

VOTING BY BRAZIL, ISRAEL, AND THAILAND IN UNITED NATIONS GENERAL ASSEMBLY RESOLUTIONS ON THE WAR IN UKRAINE: A COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS

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Abstract. The study examines the fluctuating voting behavior of states in the United Nations General Assembly resolutions on the war in Ukraine. Following the Eleventh Emergency Special Session of the United Nations General Assembly on February 28, 2022, the study investigates the factors influencing states' voting patterns and the discursive strategies employed to articulate national interests. Grounded in realism, the analysis focuses on Latin America, the Middle East, and Southeast Asia, with particular attention to Brazil, Thailand, and Israel. Employing Van Dijk's Critical Discourse Analysis, the study deciphers the rhetoric of representatives from these countries to reveal the role of the United Nations General Assembly and how countries utilize this platform. The findings reveal that the discourse of Brazil, Israel, and Thailand was predominantly driven by their national interests, focusing on promoting peaceful dialogue and critiquing the liberal international order. This study contributes to the broader academic literature on political realism showcasing the limitation of international institutions in addressing the global issues. We believe this study will be interesting for academics, policymakers, and practitioners seeking insights into the intricacies of international relations in times of crisis.

Key words: voting, resolutions, national interests, United Nations General Assembly, Brazil, Israel, Thailand.

Аңдатпа. Бұл зерттеу Біріккен Ұлттар Ұйымының Бас Ассамблеясының Украинадағы соғысқа қатысты қарарларындағы мемлекеттердің дауыс беру әрекеттерінің өзгермелі сипатын талдайды. 2022 жылғы 28 ақпанда өткен Біріккен Ұлттар Ұйымының Бас Ассамблеясының он бірінші төтенше арнайы сессиясынан кейін зерттеу мемлекеттердің дауыс беру үлгілеріне әсер ететін факторларды және ұлттық мүдделерді білдіру үшін қолданылатын дискурсивті стратегияларды зерттейді. Реализмге негізделген бұл талдау Латын Америкасы, Таяу Шығыс және Оңтүстік-Шығыс Азия аймақтарына, атап айтқанда, Бразилия, Тайланд және Израильге ерекше назар аударады. Ван Дейктің Сындарлы дискурс талдауын қолдана отырып, зерттеу осы елдердің өкілдерінің риторикасын шешіп, Біріккен Ұлттар Ұйымының Бас Ассамблеясының рөлі мен мемлекеттердің бұл платформаны қалай пайдаланатынын ашып көрсетеді. Нәтижелер Бразилия, Израиль және Тайландтың дискурсы негізінен ұлттық мүдделерге бағытталғанын, бейбіт диалогты алға жылжыту және либералды халықаралық тәртіпті сынауға басымдық бергенін көрсетті. Бұл зерттеу халықаралық қатынастардың дағдарыс жағдайындағы күрделілігін түсінгісі келетін ғалымдар, саясаткерлер және практиктер үшін қызықты болады деп санаймыз, сондай-ақ халықаралық институттардың жаһандық мәселелерді шешудегі шектеулерін көрсететін саяси реализм тақырыбына қосылған маңызды үлес болып табылады.

Түйінді сөздер: дауыс беру, қарарлар, ұлттық мүдделер, Біріккен Ұлттар Ұйымының Бас Ассамблеясы, Бразилия, Израиль, Тайланд.

Аннотация. В исследовании рассматриваются колебания в голосовании государств по резолюциям Генеральной Ассамблеи ООН по войне в Украине. Следуя за Одиннадцатой чрезвычайной специальной сессией Генеральной Ассамблеи ООН 28 февраля 2022 года, исследование изучает факторы, влияющие на характер голосования государств, и дискурсивные стратегии, используемые для артикуляции национальных интересов. Основанный на реализме, исследование фокусируется на Латинской Америке,

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Ближнем Востоке и Юго-Восточной Азии с особым вниманием к Бразилии, Таиланду и Израилю. Используя критический дискурс-анализ Ван Дайка, исследование расшифровывает риторику представителей указанных стран, чтобы выявить роль Генеральной Ассамблеи ООН и то, как страны используют данную платформу. Полученные результаты свидетельствуют о том, что в своих выступлениях Бразилия, Израиль и Таиланд руководствовались преимущественно национальными интересами, ставя во главу угла продвижение мирного диалога и критику либерального международного порядка. Данное исследование вносит вклад в более широкую академическую литературу по политическому реализму, демонстрируя ограниченность международных институтов в решении глобальных проблем. Мы считаем, что данное исследование будет интересно ученым, политикам и практикам, стремящимся разобраться в тонкостях международных отношений во время кризиса.

Ключевые слова: голосование, резолюции, национальные интересы, Генеральная Ассамблея ООН,

Introduction

In the aftermath of the Russian invasion in Ukraine, the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) called for the Eleventh Emergency Special Session on February 28, 2022 [1]. Discussions within this issue unfolded against a backdrop of heightened

battleground of ideas, providing a theater for expressing and defending these interests. In this context, the most powerful states shape and influence institutions, transforming them into “arenas for the actualization of power relations,” aiming to maintain or expand their influence [2]. As Van Dijk aptly opines, contexts have a controlling power that shapes what people say and especially how they say. This assertion underscores the significance of considering broader contextual factors, such as sociocultural, political, and personal circumstances that shed light on how influential nations strategically navigate international institutions [3].

