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Challenging Structures: A Case Study of Middle East and North
African States in the United Nations System

A Capstone Project Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the
Requirements of the Renée Crown University Honors Program at
Syracuse University

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and Renée Crown University Honors
Spring 2017

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Abstract

This project consists of two complementary studies exploring structural challenges of the United Nations through a case study of the Middle East and North African states. The research focuses on the major organs of the General Assembly, Security Council, Peacebuilding Commission, and Human Rights Council to analyze and assess their representativeness and legitimacy. The project is framed as supportive of increased diverse representation in order to provide legitimacy to organs and policies within the United Nations.

Executive Summary

The representativeness and structure of the United Nations is an important model for the world. The United Nations is an important actor in global governance as it responds to international crises, keeps peace in conflict-stricken locations, and distributes aid all over the world. If the current United Nations system is unrepresentative, especially in handling dire security issues around the world, this could hurt the organization's legitimacy. Furthermore, the structure of the organization should be reconsidered. This project focuses on two major structural constraints within the United Nations that affect state members and the representation of interest. First, the creation of the United Nations is a result of post-World War II politics and does not reflect the current state of world politics. Second, the United States has a difficult reformation process which has allowed this outdated model of representation to persist. We can use the Middle East and North African states as examples of countries that are hindered by these flaws.

This project contains two studies: the first study focuses on understanding how the Middle East and North African states function as a region within the United Nations system. The second study uses a set of case studies of MENA and Permanent Five States to see if the 'MENA identity' is unique within the UN system. The studies also focus on major organs of the United Nations: the General Assembly, Security Council, Peacebuilding Commission, and Human Rights Council in order to analyze and assess their legitimacy in regards to regional representation.

The first study addresses two main questions: Does the Middle East / North Africa "speak with one voice," and is that voice distinct from Africa and Asia? Are Middle East and North African states currently advocating for a designated Security Council seat? Would a Middle East

/ North Africa Security Council seat enhance representativeness and degree of democracy based on the current system of election?

The Middle East / North African states joined the United Nations fairly recently, due to the decolonization of many MENA states from the middle to end of the 20th century. Because of this late independence, many UN bodies, such as the Security Council, do not recognize the Middle East / North Africa as a region. These states are divided into African and Asian regional groups, and therefore are unable to elect representation specifically for the Middle East and North Africa region. While there are consistent Security Council seats specifically set aside for Europe, Africa, Asia, and Latin America, there are none set aside for the Middle East and North Africa. These states must represent the continental interests as opposed to their regional interests.

The UN Security Council was created to “maintain international peace and security,” and is one of the most prominent bodies of the United Nations. I found the lack of a recognized Middle East and North African ‘voice’ to be a major problem in the Security Council, as many issues of international peace and security persist in the Middle East / North Africa. My proposed solution to this problem was for the Security Council to recognize this ‘voice’ and implement a consistent Middle East and North African seat in order to potentially be more effective and representative in solving issues in the region.

However, I feel that proposing a Middle East and North African seat is crucial in researching if the Middle East and North African states have a common regional identity within the UN system that warrants a separate seat. Perhaps the Middle East and North African states fit well in their current African and Asian groups. The United Nations General Assembly Debate is a yearly forum where state representatives discuss the issues they want the United Nations to prioritize in the upcoming year. To discern if this regional identity exists, I researched the

General Assembly Debates from 2009-2016 for the Middle East and North African states to see if these states prioritize similar issues, especially those that are regional topics. I chose this timeframe to test if the region was unified during the turmoil of the Arab Spring and Syrian Conflict. Additionally, I also looked at topics related to the current groups, Africa and Asia, to see if these issues were prioritized more consistently or often than the regional topics.

Along with this, I examined the unrepresentativeness of the current system of Security Council election, especially for Middle East and North African states. I concluded that while a Middle East and North African seat would improve the current system of election and may improve the efficiency of the Security Council, reformation of the current United Nations structure is unlikely. However, I still advocate for a Middle East and North African seat, because the current system is unfair to these states.

The second study expands on the questions and issues that were raised in the first study. I argued in the first study that the regional prioritization of certain topics was unique to the Middle East and North Africa; however, I expanded this study with other states to compare the prioritization of these topics. I also focused on Middle East and North African states within the UN organs of the Peacebuilding Commission and Human Rights Council. In addition, I conducted specific case studies of individual states to further study the weaknesses of the UN structure and threats structural flaws present to its legitimacy.

The second study addresses three main questions. Do states outside of the Middle East / North Africa also prioritize the same regional topics in the General Assembly Debate, and if so, how strongly, and how does this speak to the uniqueness of the Middle East and North African identity? Is the current United Nations model of representation unsuitable to the Middle East and

North African states, or is it beneficial in certain organs? Do norms within the United Nations system affect states' actions?

From these studies, I concluded that the current United Nations structure does not allow for the most representative and legitimate system. Through the examination of the UN structure regarding the Middle East and North African states, it still seems that the current structure is not as democratic and as fair as it could be overall.

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Introduction

The United Nations was created in the wake of World War II, when a type of world governance was needed to replace the failed League of Nations. When the United Nations charter and structure were created, there were fewer states in the United Nations than there are now. Many states that are now members of the United Nations, specifically in the regions of Middle East/North Africa, Africa, and Asia, were not independent states when regional groups were developed, and could not advocate for regional seats in the Security Council. The few states from Africa that were independent at the time were supportive of the Pan-Africanism movement, so this combined with a Eurocentric perspective of Africa as a unified region, as opposed to a complex continent with several sub regions, has allowed this structure to persist. This may be the same for the Asian region as well, which also has many sub regions.

While the groups in the United Nations are mostly divided by region, a group such as Western Europe and Other (WEOG) is not defined by region, as it contains states in all different parts of the world, i.e. the United States, United Kingdom, Israel, Australia, and more (UNITED NATIONS DGACM 2014). It can be observed that WEOG is an ideological grouping, not a common culture or geographical location. What this shows is that a Middle East and North Africa region unified by a combination of cultural and regional aspects is not unfeasible, but is not a part of the system due to long-persisting norms and outdated structure.

For example, the UN Charter section about the Security Council states that election for the ten non-permanent seats would be voted on by the General Assembly and would be designated by “equitable geographical distribution” (UN Charter). Due to the vagueness of this language, a resolution was created in 1963 to specify how the non-permanent seats would be

divided. This resolution created the following designations for the composition of the non-permanent seats: Two representatives from the Western Europe and Other group, one representative from Eastern Europe, three representatives from Eastern Europe, and seven representatives from Africa and Asia (General Assembly Resolution 1991). So although this resolution does acknowledge the expansion of UN membership, it was still enacted before many states, especially in the Middle East and North Africa, gained independence.

Another aspect is that not only is the structure of the United Nations perhaps outdated, the reform process is also very difficult. To change the Security Council, it requires an amendment process, according to Chapter XVIII of the UN Charter. First, a “General Conference of the Members of the United Nations” must be approved by two-thirds of the members of the General Assembly and nine Security Council members for reviewing the Charter. The proposed amendment must be adopted by two-thirds of the General Assembly, and ratified by respective states’ processes by two-thirds of UN members, which must include all of the P5 members (Charter of the United Nations 1945). While this is just one case, it can be seen that in order to make significant changes to the United Nations it requires support of an overwhelming amount of states to even be considered, much less approved. This is not only a long-persisting structure, but it is also one that cannot easily be reformed.

All of this matters because the United Nations is a long-lasting structure in an ever-changing world with increasingly complex conflicts. I question if aspects of this structure are as effective as they could be. Currently, parts of the Middle East and North Africa are in complete turmoil, and yet this region cannot elect an official representative to the Security Council, the body that “maintains international peace and security” (United Nations Security Council 2016). There are states that use the structure to remain powerful or project an image on the world stage.

There are persisting crises around the world, and it is important to examine how effective and efficient the current systems are. I find in this project that aspects of the United Nations benefit the Middle East and North Africa in some instances, but in other instances do not, but all of these show the ineffectiveness of the United Nations.

This project encapsulates two studies, which analyze different aspects of the United Nations structure. The first study is a general case study of the Middle East and North African states in the UN system. This study specifically focuses on how the current United Nations structure, specifically with the Security Council, is unfavorable for the Middle East and North African states. This study also explores how identity functions within the United Nations, and how the structure could be improved to promote different identities and be more representative while solving issues of world security. Both projects mainly focus on the Middle East and North African states; however, each study focuses on different organs of the United Nations.

The first study focuses on the Middle East and North African states in the General Assembly and Security Council. The main focuses of the study are the current system of election of the Middle East and North African states to the Security Council, and if the Middle East and North African states are unified on issue prioritization through the General Assembly Debates from 2009 - 2016 in order to have a consistent Middle East and North African seat on the Security Council. The current system and structure was found to be unfavorable to the region because the system of election with the rotating Arab Seat was undemocratic.

To improve representativeness in the Security Council, the best solution would be to create a consistent Middle East and North African seat for the region. During this first study, there are several questions raised about whether the Middle East and North African states' "identity" was unique, and needed comparison to other states. Also, while the General Assembly

and Security Council election have been often studied, I want to further look at other organs of the United Nations, mainly to see if the structure is unfavorable to these states. With the Security Council, I want to look beyond the elections and study what meeting topics states focus on during Security Council service.

The second study was designed to further expand on topics that were addressed in the first study. While the first study only focused on two main organs, it is necessary to further study other organs to see if unrepresentativeness is a pattern throughout the UN system. One of the major flaws of the first study was that the Middle East and North African states' identity was labeled as unique, but states outside of the Middle East and North Africa were not studied to compare this identity. I chose the Permanent (P5) states as comparison, which have a wide array of international issues in which they are involved. If these states also focused consistently on the issues of Palestine and Syria, then the unique identity of the Middle East and North African states based on issue prioritization may not be unique. This was one area in which expansion of the previous study on the General Debate provided different results than were found before.

I also looked at the Peacebuilding Commission, another important UN organ, as a case similar to the Security Council, where the membership system is unrepresentative towards the selected states. In addition I focused on two states, Morocco and Saudi Arabia, to see how the current UN structure affects individual states' actions and identities, as opposed to a group of states. A major theme of the second study was structural norms within the United Nations, and how these unofficial structural norms may restrict identities of different regions and states, and also influence representation in different UN organs.

The two studies explore how the UN structure affects the Middle East and North African states through different UN organs. While the first study finds the structure of the UN to be

unfavorable to the MENA states, the second study expands on this premise, but also finds aspects of the UN structure that are favorable to the Middle East and North African states in representativeness.

Study 1

Introduction

According to General Assembly resolution XVIII of the UN Charter, the UN system organized states for Security Council election of nonpermanent seats based on the regions of Western Europe and Other, Latin America and the Caribbean, Africa, Asia, and Eastern Europe (United Nations Security Council 2016). The Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region is often not represented in the UN system, which is problematic for Security Council elections. The region has the plight of being split between the African and Asian state groups in the UN system, which raises the question of representation and identity for the region, especially for service on the UN Security Council. The consistent voice of a MENA state should be welcomed, seeing as many major security issues currently exist in the region.

However, the current system of nomination is that the MENA states are nominated from the respective, separate groups in which they are categorized. These states are divided between the Africa and Asia groups, and a routine pattern of election for MENA has developed between the two groups since the 1990's. According to a Special Research Report done on Security Council Elections, of the five consistent seats delegated to Africa and Asia, one of these seats is a rotating "Arab Seat," which switches every term between the groups ("Special Research Report No. 4: Security Council Elections 2011 : Special Research Report : Security Council Report" 2011). However, this means that MENA states can only run for election every other term, and the region as a whole does not decide this representation together. Many states in MENA have vocalized a solution to recognize this distinct identity is to create a consistent

MENA seat on the Security Council. My main research questions are as follows. Does MENA speak with one voice and is that voice distinct from Africa and Asia? Are many MENA states currently advocating for a designated MENA seat? Is a MENA seat necessary based on the current system for election?

My expectation for this study is that the MENA region has a unified identity within the UN system, as seen through the high prioritization of regional-interest topics of Palestine, Syria, and international security, in the General Assembly Debates of 2009-2016. The strength of this identity will be tested through patterns before, during, and after, the Arab Spring, as well as before and during the Syrian Conflict. Tunisian president Mohamed Moncef Marzouki depicted the struggle of the Arab Spring aftermath in his 2013 General Debate speech when he said, “Nations require decades to gain control of their revolutions and achieve their success or failure” (Marzouki 2013). The Syrian Conflict was described in 2015 by Sheikh Al-Thani, Amir of Qatar, as having “catastrophic consequences for the Middle East region and world as a whole,” while in the same year Iranian President Rouhani also described the conflict as “a wave of destruction [that] has gone beyond the Arab world” (Al-Thani 2015) and (Rouhani 2015).

It is clear these conflicts impact the whole world, and will continue to do so. The addition of a consistent MENA seat would benefit the Security Council by routinely having an “insider voice” on major security issues from the region and enhance legitimacy of the body (Hurd 2008). Additionally, this representation could help resolutions and actions aimed at solving these conflicts to be more effective.

As I am advocating for Security Council reform, it was necessary to determine what the process is to reform the Security Council. There is an amendment process, according to Chapter XVIII of the UN Charter. First, a “General Conference of the Members of the United Nations”

must be approved by two-thirds of the members of the General Assembly and nine Security Council members for reviewing the Charter. The proposed amendment must be adopted by two-thirds of the General Assembly, and ratified by respective states' processes by two-thirds of UN members, which must include all of the P5 members (Charter of the United Nations 1945). Due to the extensiveness of this process, amendments are rare and difficult to achieve.

I expect to find that MENA states prioritize certain common regional issues, even within a system that does not recognize the region's existence. MENA state representatives may prioritize MENA regional issues more often than the issues of their various caucuses in General Debate speeches. I also expect to see that the current pattern of election for MENA states is ineffective and unequal. I expect to find that MENA state representatives often advocate for a consistent seat of their own.

