Leading the disenfranchised or joining the establishment? India, Brazil, and the UN Security Council

Oliver Stuenkel

This paper compares Brazil's and India's strategy to obtain a permanent seat on the UN Security Council and the implications this has for both countries' identities. On the one hand, Brazil and India align with developing nations and jointly press for more inclusive global governance. On the other hand, critics have pointed out that Brazil's attempt to enter the UN Security Council as a permanent member is not entirely about democratizing the UN, but rather about creating an "expanded oligarchy". This article seeks to better understand the nature of this dilemma, comparing how both countries deal with this transition.

Key words: UN Security Council, Brazil, India

Este artigo compara a estrategia brasileira com a estrategia indiana para se tornarem membro permanente no Conselho de Segurança. Este projeto tem implicações profundas para a identidade e a posição dos dois países no cenário internacional. Por um lado, o Brasil e a Índia mantém sua aliança com os países em desenvolvimento, e juntamente pressionam os países estabelecidos para reformar as instituições internacionais. Por outro lado, a tentativa brasileira e indiana de tornarem-se membro permanente não é apenas um projeto de democratização da governança global, mas também fruto da própria ambição de fazer parte de uma "oligarchia expandida", que pode causar críticas no mundo em desenvolvimento. O artigo procura entender melhor a natureza deste dilema, comparando como os dois países lidam com esta transição.

Palavras-chave: Conselho de Segurança das Nações Unidas, Brasil, Índia

Permanent UN Security Council membership – or the lack thereof – is a defining factor of a nation's geopolitical status and position. Furthermore, it fundamentally affects the country's outlook and overall understanding of the global political system. Despite occasional contradictory rhetoric, all permanent UN Security Council members, including China, regard the international order as fundamentally sound and can thus be described as "status quo powers". In addition, the "P5" have been largely responsible for the fact that all

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attempts to enlarge the number of permanent members have proved illusive.

Conversely, emerging powers who are not permanent members of the most prestigious institution of the world, such as Brazil and India, have built their foreign policy identity around the fact that they are excluded. Their "membership" of the disenfranchised has, more than anything, shaped both their rhetoric and their worldview of a system that is fundamentally unjust.

At the same time, Brazil and India are the most active advocates for UN Security Council expansion. This creates a dilemma for both actors. Allied to, and many times the leaders of, developing countries without any perspective to be included into a powerful international institution such as the UN Security Council, both Brazil and India profess to defend the disenfranchised. Their effort to become permanent members, however, is likely to turn them into status quo powers, and it is unclear in how far they would

continue to support the voice of the poor once they form part of the ruling oligarchic class. In fact, several poor countries in all regions of the world have actively sought to prevent Brazil and India from entering the UNSC as permanent members, and African countries –arguably the most disadvantaged and the least integrated into international structures – have been the most obstinate with regard to expansion.

This paper thus seeks to explore the ways Brazil and India attempt to align their objective of a more equitable world order with a greater say for the poor with their own ambitions to become a global actor established in today's international structures. This struggle symbolizes the transition both countries are undergoing internally, lifting millions out of poverty, becoming more competitive, and with interests slowly moving away from those of other developing countries, aligning with those of richer countries. While their rhetoric often indicates that they

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remain aligned with the developing world, there is increasing evidence that their interests are beginning to diverge from those of the G77. For example, both Brazil and India have turned into lenders of the IMF and the World Bank.

This paper is divided into three parts. First, it gives a brief overview over the history of the UN Security Council to put the discussion into context. Secondly, it seeks to analyze both Brazil's and India's stance towards UNSC reform and the dilemma Brazil and India find themselves in. What have both countries done to obtain permanent membership, and how do they deal with the tensions this causes in their efforts to defend the poor? Or is their strategy of styling themselves as the defenders of the dispossessed deliberate and part of their tactic to permanently enter the UNSC as representatives of the poor? Finally, the question is analyzed whether Brazil and India can continue to act as Third World leaders after they have turned into permanent UNSC members and into established status quo powers. How will they change their rhetoric to maintain their credibility among the poor, a group of countries over which they wield an enormous influence, as their leadership during trade negotiations over the past years shows?

