

Stretching Horizons and Testing Limits, The Netherlands and Sweden as Norm Entrepreneurs the United Nations Security Council

Alanna O'Malley and David den Dunnen

The United Nations Security Council (UNSC) is often criticized for its problematic veto system and its operational logic. From this perspective, it could be expected that there would be dwindling interest among small and medium powers in non-permanent seats; yet the opposite is the case. This article explores the motivations, experiences and challenges of two Western, medium powers, The Netherlands and Sweden, which completed one- and two-year terms respectively on the Council in 2017-2018. This paper analyzes the preconceptions versus the realities of the opportunities and limitations of small and medium powers in this role and examines how influence is channeled, utilized, obstructed, and proliferated in different ways. It is argued that despite the perception of non-permanent seats as prestigious and exclusive, actual experience of the role often results in disillusionment among non-permanent members. Yet, it is important to determine why this perception persists, whether or not it has an inclusive or an exclusory effect, and what these case studies demonstrate about the overall value of non-permanent membership of the Security Council.

Introduction¹

In July 2019, UN diplomats were invited to an unusual event when Ireland organized a concert at the New York venue Madison Square Garden, featuring rock band U2 and a host of other Irish popstars. The evening included a showcasing of Irish cuisine, culture, and heritage in a bid to gather votes for the Irish campaign for a non-permanent seat on the United Nations Security Council in 2020 (Murray 2018). The event, a determined effort to utilize and demonstrate Ireland's soft power, was open to all 193 member states of the UN and dedicated towards persuading them that Ireland would be a valuable candidate for the seat of the Western European and Others Group (WEOG) on the Council. Certainly, given that their closest competitors were Canada and Norway, both of whom have significant resources at their disposal for such a campaign, this was a strategic effort to highlight Ireland's cultural resonance with other small nations, while driving home their main campaign message. An evocative video showcased Ireland as a small nation which has struggled for independence, faced down the challenges of colonization, migration, hunger, famine, religious tensions, war and division while developing into a strong, peaceful, independent, and reliable multilateral partner, set of course to Bono's dulcet tones (Merrion Street News, 2018). Apart from the hyperbole, the campaign has been explicit on two issues in particular; in the current international climate the UN is more important than ever, and Ireland shares an empathy with other small powers.

It is clear from this slick campaign, that Ireland, and other small nations, hold the prospect of a non-permanent seat on the Security Council in high regard. The campaigns for

votes for candidates for the non-permanent or 'elected' seats is expensive in terms of resources and time spent organizing such events, lobbying other UN delegations for votes, and demonstrating the value of a country's performance at the UN to other diplomats, rather than to the general public. It is evident from Ireland's campaign and many others over time, that states continue to attach considerable strategic importance and prestige to non-permanent seats which are still considered to be vital seats at the table of the world's most exclusive club, despite their often quite limited maneuverability, their lop-sided position in the power structure of the Security Council, and their narrow mandate. Non-permanent members can negotiate the agenda of the Council, bring issues on behalf of other members, hold the Presidency of the Council as part of the rotation and generally participate and vote in the debates on peace and security issues. However, as has been pointed out by Johan Verbeke (2018), the former Belgian Permanent Representative to the UN, becoming a non-permanent member does not change the amount of power a state can wield at any one time, it simply allows them to practice that power (whether limited or expansive) in a different forum. In addition, in recent years there has been an emphasis on changing the perception of this role from one of 'prestige' to one of 'responsibility' whereby non-permanent members would, as part of their participation, be expected to contribute (whether politically or materially) more to the UN system as a whole. In this article we probe the value of elected membership of the Security Council for medium-sized powers in the WEOG group by examining the experience of The Netherlands and Sweden.

On 31 December 2018, The Netherlands and Sweden completed their tenure on the Security Council. Both had experienced a range of events, some of which directly challenged their national interests, particularly The Netherlands which faced the fallout over the downing of civilian airliner MH17 over Ukraine in 2014 killing 193 Dutch citizens.ⁱⁱ In addition, ongoing wars in Syria and Yemen, simmering unrest in Burundi, Mali and elsewhere, combined with escalating tensions between the superpowers, and a withdrawal of American leadership on key questions combined to make this an extremely challenging period. At the same time, the shift in relations between the P5,ⁱⁱⁱ the British exit from the European Union (EU), Brexit, and its impact on European multilateralism at the UN, and the increased focus on activating the agency of small and middle powers in this fraught environment, combined to create opportunities for both countries. They also shared important areas of focus for their terms in particular: conflict resolution, peacekeeping, and the role of women.

This article argues that the dissonance between the P5 during this period drew together the non-permanent members (the 'elected 10,' or 'E10') on the Council, enhancing their efforts to cooperate and strengthening their relationships. In addition, it brought renewed vigor to efforts to enhance and streamline procedural and structural adjustments to how the Council operates. Moreover, this was also a period of innovation when it came to addressing the manifest humanitarian disasters of the Syrian conflict in particular. We argue that The Netherlands and Sweden were influential in shaping these initiatives by bringing sustained attention to this issue and repeatedly putting it on the Council's agenda. Moreover, they were successful in using quiet diplomacy and working within existing confines to advance proposals to temporarily introduce ceasefires and open humanitarian corridors to extend relief efforts in Syria. This demonstrates that non-permanent members can play an important role as norm entrepreneurs which adds an additional incentive for membership of the Council. Moreover, when used effectively as in this case, it enhances the working methods and efficacy of the Council as a whole. In the absence of 'hard power' tools, some small and medium-sized

countries, in particular the Nordic countries, pursue social power, persuading others to adopt new norms (Thorhallsson, 2012).^{iv} Therefore, they are successful if other states conform to their norms in the absence of pressure, following Joseph Nye's (2011) famous conceptualization of soft power).^v

In this regard, these two case studies taken together exemplify both the rationale and the method of non-permanent membership and demonstrate its effectiveness in the context of one of the world's worst humanitarian disasters. This is a fresh contribution to the field, which adds new empirical findings about the membership experiences of two WEOG members at the same time. We reveal both the similarities and the differences in their approaches, challenges, and operation, and compare and contrast their performance on key issues. Moreover, we analyze the results of their experiences in terms of the short- and long-term benefits and contributions to the specific issues at hand, and the UN system. From this basis we argue that non-permanent membership can be operationalized in different ways, even by members of the same regional group, with similar international standing. The complexities and challenges of effective multilateralism notwithstanding, it is evident that beyond the allure of prestige touted by campaigns for these seats, substantive and serious work is required of non-permanent members, ultimately underscoring, rather than underestimating, their important contributions to the UN and the international peace and security system as a whole.

Setting the Stage for Leadership

In order to begin the analysis of the performance of these two countries, it is essential to first set the stage, outlining the structural and political context of the UNSC. When comparing the non-permanent members to the P5, it becomes evident that the position of the former suffers from a range of structural disadvantages. First, they lack the 'institutional memory' the P5 have as permanent members. Given that the P5 have large, well-resourced, permanent missions in New York, they have been able to accumulate knowledge over many years' experience and build networks with the UN Secretariat and the NGO community which gives them a useful base of power within the UN system. In contrast, non-permanent members tend to have significantly smaller permanent missions which are staffed with new personnel when they hold a seat on the Council. This means that from the beginning, non-permanent members are at an epistemic disadvantage compared to their P5 colleagues who are already fully embedded in and familiar with the personalities, processes, and practices of the Security Council. Second, non-permanent members do not wield veto power on non-procedural matters as the P5 do. Due to these structural inequities, non-permanent members suffer from a "lack of belonging" (Roele 2020, 123).

Several measures have been taken to level the playing field to some extent. To bring non-permanent members up to speed with the pace of Security Council procedures, elections for non-permanent membership at the General Assembly (UNGA) now take place earlier than in the past, having moved from October to June. Annual workshops (sponsored by Finland since 2003) are organized to foster exchange of information and experience between the incoming and the current and outgoing members about the working practices of the Security Council. The UN Secretariat's Security Council Affairs Division in the Department of Political Affairs also now provides trainings to incoming members.