To define what the "MENA region" encompasses, I draw on United Nations Environment Programme's definition, comprising of the following 17 states: **Algeria, Bahrain, Egypt, Iran, Iraq, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Libya, Morocco, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Syria, Tunisia, United Arab Emirates (UAE), and Yemen** ("Partnership For Clean Fuels and Vehicles" 2016). This excludes other commonly grouped states such as Israel, Palestine, Sudan, and Turkey. Below are justifications for why certain states were included and excluded.

Iran: All of the other states categorized in this region have majority ethnic Arab populations and are Arabic-speaking, while Iran's population is mainly Persian and speaks Farsi. Despite this difference, the Iranian delegation's website says Iran and its culture are part of the Middle East, which shows Iranian leaders view the state as part of the region ("General View : Permanent Mission of the Islamic Republic of Iran" 2016) and ("Iranian Press & Media : Permanent

Mission of the Islamic Republic of Iran” 2016). Iran has not been elected to the Security Council since 1955, and this may be attributed to the Asian group’s lack of rotating efficiently, but more recently, could be because of the imposition of UN sanctions on Iran (“Special Research Report No. 2: Security Council Elections 2008 : Special Research Report : Security Council Report” 2008). Potentially now with the adoption of the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) deal, Iran may be more likely to be elected and confirmed to the Security Council based on good behavior. Charles Barber (1996) also categorized Iran in the MENA region as well.

Israel: Charles Barber (1996) grouped Israel into the “Middle Eastern States” category in his Security Council analysis, however Israel is already categorized into the “Western Europe and Other Groups” in the UN system (UNITED NATIONS DGACM 2014). Even if a permanent MENA seat was created on the Security Council, Israel may not caucus with this group.

Secondly, even if Israel did join the MENA caucus, the state would not likely be elected, since the MENA caucus (as I am proposing) would be dominated by Arab states and longtime rival Iran, many of whom sympathize with the Palestinian cause and condemn Israel’s actions, as is seen in the General Debate speeches. Lastly, although located physically in the Middle East region, as stated before, Israel is separate from the rest of the region in many ways, and is probably most suitable in WEOG.

State of Palestine: Palestine’s UN Observer State status allows it to participate in the General Debate along with the other member states; however, Palestine is not a UN member state, so it cannot serve on the Security Council. If a MENA seat were created, Palestine would not be

eligible for election, and is therefore excluded from this regional grouping for the purpose of this study.

Sudan: Although some categorize Sudan in North Africa, Sudan recently underwent a revolution and partition. Before splitting, Sudan may not have been considered part of MENA since it still included South Sudan, which was culturally and religiously separate from the North. Now, due to the split, Sudan may consider itself and be considered more a part of the North African states, as there are cultural similarities, but since this revolution occurred during the examined time-period, Sudan's General Debate transcripts may not reflect this identity before the revolution. This research is focused on the concept of MENA identity over time, so for the purposes of this study, Sudan has been excluded.

Turkey: Turkey is also sometimes considered part of the MENA region. Turkey borders the Middle East and Europe: however it can often be precariously excluded from either group. In the UN system, Turkey is grouped into the "Western Europe and Other" for purposes of representation, and additionally consults with the Asia group (UNITED NATIONS DGACM 2014). From its pending European Union admittance, to its involvement with NATO, to its historical flip-flop between the Middle East and Eastern European Security Council seats, as identified by Charles Barber, Turkey does not quite fit into one region, and due to this limbo, Turkey will not be included in this study (1996).

Although this definition of the MENA region may seem like it is a grouping of common cultural and religious states that is common in the United Nations, the name "Middle East and

North Africa” indicates a geographical place in the world. I am not proposing this be an “Arab” or “Islamic” seat, because then that becomes less geographical and more political of a grouping. Another note is that the “Western Europe and Other Group,” is not really a regionally defined group, as it spreads from Australia to North America to Western Europe to Turkey to Israel, and seems to be a group defined by common values. So a MENA caucus grouped regionally and also culturally would not be commonplace in the UN system.

Literature Review

The major work that framed this project was Zweifel's study, "International Organizations and Democracy," which has the main premise that international organizations are not, and do not strive to be democratic. Legitimate proposals for reform of international organizations need to be specifically targeted, as opposed to general, when addressing undemocratic aspects of these organizations. His main indicator that the United Nations is not focused on democracy is that the UN Charter never once says "We the People," or "democracy," showing the organization is not focused on representing the people democratically, but more about representing the interests of state governments. From studying different international organizations, Zweifel concluded that bodies like the United Nations need to incorporate stakeholders more and increase democratic elements, one such way by increasing the permanent and nonpermanent members of the Security Council. In my project, I use this premise of increased regional representation in UN organs to increase democratic elements in the organization and establish legitimacy of the organs. Since UN organs propose policy and programming, it is essential that these organs establish legitimacy in order to be effective in actuality.

Another source that discusses a precedent of diversity in democracy is Federalist Paper 10 by James Madison. The essay discusses that the formation of factions is unavoidable and also necessary to preserve democracy. Madison argues that the more parties there are functioning in a democracy, the less likely it is for one to oppress the others, and similarly, less likely for one faction's interests to be represented over another's. Additionally, expansion of representation to many different groups also means that more ideas are represented, making the organization more democratic. These ideas were instrumental in the foundation of American democracy, and based

on ideas of theorists of the time. While the previous articles were favorable of diverse representation, the following article is critical of great factionalism.

Scholarly literature on general UN Security Council reform discusses the difficulty of the UN reform and the domination of P5 states in this process. David Caron is a scholar who is skeptical of expansion of representation as a means of improving democracy, because he believes the cost is efficiency. Under the premise that increased representation will decrease efficiency, Caron questions what the balance and relationship of legitimacy and efficiency is for the Security Council. For example, how many states would be perceived as “legitimate enough” on the Security Council, while also maintaining a certain level of “efficiency.” According to Caron, this is an inverse relationship: increased representation leads to decreased efficiency. Caron also discusses the domination of the powerful states as a reason for Security Council reform, but questions if increasing the number of members would counteract this problem. His solution to this problem is to increase Security Council membership slowly, but still says even then more power could be transferred to the already powerful states and may not be the solution to the problem. Caron reflects an opposing view to Security Council reform by way of increasing membership to be more diverse and representative.

Slaughter discusses Security Council expansion hopes for the G4 states, Brazil, India, Japan, and Germany, to become permanent members on the Security Council, but due to UN politics and the influence of the P5, most likely will not (2006). Ian Hurd (2008), who discusses the view that the Security Council’s legitimacy depends on its diverse representation of the world. With this view, the more different the members on the Security Council, the more legitimate the body is. Hurd advocates for more seats to be added to the Security Council to ensure diversity, because a single state cannot fully represent all of the different ideas of the

greater region (Hurd, 2008, 200). Both scholars depicted the difficulty of changing the Security Council election procedure. The authors assume that the current structure of the Security Council is ineffective and unrepresentative, and Security Council expansion would solve this problem. However, large states could still dominate the Security Council, and maybe the reform would not be representative enough. These articles emphasized that reform is important, but unlikely. Another gap is that neither talked about having a consistent seat on the Security Council for a region, which is what this project advocates for as a way of increasing representativeness.

There is also a gap in literature written on the topic of a MENA Security Council seat, or MENA representation in the United Nations. This seems surprising, as the region is commonly recognized as a separate entity, and contains major international security issues. The only mention of MENA representation was found in a policy brief for the Center on International Cooperation, which mentioned the Arab Group's vocalization for a permanent Arab seat on the Security Council (Gowan and Gordon 2014, 29). Gowan and Gordon also discussed the role of the Arab League in the UN system, which speaks out about important MENA issues such as Syria (Gowan and Gordon 2014, 16). This article was important in finding out that the absence of a MENA seat has been noted by other scholars, but also in discussing the advocacy role of international organizations. The article discussed a topic not well covered by scholars and filled a gap, but the scholar discussed many different topics on the surface-level, as opposed to focusing on one in depth. There was little discussion of the factors and details surrounding each of the topics in the brief.

In summary, general discussions on Security Council reform were found more frequently than discussion of adding a consistent MENA seat to the Security Council. It seems few scholars are discussing or advocating for consistent MENA membership on the Security Council.

However, the question is if MENA states representatives themselves call for a seat, which will be looked at through analysis of General Debate transcripts. This is helpful in seeing the challenges to reform, as well as the prominent voices advocating for Security Council reform. My research will expand on what a MENA seat would look like: who represents MENA now, what issues are important to the region, and why a consistent MENA seat is essential, which has not been covered by previous scholars.

As the issues of the Palestinian and Syria conflicts will be discussed within the General Debate in this project, it is important to look at what has previously been written on the topic. Both scholarly articles focused on the Palestinian Conflict detailed the history of UN actions and discourse surrounding the conflict. The pattern was that the more powerful states are involved in the Conflict, but this has not led to any results. There was also a pattern of limitation for what the United Nations can do to solve the Conflict. The articles detailed exact UN actions and resolutions that happened to emphasize the point, but did not discuss if MENA states influenced or affected actions, only how the P5 were involved.

All of this is important because the unsolved nature of this Conflict partly explains why there is a pattern of this topic being brought up by MENA states in the General Assembly. With articles discussing the UN and the Syria Conflict, a similar pattern of UN action, followed by little results, or UN inaction, was found. These articles did bring up a different analysis of the situation from the Palestinian Conflict. The authors mentioned that if the United Nations continues to be ineffective in upholding international law with the Syrian Conflict, it would seriously undermine the legitimacy of the United Nations (Rostow, Koh, Mathias, Mohamed, and Arsanjani 2012). These analyses by other scholars lend some legitimacy to my claim that the

reasons these conflicts are brought up most frequently is due to the current system's ineffectiveness in solving these regional issues.

Methodology

This qualitative case study analyzes archival data (Berg and Lune 2017, 165). The archival data are drawn from primary sources from the UN website, including the UN General Debate Speeches Archives, UN Security Council member records, and the UN Peacekeeping website.

To learn about the current system of election to the Security Council for MENA states, and to follow the pattern of the rotating MENA seat, I updated Charles Barber's work, "UNSC Representation: The First 50 Years and Beyond" (1996). I used the UN Security Council website to record the amount of times MENA states served on the Security Council, when the states gained independence and UN membership, and if there were any patterns in service since the inception of the United Nations in 1945. If the states had not served on the Security Council for a long time, I calculated how long it had been since they served to see if there was a present pattern. Collecting these qualitative data were essential to seeing the representation patterns of election to Security Council.

To complement the data updating Barber's work, I examined peacekeeping troop and police contributions by each selected state, to see if there is a correlation between the number of terms served on Security Council and the number of peacekeeping troop contributions. This is because peacekeeping contributions are often an indicator of states "maintaining international peace and security," and by demonstrating this commitment, it may help states get elected to the Security Council (UN Security Council 2016). Since I was comparing data over time, I looked at data starting from 2000, to 2016, because before 2000 the data were measured differently, and I wanted to keep the data measurements consistent for comparison. The contribution timeframe every year was from January-August, because the 2016 data only goes until August, and again, I wanted to keep my measurements consistent. I then took the average of all of the contributions of

one state over the time period to compare the figures. For the second graph of the peacekeeping data, the data were expanded to include the years 1990-2000, because this is the earliest data shown for peacekeeping on the website. As the goal of these data are to show a comparison over time with each state, not to each other, the measurement methods being different does not skew the data like the above.

To determine if MENA states represent similar interests in the UN system, I conducted content analysis on the General Debate transcripts of MENA states from 2009-2016. This timeframe was chosen because the MENA region has faced tumultuous and divisive unrest with the Arab Spring and the Syrian Conflict. It was necessary to look before, during, and after these events to see if the MENA region generally has remained unified on security and peace priorities throughout this period of unrest. This longstanding pattern could speak to the unity and identity of the region as a whole, and if a seat would work for the region.

Each MENA state's General Debate speeches were searched for key phrases and patterns of issues. These issues were looked at across the states and the timeframe. I counted the number of MENA state representatives who brought up certain topics each year, looked at the number of times certain issues were brought up for each state's speech, and calculated percentages based on these findings.

As defined by the UN website, the General Debate is "...the annual meeting of Heads of State and Government at the beginning of the General Assembly session...the only one in which Heads of State and Government regularly participate" (Frequently Asked Questions about the United Nations Security Council 2016). The General Debate serves as a platform for states to discuss their priorities to the world. If a speaker in the General Debate used one of the terms in

the codebook below, this counted as a “mention.” State representatives have limited time and if they spend time to discuss a topic, even briefly, this shows a commitment to this issue.

The main topics of analyses of “international security,” “Palestine,” and “Syria” were chosen because these are current topics that would most likely be brought up on the Security Council that pertain to the MENA region. International security is a more broad term, designed to show state’s general commitment to ideas of security and counter-terrorism. This topic was chosen before I started the research process. I chose the conflicts of Palestine and Syria because these are two of the largest security issues in the MENA region that currently render discussion in the Security Council. I also selected Security Council reform to determine if MENA states advocate for reform and demand a continuous seat on the Security Council.

To see if the MENA states potentially identify with their respective caucuses, I decided to also track general and unspecific African and Asian topics in addition to the two MENA topics. This paper assumes specific topics in the MENA region are more important for region members than to other regions. I found the General Debate data show no pattern of specific African or Asian issues the MENA states discussed over time, whereas there was a pattern of the MENA topics of Palestine and Syria being consistently brought up by a majority of states every year. If MENA states brought up topics related to their caucuses more consistently than MENA issues, this could show a MENA Security Council seat would not be necessary because the states identify with the African and Asian regions. This comparison could also further show that a MENA seat is necessary if MENA topics are more of a focus to these states.

Shown below Table 1 with coded indicator topics related to the UN Security Council and MENA region, with explanation of the methodology for content analysis.

