The *Global Peace Operations Review* is an interactive web-portal presenting in-depth analysis and detailed data on military peacekeeping operations and civilian-led political missions by the United Nations, regional organizations, and ad-hoc coalitions. The web-portal is a product of the New York University Center on International Cooperation (CIC) and a continuation of its long-standing print publications the *Annual Review of Global Peace Operations* and the *Review of Political Missions*.

Providing the most comprehensive overview of multilateral contributions to peacekeeping, conflict prevention, and post-conflict peacebuilding, the Review aims to initiate and inform discussions on the comparative advantages and appropriateness of different missions, and through constructive analysis to further strengthen existing partnerships necessary for them to succeed.

Through the Country & Regional Profile pages, the Review provides background information and regularly updated key developments on peace operations and the contexts in which they operate. The analysis is further enhanced by the provision of detailed data on each of the UN's peace operations, and headline data on missions fielded by regional organizations and ad hoc missions, which can be accessed in full through the Data & Trends section. Data on non-UN peace operations was compiled by the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI). For more details, please see our Data guide. The Strategic Summary provides an overview of main developments in mission settings over the past year and presents analysis on trends and the impact these may have on shaping peace operations of the future. Thematic essays presented in the In Focus section unpack issues critical to peace operations, providing analysis and guidance on possible approaches.

The Library section enables readers to download full text .pdf files of past editions of the *Annual Review of Global Peace Operations* (2006-2012) and the *Review of Political Missions* (2010-2012). For those interested in conducting their own analysis using the data generated for these publications, we have provided spreadsheets of all the statistics used to compile these reports.

**Scope of the Global Peace Operations Review**

The Review covers more than one hundred multilateral peace operations active in the previous year including missions fielded by the UN, AU, EU, ECOWAS, OSCE, OAS and coalitions. It uses a broad definition of peace operations that includes multilateral and ad hoc military and police missions, as well as civilian led political missions. Neither type of mission has a simple definition. Alongside more straightforward peacekeeping missions, the Review, mindful of the need for peace operations to adjust to the changing nature of conflict, also includes peace enforcement operations that employ the use of force and engage in active combat.

Under political missions, we include multilateral civilian-led missions that have political engagement in the form of launching and supporting political processes at their core. This includes, for example, the EU's Special Representatives and the African Union Liaison Offices that support the implementation of peace agreements and accompany political processes. We have excluded missions, such as EU delegations and other liaison offices that may engage in political activities, but as their core function serve more as regular diplomatic or developmental presences. Along the same reasoning, we have also excluded election observer and human rights monitoring missions.

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# TABLE OF CONTENTS

## Thematic Essays

Towards a Continental Strategy for Countering Violent Extremism in Africa  
Tarek A. Sharif and Joanne Richards  

Has UN Peacekeeping Become More Deadly?  
Marine E. Henke  

Challenges for Human Rights Sections of UN Peace Operations  
Alexis Guidotti  

## Commentary

Is MONUSCO Doing a Good Job at Protecting Civilians?  
Jason Stearns  

Land Privatisation and Climate Change are Costing Rural Kenyans  
Jonathan Rozen  

Sustaining Peace Requires Urgent Climate Action  
Jonathan Rozen  

Accountability for Peacekeeping Failures Must be Shared by the UN in New York  
Lauren Spink
Interviews

Olof Skoog: Sweden is Preparing for an Active Two Years on the Council
Olof Skoog

Related Publications
Maps
TOWARDS A CONTINENTAL STRATEGY FOR COUNTERING VIOLENT EXTREMISM IN AFRICA

Tarek A. Sharif and Joanne Richards

The African Union has a comprehensive counter-terrorism framework promoting law-enforcement, intelligence sharing, and traditional military responses. However, the fight against terrorism also requires more preventative, grassroots measures that address the root causes contributing to the development of violent extremism.

