

Draft only

The Reform of the UN Security Council: A Veto-Players Analysis

Aris Alexopoulos* and Dimitris Bourantonis**

***Department of Political Science, University of Crete, e-mail:
alexopou@pol.soc.uoc.gr**

****Dept. of International and European Economic Studies, Athens University
of Economics and Business, e-mail: bouranto@aueb.gr**

The Reform of the UN Security Council: A Veto-Players Analysis

INTRODUCTION

The aim of this work is to examine the impact of a potential reform of the UNSC based on enlargement and a change in its decision rule. During the Cold War, the UNSC served as little more than a stage upon which the East and West enacted their ideological struggle. Rather than operating as a mechanism duty-bound under the UN Charter to exercise “the primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security” on behalf of all UN members, the UNSC provided a security institution of little political significance. So far, as the operability of the UNSC remained limited in the Cold War period, the members of the UN refrained from calling into question its structure, which has not changed since 1965.

Its structure started to be subjected to close scrutiny from the late 1980s, when the collapse of the communist rule in Central and Eastern Europe and the consequential end of the East-West conflict opened up prospects for a greater role of the Security Council in international security. Some hopes were raised, especially after the 1990-91 Gulf conflict during which the UNSC stood center-stage, that the potential of the Council, which had been held hostage by the Cold War, would now be released, thus making the Council a prominent security actor.

However, the UNSC’s roller coaster ride had been quick and severe - from the initial euphoria to disenchantment. Despite the fact that from the early 1990s the UNSC began to meet more frequently than in the past and passed more resolutions than ever before in its history (Bourantonis 2005: 34; Russett et al: 1997: 155; Voeten in this volume), it soon attracted severe criticism for its failures in managing or averting

serious international crises such as those in Somalia, Rwanda, Congo, the Former Yugoslavia including Kosovo, as well as Iraq in 1993. Inactivity and indecision brought its structure and its decision-making capacity into question and attracted disapprobation accompanied by a perception that the Council acts only when it suits the agenda of those who dominate and direct it at their will, principally the U.S., the United Kingdom and France. ¹This development along with the fact that some states, most notably Germany and Japan, grew in standing and the dramatic increase in UN membership (mainly due to the dissolution of the Soviet Union and Yugoslavia) called the UNSC structure further into question. As a result, a large number of states put their claims for reforming the UNSC in order to make it more representative.

Despite the active debate on UNSC reform since 1993, no progress has been made up to date. The deadlock remains strong despite the plethora of reform proposals that have been put forth. ² The central issue, well known and hotly debated by the member states, is the question of the enlargement of the UNSC. The attention given to the size and the composition of the UNSC is based on the assumption that making the UNSC more representative of the UNGA membership would make it more trustworthy among the UN members, thereby helping it to retain or , as it has been often argued, recoup some of its lost legitimacy.

What has been the response of the literature to the demand for UNSC reform and especially to the question of enlarging its membership? Most scholarly accounts for the UNSC reform, while in favor of the UNSC enlargement, they take it as self-evident truth that its bigger size would weaken its decision-making capacity and in other words its ability to act swiftly and effectively. Russett (2005:161) for instance, argues that “anything... that increases the number of players that have leverage in its [i.e., the UNSC] negotiations throws one more bucket of sand into the wheels of rapid

and decisive action by the Council.” Similar concerns were expressed by Sutterlin (2005:4,) who has underlined that “the most forceful argument and the one that retains its resonance today, was that to be an effective body in dealing with threats to the peace, the Council had to be small and capable of quick decisions.” In the same line of reasoning, Wallensteen (1997:106), Weiss (2003: 149), Caron (1993: 567), the members of the UN Secretary-General’s High-level Panel on Threats, Challenges and Change and others³ have called for a trade-off between better representation through Council enlargement and efficiency. Their convictions that “concern for efficiency argues for a relatively small Council,” or that “a Security Council of 21 or 25 members would hardly improve effectiveness” or “ the number of members must be kept small for the sake of efficient argument” are not well informed by analysis and as such sound like axioms or arbitrary judgments.

Central element in the decision structure of the UNSC is the veto power which either institutionally or positionally the involved players hold. It is this reason, which drives us to apply, by analogy, to such an international decision structure, the work of Tsebelis (2002) on the role of veto players in decision-making games, a theory produced to explain the functioning of domestic political institutions. More specifically, we examine the relationship between enlargement of the size of a decision making body and its decision efficiency. To do so, the paper is organized in three sections. Firstly, we introduce the tools of Tsebelis’s veto player theory needed in the analysis of the various reform scenarios. Secondly, based on the main findings we analyze the current functioning of the UNSC. Thirdly, we discuss the decision capacity of the system under alternative reform scenarios on the membership and institutional arrangements of the future UNSC.

The Veto Players Theory and Its Implications on International Decision -making

According to Tsebelis' theory, veto players are individual or collective decision makers whose agreement is necessary for the change of the status quo (SQ). In his book, following spatial analysis, Tsebelis arrives at the key proposition that the SQ is preserved as the number of veto players increases and at the same time the diversity of their policy preferences over the policy at stake increases as well.

This argument is drawn upon the complementary analytic concepts of *winset* and *core* of a decision-making system. Tsebelis defines as core of a political system the set of points, which cannot be defeated by any other point of the space within which decision makers choose over policies (Tsebelis 2002: 21-26). If the status quo of a policy belongs to this set, then it is undefeatable and the decision makers cannot agree to replace it with a new policy output. Equally, if the core of a political system is an empty set, then decisions over changing the SQ are possible. All the points that can defeat the SQ, belong to its winset. The larger the winset, the easier it is for the veto players of the system to agree upon a change of the status quo. Additionally, since the variety of policy alternatives is wider, the possibility for the decision makers to agree upon a policy outcome in far distance from the SQ is also greater. Therefore, the decision capacity of a political system can be measured either with the winset or with the core. The larger the winset, the larger is the decision capacity, or equivalently, the smaller the core, the larger is the decision capacity of the system. For our analysis, in order to measure the decision capacity of the UNSC for each of the reform scenarios, we will use the concept of *core*. The size of the core depends on the decision rule, the number and the location on space of the ideal points of the veto players of the system. Tsebelis shows in his theory that the core expands, as the majority rule becomes more demanding, starting from simple to qualified majority and unanimity (Tsebelis 2002:

39-41). The core also expands, the more distant the veto players' ideal policy points are. The increased number of veto players does not necessarily lead to the increase of the core. If these veto players are located closer among them than their fewer predecessors, then the core is smaller. Tsebelis (2002: 30-2) shows that a core of three decision-makers can be greater than a core of five, if the five players are located inside the core of the three.

(Insert figure1)

We can observe this possibility in figure 1, where we locate two decision bodies, one with three members (A1, A2, A3), which compose the triangle A1A2A3 on the two-dimension policy plane, and the other body with five members (B1, B2, B3, B4, B5), which compose the pentagon B1B2B3B4B5. The pentagon is contained within the triangle. The core of the first body is the triangle, so if the SQ is located within this triangle the members A1, A2 and A3 cannot reach an agreement to change it. All points inside the triangle cannot be defeated by unanimity among the three veto players of the decision body A. Under the same reasoning, the five members of the decision body B cannot reach by unanimity an agreement to change the SQ if this is located within the pentagon B1B2B3B4B5. Since the pentagon is contained within the triangle, it is also smaller than A1A2A3. As we earlier discussed, the core is a measurement of the decision capacity of the correspondent decision body. The smaller the core, the greater the capacity of the decision body, since there are more points of the space outside the core over which the veto players may agree by unanimity to replace the status quo. In our case, the decision capacity under unanimity of A1, A2, A3 is smaller than the decision capacity of the larger set of B1, B2, B3, B4, B5 though closer located veto players.

