

Lost in transition?

How the end of the Cold War affected Sweden's state identity & interests

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Abstract

During the beginning of the 1990's the world witnessed the collapse of the Soviet Union and subsequently the end of the Cold War. This gigantic change within the international system had large ramifications on how states interacted with each other. Within this context, Sweden had a unique position due to its identity of non-alignment combined with an interest for participation in international peacebuilding operations. What becomes interesting to examine is how the end of the cold war affected Swedish state-identity and interests. In this paper the authors conduct a comparative study between the Swedish participation in the peacebuilding missions in The Democratic Republic of the Congo (ONUC) and Afghanistan (ISAF) in order to identify differences in identity using the work of Alexander Wendt on state identity and interests.

Keywords: Sweden, ONUC, ISAF, Cold War, identity, state, interest, transformation

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I. Introduction

During the Cold War, Sweden followed a policy of non-alignment in order to avoid being “dragged” into a conflict between the United States and the Soviet Union. Since Sweden also had an interest to be active in international relations, it comes as no surprise that Sweden has participated in numerous international peace building missions.¹ Two of the largest peace building missions that Sweden has participated in are the missions in DRC (ONUC) and Afghanistan (ISAF) (Agrell, 2013, p.9, 32-33). But the fact that the missions were led by the U.N and NATO respectively raises the question of how Sweden could go from following a policy of political and military non-alignment to participating in a large NATO operation? A key factor in this puzzle of state behaviour is the fact that between these two missions, the Cold War ended.

How do we then analyse state behaviour? Social constructivism argues that state behaviour is connected to interests, identity and interaction (Wendt, 1999, p.233). If one then follows the notion that the behaviour of states is affected and partly constituted by its identity and interests, it raises the question of how state-identities and interests are created and interact with each other.

¹ “Peace building mission/operation” in this paper refers to all different types of UN –mandated operations; peacekeeping, - building, -enforcing, -sustaining etc.

II. Purpose and research question

The fact that Sweden participated in two very different operations in the ONUC and ISAF mission tells us that something has changed. The key here is the end of the Cold War. The question therefore becomes more of how the end of the Cold War has affected Sweden's state-behaviour. Following the social constructivist notion that state behaviour can be understood by examining identity and interests of states, leads us to the following research question:

How did the Collapse of the Soviet Union affect Sweden's state-identity and interests?

In order to answer this question we will use the work of Alexander Wendt to examine the process of state identity and interest formation while applying it to the two missions in order to highlight the differences in Swedish state identity and interest. We then argue that the end of the Cold War can explain the difference in our dependant variable; state identity and interest. Finally we will analyse the process of identity and interest transformation.

III. Theoretical framework

III.I. Previous literature

Concerning previous research and literature about our subject there is a large quantity of work that was available. Much has been research about the Swedish international peace building missions with focus on Sweden's involvement. Nils Sköld, Sofia Nyman Ekfeldt and Henrik Salander are some of the many researchers that have produced work about this subject (Sköld, 1994)(Ekfeldt, 1999) (Salander, 2002).

Within the field of state identity and interest formation there has been plenty of research conducted. Within this framework, we decided to use the work of Alexander Wendt concerning social theory of international politics. The theories used in this paper are primarily drawn from his book *The Social Theory of International Politics* (1999) and his paper about state identity and interests within anarchy (Wendt, 1992, p.391-425).

III.II. Theoretical premises

State identity is based on two dimensions, the internal and external. The internal or the state's self-image is how the state views itself. This idea comes from the collective identity of the individuals of the state combined with the culture that includes norms, institutions, rules, ideologies and organizations (Wendt, 1999, p.141-42). The second dimension is the external; or how other states, institutions and organizations view the identity of the state in question (Wendt, 1999, p.224). In other words, a state's identity is based upon both internal and external perception of self. The core of this identity is based upon the internal dimension, which affects its actions. This in turn affects the view states have on other states and how they view the state in question. This interaction of the two dimensions is subjective, meaning that the state has several identities that can arise depending on the situation (Wendt, 1999, p.224-225).

State behaviour then can be seen as something that is motivated by a variation of interests that are rooted in the state identity (Wendt, 1999, p.233). Wendt argues that all states have four general and universal interests that need to be fulfilled as requirement for state survival (Wendt, 1999, p.235-36). The four universal interests are:

- Physical survival refers to the survival of the state as a whole; territories and individuals can be sacrificed for this purpose.
- Autonomy refers to the ability of the society complex within the state to exert total control over itself.
- Economic well-being refers to the care of the state's resources.
- Collective self-esteem refers to the fundamental human need of feeling good about self in order to enjoy respect or status.

In other words the interaction of the self and other is the process in which states create their identities and interests depending on their view of self, other and interest. Wendt argues that this process of communication and interpretation between different actors is what creates the identities and interest of states (fig.1). When this process is repeated long enough, it will create relatively sustainable ideas of the actors own identity and others concerning the issue central to the interaction (Wendt, 1992, p.402-4).

