

# Small State, Great Power?

An Analysis of Norway's Influence on the United Nations Security Council, 1979-80.



Master's thesis Modern International and Transnational History

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## **Abstract**

This thesis is a contribution to the understanding of small state power in the United Nations Security Council. The Security Council has always been a prestigious organ of the UN, and Norway has served several times since its creation in 1945. Norway was elected to sit in the Council for the period from 2021-2022, and the debate on whether it was beneficial for a small state such as Norway to sit on the Security Council surrounded by great power was ongoing. Questions of what Norway would stand to gain and spend on such an endeavour were central. This thesis analyses Norway's third term in the Security Council from 1979-1980. The focus is on how Norway managed to influence the Council and how allied interests played a part in determining what room for manoeuvre Norway had from case to case.

In 1979 Norway entered its third term in the Security Council. Norway's term on the Security Council from 1979-1980 was characterized by severe cases where Norway often had to take its allies' interests into account. This thesis divides the cases in the Security Council into two categories where Norway's allies had strong interests of their own and secondly where their interests were relatively weaker. The cases being examined where allies had strong interest are the Iranian Revolution of 1979, the Soviet Invasion of Afghanistan, the Iran-Iraq War and Israeli settlements in Arab areas. The second part of cases examined are the apartheid regimes in Southern Africa, the Vietnamese invasion of Cambodia, and the Lebanese Civil War and subsequent UN peacekeeping mission though UNIFIL.

Norwegian influence in the Security Council depended on three main factors: allied interests in the conflicts being debated, Soviet interest in conflicts being debated, and Norwegian self-restriction in cases where Norway was concerned about damaging its relationship with either the US or the USSR.

# Preface

To work with this thesis has proved quite the challenge. It has been a learning progress and has allowed me to work with fascinating subjects. It has given me an increased respect for the work behind historical research and enhanced my insight into my own capabilities and limitations.

When the thesis, at last, is handed in, some essential people deserve my gratitude. First and foremost, I would like to thank my supervisors Hilde Henriksen Waage and Olav Njølstad. Their contribution, feedback and support have been quintessential for the progress of the thesis. I would also like to extend my gratitude to Hilde's seminar group, where feedback and constructive criticism has been helpful.

I would like to thank my fellow graduates for their good conversation and encouragement throughout the writing process.

I would not have been able to deliver this thesis without Mahalet Tadesse. The importance of her endless support and proofreading to the very end can not be understated.

Finally, I would like to thank my dear friend Pavel Semaev who tried his best to keep the thesis on schedule.

I have gotten much advice and feedback through this process, and not all have been followed. Any potential mistakes are entirely my own.

This thesis is dedicated to my mother, Kari Mette Falch Juvik.

Per Falch Juvik

Oslo, May 2022.

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# Chapter 1: Introduction

This thesis will examine Norway's role in the United Nations Security Council from 1979-1980. The Security Council has long been considered one of the UN's most prestigious and powerful organs. In international law, they alone hold power to authorise the use of force towards sovereign states, ranging from economic sanctions to military interventions or other measures. The possibility of being represented at the Council is appealing to many countries. Every year, countries run against each other, in drawn-out campaigns, for a spot at the table. If elected, they would sit with the five permanent members and nine other non-permanent (elected) members. The five permanent members all have veto power to block any resolution, leading to the debate that non-permanent members do not have an impact on the Council as anything they put forward can just be vetoed. Usually, the proposed resolutions do not get vetoed as countries negotiate beforehand on the content of the resolution and threats of veto can be enough to stop the resolution from being voted over. This has not persuaded countries from not wanting to run for a seat and sit at the table with the great powers.

In 2007 Norway announced its bid for a seat on the United Nations Security Council and gradually increased its efforts to secure the position over the years. From 2016 to 2019, almost 30 million NOK was spent on the campaign, and Norwegian embassies worldwide worked to convince countries to vote for them in the upcoming election. With such massive economic and political capital spent on a seat on the Council, it is essential to examine what Norway gets out of such a position and how effective a small country can be on a stage filled with the world's great powers.

On 17 June 2020, Norway won its bid and was elected to sit on the Security Council from 2021-2022.<sup>1</sup> This will be the fifth time Norway sits on the Council, the last time being in 2001-2002. On a 15-20-year interval, Norway has campaigned and been elected to the Council. On 10 November 1978, Norway was elected for its third term on the United Nations Security Council. The political situation when Norway took its seat at the table in 1979 was a lot different than that of today. However, the desire to sit on it has not diminished, and the debate on the worth and need for Norway to sit on the Council intensified as the election came closer. Whether a seat on the Security Council is worth Norway's time and effort or if it is just

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<sup>1</sup> Gladstone, "Mexico, India, Ireland and Norway Win Seats on U.N. Security Council."

a place to appease its allies has been raised.<sup>2</sup> It can be seen as a position where the country will get very little of its foreign policy through unless it can convince all the great powers of its view. This master thesis will examine the questions of small state power in an arena seemingly dominated by great powers. The thesis will answer the following research questions:

*How did Norway's influence on the United Nations Security Council differ in cases where allied interests were strong?*

*How did Norway yield influence on the Security Council during its two-year term on the Security Council from 1979-1980?*

*Did Norway achieve its objectives on the Security Council?*

*Did Norway bend to allied pressure in cases where allied interests were strong?*

## ***Methodology and Theory***

The reasoning for selecting the period of 1979-80 is that it was one of the terms Norway served on the Security Council and where sources were readily available. Several periods of Norwegian periods on the Security Council could have been selected and compared, but that would prove too large of a task to fit within the given framework for this project.

Furthermore, the period was also characterised by great dispute within the Council itself. The US was almost catching up with the USSR in terms of vetoes, and Norway had to carefully navigate allies and interests for the country and for the individual politicians. Norwegian interests were also often at odds during its term on the Security Council. An example of this was when Norway condemned Vietnam's intervention in Cambodia, placing state sovereignty higher than brutal human rights abuses and outright genocide in a time before intervention on a humanitarian basis was established in international law.<sup>3</sup> This is, of course, an oversimplified picture of the situation, but it exemplifies how a country must weigh its interests and morals in difficult situations.

The main theoretical lens that is applied in this thesis is realism. Realism is a rather broad theory that includes several subsections where it has developed into different branches. What

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<sup>2</sup> Gravdal, *Til Bords Med De Mektige*, 12.

<sup>3</sup> Gravdal, *Til Bords Med De Mektige*, 29.



is often seen as the general assumptions for realism as a whole is that the state is the central actor of the international community, that the objective of the state is its own survival and that the state can only rely on itself to achieve this.<sup>4</sup> These claims have been challenged from all fronts, including realists themselves, and said new branches have evolved from such debates. Some of the interesting parts to examine from realism will be power dynamics and the tendency to overlook small states and their ability to influence great powers. The basic assumption of realism grants a way of categorizing the cases. In the cases where the US had a strong interest, one would assume, according to realism, that Norway would often back down and side with the US if their interest differed.

The cases where allied interest was strong can be challenging to define as countries' interests vary based on the perspective applied. The US saw the fall of the Shah in Iran, the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan, and the Iran-Iraq war as an interwoven threat from the Soviets against the world's oil supplies.<sup>5</sup> These three issues were prioritised, and consequently, other areas were not prioritised as much. The case of Israeli settlements in Arab areas is an exception since Israel was one of the closest allies of the US, and their relationship has been a priority of US governments since the conception of Israel after the Second World War. While other allies' interests certainly influenced Norway in this period, no one had a more decisive say than the US as the *de facto* guarantor of Norwegian security.

## *Sources*

Norwegian archive material constitutes the bedrock of this thesis. The majority of the primary sources come from the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA). These sources constituting correspondence from the different embassies to the MFA as well as internal communication were found at *Riksarkrivet*. However, the sources made available here were only for 1979, as the sources from the MFA for 1980 are still classified and kept in the MFA's own archive. Due to COVID-19 their archives have been closed during the period this thesis was written. This should not dilute the analysis of the thesis notably. To compensate for this lack of sources for 1980, complementary sources such as the MFA's own reports to the Norwegian parliament have been used.

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<sup>4</sup> Baylis, *The Globalization of World Politics*, 107-109.

<sup>5</sup> Tamnes, *Oljealder 1965-1995*, 98.

The thesis also required extensive research on the seven different cases examined. This was done mainly by looking at secondary literature on the cases as well as supporting Norwegian sources on the subject. The Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs' reports on the period in the Security Council were useful to get an insight into the priorities of Norway at the time as well as the views on the cases.

### *Scholarly Debate and Literature*

The scholarly debate on the topic chosen for this thesis can be looked at from a few different angles. First is a general perspective of small state power versus great powers. This is a rather broad approach to the topic and could give an overview of the broader debate. When looking at small state power in this context, it will be natural to bring in theories of international relations (IR-theories) as they often examine such power dynamics. Realism, in particular, can be used as a starting point for this section of the debate. In broad terms, realism will argue that the essential goal for all states is their survival and that this is achieved through the maximization of power. Whether this is military or economic can be argued, but military security and self-preservation are often seen as the goal.<sup>6</sup> If applied to the Security Council and Norway's term, one could argue that Norway as a small state would only use its position to further its chances for survival and bandwagon on its great power allies. This oversimplified image can fit some instances where a state has to swallow its pride or morals in order to appease an ally or adversary. It does, however, not capture the nuances of the Council nor the complexity of its workings.

In addition to the literature on small state power, the thesis focuses on a period of Norwegian foreign policy history that has been written extensively about. Among others, Rolf Tamnes sixth volume on the history of Norwegian foreign policy and Olav Riste's *Norway's Foreign Relations – A History* form the foundation for the comprehensive history of Norwegian foreign policy in the Cold War period that this thesis examines.<sup>7</sup>

Second, one could look at the debate on small state power in the United Nations Security Council and whether the mechanic of veto power is everything. Icelandic scholar Baldur Thorhallsson argued that the means of influence on the Security Council stretches further than

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<sup>6</sup> Baylis, *The Globalization of World Politics*, 110.

<sup>7</sup> Tamnes, *Oljealder 1965-1995.*; Riste, *Norway's Foreign Relations*.

the traditional methods of power. By including small states' abilities as norm entrepreneurs, their diplomatic skills and knowledge of and initiative in the UN and the Security Council, among other factors, he tries to broaden the concept of power and influence on the Council.<sup>8</sup> This serves to open the discord beyond one where the permanent members and their vetoes hold all power on the council.

The broader view is important, but the debate on small state power versus great powers is not the main focus of this paper and only the context in which it is placed. We can look for literature on Norway's time on the Security Council and see how the debate surrounding its term and influence at the time was and is perceived. Bjørn Skogmo's autobiography includes extracts of his time in the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The book includes a section on Norway in the Security Council when he served as Minister-Counsellor to the UN. While this gives some insight into Norway's behaviour and motivation in the Council, it functions more as a recollection of Skogmo's own experiences while in the Council. Hallvard Kvale Svenbalrud also included a section about Norway in the Security Council in his dissertation on Norway and the UN. Svenbalrud's subchapter is a quick glance at the Council period and concludes that Norway's period can be characterized as uncontroversial and unmemorable. This thesis places itself in the context of these works but looks closer at the cases and how Norway was able to manoeuvre itself between vetoes and allied interests. To the best of my knowledge, not much research has been done specifically on Norway's term from 1979-80 in terms of influence and power on the Council.

## ***Relevance***

This thesis contributes to the understanding of the power relations between small states and great powers in the United Nations Security Council. It adds to the foundational knowledge of Norwegian foreign policy history and precisely Norway's behaviour in the Security Council. The period of Norwegian foreign policy has been widely written about, but Norway's actions and ability in the Council have been a dimmed subject.

Following Norway's bid for the spot at the Security Council, the debate over whether it was worth the struggle went on.<sup>9</sup> When discussing issues of national interest, it is vital to have a

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<sup>8</sup> Thorhallsson, *Small States in the UN Security Council: Means of Influence?*, 5-6.

<sup>9</sup> Gravdal, *Til bords med de mektige*, 221.

clear understanding of Norway's actions and ability in the Council in the past. This thesis will help fill a gap in the literature and debate on a highly relevant subject.

### *Structure*

The second chapter is a background chapter examining the creation of the United Nations Security Council. The process leading to the creation of the Council also explains how it ended up with a composition of five permanent and ten non-permanent members. The power dynamic this created is an integral part of this thesis and has therefore been given its own chapter. Chapter three is the first of the two main chapters and the start of the analysis. This chapter contains the cases that the Security Council worked on and where Norway's allies and the US in particular had vital interests. The cases included here are the Iranian Revolution of 1979, the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan, the Iran-Iraq war, and Israeli settlements in Arab areas. Chapter four examines the last three prominent cases that the Security Council debated during Norway's term. These cases are the apartheid regimes in South Africa and Rhodesia (later Zimbabwe), the Vietnamese invasion of Cambodia and the civil war in Lebanon and subsequent peacekeeping missions through UNIFIL.

## **Chapter 2: The Victors' World Order**

As Norway took its seat on the Security Council in 1979 it did so alongside 14 other nations as numerous nations had done before. The background for the formation of the Security Council is important to examine as it can provide context to the position Norway stepped onto the Security Council. So how did this conglomerate of the world's great powers and a few elected members come to be?