The reader can also verify that the same number of decision-makers, when located in a greater distance amongst them than in the first time, produce a greater core. The important element is the location of the ideal preference points of the players in the decision game and not the number of the players.

Applying the above-mentioned theoretical propositions on the functioning of the UNSC, we compose the following argument for the proposed reform scenarios: The increase of the membership of the UNSC does not necessarily correspond to a reduced capacity to make decisions. The key element is the location of the policy preferences of the new members in the policy space regarding the SQ. Hence, it is not the increase of the members of the UNSC alone, but its combination with the divergence of the decision makers' security policy preferences in the UNSC that produces less collective action for the promotion of the international security.

In the following parts we will examine in more detail the current functioning and various reform scenarios of the UNSC, in terms of their decision capacity, based on the above raised argument about the number and the location of veto players, incorporating in our analysis specific alternative member states. We will show that the important element to produce a more efficient UNSC is not the number of veto players in the decision process but the distance of their preferences over two distinct forms of enforcement actions that are available to the UNSC under Chapter VII of the UN Charter (i.e., sanctions or use of armed force) and their economic development agenda.

Analyzing the current structure of the UNSC

We decide to work on a two dimension space although unidimensionality could provide simplicity in our analysis⁴. We adopt two dimensions as a more realistic

representation of the decision-making of the UNSC, which allows us to incorporate trade-offs in the players' security policy preferences without losing clarity in the presentation of the arguments. We choose to represent the decision-making of the SC over an axes system, where across the horizontal ax we measure the economic agenda of a member of the UNSC. To be more specific, we examine whether it pursues the restructuring of its external debt with the advise of IMF⁵ and the World Bank, whether it tries to expand into new foreign markets, or if it is embarked upon environmental protection negotiation at a world level. We assume that the economic agenda of the states is related to their level of development. We pick as an indicator for the development level the extensively used GDP per capita despite its shortcomings in representing the real level of development.⁶ The reason is that we adopt the position that the economic agenda of governments abroad is very close related to the living standards of their citizens. What the states pursue in the foreign forums mirrors the need of their voters for employment, consumption, free time, and quality of life in general. Across the vertical ax we measure whether the member state of the UNSC prefers sanctions or use of armed force to safeguard peace. With these two variables we try to bridge the liberal and realist traditions in international relations literature. The foreign economic policy agenda is formed according to liberal intergovernmentalism arguments (Moravscik 1997) for representing abroad domestic political and economic interests. We assume that a two-stage game (Putnam 1988) occurs, in which the economic agenda of the state players is formed domestically at first and then negotiated abroad. Despite the increased possibility that, in general, domestic actors, governments and international organizations may be engaged in a super game, which takes place simultaneously in two nested arenas, the domestic and the international (Tsebelis 1990), we believe that this is not very probable in the case

of decision making within the Security Council structure. Here, the countries come to negotiate having already fixed their economic policy preferences. The security agenda of the states is formed according to realist assumptions for geopolitical interest formation. In the third part of the paper we will try to locate on the produced two dimensions policy space, the members of the UNSC according to these variables.

Let us now turn to the decision rule of the UNSC. In the current structure of the UNSC, what is needed for a decision to be validated, is not only to reach a qualified majority, around 60% (9/15), but also none of the permanent members to use its veto privilege in order to block the decision. In other words a decision at the UNSC can be reached when two conditions occur simultaneously: 1) qualified majority with a threshold at 60% and 2) no use of veto by any of the current five permanent members, namely U.S., U.K., France, China and Russia.

Translating the above decision conditions in the language of veto players theory, the core of the decision system of the UNSC is the convexification of two cores of “the unanimity core” consisted by five permanent members and “the 60% qualified majority core” of the whole UNSC. Since we have already discussed the way the unanimity core is identified, it is now time to see the same about the qualified majority core and also discuss the convexification of the two cores in a UNSC like decision body.

(Insert figure 2)

In figure 2 we select any 15 points, which correspond to the members of the current composition of the UNSC. Any selection (say 8,...,12) of five points could play the role of the five permanent members of the UNSC, which hold the privilege of veto power. The 8,...,12 pentagon composed of these points constitutes “the unanimity 5/5 core” of this set of decision-makers. We can also divide the fifteen members several

times picking 9 out of 15 points and creating 9/15 majorities. The lines, such as the one drawn through the points 1 and 8, which can leave 9 points on the one side of them, including 1 and 8, are called “9/15 qualified majority dividers” (q-dividers in Tsebelis 2002: p.52). We draw all the possible q-dividers creating each time an enneagon (say the 1,8,9...15). Anywhere within each enneagon the correspondent veto players cannot unanimously (9/9) agree to change the SQ if the last is located within the enneagon. This enneagon constitutes the unanimity core of the nine selected players. If we now select all possible enneagons, their intersection constitutes the area within which no point can be defeated by any 9/15 majority. This intersection is the hatched small polygon in figure 2 and represents the “9/15 qualified majority core” of the 15 players decision-making body.

In the case of the UNSC, if the status quo on a peace crisis is laid within the five permanent members unanimity core, no matter whether it is not contained within the “60% qualified majority” core, no draft resolution can be adopted by the UNSC, since it will be vetoed as less preferred by at least one of the permanent members. If the SQ lays outside the five permanent members unanimity core and within the “60% qualified majority” core of the fifteen members of the SC, it cannot again be defeated by any other draft resolution since it will not be supported by at least 9/15 votes. If the SQ lays outside both cores but within the area contained by the straight lines that connect the extreme points of the unanimity and the 9/15 core, it cannot again be defeated. Actually, if the draft resolution is closer to one of the two cores, then it will be vetoed by the members of the other core since the draft proposal moves things away from their ideal policy preferences. Therefore, the core of the UNSC is the area, which covers and connects the two cores and represents their convexification the hatched and shaded areas in the following figure.

Insert figure 3

The greater the differences between the permanent and the non-permanent members of the UNSC and the greater the preference dispersion (less homogeneous) inside these two groups, the greater is the size of the core of the UNSC, and, hence, the greater the possibility for unilateral or let us say non-collective actions under UNSC auspices. In the case of non-decision for the UNSC, two are the possible policy outcomes, either mostly unilateral actions occur outside the UNSC or peace violation remains bleeding. The core of the UNSC could serve as a measure of multilateralism in the collective security agenda. The larger the core, the less multilateral actions take place under the UNSC auspices.

We should mention here, based on Greenberg's theorem⁷, that "the 9/15 qualified majority core" does not always exist in a two-dimension policy space, since $9/15 < 2/(2+1)$. If the preferences of the fifteen members of the decision body are homogeneous enough, the "9/15 qualified majority core" may shrink and disappear. In this case, only within the "five permanent members unanimity core" is the SQ security case unbeatable. Outside this area we can form draft resolutions, which can be voted both by the five permanent members and by a combination of nine of the total fifteen members of the UNSC.

