense of economic and military dominance in the region, still qualifies to be a regional and continental giant and has been examined to possess symbolic hegemony (Alden & Schoeman, 2015: 239) rather than material. Perhaps it is important some of the leadership ineffectiveness of South Africa as a regional hegemon in the SADC region where it has failed to assert its dominance in situations where other states act against its foreign policy interests.

Alden and Schoeman (2015: 240) note some of the issues that affect South Africa emanating from its weak material basis of power on the continent as evidenced by the anaemic domestic economy and severe structural erosion (even before the advent of Cocid-19). Moreover, the shrinking domestic economy is accompanied by the inability to exert influence over neighbours such as Zimbabwe and Swaziland, whose governance systems oppose South Africa's foreign policy interests (Alden & Schoeman, 2015: 239).

Noting this, South Africa still manages to receive appointments for leadership positions in international organisations, whether it's the BRICS (Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa), G20 (Group of Twenty), nearly successive terms at the council, successive invitations at G7 (Group of Seven) summits, requested to be a mediator for conflict resolution (Ukraine-Russia conflict), and is internationally recognized and acknowledged as a champion for democracy and human rights. This, by virtue, provides South Africa with a form of symbolic leadership and thus hegemony in the region and thus a majority of external partners perceive South Africa to provide direction on engagements with the continent or the region engaging with the continent.

South Africa in Africa's peacekeeping

The state of insecurity on the continent over the three decades has contributed to the formulation and crafting of South Africa's foreign policy in the post-apartheid dispensation. De Carvalho (2019: np) notes that over the last two decades, partnerships in peacekeeping have been steadily increasing with at least 50 operations conducted in 18 African nations between UN, AU, EU, ECOWAS, SADC, and other organisations. With most peacekeeping activities conducted with the mandate of conflict resolution or conflict de-escalation, the AU has since 2003 deployed over 40 000 troops in partnership peacekeeping missions, and South Africa has deployed at least 3000 peacekeepers in these missions (De Carvalho, 2019: np).

These security issues, coupled with South Africa's increasing international relevance, the then increasing economic prowess and moral prestige, had offered an avenue for South Africa to align its foreign policy objectives with the needs of the continent. Following the watershed moment of 1994 of South Africa's democratic dispensation, among the continent's fifty-four nations, the republic has significantly broadened its foreign policy to South Africa's position on the African continent is widely seen to be one of dominance and leadership.

South Africa first deployed the South African Protection Support Detachment (SAPSD) in October 2001, which consisted between 700-800 military personnel, and then led (as the main troop contributor) the AU's deployment of the African Union Mission in Burundi (AMIB) in 2003, consisting of over 3500 military and civilian personnel. SAPSD's task was mainly the protection of Burundian state political officials, particularly Hutu leaders returning from exile to participate in Burundi's transitional government. The SAPSD successfully completed its small mandate of protecting political officials, considering that it was a personal initiative from then president Nelson Mandela.

With the number of operations that South Africa has been involved in over the last decade coming to about 14 or *15 (operation expresso in Eritrea between 2000 and 2008 (10 members deployed); Operation Cordite in the Sudans from 2004 (850 members deployed); Operation Mistral in the DRC from 1999 (over 1200 members deployed); Operation Curriculum in Rwanda and Burundi from 2001 to 2009, (over 1000 members deployed); and Operation Copper in the Mozambique channel since 2012 (over 300 members deployed*), the nation had become a major contributor and player in Africa's peacekeeping missions and in line with its foreign policy priorities (Student paper, 2019).

Unfortunately, the change in administration (from to Mbeki to Zuma), coupled with severe corruption and wasteful government expenditure, South Africa drastically reduced UN contributions to UN operations and its military has been rumoured to be collapsing. South Africa has, by virtue of its policy priorities at the UN in its first and second terms, made significant the importance of the AU-UN partnership in peacekeeping. It is with that the research agrees with De Carvalho's (2019: np) assertion that in line with its campaign centred on the 'African Renaissance' and reshaping continental bodies to align to Its interests, South Africa made one of its policy priorities the peacekeeping in Africa, which would later be used for its campaign to serve on the council.