During the Moscow and Teheran Conferences between the US, Britain, and the Soviet Union in the fall of 1943 it was decided that an organisation of like-minded 'peace-loving' nations should be established after the war ended. They had rather differing interests in terms of what this organisation was going to provide, ranging from human rights to protection of state sovereignty and colonial empire preservation.<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>10</sup> UN, History of the United Nations.

## *Three Diverging Visions*

President Franklin D. Roosevelt expressed that he favoured a post-war order dominated by these three nations and China. He even went as far as suggesting the general disarmament of other nations and having garrisons from great powers deployed to settle border conflicts and other local or regional disputes during state dinners with the British minister of foreign affairs Anthony Eden.<sup>11</sup> He was haunted by the belief that the former isolationist position of the US had opened up the possibility for Nazi Germany and Imperial Japan to pursue their expansionist plans. The vision of a global organisation with a central position for the US that could keep peace and security for all was, therefore, important to implement and something Roosevelt strongly believed in. Opposition politician was consequently often included in the subsequent planning of this proposed organisation and the president had to ensure his political adversaries that a 'global superstate' was not what he envisioned.<sup>12</sup>

Prime Minister Winston Churchill did not concern himself with such domestic opposition as he was focused on what the place of Britain should be in the world where power was shifting further and further away from them. Both the US and the Soviet Union had drastically expanded their military and industrial capabilities during the war and the Brits were increasingly aware of the potential for loss of influence in the post-war era. He later reflected on Britain's diminished role that became ever more obvious during the Teheran conference:

There I sat with the great Russian bear on one side of me with paws outstretched, and, on the other side, the great American buffalo. Between the two sat the poor little English donkey, who was the only one ... who knew the right way home.<sup>13</sup>

With this new reality in mind, Churchill wanted to establish a system where Britain's security as well as their vast and crumbling empire. The desire to preserve the empire at great cost came to clash with Roosevelt's idea of a post-war world. This idea of empire preservation also made him support the idea of regional councils that would be the guarantors of peace and security in their respective regions. This idea found little support, not just with Roosevelt, but was also seen as too weak and decentralised compared to Roosevelt's proposal within his own foreign office.<sup>14</sup>

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<sup>11</sup> Bosco, *Five to Rule Them All*, 14.

<sup>12</sup> Hoopes & Brinkley, *FDR and the Creation of the U.N.*, 128.

<sup>13</sup> Dilks, *Diaries of Sir Alexander Cadogan*, 627.

<sup>14</sup> Louis, *Still More Adventures with Britannia*, 232.

The Soviets had on their parts only increased their spoils of war as the war neared its end and was keen on maintaining as much of this as possible which was looking to be on collision course with the American perspective of the post-war world of independent nations. The Soviet Union was however devastated by the war and needed a period of peace. Stalin was contempt with maintaining the wartime alliances (in the form of this new organisation) as long as Soviet interests remained safeguarded. Stalin was often more interested in questions concerning territory and borders than the actual procedural and legal aspects of the new world order. It was to be an organisation that could secure the USSR's borders and not much more.<sup>15</sup> It was in the spirit of maintaining as much power as possible over this new organisation and their own sovereignty that the USSR Foreign Secretary Andrei Gromyko and his delegation during the Dumbarton Oaks Conference in 1944 proposed that a Security Council should be put in place.<sup>16</sup> There was to be no confusion about where the power of the United Nations should lie. Delegates from all three countries agreed that they should hold special privileges in this Council as they stood as the guarantees of international peace and security and that they would not be restricted in the use of all necessary means (often meaning military power) to ensure the peace and security against potential threats. This idea of special privileges for the permanent members of the Security Council evolved to be the veto power on resolutions. The failures of the League of Nations without power to enforce its rulings were not to be repeated and this new organisation would be able to follow its words up with action.<sup>17</sup> The first three permanent members of the Security Council were agreed on amongst themselves mostly due to their position of power as the outcome of the Second World War was beginning to look ever clearer with the Allies pushing the Axis on every conceivable front. The three powers had agreed on a rough premise for the Security Council, but still, there were matters to resolve, especially who else should be on the Security Council.

Roosevelt was interested in getting additional members as permanent on the Security Council and suggested both China and Brazil. The latter was rejected by both the Brits and the Soviets<sup>18</sup> and while China did not play a major part during the Dumbarton Oaks Conference, President Roosevelt insisted that China should be invited to the meetings and should receive a permanent seat on the new Security Council. At this moment in time, the majority of China was ruled by nationalists led by Chiang Kai-shek who was fighting a brutal war against

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<sup>15</sup> Bosco, *Five to Rule Them All*, 17-18.

<sup>16</sup> Bosco, *Five to Rule Them All*, 17.

<sup>17</sup> Bosco, *Five to Rule Them All*, 21-31.

<sup>18</sup> Meisler, *United Nations: The First Fifty Years*, 9.

Japanese aggressors as well as trying to contain Chinese communist uprisings. The nationalists were receiving large quantities of supplies for the war from the US to be able to keep the war participation high. Roosevelt did indeed get his way and secured a permanent seat for China on the Council with veto power despite opposition from both the USSR and Great Britain.

It was seen as a major victory for the US, which seemingly had secured a great power that would always vote in agreement with them. Great Britain also wanted an ally on its side: France. Both the USSR and the US did not favour France as a candidate for a permanent seat at the Security Council. Roosevelt and Stalin disliked the French exile leader Charles de Gaulle, something that Churchill could agree on and saw him as both arrogant and ungrateful. He did, however, want to look past personal preferences. France was, in Churchill's opinion needed as a strong continental ally in order to control Germany as well as to contain Soviet expansionism on the continent. He fought hard for France's place at the table and eventually both the USSR and the US gave in and the original three had now become five permanent members.<sup>19</sup> This is how the permanent members of the United Nations Security Council came to be. A group dominated by the victors of the war and the post-war power balance. In the future this internal power of balance in the Security Council would prove to influence and decide the effectiveness and outcome of the resolutions that came before the Council.

### **Chapter 3: Vital Allied Interests and Great Power Vetoes**

“Critics in Norway’ maintain that I transformed Norway into the 51st state of the United States during my years in the Security Council.”<sup>20</sup>

Ole Ålgård, Norway's Ambassador to the UN, 19. February 1981.

Norway's room to manoeuvre in the Security Council during its term was contingent on the inherent structure of power in the Council. This meant that in a case where one of the five permanent members of the Council (P5) had diverging interests from that of Norway, any prospect of a resolution straying too far from those interests would be met with the threat or use of a veto. Norway's potential influence in the Security Council was also affected by its partnership with NATO. The alliance with the US, in particular, was viewed as a guarantor of

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<sup>19</sup> Meacham, *Franklin and Winston*, 208.

<sup>20</sup> Svenbalrud, *Foundation and Ornament*, 216.

Norwegian security and independence.<sup>21</sup> NATO's place as a cornerstone of Norwegian security and foreign policy would imply that Norway had to take the interests and opinions of NATO allies into consideration when acting in the Security Council. Was Norway able to manoeuvre around the interests of the P5 and in particular the US, UK, and France, as NATO members? Did Norway act and vote according to the interests of these allies in these instances? This chapter will examine if Norway was able to influence the Security Council in the cases where their NATO allies in the P5 had strong interests. The first case this chapter will examine is the Iranian Revolution and consequent hostage crisis. The second case will examine the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan. After comes the Iran-Iraq War, and finally the Israeli occupation of Arab areas. Norway's objective in the Middle East was to solve conflicts debated in the Security Council through internationally negotiated and recognized solutions.<sup>22</sup>

### ***The Iranian Revolution: A Crisis of Diplomacy***

The Iranian revolution in 1979 shifted the political landscape in the Middle East drastically. For the US, it turned one of its closest allies in the region into its staunchest adversaries. The situation escalated further when students in Teheran overran the US embassy, sparking a diplomatic crisis and the beginning of Iranian isolation from the West. For Norway, the change in regime led to some difficulties when conducting diplomatic missions to Iran, but the real challenge came with the occupation of the US embassy. For a state that relied heavily on the international system and rule of law, it was seen as troublesome for Norway that Iran would allow a foreign embassy to be occupied and its workers held captive for over a year. The US clearly had strong interests in the crisis as one of the two parties. This does not mean that Norway had to yield to US interests as Norway had a self-interest in international treaties being followed. The build-up to the Iranian revolution can be examined in great detail but it will only be briefly summarised in this subchapter as the focus is on Norway's response in the Security Council.

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<sup>21</sup> Frydenlund, *Lille land – hva nå?*, 85.

<sup>22</sup> Svenbalrud, *Foundation and Ornament*, 217.



## *The Slide to Revolution*

The Iranian revolution of 1979 came after a period of economic turmoil. The Iranian economy had seen an initial boom in the early 1970s from oil and gas exports. This had begun to decline by the end of the decade, and inflation and unemployment were rising. In 1977 the Shah of Iran, Mohammad Reza Pahlavi, reversed some repressive policies, opening a more liberal and left-leaning civil discourse. The softening of the Shah's grip on public discourse was meant to accommodate some of the criticisms of his regime, but it also allowed for that very same criticism to reach further than before. After a government-controlled newspaper ran a smear campaign against the exiled Ayatollah Khomeini in January 1978, riots broke out in the holy city of Qom. Several protesters were killed by the police in the ensuing chaos. This led to condemnation by the exiled Khomeini and clerics in Iran, fuelling the protests. Cycles of new protests, killings of protesters, and periods of mourning commenced. The protests, which initially had involved students and people from the bazaars, grew to involve even more people and got more violent.<sup>23</sup>

During the summer of 1978, workers unsatisfied with their wages went on strike and joined the protesters. Of these strikes, the ones in the oil industry were particularly damaging to the Iranian economy. The Shah responded by declaring martial law on 8 September, resulting in the death of several protesters in Tehran. The events of this day were later known as Black Friday. The legitimacy of the Shah was left shattered, and public opinion was lining with Khomeini's long-standing view; the Shah had to abdicate and give up his powers. The strikes and protests only continued to grow in size and intensity and when troops from the army began to desert in large numbers, the days of the Shah seemed numbered.<sup>24</sup> On 16 January 1979, the Shah decided to leave Iran and went into exile. Two weeks later, Khomeini returned from his exile, and the last troops loyal to the Shah surrendered ten days later.<sup>25</sup> A national referendum in March saw the population in Iran voting in overwhelming support for the establishment of an Islamic republic.<sup>26</sup> The revolution in Iran was, in international law, characterised as an internal matter. Even though it was widely discussed at the UN headquarters in New York, it did not make it to the Security Council's agenda.<sup>27</sup>

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<sup>23</sup> Axworthy, *Revolutionary Iran*, 36.

<sup>24</sup> Axworthy, *Revolutionary Iran*, 36-37

<sup>25</sup> Skogmo, *Visjonen om en bedre organisert verden*, 200.

<sup>26</sup> Axworthy, *Revolutionary Iran*, 37.

<sup>27</sup> Skogmo, *Visjonen om en bedre organisert verden*, 200

From the Norwegian perspective, the shift in power in Iran made Norwegian soft power weaker in the region. Norwegian diplomats posted in New York at the time stated that the new delegates from Teheran had an "...extensive scepticism of western diplomats and almost no international experience."<sup>28</sup> Minister-Counsellor Skogmo also stated that when engaging with the Iranian diplomats, it was the first time in his diplomatic career that he had found their frames of reference to be so different that it was hard to understand each other.<sup>29</sup> This would have made working with the Iranian delegations more arduous, but Norway's position would not have been diminished in the Security Council. The Iranian revolution had turned some heads in New York. However, not enough to influence the Security Council. The situation rapidly changed on 4 November 1979 when students in Tehran supporting the revolution occupied the US embassy in the capital.

### *The Hostage Crisis and Norwegian Response*

On 22 October 1979, the Shah was granted entry into the US to receive medical treatment because his health had rapidly declined since leaving Iran. At first, the news of the Shah's residence in the US made little news, but soon Khomeini and his followers started to make allegations linking his stay in the US to adversaries of the revolution in Iran. They claimed that people still in the government were working with the Shah and the US to undermine the new regime of Khomeini.<sup>30</sup> At the same time, the situation on the streets of Iran was chaotic as no one knew the future of the new regime or who was controlling the country. Furthermore, the Shah's stay in the US had led radical students in Tehran's universities to believe that he was working with the US government to overthrow Khomeini and quell the revolution. The events were quickly linked to the coup in 1953, where American and British intelligence agencies helped oust the democratically elected prime minister of Iran, Mohammad Mosaddegh, to secure the rights to oil fields in Iran.<sup>31</sup> A group of Khomeini-loyal students called 'students following the line of the Emam' took themselves into the US embassy on 4 November, occupying multiple buildings and taking the staff as hostages. Numerous staff were beaten for information on potential CIA operatives in the embassy as well as to open safes on the compound. After taking control of the embassy students made a

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<sup>28</sup> Skogmo, *Visjonen om en bedre organisert verden*, 200. "... utstrakt skepsis til vestlige diplomater og nesten uten internasjonal erfaring."

<sup>29</sup> Skogmo, *Visjonen om en bedre organisert verden*, 200

<sup>30</sup> Axworthy, *Revolutionary Iran*, 181.