Violent extremism is now recognized as a growing threat to peace and security in Africa, as exemplified by the recent terrorist attacks in Garissa, Abidjan, and Ouagadougou. While much of the policy discussion on Countering Violent Extremism (CVE) focuses on the return of radicalized foreign fighters to the West, less attention is directed to those foreign fighters who may eventually return from Iraq, Syria, and Libya to other areas of North Africa, the Maghreb, and the Horn of Africa. Tunisia is one of the world’s largest contributors to the Islamic State in terms of foreign fighters, with smaller contributions from Algeria, Morocco, Libya, Sudan and Somalia. Issues concerning the return of foreign fighters to Africa are particularly salient not only because these individuals may return to their communities, but also because they may link up with other extremist armed groups present across the continent. These include groups affiliated to either al-Qaeda or the Islamic State, such as Boko Haram, al-Shabaab, and al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM).

Attempts to counter violent extremism began in Europe in the 1980s with the advent of programs to dissuade and disengage right-wing extremists in Norway, Sweden and Germany. Although no common definition exists, since that time CVE has come to be associated with a range of measures designed to prevent and reverse the radicalization of individuals and groups, and to forestall the participation of these groups and “lone wolves” in acts of terrorism. Given that CVE is preventative and reactive, different CVE strategies are necessary for different stages of the radicalization continuum, including for individuals and communities with no exposure to extremist networks, those with some exposure, and those already radicalized. The latter is often associated with attempts to shift extremists towards acceptance of more moderate ideologies and is known as “deradicalization.”

In some ways, CVE is difficult to distinguish from conventional counter-terrorism, which often includes traditional military measures and the sharing of intelligence between nation states. However, because conventional counter-terrorism does not address the root causes prompting radicalization, policy interventions under the rubric of CVE have more recently been designed to focus attention on the grassroots factors, which may render certain individuals more susceptible to radicalization than others. Social exclusion, poverty, and a lack of education are often named as typical contenders in this regard, although CVE practitioners...
generally acknowledge that no single causal pathway to radicalization can be identified. Reflecting these general trends, this essay charts the development of African Union policy, from its roots in conventional counter-terrorism, to efforts to devise a continental strategy for CVE in Africa. It also outlines a number of policy measures, which any such continental strategy should take into account.

**TERRORISM AND EXTREMISM AS A TRANSNATIONAL SECURITY THREAT TO AFRICA**

The foreign fighter phenomenon is not new to Africa, and the resurgence of terrorism on the continent (and elsewhere) in the early 1990s is often traced back to veterans of the anti-Soviet Muslim army, the “Mujahideen.” Trained by the CIA during the Cold War, a number of foreign Mujahideen fighters returned to their countries of origin following the withdrawal of the Soviet Union from Afghanistan in February 1989. Mujahideen veterans returning to Algeria founded the radical Armed Islamic Group (GIA) and also participated in its splinter faction, the Salafist Group for Preaching and Combat (GSPC). Formed in 1998, GSPC trained individuals from Chad, Sudan, Libya, Mali and Mauritania, and extended its operations throughout southern Algeria, northern Mali, and regions of Niger and Mauritania. In 2007, GSPC pledged allegiance to al-Qaeda and renamed itself al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM). AQIM’s leader, Abdelmalek Droukdel, later announced that the group would provide arms and training to Nigeria’s Boko Haram. This association was illustrated when Boko Haram attacked the United Nations office in Abuja in 2011, using tactics strikingly similar to those employed by AQIM.