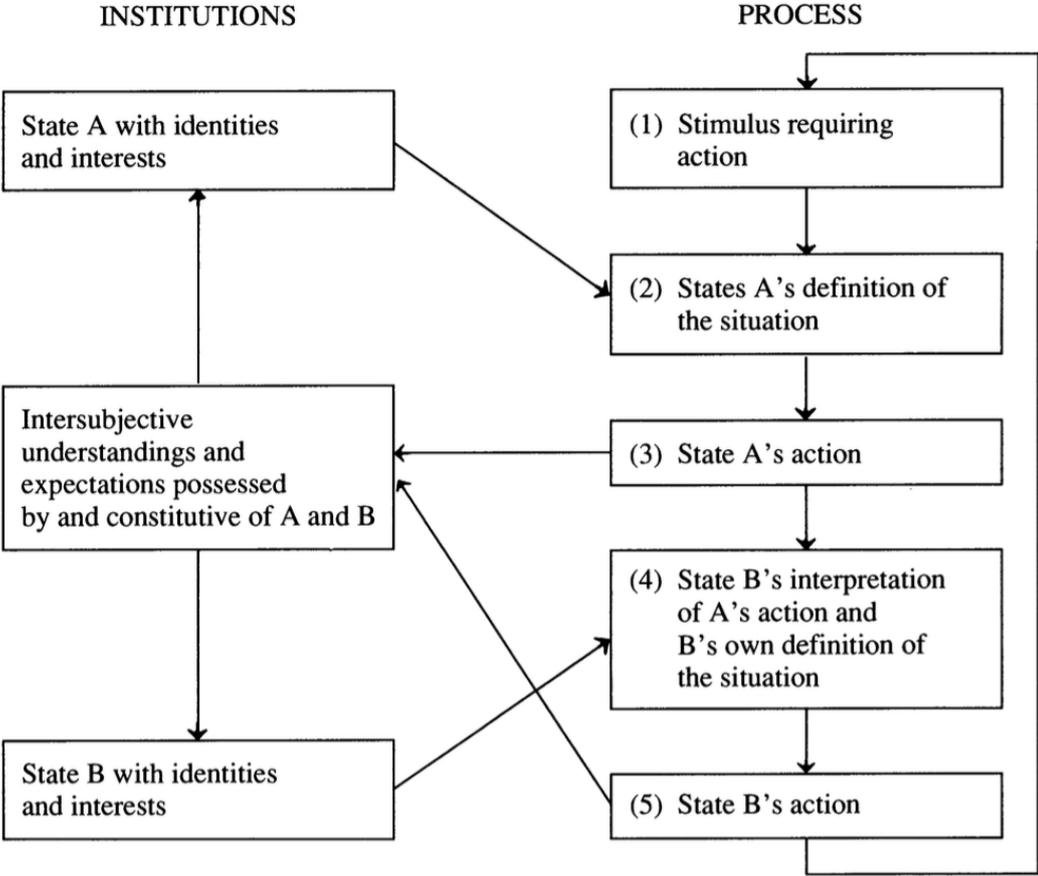


Fig.1 Codetermination of institutions and process (Wendt, 1992, p.406).

Because this interaction is the basis for the creation of identity and interest, the systems that are created are a product of the interaction of states. If a state finds itself in a competitive system it is not because of the anarchy but because of the actions of that state while interacting with other states (Wendt, 1992, p.407). In order to make the transition away from self-help competitive systems then, Wendt has identified three ways in which collective state identity and interest can be changed: the institution of sovereignty, evolution of cooperation and the transformation from egoistic to collective identities (Wendt, 1992, p.412-18). Since it's possible to transform the systems in which states are active, we can assume that states do not have fixed roles in their interaction with each other but assume different roles individually

depending on the situation (Wendt, 1992, p.419). Based on this notion then, it's also possible for states to transform their identities.

III.III. Critical strategic theory

Due to the fact that states' identity and interests are constructed through the interaction with others; states also have the capacity to individually reinvent their identities. Wendt stresses the fact that although this capacity exists, states cannot exercise this ability all the time since it would inhibit the existence of state order (Wendt, 1992, p.419). In order to use this capability, Wendt presents two preconditions for this process;

"The exceptional, conscious choosing to transform or transcend roles has at least two preconditions. First, there must be a reason to think of one self in novel terms. This would most likely stem from the presence of new social situations that cannot be managed in terms of pre-existing self-conceptions. Second, the expected costs of intentional role change the sanctions -imposed by others with whom one interacted in previous roles- cannot be greater than its rewards."(Wendt, 1992, p.419)

The process of intentional transformation has four stages:

1. Breakdown of consensus on identity commitments
2. Denaturalization
3. New practice
4. Reward by other actors

In this process there will first be a deterioration of the consensus of what the identity of the actor means. Secondly the actor will then critically examine ideas about self and strive to find new ones. Thirdly the actor will reinvent the identity of others in order to sustain the system of interaction mentioned earlier. And finally for the process to succeed, the actor needs to be accepted by the other through encouragement of the new practices initiated by the actor (Wendt, 1992, p.420-22).

