

The Value of the Veto: Analysis of Resolution Content and Veto Reasoning on the Palestinian Question (2000-2025)

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ABSTRACT

The veto is a controversial part of the United Nations' procedural rules, defended by the Permanent Members as a quality-control mechanism for resolutions and viewed by other countries as a symbol of the Council's oligarchical system and obstacle to meaningful action in politically strife questions such as Israel-Palestine. Previous research on Security Council resolutions indicates that wording has an impact on whether or not a resolution is passed, as well as the existence of two clear, consistent narratives within the body. This paper uses mixed methodology – content analysis to compare how often vetoed resolutions use strong terms compared to passed ones, a quantitative-based methodology for word count and Regional Group patterns in resolution sponsorship, and qualitative textual analysis for veto reasoning. Vetoed resolutions were found to have more average occurrences of strong terms and a greater average word count, as well as the pattern that US vetoes were almost exclusively on draft resolutions with a majority-Arab authorship. In qualitative analysis, the paper found that China and Russia had the same veto reasons and always exercised vetoes in alignment. The US was found to have generally consistent reasoning throughout the time periods examined. Some veto reasoning observed across the three countries directly countered each other. These findings provide insight into the writing and veto habits of Council members and reveal the importance of pursuing solutions in the United Nations system beyond the Security Council, as well as the potential current value of the veto in conflict prevention.

Keywords: Israel-Palestine, content analysis, qualitative textual analysis, United Nations Security Council, veto

INTRODUCTION

The United Nations Security Council (UNSC) is a key body of the United Nations (UN) founded with the

responsibility to maintain international peace (1). Unlike the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA), UNSC resolutions are, when applicable, legally binding in international law on all member states, even those who are not represented on the Council when the resolution is passed (2). Within the UNSC is what is colloquially referred to as the 'veto power,' a voting condition outlined in the UN Charter practically interpreted by countries that if at least one permanent member casts a negative vote, the resolution in question automatically fails (3) (4). This power has long been a subject of controversy

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and has even been debated in the UNGA. Past UNGA President Dennis Francis stated that “each veto cast [is] perceived as our collective failure to act”, while deputy Russian representative Dmitry Polyanskiy said that the UN would become “an organ that rubberstamped dubious decisions imposed by a circumstantial majority that would be practically impossible to implement” without it (5). With the veto being viewed as such an integral and controversial procedural component of the UNSC, this paper aims to gain a deeper understanding of why the veto is used. Why do China, Russia, and the US veto or pass UNSC resolutions, and how do their stated reasons compare to each other on the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict 2000-2025?

LITERATURE REVIEW

Extensive previous study has been done on the interactions between countries within the UN Security Council, as well as what political patterns within the Council could mean for countries pursuing solutions outside of the UN system and their policies. In this section, I will examine three papers for previous context on the UNSC veto in three aspects.

Pursuing solutions outside of the Security Council

Diplomacy and multilateral cooperation have existed long before the UN system. Even today, countries still pursue independent multilateral cooperation outside of the organization, exemplified by BRICS and NATO.

In the context of increasing great-power competition in the Security Council, recent research examined the tools available to the US through the UN on the topic of preventing mass atrocities in multilateral conflict management (6). A 2024 policy recommendation paper by Dayal presented three arguments: it is in the US’s best interest to support atrocity-prevention tools, the Responsibility to Protect is in decline, the Russian-Ukrainian conflict has refocused multilateralism onto sovereign non-intervention, and that support for existing tools for civilian protection is vital due to division in the UNSC (6).

Dayal’s research proves that countries still have resources to take action on international issues beyond the Security Council, and that pursuing solutions in the face of UNSC vetoes is still possible.

Even though only Security Council resolutions are binding, the UN system includes many mechanisms, including but not limited to: the UNICEF, WHO, and UNHRC. If action cannot be taken through the UNSC,

these other organizations provide the best chance at pursuing humanitarian action.

Factors affecting resolution outcome

Wording is a crucial factor in diplomatic writing. Even different synonyms can result in very different reactions or results.

A 2014 paper by Benson and Kathman has already found a correlation between wording strength and UNSC action: A stronger wording choice (i.e. ‘use all necessary means’) in Peacekeeping mandates typically correlated with greater force commitment in the corresponding mission (7).