However, the nation's contributions towards regional and continental peacekeeping have taken a significant dip as it has been recorded as the 11th largest contributor to UN peacekeeping and 17th in the world (Dirco, 2019: np), with an approximate 2000 troops stationed in UN Peacekeeping missions across Africa (the DRC, Sudan and South Sudan). Since 2010, South Africa has been involved in at least 15 peacekeeping operations across Africa.

It should be noted, however, that while still maintaining a significant presence in the peacekeeping landscape in Africa, the state of South Africa's military sector has declined significantly, as a result of severe budget cuts and underfunding from the government (Bussinestech Internet source, 2020: np) as well as troubled military equipment provider, Denel going through liquidity challenges (Martin, 2021: np). This has had an effect on the troop contribution capabilities of South Africa, considering that the number of troops deployed for peacekeeping has decreased over the years.

South Africa at the UN Security Council

This section considers the role South Africa has played at the UN, not only by participating in line with direct foreign policy but also in alignment with common African positions. Thus, the focus will not only reside in its voting behaviour at the UNSC but will extend to other bodies within the UN, which are significantly linked to the UNSC and peace and security. Moreover, this section does consider that South Africa has been actively involved in turning the international gaze on African peace and security matters long before its tenure at the UNSC began in 2007-2008.

In fact, as one of the four African nations (alongside Egypt, Ethiopia, and Liberia) that participated in the 50-nation debate during the drafting of the UN charter, South Africa with its African counterparts (Egypt as the main African antagonist to the installation of veto privilege) vehemently disagreed with the veto being availed to the five permanent members since the UN's establishment (Kuwonu, 2020: internet). Similarly, South Africa was part of the 15 African nations that met in Swaziland to discuss and develop a reform plan for the UNSC entitled "*The common African Position on the proposed reform of the United Nations: Ezulwini Consensus*" (AU, 2005e: 9).

This, after a decade wherein the republic's first delegates to the UN espoused a "refashioning of the UN to meet post-Cold War challenges, followed by an official statement two years later from then foreign affairs minister, Alfred Nzo (Cornelissen, 2003: 37, in student paper, 2013: 223). Thus, by observing its activities regarding the UN and Africa, South Africa has displayed a hegemon-like trait of subsuming regional or continental interests under its own foreign policy interests.

This is particularly the case following the democratic dispensation of 1994. Since 2007, South Africa has served as a UNSC council member on three occasions: in 2007-2008 under President Thabo Mbeki (Brosig, 2018: np), 2011-2012 under President Jacob Zuma (Serrao, 2011), and in 2019-2020 under President Cyril Ramaphosa (Dirco media statement, 2019: internet).

During its first term at the council, South Africa votes on 121 resolutions on country-specific issues, of which 68 concerned the African continent. SA was found to be consistent in its voting behaviour at the council, with only one noted abstention. By consistent, it is meant that its voting behaviour compliments its foreign policy principles, even if this means going against the interests of the permanent faction, commonly the P3.

Thus, while appearing controversial and disappointing in its first term at the UNSC, by several local and international actors, South Africa was effective in politicising UN machinery to defend its position and was further involved in the milestone passing of a resolution cementing the AU-UN partnership. The Republic, through consolidating the African Peace and Security Agenda (APSA), devoted its presidency terms on the Security Council in March 2007 and April 2008 to the consolidation of relations between the United Nations (UN) and the African Union (AU) organisations (Kagwanja, 2008: 47-48). For Serrao (2011), the Republic's first term at the council was marked by controversy and criticisms largely associated for some its decisions at the council.