The analysis of this paper will be based on the critical strategy theory and on how states intentionally can take steps to transform their identity and interests. By identifying the needed preconditions followed by the four stages of the transformational process, the authors found that this theory was suitable for the argument we present in this paper.

IV. Research design

IV.I. Method

This paper will be a comparative case study that examines how the end of the cold war has affected Sweden's state identity and interests.

First, we present the empirical background to the two missions and the discourse used in both cases. Using Wendt's, social constructivist theory of identity formation we will analyse the empirical material in order to get an idea of what Sweden's identity and interests was during both missions. We will then highlight the differences in order to prove that there is a notable difference between the missions. Finally, we use the critical strategic theory of Wendt to identify the preconditions of intentional identity transformation and analyse the four steps of identity transformation and apply them the behaviour of Sweden during the beginning of the 1990's at the end of the Cold War.

IV.II. Case selection

We chose the cases of ISAF and ONUC due to three reasons:

- The fact that the missions have a long enough time period between them (1960-64 & 2001-14), which provides the study with a better base for analysis.
- The large difference between these two operations. In the case of ONUC it was a United Nations mission while the ISAF mission was a NATO-led mission with a United Nations mandate. Simply the fact that Sweden would participate in a NATO-led mission despite its policy of non-alignment proves a shift in Swedish peace building mentality and identity.
- Finally, these two cases were also chosen due to the large amount of personnel and resources that Sweden contributed to these missions. The ONUC and ISAF missions are two of the largest missions that Sweden has participated in to date (Agrell, 2013, p.9, 32-33).

IV.III. Material

The material used for the comparative study of the two missions context are United Nations resolutions, governmental prepositions, interviews and official statements concerning the missions.

The various United Nations Security Council resolutions concerning the two peace building operations respectively are in our opinion one of the important aspects that need to be analysed. There are of course many resolutions concerning these operations, especially in the case of Afghanistan in which the peace building operation in some respect to-date has lasted over 14 years. We feel that those resolutions preceding and deciding upon the peace building operations are the most important for our study, along with the resolutions that notably

changed the characteristics of the operations and thereby the Swedish commitment and involvement.

The various governmental propositions, interviews and official statements are used because they provide the paper with an understanding of the Swedish mentality and discourse regarding Sweden's participation in the peace building missions. This material also provides an idea of how the Swedish government² viewed its own identity and interests in relation to the operations.

Finally a combination of various literature and research was used for the papers theoretical and empirical purpose. An important requirement of the material used was its relative political and ideological impartiality.

² "Government" in this paper refers to the Swedish executive power.

V. Collected data

V.I. The Democratic Republic of the Congo

V.I.I. Security Council resolutions

On the 14th of July 1960, the Security Council adopted the first major resolution concerning “The Congo Question”. With eight votes to none, and three abstentions, the Security Council adopted resolution 143 in which it [*Considering* the request for military assistance addressed to the Secretary-General by the President and the Prime Minister of the Republic of the Congo] - [*Called upon* the Government of Belgium to withdraw its troops from the territory of the Republic of the Congo] and [*Decided* to authorize the Secretary-General to take the necessary steps ... to provide the (DRC)³ Government with such military assistance as may be necessary ...], among a few other points regarding report-duties etc.(UNSC res. 143; 1960). This was not a very complicated decision; the officially recognized government of a sovereign nation had requested military assistance from the United Nations in order to deal with their national security situation. In other words, the UN was invited to the country and therefore the only real question was whether to grant military assistance or not; which as we know, it did.

On the 22nd of July and 9th of August, the Security Council adopted resolutions 145 and 146 respectively. In these relatively similar resolutions, the Security Council first and foremost [*Noted*... that the arrival of (UN) troops... has already had a salutary effect], [*Recognized* ... an urgent need ... to increase such efforts (**military assistance**)], [... *called upon* the Government of Belgium to speedily implement ... resolution 143(1960) ... on the withdrawal of its troops and authorizing the Secretary-General to take all the necessary action to this effect], [*Reaffirmed* that the (UN)-force ... will not be a party to or in any way be used to influence the outcome of any internal conflict ...] and lastly [*Called upon* all member states ... to accept and carry out the decisions of the Security Council and to afford mutual assistance ...] (UNSC res-s. 145, 146; 1960). The most interesting parts of these two resolutions are the facts that they bear evidence of an unwillingness by Belgium to withdraw its troops, even under international pressure and what is even more important is that in these resolutions the Security Council clearly states the standpoint of the UN; that it will not in any way be an influential part to the outcome of the internal conflict in the DRC – something that probably should be interpreted as the UN-force being in the DRC solely for the purpose of the implementation of Security Council resolutions.

