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Responsibility to protect, a norm in decline. The discursive shift after Libya

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Table of contents

Abstract	4
List of Abbreviations	5
Chapter 1. Introduction	6
Chapter 2. Overview of the literature	10
<i>2.1 Sovereignty and non-intervention</i>	10
<i>2.2 The responsibility to protect</i>	11
<i>2.3 The responsibility to protect as an emerging norm</i>	14
<i>2.4 The future of the responsibility to protect</i>	16
Chapter 3. Methodology	18
<i>3.1 Methodological approach</i>	18
<i>3.2 Conducting a critical discourse analysis</i>	22
Chapter 4. Textual analysis of the Russian speeches	24
<i>4.1 Analysis of the speech by Vitaly Churkin on Libya, UNSC meeting 6498</i>	24
<i>4.2 Analysis of the speech by Vitaly Churkin on Syria, UNSC meeting 6627</i>	29
Chapter 5. Conclusion	36
Bibliography	38
<i>Appendix A – Speech by Vitaly Churkin on Libya, UNSC meeting 6498</i>	43
<i>Appendix B – Speech by Vitaly Churkin on Syria, UNSC meeting 6627</i>	45

Abstract

Since the conflict in Syria started in 2011, an estimated 400,000 Syrians have lost their lives. The international community has failed to prevent crimes against humanity in the Syrian context and has been highly criticised for its inaction and incapacity. In this thesis, the source of this inaction will be investigated. Syria has manifested a divided United Nations Security Council (UNSC), unable to unilaterally act under the Responsibility to Protect (R2P) banner. Those in favour of R2P increasingly face opposition from non-western powers. Russia has persistently opposed R2P action and advocates for a new form of R2P, the Responsibility While Protecting (RWP). The application of R2P in Libya can be identified as the reason for this shifting discourse of R2P. This thesis will argue the application of R2P in Libya led to a negative discursive shift of R2P, especially in relation to the military aspect of R2P. The focus will be on the Russian role in this shifting discourse since Russia holds a veto power in the UNSC, making it a key player in international politics. The Russian influence will be investigated through analysing two Russian UNSC speeches relating to R2P: one speech in the Libyan context, the other in the Syrian context. The speeches have been selected after thoroughly analysing all UNSC speeches dedicated to R2P. The two speeches have been chosen to analyse for they best reflect the shifting Russian discourse on R2P. A critical discourse analysis of these two key speeches demonstrate Russia's position in the debate is indicative of a shift in the overall discourse on R2P, from relatively accepting to critical, moving into the direction of RWP. It is thus concluded that the R2P concept, in its current form, is in decline.

List of Abbreviations

CDA	Critical Discourse Analysis
EU	European Union
ICISS	International Commission on Intervention and State Sovereignty
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organization
RWP	Responsibility While Protecting
R2P	Responsibility to Protect
UN	United Nations
UNGA	United Nations General Assembly
UNSC	United Nations Security Council
US	United States

Chapter 1. Introduction

The tragedies in Rwanda and the Balkans in the 1990s sparked an international debate about how to deal with mass atrocities. At the heart of this debate was the sovereignty of states which made the international community incapable of interfering in the internal affairs of a state. However, there was a growing consensus that sovereignty had to be infringed upon in certain cases. This opened up a broader discussion on the usage of humanitarian interventions to prevent mass atrocities. In 2000, then Secretary-General Kofi Annan took a clear stance in this discussion as he stated: "if humanitarian intervention is, indeed, an unacceptable assault on sovereignty, how should we respond to a Rwanda, to a Srebrenica, to gross and systematic violation of human rights that offend every precept of our common humanity?". In order to answer Annan's question, the International Commission on Intervention and State Sovereignty (ICISS) was created, which composed conditions on when the international community has to intervene for humanitarian purposes. This process led to the creation of the 'Responsibility to Protect' (R2P), a concept that has been considered controversial from its inception. The concept clashes with the Westphalian conceptualisation of sovereignty, which prescribes an absolute and exclusive right to the state, allowing it to control all of its internal affairs (Abbas, 2012). This provides the state a "free hand to violate its citizen's human rights with impunity" (Pattison, 2010, p.2). For others the concept reinforces the obligation governments have to protect its population, which is an obligation often associated with sovereignty (Luck, 2008; Thakur & Weiss, 2009). Many non-Western states are sceptical of this new form of sovereignty, fearing it will serve as a justification for interventionist practices by the "Western-dominated, international order" (Chandler, 2004, p. 60). However, the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) adopted the doctrine in 2005, signalling R2P reflects a broader consensus within the international community that something has to be done to halt mass atrocities. The practical implementation of the doctrine remains topic of debate.

The main test for the concept was the application of R2P in Libya, which was the first and, at the time of writing, the only time the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) authorized an international military intervention under the R2P banner. Therefore, it is expected that the application of R2P in Libya will have implications for future humanitarian interventions, definitely for those involving military force. The conflict received increasing international attention after Gaddafi's March 16 2011 speech on Libyan television. At the time, pro-Qaddafi

forces were approaching the city of Benghazi, then a stronghold of opposition forces. Gaddafi declared his army was coming to cleanse the city, directly threatening Benghazi's residents as he stated his soldiers were not going to show mercy nor pity (Adams, 2014, p. 1). Fear of what would ensue at Benghazi led the UNSC to pass Resolution 1973 (Idem.). The resolution demanded an immediate ceasefire and urged for the creation of a no fly zone (Roth, 2011).

The usage of R2P in Libya has been heavily discussed in scholarly work as well as within the UNSC, where different member states have expressed their disregard of the manner in which the international coalition implemented the mandate authorized by the UNSC. General consensus is that the mandate has been overstepped, mainly because it led to regime change. This has created a growing reluctance within the UNSC to apply R2P in Syria, which resembles the Libyan case. There were calls to act under the R2P banner in Syria. The Secretary-General's Special Adviser on the Prevention of Genocide, Adama Dieng argued "the international community must act on the commitment made by all Heads of State and Government at the 2005 World Summit to protect populations from genocide, war crimes, ethnic cleansing and crimes against humanity, including their incitement" (United Nations, 2012, para. 5). However, until the current day R2P has not been implemented in Syria. Most would argue this relates to the application of R2P in Libya (Morris, 2013; Nuruzzaman, 2013; Garwood-Gowers, 2013).

R2P debates within the UNSC reflect a growing division within the council. The US, France, and the UK face opposition from Russia and China, who are more reluctant of R2P. This reluctance is shared by other countries such as Brazil and India. These BRIC countries are advocating for a different form of R2P, the "responsibility while protecting" or "RWP." (Evans, 2014). This is an initiative in which it is stated that there should be a set of clear criteria which have to be taken into account before the UNSC can mandate the use of military force. Moreover, they advocate for enhanced monitoring of the implementation phase. This will allow for a better understanding of how to improve potential future military interventions (Pattison, 2013). The creation of the RWP signals a potential discursive shift of R2P, for it reconceptualises the current perception of R2P. The aim of this thesis is to investigate whether there is indeed a discursive shift of R2P, this will be done by focussing on the Russian approach to R2P. The focus will be on Russia since Russia is a permanent UNSC member state and, therefore, holds a veto right. This makes Russia a powerful actor in the decision making process concerning R2P. Moreover, Russia has historically always maintained a reluctant attitude

towards international interventions. Russia has thus been chosen as a representative for others, mostly non-western states, opposing the interventionist practices of R2P.

Russia has been especially reluctant towards interventionist practices in the case of Syria. They have exercised their veto power eight times to block resolutions condemning the Assad regime for human rights violations (Sengupta, 2017), partially, because Russia felt the proposed resolutions did not sufficiently respect Syria's national sovereignty and because they were based upon the logic of confrontation according to Russia (United Nations, 2011b).

Russia believes that any decision made in the response to the Syrian conflict, especially relating to R2P, needs to be done with great respect to the sovereignty of the Syrian state (Glanville, 2012, p. 326). According to Russia, R2P would not apply in Syria because they see the Syrian situation as essentially a domestic matter that the Syrian authorities have to resolve themselves (Zifcak, 2012). They furthermore argue the situation in Syria does not constitute a threat to international peace. Outside interference could potentially lead to undesirable regional instability, according to Russia (Zifcak, 2012, p. 17). In making this argument, Russia refers to article 2 of the UN charter, in which it is stated that "all Members shall settle their international disputes by peaceful means in such a manner that international peace and security, and justice, are not endangered" (UN charter, n/d). By referring to this article, Russia justifies its position on the importance of non-intervention. It will thus be investigated how Russia is creating a discursive shift of R2P after Libya.

The discourse on R2P be investigated by conducting a critical discourse analysis, which is a tool used to scrutinise how meaning is created through the usage of language. The analysis will focus on the language used by Russia in relation to R2P through the close analysis of two UNSC speeches dealing with R2P. The discourse on R2P in Libya will first be established in order to compare it to the discourse on R2P in Syria. The goal of the critical discourse analysis is to highlight elements of the speeches that allow for a critical reflection. Special attention will be paid to the manner in which the speeches frame R2P, to what is emphasised in relation to R2P, and to what is de-emphasised in the speeches. This is ought to shed light on the potential Russian discursive shift of R2P, as well as on the general perception of R2P. The focus of the analysis will be on the Libyan and Syrian case because the cases share similarities in that the political leader of both countries violently responded to non-violent protesters. Despite of the similarities, R2P has not been invoked in Syria. Therefore, it is appropriate to question whether

the the concept of R2P is in decline. It will be investigated if the Syrian case signals a re-assertion of the Westphalian notion of sovereignty, meaning that outside interference in a state is deemed as inappropriate. This thesis will argue there is a growing resistance against the R2P concept in its current form, especially by non-Western states. The main research question is formulated as follows: how did the discourse on R2P shift after Libya?