Analyzing the main UNSC Reform Scenarios

In order to obtain a complete picture of the various implications of the above presented theoretical arguments for the location of the ideal preference points of the member states and the potential changes of the current decision rule to the decision capacity of the UNSC, we are going to examine the following reform scenarios. Firstly, we examine two cases in both of which the potential new members hold veto

power. In one case, the new members belong to the developed economies and in the other to the developing ones. In turn, we compose the scenario where none of the new permanent members has individual veto power. In this case, we examine the impact of the new members on the rest part of the tri part decision core, the qualified majority core and the area between the two cores. Thirdly, we examine the scenario where although no change occurs in the current composition of the permanent members of the UNSC, we allow the relocation of its permanent members on our preference map. Finally, we examine the decision capacity of the UNSC under a potential change on its decision rule, with the presentation of a scenario where the required qualified majority becomes more demanding. We start our discussion on the various reform scenarios trying to locate both the permanent and the candidate members of the UNSC on the two-dimensional space according to their ideal policy preferences. As mentioned above, the two dimensions are, on the vertical ax, the type of enforcement measures (i.e., the imposition of sanctions or the use of armed force) preferred by states supporting the UNSC actions under Chapter VII of the UN Charter, and, on the horizontal ax, states' GDP per capita as an index of their international economic policy preference. Without losing in generalizability, we indicatively chose to quantify coercion on a scale from 0 to 120, where zero stands for the preference of economic sanctions and 120 for the use of military force to deal with threats to the peace, breaches of the peace and acts of aggression. A mix of economic sanctions and threat of using military force lies in between the two extremes.

Insert figure 4

We start our mapping exercise by locating on our policy space the permanent members of the UNSC. What matters in this picture is not the absolute mark but the relative distance between the states. The U.S. being the most active and taking

initiatives for peacemaking, holds the highest score on the scale favoring military force. The U.K. is the closest to US ideal position, however, in our measurement exercise it obtains a slightly lower score due to segments of domestic pacifists' constraints incorporated into the governing labor party. Because of both pacifists' constraints in the French political system and the anti-U.S. legacy on foreign policy, we locate France close to US but even lower than the UK. Russia, in most of the cases discussed in the UNSC, usually votes in favor of the respect of national sovereignty and blocks proposals for the use of military force; for this reason, it takes a much lower grade in our scale. China is in line with Russia, but much more in favor of respect of the national sovereignty and against the use of military force, so it takes the lowest grade.

New permanent members with veto power

We now turn our examination on how a reform scenario works by adding as new permanent members of the UNSC, Germany and Japan that hold the higher probability to become the new members of the body. Germany's ideal point on our space is very close to France and the U.K. Its GDP per capita and its security policy preference after its post cold war transformation resembles to this of its major European allies. Actually, Germany for years had come close to resembling a civilian power acting with self-imposed constraints in its foreign and security policy. With the emergence of a new security environment, in the aftermath of the Cold War, the foreign and security policy of Germany has been under a process of change, normalization and emancipation, indicating the country's willingness to display less of a profile of a civilian power and more of a profile of a normal state. Its growing self-image as a great power and its resistance to the U.S. vision of a unipolar world

has led Germany to assume more responsibility on the international stage, while continuing to give prominence to multilateralism especially through the context of the UN and NATO. To this end, Germany has progressively accepted the necessity of taking part in international military operations around the globe. However, in line with the pacifist sentiments of the German public, as four out of five Germans believe that the UN endorsement should be secured before the use of coercive means to deal with international threats or breaches of the peace (Pew Global Attitudes Project 2004), Berlin recognizes force as a last resort. Germany would support the use of force under a UNSC mandate only if its major European partners agreed to participate in such a multilateral action. Based on the above analysis we locate Germany inside or marginally outside the unanimity core of the five permanent members of the current UNSC.

The other front-runner for taking a permanent post at the SC is Japan. Japan's traditional pacifism led the state to pursue for many years the role of a global civilian power. However, in the wake of the September, 11th terrorist attacks and the rising threat perceptions of North Korea (and China), pacifist and isolationist sentiments have been significantly weakened and a new political and military posture has emerged. This posture drives Japan to become "a global ordinary power" by two means: firstly, by enhancing its military capability for its self-defense in response to feared external threats, as Japan is already one of the world's largest spenders on national defense, and secondly, by assuming a more active role in international security activities. With the Japanese policy-making to derive less from ideology than from more pragmatic considerations, the main partisan disagreements among the various political parties competing for power have eased and there is an emerging consensus on foreign and security policy issues, based on two main pillars: alliances

with the Western countries, principally with the U.S., and pro-UN orientation.

However, differences between the major political parties over these two pillars “are likely to be a question of emphasis with regard to each pillar, rather than disputes over fundamental issues” (Inoguchi and Bacon 2006: 17). As far as Japan’s policy vis-a-vis the UN is concerned, there is a shift away from a stance that would tolerate no change in its role as passive observer or an actor engaged only in “checkbook diplomacy” by simply contributing money to the UN, towards assuming “international responsibilities” which permanent membership in the UNSC entails. After Japan’s involvement in the war against Afghanistan and its military support for the U.S.-led war against Iraq in 2003, the clamor in Japan is pervasive for pushing its policy preferences toward playing a more active role in UN affairs including the endorsement of the use of force. To this end, the major Japanese political forces are prone to make revisions to the pacifist contribution and more specifically to the so called no-war clause of Article 9, which, according to 1992 Diet legislation, allows the participation of Japan in peacekeeping operations but still prohibits the country from taking part in military operations under Chapter VII of the UN Charter. For this reason, we believe that in the near future the ideal point of Japan will also be inside or on the borders of the current unanimity UNSC core.

Hence, our analysis drives us to the conclusion that a potential enlargement of the UNSC with Germany and Japan as its new permanent members that would also hold the privilege of institutional veto, will not change the decision capacity of the Council, since the ideal points of the new members are within the current unanimity core of the five old members.

Other candidates, however, with a much lower GDP per capita are India, Brazil, Egypt and South Africa. New members from the pool of developing economies

spread to a significant degree the ideal points of the members of the UNSC across the foreign economic policy variable in our preference mapping exercise. This is enough to drive us to the conclusion that contrary to the case of Japan and Germany, a potential enlargement of the UNSC with developing countries, which hold veto power, increases the size of the unanimity core and reduces its decision capacity.

New permanent members without veto power

We move our discussion to the examination of the most popular reform scenarios. These reform proposals (see the scenarios of the High Level Panel) do not propose the expansion of veto to new members, so the unanimity core in the new decision structure remains unchanged. In this case, the proposed new members, no matter whether they hold a permanent or a non-permanent post, will affect the rest part of the tri part decision core, the qualified majority core and the area between the two cores. In order to draw on this impact and speculate on the implications of such an enlargement of the SC with the above mentioned developing states on its decision capacity, we need to locate their ideal points not only according to their GDP per capita but also across the security policy dimension. We do this exercise by examining India, South Africa, Brazil and Egypt, which so far run with greater probability of becoming the new permanent members, without, however, any veto power in a potential UNSC reform.