Table 1: Coding for UN General Debate Phrases

Topic	Phrases
Palestine	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Question of Palestine • State of Palestine • Israeli aggression/ violation • Arab-Israeli Conflict • Arab Peace Process • Palestinian brothers • Two-state solution
Syria	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Syrian Conflict • Syrian regime • Syrian people • Syrian brothers • Syrian refugees
International Security	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Terrorism • Counterterrorism • Nonproliferation • Chemical and Nuclear weapons • Terrorist organizations • International Security
UN Reform	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Security Council Reform • Africa seat • MENA seat • Arab seat • General UN reform
Africa	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An issue in an African state outside of described MENA region (all states on the African continent below the Sahara) • Africa as a whole • African identity • African Union
Asia ¹	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An issue in an Asian country outside of described MENA region (East Asia, South Asia, Southeast Asia) • Asia as a whole

¹ *Comment: Originally only Security Council reform was going to be looked at as a topic, however, there was equal if not more calls for general UN reform by MENA region states. I made the determination that these generally give the same idea and would be appropriate to consolidate.*

I marked that a topic had been mentioned after the first occurrence of it in the General Debate transcripts for each state. For the specific MENA issues of Palestine and Syria, I calculated the number of times mentioned within each speech to see if there was a pattern of how often individual states brought up these issues, and if this contributes to the idea of “MENA identity.” I thought by calculating these specific issues, it could expand my argument that this identity is present. These issues affect the whole region, and a region-wide prioritization of these issues on the world stage may indicate a regional identity encompassing similar beliefs, political goals, and culture. For this calculation, I counted every time a state representative mentioned one of the key phrases in Table 1. For the other issues, the number of times mentioned in the individual transcripts was not calculated; because the mere fact the issues were brought up in this forum shows their significance.

The topics above had to be explicitly stated in order to count for this study, however, there was one instance where King Abdullah of Jordan alluded to the topic of Palestine. In his 2015 speech, he said that Jordan “join[s] Muslims and Christians everywhere in rejecting threats to the holy places and the Arab character of that Holy City” (Abdullah 2015). This phrase does not specifically state support for Palestine with this vague wording. I included the topic as a “mention” because Jordan would not allude to the Arab-Israeli conflict in the General Debate if they did not find it important. This interpretation is subjective, and others could interpret this differently.

Attitudes towards these topics were not analyzed as “positive,” “negative,” and “neutral,” for a few reasons. Due to the history and cultural identity of the MENA region, their attitudes towards the issue of Palestine are generally the same. The Palestinians share this cultural identity with Arab and Islamic states, and therefore these states are sympathetic to the Palestinian side of

the conflict, and this can be seen through the language used in the previous coding table. The General Debate speeches indicated all of the MENA states selected did have this view. The Syrian Conflict has more varied attitudes, but the importance of the issue is similar even if the points of view are not exactly the same. For the other issues, it did not seem conducive to this analysis to describe an issue such as international security or UN reform as “positive” or “negative.” For this project, further categorization of the selected topics was deemed unnecessary.

In general, the reader should allow for a slight margin of error, as human error in calculating and counting easily occurs. The methodology and process for collecting the data has been depicted in careful detail. If the study is to be replicated, start by using the UN Security Council website to see the list of which states have served on the Security Council, and when they served. The list of UN membership dates can also be found on the UN website under “About the UN,” and then “Member States.” The UN “Member States” section included most of the dates of independence.

For the General Debate speech process, I accessed the UN General Debate transcripts through the UN archives. I looked at English transcripts of Sessions 64-71 for the 16 states (17 in 2012 and 2015 when a Saudi Arabian representative participated) in the MENA region. I visited each state’s General Debate speeches page in the selected years and read the transcripts for mention of these topics, noted if a topic was mentioned in a table, and counted the times the key phrases for Palestine and Syria were mentioned. After all of the data were collected, I calculated the percent of states that brought up a certain topic each year by dividing the states that mentioned the topic over the total number of states who participated that year. I looked for patterns during this timeframe.

For the peacekeeping data, I used the UN website to find the troop and police contributions each year, and then averaged all of the contributions for each MENA state during the 2000-2016 timeframe. I reported how many were contributed for every selected state, and compared side-by-side with the number of Security Council terms to look for a correlation.

I collected data from secondary sources such as the UN Press and UN News Services websites, and scholarly articles about UN reform. Quotations from press statements were necessary to show that the MENA topics of Palestine and Syria were deemed important by others, and to the United Nations as well. These data show security issues that were important to MENA were also important to the United Nations, and MENA may provide insight and problem solving to these issues with a reserved seat on the Security Council. If these issues were not deemed important by UN representatives and administration, it would not matter as much if MENA prioritized them because it may not be as necessary for them to have a separate permanent seat. The literature on the Security Council reform was enlightening as to a) how hard reforming the United Nations, especially the Security Council, is, and b) that MENA has been neglected in reform discussion. Though maybe important to the region, other states are more widely recognized as needing UNSC reform. This evaluated the feasibility of a MENA seat being created, and it was found there is lack of discourse on the issue among scholars and MENA states alike.

Security Council Representation

I updated Charles Barber's "UNSC Representation: The First 50 Years and Beyond," focusing only on the previously-defined 17 MENA states to introduce the current dynamics of election to the Security Council as a member of the MENA region, and the need for a permanent MENA seat. Charles Barber used quantitative analysis to explain patterns in Security Council service by regional caucuses, as well as the broader political context to explain these trends. In 2015, Algeria's Minister of Foreign Affairs, Mr. Lamamra, said in his General Debate speech that Security Council reform is necessary as the Security Council "no longer mirrors the composition of the international community, particularly the African continent," which brings up dissatisfaction with the current system for the African group (Lamamra, 2015). More specifically, Kuwaiti Prime Minister Sheikh Al Sabah said in the 2012 General Debate that Security Council membership should be added to "...reflect the new international reality and to ensure that Arab and Islamic States are represented fairly," and once again brought up the need for a region-specific seat because "issues relating to the Arab States and their region top the agenda of the Council..." (Al Sabah, 2012) and (Al Sabah, 2015).

Barber (1996) defined the Middle East region as 23 states, however; only 17 states will be categorized in the MENA region in this study. Barber included Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia, and Turkey, in this region; however, the UN system Economic Commission for Europe categorized these states in Europe, so are not included in this study ("Member States and Member States Representatives" 2016). Barber also included Israel in the Middle East, however; the UN designates Israel in the Western Europe and Other group and is not included in this study. The inclusion of these four states plus the 17 previously mentioned brings Barber's total to 22. I could not determine the last state, potentially two states (if he did not count Turkey in his

Middle East state total) Barber included in the Middle East, however, these states were never specifically discussed throughout the article and could not be accurately predicted.

Barber's study was conducted to 1996, and focused on regional groups, whereas I expanded to 2017 with the specified MENA states. I found a consistent pattern of a MENA seat alternating between the African and Asian groups. Table 2 shows the number of times each of the 17 states served on the Security Council, when these terms were, the date of independence for the state, and the date of UN membership.

Table 2: MENA States Served on Security Council, 1946 to 2017

MENA States	Number of Terms on Security Council	Terms	Date of Independence	Date of UN Membership	UN Caucus
Egypt	5	1946, 1949-1950, 1984-1985, 1996-1997, 2016-2017	23/07/1952	24/10/1945	Africa
Syria	3	1947-1948, 1970-1971, 2002-2003	17/04/1946	24/10/1945	Asia
Lebanon	2	1953-1954, 2010-2011	22/11/1943	24/10/1945	Asia
Iran	1	1955-1956	01/04/1979	24/10/1945	Asia
Iraq	2	1957-1958, 1974-1975	14/07/1958	21/12/1945	Asia
Tunisia	3	1959-1960, 1980-1981, 2000-2001	20/03/1956	12/11/1956	Africa

Morocco	3	1963-1964, 1992-1993, 2012-2013	18/11/1955	12/11/1956	Africa
Jordan	3	1965-1966, 1982-1983, 2014-2015	25/05/1946	14/12/1955	Asia
Algeria	3	1968-1969, 1988-1989, 2004-2005	01/11/1954	08/10/1962	Africa
Libya	2	1976-1977, 2008-2009	24/12/1951	14/12/1955	Africa
Kuwait	1	1978-1979	25/02/1950	14/05/1963	Asia
UAE	1	1986-1987	02/12/1971	09/12/1971	Asia
Yemen	1	1990-1991	22/05/1990	30/09/1947	Asia
Oman	1	1994-1995	18/11/1940	07/10/1971	Asia
Bahrain	1	1998-1999	16/12/1971	21/09/1971	Asia
Qatar	1	2006-2007	03/09/1971	21/09/1971	Asia
Saudi Arabia ²	0	Elected, but rejected seat	23/09/1932	24/10/1945	Asia

Sources: “List of Countries Which Have Been Elected Members of the United Nations Security Council since 1946” and “List of National Independence Days.”

It is important to discuss the necessity of the date of independence and UN membership.

In this region, all states were colonies, and most did not become UN member states until

² Saudi Arabia was elected to the Security Council in 2014, however, ended up denying the seat. Expanded on in Study II.

independence, which affects the number of times these states have served on the Security Council. There are a few key patterns that can be seen from this table. One of which is that the North African states, minus Egypt, received independence later than several Middle Eastern states, and waited an equal, if not shorter amount of time to serve on the Security Council from the year they were granted UN membership. The pattern of the alternating MENA Security Council seat between the African and Asian states is evident from the table.

This rotation, however, does not lead to equality in representation, due to the difference in sizes between the split MENA groups. There are only five North African states who serve on the rotating seat when it comes to the African caucus, as opposed to 12 Middle Eastern states in the Asian caucus, which means Middle East states have a voice on the Security Council less than the North African states. From the data collected, it is inferred the rotating pattern between African and Middle Eastern states will continue, which means the North African states will serve almost twice as many times as the Middle Eastern states. This uneven division does not allow for equal voices from MENA to be heard. The argument could be made that MENA is actually better off being divided, because the pool is smaller for competition when each group gets the MENA seat.

However, each group must wait until they get the MENA seat in order to run, whereas with a consistent MENA seat, interested MENA states could run whenever they wanted. With ever changing issues in the Middle East, like Palestine and the Syrian conflict, the timing of serving on the Security Council could align with major decisions being made about the issue. With a MENA seat, all of the states would have a fairer chance of being nominated within a group of similar states, as opposed to being grouped with a larger continent.

Barber noted that Africa has one of the best records for representation, whereas the Asian group is highly dominated by leaders of the region (Barber 1996). Recently, this has allowed the North African states to each serve on the Security Council about every 20 years; as there is five states that equally rotate every four terms. For example, Egypt served in 1996-1997, and again in 2016-2017, because this seat rotated through each North African state until it was Egypt's turn again. However, on the Middle East side, there is a pattern of states serving on the Security Council less, but many also did not join the United Nations until 1971 (UAE, Oman, Bahrain, Qatar), which is later than the North African states who joined in the 1940s, 1950s, and early 1960s. It is possible, however, that these previously mentioned states did not want to serve on the Security Council, which will be discussed in the next section.

There are also gaps in MENA states serving on the Security Council before 1996, which indicate this is not always a true and reserved MENA rotating seat. From 1951-1952, Turkey served on the Security Council and from 1972-1973, Sudan served on the Security Council, when none of the defined MENA states did at this time (List of Countries Which Have Been Elected... 2016). So although it cannot be proven they replaced the rotating seat, it could be assumed by looking at the other states that also served at the same time. I have already discussed why these states are problematic in representing MENA, so during these years, MENA's interests may not have been represented much. Although this gap hasn't occurred for several decades, it still shows that the seat could easily be delegated to another state because it is "unofficial."

The Security Council has four main goals: "to maintain international peace and security, to develop friendly relations among nations, to cooperate in solving international problems and in promoting respect for human rights, and to be a center for harmonizing the actions of nations,"

and the peacekeeping program is the most aligned with achieving these goals (United Nations Security Council 2016). The clearest way for states to demonstrate this commitment to Security Council service and international peace and security is by providing peacekeeping troops to missions. I looked at peacekeeping troop contributions by state for the following reasons: one, to see if there is a correlation in the number of terms served on the Security Council and the number of peacekeeping troops supplied, and two, if when a state served on the Security Council or was about to, the state changed peacekeeping contribution numbers. The number of peacekeeping troops contributed or lack thereof could indicate a state's desire to be on the Security Council.

Table 3: MENA States' Average Number of Peacekeeping Troops and Police Contributions, 2000-2016

MENA State	Average Peacekeeping Troops and Police Contributed	Number of Terms Served on Security Council
Jordan	2801	3
Egypt	1893	5
Morocco	1396	3
Tunisia	254	3
Yemen	192	1
UAE	93	1
Qatar	24	1
Algeria	12	3
Libya	4	2
Iran	3	1
Lebanon	1	2
Bahrain	0	1
Iraq	0	2
Kuwait	0	1
Oman	0	1
Syria	0	3
Saudi Arabia ³	0	0*

Source: "Troop and Police Contributors. United Nations Peacekeeping."

³ Saudi Arabia was elected to the Security Council in 2014, however, ended up denying the seat. Expanded on in Study II.