1. The UN Security Council

As arguably the most important international institution of all, the UN Security Council (hereafter UNSC) remains the symbol of global governance and the only judge for defining what amounts to a threat to international peace.[1] Despite its importance, remarkably little has been written about the Council, as Edward Luck points out.[2]

The Security Council built on the experiences of the League of Nations. In order to strengthen the new institution's ability, the Council's creators made three fundamental changes. First, they gave the organ enforcement capabilities. Second, they discarded the unanimity role, which was seen as one of the major reasons for the League's failure[3], and gave veto power to a small number of powerful states.[4] Its enforcement authority is unique in the history of international institutions.[5] To compensate the smaller nations, the UN General Assembly (hereafter UNGA) was given the right to discuss security matters under article 10 and give recommendations to the UNSC. The voting procedures in the UNSC were agreed upon during the Yalta Conference by Roosevelt, Stalin and Churchill in February 1945, and adopted in June of the same year at the UN conference in San Francisco.[6]

The Security Council held its first session in 1946 in London. Since then, the Council has existed in continuous session in New York City. The Council consists of 15 members: 5 veto-wielding permanent members (China, France, Russia, United Kingdom, and United States, called the "P 5"[7]) and 10 elected non-permanent members with two-year terms. In order to respond quickly to crisis situations, representatives of the countries occupying the Council must always be present. Few rules have changed since the Council's inception in 1945. Articles 23 and 27 of the UN Charter were amended in 1965, increasing the Council's membership from eleven to fifteen, increasing the necessary votes for the adoption of resolutions from seven to nine.[8]

The Cold War largely immobilized the UNSC[9], but even after a brief moment of hope at the Cold War, criticism persisted.[10] In 1990, the UNSC authorized the use of force for the second time in history, and a large coalition force under US leadership defeated Iraq.[11] In 1992, John Major captured the spirit of the time when he argued that at last the UNSC was fulfilling the role envisioned by the UN's founders in 1945.[12] Since then, however, the Council proved to be a largely ineffective instrument in the context of collective security, failing to take action in the face of horrific human suffering in Rwanda and former Yugoslavia, and making serious mistakes with regards

to the Somalia mission, which ended unsuccessfully in 1995.[13] "The veto", John English and Andrew Cooper argued in 2009, "plays havoc with the United Nations."[14] "The Security Council failed", John Glennon announced in a similar vein in 2003, after US President Bush had decided to invade Iraq. He predicted that the UNSC would go the same way the League of Nations did sixty-five years before.[15] One of the major criticisms voiced is the lack of representativeness.[16] A New York Times editorial from 2004 reflected a common opinion when it argued that "the Security Council['s] membership…. reflects the power relations of 1945, not 2004."[17] Reform efforts largely focused on the following categories: the size of an enlarged Security Council, the categories of membership, the question of regional representation, the question of the veto, the working methods of the Security Council and the relationship between the Security Council and the General Assembly.[18]

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Yet the UNSC proved resilient, adapting to some changing realities.[19] In 1965, over initial Soviet opposition due to continued Taiwanese occupation of the permanent seat, the Security Council underwent reform and increased the number of members from eleven to fifteen.[20] Now, nine instead of seven votes were needed to pass a resolution.[21] This was largely done to reflect the new realities after the wave of decolonization in the 1960s which had caused the number of UN members to increase from 51 to 114.[22] In 1971, mainland China was handed the seat until then occupied by the government in Taipeh. In 1991, Russia was allowed to hold on to the seat until then assigned to the Soviet Union.[23] Despite frequent criticism, there has been no military conflict between members of the UNSC since its inception. Jochen Prantl argues that the Security Council is largely functional, and that conclusions of failure premature.[24]

In other instances, the UNSC has been slow to change.[25] Some years after the expansion in 1965, reform pressure resumed due to the growing number of underrepresented African countries. Efforts for reform reached another high when Razali Ismael, a Malaysian diplomat, submitted to the working group a carefully crafted reform proposal in 1997. Yet too few members were willing to openly support the plan to create the necessary political momentum, and the plan was not put to vote in the General Assembly.[26]

In 2002, Kofi Annan made the rare move for a Secretary General to get personally involved in the reform efforts, pursuing the "most ambitious overhaul of the United Nations since its inception".[27] The pressure to reform had been particularly high since the 1990s, which can paradoxically be explained by the relative successes of the Council after the end of the Cold War- as seen by the examples of Kuwait[28] He presented the report produced by the high-level commission he had appointed to make proposals about how to deal with "threats, challenges and change" confronting the United Nations. While the panel specifically warned about solely focusing on the recommendations on how to reform the UNSC, just this happened.[29] The report proposed two reform options both of which recommended an expansion from fifteen to twenty-four members. One proposal includes Brazil and India as permanent members, the other one offers a rotation principle which would give the two countries semi-permanent status.[30]