Within the resolutions on the war in Ukraine, where every word carries weight, it is crucial to explore the discursive strategies employed by different countries under the auspices of the UNGA, as language plays a pivotal role in molding the execution of actions and the conduct of global politics, possessing the power to construct positive and destructive changes [4]. In other words, individuals receiving information are not merely passive listeners; they are subject to social influence and can be manipulated through text to achieve political or economic objectives [5]. Despite a profound understanding of the role language plays in this context, a research problem arises when scrutinizing states' voting behavior in UNGA resolutions on the war in Ukraine. The core issue is the complexity of deciphering countries' actions: while their

tensions among states, emphasizing the need for a meticulous understanding of their voting dynamics and behavioral shifts. In international politics, where national interests act as guiding beacons shaping state actions, each UNGA meeting become

verbal expressions may suggest a particular stance, unraveling the concealed national interests behind their words proves intricate. The added difficulty of oscillating behavior further complicates understanding the motivations at the heart of researching UN voting patterns.

Existing studies on UNGA voting behavior delve into the underlying reasons behind general patterns exhibited by states. Key themes include exploring the impacts of factors like foreign aid, trade, and intensive lobbying on states' voting tendencies [6, 7, 8]. These studies precisely aim to unravel the complexities of why certain countries demonstrate more sympathetic attitudes towards Russia or Ukraine [9, 10, 11]. A synthesis of the literature brings forth recurring themes, including economic dependence, military incentives, political ideology, and historical or personal affiliations. Moreover, in the exploration of theoretical approaches, this study deliberately focuses on realism as a framework providing nuanced insights into the intricate motivations that underpin states' behavior in the global arena. Studies within this perspective emphasize human nature as a driving force for politicians' foreign policy decisions, rooted in self-interest and pursuit of national survival in an anarchic international environment.

While existing research meticulously examines various factors influencing voting dynamics, a noticeable gap arises when discussing the discursive elements employed by countries in analyzing voting

behavior amid the complex conflict in Ukraine. The study aims to contribute to this area by examining various aspects of voting behavior. Specifically, the intention is to identify distinctive shifts in voting and systematically analyze official statements at the UNGA focusing on the discursive strategies of the speakers to decipher intricate discursive patterns they employ. Therefore, this research delves into states' voting behaviors in the UNGA amid the Ukraine conflict, addressing gaps in existing literature through Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA). It offers valuable insights into how countries

Literature Review

The study of the voting dynamics in the UNGA is a crucial tool for understanding the direction of foreign policy [12]. Delving into the intricacies of this diplomatic arena, where national interests manifest in significant votes, contemporary research focuses on uncovering potential explanations for voting changes during emergency UNGA sessions.

Within this framework, existing studies on countries' behavior in the UNGA often scrutinize the mechanisms by which bilateral trade and foreign aid from influential nations like the United States (US) and China shape voting patterns. Alexander and Rooney's research investigates whether the US utilizes foreign aid as a tool for "vote buying" in the UNGA [6]. Bailey et al. propose a dynamic model for assessing states' ideal points in UNGA voting, exploring how preference choice impacts the democratic world [7]. Additionally, the works of Brazys and Panke shed light on the "windows of opportunity" and intensive lobbying, influencing states' voting changes on recurring resolutions [8]. These findings emphasize that financially constrained states may be more flexible in their voting positions on repeated international resolutions. In a broader context of analyzing factors influencing voting dynamics, Lectican and Bingleiser investigate how US sanctions, especially when targeting aid-dependent countries,

articulate their national interests, thereby enriching an understanding of global diplomacy and power dynamics across academic, policymaking, and practitioner communities.

The article is structured as follows: an existing literature including theoretical framework will be reviewed in the second section, research method encompassing CDA and case sampling strategy will be discussed in the third followed by the data analysis in the fourth, results and discussions will be given in the fifth section, while a conclusive synthesis will finalize the study.

can shape voting similarity. The impact of natural resource exports and China's positive effect on political support on bilateral trade is studied by Che et al., Yan and Zhou, and Dreher et al., highlighting the voting alignment of some African nations with China's interests.

Literature in the academic sphere regarding the war in Ukraine is limited due to the relatively short time since this crisis garnered the global community's attention. Consequently, these studies primarily focus on identifying critical motives for choices and inconsistencies. This reflects a growing interest in understanding the intricacies of decision-making within the international community. Amighini and García-Herrero delve into various factors influencing countries' votes during the UNGA resolutions on the conflict in Ukraine, categorizing them into economic, defense cooperation, and soft power spheres [9]. Their findings reveal high voting model similarities when comparing and dividing votes along the Global South and Global North, as well as countries supporting the "Belt and Road Initiative" (BRI) and those not involved in the initiative. Farzanegan and Gholipour also concentrate on exploring potential economic-political, military, and historical-geographical factors that determine a country's voting behavior in favor of Russia, including the absence of military conflicts with the Soviet Union, similarity in political ideologies, and cooperation agreements in defense and trade spheres [10].