The fact that at the time of writing there are still mass atrocities taking place in Syria whilst the international community is manifesting inaction, allows this thesis to be highly relevant. Especially because this thesis touches upon the main source of inaction, which is the reluctant attitude of Russia towards R2P which, because of its veto right, paralyzes the UNSC. By scrutinising the main sources of the Russian reluctance towards R2P, this thesis hopes to contribute to a more inclusive understanding of R2P. Most scholarly literature dedicated to R2P deals with the issue that R2P does not seem to deliver what it once promised. However, there is a lack of close analysis on what the source is of this issue with R2P. By focusing on Russia, this thesis hopes to identify the main causes of the growing reluctance to R2P.

The first part of the thesis will be dedicated to providing an overview of scholarly literature dealing with R2P. This will be followed by a methodology chapter, in which a clear guideline is created to properly execute the critical discourse analysis. The chapter will deal with the various facets of the discourse analysis. The third part of the thesis will be dedicated to conducting the discourse analysis by closely analysing the discourse on R2P in the two UNSC speeches. The final part will conclude with the results of the discourse analysis and will provide a clear answer to how the discourse on R2P has shifted after Libya. It will now be discussed how R2P relates to some key principles in international politics, it will then be explained how R2P came into existence and how the concept has evolved from its inception.

Chapter 2. Overview of the literature

2.1 Sovereignty and non-intervention

This chapter will provide an overview of the different approaches to R2P and will discuss some problems the concept faces. R2P is heavily debated in relation to sovereignty. Scholarly literature is divided on this relationship. Those who believe R2P infringes on sovereignty often perceive sovereignty in a Westphalian manner. This form of sovereignty prescribes an absolute and exclusive right to the state, allowing the authority of a state to control everything within its borders (Abbas, 2012). Potentially this can lead to human right violations by the authority of a country, whilst the international community is incapable of intervening (Pattison, 2010, p.2). Those adhering to this perception of sovereignty uphold the principle of non-intervention, meaning outside interference must be refrained from. Luck (2009) argues R2P challenges this traditional conception of state sovereignty. He explains R2P has deep roots in the notion of sovereignty. In making his argument he refers to Thomas Hobbes. Luck (2009) argues Hobbes “recognized that the sovereign power had an obligation to protect the people under its rule” (p. 14). This entails sovereignty is a two-way street, loyalty is offered by the people which is returned by the sovereign leader with order and protection. Therefore, Luck (2009) concludes R2P is a reconceptualization of sovereignty, it does not challenge the sovereign authority of a state to do something which they otherwise would not have to do. He thus believes “domestic sovereignty, therefore, need not pose a barrier, legally or politically, for RtoP” (Luck, 2009, p.14). Thakur and Weiss (2009) confirm this argument by Luck, they argue sovereignty is not a pretext for abuse but a responsibility to offer protection. This means that if a country fails to protect its population or purposefully attacks it, it loses its sovereignty. Therefore, R2P does not infringe upon sovereignty, because at the point of intervention that country has already lost its sovereignty. Thakur and Weiss (2009) explain this by arguing “it is becoming increasingly difficult for states to claim the prerogatives of sovereignty unless they meet internationally agreed responsibilities, which include protecting the human rights” (p. 11). Sovereignty is something countries have to deserve and maintain. When a country fails to deserve sovereignty, the principle of non-intervention no longer holds.

R2P can thus justify an international intervention in a country, thereby opposing the principle of non-intervention. Kinacioglu (2005) explains the doctrine of non-intervention has been

perceived as the most significant manner for coping with the so called ‘logic of anarchy’, which is presumed to lay at the heart of international politics. Some believe the principle of non-intervention is the main governing rule of the relationships between states (Kinacioglu, 2005). The roots of this principle can be traced back to the UN Charter, in which the meaning of it is implied. Kinacioglu (2005) refers to article 2 (4) of the UN Charter, this article requires that states refrain from threatening or actually using force. The non-intervention norm mainly functions as a general prohibition of the use of force (Kinacioglu, 2005). The principle does not only apply to UN members. In article 2 (6) it is implied that the UN is allowed to take measures against non-UN members as well if they threaten or use force. However, there remains some controversy over the clear definition of the term ‘force’ commonly referred to in relation to the UN charter on non-intervention. The term would not encompass all kind of forces such as political or economic coercion, ‘force’ seems to solely refer to armed force (Kinacioglu, 2005, p. 18). R2P can thus be perceived as a reinforcement of already existing conditions for sovereignty and challenges the value prescribed to the principle of non-intervention. It will now be discussed how the R2P concept came into existence.

2.2 The responsibility to protect

The cruelty of the Holocaust led to increased cooperation of the international community aimed at preventing potential future genocides. This led to the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide. However, the period that followed witnessed many atrocities in which the international community was inactive. One million Igbos were killed in Biafra, 4.2 million Cambodians and 800,000 Rwandans (Mckay & Murray, 2014). This all took place in a timespan of 27 years, which resulted in a general consensus within the international community that efforts to prevent mass human right violations had to increase. These efforts led to the creation of the International Commission on Intervention and State Sovereignty (ICISS), which was created to devise a response plan for the international community. In 2001 the ICISS created a report bearing the name ‘The Responsibility to Protect’ (Idem.). The report signals the ICISS’s aim to “bridge the gap between so-called legitimate (ethically justifiable) and legal (legally authorized) intervention” (Doyle, 2011, para. 3). R2P was aimed to reframe the states’ understanding of sovereignty, the concept caused a shift from the right to protect to the responsibility to protect (Thakur & Weiss, 2009). States slowly started to perceive protecting citizens from gross human right violations as their responsibility.

The concept became institutionalised in 2005, when the norm of the R2P was agreed upon by heads of governments at the World Summit (Thakur & Weiss, 2009, p. 3). The scope of the R2P was narrowed down to four specific cases: genocide, war crimes, ethnic cleansing, and crimes against humanity (United Nations, 2005). The 2005 version of R2P rests on three equally important pillars:

(1) the primary responsibility of states to protect their own populations from the four crimes of genocide, war crimes, ethnic cleansing, and crimes against humanity, as well as from their incitement; (2) the international community's responsibility to assist a state to fulfill its RtoP; and (3) the international community's responsibility to take timely and decisive action, in accordance with the UN Charter, in cases where the state has manifestly failed to protect its population from one or more of the four crimes (Bellamy, 2010, p. 143).

The third pillar allows the usage of force as a last resort and has been a source of scepticism for many non-western powers. They perceive this pillar as a potential tool for powerful states to facilitate forced regime change. Although the 2005 World Summit was the first time member states formally acknowledged the responsibility to protect their citizens (Bin Talal & Schwarz, 2013), it was received with mixed sentiments. Proponents of R2P perceive the endorsement at the World Summit as a fundamental turning point. For example, Evans (2008) argued it marked "the really big step forward in terms of formal acceptance of R2P" (p. 44). However, the R2P concept agreed upon in 2005 differed from the concept created in 2001 by the ICISS. The 2005 version of R2P moved away from the focus on the intervening states and instead focused on the responsibilities of the 'failing' state. Moreover, R2P was separated from the use of coercive force (Chandler, 2009). The 2005 version of R2P failed to adopt criteria which can legitimise the use of force outside of the UNSC, making a R2P response little different from a non-R2P response, according to Chandler (2009). The fact that the legitimisation of force has to be approved by the UNSC is problematic because some argue the UNSC is structurally unequal because of the veto powers (Hehir, 2010). Hehir (2010) perceives the UNSC as a slow-moving institute that, therefore, jeopardises the speed of potential application of R2P. The concept of R2P has thus undergone significant changes in comparison to the ICISS report in 2001. Chandler (2009) concludes the focus on the potential victims of mass human right violations is the only remainder resonating with the R2P version from the ICSS report (Idem.).

Even though heads of governments at the World Summit in 2005 agreed upon R2P, the international community still proved to be reluctant to take action under the R2P banner. The main source of this reluctance is that some believe R2P infringes on a country's sovereignty. R2P can justify the right to intervene, which led to a storm of controversy according to Arbour (2008). She argues "it became increasingly clear then that sovereignty in and of itself should, at the very least, no longer shield perpetrators from punitive measures" (p. 446). Some question the intention of the potential interveners and highlight the self-serving agendas which can be accompanied by infringing on a state's sovereignty (Arbour, 2008). This has led opponents of intervention to be sceptical of undermining rights of sovereignty, not in the least because it can lead to a western-dominated international order (Chandler, 2009). Moreover, Warner (2003) is also critical of the infringement of sovereignty, he states the usage of R2P allows the international community to remove and replace a government of a nation and replace this power with another sovereign. Therefore, R2P weakens the sovereignty of a state without providing a sound alternative (Idem.). It becomes the task of the international community to protect individuals for a long period and this is something Warner (2003) deems impossible. He believes that in order to protect individuals, a strong state system is necessary. Warner (2003) questions how human security can be guaranteed without the return to independence for the 'host' state (2003). R2P has shifted legitimate sovereignty from 'unlimited' to one that is conditional on the good state performance as well as a demonstration of respect of human right within its boundaries (Hornung, 2015).