<sup>31</sup> Axworthy, *Revolutionary Iran*, 182.

press release stating that the Shah had to be extradited from the US to stand trial for the crimes committed during his reign.<sup>32</sup>

In New York, the situation was beginning to unfold, and on 9 November, the US had informed the president of the Security Council of the occupied embassy and the hostages kept there. The president issued a statement the same day expressing concerns about the American diplomatic personnel being held at the embassy. Without wanting to mingle in Iran's internal matters, the president underlined in the statement that the principles of diplomatic personnel and embassies' inviolability under any circumstances under international law. On 25 December, Secretary-General Waldheim classified the hostage crisis as a threat to international peace and security and requested that the Security Council meet shortly to find a solution.<sup>33</sup>

The Council officially met on 27 November to discuss the conflict between the US and Iran. The US insisted that the hostages ought to be released immediately. From Iran, demands were made towards the US to reimburse the Iranian people for the human rights abuses committed by the Shah's regime. Norway's position in the Council was clear from the start of the crisis; "The Norwegian government demands that the hostages be released without any delay."<sup>34</sup> The Norwegian Ambassador to the UN Ole Ålgård expressed his concerns further when the Council met again on 1 December. He pointed out that the taking of hostages was a clear breach of fundamental rules of international law, as written in the Vienna Convention on diplomatic relations of 1961, a treaty that Iran had ratified. Iranian concerns were to be addressed after the hostages were released.<sup>35</sup> Ambassador Ålgård furthermore praised US president Jimmy Carter for his modern leadership in the crisis and his decision to solve the situation with peaceful means through the UN and the Security Council.<sup>36</sup> This underlined Norway's commitment to solving the crisis through diplomatic and peaceful means. The hostage crisis had the potential to interfere with international peace and security, and President Carter's attempt to first solve the issue through the Security Council was welcomed by Norway.

Norway's influence on the Security Council was displayed in another noteworthy dynamic in the Council during the deliberation of the hostage crisis. The governments in the Nordic

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<sup>32</sup> Axworthy, *Revolutionary Iran*, 182-183.

<sup>33</sup> UD, *St.meld.nr.70, 72*.

<sup>34</sup> UD, *St.meld.nr.70, 73*. "Den Norske regjering krever at gislene må løslates uten opphold."

<sup>35</sup> UD, *St.meld.nr.70, 73*, 85-86.

<sup>36</sup> UD, *St.meld.nr.70, 73*.

countries Sweden, Denmark, Iceland, and Finland authorised Norway's delegation to the Security Council to speak on their behalf. They considered their views on the situation to align with Norway's position and wanted Norway to convey this to the Council.<sup>37</sup> Nordic countries having similar views was not something out of the ordinary, and neither was Norway speaking on behalf of this group during its term on the Security Council. The case of the Hostage Crisis was also not a divisive case since the breach of the Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations was clear. Despite this, the fact that Norway not only represented itself in this case, but the larger group of Nordic countries shows how Norway's place on the Council would lead to influence it would otherwise not have.

As Ambassador Ålgård presented the Norwegian views, so did the representatives of the other countries in the Security Council. In the Council meeting on 1 December, the USSR stated that they understood the grievances of Iranian delegates but underlined that any violation of the Vienna Convention was a breach of international law.<sup>38</sup> Their response was not as strong as other states and more of an affirmation of the facts, but they did support the demand for the release of hostages.

Following the Council meeting on 1 December, Secretary-General Waldheim tried, without success, to get the hostages released through dialogue with the Iranian government. When no results yielded from this effort, the Security Council convened again on 29 December. The US had requested that binding sanctions be put in place against Iran if the hostages were not released within a reasonable timeframe. Iran had violated fundamental UN principles and neglected appeals from both the Council and the Secretary-General. The Security Council discussed the proposed sanctions from the US. Norway held firm to its prior statements and emphasised that while Iran's sovereignty had to be respected, Iran also had to respect and uphold the rights and sovereignty of other member states. As they had failed to comply with international law, the Security Council would have to step in to uphold them.

Norway further argued that Iran's concerns only would be addressed after the hostages had been released.<sup>39</sup> During the session, the Security Council passed the proposed Resolution 461.<sup>40</sup> Included in the resolution was a request to the Iranian government to release the hostages and a decision to convene again on 7 January if the resolution was not followed. If

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<sup>37</sup> UD, *St.meld.nr.70*, 84.

<sup>38</sup> UD, *St.meld.nr.70*, 73.

<sup>39</sup> UD, *St.meld.nr.70*, 74-75

<sup>40</sup> Resolution 461 was passed (11 – 0 – 4) with Bangladesh, Kuwait, the USSR and Czechoslovakia abstaining from voting.

the hostages were not released by this time the Council would enact measures in accordance with the UN Chapter Articles 39 and 41.<sup>41</sup> This meant that the Security Council had the right to implement economic and diplomatic sanctions against Iran if the hostages were not released.

When the Council yet again met on 7 January Iran had not met the demands of the Council and on 13 December the US proposed a resolution text containing severe economic and diplomatic sanctions against Iran. The proposal was rejected by a Soviet veto as they saw it as a bilateral problem and not a threat to international peace and security. The Soviet veto was characterised by the US as a diversion tactic for the USSR as they had launched an invasion of Afghanistan just days prior.<sup>42</sup> Norway argued that the member states of the UN were bound by Resolution 461 which stated that if the hostages were not released within the given deadline, sanctions would be placed on Iran. This view was however not shared by everyone.<sup>43</sup>

The hostages in Tehran ended up being released over a year later through a bilateral agreement between the US and Iran, but the situation had proven Norway's interests in the hostage crisis to be aligned with the interests of the US. For a small state, abiding by the rules of diplomacy, as stated in the Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations of 1961, was fundamental as Norway did not have the means to enforce the rules alone. When another state, such as Iran, opted to break the rules of diplomacy, it was in Norway's interest to sanction this. In addition, the US was one of, if not the, most important ally of Norway at the time, and to support the US in the Security Council would have value in itself. Norway did not have a lot of influence in the Council when they debated the hostage crisis due to the US' central position in the conflict.

### ***Soviet Invasion of Afghanistan: The Graveyard of Resolutions***

At the end of 1979, the USSR invaded their neighbour and ally Afghanistan through a hybrid of covert operations and open warfare. These actions, towards what many in the international community perceived as a country incapable of defending itself alone, were met with

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<sup>41</sup> UD, *St.meld.nr.70*, 74-75

<sup>42</sup> UD, *St.meld.nr.64*, 61.

<sup>43</sup> UD, *St.meld.nr.64*, 63.

disbelief.<sup>44</sup> The Security Council's handling of the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan was embossed by Soviet vetoes. Having one of the parties in the conflict with the power to stop the case in the Council singlehandedly was one of the main faults of the Security Council and this was exemplified well in the Soviet invasion. Norway had to find an opportunity for influence in a narrow space where every ounce of critique of the USSR and its actions was shut down.

### *Betrayal and Invasion*

The Soviet-Afghan relations, and more specifically the Soviet relations with the Afghan president Hafizullah Amin, had deteriorated drastically during 1979 and in Moscow, he was viewed as a failure.<sup>45</sup> Amin had risen to power during the Saur revolution in 1978. The revolution was a quick one-day coup where the People's Democratic Party of Afghanistan (PDPA), backed by elements of the Afghan army, overthrew President Mohammed Daoud Khan and the republican government. After the coup Amin gained some power in the new communist government as Minister of Foreign Affairs.<sup>46</sup> He further consolidated his power during subsequent purges of opposition in his own party, the People's Democratic Party of Afghanistan during 1979, rising to the position of president.<sup>47</sup>

Under his short reign, Amin managed to alienate much of the Afghan populace through unpopular reforms. The USSR feared that Amin's regime would not last and that he would prove unstable to the socialist future of Afghanistan. During the summer of 1979, it was decided that new people were needed in power and preparations to eliminate Amin started in Moscow.<sup>48</sup> Amin was not entirely in the dark about the Soviet's dissatisfaction with him and he had little trust in them. After the Saur Revolution, the USSR had placed military advisors in Afghanistan to help the new government shut down unrest in the country.

After the expulsions initiated by Amin and the PDPA, Soviet military advisors had started to fill up positions of Afghan military officers that had been purged from the ranks. This was based on a friendship treaty the two countries had signed following the Saur Revolution which made it possible for the Afghan government to call on Soviet military help if needed. This gave the USSR influence, as orders often had to go through Soviet officers before being

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<sup>44</sup> Skogmo, *Visjonen om en bedre organisert verden*, 201.

<sup>45</sup> Bradsher, *Afghanistan and the Soviet Union*, 169.

<sup>46</sup> Bradsher, *Afghanistan and the Soviet Union*, 74-75.

<sup>47</sup> Bradsher, *Afghanistan and the Soviet Union*, 179-181.

<sup>48</sup> Bradsher, *Afghanistan and the Soviet Union*, 169.

cleared, effectively giving Moscow direct influence over the Afghan military. Internally, Amin tried to limit the Soviet influence at the same time as he publicly expressed gratitude for their presence.<sup>49</sup> The Soviets feared that if Amin were to stay in power, Afghanistan could fall to anti-Communist rebels or worse anti-Communist rebels with Islamic associations which could spread to the Muslim majority boarder regions of the USSR.<sup>50</sup>

On 31 October Soviet officials had ordered elements of the Afghan army to undergo maintenance of their heavy equipment such as tanks and armoured personnel carriers. Simultaneously, telecommunication lines were being cut off around Kabul, isolating the capital from the rest of the country. On 25 December, a large number of Soviet airborne troops began to land at Kabul International Airport. In the meantime, Amin had moved his headquarters from the capital to the Tajbeg Palace on the outskirts of the city and surrounded himself with his most trusted Afghan units as well as some tanks to protect the palace.<sup>51</sup>

By the morning of 27 December, the Soviets had gathered almost 5,000 troops in and around Kabul. The Soviet officers in charge of Afghan units told their soldiers it was because of an exercise and managed to get them to hand in their live ammunition, as well as sabotaging some tanks under the excuse that they needed winterisation. The Soviet intervention began the same day with the telephone systems in Kabul bombed and knocked out. Soviet troops took control of key government institutions, though not without resistance from parts of the Afghan army still loyal to Amin. Some of the hardest fighting occurred when Soviet special forces attacked the Tajbeg Palace where Amin was located. The Soviet forces managed to take the palace after heavy fighting. Amin was captured alive but later died at the palace grounds. It is not clear what exactly caused his death, but he had reportedly been shot during the fighting. Amin was replaced by Babrak Karmal, one of the founding members of the PDPA and a loyal friend of Moscow.<sup>52</sup> As the dust settled in the streets of Kabul, the fighting in the Security Council had just begun.

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<sup>49</sup> Bradsher, *Afghanistan and the Soviet Union*, 117.

<sup>50</sup> Bradsher, *Afghanistan and the Soviet Union*, 169.

<sup>51</sup> Bradsher, *Afghanistan and the Soviet Union*, 179.

<sup>52</sup> Bradsher, *Afghanistan and the Soviet Union*, 179-182.

### *Puppeteering and Veto Power*

The Soviet invasion of Afghanistan was brought before the Security Council on 5 December 1980. 53 countries, among them Norway, had sent a letter the president of the Council asking for the invasion to be brought to the Council. The USSR and East Germany were firmly against the subject being brought to the Security Council, but they could not stop it from being placed on the Council's agenda, as the Soviet veto power only applied to resolutions. The Afghan delegation in New York also protested this and argued that the situation should be considered internal matters and be handled outside the Council. They also stated that any interference would violate Afghanistan's right to sovereignty.<sup>53</sup> Norway's stance on the issue was that the invasion was a clear violation of a vital part of the UN Charter; Article 2(4), regarding abstaining from the threat or use of force against the territorial political integrity of another state.<sup>54</sup>

According to the Security Council's procedure, the new Afghan government was invited to participate in the Council debate. Several countries made it clear that the Afghan government's participation in the Security Council's deliberations was not a recognition of the new regime in Kabul. Norway also made a statement on the issue but formulated it more vaguely than other western countries. It was argued that the invitation to the Afghan delegation would not influence the Norwegian view on the situation which had occurred in Afghanistan.<sup>55</sup> The reasoning for selecting a more nebulous formulation can be numerous, but Norway might not have wanted to alienate the new regime in Kabul and keep the focus on the actions of the USSR.

The Soviets had partially justified the invasion through the Brezhnev Doctrine. This was a Soviet foreign policy doctrine stating that if internal or external forces threatened a socialist country and tried to turn it in the direction of a capitalist system, it was no longer a problem just for that country but for all socialist countries.<sup>56</sup> This was coupled with the argument that the Afghan-Soviet Friendship Treaty of 1978 had allowed Soviet troops to be called on by the Afghan government if needed. These claims were thoroughly discredited in the Council's debate. None said it better than Pakistan's Ambassador to the UN Niaz A. Naik who stated

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<sup>53</sup> UD, *St.meld.nr.64*, 49.

<sup>54</sup> Skogmo, *Visjonen om en bedre organisert verden*, 201.

<sup>55</sup> UD, *St.meld.nr.64*, 49.