The early connections between AQIM and Boko Haram are indicative of a broader trend in which the many different extremist groups across Africa have become loosely linked to one another, and to either the Islamic State or al-Qaeda in the Middle East. Despite differences in ideology, al-Murabitun (a splinter of AQIM) and Ansar Dine (an AQIM ally in northern Mali) collaborate at least marginally. There is also evidence suggesting that the Ansaru group (a Boko Haram splinter formed in 2012) has trained and collaborated with both AQIM and Somalia’s al-Shabaab. Like AQIM, al-Shabaab has remained affiliated to al-Qaeda, despite the recent establishment of Islamic State footholds in both Egypt’s Sinai Peninsula and Libya. Boko Haram’s recent pledge of allegiance to the Islamic State in 2015 has also seen dozens of its fighters travel to Libya to provide support for the group. Exacerbated by the Arab Spring, open borders and ungoverned spaces throughout the Maghreb and Sahel regions have significantly contributed to both the transnational connections between extremist groups and the movement of fighters. Members of the Tunisian Ansar-al-Sharia group hold out in mountainous regions along the border with Algeria and benefit from the open border with Libya. AQIM and other affiliated groups also move freely across the border between southern Algeria and northern Mali.

**AU COUNTER-TERRORISM: NORMATIVE AND IMPLEMENTATION FRAMEWORKS**

In response to these transnational terrorist threats, in 1992 the Organization of African Unity (OAU) took initial steps to strengthen the cooperation and coordination of African states in counter-terrorism. This effort was later followed by the adoption, in 1999, of the OAU Convention on the Prevention and Combating of Terrorism and its related Protocols. The Convention entered into force in December 2002 and, to date, 41 Member States have ratified. In order to implement the Convention, the AU developed a Plan of Action on the Prevention and Combating of Terrorism that lays out several measures related to improvements in border control, inter-governmental information exchange, countering terrorist financing, and necessary legislative and judicial steps. As part of the implementation of the 2002 Plan of Action, the African Centre for the Study and Research of Terrorism (ACSRT) was established in 2004 in Algiers. ACSRT serves as an information center for research and analysis on terrorism and
terrorist groups, and for the development of counter-terrorism capacity building programs. The AU also appointed a Special Representative for counter-terrorism in October 2010, and, the following year, the AU Commission adopted the **African Model Law on Counter-Terrorism** at the 17th Ordinary Session of the Assembly of the Union, held in Malabo (July 2011). The Model Law provides a template designed to harmonize domestic counter-terrorism legislation and to ensure compliance with relevant international instruments.

The Islamic State’s recent call for jihadists to make their way to the “African provinces” further intensified AU efforts. In September 2014, the AU Peace and Security Council adopted a **communiqué at its 455th meeting**, at the level of Heads of State and Government, on the prevention and combating of terrorism and violent extremism in Africa. This communiqué was seen as a second action plan with the PSC calling upon the AU Commission to intensify its efforts in a number of areas, including the establishment of a Counter Terrorism Fund, the elaboration of an African arrest warrant for persons charged with or convicted of terrorist acts, and the establishment of specialized joint counter-terrorism units at the sub-regional and regional levels within the framework of the African Standby Force (ASF). These steps complement the AU’s ongoing **Nouakchott (2013)** and **Djibouti (2015)** processes, which bring together heads of intelligence, from across the Sahel and East Africa regions respectively, to share information and strengthen regional security cooperation against transnational threats. In 2015, the PSC also authorized a Multinational Joint Task Force (MJTF) to fight Boko Haram made up of troop contingents from Benin, Cameroon, Chad, Niger and Nigeria. The MJTF’s specific tasks include cross-border military operations, regional coordination, and joint border patrols. In addition to these military efforts, the **PSC decision establishing the MJTF** also noted the need to improve livelihoods, education, and job creation in the region in order to address “alienation and marginalization as conditions conducive to violent extremism.”

**CVE: TOWARDS AN EFFECTIVE AFRICAN APPROACH**

While the AU Commission has devoted considerable attention to building the capacities of AU Member States to conduct conventional counter-terrorism, such as joint military operations and the sharing of intelligence, more must be done to address the root causes of violent extremism and the so-called “battle of minds.” This requires a multi-sectoral approach with different policy interventions for different stages of radicalization.

