Continuation Rather Than Culmination: The Utility of Force in the United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

A Monograph

by

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The United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUSCO) is the first UN force in history authorized to deliberately execute offensive operations, and since 2013 has done so against different armed groups in eastern DRC, employing robust military means such as attack helicopters, field artillery, special forces, and unmanned aerial vehicles to accomplish its mandate. This study analyzes how military force has been used by UN troops and why it has been considered controversial. Using MONUSCO as a case study, it specifically examines if military force has reduced the threat posed by Congolese and foreign armed groups, and if it has contributed to the achievement of the mission's ultimate political aim, that is protection of civilians. The analysis demonstrates that MONUSCO has struggled to overcome broad structural limitations of the UN to deploy and employ military assets; to adhere the principles of peacekeeping; to understand the utility of force in stabilization operations; and to pay enough attention to possible side effects and long-term repercussions of the offensive use of force i complex adaptive systems.

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Abstract

Continuation Rather Than Culmination: The Utility of Force in the United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, by LTC Flavio Caúla Américo dos Reis, Brazilian Army, 44 pages.

The United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUSCO) is the first UN force in history authorized to deliberately execute offensive operations, and since 2013 has done so against different armed groups in eastern DRC, employing robust military means such as attack helicopters, field artillery, special forces, and unmanned aerial vehicles to accomplish its mandate. This study analyzes how military force has been used by UN troops and why it has been considered controversial. Using MONUSCO as a case study, it specifically examines if military force has reduced the threat posed by Congolese and foreign armed groups, and if it has contributed to the achievement of the mission's ultimate political aim, that is protection of civilians. The analysis demonstrates that MONUSCO has struggled to overcome broad structural limitations of the UN to deploy and employ military assets; to adhere the principles of peacekeeping; to understand the utility of force in stabilization operations; and to pay enough attention to possible side effects and long-term repercussions of the offensive use of force in complex adaptive systems.

Contents

Acknowledgments iii

Abbreviations iv

Figures vi

Introduction 1

The Evolution of UN Peace Operations 3

The UN Stabilization Operations 7

The Use of Force in the UN Peace Operations 9

Authority, Command, and Control (AC^2) 9

The UN Troops 11

The Principles of Peacekeeping and the Use of Force 12

The Utility of Force in the UN Peace Operations 15

Case Study: The UN in the DRC 18

The Environment 18

The MONUSCO's Background 22

The UN Organization Stabilization Mission in the DRC 25

Conclusion 37

Bibliography 40

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Abbreviations

ACLED	Armed Conflict Location and Event Data
ADF	Allied Democratic Forces
APCLS	The Alliance of Patriots for a Free and Sovereign Congo (French: *Alliance des Patriotes Pour un Congo Libre et Souverain*)
CNDP	National Congress for the Defense of the People (French: *Congrès national pour la défense du people*)
DRC	Democratic Republic of the Congo
FARDC	Forces of the Democratic Republic of the Congo (French: *Forces Armées de la République Démocratique du Congo*)
FDLR	Rwandan Liberation Democratic Forces (French: *Forces Démocratiques de Libération du Rwanda)*
FIB	Force Intervention Brigade
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
HDI	Human Development Index
ICGLR	International Conference on the Great Lakes Region
IDMC	Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre
IDP	Internally Displaced Persons
LRA	Lord's Resistance Army
M23	Movement of 23 March (French: *Mouvement du 23 Mars*)
MINUSCA	Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Central African Republic (French: *Mission multidimensionnelle intégrée des Nations unies pour la stabilisation en Centrafrique*)
MINUSMA	Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali (French: *Mission multidimensionnelle intégrée des Nations unies pour la stabilisation au Mali*)
MONUC	United Nations Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (French: *Mission de l'Organisation des Nations Unies en Congo*)
MONUSCO	United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (French: *Mission de l'Organisation des Nations unies pour la stabilisation en République démocratique du Congo)*

ONUC	United Nations Operation in the Congo (French: *Organisation des Nations Unies en Congo*)
PSCF	Peace Security and Cooperation Framework for the DRC and the Region
UN	United Nations
UNSC	United Nations Security Council
USA	United States of America
USSR	Union of Soviet Socialist Republics

Figures

Figure 1. Number of UN Peacekeeping Missions Around the Globe - 1947 to 2014 7

Figure 2. Simplified Structure for the AC^2 in UN peace operations 10

Figure 3. The DRC: Area Comparative 19

Figure 4. Transportation Infrastructure in the DRC 21

Figure 5. Violence against civilians in the DRC, 2010-2012. 27

Figure 6. Conflict and Disaster Displacement Figures – DRC, 2010-2012 27

Figure 7. M23: Acts of Violence Against Civilians in the DRC, 2013-2016 30

Figure 8. Violence Against Civilians in the DRC (M23, ADF, and FDLR), 2013-2016 32

Figure 9. Conflict and Disaster Displacement Figures in the DRC, 2013-2016 33

Figure 10. Violence Against Civilians in the DRC, 2013-2019 36

Figure 11. Conflict and Disaster Displacement Figures in the DRC, 2013-2018 37

Introduction

Since 1999 peacekeeping forces deployed in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) have expanded from a small contingent to observe, monitor, and inform developments of the Lusaka Peace Agreement[1] to become the biggest and most expensive mission ever deployed by the United Nations (UN). Until 2013, however, despite its unique capabilities, the mission was surprisingly reluctant in employing force. Its size and strength did not prevent violence against civilians, one of the key tasks of its mandate. As a result, the mission struggled for credibility, and the general perception grew that its failure stemmed from its inability to deter violence.

On March 28, 2013, the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) changed the United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo's (MONUSCO) military strategy from conventional deterrence to compellence. As force deployment had failed to influence parties' decision to use violence, military power has employed to curtail their capabilities by executing offensive military operations.[2] Through Resolution 2098, the UNSC assigned MONUSCO a Force Intervention Brigade (FIB) to carry out, either unilaterally or jointly with Congolese forces, operations to prevent the expansion of, neutralize,

[1] The Lusaka Agreement was signed in October 7, 1999, between the countries of Angola, Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), Namibia, Uganda, Rwanda, and Zimbabwe, seeking to bring an end to the hostilities within the territory of the DRC. It addressed several issues related to the Congolese conflict, including the cessation of hostilities, withdrawal of foreign groups, release of prisoners and hostages, as well as the deployment of a UN peacekeeping force in the DRC. United Nations, "Document Retrieval," United Nations Peacemaker, accessed 2 November 2019, https://peacemaker.un.org/drc-lusaka-agreement99.

[2] The term offensive military operations is cited within UNSC Resolution 2098. However, UN doctrine does not specify the organization's understanding of offensive military operations. For the purpose of clarity, this work will adopt definitions from the United States Joint doctrine whenever a UN definition is missing. Military operations and campaigns, whether they involve large-scale combat, normally include both offensive and defensive operations. Offensive ones- are considered decisive in combat to take the initiative and achieve military objectives quickly and efficiently. US Department of Defense, Joint Staff, Joint Publication (JP) 3-0, *Joint Operations* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 2006), V-15.

and disarm armed groups in the eastern part of the country.[3] The FIB is a milestone in the use of force by UN troops. MONUSCO was the first UN force in history authorized to deliberately execute military operations beyond self-defense, and since 2013 has done so against different armed groups in eastern DRC, employing robust military means such as attack helicopters, field artillery, special forces, and unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs) to accomplish its mandate.

After almost five years of military engagements, UN Secretary-General António Guterres addressed the Security Council in 2019 on the issue of the use of force by peacekeepers. His letter also forwarded an independent strategic review of MONUSCO conducted by Dr. Youssef Mahmoud, Senior Adviser at the International Peace Institute (IPI). Mahmoud's letter states that "the impact of offensive operations on the protection of civilians remains controversial, as these operations seem to have escalated the violence in the country to its highest levels in a decade, caused collateral damage and triggered retaliatory attacks against communities." In addition, he also pointed out that "the focus on neutralizing armed groups seems to have largely overshadowed the activities of the civilian component of the Mission" and, therefore "most Congolese people identify MONUSCO with its military component."[4]

The purpose of this study is to understand how military force has been used by the United Nations in the DRC and why it has been considered controversial. It argues that UN military forces have pursued tactical victories instead of providing a position of continuous advantage for the political process. Force, in this sense, should be understood as a bargaining power to be exploited by politics. The use of force – or the threat thereof – must provide a position of

[3] United Nations, United Nations Security Council (UNSC), *Resolution 2098* (New York: United Nations Security Council, 28 March 2013), accessed 11 November 2019, http://unscr.com/en/resolutions/2098.

[4] United Nations, *Letter from the Secretary-General Addressed to the President of the Security Council: Transitioning from Stabilization to Peace: an Independent Strategic Review of the United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo* (New York, NY: United Nations Security Council, 29 October 2019), 3, 7, 19-21.

advantage for future political outcomes. Using MONUSCO as a case study, this project specifically examines if it has reduced the threat posed by Congolese and foreign armed groups, and if it has contributed to the achievement of the mission's political aims.[5]

The paper is organized in five sections. Following the introduction, Section II examines the evolution of UN peace operations in the current era and, in particular, the shift to a more assertive use of force in the so called "stabilization operation." Section III provides an overview of the UN command and control structure, principles, and discusses some key vulnerabilities of the institution to deploy and employ military forces. Section IV is the case study which analyzes how force has been used by MONUSCO since 2013 and the results in the light of the mission's political aim. Finally, the conclusion summarizes the main arguments and provides recommendations for further studies.

The Evolution of UN Peace Operations

For this work, definition of key terms regarding peace operations is adopted from the *United Nations Peacekeeping Operations: Principles and Guidelines* of 2010, as follows:

> Peacekeeping is a technique designed to preserve the peace, however fragile, where fighting has been halted, and to assist in implementing agreements achieved by the peacemakers. Over the years, peacekeeping has evolved from a primarily military model of observing cease-fires and the separation of forces after inter-state wars, to incorporate a complex model of many elements – military, police and civilian – working together to help lay the foundations for sustainable peace.
>
> Peace enforcement involves the application, with the authorization of the Security Council, of a range of coercive measures, including the use of military force. Such actions are authorized to restore international peace and security in situations where the Security Council has determined the existence of a threat to the peace, breach of the peace or act of aggression. The Security Council may utilize, where appropriate, regional organizations and agencies for enforcement action under its authority.

[5] Generally, the UNSC resolutions assign political and military objectives to the UN missions. For instance, UNSC Resolution 2098 lists the following political and strategic objectives to MONUSCO. Facilitate post-conflict peacebuilding; prevention of relapse of armed conflict; and progress towards sustainable peace and development. Military strategic objectives are described as protection of civilians; and stabilization through the establishment of functional state security in conflict-affected areas.