Beyond the structural differences that exist between the two sets of members, the political culture and context need to be taken into account when assessing members' performance. New Zealand's former UN Ambassador Colin Keating argues that the relationship between the P5

and non-permanent members has deteriorated over the past decades: in the early 1990s non-permanent members would still take initiatives on major substantive issues. Since the mid-2000s, however, “all meaningful discussion” on major issues, such as the North Korean nuclear program, have taken place outside of Security Council consultations, and the P5 pre-cook decisions, according to Keating (Keating 2016, 145). As Sebastian von Einsiedel and David Malone (2018) confirm, the “biggest dividing line in the day-to-day work of the Security Council [runs] between the P-5 and the E-10.” They see little influence by the non-permanent members, except on country-specific files. There, they wield relatively more influence on thematic issues (von Einsiedel and Malone 2018, 159). Keating also criticizes non-permanent members for being passive at times, not using their collective ‘6th veto’ (when at least seven Security Council members vote against a draft resolution, it cannot be adopted even with all P5 and the remaining non-permanent members voting in favor). Additionally, several experts argue that non-permanent members lose time in the bureaucracy of the Security Council, including by chairing the sanctions committees (Keating 2016, 148; Roele 2020, 129–30). However, it seems that this issue remains subject to perception and experience. The Dutch former Deputy Permanent Representative Lise Gregoire for example, denies that the dividing line always runs precisely between the two groups, arguing that in fact it depends per theme or region.^{vi}

From Prestige to Responsibility: The Role of Norm Entrepreneurship

Given the many structural challenges of effectively utilizing a non-permanent seat, it could be expected that there is an abundance of literature on the topic. However, the opposite is the case. Most recently, Ann-Marie Ekengren, Fredrik Hiorthen and Ulrika Moller have proposed a theoretical approach based on empirical analysis that identified three reasons for membership; the enhancing and utilizing of influence, increased opportunities for networking, and the elevation of status.^{vii} This echoes some of the wider themes in the literature on the role of small and medium states on the Security Council namely the acquisition or emphasizing of legitimacy, the ability to wield power or influence and a perception of the prestige of holding this position.^{viii} While contributing to this lacunae, we counter the conventional approach of the field by focusing on the issue of norm entrepreneurship, a salient but under-emphasized topic in the current literature which combines all three themes.^{ix} With a retrospective review that analyses the experience of The Netherlands and Sweden, we compare why these members sought elected seats and question whether they would seek one again based on their role as norm entrepreneurs and norm developers. We argue that rather than the nebulous issue of prestige which receives so much attention, there is in fact a deeper trend emerging which is the shift in perceptions of non-permanent seats from being merely a position of stature, to one of responsibility which is perceived, in our analysis, as an opportunity for norm entrepreneurship and enhanced agency.

For Ian Hurd (2002), the value of the non-permanent seat is to be found in the ability of states to raise issues to the Council’s agenda, to learn the views of other members and to openly participate in debates. He maintains that this creates the perception among members of being at the center of important discussions although it may also add to the false promise of this role when influence in drafting and voting is ultimately proven to be limited. Hurd also maintains however, that the foundation of the ‘power’ of the Security Council is largely symbolic and that this is directly linked to the legitimacy that actors confer both to it and the UN. This issue of symbolic politics is an important one as this is precisely what both draws

states into the process of becoming a non-permanent member, while also being a significant difficulty they encounter when trying to capitalize on the symbolic power of having a seat at the table, which sometimes adds up to very little ‘real’ influence. Baldur Thorhallson (2012) takes this as an explicit point of focus in his work which advocates combining both qualitative and quantitative factors which determine the power of states to understand how small and medium members wield their influence in this environment. By defining the factors which determine the active capacity of smaller states, i.e., what they can do once elected, he points to the soft power elements of their role such as political incentive, niches of expertise or experience, utilization of knowledge, diplomatic skill, the ability to network and the value of reputation as a norm entrepreneur that other states recognize. Crucially, the space for norm entrepreneurship on the Security Council, as opposed to within the wider UN system, is rather small. In fact, as Ian Martin has noted, “Member States that have returned to the Council after a decade or more of absence have noted the closing down of space for initiatives of elected members” (Holland 1999; Roele 2020, 132). Verbeke (2018) revealed that this space tends to present itself around procedural issues rather than on substantive questions where proposals and actions tend to still be dominated by the preferences of the P5.

Given that structural reform of the UN and the UNSC is lagging, working methods renovation is thriving and especially being driven by small and medium powers (Luck 2018, 799). As Isobel Roele (2020, 119) argues, the ‘impermanence’ of the elected members can be ‘removed’ by either seeking constitutional parity with the P5 (composition reform), or, by the operational redistribution of responsibilities (working methods reform) which has been precisely where most norm entrepreneurship has taken place. In fact, it has become increasingly evident that non-permanent members have made the most lasting change in UNSC working methods. For instance, the Arria formula meetings were developed by the elected members on the initiative of Venezuela in 1992. Arria formula meetings are a working method innovation that allows for informal discussions that include third parties (Keating 2016, 151). Although the number of Arria formula meetings fluctuates, in recent years their number has increased.^x Apart from Arria formula meetings, a range of ‘renovation’ measures of the UNSC’s work has taken place, from ‘informal informals’ (meetings that are spontaneous or casual) to informal interactive dialogues with outside experts, to ‘horizon-scanning meetings’ (Luck 2018, 812).

However, it is unclear whether the reform of working methods really increases the influence of non-permanent members. Roele (2020) argues that it is not an effective tool as it typically entails an increase in the administrative and bureaucratic work for those members who undertake it as an opportunity to engage in strategic decision-making or to voice alternative perspectives on acutely politicized matters. Bureaucracy, Roele (2020, 129) argues, is ‘devastating’ for meaningful politics and in fact the heavy workload of sub-committee chairing prevents the elected members from making their mark elsewhere.

Contrary to working methods reform, she considers the pen-holding system more promising for expanding and wielding influence. Pen-holding is the process of initiating and chairing the drafting of a resolution, as an ‘editor’ rather than as an author.^{xi} The penholder can shape the discussion and the wording of the outcome document to a certain extent. On some questions, non-permanent members have conducted ‘successive pen-holding,’ e.g., on the topic of humanitarian aid in Syria (discussed below), which led to tangible results on the ground. However, pen-holding has generally been dominated by the P5, or even the P3 (United States, France, United Kingdom), because of their depth of expertise and large staff

capacity for the work required in drafting. What pen-holding does create however, is precisely the opportunity for agenda setting and norm entrepreneurship that is the focus of our analysis. For example, The Netherlands acted as a penholder on Afghanistan, repeatedly pressing for a peace process, and emphasizing the importance of NATO's Resolute Support Mission for local security, elections and the Afghan agenda for reform.^{xii} Similarly, Sweden acted as a penholder for the humanitarian situation in Syria^{xiii} leading the negotiations on the three resolutions that were adopted during the Swedish tenure. There is particular value in elected members being penholders, especially where there is disagreement between the P5.

As Finnemore and Sikkink argue, norms operate to transform state behavior in an institutional environment due to the pressure of socialization and the shifting role of identities and interests.^{xiv} We argue that by framing the contributions of non-permanent members in this way, it avoids rather generalist discussions about measuring power or accounting for prestige. Rather, it provides a way to analyze the agency of these states acting within a specific normative environment. This is not to suggest however, that norms are inherently value-free. At the root of the normative environment is the question of the values and interests that motivate states to actively participate or to resist the influence of norms. It goes without saying of course that small and medium states are willing to invest more in international institutions as these serve their interests: they entail an institutional protection of the weak against the stronger (e.g. 'one state one vote') (Thorhallsson 2012, 141). Of course it is also difficult to separate value-based diplomacy from interest-based foreign policy but the UN environment with its inherent political positioning, compromise and negotiation strategies therein necessitates states to couch their interests in different frames (Laatikainen 2017, 135). Thereby, the normative element of their position becomes more essential to their agency. In this respect we contribute to the literature on how norm entrepreneurship works at the UN, by highlighting the commonalities and differences between the experiences of The Netherlands and Sweden who pursued comparable strategies to enhance their agency in this regard, based on a similar set of values.

The Netherlands and Sweden are examples of states that attempted to mobilize all non-permanent members together as if they constitute a 'group.' Viewing the non-permanent members as an informal 'group' in the UN system helps to shed some light on political outcomes at the UN. "States are privileged actors in UN multilateralism, but very few states 'act individually' in UN diplomacy." (Laatikainen and Smith 2017, 109). Working with groups has benefits that outweigh costs, including when it comes to quantity, as large groups help to win the numbers game at voting. It also increases the chances of the UN collectively legitimizing the position of states. This is a good example of the importance of politics of scale, magnifying the voice of an individual state, and at the same time amplifying the amount of information that is available. Cooperation between non-permanent members allows small states to deal with topics they would normally not have the capacity for. However, this approach also comes with some costs, requiring compromise, the loss of an individual state's visibility, and confronting the potential rigidity of a group's position (Laatikainen and Smith 2017, 99–103).