In the interest of realpolitik and national interest, India has attempted from the early 1990s to redefine its foreign policy, in order to suit the requirements of a greatly altered international order. Its commitment to the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) - a guiding factor in its foreign policy - eased as its foreign policy has begun to shift towards more pragmatism and its increasing self-awareness that it has the potential to

emerge, due to its strategic importance and its military capability, as a great power in its own right. As a result, India has underplayed the role of the leader of the NAM, it has come closer to the West, especially to U.S., and has discarded the anti-great power impulses that shaped its foreign policy during the Cold War. India, as an ardent supporter of multilateralism through the UN, is expected to develop as a permanent member of the UNSC, a stronger sense of international responsibility, as part of its great-power ambitions and give its vote for the imposition of sanctions in cases that fall within Chapter VII of the UN Charter. However, as far as the tension between the old and the new directions remains an enduring one in India's foreign policy, doubts are thrown upon India's ability to push its preferences still further to endorse the use of force. Such ability will depend on the nature of the issue and the circumstances prevailing in India's domestic politics at the particular time, when an issue will be considered by the UNSC. The above analysis leads us to locate India closer to the pacifist side with a moderate inclination to the use of force to invade countries and we mark its ideal security preference somewhere close to this of Russia.

Regarding the case of South Africa, mainly due to its recent transformation to a democratic system of governance, this state has shown a lack of ability to articulate a coherent foreign policy agenda that would enable it to establish a distinctive niche for itself in world affairs. As a middle power, it is characterized by a tendency to pursue multilateral approaches to world issues, a tendency to embrace compromise positions in international disputes and a willingness to maintain a degree of autonomy in relation to major powers (Cilliers 1999). As an African state, it has been too assertive to "African renaissance" which has become a central element of the country's international objectives. Being very active in grappling with the continent's problems and having a leadership role within the African Union and the NAM (Hamill and Lee

2001: 37), where it acts as a champion of the underdog on the basis of anti-North bias, South Africa is committed to the non-interference and to solution of conflicts by political rather than coercive means. Evidence of this can be found in the leading role it played towards the adoption by the African Union of the “Ezulwini Consensus”, a document that contains the African position on UN issues.⁸ The document is highly critical even to the imposition of sanctions, which according to the African states, could be decided by the UNSC only if a strict set of conditions was met. Taking all this into account, one can assume that South Africa as a permanent member of the UNSC will hardly go further to endorse the use of force, so its mark on our scale is the lowest.

Egypt, now, views its international role as a mediator, particularly in solving disputes between various Arab states in an effort to shape the norms of intra-Arab relations and trying to advance the peace process between Israel and the Arabs. Its mediating role in intra-Arab disputes has been welcomed by most Arab states which have given credence to Egypt playing that role, viewing it as entirely consistent with the notion of “Arabness.” (Alterman 2000: 359). As a bridge to the Arab world and as a broker in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, Egypt has enhanced its value to the U.S., the relationship with which remains a keystone of Egypt’s foreign policy. As it has been pointed out, sometimes Egypt exploits its role as a broker and “frequently helps frame an agenda that is much more to U.S. liking than would otherwise be the case” (Alterman 2003: 4). In all probability, Egypt, as a permanent member of the UNSC, in which most of the issues concern Middle East and Africa, will do its outmost to sustain the profile of mediator. It seems unlikely to support the use of force under a UN mandate except in acts of aggression that constitute blatant violations of the

principle of non-intervention similar to that the Arab region experienced in 1990 when Iraq invaded Kuwait.⁹ Should Egypt have supported the use of force under Chapter VII of the UN Charter, it might have undermined its ability to maintain, internally and externally, its profile of mediator. Egypt, which along with the other NAM countries has accused the UNSC for having been “increasingly resorting to Chapter VII of the UN Charter as an umbrella for addressing issues that do not necessarily pose a threat to international peace and security”¹⁰ is against the imposition of any “preventive” sanctions.¹¹ This drives us to argue that Egypt is in favor of “targeted” sanctions as a last resort under strict conditions and only after all means of peaceful settlement have been exhausted. Therefore, we give to Egypt the same mark as South Africa.

At last, we try to locate Brazil on our map. In recent years, Brazil’s foreign policy has departed from its traditional tendencies of aloofness, that was mainly due to the serious domestic (political and economic) problems it had to address, toward developing a more assertive and pragmatic role in its region and even broadly in the wider international context. Despite the fact that Brazil maintains a strong notion of sovereignty and is guided in the conduct of its international relations by the principles of non-intervention, non-interference and the peaceful solution of disputes, enshrined in the 1988 Constitution, it has in practice employed double-standards in its policy vis-a-vis the enforcement actions under Chapter VII of the UN Charter. It seeks to play the dominant role in regional crisis management without resorting to the use of sanctions or armed force. For instance, Brazil, as non-permanent member of the UNSC, did not vote for UNSC Resolution 940 of 1994 which authorized the member states to “use all necessary means to facilitate the departure from Haiti of the military

leadership.”¹² At the broader international level, Brazil has maintained that the UNSC can make use of its powers under Chapter VII, “in clear exceptional circumstances” as in Somalia in 1994 and Iraq in 1991.¹³ Brazil voted in favour of UNSC Resolution 897 of 1994, which reaffirmed the obligation of states to fully implement the embargo imposed by Resolution 733 of 1992. It also supported Resolution 678 of 1990 during the Gulf War by using the argument that it was about an invasion that took place outside the Latin American region.¹⁴ Based on the above evidence we give Brazil the same mark as Russia and India.

Based on the above comparative evaluation, we observe that, despite the dominant impression within the security policy community and also within the wider public opinion, the security policy preference of these less developed countries converges with the ideal points of the current permanent members from the pool of the developed economies (see above in figure 4). More specifically, we observe this trend of convergence in contrast to divergence across the economic variable of our mapping exercise. This may lead us to assert that the size of the qualified majority core and its distance from the unchanged unanimity core will change only marginally. So it is reasonable to argue that even with the addition of this type of countries to the bundle of permanent members, the decision capacity of the UNSC may stay unchanged and in any case will not be reduced dramatically. However, our model cannot provide further prediction since we cannot calculate the total size of the core of the UNSC. This is due to the fact that its composition will also include other temporary non-permanent members for which we do not know the ideal points in our two-dimension space.

The potential relocation of the current permanent members of the UNSC

Another aspect we want to examine, in order to obtain a complete picture of the various implications of the location of the ideal preference points of the member states to the decision capacity of the UNSC, is the potential relocation of the current permanent members on our preference map.

Insert figure 5

Suppose we take a hypothetical but realistic scenario for the decision capacity of the UNSC after twenty to twenty five years without any reform in its current function. The new element which will change drastically the size of the unanimity core of the UNSC is the transfer of Russia and China to the bundle of developed countries. Both are fast growing economies, especially China, which has been taken off and perhaps in less than thirty years time it will be landed close to the average GDP per capita of western European economies such as Germany, France, and U.K. This development will make the unanimity core of much smaller size and, therefore, the decision capacity of the UNSC will increase accordingly. In this case, the blocking role of the non-permanent members from the less developed states will be increased. The location of the ideal preference points of these countries may influence the qualified majority core and the area between the two cores (see above in figure 3) in such a way that the total core of the UNSC may be larger than a current core which is composed by a larger unanimity core. The loss in unbeatable points in the unanimity core, due to the convergence of China and Russia with the rest of the current permanent members, could be compensated with new points in the two other parts of the total UNSC core. However, we must not forget that these states may be located on our space in such a way that the q-core (the small polygon in figure 3) is empty. In this case these countries have no impact on the decision capacity of the SC. If the five permanent

members reach an agreement on draft proposal outside their unanimity core they will also obtain a majority of 9/15 to make it a UNSC resolution.

