

Hello, my name is Christopher Tansella.

I am currently a candidate for a Master in Applied Politics from the University of Wilfrid Laurier (WLU). Prior to attending WLU, I attended the University of Toronto where I obtained a Bachelor of Arts degree with a specialist in political science.

Specializing in political science allowed



me to focus a majority of my studies taking political science courses. I took courses in political methods, comparative politics, international relations, international law, provincial and Eastern European politics. This wide array of courses has given me not only a deeper understanding of political theories and issues but also the knowledge to look at various issues from different lenses such as a legal, national or international perspective.

During my four years at UofT I worked part time at a large financial institution in a branch (store for my American counterparts) about 20 hours a week. The work I performed while working there had almost nothing to do with political science. However, the conversations I had with many of my regular and non-regular clients about political issues helped give me a fresh perspective on certain topics. A common thread that was brought up in almost every discussion was the distrust and ineffectiveness of people involved in politics and local and international institutions.

All of my experiences with school and work have influenced my work and interests in political science. My goal now is to broaden my educational horizon and gain more experience by attending conferences and being more active in the political science community (I got a whopping 22 views on my Academia.edu page so far). Being given the chance to attend this conference would help give me the opportunity to kick-start my journey. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Towards a (More) Workable World
A look at the United Nations' Failure to Handle Global Security Issues
Christopher Tansella

A major problem that is currently affecting and will continue to affect the global community is global security. Global security for the purpose of this paper refers to security concerns dealing directly and indirectly with the five permanent UNSC members. As global conflicts begin to heat up, pressure is being placed on the United Nations (UN) to contain or at least minimize these conflicts. The UN was created to allow for a global forum for all members to handle their issues in a civil way. One major task of the UN through the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) is to manage security issues between states. This paper will address how the UN as a whole, in its current capacity is unable to handle major global security issues; this paper will also suggest a reform that is necessary if the UN is to be able to handle and or contain global security conflicts.

Recent global events support this notion that the UN and the UNSC are unable to handle major global security concerns. The annexation of Crimea by the Russian Federation serves as a prime example of the UN and the UNSC's inability to properly handle global security conflicts. The Russian Federation was able to annex

Crimea with complete impunity from the UNSC and essentially only moral condemnation by the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA). On March 14th, 2014 Russia vetoed a UNSC resolution addressing the takeover of Crimea and the assertion of Ukraine's sovereignty, undisputedly because it was in Russia's interest to do so.¹ On March 27th, 2014 the UNGA adopted a resolution reaffirming Ukraine's sovereignty and calling the annexation of Crimea and the referendum that occurred illegal; however this vote was non-binding and seen as symbolic in nature.²

The UNGA and the UNSC exhausted all of its meaningful power. The current design of the UNGA and the UNSC is not capable of dealing with major global security concerns. The UNGA has no meaningful power to deal with situations like this, and the UNSC can be placed into a gridlock with the will of only one of the five permanent members.

Instead of a swift response from the UNSC, which was created, in theory, to handle matters like the Crimea case, the UNSC was and is left in a paralytic state. Ukraine has as an alternative to the UNSC increased its dialogue with the regional security organization NATO. From a span of eight months from March 2014 to April 2015 there have been 11 NATO-Ukraine milestone relation events compared to 11 milestones that occurred from April 2008 to February 2013, a span of roughly six

¹ "UN Security Council Action on Crimea Referendum Blocked." *UN News Centre*. United Nations, 15 Mar. 2014. Web. 03 Aug. 2015.

² "General Assembly Adopts Resolution Calling upon States Not to Recognize Changes in Status of Crimea Region | Meetings Coverage and Press Releases." *UN News Center*. UN, 27 Mar. 2014. Web. 03 Aug. 2015. "Ukraine: UN Condemns Crimea Vote as IMF and US Back Loans - BBC News." *BBC News*. British Broadcasting Centre, 27 Mar. 2014. Web. 03 Aug. 2015.

years.³ This unprecedented increase in security cooperation and communication between NATO and Ukraine has signalled that Ukraine is looking for protection and a deterrent against further Russian aggression and that it cannot get this protection through the UNSC.