A lot of non-western powers also criticise the consequences of R2P in relation to sovereignty, these countries believe the infringement of sovereignty under the R2P banner relates to interventionism and can be perceived as a form of imperialism cloaked in humanitarianism. (Weiss, 2006, p. 747). The BRIC countries (Brazil, Russia, India, and China) have voiced this concern and are starting to unite around this scepticism against R2P, thereby, hoping to oppose western enthusiasm about the concept (Keeler, 2011). This criticism has caused BRIC countries to pursue the non-intervention practice and to refuse voting in favour of the decision to use R2P in order to intervene in a country (Keeler, 2011).

Besides from criticism related to sovereignty, R2P has been criticised on other grounds. Hehir (2010) argues R2P lacks the capacity for real adjustments, he perceives R2P as a rhetorical ploy without any concrete reforms (Hehir, 2010). Bin Talal & Schwarz (2013) perceive R2P as "plagued with many challenges and institutional failures" (p. 2). One of these challenges is that

the R2P concept is perceived by some as politically utopian because it creates an expectation of other states that they should use scarce resources to prevent and to intervene when a state fails in this regard (Bin Talal & Schwarz, 2013). Moreover, R2P is critiqued because the concept would not be anything new since states already acted as protectors before the R2P concept came along (Rotmann, Kurtz and Brockmeier, 2014).

Proponents of R2P highlight the potential of the concept. Bin Talal and Schwarz (2013) argue “far from diminishing state sovereignty through intervention, R2P should be seen ultimately as an international effort to strengthen the capacity of failing states through the provision of welfare, security assistance, and wealth creation” (p. 2). Therefore, they perceive R2P as a historic concept which is capable of stopping enormous human right violations (Bin Talal & Schwarz, 2013). At the same time, they believe there is hardly a term more fundamental to international relations than sovereignty, a term R2P has broadened by dividing sovereign duties among different actors (p. 4). Evans & Sahnoun (2002) argue R2P prioritises human rights over sovereignty. Bellamy (2011) argues R2P signals the potential and capacity of the UN to identify enormous atrocities and to prevent them. Moreover, he argues the concept ‘played an important role in shaping the world’s response to actual and threatened atrocities’, allowing R2P to become an accepted norm in responding to mass atrocities (Bellamy, 2011, p. 263). As has been shown in the above discussed chapter, R2P is perceived with mixed sentiments.

2.3 The responsibility to protect as an emerging norm

The aim of this thesis is to investigate how the perception of the R2P norm is evolving over time, especially after Libya. Therefore, it is of great importance to firstly clarify how a norm is defined and how it comes into existence. The main theory dealing with the evolution of norms is the life-cycle model norm, which is composed by Finnemore & Sikkink in 1998. They researched how norms originate and how they influence political change. They defined a norm as the “standard of appropriate behaviour for actors with a given identity” (Finnemore & Sikkink, 1998, p. 891). There are different categories in the abovementioned definition of a norm. The general distinction is made between regulative norms and constitutive norms. Regulative norms order and constrain behaviour (Finnemore & Sikkink, 1998). Constitutive norms regulate the creation of institutional facts such as property and marriage. Those norms furthermore modify the normative system itself (Boella & Van Der Torre, 2004, p. 256).

Finnemore and Sikkink (1998) argue that agreement among a critical mass on a certain norm can lead to a tipping point, after which the agreement becomes a widespread norm. According to the life-cycle model, some norms are more strongly internalised than others and they will therefore be more likely to be accepted and followed than norms which are less internalised. Whether a norm becomes internalised depends on the stage it is in. Finnemore and Sikkink (1998) argue that before an agreement becomes a widespread norm, there are three stages a norm generally has to go through. The first stage is what they refer to as 'norm emergence', this stage is characterised by persuasion of norm entrepreneurs. Those norm entrepreneurs aim to persuade a critical mass of state actors to accept a new norm. The second stage has to do with broad norm acceptance. This stage is characterised by attempts made by norm leaders to convince other state actors to follow their norm. The third stage involves the internalisation of a norm. At this point norms acquire a taken-for-granted status, they are no longer part of broad public debate (Finnemore & Sikkink, 1998, p. 895). The first two stages lead up to the aforementioned tipping point, the moment a norm becomes accepted thus takes place in stage three. However, Finnemore and Sikkink (1998) are of the opinion that the life cycle does not always have to be completed. Many norms fail to reach the tipping point and, therefore, never become a fully internationalised norm (Finnemore & Sikkink, 1998).

The life-cycle model has, however, been subjected to criticism. Krook & True (2012) for example argue the life-cycle model is highly inspired by constructivism since the life-cycle model is grounded in the idea that norms form structures which shape the interaction between states and non-state actors. The constructivist influence arises when bearing in mind the life-cycle model confers a central role to ideas in international politics (Krook & True, 2012, p. 104). Krook and True (2012) are of the opinion that this constructivist approach leads to a static depiction of norms. The life-cycle model approaches norms as things, namely as standard behaviour. This entails norms may take a variety of forms but that their boundaries are fixed. In this approach, norms are in competition with each other and can be compared with each other (p. 104). Krook and True (2012) are critical of the life-cycle model of norms because they believe norms are dynamic instead. They argue norms tend to be vague, enabling their content to be interpreted in different manners, allowing norms to be appropriated for different purposes. Norms, according to Krook and True (2012), are processes. They cannot be perceived as finished products. Attending to the fluid nature of norms helps to understand why norms rarely achieve their intended aims, this is difficult because norms can, therefore, encompass different

meanings. These meanings can fit a variety of contexts, enabling norms to be subjected to framing by a multitude of actors (Krook & True, 2012, p. 104-105). The meaning of norms thus depends on the actor defining it.

This point of criticism is also brought forward by UN special advisor Edward Luck, who argues the general approach to norms fails to incorporate the interactive nature of international politics and assumes an overly linear conception of the evolution of a norm (Welsh, 2010). Moreover, Edward Luck states existing models fail to analyse short-term, non-linear interaction dynamics between the many actors shaping a fluid global norm (idem.). Rotmann, Kurtz and Brockmeier (2014) share this perception of norms. They highlight the fluid nature of norms and believe this allows established major global powers to “continue to hold a near-monopoly over the political resources to implement atrocity prevention and response. Their practice significantly shapes whether diverse actors around the globe see an evolving norm as fair and legitimate” (Rotmann, Kurtz and Brockmeier, 2014, p. 5). Major powers thus play a significant role in determining how a norm comes to be perceived, which will influence whether standards for behaviour will be considered as legitimate or not. This thesis will focus on the Russian influence on the norm of R2P.

Finnemore and Sikkink (1998) thus perceive norms as standards for behaviour whereas others perceive norms as fluid concepts given meaning by major powers. This thesis will approach norms also as a fluid concept as it will be investigated how major powers shape the norm of R2P. This fluidity of the R2P norms led some to argue the concept of R2P can be manipulated to become a tool for major powers to use it in their benefit. Therefore, it is important that the meaning given to R2P is approached in a critical manner. This thesis aims to contribute to this critical approach by focusing on the role of Russia in shaping the meaning of R2P.

2.4 The future of the responsibility to protect

Resolution 1973 and its implementation highly influenced the perception of R2P. Bellamy and Williams (2011) emphasise Resolution 1973 was the first time the UNSC authorised the use of force under the banner of human protection, even though this was against the will of a functioning state (p. 825). This authorisation of force was not endorsed by the BRIC countries. After the implementation of R2P this sentiment intensified as they argued the NATO-led forces overstepped their civilian protection mandate. This, in turn, led to a decreasing level of trust

within the UNSC, which contributed to a paralysed UNSC in the face of the even more grievous situations that subsequently partook in Syria (Evans, Thakur & Pape, 2013).

Morris (2016) shares this observation as he argues R2P has become toxic after the Arab Spring, this mainly has to do with the military aspect of R2P. He argues “the principal objection is to the use of force for humanitarian purposes rather than to the other aspects of R2P” (Morris, 2016, p. 211). Garwood-Gowers (2015) also perceives the military aspect of R2P as a source of contestation. He argues “R2P’s third pillar is perceived by some states as a tool that powerful states use to challenge the legitimacy of sovereign governments, a kind of ‘finger-pointing’ device to stigmatise certain regimes and facilitate intervention in domestic conflicts” (Garwood-Gowers, 2015, p. 15). He is of the opinion that this sentiment has been central to the Russian and Chinese discourse on R2P in Syria. This sentiment is shared by other states such as India, who in 2013 warned R2P should not become a tool used by the powerful to pressure weaker states, and bring about a change of regime. Garwood-Gowers (2015) concludes “these statements indicate that R2P’s third pillar continues to be perceived by many states as challenging, rather than supporting, existing normative principles such as sovereignty and non-intervention” (p. 15). This reluctance towards the third pillar of R2P was also present in UNSC debates concerning Syria. There has been a division between those who favour a military intervention in Syria and those who do not. The focus of the analysis will be on the third pillar of R2P, especially on the military aspect of it. As argued above, Russia’s discourse of R2P in relation to this aspect is sceptical. It will be investigated how this is manifested in the Libyan and Syrian context.

This literature review demonstrated norms dictate what is perceived as standard behaviour. In this thesis, norms will be perceived as fluid concepts. It will be analysed how Russia shapes the norms which determine what is deemed as standards for behaviour in order to investigate whether or not the discourse of R2P is shifting.

Chapter 3. Methodology

3.1 Methodological approach

The purpose of this chapter is to demonstrate how the research in this thesis will be conducted. It will be argued why a certain methodological approach is chosen and how this will affect the research. In this chapter it will be explained what data will be analysed and how this data will be collected. Potential complications will be taken into consideration and it will be clarified how these obstacles will partially be overcome.