As a response to Annan's efforts, reform efforts came relatively close to success in 2005, when the General Assembly could not agree on a reform proposal by the G4.[31] This specific proposal would have included Germany, Brazil, Japan, India and two African countries as permanent members without veto power. Too many key decision makers, however, opposed at least one of the G4 members. Particularly the United States only viewed Japan's bid favorably.[32] In addition, 43 African countries, submitted their own proposal which included veto power for two African nations, because non-permanent members without a veto have significantly less power than veto-wielding members.[33] None of the plans received enough endorsement to be put to vote in the General Assembly. Other, less realistic reform proposals are to give the International Court of Justice (ICJ) the power to "judicially review" decisions by the UNSC to hold it more accountable.[34]

After the failure in 2005, other proposals surge occasionally, but there is overall fatigue with regards to reform. In 2006, the "Small 5" ("S-5") launched a more modest reform proposal that merely included procedural reforms but no expansion, and Panama later launched a "transitional proposal" which foresaw five-year terms for non-permanent members with the possibility of becoming permanent members without veto power after four reelections.[35] Yet, despite numerous efforts within the General Assembly's Working Group on the subject (established in 1993), successful reform seems unlikely at this point.[36]

2. Brazil and the UN Security Council

Brazil attempted, with the support of the United States, to be included as a permanent member of the UNSC at its inceptions, but its efforts were thwarted by the United Kingdom and the Soviet Union during the Yalta Conference.[37] As a consolation prize, Brazil was elected as a non-permanent member during the first selection process. In addition, Brazil was granted the right to speak first at General Assembly meetings. Since then, Brazil has been a non-permanent member nine times, currently serving for the tenth time.[38] Yehuda Blum argues that Brazil has become a de facto "semi-permanent" member of the UNSC.[39] Brazil is thus, together with Japan, the country that has held a non-permanent seat for the longest period of time (18 years in total as of January 2010). Brazil is also one of the most vocal supporters for reform, asking for greater influence and responsibility for emerging powers such as itself.

A permanent seat on the UN Security Council has been, at varying degrees of intensity, the objective of Brazil's foreign policy over the past decades, but it has intensified significantly under Presidents Cardoso (1995-2002) and President Lula (2003-2010).[40] There are two types of reform Brazil has sought in the past. First, and most importantly, it has argued for membership expansion. Secondly, it has at times lobbied for an alteration of the P5's veto rights. President Itamar Franco (1992-1995) articulated this goal more clearly than his predecessors. President Cardoso (1995-2002) mentioned it more often still, but continued to have restraints out of respect for Brazil's faltering neighbor Argentina.[41] In addition, Cardoso argued that UNSC reform was unlikely, and that Brazil should focus on G8 reform instead.[42] President Lula (2003-2010) was more vocal still and made a permanent seat for the UN Security Council a key goal of Brazil's foreign policy strategy.[43]

Since its earliest efforts to join the Council, Brazil has argued along similar lines, stressing that its inclusion would increase the Council's legitimacy. As President Lula argued in 2008 in the UN General Assembly, "today's structure has been frozen for six decades and does not relate to the challenges of today's world. Its distorted form of representation stands between us and the multilateral world to which we aspire."[44] Brazil considers the UN Security Council as the only organ with a legitimate enforcement capacity. This became obvious in 2002 and 2003, when both President Cardoso (1995-2002) and President Lula (2003-2010) argued that war against Iraq would only be justifiable if authorized by the UN Security Council.[45]

From a more realist point of view, Brazil's behavior can be explained differently. Since Brazil lacks significant military power, it regards multilateralism as the only way to project its power and influence outside of its borders. Since Brazil lives in an exceptionally peaceful neighborhood, it is unlikely that Brazil will ever engage in a military build-up. The United Nations, and a permanent seat on the UNSC, are therefore seen, largely out of necessity, as one of Brazil's best bets to turn itself into a global actor.[46]