In our cases, both The Netherlands and Sweden sought to strengthen the position of the non-permanent members believing that "[t]he E10 need to be heard."^{xv} Sweden rallied the E10 on topics such as the humanitarian situation in Syria, where even states that would normally side with a skeptical Russia, now sided with the informal group.^{xvi} However, Sweden did not intend to formalize the grouping, also to not give legitimacy to the P5 concept and privileges,

and for that reason, for example, did not actively support the proposal by others to have a designated room at UN Headquarters. However, they did meet every month to discuss innovative procedures as there was a constant sense of being excluded by the P5 on drafting resolution proposals. On substance, Sweden was able to rally the group on issues including the conflict in Syria, though with mixed results. In one instance, Bolivia, which would often side with Russia, argued that the Security Council needed to do something after the alleged chemical attack by the Syrian regime on a rebel-held area in Idlib. Though a text was drafted, it ultimately failed to be adopted due to both Russian and American opposition but it had the support of all non-permanent members.^{xvii} Crucially, the drafting of the text and the consensus reached between the non-permanent members advanced the discussion on how to respond to this aspect of the conflict and provided a primer for further texts and eventually resolutions.

A Thematic Approach

Having surveyed the general context for the performance of The Netherlands and Sweden it is now important to turn to the themes they embraced as central to their tenure. Themes on which a state can present a credible case are those that are considered to 'belong' with the state, or on which the state has built a reputation.

Thematic Priorities of The Netherlands

Traditionally, areas such as human rights and accountability are considered by The Netherlands as part of its 'DNA,'^{xviii} tracing back its role in international justice and peace to the times of Hugo Grotius (1583-1645). Today, the Dutch seat of government, The Hague, is host to one of the largest numbers of international courts and tribunals in the world, including the International Criminal Court (ICC)^{xix} and until recently the International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia (ICTY).^{xx} UN Secretary General Boutros Boutros-Ghali once dubbed The Hague "the legal capital of the world."^{xxi} In light of this, The Netherlands focused on three themes for its tenure: Conflict prevention, Peacekeeping and Accountability.

1. Conflict Prevention and the Root Causes of Conflict

One of the main priorities of The Netherlands during its tenure was conflict prevention and the root causes of conflict – a broad notion that can entail poverty, famine, water scarcity and economic deprivation, and that may trigger conflict in different regions of the world. There are several practical examples of how The Netherlands contributed to conflict prevention and addressed root causes of conflict at the UN. For example, on Dutch initiative, although not as penholder, the Security Council adopted Resolution 2417 in May 2018. It reiterated the Council's commitment to addressing the root causes of conflict. Although the resolution emphasized that conflict often induces food insecurity and may lead to famine, it recognized the need to break the vicious cycle between conflict and food insecurity, suggesting that food insecurity may well trigger conflict. It was the first time that the Council strongly condemned the use of starvation as a tool of warfare as prohibited under international humanitarian law.

On the issue of climate change and rising sea levels and their impact on conflict and the flow of refugees, The Netherlands addressed the Council repeatedly about the challenges faced by the Small Island Developing States (SIDS), amongst them the three Caribbean parts of the Kingdom, Aruba, Curaçao and Saint Martin. In July 2018, Curaçao Prime Minister Eugene Rhuggenaath addressed the Council, declaring climate change a 'threat multiplier.'^{xxii} Even if the flow of refugees from Venezuela to Curaçao over the past years has not been

directly triggered by climate change, Curaçao and other SIDS are particularly concerned about climate change-induced natural disasters causing flows of 'climate migrants.' The Caribbean and Central American regions suffer from natural disasters that are both increasing in number and severity. This is expected to increase migration flows in the region,^{xxiii} without islands such as Curaçao having the capacity to host them or the economy to sustain them.

2. Strengthening UN Peacekeeping

The second priority of the Netherlands concerned strengthening UN peacekeeping, which is a historically charged and sensitive matter for The Netherlands, given the role of the Dutch UN peacekeepers in Srebrenica in the former Yugoslavia. The Netherlands values the enhancement and modernization of peacekeeping and accordingly addressed this issue. First, during the Dutch presidency of the Security Council in March 2018, Prime Minister Mark Rutte addressed the Council calling for a reform of peacekeeping, including the deployment of blue helmets only if they are provided with a sufficiently robust and flexible mandate, advancing earlier agreements and the reform of the UN Department of Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO) into UN Department of Peace Operations (DPO) in 2019. To enhance the potential success of the Dutch proposal, The Netherlands joined forces with the United States. The latter has been critical of peacekeeping and has demanded a substantial overhaul for some time. The Dutch-U.S. cooperation led to the unanimous adoption of UNSC Resolution 2436 during the U.S.' presidency in September 2018. The resolution focused on "continued instances of underperformance" by troops from the Member States, and the "serious and continuous allegations (...) of sexual exploitation and abuse by United Nations peacekeepers." It welcomed the Secretary General's initiative 'Action for Peacekeeping,' that aims at both improving the protection of civilians, and to better protect the peacekeepers themselves from violence. The Council recognized the need for "realistic mandates," but emphasized "full mandate implementation" by the peacekeeping operations, "adequately resourced missions" and "strong leadership" of the missions. It welcomed the Member States' commitment to improve training and capacity-building activities but called on the Secretary General to ensure that the troop-contributing nations (TCNs) provide peacekeeping operations with adequate 'enablers' to deploy troops.^{xxiv}

3. Accountability

Third, The Netherlands prioritized accountability. It chaired the UNSC's sanction committee on North Korea, established because of the country's nuclear program. Through this mechanism, the Council may impose targeted sanctions ('smart sanctions') on designated individuals who pose a threat to international peace and security, to prevent the civilian population of a country from suffering under a wider sanctions regime. On the North Korea sanctions committee, The Netherlands was confronted with a difficult position between member states with widely diverging views: the U.S. wanted to apply maximum pressure on North Korea to engage in nuclear disarmament, whereas Russia was being accused of propping up the North Korean regime by means of oil supplies. More broadly, a growing number of countries ignore or evade the sanctions regimes in place, rendering them largely ineffective.^{xxv} Sanctions are also imposed on individuals who engage in terrorist activities and here, The Netherlands served as a member of the sanctions committee for ISIS/Al-Qaeda.^{xxvi} On Dutch initiative, sanctions were imposed for the first time on human traffickers in Libya. Aside from sanctions committees, The Netherlands together with Sweden pushed for the

Council to refer the situation in Myanmar to the International Criminal Court, because of atrocities committed against the Rohingya minority in Rakhine state. At that time, this initiative was not successful due to the geopolitical climate.

Thematic Priorities of Sweden

The main focal points of Sweden during its tenure in the Security Council can be divided into four thematic priorities: Women, Peace and Security (WPS), Conflict Prevention and Peacebuilding, Climate and Security, and Children and Armed Conflict.

1. Women, Peace and Security (WPS)

The agenda on WPS was a central priority for Sweden throughout its tenure. Bearing in mind the long-standing commitment of Sweden in this area, as well as its feminist foreign policy and promotion of gender equality, Sweden consistently acted to implement the landmark UNSC Resolution 1325 (2000) and consecutive resolutions. Resolution 1325 acknowledged that women account for the majority of those affected by armed conflict, yet they also hold the key to better conflict prevention and resolution. The resolution called on the UN, Member States and parties to conflicts to better acknowledge the particular needs of women and girls, including in post-conflict reconstruction. Sweden insisted on integrating the area of women, peace and security in the daily work of the Security Council.^{xxvii} It attempted to use its own unique (and niche) emphasis on WPS to leave its mark on as many outcome documents, and most importantly resolutions, as possible.^{xxviii}

Sweden contributed to the development of WPS in several significant ways. First with Uruguay (2017) and then Peru (2018) Sweden led the Informal Experts Group on Women, Peace and Security, created through Resolution 2242 (2015). It is the venue for regular consultations between experts and the United Nations on concerns regarding WPS in country-specific situations. During Sweden's tenure, the group developed into a driving force for a more systemic approach to WPS in the Security Council's work. The Swedish team attempted to ensure that all UN missions that were discussed and assessed during the Swedish tenure included a mandate to work with the WPS agenda. Furthermore, in negotiations that resulted in a statement from the Secretary General on the protection of civilians, Sweden ensured that a special reference was made regarding sexual violence and the particularly exposed situation of girls in conflict. Largely as a result, Resolution 2427 concerning children and armed conflict, negotiated by Sweden as the penholder, includes numerous references to women's rights and needs.

Although previous research from Becker and Lunz identify these successes among others, the question remains how Sweden's Security Council membership has directly contributed to the wider implementation of the WPS agenda. In practice, it is clear that the Swedish preference for a 'niche approach' confirms Thorhallsson's theory that as small states are at a structural disadvantage compared to the P5, they have to prioritize and find their niche (Thorhallsson 2012, 160).