UN Peacekeeping mandates are documents that give legal basis to peacekeeping missions which must be approved by the Security Council (8). This means that every P5 member must either vote in favor or abstain for the mandate to pass. Since only previous and current Peacekeeping mandates were examined, the paper implies that wording has an impact on whether or not a draft resolution is passed.

With this in mind, I expect the following outcome:

Hypothesis 1: An increase in wording strength and word count leads to an increase in the likelihood of a veto.

A greater wording strength indicates that there is a stronger request for countries to follow through with a defined action. In an issue such as Israel-Palestine where the veto powers are so politically divided, wording may be what causes a resolution to fail by the veto.

Existing narratives on Israel-Palestine within the Security Council

The Israeli-Palestinian conflict is one with a long history, predating the founding of the United Nations. In the decades that have passed since then, countries have had the time to develop and clarify their positions on the issue.

Narrative analysis to identify unitary aspects in countries’ positions found clear dominant and marginal narratives on Israel-Palestine, with different interpretations of the situation and different characterizations, or lack thereof, for different parties to the conflict from 2006-2018 (9).

The dominant narrative characterized the Israeli government as the aggressor and lacked a clear characterization of Hamas. The marginal narrative characterized specifically the Israeli military as aggressors and characterized Hamas as a group that abused Palestinians and attacked Israelis.

Regional Groups were found to be clearly divided into

groups (blocs) by narrative. The dominant narrative found its supporters in the Global South (namely, AG, APG, and GRULAC), while the marginal narrative was supported by the WEOG (specifically the US and Israel).

With this in mind, I also expect the following outcome:

Hypothesis 2: Countries are more likely to veto if the resolution at vote is authored by a country/countries from continental groups in blocs contrary to their own.

Additionally, I seek to find if there are any patterns in Permanent Members' veto reasons, similar to how patterns are observed in the narratives on Israel-Palestine in the UNSC and UNGA. I expect there to be slight changes in reasoning over time as the circumstances of the conflict change.

METHODS AND MATERIALS

This paper uses a mixed-methods approach. In investigating why China, Russia, and the US veto UNSC resolutions when considering factors such as wording, a hypothesis-driven, content analysis method is used. When analyzing authorship, the paper counts the number of times each Regional Group appears. In comparing the stated reasons of each country, qualitative textual analysis is used to analyze the contents of the countries' veto statements.

Case selection

In total, the paper selected 32 vetoed and passed resolutions. Israel-Palestine was chosen over other conflicts as it was one of the only ongoing or recent conflicts discussed in the Security Council that had a roughly equal number vetoed and passed resolutions over the selected time period.

From between January 2000 and March 2025, the UNSC produced 17 vetoed and 15 passed resolutions with the topic “The situation in the Middle East, including the Palestinian question” (Figure 1). Vetoed resolutions must have been vetoed by at least one of the People's Republic of China, the Russian Federation, and the United States of America (Figure 2). The United Kingdom and the French Republic were excluded from case selection as neither has vetoed any UNSC resolution since 1981. Vetoed resolutions were obtained from an UN-published dataset (10) and passed resolutions were obtained from the UN Security Council website (11). Selected resolutions were subsequently looked up in the UN Digital Library (UNDL) for their corresponding voting data and meeting transcript (12). There were a total of 17 meeting transcripts analyzed, each corresponding to a selected vetoed resolution. These

were found in each vetoed document's UNDL entry in the “Meeting record” row of ‘Details’. The ‘find’ function in PDF-processing software was then used to search through the transcript for veto reasoning by the delegate of a veto power who was recorded in the transcript. Meeting transcripts were only reviewed for vetoed resolutions as they are the only ones containing veto reasonings.