<sup>56</sup> Bradsher, *Afghanistan and the Soviet Union*, 137.



that it was completely unreasonable to think that anyone would believe that the Afghan government would invite a foreign power to liquidate itself.<sup>57</sup>

In the Norwegian statement, Ambassador Ålgård expressed deep concern for the situation in Afghanistan and its implications for international peace and security. The Soviet invasion was a violation of international law and Afghanistan's sovereignty. To restore some sense of peace and security the first step had to be the withdrawal of all Soviet troops stationed in Afghanistan.<sup>58</sup> On 7 January Bangladesh introduced a preliminary resolution text on behalf of several non-aligned countries. The proposal was written vaguely so as to get by any potential veto by the Soviets and did not mention the USSR by name once. Despite this resolution text the USSR and East Germany voted against it, and it was not passed due to the Soviet veto.<sup>59</sup>

Norwegian Minister of Foreign Affairs Knut Frydenlund informed both the government and parliament of the situation in Afghanistan as it developed. He repeated what Ambassador Ålgård had said in the Council debate condemning the invasion and demanding the withdrawal of Soviet troops. Frydenlund also argued that any Norwegian reaction should be limited to the invasion, meaning that the Norwegian response should not be linked directly to other East-West issues such as disarmament and non-proliferation of nuclear weapons. The bilateral relationship between the USSR and Norway should also be kept outside any response to the invasion.<sup>60</sup> These considerations show how Norway's room for manoeuvre in the Security Council was not only limited by the Soviet veto power but also by its own desire for good and functional relations with its neighbour in the north. This was not the first time Norway had to take the realities of its geopolitical location into account. It was most visible in Norway's relation to the USSR concerning its human rights violations, which were met with little to no Norwegian critique.<sup>61</sup>

On 9 January Mexico and the Philippines put forward a resolution where it was suggested to move the deliberations on Afghanistan from the Security Council to the General Assembly. This was done to avoid the gridlock that Soviet vetoes had created. Again, the USSR and East Germany voted against it, but because it was a procedural matter the veto power was not applicable, and Resolution 462 was passed (12 – 1 – 2). Resolution 462 led to the sixth emergency special session of the United Nations General Assembly

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<sup>57</sup> UD, *St.meld.nr.64*, 50.

<sup>58</sup> UD, *St.meld.nr.64*, 51-52.

<sup>59</sup> UD, *St.meld.nr.64*, 52.

<sup>60</sup> Skogmo, *Visjonen om en bedre organisert verden*, 203-204.

<sup>61</sup> Tamnes, *Oljealder 1965-1995*, 372.

The Norwegian influence on the Security Council's handling of the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan proved to be severely limited by the Soviet veto power. The strongest restrictions, however, Norway placed on itself. Norway was cautious of its bilateral relationship with the USSR and would seldom take actions that could jeopardise it, as seen when they hesitated to criticise human rights abuses in the USSR.

### ***The Iran-Iraq War: One-Sided International Support***

The tension between Iran and Iraq had been brewing for some time when the territorial and political disputes between Iran and Iraq broke out in all-out war on 22 September 1980.<sup>62</sup> Both the US and the USSR supported Iraq when the war started.<sup>63</sup> This opened the playing field in the Security Council as Norway had an opportunity to put forward a resolution, without having to take the Cold War rivalry into account. Norway did propose a resolution together with Mexico. The resolution was passed, but little progress towards peace between the two countries was made as the war continued on for years.<sup>64</sup>

### ***The Imposed War***

Ayatollah Khomeini, the Supreme Leader of Iran, had prior to the war called for the downfall of President Saddam Hussein's regime in Iraq and for the Islamic revolution to spread to the neighbouring country.<sup>65</sup> Saddam answered in July 1980 by stating that Iraq did not desire war and that it was for Khomeini to decide. Yet, between 6 and 13 September, he ordered the Iraqi military into the border areas of Saif Saad and Zain al-Qaws. These areas had been ceded to Iraq in the Algiers Agreement of 1975, where the disputed border territory had been negotiated, but Iran had never handed over control of them.<sup>66</sup> The Iraqi incursion led to a

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<sup>62</sup> Axworthy, *Revolutionary Iran*, 202.

<sup>63</sup> Skogmo, *Visjonen om en bedre organisert verden*, 204.

<sup>64</sup> UD, *St.meld.nr.64*, 54-55.

<sup>65</sup> Axworthy, *Revolutionary Iran*, 202.

<sup>66</sup> The Algiers Agreement of 1975 is commonly known as the Algiers Accords. The Algiers Accords also refers to the agreement reached between the US and Iran to solve the hostage crisis in 1981 and therefore it will not be used in the context of the Iran-Iraq war.

series of minor skirmishes in the contested territories on land and in the air, where an Iranian fighter jet had destroyed five Iraqi attack helicopters.<sup>67</sup>

Saddam had tested the Iranian response to the Iraqi aggression and made his second move. On 17 September he denounced the Algiers Agreement of 1975 and in response, Iran called up its reservists on 20 September. All was set for a regional conflict to ignite, and Saddam did not shy away. On 22 September Iraqi forces launched a full-scale offensive deploying 45,000 troops into Iran through four different avenues of attack. In addition to this, large scale air raids were conducted against ten Iranian airbases, resulting in limited success. The attack came as a surprise to both the Iranians and the international community, who despite the border clashes did not expect an Iraqi invasion. Due to the surprising nature of the invasion, Iraq managed to make gains in the early days of the war. The surprise element was achieved in part due to the Iranian inward focus during and after the revolution, where political issues in Tehran simply demanded too much attention.<sup>68</sup>

The Iraqi army was initially better suited for war as it included 200,000 troops, with predominantly modern equipment. In contrast, the Iranian army consisted of only 160,000 troops as it had yet to recover from purges carried out during the revolution of 1979. The Iranian military equipment was, with the exception of the air force, in poorer condition compared to Iraq. The main bulk of the Iraqi force was used in the southern avenue of attack, focusing on capturing the relatively flat and oil rich region of Khuzestan along the Persian Gulf. The resistance put forward by Iran was meagre and contained scattered divisions as well as some border guards. The main bulk of the Iranian army was stationed close to regional centres and north along the Soviet border to secure it against any potential threats from the powerful neighbour. Lacking Iranian defence and mechanised Iraqi divisions resulted in quick Iraqi advances in the South.<sup>69</sup>

Across Iran reservists, as well as volunteers, were gathering in regional deployment centres. At the same time, the panic was setting in for the leading group of Iran which believed the war would end in defeat. Partly because they knew the poor state of their military forces and partly because much of it was reliant on American made spare parts which conveniently were hard to acquire after the revolution and the hostage crisis. The Iraqi offensive was, however, not as cataclysmic as first assumed. The opening Iraqi airstrike, for example, was proven

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<sup>67</sup> Axworthy, *Revolutionary Iran*, 203-204

<sup>68</sup> Axworthy, *Revolutionary Iran*, 205.

<sup>69</sup> Axworthy, *Revolutionary Iran*, 205-206.

incredibly ineffective against well prepared Iranian airbases. Few planes were destroyed or even seriously damaged and any damage to the runways was fast to repair. The superiority of the Iranian air force could easily be seen when after some dogfighting and air raids, the Iraqis evacuated as much as two-thirds of all operational planes to nearby friendly states. On 25 September both countries shelled oil facilities in the other, but the Iranian strikes were combined with airstrikes, lasted for several days, and proved far more effective.<sup>70</sup>

By the end of September Iraqi forces had made progress against the weak Iranian resistance on the ground but more and more volunteers and reservists were filling the gaps in the Iranian lines, and it was becoming more difficult to make breakthroughs. This became somewhat of a pattern as the war entered October. The initially weaker Iranian ground forces were being rapidly reinforced as the Iraqi advance was grinding to a halt in Khuzestan. Iraqi forces also proved inefficient when encountering heavy resistance and often acted cautiously in well-defended areas.<sup>71</sup> This was the situation on the ground when the conflict was brought to the table of the Security Council.

### *Norwegian Initiative and Lacking Enthusiasm*

On 26 December, Norway and Mexico initiated a request for a Council meeting on the developing situation between Iraq and Iran. Norway faced some backlash for calling the meeting. The Deputy Foreign Minister of Iraq and later President of the General Assembly, Ismat Kittani, travelled to New York to meet with Ambassador Ålgård. Kittani pressed Ålgård to stop the Norwegian-Mexican initiative and let the matter be dealt with bilaterally.<sup>72</sup> Norway did not make any concessions to Kittani and pushed forward, alongside Mexico, to put the war on the agenda of the Security Council.<sup>73</sup>

The Council met on 26 September to discuss the conflict and actions. The meeting started with deliberations from Secretary-General Waldheim on the actions taken so far. This included appeals to both parties to end the hostilities and initiate peace talks. He also made it clear that while all avenues of peace should be explored, the Security Council had the primary responsibility for maintaining international peace and security, as stated in the UN Charter.

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<sup>70</sup> Axworthy, *Revolutionary Iran*, 206-207.

<sup>71</sup> Axworthy, *Revolutionary Iran*, 209-210.

<sup>72</sup> Skogmo, *Visjonen om en bedre organisert verden*, 205.

<sup>73</sup> UD, *St.meld.nr.64*, 53-54.

He had, on 22 September, tried to get the case to the Security Council, but then it only resulted in informal consultations amongst the Council members.<sup>74</sup>

To bring a given case to the Security Council was seldom seen as a contentious decision, and since the war was a clear threat to international peace and security, Norway could, with some confidence, bring it up. It was, however, typical for countries in the vicinity of the conflict to be the ones that brought it to the Council, but since no one had managed it when the Secretary-General first labelled the conflict a threat to international peace and security on 22 September, it fell on Norway and Mexico to do so.<sup>75</sup> Bringing it up together with Mexico also gave Norway some backing as two non-permanent members of the Council were harder to ignore or pressure than one.

The case of the Iraq-Iran war stands out in the context of Norway's term on the Security Council as it was one of the only times where both the US and the USSR supported the same party, Iraq. At the same time, Iran was largely isolated within the international community. This, according to Skogmo, created a larger room for manoeuvre for the UN and the Security Council.<sup>76</sup> This can be debated as it left Norway alone or at least without the backing of its superpower ally. Norway's main objective in the Council was always to solve conflict through internationally negotiated solutions.<sup>77</sup> As Iraq was the main aggressor in the war and was acting with the implicit backing of both the US and the USSR it was hard for Norway to put any relevant pressure on the parties to end the war or at least agree to a ceasefire.

In the Mexican statement, it was emphasised that other non-permanent members of the Council had expressed their moral support for the issue being handled in the Council. This showed that the proposal had support within the Council to bring it up and not something Norway and Mexico were doing alone.<sup>78</sup> Ambassador Ålgård stated that it was the responsibility of the Council to maintain international peace and security and that when faced with an ongoing war, the Council had a duty to act. He also addressed the importance for the entire world of the area the fight was taking place. This was implying that if something were to halt the oil transported through and being produced in the region it could escalate and spread. Ålgård implored the Security Council to pass a resolution that would ask Iran and Iraq

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<sup>74</sup> UD, *St.meld.nr.64*, 53-54.

<sup>75</sup> UD, *St.meld.nr.64*, 53.

<sup>76</sup> Skogmo, *Visjonen om en bedre organisert verden*, 204.

<sup>77</sup> Svenbalrud, *Foundation and Ornament*, 217.

<sup>78</sup> UD, *St.meld.nr.64*, 54.

to end the ongoing hostilities immediately and initiate peace negotiations with the aim of securing a long-term peaceful solution to the conflict.<sup>79</sup>

The Security Council resumed its debate on 28 September. It started with some opening remarks from the president commemorating the effort of the Islamic Conference for their effort to initiate peace negotiations between the parties. After this, a suggestion for a resolution text was put forward by Mexico and passed unanimously (15 – 0 – 0) by the Security Council.<sup>80</sup> Resolution 479 implored Iran and Iraq to end the hostilities and start peace negotiations immediately. It advocated for outside parties to deter from actions that could escalate the conflict and that the Secretary-General should report on the situation again in two days.<sup>81</sup> Resolution 479 is also interesting because it was written by Mexico and Norway in cooperation with the Non-Aligned members of the Security Council.<sup>82</sup> This meant that Norway had managed to work with other willing countries to create momentum in a war where little effort was being made to end it. It also exemplifies the benefits of a small country in the Security Council. Norway had next to no interests in the war, except for finding a peaceful solution. Norway could realistically not be blamed for taking sides or having alternative motives behind their actions in the Council. Norway could therefore bring the situation to the Security Council and ignore the pressure from Iraq. It can be argued that Resolution 479 yielded little in terms of results and peace, but that is often the case for resolutions in the Council, particularly when it is not backed up by stronger nations.

### ***Israel and the Palestinians: Great Power Pressure***

The Israeli occupation of Arab areas was a subject frequently on the Security Council's schedule during Norway's term. Resolution proposals were often brought up by Muslim countries with sympathies for the Palestinians' cause.<sup>83</sup> During Norway's term on the Council, it was difficult to pass meaningful resolutions as the focus of the US was on the Camp David Accords, finalizing the peace deal between Israel and Egypt.<sup>84</sup>

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<sup>79</sup> UD, *St.meld.nr.64*, 75.

<sup>80</sup> UD, *St.meld.nr.64*, 54-55.

<sup>81</sup> UN, *Resolution 479 of 28 September 1980*, 23.

<sup>82</sup> UD, *St.meld.nr.64*, 55.

<sup>83</sup> UD, *St.meld.nr.70*, 13.

<sup>84</sup> UD, *St.meld.nr.70*, 6.