For those not (yet) exposed to extremist ideology, CVE interventions should aim to prevent and build resilience to radicalization. A holistic approach is necessary, including the expansion of educational programs that promote critical thinking and the use of mainstream development projects, which can be implemented with a CVE sub-objective, to prevent the marginalization of individuals and communities. Efforts to promote religious moderation may also be undertaken, including the use of radio and television to promote moderate teachings, and the review of textbooks and syllabi to remove radical exhortations to violence.

More targeted interventions are required for those individuals and groups already exposed to extremist networks and identified as “at risk” of radicalization. Counter-messaging is one means of undermining the appeal of violent extremist messaging and can make use of counter-narratives provided by former terrorists and the victims/survivors of terrorist attacks. In this regard, the AU Commission organized two meetings on “Victims of Terrorist Acts” in **October 2014** and **November 2016**. The meetings provided a forum to discuss how best to assist victims of terrorism and how to promote their role as active partners in CVE. Recent experience from past counter-messaging initiatives has shown that the content, source, and scale of the message must be taken into account. While the message must be clear and the source credible, the scale of counter-message dissemination must...
also be large enough and sustained enough to be heard, particularly in the vast expanse of the internet. To achieve the required volume and credibility, partnerships with terrorist victim associations, former fighters, religious leaders and civil society must be further explored. Counter-messaging can also be provided face-to-face, as is currently taking place within the AU’s peacekeeping mission in Somalia (AMISOM). Here, AMISOM and the Somali authorities engage Imams and religious scholars to sensitize local communities and to provide a counter-narrative to the violent rhetoric propagated by al-Shabaab. As part of the Mission's Quick Impact Projects (QIPs), Mosques and Islamic schools, or Madrassas, are also currently being rehabilitated to provide a platform for community mobilization, reconciliation and peacebuilding.

**THE FIGHT AGAINST TERRORISM ALSO REQUIRES MORE PREVENTATIVE, GRASSROOTS MEASURES THAT ADDRESS THE ROOT CAUSES CONTRIBUTING TO THE DEVELOPMENT OF VIOLENT EXTREMISM**

In addition to counter-messaging, it is also important for CVE programs to gain the support and trust of individuals who are well positioned to detect behavioral changes suggestive of radicalization, particularly in “at risk” communities. This can include those with close personal ties to the individual(s) in question, such as friends, teachers, and family members. Providing education to help these bystanders assess the potential signs of radicalization and recruitment may help to encourage reporting to law-enforcement or to other CVE networks. However, any such educational program will also have to address the fact that bystanders will likely be reluctant to report close friends and may fear repercussions. Community policing may be able to make some in-roads in this regard, particularly if community projects aimed at countering violent extremism encourage relationship and trust-building activities as well as communal problem solving. In the African context, the strong role of civil society and women's organizations could also be leveraged to build confidence in this regard.

A final set of policy interventions is required for individuals who have already radicalized. These policy interventions should facilitate both disengagement (the rejection of violence), and deradicalization (a shift towards more moderate ideology). Disengagement and deradicalization are often prison-based activities, and may be carried out by moderate religious authorities that visit inmates and lead prison-based prayers. This occurs in Morocco, where deradicalization is accomplished through religious supervision carried out by authorities from the Ministry of Islamic Affairs and members of regional and local religious councils. In 2013, these officials visited approximately 5,000 inmates. Support for reintegration into civilian life upon release is also paramount. In this respect, much can be learnt from the African Union and United Nations' experience of reintegration during programs of Disarmament, Demobilization, and Reintegration (DDR). In the case of CVE, vocational training traditionally associated with DDR could be combined with religious re-education and support for the (re-)establishment of relationships away from extremist networks.

One additional issue of concern is the use of the Internet by still active radicals to spread information on methods of guerrilla warfare, and on the construction of Improvised Explosive Devices (IEDs) and other forms of Radiological Dispersal Device (RDD). This could allow terrorist groups and their operatives to develop expertise to further wreak havoc and destruction. Al-Qaida in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP) allegedly publishes an on-line magazine, “Inspire,” with the stated objective of enabling Muslims to
train for jihad at home. This calls for concerted efforts at the national, regional and global levels, to prevent the exploitation of the Internet by terrorist groups. This could be achieved through legislation against cybercrime and Internet counter-terrorism, and the use of enhanced technical capabilities to monitor and track its misuse.