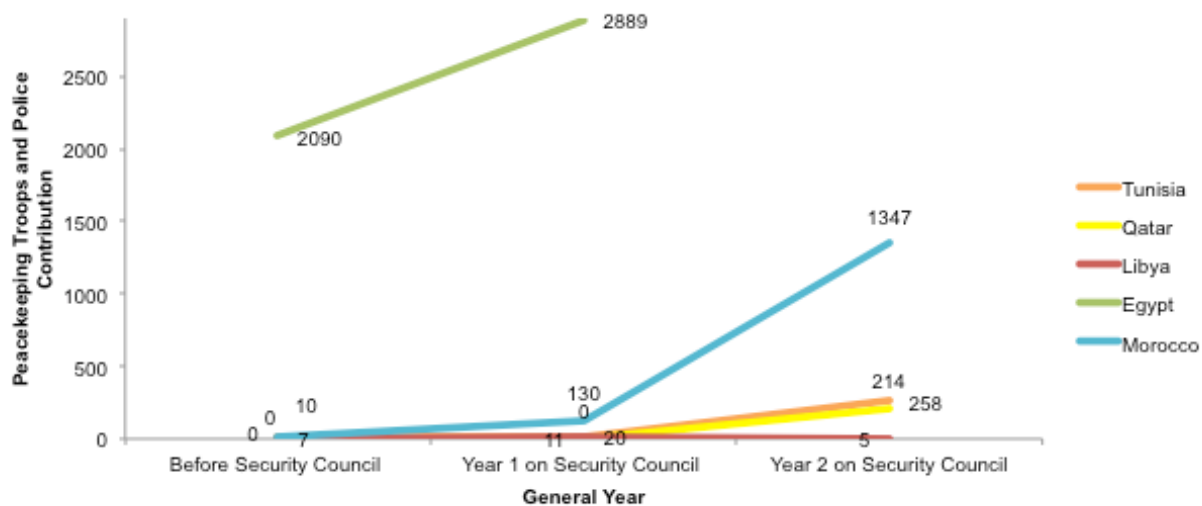
From the table above, there appears to be some correlation in that the top four contributors to peacekeeping operations in the MENA region (Jordan, Egypt, Morocco and Tunisia) are also among those who have served the most terms on the Security Council for the region. This may show a connection of demonstrating commitment to international peace and wanting to be elected to the Security Council, to actually being elected to the Security Council. There are two important outliers to this pattern: Algeria and Syria, both of whom have served as many times as Jordan, Morocco, and Tunisia, but with an average contribution of 12 and 0 troops and police, respectively. Algeria serving three times on the Security Council goes back to the unfairness of the rotating MENA seat. The cyclical pattern that has been established means that Algeria will be elected regardless, without needing to contribute a significant amount of peacekeepers. The North African states seem to nominate each other for Security Council based on fairness, not based on peacekeeping contributions.

Since increased peacekeeping contributions can show a commitment and desire to be on the Security Council, it is possible based on the lack of contribution from the Middle East states there is a lack of desire to be on the Security Council. A major flaw in Barber's work is that he assumes every state wants to serve on the Security Council, which may not be true. Based on his findings, he assumes that since the Asian caucus is dominated by a few powerful states, many states are not elected to the Security Council. In reality, states may not bid for Security Council service because they do not wish to serve on the Security Council, not because they go unelected by fellow states. The states who provided 0 peacekeepers during the examined time period, Bahrain, Iraq, Kuwait, Oman, Syria, and Saudi Arabia are all in the Asian caucus, and have also served on the Security Council a low number of terms. The one exception is Syria, who has

served three times, equal to big-time contributors Jordan, Morocco, and Tunisia. It makes sense that Syria has served a high amount of times without necessarily having a high amount of peacekeepers because Syria was the second state in the MENA region to become a member of the United Nations in 1945, so Syria has had a long amount of time to serve. If Security Council election can be based on the “merit” of providing a lot of peacekeeping troops, it seems unfair that based on the rotation, these numbers may not matter at all.

Although it cannot be directly proven that states that serve on the Security Council more often also contribute the most peacekeepers, it seems to be a pattern that commitment to peacekeeping can also mean commitment to Security Council service. To avoid the same assumption Barber made, I looked at states around the time of Security Council to see if these states altered their peacekeeping contributions in order to demonstrate “maintaining international peace and security” (United Nations Security Council 2016).

Figure 1: Peacekeeping Contributions for Selected MENA States, One Year before Security Council Term to Second Year of Security Council Term, 1991-2017⁴



Source: “Troop and Police Contributors Archive (2000 - 2010). United Nations Peacekeeping.”

⁴ Egypt only has two data points because those are figures from its current term on the Security Council, and the second year has not happened yet.

From the period of 1990-2016, an increase in peacekeeping troops in the years before and during the term on the Security Council could be seen with five different states. The states of Morocco and Egypt heavily increased numbers in the year leading up to Security Council service, which was most likely when elections were happening, whereas Tunisia and Qatar highly increased numbers during time on the Security Council. As discussed before, due to the noncompetitive North African pattern for the Security Council seat, it does not seem necessary that states increase peacekeeping troops to demonstrate qualification to serve, however it is possible Egypt and Morocco did so to promote an image of commitment to peace and security, or perhaps there were peacekeeping missions that fit their interests.

The UN Security Council and peacekeeping data showed the unfairness of the current system of election for the MENA states. This questions, however, if the MENA states are unified in interests and thoughts in the UN system to have a consistent MENA representative on the Security Council.

General Debate

In this section, I will discuss the results from the General Debates. While I am expecting MENA states to be unified on regional issues, it is necessary to see if the states align on issues focused on the Security Council's mission. As discussed before, the UN Security Council focuses on "the maintenance of international peace and security," as well as settling disputes around the world peacefully ("United Nations Security Council" 2016). Members on the Security Council are expected to participate in discourse and decision-making to promote this mission, as well as determine topics of discussion. States from different regions often serve as the voice of their region and bring up the issues and viewpoints of this region. I tracked certain issues, which can be found in the following sections.

Palestine

The topic of Palestine was brought up by the most states of all of the topics tracked. Every year, Palestine was brought up by 80% or more of the MENA states, as can be seen in Table 4.

Table 5: MENA States' Discussion of Palestinian Conflict in General Debate, 2009-2015

Year	Number of States Mentioned Support for Palestine	Total MENA States	Percent of States Mentioned Palestine
2009	14	16	88%
2010	16	16	100%
2011	13	16	81%
2012	17	17 ⁵	100%
2013	14	16	88%
2014	15	16	94%
2015	15	17	88%
2016	15	17	88%

Source: Past General Assembly Debates, 2009 – 2016.

These findings show that MENA is unified on the priority of the Palestinian issue. The nature of these mentions, as discussed in the “Coding” in the Methodology section, are in support of a solution to the Palestinian situation, or are critical of Israeli actions toward Palestine, which shows MENA is mostly unified in ideology towards the issue as well. Most of the MENA states view the Palestinian Conflict from a social justice perspective—these states want recognition and statehood for their fellow region member. Since the Palestinian conflict is an issue of peace and security, which is what the Security Council focuses on, I can infer that, any MENA state serving on the Security Council would represent the region’s interests and priority on the Palestinian issue.

⁵ Number of MENA states was 17 when Saudi Arabia participated in the General Debates. Expanded on in Study II.

Throughout the six years, every MENA state supported the Palestinian cause in the General Debate, but sometimes there were fluctuations when a few states did not bring the topic up in certain years. For instance, it is unclear why in General Debate speeches from 2013-2015, the representative of Morocco did not bring up the Palestinian Conflict once, especially since it was mentioned in all of the prior years. Despite this one fluctuation, the Palestinian conflict is overwhelmingly a unifying, regional issue. MENA representation on the Security Council is essential for the Palestinian Conflict because of regional interest, and is a conflict that Secretary Ban Ki-moon described as having “long-pending issues,” which will most likely continue to be discussed on the Security Council as it is unresolved (United Nations News Service 2016).

Syrian Conflict

The Syrian Conflict was brought up by the second-most among MENA states from 2012 (when the conflict escalated) to 2016. Secretary Ban Ki-Moon unofficially described the Syrian Conflict as “a clear threat to international peace and security,” at a Security Council meeting (United Nations Press 2015). The table below shows the number of MENA states that discussed the Syrian Conflict in General Debate speeches.

Table 6: MENA States' Discussion of Syrian Conflict in General Debate, 2012-2016

Year	Number of States Mentioned Syrian Conflict	Total MENA States	Percent of States Mentioned Syrian Conflict
2012	15	17 ⁶	88%
2013	15	16	94%
2014	13	16	81%
2015	13	17	76%
2016	14	17	82%

Source: Past General Assembly Debates, 2009 – 2016.

The findings show that every year since the Syrian Conflict began, 75% or more of MENA states have discussed the Syrian Conflict in the General Debate. While many of the states studied condemn the conflict in Syria and are unsupportive of the regime, it cannot be ignored that the transcripts of Syria and Iran were read for this project. The Syrian and Iranian representatives had a pro-Syrian regime perspective of the conflict, however despite this difference, I am arguing that these states still prioritize the Conflict and recognize its importance. Since the conflict has major security implications for the world, this issue will likely be discussed in the Security Council. As with the Palestinian Conflict, most MENA states each year mentioned the importance of solving the Conflict for the region, so this issue also shows that the studied MENA states have unified security priorities.

⁶ Number of states was 17 when a representative of Saudi Arabia participated in the General Debates. Expanded on in Study II.

International Security

Another issue clearly related to the Security Council is international security, which consists of general topics related to terrorism, nuclear/chemical weapons, and non-proliferation. MENA states discussed this topic the most after the topics of Palestine and Syria. Each year between 2009-2016, at least 50% or more, sometimes up to 100%, of MENA states brought up issues of international security. By discussing these topics, the selected MENA states showed a commitment to serve on the Security Council.

UN Reform

While these results were not found to be as significant as the previous findings, on average, 30% or more of MENA states mentioned a need for general UN or Security Council reform each year, with the highest being 44% of MENA states in 2010 (Past General Assembly Debates, 2009 - 2015). Even though there were not an overwhelming number of MENA states brought up reform in the selected timeframe, the idea is still present. I expected there to be a stronger pattern of the chosen states mentioning UN reform than was found. However, this also does not necessarily represent which states do/do not support UN reform or a MENA seat because there may be states that would support a MENA seat if it became likely. As discussed before, it seems that Brazil, India, Germany, or Japan seat is discussed before a MENA seat, and the reform process is difficult, so perhaps some states wanted to focus on other important issues in the General Debate instead of Security Council reform that may be unfeasible.

African / Asian Topics

The last topics I analyzed in the General Debate transcripts is the number of states that mentioned issues about Africa and Asia to see if the MENA states mentioned these more than the MENA issues. For these data, the MENA states were split to see if issues from Africa and Asia were prioritized. For most years, 80% or more of the five-member MENA North African group (Algeria, Egypt, Libya, Morocco, and Tunisia) mentioned African topics outside of the MENA region defined earlier. It was quite surprising to find how consistently the North African group brought up these other issues, almost as equally in number as the MENA issues.

For the Asian group, there were different findings. The Asian group is defined as the 12 states of Bahrain, Lebanon, Iraq, Iran, Kuwait, Qatar, UAE, Syria, Jordan, Oman, Saudi Arabia, and Yemen. However, the Middle East group in Asia inconsistently brought up topics about the other states of Asia, ranging from 50% of MENA states in 2012 to 8% of states in 2015. It should be noted that in 2012, there was a disastrous flood in Pakistan, which is the Asian topic that was brought up by many states that year, but this was an uncommon occurrence. It seems the African states may feel a stronger affinity to Africa than the Asian group states feel to Asia; however, this does not truly prove that either is attached to the larger groups. It may just be an indicator that during the General Debate, the MENA states are more likely to bring up MENA topics as opposed to African/Asian topics. Even though this may show the North African group prioritize African issues almost equally to MENA issues, it does not necessarily mean these states would not support the addition of a MENA reserved seat in the UN Security Council.

The results from the General Debate suggest that there is a regional identity for the MENA states studied within the UN system that persists over time because most states prioritized the same MENA security issues. During this time, MENA underwent the Arab

Spring, continuing Palestinian Conflict, ISIL, and the Syrian Conflict. Despite this, throughout this time period, there were regional patterns of identity. The findings from the UN General Debates from 2009-2016 show that the MENA states consistently focus on issues relevant to the MENA region, and inconsistently focus on the issues of their respective regional caucuses. The research also shows that UN reform is not brought up consistently and overwhelmingly, but usually brought up by a third of states each year. If given a reserved Security Council seat, the MENA states would most likely have a unified voice about issues and interests the states would represent, but the region is not vocally advocating for this seat, as seen in the General Debate.

Conclusions of Study 1

The United Nations and the Security Council should recognize the MENA identity, especially since many current international security issues originate in the MENA region, and this voice should be viewed as essential. The results have shown the inefficiency and unfairness of election to the Security Council for the MENA states, while simultaneously proving the general unification of the MENA states enough to be recognized as a separate region, perhaps more than their currently categorized groups. While the reform of the United Nations is complex and difficult to achieve, I argue that a consistent MENA seat on the Security Council is imperative to international security and peace.

A way to expand this research could be to look at the sequence order, but I think mentioning an issue is an indicator enough of its importance to the state representative speaking. An area for further study would be to look at General Debate transcripts further back in time, to see if this identity has been as cohesive as it was during this timeframe. Another source to use in addition to UN General Debate transcripts would be the different MENA states' UN delegation websites, to see which issues are discussed there as well. If looking at other regional identity issues, it could be interesting to look at the split between Latin America and the Caribbean, and the different regions of Africa and Asia to see if they align on issue priorities as well. It is possible that large geographical groupings of states may not be the most effective way for interests to be represented on the Security Council. This study found this structure to be unfavorable to MENA states, and it is possible aspects of the UN could be restructured to benefit other groups as well.

With a recognized MENA seat on the Security Council, representation could be improved and more diversified, and there could be more democratic elections to the Security Council than

the current system. The current Security Council does not promote diverse representation to reflect the world now. MENA is a commonly accepted region now, and the persisting colonial structure of the organ prevents these states from being able to elect each other in the most democratic way possible. This goes back to the idea of if the United Nations was made to be democratic, or as effective as possible at the cost of representativeness.

While some scholars worry that if the Security Council is enlarged, the effectiveness of the organ will be compromised, however, the Security Council is already ineffective towards the conflicts in the MENA region, which can be seen by their unresolved status. I do not see how adding more seats on the Security Council could make the organ less effective towards these conflicts than they already are. In addition, perhaps increasing representation would not only bolster legitimacy of Security Council resolutions, but also make the organ more effective by having a wider spread of ideas from different regions. Maybe certain long-persisting problems in the Middle East are unsolved due to the MENA region being grouped into broader geographical areas, and therefore having to represent a plethora of interests. Certain aspects of the organs of the Security Council and General Assembly were found to be unrepresentative and in long need of reform for the selected MENA states, and it can only be imagined what could be accomplished and solved in the United Nations with more democratic and legitimate practices.