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Assessing Brazil's strategy with regards to UNSC has been widely popular among scholars, while few have analyzed reform proposals of the UN's other entities[47], and it at times seemed as though this particular topic eclipsed all other matters related to the United Nations.[48]

Brazil's efforts are also motivated by the belief that Brazil deserves a more prominent role as the South American representative and the belief that international institutions are more legitimate and effective if developing countries are adequately represented.[49] While some conservative voices have denounced the quest for UNSC as an "unnecessary adventure", there is now a sold consensus that Brazil deserves a permanent seat.[50] For Brazil, a reformed Security Council reflects on the legitimacy and thus on the effectiveness of the entire UN organization, and no UN reform is thus complete without a reform of the UN Security Council.[51]

But not all agree with this rationale. Critics argue that an expanded UNSC could very well paralyze the process.[52] Using the same rationale, the G7 long resisted reform to maintain effectiveness. Finally, there is a more fundamental argument against the value of inclusiveness in the context of the UNSC. No matter how much the UNSC will expand, it will never be as representative as the UN General Assembly, which represents all countries. While the UN's creators attempted to make the UNSC as inclusive as possible, it was specifically not supposed to be inclusive, but functional. The UN General Assembly, on the other hand, satisfied the need for inclusiveness. In this context, it seems questionable whether increasing the inclusiveness to some degree is a worthwhile exercise if it implies a strong reduction of effectiveness. Finally, the argument that Brazil can represent Latin America in the world's most important international institution is strongly contested outside of

Brazil. In fact, Argentina, Mexico and Colombia all joined coalitions (first the "Coffee Club"[53], then "Uniting for Consensus" after 2005) created to frustrate Brazil's attempts to gain entry as a permanent member.[54] In a survey in 2005, all Latin American countries except Honduras and Venezuela said they opposed Brazil's permanent membership.55 These smaller countries agree in principal

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that the "global South" needs better representation, but there is no consensus about which country should be in the Council permanently. Finally, Weiss points out that the key problem of the Council is not a lack of legitimacy (quite to the contrary, he says), but its strong dependence on US military power to enforce its decisions.[56]

Specifically, Brazil seeks to expand the Council with several permanent and non-permanent members. The G4's proposal envisions six new permanent seats (two for Africa, two for Asia (India and Japan), one for Latin America (Brazil) and the Caribbean and one for Western Europe and Others (German); and four new non-permanent members (one from Africa, one from Asia, one from Eastern Europe, and one from Latin America and the Caribbean).[57] Since expansion and its own inclusion is the fundamental objective, Brazil does not favor rotation of a new permanent seat to be filled by a country from the Latin American and Caribbean region.[58]

While Brazil would certainly prefer to enter the Council as a permanent member with veto power, pragmatic considerations have led the Brazilian government to seek inclusion without veto power.[59] This is widely believed to increase the chances for reform. Stressing the need to avoid conditions that led to the downfall of the League of Nations, the P-5 insisted on having individual veto rights over UN Charter amendments.[60]

In 2004, Brazil joined the G4 in an attempt to realize UN Security Council Reform and to obtain a permanent seat.[61] The G4 was largely formed to use the "window of opportunity" that Kofi Annan's push for an intensive UN soul searching and reform project had opened.[62] In 2005, the UN Assembly discussed a reform proposal

which included the addition of the G4 and two African nations, as permanent non-veto wielding members.[63] The proposal failed to be submitted to a vote in the General Assembly, largely because African countries were unable to agree who would occupy the two permanent seats.[64] In addition, several countries such as Italy, Argentina, Pakistan and Mexico opposed the inclusion of the G4, which led Brazilian policy makers to doubt whether an alliance with India would be the most prominent strategy.[65] However, even if the Assembly had agreed to the proposal, the United States would have most likely vetoed it.[66] While the G4 has, for now, ceased to exist as a vehicle for achieving Security Council Reform, Brazil continues to press for expansion and a permanent seat.