These specifically speak to the Republic's vote (along with Russia and China) opposing a draft resolution (S/PV.5619, 2007) on the condemnation of human rights abuses in Myanmar (student paper, 2013; Serrao, 2011). Subsequent to this, South Africa opposed (again with Russia and China) a resolution draft sanctioning Zimbabwe (S/PV.5933, 2008), with the Republic's permanent representative to the UN ambassador Khumalo stating that the reason for voting against the draft was that prior to the session, a joint media statement by SADC facilitator (the Republic), the Zimbabwe African National Union-Patriotic Front (ZANU-PF) as well as the Movement for Democratic Change (MDC) confirming talks were ongoing, was released (S/PV.5933, 2008: 4). Furthermore to this, an AU Summit held a month prior to the session concluded with concerns on the situation in Zimbabwe but appealed to the international community not to take any action which might impede the ongoing dialogue process. Amb. Khumalo ended his speech by emphasising that the council should give AU summit decisions to be implemented (S/PV.5933, 2008: 4).

Opposing the draft tables by the UK to include climate change to the UNSC's agenda, Amb. Khumalo emphasised that the climate change fell well outside the council's mandate, with several forums better suited to address it. Amb. Khumalo referred to the 1992 Rio principle of common but differentiated responsibility, the World Summit in Johannesburg, that reaffirmed UNGA, Economic and Social Council, Commission on Sustainable Development and UNEP (United Nations Environmental Programme), the Climate Change Convention, as well as the Kyoto Protocol, as the main bodies tasked with following up on climate change and sustainable development issues (UN, 2007: internet).

Explaining its refusal to vote in favour of resolutions on these files at the council, South Africa had been on a mission to reform institutional and informal working methods where discussions and dialogues on files included on the council's agenda. These institutional and informal methods, from the perspective of SA, were corrosive and afforded a channel for the West to coerce nations to reform domestic and foreign policies (for their own gain), as well as UN conventions (student paper, 2014: 25).

This coercion and circumvention alluded to the interest-laden responses of the council, particularly the permanent three – The US tabled the drafts against authoritarianism in Zimbabwe, Darfur, and Myanmar, all the while appearing chummy with Moshe Katsav, Shimon Perez, Tzipi Livni, and Ehud Olmert of Israel, Pervez Musharraf of Pakistan, as well as Hosni Mubarak of Egypt (student paper, 2014: 25). However, in its first term, South Africa was also lauded for the role it played for championing the AU-UN partnership as was reaffirmed by resolution 1809.

As stated above, South Africa had made the promotion of regionalisation between the UN (Security Council) and African regional organisations, the central theme of its presidency in 2008. Two years prior to taking the UNSC presidency, foreign policy advisors counselled that if Pretoria seeks to make an impact in its first tenure at the Security Council, it should be as an African power on issues concerning African files on the council's agenda (DFA 2006, in Kagwanja, 2008: 51).

Immediately after taking up the UNSC presidency in March 2007, South Africa prioritised consolidating the African agenda at the council and collaborations between the PSC and UNSC with the vision to prevent outbreaks of violence and conflict in Africa (DFA, 2007d, in Kagwanja, 2008: 51).

In her statement to the council on 28 March 2007, the then South African foreign policy minister, Nkosazana Dlamini-Zuma (NDZ) noted that:

> *"South Africa believes the time has come to look into ways of strengthening the relationship with regional organisations as foreseen in Chapter VIII of the UN Charter. Our hope is that during our tenure in the Security Council, we can contribute to a better articulation and clarification of this important matter"* (Van Nieuwkerk, 2007: 68).

NDZ was referring to the issue of burden sharing and co-deployment, particularly to the situation in Sudan in which the AU needed resource assistance in maintaining a peacekeeping mission in the nation. Thus, South Africa initiated discussions on the necessary exploration of best methods towards strengthening AU-UN relations in the maintenance of international peace and security. Its efforts were mainly focused on the African Union, given that most of the UN's peacekeeping operations are in Africa (student paper, 2014: 22). In 2008, the council passed Resolution 1809 (S/RES/1809) which saw the official establishment of an AU-UN partnership promoting strengthened and concerted regional peacekeeping initiatives on the continent while simultaneously fostering developments on the continent's intervention system such as ASF, CEWS, and other pillars of the APSA.