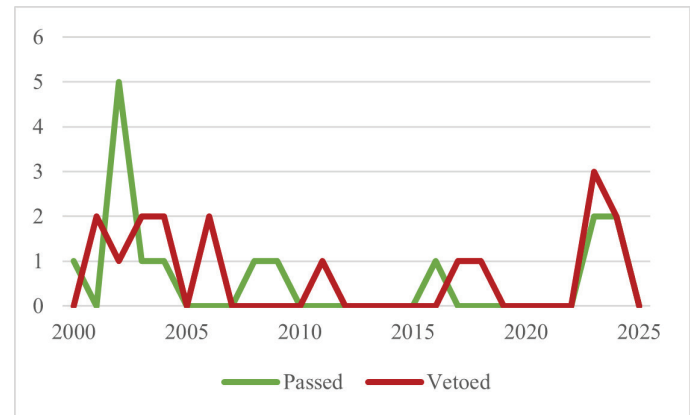


Figure 1. UNSC passed and vetoed resolutions on Israel-Palestine by year, 2000-2025.

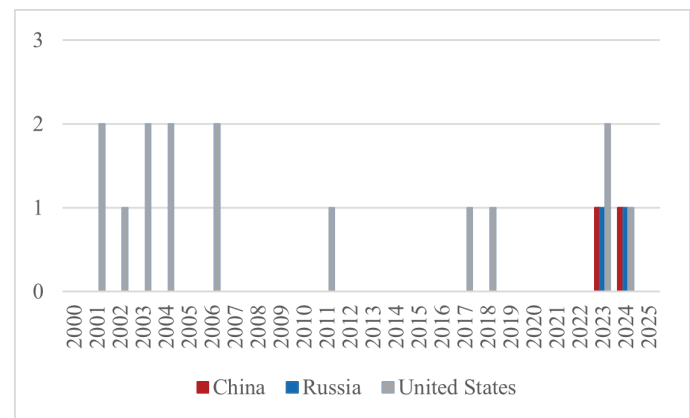


Figure 2. Vetoes on Israel-Palestine, by country, by year, 2000-2025.

The following lists all UN documents analyzed in this paper, in chronological order:

Passed resolutions

- S/RES/1322 (2000) (13).
- S/RES/1397 (2002) (14).
- S/RES/1402 (2002) (15).
- S/RES/1403 (2002) (16).
- S/RES/1405 (2002) (17).
- S/RES/1435 (2002) (18).

S/RES/1515 (2003) (19).
 S/RES/1544 (2004) (20).
 S/RES/1850 (2008) (21).
 S/RES/1860 (2009) (22).
 S/RES/2334 (2016) (23).
 S/RES/2712 (2023) (24).
 S/RES/2720 (2023) (25).
 S/RES/2728 (2024) (26).
 S/RES/2735 (2024) (27).

Vetoed resolutions

S/2001/270 (28).
 S/2001/1199 (29).
 S/2002/1385 (30).
 S/2003/891 (31).
 S/2003/980 (32).
 S/2004/240 (33).
 S/2004/783 (34).
 S/2006/508 (35).
 S/2006/878 (36).
 S/2011/24 (37).
 S/2017/1060 (38).
 S/2018/516 (39).
 S/2023/773 (40).
 S/2023/792 (41).
 S/2023/970. (42).
 S/2024/173 (43).
 S/2024/239 (44).

UNSC meeting transcripts

S/PV.4305 (45).
 S/PV.4438 (46).
 S/PV.4681 (47).
 S/PV.4828 (48).
 S/PV.4842 (49).
 S/PV.4934 (50).
 S/PV.5051 (51).
 S/PV.5488 (52).
 S/PV.5565 (53).
 S/PV.6484 (54).
 S/PV.8274 (55).
 S/PV.8139 (56).
 S/PV.9442 (57).
 S/PV.9453 (58).
 S/PV.9499 (59).
 S/PV.9552 (60).
 S/PV.9584 (61).