More recent reform proposals do not look promising, but the "Open-ended Working Group on the Question of Equitable Representation on and Increase in the Membership of the Security Council and Other Matters related to the Security Council" (more simply known as the Working Group), set up by the General Assembly in 1993, continues to gather and discuss possibilities. Brazil still pushes for UNSC expansion. The Brazilian government has continuously rejected any more modest proposals that divert attention from UNSC expansion.[67]

How has the objective of UN Security Council Reform influenced President Lula's foreign policy since 2003? Brazil's strategy towards UNSC reform has been a complex mix of multilateral engagement (positioning itself as a "responsible stakeholder"), global outreach (diversifying its strategic partnerships), assuming regional leadership, and becoming the leader of the South (by strengthening South-South partnerships and distancing itself from the developed world to some degree). While obtaining a seat on the UNSC may have been the greatest foreign policy goal of the Lula administration, these strategies certainly constitute policy goals in themselves as well. During interviews for this study, most diplomats named a seat on the UNSC, a global trade deal and South American unity under Brazilian leadership as the Lula administration's three main foreign policy deals.[68]

Since 2003, Brazil's commitment to multilateral institutions has continued to be one of its principal policy paradigms.[69] For example, Brazil has successfully led the UN mission in Haiti. Secondly, one of President Lula's major foreign policy innovation after President Cardoso (1995-2002) was to diversify Brazil's strategic partnerships. One of the major tools to do so was through trade. This goal was largely achieved, as trade and other ties in Africa and Asia have indeed been strengthened. Brazil's engagement

in the Middle East and strengthening ties with Russia symbolize this move. In addition, Brazil has attempted to turn into a "Leader of the South" by drastically increasing aid flows to poorer countries.[70] Thirdly, it has been one of the major goals of the Brazilian government since 2003 to assume regional leadership and help the process of regional integration. Results of this third strategy, however, have been poor. Progress with regards to Mercosur is largely stalled, and UNASUL, a recently created body, is unlikely to strengthen integration.

3. India and the UN Security Council

India was an avid supporter of the United Nations, and the UNSC, since the body's inception. India, which

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had been a member of the League of Nations[71], actively campaigned for a permanent seat on the UN Security Council during the San Francisco Conference in 1945, but ultimately failed, like Brazil, partly because it was not an independent country yet.[72] This can mostly be explained by India's leaders' refusal to suspend its independence struggle, which caused Roosevelt to stop pressuring Great Britain to grant independence, driving a wedge between the US and India during the War.[73] It then changed its approach and lobbied towards making population a crucial indicator for the selection of the non-permanent members to assure its frequent presence on the Council.[74] It has been on the Council as a non-permanent member six times[75], making it one of the most frequent non-permanent members. As Blum points out, India has obtained, like Brazil, "quasi semi-permanent" status, although it has been able to participate in the Council as often as Brazil due to its regional rivalry with Pakistan.[76] In 2010, after Kazakhstan decided to give up a campaign it had been waging for years to obtain the Asian seat in the UNSC, India will once more occupy the non-permanent seat starting in January 2011.[77]

India has regularly pushed for UNSC Reform, and it remains one of the principal foreign policy objectives.[78] In 1979, a series of NAM countries, including India, submitted a draft resolution to the General Assembly proposing an increase of the non-permanent members from 10 to 14. They argued that UN membership had increased since 1963, from 136 to 152, and that the last 1965's benefits had already been nullified.[79] The 1990s saw India strengthen its campaign for reform and a permanent seat on the UNSC.[80] Finally, in 2005, India was once more, as part of the "G4", one of the driving forces behind a reform effort which almost led to a second fundamental reform.

India's major argument is that its inclusion would increase the UNSC's legitimacy by making it more representative of UN membership.[81] In 2004, for example, India argued that it deserved the seat because it was the world's second largest country in terms of population, with a large economy and the third largest contributor of troops to UN peace-keeping missions.[82] In addition, it has always been India's proclaimed goal to increase the representation of the "global South" and limit the influence of the established powers. The government argues that an "adequate presence" of developing countries is needed in the Security Council. Nations of the world must feel that their stakes in global peace and prosperity are factored into the UN's decision making. Any expansion of permanent members' category must be based on an agreed criteria, rather than be a pre-determined selection. There must be an inclusive approach based on transparent consultations. India supports expansion of both permanent and non-permanent members' category. The latter is the only avenue for the vast majority of Member States to serve on the Security Council. Reform and expansion must be an integral part of a common package."[83] With regards to these principled motivations, India's rhetoric has been and remains remarkably similar to that of Brazil, another G77 member.