After three major resolutions and more than half a year of UN involvement in the DRC, the situation had deteriorated further, as can be seen in Security Council resolution 161 of 21st of February 1961. In this resolution the Security Council [*Noted* ... the development of a serious

³ All in **bold** added/abbreviated by author for clarification.

civil war situation ...] and explained its '[*Grave concern* at ... continuing deterioration ... situation in the Congo ... which seriously imperil peace ... and threaten international peace and security] , it further [*Urged* that the United Nations take all appropriate measures to prevent the occurrence of civil war ...], and again [*Urged* ... the immediate withdrawal ... of all Belgian and other foreign military and paramilitary ... not under (UN) Command, and mercenaries], also [*With deep regret and concern noted* the systematic violations of human rights and fundamental freedoms ...]. In this resolution the Security Council recognizes the occurrence of civil war in the DRC and explicitly points out that foreign forces; both military and paramilitary are still active in the DRC, despite previous resolutions. For the first time, mercenaries are mentioned and violations of human rights and freedoms are specifically recognized. (UNSC res. 161; 1961)

The last major resolution adopted by the Security Council concerning the DRC is resolution 169 of 24th of November 1961. In this resolution, the Security Council specifically outlined the intentions of the UN in the matter, namely; (a) maintaining the territorial integrity and political independence of the Congo, (b) assisting the central (recognized) government, (c) preventing the occurrence of civil war, (d) securing the immediate withdrawal of foreign military personnel not under UN command and rendering technical assistance (UNSC res. 169; 1961). The Security Council further escalated the rhetoric by [*Authorizing* the Secretary-General to take vigorous action, including ... requisite measure of force, ..., for the immediate ... deportation of all foreign military and paramilitary personnel ...] and also [*Declared* the full and firm support for the Central Government of the Congo and the determination to assist that Government, ...]. If not before, then surely after this resolution, the UN standpoint in the matter was very clear. The resolution enabled peacekeeping forces to take firm, violent action for the implementation of the UN intentions.

V.I.II. Discourse and arguments

Shortly after the adoption of resolution 143, the Secretary General of the UN, Swedish Dag Hammarskjöld requested on 17th of July that Sweden send peacekeeping troops to the DRC. Even if those, mainly North African troops already on the scene had managed to improve the situation, there was a need of white troops due to the fact that the white population of the DRC had a hard time distinguishing the African UN-troops from those of the Congolese National Army, resulting in fear and insecurity. The Swedish political leadership deemed supporting UN a very important matter and thus only a day later, on the 18th of July, decided to grant the Secretary Generals request (Sköld, 1994:45). Later that day, the current minister of foreign affairs Östen Undén commented the decision in a live radio broadcast:

“It is a mission of great responsibility that has been given the Swedish contingent [...] The contingent is not meant to take part in in battle or in any way act in line with any political

program or interfere in national (Congolese) affairs.” (Undén, 1960, as cited in Sköld, 1994, p.45)⁴

Already in this early stage, the Swedish leadership clearly outlined the premises of the Swedish contribution to ONUC along with an emphasis on what an important responsibility the troops from Sweden had been given and thus how important the Swedish contribution in itself was. On The 28th of August, minister of defence Sven Andersson clarified the Swedish participation in ONUC in a statement:

“The mission of the Swedish Armed Forces is keeping the peace. Our own peace is highly correlated to the development of the international situation. [...] the ability to engage in UN peacekeeping efforts should therefore be an as big as possible natural aspect of the continuous work of the armed forces.” (Andersson, 1960, as cited in Ekfeldt Nyman, 1999, p.43)

When the matter of sending a new Swedish contingent to the DRC came up on the Swedish political agenda during the autumn and winter of 1960, the support for sending new troops was strong. It was emphasized that a developed and militarily strong country such as Sweden had a responsibility for international peace and security, as stated by minister of foreign affairs Östen Undén:

“Primarily, we are responsible for the contribution to peace in our part of the world. This we seek through independent, neutral politics. [...] as part of this commitment we keep a strong armed force... at the same time we strive to, on the basis of our power and the principles of the UN charter, contribute to the development of peaceful cooperation between peoples. (Undén, 1960, as cited in Ekfeldt Nyman, 1999, p.47)

As the situation in the DRC deteriorated further during 1961 (Sköld, 1994, p.60-64) and the Swedish commitment became associated with greater risk, the public opinion in Sweden against the UN as well as the ONUC mission increased. Simultaneously, it became harder for the Swedish government to motivate the Swedish commitment to the public due to the increase of risk for Swedish troops. Continued commitment was motivated as follows by minister of defence, Sven Andersson:

“The Swedish contribution to the UN must be seen in the context of our non-aligned and peacekeeping political agenda. For the Swedish government, it has been natural to, in accordance with our capacity, support the endeavours of the UN to create peace and security world-wide. The Congo crisis is no exception.” (Andersson, 1961, as cited in Ekfeldt Nyman, 1999, p.48)

The Swedish government further motivated its' continued commitment to the ONUC mission through the previously stated agenda of supporting national independence and autonomy.

