Silence in Syria

-A examination of the UN:s diplomacy in the Syrian civil war

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Abstract

By 2018 the war in Syria has been going on for seven years. The conflict has caused the death of hundreds of thousands and has forced more than 11 million Syrians to flee their homes. The responsibility for the huge humanitarian disaster rests on the perpetrators but who has the responsibility to protect? The resolution ’Responsibility to Protect’ [R2P] determines the responsibility to protect on to the international community and the United Nations [UN]. When looking at the large numbers of refugees, wounded and dead the question arises, why hasn't the UN succeed in its responsibility to protect the Syrian people?

This case study of the UN:s diplomatic mission and why it has failed to protect the Syrian people rests on the theoretical foundations of resolution R2P, two branches of diplomacy and further the inclusion of women in peacemaking processes. The inclusion of women in the decision-making peace processes are highly important to gain a holistic perspective and an enduring peace according to several available sources. Available data reveals, however, that the numbers of women included in the peace process in Syria are rather low and when women are included they are in a position of advocacy, not decision-making. The essay’s conclusion establishes the prospects for peace in Syria as quite low due to the poor preconditions. Further, the essay finds that the international community through the UN possesses the necessary framework, and bears the responsibility for the Syrian people due to the Syrian government's atrocities committed against its people. The UN:s diplomatic strategy are by the Secretary-General Special Envoys characterized by humanitarian diplomacy, but unfortunately, all attempts by the UN or any other actor to the time of writing have been without success.

Key Concepts:

United Nations, Syria, Responsibility to Protect, Diplomacy, Women, Human Rights
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1 Introduction

1.1 Introduction

“*The worst man-made disaster the world has seen since World War II.*”

This phrase by Prince Zeid bin Ra’ad, the High Commissioner of Human rights, described Syria in March 2017 (bin Ra’ad. 2017). After the atrocities the world witnessed during the Yugoslavian war and the genocide in Rwanda, the international community agreed to never “stand by and watch” another conflict unfold again. In 2017 the war in Syria has been ongoing for six years and have developed into a humanitarian disaster. The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees [UNHCR] provides data which states that over five million people originate from Syria are externally displaced by early 2017. More then 6,5 million Syrians have fled the war within Syria (UNHCR 2017). One of the factors contributing to the humanitarian disaster in Syria is the international communities indecision and lack of cooperation. The international community has failed to agree upon a common action plan, and therefore they have failed to protect the Syrian people. The war and crimes conducted in Yugoslavia and the genocide in Rwanda was the reason why the United Nations General Assembly [UNGA] in 2005 agreed on the R2P resolution. The UN wanted to be able to restrict and combat similar development like the one in the Balkans and Rwanda, and the R2P was supposed to give the UN the tools necessary for this task (UN. 2017). R2P determines the primary responsibility of recognizing the rights of civilians to the state they belong. Secondary the responsibility of protecting civilians is transited to the international community, executed by the UN, if the state the civilians belong to are incapable of protecting or actively carrying out the abuse of its people (UNGA. 2001).

Previous research on the subject has generally focused on the power balance between Russia and the US in the UN Security Council or on the indecisive international community as a result of the consequences of the 2011 intervention of Libya. However, this single case-study focus on how the diplomacy and mediation have unfolded in Syria. Further the question the world has been reflecting over- why has the UN not been able to stop one of the worst conflicts of our time?

The essay is carried out with theoretical and analytic tools consisting of three major themes. The base, human security, is used to understand the need for the analytic tool R2P. Then follows two branches of diplomacy, boiled down to the analytic tools humanitarian diplomacy and coercive diplomacy. The last aspect applied to the issue is
the analytic tool of female participation. To be able to verify the female participation against the question of the essay, it is narrowed down to a more applicable form: UN Security Council [UNSC] resolution 1325 “Women, Peace, and Security.” The focus within resolution 1325 is on the participation and inclusion of women in peace processes and negotiation.

1.2 Purpose and framing of question

1.2.1 Purpose

The purpose of the essay is to give a compound answer to why the negotiations and diplomacy conducted, by the UN, not yet have given the results of peace in Syria. Additional approaches and perspective are applied to the issue. Theoretical standpoints and analytical tools will provide a foundation and support for the analysis of the result. Both R2P and resolution 1325 contributes to the analytic frames. Additional perspectives are taken in the humanitarian and coercive branches of diplomacy. The three standpoints are narrowed down to be possible to verify the questions of the essay.

1.2.2 Framing of question

One central question has been established to fulfill the purpose of the essay. Additional questions have been created to give a compound picture of the issue and to deepened the understanding of the underlying preconditions. The central question of the essay:

- What has caused the UN:s diplomatic locking in the Syrian civil war?

Additional questions:

- How have the peace talks performed by the UN been designed in the first five years, 2011-2016, of the Syrian civil war?
- How do the preconditions for a diplomatic solution look like in Syria?
- How does women’s participation, if there is any, affect the peace talks in Syria?

The following chapter presents how the essay will be carried out methodologically. The design, as well as the choice of methodological approach and how it will be used throughout the essay, is discussed. Further, the demarcation of the essay will be presented, followed by the sources used for this essay, which will be discussed critically.
2 Research design and method

"Before knowing what to examine, I can’t know how to do it" (Fog. 1979. Referred in Holme, Solvang. 1997). The phrase does describe the process of choosing the right method for this essay. The process requires careful consideration to be able to select the methodology that will bring the most out of the essay's subject. To choose a qualitative, quantitative or a combination of both methods is one of the initial steps. A qualitative study will give a more profound picture of the subject. A quantitative research will show significant patterns of observation and maintain a distance to the issue of concern.

2.1 A qualitative single case-study

After taking the information above into consideration, the qualitative research method was chosen. The essay is a single case-study of how the UN and the international community has dealt with the Syrian conflict. A single case-study entails an intensive and profound analysis of one single case to properly examine a specific issue. In this case, the behavior of the UN is in focus, and the case that it will be examined upon is the Syrian conflict. Due to the wish to examine and understand in depth why the Syrian conflict remains unsolved as a result of the behavior and conducts by the UN (Bryman. 2016: 61). The research is of explanatory character and uses three theoretical and analytical tools in the attempt to explain what has caused the diplomatic locking in Syria (Esaiasson et al. 2017: 89). The research is theory consuming. Firstly the case, the Syrian war, was chosen. Secondarily the factors of explanation, R2P, two branches of diplomacy and resolution 1325 was selected (Esaiasson et al. 2017: 42-43).

2.2 Demarcation

2.2.1 Analytical and theoretical standpoints

The analytic and theoretical perspectives taken in this essay is an attempt to investigate and answer the question of how the UN through peaceful means have tried, and so far failed, to solve the conflict in Syria. A description of human security and humanitarian intervention and how it is used, provides a foundation to understand the use of the analytic tool R2P. The analytic tool R2P furthers the analysis by illuminating what kind of mandate and reasons the international community has to use diplomatic tools in the conflict in Syria. Additionally to R2P, the essay focuses on two branches of diplomacy:
humanitarian and coercive diplomacy. Both branches of diplomacy are selected with the anticipation that they will provide different perspectives to the analysis. It is two different kinds of diplomacy, with different goals and strategies to reach their specific goals. The last perspective and analytic tool applied to the case is female participation. Have the absence of women, if there is an absence, affected the outcome or lack of outcome, from the negotiations in Syria? To make it applicable, the essay discusses the mediation conducted within the frames of the conflict through resolution 1325 paragraphs, focusing with women's participation in conflict resolutions.