Mikami looks into numerous resolutions and systematically examines

factors such as existential threats, internal security dependence on Russia, historical friendship, and emotional aspects [11]. Contrary to common belief, the research shows that factors like trade dependence and emotional considerations are insignificant, emphasizing the dominance of authoritarianism and concerns about undermining internal security dependent on Russia's assistance.

Examining state voting dynamics in the UNGA unveils a multifaceted global political landscape, where major powers and power-constrained states alike engage in a complex interplay of national interests. However, despite the dearth of existing literature, we believe that more nuanced approach is still required. Firstly, the existing studies often focus on individual

Methods and Materials

This study seeks to address the following research questions:

1. Which states have exhibited fluctuating and distinctive voting behavior in the UNGA resolutions on the war in Ukraine?

2. What are the reasons behind the fluctuating and distinctive voting behavior of some states in the UNGA resolutions on the war in Ukraine?

First of all, the states' votes on all resolutions adopted during the Eleventh Emergency Special Session of the UNGA, centered on the war in Ukraine were scrutinized. The resolutions in question were ES-11/1, ES-11/2, ES-11/3, ES-11/4,

resolutions rather than providing a holistic view of voting changes across multiple resolutions in the Eleventh Emergency Special Session of the UNGA. Secondly, while existing studies specifically address the voting behavior of countries concerning the war in Ukraine, exploration focused on the states' national positions is still needed. Thirdly, the literature predominantly emphasizes on the roles of major powers', such as the US and China, voting patterns. Therefore, inclusion of other states' voting behavior will add value to the existing literature.

Thus, unraveling the intricacies of how these countries articulate their stances can contribute to addressing these gaps and providing a more nuanced picture of the global response to the war in Ukraine ES-11/5, and ES-11/5. After assembling a comprehensive overview of global voting patterns through the examination of publicly available data from the UN documents website (<https://research.un.org/en>), it was decided to focus on South America, the Middle East, and Southeast Asia. This focus was determined based on observable and noteworthy voting behavior distinctions (Table 1). For better understanding, it should be noted that countries when voting on UNGA resolutions can choose between "yes" (Y), "no" (N), "abstentions" (A), or "non-voting" (X).

Table 1.1: Latin America

Countries	ES-11/1	ES-11/2	ES-11/3	ES-11/4	ES-11/5	ES-11/6
Argentina, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Ecuador, Guatemala, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Uruguay	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Mexico	Y	Y	A	Y	Y	Y
Brazil, Belize, Guyana, Suriname	Y	Y	A	Y	A	Y
Honduras	Y	Y	Y	A	A	Y
Mexico	Y	Y	A	Y	Y	Y
El Salvador	A	A	A	X	A	A

Bolivia	A	A	N	A	A	A
Nicaragua	A	A	N	N	N	N
Venezuela	X	X	X	X	X	X

Table 1.2: Middle East and North Africa						
Countries	ES-11/1	ES-11/2	ES-11/3	ES-11/4	ES-11/5	ES-11/6
Kuwait, Qatar	Y	Y	A	Y	Y	Y
<i>Israel</i> , Libya	Y	Y	Y	Y	A	Y
Egypt, United Arab Emirates, Yemen, Oman, Bahrain, Tunisia, Jordan, Saudi Arabia	Y	Y	A	Y	A	Y
Iraq	A	Y	A	Y	A	Y
Lebanon	Y	Y	X	Y	A	X
Morocco	X	X	X	Y	X	Y
Algeria	A	A	N	A	A	A
Iran	A	A	N	X	N	A
Syrian Arab Republic	N	N	N	N	N	N

Table 1.3: Southeast Asia						
Countries	ES-11/1	ES-11/2	ES-11/3	ES-11/4	ES-11/5	ES-11/6
Myanmar, Philippines	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Timor-Leste	Y	Y	Y	Y	A	Y
Singapore	Y	Y	A	Y	Y	Y
Cambodia, Indonesia, Malaysia	Y	Y	A	Y	A	Y
Brunei Darussalam	Y	A	A	Y	A	Y
<i>Thailand</i>	Y	Y	A	A	A	Y
Vietnam, Lao PDR	A	A	N	A	A	A

Within these regions, Brazil, Israel, and Thailand were the nations that displayed the most notable and interesting voting patterns (Table 2).