“In the situation that has now been brought into light, it is more important than ever that the principle of autonomy and not least the right to, without moral or political reprehension,

⁴ This; and all of the following citations have been translated from Swedish by the authors.

choose an independent neutral political agenda; as soon as possible is recognized and realized in all parts of the world.” (Undén, 1961, as cited in Ekfeldt Nyman, 1999, p.49)

During late 1961 and early -62, the Swedish intentions in the DRC were forcefully and clearly outlined after criticism from both the public and international opinion had escalated rapidly, mainly due to vague and inconsistent news-reporting of the situation in the Congo. It is also widely suspected that an extensive psychological warfare-operation was being conducted against the UN and its’ supporters in the Congo at this time (Ekfeldt Nyman, 1999, p.53-54). As a response to the criticism, minister of foreign affairs Östen Undén gave the reply:

“It has been questioned whether the Swedish troop-contribution in the Congo is compatible with its traditionally neutral political agenda. [...] the Congo mission does not conflict with our political agenda of neutrality. [...] Swedish soldiers and officers have shown good discipline and generally acted honourably. We have no other motives in the Congo and do not wage war in the country, our motives are altruist. (Undén, 1961, as cited in Ekfeldt Nyman, 1999, p.54)

The six citations above together show the standpoint of the Swedish political leadership regarding the Swedish contribution to the ONUC mission. The motives and arguments remained more or less consistent throughout the Swedish commitment in the DRC and have been maintained long after.

V.II. Afghanistan

V.II.I. Security Council resolutions

The first resolution concerning Afghanistan (even if this was not known at the time), was Security Council resolution 1368 of 12th of September 2001, the day after the 9/11 terrorist acts against the USA. In this resolution, the Security Council and UN as a whole condemned the terrorist actions and called on all states and the international community to work together and increase their efforts in order to bring those responsible for the attacks to justice and to prevent and suppress future acts of terrorism. Lastly, the Security Council announced its’ [...readiness to take **all** necessary steps to ... combat terrorism ... in accordance with ... the Charter of the (UN)] (UNSC res. 1368, 2001) On 28th of September 2001, the Security Council adopted resolution 1373 in which various aspects of the global terrorist threat were specified along with specific recommendations and commandments for all member states regarding the combatting of terrorism worldwide, his resolution however does not mention either Al-Qaeda or Afghanistan (UNSC res. 1373, 2001).

By November 2001, the US and its’ allies had begun the military operation in Afghanistan after evidence of the country harbouring Al-Qaeda had come in to light. On 14th of November, the Security Council adopted resolution 1378 in which it [*Supported* international efforts to root out terrorism, in keeping with the Charter of the United Nations, ...]. It further recognized the urgency of the security and political situation in Afghanistan and expressed its’

deep concern regarding the grave humanitarian situation and the violations of human rights and international humanitarian law by the Taliban in the country (UNSC res. 1378).

Even if not being a Security Council resolution the Bonn Agreement, adopted on 5th of December 2001, was an important milestone for the developments in Afghanistan. This agreement consisted mainly of a framework for an Afghan interim government that would be in power until the security situation in the country was good enough for democratic elections to be held. The agreement also consisted of the establishment of an international security assistance force, ISAF, which under UN-mandate would be deployed to Afghanistan to assist the Afghan armed forces in ensuring security and stability. The establishment and deployment of ISAF was finally authorized through Security Council resolution 1386 of December 20th, 2001. In this resolution, the Security Council also called upon all member states to contribute personnel and resources to ISAF and [*Authorized* the Member States participating in the International Security Assistance Force to take all necessary measures to fulfil its mandate] (UNSC res. 1386, 2001)(Bonn agreement, 2001).

On 27th of November 2002, almost a year after the establishment of ISAF, the Security Council adopted resolution 1444. This resolution [*Determined* that the situation in Afghanistan still constituted a threat to international peace and security] and clearly stated its' determination to ensure the full implementation of the ISAF mandate. In line with this, the resolution prolonged the mandate by another year and reaffirmed its' authorization to take all necessary measures to fulfil the mandate, thereby giving ISAF a broad spectrum of choices in the fulfilling of the UN-mandate. (UNSC res. 1444, 2002) The Security Council resolutions concerning Afghanistan and ISAF during the following years were mainly adopted in order to prolong and in some cases expand or otherwise change the mission, the main objective of the mission however remained relatively unchanged.

V.II.II. Discourse and arguments

In the wake of the 9/11 attacks on World Trade Centre and the United Nations Security Council resolutions adopted concerning this matter during the autumn of 2001, the Swedish government for the first time handed a proposition to the *Riksdag*⁵ concerning the contribution of 45 Swedish soldiers to the ISAF mission, on 28th of December 2001. In this proposition, signed by current Prime Minister Göran Persson, the requested Swedish contribution was motivated as follows:

“Previous attempts to stop twenty years of violent conflicts in Afghanistan have failed. For the first time, the world community acts united in the strive to accomplish peace in Afghanistan. [...] Increased security in Afghanistan is of great importance. [...] Sweden has for a long time been a humanitarian contributor to Afghanistan. [...] A better security situation is a prerequisite for effective humanitarian support in the country. A Swedish contribution to a peacekeeping force would be consistent with the already big commitment in

⁵ Swedish legislative power, eq. “Parliament”