2. Conflict Prevention and Peace Building

Another thematic priority of Sweden, similar to the abovementioned priority of The Netherlands, was conflict prevention and peace building. Sweden contributed to conflict prevention and peace building in a number of different ways, with particularly deft handling of the crisis in The Gambia in January 2017. Sweden used the platform of holding the

Presidency of the Security Council at that time, to bring the issue before the Security Council and to pressure the Gambian president to resign in a peaceful manner when he initially refused to hand over power to the winner of the most recent election. In contrast however, failure to address on-going conflicts in Cameroon and Venezuela is an example of disappointment. In the latter instance, Sweden attempted to inscribe this issue on to the agenda of the Council but was faced with resistance, also from otherwise allied states which claimed that it would be counterproductive to discuss the topic in the Council.^{xxxix}

3. Climate and Security

In response to both resolutions and statements that were made during the Swedish tenure, in which negative consequences of climate change for peace and security were recognized, Sweden initiated certain institutionalization within the UN system to better understand and handle climate related security risks.^{xxx} In particular, drawing on earlier discussions of the situation in the Lake Chad region during the Swedish tenure in January 2017, the Council visited the region and saw concrete examples of how climate change can threaten natural resources and livelihoods, in turn resulting in instability. Following the visit, Resolution 2349 was adopted, addressing the conflicts and the fight against terrorism in the region and their humanitarian impact. In line with the Swedish initiative, the resolution addressed root causes of conflict, including the negative impact of climate change on security in the region. It acknowledged that climate change can lead to water scarcity and food insecurity, that in turn can trigger violent conflict. Although the Council's response was limited to identifying "the need for adequate risk assessments and risk management strategies," it was the first time a Security Council resolution touched upon the nexus climate change-security. It is regarded as the point of departure for climate change to move up the list of priorities on the agenda of the Council.

4. Children and Armed Conflict

When joining the Security Council as a non-permanent member, Sweden was assigned the mission to chair the Council's Working Group on Children and Armed Conflict. Considering that such a mission was in line with Sweden's foreign policy, this naturally became one of its main priorities.^{xxxi} Taking up the issue directly, Swedish Prime Minister Stefan Löfven led the negotiation between 98 states of Resolution 2427 on children and armed conflict, which was unanimously adopted in July 2018.^{xxxii} The resolution called for mainstreaming child protection in conflict prevention, conflict management and post-conflict peacebuilding, including in UN peacekeeping mandates, in a way similar to gender mainstreaming. The resolution acknowledged the direct impact of conflict on children and the long-term effect of that on durable peace, security, and development. In a veiled reference to the conflict in Syria, the resolution "expresses deep concern at the high number of children killed or maimed" in armed conflict, by "indiscriminate attacks against civilian populations" and "the use of children as human shields." The fight against poverty and inequality directly contribute to conflict prevention and the protection of children, with safe education serving as a vital tool, including to help prevent the recruitment of child soldiers. At the same time, on Sweden's initiative, the monthly humanitarian meeting on Syria focused on the situation of children in the conflict drawing on similar discussions held in parallel by the UN Refugee Agency UNHCR and utilizing related resolutions on child protection in conflict and the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child.^{xxxiii}

Interconnection between Priorities

Notably, Sweden agreed with the Dutch priorities of improving UN peacekeeping, prioritizing accountability, in the same way as The Netherlands valued WPS and climate issues. Several priorities may be related or interconnected – the priorities above being mere examples of the focal points that formally have been stipulated by the two states but also by EU members as a whole. The terms of both countries were of course dually representative of their national priorities on one level and their EU commitments on another. The convergence of the interconnection between priorities around peacekeeping, WPS and climate change dove-tailed neatly with the EU's wider aims and values around human rights. However, despite wearing two hats simultaneously, both The Netherlands and Sweden approached these issues in different manners. For the Dutch, climate change and security were considered together as part of conflict prevention diplomacy, whereas Sweden sought to address these issues as two separate priorities, with interesting results.

Making Syria a Priority

Throughout the periods of tenure of The Netherlands and Sweden on the Security Council, the work of the Council was significantly influenced by the on-going conflict in Syria.^{xxxiv} The unrest began in 2011 when protests erupted against the Syrian government as part of the wider Arab Spring Movement across the Middle East. By 2017, the war (which remains active) was being fought by various factions, including the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL), Sunni opposition groups including the Free Syrian Army and Kurdish-Arab-Syrian Democratic Forces. Foreign powers including Iran, Russia, the United States and Turkey have been directly or indirectly involved and the conflict has produced severe human rights violations, massacres, and a major refugee crisis. Although a near consistent divergence in the positions of the P5 repeatedly resulted in frustration and deadlock, the situation simultaneously opened the possibility for The Netherlands and Sweden to play unique roles as norm entrepreneurs.

This is in line with E10 practice in another recent situation before the Security Council. In response to the scandal involving Nepalese UN peacekeepers who caused a massive outbreak of cholera in Haiti, the P5 chose not to take the lead. Each of them had reasons not to explicitly support or block a resolution on the matter. Rosa Freedman and Nicolas Lemay-Hébert argue that the E10 could then act as "agents of 'discursive power,'" able to promote and impose concepts, such as justice, to inform the policy to be pursued. The P5 reluctance on the matter allowed various E10 members during the mid-year review of the peacekeeping operation MINUSTAH in 2016 to speak out on the situation as not only a humanitarian issue, as did the P5, focusing on cholera prevention and containment. They also approached it as a human rights issue, emphasizing the need for justice and reparation for the victims. Several of them publicly called for the UN to take steps to ensure justice for the victims, sending "a clear message to the Secretary-General."^{xxxv} The discussion below outlines the way in which Sweden and The Netherlands tried to influence the Security Council position on the Syrian conflict.

The Netherlands

First, Sweden and the Netherlands (and 8 other countries) were co-sponsors of Resolution 2401 (2018) that reiterated the Council's distress at "the devastating humanitarian situation" in Syria and condemned "the unacceptable levels of violence" towards civilian targets and

medical facilities in several Syrian regions. The resolution demanded an immediate cessation of hostilities by all parties to the conflict (except towards ISIS and other terrorist groups) to allow for a resumption of humanitarian aid. Even though the resolution was adopted unanimously, and despite hopes of it becoming important, it proved to have a limited practical effect.^{xxxvi} The Netherlands expressed support for the military attack that the P3 states carried out on 13 April 2018 on certain targets in Syria. Sweden, on the other hand, neither expressed support nor criticism, but simply reiterated the importance of all acts taking place in accordance with international law and the UN Charter.^{xxxvii}

Second, Resolution 2417 on conflict and hunger, adopted in May 2018, was pushed for by both The Netherlands and Sweden. By condemning the starving of civilians as a method of warfare, the resolution was the first of its kind. Starvation was allegedly being used as a war tactic by the Syrian government (Zappalà 2019, 884).^{xxxviii} Potentially, the alleged use of hunger as a weapon of war by the Syrian government could amount to torture under the UN Convention against Torture.^{xxxix}

Third, when Resolution 2449 (2018) was adopted – authorizing a one-year extension of cross-border aid deliveries targeting 13 million people in Syria – The Netherlands issued a statement in which it called on the Security Council members to refer the situation to the ICC. It also urged all States to increase support for the International, Impartial and Independent Mechanism to Assist in the Investigation and Prosecution of Persons Responsible for the Most Serious Crimes under International Law Committed in the Syrian Arab Republic since March 2011 (UN Security Council 2018).

Fourth, when U.S. President Donald Trump announced a major withdrawal of the U.S. military from Syria in 2018 as part of the global anti-ISIS coalition *inter alia* in Eastern Syria, the Dutch were among the staunchest critics. According to the U.S. Ambassador to The Netherlands, Pete Hoekstra, the criticism voiced by the Dutch (both from the government and parliamentary members) led to a redevelopment of U.S. strategy in Syria. Dutch Foreign Minister Stef Blok argued in this regard that “the withdrawal could lead to a change in regional power dynamics and new rounds of fighting.” Dutch Defence Minister Ank Bijleveld criticized the U.S. Administration’s “self-declared complete victory over ISIS in the face of the ongoing presence of thousands of ISIS-fighters in Iraq and Syria.” Despite the initial readiness of the Dutch government to offer a renewed participation in the 2014-2018 military mission as part of the global anti-ISIS coalition, both parliament and the government later proved reluctant (Wermenbol 2019).