South Africa served its second term at the council, (two years after the first term) which began in January 2011 and ended in December 2012. Retaining a similar line of argument to that of the previous chapters, African files at the council have tended to take precedence over other matters and the two terms served by the Republic saw it vote in over 50% of conflict related issues [43 of 66 resolutions in 2011 and over 68 of 123 resolutions between 2007-2008] (Bowland, 2012: 2).

Similar to its presidency during its first term at the council, South Africa took up the presidency in January of 2012 by emphasising its African agenda, where it convened a high-level debate on strengthening UN relations with African regional organisations, and on maintaining international peace and security. Resolution 2033 (S/RES/2033) of 2012 was the result of the high-level debate that cemented the SA's crucial role in advancing African agendas and positions at the council. The passing of this resolution was considered by numerous nations, as the research report, as an advancement of the African agendas at the council and South Africa a representative of the continent at the council, over its first two terms. To this extent, Pretoria used the moment as a catapult to emphasise once more, how African nations need to become permanent members of the council, considering the high-level debate (Bowland, 2012: 2).

Reforming the UN Security Council membership and privileges has been the main primary focus of the Republic's agenda at the council, along with championing the African agenda. More than this, South Africa has also focused on serving elective back-to-back terms as evidenced by the fact that there are only eight (two years between the first and second terms, and six years between the second and third terms) between the three terms the Republic has served at the council.

Bowland (2012: 3) interestingly notes that South Africa voted in favour of fourteen resolutions in 2011-2012 and four in 2007-2008. During its two terms on the UNSC so far, South Africa has co-sponsored 18 UNSC resolutions. Ten of the fourteen resolutions South Africa voted for at the council were in cooperation with the African representatives (Nigeria and Gabon) reflecting A3 cohesion and the others were with other elective members at the council such as India and Lebanon. Interestingly, because these were passed, this is a reflection that all permanent members voted in favour of the resolutions as well, if they had not tabled them directly, representing a certain amount of cooperation between elective and permanent factions at the council.

It needs to be noted however, that South Africa was once again at the heart of controversy in Security Council when voted in favour of the 2011 'no-fly zone' in Libya – something the PSC vehemently and vocally against, thus straying away from a common African position, and PSC recommendations (Rossouw, 2011: np). The research report understands this decision from two perspectives – one is that the decision was not influenced the nation's values towards continental identity and the second being that seemingly its vote legitimated an action that was condemned within and outside of Africa, thus displaying the nation's power related to being a norm entrepreneur.

The Republic's third tenure at the council (2019-2020) was accompanied by South Africa's ascendance to AU chair in 2020, a change to its failed bid for the position in January 2011 when Equatorial Guinea President, Teodoro Obiang Nguema Mbasogo was elected chair. Six months in on its third term, South Africa had already been noticeable in its activities at the council, blocking and intervening in key debates on the council's agenda. In a tense debate on the situation in the DRC in early 2019, the Republic blocked the council from releasing a statement it considered rash (De Carvalho, 2019: np). This reflects that while permanent members have the upper hand in passing resolutions, the elective members can block the

release of statements, which are important for pushing a narrative for the council's view on conflicts.

UN analysts (in conversation with ISSAfrica staff) perceived South Africa's position at the council as more 'nuanced' in that its policy interests are not aligned with the P5 (P3 and Sino-Russian coalition), and sometimes taking advantage of the P5 diverging interests (De Carvalho, 2019: np). For instance, De Carvalho (2019: np) notes that the Republic opposed a request by the US on excluding language on the draft resolution on sexual and reproductive health, aligning with Germany, Belgium, France, and the UK. As an international human rights champion, the Republic worded a critical statement on the council's response to human rights issues tabled on the agenda, by stating, "*The council is therefore telling survivors of sexual violence in conflict – by denying survivors essential services when they need them the most – that consensus is more important than their needs*". This statement was a clear opposition to the position adopted by the Sino-Russian coalition at the council on the situation.