Afghanistan and would also give proof of a Swedish will to actively take on a wide responsibility for the UN:s peace building endeavour in Afghanistan.” (Prop 2001/02:60)

During the next few years, new propositions had to be presented to the *Riksdag* in order to prolong the Swedish contribution to ISAF, they did not differ much and all had the same main arguments in favour of continued Swedish contribution:

“The greatest threat to a continued positive development in Afghanistan is a continued serious and unpredictable security situation. [...] It is the view of the government that [ISAF] has a decisive role to play in the future peaceful development in Afghanistan. [...] the Swedish contribution has thus far effectively been able to contribute to increased security in the area of operations. A continued Swedish contribution is consistent with the already great commitment in Afghanistan. (Prop 2001/02:179) (Prop 2002/03:21)

The first major change in the Swedish commitment in Afghanistan was presented in a proposition handed to the *Riksdag* by the government on 27th of October 2005. In this proposition, the government did not only propose a continued Swedish contribution but also increasing the contribution to 375 troops. Previously, the *Riksdag* had on 26th of May 2004 approved the increase from 45 to 150 troops and also approved that Sweden would take part in a PRT – Provincial Reconstruction Team (UFöU2, rskr. 2003/04:245) in the northern province of Mazar-e-Sharif. The more than double increase of the Swedish contingent was motivated as follows:

“The UN Security Council has authorized [ISAF] in accordance with the VII chapter of the UN-charter. The decision of the Security Council thus states a clear connection to International Humanitarian Law. [...] The country is still tormented by weak institutions and a fundamental lack of security and stability. [...] the government concludes that a negative development in Afghanistan could have serious consequences for regional and global security, including our own security. [...] It is in the interest of Sweden to contribute to such a [positive] development. Around 80 per cent of the heroin sold in Sweden today originates from Afghanistan.” (Prop 2005/06:34)

On November 24th 2005, the Swedish contingent suffered its first casualties. One soldier was killed and another three were wounded, two of them seriously. After almost four years of Swedish presence in Afghanistan without any Swedes killed, this event came as a shock for the Armed Forces, the political leadership and the public opinion in Sweden. Current minister of defence Leni Björklund commented the loss of a Swedish soldier the following day:

“[...] we must of course always consider the risks we expose ourselves to. It is important to analyse whether further training is needed for missions such as this [ISAF]. [...] We have to remember why we are on scene [in Afghanistan]. It is to prevent the establishment of terrorism. Sweden has been a donor of humanitarian aid in Afghanistan for 25 years and we are there to ensure that girls can go to school and to prevent the widespread opium production, which in the end affects us as well. (Björklund, 2005)

A week later, the Swedish newspaper Dagens Nyheter interviewed minister of defence Björklund on the recent fatal casualty in Afghanistan. The Swedish public wanted answers and Björklund commented on the Swedish commitment;

“Our commitment is not without risk. [...] ISAF (and thus Sweden) is in Afghanistan to create vital security around the reconstruction-process. [...] The Swedish Afghanistan-committee⁶ has worked there for 25 years and the local population has a confidence in swedes since we did not go home when the war against the Soviet Union ended. (Björklund, 2005)

One of the probably most specific and elaborated official answers as to why Sweden contributes troops to ISAF was given by current minister of defence Sten Tolgfors through his debate article “*Why Swedish soldiers fight in Afghanistan*” on 28th of July 2009;

“We are in Afghanistan both for the sake of Afghans and ourselves. The human rights are universal and apply also to Afghans. Their security is now threatened [...] But Sweden is also in Afghanistan because it affects Sweden’s own security. One cannot let a nation fall apart and be taken over by terrorists. [...] Today, Afghanistan is a country in which two million girls go to school. But schools are still burned down, schoolgirls threatened and exposed to violence [...]. Today, 80 per cent of the population has access to basic healthcare. Before [ISAF] this number was around 8 per cent. Today, Afghanistan has a democratically elected government and president. [...] Without ISAF [...] Afghanistan would soon fall back into civil war, oppression and dictatorship. [...] Sweden is in Afghanistan because it affects Sweden’s own security. The 9/11 attacks showed that in a globalized world, [...] regional problems can have a global effect. [...] No nation can simply shut the door and believe that the problems will go away. Afghanistan produces 90 per cent of the worlds’ opium [...] which in turn damages and hurts European societies. [...] This is why Sweden contributes with both civilian and military resources, together with 40 other countries in Afghanistan - to make a difference. (Tolgfors, 2009)

⁶ Non-governmental Swedish aid organization established in 1980, focused on Afghanistan and active there since 1982.