Table 2: Countries with the most fluctuating voting dynamics

Resolution	Brazil	Israel	Thailand
ES 11/1 (Aggression against Ukraine)	Y	Y	Y
ES 11/2 (Humanitarian consequences of the aggression against Ukraine)	Y	Y	Y
ES 11/3 (Suspension of the rights of membership of the Russian Federation in the Human Rights Council)	A	Y	A
ES 11/4 (Territorial integrity of Ukraine: defending the principles of the Charter of the United Nations)	Y	Y	A
ES 11/5 (Furtherance of remedy and reparation for aggression against Ukraine)	A	A	A
ES 11/6 (Principles of the Charter of the United Nations underlying a comprehensive, just, and lasting peace in Ukraine)	Y	Y	Y

In comparison to other countries in Latin America, the Middle East and North Africa, and Southeast Asia, the votes of Brazil, Israel, and Thailand are distinguished by their behavior, which is neither repetitive, as it constantly oscillates between Y and A, nor easily attributable to a large group of countries whose decisions are more congruent. Furthermore, the cases were selected in accordance with the Most Different System Design (MDS) that presupposes the selection of dissimilar cases that demonstrate the similar outcomes [13]. Thus, being significantly different in many political, social and economic factors, Brazil, Israel, and Thailand exhibited similarity in their erratic voting patterns. For example, in terms of the political system, Brazil holds a presidential system, Israel is a parliamentary system, whereas Thailand is a constitutional monarchy. Against this backdrop, MDS allows to reveal whether there are generalized patterns between states as different as Brazil, Israel, and Thailand.

Secondly, to compare the voting behavior, this study applies CDA - the analytical approach that seeks to analyze how influential groups such as professors, journalists, lawyers, and politicians define discourse [14]. Therefore, the speeches of the UNGA ambassadors who fall into the category of specific actors who utilize their power not to shape but rather to broadcast the chosen political discourse of their

leadership. Furthermore, in addition to power, critical areas of CDA are domination, hegemony, ideology, social structures, social order, class, gender, race, discrimination, as well as institutions and interests [15]. It is the latter two aspects, in conjunction with the concept of power, that this study is concerned with. Consequently, application of CDA enables us to focus on how such countries as Brazil, Israel, and Thailand, through their powers, employ an institution such as UNGA as a platform to promote their agendas.

Finally, applying CDA, this study examined official records of speeches made by ambassadors of Brazil, Israel, and Thailand at the plenary meetings of the UNGA in 2022 and 2023 on the war in Ukraine, i.e., on the resolutions adopted during the Eleventh Emergency Special Session. Specifically, the study analyzed fourteen speeches — five from Brazil and Thailand and four from Israel — delivered at the third, fifth, ninth, tenth, eleventh, fourteenth, seventeenth, and nineteenth plenary meetings (Appendix 1). H.E. Mr. Costa Filho and H.E. Mr. De Almeida Filho spoke on behalf of Brazil, while the ambassadors of Israel were H.E. Mrs. Noa Furman and H.E. Mr. Gilad Erdan, along with representatives from Thailand H.E. Mr. Suriya Chindawongse and H.E. Mr. Supark Prongthura. The number of plenary sessions is considered appropriate, since it provided a sufficiently extensive and substantial base of discourse by Brazil,

Israel, and Thailand on the war in Ukraine. The records of the plenary meetings were accessed via the official website of the UN-affiliated Dag Hammarskjöld Library (<https://research.un.org/en/docs/ga/quick/mergency>). Also, all speeches were analyzed in English in the official UN translation, so there were no difficulties with the accuracy of the transmitted information that could potentially arise from relying on unofficial translations. Studying such sources is one of the most accessible and reliable ways of comprehending the common discourse of various nations.

Results

The data analysis section includes close examination of the six resolutions adopted during the Eleventh Emergency Special Session of the UNGA concerning the Ukrainian issue. Resolution ES-11/1, passed in March 2022, condemned Russian aggression and urged the withdrawal of its troops from occupied territories of Ukraine, initially garnering unified support from Brazil, Israel, and Thailand. Resolution ES-11/2, which tackled the humanitarian crisis, received unanimous support from these nations. Somewhat divergent voting, however, occurred at the voting for the Resolution ES-11/3 in April 2022 on suspending Russia from the UNHRC; Brazil and Thailand abstained while Israel supported the resolution. Resolution ES-11/4, adopted in October 2022 reaffirmed principles of Ukraine's territorial integrity and sovereignty, when Brazil and Israel supported the resolution, whereas Thailand abstained. In voting for the Resolution ES-11/5 in November 2022 all three states opted for abstaining as the Resolution laid accountability for Russia's violations of international law. Finally, Resolution ES-11/6 in February 2023 underscored the urgency of Russia's withdrawal from Ukraine, receiving unanimous support from Brazil, Israel, and Thailand.

These intricate voting patterns highlight the evolving perspectives of Brazil, Israel, and Thailand in response to the situation in Ukraine and almost unanimous international condemnation of Russia.

Brazil

An analysis of Brazil's discourse during UNGA plenary meetings, focusing on the Russia-Ukraine conflict, reveals distinct linguistic patterns and foreign policy alignments.

In Resolution ES-11/1, Brazil adopted a nuanced stance regarding Russia's aggression against Ukraine. During the 5th meeting on March 2, 2022, Brazil's Permanent Representative to the UN, H.E. Mr. Costa Filho, emphasized peace, ceasefire, dialogue resumption, de-escalation, agreement, and adherence to UN principles and international humanitarian law. Brazil urged both Russia and Ukraine to comply with these measures, refraining from publicly condemning Russia's actions and maintaining neutrality. Instead, Brazil criticized the UN for not playing a supportive role and for overly focusing on assigning blame, expressing dissatisfaction with its current dynamics. Mr. Costa Filho underscored Brazil's disapproval of broad sanctions and military deployments, advocating against universal condemnation and punitive measures towards Russia (A/ES-11/PV.5).