### *Norway's Stance and US Pressure*

Throughout 1979 the Security Council passed a total of 18 resolutions. These resolutions varied in content. Two resolutions on Iran-US relations, two on Cyprus, four on Southern Rhodesia, seven on territories occupied by Israel and their relation to neighbouring countries, two on South Africa and one adopting the new member of Saint Lucia into to UN. The Soviet Union used its veto power twice, both regarding the Vietnamese invasion of the Democratic Kampuchea in 1979. The US never used its veto power but quelled a resolution on Palestinian rights before it reached the balloting of the Council when they threatened to use their veto. Norway voted for all 17 resolutions passed by the Council, with the exemption of one: Resolution 446.<sup>85</sup> This resolution was passed on 22 March 1979 and created a UN commission headed by Portugal to survey the Israeli settlement policy in Arab areas. The resolution further considered the Israeli settlements in occupied Palestinian and other Arab areas since 1967. It stated that

the Fourth Geneva Convention relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War of 12 August 1949 1/ is applicable to the Arab territories occupied by Israel since 1967, including Jerusalem, 1. Determines that the policy and practices of Israel in establishing settlements in the Palestinian and other Arab territories occupied since 1967 have no legal validity and constitute a serious obstruction to achieving a comprehensive, just and lasting peace in the Middle East.<sup>86</sup>

Together with the US and Great Britain, Norway abstained from voting on this matter. From the report on Norway's period in the Security Council given to the Norwegian parliament by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, this deviation in voting was justified so as not to jeopardise the ongoing peace negotiation and the effort being made to implement the Camp David Accords between Israel and Egypt signed only months prior. It was argued that the establishment of a committee that would examine Israeli settlements could potentially endanger the work being done on this issue.<sup>87</sup>

Internal communication between the Norwegian embassy in Cairo and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs sent eight days after the resolution was passed in the Security Council indicated American pressure towards its western allies to accept the forthcoming peace deal, not endanger it, and to work to promote the benefits of the agreement towards other Arab

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<sup>85</sup> Innst.S.nr.279, 1-2.

<sup>86</sup> UN, *Resolution 446*, 1.

<sup>87</sup> UD, *St.meld.nr.70*, 6.

countries in the region. Norwegian ambassador to Egypt Tancred Ibsen jr. expressed that the “American side recommends the other western countries to try to persuade the Arab states, through personal inquiries and contacts, not to counteract the peace deal between Egypt and Israel.”<sup>88</sup> It was further argued by Ambassador Ibsen that when encountering representatives from these states it should be made clear that the Norwegian, and American, objective was to ensure the forthcoming negotiations with the Palestinians would be prioritised and that it would lead to genuine self-determination, including both the population and the areas of Israeli settlements.<sup>89</sup> The addition of the perspective of the Palestinians and their foreseeable gains from the forthcoming peace deal indicate a legitimate belief in the Palestinian right to self-determination. It also reveals an uneasiness with passing the message along on behalf of the US that the peace deal between Egypt and Israel should be regarded as a positive development, without also making concessions towards the Palestinians. When considering the American request not to endanger the Camp David Accords it seems plausible that Norway found itself forced to vote as their ally implied, they should.<sup>90</sup>

The argument that abstaining from voting on resolution 446 was because it could endanger the implementation of the Camp David accords could also be argued to be based on the strong pro-Israel movement within the Norwegian parliament at the time. In 1974 the caucus “Friends of Israel” was formed in the Norwegian parliament. With over half the parliamentarians entering the group it marked strong support for the State of Israel within the Norwegian centre of power.<sup>91</sup>

However, there was no consensus for such one-sided support within the parliament or the government. The Minister of Foreign Affairs Knut Frydenlund had the same year directed the Norwegian ambassador to the UN to vote in favour of letting Yasser Arafat speak on the behalf of the PLO and the Palestinian people in the General Assembly. This action sparked strong criticism in Norway and within his own party, the Labour Party.<sup>92</sup> It was clearly a topic that divided the Norwegian parliament. To argue that political disagreement within the parliament was the reasoning behind the abstention from voting on Resolution 446 would

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<sup>88</sup> RA/S-6794/D/Dbal0998/0001-25.11/19, *Midtøsten: Politikk*. Memorandum from the Norwegian Embassy in Cairo to the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs. p. 1. “amerikansk side henstiller til de vestlige land aa forsøke gjennom personlige henvendelser og kontakter aa overtale de andre araberland til aa ikke motarbeide fredsavtalen mellom egypt og israel”. 30.03.1979.

<sup>89</sup> RA/S-6794/D/Dbal0998/0001-25.11/19, *Midtøsten: Politikk*. Memorandum from the Norwegian Embassy in Cairo to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2. 30.03.1979.

<sup>90</sup> UD, *St. meld. nr. 70*, 6.

<sup>91</sup> Riste, *Norway's Foreign Relations*, 265.

<sup>92</sup> Riste, *Norway's Foreign Relations*, 265-266.



require more evidence, but the fact that such a significant portion of the Norwegian parliament were members of this caucus implies the pull Israeli interests would have had in such cases.

Norway had abstained from voting on a resolution in the Security Council for the only time and had done so to accommodate a US-led peace initiative. As Norway's goal was to achieve internationally negotiated and recognized agreements to solve conflicts this can be viewed as a trade-off. On the one hand, the Camp David Accords did come to fruition, but the Israeli settlements in Arab areas was neglected.

### ***Conclusion***

Of the four cases discussed, only the hostage crisis was solved through a negotiated agreement. These four cases were characterized by strong allied interests, and one would assume that Norway had less influence on the Council. In the cases of the Israeli settlements in Arab areas and the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan this was the case, but for different reasons. Resolutions on Afghanistan was blocked by the USSR which had a strong vested interest in the conflict as a direct part. In the case of Israel, the US put pressure on Norway to abstain from voting on a resolution on the rights of Palestinians in occupied areas.

During the Iranian Revolution and subsequent hostage crisis, there was little Norwegian involvement as the US was leading the negotiations for the hostage's release. Immediately after the hostages were taken, the international community was gathered behind American demands for the release of the hostages and otherwise to sanctions Iran. After the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan, the Cold War rivalry spilled over into the hostage crisis and the USSR vetoed the proposed sanctions on Iran. Norway's room for manoeuvre was narrowed as the two superpowers stood against each other. In the Iran-Iraq War, Norway managed to be the penholder with Mexico on a resolution, a position usually reserved for countries in the geographical vicinity of the conflict or in other ways related to it. This was a direct way in which Norway yielded influence in the Security Council as it gave Norway a strong influence on the wording of the resolution.

## Chapter 4: Opportunities for Influence

Not all Cold War events fit into a Cold War narrative. The cases that came before the Security Council during Norway's term cannot solely be understood from the context of the superpower struggle between the US and the USSR. The following chapter will examine the cases that the Security Council worked on during Norway's term that do not fit the Cold War narrative and where Norway's NATO allies did not hold vital interests. This is not to say that Norway's allies did not hold interests or opinions in these cases, they were just not as vital as in the cases discussed earlier. This chapter will review cases where the structural situation of the Security Council allowed for more significant opportunities for Norway to pursue its interest. Combined with the weaker interests of Norwegian allies, in relation to the cases discussed in chapter 3, this laid the foundation for a room of manoeuvre for Norway in the Security Council. The first part will look at the case of Southern Africa and Norway's goal for international negotiated solutions in both Rhodesia and South Africa. The second part will be on the Vietnamese invasion of Cambodia. The third and last case is the Lebanese Civil War and the UN peacekeeping mission there.

### *Southern Africa: Torn Between Economic Interests, Ideals and Allies.*

In addition to the Middle East, Norway considered Southern Africa the focus area during the country's two-year term in the Security Council.<sup>93</sup> In this context, Southern Africa refers mainly to South Africa and Rhodesia, later Zimbabwe. Along with the rest of the Scandinavian countries, Norway was an essential ally for leading African countries in the struggle against the apartheid regimes. At times, it was even a struggle between the Scandinavian countries to be the 'best' supporter of the parties opposing the regimes.<sup>94</sup> Norway also gained recognition for its stance on Southern Africa. During the first months of the Security Council term, Norway's work in the region was recognised by many African countries and received letters of gratitude from the Nigerian Ministry of External Affairs, praising Norwegian efforts and "the progressive stand consistently taken by Norway"

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<sup>93</sup> Svenbalrud, *Foundation and Ornament*, 216-217.

<sup>94</sup> Tamnes, *Oljealder1965-1995*, 364.

regarding Southern Africa.<sup>95</sup> This part of the chapter will look at how Norway influenced the Security Council, its behaviour, and how outside events influenced Norway's room for manoeuvre.

### *The Gust of Change*

During the end of the 1970s, Southern Africa was in a peculiar state. White minority governments that applied apartheid rule over most of its inhabitants ruled South Africa and Rhodesia.<sup>96</sup> The neighbouring countries had recently gained independence and with Portugal relinquishing the remnants of its colonial empire in 1975, the last colonial nations in Southern Africa, Mozambique and Angola, were independent. Following the Allied victory in the First World War, the German colonies were divided amongst the victors. Namibia was established as a League of Nations mandate and placed under South African control. Namibia remained under so until 1990 and the fall of the South African apartheid regime.<sup>97</sup>

The prestige and international feeling towards the two apartheid regimes in Southern Africa had steadily declined throughout the 1970s, and Norway started advocating for a hard line towards the two countries. In addition to diplomatic pressure, Norway significantly increased its aid to independence groups in Rhodesia from NOK 200 000 in 1974 to NOK 8 million in 1979. These funds were equally divided between the two main groups fighting for independence: Zimbabwe African People's Union (ZAPU), led by Joshua Nkomo, and Zimbabwe African National Union (ZANU), led at first by Ndabaningi Sithole and then later by Robert Mugabe. These were seen as the two main parties opposing the apartheid regime in Rhodesia.<sup>98</sup>

Although South Africa and Rhodesia were two different countries, they will be examined closely together in this chapter as many of the resolutions passed concerned the situation as a whole or South Africa in relation to Rhodesia. Their position at the time also had many similarities, such as their ruling class, colonial history, and form of government.

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<sup>95</sup> RA, UD, 25.9/24, Memorandum from the Norwegian Embassy in Lagos, 1.

<sup>96</sup> The country of Rhodesia was known under several different names (Southern Rhodesia, Rhodesia-Zimbabwe, Zimbabwe) during this period. The country will, for reasons of convenience, in this chapter be referred to as Rhodesia when referring to the white minority government and the different opposition parties will be referred to by their names.

<sup>97</sup> Rajagopal, *International Law from Below*, 50.

<sup>98</sup> Lorentz, *Norway and "Rhodesia"*, 183.

The Council spent a considerable amount of time on this region. This was reflected by the total number of resolutions passed regarding Southern Africa reaching eleven during Norway's two-year term. Five of these resolutions were regarding South Africa, its Apartheid regime, and its interventionist policy in neighbouring states. The remaining six concerned Rhodesia's transition of power from a white minority rule to an envisioned democratic state as well as attacks by the white minority government into neighbouring states, often referred to as the Frontline States (FLS), which included Angola, Botswana, Lesotho, Mozambique, Tanzania, Zambia, and later Zimbabwe.<sup>99</sup>

Norway found itself in a peculiar situation in this region. The Carter administration, while willing to criticise the Apartheid regime of South Africa's human rights abuses, was not ready to impose economic sanctions or divestments of any sort. The Carter administration argued that these actions would potentially hurt the black majority more than the white minority.<sup>100</sup> While the US might not have been willing to support sanctions, they did not actively support the regime either. The USSR was firmly against the apartheid regime and had for a long time supported different liberation movements such as the ANC.

The absence of a clear-cut cold war rivalry in the two nations due to the hostile attitude at the end of the 1970s from both the US and the USSR towards the Apartheid regimes gave way for a more active role for the Security Council and Norway. If Rhodesia and South Africa lacked support from one of these superpowers resolutions against them would be more likely to pass through the Security Council without being subject to vetoes. The objective for Norway in the conflicts pertaining to South Africa and Rhodesia was that "an internationally recognised negotiated solution was necessary to avoid a violent conclusion".<sup>101</sup> Nevertheless, Norway had to contend with other allies' and parties' interests.

### *Abstention Voting by Norway's Allies*

Six out of eleven resolutions on Rhodesia and South Africa came in response to their attacks against their neighbouring countries. Out of these six resolutions the US, the UK and France

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<sup>99</sup> United Nations, *Resolution 445, Resolution 447, Resolution 448, Resolution 454, Resolution 455, Resolution 460, Resolution 463, Resolution 466, Resolution 473, Resolution 475, Resolution 477.*

<sup>100</sup> Thomson. *U.S. Foreign Policy Towards Apartheid South Africa 1948–1994*, 102.