Hypothesis 1

For Hypothesis 1: *An increase in wording strength and word count leads to an increase in the likelihood of a veto*, wording strength of a specific resolution is defined through

the appearance of certain terms such as “Demands” and “In the strongest possible terms”. To prove this hypothesis, my paper uses a content analysis methodology. The more times one or more of the selected terms appear, the stronger the wording of the resolution, and vice versa. The ‘find’ function is used in the UNDL document viewer to locate these terms, including number and location of appearances. The number of appearances in vetoed and passed resolutions for each term is counted and averaged, then compared to investigate if there is a correlation between this number and whether or not a resolution is vetoed. The median of these numbers is also included in the table to present a number more representative of the selected cases. Searched terms include other grammatical forms (i.e. ‘demands’ includes forms such as ‘demand’, ‘demanding’, etc.). These terms were selected because they have existing, weaker synonyms in resolution writing (i.e. ‘requests’ instead of ‘demands’), convey a strong sense of urgency that compels countries to act (i.e. ‘immediate’), or have a connotation that pressures countries into committing to a certain action or certain form of agreement (i.e. ‘unconditional’). Searches were not case sensitive. It is possible that there are other terms that affect veto outcomes, but the selected terms were chosen as they are all in established use in UNSC resolutions and are less affected by short-term events than other specific terms, allowing for more consistent analysis over long periods of time by decreasing potential data skew.

The word count of each resolution was also measured in document-processing software and averaged with other vetoed or passed resolutions, with median also included in the table. Only the body of each resolution (preambulatory and operative clauses) is counted.

Hypothesis 2

For Hypothesis 2: *Countries are more likely to veto if the resolution at vote is authored by a country/countries from continental groups in blocs contrary to their own*, I reference Kertcher’s previous research on past narrative blocs within the UN system on Israel-Palestine. The country or countries that authored the resolution are found in its corresponding UNDL entry. For geographical location, countries are sorted by United Nations Regional Group - African Group (AG), Asia and the Pacific Group (APG), Eastern European Group (EEG), Latin American and Caribbean Group (GRULAC), and the Western European and Others Group (WEOG). Countries are looked up on the UN website (62). The number of times authors from different groups appear for each vetoed resolution is counted and examined to see if a specific veto

power vetoes an especially high number of resolutions written by a specific geographical group. According to UN procedural rules, Israel, Türkiye, and the US are considered part of the WEOG group.

Qualitative textual analysis

For the comparison of China, Russia, and the US's stated reasons for veto, each selected case was looked up in the UN Digital Library for corresponding voting data and Council meeting transcript. The 'find' function was used to find statements by Chinese, Russian, and American representatives on why their countries exercised the veto. These statements are then analyzed for similarities and differences in reasoning. Analysis is broken up into three intervals:

- 2000-2005, the period of the Al-Aqsa Intifada;
- 2006-2022, immediately after Hama's election to Palestinian legislature (63) and when international action on Israel-Palestine within the UNSC slowed;
- And 2023-2025, when the ICJ was requested to provide an advisory opinion on Israeli actions in the Gaza Strip (64).

This is to also observe how major events in the conflict may have impacted countries' veto reasons. Each interval includes a 'dominant' reasoning (reasoning that appears in one half or more of that country's vetoes in the selected interval) and 'marginal' reasoning (reasoning that appears less than one half of and at least once in the country's vetoes in the selected interval). If countries only have two distinct kinds of veto reasoning in an interval, a reasoning that appears only once is automatically coded as marginal. Countries may have more than one dominant or marginal reasoning.

RESULTS

Hypothesis 1

Content analysis of resolution wording showed that vetoed resolutions used strong terms more often than passed ones on Israel-Palestine in the same time period. Vetoed resolutions had higher average appearances of selected terms (8.41 appearances) than passed resolutions (6.07). However, the difference is small when it comes to the median: 6.00 appearances of any selected term in vetoed resolutions compared to 5.00 appearances of any selected term in passed resolutions (Table 1).

The difference between vetoed and passed resolutions becomes more apparent in word count. Vetoed resolutions had a much higher average and median word count than passed resolutions.

The findings partially affirm Hypothesis 1. Vetoed resolutions had a significantly higher average and median word count compared to passed resolutions, but wording strength did not significantly distinguish between a pass and veto.