VI. The end of the Cold War

The United Nations was founded to be the organisation that had the legitimacy and resources to promote and work towards collective humanitarian goals that most states supports. During the Cold War, the United Nations was also the primary organisations that performed “peacekeeping” operations which at the time meant the deployment of a military unit to separate, and oversee that former belligerents followed agreed peace-agreements (Paris, 2004, p.13). When deployed, the majority of U.N peacekeeping efforts made great efforts to stay out of domestic politics for good reason. First, involvement in domestic politics was against the U.N charter. Second, in order for the U.N to have a greater role in in the process of peace building, they needed the consent from the parties involved. Third, the permanent members of the U.N Security Council, generally was against the idea of involving the U.N in the domestic affairs of their allies and interest areas. Finally the ideological differences between the western and eastern blocs made it impossible for the U.N to have any particular model of domestic governance (Paris, 2004, p.14-15). Although the U.N was supposed to provide a platform in which states could communicate and solve different disputes without the use of force, it was many times handicapped due to the Cold War.

Many of these conditions however changed with the end of the Cold War. With the end of the war, the US and the Soviet Union both looked to distance themselves from expensive foreign alliances and therefore had no issue with international organizations stepping in and assuming great responsibilities (Paris, 2004, p.16). The political and economic void that the end of the cold war left behind, had now be filled by a collection of international organizations such as the EU, NATO, the OAS, the IMF, the World Bank and a host of international NGO:s that where active in tasks of development (Paris, 2004, p.21-22).

Of all these organizations, special focus can be put on the E.U and NATO. During the Cold War the E.U produced limited efforts to advocate democracy outside its borders. But with the end of the war the E.U started a period of expansion and consolidation of former states of the eastern bloc. Beside it’s activity in Europe, the E.U also emerged as one of the world’s most powerful promoters of democracy in the 1990’s (Paris, 2004, p.26-27).

NATO, which was founded as a military alliance to guarantee the safety of its members from the threat of the eastern bloc, changed its function after the Cold War when the threat of the Soviet Union grew weaker. From its start as guarantee of safety, the alliance started to promote cooperation, democracy and collective security though its partnership for peace program (Paris, 2004, p.27-28).

From a Swedish perspective the end of the Cold War had had large implications on how Sweden interacted with other states and viewed itself. With the end of the Cold War, the threat from the Soviet Union and its allies decreased drastically. At the same time, the growing role of the E.U, U.N, NATO and various other international organizations was creating new possibilities for Sweden to interact on the global stage (Pallin, 1998, p.93).

VII. Analysis

VII.I. State identity and interests in ONUC

The ONUC mission in the DRC was conducted from 1960 – 64. This was one of the tensest and most unstable periods of the Cold War and global actors were very careful in their international engagements. Despite this global situation, the UN was able to formulate and take steps to implement its intentions in the DRC. Regarding the Congo crisis, the UN formulated its motives for involvement mainly in the manner of defending universal human rights, partly by preventing conflict and suffering; and by the strive not to allow neither east nor west to gain influence in the Congo.

In 1960 when the Swedish government received the request for a contribution of troops to the ONUC mission, it granted this request very quickly. The official motives expressed regarding the Swedish contribution remained generally the same throughout the mission. The government repeatedly maintained that the country's commitment to the UN and its work was of the utmost importance and a very important part of the current Swedish political agenda.

The Swedish involvement was motivated by frequently referring to the importance of the UN charter and principles of peace, freedom and human rights. To a much lesser extent, the government mentioned global and Swedish security. Altruism was also mentioned, however not frequently. What also was mentioned repeatedly was the fact that Sweden involvement in this mission did not go against its identity of non-alignment since it was a United Nations mission.

To summarize, what becomes clear by analysing the empirical material of the ONUC mission is the fact that Sweden motivated its participation in operation due to its state interest of promoting human rights and peace. What also is evident is the fact that Sweden viewed the U.N as a non-aligned actor in world politics. By doing this, Sweden could argue that its participation in the ONUC mission did not in any way go against its own identity and policy of non-alignment. Sweden's identity of political neutrality also comes up as a right of every state if they choose to.

VII.II. State identity and interests in ISAF

The ISAF mission in Afghanistan has, not surprisingly, been very different regarding both the context of the international situation and the goals of the UN. The ISAF mission was established in late 2001 and followed an American invasion of Afghanistan conducted earlier that year. The Cold War had ended over a decade ago and there was no longer an eastern bloc. Large parts of the world had become widely globalized and the UN could be far more vigorous than during the Cold War. In Afghanistan, as opposed to Congo in the '60s, the UN motivated the mission in Afghanistan mainly by referring to the importance of preventing international terrorism and preventing, to an as great extent as possible, the occurrence of

failed states. It maintained that failed states such as Afghanistan could easily result in spill-over effect; destabilizing whole regions and affecting international security.

When it comes to Afghanistan and the ISAF mission, the political discourse and motives rather focused on mainly the long Swedish humanitarian commitment in Afghanistan prior to ISAF. Along with this, the need to ensure global security, and thus security for Sweden by countering and preventing terrorism was frequently brought up in advocacy for the Swedish involvement. A third repeatedly used argument was that of helping the Afghan society and population by ensuring universal human rights. Swedish responsibility towards the UN as such was mentioned only sporadically and never used as a concrete argument.