> Peacebuilding involves a range of measures targeted to reduce the risk of lapsing or relapsing into conflict by strengthening national capacities at all levels for conflict management, and to lay the foundation for sustainable peace and development. Peacebuilding is a complex, long-term process of creating the necessary conditions for sustainable peace. It works by addressing the deep-rooted, structural causes of violent conflict in a comprehensive manner. Peacebuilding measures address core issues that affect the functioning of society and the State and seek to enhance the capacity of the State to effectively and legitimately carry out its core functions. [6]

The Charter of the UN does not explicitly mention, nor contains provisions for the term "peacekeeping," which was invented in the 1950s.[7] Its inspiration comes from the Article 1, describing the UN as an institution created to maintaining international peace and security able to take effective collective measures for the prevention and removal of threats to peace.[8]

Instead of peacekeeping, peace enforcement, or peace building, this work will use "peace operations" as an umbrella term that applies to all UN missions involving military personnel. Trevor Findlay argues that this approach avoids prejudicing whether a particular operation is peacekeeping, peace building, or has become, either inadvertently or by design, peace enforcement.[9] Willian Flavin and Chiyuki Aoi also assert that firm boundaries between the different kinds of peace operations do not exist and that different kinds of peace operations can be conducted simultaneously in the same geographic area.[10] In 2015, the *Report of the High-Level Independent Panel on Peace Operations* used the term "United Nations peace operations" to embrace a broad suite of tools managed by the institution, ranging from special envoys and

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[6] United Nations, Department of Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO), *United Nations Peacekeeping Operations: Principles and Guidelines* (New York: Department of Peacekeeping Operations, 2010), 18-19.

[7] Alex J. Bellamy, Paul D. Williams, and Stuart Griffin, *Understanding Peacekeeping* (Cambridge, UK: Polity, 2010), 3, 49.

[8] United Nations, General Assembly, *Charter of the United Nations* (New York: United Nations, 1945), 3.

[9] Trevor Findlay, *The Use of Force in UN Peace Operations* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2002), 23.

[10] Willian Flavin and Chiyuki Aoi, "US Military Doctrine and The Challenges of Peace Operations," in *UN Peacekeeping Doctrine in a New Era: Adapting to Stabilization, Protection and New Threat*, ed. Cedric de Coning, Chiyuki Aoi, and John Karlsrud (New York: Routledge, 2017), 51.

mediators to more complex and comprehensive missions. The document explains that terms such as "peacekeeping" are ingrained in mindsets and the UN bureaucracy but should not constrain the organization's ability to respond more flexibly. Using the term peace operations could enable it to deliver more flexibly tailored "right fit" rather than "template" missions.[11]

The literature also differentiates between traditional and multidimensional peace operations. Traditional UN peace operations are missions consisting of unarmed military observers and lightly armed troops primarily in monitoring, reporting, and confidence-building roles.[12] Multidimensional UN peace operations, in their turn, are designed to support implementation of comprehensive peace agreements, and typically include organizing a range of activities such as post-conflict elections, disarmament of former combatants, and a national reconciliation process.[13] The concepts of "multidimensional" or "multidimensionality" is different than multidisciplinary. The ability to synthesize separate findings into a coherent whole is far more critical that the ability to generate information from different perspectives. Integration is key for multidimensional approaches.[14]

From the first UN mission until the end of the Cold War, traditional UN peace operations were predominant. During that time, threats to international peace were described basically as an aggression by one state against another.[15] Along with a possible nuclear war, threats to self-

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[11] Jose Ramos-Horta, *Report of the High-Level Independent Panel on Peace Operations on Uniting our Strengths for Peace: Politics, Partnership and People* (New York: United Nations, 17 June 2015), accessed 20 November 2019, https://www.un.org/en/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=S/2015/446, 20.

[12] United Nations, "Our History," United Nations Peacekeeping, accessed 11 November 2019, https://peacekeeping.un.org/en/our-history.

[13] Cedric de Coning, Chiyuki Aoi, and John Karlsrud, *UN Peacekeeping Doctrine in a New Era: Adapting to Stabilization, Protection and New Threats* (New York: Routledge, 2017), 8.

[14] Jamshid Gharajedaghi, *Systems Thinking: A Platform for Designing Business Architecture*, 3rd ed. (Burlington, MA: Morgan Kaufmann, 2011), 89.

[15] Bellamy et al., *Understanding Peacekeeping*, 49-50.

determination and sovereignty were the major concerns among the UN members. Thus, the primary role of the military forces was to prevent the escalation of conflicts and then pave the way for diplomatic efforts to solve them.[16] Force was authorized only in self-defense. Internal national issues such as human suffering within borders were not addressed by peacekeepers unless those issues would have threatened the security between states.[17]

The fall of the Soviet Union, later reinforced by the September 11 attacks, changed the perception of interstate threat in the West. The fall of the Communist superpower created a vacuum into which the Western world view expanded. UN peace operations thereafter became heavily influenced by values of the liberal peace theory and the post-Westphalian concept of stable peace.[18] Together, they reframed the understanding of international relations, particularly the sovereign right of states.[19] In this new perspective, sovereignty rights were re-characterized from control of space to responsibility for both internal functions and external duties. States enjoy sovereign rights when they fulfil their responsibilities of protecting the safety and lives of citizens and promotion of their welfare.[20] Conversely, to address internal civil conflicts and violations to human rights, multinational intervention became the conflict resolution tool of choice. Between

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[16] Bellamy et al., *Understanding Peacekeeping*, 5.

[17] United Nations, Department of Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO), *United Nations Peacekeeping Operations: Principles and Guidelines*, 18.

[18] The liberal peace theory asserts that democracies are unlikely to wage war, descend into civil conflict or anarchy. Democracies, in general, assure basic human rights and offer non-violent approaches for the resolution of disputes. The post-Westphalian conception of stable peace holds that states receive their sovereign rights only if they fulfil their responsibilities to their citizens, such as protection and prosperity. In the post-Westphalian perspective, peace operations need to be in the business of protecting human rights where host states prove unwilling or unable to do so as well as promoting democracy. Bellamy et al., *Understanding Peacekeeping*, 29, 38; Lise M. Howard, *The UN Peacekeeping in Civil Wars* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2008), 341.

[19] Oliver P. Richmond, "Introduction: NGOs, Peace and Human Security," *International Peacekeeping* 11, no 1 (2003): 2.

[20] International Commission on Intervention and States Sovereignty, *The Responsibility to Protect Report* (Ottawa, CA: International Development Research Centre, December 2001), 13, accessed 10 January 2020, http://responsibilitytoprotect.org/ICISS%20Report.pdf; Bellamy et al., *Understanding Peacekeeping*, 38.

1988 and 1993, the UNSC authorized more peace operations than over the previous forty years (Figure 4). Despite some prominent failures such as Bosnia, Somalia, and Rwanda, the number of peacekeepers deployed during the 1990s remained considerably greater in comparison with the Cold War.

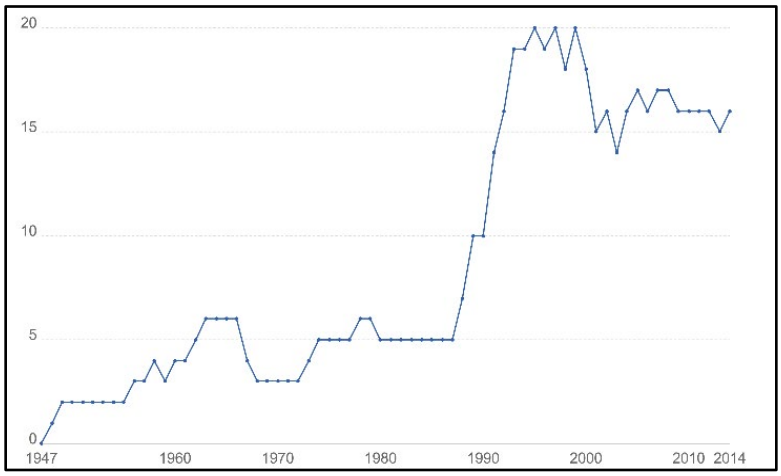

Figure 1. Number of UN Peacekeeping Missions Around the Globe - 1947 to 2014. *Source*: Max Roser and Nagdy, Mohamed, "Peacekeeping", *Our World in Data* (2019), accessed 30 October 2019, https://ourworldindata.org/peacekeeping.

The UN Stabilization Operations

If the post-Cold War world made internal conflicts and authoritarian regimes the focus of international security, the September 11 attacks moved asymmetric warfare[21] and asymmetric threats to the top of that list. As the perception of threat to international peace and security changed, the UN had to adapt in order to deal with the new challenges. Therefore, since 2004, the UN has named some of its missions as "stabilization operations," a kind of subcategory of multidimensional peacekeeping. In stabilization operations, UN troops are deployed in conflict

[21] Asymmetric warfare is population-centric nontraditional warfare waged between a militarily superior power and one or more inferior powers which encompasses all the following aspects: evaluating and defeating asymmetric threat, conducting asymmetric operations, understanding cultural asymmetry and evaluating asymmetric cost. In the asymmetric warfare, the threats are normally terrorism, insurgencies, guerrilla, among others. David L. Buffaloe, "Defining Asymmetric Warfare," *The Land Warfare Papers*, no.58 (September 2008): 17.

environments where there are no clear parties from whom mediation, negotiation and especially consent can be sought. Moreover, in these environments, UN troops have used more military force, engaged in intelligence gathering activities, and deployed special weapons and tactics such as unmanned aerial vehicles, snipers, and special forces.[22]

The term stabilization has a wide range of interpretations and is not formally defined in the UN documents.[23] Nor is there common doctrine among the UNSC permanent members covering this type of operation.[24] The US Joint Publication (JP) 3-0 *Joint Operations* states that stability encompasses the various military missions and tasks conducted in coordination with the diplomatic, informational, and economic instruments of national power, in order to maintain or reestablish a safe and secure environment and to provide essential activities such as governmental services, emergency infrastructure reconstruction, and humanitarian relief.[25] A stabilization operation involves potentially long-term military deployments to perform stability tasks, and combat operations involving offensive and defensive missions are likely. The general political aim for stabilization operations is to create a favorable environment to transition to full civilian authority, enabling it as the threat wanes and civil infrastructures are minimally reestablished.[26]

Stabilization can be a strategy. When the JP 3-0 says that stabilization encompasses the various military missions and tasks conducted in coordination with instruments of national power to achieve a given political purpose, it raises the concept to the level of strategy. Cedric De Coning, Chiyuki Aoi, and John Karlsrud have similar understanding. In *UN Peacekeeping Doctrine in a New Era; Adapting to Stabilization, Protection and New Threats*, they defined

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[22] Ramos-Horta, *Report of the High-Level Independent Panel on Peace Operations*, 44.