But permanent membership would also help India defend its ever more global interests. According to Kulwant Rai Gupta, there is a sense in India that with regards to security matters, the role of the UNSC is increasing while that of the UN General Assembly is diminishing. Development issues are more and more handled by the IMF and the World Bank, while the UN turns into an institution dealing mostly with security issues. This interpretation is thus yet another reason why India should seek to gain admission as a permanent member to an ever more important organ.[84] Finally, India is said to eye a permanent seat to assure that the United Nations does not get involved in the conflict in Kashmir, which would, Indians fear, lead to a partition or independence of Kashmir.[85]

Specifically, India seeks to expand the UNSC by four permanent and six non-permanent members. The G4's proposal envisions the six new permanent seats to be occupied by two African nations, two for Asia (India and Japan), one for Latin America (Brazil) and the Caribbean and one for Western Europe and others (Germany); and four new non-permanent members (one from Africa, one from Asia, one from Eastern Europe, and one from Latin America and the Caribbean).[86]

While a majority of states, within the General Assembly, want to abolish or curtail the right of the veto[87], India is more pragmatic and seeks no veto rights for new permanent members. It thus proves much more realistic, given the fact that the current permanent members with veto power are unlikely to grant it to any newcomers.[88]

Similar to Brazil, UN Security Council Reform has been one of India's key objectives over the past decade, influencing its policies to some degree. Given its prominence, UN Security Council Reform has traditionally been regarded as a crucial part of any wider UN reform by the Indian government. [89] Several of India's strategies can be better understood in the context of the UN Security Council.

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components: Garnering support in the UN General Assembly and reducing resistance in the UN Security Council. Through India's continued leadership in the G77, India hopes to assure widespread support in the UN General Assembly. India's strong stance on defending sovereignty and criticizing "the responsibility to protect" can be understood in this context. At the same time, India's recent rapprochement with China, its historic deal with the United States, and its continued historic friendship with Russia are all meant to assure that none of the permanent members would block India's entry.

India's decision to openly vie for a seat as part of the "G4" was the most recent attempt, which garnered considerable support but failed to materialize due to African disunity. Specifically, the G4's proposal envisions six new permanent seats (two for Africa, two for Asia, one for Latin America and the Caribbean and one for Western Europe and Others); and four new non-permanent members (one from Africa, one from Asia, one from Eastern Europe, and one from Latin America and the Caribbean).[90] Even South Africa supported the proposal.[91]

Since the G4's failure in 2005, India has continued to focus on UNSC expansion. When the so-called "Small 5" or "S5", a group made up of Switzerland, Singapore, Jordan, Costa Rica and Liechtenstein, submitted a proposal that sought not to expand the UNSC but change its procedures to some degree, India rejected it as it would shift focus away from expansion.[92] India has, together with Brazil and South Africa, created an IBSA faction within the Working Group set up by the General Assembly (called "Open-ended Working Group on the Question of Equitable Representation on and Increase in the Membership of the Security Council and Other Matters related to the Security Council"), but its impact has not been substantial.[93]

India seeks to alter some of the UNSC's rules and decision-making procedures, but adheres to its principles, ultimately strengthening the UNSC. Its strategy is therefore not merely "revisionist", as is often claimed,[94] but it constitutes revisionist integration. The fact that India is one of the few member states that has been elected six times to the body underlines the importance of the entity for the Indian government.[95] The Indian government bemoans that governance structures, particularly in the UNSC, had not been able to keep up with contemporary realities. Indian politicians believe that India should have been granted a permanent seat on the UNSC in 1945.[96] After failing to obtain a seat in 2005, when India was part of the G-4 (together with Germany, Japan and Brazil), the Indian government is determined to continuously push for expanding the Council, even though short-term success is unlikely. China is seen as a crucial gate keeper in India's attempt to advance in the UN Security Council, and this—together with an appreciation of China's growing economic importance—is one of the reasons that India aims to improve relations with China, despite an ongoing border dispute in Arunchal Pradesh. In the future, India is more likely to team up with Brazil in its attempt to obtain a seat, as Germany and Japan weaken India's claim that developing countries need to be better represented.