During the 9th plenary meeting on March 24, 2022, addressing Resolution ES-11/2 concerning the humanitarian impact of the Ukraine conflict, H.E. Mr. Costa Filho emphasized the urgency for a humanitarian solution to alleviate civilian sufferings. Specifically, he called on all UNGA participants, including Russia and Ukraine, to uphold humanitarian law and cease hostilities. However, Mr. Costa Filho also criticized the UN for what he described as the gradual erosion of rules against the use of force and its failure to present a unified voice. He underscored Brazil's frustration with the UN's approach, stating that "war begins when diplomacy fails," indicating dissatisfaction with current international diplomatic efforts. A significant aspect of Mr. Costa Filho's speech was his condemnation of "indiscriminate economic sanctions," arguing that such measures not only exacerbate economic hardship in already vulnerable countries recovering from the pandemic, but also harm their most disadvantaged populations (A/ES-11/PV.9).

At the 10th plenary meeting held on April 7, 2022, focusing on Resolution ES-11/3 to suspend Russia's membership rights in the UNHRC, Brazil's representative, H.E. Mr. Costa Filho, expressed concern about gross violations of human rights and humanitarian law in Ukraine.

At the 14th plenary meeting on October 12, 2022, the UNGA discussed Resolution ES-11/4, which focused on Ukraine's territorial integrity and UN Charter principles. Representing Brazil, H.E. Mr. De Almeida Filho emphasized on respecting states' territorial integrity and upholding international law. Brazil advocated for dialogue over nuclear threats and expressed frustration that its proposed initiative "to include a clear message urging the parties to cease hostilities and engage in peace negotiations was not included in the draft" (A/ES-11/PV.14). This aspect of De Almeida Filho's speech is indicative of the fact that Brazil has its own specific agenda it wishes to promote. Notably, Brazil abstained from voting and remained silent for the first time during the 15th plenary meeting on November 14, 2022, that focused on Resolution ES-11/5 concerning remedy and reparation for aggression against Ukraine. Moving forward to the 19th plenary meeting on February 23, 2023, that marked one year since Russia's intervention, Brazil re-engaged in discussions, supporting the UN Charter principles for achieving just and enduring peace in Ukraine.

Brazil's emphasis on promoting peaceful dialogue extends beyond rhetoric to active initiatives. Thus, in 2023, Brazil initiated formation of a coalition of nations dedicated to peacebuilding efforts. President Lula da Silva personally engaged with leaders of China, Portugal, Spain, and the UK to advocate for dialogue and diplomacy as essential pathways to peace.

Brazil's stance on the Ukraine conflict reflects a nuanced critique of global powers and their policies. President Lula attributed blame for the war to Putin's aggression but also criticized the US and EU for not formally forbidding Ukraine from joining NATO, which he viewed as contributing to the conflict escalation. This criticism aligns with sentiments expressed

by former President Jair Bolsonaro, who began questioning the UN during his 2018 campaign, suggesting Brazil might withdraw from the UNHRC [16]. Moreover, Brazil's current and past leaders have been vocal critics of Western sanctions against Russia. This stance is rooted in Brazil's historical experience with sanctions, particularly during the 1980s due to nuclear technology disputes with the US [17]. Brazilian officials, including H.E. Mr. Costa Filho and H.E. Mr. De Almeida Filho, have consistently opposed sanctions and even facilitated circumvention efforts for affected countries [18]. This critique of the liberal international order serves multiple purposes for Brazil. It positions Brazil as a voice challenging dominant global power while also drawing on historical grievances regarding the use of punitive measures like sanctions. This rhetoric not only shapes Brazil's diplomatic strategy but also resonates with domestic audiences, particularly those skeptical of Western influence.

Israel

At the 9th plenary meeting on March 24, 2022, where Resolution ES-11/2 was adopted, H.E. Mrs. Noa Furman represented Israel for the first time during this session. This marked Israel's sole instance of commenting on Israel's position and actions regarding the ongoing circumstances. Mrs. Furman strategically used phrases like "humanitarian assistance" and "humanitarian efforts" to depict Israel as actively addressing the humanitarian impact of Russian aggression. Her statement, "we will extend a helping hand to them, as has always been Israel's custom in such crises," underscored Israel's commitment to consistent humanitarian response, highlighting tradition and reliability. Mrs. Furman also noted Israel's positive relations with both parties involved in the conflict and its active engagement in mediation efforts, positioning Israel as a diplomatic mediator seeking resolution amidst the war (A/ES-11/PV.9).

During the 3rd plenary meeting of the Eleventh Emergency Special Session of the UNGA, H.E. Mrs. Noa Furman spoke assertively as the Israeli representative.