Furthermore, South Africa was able to repel pressures from Germany and the UK, while also halting a UNSC public statement on the situation in Sudan, giving the PSC time to convene in the nation to discuss a way forward (De Carvalho, 2019: np). In its third term, the Republic not only focused on independently pushing forward an African agenda, but the Republic also successfully led the A3 (including Equatorial Guinea and Cote d'Ivoire) to adopt a cohesive and united position on Sudan. Perhaps the PSC and the A3, in this particular instance cooperated effectively in that the PSC suspended Sudan from the AU on the 6th of June 2019 (PSC/PR/COMM/ DCCCXLIV) meant that the Republic would be able to unite the A3, which was key on resisting Sino-Russian pressure opposing Darfur's peacekeeping mission renewal for the UN (De Carvalho, 2019: np).

Because of this group cohesion, Russian and China were alone citing sovereignty in their position that opposed the renewal. Leading up to its October presidency at the council South Africa had made policy priorities in 2018 – when elected for the third term elective membership at the council seat – that it would focus on further strengthening AU-UN relations, focus on the situation Sudan and the DRC, women, peace and security agenda, mediation in peacekeeping and conflict resolution, aligning the Silencing of the guns by 2020, as well as broader African positions relating African files at the council (De Carvalho, 2019: np).

Surely, South Africa managed to keep up to some of its policy aspirations at the council in that on the second day of its presidency at the council, a debate on the mobilisation of youth in achieving the silencing of the guns by 2020 was held by council members.

Similarly, the republic facilitated and led a council delegation to the 13th annual joint consultative meeting between the UNSC and PSC in October 2019, a month after the republic – with the US – co-led council visit to Sudan (De Carvalho, 2019: np). In these meetings, South Africa maintained its role as a bridge builder for strengthened cohesion among the PSC, A3, and AU (or African) common positions at the council. It goes without saying that while they may have been wins for South Africa's presidency in October 2019, this was accompanied by several controversies such as the draft resolution on the Peace Fund – financing of AU-led peacekeeping with UN-assessed contributions (De Carvalho, 2019: np) – which was not only rejected by the US but also the PSC, which alternatively suggested that at the next AU extraordinary session, a common position shall be formulated and joint draft presented at the council by the A3.

Assessment of the chapter

Upon reviewing the discourse on South Africa's significance on the continent's peacekeeping operations as well as on advancing African common positions at the council, the chapter finds that while Africa's political and security landscape makes it quite difficult for there to be a clear definition for a hegemon, there are certain elements of this classification that apply to three or more nations on the continent.

It needs to be noted that these elements are relative to African nations and not necessarily a comparison to regional hegemons elsewhere considering Africa's lag in the developmental process. Thus, the presence of South Africa does not always result in the adoption of Afro-centric resolutions at the council, but brings attention to African concerns, voices and perspectives on matters discussed at the council.

South Africa as the chosen contender for continental hegemony, particularly for the research report, has displayed what may be categorised as symbolic hegemony rather than material-laden hegemony. First, the chapter agrees with the understanding that the presence of a hegemon does advance common regional positions and contributes significantly to regional development, the establishment of terms of regional engagement and regional institutions as well as the legitimacy of these institutions. Moreover, the presence of a hegemon becomes a rapidly increasing demand when contextualised to the African landscape given the premature

nature of engagements, the difficulty for continental and regional bodies to assume and distribute responsibilities, and the extensive periods it takes for continental and regional bodies to reach a consensus or common position on a particular topic.

Second, the chapter feels it necessary to acknowledge that South Africa is not the only viable contender for the role of hegemon in Africa, given that Nigeria possesses a bigger economy than South Africa, that nations such as Rwanda have overtaken South Africa in terms of contributions towards peacekeeping in Africa, and that South Africa is host to a myriad of corruption and structural constraints. Having noted this, it also needs to be stated that many of the regions in Africa are overwhelmed by the increasing security threats either within their territories or near their borders, and with many of these nations unable to appropriately respond to threats.