A scenario with a more demanding decision rule

Let us now examine another element in a potential reform proposal. What happens to the qualified majority core if we change the decision rule and make it more demanding by moving it, let us say, from 9/15 to 10/15?

Insert figure 6

It is easy to verify¹⁵ that the shaded polygon representing the 9/15-majority core in figure 2 will also expand. This drives us to the conclusion that the decision capacity of the fifteen-members' body, with its composition remaining unchanged, will be reduced. We can also see, as in the case of any unanimity core (see figure 1), that if the ideal points of the members change by moving apart from their current position, then the "9/15 core" will expand too. However, we can observe a smaller 10/15 than a 9/15 "qualified majority core" by adding new members in the decision body which hold ideal points on our two dimensions space in such a way that makes the initial 9/15 core to shrink. Hence, we cannot predict whether the decision capacity of the UNSC will decrease if we just enlarge it and make its decision rule more demanding. The knowledge of the new size of the body is not enough to drive us to a safe inference. In order to determine the outcome of such an exercise we also need to know the exact position of the ideal preference points of all the members of our modified decision body.

Concluding Remarks

Our discussion may be summarized as follows. According to Tsebelis' veto players theory the important element for the decision capacity of the UNSC is not its size but the location of the ideal preference points of its members and the decision rule according to which these members vote for the proposed draft resolutions. We have shown that it is misleading to connect, as many used to do, enlargement with less decision capacity in the UNSC. We have shown that we could have a UNSC larger than the current one, with more permanent members equipped with institutional veto power, which could, however, arrive to a decision with less difficulty than the current less populous UNSC. Our analysis was based on the concept of the "core", which is the set of points on decision spatial analysis that cannot be defeated by any other point on our decision space without violation of the decision rule. The core of the Council is a tri-part core, composed by the unanimity core of the institutional veto holders, the qualified majority core and the shaded area between the two cores (as in figure3). We examined the various reform scenarios based on the main analytical tool provided by the veto players theory, according to which, the larger the core is, the smaller is the decision capacity of a decision body. We have obtained that the three parts of the core of the UNSC may be reshaped in various and many times opposite directions, which make prediction for its decision capacity an extremely demanding exercise. However, we managed to show that the key element in the solution of this puzzle is the positioning of the member states on the decision space and not the size of the decision body. Finally, we want to exclusively state that our motivation to do this work was not to embark upon a normative discussion for the future of the UNSC. On the contrary, we tried to limit ourselves to the positive discussion locating our arguments on the same side with those who believe that the fruitful way to do social science is

not to mix the two cognitive worlds. We also share the opinion that positive evidence may help a better normative discussion based on feasible goals and more efficient means. If the goal is a more efficient UNSC we have shown that this has nothing to do with its size. If the goal is to increase the legitimacy of the decisions of the UNSC, and we want to do this based on input legitimacy, we could increase its size in order to make it more representative without losing in efficiency. On the contrary, the efficiency may be improved if we choose as new members, states with ideal preference points over security and foreign economic policy located in such a way that drive the current decision core to shrink.

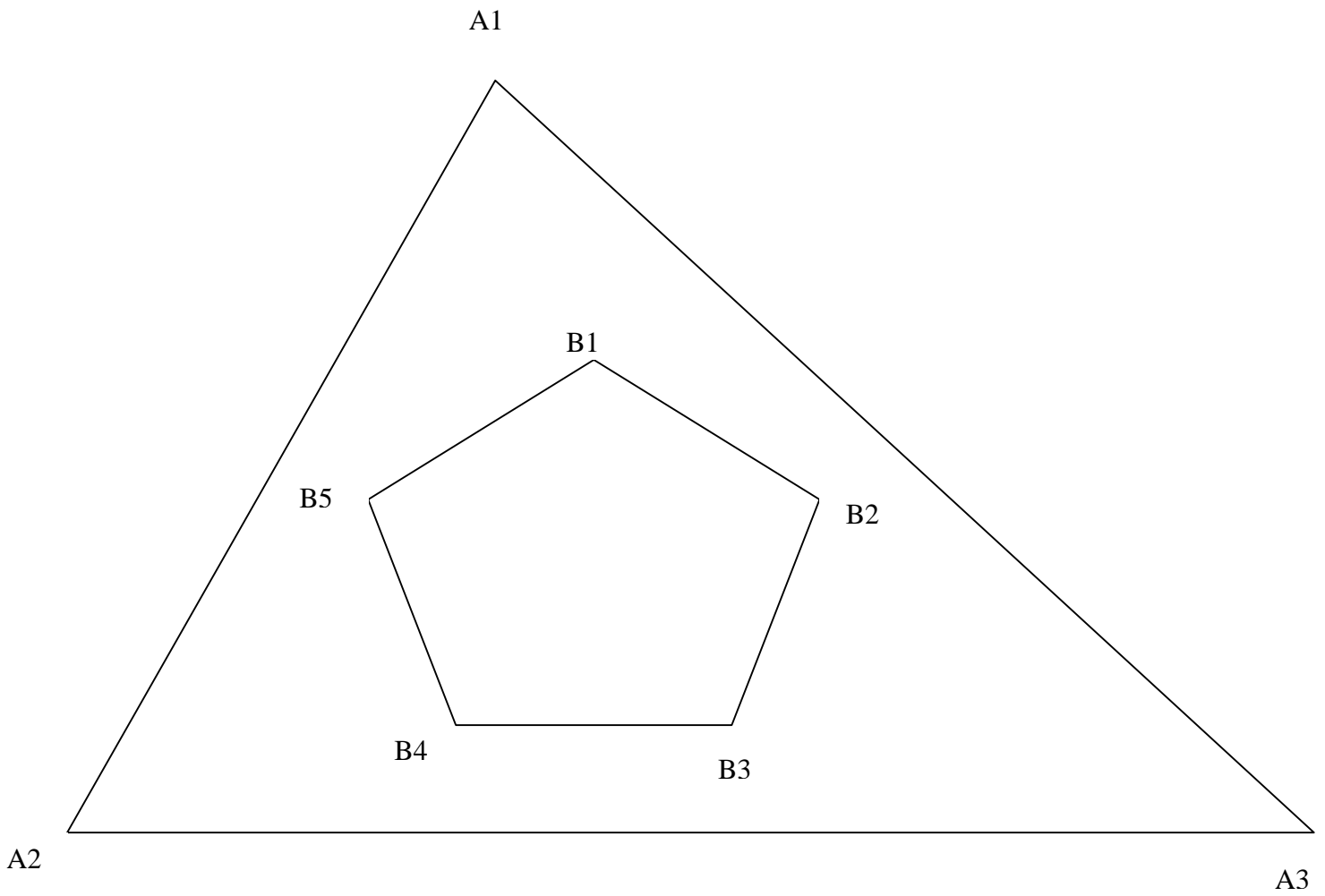


Figure 1: Three and five members' unanimity cores in two dimensions, where five members can reach a decision easier than a three members and more distant decision body