Since the aim of this thesis is to investigate the shifting meaning and relevance of the R2P 'norm', it is important to research how the meaning of R2P is constructed and by which actors. One manner through which this can be done is by focusing on the usage of language in relation to R2P. Starks and Brown Trinidad (2007) argue language and words are in themselves meaningless but gain importance by their shared and mutually agreed use. This is how they believe meaning is created (p. 1374). Language creates an understanding of reality and the careful analysis of language can therefore shed light on the creation and maintenance of norms. Moreover, Starks and Brown Trinidad (2007) argue the common methodological approach to studying language is through conducting discourse analysis. They state discourse analysis allows for the tracing of the historical evolution of language practices, it examines how language shapes and reflects dynamic political practices (Starks & Brown Trinidad, 2007, p. 1374). The methodology applied in this thesis will, therefore, conduct analysis by the usage of critical discourse analysis in order to shed light on the shifting meaning of R2P. This will clarify how the discourse of R2P has shifted after its application in Libya.

The concept of discourse is a popular topic of academic writing and has been defined in a wide range of varieties. Wodak and Meyer (2009) acknowledge this variety of approaches, they argue the concept of discourse, and the manner in which it is shaped, has been subject to a big and varied amount of usages in the social sciences. They highlight the importance of Michel Foucault in the construction of the discourse concept, since Foucault has been of vital importance to the concept of discourse. Wodak and Meyer (2009) argue Foucault concentrates on technologies of power. Foucault focuses on how knowledge comes to be perceived as accepted. He moreover focuses on how power can be exercised to determine what knowledge

will be deemed as accepted (p. 9). This is especially relevant for the research in this thesis, since it will focus on how Russia uses its power to challenge the mainstream conception of R2P. Since there is such a variety of definitions for the concept of discourse, it is important to clearly define the concept. Campbell (2010) argues discourse refers to a specific series of representations and practices which produce meanings (p. 234). Parker (1992) describes discourse as “the sets of meanings which constitute objects” (p. 4). This definition is helpful but somewhat narrow. Lessa (2006) has a broader definition of discourse, she summarises Foucault's definition of discourse as “systems of thoughts composed of ideas, attitudes, courses of actions, beliefs and practices that systematically construct the subjects and the worlds of which they speak” (p. 285). The research in this thesis will focus in particular on the attitudes towards R2P, which shape the meaning of the concept. The focus will especially be on the shift in attitudes after the usage of R2P in Libya. Therefore, the definition of discourse composed by Lessa is the definition that will be applied in this thesis.

The definition of critical discourse analysis is, as is the case with discourse, also widely varied. Wodak & Meyer (2009), for example, state there are multiple dimensions to critical discourse analysis. They argue critical discourse analysis has ‘an interest in the properties of ‘naturally occurring’ language use by real language users’ (Wodak & Meyer, 2009, p. 2). They continue by arguing critical discourse analysis investigates the role of contexts of language use. Those contexts can be determined by social, cultural, situative and cognitive backgrounds (Wodak & Meyer, 2009). Huckin (1998) argues critical discourse analysis is mainly concerned with “the close analysis of written or oral texts that are deemed to be politically or culturally influential to a given society. But the text-analytic activity cannot be done in isolation” (p. 88). This means the analyst has to be aware of the larger context in which a text is situated. The meaning of a text, therefore, does not solely depend on the words-on-the-page, as argued by Huckin, but also on the particular social context in which those words are used (1998, p. 89). The contexts of the Libyan and Syrian conflicts are thus likely to influence the perception of R2P.

The goal of critical discourse analysis is not to describe texts in exhaustive detail, instead the goal is to point out elements of texts which are most interesting and can be critically assessed (Huckin, 1998). Van Dijk (2008) also worked on the topic of critical discourse analysis. He argues “critical discourse analysis (CDA) is a type of discourse analytical research that primarily studies the way social power abuse, dominance, and inequality are enacted, reproduced, and resisted by text and talk in the social and political context” (Van Dijk, 2008,

p. 352). It is expected Russia uses its veto power to ensure their preferences are respected, which can signal a potential power abuse and demonstration of dominance by Russia. The definition of critical discourse analysis composed by Van Dijk will be utilised in this thesis since this definition deals with the political aspect of a discourse. Therefore, this is most applicable to the concept of R2P, which is a highly politicised issue.

The method of critical discourse analysis will be applied in this thesis because this form of conducting research is most applicable to investigate shifting norm perceptions. The analysis will be focused on how language shapes the meaning of R2P and how different actors play a role in this. The data which will be analysed in this thesis will consist of two Russian speeches which were given in UNSC meetings dealing with the issue of R2P. The speeches have been selected after thoroughly analysing all UNSC speeches dedicated to R2P. These two speeches have been chosen to analyse for they best reflect the shifting Russian discourse on R2P. The speeches have been slightly shortened due to limited space, the full speeches can be found in appendix A and appendix B. All texts are in English, allowing for a direct analysis without the need of translation. The focus in the analysis will be on the debates taking place around R2P in the Libyan case as well as in the Syrian case. The UNSC has been chosen as a unit of analysis because decisions concerning the application of R2P can only be made in the UNSC. The focus of the critical discourse analysis will be on the power relations and the potential inequality in this relationship between the different actors. It will be investigated how these potential inequalities are reflected in the UNSC meetings. Special attention will be paid to the importance of sovereignty because the perception of sovereignty ultimately determines whether or not R2P will be applied. If sovereignty is prioritised over a humanitarian intervention, then the application of R2P is likely not to be supported by that actor. Moreover, it will be investigated whether sovereignty is perceived as more important in the Libyan case than in the Syrian case and if so, then it will be investigated why this is the case. It will mainly be investigated how Russia perceives R2P and what arguments they bring forward in voicing their opinion of R2P. Russia has been chosen because it is a key player in international politics since it is a permanent member of the Security Council. Moreover, Russia is an important actor in the R2P debate because it holds a veto power in the UNSC, allowing Russia to be an actor capable of significantly influencing the discourse on R2P. Russia is a main driver of critical thought on R2P and their influence is already visible since their critical approach to R2P is starting to be shared among other states. It is expected Russia's criticism of R2P has caused the value of R2P

to decrease after Libya, which has led to a discursive shift of the concept. It will thus be analysed what role Russia played in R2P discussions concerning Libya and Syria.

The timeframe for the thesis will be the period between 2011 until 2017. This period begins in 2011 because this is the year in which the Arab Spring started, which eventually led to the crises in Libya and Syria. Moreover, 2011 was the year in which debates around the potential usage of R2P in Libya started and this year will thus function well as a start of point in order to analyse the shifting discourse on R2P.

In order to conduct successful analysis, it is important to indicate the variables being analysed in this thesis. The dependent variable is the concept of R2P, this variable depends on the independent variable of sovereignty. In analysing these variables, it will be investigated what role Russia fulfils in upholding the principle of sovereignty. The analysis will firstly focus on the Libyan case and the debates around R2P in this case. The role of Russia in this debate will be compared to their role in the R2P debate concerning Syria. The research conducted in this thesis will be approached inductively because this approach to critical discourse analysis is more reliable and unbiased than a deductive approach (Tenorio, 2011, p. 189).

In doing a critical discourse analysis, it is important to be aware of potential obstacles. Tenorio (2011) for example argues one main obstacle in doing a critical discourse analysis is the various definitions of the concept of discourse (p. 184). This obstacle has been overcome by the decision to use the definition of discourse composed by Lessa (2006). Some would argue being critical implies one must be judgemental (Tenorio, 2011, p. 187). However, Critical discourse analysis is not an absolute or objective methodology. It is a methodology which allows the analyst to interpret data. Therefore, subjectivity is inevitable. It is thus crucial to strictly adhere to the steps of this methodology and to be transparent about the interpretations, allowing the reader to understand how certain interpretations were established. Another point of critique Tenorio (2011) brings forward is the approaches to critical discourse analysis “differ according to theoretical foundations or methodology” (Tenorio, 2011, p. 189). This is partially overcome by clearly defining the definition of critical discourse analysis being applied in this thesis and by composing a sound methodology with clear characteristics.

The research done in the thesis will, thus, be approached by the usage of critical discourse analysis. This will be done to investigate the evolving discourse on R2P. The analysis will focus

on UNSC meetings and special attention will be given to Russia. The discourse on R2P will be researched by focusing on the importance given to the principle of sovereignty. The ultimate goal of the thesis is to identify whether there is a shift visible in the discourse on R2P after Libya.

3.2 Conducting a critical discourse analysis

In order to conduct a critical discourse analysis, it is important to clarify the manner through which this can be done. Moreover, this will allow the research to be transparent. The analysis will be guided by the work of Huckin (1998), who has created a guideline on the application of critical discourse analysis. The first step in conducting a CDA is to place the text which will be analysed into the context in which it is situated. Moreover, Huckin (1998) argues it is important to recognise the text belongs to a certain genre. A genre is usually associated with a characteristic set of formal features, the kind of genre of a text will, therefore, influence the manner in which a text is written. Huckin (1998) explains “this genre-orientation often allows the analyst to see why certain kinds of statements appear in the text and how they might serve the purposes of the text-producer, as encoded in that genre” (p. 82). Because genres are often accompanied by certain formal features, one can expect certain kinds of information to be present in the text. If that information is not present in the text, then the analyst has to be aware of why this information is lacking, according to Huckin (1998). Therefore, identifying the genre of a text can help the analyst to be aware of what was potentially left out of the text (Huckin, 1998, p. 82).