Southern Africa on the other hand may be facing insecurity challenges from Mozambique and there have been attempts at resolving or at least responding to the issue. South Africa, is not in any apparent direct threat from any conflicts that afflict the continent and can thus redirect whatever military resource it has to aid other conflict-afflicted nations. This, and its direct advocacy at the council, makes it a prime contender for the role of continental hegemon (at least in the sense of symbolic hegemony).

Third, South Africa has played a noticeable role in Africa's peacekeeping since the advent of the 21st century and the formation of the AU from the OAU. However, the level of involvement has decreased over the last decade and with South Africa's military facing the threat of total collapse due to underfunding and budgets cuts, compounded by its main military equipment supplier, Denel, facing a liquidation crisis, has rendered the nation unable to match its activities to its foreign policy ambitions. However, where its role at the council is considered, South Africa has been lauded for the role it has played in advancing the AU-UN partnership, unifying the A3coalition to adopt common positions on African files on the council's agenda.

South Africa's near successive terms at the council are a testament not to its ability to mobilise support from the international community and Africa, in particular, but also to how the international community itself views the nation and its role in the continent's peace and security as well as developmental trajectories. Its endeavours at the council have not been without controversy and fail where the files on Zimbabwe, Iran, the Ezulwini consensus, the AU peace fund, as well as the controversial vote on Libya in 2011, are concerned.

Council outcomes compared against member objectives and positions convey a gloomy picture that regardless of the presence of a hegemon advocating for African positions, institutional and informal working methods and procedures will always favour the permanent factions, particularly when coordinating on common positions.

Given all of the above, South Africa still manages to bring attention to, if not succeeding in, common African positions and issues of contention and concern for Africa where African files on the agenda are concerned. Lastly, South Africa, since the advent of a democratic dispensation, has always had Afro-centric policy leanings and has had one of the broader foreign policies in the region and the continent.

Conclusion

The idea of an African hegemon present at the council appears a viable and considerable one at first glance. Challenges arise when tasked with finding and proposing an African nation for the role of hegemon, particularly when looking to identify them under the lens of western normative classifications which focus more on material prowess and the economy. However, South Africa has played a leading role in both peacekeeping and AU-UN partnership toward joint peacekeeping operations. The nation has, in its three terms, laid the foundation for increased activism and the need to further advance and promote policy positions that favour African nations and convey Africa's participation in planning, strategizing, and deploying peacekeeping operations on the continent.

A key takeaway is that perhaps it may be too soon for continental giants to have any direct and immediate influence on resolution adoption at the council, but rather that currently, the endeavours of nations like South Africa at the council will serve as the blueprint for increased active participation and hopefully tangible direct and immediate influence on the decision-making structures at the council.

Chapter 5

Research report analysis, recommendations, and conclusions.

Introduction

The research report began with the following statement, "*Theoretical inquiry in Africa's International Relations (IR) has always lagged when compared to that on the global north's international relations, understandably so, because the three grand IRT are most useful and accurate when applied in western contexts, and so marginally consider Africa"*. With this in mind, the idea was to engage with non-western International relations scholarship to offer insights on and highlight Africa's role in International peace and security through the AU PSC (and by extension the A3) and its influence in the adoption of resolutions within the UNSC.

The core of the report was exploring African agency in the UNSC through Africa's (A3, PSC, etc.) influence on decision-making processes at the council. Several conditions were proposed for the advancement of agency: collectivity of efforts, shared culture and identity, and interests from the A3. It was necessary to note the conditions that made possible the curtailment of agency at the council: dominant power rivalry, diverging interests, views, bureaucracy and politicisation of issues. This chapter reassesses and concludes on the relevance of the conditions in conjunction with the findings.