2.2.2 Timeframe

The choice to restrict the timeframe of the study to focus on the period from the start of the war in 2011 until 2016 has been taken by trying to maintain reliability in the sources used for this study. Since the war in Syria is still ongoing, it is challenging to determine which sources are confirmed and trustworthy.

2.2.3 Other perspectives

One factor that makes the Syrian conflict complex is that it could be argued to contain three separate wars in one.

1. A civil war between rebels and the Syrian regime.
2. A cold or ”proxy war” between the east (Russia and China) and the west (the US and some EU countries) taking place on Syrian territory (Mintz. 2016: 141).
3. A holy war. The holy war emerges both within Syria as the majority of the people are Sunni Muslims, while the regime consists of predominately Alawite families, a sub-branch of Shia Muslims. The dimension of the religious belonging to the different countries supporting the two different sides in the conflict. The Gulf states including dominant Saudi Arabia and Turkey consists of a majority of Sunni Muslims, have supported the rebels with funding and weapons. Iran and Libanon have supported the regime and even contributed with troops on the ground against the insurgents (Berti, Guzansky. 2014: 26).

Not enough with the hybrid three-in-one war, the Syrian conflict has also been the world stage for a new terror organization, which furthered the complexity of the conflict. The Islamic State of Iraq and Syria [ISIS] is a terror classified
The organization encouraged and claimed responsibility for several terror attacks within Syria but also globally. The shooting in a gay-club in Orlando killing 50 people, the terror attacks in Paris including the shooting in the Bataclan, killing 130 people, to mention two examples. The attacks brought the attention of other nations and changed the way they looked upon the Syrian conflict. The US policy shifted towards trying to defeat ISIS, instead of opposing the regime and al-Assad (Mintz. 2016: 146). The two mentioned perspectives or factors, the multiple war/actor, and ISIS are frequently used to explain and examine the Syrian conflict.

2.3 Sources

The sources used to conduct the essay are based on scientific texts and documents relevant to the subject, Syria and the UN. The sources used, mainly consist of UN resolutions, scientific articles, and research, literature or other similar types of documents. The theoretical and analytical framework is primarily based on the resolution 'Responsibility to Protect' (UNGA 2001) and paragraph one and two in 'Resolution 1325' (UNSC. 2000). The website of the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies has provided the primary material for the analytic tool Humanitarian diplomacy. Viggo Jakobsen’s book 'Contemporary security studies' (2016) have been the primary material for the analytic tool Coercive diplomacy. The research field of the Syrian war is still rather new to the academic community, which makes it challenging to find primary sources. To the extent possible, primary sources have been used, but the essay has been dependent on secondary sources. Triangulation is used to ensure the authenticity of the information and to verify the information in the secondary sources.

2.3.1 Source credibility

Conducting a single case, theory-consuming, explanatory study it is of high importance to be able to verify the sources used. The material used to conduct this study rely on literature, reports and other sources that reproduces information from the original source. The material is used in the analysis to examine and respond to the question of the essay (Repstad. 2007: 115). Four criteria have been followed to verify the sources
used. Authenticity, credibility (May 2013: 243-245) contemporaneity and tendency (Esaiasson et al. 2017: 294-295). The authenticity of sources means the need to question whether the sources are genuine or fabricated. Is it a primary source or a re-enactment of a primary source? (May. 2013: 244). To verify the credibility of a source means the process of clarifying if and to what extent the author of the source is presenting the observed truth. Are the source and the author of the source trustworthy?

Contemporaneity intends the period between the event that the source comment on and when the source is conducted. A more significant contemporary of a source is more likely to be able to refer what happened, by who and why correctly (Esaiasson et alt. 2017: 294). A low degree of a tendency within the sources gives a confirmation that the sources used aren't deliberately false. It is desirable to have sources that are as central to the event, that the source comments on as possible, but not undistorted in any direction. (Esaiasson et alt. 2017: 295).

2.3.2 Source examination

Official UN documents, frequently used in this essay, are estimated to have high authenticity and credibility. Further, the tendency of official UN documents, such as resolutions and press statements is evaluated to be high. Thus, when judging the contemporaneity of the UN documents, especially the resolutions, there is room for criticism. UN is a highly bureaucratic organization consisting of many different wills, opinions, and nations. To get a proposal, through a vote, and to implement it, takes time. But when reviving the resolutions used, one should remember that the resolutions normally aren’t a reaction to a specific event. They are neither a display of an event but rather a sort of framework to relate to. The contemporaneity is noted as a possible issue of the quality of the source but isn’t perceived as a major obstacle for this essay.

Keeping in mind the challenges of a single case study that partly rely on secondary sources, preventive methods have been taken. Sources have been verified against each other to secure the validity of the information. Moreover, the reliability is considered being high since the case has been consciously restricted to only include the first five years of the conflict. Since the timeframe is set, the same factors contributing to this essay would presumably be recurring if the study was done again. Thus, all aspects of an issue could never be covered; this is also the case regarding this study. To counteract a potential oversight of an essential factor affecting the outcome of the study a variety of aspects have been chosen to strengthen the validity of the essay.
3 Theoretical and Analytic framework

In this chapter examples of previous research on the subject will be presented to provide a greater understanding of the choice of the analytical framework. The essay's three essential perspectives consist of; Responsibility to Protect, two branches of diplomacy and female participation. Female participation is narrowed down to the analytic tool resolution 1325 to enable verification.

3.1 Previous research

Previous research on the Syrian war tends to either focus on the UNSC disagreement or the indecisive international community as a result of the consequences of the 2011 intervention of Libya. Jess Gifkins (2012) article "The UN Security Council Divided: Syria in Crisis" relates to the first subject. Gifkins argues that the UNSC have been divided in their approach against the Syrian war by two causes. Primarily, disagreements have appeared within the council on how to frame the conflict. This is a fundamental part of the process to enable later agreement on how to act in the conflict. The conflict has been described as a "violent repression of protestors and mass human rights abuses perpetrated predominately by the Syrian Government" by the western nations in the council (Gifkins 2012: 390). The council's eastern nations, mainly Russia and China, argues that the actions by the Syrian regime solely is a resistance against a violent insurgency. The second issue contributes to dividing the council, with which measures should the UNSC respond to the conflict? Economic sanctions or military intervention that could lead to regime change have been controversial. Russia and China have utilized their vetos in votes on such proposals with the argument that "amendments condemning opposition violence were not included" (Gifkins 2012: 390).

Additional research on how the UN has managed the humanitarian disaster in Syria, tend to focus on a comparison between how the UN handled Libya and Syria. In 2011 Libya was in a similar situation like the one that later escalated during the same year in Syria. The UNSC vote, if to intervene Libya with a humanitarian sign as the legitimate reason, were in favor of an intervention (Security Council. 2011: S/RES/1973). Justin Morris article "Libya and Syria: R2P and the specter of the swinging pendulum" (2013: 1271) claims that the intervention of Libya was the first of its kind. The sovereign state of Libya objected the decision. The decision to intervene
Libya, against the will of the sovereign state was not unanimous. Several states, including Russia and China, abstained from the vote (UNSC. 2011: S/RES/1973). Since the intervention, that NATO carried out, Libya is a "non-functioning state" (Lynch. 2016:24. Morris (2013: 1274) argues that no matter how one interprets the importance of R2P in Libya, the outcome of the intervention will affect, how the value of the principle is interpreted.