Table 1. Number of appearances of selected terms and resolution body length (to nearest hundredth)

Term	Average (Veto)	Average (Pass)	Median (Veto)	Median (Pass)
Demands	1.56	1.53	1.00	1.00
Condemns	1.38	0.60	1.00	0.00
Strongest terms	0.13	0.07	0.00	0.00
Unwavering	0.13	0.27	0.00	0.00
Immediate	2.63	1.53	2.00	1.00
Unconditional	0.44	0.27	0.00	0.00
Rejects	0.38	0.20	0.00	0.00
Strong concern	0.06	0.13	0.00	0.00
Grave concern	1.25	0.87	1.00	1.00
Deep concern	0.31	0.33	0.00	0.00
Unjustifiable	0.13	0.00	0.00	0.00
Alarmed	0.06	0.07	0.00	0.00
Deplores	0.31	0.33	0.00	0.00
Strongly urges	0.13	0.00	0.00	0.00
Any selected	8.41	6.07	6.00	5.00
Word count	613.06	453.87	485.00	357.00

Hypothesis 2

Table 5 shows that the US vetoed an outstanding number of draft resolutions authored by countries in the African and Asia-Pacific regional groups. The 15 US-vetoed draft resolutions were almost all exclusively authored by Arab nations, such as Algeria, Egypt, and Qatar, or had an Arab-majority authorship, with the exception of S/2023/970, S/2023/773, S/2011/24, and S/2001/270 (Table 5). Considering previous findings on Regional Groups' narratives, this result aligns with previous research.

China and Russia exclusively vetoed draft resolutions authored by the US (Table 5). Considering previous research found that China and Russia supported the dominant narrative and the US supported the marginal narrative, this is consistent with their narrative blocs (9). The findings from all three countries, considering Kertcher's previous findings, affirm Hypothesis 2.

Qualitative textual analysis

US veto reasoning was largely consistent across the three time periods examined. Qualitative analysis showed that the US consistently used “Resolution language harms peace-building efforts” as a dominant reason. “Resolution does not mention Hamas” also consistently appeared, though this became a marginal reason after 2005. US veto reasons did not change significantly throughout 2000-2025 except for one-time uses of “Resolution is not focused on the issue at hand” and “Protection of American sovereignty” in 2000-2005 and 2006-2022, respectively (Tables 2, 3, 4). All other veto reasons consistently appeared throughout the three time periods examined as either a dominant or marginal reason.

Chinese and Russian veto reasoning were found to be somewhat consistent with each other. In the 2023-2025 segment, both shared the dominant reasoning “Resolution text not including a call for immediate ceasefire” and the marginal reasoning “Concerns/comments of relevant/other Council members ignored”. All other reasonings

in this time period for the two appeared at least once in either country’s dominant or marginal reasoning (Table 4). China and Russia did not exercise the veto from 2000 – 2022 (Tables 2, 3).

The countries were found to share some veto reasons, as well as others that directly conflicted with each other. All three countries used “Comments/concerns ignored” in some form in the 2023-2025 time period (Table 4). All three also use claims of bias in a resolution, though Russia and China used “Israeli actions are not clearly condemned” and the US used “No condemnation/mention of Hamas (Tables 2, 3). The reasonings that counter each other the most clearly is “Resolution does not contain call for immediate ceasefire” (China, Russia) and “Immediate ceasefire is not realistic” (US). “Immediate ceasefire is not realistic” somewhat conflicts with “Resolution language enables further killings”. The Chinese dominant reasoning “Israeli actions are not clearly condemned” also somewhat clashes with the US dominant reasoning “Resolution does not mention Israeli rights”.

Table 2. Dominant and marginal reasoning by country, 2000-2005

	China	Russia	United States
Dominant	N/A	N/A	Resolution language harms peace-building efforts (45)(46)(47) (49)(50)(52)(53); Resolution does not mention Hamas, condemn terrorism, or is otherwise unbalanced (46)(48)(49)(50)(51) (52) (53);
Marginal	N/A	N/A	Excessive politicization (45)(50); Comments or suggestions were ignored (47)(50); Resolution is not focused on the issue at hand (47)

Table 3. Dominant and marginal reasoning by country, 2006-2022

	China	Russia	United States
Dominant	N/A	N/A	Resolution language harms peace-building efforts (54)(56);
Marginal	N/A	N/A	Protection of American sovereignty (55); One sided language – no mention of Hamas action (56)