She condemned Russia's actions as a "serious violation of the international order" and emphasized the devastating impact of war. Mrs. Furman consistently used phrases like "territorial integrity," "sovereignty," and "diplomatic efforts," highlighting Israel's commitment to global peace and stability (A/ES-11/PV.3). Despite her critique, she also underscored Israel's long-standing and positive relations with both Russia and Ukraine, indicating a willingness to play a diplomatic role in mediating the conflict, which aligns with Israel's interests in maintaining ties with both nations.

During the 11th plenary meeting on April 7, 2022, H.E. Mrs. Noa Furman delivered a speech strongly condemning Russia's invasion of Ukraine, affirming Israel's steadfast opposition to the violation of Ukrainian sovereignty and the harm inflicted on civilians. She expressed Israel's support for Resolution ES-11/3, which addresses the suspension of Russia's membership rights in the UNHRC. Mrs. Furman then criticized the UNHRC for its long-standing credibility issues, accusing it of discriminatory practices against Israel. Specifically, she cited the establishment of a commission of inquiry in May 2021 that focused on Israel without addressing Hamas, suggesting bias and questioning the Council's impartiality in its treatment of member states. Her remarks underscored ongoing concerns about fairness within the Council's framework. Furthermore, Mrs. Furman referenced past international efforts to reform human rights mechanisms, noting the unsuccessful attempt in 2006 to replace the UN Commission on Human Rights (UNCHR). This critique reflected Israel's dissatisfaction with global initiatives aimed at improving human rights governance (A/ES-11/PV.11).

During the 17th plenary meeting of the Eleventh Emergency Special Session of the UNGA in February 2023, H.E. Mr. Gilad Erdan represented Israel. His address carried diplomatic weight as he affirmed Israel's steadfast support for Ukraine's sovereignty and territorial integrity, using diplomatic language to emphasize solidarity. Mr. Erdan strategically invoked the Jewish maxim "saving even one life is akin to saving the

entire world" to underscore Israel's value-driven approach and ethical stance. Furthermore, Mr. Erdan characterized Iran as a "global threat," employing assertive language to justify international action and frame Israel's concerns. He emphasized the imperative to act "for the sake of the Iranian people, for the Middle East, for Ukraine, and for the world," broadening the narrative to highlight global security and humanitarian imperatives (A/ES-11/PV.17).

In navigating the complexities of the Ukraine conflict, Israel finds itself in a delicate diplomatic position influenced by its relationships with major global powers. Traditionally aligned closely with the US, which strongly condemns Russia's actions, Israel must also balance its strategic ties with Russia, a pivotal player in regional dynamics including the Syrian conflict and Iranian interests. Israel's response has been marked by a commitment to humanitarian assistance rather than military involvement. The Israeli Ministry of Foreign Affairs, through its Agency for International Development Cooperation (MASHAV), dispatched substantial aid to Ukraine.

Criticism has arisen against Israel for its perceived neutrality in the Ukraine conflict, viewed by Ukrainian officials as leaning towards Russia [19]. This stance reflects Israel's security concerns, exacerbated by Russia's presence in Syria and warnings from figures like former Russian President Dmitry Medvedev about potential repercussions from aiding Ukraine militarily [20]. Despite calls for Israel to provide military assistance, leveraging its advanced Iron Dome air defense system, the country has opted for a cautious approach. This strategy aims to balance internal security interests with diplomatic considerations amid the ongoing conflict between Russia and Ukraine. In response to Israel's cautious stance, Ukraine supported an initiative at the UNGA's Fourth Committee on November 11, urging an urgent advisory opinion from the International Court of Justice on Israel's activities in Palestinian territories [21]. This move sparked dissatisfaction from Israeli authorities, leading them to abstain from voting on UNGA Resolution ES-11/5 adopted on November 14, which

addressed reparations for Ukraine (A/RES/ES-11/5). Israel's decision may have been influenced by concerns that supporting such a resolution could establish a precedent affecting issues related to Palestinian refugees.

While the voting dynamics in the UNGA underscore Israel's close relations with the US and the West, the country still needs to maintain its neutrality and effectively leverage its relationships with various blocs. For example, despite supporting Resolution ES-11/1 to mitigate its significance and avoid potential diplomatic conflict with Russia, Israel appointed Deputy UN Ambassador Noa Furman instead of Ambassador Gilad Erdan during the Emergency Session, with Erdan's office refraining from making any official comments [22]. Israel's support for Ukraine in UN resolutions reflects its long-standing pro-Western orientation, particularly evident in its military-economic relations with the US. This alignment is further underscored by Israel's status as the largest recipient of US vetoes at the UN, shielding against resolutions critical of Israeli policies [23]. Israeli policymakers consistently urge the UN to reform its approach towards the country, criticizing what they perceive as bias and politicization. Despite its alignment with Western positions, Israel refrained from severing economic ties or imposing sanctions on Russia, arguing the lack of a legal basis to target assets and individuals from a state not legally defined as hostile [24].

Thus, Israel's diplomatic maneuvers in the context of the Ukraine conflict highlight its strategic efforts to advance national interests while navigating complex international dynamics. By balancing support for Ukraine with maintaining relations across diverse global alliances, Israel aims to ensure security and stability amidst a turbulent geopolitical landscape.