[23] Ramos-Horta, *Report of the High-Level Independent Panel on Peace Operations*, 30.

[24] De Coning et al., *UN Peacekeeping Doctrine in a New Era*, 290.

[25] US Department of Defense, Joint Staff, Joint Publication (JP) 3-0, *Joint Operations* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 2006), V-2.

[26] US Joint Staff, JP 3-0 (2006), VIII-25.

stabilization as a strategy to "contain aggressors and spoilers and enforce stability so to create a political space that is more conductive to moderates on all sides finding a political path out of the conflict."[27] This work supports such views.

The Use of Force in the UN Peace Operations

This section will discuss specific issues regarding the use of force by the UN. To provide a broader picture of the many vulnerabilities and constraints the UN has when employing and deploying military assets, it will address its nature as an international organization, its command and control structure, the peculiarities of the UN troops, and theorical influences involved in the utility of force.

Authority, Command, and Control (AC^2)

The UN is not singular body such a sovereign nation-state. It is an international organization, a forum comprised of several independent members with different objectives, perspectives, and interests. Nor is it a military alliance. The use of force was not a deliberate objective when the UN was conceived, as discussed earlier, and the idea of peacekeeping developed later in the 1950s. Since then, the institution has adapted to perform military operations based on real-world developments and perceptions of threat to the international community. In 2019, the UN Department of Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO) renewed its 2008 policy in *Authority, Command and Control in United Nations Peacekeeping Operations*. The document describes the strategic, operational, and tactical structures; the responsibilities of the senior mission leadership; and mission integration and control arrangements. In terms of decision-making levels, the policy asserts that peacekeeping missions decentralize significant decision-making authority and responsibility and are characterized by a relatively "flat" command structure.

[27] De Coning et al., *UN Peacekeeping Doctrine in a New Era*, 297.

The document distinguishes two different levels of AC^2 in UN peace operations: the UN headquarters level (UNHQ), located in New York, and the mission level. The UNHQ level performs grand-strategic and strategic roles. At this level, for instance, the UNSC establishes peace operations, provides their mandates, and specifies political objectives. The UN Secretary-General (UNSG) has the responsibility for implementing mission mandates. At the mission level, the Head of Mission (HOM) sets its political and strategic direction. The Head of the Military Component (HOMC) exercises operational AC^2 over all UN military personnel and units in the theater. Finally, brigades, battalions, and subunits' commanders execute tactical tasks. Figure 2 provides a simplified overview of the AC^2 framework for UN operations.

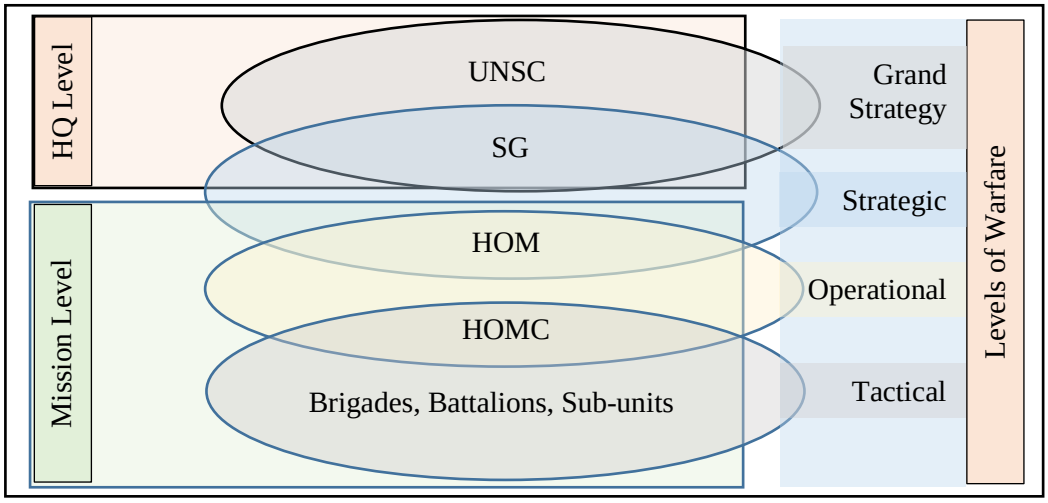

Figure 2. Simplified Structure for the AC^2 in UN peace operations. Created by the author using data from United Nations, Department of Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO), *Authority, Command and Control in UN Peacekeeping Operations* (New York: Department of Peacekeeping Operations, 2019).

There are some issues with this structure. First, as an international institution, the UN represents a variety of agendas and interests what sometimes create significant obstacles to develop coherent strategic objectives and guidelines. Patrick Morgan highlights that the main problem of military operations led by collective actors such as the UN is that they are likely to

use force unevenly, because of the different interests between members.[28] In terms of international peace and security, finding common ground between the USA, Russia, China, France, and the United Kingdom (the five permanent members of the Security Council) is not an easy task.

The second issue reflects the organization of peace operations at the mission level. In multidimensional and stabilization operations, the HOM is normally a civilian invested with the responsibility for the implementation of the mission mandate and authority for managing all UN assets on the ground. This arrangement ensures unity of effort at the strategic and operational levels, and between the uniformed components and UN civilian agencies.[29] Similar authority does not exist at the tactical level. At the lower levels, each component reports through its own chain of command. Some exceptions exist during crises or critical incidents in which one component may be placed temporarily under the operational control of another uniformed component. However, the lack of a permanent authority to unify actions across the tactical level weakens the mission capability to learn locally and to develop flexible bottom-up strategies tailored for specific contexts.

The UN Troops

The UN does not possess permanent military formations. The institution relies on its member states, the Troop Contributing Countries (TCC), to provide it with the military assets for every single operation. But contribution of troops is not mandatory, it is based on the TCCs willingness to join any given peace operation. Many problems arise from this arrangement. First, the provision of military assets will be closely related to TCCs' national interests, financial compensation, and risks on the ground. High-risk missions that offer few political and economic

[28] Patrick M. Morgan, "The State of Deterrence in International Politics Today," *Contemporary Security Policy* 33, no. 1 (2012): 92.

[29] United Nations, Department of Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO), *Authority, Command and Control in UN Peacekeeping Operations* (New York: Department of Peacekeeping Operations, 2019), 5.

attractions are unlikely to find countries interested in participating. Moreover, when third actors are deployed in someone else's war, force preservation tends to become the main condition behind the decision-making process at the tactical level. Also, lessons from the past show that TCC's troops, once deployed, develop a second and informal chain of command with their own countries.[30] As a result, orders coming from the Head of the Military Component tend to be submitted for TCCs countries' prior approval. In short, TCC commanders are very unlikely to execute any order that are not approved by their countries.

Second, the diversity of deployed TCCs challenge unified tactical and operational command and control. In UN peace operations, TCCs normally deploy forces up to the battalion level, due to the logistical challenges to sustain higher military formations abroad. Therefore, several barriers exist at higher levels in terms of doctrine, organization, training, materiel, leadership, and personnel. For instance, a brigade may have command and control problems because of incompatibility of radio equipment and diversity of languages spoken. Sustainment is also challenging, as each battalion relies on its own country for key logistics, such as supply of ammunition and repair of military vehicles. Although the UN has made progress over the years to develop standard operational procedures, rules of engagement, military training, and to support TCC with financial compensation, problems of diverse military formations persist.

The Principles of Peacekeeping and the Use of Force

Peacekeeping operations are based on three inter-related and mutually reinforcing principles: consent of the parties, impartiality, and non-use of force except in self-defense and defense of the mandate.[31] According to these principles, peace operations are likely to succeed when all the parties are committed to the peace process, the UN is perceived by them as a neutral

[30] Trevor Findlay, *The Use of Force in UN Peace Operations*, 13; Roméo Dallaire, *Shake Hands with the Devil: The Failure of Humanity in Rwanda* (Cambridge, MA: Da Capo Press, 2003), 273.

[31] UN, "Principles of Peacekeeping," accessed 23 March 2020, https://peacekeeping.un.org/en/principles-of-peacekeeping.

third actor, and when force is used only when the other instruments of power fail. However, in the new UN peace operations such as stabilization, following these principles has become increasingly challenging. First, the multitude of parties involved in these conflicts, and the variety of their political agendas, have made broad consent unrealistic. Moreover, because of volatile political environments, governments often change, new armed groups form, and many others split or disappear. Second, in the specific case of the stabilization operations, the UN must side with the government to achieve stability, executing combined joint military operations with national armies which impacts the way local populations perceive the UN and affect the institution's capability to achieve its political aims. Section IV will explore the UN mission in the DRC and the implications of its association with the government.

Regarding the non-use of force except in self-defense and defense of the mandate, the principles reflect two ideas. First, the primacy of diplomacy: In its first missions, UN forces were basically an interposing force invited by adversarial parties with the task to facilitate a peace agreement; non-use of force was a requirement to preserve the negotiation process. The second idea comes from just war theory, more specifically from *jus ad bellum* principles.[32] These assert that the use of military power is just only if undertaken with competent authority, for a just cause, with right intention, as a last resort, and if the harm judged likely to result is not disproportionate to the good to be achieved. The requirement that military power should be employed only as a last resort recognizes the immense suffering that military operations may cause. Thus, it encourages the peaceful settlement of disputes and accepts the use of military power only if other options are judged unlikely to succeed.[33] However, it assumes an orderly process of escalation in which military force becomes an alternative after the failure of other instruments of power, such

[32] David Fisher, *Morality and War: Can War Be Just in the Twenty-First Century?* (Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, 2011), 65.

[33] David Fisher, *Morality and War,* 67, 235.

as diplomacy, to provide a peaceful solution.[34] In this sense, force remains passive, waiting backstage for the failure of the other instruments of power.

This paper offers an alternative perspective. The understanding that military power should be undertaken only as last resort reflects the idea that power is divisible and can be used separately. In *the Twenty Years' Crisis 1919-1939*, however, Edward H. Carr asserts that power may be divided for purpose of discussion only. In the real world, he says, the instruments of power are closely interdependent, and it is difficult to imagine the application of one instrument in isolation from the others; in essence, power is an indivisible whole.[35] Similarly, Robert D. Worley argues that one instrument of power cannot exist for long in the absence of the others. In his point of view, military power serves diplomacy, defined as the art of politics. Therefore, the use of force – or the threat to use it – does serve to achieve a fluid and continuous political process.[36] Joseph Nye also corroborates this view. He divides power into two groups, soft and hard, and states it is better used by the intelligent integration and networking of diplomacy, defense, development, and other available tools. Nye also believes that players who focus on only one aspect of power are bound to lose in the long run.[37] In this sense, force is never last resort. In coordination with the other instruments of power, a good strategy envisions the use of force – or the threat to use it – as a mean to change, influence, and control since the early stages of a crisis.