3.2 Theoretical framework and Analytic tools

The purpose of this essay is to investigate why the international community, through the UN, haven’t succeeded in their attempt to cease or stop the war in Syria by peaceful means. The Syrian war is yet ongoing which complicates the conditions of research within the field. Most of the research conducted regarding the Syrian conflict and the failure of the UN to stop the war tend to focus on the unsuccessful attempts by the UNSC to reach an agreement on the matter. The UNSC is, of course, an essential aspect to the problematics surrounding the conflict in Syria.

However, this essay provides a more variegated perspective on why the UN has not been capable to this point to halt the war and bring peace to Syria, rather then focus on the UNSC solely. Three tools will provide perspectives to why the UN, continue to forfeit the Syrian people. The first analytic tool and perspective applied to the issue is the R2P resolution. Following R2P, it shall be clear if and how the international community should intervene Syria. Is an external action from the international community justified or not? Secondly humanitarian and coercive diplomacy is applied to the case. The two diplomacy branches have different goals and strategies to reach the goal. They are used to compare against each other, how have they been used? Moreover, have any of the branches been more successful than the other? Finally, a perspective of female participation in the peacemaking processes and negotiations is included. By applying the UNSC resolution 1325 "Women, Peace, and Security," with the particular focus on the part of participation and inclusion of women in the decisionmaking peace processes. Is there any women in the negotiations and did they have any impact on the outcome?
3.3 Concept definition

Before further developing the analytical framework, two central concepts need to be defined. War and peace. War is defined as: "an armed conflict with at least 1000 battle-related death within a year" (Bastick, Grimm, and Kunz. 2007 referred in Mundkur and Porter. 2012: 12). Negative peace is defined by Johann Galtung as: "the absence of violence, absence of war" (Galtung. 1964, referred in Mundkur and Porter. 2012: 14).

3.4 Human Security

Security, or security issues, have traditionally intended a state to state relationship. During the middle eastern oil crisis in the 1970s and 1980s and the rising awareness of the existential environmental damages, the term security was questioned (Acharya. 2013: 449). In 1994, when the UN first released the Human Development Report [HDR], the question arose if the term security entirely covered the meaning of security and international discussion of the term followed. The discussion led to a more inclusive and deepened the meaning of the term, and now covers areas such as environmental, economic, food, health, personal and political security, which is summarized into human security (B. Persaud. 2016:140).

Critics argue that the only distinct differences between human security and the initial security approach are that human security issues are not a result from terrorism or interstate war, but instead "death by economics rather than by politics" (Bellamy, McDonald 2002, referred in B. Persaud. 2016:140). The core in the emerging of a new security concept is an expansion of damages in conflicts that according to the earlier definition of security would not consider being a security issue. Human security includes security threats from external threats but also from internal threats by the own state. Further, the concept covers human lives in different forms. Refugees, minorities or exposed groups instead of geographical territory, state, and institutions. Methods of preventions against security threats thus also vary. The traditional security approach embraces military power and sanctions as the primary strategy for combatting security issues. While human security uses humanitarian interventions or policy reforms as combatting method (B. Persaud. 2016:142).
3.4.1 Humanitarian Intervention

The term "humanitarian intervention" refers to an external actor, guided by a humanitarian compass, intervenes another state with military means for the maintenance of human rights (Bellamy. 2016:328). During the cold war, an intervention of a sovereign state with the mission of upholding human rights was unimaginable. A consensus prevailed regarding how the UN-charter should be interpreted on this matter. It was unacceptable to intervene another state for the sake of human rights (Bellamy. 2000: 1). Since then the support of the use of humanitarian interventions has shifted towards being more supportive. In 2000 the current UN Secretary-General, Kofi Annan, raised the question:

"if humanitarian intervention is, indeed, an unacceptable assault on sovereignty, how should we respond to a Rwanda, to a Srebrenica- to gross and systematic violations of human rights that offend every precept of our common humanity?"


The response came in 2001 when the International Commission on Intervention and State Sovereignty [ICISS] released their rapport 'The Responsibility to Protect'.

3.4.2 Responsibility to Protect

The R2P principle was presented in the report by ICISS as a new way of approaching human rights violations executed by a state towards its people. The principle applies to two scenarios.

i. When a state is unable to protect its citizens.

ii. When a state is actively conducting genocide, war crimes, ethnical cleansing or crimes against humanity against its people.

The report highlights the connection between rights and duties of states. States first and foremost have the duty and responsibility to protect their citizens. If a state fails to protect or actively carries out atrocities, the responsibility and duty to protect civilians pass on to the international community, executed through the UN (Bellamy, Wheeler 2014:480). The R2P principle is triggered if a state fails to protect, or actively harm its people. The ICISS report presents a principle that doesn't exclusively focus on military instruments. Instruments that R2P includes is economic sanctions, embargos, legal actions or, as this essay focuses on- diplomacy.
R2P rests on three pillars:

3.4.2.1 Pillar I

Each state has the responsibility to protect its populations from atrocities. This responsibility entails the prevention of such crimes, including their incitement, through appropriate and necessary means. The international community should, as appropriate, encourage and help states to exercise this responsibility and support the UN in establishing an early warning capability (General Assembly 2005. A/RES/60/1: paragraph 138).

3.4.2.2 Pillar II

The international community, through the United Nations, has the responsibility to use appropriate diplomatic, humanitarian and other peaceful means, to help to protect populations from atrocities. The Charter determines that UN member states should be prepared to take collective action on a case-by-case basis after a decision by the UNSC. Should peaceful means be, inadequate and national authorities are manifestly failing to protect their populations from atrocities, the UNGA needs to continue consideration of the responsibility to protect populations, bearing in mind the principles of the Charter and international law. The international community, through the UN further commit themselves, as necessary and appropriate, to support states build capacity to protect their populations from atrocities and to assisting those which are under stress before crises and conflicts break out (General Assembly 2005. A/RES/60/1: paragraph 138-139).

3.4.2.3 Pillar III

The international community, through the UN, has a collective responsibility to timely and decisive action to protect civilians. The peaceful means should be used primarily, by the UN:s Charters chapter VII. If the effects of the peaceful means shown inadequate and a presumed threat of any atrocities will be perpetrated, additional more vigorous means, authorized by the UNSC could be used (General Assembly 2005. A/RES/60/1: paragraph 139).
The atrocities that trigger the R2P principle;

3.4.3 Atrocities

3.4.3.1 Genocide

UNGA adopted the convention on "prevention and penalties of genocide" in 1948. The convention describes a genocide as;
"Actions which intends to destroy, partly or as a whole, national, ethnic or religious groups. Such actions could be expressed through murder, severe physical damage, prevent reproduction within the group, by force abduct children from the group or deliberately put the grouping in living conditions that will cause damage" (UNGA 1948. No 1021).

3.4.3.2 Crimes against humanity

Crimes against humanity is merely a crime against internationally norm than an offense of established law. The International Criminal Court [ICC] agreed on the description of crimes against humanity in the Rome treaty 1998 (Article 7). The description is divided into:

i. The physical element includes the following actions; murder, slavery, severe forms of sexual violence, torture, persecution, and extinction.

ii. The content-based element determines the participation in a systematic or widespread attack on civilians.

iii. The mental element determines that the knowledge of atrocities is a crime against humanity.