Sweden

During the Swedish tenure, the Security Council addressed the conflict in Syria on a monthly basis in terms of (1) phasing out the Syrian chemical weapons program in accordance with Resolution 2118, (2) humanitarian issues, and (3) the political process.^{xl} Sweden consistently pressed the parties to the Syrian conflict to respect their obligations under international law. Throughout its membership, Sweden pushed for the situation in Syria to be brought before the ICC to the extent possible, emphasizing its disappointment in the Council’s inability to uphold accountability.^{xli} During the Swedish tenure in July 2018, the monthly humanitarian meetings on Syria focused on the situation of children in the conflict.^{xlii} Two months later, Sweden sought together with Kuwait to carry through an extension of Resolution 2393 without any alterations to the mandate. The resolution had expressed the Council’s frustration with the impediments to the delivery of humanitarian aid to the many Syrians in need and had

demanded all parties to the conflict to immediately comply with international humanitarian law and with the Council’s earlier resolutions on the Syrian conflict. Although initial efforts failed, a year later the mandate was amended, and Resolution 2449 was adopted.^{xliii} It repeated much of the same language of earlier resolutions, including 2393, emphasizing its calls on all parties to the conflict to ensure improved humanitarian assistance to the people affected by the conflict. Later, in an effort to overcome the deadlock over Syria, Sweden invited the Security Council to conduct its annual informal work meeting at former UN Secretary General Dag Hammarskjöld’s estate Backåkra. By virtue of this Swedish initiative and in close cooperation with the Secretary General, the Security Council for the first time in months agreed upon a common statement.^{xliv} Altogether, the only three resolutions on Syria that were adopted during the Swedish membership were put forward by Sweden together with other actors in the humanitarian field, demonstrating their influence and success with quiet diplomacy.^{xlv}

Reviewing Dutch and Swedish Achievements and Failures

The Dutch Parliament demanded a European focus for the Dutch UNSC tenure, which was exemplified by the negotiations between The Netherlands and Italy to share the seat. Since neither of them secured enough votes to be elected for the two-year position, they agreed on splitting the tenure, whereby each would serve for a year. Even though the Charter does not foresee this option, it is permitted by established practice. The General Assembly agreed with the arrangement by electing both countries to the Security Council by a large majority. The Netherlands attempted to safeguard its legacy in the Council by closely cooperating with its other European partners, including Poland (2018-2019) and Belgium (2019-2020), and to provide for a transition after its tenure. The Netherlands involved not only its fellow European Union Member States, but also the EU’s External Action Service (EEAS). Sweden similarly claims to have worked successfully together with The Netherlands to strengthen the link between the EU and the UN.^{xlvi}

According to Hedda Samson, the former Political Coordinator at the Dutch Representation to the UN, an important part of the Dutch legacy is “the small print” of the text of outcome documents, including binding resolutions that The Netherlands negotiated.^{xlvii} Particularly noteworthy are Resolution 2417 on starvation in Yemen (closely connected to the Dutch priority to address the sources of conflict and conflict prevention), and Resolution 2436 on improving UN peacekeeping (connected to the corresponding Dutch priority).

Sweden argues that its global profile increased with its Security Council membership. Of particular importance in this regard is the Yemen UN summit, hosted by Sweden in Stockholm in December 2018.^{xlviii} This was an UN-brokered peace conference, led by envoy Martin Griffiths, in which both main parties to the conflict, the Houthis and the Hadi government, participated. The UN aimed at preventing an all-out battle over the port of Hodeidah, vital to humanitarian access. The negotiations led to Resolution 2451, the first UNSC resolution on Yemen in over three years. It endorsed the agreement that the government of Yemen and the Houthis had entered into in Stockholm, including a ceasefire for the Hodeidah governorate to allow for unimpeded access for humanitarian aid into the country.

Similarly, Swedish former Deputy Permanent Representative Carl Skau argues that Sweden positioned itself on the global stage, both generating experience for Sweden itself, and credibility with other states. According to Skau, Sweden “made a difference,” helping to adopt three resolutions on humanitarian aid to Syria, the only resolutions on Syria in five years. Sweden claims that Canada is one of the states that follows in Sweden’s footsteps in the

field of WPS. It expressed its hope that Germany, Norway and Ireland would do so as well.^{xliv} According to Efraim Gómez, Head of the UN Policy Department of the Swedish Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Sweden contributed to (1) providing humanitarian help for millions of Syrians in need; (2) re-activating the political process in Yemen; (3) placing the situation of Myanmar on the agenda of the Security Council; (4) giving women a place at the table in peace processes; and (5) strengthening the focus on children in armed conflict. A less visible success would be Sweden's contribution to deeper cooperation within the UN, having successfully worked for a more prominent role of the Secretary General.

To leave a mark on the work of the Security Council is to constructively participate, which both states attempted to do: Sweden did so by consistently pursuing its niche topic of WPS where relevant to the topic or country at hand, and also by encouraging more constructive debate in the Council.^l The Netherlands did so by consistently focusing on topics that are in the Dutch 'DNA' and attempting to build coalitions in support of these themes.

According to Skau, Sweden's tenure was 'successful' given its principled approach based on humanitarian law, prioritizing this notion over alliances. This led to some European allies, including the United Kingdom, taking issue with Sweden over Yemen. The U.S. found Sweden in opposition over Gaza, and China experienced a Swedish push-back over Myanmar. However, Sweden could mobilize the E10 to "corner the Russians on Syria" as it had generated both credibility and credit; the other E10s had seen Sweden "take up the fight" with the P5.^{li}

Sweden and The Netherlands worked closely together on many issues on the Council, including on country-specific questions (e.g., the conflicts in Central Africa^{lii}). Both states' tenures helped them expand their networks by building relationships. The Netherlands tried to generate maximum support for its position through the so-called 'ink-spot strategy.' Skau argues that it is people who make a difference: 'Team Sweden' built strong relationships with other Member States' embassies and Secretariat staff. Importantly, Sweden would speak as much as possible to countries affected by potential Security Council decisions, allowing them to bring the input back into the Council room, arguably giving Sweden leverage.^{liii}

Another legacy is the diplomatic experience and the acquisition of diplomatic skills at the highest level and the most difficult circumstances, where things would be made personal, and diplomats would bluff.^{liv} Mariëtte Schuurman, the former Head of the Task Force for The Netherlands on the Security Council at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, argues that the Dutch legacy includes increased experience in diplomatic skills, as well as having gained expanded knowledge.^{lv} Peter Wallensteen argues that through its Security Council membership, Sweden gained knowledge and experience that may benefit its foreign policy for years to come. Both The Netherlands and Sweden raised their international profile through their UNSC tenure. This was done for instance by having the country's top officials address the Council with sweeping public statements, as e.g. Dutch Foreign Minister Stef Blok did in May 2018: in the presence of Russian Permanent Representative Vassily Nebenzia, Blok claimed Russian state responsibility for the downing of MH17.

Both states were disappointed with the lack of progress in the Council on the persecution of the Rohingya in Myanmar.^{lvi} Skau explains that from 2016 onward, China prevented resolutions on the matter from being adopted, although a substantial presidential statement was agreed. During its tenure, The Netherlands organized a visit of the Council to Myanmar and Bangladesh in April 2018 to step up the pressure on Myanmar's authorities for a safe return of Rohingya refugees.^{lvii} The Chairman of the International Committee of Inquiry on

Myanmar, Marzuki Darusman, informed the Council on the situation of the Rohingya. China responded in a familiar manner, that the Council should not get involved in country-specific human rights issues. Dutch representative Lise Gregoire, on the other hand, argued that it would be important that the Council discuss human rights violations and potentially international crimes that are taking place, as it can refer cases to the ICC.^{lviii} Despite this, The Netherlands failed in the push for Myanmar and the situation in Rakhine to be brought to The Hague.^{lix lx}

Jens Peterson, senior advisor on peace, security and disarmament issues at the UN Association of Sweden, argues that Sweden could have demanded stronger and more stringent efforts by the Security Council in relation to the alleged genocide of Rohingya in Myanmar, and the question of a potential weapons embargo against Myanmar. Like The Netherlands, Sweden had no success in the push for Myanmar and the situation in Rakhine to be brought before the ICC.^{lxi} In relation to the crash of flight MH17, The Netherlands wanted to hold the perpetrators responsible. However, as the passing of a UNSC resolution on the matter would require all permanent members to vote in favor, there was very little chance of it being passed (Russia being a veto power). No significant progress – if any – on this matter was made during the Dutch tenure.^{lxii} Peterson claims that Sweden should have questioned the role of the UK as penholder in the Yemen situation, considering that it may have been biased in the conflict. According to Peterson, the biggest failure during the Swedish membership may have been the overall situation in Syria, even though Sweden "did all it could." He argues that Sweden should have referred more frequently to the principle of Responsibility to Protect (R2P) in situations of veto deadlocks – particularly where the situations concern alleged war crimes, such as in the cases of Myanmar and Syria, and the responsibility to protect the people would shift from failing national authorities to the international community.^{lxiii}

Enhancing Agency through Norm Entrepreneurship

Swedish former Deputy Permanent Representative Irina Schoulgin-Nyoni claims that Sweden did not apply coercion during its tenure.^{lxiv} This is in line with Thorhallsson's findings, describing small states as norm entrepreneurs, persuading others to adopt new norms rather than resorting to coercion. At first Sweden "felt lonely" on the Council in constantly raising issues such as WPS. However, Schoulgin-Nyoni argues that, over time, more member states started raising these issues, making them less controversial, including with the Russians.^{lxv}

Even when they do not serve on the Security Council, Nordic states are often invited to the UNSC under article 31 UN Charter and Rule 37 of the Council's Rules of Procedure. In the absence of hard power tools, Nordic states are widely perceived as wielding significant soft power, benefitting from their high scores on the Human Development Index, their perceived historical neutrality (for instance in relation to having no or little colonial history), and their lack of involvement in current conflicts (Thorhallsson 2012, 148–51).