Thailand

During the 5th plenary meeting on March 2, 2022, H.E. Mr. Chindawongse represented Thailand and voiced support for Resolution ES-11/1, citing adherence to principles in the UN Charter and international law, particularly emphasizing

sovereignty and territorial integrity (A/ES-11/PV.5). Thailand's diplomatic discourse, akin to strategies observed in speeches by Brazil and Israel, underscored its commitment to principled international relations. Mr. Chindawongse expressed deep concern for the humanitarian impact of the conflict, focusing on the suffering "in the area" without explicitly naming Russia or Ukraine. This deliberate choice reflects Thailand's cautious approach, avoiding premature attribution of blame.

During the 9th plenary meeting on March 24, 2022, H.E. Mr. Prongthura represented Thailand during discussions on Resolution ES-11/2. It was a notable shift as Thailand explicitly mentioned Ukraine for the first time, expressing concern about the humanitarian crisis and commending neighboring countries and others for swift humanitarian aid efforts. Mr. Prongthura emphasized the importance of international law, humanitarian principles, and dialogue between Russia and Ukraine. He also highlighted Thailand's ongoing humanitarian assistance through the Red Cross Society of Ukraine.

In the subsequent 10th plenary meeting on April 7, 2022, Thailand abstained from voting on Resolution ES-11/3. H.E. Mr. Chindawongse expressed the need for careful consultations, adherence to principles, verified facts, and consideration of consequences (A/ES-11/PV.10). By stating that "another life lost is another life too many, Thailand expressed regret over the conflict's escalation and reiterated calls for respecting humanitarian laws, and providing impartial aid.

At the 14th plenary meeting on October 12, 2022, Thailand abstained from voting on Resolution ES-11/3. H.E. Mr. Chindawongse justified this decision by highlighting Thailand's commitment to sovereignty, international law, and its aversion to violence or threats against other nations' sovereignty. He described the atmosphere surrounding the resolution as highly volatile and emotionally charged, which he believed hindered peaceful negotiations and could escalate to nuclear conflict and global economic collapse (A/ES-11/PV.14). Mr. Chindawongse criticized the increased politicization of

international principles and argued that condemnation of Russia could lead to further intransigence.

During the 19th plenary meeting on February 23, 2023, Mr. Chindawongse again spoke on behalf of Thailand, addressing the exacerbating factors in the Ukraine crisis. He criticized the politicization and discriminatory handling of humanitarian issues, escalation of military actions, imposition of additional sanctions, and oversimplified moral narratives that vilify Russia. Mr. Chindawongse advocated for dialogue and engagement, quoting Isaiah 1:18 "it is now time for all nations to come and 'reason together'," to emphasize the need for nations to reason together and pursue pragmatic diplomacy for achieving peace (A/ES-11/PV.19).

In summary, Thailand's representatives consistently emphasized adherence to international law and humanitarian principles, advocating for humanitarian assistance and dialogue between Russia and Ukraine while refraining from explicitly condemning Russia. This stance underscores Thailand's prioritization of neutrality in response to the conflict in Ukraine, as evidenced by its passive reaction and decision not to impose sanctions on Russia or supply weapons to Ukraine, aligning with ASEAN's principles of mutual respect for sovereignty [25, 26]. During UNGA voting, Thailand adopted a nuanced approach by

supporting some resolutions while abstaining from others, including Resolution ES-11/3, delineating commitment to transparency and impartiality in multilateral engagements. These abstentions may be linked to Thailand's preparations to host the APEC Summit, aiming to maintain diplomatic relations without causing friction, particularly with Russia [27]. These actions reflect Thailand's strategic diplomacy aimed at navigating complex geopolitical dynamics and preserving national interests and regional stability.

Furthermore, Thailand strategically utilizes its position in the UN to advance both economic and geopolitical interests, navigating a delicate balance with long-standing diplomatic ties to Russia. This relationship shapes Thailand's neutral stance on the conflict in Ukraine and supports its engagement in negotiations for a free trade agreement with the Eurasian Economic Union [28]. Recent high-level meetings between Mr. Thongphakdi and Russian envoy Evgeny Tomikhin, underscore the importance of maintaining and cautiously managing bilateral relations, reflecting Thailand's pragmatic approach to diplomacy [29]. Despite engaging in military-industrial cooperation post-2014 coup, Thailand's economic reliance on Russia remains secondary to partnerships with Vietnam and Myanmar [30].

Discussion and Findings

The results of the CDA indicate that the officials' rhetoric was often driven by the pursuit of the national interests of their respective governments. Moreover, there were specific common patterns among the selected countries, in particular, the

establishment of peaceful dialogue and judgment of the framework of liberal global governance.