To summarize, while examining ISAF how Sweden views itself here is not clear. However, just the fact that Sweden is participating in a NATO-led operation hints to the fact that the state-identity of non-alignment from the Cold War times has changed. What have remained from this era though; is Sweden's commitments to promoting humanitarian beliefs. National and collective security from terrorism and drugs are also used as interests that motivate participation in the ISAF mission.

VII.III. Case differences

When comparing the examined empirical cases and their discourses we found large differences in what was motivated as state interest in the different missions as well as what could be interpreted as the view of self.

In the case of self-image, the identity of non-alignment that can be found in the ONUC discourse is not as clear in the case of ISAF. Also, the Swedish state-interests that are presented in the case of ONUC also go through a change. While peace, human rights, freedoms and Swedish commitment to human rights are the main arguments in ONUC, they have changed to national and collective security, commitment to humanitarian aid and the combatting of terrorism.

What can be clearly seen here is that there is a large difference not only in the empirical cases but also in the state identity and interest. As this paper has argued earlier, we believe that this change in state identity and interest is due to the end of the cold war.

VII.IV. The transformation of the Swedish state-identity

Using the framework of Wendt, we have identified the two preconditions that are needed in order for an intentional change of state identity and interest as made evident by the different state identities and interests in the ISAF and ONUC missions. The collapse of the Soviet Union and the subsequent end of the cold war was an historical event in which the entire international system changed. This event was at the same time extremely significant especially for the Swedish state-identity since the context in which Sweden based its policy and identity of non-alignment was gone (Prop. 1991/92:100, Annex. 4 p.10). In essence Sweden now found itself in a social situation in which there was a reason for re-evaluation of

its state identity. This reason we argue is the first precondition of the process. The collapse of the Soviet Union also fulfilled the second precondition of identity change since the risks of identity change was now significantly smaller due to the elimination of the threat that the Soviet Union and its interest presented earlier (Prop. 1991/92:100, Annex. 4 p.11-12).

Now that we have identified the two preconditions of Wendt's theory, we now will examine the four stages of the transformation process.

The first part of breakdown of consensus and on identity commitments had already started during the late 1980's simultaneously with the decline of the eastern bloc. By 1990 the Swedish government issued an investigation in how the development in Europe and the cold war would affect Swedish military and political policies (SOU 1990:5, p.9-13). The second and third part of denaturalization and new practice started from the beginning of the 1990's. During this period Sweden first identified a need to adapt it's interest to the new realities of the world since policies of neutrality would no longer adeptly describe the policies that the government wanted to pursue (Prop. 1991/92:100:Annex. 4, p.4). The goal would be for Sweden to change their identity of non-alignment to one of cooperation with various international organizations such as NATO and the EU (Prop. 1993/94:207, p.2, 4-6) (Government offices, 2015). While identifying the new practices needed Sweden also consequently re-evaluated the identities of other actor such as Russia, The US, EU and NATO. With the end of the cold war Sweden's view of the other in which it interacted with changed in order to sustain transformed Swedish state-identity (Ds 1995:28, p.5-7). In order to complete the transformation of state-identity and interest, the new identity would have to be accepted and encouraged by the other in order to be sustainable in the interactions between actors. The fact that Sweden since the 1990's has further evolved the partnerships with not only the EU, but also NATO argues for the fact that the other actors have accepted and encouraged the new state-identity of Sweden to continue with such practice (Government offices, 2015) (NATO, 2015).

VIII. Conclusion

In this paper we argued that there had been a change Sweden's identity and interests between the peacekeeping mission in DRC and Afghanistan. We also identified the collapse of the Soviet Union and the end of the cold war as our breaking point or cause to this change. By first highlighting the empirical differences in order to examine the change of ideas state identity and interest; we could go on to find the needed preconditions for the process on intentional identity transformation. We could then finally identify the different part of the transformation process of the Swedish state.

With this in mind, we can conclude that the end of the cold war was a contributing factor if the intentional identity changes in Sweden. What we found was a large collection of governmental documents that looked into how the end of the Cold War did and was going to affect Sweden and how Sweden best could adapt to this change. What we also found was that we couldn't argue that the end of the Cold War initiated the process of identity transformation. This process, we found, already started in the late 1980's while the Soviet Union itself was going through a process of identity change through the Perestroika reformation movement (Wendt, 1992, p.419-420). This effort of change within the Soviet Union caused other actors, including Sweden to re-evaluate their own identity and interest in within their interaction with the Soviet Union.

We do not however argue that the Swedish identity has completely changed. Instead we argue that certain identities that during the Cold War were not dominant, have now taken a larger role in the interaction that forms state identity and interests. At the same time we also argue that the interests have to a certain degree also changed, but these also are affected by all the new ways in which Sweden now can exercise its state interests that was not possible before through institutions such as the E.U and the U.N.

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Acronyms and abbreviations

DRC – Democratic republic of the Congo

ONUC – “Opération des Nations Unies au Congo”(Fr.) The United Nations Operation in the Congo

ISAF – International Security Assistance Force

NATO – North Atlantic Treaty Organization

UN – United Nations

UNSC – United Nations Security Council

EU – European Union

Prop. - Proposition

Res. – Resolution