Finally, the idea of force as last resort creates the perception that it must be decisive. Because all other instruments have failed, force, as the last means, must prevail. However,

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[34] Rupert Smith, *The Utility of Force: The Art of War in the Modern World* (New York: Vintage Books, 2007), 312.

[35] Edward H. Carr, *Twenty Years' Crisis 1919-1939: An Introduction of the Study of International Relations* (New York: Palgrave, 2001), 225.

[36] Robert D. Worley, *Orchestrating the Instruments of Power: A Critical Examination of the U.S. National Security System* (Lincoln, NE: University of Nebraska Press, 2015), 239.

[37] Joseph Nye Jr., *The Future of Power* (New York: Public Affairs, 2011), 20-24.

military power may not be decisive. Particularly in limited-contingency operations, tactical victory does not infer strategic success.[38] For instance, the great allocation of resources and continuous tactical superiority did not deliver political advantages to American decision-makers during the interventions in Vietnam, Afghanistan, or Iraq. Everett C. Dolman claims that the purpose of strategy is to achieve a situation of continuous advantage.[39] Thomas C. Shelling claims that military power is used to influence an adversary by the harm it could to them. In his opinion, the power to hurt does not deliver decisive outcomes in itself, but in how it sets conditions for advantageous position. Force is therefore a bargaining power to be exploited by politics.[40] In his analysis of the utility of force in the twenty-first century, Rupert Smith sees decisive victories as the hallmark of the interstate industrial war, but not relevant to intrastate conflicts such as civil wars. According to him, the twenty-first century is an era of continual confrontations and conflicts, rather than of distinct periods of war and peace. In these circumstances, he argues, the use of force cannot deliver a definitive victory.[41]

The Utility of Force in the UN Peace Operations

In general terms, the aim of force in peace operations is to deter groups working against the peace process or seeking to harm civilians, not their military defeat.[42] According to Michael Howard, deterrence aims to convince an adversary that the cost of using military force to solve

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[38] Stian Kjeksrud and Lotte Vermeij, "Protecting Governments from Insurgencies," in *UN Peacekeeping Doctrine in a New Era*, ed. De Coning et al. 240.

[39] Everett C. Dolman, *Pure Strategy: Power and Principle in the Space and Information Age* (New York: Frank Cass, 2005). 33.

[40] Thomas C. Shelling, *Arms and Influence* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2008), 2.

[41] Rupert Smith, *The Utility of Force*, 374-375.

[42] UN, Department of Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO), *United Nations Peacekeeping Operations: Principles and Guidelines*, 34-35.

political conflicts will outweigh its benefits.[43] Deterrence is based on credibility, and encompasses the ability to carry out a threat to defend against other's actions.[44] Patrick Morgan asserts that deterrence is at the heart of democratic peace theory. International institutions such as the UN promote deterrence when helping states to avoid disruptive internal political struggles on security issues, and to keep them from becoming threats to each other.[45] Finally, Findlay says that the more willing and able UN operations are to use force, the less likely they will need to use it.[46]

In UN stabilization operations, however, there are limitations on implementing a strategy of deterrence. First, it is challenging to match a theory designed for interactions between strong, often nuclear-armed states to problems posed by weak states and non-state actors, and an international environment of expanding normative constraints on using force.[47] Second, deterrence may not be effective when peacekeepers are deployed in the midst of conflicts to contain escalation while protecting civilians. Schelling explains that deterrence involves setting the stage and waiting; the overt act is up to the opponent.[48] Force is used reactively not preventively. This is an issue in situations with growing demands for non-combatants' protection. Peacekeepers deployed in civil wars, for example, must be prepared to deter and compel, to perform a broader range of military operations across the continuum of conflict.

A broader understanding of the utility of force and alternative military strategies, however, may not be enough to provide continuous political advantage, as the case study of the

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[43] Michael Howard, "Reassurance and Deterrence: Western Defense in the 1980s," *Foreign Affairs* 61, no. 2 (Winter 1982): 317.

[44] Robert Jervis, "Deterrence and Perception," *International security* 7, no. 3 (Winter 1982-1983): 9.

[45] Patrick M. Morgan, "The State of Deterrence in International Politics Today," *Contemporary Security Policy* 33, no. 1 (2012): 89.

[46] Trevor Findlay, *The Use of Force in UN Peace Operations*, 376-377.

[47] Lawrence Freedman, "Deterrence: A Reply," *Journal of Strategic Studies* 28, no. 5 (October 2005): 795.

[48] Thomas C. Schelling, *Arms and Influence*, 71.

UN in the DRC will demonstrate in the next section. To provide a better understanding of the limits of force in this example, two ideas will be discussed here. First, is the concept of "complex adaptive systems." In *Harnessing Complexity,* Robert Axelrod and Michael D. Cohen explain that in a complex adaptive system, every intervention generates multiple adaptive reactions among its agents. Predictions are difficult because the forces shaping the future do not act in a systemwide manner but rather by nonlinear manner.[49] In this sense, Peter Senge asserts that in a complex adaptive system, interventions normally work well in the short term but not in the long term; the interventionist agent fails to learn from the environment.[50] In addition, the interventionist actor tends to be not flexible enough in recognizing emergent actions and adapting to the new circumstances.[51] There is a tendency, under time pressure, to continually resort to established measures instead of reassessing the environment in search of new options and approaches.[52] Therefore, the harder one push the established measures, the harder the system pushes back and yesterday's solutions become today's problems.[53]

Civil wars are complex adaptive systems. The multitude of social, economic, and political issues, ranging from diversity of ethnic groups, gender inequality, lack of infrastructure, and underdevelopment (among others) make the environment even more challenging. When intervening in such a system, one can never take a purely linear approach. Although UN stabilization missions are structured for a multidimensional approach, experience from the field has demonstrated that integration is still an issue at the tactical level.

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[49] Robert Axelrod, and Michael D. Cohen, *Harnessing Complexity: Organizational Implications of a Scientific Frontier* (New York: Basic Books, 2000), 4-9, 14.

[50] Peter Senge, *The Fifth Discipline: The Art & Practice of the Learning Organization* (New York: Doubleday, 2006), 57-59.

[51] Michael Arena, *Adaptive Space*: *How GM and Other Companies Are Positively Disrupting Themselves and Transforming into Agile Organizations* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 2018), 4.

[52] Dietrich Döner, *The Logic of Failure: Recognizing and Avoiding Error in Complex Situations* (Cambridge, MA: Metropolitan Books, 1996), 2, 15.

The second idea is that implementing strategy in UN operations is difficult because the AC^2 structure does not provide authorities to coordinate and command forces between different theaters. For instance, there is no strategic command responsible for the operations in the Great Lakes region of Africa. Thus, UN forces in the DRC, Southern Sudan, and Central African Republic are limited to the geographical boundaries of their missions, and armed groups frequently cross borders to find sanctuary. There is some cooperation and exchange of information between these distinct missions, but no military strategic command. Such a structure could rearrange forces in and among these different theaters to better employ UN strategic assets.

Case Study: The UN in the DRC

As protection of civilians is the first military objective listed in Resolution 2098, this section analyzes how MONUSCO has used force since 2013 in the light of this aim. It briefly describes the environment where the peacekeepers have been deployed; provides an overview of the mission's background and features; and discusses the utility of force as employed by MONUSCO. The analysis relies on primary sources such as the mission mandates, reports of the Secretary-General to the UNSC, and strategic reviews. The data was collected from the Armed Conflict Location and Event Data project (ACLED). In addition, the discussion uses the number of internally displaced persons (IDP) to assess the intensity and impact of violence on the populace; people only leave their homes when violence reaches very critical levels.[54] The data on IDPs in the DRC was collected from the Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre (IDMC).

The Environment

Located in the central sub-Saharan region of Africa, the Democratic Republic of the Congo is the second largest country in the continent, with an area of $2{,}267{,}048\ \text{km}^2$ divided

[54] Jessica Di Salvatore and Andrea Ruggeri, "Effectiveness of Peacekeeping Operations," *Oxford Research Encyclopedia of Politics* (Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, 2017), 2.

among 26 provinces. The estimated total population is 85,281,024,[55] fewer than 40% of whom live in urban areas.[56] Kinshasa is the major city and capital, located in the western side of the country and with a population of more than 12 million people.[57] Although the biggest UN mission ever deployed, the number of UN troops is still modest given the size of the country and the dispersion of the population. Figure 3 compares the DRC to US territory.

Figure 3. The DRC: Area Comparative. *Source*: Encyclopedia Britannica, "The Democratic Republic of the Congo," accessed 19 January 2020, https://www.britannica.com/place/Democratic-Republic-of-the-Congo; Central Agency Intelligence, "Africa: The Democratic Republic of the Congo," accessed 16 December 2019, https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/print_cg.html.

The DRC is currently a presidential republic. It became independent from Belgium in 1960. From 1971 until 1997, it was called "Zaire;" following the First Congo War, the country was renamed the Democratic Republic of the Congo. The DRC is remarkably diverse regarding ethnicity and language. The country is home of several ethnic groups which in turn speak many different dialects. Congo's Gross Domestic Product (GDP) ranks 103rd among the world largest

[55] Central Intelligence Agency, "The World Factbook: The Democratic Republic of the Congo," 3 December 2019, accessed 16 December 2019, https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/cg.html.

[56] The World Bank, "The World Bank in the DRC: Overview," 20 April 2019, accessed 16 December 2019, https://www.worldbank.org/en/country/drc/overview.

[57] World's Capital Cities, "Capital Facts for Kinshasa, DR Congo," accessed 25 April 2019, https://www. worldscapitalcities.com/capital_facts_for_kinshasa_dr_congo/.

economies. In 2018, the GDP reached $ 47.228 billion dollars, in which mining alone accounts for almost 40 percent.[58] The main exported minerals are copper, cobalt, gold, diamonds, coltan, zinc, tin, and tungsten.[59] Although extremely rich in mineral resources, the DRC displays low levels of development. The Gross Domestic Product (GDP) per capita (nominal) is $501, and the Human Development Index (HDI) is 0.470, ranking 176th out of 187 countries.[60] Low development creates even more challenges for the UN, as the organization has to deal not only with conflict management and resolution but also with a variety of health security issues. Moreover, Paul Collier argues that countries which have a substantial share of their income (GDP) coming from the export of primary commodities are radically more at risk of conflict.[61]

History, geography, and economy have affected the DRC government's ability to project authority over its territory. Jeffrey Herbst in *States and Power in Africa* highlights that because colonial rule was designed to benefit European countries, power in the African possessions was concentrated towards the ocean. Little or nothing was done to control the interior; a colonial regime had no interest in developing an extensive administrative network due to high costs. This is the case of the DRC, where the capital Kinshasa is located close to the coast, while most the underdeveloped and problematic areas are in the eastern side of the country, miles away from the

[58] The World Bank, "The World Bank in the DRC: Overview," 20 April 2019, accessed 16 December 2019, https://www.worldbank.org/en/country/drc/overview.