Elevation of National Interests Over the Liberal Agenda

All officials frequently emphasized the significance of promoting peaceful dialogue as the only way to resolve the conflict. Based on Brazil's speeches at the

UNGA, it was clear that the country actively advocates the necessity of diplomatic negotiations. Moreover, this was also evident in its foreign policy actions, which aimed to implement initiatives to organize meetings between countries to find ways to achieve peace and engage in various UN entities. This proactive stance demonstrated that Brazil has consistently sought to strengthen and enhance its role in the international political arena. As for Israel, in the context of diplomatic relations, the country aims to maintain neutrality and balance between various stakeholders. Israel's dual approach to participation in the UN reflects its strategic interest in promoting its national ambitions, such as ensuring security and preserving diplomatic relations between the West and Russia.

Thailand supports the idea of peaceful dialogue to resolve conflicts as well. However, Thailand stands out with its more neutral position, driven by its support for ASEAN's calls for dialogue to settle and end the conflict, and potential long-term diplomatic ties with Russia. Thus, as part of its national strategy, Thailand adheres to a neutral position in the context of the conflict in Ukraine, aiming to ensure preservation of independent foreign policy.

Critique of the Liberal International Order

One important pattern of Brazil and Israel was their constant criticism of the liberal international order. For example, Brazil's representatives in the UNGA, along with the previous and current president of Brazil, have actively criticized the UN, the US, and the EU for not only failing to take active measures to resolve the conflict in Ukraine but also for exacerbating it by imposing sanctions on Russia. It is worth noting that Brazil itself was under US sanctions in the 1980s; since then, it has historically been against their application. Israel, in its engagement with the UN, underscores the shortcomings and biases of the UNHRC, highlighting its subjectivity, unequal recognition of Israeli rights, and the necessity to prioritize international resources towards real threats such as Iran or terrorist organizations in Palestine. This not only demonstrates Israel's pursuit of fair treatment for itself but also reflects its uncompromising stance on systemic deficiencies within international bodies that impact its position and security. Both Brazil and Israel's critique of the liberal international order aligns with realist thought, suggesting that international organizations often serve the interests of powerful states, such as the US and the EU, rather than fostering genuine multilateral cooperation. Their stance reflects a deeper realist skepticism about the efficacy of international institutions in promoting equitable global governance.

Conclusion

This study aimed to explore some standout voting behavior at the UNGA on the war in Ukraine. After examining all the resolutions of the Eleventh Emergency Special Session of the UNGA, we have

discovered that Latin America, the Middle East and North Africa, and Southeast Asia demonstrated the most bizarre voting behavior. Brazil, Thailand, and Israel particularly distinguished themselves from other nations within these regions. After selection of cases, we applied Van Dijk's CDA to explore the rhetoric and discourse of the selected countries' officials.

Our findings revealed national interests as shaping and advancing states' positions during UNGA deliberations. This becomes evident as states strategically emphasize the primacy of state sovereignty and security concerns. To explain and justify this phenomenon, it is appropriate to apply the theoretical framework of realism - a research tradition that points to human nature as the core explanation for politicians' foreign policy decisions. Individuals' essence, seen as selfish, self-interested, and unconcerned with moral principles, spurred also by an anarchic environment, favors the will of states to pursue a coherent agenda of their goals, which is not influenced by international institutions such as the UNGA [31, 32, 33, 2].

The analysis confirms that national interests, especially security concerns, dominate state behavior in UNGA deliberations. In line with realist theory, states like Brazil, Israel, and Thailand prioritize sovereignty over international norms, often acting independently of liberal international frameworks when their strategic interests are at stake. Hence, our study contributes to the broad academic literature on realism and critique of the liberal international order by illuminating the key role of national interests and international organizations in contemporary global affairs.

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Appendix 1. List of Plenary Meeting Records

1. A/ES-11/PV.3. 1 March 2022
2. A/ES-11/PV.5. 2 March 2022
3. A/ES-11/PV.9. 24 March 2022
4. A/ES-11/PV.10. 7 April 2022
5. A/ES-11/PV.11. 7 April 2022
6. A/ES-11/PV.14. 12 October 2022
7. A/ES-11/PV.17. 22 February 2023
8. A/ES-11/PV.19. 23 February 2023

Source: <https://research.un.org/en/docs/ga/quick/emergency>

БРАЗИЛИЯ, ИЗРАИЛЬ ЖӘНЕ ТАИЛАНДТЫҢ БІРІККЕН ҰЛТТАР ҰЙЫМЫНЫҢ БАС АССАМБЛЕЯСЫНДА УКРАИНАДАҒЫ СОҒЫСҚА ҚАТЫСТЫ ҚАРАРЛАРҒА ДАУЫС БЕРУІ: САЛЫСТЫРМАЛЫ ТАЛДАУЫ

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ГОЛОСОВАНИЕ БРАЗИЛИИ, ИЗРАИЛЯ И ТАИЛАНДА НА ГЕНЕРАЛЬНОЙ АССАМБЛЕЕ ОРГАНИЗАЦИИ ОБЪЕДИНЁННЫХ НАЦИЙ ПО РЕЗОЛЮЦИЯМ, КАСАЮЩИХСЯ ВОЙНЫ В УКРАИНЕ: СРАВНИТЕЛЬНЫЙ АНАЛИЗ БРАЗИЛИЯ, ИЗРАИЛЬ, ТАИЛАНД

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