3.4.3.3 War crimes

War crimes include the following violations of international humanitarian law during an international military conflict established by the Rome treaty (1998. Article 7);

i. Biological experiment, torture, extensive destruction of infrastructure, deliberately kill or cause significant physical or mental damage, force prisoners of war fight for the opposite side of the conflict, unjustified imprisonment or taking hostages.
3.4.3.4 Ethnic cleansing

The implications of the term ethnic cleansing are not unambiguously defined. The term was created in the aftermath of the Yugoslavian war by request from the UN. The expert group that invented the description of ethnic cleansing proposed the following definition;

"A purposeful politics executed by an ethnic or religious group with the aim and the means of violence or terror like actions to eliminate the civil population of another ethnic or religious group from a specific territorial area" (UNSC. S/1994/674).

3.5 Diplomacy Theory

Diplomacy has throughout history been neglected as an field of study, despite that diplomacy is a hugely important field within international relations (Sharp referred in Jönsson, Hall 2015: ix). The definition of diplomacy divides the research community. The ‘Oxford Handbook of Modern Diplomacy’ states that modern diplomacy should “retain the managing of international relations by negotiations” (Mills. 2013:404).

3.5.1 Analytic tool: Humanitarian Diplomacy

The International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent societies [IFRC] defines humanitarian diplomacy as; "Humanitarian diplomacy is persuading decision makers and opinion leaders to act, at all times, in the interests of vulnerable people, and with full respect for fundamental humanitarian principles" (IRFC. 2009: 2). Humanitarian diplomacy focus on securing necessities for survival are disposable to non-combatants in conflicts. Carried out by attempts to gather the actors involved in the conflict, to agree on letting humanitarian assistance reach the civilians. This is not an easy task, although it might feel obvious to accept assistance like water, medicine or shelter to civilians, for all partners in a conflict. However, the reality is not as humane. This branch of diplomacy encounters resistance.

Conflicts have evolved, from classical state versus state wars towards more complex wars, including multiple actors and frontlines. It requires a closely monitored balance on which actors to trust. Negotiation with armed groups or terror organizations is a typical issue to take into account when mediating in conflict areas. The difficult task for either IRFC, the UN or any other humanitarian organization when operating in
conflict areas, is to determine which organizations or grouping to cooperate with and trust. The UN and the IRFC are using specific criteria when in the decision which organizations and groupings they trust. The organization or group needs to respect international law, impartiality and independence of relief work (Egeland. 2013:354).

### 3.5.2 Analytic tool: Coercive Diplomacy

As the traditional state versus state wars decline, the use of the strategic coercive diplomacy has been given an increased part in the processing of global conflict (Jakobsen. 2016:280). The focal point of coercive diplomacy is to resolve conflicts, crisis, and human rights violations before it evolves into a full-scale war. Diplomacy by the tradition uses sticks and carrots, and coercive diplomacy is not an exception. Pressure is put on the binding between measures of encouragement and punishment, to encourage an adversary state, group or authority to act against its will. The combination of the measures, encouragement, and punishment makes the coercive diplomacy branch deviate from military coercion, but also from other branches of diplomacy. The method of coercive diplomacy is to threat with and-or use some military means against the opponent. It is crucial to make a clear distinction between the use of ”some” or small-scaled military use and the use of brute/full-scale force. A full-scale military action means that diplomacy has failed. The definition of limited or some military force is not clear but could be explained as a force that does not achieve the total preferred outcome or force that communicate a ”symbolic” use (Jakobsen. 2016:282).

![Figure 1: Coercive Diplomacy [CD]](image_url)
3.6 Women’s participation

Pierre Schori, Swedish diplomat and former social-democratic politician, writes in his chapter “UN Peacekeeping” in the ‘Oxford Handbook of modern diplomacy’ about ‘Gender- the missing link.’ Schori focuses on his experiences in the UN peacekeeping mission in Côte d’Ivoire and the gender-based violence directed towards women during the civil war in Côte d’Ivoire. Schori criticises the international community and the UN of the failure of implementing resolution 1325.

Resolution 1325 and the dimension of female participation in conflict resolution is the last analytic tool. The perspective of how and if women are included or excluded in mediation, peace talks and diplomacy and if that makes a difference is central. How does women’s participation, if there is any, affect the peace talks in Syria?

3.6.1 Analytic tool: Resolution 1325

The essay focuses on the representation and participation of females in decision-making and diplomacy. The focus within the analytic tool, resolution 1325 will, therefore, focus on women's in decision-making processes. The UNSC resolution 1325: 'Women, Peace and Security’ was adopted in 2000. The resolution includes three dimensions: protection, participation, and promotion (Schori. 2013:784). Additional dimensions of implementation and prosecution of gender-based war crimes were later submitted to resolution 1325 in the following resolutions. Paragraph 1 and 2 in resolution 1325 address the need of ensuring women's participation at all decision-making levels (UNSC. 2000: S/RES/1325. Paragraph 1, 2).

Paragraph 1: “Urges Member States to ensure increased representation of women at all decision-making levels in national, regional and international institutions and mechanisms for the prevention, management, and resolution of conflict” (UNSC. 2000: S/RES/1325. Paragraph 1).

Paragraph 2: “Encourages the Secretary-General to implement his strategic plan of action (A/49/587) calling for an increase in the participation of women at decision-making levels in conflict resolution and peace processes” (UNSC. 2000: S/RES/1325. Paragraph 2).
The two paragraphs build a framework to implement and to be gender-conscious in decisionmaking processes. Why is it important to stress female participation in peace-negotiations? Which ideas and perspectives do women mediators, or diplomats bring forward to the negotiation table that men do not? Rachel Mayanja, Special Advisor to the UN Secretay General in 2010 stated that females to a larger extent then men raise gender issues to the agenda in peace processes. Women enriched the process by the setting of a shifted priority in the agenda (Mayanja. 2010. Referred in Mundkur and Porter. 2012: 118).

All UN resolutions, statements, and agreements are written in a gender-neutral language with the notion that they would all be equally applicable to both men and women. Why is there a need for resolution 1325, that stresses the importance of female participation in peace negotiations? Resolution 1325 is needed because women and men do not perceive war and conflicts in the same way. Women and men are not affected in the same way by conflicts and wars as stated in the resolution preamble (UNSC. 2000: S/RES/1325). Between 2001 and 2002 Elisabeth Rehn and Ellen Johnson Sirleaf, on behalf of the UN, conducted an expert assessment on women, peace, and war were they visited 14 conflict areas. The areas visited were in different stages of pre-conflict, conflict or post-conflict. The common denominator was, no matter the extent of violence, that women, and men experienced the violence and conflict differently (Rehn, Johnson Sirleaf. 2002. Referred in Mundkur and Porter. 2012: 38).