<sup>101</sup> Svenbalrud, *Foundation and Ornament*, 217.

chose to abstain from voting over five of them.<sup>102</sup> These attacks were often targeted at refugee camps in the neighbouring countries something that sparked outrage in the international community.<sup>103</sup> Abstaining from voting was a less blunt option than using their veto power, but it still signified a degree of defiance regarding the resolution. When a resolution was met with abstention votes from members of the P5 it was often a result of a threat of a veto. The result of such threats often led to a softer resolution that could be passed. Such a voting pattern was seen when the desire for more strict economic sanctions against South Africa only ended with an arms embargo in 1977 due to expected French and British vetoes on harsher resolutions.<sup>104</sup>

In the five resolutions regarding South African and Rhodesian incursions into the Frontline States, Norway voted in favour of the resolutions and was, together with Portugal, the only western country to do so. One of these resolutions was Resolution 445. It considered Rhodesian incursions into Zambia and the prospect of member states sending observers to the announced election in Rhodesia.<sup>105</sup> The forthcoming election was called the *internal solution*, and the prospect of international election observers was controversial as it excluded the main opposition groupings ZANU and ZAPU. The *internal solution* was a compromise between Ian Smith's white minority government and the only legal opposition party: bishop Abel Muzorewa's United African National Council (UANC), not to be confused with the South African political party African National Congress.<sup>106</sup>

This *internal solution* was widely condemned by the international community from the beginning as it was seen as just another way to legitimise the apartheid regime. The US and UK also expressed their distaste for the *internal solution*, but did regardless abstain from voting for the resolution. They explained their abstention voting on this resolution in part by stating their right to send observers to the election and to gather information through these observers.<sup>107</sup> The UK also expressed that if specific points had not been removed from the original resolution proposal, they would have voted against it, effectively vetoing the resolution. This threat of veto extended to potential resolutions that would limit the British parliament from gathering information on the Rhodesian election.<sup>108</sup>

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<sup>102</sup> United Nations, *Resolution 445, Resolution 447, Resolution 448, Resolution 454, Resolution 475*.

<sup>103</sup> Skogmo, *Visjonen om en bedre organisert verden*, 207.

<sup>104</sup> Svenbalrud, *Apartheid and NATO*, 752-753

<sup>105</sup> UN, *Resolution 445*.

<sup>106</sup> Lorenz, *Norway and "Rhodesia"*, 178.

<sup>107</sup> UD, *St. meld. nr. 70*, 40-41.

<sup>108</sup> UD, *St. meld. nr. 70*, 40.

Former Norwegian Minister-Counsellor to the UN Bjørn Skogmo, who represented Norway in the Security Council during its term, highlighted in his biography Norway's ability and opportunity to influence and cooperate on resolution texts from countries in the 'third world'. This was done by replacing sections and language Norway knew would be vetoed by members of the P5. This would increase the chances of getting the resolution through the Security Council's voting. He pointed out how Norway could help avoid confrontation over unnecessary harsh language in the resolutions and that this was true for South Africa and Rhodesia.<sup>109</sup> It is reasonable to assume that Resolution 445 was influenced by Norwegian editorial work in order to get it past the UK's standards for resolutions regarding Southern Africa.

Hallvard Kvale Svenbalrud have pointed out in his doctoral dissertation, that the British Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) in 1978 created an assessment sheet for Norway, portraying Britain's interests in the country. The objective was to categorise and highlight areas where Britain should influence Norway and how to prioritise these issues. The objective regarding Norway was, in order of priority:

- I. Defence: To maintain Norwegian loyalty to NATO . . .
- II. Political: To secure Norwegian support (and through her, Nordic support) for British policies towards the Third World
- III. Trade . . .
- IV. Energy . . .<sup>110</sup>

Norwegian behaviour in the 'third world' was something that worried the UK a great deal and Norwegian conduct on this area should from London's perspective, be more in line with that of the UK. In this ranking of strategic interest, Norwegian policy regarding the 'third world' was ranked higher than matters of the traditional security policy areas trade and energy. This exemplifies how important the UK found their allies' actions in the 'third world' was.

Svenbalrud furthermore states that [the UK] "wary of communist influence in Africa as well as concerned about protecting their interests on the continent, the British preferred moderate measures and a long-term perspective when dealing with Southern Africa."<sup>111</sup> In the context of Rhodesia, the question of communist influence was harder to concretise since, as Wolf

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<sup>109</sup> Skogmo, *Visjonen om en bedre organisert verden*, 213.

<sup>110</sup> Svenbalrud, *Apartheid and NATO*, 748.

<sup>111</sup> Svenbalrud, *Apartheid and NATO*, 746.

Lorenz states in his PhD: "the liberation movements should not be labelled "communist" or "non-communist", they were *nationalists* fighting for their right to rule their country."<sup>112</sup>

The existence of significant communist groups in Rhodesia might not have been a reality. If the perception in the FCO was that communist influence was present in Rhodesia, the realities of the situation might not have mattered as they would have acted on the perceptions and information they had at the time. It is however reasonable to assume that the FCO had adequate intel on the nature of these liberation movements and was able to treat them as liberation movements. This is reflected in the British (and worldwide) condemnation of the *internal solution* of 1978. Subsequently the British supported and facilitated the Lancaster House Agreement in 1980. The Lancaster House Agreement was a negotiated agreement between the Patriotic Front (ZANU and ZAPU combined), the UK, and the Rhodesian government (now Zimbabwe-Rhodesia). It concluded the decade long Zimbabwe War of Liberation and paved the way for a perceived democratic Rhodesia following a short period of British control to ensure free elections. The agreement led to the formation of Zimbabwe and the end of apartheid in the country.<sup>113</sup>

### *Norwegian Views on Economic Boycott in Southern Africa*

One of the questions raised was if there should be an international boycott of South Africa. Former Norwegian Foreign Minister Knut Frydenlund wrote a book following the end of his first term as foreign minister (1973-1981) where he reflected on Norway's foreign policy position in 1982 and the years prior. In the book titled *Lille land – hva nå? (Small country – what now?)* he briefly addressed Norway's position on the aspect of economic boycott as a tool in foreign policy.<sup>114</sup> When considering an economic boycott in Norwegian foreign policy, Foreign Minister Frydenlund viewed it as a flawed instrument as he personally was never convinced of its effectiveness. He deemed this to be particularly true in the case of a one-sided Norwegian boycott not backed by any significant countries.<sup>115</sup>

The question of a Norwegian economic boycott of South Africa came up before the Norwegian Parliament in May 1981 during Frydenlund's term as foreign minister. In

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<sup>112</sup> Lorenz, *Norway and "Rhodesia"*, 183.

<sup>113</sup> Lorenz, *Norway and "Rhodesia"*, 190-191.

<sup>114</sup> Frydenlund, *Lille land – hva nå?*, 198-200.

<sup>115</sup> Frydenlund, *Lille land – hva nå?*, 198.

Parliament, he argued the case for and against such a boycott. As Norway had a strict line towards the South African apartheid regime, it would instinctively follow that; economic gains would not compromise the principles of Norway in this regard. He further argued that by being the icebreaker, Norway could tug other states along and put the spotlight on the apartheid question. He then listed the arguments against economic sanctions stating that a one-sided Norwegian boycott would have limited to no impact on the South African economy.

Furthermore, it would be doubtful that any other country of any relevance would follow such a boycott at the given time. The economic consequences for the Norwegian economy would reach exporting and importing sectors that relied on South African goods. He also brought up that a one-sided Norwegian boycott of shipping to South Africa would place the Norwegian shipping sector at a disadvantage to its international competitors. The conclusion of the Norwegian government following Foreign Minister Frydenlund's argumentation was that a one-sided Norwegian boycott should not be implemented as it most likely would not achieve the desired outcome and hurt the Norwegian economy in the process.<sup>116</sup>

Even though the Norwegian parliament and the Foreign Minister were opposed to a unilateral embargo, this did not stop the parliament from implementing a variety of unilateral sanctions towards South Africa. This included banning new bank loans, export, and investments credit insurance. A *gentleman's agreement* was also agreed upon between the Norwegian government and the shipping companies exporting Norwegian oil stating that the oil extracted from the North Sea would not end up in South Africa. The nature of this agreement made room for loopholes. Norwegian owned ships ended up shipping oil from other oil-producing countries instead.<sup>117</sup>

Norway had some influence on the Security Council's discussions on Southern Africa. Norway helped formulate Resolution 445 in order to get it past the UK's standards for resolutions regarding Southern Africa. This was done despite the fact that the UK had strong reservations concerning Norwegian foreign policy in Southern Africa, which shows how Norway was able to work around allies' interests in some cases.

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<sup>116</sup> Frydenlund, *Lille land – hva nå?*, 199.

<sup>117</sup> Eriksen & Krokan, "*Fuelling the Apartheid War Machine*", 194.



## *South-East Asia: Diverging Concerns of State Sovereignty and Human Rights*

Norway's entry into the Security Council was one of trial by fire. Just one week before Norway took its seat at the Council, Vietnam launched a full-scale invasion of its neighbouring country Cambodia.<sup>118</sup> This was done with the *casus belli* of protecting Vietnamese minorities in Cambodia and ending prolonged border clashes. They succeeded in bringing an end to the Khmer Rouge regime of Pol Pot in Cambodia and installed its own puppet government led by the former Cambodian politician Heng Samrin.<sup>119</sup> The Vietnamese government expected a swift victory and subsequent international recognition of the new *status quo* in Cambodia. The brutality of the Khmer Rouge regime could be seen as an adequate reason for the intervention, but the apparent breach of state sovereignty posed a problem for the international community and Norway.<sup>120</sup>

### *The Vietnamese Invasion of Cambodia*

The Vietnamese invasion of Cambodia had been in the making for some time, and the American representatives in the Security Council claimed it had been planned for months.<sup>121</sup> The ruling communist party of Cambodia, the Khmer Rouge, had assumed Vietnam to be their main adversary in the region as they feared Vietnam would strive for an Indochinese union in the region.<sup>122</sup> If this were the case, then Cambodia would likely end up as the lesser part of the union. The Khmer Rouge acted as if this potential enemy's goals were real. To some degree, their fears were justified as Vietnam had indoctrinated informants within the Khmer Rouge called Khmer Viet Minh, whom Hanoi believed would act on their behalf. These operatives were all arrested in 1975 upon their return from Vietnam, but the belief within the Khmer Rouge was that the party was still not rinsed of Vietnamese operatives. From 1976 internal purges of the party intensified in scale and local and regional leaders reportedly went missing or were executed.<sup>123</sup> The reasoning for Cambodia's behaviour

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<sup>118</sup> Officially named Democratic Kampuchea from 1976- 1979. Due to the rapid changing of official names in this period, it will, in this paper, be referred to as Cambodia and the Khmer Rouge.

<sup>119</sup> Skogmo, *Visjonen om en bedre organisert verden*, 184.

<sup>120</sup> Morris, *Why Vietnam Invaded Cambodia*, 219.

<sup>121</sup> UD, *St. meld. nr. 70*, p. 65.

<sup>122</sup> Morris, *Why Vietnam Invaded Cambodia*, 69.

<sup>123</sup> Morris, *Why Vietnam Invaded Cambodia*, 73

towards Vietnam and the Vietnamese minority in Cambodia can partially be explained through the domestic state of the country.

The Khmer Rouge came to power in Cambodia after a civil war in 1975 and quickly started the process of reforming the Cambodian society into its definitive version of socialism. The leader of the Khmer Rouge and Cambodia, Pol Pot, was possessed with the idea that the neighbouring countries Vietnam and Thailand were attacking and tormenting the Cambodian people. The perception of foreign powers trying to undermine Cambodia's transition to socialism was used to justify accelerating the procedure. The idea was that if civil society were transformed quickly, it would come out stronger and be better prepared to challenge outside threats. The notion of foreign powers attacking and tormenting the Cambodian people was untrue, even though both Thailand and Vietnam were hostile toward the regime in Cambodia.<sup>124</sup> The transition to socialism that Cambodia underwent in this period involved large-scale arrests of its citizens, torture, and genocide. Confessions were forced by torture and could include wild admissions such as conspiracy with the US, the USSR, Vietnam, and Thailand all at once. These persecutions were not limited to one ethnic group or nationality but targeted all inhabitants of Cambodia deemed an enemy of the state or party.<sup>125</sup>

In addition to vicious internal persecutions, the Khmer Rouge also launched several attacks on the border regions with both Vietnam and Thailand. They claimed these territories were a part of Cambodia and therefore counted as internal matters.<sup>126</sup> On the border with Vietnam, these disputes mainly originated from French colonial rule and the succession of Cambodian territories, namely the Mekong River Delta, into their Vietnamese colonial holdings. The Khmer Rouge used these disputes as a pretence to launch several incursions into Vietnamese border towns throughout the late 1970s killing hundreds of civilians.<sup>127</sup>

The government in Vietnam responded to the attacks by partially mobilising its military forces along the exposed border region. This led to sporadic clashes between the parties. Initially, Vietnam restrained from retaliating against the Cambodian border attacks because of the belief that Cambodia could be a valued ally was it not for hostile elements in the Khmer Rouge leadership. In October 1977 Vietnamese leadership began making severe plans to overthrow Pol Pot and the Khmer Rouge regime. Cambodian dissidents living in Vietnam

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<sup>124</sup> Morris, *Why Vietnam Invaded Cambodia*, 72.

<sup>125</sup> Morris, *Why Vietnam Invaded Cambodia*, 74-75.

<sup>126</sup> Morris, *Why Vietnam Invaded Cambodia*, 78.