Study II

Introduction

In the first study of this project, I focused solely on the MENA states and different aspects of their identity within the United Nations system. While there were overall patterns found in the General Debate speeches, rotation of the Security Council seat, and in peacekeeping contributions, there are other parts of the UN system that can be furthered studied. MENA's identity appears to be unique, but this cannot be determined by only looking at MENA states. This study expands to the Permanent Five states on the Security Council, United States (U.S.), United Kingdom (U.K.), Russia, France, and China, to compare with MENA's identity. To determine if MENA's identity is unique, General Debate speeches for the P5 were analyzed using the same methodology as Study 1. In addition, the Peacebuilding Commission was also analyzed to further highlight the dominance of the powerful states, and the unrepresentativeness of the UN structure, especially towards MENA.

This research uses specific MENA state case studies to highlight functioning structural norms within the United Nations, which may not allow for unique identities. While the idea of states' images is an underlying theme in the first study, I will discuss how this theme relates to state actions in this study. In the previous section, I found general patterns and themes of the MENA states in the United Nations, however, more specific and empirical case studies were necessary for this project. The case studies of the Morocco, and Saudi Arabia demonstrate the structural limitations that states face within the UN system. The case study on Morocco focuses on Security Council meeting topics as well as Morocco's counterterrorism involvement, while the case study on Saudi Arabia focuses on its denial of the Security Council seat and

involvement on the Human Rights Council. In this part, I seek to address topics that will expand on and potentially question the results from the first study.

Norms in the United Nations

In this study I will explore the concept of norms within the UN system. There are two previous case studies focused on UN norms: weapons treaties and human rights. They both focus on the idea of norms being embedded in the UN system by way of these different topics. Teal Buckner Lowring cites in his case study that norms can be identified ““by looking at the consistent behavior of states”” (Hurrell 2007). David B. Steele also discussed a similar definition of norms, in that they come into being by “usage and general acceptance” (Steele, 2007). While a lot of literature focuses on the United Nations setting international norms outside of the organization, there is not much, if any, literature on norms inside of the United Nations, which is one of the ideas in which I focus for this study. These concepts were necessary to provide background of the United Nations as a norm-setting institution. For the purpose of this study, the term “structural norms” and “norms” will refer to the idea that norms are often deeply embedded in the UN system and function as part of the structure of the United Nations.

Methodology

In this part, the General Debate speech topics for the P5 states were studied using the same methodology as for the MENA states. The topics of Palestine, Syria, international security, and UN reform were examined to identify a pattern. As in Study 1, I chose the timeframe from 2009 to 2016. The specifics of this process can be found in the methodology section of Study 1.

For the case study focused on Morocco, I completed content analysis of the most recent time each North African state, as defined by Morocco, Libya, Egypt, Tunisia, and Algeria, served on the Security Council. The role of the Security Council President is to dictate the agenda for one month per term (Daily Programme of Work of the United Nations Security Council 2017). The purpose was to look at the meeting topics in order to see if there was a pattern of which topics the North African representatives mentioned when they served as Security Council President for the month. In one case, the Libyan state representatives served Security Council President twice, once in 2008 and once in 2009. The results were compared among the North African states, and also to the other states serving at the time. I created a coding system for the meeting topics and tallied the number of times topics were mentioned. When each state on the Security Council served as President, topics were tallied during that month to see how many times states brought up certain issues. The coding scheme is shown in Table 7.

Table 7: Coding for Security Council Meeting Topics in Selected Years: 2001, 2004, 2008, 2009, 2012, and 2016

Issue	Meeting Topics
Issue- Africa	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Peace and security in Africa” • “Security Council Mission -- Africa” • “Peace consolidation in West Africa” • “UN West Africa Office” • “The situation in” (any African state) • Name of any African state or region • “Situation along the borders of” (African states) • “Report of the Secretary-General on the Sudan and South Sudan” • Briefing / report by UN leader focused on an African state • “International Tribunal- Rwanda” • “International Tribunal- Rwanda and Yugoslavia” • “Meeting with countries contributing troops to” (any UN African Mission) • “Meeting of the Security Council with the troop- and police-contributing countries pursuant to resolution 1353 (2001), annex II, sections A and B” (any African state)
Issue- MENA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “The situation in the Middle East” • “Middle East Situation” • “The situation in the Middle East, including the Palestinian question” • “Nonproliferation-- Iran” • Name of any MENA state • “Middle East --” (any MENA state) • “The situation in” (any MENA state) • “Middle East — UNDOF” or “UNIFIL” • “Meeting with countries contributing troops to the” (any UN MENA mission) • “Meeting of the Security Council with the troop- and police-contributing countries pursuant to resolution 1353 (2001), annex II, sections A and B” (any MENA state)
Issue- international security	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction” • “Non-proliferation” • “Maintenance of international peace and security: Nuclear

	<p>nonproliferation and nuclear disarmament”</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Small arms” • “Prevention of armed conflicts” • “Peace and security” • “Peace and security — terrorist acts” • “Threats to international peace and security caused by terrorist acts” • “Maintenance of international peace and security” • “Maintenance of peace and security” • “Women and peace and security” • “Cooperation between the United Nations and regional and sub regional organizations in maintaining international peace and security”
Issue- Asia	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Name of any Asian state” • “Nonproliferation-- Democratic People’s Republic of Korea” • “Meeting with countries contributing troops to the UN Integrated Mission in Timor-Leste” • “Meeting with countries contributing troops to the UN Transitional Administration in East Timor” • “Report of the Secretary-General — Nepal” • “Report of the Secretary-General on the request of Nepal for United Nations assistance in support of its peace process”
Issue- Europe	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Name of any European state • “Situation in” (any European state) • “Briefing by the Chairperson-in-Office of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe” • “International Tribunal- Yugoslavia” • “International Tribunal- Rwanda and Yugoslavia” • “Meeting with countries contributing troops to the (UN European Mission)”; “Security Council resolutions 1160 (1998), 1199 (1998), 1203 (1998), 1239 (1999) and 1244 (1999) - Kosovo”
Issue- Latin America & Caribbean	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Name of any Latin American / Caribbean state • “The situation in” (any Latin American / Caribbean state) • “Security Council mission — Haiti” • “Diplomatic relations — Brazil” • “Identical letters dated 19 January 2016 from the Permanent

	<p>Representative of Colombia to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General and the President of the Security Council (S/2016/53)”</p>
Issue- Administrative	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “ICJ — Election” • “Briefing by the President of the International Court of Justice” • “Briefing by ICJ President” • “Briefings by Chairmen of subsidiary bodies of the Security Council; Implementation of the note by the President of the Security Council (S/2010/507)” • “Security Council - working methods” • “Consideration of the draft report of the Security Council to the General Assembly” • “Wrap-up discussion on the work of the Security Council for the month of” (insert month) • “Annual report of the Security Council to the General Assembly” • “Appointment of Secretary-General” • “Tribute to Secretary General” • “Recommendation for the appointment of the Secretary-General of the United Nations”
Issue- General Peacekeeping (not country specific)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Post-conflict peacebuilding” • “Peacekeeping operations” • “United Nations peacekeeping operations” • “HIV/AIDS and international peacekeeping operations” • “Peace and security: role of the Security Council in supporting security sector reform” • “Role of civil society in post-conflict peace-building” • “Peace-building” • “Role of business in conflict prevention, peacekeeping and post-conflict peace-building” • “Meeting with countries contributing troops to the United Nations Disengagement Observer Force”; “Strengthening cooperation with troop-contributing countries”
Issue- Other	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Children and armed conflict” • “Civilians in armed conflict” • “Protection of civilians in armed conflict” • “Report of the Secretary-General on children and armed

	<p>conflict”</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Respect for international humanitarian law” • “Nobel Peace Prize” • “Sanctions” • “General issues relating to sanctions” • “Briefing by UN High Commissioner for Refugees”
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Source: UN Security Council Meeting Records: 2001, 2004, 2008, 2009, 2012, and 2016

Specifically regarding certain meeting topics, if two different states were brought up, for instance, “International Tribunal- Rwanda and Yugoslavia,” both regions mentioned (in this case Africa and Europe) received tallies. However, with a topic such as “Peace and security in Africa,” only the “Issue- Africa’ category received a tally, not the “Issue- International Security” because the regional focus was most important for this study. Any mention of a state, region, or continent, in a meeting topic was categorized under that regional issue. The same boundaries for MENA as described in the first study apply to this categorization as well. For the other regions, the following boundaries apply:

Africa: All states on the African continent minus the North African states of Morocco, Libya, Tunisia, Algeria, and Egypt

Europe: All states in Western and Eastern Europe, including Turkey

Asia: All states east of Afghanistan and Pakistan

Latin America and Caribbean: All states south of Mexico, including the Caribbean islands

I calculated the number of topics for each state who served as Security Council President were calculated, and the percentages of each state out of the total number of topics. Tables

including all Security Council meeting data broken down in the selected years can be found in the Appendix.

General Debate: The Permanent Five Members

The conclusion of the first study of MENA states' participation in the General Assembly Debates was that there is a distinct pattern of MENA-region specific topics brought up, which indicates a regional identity. However, this pattern of issue prioritization was not compared to any states outside of MENA to see if this may be a general pattern. For this comparison, I chose the Permanent Five (P5) members of the Security Council and used the same methodology to analyze the General Assembly Debate transcripts during the same timeframe. The P5 were chosen because they are the biggest decision-makers in the Security Council and some of the most involved states in the United Nations and around the world. The logic was if the MENA issues are important enough to be discussed by the P5, who have many interests around the world, then these are issues that states outside of MENA region also find important. This comparison is done to test the analysis of the MENA identity as "unique" based on the prioritization of regional topics.

Also, as the most powerful states, the P5 are able to influence international events more than others by their veto power on Security Council resolutions and monetary contributions around the world. Essentially, their views impact UN action the most of any states, and therefore it is interesting to see what issues they prioritize. The P5 is also an interesting group to look at because they do not necessarily have a unified stance on issues such as Palestine and Syria, whereas the MENA states generally do. As with the MENA states before, the main topics that were examined in the General Assembly Debate transcripts for the P5 were the Palestinian Conflict, the Syrian Conflict (2012-on), International Security, and UN reform.

Palestine

In the MENA study, the Palestinian Conflict was the strongest and most unified issue, however, based on the findings below, there was not as strong of a pattern for the P5.

Table 8: P5 States' Discussion of Palestinian Conflict in General Debate, 2009-2016

State / Year	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
U.S.	x	x	x	x	x	x		x
Russia	x	x	x	x	x	x		
U.K.	x	x	x	x	x			
France	x	x	x	x	x			x
China			x	x	x	x		

Source: Past General Assembly Debates, 2009 - 2016

While in most years, the issue of Palestine was discussed by more than half of the group, and in the instances of 2011, 2012, and 2013, the every state discussed them. Despite the varying views from the P5 that I will discuss next, it is important to note the difference in perspective of this issue from the MENA states to the P5. While for most of the MENA states the issue of Palestine is an issue of recognition and social justice, the P5 states come from a conflict resolution and containment perspective. Although this conflict is prioritized by the P5, the states often do not discuss the situation in the same manner as the MENA states in the General Debate. The results do indicate a pattern, although it is not as strong as the MENA states during the same timeframe.

The U.S. and Russian state delegations mentioned Palestine the most of the P5. This could be explained by the historic involvement of the U.S. and Russia as members of The Quartet on the Middle East. The U.S. proposed a two-state solution, with the states living side-

by-side, in every year studied. U.S. President Obama expressed support for both sides of the Conflict, but often reiterated its commitment to Israel and Israel's security (Obama 2009-2014). In 2016, he stated "Israelis and Palestinians will be better off if Palestinians reject incitement and recognize the legitimacy of Israel, but Israel recognizes that it cannot permanently occupy and settle Palestinian land" (Obama 2016). So although there is commitment to a two-state solution, President Obama emphasized the U.S.' relations with Israel. The Russian state representatives also brought up Palestine the most, and were the only state to continuously prioritize the need to mobilize the Quartet. This was seen in 2009 and 2013 (Medvedev 2009) and (Lavrov 2013).

Although the European Union is a member of the Quartet, the U.K., France, and China also are not as direct of players in the coalition. UK representatives David Cameron and Nick Clegg showed support for a two-state solution to the conflict, which was framed as pretty neutral to both sides, but in 2011 Cameron showed strong support for a Palestinian state (Cameron 2011 and 2012) and (Clegg 2013). French President Hollande stressed the importance of starting peace talks again in 2012 and 2013, which was very different from his predecessor's message in 2011, where he said that the solution was up to Israel and Palestine, but other states should help a little (Sarkozy 2011) and (Hollande 2012 and 2013).

China has mentioned the Palestinian Conflict the least of the P5. The Chinese representatives have been as inconsistent about its dialogue of the Palestinian Conflict as it has mentioned the conflict in the General Debate over the years. For example, in 2012, Minister Jiechi showed support for Palestine at the General Debate, whereas in 2013, Minister Yi did not talk about China's stance on the issue, but in 2014 called for a ceasefire, and for Israel to stop the blockade on Palestinian territories (Jiechi 2012) and (Yi 2013 and 2014). This inconsistency of

mentions about the conflict may be because of China's geographical distance and lack of involvement in the issue of Palestine.

However, there is one disparity in 2015, where none of the P5 mentioned the Palestinian issue. The P5 state representatives focused more on the Middle East generally in their General Debate speeches in this year. This could possibly be because of the escalating nature of the Conflict. Another reason may be because the last time the Quartet on the Middle East met was in May 2015, and soon afterward Special Envoy Tony Blair resigned, whom many critics thought was ineffective in the negotiations (Black and Beaumont 2015). Perhaps the silence on the Palestinian issue by the P5 was due to the failures of the Quartet that previous May. The prioritization of the Palestinian Conflict did not prove to be as strong of a pattern for the P5 states as it did for the MENA states, however, there is still a present pattern.

Syrian Conflict

The Syrian Conflict was another consistent issue prioritized by the MENA region during the General Assembly Debates, so it is necessary to compare to the P5 to see if this is unique to the MENA region, or a common pattern among other state members.