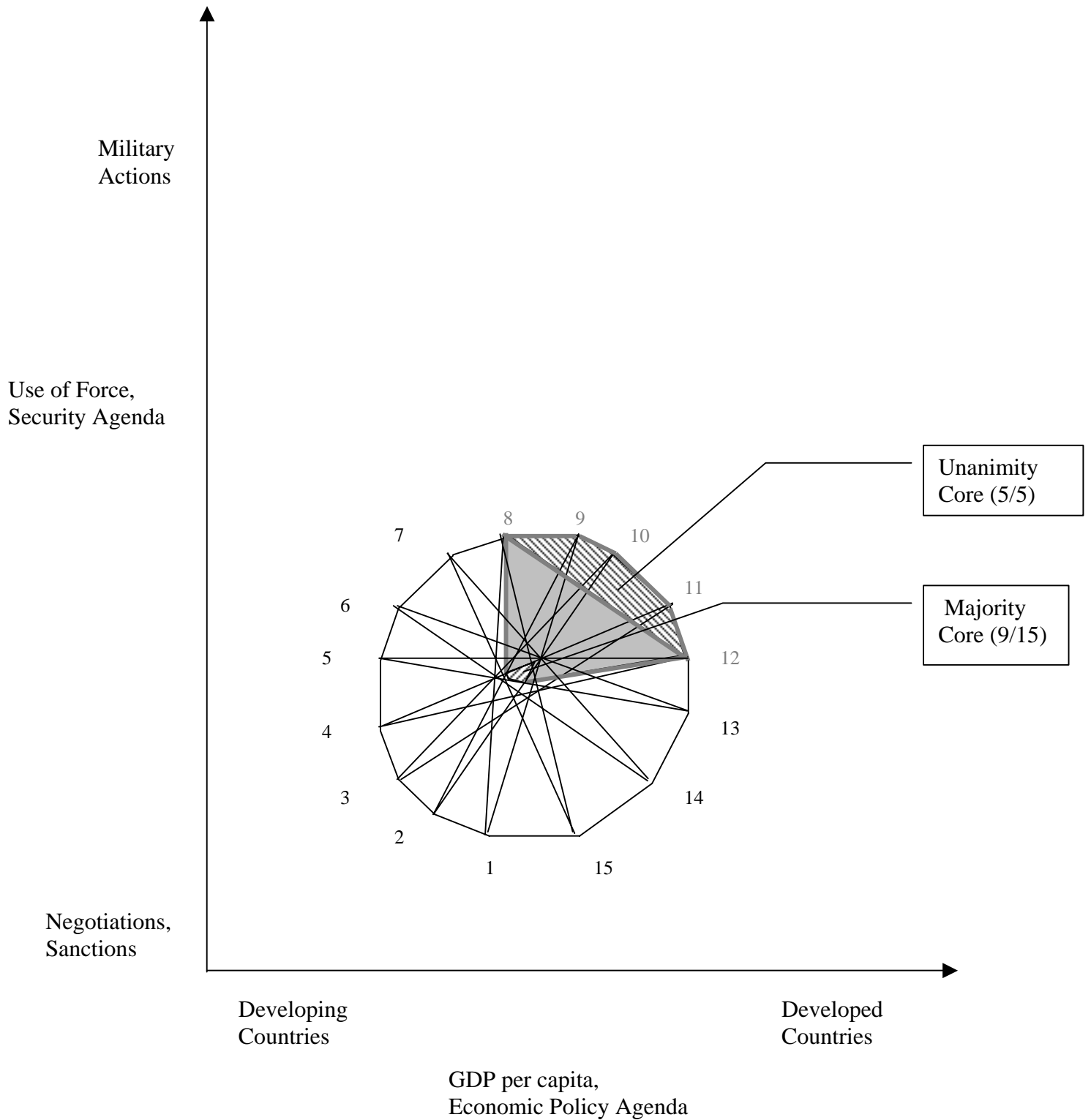


Figure 2: A fifteen members decision body in a two dimensions policy space