The initial analytic tool applied is Responsibility to Protect, R2P. The way R2P is interpreted contributes as one of the explanatory factors to the main question of this essay: What has caused the UN:s diplomatic locking in the Syrian civil war? Furthermore, the understanding of the R2P resolution and the controversy regarding it contributes to the understanding of the additional question of how the preconditions for a diplomatic solution look like in Syria. The second analytical tools brought forward is humanitarian and coercive diplomacy and provide the analysis with the means to answer the question of how the UN:s different peace talks have been designed within the Syrian conflict. The last perspective applied is female participation a and the UNSC resolution 1325 "Women, Peace, and Security.” The analytical tool of female representation, resolution 1325, frames the question if female participation exists in the Syrian conflict and, if so, have an impact on the outcome of the negotiations?
4 Background

4.1 Prerequisites for peace

To define the prerequisites for peace in Syria is a complex task. The constellation of ambassadors, foreign policy experts and diplomats James Dobbins, Jeffrey Martini and Philip Gordon, did in 2015-2017 came out with a series of articles with a proposed peace plan for Syria. The first article in the series ”A peace plan for Syria” put forward the challenging prerequisites for peace in Syria. The authors argue that the goal of the civil rising that started the war, to overthrow President Bashar al-Assad, has been exceeded and too costly for the Syrian people. The authors further illuminate the complexity of the war. Government against the opposition, Shia versus Sunnis Muslims, foreign fighters coming to fight on different sides in the war and the involvement of ”external” states in the war. The prerequisite for peace in Syria, by the time of writing of the article, didn't look well (Dobbin, Martini, and Gordon. 2015).

4.2 Atrocities committed during the Syrian war

During the war, numerous civilians have been killed or displaced as a result of the violence performed by the government, rebels or terror organizations. UNHCR provides data which states that more than 11 million Syrians are internally or externally displaced by early 2017 (UNHCR 2017). According to the Syrian Center for Policy Research, more than 470 000 people have been killed during the Syrian war in February 2016 (referred in Human Rights Watch [HRW] 2017). The Syrian government has used several strategies to violate their people including blockades of transportsations carrying food and medicine to civilians, which have caused people to starve to death (Greek och Högbladh. 2016). Since 2012, four occasions have been reported where bombs contained chemical substances that have been released by governmental airplanes (Solvang. 2017). HRW (2016) report of airstrikes targeted at civilian goals, including schools and civil hospitals in 2016.
5 Analysis

In the following chapter, the questions will be separated into the different segment to become more applicable to the purpose. The essay's purpose is to give a compound answer to why the negotiations and diplomacy conducted, by the UN, not yet have given the results as in peace in Syria. The main question of the essay is;

- What has caused the diplomatic locking in the Syrian civil war?

Additional questions:

- How have the peace talks performed by the UN been designed in the first five years (2011-2016) of the Syrian civil war?
- How do the preconditions for a diplomatic solution look like in Syria?
- How does women’s participation, if there is any, affect the peace talks in Syria?

5.1 R2P in Syria

R2P intended to give the international community the tools necessary to protect civilians from atrocities. The resolution states that four atrocities trigger R2P. War crimes, crimes against humanity, ethnic cleansing and genocide, explained in detail in section 3.4.3 Atrocities. During the Syrian, between 2011-2016, several violations and crimes that would be characterized as atrocities have been committed against the Syrian people by the regime and other actors. One of the aspects that make the Syrian conflict to one of our time's most challenging, is the involvement of multiple armed actors. R2P in its configuration is mainly to target crimes committed by sovereign states. It is, therefore, necessary to clarify as the analysis will focus on the crimes and atrocities committed by the Syrian government. This without neglecting the fact that the complexity of the conflict is, with no doubt, increased with the involvement of the numerous actors.

The UN's Independent International Commission of Inquiry [IICI] conducted a report that was presented to the UN Human Right’s Council on the matter of the situation in Syria in 2015. The report brought light to crimes committed by the Syrian government and is a result of over 3500 interviews, testimonies by eye-witnesses and
victims. The time frame of the interviews ranging from 2011 until 2015 (Human Rights Council. A/HRC/28/69. 2015:3). The report covers the development from peaceful demonstrations in 2011, through the transformation to a civil war and finally until the chaos and humanitarian disaster that prevails Syria by 2015. Moreover, the report highlights the actions committed by the Syrian regime towards its people of the most unflattering character.

During 2012 the tactics of the regime shifted from consisting of attacks on the ground, towards aerial bombings and a large-scale siege of cities and areas. The strategy of the government that during 2012 grew into standard procedure has from witnesses been described as "tansheef al bakhar” or "draining the sea to kill the fish” (Human Rights Council. A/HRC/28/69. 2015:4). By establishing checkpoints, the flow of food, medical supplies, water, and electricity to the targeted city or areas is prevented. The tactic diminishes the will and ability of resistance of the population. According to the report, the tactic also goes by the name ”starve or surrender,” during the development of the war it has become more hardened and frequently used. The Syrian city of Dar’a exemplifies this, a city with approximately 97 000 inhabitants. During 2011 Dar’a was under isolation by the government for two months. Later the same year, the city of Homs with more than 650 000 inhabitants became under siege. The isolation of Homs was not relieved until 2014 when the resistance of the city collapsed.

The report further determines mass killings, abductions, and arrests of a large number of male civilians, initiated by the government. Further, the use of prohibited weapons like cluster bombs, as well as conventional but extremely powerful thermobaric bombs and missiles, are documented. The use of prohibited and conventional bombs and missiles have been used against civilian targets including schools and hospitals. In 2012 the use of barrel bombs was documented and confirmed by witnesses and surviving victims. The governments use of barrel bombs increased during 2013-2015 in the city of Aleppo, regularly dropped in crowded areas including markets, apartment buildings or aid distribution stations (Human Rights Council. A/HRC/28/69. 2015:4). On two separate occasions in 2014, in the city of Idlib and Hama, the government used chemical weapons, most likely chlorine (Human Rights Council. A/HRC/28/69. 2015:5). Since the use of chemical weapons in 2014, additional use of chemical weapons have occurred, but not within the time frame of this essay.
Under the headline "Consequences of the failure of the State to protect civilians" in the report it is states that:

"The human cost of the ongoing conflict in the Syrian Arab Republic is immeasurable. The Syrian State has manifestly failed to protect its citizens from mass atrocities. War crimes and crimes against humanity have been committed on a massive scale. Many Syrians have suffered multiple violations and abuses from different actors. The scale of human suffering has grown as the conflict has escalated."


The consequences of the Syrian state failing to protect and even willfully diminish, hurt and kill its people is of the most severe character. The report in detail discloses the consequences for different groups in the Syrian society during the war. All groups within the Syrian society have been heavily affected by the war. The number of disabled persons in Syria has risen as a consequence of the warfare (Human Rights Council. A/HRC/28/69. 2015:12). Most groups have and are still facing major effects from the war. But the consequences for the children is probably the most severe as has an long-term impact. Children within the conflict have been killed, wounded, traumatized or exposed to sexual violence. The consequences of the damage that has been done towards a generation that is lacking years of education lost of families, and that is deeply traumatized by their experiences during the war. The Syrian war will have long-lasting effects even if it would end tomorrow (Human Rights Council. A/HRC/28/69. 2015:11).