Another aspect which will be closely analysed is the manner in which the text is framed. Huckin (1998) explains framing refers to the presentation of content in a text (p. 82). A text consists of details, combined in a certain manner so a unified whole emerges (Idem.). Hence, critical analysis is dependent on the analyst identifying how a text is framed. Closely related to framing is foregrounding, which refers to those parts of the text emphasised by the writer, achieving textual prominence for some parts while de-emphasising others (Idem.). Special attention will thus be paid to the emphasis in the texts, particularly in respect of whether sovereignty is foregrounded and R2P de-emphasised. Attention also needs to be paid to backgrounding, whereby the writer purposely leaves information out of the text. This is, analytically-speaking,

more problematic for, “if the writer does not mention something, it often does not even enter the reader's mind and thus is not subjected to his or her scrutiny” (Huckin 1998: p. 82).

Writers can also manipulate a text through presupposition. Presupposition refers to language which can create the idea that statements and ideas can be taken for granted. The usage of presupposition causes the reader to believe there are no alternatives to the information presented in a text (Idem.). It will be analysed whether this is the case for R2P and sovereignty. Proponents of one concept, or another, are likely to present their preference as if the other concept is not valuable, making it seem like there is no alternative to their preference.

It will be clarified whether or not the abovementioned aspects are present in the speeches and if so, to what extent. This will allow the analyst to identify the ways in which the concept of R2P is presented and how sovereignty is perceived. Russia's position on sovereignty is shaped by various factors. One factor which shaped Putin's mind-set was the Kosovo crisis, during which the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) launched a military intervention regardless of Russia's strong objections. The crisis led to the crystallisation of Russia's position on humanitarian intervention and on the consequences an intervention has on sovereignty (David, 2015). Moreover, Putin's disregard of intervention by the international community has to do with the nature of a quasi-democratic regime, which according to Baev (2011) causes an obsession with sovereignty. He argues political leaders of a quasi-democratic regime know that at a certain point they have to protect their supremacy with violent repression, regardless of the opinion of the West (Baev, 2011). Lastly, Russia perceives the global system as multipolar and, therefore, regards politics as an ever enduring struggle for influence. Hence, Russia “sees state sovereignty as the cornerstone of the international system and attempts to undermine it as disruptive of global order. The responsibility of the state extends to its duty of maintaining internal order and stability” (Kurowska, 2014, p. 495). Russia thus fears infringing on a states' internal affairs will lead to chaos and should be avoided. It will be analysed how this perception of sovereignty influences the manner in which Russia perceives R2P. The ultimate aim of the critical discourse analysis is to identify the evolution of the R2P discourse. The speeches will now be analysed.

Chapter 4. Textual analysis of the Russian speeches

4.1 Analysis of the speech by Vitaly Churkin on Libya, UNSC meeting 6498

The ultimate aim of analysing this speech is to identify the Russian discourse on R2P during the Libyan conflict. This will be done to later analyse whether there is a discursive shift of R2P after Libya. The speech which will now be analysed was given on the 6498th UNSC meeting, on March 17th, 2011 (United Nations, 2011a). The topic of the meeting in which this speech was given is the situation in Libya. The full speech can be found in appendix A.

Mr. Churkin starts his speech by stating “the Russian Federation abstained in the voting on the draft resolution on Libya on the basis of a number of considerations of principle” (United Nations, 2011a). He elaborates on those considerations by explaining the Russian position “regarding the clear unacceptability of the use of force against the civilian population of Libya remains unchanged. Any attacks against civilians and other violations of international humanitarian law and human rights must immediately and unconditionally cease” (United Nations, 2011a). This statement by Mr. Churkin summarises their perception of Resolution 1973. It is made clear Russia has some ‘considerations’ about the draft resolution. These considerations have to do with the value Russia prescribes to sovereignty, which in their opinion should not be infringed upon. Therefore, Russia upholds the principle of non-intervention. However, they do acknowledge the importance of action in order to protect the Libyan people. Mr. Churkin argues human right violations must immediately and unconditionally cease but refrains from mentioning the manner through which this can be obtained. This, potentially, has to do with the multiple possible scenarios through which protection can be obtained, from which intervention under the R2P banner is just one. However, the fact that Russia abstained from voting on Resolution 1973 clearly demonstrates the Russian reluctance to intervene under the R2P banner, the opening statement emphasises this reluctance.

Huckin (1997) argues the type of genre of a text influences the manner in which a text is written. The genre of this text is ‘public speech’, which typically has a top-down structure of presenting information, with the most important information presented first. Mr. Churkin starts his speech by stating the main reason for Russia to abstain from voting is because of the unacceptability

of the use of force against the civilians in Libya. The negative start of the speech causes the speech to be framed in a negative manner. Mr. Churkin continues by arguing:

Given this situation, the League of Arab States turned to the Security Council with a request that it take immediate measures to ensure the protection of the civilian population in Libya, including the establishment of a no-fly zone in Libyan airspace. We gave that request our full attention. We participated actively in the discussions on the draft resolution. Unfortunately, work on that document was not in keeping with standard practice in the Security Council. In essence, a whole range of questions raised by Russia and other members of the Council remained unanswered. Those questions were concrete and legitimate and touched on how the no-fly zone would be enforced, what the rules of engagement would be and what limits on the use of force there would be (idem.)

Mr. Churkin states the work in resolution 1970 ‘was not in keeping with standard practice’, this refers to their disregard of an international military intervention under the R2P banner. Moreover, the quote serves to frame resolution 1970 as a deviation from standard UN practice. Therefore, Russia is framed as being an actor adhering to international law, whereas others do not. The last sentence of the abovementioned quote by Mr. Churkin again highlights their scepticism of a military intervention without clear limitations. The statement emphasises the importance of regulating an intervention. This is a result of the coalition overstepping the original mandate. Russia argues the current draft resolution does not guarantee that the resolution will not be overstepped again.

Mr. Churkin uses foregrounding to present an intervention as a potentially dangerous tool which should be approached with reluctance, this is done through the continuous emphasis of the potential danger of a military intervention. Moreover, Mr. Churkin is critical of the manner in which the draft of the League of Arab states came into existence, he argues “the draft was morphing before our very eyes, transcending the initial concept as stated by the League of Arab States. Provisions were introduced into the text that could potentially open the door to large-scale military intervention” (idem.). Again this statement highlights the importance of having clear rules of engagement. Russia is not only critical of resolution 1970, but continues to criticise the behaviour of other member states regarding the creation of Resolution 1970. The general tone of the statement is that they feel incapable of imposing regulations on a potential intervention, something they argue does not only apply to Russia. They argue the resolution

transcended “the initial concept as stated by the League of Arab States” (idem.). Thereby, they frame the resolution, and R2P, as something which is imposed on countries without taking into consideration that there are more countries sceptical of international interventions in its current form. The statement is a clear call on the international community to open up a broader discussion on the boundaries of international interventions.

Framing is used in the first part of the speech, which is critical of an intervention without clear regulations. This causes the speech to be framed in a critical manner. Mr. Churkin uses presupposition to frame a R2P intervention without clear boundaries as something that could have a destabilising effect on the region. Therefore, Russia calls upon the international community to expand its perception of R2P into one that includes the non-western perception of the concept. This call on the international community is strengthened by the critical statements Mr. Churkin makes in relation to the negotiations on the draft. He states that “statements were heard claiming an absence of any such intentions” (idem.). Russia remains critical of the lack of limitations on the usage of force. Mr. Churkin argues:

I underscore yet again that we are consistent and firm advocates of the protection of the civilian population. Guided by this basic principle as well as by the common humanitarian values that we share with both the sponsors and other Council members, Russia did not prevent the adoption of this resolution (idem.).

The statement emphasises Russia is a firm advocate of the protection of the civilian population, allowing Mr. Churkin to frame Russia as a constructive partner willing to work with the international community. This is in line with the earlier made remarks which establish Russia is adhering to international law. These statements serve to justify Russia’s behaviour concerning R2P and simultaneously criticise the international community of not taking into consideration that there are different ideas about a potential intervention. Instead, Russia proposes a solution for the Libyan conflict which does not involve force. Mr. Churkin explains they “remain convinced that the quickest way to ensure robust security for the civilian population and the long-term stabilization of the situation in Libya is an immediate ceasefire” (idem.). Mr. Churkin frames this solution as one shared by others as he argues:

This, specifically, was the aim of our draft resolution submitted to the Security Council on 16 March, which backed relevant efforts by the Special Envoy of the Secretary-General, the

Human Rights Council and the African Union and underscored the need for a peaceful settlement of the situation in Libya. The Russian delegation repeatedly proposed the adoption of such a resolution without any delay, with a view to saving numerous human lives. We enjoyed the support of a number of Council members, and we are grateful to them (idem.).

In this statement Mr. Churkin continues to frame Russia as being supported in its efforts to adjust the proposed intervention. He argues their draft resolution backed relevant efforts of other international actors. The quote again allows Russia to frame itself as a constructive partner which is willing to cooperate with other parties. Moreover, Mr. Churkin argues Russia enjoyed the support of a number of Council members, which further emphasises the idea that Russia is backed by other countries in their criticism. Russia persistently voices its criticism on the manner in which resolution 1973 came into existence. This statement is thus no exception. Even though Russia is backed by other actors, it still feels it faces opposition from other council members. Mr. Churkin argues:

The passion of some Council members for methods involving force prevailed. This is most unfortunate and regrettable. Responsibility for the inevitable humanitarian consequences of the excessive use of outside force in Libya will fall fair and square on the shoulders of those who might undertake such action. If this comes to pass, then not only the civilian population of Libya but also the cause of upholding peace and security throughout the entire region of North Africa and the Middle East will suffer. Such destabilizing developments must be avoided (idem.)