[59] Central Intelligence Agency, "The World Factbook: The Democratic Republic of the Congo," 3 December 2019, accessed 16 December 2019, https://www.cia.gov/library/ publications/the-world-factbook/geos/cg.html.

[60] The Human Development Index (HDI) is a summary measure of average achievement in key dimensions of human development: a long and healthy life, being knowledgeable and have a decent standard of living. It was created to emphasize that people and their capabilities should be the ultimate criteria for assessing the development of a country, not economic growth alone. United Nation, *Human Development Reports: Congo* (New York, NY: United Nations Development Program, 2018), accessed 25 April 2019, http://hdr.undp.org/en/ countries/profiles /COD.

[61] Paul Collier, "Economic Causes of Civil Conflict and their Implications for Policy," *Oxford University Department of Economics Report* (April 2006), 9-10, accessed 15 March 2020, http://citeseerx.ist.psu.edu/ viewdoc/download?doi=10.1.1.460.9440&rep=rep1&type=pdf.

coastline. Moreover, African politicians in general equate their political survival with appeasing their urban population, not that of the interior.[62] In addition to its rural character and large size, the relatively low population density in the DRC means that it expensive to exert control, because resources have to be dispersed, rather than concentrated. The geography of the Democratic Republic of the Congo makes it unusually hard for government forces to control because the population lives around the fringes of a huge area, with the three main cities in the extreme west, extreme south-east and extreme north. Economically, underdevelopment impedes the DRC's ability to build necessary transportation and communication infrastructure. (See Figure 4.)

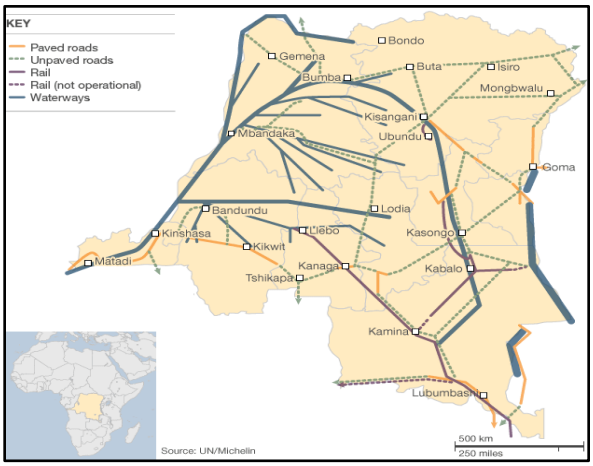

Figure 4. Transportation Infrastructure in the DRC. *Source*: Julian Keane, BBC World news, "Waiting in vain for a train in DR Congo", 24 November 2011, accessed 10 January 2020, https://www.bbc.com/news/world-africa-15859686.

Transportation infrastructure is key when analyzing the state's capability to exert its authority, and roads in particular are the most efficient instrument for projecting military power.[63] In the DRC, of 95,378 miles of roads, only 1,793 miles are paved. In terms of railways, there are around 2,485 miles of narrow-gauge track in poor condition.[64] Moreover, while Goma, the main

[62] Jeffrey Herbst, *States and Power in Africa: Comparative Lessons in Authority and Control* (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 2000), 15-17, 62.

[63] Jeffrey Herbst, *States and Power in Africa: Comparative Lessons in Authority and Control*, 84.

[64] Julian Keane, "Waiting in vain for a train in DR Congo," *BBC World News*, 24 November 2011, accessed on 10 January 2020, https://www.bbc.com/news/world-africa-15859686.

urban economic hub in the eastern side of the DRC, is a distant 997 miles from Kinshasa, it is located only 100 miles away from Kigali, the capital of Rwanda, and 350 miles from Kampala, the capital of Uganda. Thus, the local population may be more subject to the influence of Rwanda and Uganda than to Kinshasa. The lack of ground transportation infrastructure also impacts UN's ability to monitor, verify, and implement the terms of Lusaka peace agreement. In addition, poor road conditions during the rainy season makes the UN dependent on air assets to move troops across the country.

The DRC has faced several internal conflicts since 1960. Some of them escalated to the regional level due to the interference of neighbor countries and extracontinental powers, such as the USA and the USSR. The eastern provinces, particularly South and North Kivu, Ituri, Haut-Uele, Tanganyka, and Katanga, are the most unstable regions. They are the home of several different ethnic groups and have received large numbers of refugees over time due to the numerous and violent conflicts in the Great Lakes Region, such as the Burundian and Rwandan Civil Wars of 1993 and1994, respectively. The International Organization for Migration estimates that currently there are over 1.6 million internally displaced persons (IDPs) in eastern DRC.[65] The historical background has shaped MONUSCO's stabilization efforts because in the first decade of post-conflict, societies face roughly double the risk of conflict resurgence. Post-conflict societies may have no tradition of conducting their political conflict non-violently and rebel organizations usually maintain their effectiveness during the post-conflict period.[66]

The MONUSCO's Background

The UN presence in the DRC can be divided in three distinct periods. In the first period, from July 1960 to June 1964, the United Nations Operations in Congo (French: *Opération des*

[65] United Nations, "The Democratic Republic of the Congo," International Organization for Migration, accessed 25 April 2019, https://www.iom.int/countries/democratic_republic_congo.

[66] Paul Collier, "Economic Causes of Civil Conflict and their Implications for Policy," 19-20.

Nations Unies au Congo, or ONUC) deployed peacekeepers to deal with internal security following the DRC's independence from Belgium. Although designed to perform traditional peace operations, ONUC carried out tasks that differed little from large-scale combat operations. For instance, Operation Morthor, which took place in the Katanga province from 12 to 20 September 1961, marked a temporary lapse from peacekeeping into peace enforcement. It was a pre-emptive UN offensive operation to address the Katanga secession, involving significant use of force and causing hundreds of casualties on both sides.[67]

The second phase began in the end of the1990's and is linked to the First and the Second Congolese Wars (1996-97 and 1998-2003, respectively). The two wars were a culmination of interconnected conflicts at the local and regional levels.[68] The regime change in Rwanda that followed the 1994 genocide sparked a massive influx of ethnic Tutsis and Hutus refugees, including some of its perpetrators, in to what was then eastern Zaire. Hutus soon controlled access to mines and weapons and started fighting Tutsi refugees, as well as launching attacks against Rwandan forces from eastern Zairean territory. In retaliation the Rwandan government, aided by Uganda, began training Tutsi militias within Zairean territory. A Tutsi-led insurgency began in 1996. The rebellion managed to mobilize the Congolese population and, eventually, the Tutsis took power in 1997, renaming the country as the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC).[69]

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[67] Trevor Findlay, *The Use of Force in UN Peace Operations*, 75-77.

[68] Denis M. Tull, "Peacekeeping in the Democratic Republic of Congo: Waging Peace and Fighting War," *International Peacekeeping* 16, no. 2 (2009): 216.

[69] UN, "MONUC Background," accessed 25 April 2019, https://peacekeeping .un. org/ mission/past/monuc/background. shtml.

The new Congolese government was marked by corruption, inefficiency, and could not stabilize the situation along the border with Rwanda.[70] In 1998, a new insurgency seized large areas of eastern DRC. Angola, Chad, Namibia and Zimbabwe supported the DRC government, while Uganda and Rwanda backed the rebels. As the situation escalated from the national to the regional level, the UN became involved and, in July 1999, the DRC, Angola, Namibia, Rwanda, Uganda, and Zimbabwe signed the Lusaka Ceasefire Agreement that brought an end to the hostilities within the territory of the DRC. [71]

The UN deployed a traditional mission (French: *Mission de l'Organisation de Nations Unies en République Démocratique du Congo*, or MONUC) of 90 military personal and civilian staff to observe the ceasefire and disengagement of forces, and maintain liaison with all parties to the Lusaka Agreement. As the security situation deteriorated, more personnel and means were allocated, and by 2002 the troop ceiling reached 8,700 soldiers.[72] More means, however, did not deter violence against civilians, one of the key tasks of its mandate, and MONUC was tainted by a perception of impotence.[73] The failure to achieve political objectives moved the UNSC to allocate even more means. By 2008, MONUC became the biggest and most expensive mission deployed by the UN, with 18,434 uniformed personnel. Moreover, MONUC's mandate was at that time the most comprehensive and robust ever issued to a peacekeeping operation. However,

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[70] Erik Kennes, "The Democratic Republic of the Congo: Structures of Greed, Networks of Need," in Cynthia J. Arson and I. William Zartman, ed. *Rethinking the Economics of War: The Intersection of Need, Creed, and Greed* (Washington, DC: Woodrow Wilson Center Press, 2005), 140.

[71] United Nations, United Nations Security Council (UNSC), *Resolution 1258* (New York: United Nations Security Council, 6 August 1999), accessed 25 April 2019, http://unscr.com/en/resolutions /doc/1258.

[72] United Nations, United Nations Security Council (UNSC), *Resolution 1291* (New York: United Nations Security Council, 24 February 2000), accessed 25 April 2019, http://unscr.com/en/resolutions /doc/1291; United Nations, United Nations Security Council (UNSC), *Resolution 1445* (New York: New York: United Nations Security Council, 4 December 2002), accessed 25 April 2019, http://unscr.com/en/resolutions /doc/1445.

[73] James Traub, "The Congo Case," *New York Times*, 3 July 2005, accessed 30 March 2019, https://www.nytimes.com/2005/07/03/magazine/the-congo-case.html.

despite means and robust mandate, MONUC was surprisingly reluctant to employ military power.[74]

According to Denis Tull, the general perception of failure regarding MONUC's performance is rooted in conceptual and operational problems that relate to the use of force. The author observed that the vague concepts of "use of force" and "robust peacekeeping" created different interpretations and expectations on the ground. Although UNSC Resolution 1565 authorized MONUC "to use all necessary means, within its capacity and in the areas where its armed units are deployed," to carry out the tasks mentioned in the mandate, MONUC did not pursue a consistently robust operational approach to implement it.[75] Séverine Autesserre argues that the conceptual problem regarding the use of force in MONUC is related to its reactive approach; more specifically, preventing actions were never explicitly mentioned in any of the UN resolutions.[76] This reluctance to use force and the conceptual understanding of its utility reflects the general idea that force should be undertaken only as a last resort. In order to stimulate the peaceful settlement of disputes and avoid any escalation of the conflict, decision-makers and military leaders had avoided using military power – despite the large deployment of military assets. In MONUC, the peacekeeping principle of "non-use of force except in self-defense and defense of the mandate" was interpreted as non-use of any force.