Chapter one summary

In introducing AA, the chapter began by noting the dissatisfaction of scholars with mainstream IR's inability to comprehensively explain Africa's international relations from the perspective of bringing significant gains and content to the discipline. By doing this, the chapter highlights one of the interesting applications of AA, which is at the Security Council level, largely because of the dynamics prevalent at the institution. The chapter ends by providing a map of the report and the logic of arguments put forward by the report in seeking to test the hypotheses. From the chapter, it was deduced that AA is multifaceted and commonly requires the logic of 'strength by numbers' from African actors. Moreover, strength is not only displayed through the show of material force, but also and mainly through 'the ability to participate in and convince the UNSC to adopt AU PSC-aligned positions for conflict resolutions.

Chapter two summary

With the definition of AA formed in the first chapter, the second chapter sought to shine light on the PSC, A3 and relevant communication channels and offices for the advancement of African positions at the Security Council. In its sections, the chapter conveyed that indeed AA can be and has been advanced through group cohesion and shared features by African states. From this, an argument for the lack of cohesion can be made in that African actors need to show more cohesion beyond the voting stages. For instance, the issue of outgoing A3 members and incoming members not communicating on positions advanced and the likelihood of some being adopted as resolutions and others being rejected.

Cohesion needs to happen at the communication level and certain offices such as AUHIP can play an important role in serving as an institutional memory for the policy positions supported and rejected by African actors. In order of relevance to the augmentation of AA, conditions necessary for advancing an African position at the council. Collectivity of efforts is very important for coordination among the A3 and between the A3 and the PSC. Much literature on the activities of the African nations and available channels speaks to this collectivity of efforts, although hinting at the need for more coordination between African representatives (Amani Africa, 2021).

The conditions of identity, culture, and ideology did not prove to be that significant in whether African representatives display cohesiveness at the council, and even in those instances where dissonance was seen, lack of shared identity, ideology and culture were not cited reasons. This may largely be due to the lack of data and literature focused on the significance of these conditions at the council. However, other conditions, such as limited financial contributions, lack of authorship prowess on African files at the council, as well voting coherence among council members emerged as more significant in the relations between augmented AA and curtailed AA. The A3 has displayed a significant amount of voting coherence, even when abstaining.

Chapter three summary

Given the material differences between African actors (non-permanent faction) and the P5 (especially the P3), the chapter saw it necessary not the obstacles posed by council dynamics which have been shaped and moulded by the P3's economic dominance and permanent status at the council.

First, the veto, the permanent seats, and the penholdership being monopolised by the P3 gives almost no chance for other members to push forward positions, unless those are aligned with P3 positions. Secondly and not fully explored in the chapter, it makes sense to associate the level of involvement from the P3 in resolutions drafts and adoption with their financial contributions to the peacekeeping budget. The P3 alone is responsible for nearly 40% of the total budget, and because their positions have tended to align (save for the Trump administration tenure) their African drafts have mostly gone unchallenged (to the extent that Russia and China feel the resolutions will not interfere with their interests and reach in the regions).

Dominant power rivalry has been the main feature in the curtailment of AA, more than the general lack of involvement and activity from African actors and the limited avenues for the A3 to pursue African positions with guaranteed success. The argument however arises that financial contributions (accompanied by bilateral and unilateral pressure exerted on elected members by the P5) seem to be an iron-clad clause and cause for greater involvement in council resolutions and adoption.

Similar to the second chapter, emerging conditions have taken prominence over the proposed conditions for the curtailment of AA. Penholdership and significantly larger financial contributions also seem highly pertinent. The difference in significance, however, is not so large for conditions necessary for curtailing AA, than they are for advancing AA.

Dominant power rivalry in the form of voting coherence among the permanent faction is very visible but does not directly increasingly affect in the sense most of the vetoed resolutions by the Russian Federation and China concern the Middle East and Asia rather than Africa. Where African files, are concerned, the two dominant powers opt for abstention rather than veto. It seems that the P3 are mostly involved in the sole authorship of resolutions at the council on African files, and this is most likely where the Sino-Russian coalition abstains from the resolutions.