4. Conclusion: Leading the disenfranchised or joining the establishment?

Brazil's and India's bid for institutionalized big-power status is contrasted by their traditional membership of and loyalty to the G77, where leadership becomes ever more difficult for increasingly pragmatic governments in Brasília and New Delhi.[97] As part of the G77 and as an observer of the Non-Aligned Movement, Brazil has historically sought to promote a more prominent role for the UN General Assembly (GA) by envisioning greater GA involvement on questions regarding military intervention, for example.[98] Critics have pointed out that Brazil's attempt to enter the UN Security Council as a permanent member is not entirely about democratizing the UN, but rather about creating an "expanded oligarchy", as a former Brazilian diplomat has called it. While Security Council Reform is also one

of the Non-Aligned Movements goals,[99] Brazil does not have all the developing countries' support in this project, and it has been at times criticized for seeking permanent UN Security Council membership, which would make it part of the "global elite."[100] While India has a rich history of confronting established countries, Mohan argues that India "woke up" and now rejects "third worldish" modes of thinking.[101]

Brazil's and India's behaviour towards the UN General Assembly contrasts their efforts towards UNSC reform, and an instructive example about their strong ambivalence about their own place. It has also often voted in a bloc with other G77 members, often against the United States, France and Great Britain. For example, it has supported a condemnation of the United States' economic embargo against Cuba. Furthermore, it abstained from the UN Security Council resolutions with on arms embargos to Yugoslavia once ethnic cleansing had begun, on intervention in Haiti after the coup, and on peacekeeping operations in Rwanda and Somalia.[102] In this respect Brazil continues to side with development countries, and it remains a country with a strongly Westphalian outlook. While it regards interference approved by the UN Security Council as legitimate, it traditionally has been reluctant to vote for any type of measures that violate a country's sovereignty. The Brazilian government is therefore highly critical of the concept of "R2P" (Responsibility to Protect), which it believes can be easily misused as a pretext for aggressive military intervention.

Despite Brazil's leadership role in the G77 and its ability to influence other members,[103] Brazil has quietly departed from the G77's more radical calls for "total democracy" which includes proposals to limit the UNSC's freedom through the General Assembly—this position very much reflects Brazil's expectation to form part of the Council at some point in the future.[104] Despite continuous rhetorical support for reform, Brazil has not assumed leadership in reviving ECOSOC[105], indicating that it does not regard this as a priority.

India's strategy is comparable. For years, India's representatives have called for a revitalization of the UN General Assembly, seeking to strengthen the system. In April 2010, for example, Hardeep Puri, Permanent Representative of India to the U.N., said that "the General Assembly should take the lead in setting the global agenda and restoring the centrality of the United Nations in formulating multilateral approaches to resolving transnational issues."[106] In a similar fashion, Indian representatives usually argue that the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC), which, despite its pre-eminence in

the charter, has proved too weak to provide coherence to the work of the specialized agencies,[107] should be at the heart of international efforts of development. There is a fundamental agreement with the UNGA's principles, norms, rules and decision-making procedures. India's foreign policy is still influenced by its ties to the Non-Aligned Movement and the G77.[108] However, similar to Brazil, India's alignment with the dispossessed is increasingly at odds with its efforts to join the "club of the powerful".

Despite Brazil's leadership role at the G77 and its abiloty to influence other members, Brazil has quietly departed from the G77's more radical calls for "total democracy" which includes proposals to limit the UNSC's freedom through the General Assembly.

Aside from a stronger role for the United Nations General Assembly, India has traditionally argued for UN Security Council Reform – in accordance with the 1992 Accra Declaration of the Non-Aligned Movement.[109] India's position has thus been traditionally part of the Non-Alignment Movement, although the NAM never reached the cohesion of a power bloc. Furthermore, India has diverged increasingly to the pragmatist side. India, a co-founder of the NAM in 1955, has always pledged adherence to the movement, and Indian political leaders continue to mention it frequently.[110] However, there has been growing internal criticism of India's NAM stance,[111] and India's foreign policy over the past decade indicates that it at times diverges from its traditional, multilateralist strategy- for example when it signed a bilateral nuclear deal with the United States.[112] A former Indian diplomat argued that India exerts considerable influence over both the G77 and NAM, a leadership position India will attempt to hold on to as long as possible. He admits, however, that India's economic development may make India's adherence to both clubs increasingly untenable.[113] In a similar fashion, Nayar and Paul argue that "emotionally though not formally, India has (..) already left (…) the Non-Aligned Movement."[114] Raja Mohan adds that "by the late 1990s, [India] was compelled to look for ways to ease out of the political straightjacket the NAM had become on its external relations."[115]

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