CONCLUSION

The African Union has a comprehensive counter-terrorism framework promoting law-enforcement, intelligence sharing, and traditional military responses. However, the fight against terrorism also requires more preventative, grassroots measures that address the root causes contributing to the development of violent extremism. As a result, at its 592nd meeting in April 2016, the AU Peace and Security Council called for the establishment of a “platform for reflection” to inform the development of a comprehensive continental strategy for both counter-radicalization and counter-terrorism. This platform will need to examine the themes outlined above concerning education for the prevention of radicalization, counter-messaging, the engagement of bystanders, legislation against cyber-crime, and means for disengagement and deradicalization. The particular challenges posed by CVE will also need to be addressed. For example, CVE programs have the potential to do considerable harm if seen to alienate and stigmatize particular communities. The root causes that lead to radicalization are difficult to identify and CVE programs that focus only on deprived and marginalized communities may neglect to counter the radicalization of those who do not fit a standard profile. Careful context specific analysis will be required to identify the different drivers of extremism in different settings.

Countering violent extremism in Africa will ultimately be a long-term process inextricably linked to events beyond the continent. The AU will therefore continue to work towards the development of an overarching CVE framework and the provision of support to AU Member States in the design and implementation of counter-radicalization and deradicalization programs. These programs should be appropriate to specific national contexts, dealing sometimes with the prevention of radicalization and sometimes with the return, deradicalization and reintegration of former fighters. Moving forward will require enhanced levels of cooperation and collaboration with both international and domestic partners. Capacity building in emerging CVE concepts and methods will also be necessary, and the training of select DDR officers and AU Mission personnel, such as those working within Somalia (AMISOM) and Mali and the Sahel (MISAHHEL), may be particularly desirable. Furthermore, in order to provide a facilitating environment for CVE, the AU will continue to assist Regional Economic Communities (RECs) and AU Member States in complementary counter-terrorism efforts, including improvements to border control and the review, drafting, and domestication of counter-terrorist legislation in line with the AU Model Law.

Dr. Tarek A. Sharif is the Head of the Defense and Security Division at the African Union. Twitter: @AU_PSD

Dr. Joanne Richards is a Technical Advisor on SALW/DDR in the Defense and Security Division, of the African Union. She is seconded on behalf of Bonn International Center for Conversion (BICC). Twitter: @BICC_Bonn
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HAS UN PEACEKEEPING BECOME MORE DEADLY?

Marine E. Henke

TO ASSESS TRENDS, THE PAPER MERGES THIS MONTHLY FATALITY DATA WITH MONTHLY DEPLOYMENT DATA AND CALCULATES FATALITY RATIOS (I.E., FATALITIES RATES RELATIVE TO DEPLOYMENT LEVELS) BY NATIONAL CONTINGENT, MISSION, AND GLOBALLY (I.E., ALL UN MISSIONS COMBINED).

Many practitioners believe that peacekeeping has become an increasingly dangerous undertaking in recent years. My research paper “Has UN Peacekeeping Become More Deadly? Analyzing Trends in UN Fatalities”, tries to get at the heart of this question. It examines trends in fatalities using a new dataset compiled by the Department of Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO). The dataset accounts for monthly fatalities by type of fatality (accident, malicious act, illness, and other causes), nationality of the deceased as well as personnel type for each UN operation worldwide during the time period of 1948 - June 2015. To assess trends, the paper merges this monthly fatality data with monthly deployment data and calculates fatality ratios (i.e., fatalities rates relative to deployment levels) by national contingent, mission, and globally (i.e., all UN missions combined). This is a novelty. All previous studies have worked with yearly deployment averages. As a result, the analysis of fatality trends presented in this paper constitutes the most detailed study of this phenomenon thus far.