The Netherlands, much like Sweden, has a limited range of hard power tools at its disposal. It is considered an 'established middle power,' "known for [its] predisposition to pursue diplomatic solutions that embrace compromise, good international citizenship, and inclusive multilateralism." (Oosterveld and Torossian 2018). The adoption of Resolution 2417 (2018), condemning the use of starvation as a prohibited tool of warfare, serves as the primary example of Dutch norm entrepreneurship, based on Dutch political incentive, diplomatic skill, and the value of its reputation (Thorhallsson 2012). It pertained to a specific situation too,

namely the conflict in Syria, as starvation was allegedly being used as a war tactic by its government (Zappalà 2019).^{lxvi}

As to the Russian-Dutch tensions over the downing of MH17, the UNSC served as an important forum to swap thoughts, express views, and to engage in confidential exchanges. Behind closed doors, hosted by Sweden at Dag Hammarskjöld's former estate Backåkra, or by The Netherlands at the Dutch Ambassador's private residence, states continued to meet, and may have agreed to disagree, but stayed on speaking terms on the larger issues, such as humanitarian help to Syria. 'The Backåkra spirit' is now spoken of as an illustration of constructive cooperation and joint responsibility to take necessary decisions.^{lxvii}

Procedurally, Sweden tried to rally the E10 to have the draft text of an outcome document run at least once by all 15 members. In the Informal Working Group on Documentation and other Procedural Questions, Sweden convinced some Member States of the importance of transparency between permanent and non-permanent members, convincing those that would normally acquiesce in limited transparency on the side of the P5. Sweden got Japan on board, which had so far accepted that texts on the North Korean nuclear weapons program were exclusively negotiated between two P5 states, the U.S. and China.^{lxviii}

Another attempt by Sweden to improve working methods was to only hold meetings when they could lead to an outcome. Sweden claims that this practice was followed by the subsequent presidencies of Ukraine, and then that of the UK. Sweden was highly practice-oriented: it stressed action over codifying procedures in Note 507, as e.g., the Japanese had done. Note 507 (2006, last updated in 2017) is the chief working method instrument of the Council; it is a "concise and user-friendly list of recent practices." Also, Sweden injected a dose of transparency into its work on the Security Council, by reaching out to the press to brief them on its positions on a daily basis.^{lxix}

Both Sweden and The Netherlands experienced that the veto paralyzed decision-making on major issues such as Syria and North Korea. Accordingly, Sweden did not achieve 'systemic reform' at the SC: there was not any constitutional overhaul, as the P5 veto power remains a major hurdle. However, in achieving a constructive debate with all members, Sweden arguably succeeded. Agnes Hellström (NGO 'Swedish Peace') argues that Sweden profiled itself as a "sensible mediator." Skau claims that Sweden operated as a "voice of reason and calm." Contrary to Swedish parliamentarian Hans Wallmark, Hellström considers 'structural change' to be Sweden's biggest success, by achieving more constructive debate in the UNSC. The Swedish government concludes that there was a strengthened E10 dynamic after the Swedish presidencies.^{lxx}

Conclusion

The Dutch decision to run for a seat on the Security Council was motivated by gaining a more prominent and powerful platform for its policy agenda. Similarly, Sweden, which is one of the world's largest donors to the UN system,^{lxxi} sought a seat at the table of the most important and powerful UN body.^{lxxii} The discourse around these motivations is also very similar from both countries. Sweden claims its tenure was 'value-driven' rather than interest-driven.^{lxxiii} For the Netherlands, an emphasis was also placed on foreign policy values over national interests.^{lxxiv} The framing of these tenures as value-based tenures of Sweden and The Netherlands certainly helped these countries to build support and consensus around their priority areas which shaped the Council's agenda. For Sweden, this value-based policy allowed it to build a "relationship with the other members of the Council." Sweden did not automatically vote in line with a

certain fixed 'block' of allies; instead, it let its values on the theme at hand decide. Sweden argues it would always be led by its position on the merits, and that it was transparent in doing so.^{lxxv} This allowed it to engage with and rally the E10 at large.

Similarly, the Netherlands argues that its upfront transparency on its position on the merits allowed it to limit any potential damage, including to the Russian-Dutch relationship over MH17. Diplomacy, as Gregoire explains, entails that one distinguishes the positions that every diplomat is instructed by their capital to defend from the professional relationship they have with the other states' diplomats. A relationship goes beyond the issues on the agenda, therefore there is always room to keep the relationship sound. This may entail giving each other the heads-up if you are preparing a position that may affect the other.^{lxxvi} On balance, it is clear that the Dutch and Swedish UNSC tenures have resulted in modest successes, but also in failures and disappointment. Their tenures on the most prominent international body have led to mixed results, presenting further areas for potential future research, including the ways in which moments of leverage arise, and how the unanimity of non-permanent members on an issue can serve to keep the drafting process for resolutions going, even where the P5 may use their veto. Although no single E10 state can make a major difference on the Security Council, both states' representatives consider their respective tenures as success that deserve repetition in the future. Despite the inherent constraints to the E10's position and powers on the Council, and absent structural Security Council reform, the Swedish and Dutch tenures show that the E10 can "carve out their own spaces" by means of norm entrepreneurship. Through their political initiatives, niche expertise and experience, utilization of knowledge, diplomatic skill and the value of their reputation, The Netherlands and Sweden were able to pursue 'social power.' The resolutions on their policy priorities that were adopted by the Security Council during the Dutch and Swedish tenures attest to their ability to persuade a majority on the Council to adopt new norms (Thorhallsson 2012). Sweden and The Netherlands have been successful to the extent that the other states on the Council voluntarily conformed to their norms. The Dutch and Swedish experiences allow us to view a non-permanent seat on the Security Council as not just a position of prestige, but also one of responsibility.

Working methods reform may be a limited and flawed tool to increase the E10's leverage on the Council, yet pen-holdership by the E10 entails increased E10 agency in the work of the Council. It is vulnerable, however, as it depends to an extent on the willingness of the P5 (and specifically P3) to allow it to develop. It will take a concerted and sustained effort of the E10 to continue to engage the P5, to further develop their role in norm entrepreneurship. Future research could examine the experiences of E10 states over an extended period in order to assess the impact of norm entrepreneurship at a Council of different compositions facing different challenges. Further, the changing structure of the Council after Brexit, adds an extra dimension of multilateral leverage to European members who seek membership. This additional layer of support on the one hand granted a wider community caucus for members seeking support for various agenda items, while enhancing their prestige and representativeness to other EU states not sitting on the Council. What deserves further examination, however, is whether or not as a result of this process, Britain's role has been diminished and its position marginalized from the European dimension of coordination at the UNSC, given its exit from the European Union. Certainly, it is evident that not only is much more work required to trace the potential and the limits of non-permanent membership (especially for non-Western members) but we have found that in the case of these two European members, focusing on a value based, rather than an interest driven approach created

consensus, led to creativity around existing resolutions, and allowed procedural scope when addressing difficult issues where a P5 veto could be used. By emphasizing a discourse of shared values from the beginning, these members molded an agenda that was directive, inventive and allowed them to enhance their agency even on divisive issues. As the E10 enjoy significant 'democratic legitimacy,' being elected by often overwhelming majorities in the UNGA, E10 norm entrepreneurship stands to increase the legitimacy of a Council that is facing an unprecedented array of challenges to international peace and security in the 21st century.