Table 9: P5 States' Discussion of Syrian Conflict in General Debate, 2012-2016

State / Year	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
U.S.	x	x	x	x	x
Russia	x	x	x	x	x
U.K.	x	x	x	x	x
France	x	x	x	x	x
China	x	x	x		x

Source: Past General Assembly Debates, 2009 - 2016

Compared to the topic of the Palestinian Conflict, the Syrian Conflict has a much stronger pattern of mentions by the P5 states. Although the time frame is shorter, the P5 all mentioned Syria once the conflict started escalating. This makes sense seeing as almost every P5 state is involved in the conflict, in some capacity. It is also not surprising that China was the only P5 state not to mention Syria during the chosen timeframe, seeing as China is not as directly involved as the other P5 members, but this only occurred once.

There is a wide range of discussion and views of the Syrian Conflict across the P5 states. President Obama called for an end to the President Bashar Al-Assad's regime in 2012 (Obama 2012). In 2015, President Obama focused more on defeating the Islamic State, but stated the need for a political transition (Obama 2015). As Russia is a long ally of the Syrian government, it was seen in 2012, Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov called for a ceasefire in Syria, and in 2013, recognized that the Syrian Conflict was a problem, but there needed to be evidence that

chemical weapons were used (Lavrov 2012 and 2013). In 2016, he also praised the Russian military's assistance, which kept the Syrian government in control and prevented collapse of the state (Lavrov 2016).

The U.K. and French representatives took strong stances towards removing President Assad year after year. In 2012, Prime Minister Cameron stated that Syria's future "is a future without Al-Assad" (Cameron 2012). Secretary of State Philip Hammond in 2015 talked about Syria in more long-term dialogue, stating the need for political settlement after Assad and defeat of ISIS, and what it will take to rebuild Syria (Hammond 2015). President Hollande of France expressed outward support for the Syrian rebels in 2012 and 2014, and in 2015, stated that President Assad "is at the origin of the problem; he cannot be part of the solution" (Hollande 2012, 2014 and 2015). Lastly, the Chinese representatives talked about the Syrian Conflict generally. In 2013, Minister of Affairs Wang Yi stated a need for a ceasefire, but did not mention specific parties involved (Yi 2013). In 2016, Premier of China's state Council, Li Keqiang, ascertained that Syria was a political conflict with a political solution involving all players (Keqiang 2016). Despite the varying views and proposed solutions to the Syrian Conflict among the P5 states, the findings show that the Syrian Conflict is a priority the P5 as well and as the MENA states.

International Security

A commitment to international security shows a similar pattern of the Syrian Conflict: no less than 4 out of 5, or 80%, of the P5 member states, brought up this topic each year in 2009 - 2016. As permanent members of the UN Security Council, it is the P5's responsibility to lead efforts in the maintenance of international peace and security, so this pattern is unsurprising.

UN Reform

As I found in the MENA states analysis, advocating for UN reform was a weaker pattern, however, I believe this is for different reasoning. There were not many MENA states that brought up reform in the General Debates in 2009 - 2016, which I attributed to the difficulty and unlikelihood of UN reform to occur. For these states, there was often a call for more fair representation on the Security Council, or re-structuring of the United Nations, to better reflect the world now. Similarly, a weak pattern was also found with the P5 states, where the norm was 50% or less of the P5 mentioning a need for reform.

While the proposed reforms were similar to the MENA states, I would argue that the P5 do not bring up UN reform often because the current system and structure favors them. By adding more states to the Security Council, the P5's dominance and power in the body could be diluted and perhaps undermined. To further illustrate this point, the U.S.' representative President Obama did not mention UN reform once between 2009 and 2016, and was the only P5

state to do so. The United Nations and post-Cold War world order favors the U.S. as the most powerful state in the world. The U.S. most likely would not want anything to change as the current system fits its interests. This result relates back to Zweifel's argument that the United Nations, especially the Security Council, was not meant to be democratic or representative (2006). Although this pattern was inconsistent among the P5, it makes sense that UN reform is a less-discussed topic with these specific states.

General Debate Results

The overall results were that MENA and the P5 both consistently prioritized the Palestinian and Syrian Conflicts, with MENA prioritizing Palestine slightly more often and the P5 prioritizing Syria slightly more often. The P5 focused on international security topics more frequently than MENA, and both MENA and the P5 states infrequently mentioned UN reform. Although the comparison was not perfect due to the different sizes of the two groups studied, the general patterns were more important than the specific ratio between the two groups. From these findings, it could be concluded that claiming the MENA region's identity is unique based on General Assembly Debates is not true. As was found, states outside of the region also prioritized issues in the MENA region, proving that this is not a MENA-specific indicator of regional identity.

The expansion of this study to the P5 states provided a different conclusion than was found in the original study of the MENA region only. Despite the conclusion that the MENA identity is not as unique as was originally thought, I believe a MENA seat is still necessary for the Security Council. Although the P5 do prioritize these MENA conflicts almost as often as the MENA states themselves in the General Debates, the conflicts still continue without resolution or effective action from the Security Council. Although it cannot be said that the MENA states would bring a unique identity to the Security Council based on the prioritization of these issues, it could be said that recognized MENA representation is still needed to reinforce the importance of bettering these still-unsolved conflicts in the Security Council.

Peacebuilding Commission

The Peacebuilding Commission is also an important and powerful agency in the United Nations.

The goal of the Peacebuilding Commission is to delegate a separate body to make decisions, develop strategies, and make recommendations to UN bodies and outside players, about post-conflict peacebuilding (“United Nations Peacebuilding Commission” 2017). In Moroccan representative Mr. Taib Fassi Fihri’s Security Council bid during the 2011 General Debate, he cited Morocco’s involvement in the Peacebuilding Commission as a worthy attribute for election to the Security Council (Fihri 2011). Taking this into consideration, it still seems that the membership structure of this body is flawed, especially for MENA representation.

According to the resolution which created the Peacebuilding Commission, the Organizational Committee states were determined by various bodies: Seven states from the Security Council and Economic and Social Council, respectively, five states who contributed the most to the budget, five states who contributed the most peacekeeping troops and police, and seven nonpermanent states (“United Nations Official Document” 2017). While the resolution was updated in 2005 to make terms for all member states two years, and emphasized the need for representation from states in regions that will be discussed by the Peacebuilding Commission, there are still aspects that are not as representative as they could be (“United Nations Official Document” 2017).

Although the Peacebuilding Commission members are elected from different bodies with different procedures, there is still continuity in who dominates. The Security Council votes on seven members, and the permanent and nonpermanent members alike can vote for the Organizational Committee members. So it is not surprising that the P5 states almost always take five out of seven spots on the Peacebuilding Committee from the Security Council (“United Nations Peacebuilding Commission” 2017). As was discussed in the previous section, the P5 states already have much influence with resolutions, major UN decisions, and having their voices heard, and they also are able to influence the Organizational Committee as well.

Focusing on MENA representation, Egypt is the only state in the previously defined MENA region elected to the Organizational Committee (“United Nations Peacebuilding Commission” 2017). As has been seen before, Egypt has served the most times on the Security Council, and contributes some of the highest number of peacekeeping troops, of the MENA states. While these are necessary attributes to be elected, there are other MENA states that should also represent the region as well. MENA is the only geographical region represented by one state on the Organizational Committee. The data are shown below:

MENA: Egypt

Latin America / Caribbean: Colombia, El Salvador, México, Uruguay, and Argentina

Eastern Europe: Montenegro, Estonia, Russia

Asia: Indonesia, China, Bangladesh, India, Pakistan, and Republic of Korea

Africa: Kenya, Senegal, South Africa, Nigeria, Ethiopia, and Rwanda

Western Europe and Other: France, United Kingdom, United States, and Belgium

Independent of the P5 states, many of the other states are some of the most powerful states in their respective regions, like Egypt. Other states that may be categorized similarly are Argentina, Mexico, Colombia, India, Pakistan, Republic of Korea, and South Africa. While the representation for MENA and many smaller, less powerful states, is lacking, the representation for Africa is necessary, especially since all of the states currently on the Peacebuilding Commission agenda are African states (Burundi, Sierra Leone, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Liberia, Central African Republic) (United Nations Peacebuilding Commission 2017). While it is unknown if the lack of representation from the MENA states comes from a lack of interest or resources, there still seems to be a problem of powerful states participating, and potentially domination, many aspects of the United Nations. Additionally, as will be seen in the next section, other aspects of the United Nations also focus heavily on Africa, and the Peacebuilding Commission is part of these norms.

MENA State Case Studies

The following section examines norms, representativeness, and how these play into a state's projected image. The case studies of Morocco and Saudi Arabia will show how the certain limitations listed previously restrict state behavior and identity. This is to expand on what was found in Study 1, where it was found that MENA regional identity is present based on the chosen vehicles for research.

This section also addresses certain states' involvement in the United Nations and how this contributes to the idea of how factors outside of the United Nations can affect actions within the UN system. There is further analysis done about if the norms and structures of the United Nations weaken its representativeness and legitimacy, which was also focused on in Study 1. Specific states are used to take a more focused and in-depth look, whereas before the region was looked at more generally.

Morocco

The Moroccan delegation is highly involved in U.N. initiatives, especially involving counterterrorism efforts. Morocco was the Chair of the Counter Terrorism Committee of the United Nations in 2013, and a member of both the United Nations Counter-Terrorism Implementation Task Force, as well as the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy.

In addition, Morocco hosted the United Nations Global Forum Countering Terrorism workshop in 2012, and also hosted the first meeting for the Global Initiative to Combat Nuclear Terrorism in its capital, Rabat, in 2006. Morocco is clearly promoting its commitment to counterterrorism, not to mention serving as a partner to several European states and the U.S. in intelligence and security efforts outside of the United Nations. In 2015, a UN Human Rights Council report recognized Morocco's intelligence agency as the most powerful in MENA, and commended its effectiveness of preventing terrorist attacks (Morocco World News 2015). In the 2011 session of the General Assembly Debate, Taïb Fassi Fihri, Minister for Foreign Affairs and Cooperation of Morocco, advocated for Morocco to serve on the Security Council in the 2012-2013 session.

Fihri cited Morocco's contributions to peacekeeping, as well as ambitions to support areas outside of MENA such as sub-Saharan Africa and the Pacific, as evidence of Morocco's suitability for the position (2011). Due to this demonstration of commitment, along with

consistent contributions of peacekeeping troops, it was originally thought that the member states rewarded Morocco with a Security Council bid in 2011.

However, after studying the pattern of the “rotating Arab Seat,” it seemed only natural that Morocco would serve on the Security Council at that time because it was the state’s “turn.” On the other hand, the Southern Provinces in Morocco have long been a source of conflict between the Moroccan government and the United Nations, and around the same time, the situation was not improving. Morocco’s election to the Security Council despite this violation of upholding peace and security could indicate that structural norms can also benefit the MENA states too. As discussed before, the North African states have a consistent pattern of rotation, so it could be said that Morocco would have been elected to the Security Council anyways since it was its turn. This demonstrates how overarching norms in the United Nations may control states’ actions. This case explores the ideas of norms through a focus on Morocco and the North African states.

Southern Provinces

The Southern Provinces in Morocco have long been a topic of contention between the United Nations and Moroccan leadership, most recently seen when Secretary General Ban-Ki Moon called the Southern Provinces an “occupation” by Morocco, leading to the firing of many UN workers by Moroccan leadership (Charbonneau 2016). The United Nations Mission for the

Referendum in Western Sahara (MINURSO) in the Southern Provinces has the goal of facilitating a “transitional period for the preparation of a referendum in which the people of Western Sahara would choose between independence and integration with Morocco,” since the 1991 ceasefire agreement (United Nations Mission for the Referendum in Western Sahara 2017). This has led to conflict between Morocco and the United Nations, as Moroccan leadership praised a Security Council approved-initiative to solve the dispute in the General Debates of 2009 and 2011, but in reality progress has not been made and there is still not a solution (Fihri 2009 and 2011).

While I originally thought that Morocco was elected to the Security Council partially because of improvement relating to the Southern Provinces, the norm of election to the Security Council for the North African states seems to be strong based on the previously discussed pattern. Recently in 2016, it was reported that talks between the United Nations and Morocco were in occurrence, and potentially tensions between the two are subsiding, but when Morocco was seeking Security Council election in 2011 the conflict was not improving (Charbonneau 2016).

In 2011, MINURSO was renewed by the Security Council, showing that there was no resolution to this conflict, and according to Human Rights Watch, is the only peacekeeping mission to not have a human rights component, which the Moroccan government has allegedly opposed (Human Rights Watch 2012). In 2011, Human Rights Watch also reported that the

Moroccan government shut down the Al-Jazeera branch in Morocco due to their coverage of the Western Sahara conflict (Human Rights Watch 2012). For the year 2011, Freedom House gave the Western Sahara situation the label of “Not Free,” with the worst rankings in the categories of civil liberties and political rights, and they cited cases of censorship, and prohibition of freedom of press and assembly as evidence for this ranking (“Western Sahara 2012). The Moroccan government’s treatment of the Southern Province situation is not in line with the Security Council’s mission, and it is surprising based on the long-lasting nature of this conflict that Morocco was elected to the Security Council (UN Security Council 2017). At this point, the situation in the Southern Provinces was not improving, and it seems as if it continues to be an issue. If the North African rotation did not have the current pattern, perhaps Morocco would not be elected to the Security Council or confirmed due to this United Nations-involved conflict.

While in the first study, the focus was on how dividing MENA is not good for the states, this study examines how the current system may benefit the MENA states. The situation in the Southern Provinces is clearly not an example of Moroccan government following the mission of the Security Council because the unrest in the Southern Provinces could contribute to the already-present security threats in the area (Fourth Committee 2017). The fairness of the Security Council rotation in the North African states allowed Morocco to be elected to the Security Council despite this issue. This case also shows how issues outside of the United Nations systems may not influence relations with states as much as one may think. As mentioned before,

this long-contested conflict does not seem to influence the system of election to the Security Council. Further flaws in the UN system involving elections will be seen in the following case study as well.