<sup>127</sup> Morris, *Why Vietnam Invaded Cambodia*, 91.

were recruited and armed to prepare for an upcoming invasion of Cambodia. In December 1977 the border clashes intensified even further with the deployment and use of artillery, warplanes and upwards of 20,000 men from the Vietnamese side.<sup>128</sup>

After a failed propaganda campaign in mid-1978 aimed to provoke an internal revolution in Cambodia, Vietnamese leaders saw a conventional invasion as the only viable option to solve their problems with neighbouring Cambodia.<sup>129</sup> Throughout 1978 Vietnam sent envoys to Moscow to ensure they had the backing of the USSR, their closest ally, in a potential large-scale conflict with Cambodia. This was done to ensure military backing and to explore the possibility of security insurance if the conflict were to escalate and draw in China on the side of Cambodia. The Soviets had no intentions of going to war with China over a regional conflict between Cambodia and Vietnam but did sign a Treaty of Friendship and Cooperation in November 1978. The treaty was a sign of closer military and economic cooperation between the two countries but gave no guarantees in case of war with China.<sup>130</sup> After an additional military build-up, the Vietnamese military cautiously moved into the eastern regions of Cambodia in the early weeks of December 1979. On 25 December the invasion began in full force with 13 divisions and over 150,000 troops. On 7 January Vietnamese troops entered the Cambodian capital Phnom Penh and installed a puppet regime led by Heng Samrin. The Cambodian forces suffered heavy casualties after trying to face the Vietnamese in conventional battles and quickly shifted to guerrilla warfare.<sup>131</sup>

### *Norwegian Response to the Invasion*

Norway was put in a dilemma concerning the Vietnamese invasion of Cambodia. On the one hand, Vietnam had invaded under the pretext of protecting Vietnamese minorities and stopping prolonged border clashes. The Khmer Rouge regime, which had ruled Cambodia since 1975, was responsible for brutal human rights violations and genocide, including Vietnamese minorities in the regions bordering Vietnam. Norway had expressed deep concerns about the developments in Cambodia, and the humanitarian situation in particular.<sup>132</sup> It was certainly not much support for the regime in Norway prior to the invasion.

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<sup>128</sup> Morris, *Why Vietnam Invaded Cambodia*, 101.

<sup>129</sup> Morris, *Why Vietnam Invaded Cambodia*, 107-108.

<sup>130</sup> Morris, *Why Vietnam Invaded Cambodia*, 108.

<sup>131</sup> Morris, *Why Vietnam Invaded Cambodia*, 111.

<sup>132</sup> RA, UD, 25.11/38, Memorandum on the Kampuchea-Vietnam Conflict in the Security Council, 2.

On the other hand, Norway's position on the Vietnamese invasion was that the principle of state sovereignty had to be upheld in all circumstances, even when this related to one of the worst human rights abusers in the post-war era. Norwegian historian Rolf Tamnes described the situation Norway faced as a choice between two evils, where opposing the Vietnamese invasion could be seen as support for Khmer Rouge.<sup>133</sup> In Oslo, it was clear that this dilemma could pose a problem.

In a memorandum from the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Norway's position on the invasion and how it should place itself in the Security Council was discussed three days after the invasion. Norway would not accept a breach of the principle of state sovereignty as stated in the UN Charter. The MFA also made it clear that its condemnation of the Vietnamese invasion was not a sign of support or legitimisation for the Khmer Rouge regime's actions towards its population or the regime itself.<sup>134</sup> The situation was partly solved by separating the two matters and stating that the issues of human rights violations, at the time, were being handled in other UN organs.<sup>135</sup> This was easier done in theory than in practice.

The fall of the Khmer Rouge regime came with some diplomatic challenges, as a representative for the nation of Cambodia had to be acknowledged in the UN system. Norway, therefore, had to decide its position on who this representative party should be. The two parties in question were the opposing Revolutionary Council set up in Phnom Penh by the Vietnamese and a delegation led by the former king of Cambodia, Norodom Sihanouk, which ironically represented the Khmer Rouge. Norway took the stance, with the majority of the Council, to let the Sihanouk delegation represent Cambodia in accordance with rules of procedure of the Security Council Article 37. By doing this, Norway and the Council acknowledged the delegation as representatives of the state of Cambodia and not personnel affected by the case, which article 39 would have done.<sup>136</sup> This was not a radical decision to take as all other members of the Security Council, except the USSR and Czechoslovakia, saw them as the legitimate government of Cambodia.

The question of how the Security Council should react in terms of resolutions arose soon after the invasion and it was decided that Norway, initially, should keep a low profile on the matter in the Council and await statements from China and the non-aligned members of the

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<sup>133</sup> Tamnes, *Oljealder 1965-1995*, 371.

<sup>134</sup> RA, UD, 25.11/38, Memorandum on the Kampuchea-Vietnam Conflict in the Security Council, 5.

<sup>135</sup> RA, UD, 25.11/38, Memorandum on the Kampuchea-Vietnam Conflict in the Security Council, 4.

<sup>136</sup> RA, UD, 25.11/38, Memorandum on the Kampuchea-Vietnam Conflict in the Security Council, 4.

Council.<sup>137</sup> China was strongly opposed to the invasion and a Vietnamese led government in Cambodia, since the Khmer Rouge regime had been a Chinese ally. It was therefore expected that the Chinese resolution text would include (1) affirmation of the principle of non-intervention in other states' internal matters, (2) respect for territorial integrity and (3) a withdrawal of foreign troops from Cambodia. The expectation was that the USSR would only accept the last point if any at all and use its veto powers to stop any resolution containing the other formulations.<sup>138</sup> On 15 January, a resolution text by Kuwait on behalf of the Non-Aligned countries was put forward. It stated that all foreign troops in Cambodia had to withdraw from the country. Not surprisingly, the USSR and East Germany voted against the resolution (13 – 2 – 0), with the Soviet vote effectively vetoing the resolution.<sup>139</sup>

In the case of the Vietnamese invasion of Cambodia Norway kept a low profile. At first, Norway considered whether a condemnation of the invasion could be seen as legitimization of the Khmer Rouge regime. It was agreed that this would not be the case and Norway could simultaneously reject the illegal use of force and the human rights abuses in Cambodia. Norway did not yield much influence in the Security Council's handling of the invasion as the responsibility for resolution proposal fell to states closer to Vietnam and Cambodia. The Soviet veto of the Kuwaiti resolution also made it difficult for anyone to pursue a peacefully negotiated solution to the situation.

### ***Lebanon and UNIFIL: Norway's Influence and Legitimacy Through UN Peacekeeping Mission***

During Norway's two-year term at the Security Council, a recurring theme was the confirmation of UN peacekeeping missions. One of these missions was *the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon* (UNIFIL). Initially, UNIFIL was intended to confirm and secure the Israeli withdrawal from South Lebanon, which it had invaded in 1978.<sup>140</sup> This subchapter is not meant to explain all the complexities that make up the Lebanese Civil War, Israeli invasions, and the subsequent UN Peacekeeping Missions. Instead, the purpose is to give a general recollection of the events that led to the establishment of UNIFIL and how Norway

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<sup>137</sup> RA, UD, 25.11/38, Memorandum on the Kampuchea-Vietnam Conflict in the Security Council, 4.

<sup>138</sup> RA, UD, 25.11/38, Memorandum on the Kampuchea-Vietnam Conflict in the Security Council, 4-5.

<sup>139</sup> UD, *St. meld. nr. 70*, 65.

<sup>140</sup> UN, *Resolution 425 of 19 March 1978*, 5. UN, *Resolution 426 of 19 March 1978*, 5.

ended up bearing a relatively large part of the burden that the mission turned out to be. The focus will also lie on what Norway gained from participating in UNIFIL and if it translated to any meaningful influence on the Security Council.

### *The Outbreak of the Lebanese Civil War*

The part of the Lebanese Civil War that will be explored in this chapter ignited in March 1975 with a fishing conflict in the southern port city of Saida. After a Maronite fishing company had been granted a monopoly in the waters outside Saida, the Muslim fishers in the city started a protest. Amid the protests, a local Sunni leader was shot and later died of the injuries he sustained. This death sparked further the conflict, and local protesters allied with the Palestinian Liberation Organization (PLO), which had moved large parts of its organisation to Lebanon following its expulsion from Jordan in 1970.<sup>141</sup> On the opposing side was the Lebanese army, dominated by Maronite officers, which saw the PLO's participation in the protest as a prelude to what would become of Lebanon if it did not rid itself of the Palestinians.<sup>142</sup> Although the officer corps was made up of Maronites, the base of the army consisted of mainly Muslim soldiers, and they would not fight the PLO or other left-leaning parts of the population, which they viewed as their supporters. After a failed assassination attempt, by unknown perpetrators, on the Maronite leader of the falangist militia Pierre Gemayel, the violence escalated further with new retaliations. The Lebanese army, which previously had been a stabilising factor in the conflict, could not stop the ongoing violence and disintegrated. The fragmented parts of the army joined different militia groupings on opposing sides of the civil war.<sup>143</sup>

The fighting in Lebanon went on until an armistice between PLO and the Maronite militia group was signed in June 1975. The armistice only halted the bloodshed and postponed it as the different parties prepared. In March of the same year, fighting again broke out. This time between the Maronite militia and *the Lebanese National Movement*, backed by the PLO. *The Lebanese National Movement* was the leading Lebanese group opposing the Christian Maronite militia in the early civil war.<sup>144</sup>

Syria had long benefitted from a fragmented power structure in Lebanon where they could influence different parties to do their bidding. At the start of 1976, *the Lebanese National*

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<sup>141</sup> Waage, *Konflikt og stormaktspolitikk i Midtøsten*, 227, 309.

<sup>142</sup> Waage, *Konflikt og stormaktspolitikk i Midtøsten*, 228.

<sup>143</sup> Waage, *Konflikt og stormaktspolitikk i Midtøsten*, 228.

<sup>144</sup> Waage, *Konflikt og stormaktspolitikk i Midtøsten*, 228-229.

*Movement* and PLO looked to be victorious in the Civil War, and the neighbouring power Syria was worried that it would end up without influence in Lebanon if the Maronites were defeated.<sup>145</sup> Furthermore, President Hafez al-Assad of Syria feared the establishment of a Christian Israeli puppet in Lebanon which could draw them into a new war with Israel.<sup>146</sup> Syria had therefore switched between the opposing sides in the conflict. When the Maronite militia was on the brink of collapse in May 1976, President Assad ordered a military intervention on behalf of the Maronites. This operation had the blessing of the US, as they wanted to stay an arm's length from the conflict, not to endanger the progress made in the peace negotiations between Israel and Egypt. The US also wanted the Christian minority in Lebanon to be protected, and a Syrian intervention was a way to achieve this and simultaneously not get directly involved.<sup>147</sup>

In October of the same year, an armistice was signed between the PLO and Syria, establishing an Arabian peacekeeping mission in Lebanon.<sup>148</sup> The Syrian Army constituted the main bulk of this mission, making it more of a way for Syria to establish military occupation. The Lebanese Civil War's intensity was again brought down to a low flare. However, the civil war was not over and had only changed in form. The focus of the fighting had shifted from Beirut to Southern Lebanon, where Christian villages, with backing from Israel, were launching attacks against the PLO and *the Lebanese National Movement*. The Palestinians launched retaliatory attacks across the border into Israel.

### *Israeli Invasion and the Creation of UNIFIL*

Lebanon was, in practice, separated into spheres of influence with distinct groupings and militias controlling them.<sup>149</sup> Israel had, like Syria, an interest in keeping the political power in Lebanon divided. They feared that political enemies would come to dominate the country and that the Maronite minority in Lebanon would end up with less influence. Israel supported the idea of a divided Lebanon under Christian rule.<sup>150</sup> Their main enemy in Lebanon was the Palestinians led by the PLO, which drew in more anti-Israeli parties into the conflict. Israel had stayed on the fence in the conflict while still spending some 150 million dollars on building up different Maronite militia groups. While they did not like the idea of the Syrian

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<sup>145</sup> Waage, *Konflikt og stormaktspolitikk i Midtøsten*, 229.

<sup>146</sup> Waage, *Konflikt og stormaktspolitikk i Midtøsten*, 229.

<sup>147</sup> Waage, *Konflikt og stormaktspolitikk i Midtøsten*, 230.

<sup>148</sup> Waage, *Konflikt og stormaktspolitikk i Midtøsten*, 230.

<sup>149</sup> Waage, *Konflikt og stormaktspolitikk i Midtøsten*, 231.

<sup>150</sup> Waage, *Konflikt og stormaktspolitikk i Midtøsten*, 232.

intervention in Lebanon, they understood that it was the only viable solution to save their Maronite allies from defeat.<sup>151</sup> They did, however, come with some demands concerning the Syrian intervention, including no Syrian troops stationed south of the city Sayda in Southern Lebanon. President Assad promised to abide by the Israeli demands as long as they kept out of Lebanon.