The principal findings of the paper are as follows: overall UN fatalities are not substantively on the rise. Indeed, total fatality ratios are sharply declining. Nevertheless, this good news does not equally apply to all types of UN fatalities. While fatality rates and ratios due to accidents and malicious acts are declining, the same cannot be said for illness-related fatality rates and ratios. Indeed, the report provides strong evidence, that fatalities due to illness follow an upward trajectory: increasingly troops, police and military observers die due to illness-related causes while serving in missions.

These findings go against analyses that UN peacekeepers face increasing risk due to changing peacekeeping mandates and more dangerous peacekeeping environment. Both of these changes would imply increases in fatalities due to malicious acts or accidents. Instead it appears that illness-related fatalities constitute the most worrisome development – at least when it comes to peacekeeping fatality rates.

The report does not make claims with regard to UN casualties. The UN currently does not provide systematic data on injuries and/or attacks on UN peacekeepers. It is possible that the number of those has increased in recent years. Due to medical advances, more wounded personnel are able to survive. Without a doubt, these injuries and attacks need to be taken into account when assessing the overall risks peacekeepers face.
THE NEEDS

The report suggests that the UN needs to reassess the importance of health issues in the realm of peacekeeping deployments. Risks in this area urgently need to be addressed in order to improve the safety and security of peacekeepers.

More research is necessary to fully understand why illness-related fatalities have increased in recent years and how to reverse this trend. To do so, the UN should commission a report to examine the reasons for the stark increase in health-related fatalities. In the meantime, DPKO must better enforce its own health-related principles and guidelines, notably with regard to pre-deployment health checkups as well as health and hygiene conditions of in-mission medical facilities.

**WHILE FATALITY RATES AND RATIOS DUE TO ACCIDENTS AND MALICIOUS ACTS ARE DECLINING ... INCREASINGLY TROOPS, POLICE AND MILITARY OBSERVERS DIE DUE TO ILLNESS-RELATED CAUSES WHILE SERVING IN UN MISSIONS**

Health considerations should also inform the ongoing development of capability standards. In the C-34 and other UN fora most attention has thus far been given to the prevention of hostile acts (i.e., better protective equipment in the field, anti-mine vehicles etc.). Ill health and the prevention of health related death have garnered much less attention.

Nevertheless, fatalities are not necessarily the best measure to assess the entirety of risks peacekeepers face. To accurately address the latter question, the number of wounded soldiers that survive because of medical care also needs to be taken into account. The UN should start to systematically collect and make publicly available data across missions with regard to injuries and/or attacks on peacekeepers. To date, no such single medical database exists.

This report was published by Providing for Peacekeeping and the International Peace Institute (IPI). You can download the full report “Has UN Peacekeeping Become More Deadly? Analyzing Trends in UN Fatalities” [here](#).

Marina E. Henke is an Assistant Professor at Northwestern University. Her research focuses on military interventions, UN peacekeeping, and European security and defense policy. | Twitter: @mephenke
When António Guterres succeeds Ban Ki-moon as UN Secretary-General, many problems will be waiting for him, including challenges to the fundamental values underpinning UN peacekeeping. Uncooperative host governments and shifting conflict environments, including asymmetrical threats and violent extremism, are testing blue helmets on the ground. Recent adaptations of peacekeeping practice are also bringing into question the role of civilian components in UN peace operations, notably the human rights sections. The growing use of offensive mandates to quash negative forces and ensure protection of civilians has sometimes made the UN a *party to the conflict* and has cast doubt on the civilian staff’s protection under international humanitarian law. Recommendations by the High-level Independent Panel on Peace Operations (HIPPO) on the primacy of politics also bring into question the principles of impartiality and transparency that lie at the core of credible human rights monitoring. How can UN peace operations ensure robust protection of civilians and broker political solutions while maintaining a transparent and impartial human rights agenda?

