

How efficient is the  
united nations  
security council in  
promoting global  
security...



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HOW EFFICIENT IS THE UNITED NATIONS SECURITY COUNCIL IN PROMOTING GLOBAL SECURITY (WITH SPECIFIC REFERENCE TO DARFUR AND IRAQ)? “ Mr.

Secretary General, Mr. President, distinguished delegates, and ladies and gentlemen: We meet one year and one day after a terrorist attack brought grief to my country, and brought grief to many citizens of our world.

Yesterday, we remembered the innocent lives taken that terrible morning.

Today we turn to the urgent duty of protecting other lives, without illusion and without fear. (President George W. Bush cited in Scott et al. , 2004 p55)

The United Nations Security Council has a very integral role to play in promoting Global Security. Today, there is the question of how efficient the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) is in this endeavour especially in light of several key happenings across the developed and developing nations of the world. The focus of this paper is the efficiency in the execution of this role in two countries: Sudan (Darfur specifically) and Iraq.

At present, Darfur in Western Sudan is faced with a disheartening case of civil wars and mass genocide led by government inspired militias. Iraq has maintained negative popularity particularly since the Persian Gulf Crisis of 1990 and more recently the US-Iraq war of 2003. It is critical in such a discourse to first briefly highlight the roles and responsibilities of this body. The United Nations grew out of the need to create a world of hope, justice and peace (Scott et al. , 2004).

Among the functions listed under the charter, the United Nations Security Council is responsible for peace and security, investigations into disputes which can become international, offer methods of adjustments, determine

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the existence of a threat and recommend actions, to call on Members to apply economic sanctions and other non- forceful measures and it is important to note that the United Nations was never intended in its formation to bring about world peace (Spiegel et al. , 2004) .

In a speech made to the United Nations General Assembly by United States President George Bush “ We created the United Nations Security Council, so that, unlike the League of Nations, our deliberations would be more than talk...we dedicated ourselves to standards of human dignity shared by all, and to a system of security defended by all. ” (Bush 2002 cited in Scott et al. 2004: 55-56). President Bush made this speech to the United Nations General Assembly about the difficulty in maintaining world peace with all the regional conflicts which exist and affirmed his commitment to help in this fight.

At the same time, it is also argued that the United States of America is a big global bully (Snarr and Snarr 2005), always plotting and scheming in an attempt at creating an excuse for them to invade a country when in truth they are really after the resources of that country. It is often believed that the USA offers its help with ulterior motives and not sincerity. The first question then, is, what can poor Darfur offer?

The US has claimed that its actions are out of concern and where limited is the result of a sluggish United Nations Security Council (Baker 2008). On September 17, 2006 twenty thousand demonstrators around the world marched against the frenzy of ethnic killings and displacement in Darfur

(Western Sudan); hoping that the Sudanese government would allow UN <https://assignbuster.com/how-efficient-is-the-united-nations-security-council-in-promoting-global-security-with-specific-reference-to-darfur-and-iraq-assignment/>

peacekeeping troops to enter (Majendie 2006). The Economist Magazine (Mission Impossible, 2007) showed that ethnic wars and religious violence are not by any means uncommon phenomena.

In fact, they argue that following the Cold War, the UN, with no standing army, little equipment, military or peacekeeping experience and training had to grapple with these uncomfortable realities and today the UN Security Council needs much more resources in order to accomplish peacekeeping (Spiegel et al. 2004). Today, it is estimated that about 300, 000 civilians have been killed and over 2 million displaced at the hands of Sudanese militias (The Economist Magazine 2007).

Majendie (2006) wrote also of the counter- protest to the ' Day for Darfur' march on September 17th. He argued that these activists marched to U. N offices to oppose new officials being brought into Darfur and quoted the Sudan Council of Voluntary Agencies who argued that UN intervention would merely " add to the complexity of an already volatile situation" (Majendie, 2006). The United Nations is weakened when countries do not work together in multilateral institutions and Scott et al. 2004) pointed out that today is a new age that demands the concerted effort of all nations. In point of fact, The Economist Magazine (A Chance for a Safer World, 2007) clearly argues that the UN's Security Council needs the full support of countries like China for instance to allow forceful and successful intervention. The United States of America has been seen as the harshest critic of the United Nations and quite often turn to the UNSC for help with peacekeeping or the saving of lives (A Chance for a Safer World, 2007).