Russia continues to voice their disregard of methods involving force, like they did in the majority of the speech. They believe that the military aspect of R2P infringes on the sovereignty of Libya and should, therefore, be refrained from. The last paragraph of the speech serves to underline the danger of methods involving force. Russia deems the passion of members for methods that involve force as 'unfortunate' and 'regrettable', this reinforces the earlier made remarks on the lack of Russian involvement in the creation of resolution 1970. The final statement serves as a warning of infringement of the principle of sovereignty and simultaneously functions as justification of their emphasis on sovereignty. Ultimately this has to do with Russia perceiving the global system as multipolar. Therefore, they believe politics is an ever enduring struggle for influence causing Russia to perceive state sovereignty as the cornerstone of the global system. They believe infringing on sovereignty can lead to global

instability. Hence, Russia believes 'such destabilizing developments must be avoided' in the Libyan case.

The speech contained two manners of presupposition. The first manner in which presupposition was used was to reinforce Russia is willing to work on a better situation in Libya. One example of this is the statement in which Mr. Churkin says the following: 'I underscore yet again that we are consistent and firm advocates of the protection of the civilian population'. This statement reinforces the audience Russia is willing to work together to aid Libya. Another manner through which presupposition was used was to present a military intervention as something that is factually dangerous in its proposed form. The manner in which this speech is framed presupposes that a military intervention without clear rules of engagement will have negative consequences. Especially the last sentence of the speech helps to create a negative image of military intervention without clear limits, it is stated it will lead to 'destabilizing developments'. This sentence creates the image that it can be taken for granted that a military intervention under the R2P banner will lead to destabilisation. The proposed form of intervention can easily be overstepped precisely because of this lack of regulation, Russia argues. Even though Russia voted in favour for resolution 1970, the majority of the speech emphasises the importance of sovereignty and exposes the lack of regulation on a potential intervention, which can potentially lead to parties overstepping the mandate.

The Russian approach to R2P seems to reflect the general discourse on R2P at the time of the speech because there were more countries who shared the Russian scepticism of a military intervention under the R2P banner. This is best reflected by focusing on resolution 1973, for which resolution 1970 paved the way. The resolution was accepted but the voting behaviour showed a clear reflection of the different sentiments about the resolution. Brazil abstained in the vote together with China, Russia, Germany and India, this comes down to one third of the total amount of votes. The abstention of the BRIC countries showed a moderate support of resolution 1973, but it simultaneously signalled the criticism on the lack of clear regulations of a potential R2P intervention. The resolution was thus received with moderate support, which signals R2P was seen as a concept capable of helping the Libyan situation. However, there were many who were reluctant about a military intervention in its proposed form.

Analysing the speech by Mr. Churkin shed light on the discourse of R2P in the Libyan context. Even though R2P was applied in Libya, there was already a big trust issue concerning the

limitations of a potential military intervention under the R2P banner. The overall discourse of R2P was positive, as most UNSC members perceived it as a solution to the Libyan case. However, there was a strong sense among different UN members that a potential military intervention should be more regulated. The discourse on R2P during the Libya crisis has now been established. This will allow for a later comparison to identify to what extent there has been a discursive shift of R2P after Libya. The discourse on R2P will now be analysed in the Syrian context.

4.2 Analysis of the speech by Vitaly Churkin on Syria, UNSC meeting 6627

The analysis will again focus on the importance of sovereignty. Moreover, it will be analysed how R2P is perceived by Russia in the Syrian case, with the ultimate aim to identify whether the discourse on R2P has shifted in relation to the discourse on R2P in Libya. This speech was given on the 6627th UNSC meeting, on Tuesday, 4 October 2011 (United Nations, 2011b). The topic of the meeting is the situation in the Middle East. The full speech can be found in appendix B. Mr. Churkin starts his speech by arguing the following:

Of vital importance is the fact that at the heart of the Russian and Chinese draft was the logic of respect for the national sovereignty and territorial integrity of Syria as well as the principle of non-intervention, including military, in its affairs (United Nations, 2011b).

Mr. Churkin commences by presenting the resolution which has been made in cooperation with China and clearly illustrates Russia's relation to sovereignty. Mr. Churkin stresses the importance of the principle of non-intervention, which is of vital importance to Russia's perception of the global order. They believe in a multipolar world in which there is an enduring struggle for influence. Therefore, Russia believes that infringement on sovereignty will be disruptive of the global order. Of importance here is that Russia has a Westphalian perception of sovereignty in which sovereignty is perceived as an absolute and exclusive right to the state without external interference (Abbas, 2012). In making his argument, Churkin highlights the military aspect of R2P. The rationale for this statement can be traced back to the application of R2P in Libya. Russia felt Resolution 1973 was overstepped because it led to a military intervention without clear regulations. With the first statement Russia distances itself from a potential military intervention in Syria.

The genre of the text is, as was the case in the first text, ‘public speech’, which typically start with the most important information. In this speech, Mr. Churkin starts by stating Russia respects national sovereignty and adheres to the principle of non-intervention. With this opening statement, Russia distances itself from the third pillar of R2P, which allows the usage of force as a last resort. They believe this pillar infringes on the principle of non-intervention. Russia perceives sovereignty as described in the UN charter. Article 2, paragraph 7 of the charter prescribes that nothing in the charter will lead to the authorisation of an intervention in matters which are within the domestic jurisdiction of a state (United Nations, n/d). Article two of the UN charter is a source often referred to in explaining their reluctant attitude towards intervention. By referring to the UN, Russia positions itself as a state which adheres to international principles.

Based on this respect of sovereignty, Mr. Churkin presents the Russian draft resolution as a sound alternative. He does not start with explaining why Russia rejected the draft resolution submitted by France, Germany, Portugal and the United Kingdom, which condemned the systematic human rights violations in Syria. Instead, Mr. Churkin uses framing so to emphasis the Russian efforts concerning Syria. It is thus clear Mr. Churkin prioritises presenting the Russian draft over discussing the draft composed by the four European countries. The framing succeeds in drawing the attention away from the rejection of the draft and enables Mr. Churkin to position Russia as an actor willing to cooperate. Foregrounding the Russian draft functions to oppose critique on Russia. Some states felt Russia maintained an obstructive and unhelpful approach to the Syrian crisis. The foregrounding helps to position Russia as an active actor, which is concerned with the situation in Syria. Mr. Churkin continues by arguing that:

Today’s rejected draft was based on a very different philosophy — the philosophy of confrontation. We cannot agree with this unilateral, accusatory bent against Damascus. . . . Our proposals for wording on the non-acceptability of foreign military intervention were not taken into account, and, based on the well-known events in North Africa, that can only put us on our guard. Equally alarming is the weak wording in connection with the opposition and the lack of an appeal to them to distance themselves from extremists. Given the basis of statements by some Western politicians on President Al-Assad’s loss of legitimacy, such an approach could trigger a full-fledged conflict in Syria and destabilisation in the region as a whole. The collapse

of Syria as a result of a civil war would have a very destructive impact on the situation in the entire Middle East (United Nations, 2011b).

This part of the speech is dedicated to criticising the situation in Libya, which serves as a source of reluctance to a military intervention in Syria. As shown in the analysis of the first Russian speech, Russia has been very critical of the implementation of Resolution 1973 because of the usage of military force against non-military targets in Libya. Russia has expressed its disregard of the lack of clear limitations of the usage of force in the resolution on multiple occasions. Moreover, Mr. Churkin argues the West presupposes Assad has lost its legitimacy. He frames this perception as one that could trigger conflict in Syria, allowing him to position the West as an entity which is worsening the Syrian situation. Simultaneously, Mr. Churkin uses framing to position Russia as being at the other end of the spectrum, allowing him to create the idea that Russia is helpful in de-escalating the Syrian conflict. This idea is strengthened by the usage of presupposition, which Mr. Churkin uses to link Assad's so-called loss of legitimacy to a full-fledged civil war. This again has to do with Russia perceiving sovereignty as defined in the UN charter. This definition of sovereignty links the loss of legitimacy of a government to destabilising consequences for the country. Mr. Churkin continues by further criticising the international community, he states "the situation in Syria cannot be considered in the Council separately from the Libyan experience" (United Nations, 2011b). Mr. Churkin refers to the Libyan situation because they believe the international community has made crucial mistakes in its involvement in Libya. Therefore, Mr. Churkin argues "the international community is alarmed by statements that compliance with Security Council resolutions on Libya in the NATO interpretation is a model for the future actions of NATO in implementing the responsibility to protect" (idem.). Reference is made to the international community to frame the Russian perspective as one shared by other states.

Russia distances itself from the Libyan intervention by arguing "it is easy to see that today's "Unified Protector" model could happen in Syria" (idem.). This quote links the Libyan case to the Syrian case. Russia hopes the future implementation of R2P will not be based on the Libyan framework. Mr. Churkin refers to the 'Unified Protector' model, which is a code name for Resolution 1970 and 1973. Russia is known to be critical of especially Resolution 1973. They are especially critical of the lack of regulations of the usage of force, which in their eyes provided the international community with an incentive to impose regime change in Libya. As a response to this critique, Russia has advocated for the RWP, which is aimed to set clear criteria

on a potential UNSC mandate for the usage of military force. The RWP signals a reconceptualization of the R2P concept. This concept arose in the Libyan aftermath, about which Mr. Churkin says the following:

The people of Libya have spoken regarding Al-Qadhafi, and they have determined his fate. For us, Members of the United Nations, including in terms of a precedent, it is very important to know how the resolution was implemented and how a Security Council resolution turned into its opposite. The demand for a quick ceasefire turned into a full-fledged civil war. . . . The situation in connection with the no-fly zone has morphed into the bombing of oil refineries, television stations and other civilian sites. The arms embargo has morphed into a naval blockade in western Libya, including a blockade of humanitarian goods. Today the tragedy of Benghazi has spread to other western Libyan towns — Sirte and Bani Walid. These types of models should be excluded from global practices once and for all (idem.).