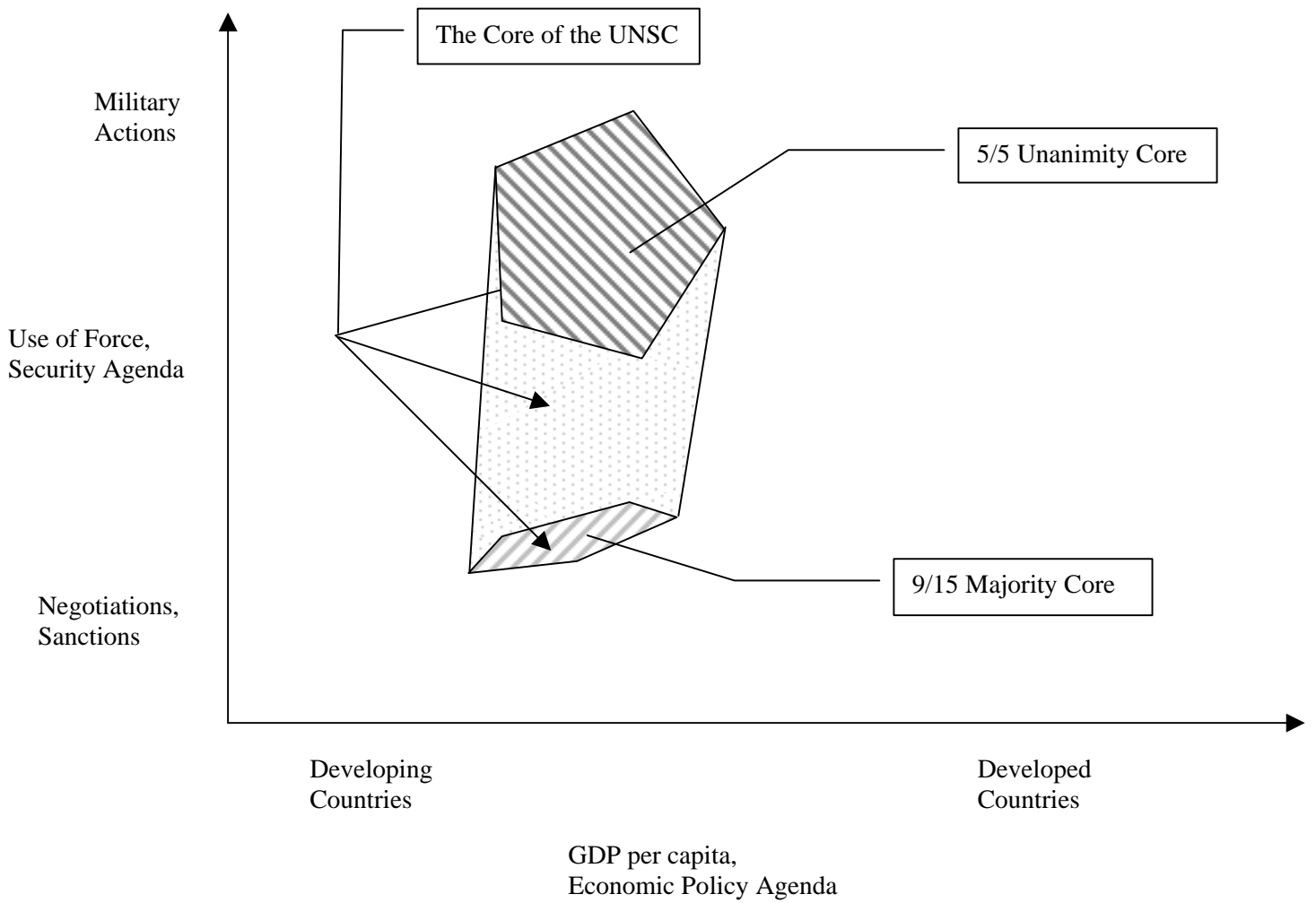
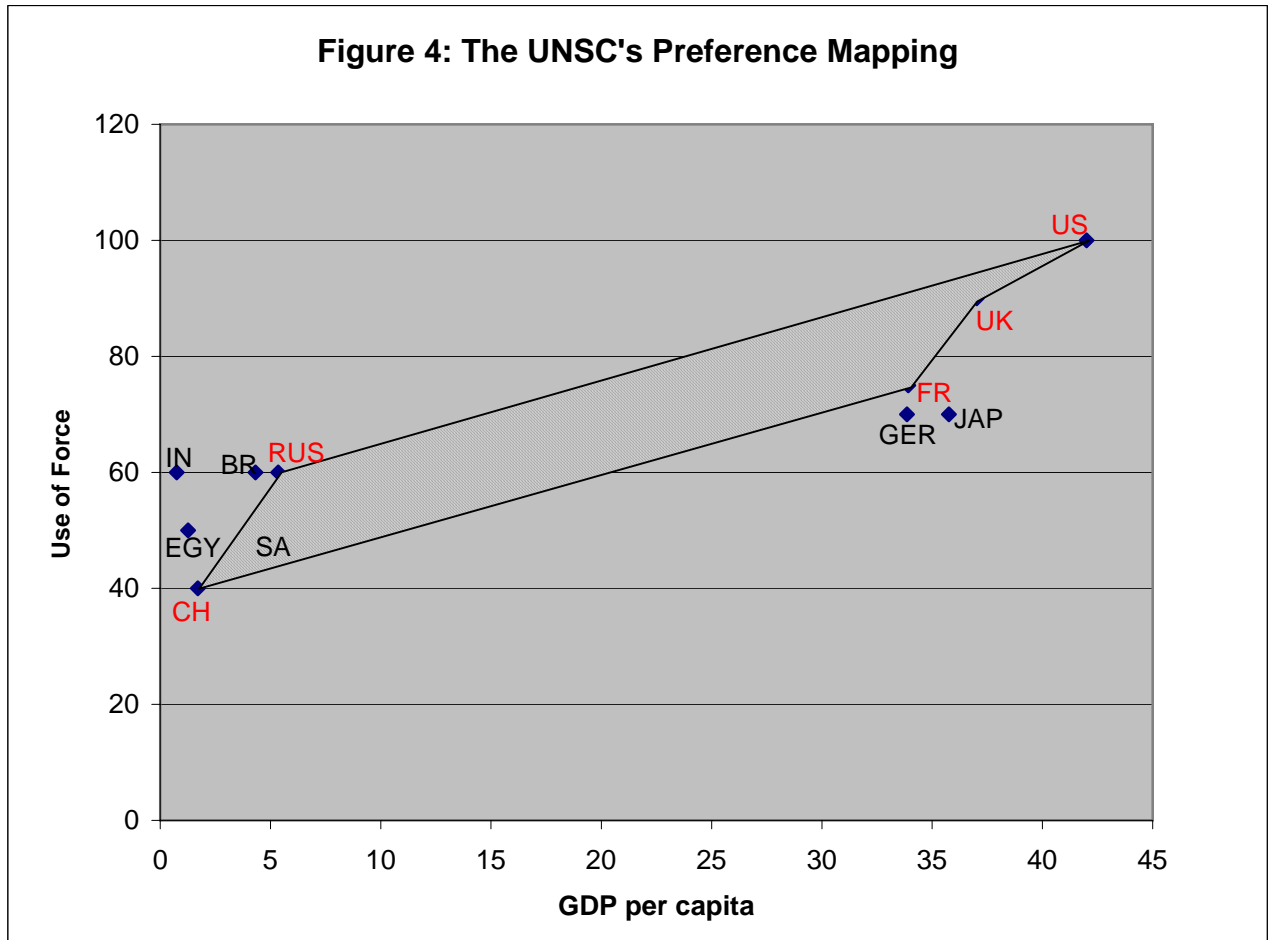
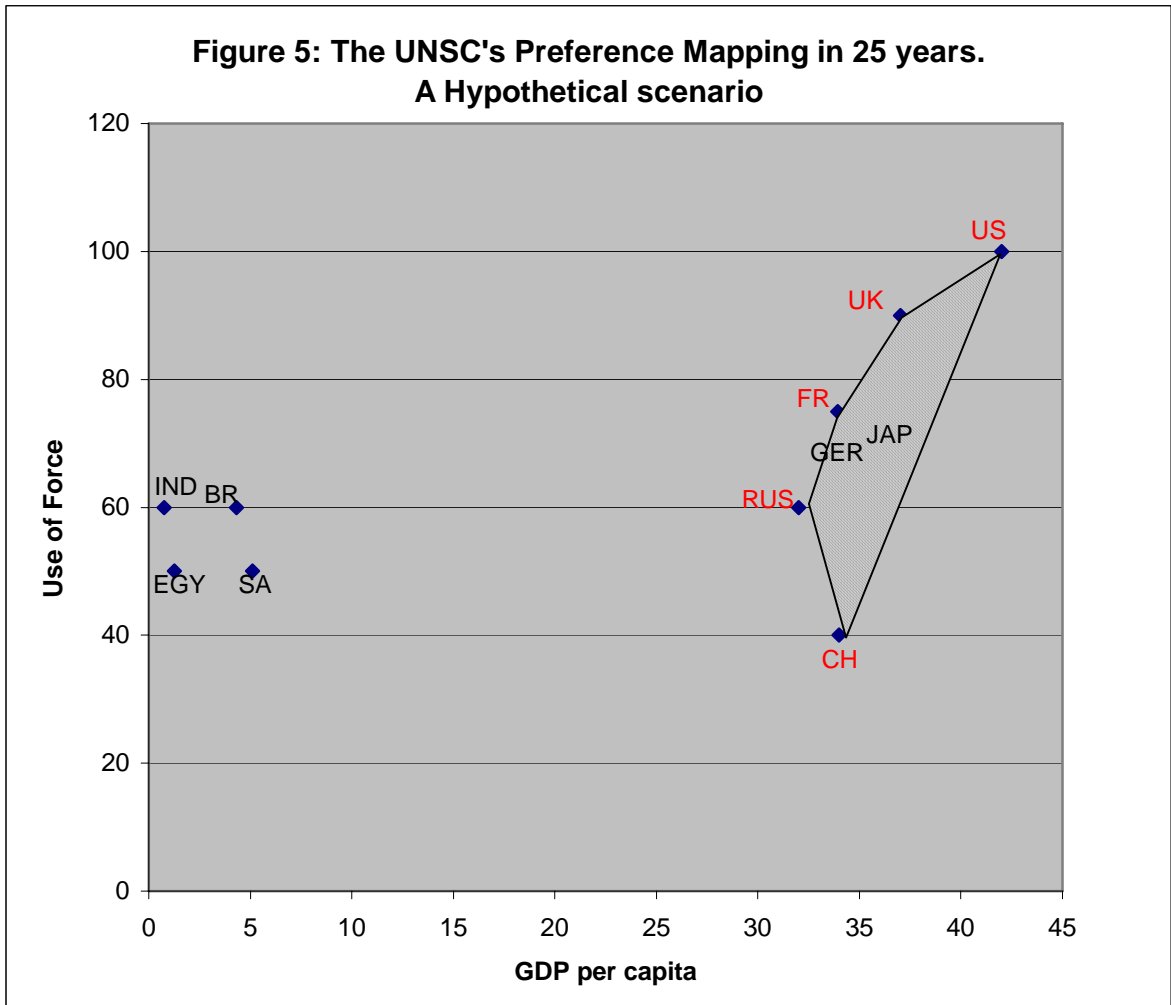