The UN Organization Stabilization Mission in the DRC

The third phase of the UN presence in the DRC started on May 28, 2010, when MONUC was renamed the United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the DRC (MONUSCO).

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[74] Otto Spijkers, "The Evolution of United Nations Peacekeeping in the Congo," *Journal of International Peacekeeping* 19, no. 1-2 (2015): 112.

[75] Denis M. Tull, "Peacekeeping in the Democratic Republic of Congo: Waging Peace and Fighting War," *International Peacekeeping* 16, no. 2 (2009): 216.

[76] Séverine Autesserre, "The Responsibility to Protect in Congo: The Failure of Grassroots Prevention," *International Peacekeeping* 23, no. 1 (2016): 33.

Generally speaking, in this new phase peacekeepers were expected to cooperate with the government of the DRC to protect civilians under threat and to stabilize and consolidate the peace. In its early years, MONUSCO seemed to suffer from the same issues as MONUC regarding its reluctance to use of force. Despite the fact MONUSCO was the largest mission in UN history, criticism of the mission's performance increased as rebel groups seized towns, increasing the number of IDPs and civilian casualties.[77]

Since the deployment of MONUSCO in 2010, the mission credibility had eroded daily due to its incapacity or unwillingness to deal with the environment in eastern DRC. The Mission was not effective. Attacks on MONUSCO's peacekeepers and violations of human rights became frequent, despite the mission's military size and strength. MONUSCO failed to deter and some armed groups took advantage of its inactivity. (Figure 5 includes the number of attacks against civilians in the DRC as well as the number of fatalities caused by these attacks between 2010-2012. Figure 6 shows the flow of internally displaced persons during the same period.)[78]

[77] Jeffrey Gettleman and Josh Kron, "Congo Rebels Seize Provincial Capital," *The New York Times,* 20 November 2012, accessed 26 April 2019, at https://www.nytimes. com/2012/11/21/world/africa/Congolese_rebels_reach_goma_reports_say.html; Gabriel Gatehouse, "Goma: M23 rebels capture DR Congo city," *BBC,* 20 November 2012, accessed 26 April 2019, https://www.bbc .com/news/world-africa-20405739.

[78] Mathematically speaking, a flow variable is a vector, a two-dimensional measurement. One of these dimensions is time. The other is the quantity of the variable in question that was tabulated over the specified period. By contrast, a stock variable is a one-dimensional measure. It is an instantaneous measure, taken at a precise moment in time. As a result, stock variables often are referred to as snapshot values. Mark Kolakowski, "Stock and Flow Variables Explained: A Closer Look at Apple," 19 January 2020, accessed 2 March 2020, https://www.investopedia.com/articles/investing/011916/stock-and-flow-variables-explained-closer-look-apple.asp.

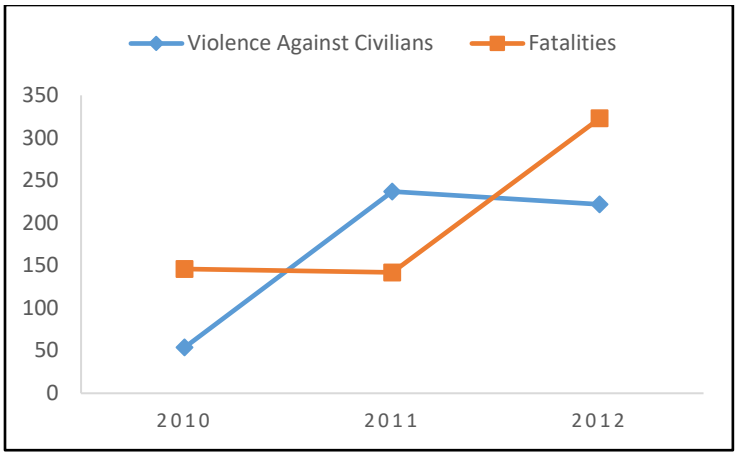

Figure 5. Violence against civilians in the DRC, 2010-2012. Created by author using data from Armed Conflict Location and Event Data project, "Data Export Tool", accessed 23 May 2019, https://www.acleddata.com/data.

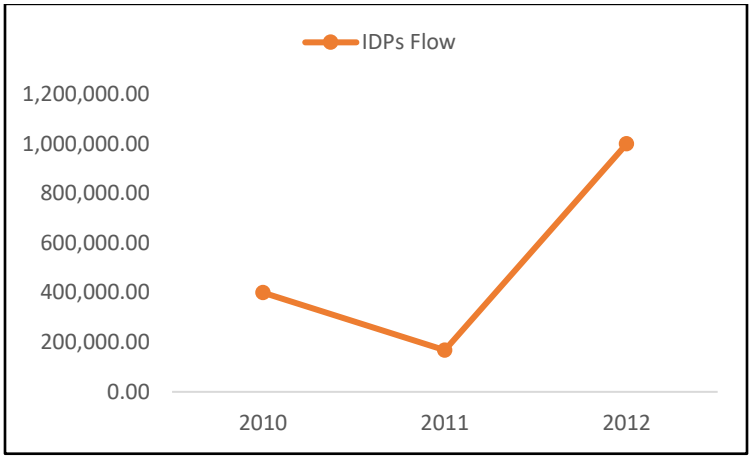

Figure 6. Conflict and Disaster Displacement Figures – DRC, 2010-2012. Created by author using data from the Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre, "Democratic Republic of the Congo", accessed 10 January 2020, http://www.internal-displacement.org/countries/democratic-republic-of-the-congo.

As a result, on 28 March 2013 the UN adopted Resolution 2098, which has become the cornerstone for the use of military power in the DRC. It is the first UN resolution in history authorizing its troops to use force offensively. Politically, the mission was assigned to facilitate post-conflict peacebuilding, prevent the relapse of armed conflict, and progress towards

sustainable peace and implementation of the Peace Security and Cooperation Framework.[79] Strategically, the military objective was defined as stabilizing the country through the establishment of functional security in conflict-affected areas, and protection of civilians was listed as the main military task.[80] Resolution 2098 also assigned MONUSCO a Force Intervention Brigade (FIB) to carry out, either unilaterally or jointly with Congolese military forces, offensive operations to prevent the expansion of, neutralize, and disarm armed groups in the eastern part of the country.[81] This decision did not authorize the use of force at the strategic level, but rather at the operational level. In the very particular situation of the DRC, Resolution 2098 contains a political authorization for the execution of operational-level offensive military operations by MONUSCO.

Some considerations are critical regarding the resolution. First, the strategic approach changed from conventional deterrence to compellence. In UN peace operations, deterrence is achieved by the quick deployment of a military contingent capable of using the threat of force to persuade the parties to behave in a way they would otherwise not do. It is not about making the parties defenseless, but influencing their decision to use force. When deterrence fails, however, compellence can be used to change the status quo and punish the parties, by using limited military force to influence the capacity of the parties to employ violence.[82] Schelling explains that

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[79] In February 2013, eleven countries reached an agreement on a Peace Security and Cooperation Framework for the DRC and the Great Lakes Region (PSC Framework). The document recognizes that eastern DRC has continued to suffer from recurring violence by armed groups with displacement figures ranking among the highest in the world. The PSC Framework established principles of engagement at the national, regional and international levels to improve the security situation in the eastern DRC. Global Centre for the Responsibility to Protect (GCRP), *Peace Security and Cooperation Framework for the Democratic Republic of the Congo and the Great Lakes Region* (24 February 2013), accessed 10 January 2020, http://www.globalr2p.org/media/ files/au-peace-and-security-drc.pdf.

[80]United Nations, United Nations Security Council (UNSC), *Resolution 2098*, 4.

[81]United Nations, United Nations Security Council (UNSC), *Resolution 2098*, 6.

[82] Kersti Larsdotter, "Military Strategy and Peacekeeping: An Unholy Alliance?" *Journal of Strategic Studies* 42, no. 2 (2019): 194.

deterrence involves setting the stage and waiting, the overt act is up to the opponent. Thus, deterrence is passive by design. Compellence, in contrast, involves initiating an action that can cease, or become harmless, only if the opponent responds accordingly.[83] Either by deterring or compelling adversaries, the utility of force in limited-contingency operations is always to foster political negotiations. Rather than destruction, setting the conditions is the desired effect.

The task to neutralize the armed groups raises another consideration. The US Joint Publication (JP) 3-0 *Joint Operations* defines "neutralize" as "to render ineffective or unusable" or " to render enemy personnel or materiel incapable of interfering with a particular operation."[84] According to Alessandro Visacro, neutralizing irregular forces requires not only direct military engagements but the deterioration of their narrative, infrastructure, financial, and popular support, in addition to political and diplomatic efforts.[85] Oher theorists and practitioners echo this argument, such as David Galula, Rupert Smith, and Gordon McCormick.[86] Although MONUSCO, as a multidimensional operation, has performed a variety of state building activities, the military component – either because of the absence of adequate resources or a narrow interpretation of the task – has pursued neutralization basically in terms of tactical engagements.

In this regard, military operations were developed to defeat piecemeal the armed groups cited within Resolution 2098. The Movement of 23 March (M23)[87] became the first priority

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[83] Schelling, *Arms and Influence*, 72.

[84] US Joint Staff, JP 3-0 (2006), GL-13.

[85] Alessandro Visacro, *Irregular War* (São Paulo, SP: Editora Contexto, 2009), 353.

[86] David Galula, *Counterinsurgency Warfare: Theory and Practice* (Westport, CT: Praeger Security International, 2006), 4, 51-54; Smith, *The Utility of Force*, 279; Gordon H. McCormick, "Terrorist Decision Making," *Annual Review of Political Science* 6, (2003): 473.

[87] The name is a reference to the 23 March 2009 peace agreement, which the M23 leadership claims was never fully implemented. The group was created in May 2012 by former members of the National Congress for the Defense of the People militia (CNDP - *Congrès national pour la défense du peuple*), what explains why there is no data related to the M23 before 2012. Flavio C. Américo dos Reis, "The Use of Force in the United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo" (MMAS Thesis, US Army Command and General Staff College, Ft. Leavenworth, KS, 2019),

target. The operations were successful in tactical terms, and by November 2013 the M23 renounced its insurgency. The remaining M23 combatants fled to Uganda, where they surrendered and were disarmed.[88] This first success created momentum towards MONUSCO's aim of regaining credibility and reinforced the idea that military power could be decisive in itself, previously discussed in Section II. With destruction of enemy forces as the main overriding criteria for success, strategic planners have continued to push victory in tactical terms, targeting the Democratic Forces for the Liberation of Rwanda (French: *Forces Démocratiques de Libération du Rwanda*, or FDLR) and the Allied Democratic Forces (ADF) after M23's defeat.