With the abovementioned quote Russia continues to criticise the manner through which R2P was applied in Libya. They argue the international community had overstepped the mandate. This is especially important because Russia has on multiple occasions asked for a guarantee that there would be clear limitations on the usage of military force in Libya, as was visible in the Russian speech on Libya. Russia thus feels ignored and betrayed by the international community, which created a distrust in the ability of the West to cope with the humanitarian intervention task in Syria. By placing R2P in the Libyan context, Mr. Churkin is able to frame R2P as a harmful concept. Moreover, referring to Libya as the ‘tragedy of Benghazi’ emphasises this negative framing of R2P.

The following statement clarifies Russia’s stance on Syria, Mr. Churkin states: “with respect to Syria, we are not advocates of the Al-Assad regime. We believe that the violence is unacceptable, and we condemn the repression of protests by peaceful demonstrators” (idem.). With this statement Russia distances itself from the atrocities committed by Assad. However, Mr. Churkin is quick to argue Assad is not the sole perpetrator of atrocities in Syria. He argues “the continuation of this tragedy cannot be blamed only on the harsh actions of the authorities. Recent events convincingly show that the radical opposition no longer hides its extremist bent and is relying on terrorist tactics” (idem.). Moreover, he argues the opposition is “taking over land, and killing and perpetrating atrocities against people who comply with the law enforcement authorities” (idem.). Mr. Churkin is eager to point to this ‘radical opposition’

because they believe Assad is the sole authority in Syria. By referring to other aggressors, Russia is able to project Assad as the only legitimate leader of the country and thereby justifies refraining from regime change. Mr. Churkin places the Syrian mass atrocities in the context of the conflict between rebel forces and Assad. He foregrounds the danger of the rebels while backgrounding the role of Assad, enabling him to frame the rebels as a main source of evil, whilst simultaneously allowing Russia to maintain its support for Assad. Mr. Churkin presents the following solution for the Syrian conflict:

We must bear in mind the fact that a significant number of Syrians do not agree with the demand for a quick regime change. . . . The best way to end the crisis is to refuse to provoke a confrontation and to bring together all responsible members of the international community so as to induce the parties to launch an inclusive intra-Syrian political process. . . . A more active dialogue must be undertaken with the opposition and access must be given to the international media, as well as step up their interaction with the League of Arab States. . . . We are continuing to work with constructive patriotic groups of the Syrian opposition who are concerned about the fate of their country and who have said that they want no foreign interference in their internal affairs (idem.)

Russia argues why they oppose a quick regime change and states that this is in line with the preference of the Syrian people. By including the preference of the Syrian people, Russia is able to presuppose that they respect their will. Thereby, they frame their draft as one which is desirable. Moreover, Mr. Churkin states Russia refuses to provoke a confrontation, allowing him to frame the proposed resolution as one provoking confrontation. This way, Mr. Churkin can frame the Russian draft resolution as a good alternative. Again, Russia emphasises the importance of an active dialogue as the only solution to the conflict. The last sentence of the statement clarifies Russia's disregard of an international intervention in Syria.

Foregrounding is used in the speech to emphasise the potential of the Russian resolution. The focus is directed to this resolution, which is presented as the only solution. Moreover, foregrounding is used to highlight the positive consequences of supporting Assad. This backgroundes the atrocities which have been committed by the regime. The manner in which this speech is framed presupposes the draft resolution by the European countries should be disregarded and that the only solution for the Syrian conflict can be obtained by the Russian

resolution. Moreover, the speech presupposes the Assad regime is the only legitimate authority in Syria and a solution can, therefore, only be found by supporting this regime.

Mr. Churkin frames the Russian draft resolution as the only solution by arguing that Russia believes “that today’s message will be correctly understood by the opposition forces. There is no alternative to dialogue; there cannot be” (idem.). This statement presupposes there is no alternative to the Russian solution. Mr. Churkin argues Russia is willing to cooperate with the international community as he argues that:

Our draft remains on the table. On that basis, we are prepared to develop a genuinely collective and constructive position for the international community and not get involved with legitimizing previously adopted unilateral sanctions or attempts at violent regime change. The people of Syria deserve peaceful change, with the support of the international community (idem.).

By foregrounding Russia’s willingness to create a collective position, Mr. Churkin frames Russia as a cooperative actor. The draft proposed by Russia is one refraining from a military intervention in Syria. By foregrounding the military aspect of R2P, Russia frames R2P as a potentially harmful concept. This focus on the third pillar backgrounds the first two pillars of R2P, which do not involve military power. This ultimately has to do with the Russian understanding of sovereignty, which is embedded in the UN charter. As aforementioned, this understanding of sovereignty upholds the principle of non-intervention, a principle Russia deems as essential for global order.

Overall, Mr. Churkin clarifies Russia does not want another Libya, from which Russia clearly distances itself. Russia continuously voices its concerns over the consequences of a potential military intervention in Syria. The approach taken by Russia opposes the approach taken by the European countries, there is thus a clear division visible within the UNSC. Moreover, the speech illustrates a shift in the discourse on R2P. Mr. Churkin uses stronger language to voice the Russian disregard of an international intervention under the R2P banner. The principle of non-intervention prevails over R2P in this speech since Russia argues it prioritises respecting national sovereignty over a potential military intervention in Syria under a R2P banner. The discursive shift in the R2P perception by Russia is shared by other member states in the UNSC. Almost half of the members present in the UNSC meeting in which the Russian speech was

given, did not vote in favour of the draft resolution which was drafted by France, Germany, Portugal and the United Kingdom. The draft resolution was eventually rejected because Russia and China used their veto powers. The speech signals a discursive shift of R2P, which has shifted from one that was critical yet accepting of the concept, to one that is solely negative. Especially the third pillar, which refers to a potential military intervention, seems to have lost its credibility in the Syrian context.

Analysing the speech by Mr. Churkin demonstrated there has been a growing reluctance to operate under the R2P banner. Whereas Russia was critical of the lack of limitations on the use of force in Libya, it did not veto the R2P application in Libya. The new discourse on R2P is one which emphasises non-intervention and this causes the perception of R2P to be a negative one. The shift towards a discourse in which the Westphalian understanding of sovereignty prevails over R2P, which was already slightly visible in Libya, has been completed in R2P discussions relating to Syria.

Chapter 5. Conclusion

The discourse on R2P has been scrutinised to investigate whether there has been a discursive shift after the Libyan conflict. This has been done by first establishing the discourse on R2P in Libya, which was relatively positive. However, Russia shaped the discourse into one critical of especially the third pillar of R2P. Analysing the Russian speech on the Libyan situation demonstrated Russia persistently criticized the lack of clear limitations on the usage of force in the R2P resolution. Mr. Churkin highlighted on multiple occasions that a military intervention without clear rules of engagement would lead to negative consequences in Libya, allowing him to frame R2P as a potential harmful concept. Mr. Churkin was able to frame R2P in such a manner that it encouraged other states to share their reluctance to act on pillar three of R2P. However, the fact that Russia abstained from voting on Resolution 1973 instead of vetoing it, shows Russia was moderately accepting of the proposed form of R2P in Libya.

The discourse on R2P in the Syrian conflict was different, it was more negative especially of the military aspect of R2P. From the opening sentence of Mr. Churkin onwards, Russia distanced itself from a potential military intervention in Syria. As the Russian speeches showed, this ultimately has to do with the international coalition overstepping the mandate in Libya. Mr. Churkin shaped the discourse into one in which it was established that military intervention without the authorisation of the Assad regime will not be applied in Syria. This has been achieved by Mr. Churkin by persistently linking R2P to destabilising consequences for the region. As a response, Russia advocated for the RWP, which is aimed to create a clear set of criteria which have to be taken into account before the UNSC can authorise the use of military force. Russia is backed by other states in its effort to promote this concept. The concept signals a growing division within the UNSC concerning the practical implications of R2P. The creation of the RWP demonstrates a discursive shift of R2P, for it reconceptualises the current perception of R2P. Thus, it is clear there has been a discursive shift of R2P after Libya. The discourse shifted from a critical one yet accepting, to one in which the concept is reconceptualised, this especially relates to the third pillar of R2P which is under particular pressure.

The discourse on R2P is highly influenced by the manner in which it has been applied in Libya. As was revealed, the general consensus is that the mandate has been overstepped in Libya. This

created a decreasing level of trust within the UNSC. The Libyan case has thus negatively influenced the discourse on R2P. This becomes evident by focusing on the Russian speech on R2P in Syria, in which frequent reference is made to Libya. The main critique relates to third pillar of R2P, which allows the usage of force as a last resort. Some states perceive this pillar as a potential tool for powerful states to facilitate forced regime change. This has created an overall reluctance by mainly non-Western states to operate under the R2P banner in its current form. Therefore, it can be concluded that the R2P norm in its current form is in decline. Serious adjustments have to be realised in order for the concept to remain relevant in future mass atrocities.