Security Council Meeting Results

Previously, elections to the Security Council and General Debate transcripts have been examined for patterns of a unified and distinct MENA identity. Following Morocco's election to the Security Council, which as discussed before, may have been more a cause of structural norms rather than merit, it seemed that Security Council meeting topics could also be an indicator of this identity as well.

Focusing on Morocco and the other North African states, I looked at the last time each of the state representatives served on the Security Council, and what topics headlined the meetings they led as Security Council President, compared with the other states on the Security Council at the time. The position allows the representative to set the agenda and control the conversation. My expectation for this research was to find that Morocco and the North African states as a group would bring up topics about MENA and international security more often than states outside of the region. The codebook in the Methodology section shows how the different meeting topics are categorized, and the breakdown of the different topics by Security Council session can be found in the Appendix.

A major pattern I looked for was if the North African states focused on topics related to Africa or MENA more. I expected to find, as I did with the General Assembly Debates, that topics of MENA, especially those involving security issues, would be brought up more consistently.

I started with Morocco, who has a clear focus on international security and representing the Arab World by vying for the rotating Arab Seat. When the Moroccan representative served as Security Council President in December 2012, it was found that more meetings were focused on African topics, which were 8 out of 21 meetings (38%). In comparison, the President focused only 3 out of 21 (about 14%) meeting topics about MENA issues, and only 2 out of 21 meetings about general issues related to international security (10%). These findings were surprising, as I expected the Moroccan representative would bring up MENA and international security more, especially seeing as MENA does not have a reserved seat on the Security Council to advocate fully for the MENA region.

However, these findings alone do not prove underlying norms or a collective pattern prevail over states' own interests. Following this, I looked at when the North African states of Libya (January 2008 & March 2009), Tunisia (February 2001), Algeria (December 2004), and Egypt (May 2016), the year they were Security Council president within that term, which is indicated in parentheses above. Overwhelmingly, the pattern was the same with all of the other North African states. The meetings were most often focused on Africa, and less so with MENA

and international security. There was as much of a disparity of the Tunisian representative's time as President in February 2001, when African topics headlined 60% of the meetings, MENA headlined 7%, and international security 0%, during that month. The rest of the data can be found in the Appendix. Based on this strong pattern, it seems that there are collective norms in the North African region that have prioritized African issues at Security Council meetings over MENA issues.

With further research on these Security Council meetings, the pattern of African issues being prioritized was also found with the other states serving on the Security Council. While it was a demonstrated pattern that African topics were brought up more often than MENA topics by Security Council presidents, it goes beyond that. It was found that there is an overall pattern of African topics being the focus of meetings for almost all states every year, more than any other topics (exact numbers can be seen in the Appendix). While this does not apply to every state, it was an overall trend that occurred.

This result shows that this collective focus on Africa in Security Council meetings goes beyond the North African region, as this applied to almost all states that served. It appears that the North African states do not have a distinct identity when looking at the Security Council meetings. Rather, it seems that there is an underlying global prioritization of African issues being the most vital or pressing to peace and security. Additionally, perhaps African topics are discussed more because the region is recognized in the Security Council as one of the major

geographical blocs. It can be said that there appear to be norms functioning in the UN system, which may affect state's actions, based on this overall pattern.

Turning focus back to Morocco, I noted that Morocco appears to follow norms just the same as the other states. While Morocco and the other North African states expressed the importance of solving the Palestinian and Syrian issues during the General Assembly Debates analyzed from 2009-2016, it would be logical that the state representatives advocate for these issues as presidents of the Security Council. This lack of prioritization may indicate further these inherent norms, as the Palestinian and Syrian conflicts were consistently brought up by the states in the General Assembly Debate, but not as strongly once on the Security Council.

Although at first glance, Morocco's election and participation on the Security Council appeared to be an example of a committed state representing the interests of an unrecognized region, it may have ended up being a victim to strong, structural norms in the UN system. Morocco had proven a commitment to international security with its involvement in other facets of the United Nations, but its representative did not focus too often on this topic. Through this study of Morocco, it can be seen that norms may be constraints to the North African states and influence state action within the UN system.

Saudi Arabia

Historically, Saudi Arabia has been vying for leadership in the Islamic world, usually competing with Shi'a religious power Iran in the region (Mabon, 2013, p. 2). Both of these states see each other as leaders in the Middle East, and feel threatened by the other. This is not only a competition of religious power, but also historical, economic, and political power (Mabon, 2013). While these tensions are outside of the UN system, Saudi Arabia participates less in the UN system than other states, perhaps as a means of showing leadership for the MENA region.

However, through further research, it is not necessarily true that Saudi Arabia has chosen not to participate in all aspects of the United Nations, but it has chosen not to participate in the major bodies of the Security Council and General Debate, which many powerful state leaders want to be involved in. There are some occurrences where Saudi Arabia does participate, and I argue that this inconsistency may be because Saudi leadership is frustrated with the UN structure and whichever image matches their interests at the time.

Absence from General Assembly Debates

In the selected years of analysis for the General Assembly debates, Saudi Arabia attended only two of the seven sessions. Out of the 22 states studied throughout this project (the MENA + P5 states), Saudi Arabia is the only state to be absent from any of the General Assembly Debates. When in attendance in 2015, Saudi's representative, Mr. Adel Ahmed Al-Jubeir, stressed MENA

conflicts of Palestine, Syria, and Yemen, non-proliferation in Iran, and terrorism, while ending with a need for reform of the United Nations (Al-Jubeir, 2015). This makes Saudi Arabia one of two MENA states that year to bring up UN reform (the other being Algeria). In Saudi's other General Assembly Debate appearance in 2012, Saudi leadership mentioned UN reform, most likely because of frustration with the UN structure (Abdulaziz 2012). It was seen before that the Security Council structure recognizes the power of the P5 states. UN Secretary-General Antonio Gueterres called Saudi Arabia "an important pillar of stability in the region and in the world as well as a key global player and a key pillar of multilateralism." However, the structure of the United Nations does not favor all states, no matter how powerful they may be. This concept can be seen in the following section.

Denial of Security Council Seat

Saudi Arabia ran for election to the UN Security Council for the 2012 - 2013 session, and won the seat. This would have been Saudi Arabia's first time serving on the Security Council. However, Saudi Arabia's leadership ended up denying the seat, stating its reasons for denial in a letter to the United Nations available on the UN website (Al-Mouallimi 2013). This was the first time a state has ever won election to the Security Council, and subsequently denied the seat. In the letter, the Minister of Foreign Affairs for Saudi Arabia stated that the "...mechanisms of action and double standards existing in the Security Council prevent it from performing its duties

and assuming its responsibilities towards preserving international peace and security as required” (Al-Mouallimi 2013). The representative also discussed long-standing conflicts in the region: the Palestinian cause, presence of weapons of mass destruction in MENA, and the Syrian Conflict, as instances of “the Security Council’s inability to carry out its duties and assume its responsibilities” (Al-Mouallimi 2013). The statement ended with the Saudi Arabian representative stating the Kingdom’s “historical responsibilities towards its people,” (“people” meaning Arab and Islamic nations) (Al-Mouallimi 2013).

An analysis of this letter, combined with the absences from the General Assembly Debates, draws several conclusions. First, Saudi Arabia is frustrated by the structure and norms of the United Nations, especially the Security Council, relating to its capacity and ability to solve problems in the MENA region. Second, by denying to sit on the major decision-making body of the United Nations, Saudi Arabian leadership is choosing not to participate in UN actions to help MENA, but may think that it can do more without the United Nations. Third, the government of Saudi Arabia is essentially protesting the ineffectiveness of the United Nations for the MENA region with its absence, as opposed to voicing these concerns and critiques through participation. Lastly, as one of the major powers in the MENA region, it seems that Saudi Arabian leadership may feel a duty to not be part of a body that does not help their region and people.

Due to the Saudi-Iranian rivalry, Saudi Arabian leadership may have taken this opportunity to assert its commitment to MENA by making an unprecedented statement. I think

the Saudi Arabian government made this decision because they wanted to project the image of regional leadership. It has been observed by some analysts of leadership in the MENA region that the Saudi Arabian government has been taking a more assertive approach to its leadership to fill a “perceived vacuum,” especially through military action, which is likely stimulated by the threat of Iran’s leadership (Shanahan 2015).

This assertive approach to leadership can also be seen in the denial of the Security Council seat. Tying in the idea of norms, the structure and norms of the United Nations may have compromised Saudi Arabia’s perceived ability to keep up the image of being a leader in MENA if they had taken the Security Council seat, which may be why they chose to deny it. The issue of norms was found to be a problem with the previous case study of Morocco and the other North African states, where states may not have been able to focus on topics they wanted. Saudi Arabia’s chosen absence could be not only a sign that norms do have a role in the UN system, but also that state’s roles outside of the United Nations can impact their actions within the system.

Human Rights Council Election

Similar to the Security Council, the Human Rights Council is also an organization that does not recognize MENA as a region in its elections and representation. The role of the Human Rights Council is “strengthening the promotion and protection of human rights around the globe and for

addressing situations of human rights violations and make recommendations...” (“Welcome to the Human Rights Council” 2017). These 47 states are voted onto the Human Rights Council by the General Assembly, and are voted on by the following standards in waves:

African States: 13 seats

Asia-Pacific States: 13 seats

Latin American and Caribbean States: 8 seats

Western European and Other States: 7 seats

Eastern European States: 6 seats

Saudi Arabia was recently re-elected to one of four spots to the Human Rights Council to serve until 2019, representing the Asia group (Human Rights Watch 2016). There were only four states running, and China, Japan, and Iraq were the other states that ran and were elected (Human Rights Watch 2016). This is an interesting election seeing as Saudi Arabia is not known for human rights. In 2017, Freedom House ranked Saudi Arabia “7” on its “Freedom of the World” Rating scale, with a status of “Not Free,” which is the worst score a state can earn (“Saudi Arabia | Country Report | Freedom in the World). Saudi Arabia has also received criticism for arrests of political opposition, flawed trials, and bombing campaigns in Yemen, all of which have contributed to Saudi’s low human rights record (Human Rights Watch 2017). According to the

World Economic Forum gender gap rankings, Saudi Arabia ranked 134 out of 145 countries (The Global Gender Gap Report 2015). As Human Rights Watch noted, despite this reputation, Saudi Arabia was elected due to the uncontested nature of the election, whereas Russia, who was in a contested election and has a slightly better human rights reputation, was not elected (Human Rights Watch 2016).

This shows that there are flaws in the elections to the Human Rights Council, if states with terrible human rights reputations can be elected to a global body that oversees human rights. This also raises the question of why Saudi Arabia would want to serve on the Human Rights Council, since it would appear upholding of human rights is not seen as a priority. Not only is Saudi Arabian delegation participating in the United Nations, but also the delegation is participating in a body of the United Nations focused on a topic that Saudi Arabian leadership is not known for. Potentially, Saudi Arabia's representatives want to show the world that they are committed to human rights, despite what has been recorded.

In looking at the Saudi Press Agency, which was created by the Saudi government and is now a "General Commission" overseen by the Minister of Culture and Information for Saudi Arabia, there are several press statements that focus on the Saudi Arabian leadership's commitment to human rights (Al-Toraifi 2017). In February 2017, there was a brief press release about the President of Human Rights Commission Dr. Bandar bin Mohammed Al-Aiban

discussing Saudi Arabia government's "efforts in supporting human rights issues" with the Swedish Ambassador to the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia Jan Knutsson (Saudi Press Agency 2017).

The function of a press release is to update about an event or issue, usually briefly, and that is what the nature of this statement was. This may show that public knowledge of the meeting was important, but not necessarily more detail. While this is not known for certain, the release is only two sentences, and just informs the reader that the meeting happened and focused on human rights. It could be that the point was to show evidence that Saudi Arabia leadership is committed to this issue.

There was another press statement related to human rights also in early February 2017 that was longer in nature, which detailed Saudi Arabia and the Organization for Islamic Cooperation's affiliated Human Rights Organization agreement to make Saudi Arabia the "headquarter host country" for the organization, providing "resources and facilities, to guarantee realizing effective performance of the independent body" (Saudi Govt, OIC Human Rights Organization Co-sign Headquarters' Accord 2017). This further shows the Saudi Arabian government showing a commitment to human rights through meetings and supporting organizations committed to the topic. Sitting on the Human Rights Council could also be a part of fostering this public image of commitment to human rights, which benefits Saudi Arabian leadership. This is contrasted with Saudi Arabian leadership deciding that absence from the

Security Council was the best move for its image then, but election to the Human Rights Council provided Saudi Arabian leadership with an opportunity to further this commitment.

It is also important to note the structural failure of the elections to the Human Rights Council, which allowed a state heavily criticized for its human rights record to sit on an organization, which oversees human rights. This ties into the idea of powerful states that have the ability to be involved in the United Nations (in Saudi's cause, when they desire) dominating the UN system. While the Human Rights Council members are voted on democratically with a number of spots put aside regionally, it should be questioned if it is worth it to allow states like Saudi Arabia to serve in the organ.

Conclusions of Study 2

Based on this elaboration from the original case study of the MENA states, I argue that the UN system does not allow for a MENA identity as strongly as expected. The prioritization of Palestine and Syria, thought to be a MENA-specific pattern in the General Assembly Debates, turned out to be a priority to the P5 member states as well. Since the P5 states also highly prioritize these MENA conflicts, I question why the Security Council has not passed more effective resolutions towards them. There is clearly some disparity, as the P5 always have a chance to determine on what the Security Council should focus every term.

Looking at vetoes and resolutions on the Security Council related to the Palestinian and Syrian Conflicts, and comparing between the MENA and P5 states could expand this research. This could be an interesting comparison to see if the P5 and MENA states on the Security Council were on the same page about these issues, and could further speak to the dynamic of the powerful states.

With the case study of Morocco and the North African states in the Security Council, common patterns of meeting topics were found between most states that served on the Security Council during the selected years. I found no greater prioritization of MENA issues, and there was an overall prioritization of African issues by most states during the timeframe, no matter what region a state came from. The overwhelming pattern of African topics dominating the Security Council may indicate UN norms. It seems too present to just be a coincidence,

especially for states very distant from Africa. While there are undoubtedly pressing issues in Africa, I question if this pattern causes other issues to be neglected, as the African issues are discussed a large portion of the Security Council term.