Chapter four summary

The proposition of South Africa as a perceived continental hegemon following its nearly three successive terms at the council, chapter four focussed on its endeavours at the council as well as on peacekeeping on the continent.

In the early 2000's, South Africa has displayed an array of capabilities vested in economic growth and attractiveness, visionary leadership and diplomacy, international human rights advocacy and championing which has made it a prime hub for continental developments and discussions, as well as a clear developed foreign policy which was aligned to Africa's developmental path. However, changes in administration also meant changes in policy priorities and gravitations, as was from 2007 to 2017, and this resulted in decreased actives role on a continental and global level as well as foreign policy hiatus and military collapse.

There is still hope, however that going g forward, South Africa can salvage whatever remains of its continental and global ambitions and convert this into actionable foreign policy positions that will once again steer Africa's development and its increased relevance at the council not only as a theatre of operations but also as an actor.

Lastly, it is important to note that following the logic of hegemons and the power they wield, it is clear that at the council, the hegemons (USA, UK, and France) are responsible for submitted drafts as they have solely drafted nearly half of the adopted resolutions since 2000. It would make sense that for African representatives, the perceived hegemon (South Africa) will be proactive in the authorship of resolutions. However, given that African nations have solely authored only 17 resolutions, this is quite disheartening.

Limitations

The study is limited by numerous unavoidable and important factors: first, the length threshold of a master's degree report was a considerable factor in the ability to explore other variables that often appeared during the hypothesis testing stages of the report. Moreover, data collection made it difficult to test against hypotheses due to the fact that some variables (identity) are not quantifiable. Perhaps one of the true and most important limitations of the study is that some of the IVs related to dominant power rivalry (bureaucracy, rivalry on African files) were not as prominent as expected (lower). Moreover, A3 members have not been immensely involved in drafting resolutions, thus making it difficult to test whether their drafts are supported or not.

Very important throughout the report is that most of the data that has been used is primary and unorganised which made it difficult to frame the report. Moreover, because there is very little literature on Security Council activities, the report was not particularly strong in advocating for stronger AA at the council as well as accurately and effectively displaying the linkages between increased cohesiveness and increased influence on the decision-making processes at the council.

Nor was the report able to effectively link dominant power rivalry to curtailed AA due in large to the difficulty of attaining compressive literature. The report does admit that some of the conditions would be better answered through field research and interviews with involved personnel at the council – with the consideration of the difficulty of securing such interviews with officials.

Recommendations

The report puts forward the following recommendations: comprehensive and timely communication needs to be institutionalised between African actors (A3, PSC, AUC, AUHIP, outgoing and incoming members, etc.). More harmonisation of policy positions in the form of continuity rather than change, would keep the momentum of resolution drafts by African actors, and increase the chances of said resolutions being adopted. Given their economic limitations and small contributions to peacekeeping, African members should focus on securing authorship on African files at the council, as well as securing chairmanship of other organs involved in sanctions regimes to ensure that African positions are protected and advanced. Moreover, the PSC (through APSA) should ensure that the AU-UN serves its interests by focusing more on providing expertise on the landscape and issues rather than tactical peacekeeping, considering they have had more contact with stakeholders involved in the conflicts.

Conclusion

The limited explanatory reach of mainstream IRT on Africa's international relations, and the consequence of dissatisfaction from scholars focused on African IR propelled the construction of this report. Considering that Africa has been part of the UN since its inception and a part of the council for over five decades, coupled with the understanding that recent data reveals a bulk of discussions at the security council concern the continent – it was this necessary to explore how much (if any) involvement African actors have in these discussions and action taken by the council.

Mainly, the report sought to unpack the dynamics of council politics, and the ability of African actors to influence decision-making processes at the council from the point of drafting a resolution to the adoption – with odds stacked significantly against them by the permanent faction at the council. With very limited success, African members were able to advance some African positions at the council, but were also met with far greater challenges arising from permanent member and from within themselves.

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