5.1.1 The United Nations responsibility for Syria

The IICI criticise the Syrian government in their report. IICI states that "There has been a total failure of civilian protection in the Syrian Arab Republic. Civilians are systematically targeted by all parties in the conflict, resulting in egregious atrocities" (Human Rights Council. A/HRC/28/69. 2015:14). The crimes mentioned above, committed by the Syrian government, covers three out of four atrocities as presented in 3.4.3 Atrocities: Genocide, crimes against humanity and war crimes have all been committed by the Syrian regime when taking the testimonies and interviews presented in the report taken into consideration. The one atrocity that it is not possible to claim responsibility by the Syrian government, according to this rapport, is ethnical cleansing.
The R2P states the responsibility to protect civilians are passed on the international community once a sovereign state is incapable of protecting its population. The Syrian state is incapable of protecting their people. The Syrian state is actively carrying out crimes against their people. The resolution is hereby clear, the fate of the Syrian people lies in the hands of the international community, the UN. The report confirms and determines that “In the light of the manifest failure of the Government to protect its population from gross human rights abuses, the international community, through the United Nations, bears the responsibility of protecting the Syrian population from such crimes” (Human Rights Council. A/HRC/28/69. 2015:20). The UN bears the responsibility of the Syrian people due to the absent responsibility shown by the Syrian government. How does the UN manage the responsibility? What is done to end the war and the human suffering in Syria? How does UN implement R2P in the case of Syria?

The controversy regarding R2P typically consists of that it contains humanitarian intervention. Humanitarian intervention could be seen as a violation of a sovereign state (Keeler. 2011), or it could be seen as a tool to protect civilians in conflicts. The R2P consists, as mentioned in section 3.4.2 Analytic tool: Responsibility to Protect, of three pillars. The pillar of which this essay does mostly concern is the second one. The second pillar states the need for the UN to with peaceful means protect civilians. An intervention of Syria would primarily have to be authorized by the UNSC. Any joint action would need to be agreed on by the Council. This is where one of the roots of the problem appear. The UNSC have since the war started in 2011 until today, been incapable of reaching a consensus on how to deal with Syria. An agreement of intervention in Syria has been unimaginable, but also a unified condemnation of the crimes committed by the Syrian regime has to this day been impossible to accomplish. To clarify, the responsibility of protecting the Syrian people are passed on to the UN. This due to that one of the perpetrators of the crimes committed is the Syrian government. The question of what the UN does to stop the war rises as any joint action by the UNSC seem impossible. Mentioned in the previous research, some of the scientists studying the Syrian war argue that the intervention of Libya in 2011 is a crucial factor in the UNSC disagreement on Syria.

5.1.2 Libya’s shadow

Libya during 2011 experienced attempts to depositing government that later the same
also year unfolded in Syria. In the UNSC vote, if to intervene Libya, the council found
the vote in favor of an intervention (UNSC. 2011: S/RES/1973). The vote was not
unanimous within the council, Russia and China among others, abstained from the vote
(UNSC. 2011: S/RES/1973). Since the intervention, carried out by NATO, Libya is a
"non-functioning state.” The western nations in the UNSC argue that the Libyan and
Syrian cases need to be dealt with separately. Russia and China have a different
opinion. As long as Russia and China perceive a humanitarian intervention of Syria by
the R2P principle as a recurrence of the course of action in Libya, they will continue to
oppose effective action by the council by the use of vetos.

Here appears one of the reasons contributing to the diplomatic locking in the
Syrian conflict. If Russia and China perceive the attempts to reduce the humanitarian
suffering in Syria by the use of R2P as disguised attempts to regime change, as they
argue was the case in Libya, they a likely to withdraw from the vote or to use their veto.
Russia and China, among others, argued that the use of R2P in Libya were a cover-up,
for a wish by the western nations in the UNSC to a forced regime change in Libya. This
is affecting how effective the UNSC are capable of being in the case of Syria due to
that, mainly Russia, want to keep al-Assad in power.
The UNSC is powerful regarding global security when in agreement, but when
disunited, as in the case of Syria, what measures does the UN take to fulfill their duty
against the Syrian people? The forthcoming chapter brings up a few diplomatic
measures taken by the UN in attempt to reach peace in Syria.

5.2 The use of Diplomatic tools

One additional questions in the essay concern how the peace talks have been designed
during the first five years of the war. This is a question which could provide content for
an essay on its own, therefore, only a few examples will be presented.

5.2.1 Humanitarian Diplomacy

Within the time frame 2011-2016, the UN has exercised diplomacy in attempts to
prevent the conflict in Syria to expand. Despite the locking and the appeared
unwillingness to agree within the UNSC on the matter of Syria, measures were taken by the UN to decrease the violence and to stop the war eventually. One of the actors with this mission is the UN Secretary Generals Special Envoy for Syria. Since the start, three prominent gentlemen have had the demanding title. Kofi Annan, Lakhdar Brahimi and the incumbent holder of the title: Staffan de Mistura. The previous Special Envoys, Kofi Annan and Lakhdar Brahimi both resigned from the position with similar testimonies of a ”mission impossible” (Annan. 2012). As their title reveals, it is a mandate received from the UN Secretary-General with the assignment of acting peace-facilitator. The former UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan was in February 2012 the first man appointed to the mission by the then Secretary-General Ban Ki-Moon. Annan presented ”A six-point proposal” for peace in Syria (UNSC. 2011. S/RES/2012, 2042). The six-point proposal is characterized by humanitarian diplomacy. In the third point in the proposal Annan wishes to:

”ensure timely provision of humanitarian assistance to all areas affected by the fighting, and to this end, as immediate steps, to accept and implement a daily two-hour humanitarian pause and to coordinate exact time and modalities of the daily pause through an efficient mechanism, including at local level”


In the role as mediator representing the UN, Mr. Annan urges all the actors involved to agree on a humanitarian pause. A pause where medical assistance and necessities will be offered to civilians. This is humanitarian diplomacy. The UN is exercising humanitarian diplomacy, despite the disagreement within the UNSC.

Unfortunately, the lack of unity within the UNSC stretched over the six-point plan. Mr. Annan stated during his resignation in August 2012 that the increasing militarization on the ground and the lack of unity within the UNSC, made his mission impossible. During the press-conference Mr. Annan was clear on why it was impossible to create a political peace process in Syria; ”You have to understand: as an Envoy, I cannot want peace more than the protagonists, more than the Security Council or the international community for that matter” (Annan. 2012).

The successor of Kofi Annan, Lakhdar Brahimi, most significant success was the execution of the peace-conference Geneva II. The peace-conference gathered, for the first time since the conflict escalated into a war, both sides of the conflict.

Representatives of the Syrian government and the main opposition participated together
with several nations representatives in Geneva. Unfortunately, the main actors entered the negotiations with diametrically different goals and were not on beforehand particularly interested in negotiating. Before the peace-conference, BBC wrote an article about the conference. On the question, if the negotiations would be a success, the Syrian National Reconciliation Minister Ali Haidar stated that "Don’t expect anything from Geneva II. Neither Geneva III, not Geneva IV nor Geneva X will solve the Syrian crisis. The solution has begun and will continue through the military triumph of the state" (BBC. 2014). The result from the peace-conference was relative and as a consequence of the failure of the peace process- once again, the Special Envoy for Syria, Mr. Brahimi resigned from the position.

The successor of Lakhdar Brahimi, Staffan de Mistura the current holder the position, have continued the assignment of mediating peace in Syria. Within the timeframe of this essay, Mr. Mistura has continued to bring the actors involved to the negotiation table to find a diplomatic solution to the war. Mr. Mistura succeeded with this part of the mission in January 2016, when the Syrian government and the opposition attended the "Geneva III" conference. The conference topic, the need of securing humanitarian assistance to civilians trapped in the besieged cities, is another example of the UN:s use of humanitarian diplomacy (Reuters. 2016). Unforternutly, the conference ended on the same note as its precursor, with no binding or permanent decisions taken.