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Without doubt, the United Nations has been unable to functionally execute certain tasks but their few achievements in Darfur and other areas cannot go unnoticed considering that their efforts have been thwarted. " In the south, UN forces have since 2005 been keeping the peace after the end of a separate and even bloodier civil war that had lasted for decades...In Congo, one of the largest UN forces ever assembled has just overseen the transition to free elections in another vast country emerging from decades of war. (The Economist Magazine, 2007 p9) In an article entitled ' Call the Blue helmets' in the Economist Magazine (2007) it was reported that about 74, 000 military personnel were involved in peacekeeping efforts by the UN in an attempt at restoring peace and stability. So the U. N is not just providing food for stricken areas in 50 dire countries dependent on the United Nation's World Food Programme (A Chance for a Safer World, 2007) but the ' blue helmets' are in demand.

The African Union for example although initially being against outside intervention, have turned over its operation in Burundi to the United Nations and wants the ' blue helmets' to relieve their exhausted AU peacekeepers in Darfur (Call the Blue helmets, 2007). The UN Security Council could not just invade Darfur as the UN is constrained by international law and so as long as national sovereignty remains basic to international relations, so will the UN's powers be limited (Spiegel et al. 2004).

The point is, states are often reluctant to give up any amount of sovereignty to an international organization especially since it is already perceived that the UN is merely another face of the United States. There is no doubt that

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decisions of the UN usually reflect those of the permanent five members (China, France, Russia, United Kingdom and United States) and this serves as a limitation for the United Nations Security Council in carrying out its missions. With this in mind, how effective can such a body be?

There will quite often be some conflict of interest as most times, a member state could be involved in some way or another to the crisis or those responsible for the crisis. The continuation of the conflict in Darfur, President Bush blames on the lethargic behaviour of the United Nations and argued that he responded to the situation the best way he could- through humanitarian aid, imposing sanctions against Sudanese officials and promoting a viable peacekeeping plan (Baker 2008). The President of the Save Darfur Coalition (Jerry Fowler) however argued that these efforts have clearly been insufficient. So far, just 9, 000 peacekeepers are on the ground and major military powers have yet to come up with needed helicopters. China has blocked sanctions at the U. N. Security Council. " (Jerry Fowler 2008 cited in Baker 2008, pA09) In 2003, rebels like the Janjaweds for example began to attack government targets as it was their claim that the government was oppressing blacks and favouring Arabs. There has always been some amount of upheaval over land in Darfur and with the growth of rebel groups it has become even more of an issue.

Peace talks are in progress between the government and most of the countless rebel groups but the new UN-AU force needs to be deployed in Darfur for violence to end (BBC News 2007). Every group wants to take control and so the fighting will persist and it is made to appear that the UN

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Security Council has done nothing to counter this. Up until 2004, all that came out of the conflict in Darfur, was a statement by the President of the Security Council warning the Sudanese government to disarm the Janjaweed militias (Human Rights Watch 2005).

After Darfur became a part of their agenda, “ The Security Council became more strict on the situation as human rights violations were in abundance. “ By July 2004, stronger measures directed at the government were justified and necessary, but they weren’t adopted because at least one permanent member: China and possibly another Russia presumably would have vetoed any resolution that included sanctions against the government or authorized direct U. N. intervention. ” (Human Rights Watch 2005 p )

Iraq has for years been accused of creating weapons of mass destruction and shielding terrorists. President Bush, speaking to the United Nations General Assembly was in agreement with the allegations regarding Iraq; that the situation is out of control and must be given grave ultimatums. “ 12 years ago, Iraq invaded Kuwait without provocation. And the regime’s forces were poised to continue their march to seize other countries and their resources. Had Saddam Hussien been appeased instead of stopped, he would have endangered the peace and stability of the world.