At its conception, peacekeeping was formed around three core tenets, often referred to as the ‘principles of peacekeeping’. These included the requirement of consent from the parties, impartiality and non-use of force, except in self-defense. For the most part, they have stood the test of time since Secretary-General Dag Hammarskjöld defined them while devising the UN Emergency Force (UNEF) in Suez in 1956. However, in recent years UN peacekeeping has departed from these principles as operational environments have become less permissive and in key theaters there has been less or little peace to keep. Consent has proven less reliable in conflict areas where governments or non-state armed groups deny access to peacekeepers, like in Sudan, South Sudan or Mali. *Impartiality* has become questionable for missions specifically deployed to support a host state Government, sometimes against non-state armed groups opposing national authorities. Since exceptions to the non-use of force principle include the defense of the mandate, as outlined by the *Capstone Doctrine*, and as mandates now prioritize the protection of civilians by all necessary means for most UN missions, peacekeepers are increasingly called upon to use force against potential perpetrators of violence. Current concepts of operations and rules of engagement have made it clear that blue helmets are authorized to use force to protect civilians from imminent threat of physical violence by any party. More generally, the posture of modern peace operations has adapted by the adoption of robust mandates. In some theatres, special military units with offensive directives were authorized, such as the *Force Intervention Brigade (FIB) initially deployed in 2013* in eastern DRC to neutralize armed groups, or the soon-to-be-deployed *Regional Protection Force in South Sudan*, mandated to engage any actor preparing attacks.
EVOLUTION

This evolution naturally poses many questions and challenges for the UN military forces on the ground. But these shifts also are of equal consequence for the civilians working in peace operations. Boutros Boutros-Ghali recognized the central role of civilians in peacekeeping in his *Agenda for Peace*, and from the 1990s, the UN ushered in the era of multi-dimensional and integrated peacekeeping where civilian, police and military components would work together to implement Security Council mandates. Civilian experts and advisors, specialized in specific areas such as Civil Affairs, Justice or DDR were expected to operate alongside blue helmets in order to provide a more comprehensive response to conflict and post-conflict challenges. As a result of human rights mainstreaming throughout the UN, civilian human rights sections were also formed and bound to the forefront, constituting one of the largest segments of civilian peacekeeping components.

Tasked with sensitizing the parties and communities on the norms of human rights and humanitarian law as well as monitoring and investigating human rights violations, the human rights sections play a key role in supporting the rule of law and documenting abuses in order to help bring perpetrators to justice. Human rights sections support host governments in upholding their human rights obligations and as an accountability measure, human rights reporting keeps pressure on governments to uphold the rule of law.

UNCOOPERATIVE HOST GOVERNMENTS AND SHIFTING CONFLICT ENVIRONMENTS, INCLUDING ASYMMETRICAL THREATS AND VIOLENT EXTREMISM, ARE TESTING BLUE HELMETS ON THE GROUND.

However, for human rights monitoring to be credible, it is essential that human rights officers operate according to international standards, which include a set of basic principles outlined by the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), including impartiality and transparency. Any perceived siding with one party or another poses very distinct challenges to human rights work and undermines the credibility of reporting. In most UN peace missions, offensive or politically charged mandates as well as non-permissive environments raise fundamental challenges for human rights sections.