Figure 3: The Core of the UNSC





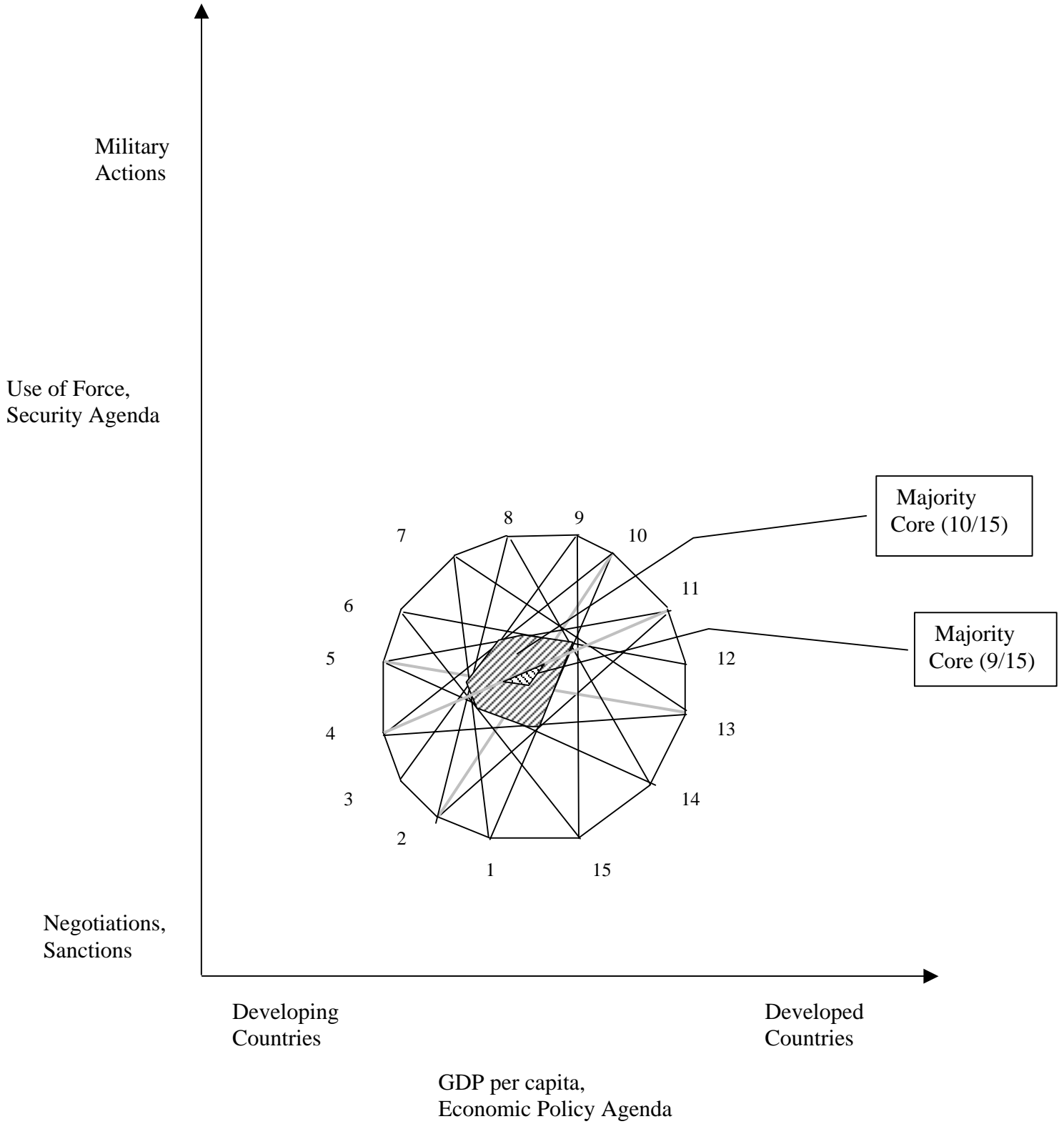


Figure 6: A fifteen members decision body in a two dimensions policy space with majority core 10/15 (compared with a majority core 9/15)

Appendix

	GDP per Capita In current U.S. Dollars
USA	42,000
JAPAN	35,757
GERMANY	33,854
UK	37,023
FRANCE	33,918
RUSSIA	5,349
BRAZIL	4,320
SOUTH AFRICA	5,106
CHINA	1,709
EGYPT	1,265
INDIA	0,750

Source: GDP (nominal) per capita for the year 2005 obtained from International Monetary Fund, World Economic Outlook Database, September 2006

¹ The Economist, 29 August 1992, p. 14.

² For a survey of the most important reform proposals see Bourantonis (2005).

³ See Laurenti (1997: 11); Russet et al. 1997: 155); Blum (2005: 632); Zacher (2003: 11), Reisman (1993:96).

⁴ For arguments in favor to unidimensionality see Frieden (2004).

⁵ Dreher, Stum and Vreeland (2006) argue and provide evidence that there is a positive correlation between participation of a country in IMF programmes and the coincidence of this country being member of the UNSC. The IMF loans provided to these countries increase during their service on the UNSC and decrease before and after the service.

⁶ For indicative arguments in favor or against the use of GDP for measuring the power and influence of countries on foreign affairs see the discussion in Fearon (2005)

⁷ According to Greenberg (1979) a core always exists if $q < n/(n+1)$ where q is the decision rule and n the dimensionality of the policy space.

⁸ See The Common Position of the Proposed Reform of the United Nations: The Ezulwini Consensus”, African Union, Executive Council, 7th Extraordinary Session, 7-8 March 2005.

⁹ During the Gulf War of 1991, Egypt supported the use of force under the terms of Resolution 678 of the UNSC.

¹⁰ See Comments of the Non-Aligned Movement on the Observations and recommendations Contained in the Report of the High-Level Panel on Threats, Challenges and Change, UN Doc. A/59/565 and A/59/565 CORR.1, 28 February 2005, p. 6.

¹¹ Ibid., p. 17.

¹² See Resolution 940 adopted by the UNSC on 31 July 1994.

¹³ See the remarks of Mr. Castro, Permanent Representative of Brazil to the UN, in UN Doc. S/PV.3334, 4 February 1994, pp. 27-8.

¹⁴ See the remarks of Mr. Sardenberg, Permanent Representative of Brazil to the UN, in UN Doc. S/PV.3413, 31 July 1994, p. 9.

¹⁵ Tsebelis (2005: 18-20) shows the same for a seven members decision body and a 5/7 decision rule .