Yet this aggression was stopped- by the might of coalition forces and the will of the United Nations. ” (President George W. Bush cited in Scott et al. , 2004 p56) The President went on to report a UN commission on Human Rights that found that Iraq had violated basic human rights laws and clearly displayed total disregard for UN authority (Scott et al. 2004). Scott et al. (2004) argued <https://assignbuster.com/how-efficient-is-the-united-nations-security-council-in-promoting-global-security-with-specific-reference-to-darfur-and-iraq-assignment/>

that the United Nations Security Council urged Iraq on numerous occasions (specifically 1991, 1994, 1996, 1997 and 1999) to renounce all involvement in terrorism and they have yet to comply.

This is cause for concern as the UN investigators allege Iraq possession of biological, chemical and nuclear weapons threatening not only countries like Iran and Israel but Western governments like the United States of America. Iraq's ability to outwit the United Nations suggests that the task of peacekeeping is perhaps too unmanageable. However, it must be noted that the UN does not have as much power in intervening in countries political affairs as should have been the case in Iraq or Sudan.

The UN tried the ' Oil for Food Programme' with Iraq but as soon as Iraq was suspected to be participants in terrorists plots, the UN had the programme discontinued. Traub (The UN and Iraq: Moving Forward, 2007) pointed out that although UN intervention in Iraq would not be as successful as would be desired, the UN is the best alternative. With this in mind, he postulated certain recommendations he felt would make them gain access and appease the situation in Iraq where he sees a state of ' calamitous deadlock'.

Among the recommendations made, Traub (The UN and Iraq: Moving Forward, 2007) pointed to the Iraqi political groups and urged that the UN send in the right people rather than more people. A key ingredient he stressed also was US support and the support of allies of the United States. At the same time, it has been argued that the claim of Iraq possessing weapons of Mass Destruction in Iraq for instance was a plot and David Kay



(Chief Weapons Inspector for the US) stated on BBC News in 2004 that these weapons did not exist in actuality (Snarr and Snarr 2005).

In this same war, the US, claiming to protect its national interest (that being security) used veto power and went against UN sentiments against the war (Spiegel et al. 2004). The US has not been sanctioned and this goes to show the power of the great United States as it would appear to many that they can do as they like as long as they have some crafty justification. Many then can argue that the United Nations Security Council is a bark without bite as most of what they do is talk.

As was alluded to earlier (Page 2), the United Nations was intended to outdo its precursor- the League of Nations- which was felt to be ' just talk' but after almost 63 years, is the United Nations Security Council mostly talk... or action? This paper begs to argue that the age in which the UN now exists poses grave problems but the UN still remains the most viable organization in promoting Global Security The proliferation of various kinds of weapons is largely responsible for the potent threat to global security. More weapons means more conflict. " (Snarr and Snarr 2005 p13). Chemical, Biological and Nuclear Weapons have been transcending borders and Iraq allegedly possessed and intended to use these weapons on countries of the West particularly the United States. The fact that the views of the UN Security Council has been clearly made irrelevant as the US waged war against Iraq without sanction even five years later shows that the UN is only strong enough for some countries.

The UN now has to find a way to adopt its structures and missions to the changing international systems and mobilize resources of all member states (Spiegel et al. 2004). The United Nations Security Council has been as effective as it can be. YES, Darfur has been neglected in many ways and the global politics of oil comes out even in the ' Oil for Food' Programme in Iraq but the UN has done much in terms of peacekeeping. " It has not brought about world peace, it cannot do so, and it was never intended to. (Spiegel et al. 2004 p578). One cannot expect a miracle of the United Nations and indeed, the UN Security Council has failed in many ways, made bad decisions and have proven weak in various ways and on many occasions but it has achieved much more than areas like Darfur and Iraq could have done on their own and have tried to promote some level of peace in these territories although some might contest this point. Countries prize their sovereignty and do not wish to have US intrusion.

Until the UN Security Council ceases to merely mirror the interests of ' The Big 5', co-operation will continue to be a big problem. In the meanwhile, the United Nations Security Council is still regarded as THE alternative regardless of the numerous complaints or criticisms especially from the United States which often serves as an instigator, getting itself in tight spots and even using the UN as a scapegoat. How has the US done so?

It neglects the sudden irrational decisions it makes and still expects the UN to be on her side, thwarting the UN and its decisions and therefore serving as one of the major obstacles of the United Nations Security Council. In this era, global security is only guaranteed through a collective stance and the

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UN Security Council does not offer this in actuality; however it is at present the most effective organization geared at promoting global security.

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