The three attempts presented above towards mediating peace in Syria have all been characterized by the urge directed towards all actors involved in the conflict to recognize the humanitarian suffering by civilians. The three examples of diplomacy presented have been examples of humanitarian diplomacy. Other approaches and attempts to reach peace have simultaneously taken place around the world. An example of coercive diplomacy will now be presented.

5.2.2 Coercive Diplomacy

Different processes towards peace have been initiated outside the sphere of the UN. Coercive diplomacy is one example of another diplomacy approach used in the Syrian war. The US president within the timeframe 2011-2016, Barack Obama, used coercive
diplomacy in a question regarding chemical weapons in Syria. International law prohibits the use of chemical weapons, and the use of it does fall under the two atrocities, crimes against humanity and war crimes, defined in section 3.2.3 Atrocities.

During a press conference in 2012, Obama answered a question regarding Syria's potential use of chemical weapons: "We have communicated in no uncertain terms with every player in the region that that's a red line for us and that there would be enormous consequences if we start seeing movement on the chemical weapons front or the use of chemical weapons" (White House. 2012. Referred in Mitton. 2015). Approximately one year later, in August 2013, the Syrian government launched an airstrike containing chemical substances, targeted at the opposition but wounded and killed civilians in the rural region Ghouta. The Obama administration found itself under pressure of marking the crossing of the red line by the Syrian government, using military power. The setting of a clear boundary or demand with following consequences of relative size if the opponent challenges the "rules set" is coercive diplomacy.

The establishment of a "red line" by the US denotes an explicit restriction on the Syrian government. The string of actions that followed, by the US in this case, is in line with the model of coercive diplomacy found in section 3.5.2 Analytic tool: Coercive Diplomacy, Figure 1. The stage of diplomacy, Step 1, have failed. The US continued by increasing the pressure on Syria with threatening with the use of military means. The use of inducements, or as in this case, threats are in line with the model of coercive diplomacy, Figure 1. After continued threats of using air strikes by the US, it resulted in an agreement with the Syrian government to dismantle its chemical weapons (Mitton. 2015). However, the agreement has repeatedly since 2012 been violated by the Syrian government. The criticism of the Obama administration in this perspective could be broken-down to a “what-if” question. What if the Obama administration would have realized the threat at first and punished the Syrian government with military action? Would that have changed the way the Syrian government thought about the use of chemical weapons against civilians? Obviously, it is a hypothetical question, impossible to answer. However, what is possible to say is that the decision taken by the US were of a coercive character. The US threatened the Syrian government with military penalties by Figure 1: Step 2 in section 3.5.2 Analytic tool: Coercive Diplomacy, and ultimately, got the Syrian government to sign a deal to abandon chemical weapons.

The Obama administration abstained to use military power which rendered critics regarding whether the administration was credible or not. Critics argued that
threats that are challenged must be met with countermeasures. Otherwise, treats would lose its power and the US its credibility. On the other hand, the US diplomacy could be argued to be a successful example of coercive diplomacy. The US administration did not need any military actions to get this deal forward. Minimum cost for maximal winning. However, it is also possible to criticize that statement, bearing in mind that the signing of the agreement depended on another chemical attack towards civilians before it was signed. Additionally, the Syrian government later broke the agreement and the agreement that the US pursued the Syrian government to accede, was the signing of the Chemical Weapons Convention. However, the convention does not include the prohibition of the gas Chlorine, a gas that the Syrian regime has used in attacks towards their people. Chlorine is prohibited under international law, but not included in the treaty and therefore not a constraint for the Syrian government to use (Mitton. 2015). To conclude, the US used coercive diplomacy in the question of Syria's use of chemical weapons. The diplomacy could be argued to be successful but also criticised for not achieving any effective agreement after all.

Russia's role has already been explained in this essay. But in the context of the use of coercive diplomacy, towards Syria, Russia plays a minor role. This is not because the Russian government does not exercise coercive diplomacy. However, Russia does not use coercive diplomacy against the Syrian government, which is the focus of this essay. Russias focus its effort in Syria to combat the terror organization within or surrounding Syria (Charap. 2013).

A conclusion of the two different branches of diplomacy examined, humanitarian and coercive diplomacy, is that the humanitarian diplomacy to a large extent is being used by the UN. Coercive diplomacy on the other hand is more frequently used by nations or coalition of nations, which take own initiatives. No matter the scope of use for either one of the two branches of diplomacy, the result from the numerous attempts remain absent. The next chapter raises the question of female inclusion is included in any form of peace attempt taken by the UN. Do more women mean more peace?

5.3 Participation of women

The last analytical tool is female participation. The subject of female participation differs from the previous analytic tools, R2P, and the diplomacy branches. The perspective is included to investigate and examine if women are included in the
attempted peace process conducted by the UN, and if that changes the process and-or the outcome. To frame the question of female participation the UNSC resolution 1325: 'Women, Peace, and Security' are used. How has the resolution, brought forward and agreed on in 2000, affected the way UN is working in the peace process in Syria? Is the UN following its directives of inclusion of women on all sides of the conflict? (UNSC. 2000: S/RES/1325. Paragraph 1, 2).

Shown previous in the analysis segment, the UNSC has been ineffective. The council hasn't been capable of agreeing on how to condemn, act or handle Syria due to a disagreement between the members of the council. But the UN is using alternative ways to negotiate peace in Syria, then the Security Council. The humanitarian diplomacy is one example where the attempts to commence a peace process in Syria mainly led by the Secretary Generals Special Envoy for Syria, currently, Staffan de Mistura.

In 2016, before the Geneva III negotiations that included representatives from the Syrian government and the opposition, Mr. de Mistura declared in a press statement, that invitations were sent to Syrian female civil society representatives. The group, Women's Advisory Board, was established to contribute to the UN-facilitated negotiations. The purpose of the Advisory Board was described in the press statements as; “The Advisory Board will allow Syrian women to articulate their concerns and ideas and present recommendations, covering all topics discussed during the talks, to the UN Special Envoy for consideration” (UNOG. 2016). The decision to create a forum where women's voices and perspectives are brought into consideration was an important step towards inclusiveness of women in the prolonged Syrian war. The decision to create the advisory board has been the first of its kind, yet it has achieved not only positive response but also criticism. Criticism was raised regarding the transparency when selecting whom and which organizations to be represented on the advisory board. The advisory board holds 12 seats and have been criticized for including a majority of organizations or women representing a government positive agenda (Syria Justice and Accountability Center. 2016). Criticism against the advisory board has further been raised due to that it's not a decision-making body. The board acts as an advisory tool for the Special Envoy for Syria. But once entering the negotiations, it consists of a substantial majority of men.
Figure 2, from Inclusive Security (Williams. 2016) illustrates how the numbers are distributed between men and women within the negotiations teams. The total number of women in the negotiation room, debating Syria's future, aren’t exceeding 20% of female representation.