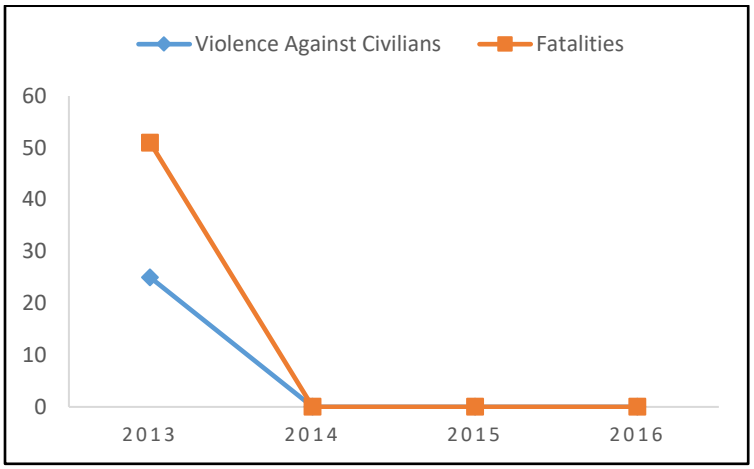

Figure 7. M23: Acts of Violence Against Civilians in the DRC, 2013-2016. Created by author using data from Armed Conflict Location and Event Data project, "Data Export Tool", accessed 23 May 2019, https://www.acleddata.com/data.

On March 28, 2014, a new UNSC Resolution stressed MONUSCO's role in neutralizing all armed groups in eastern DRC.[89] The Resolution ranked the FDLR as the first threat to regional stability and welcomed military actions to neutralize the group.[90] Thus, several military

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[88] Jay Benson, "The UN Intervention Brigade: Extinguishing Conflict or Adding Fuel to the Flames," *A One Earth Future Discussion Paper* 2 (June 2016).

[89] UN, United Nations Security Council (UNSC), *Resolution 2147* (New York: United Nations Security Council, 28 March 2014), 2, accessed 25 April 2019, http://unscr.com/en/resolutions /doc/2147.

[90] The FDLR led the ranking of the major perpetrators of violence against civilians in the DRC between 2010 and 2012. The group was founded through an amalgamation of many ethnic Hutu groups in

operations were carried out by Armed Forces of the DRC (French: *Forces Armées de la République Démocratique du Congo*, or FARDC) supported by UN forces against the FDLR. On 18 April, the FDLR announced its intention to surrender in North and South Kivu.[91] Again, tactical military operations worked well and the second-most important armed group in eastern DRC had apparently been neutralized.

After the defeat of the M23 and the surrender of the FDLR, MONUSCO shifted its focus to the ADF. On September 25, 2014, the Report of the Secretary-General on the MONUSCO stated that the security situation in eastern DRC continued to be dominated by "the FDLR voluntary disarmament process and the pursuit of military operations against the ADF."[92] The document encouraged "the successful military operations conducted by FARDC with the support of MONUSCO. These have resulted in a considerable weakening of ADF and, to a lesser extent, some other armed groups."[93] The UN's new approach to using force looked efficient, as the major groups had been defeated, surrendered, or weakened in less than two years of military operations. Apparently, the strategy to compel had affected the major armed groups' capability to use force, and allowed MONUSCO to regain its credibility to deter. (Figure 8 shows the number of acts of violence against civilians executed by the M23, the ADF and the FDLR, as well as the resulting civilian fatalities, between May 2013 to December 2016.)

September 2000 and has been opposing the Tutsi influence in eastern DRC. The FDLR is one of the last factions of Rwandan *genocidaires* still active in the Congo. International Crisis Group, *Rwandan Hutu Rebels in the Congo: A New Approach to Disarmament and Reintegration*, International Crisis Group Report no.63 (23 May 2003): 4-6, accessed 24 February 2020, https://www.files.ethz.ch/isn/28743/063_ rwandan_ hutu_rebels_in_the_congo.pdf.

[91] UN, United Nations Security Council (UNSC), S/2014/450, *Report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo* (New York, NY: United Nations, 30 June 2014), 5.

[92] UN, United Nations Security Council (UNSC), S/2014/698, *Report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo* (New York, NY: United Nations, 25 September 2014), 5.

[93] UN, United Nations Security Council (UNSC), S/2014/698, 16.

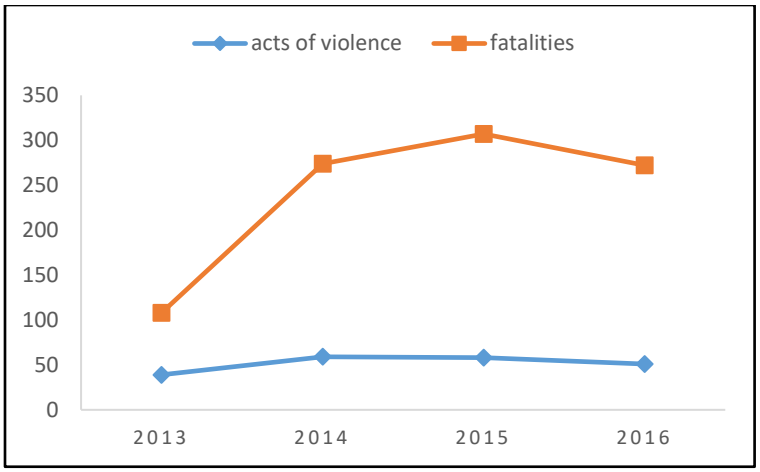

Figure 8. Violence Against Civilians in the DRC (M23, ADF, and FDLR), 2013-2016. Created by author using data from Armed Conflict Location and Event Data project, "Data Export Tool," accessed 10 January 2020, https://www.acleddata.com/data.

Acts of violence and fatalities in 2016 are fewer if compared to 2015, but more than in 2013, when the new strategy was implemented. The initial offensive operations and the defeat of the M23 may have not achieved the expected deterrent effect on the actions of the ADF and the FDLR, as these groups increased their activities until they were targeted by FARDC and MONUSCO. One possible explanation for this phenomenon is provided by Jean-Marie Guéhenno, Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations from 2000 to August 2008. In his book *The Fog of Peace*, he explains that anticipating peacekeepers will provide physical protection to civilians may prompt an armed group to step up attacks against the threatened population.[94] (Figure 9 shows the flow of the IDPs from 2013 to 2016).

[94] Jean-Marie Guéhenno, *The Fog of Peace: A Memoir of International Peacekeeping in the 21st Century* (Washington, DC: Brookings Institution Press, 2015), 159.

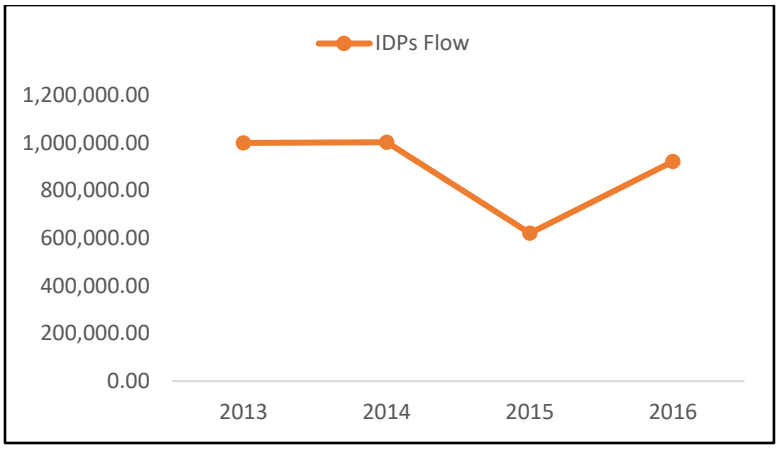

Figure 9. Conflict and Disaster Displacement Figures in the DRC, 2013-2016. Created by author using data from the Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre, "Democratic Republic of the Congo," accessed 10 January 2019, http://www.internaldisplacement.org/countries/ democratic-republic-of-the-congo.

The scenario dramatically changed from 2017 to 2019, as violence against civilians increased considerably. The armed groups initially considered weakened or defeated, including the M23, had adapted to the new circumstances and began to react. In addition, violence appeared to have spilled over to additional regions of the country. On March 10, 2017, the Report of the Secretary General on MONUSCO (S/2017/206) described the security situation as follows:

> Community-based violence and inter-ethnic clashes have spread from areas already affected by armed conflict, such as in North and South Kivu provinces, to Tanganyika, the three Kasai provinces and Kongo Central. Armed group activity in the east has increased, particularly with the resurfacing of the former *Mouvement du 23 mars* (M23). The increasing use of self-defense militia, acting along ethnic lines, points to a growing sense of insecurity and uncertainty.[95]

The same report also stated that although under military pressure, the ADF, the FDLR, and the Patriotic Resistance Force of Ituri (French: *Force de Résistance Patriotique de l'Ituri*, or FRPI) had retained the capacity to conduct destabilizing activities. [96] The document emphasized the

[95] UN, United Nations Security Council (UNSC), S/2017/206, *Report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo* (New York, NY: United Nations, 10 March 2017), 3.

[96] The FRPI is a Bunia-based armed militia and political party active in the south of the Ituri Province. The militia was born out of local fighting over land as well as the proxy wars between DRC, Uganda and Rwanda. Between 2002 and 2003, the FRPI received support from Congolese and Ugandan armies, to fight the Union of Congolese Patriots (UPC). By 2007, most FRPI human resources had

deterioration of the human rights amid rising violence and political turmoil, with an increase of 30 percent in the number of incidents of violence against civilians, when compared with 2015.[97] Finally, two tragic incidents affected MONUSCO in 2017. On March 12, two members of the Group of Experts on the Democratic Republic of the Congo who were monitoring the sanctions regime went missing in the Kasaï Central region. On March 27, their bodies were found.[98] On December 7, in Semuliki, North Kivu, 15 peacekeepers from Tanzania were killed and forty-four injured during an attack attributed to the ADF.[99]

In the terminology of complex adaptive systems, the system was reacting after some short-term success by interventionist agents. This phenomenon has been observed in other internal conflicts. In his analysis of irregular warfare, Visacro noted that the initial shift in the balance of power favors the interventionist force. After some time, however, the armed groups adapt to the new scenario and strike back. In order to regain momentum, the interventionist force must learn from the environment and revise their modus operandi.[100]

Operational commanders seemed to understand this necessity. The mission adjusted its operational approach from "protection-by-presence" to "protection-by-projection."[101] In this new

integrated the Congolese army, but reminiscent remain active in the Ituri district. Elsa Buchanan, "Battle for control of the DRC: Who are the Front for Patriotic Resistance in Ituri (FRPI)?" *The International Business Times*, 22 February 2017, accessed 11 January 2019, https://www.ibtimes.co.uk/battle-control-drc-who-are-front-patriotic-resistance-ituri-frpi-1526289.