Table 4. Dominant and marginal reasoning by country, 2023-2025

	China	Russia	United States
Dominant	Resolution does not call for immediate ceasefire (58)(61); Israeli actions are not clearly condemned (58)(61)	Excessive politicization (58)(61); Resolution does not call for ceasefire (58) (61); Resolution language enables further killings (58) (61)	Resolution harms peace-building efforts (59)(60); Resolution does not mention Israeli rights (57)(59)
Marginal	Concerns of relevant members ignored (58); Resolution language enables further killings (61)	Comments of other Council members ignored (58); Israeli actions are not clearly condemned (58)	No condemnation of Hamas (59); Recommendations were ignored (59); Resolution does not include demand for hostage release (60); Call for unconditional ceasefire is unrealistic (60)

Table 5. Vetoes vs. author Regional Group

Document	AG	APG	EEG	GRULAC	WEOG
United States					
S/2024/173	1	0	0	0	0
S/2023/970	28	30	6	25	13
S/2023/773	0	0	0	1	0
S/2018/516	0	1	0	0	0
S/2017/1060	1	0	0	0	0
S/2011/24	20	25	4	16	13
S/2006/878	0	1	0	0	0
S/2006/508	0	1	0	0	0
S/2004/783	2	1	0	0	0
S/2004/240	2	0	0	0	0
S/2003/980	1	2	0	0	0
S/2003/891	2	1	0	0	0
S/2002/1385	0	1	0	0	0
S/2001/1199	2	0	0	0	0
S/2001/270	3	2	0	2	0
Total	62	65	10	44	26
China					
S/2024/239	0	0	0	0	1
S/2023/792	0	0	0	0	1
Total	0	0	0	0	2
Russia					
S/2024/239	0	0	0	0	1
S/2023/792	0	0	0	0	1
Total	0	0	0	0	2

DISCUSSION

Hypothesis 1

Though the median number of appearances of strong terms was roughly the same for each vetoed and passed resolution, data showed that vetoed resolutions had a significantly higher use of specific terms such as ‘condemns’ and ‘immediate’. This suggests that some words may be viewed as stronger, more contentious, or otherwise more unfavorable than others. Additionally, the difference in averages of total appearances of the

selected terms between vetoed and passed terms was much higher than the difference in their medians. This was especially obvious with the veto, with an 8.41 average and 6.00 median. Since the average is more sensitive to extreme values than the median, this suggests that there were specific cases that had more occurrences of strong terms compared to other selected cases. Indeed, cases like S/2024/173 and S/2024/239 show especially high total occurrences of selected terms for vetoes, with 18 and 21 total occurrences, respectively.

A robustness check was conducted with the terms “ceasefire” and “hostage” (including other forms such as “cessation of violence” and “hostages”). This check yielded very similar results as analysis done on the previously selected terms. Vetoed resolutions had a higher average number of occurrences of both terms than passed resolutions, though the fact that the medians are the same indicates very skewed data.

Combined, the original findings and the robustness check indicate that wording has some effect on resolution voting outcomes. However, more research is needed to examine these patterns in greater depth and confirm how wording *choice* instead of wording *strength* affect voting outcomes and change over time in issues including but not limited to Israel-Palestine.

In terms of resolution body length, vetoed resolutions displayed on average a significantly greater word count than passed resolutions in the same time period. As word count did not measure any formatting-related text (i.e. list of authors) this result implies that vetoed resolutions, on average, had either a greater number of and/or longer (and thus more detailed) preambulatory and operative clauses.

Further research and analysis on vetoes may be needed to find why vetoes have a similar median number of instances of strong wording compared to passed resolutions, even with a significantly higher word count. It’s possible this pattern is consistent with all vetoes done in the Security Council, or it may be specific to the selected topic group.

Content analysis in this aspect provides important insight into the writing habits of sponsors on Israel-Palestine between 2000-2025, as well as important guidelines on how to motivate more action through the Security Council.

Hypothesis 2

The paper found that China (APG) and Russia (EEG) exclusively vetoed US-authored resolutions and that the US (WEOG) almost exclusively vetoed resolutions with an at least Arab-majority sponsorship (with the countries

being from the AG and APG).