REFERENCES

- Freedman, Rosa, and Nicolas Lemay-Hébert (2020): "The Security Council in Practice: Haiti, Cholera, and the Elected Members of the United Nations Security Council" *Leiden Journal of International Law* 33: 157-175.
- Holland, Martin (1999): "The Common Foreign and Security Policy," in Laura Cram, Desmond Dinan, and Neill Nugent (eds.): *Developments in the European Union*, London: Macmillan Education UK, 230-46.
- Hurd, Ian (2002): "Legitimacy, Power, and the Symbolic Life of the UN Security Council." *Global Governance* 8(1): 35-51.
- Keating, Colin (2016): "Power Dynamics between Permanent and Elected Members" in Sebastian von Einsiedel, David M. Malone, and Bruno Stagno Ugarte (eds.): *The UN Security Council in the 21st Century*, Boulder (CO): Lynne Rienner Publishers, 139-157.
- Koops, Joachim A., Thierry Tardy, Norrie MacQueen, and Paul D. Williams, "Introduction: Post-Cold War Peacekeeping: 1988-1998," (2015) in Joachim A. Koops, Thierry Tardy, Norrie MacQueen, and Paul D. Williams (eds.): *The Oxford Handbook of United Nations Peacekeeping Operations*, Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Laatikainen, Katie Verlin (2017): "Conceptualizing Groups in UN Multilateralism: The Diplomatic Practice of Group Politics" *The Hague Journal of Diplomacy* 12(2-3): 113-27.
- Laatikainen, Katie Verlin, and Karen E. Smith (2017): "Introduction: The Multilateral Politics of UN Diplomacy" *The Hague Journal of Diplomacy* 12(2-3): 95-112.
- Luck, Edward C. (2018): "Prospects for UN Renovation and Reform" in Thomas G. Weiss and Sam Daws (eds.): *The Oxford Handbook on the United Nations*, Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Merrion Street News (2018): "Ireland's Campaign for a Seat on the United Nations Security Council" Merrion Street News (Irish Government News Service), available at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8tPL6RjghGs>, accessed April 8, 2021.
- Murray, Shona (2018): "U2 Add Showbiz Sparkle to Irish Bid for UN Council Seat" Independent, available at <https://www.independent.ie/irish-news/politics/u2-add-showbiz-sparkle-to-irish-bid-for-un-council-seat-37070006.html>, accessed April 8, 2021.
- Oosterveld, Willem, and Bianca Torossian (2018): *A Balancing Act – The Role of Middle Powers in Contemporary Diplomacy*. Strategic Monitor 2018-2019, The Clingendael Institute.
- Roele, Isobel (2020): "Around Arendt's Table: Bureaucracy and the Non-Permanent Members of the UN Security Council" *Leiden Journal of International Law* 33(1): 117-37.
- Schrijver, Nico, and Niels Blokker(eds.) (2020): *Elected Members of the Security Council, Lamé Ducks or Key Players*, Leiden: Brill, Nijhoff.
- Thorhallsson, Baldur (2012): "Small States in the UN Security Council: Means of Influence?" *The Hague Journal of Diplomacy* 7(2): 135-60.
- UN Security Council (2018): "Security Council, Adopting Resolution 2449 (2018), Authorizes One-Year Extension of Cross-Border Aid Deliveries Targeting 13 Million in Syria" Meetings Coverage, available at <https://www.un.org/press/en/2018/sc13620.doc.htm>, accessed December 13, 2018.
- "The Netherlands Holds Syria Responsible for Gross Human Rights Violations" (2020) Government of The Netherlands, available at <https://www.government.nl/latest/news/2020/09/18/the-netherlands-holds-syria-responsible-for-gross-human-rights-violations>, accessed October 16, 2020.
- Verbeke, Johan (2018): "What Is It Like to Be a Non-Permanent Member of the UN Security Council?" *Security Policy Brief* (96): 1-3.
- Wermenbol, Grace (2019): "Why Is the US Clashing with the Dutch over Syria?" Atlantic Council, available at <https://www.atlanticcouncil.org/blogs/syriacouncil/why-is-the-us-clashing-with-the-dutch-over-syria/>, accessed October 16, 2020.
- Zappalà, Salvatore (2019): "Conflict Related Hunger, 'Starvation Crimes' and UN Security Council Resolution 2417 (2018)" *Journal of International Criminal Justice* 17(4): 881-906.
- "Highlights of Security Council Practice 2020" United Nations, available at [Highlights 2020 | United Nations Security Council](https://www.un.org/press/en/2021/01/210101 Highlights of Security Council Practice 2020), accessed 3 February 2022

ENDNOTES

- i. The authors wish to thank Marc Grau, Benita Hickson and Annie Rydén for their research assistance with this article. This article is the result of qualitative research and both doctrinal and empirical analysis. Interviews were conducted with Deputy Permanent Representatives and other staff from both Sweden's and The Netherlands' Permanent Representations to the UN and their respective Ministries of Foreign Affairs, as well as with experts.
- ii. For further on the tenure of The Netherlands on the Security Council see Van Oosterom, Karel (2020): *With an Orange Tie: A Year on the Security Council*, The Hague: Independently Published. For more information on the impact of such event in the Dutch foreign policy see: Monster, Ruben (2020): "The Impact of the Downing of Flight MH17 on Dutch Foreign Policy towards Russia" Master thesis at Leiden University; and also: Rietjens, Sebastiaan (2019): "Unravelling Disinformation: the Case of Malaysia Airlines Flight MH17" *The International Journal of Intelligence, Security, and Public Affairs* 21.3: 195-218.
- iii. The P5 are the five permanent members of the UN Security Council: China, France, Russia, the United Kingdom and the United States.
- iv. Thorhallsson, Baldur (2012): "Small States in the UN Security Council: Means of Influence?" *The Hague Journal of Diplomacy* 7: 143. A more recent analysis on small-

- and medium-states' impact and role in the UNSC can be found in: Thorhallsson, Baldur, and Anna Margrét Eggertsdóttir (2020): "Small States in the UN Security Council: Austria's Quest to Maintain Status" *The Hague Journal of Diplomacy* 1: 1-29.
- v. See e.g. Nye, Joseph S. (2011): *The Future of Power*, New York: Public Affairs: xiii, 20ff. For further information see: Nye, Joseph S. (2021): "Soft Power: the Evolution of a Concept" *Journal of Political Power*: 1-13; Nye, Joseph S. (2019): "Soft Power and Public Diplomacy Revisited" *The Hague Journal of Diplomacy* 1-2: 7-20; Rothman, Steven B. (2011): "Revising the Soft Power Concept: What Are the Means and Mechanisms of Soft Power?" *Journal of Political Power* 4(1): 49-64.
- vi. Den Dunnen, David, interview with Ambassador Lise Gregoire-van Haaren, former Deputy Permanent Representative of The Netherlands to the UN (The Hague, 30 October 2019).
- vii. Ekengren, Ann-Marie, Fredrik Dybfest Hjorthen, Ulrika Moller (2020): "A Non-Permanent Seat in the United Nations Security Council: Why Bother?" *Global Governance: A Review of Multilateralism and International Organizations* 26 (1): 21-45.
- viii. Wider literature here Albaret, Mélanie and Delphine Placidi-Frot (2016): "Les petits états au Conseil de sécurité : des strapontins à l'avant-scène" *Critique internationale* 2 (71): 19-38; Schia, N. (2013): "Being Part of the Parade – 'Going Native' in the United Nations Security Council" *PoLAR: Political and Legal Anthropology Review* 36(1): 138-156.
- ix. Literature on the UNSC and international organizations, which tends to take formal structure as its starting point (see, e.g., Ambrosetti 2012; Bailey and Daws 1998 [1975]; Bedjaoui 1994; Hurd 2007; Kirgis 1995; Lie 2013; Malone 2004; Schweigman 2001). Riles, Annelise (2001): *The Network inside out*. Not all the literature on the role of small states at the Security Council is positive about their influence. For example, Bruce Bueno de Mesquita and Alastair Smith argue that there are detrimental effects of membership, particularly among non-democratic states which use the position to garner more aid, impose stricter press freedoms within their own country and are then under less pressure to introduce democratic reforms. Bueno de Mesquita, Bruce, and Alastair Smith (2010): "The Pernicious Consequences of UN Security Council Membership" *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 54 (5) : 667-686.
- x. One exception that we expand upon is Lanmore and Farral (2016).
- xi. "Highlights of Security Council Practice 2020," United Nations, available at [Highlights 2020 | United Nations Security Council](#), accessed 3 February 2022.
- xii. Note 507 has made it more inclusive: "Any member of the Security Council may be a penholder."
- xiii. Brief van de Ministers van Buitenlandse Zaken en voor Buitenlandse Handel en Ontwikkelingssamenwerking aan de Tweede Kamer der Staten-Generaal (Letter of The Netherlands' Ministers of Foreign Affairs and Foreign Trade and Development Cooperation to the Second Chamber of Parliament) 26 150 no. 180 (2019) ('Kamerbrief'): 3.
- xiv. Regeringens skrivelse om Sveriges medlemskap i FN:s säkerhetsråd 2017-2018 (Letter of the Government on the Swedish Membership of the UN Security Council 2017-2018) Skr. 2018/19:104 (2019) ('Skrivelse'): 20.
- xv. Finnemore, Martha, and Kathryn Sikkink (1998): "International Norm Dynamics and Political Change" *International Organization* 52 (4): 887-917.
- xvi. See e.g. Skrivelse 2019 (n. 11): 14; Ambassador Lise Gregoire at public meeting "The United Nations after Brexit" (The Hague, 24 September 2019).
- xvii. Den Dunnen, David, interview with Ambassador Carl Skau, former Deputy Permanent Representative of Sweden to the UN (Stockholm, 22 January 2020); and see e.g. Skrivelse 2019 (n. 11): 108.
- xviii. Interview Skau 2020.
- xix. Den Dunnen, David, interview with Hedda Samson, former Political Coordinator at The Netherlands Permanent Representation to the UN (New York, 23 October/29 November 2018); Den Dunnen (2018): "Nederland in de VN-Veilighedsraad – een terugblik" *Atlantisch Perspectief* 6: 5.
- xx. The permanent ICC was established by the Rome Statute (1998) and commenced operations in 2002. See [www.icc-cpi.int](#).
- xxi. The temporary ICTY was established by Security Council Resolution 827 (1993). Its mandate was terminated in 2017. See [www.icty.org](#).
- xxii. See Van Krieken, Peter J., and David McKay (2005): *The Hague: Legal Capital of the World*, The Hague: T.M.C. Asser Press, and 'History of the City of Peace and Justice,' municipality of The Hague, 16 March 2017, [The Hague - History of the City of Peace and Justice \(denhaag.nl\)](#).
- xxiii. UN Security Council Verbatim Record (11 July 2018) UN Doc S/PV.8307.
- xxiv. See e.g. Canepa, Valentina, and Daniela Gutierrez Escobedo (2021): "Can Regional Refugee Definitions Help Protect People Displaced by Climate Change in Latin America?" *Refugees International*, 16 February 2021, available at [Can Regional Refugee Definitions Help Protect People Displaced by Climate Change in Latin America? — Refugees International](#), accessed 26 February 2022.
- xxv. For further on the history of the Chapter VII mandate see Boutros-Ghali, Boutros (1992): *An Agenda for Peace: Preventive Diplomacy, Peacemaking and Peacekeeping*. Report of the United Nations Secretary-General, New York: United Nations Publication Office; Morjé Howard, Lise, and Anjali Kaushlesh Dayal (2018): "The Use of Force in UN Peacekeeping" *International Organization* 72(1): 71-103; Koops, Joachim A., Norrie MacQueen, Thierry Tardy and Paul D. Williams (2015): "Introduction: Post-Cold War Peacekeeping: 1988–1998," in Joachim A. Koops, Thierry Tardy, Norrie MacQueen, and Paul D. Williams (eds.): *The Oxford Handbook of United Nations Peacekeeping Operations*, Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- xxvi. Albright, David (2018): '52 Countries Involved in Violating UNSC Resolutions on North Korea throughout most of 2017' *Institute for Science and International Security*, 9 March 2018, available at [isis-online.org](#), in: Den Dunnen (2018): "Nederland in de VN-Veilighedsraad – een terugblik" *Atlantisch Perspectief* 6: 7.
- xxvii. Kamerbrief 2019 (n. 10): 6.
- xxviii. Skrivelse 2019 (n. 11): 23.
- xxix. Becker, Sophie, Kristina Lunz (2018): "Schwedens undiplomatische Diplomatie im Sicherheitsrat" *Vereinte Nationen* 2: 73.
- xxx. Skrivelse 2019 (n. 11): 27.
- xxxi. Skrivelse 2019 (n. 11): 26.
- xxxii. Skrivelse 2019 (n. 11): 29.
- xxxiii. Skrivelse 2019 (n. 11): 30.