[97] UN, United Nations Security Council (UNSC), S/2017/206, *Report of the Secretary-General*, 7.

[98] Aaron Ross, "Who killed U.N. experts in Congo? Confidential prosecutor's file offers clues," *Reuters World News*, 19 December 2017, accessed 11 January 2020, https://www.reuters.com/article/us-congo-violence-un/who-killed-u-n-experts-in-congo-confidential-prosecutors-file-offers-clues-idUSKBN1EE0CT

[99] UN, United Nations Security Council (UNSC), S/2018/16, *Report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo* (New York, NY: United Nations, 5 January 2018), 4.

[100] Visacro, *Irregular War*, 351, 352.

[101] United Nations, United Nations Security Council (UNSC), S/2017/824, *Report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo* (New York, NY: United Nations, 2 October 2017), 12.

approach, the use of force would rely on rapidly deployable battalions operating in standing combat deployments as opposed to static postures.[102] By late 2019, in an independent strategic review report of MONUSCO requested by UNSC Resolution 2463 (of 2019), Youssef Mahmoud, Senior Adviser at the International Peace Institute (IPI), argued that the political and security situation in the DRC has remained fragile. More than 100 armed groups are significant sources of insecurity, resulting in population displacement and continued violence against civilians. Many of these groups fragment, reconstitute themselves, and at times strike new alliances, undergoing various iterations to suit different political and economic agendas. The author welcomed the operational shift from "protection by presence" to "protection by projection," highlighting that "the mix of presence and projection enabled the Mission to cover a greater area and to respond to major protection crises successfully."[103]

Yet Mahmoud questions some assumptions underlying the mandate tasks. In his point of view, the first concept that needs to be revisited is the neutralization of armed groups. The successful campaign against the M23 rebels was due to the alignment of several critical factors, such as political will of the government; support of regional actors; effective diplomatic efforts, and the conventional structure and tactics of M23. Nevertheless, the perception of military victory moved MONUSCO to embark on more military operations that provided no political advantage. After five years "the impact of offensive operations on the protection of civilians remains controversial, as these operations seem to have escalated the violence in the country to its highest levels in a decade, caused collateral damage and triggered retaliatory attacks against

[102] In situations of high uncertainty or constraint of resources, rapidly deployable units provide more flexibility to commanders. Different then forces in static posture, mobile forces can be moved across the area of operations in order to reinforce, disengage or achieve local advantage. United Nations, United Nations Security Council (UNSC), S/2017/826, *Report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo* (New York, NY: United Nations, 29 September 2017), 15.

[103] United Nations, *Transitioning from Stabilization to Peace,* 18.

communities." Finally, the report states that the focus on neutralization overshadowed the activities of the civilian component of the Mission. Therefore, the local population have identified MONUSCO with its military component.[104]

This study sees the evolution of the use of force in MONUSCO in similar fashion, based on the discussion provided within the previous sections. Figure 10 compares numbers of acts of violence against civilians and the use of military force from March 2013 to December 2019. There is a direct relationship between the number of battles and the act of violence against civilians. When the number of battles increased the numbers of acts of violence against civilians increased as well.

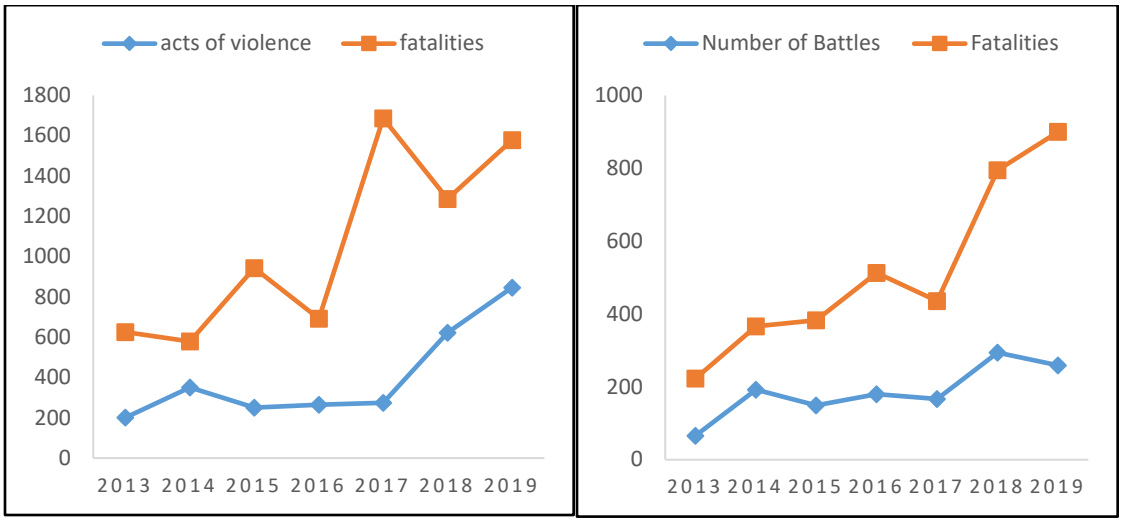

Figure 10. Violence Against Civilians in the DRC, 2013-2019. Created by author using data from Armed Conflict Location and Event Data project, "Data Export Tool", accessed 10 January 2020, https://www.acleddata.com/data.

The number of military engagements did not contribute for a more stable and secure environment, as the number of IDPs remarkably increased since 2015 as well. Figure 11 presents the flow of IDPs since the beginning of the offensive operations. At the time this monograph was written, no data was available for 2019.

[104] United Nations, *Transitioning from Stabilization to Peace*, 3, 7, 19-21.

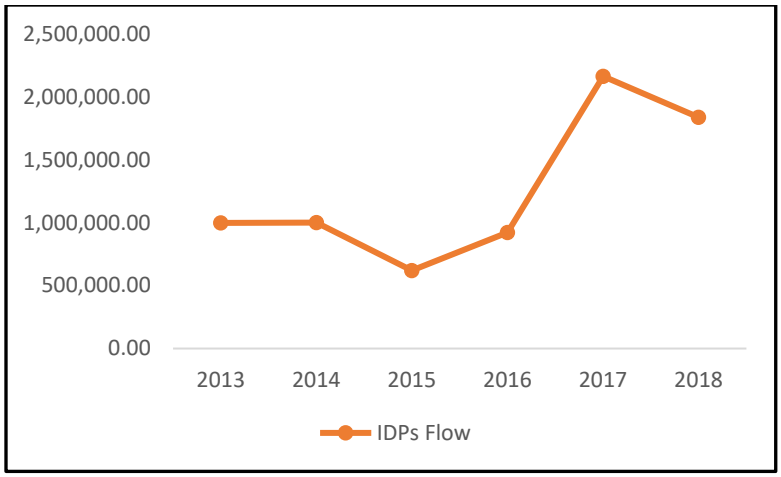

Figure 11. Conflict and Disaster Displacement Figures in the DRC, 2013-2018. Created by author using data from the Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre, "Democratic Republic of the Congo," accessed 10 January 2019, http://www.internaldisplacement.org/countries/democratic-republic-of-the-congo.

Conclusion

Using MONUSCO as a case study, this project analyzed the utility of military force in UN peace operations. It specifically examined if use of military force has reduced the threat posed by Congolese and foreign armed groups, and if it has contributed to the achievement of the mission ultimate political aim, protection of civilians. Based on four critical arguments, this work asserts that despite some relevant tactical victories, force has provided no advantage to the achievement of the mission's political aim.

First, there are several structural limitations on the UN's ability to execute stabilization operations which, by definition, involve offensive and defensive missions. There is no unity of effort in the UN. The organization represents a variety of agendas and interests what sometimes create significant obstacles to develop coherent strategic objectives and guidelines. In this sense, force is likely to be used unevenly, because of the different interests between member states. In addition, the UN has no permanent military structure. It relies on a diverse number of Troop Contributing Countries that have no common doctrine, organization, materiel, and training.

Moreover, the provision of military assets is dependent on TCCs' national interests. High-risk missions that offer few political and economic attractions are unlikely to find countries interested in participating and force preservation tends to become the main condition behind the decision-making process at the tactical level.

Second, adherence to peacekeeping principles of consent, impartiality, and non-use of force has failed. The multitude of parties involved in the DRC and the variety of their political agendas have made broad consent unrealistic. Regarding impartiality, the UN has sided with the Congolese government to achieve stability, executing combined joint military operations with the FARDC and these impacts the way local populations perceive the UN, once the Congolese forces have been accused of several human rights violations. Lastly, non-use of force privileges the primacy of diplomacy and the *jus ad bellum* requirement that military power should be employed only as a last resort. In this sense, force remains passive, in the backstage waiting the failure of the other instruments of power. However, as discussed in Section III, force is never last resort. A good strategy should envision the use of force – or the threat to use it – as a mean to change, influence, and control since the early stages of a crisis. Nor is military power decisive. Particularly in limited-contingency operations, tactical victory does not infer strategic success. Instead of pursuing tactical victories, the use of force should be understood as a bargaining power to be exploited by politics to achieve position of advantage.

Third, there are limitations on implementing a strategy of deterrence in UN stabilization operations. It is challenging to match a theory designed for interactions between strong often nuclear-armed states to problems posed by weak states and non-state actors. In addition, as in the DRC, deterrence may not be effective when peacekeepers are deployed in the midst of conflicts to contain escalation while protecting civilians. When deployed in civil wars, peacekeepers must be prepared to deter and compel, to perform a broader range of military operations across the continuum of conflict.

Fourth, the MONUSCO has not been flexible and adaptable enough to act in complex adaptive systems such the eastern DRC. Initial tactical victories obscured the organization's capability to pay enough attention to possible side effects and long-term repercussions. The system reacted after some short-term success by UN and the organization took so long to learn from the environment and revise its *modus operandi*. Between 2017 to 2019, violence against civilians increased considerably; armed groups initially considered weakened or defeated adapted to the new circumstances and begun to react; violence spilled over to additional regions of the country; and human rights situation deteriorated.

Finally, operations such as MONUSCO have pushed peacekeeping beyond its traditional limits and have presented considerable challenges for the UN. The institution has critical military strategic, operational, and tactical limitations with regard to executing combat operations in complex adaptive environments, and would have to perform several structural changes if wants to stay in the business of stabilization. Whether the UN will keep executing high-security risk operations or go back to traditional peacekeeping, military force should be understood and used, in conjunction with the other instruments of power, as a bargaining power to provide continuous advantage since the early stages of the political process. In this regard, force is neither decisive nor a last resort, and "victory" is only a minor event in time and space.

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