Furthermore, the UNGA is essentially relying on individual countries and other regional organizations (such as the European Union) to act on the UNGA's behalf in the form of sanctions indirectly. The UNGA passed a resolution condemning Russia but does not have the power or ability to sanction Russia directly. Instead of dealing with Russia on a unified front, members of the global community have been forced to act individually. The West (led by the USA) has implemented and enforced a large majority of the sanctions against Russia while most of South America, Africa, and Asia have avoided placing sanctions on Russia. Countries may have avoided placing sanctions of Russia due to fears of economic retaliation or being singled out by the Kremlin. Action against Russia has come by way of individual response or regional response but not as a unified global response.

Although the Crimea case is only one example of the UNGA and UNSC's failure to act on a global security issue, it serves as an indicator of the UNGA and UNSC's (in)ability to deal with future global security issues. What will stop Russia from expanding to other territories? What will stop China from annexing disputed territory? The USA, Britain and France are more unlikely to take over any

³ "NATO's Relations with Ukraine-Milestones In Relations." *North Atlantic Treaty Organization*. NATO, 06 May 2015. Web. 03 Aug. 2015.

territories, but it is still possible. War at this point in history will most likely lead to mutually assured destruction. If the world maintains the current status quo of avoiding global cooperation in the UN to hammer out fair deals and compromise in certain cases, some serious problems are bound to arise. If Russia crosses a NATO drawn a line in Ukraine, what will the ramifications be? War drums, a drawing of another line, another Iron Wall? The UNGA or UNSC without any doubt in its current state will be ineffective in dealing with scenarios like the one above.

A solution to the problem of global security in a peaceful non-combative way (regional standoffs for example between NATO and Russia) can only be achieved through UNSC and UNGA reform and unified global action. This paper will propose an outline of a plan to reform the UNSC and the UNGA to increase its effectiveness in handling of global security issues. This plan calls for the reduction of the five permanent members veto power and the increase in power of the UNGA to allow it to override the veto power of the UNSC. The five permanent members of the UNSC would keep their veto power, however when they veto a resolution that was carried by the majority of the other UNSC members, the resolution would now be sent to the UNGA for a vote. A super-majority of 70% of the UNGA would then be required to overrule the decision of the permanent member's veto. At this point, the parties involved in the resolution would have three options, comply with the resolution, opt for binding arbitration with a neutral third party council, or defy the will of the UN.

The first option is self-explanatory. The second option binding arbitration gives a gives a party that feels it was treated unjustly a chance to engage with this UN process without feeling the need to disengage completely. This option is

designed to keep parties involved in the resolution process and to avoid further escalation. During this arbitration process, the parties would be able to present their grievances, solutions and case to the panel to make sure their plea is completely showcased. The panel would then examine all the all the information about the case, along with all relevant UN treaties, protocols, and international law and have three options. Uphold the resolution in full; uphold the resolution with adjustments based on their findings, and lastly if the panel finds absolutely no basis for the resolution void it. The last option for the council is reserved for extreme cases where the UNGA might have acted on pure partisanship to punish or get retribution against a party (a global north vs. global south extreme scenario).

The last option a country has is to defy the resolution of the UNSC and UNGA or arbitration panel. At this stage, unified global action through enforcement of the resolution becomes key. Enforcement in most cases would be in the form of economic and political sanctions, or in extreme cases military escalation. 99.99% of the time economic and political sanctions may be enough to curb the unwanted behaviour of a state if the UNGA members remain unified and apply the sanctions unilaterally. If 70% of the countries in the world vote to take action, there should be at the minimum 70% of the countries enforcing sanctions, hopefully more if other countries that abstained or voted against want to respect the will of the UNGA.

This plan for UNGA and UNSC reform is only being discussed on a basic level and needs further exploration. There are of course negatives and positives to this paper's plan, which would need to be addressed in a longer paper, but the main purpose of this plan is to highlight the need for meaningful reform to the UN's

structure to help it better deal with global security issues. However, reform that changes the power structure of the UNSC and the UNGA is a sensitive and a difficult issue to address. Especially when this reform is designed to deal with global security issues involving the five permanent members' of the UNSC. There are two options available, maintain the current status quo and resort to regional security standoffs, or opt for reform that moves to unify states globally and calls for unified global action to end conflicts peacefully.