The analysis has shown Russia has contributed to this discursive shift through the continuous emphasis by Mr. Churkin on the destabilising consequences of a military intervention. This is achieved by presupposing a military intervention will lead to a destabilised Middle East. This negative image of R2P is reinforced by framing resolution 1970 as a deviation of standard practice, enabling Mr. Churkin to create the idea that R2P goes against the UN Charter. The constant emphasis on the dangers of R2P moreover creates a negative discourse of R2P. Analysing the speeches has shown Russia succeeds in establishing the idea that R2P is imposed on countries by western powers. This helps Russia to present their alternative to R2P as a sound option. Mr. Churkin continuously emphasises that their reluctance to apply the third pillar of R2P in practice is shared by other states. This allows Russia to present RWP as a collective effort, forcing the international community to revise the current understanding of R2P. Through the RWP concept, Russia is taking a clear stance. It is distancing itself from Western powers within the UNSC and is taking the lead in shaping the R2P concept into one in which military interventions are hampered.

In order for R2P to become a relevant norm in international politics, it has to be adapted to the growing reluctance in relation to the third pillar. The international community has to take the RWP concept serious by creating a clear set of criteria on potential military interventions. Only through a reconceptualization of R2P will the concept become relevant again. Otherwise it will lose its support from mainly non-Western states including China and Russia, who, with their veto power in the UNSC, are capable of paralysing the UNSC in relationship to R2P.

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Appendix A – Speech by Vitaly Churkin on Libya, UNSC meeting 6498

Mr. Churkin (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): The Russian Federation abstained in the voting on the draft resolution on Libya on the basis of a number of considerations of principle. Our position regarding the clear unacceptability of the use of force against the civilian population of Libya remains unchanged. Any attacks against civilians and other violations of international humanitarian law and human rights must immediately and unconditionally cease.

We base ourselves on the expectation that the relevant requirements contained in the unanimously adopted resolution 1970 (2011) must be rapidly and fully fulfilled by the Libyan authorities. This has not happened yet. Given this situation, the League of Arab States turned to the Security Council with a request that it take immediate measures to ensure the protection of the civilian population in Libya, including the establishment of a no-fly zone in Libyan

airspace. We gave that request our full attention. We participated actively in the discussions on the draft resolution. Unfortunately, work on that document was not in keeping with standard practice in the Security Council. In essence, a whole range of questions raised by Russia and other members of the Council remained unanswered. Those questions were concrete and legitimate and touched on how the no-fly zone would be enforced, what the rules of engagement would be and what limits on the use of force there would be.

Furthermore, the draft was morphing before our very eyes, transcending the initial concept as stated by the League of Arab States. Provisions were introduced into the text that could potentially open the door to large-scale military intervention.

During negotiations on the draft, statements were heard claiming an absence of any such intentions. We take note of these. I underscore yet again that we are consistent and firm advocates of the protection of the civilian population. Guided by this basic principle as well as by the common humanitarian values that we share with both the sponsors and other Council members, Russia did not prevent the adoption of this resolution. However, we remain convinced that the quickest way to ensure robust security for the civilian population and the long-term stabilization of the situation in Libya is an immediate ceasefire. This, specifically, was the aim of our draft resolution submitted to the Security Council on 16 March, which backed relevant efforts by the Special Envoy of the Secretary-General, the Human Rights Council and the African Union and underscored the need for a peaceful settlement of the situation in Libya.

The Russian delegation repeatedly proposed the adoption of such a resolution without any delay, with a view to saving numerous human lives. We enjoyed the support of a number of Council members, and we are grateful to them. However, the passion of some Council members for methods involving force prevailed. This is most unfortunate and regrettable.

Responsibility for the inevitable humanitarian consequences of the excessive use of outside force in Libya will fall fair and square on the shoulders of those who might undertake such action. If this comes to pass, then not only the civilian population of Libya but also the cause of upholding peace and security throughout the entire region of North Africa and the Middle East will suffer. Such destabilizing developments must be avoided.

Appendix B – Speech by Vitaly Churkin on Syria, UNSC meeting 6627

Mr. Churkin (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): Madam, I wish you success in your work as President of the Security Council for this month. We would also like to thank Ambassador Salam and the entire Lebanese delegation for their outstanding work in September, which was not easy.

It is clear that the result of today's vote reflects not so much a question of acceptability of wording as a conflict of political approaches. That is the only part of what was said by my French colleague with which I agree. From the outset, the Russian delegation undertook intensive, constructive efforts to develop an effective response on the part of the Council to the dramatic events in Syria. The first such response was reflected in a consensual statement issued by the President on 3 August (S/PRST/2011/16). Based on that approach, together with our Chinese partners we prepared a draft resolution to which, as events developed, we made some changes, bearing in mind the concerns of our colleagues on the Council. We would like to thank our partners, especially Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa — the BRICS States — for supporting our text.

Of vital importance is the fact that at the heart of the Russian and Chinese draft was the logic of respect for the national sovereignty and territorial integrity of Syria as well as the principle of non-intervention, including military, in its affairs; the principle of the unity of the Syrian people; refraining from confrontation; and inviting all to an even-handed and comprehensive dialogue aimed at achieving civil peace and national agreement by reforming the socioeconomic and political life of the country.

Today's rejected draft was based on a very different philosophy — the philosophy of confrontation. We cannot agree with this unilateral, accusatory bent against Damascus. We deem unacceptable the threat of an ultimatum and sanctions against the Syrian authorities. Such an approach contravenes the principle of a peaceful settlement of the crisis on the basis of a full Syrian national dialogue. Our proposals for wording on the non-acceptability of foreign military intervention were not taken into account, and, based on the well-known events in North Africa, that can only put us on our guard. Equally alarming is the weak wording in connection with the opposition and the lack of an appeal to them to distance themselves from extremists. Given the basis of statements by some Western politicians on President Al-Assad's loss of legitimacy, such an approach could trigger a full-fledged conflict in Syria and destabilization in the region as a whole. The collapse of Syria as a result of a civil war would have a very destructive impact on the situation in the entire Middle East.

The situation in Syria cannot be considered in the Council separately from the Libyan experience. The international community is alarmed by statements that compliance with Security Council resolutions on Libya in the NATO interpretation is a model for the future actions of NATO in implementing the responsibility to protect. It is easy to see that today's "Unified Protector" model could happen in Syria. All present should understand that the Russian position regarding the conflict in Libya is in no way based on any kind of special ties with the Al-Qadhafi regime, especially since a number of States represented at this table had warmer relations with the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya.

The people of Libya have spoken regarding Al-Qadhafi, and they have determined his fate. For us, Members of the United Nations, including in terms of a precedent, it is very important to know how the resolution was implemented and how a Security Council resolution turned into its opposite.

The demand for a quick ceasefire turned into a full-fledged civil war, the humanitarian, social, economic and military consequences of which transcend Libyan borders. The situation in connection with the no-fly zone has morphed into the bombing of oil refineries, television stations and other civilian sites. The arms embargo has morphed into a naval blockade in western Libya, including a blockade of humanitarian goods. Today the tragedy of Benghazi has spread to other western Libyan towns — Sirte and Bani Walid. These types of models should be excluded from global practices once and for all.

With respect to Syria, we are not advocates of the Al-Assad regime. We believe that the violence is unacceptable, and we condemn the repression of protests by peaceful demonstrators. However, the continuation of this tragedy cannot be blamed only on the harsh actions of the authorities. Recent events convincingly show that the radical opposition no longer hides its extremist bent and is relying on terrorist tactics, hoping for foreign sponsors and acting outside of the law. Armed groups supported by smuggling and other illegal activities are providing supplies, taking over land, and killing and perpetrating atrocities against people who comply with the law enforcement authorities.

In universities and schools, representatives of the Syrian intelligentsia and civil service have recently been casualties of the terrorists. We convey our condolences to Mufti Ahmad Hassoon, who is well known in the East for his active efforts to lay the foundations for tolerance and international dialogue, in connection with the death of his 22-year-old son in a terrorist attack on Sunday.

We must bear in mind the fact that a significant number of Syrians do not agree with the demand for a quick regime change and would rather see gradual changes, believing that

they have to be implemented while maintaining civil peace and harmony in the country. Such changes, even if they are late in coming, are still beginning to be implemented, and we must not overlook this. The best way to end the crisis is to refuse to provoke a confrontation and to bring together all responsible members of the international community so as to induce the parties to launch an inclusive intra-Syrian political process. This is the path taken in Yemen, where intensive mediation efforts are under way aimed at bringing together the belligerent parties.

Russia is continuing to work with Damascus. We call on the Syrian leadership to more speedily implement the changes. They need to free those who have been detained during the unrest and who have committed no criminal acts. A more active dialogue must be undertaken with the opposition and access must be given to the international media, as well as step up their interaction with the League of Arab States. Judging by what the Arab League has done and what is being shown on television, our efforts are bearing fruit. We are continuing to work with constructive patriotic groups of the Syrian opposition who are concerned about the fate of their country and who have said that they want no foreign interference in their internal affairs.

We believe that today's message will be correctly understood by the opposition forces. There is no alternative to dialogue; there cannot be. If the opposition believes that Mr. Al-Assad's laws are imperfect, then it must take up the invitation of the Government to discuss them. We will indicate our concerns to the leaders of the Syrian opposition when they visit Moscow in the near future. Changes for a peaceful resolution are possible, and we will be supporting those prospects in coordination with all constructively inclined peace partners.

If Council colleagues agree with our approach, which is aimed at dialogue and full national reconciliation in Syria, we will continue to work on the Russian-Chinese draft so as to arrive at a balanced resolution containing the vital elements for a settlement. Our draft remains on the table.

On that basis, we are prepared to develop a genuinely collective and constructive position for the international community and not get involved with legitimizing previously adopted unilateral sanctions or attempts at violent regime change. The people of Syria deserve peaceful change, with the support of the international community.