But why would a low representation of women in the Syrian conflict be considered an issue? In the article ‘Reimagining Peacemaking: Women’s Roles in Peace Processes’ the authors present several positive effects of strong female representation in peace processes. The article is a result of research stretching over 40 in-depth cases and more than 182 peace agreements. The authors argue that “there was not a single case where organized women’s groups had a negative impact on a peace process” (O’Reilly, Súilleabháin, Paffenholz. 2015: 11). The article lifts the ability of women, to push for a start of or the finalization of a peace negotiation. The research finds patterns from different cases, where women have advocated for measures that have been having preventing effects so that violence wouldn't relapse. Women in this cases have been able to focus the negotiations to deal with the root of the conflict, which results in more stable and sustained peace (O’Reilly, Súilleabháin, Paffenholz. 2015: 12). Low representation of women, like the 20% in the negotiations regarding Syria, would, therefore, lose the advantage of what a stronger representation would mean for the peace process in Syria.

The UN is trying to implement resolution 1325 in the Syrian case, the main example shown in this essay is the creation of the Women's Advisory Board. But the attempt to increase the participation of women according to paragraph 2 in resolution 1325 must be considered as a failure. Paragraph 2 explicit encourages the increase of women in decision-making processes. The Women's Advisory Board are only advisory and not decision-making. The Advisory Board is a step in the right direction but does unfortunately not manage any executive power.

Paragraph 1 in resolution 1325 urge all member states to increase the representation of women at peace-related decision-making levels. The responsibility to implement the
paragraph falls on the member nation i.e. Syria. But the role of the UN is to encourage and pressure all nations to fulfill their obligations. The measures taken by the UN to put pressure on Syria, to bring more women to the negotiations table hasn’t been investigated in this essay. The number of 20% female participation at the negotiations table could therefore not be categorized as a success or a failure. But the conclusion could be drawn that the peace process might see more positive development if more women were included, to at least cover a fifty-fifty divide between women and men.

6 Conclusion
Through the analysis, the purpose of the essay should have been fulfilled and the questions below answered.

- What has caused the diplomatic locking in the Syrian civil war?

The factors causing the diplomatic locking in the Syrian war is a combination of several aspects. The responsibility and incapability of the UNSC to act are however clear. R2P establish that the UN is responsible for protecting the Syrian people due to the Syrian governments failed to do so. The diplomatic locking in Syria partly depends on the differences of how the nations within the UNSC interprets R2P. Some nations interpret R2P as a humanitarian lifeline and the humanitarian responsibility of the international community. Other nations interpret R2P as foreign intervention and a violation of a sovereign state.

The discord in opinions and wills of the member nations within the UNSC have resulted in a deadlock and incapability of reaching any efficient, united way of action on the Syrian case. The UNSC in disagreement on how to interpret R2P in combination with the extremely complex conflict, including multiple actors and terror organizations, explains some of the factors behind the diplomatic locking regarding Syria.

- How have the peace talks performed by the UN been designed in the first five years (2011-2016) of the Syrian civil war?

The UNSC couldn’t agree on any action with noticeable effect against the Syrian government within the timeframe 2011-2016. The UN has however worked with other tools towards reaching a peace agreement. The example brought forward in this essay is the work of the Secretary Generals Special Envoy for Syria. There have been three Special envoys for Syria within the timeframe. The envoys have utilized a humanitarian diplomacy design for the peace processes attempts. The Special Envoy closest to reaching his mission was Kofi Annan with his six-point plan. Lakhdar Brahimi, the second Special Envoy and later Staffan de Mistura both initiated peace conferences, Geneva II and Geneva III, but the attempts towards peace eventually both failed.

- How does women’s participation, if there is any, affect the peace talks in Syria?
The female inclusion is exemplified with Staffan de Misturas attempt as the Secretary Generals Special Envoy for Syria. De Mistura initiated and started the Women's Advisory Board, which were and still is functioning as a way to include female perspectives in the Syrian negotiations. The female perspectives in conflicts are crucial to achieving enduring and sustainable peace since men and women experience violence and war differently. The initiative by de Mistura deserves to be saluted, but details could be questioned. Why are the group of women only advisory and not decisionmaking? The Women's Advisory Board does only partly fulfill the aims of resolution 1325 since the resolution states, in paragraph 2, that women should be included in the decisionmaking process. (UNSC. 2000: S/RES/1325. Paragraph 2).

Paragraph 1 in resolution 1325 urges all member states to increase the number of women in conflict decisionmaking and negotiations. When evaluating the number of women represented at the negotiations table between the Syrian government and opposition, the estimates do not exceed 20%. The responsibility to fulfill the urge in paragraph 1 rests on the member state, in this case, Syria. However, the responsibility of the UN is to encourage and put pressure on its member states to fulfill their obligations and the common goals of the organization. Since the estimate of 20% female inclusion does not disclose either an increase or a decrease, it’s not possible to use paragraph 1 to state that the conditions regarding an increase of female participants have been met. However, one could direct criticism towards the UN for not encourage or push the Syrian state and opposition more to include more women in the negotiations. Further criticism could be directed towards the UN for not fulfilling its directives according to paragraph 2. As an alternative to the Women's Advisory Board, the UN should have created a Women's Decisionmaking Board.

- How do the preconditions for a diplomatic solution look like in Syria?
The preconditions for a diplomatic solution in Syria are unfortunately not promising. The mechanisms that during the timeframe of 2011-2016 were causing locking in the negotiations is still today, very much operative. During the timeframe and during the two years that have passed since the UNSC still haven't managed to agree. The most recent attempts of peace talks, facilitated by Staffan de Mistura, held in December 2017 have again, failed.

“A big missed opportunity, a golden opportunity at the end of this year, when in fact there is a clear indication from many sides that the military operations are coming to a close, the Da'esh (ISIS) territory is reduced to close to zero.”

(de Mistura, UN News Center. 2017).

Thus the preconditions for a peaceful Syria does shift with the defeat of ISIS. As mentioned in 3.5.2 Analytic tool: Coercive Diplomacy, the US focus, have during the timeframe been directed towards ISIS. By the time of writing, the preconditions for a shifted focus of the US, towards the Syrian people might be at its best since the start of the war. The question thus remains, does the US administration have the political will to end the war? Moreover, could the Security Council's members unite for a diplomatic solution for Syria?

6.1 Discussion

The coming year might be the year of relief for the Syrian people. As Mr. de Mistura stated, ISIS is almost military defeated. Hopefully, the previous international focus on the terror group might now shift towards the overall situation in Syria. In January 2018 new negotiations are expected to take place, initiated by Mr. de Mistura. If the UNSC remains deadlocked, the Special Envoy might be the best opportunity within the UN to reach peace in Syria. Due to the numerous actors with interest in the conflict, the UN should remain on the humanitarian diplomacy path, by reminding the actors involved to strive towards humanitarian standards with all tools possible. However, one has to keep in mind that the United Nations, that under R2P is held accountable for solving the conflict, consist of Nations United. As long as some nations interpret R2P as a tool for hostile foreign intervention and not as a tool for upholding human rights, the current decision-making process of the UN is not adapted to handle complex conflict efficiently. The UN and its various organs and formations are never stronger then the member states allow it to be. If all the UN member states allowed the UN to be a vital
and efficient organization, it would also interpret the duty of the member nations to obey the directives of the organization. Despite the problematic preconditions, continued inclusion of women as initiated by de Mistura could be a key to peace. More women in decision-making positions in the negotiations about Syria could eventually lead to resolving the conflict by the roots and the creation of a hopefully long-lasting peace in Syria.

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