However, as qualitative analysis revealed, Russia's veto reasons indicate that it supports the dominant narrative on Israel-Palestine, contrary to the rest of the EEG. Despite this, this paper's findings still affirm Hypothesis 2, as Russia exclusively vetoed resolutions from the WEOG, a Regional Group supporting the marginal narrative.

This finding indicates that the three countries are highly focused in terms of where they use their veto on one topic. However, this result also means that future resolutions by certain author groups (for China and Russia, US and the WEOG; for the US, Arab countries and the AG and APG) may be vetoed again. If veto patterns stay consistent, it is likely authorship groups will need to diversify, or main sponsorship responsibility must move away from these groups, to achieve more meaningful action within the Security Council.

Qualitative textual analysis

The patterns observed with veto reasoning show that countries stay consistent with their previous reasoning, even across conflict phases and administrations. However, here it is important to note that Russian veto reasoning is contrary to Kertcher's previous findings that most EEG countries supported the marginal narrative (9). Russia's reasoning implies that it, like China and other AG and APG countries, support the dominant reasoning. There is intragroup variation within the EEG on Israel-Palestine, as evidenced by Russia.

The fact that multiple reasoning pairs were found to directly conflict with each other indicates that the Council is still deeply divided on Israel-Palestine. This is consistent with previous observations that the UN system exists in an environment of great-power competition (6). Owing to the procedural rules of the Security Council, this pattern means that future resolutions on Israel-Palestine are also likely to fail through the veto, meaning that countries must either change their writing habits or bolster ways to pursue action and solutions beyond the UNSC if efficient and meaningful action on the issue is to be made.

Expansion to current literature

Expanding on the existing literature, this paper broadens understanding of how resolution wording could potentially affect outcomes. When comparing Security Council resolutions to UN Peacekeeping mandates, both showed a correlation between resolution wording and outcomes. In the case of Israel-Palestine, textual analysis pointed to a correlation between certain terms or wording (with mentions of ceasefire being especially contentious)

used in the resolution and which Permanent Member vetoed the document. Similarly, in the case of past UN Peacekeeping mandates, wording of a resolution was found to have an effect on the efficiencies of corresponding operations – stronger and clearer wording meant clearer goals and defined vulnerable civilians for peacekeeping missions (65). These findings seem to suggest that there is a connection between countries' wording in documents and what eventually happens, though, again, more research is needed to confirm how far this pattern extends.

Current literature, specifically those focusing on reforming the Security Council, argue that the existence of the veto hinders international efforts in atrocity prevention, particularly in the case of the Responsibility to Protect (66). However, the findings of this paper precisely demonstrate the current value of the UNSC veto in political interactions and conflict prevention. As it is common practice in the UNSC for P5 members who veto to explain why they did so, analysis of resolution content and veto reasoning exposes the details of Permanent Members' opinions. On Israel-Palestine, the veto makes major powers' doubts and conflicts about certain aspects of the issue known, and gives the international community at least a chance to address these doubts before they potentially manifest as grave consequences in the future.

When comparing Israel-Palestine with another current international conflict, Russia-Ukraine, both situations indicated that each bloc tended to have a consistent tone. In the case of Russia-Ukraine, sentiment analysis found that certain countries used a consistent positive tone in their speeches, while others consistently used a negative tone when speaking on the conflict, particularly focusing on descriptions and actions of specific parties (67). This pattern differs slightly in the case of Israel-Palestine – though all examined Permanent Members showed a relatively consistent tone in veto reasoning, this tone leaned partially neutral. All examined countries mostly focused on the implications for future action and specific wording concerns rather than an explicit characterization of a specific side. In fact, the US is the only country out of the three examined to include an explicit characterization (Hamas as a terrorist organization) in its veto reasoning (55). However, more research is needed to find if this difference is limited to the topic of the Palestinian question or results from a consistent Permanent Member habit.

CONCLUSION

Through content analysis of vetoed and passed resolutions on the topic "The situation in the Middle East,

including the Palestinian question”, my paper found that there was a correlation between stronger wording and greater word count and whether a resolution was vetoed. In addition, analysis found that the sponsorship for vetoed resolutions was concentrated in specific Regional Groups – for China and Russia, the WEOG, and for the US, the AG and APG. The qualitative section discovered that the three Permanent Members stayed relatively consistent with their veto reasons across a long period of time (25 years). The Permanent Members examined were also found to have multiple reasonings that directly or indirectly conflicted with each other.