- xxxiv. Skrivelse 2019 (n. 11): 102.
- xxxv. Skrivelse 2019 (n. 11): 100.
- xxxvi. Freedman, Rosa, Nicolas Lemay-Hébert (2020): "The Security Council in Practice: Haiti, Cholera and the Elected Members of the United Nations Security Council" *Leiden Journal of International Law* 33: 157-175, in particular 171-172, 174.
- xxxvii. Skrivelse 2019 (n. 11): 103.
- xxxviii. Skrivelse 2019 (n. 11): 109.
- xxxix. Zappalà, Salvatore (2019): "Conflict Related Hunger, 'Starvation Crimes' and UN Security Council Resolution 2417 (2018)" *Journal of International Criminal Justice* 17 (4) : 884.
- xl. Author unknown (2017): "Syria: Surrender or Starve Strategy Displacing Thousands Amounts to Crimes against Humanity" Amnesty International, available at <https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2017/11/syria-surrender-or-starve-strategy-displacing-thousands-amounts-to-crimes-against-humanity/> accessed 16 October 2020.
- xli. Skrivelse 2019 (n. 11): 101.
- xliv. Skrivelse 2019 (n. 11): 36.
- xliv. Skrivelse 2019 (n. 11): 102.
- xlv. Skrivelse 2019 (n. 11): 103.
- xlv. Skrivelse 2019 (n. 11): 128.
- xlvi. Skrivelse 2019 (n. 11): 100.
- xlvi. Skrivelse 2019 (n. 11): 132.
- xlvi. Interview Samson 2018 in Den Dunnen 2018 (n. 16): 8.
- xlix. Skrivelse 2019 (n. 11): 96; Swedish Member of Parliament Hans Wallmark in: author unknown (2018): "Tre röster om Sveriges tid i säkerhetsrådet" *Aftonbladet*, 26 December 2018, available at <https://www.aftonbladet.se/nyheter/a/WLGp1L/tre-roster-om-sveriges-tid-i-sakerhetsradet>, accessed 19 November 2019.
- l. Carmen Wunderlich, researcher at Peace Research Institute Frankfurt (PRIF), in: Gårdemyr, Louise et al. (2018): "Sverige i säkerhetsrådet: 'På tårna, pålästa och principfasta'" *OmVärlden*, 24 September 2018, available at <https://www.omvarlden.se/Opinion/analys/sverige-i-sakerhetsradet-pa-tarna-palasta-och-principfasta/>, accessed 19 November 2019.
- li. Agnes Hellström, chair of 'Swedish Peace' (Svenska Freds) in: "Tre röster om Sveriges tid i säkerhetsrådet" *Aftonbladet*, 26 December 2018, available at <https://www.aftonbladet.se/nyheter/a/WLGp1L/tre-roster-om-sveriges-tid-i-sakerhetsradet>, accessed 19 November 2019.
- lii. Interview Skau 2020 (n. 14).
- liii. See Skrivelse 2019 (n. 11): 48.
- liv. Interview Skau 2020 (n. 14).
- lv. Author unknown (2018): "Collectieve trots, Hoofd Taskforce VNVR Schuurman over 2018" *VN-Veilighedsraad* 5, available at <https://magazines.rijksoverheid.nl/bz/veilighedsraad2018/2018/05/interview-schuurman>, accessed 1 January 2020
- lvi. Ibid.
- lvii. Skrivelse 2019 (n. 11): 73.
- lviii. Kamerbrief 2019 (n. 10): 1-2.
- lix. Den Dunnen 2018: 8.
- lx. Skrivelse 2019 (n. 11): 95.

- lxi. In a dramatic change of events in November 2019 The Gambia filed a contentious case before the International Court of Justice (ICJ) against Myanmar over the persecution of the Rohingya, and the prosecutor of the International Criminal Court opened investigations into the situation. In its provisional measures of January 2020 the ICJ ordered Myanmar to act promptly to prevent further human rights violations against the Rohingya. See Smith, Alison, Francesca Basso (2020): "Justice for the Rohingya: What Happened and What Comes next?" Coalition for the International Criminal Court, available at <https://www.coalitionfortheiccc.org/news/20200213/justice-rohingya-what-has-happened-and-what-comes-next>, accessed 4 June 2021.
- lxii. Skrivelse 2019 (n. 11): 95.
- lxiii. Ambassador Karel van Oosterom, former Permanent Representative of The Netherlands to the UN, at a public meeting (The Hague, 24 January 2019) in: author unknown (2019): "Public Meeting: Reflections on the Dutch Membership of the United Nations Security Council" available at https://www.atlcom.nl/upload/Report_Karel_van_Oosterom_24-1-2019.pdf, accessed 1 January 2020.
- lxiv. Author unknown (2019): "Sverige i säkerhetsrådet 2017-2018 – Så gick det" UN Association of Sweden, 21 April 2019, available at <https://fn.se/aktuellt/varldshorisonet/sverige-i-sakerhetsradet-2017-2018-sa-gick-det/>, accessed 20 September 2020.
- lxv. Den Dunnen, David, interview with Ambassador Irina Schougin-Nyoni, former Deputy Permanent Representative of Sweden to the UN (Stockholm, 22 January 2020).
- lxvi. Ibid.
- lxvii. Zappalà 2019 (n. 56). See also, *Amnesty 2017* (n. 57).
- lxviii. Skrivelse 2019 (n. 11): 129.
- lxix. Interview Skau 2020 (n. 14).
- lxx. Interview Skau 2020 (n. 14).
- lxxi. Skrivelse 2019 (n. 11): 15.
- lxxii. Author unknown (2018): "Sweden and the UN in Figures" Swedish Ministry of Foreign Affairs, available at www.government.se, accessed 1 November 2019.
- lxxiii. Interview Skau 2020 (n. 14).
- lxxiv. Interview Schougin-Nyoni 2020 (n. 55).
- lxxv. Interview Gregoire 2019 (n. 5).
- lxxvi. Interview Schougin-Nyoni 2020 (n. 55).
- lxxvii. Interview Gregoire 2019 (n. 5).