The case study of Saudi Arabia showed two different aspects of the structural constraints of the UN; one, how states can be affected by the restrictions, and two, how there are democratic elements that can harm the legitimacy of certain UN organs. It seems that state leadership such as Saudi Arabia may capitalize on weaknesses of the United Nations to further their own leadership in their region to fulfill outside motives. The UN can probably serve as an effective platform for states to do this due to its high visibility and widespread involvement.

Based on my research, Morocco and Saudi Arabia did not necessarily have the best attributes to be respectively elected to the Security Council and Human Rights Council, but yet they won these elections. This relates back to the idea of states that have the capability to be involved in the United Nations dominating the system. Both Morocco's Southern Province situation and Saudi Arabia's human rights reputation are clear infractions of the missions of the Security Council and Human Rights Council, and yet they were rewarded in the system with positions. This truly hurts the legitimacy of these organizations, and the United Nations as a whole, as I am sure there are similar infractions in other organs.

Perhaps because these infractions occurred outside of the UN system, it did not affect the states' elections within the UN system. This perceived lack of accountability for actions outside

of the United Nations could be a flaw of having strong norms and the current system in the United Nations. While the previous part explored that the current system of the UN is unfair to MENA, the case studies showed ways the MENA states may have benefited from the democratic elements in the current system. From this study, it seems that norms within the United Nations can become embedded as part of the structure, which may lead to uneven discussion of topics and undeserving states earning positions in the United Nations.

Conclusion

While each study provided different results and analysis of the UN structure, I focused on common themes of representation and legitimacy throughout the two studies. I found that while there are some aspects of the United Nations that are lacking in democratic elements and fair representation, such as the Security Council, even the aspects that have fair democratic procedures, such as the Peacebuilding Commission and Human Rights Council, are harmed by the structure of the United Nations, and could be deemed as illegitimate.

There is an overall problem of states using different UN organs as a platform to portray an image, and once actually being in a decision-making position, being unable to act in the manner they may have wished. This can be seen with the difference in MENA and P5 states consistently prioritizing topics such as the Palestinian and Syrian conflicts in the General Debate, but once elected to the Security Council, a body that may allow these states to have a role in ameliorating these conflicts, they either cannot or do not.

While I discussed the role of norms on the Security Council, I think there is also a disparity of how these states want to be viewed on the world stage, but then how these states act once behind closed doors and matched against other powerful states. All of this makes me question the legitimacy of the General Debate in determining if the issues discussed are truly what UN state members prioritize, or just what is convenient for them to show they are prioritizing. A regional leader like Saudi Arabia may have an interest in appearing highly

engaged in solving the conflicts of Palestine and Syria, but when given the chance to potentially make a difference in UN actions towards these conflicts on the Security Council, it was denied by Saudi leadership to maybe suit their own interests.

As mentioned before with the MENA seat, the United Nations is not an adaptable organization because of its difficult reform process. Looking further, another failure is the precedent-setting nature of every decision and structural reform made to the United Nations. Instead of taking things on a situational basis, the United Nations is expected to make a decision once and uphold this no matter what. While this is beneficial for consistency within the system, this is not beneficial when Saudi Arabia is elected to the Human Rights Council. In this very election, Russia leadership lost the spot on the Human Rights Council because their regional grouping had a competitive election, and the state does not have a great reputation for human rights.

However, a state like Saudi Arabia with a worst reputation for human rights was able to be elected because its regional grouping had a non-competitive election for the four determined regional spots. This is an instance where ideally, the Human Rights Council should have been able to limit the number of spots, or deny Saudi Arabia from serving. Saudi Arabian leadership should probably not be determining policy related to human rights, and organs within the United Nations should be able to have this autonomy. This is the same with the case of Morocco being elected to the Security Council with the persisting Southern Provinces conflict. It is unfortunate that either of these states, and others in different UN organs, are able to serve as decision makers and influence stakeholders on issues they themselves are struggling with.

This leads to how another major structural flaw is the United Nations being based on voluntary governance and how this affects its representation and legitimacy. No one can control

who participates in the UN organs because everything is voluntary. If a state does not have the capability or desire to serve in any of the organs, then they will not. This is partially what allows powerful states to dominate many organs in the United Nations. This also means that the United Nations does have to sacrifice some legitimacy of its organs due to this structure. A certain number of representatives for UN organs will be elected regardless, and if it is a noncompetitive election, it may not matter if they are qualified or even deserving of these positions. The rigidity of the UN structure not only hurts the legitimacy of the UN organs, but also can hurt the legitimacy of its democracy.

While I originally thought that more democratic elements should be included in the United Nations, after studying different UN organs, it is hard to fully advocate for this. I still believe the recognized, consistent MENA seat, along with other sub regional seats, should be added to the Security Council in the best interest of the organ as legitimately representing the diversity of the world today, but there is a problem of almost undeserving or unqualified state members being elected. It is unfair for these states to be allowed to represent stakeholders' interests and decide their fates, when these state leaders have not demonstrated their ability to do so. I argue that while democracy for increased and diverse representation is important for the United Nations' legitimacy as a world government, there perhaps should be more flexibility in the structure to ensure the character of this representation matches the mission of the United Nations.

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Appendix

Security Council Meeting Topics, Session 2001

President's Country	Month	Topic Africa	Topic MEN A	Topic international security	Topic Asia	Topic Europe	Total South America/ Caribbean	Topic Other	Topic Administrative
Mali	December	7	1		2	3			
Jamaica	November	14	4	1	3	3		4	
Ireland	October	9	1	1	4	3		2	
France	September	13		1	2	5		1	
Colombia	August	1	3	4	1	2			
China	July	4	2		3	3			
Bangladesh	June	7	2	4	2	5			
U.S.	May	7	1		2				
U.K.	April	3			1	4		2	
Ukraine	March	7	6	3		10			
Tunisia	February	9	1			2			
Singapore	January	7	1		3	5			

Security Council Meeting Selected Topic Percentages, Session 2001

President's Country	Total % Africa discussed	Total % MENA discussed	Total % international security
Mali	50%	7%	0%
Jamaica	45%	13%	3%
Ireland	41%	5%	5%
France	57%	0%	4%
Colombia	8%	25%	33%
China	31%	15%	0%
Bangladesh	29%	8%	17%
U.S.	70%	10%	0%
U.K.	30%	0%	0%
Ukraine	27%	23%	12%
Tunisia	60%	7%	0%
Singapore	33%	5%	0%

Security Council Meeting Topics, Session 2004

President's Country	Month	Topic Africa	Topic MEN A	Topic international security	Topic Asia	Topic Europe	Total South America/Caribbean	Topic Other	Topic Administration
Algeria	December	8	3	2				2	
USA	November	12	2		4	5	2		
United Kingdom	October	5	7	5	2	3		2	
Spain	September	11	3	2	2		1	1	
Russia	August	5	2		2	2			
Romania	July	6	3	1	1	3		2	
Philippines	June	9	5			6		4	
Pakistan	May	4	3	2	5	1		3	
Germany	April	1	8	3	1	6	1	1	
France	March	8	4	5	2	3			
China	February	5	2		1	2	2		
Chile	January	2	6	4	1	3		4	

Security Council Meeting Selected Topic Percentages, Session 2004

President's Country	Total % Africa discussed	Total % MENA discussed	Total % international security
Algeria	50%	19%	
USA	46%	8%	
United Kingdom	20%	28%	
Spain	52%	14%	
Russia	45%	18%	
Romania	38%	19%	
Philippines	36%	20%	
Pakistan	20%	15%	
Germany	5%	36%	
France	36%	18%	
China	42%	17%	
Chile	10%	30%	

Security Council Meeting Topics, Session 2008

President's Country	Month	Topic Africa	Topic MEN A	Topic international security	Topic Asia	Topic Europe	Total South America/Caribbean	Topic Other	Topic Administrative
Croatia	December	18	9	3	1	6			1
Costa Rica	November	7	2	2	1	2			3
China	October	11	2	2	1	2	3		2
Burkina Faso	September	7	2	4	1	3			
Belgium	August	5	5	3	2	6			2
Vietnam	July	11	2		4	2		2	
U.S.	June	15	5	3	2	4			
U.K.	May	5	3	1	1	2		2	1
South Africa	April	10	6	3		5	1		
Russia	March	5	5	2	4	1			
Panama	February	9	1		3	3		2	
Libya	January	7	4		1	2			

Security Council Meeting Selected Topic Percentages, Session 2008

President's Country	Total % Africa discussed	Total % MENA discussed	Total % terrorism/international security
Croatia	46%	23%	8%
Costa Rica	41%	12%	12%
China	46%	8%	8%
Burkina Faso	41%	12%	24%
Belgium	22%	22%	13%
Vietnam	52%	10%	0%
U.S.	50%	17%	10%
U..K	29%	18%	6%
South Africa	40%	24%	12%
Russia	29%	29%	12%
Panama	50%	6%	0%
Libya	50%	29%	0%

Security Council Meeting Topics, Session 2009

President's Country	Month	Topic Africa	Topic MEN A	Topic international security	Topic Asia	Topic Europe	Total South America/ Caribbean	Topic Other	Topic Administration
Burkina Faso	December	18	4	1		4			
Austria	November	7	3		1	2		2	
Vietnam	October	7	2	2	3	1	1		
U.S.	September	5	1	2	1		3		
U.K.	August		5	2				1	
Uganda	July	14	2	1	3	1			
Turkey	June	9	4		3	4		2	
Russia	May	8	2		2	3			
Mexico	April	9	3	2	2	1	2	2	
Libya	March	6	3		2	2	1		
Japan	February	3	2		2	3			
France	January	8	5		2			3	

Security Council Meeting Selected Topic Percentages, Session 2009

President's Country	Total % Africa discussed	Total % MENA discussed	Total % international security
Burkina Faso	62%	14%	3%
Austria	39%	17%	0%
Vietnam	39%	11%	11%
USA	42%	8%	17%
UK	0%	50%	20%
Uganda	61%	9%	4%
Turkey	36%	16%	0%
Russia	47%	12%	0%
Mexico	43%	14%	10%
Libya	43%	21%	0%
Japan	30%	20%	0%
France	40%	25%	0%

Security Council Meeting Topics, Session 2012

President's Country	Month	Topic Africa	Topic MENA	Topic International security	Topic Asia	Topic Europe	Topic South America/Caribbean	Topic Other	Topic Administration
Morocco	December	8	3	2	2	2	0	0	
India	November	8	7	3	2	2	0		
Guatemala	October	6	2	3	1		2		
Germany	September	6	3	1	1		1	2	
France	August	2	5			1			
Colombia	July	13	7			2			
China	June	9	3	3	2			3	
Azerbaijan	May	7	4	2		2			
United States	April	7	8	4	1				
United Kingdom	March	6	6	1	2		1		
Togo	February	9	3	2	3	3	1		
South Africa	January	5	4	4					

Security Council Meeting Selected Topic Percentages, Session 2012

President's Country	Total % Africa discussed	Total % MENA discussed	Total % international security
Mali	50%	7%	0%
Jamaica	45%	13%	3%
Ireland	41%	5%	5%
France	57%	0%	4%
Colombia	8%	25%	33%
China	31%	15%	0%
Bangladesh	29%	8%	17%
USA	70%	10%	0%
UK	30%	0%	0%
Ukraine	27%	23%	12%
Tunisia	60%	7%	0%
Singapore	33%	5%	0%

Security Council Meeting Topics, Session 2013 (Control)

President's Country	Month	Topic Africa	Topic MENA	Topic International security	Topic Asia	Topic Europe	Total South America/ Caribbean	Topic Other	Topic Administrative
France	December	10	4	2	1	1			
China	November	10	3		1	2			
Azerbaijan	October	6	3	2	1		1	1	
Australia	September	6	2	2	1				
Argentina	August	4	3	2		1	2	1	
U.S.	July	14	5	1		2		2	
U.K.	June	6	5	4	1	2		1	
Togo	May	8	2			2			
Rwanda	April	7	6	1					
Russia	March	8	3	1	1	3	1		
Republic of Korea	February	7	3	1				2	
Pakistan	January	7	3	3	1	2			

Security Council Meeting Selected Topic Percentages, Session 2013

President's Country	Total % Africa discussed	Total % MENA discussed	Total % international security
France	50%	20%	10%
China	59%	18%	0%
Azerbaijan	35%	18%	12%
Australia	55%	18%	18%
Argentina	29%	21%	14%
U.S.	58%	21%	4%
United Kingdom	27%	23%	18%
Togo	57%	14%	0%
Rwanda	44%	38%	6%
Russia	47%	18%	6%
Republic of Korea	50%	21%	7%
Pakistan	39%	17%	17%

Security Council Meeting Topics, 2016

President's Country	Month	Topic Africa	Topic MEN A	Topic international security	Topic Asia	Topic Europe	Total South America/ Caribbean	Topic Other	Topic Administrative
Spain	December	11	12	3	3	2			2
Senegal	November	8	7	4	1	2			1
Russia	October	4	5	4			3		2
New Zealand	September	2	5	2	1		2	1	
Malaysia	August	5	5	1		1			2
Japan	July	12	6	1		2			1
France	June	10	7	3	1	2		1	
Egypt	May	6	5	3		2		1	2
China	April	12	7	2		1			
Angola	March	10	6	3	3		2		
Venezuela	February	7	7	2		3		1	1
Uruguay	January	9	3			2	1	1	1

Security Council Meeting Selected Topic Percentages, Session 2016

President's Country	Total % Africa discussed	Total % MENA discussed	Total % international security
Spain	32%	35%	9%
Senegal	33%	29%	17%
Russia	22%	28%	22%
New Zealand	15%	38%	15%
Malaysia	36%	36%	7%
Japan	52%	26%	4%
France	38%	27%	12%
Egypt	32%	26%	16%
China	52%	30%	9%
Angola	38%	23%	12%
Venezuela	32%	32%	9%
Uruguay	53%	18%	0%