The kind of analysis used in this paper is rather uncommon in research on the Security Council, so more research is needed to expand on its findings. More research should be done to discover why vetoed resolutions only have marginally higher median occurrences of stronger terms compared to passed resolutions, despite a much higher average word count. This could be that veto powers are more concerned about certain topics (i.e. ceasefire and hostages) appearing in resolutions rather than purely wording strength, or it could simply be because Israel-Palestine continues to be a contentious issue. Again, more research is needed to confirm the reason. Additionally, more research should be done to examine whether this pattern remains consistent across multiple resolution topics or is limited to resolutions on Israel-Palestine.

Results of quantitative analysis on resolution sponsorship and qualitative textual analysis of veto reasoning suggest a highly divided Security Council. Considering the consistency of veto reasonings on Israel-Palestine over the last 25 years, major changes to the kinds of resolutions countries veto are very unlikely. China and Russia will likely continue to veto WEOG-authored resolutions without a call for immediate and unconditional ceasefire or without explicit condemnation of Israeli actions. On the other side, the US will likely continue to veto AG- and APG-authored resolutions, particularly those by Arab nations, that include calls for immediate ceasefire or lack a clear condemnation of Hamas, or lack clear acknowledgement of “Israel’s right of self-defence” (57).

However, EEG’s relative lack of participation in Israel-Palestine is not explained through the findings of this paper. More research should be conducted to explain why the EEG group has exceptionally low authorship numbers, despite their geographical proximity to Israel and Palestine and potential political ties to the issue.

When putting this paper in the context of existing literature, findings pointed to the current political value

of the veto in future conflict prevention in response to existing literature on reforming the Security Council. Since the veto is an existing convention in the UN political environment, it holds value in that it provides opportunities for disagreements between great powers to be expressed and addressed before they potentially manifest as grave consequences in armed conflict. This paper’s findings showed patterns similar to research on past UN Peacekeeping mandates and these patterns supplement findings of previous research on Russia-Ukraine, though more research is needed to further elaborate on these connections.

Both passed and vetoed resolutions include preambulatory clauses that express concern at humanitarian crises in the Gaza Strip. However, if the Council is to take meaningful, legally binding action on the issue, a resolution must be passed even in a divided Security Council. If countries are to take meaningful action on the Question of Palestine through UNSC resolutions, steps must be taken to avoid vetoes. Judging from observed patterns, resolutions may benefit from a diversification of sponsorship. Focusing on US vetoes due to the disproportionate number of these cases, resolutions may benefit from including more sponsors outside of the Arab League and outside of the AG and APG. Additionally, considering that China and Russia veto exclusively on the WEOG group, resolutions sponsored by EEG and GRULAC Member States may experience more success in passing.

If a veto is unavoidable or if passed resolutions are insufficient to motivate solutions and actions on the issue, countries should bolster other aspects of the UN system that do not need explicit UNSC approval in the form of resolutions to perform humanitarian functions in the Gaza Strip. These subsidiary bodies are able to act relatively independently of the Security Council and have already proven themselves to be valuable sources of humanitarian aid in crisis zones, whether in the Gaza Strip or elsewhere (68). Another strategy is to increase collaboration with NGOs outside of the UN system, like the ICRC and MSF (Doctors Without Borders), which have already proven themselves to be valuable sources of neutral humanitarian and civilian aid (69). As these bodies are also not bound by UN procedural rules (such as the veto), they can help implement solutions where UN resources may be limited. While other parts of the UN system and NGOs are limited by funding and countries’ willingness to cooperate, they still provide a valuable source of humanitarian action when a UNSC veto blocks political and humanitarian action completely.

As controversial as the veto is, it is a voting procedure embedded within the UN Charter and a power that Permanent Members are highly unlikely to give up (70). As long as the UN remains the main forum of global discussion on international questions, it is here to stay. The most viable path of action forward for Member states and the UN system on the Palestinian question is to take steps to avoid a veto, and if one is unavoidable, empower nonpolitical parts of the UN system to take action in place of resolutions.

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