After the Syrian intervention, a paradoxical situation arose for Israel. The same security zone they had demanded Syria kept out of had become a haven for Israeli adversaries such as the PLO. Since Syrian soldiers were to keep out of the area, the Israeli defence umbrella, intended to contain the Syrians, now safeguarded the PLO from the Syrians.<sup>152</sup> The Syrian presence in the north did not weaken the PLO either. On the contrary, the PLO had reignited the guerrilla fighting against Israel from Southern Lebanon. Israel's newly elected prime minister Menachem Begin set out to shut down these activities. Following a Palestinian terror attack on 11 March 1978, which killed 37 Israelis and left 78 wounded, Prime Minister Begin had the cause he needed to take action.<sup>153</sup>

On 14 March 1978, Israel invaded Southern Lebanon. The goal of the Israeli invasion was to disrupt and destroy the PLO's operations and infrastructure in the region. They also sought to establish a security zone in the area that the PLO previously used to launch attacks on Israel. After a brief bombing campaign, the Israeli armed forces rolled into Southern Lebanon, where the remaining Christian villages fondly greeted them.<sup>154</sup> The US initially adopted a passive role in the war, thinking that its involvement would only complicate the solution to the conflict. After seeing how the Israeli use of power in the conflict was out of proportions, the US wanted Israel out of Southern Lebanon and the UN to establish a peacekeeping mission in the region.<sup>155</sup> In addition to the concern for Israeli *modus operandi*, the US also feared that their close relations with Israel would jeopardise the ongoing peace negotiations between Egypt and Israel. The Carter Administration had put a great deal of prestige on these negotiations succeeding and would not allow the Israeli invasion of Southern Lebanon to disrupt these talks.<sup>156</sup> Israel answered US pressure by moving even further into Lebanon, which angered US President Jimmy Carter. On 19 March 1978, four days after the Israeli

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<sup>151</sup> Waage, *Konflikt og stormaktspolitikk i Midtøsten*, 232.

<sup>152</sup> Waage, *Konflikt og stormaktspolitikk i Midtøsten*, 232.

<sup>153</sup> Waage, *Konflikt og stormaktspolitikk i Midtøsten*, 233.

<sup>154</sup> Waage, *Konflikt og stormaktspolitikk i Midtøsten*, 233.

<sup>155</sup> Waage, *Konflikt og stormaktspolitikk i Midtøsten*, 233.

<sup>156</sup> Skogmo, *Visjonen om en bedre organisert verden*, 193. Waage, *Konflikt og stormaktspolitikk i Midtøsten*, 233.



invasion, the US put forward two resolutions in the Security Council demanding the complete retreat of Israeli forces from Lebanon and the creation of UNIFIL.<sup>157</sup> The Security Council adopted Resolution 425 and Resolution 426 with 12 votes for the resolution and three countries abstaining.<sup>158</sup> The objective of UNIFIL was, as stated, to secure the withdrawal of Israeli troops from Southern Lebanon, restore peace and security in the area, and help the Lebanese government re-establish control of the region.<sup>159</sup> However, the situation in Southern Lebanon was complex, and UNIFIL faced severe problems that Norway had to deal with.

### *Norwegian Legitimacy Through UNIFIL*

The background of the Norwegian entry into the conflict and UNIFIL was the Lebanese Civil War and subsequent Israeli invasion of Lebanon. Between March and April 1978, 698 Norwegian soldiers arrived in Lebanon as part of the Norwegian contribution to UNIFIL.<sup>160</sup> When Norway entered the Security Council in 1979, its involvement in UNIFIL remained, though not without its challenges. One of the significant obstacles to UNIFIL was the situation along the Israeli Lebanese border.

UNIFIL was created to ensure the Israeli withdrawal from Lebanon. Israel did, to some degree, comply with the resolutions but kept in close contact with allies in Lebanon.<sup>161</sup> The Israeli handed over control of the southernmost area lining the border to Major Saad Haddad instead of UNIFIL. Major Haddad was the leader of the Christian militia South Lebanon Army (SLA). Initially, the Lebanese government recognised Haddad's control of this border region, but they later changed their stance.<sup>162</sup> The consequence of Haddad's enclave was that the UNIFIL forces were unable to take control of their mandated area of operations, and incursions from both the Palestinians and Israel were made possible. Haddad's enclave was, according to Skogmo, the most severe issue for UNIFIL during this period. This problem was not lost on Norway, and the leader of the Labour Party Reiulf Steen predicted that it would create significant problems if not all the Israeli occupied territories in Southern Lebanon were handed over to UNIFIL.<sup>163</sup>

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<sup>157</sup> Waage, *Konflikt og stormaktspolitikk i Midtøsten*, 233-234.

<sup>158</sup> UN, *Resolution 425 of 19 March 1978*, 5. UN, *Resolution 426 of 19 March 1978*, 5.

<sup>159</sup> Waage, *Konflikt og stormaktspolitikk i Midtøsten*, 234.

<sup>160</sup> Strømme, *I Kamp for Fred*, 117.

<sup>161</sup> Tamnes, *Oljealder 1965-1995*, 379.

<sup>162</sup> Skogmo, *UNIFIL International Peacekeeping in Lebanon, 1978-1988*, 21-22.

<sup>163</sup> Strømme, *I Kamp for Fred*, 342.

Norway had a vested interest in resolving the situation along the Israeli Lebanese border as the enclave was causing troubles for their peacekeeping troops. Norway's Ambassador to the UN Ole Ålgård had, in April 1979, assumed the rotational role of President in the Security Council. The Presidentship, held by the members of the Security Council for a month, came with some perks. This included preceding over the meetings of the Council.<sup>164</sup> Ålgård tried to use his position as President to influence the peculiar situation. The Security Council had instructed the Secretary-General of the UN, Kurt Waldheim, to write a report on how UNIFIL better could fulfil its mandate. One of the suggestions was to deploy a limited force of 500 soldiers from the Lebanese army to Southern Lebanon.<sup>165</sup> These plans were rejected by Major Haddad, who threatened to attack the Lebanese force and UNIFIL alike. Ålgård used his position as President to summon the Israeli ambassador to consultations on the matter. He urged Israel to use its connections to Major Haddad and influence him to support UNIFIL's efforts. Israel agreed to cooperate, but Major Haddad made a reality of his threats and launched a campaign of heavy attacks on UNIFIL.<sup>166</sup> The first Norwegian loss from combat in Lebanon was included in the casualties when Jarle Warberg was killed by artillery fire in the southern city of Ibl al-Saqi.<sup>167</sup> Israel had not persuaded Major Haddad from attacking UNIFIL. Israel had many reasons for not interfering with Major Haddad, including their interest in keeping a helpful ally in Lebanon. This outweighed the pleas from Norway. When the attacks reached the UNIFIL headquarters in Naqoura on 18 April, the UN contacted Israel, and they succeeded in ending the bombardment.<sup>168</sup>

In New York, the situation was viewed as more tense and dangerous. Lebanon and other Arab countries called for an open meeting in the Security Council. An open meeting would likely have led to a harsh critique of Israel for supporting Major Haddad. After consulting the other members of the Council, Secretary-General Waldheim, and the Israeli ambassador, it was decided to keep the discussions behind closed doors. Ambassador Ålgård's threats of an open meeting in the Council might have put some pressure on Israel and Ålgård reached an agreement within the Security Council on a Presidential Statement on 26 April 1979.<sup>169</sup> The statement included a deep worry about the increased tension in Southern Lebanon and

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<sup>164</sup> UN. *Provisional Rules of Procedure, Chapter IV Presidency.*

<sup>165</sup> UD, *St. meld. nr. 70, 28.*

<sup>166</sup> Skogmo, *Visjonen om en bedre organisert verden*, 195-196.

<sup>167</sup> Strømme, *I Kamp for Fred*, 371.

<sup>168</sup> UD, *St. meld. nr. 70, 29.*

<sup>169</sup> Skogmo, *Visjonen om en bedre organisert verden*, 195-196.

recognising the harsh conditions under which UNIFIL soldiers worked.<sup>170</sup> However, the following months did not bring any peace to Lebanon or UNIFIL, and attacks from all parties resumed.<sup>171</sup> Skogmo stated that Norway had more influence on the Security Council's dealings with Southern Lebanon than other matters concerning the Middle East. The influence came from the contribution of the 1000 soldiers to UNIFIL. The Norwegian UNIFIL force gave Norway legitimacy when debating UNIFIL with the UN secretariat, other countries contributing forces, and during the Security Council's consultations on the subject.<sup>172</sup>

It is not unreasonable to assume Norway's relative significant contribution to UNIFIL created more legitimacy and influence on the Security Council. Mainly when the Council discussed the subject of Lebanon. Although the argument has validity, the lack of meaningful progress towards peace or protection for the UNIFIL soldiers stands out. Israeli guarantees of cooperation to Ålgård did not stop Major Haddad from launching relentless attacks on UNIFIL bases. It was not until Major Haddad's troops attacked the UNIFIL headquarter that the UN pressured Israel to intervene. Norway also did not persuade the US to make the conflict a priority. The US had a filled plate in the region with the implementation of the Camp David Accords and the fallout from the Iranian Revolution. They would not spend their political capital with Israel on the conflict in Lebanon as long as it was viewed as low intensive.<sup>173</sup>

## *Conclusion*

In the cases where Norwegian allies' interests were relatively weaker the assumption was that the Norwegian room for manoeuvre in the Security Council would increase and lead to potential influence. This assumption only fits for some of the cases examined. In Lebanon Norway was not able to pressure Israel into stopping Major Haddad's attacks on UNIFIL troops despite the fact that Norway held the presidency during the time of the attacks. Norway did manage to influence a resolution proposal on South Africa through editorial work on the resolution to get it approved by the UK. In the case of the Vietnamese invasion of Cambodia Norway kept a low profile and Soviet veto kept the resolution proposal from Kuwait from getting passed. Even though Norway's allies did not have strong interests in the conflict Norway did not manage to influence the Security Council.

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<sup>170</sup> UD, *St. meld. nr. 70*, 30.

<sup>171</sup> Skogmo, *Visjonen om en bedre organisert verden*, 196.

<sup>172</sup> Skogmo, *Visjonen om en bedre organisert verden*, 196.

<sup>173</sup> Skogmo, *Visjonen om en bedre organisert verden*, 195.

## Chapter 5: Conclusion

In January 1979, Norway started its term on the Security Council as one of ten elected members. Throughout the two-year period, Norway faced many considerations and dilemmas. The purpose of this paper has been to highlight and discuss the different aspects of Norwegian influence on the Security Council from 1979-1980. The leading research questions have been:

*How did Norway's influence on the Security Council differ in cases where allied interests were strong?*

*Did Norway achieve its objectives on the Security Council?*

*How did Norway yield influence on the United Nations Security Council during its two-year term on the Council from 1979-80?*

*Did Norway bend to allied pressure in cases where allied interests were strong?*

Allied interests can be used as an indicator on Norwegian influence on the Security Council, but it does not give the complete picture. Norwegian influence in the Security Council was limited by three factors, allied interest in the conflict being debated, Soviet interest in conflicts being debated, and Norwegian self-restriction in cases where Norway was concerned about damaging its relationship with either the US or the USSR. The Norwegian influence on the Security Council's handling of the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan proved to be severely limited by the Soviet veto power. The most substantial restrictions, however, Norway placed on itself. Norway was highly cautious of its bilateral relationship with the USSR. It would seldom take actions that could jeopardise it, keeping it outside of any reaction to the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan.

In the case of the hostage crisis, Norwegian influence was limited as the US took the lead as it was a part of the conflict. This is a case where Norway's interest aligned with the strong interest of an ally. Norway had an interest in seeing the hostages released and international law upheld. It is hard to argue that Norway had no influence the Council in this case since it did not have a clear interest in doing so when the US was the leading part in the crisis.

Norway did, to some degree, achieve its objectives on the Security Council. Norway's objectives were vaguely defined as solving conflicts through internationally negotiated and recognized solutions. The results of the Security Council can be hard to quantify, but in terms

of resolutions, Norway played an active part in most cases that allowed for small state participation or leadership. The best example of this was when Norway with Mexico were penholders on Resolution 479 regarding the Iran-Iraq War. This was a case where both superpowers backed Iraq, opening the field for Norway to make an impact. This allowed Norway to help formulate the wording in the resolution.

Norway's main avenue for influencing the Security Council during its two-year term was to help write and edit the resolution proposal. This was done in the case of South Africa (Resolution 445) and the Iran-Iraq War (Resolution 479). Norway did, in some cases, bend to allied pressure when voting on resolutions. This is best shown in Resolution 446, where Norway abstained from voting on the resolution on Israeli settlements in Arab areas after pressure from the US. This was done not to disturb the ongoing peace negotiation between Israel and Egypt.

As a small state, that does not yield great military power, it is in Norway's interest to ensure respect for international law. Functioning as a penholder in the most powerful international organ responsible for upholding international peace and security can therefore have value as such. While it might not be classified as ensuring its own survival in the classical realist sense, upholding the respect for international law may be essential for small states like Norway. However, as this thesis has demonstrated, power dynamics have at times effectively curbed the effectiveness of the Council and the room for manoeuvre small states have in the face of veto-holders.

The period of Norway's third term on the Security Council was, by Svenbalrud, described as uncontroversial and unmemorable. While this might be true some degree, the reality is more nuanced. Norway faced dilemmas where human rights were put against state sovereignty. The permanent members were using their veto power more frequently, and in many cases, Norway did yield influence in the Security Council. To what degree it is worth it for Norway to sit on the Security Council is for others to decide, but a small state such as Norway can, under the right circumstances, yield great power on the Council.

### *Future research*

Norway has previously been on the Security Council four times, excluding the current term. The periods 1949-1950 and 1963-1964 will have a larger source material than the period examined in this thesis. It would be highly relevant to research these periods and compare Norway's behaviour and influence through different periods of the Cold War. While the literature on small state power is rich, an angle that could be applied is to do a comparative analysis of Norway's terms on the Security Council and see if the level of Norwegian influence fluctuated as the tension of the Cold War increased and decreased. In addition to looking at Norway's previous record, it would be relevant to compare the findings of this thesis to that of similar countries in the same timeframe. This could give an indication of how vital the interests of allies were when examining small state power and influence.

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