Integrated peacekeeping establishes that civilian components will work with military components in support of the mandate and they do so notably by contributing to situational awareness and providing information analysis through the missions highly institutionalized reporting mechanisms. Human rights officers report daily and weekly activities to the mission leadership and log confidential information related to individual cases in an online database. On occasion, senior human rights officers can assume the role of Head of Office and represent the mission at meetings with government officials or with non-state armed groups. Human rights officers coordinate on a daily basis with the UN military component on protection of civilian concerns and to organize their own security when moving about the country. They are closely integrated into all aspects of the mission and it is reasonable to question the supporting role those civilian peacekeepers play in robust military operations.
The growing perception of the partiality of peace operations has contributed to a certain loss of trust between the human rights section and many of the other important actors on the ground. When peace operations are perceived as neutral and impartial by local actors, the human rights sections enjoy greater access to all parties, including rebel groups and militias who often demonstrate a willingness to respect human rights and stop abuse. However, in parts of the Central African Republic, dialogue with certain armed groups has faltered because MINUSCA is viewed as siding with rival armed groups or the government. The recent criticisms against MINUSCA from the FPRC, an ex-Séléka group accusing UN peacekeepers of supporting the UPC, another ex-Séléka militia, further challenged the work of human rights officers in FPRC-controlled areas. In the DRC, MONUSCO adopted a rather partial approach when it decided to avoid any interaction with M23 and to suspend human rights activities in areas controlled by the armed group. Since the UN Mission received its mandate to “carry out targeted offensive operations” against armed groups, the areas under control of the FDLR and ADF Nalu became troublesome for human rights officers since the mission had a clear mandate to neutralize and disarm those groups. The space for negotiation and discussion was severely reduced for human rights work, and access to communities living in those areas has proven increasingly difficult. Similarly in Mali, human rights officers have very limited access to much of the north of the country due to severe security risks and regular attacks on MINUSMA peacekeepers by extremist groups that consider the UN to be the enemy. In all those environments, human rights officers have lost some of the leverage they used to have for influencing armed groups behavior and pushing for the respect of human rights and humanitarian law.

HUMANITARIAN SPACE

In addition, relationships with humanitarian actors and UN agencies have also been affected by the robust stance adopted by some peacekeeping operations. Humanitarians are understandably protective of their impartial status and willing to preserve their “humanitarian space” and access. They are consequently less and less keen to be seen as having any affiliation with a UN mission that could be perceived as partial or politically biased. This greatly impacts the work of human rights officers, who often rely on information sharing with humanitarians to document abuse and support their investigations.

Moreover, trust can also be strained inside the UN Mission itself, between human rights officers and blue helmets. UN troops operating under an offensive mandate or engaging in robust military operations are likely to be wary of human rights officers potentially monitoring the conduct of military operations, which can potentially result in a breakdown of internal cooperation and information sharing.

Peacekeeping missions have been marked by a militarization of their modus operandi and an increasing politicization of their stance. Far from the original peacekeeping model, based on the deployment of a small number of military observers keeping an eye on cease-fires, modern peacekeeping has evolved to respond to more complex and demanding conflict and post-conflict situations. They generally act in support of a host state, might be mandated to target ‘negative’ armed elements or spoilers in order to protect civilians, and often have to compromise and adapt to changing international, national or local political dynamics to continue operating. In this context, the civilian components, and more specifically the human rights sections, face difficult contradictions and have to make delicate choices. Human rights officers have to find the right balance to continue to respect the basic principles of human rights monitoring and investigation, while being embedded in a highly political and militarized entity. If the new secretary-general chooses to perpetuate the dynamics launched by the Human Rights up Front initiative and to prioritize human rights, he will have to decide where human rights fits in this new era of peacekeeping. He will notably have to address the challenges of redesigning the structure and role of civilian components in peace operations for a new type of integrated missions.
Although solutions will not come easy, one option for the human rights sections could be to consider the feasibility of an independent presence of OHCHR in countries with particularly challenging operations. A stand-alone OHCHR office would allow human rights teams to regain a sense of impartiality because they would operate independently of the mission, but this would jeopardize the integrated approach. The Department of Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO) and OHCHR should also regularly review, discuss and adapt the existing policy on human rights in peace operations in order to take into consideration the new challenges related to the role of human rights officers in robust missions, and to provide detailed guidance for field personnel facing daily contradictions between OHCHR principles and DPKO positions. A thorough analysis of the consequences of robust operations for the civilian components, and of lessons learned in DRC, CAR, South Sudan, Darfur or Mali in this regard, could also contribute to inform upcoming reforms for the Secretariat in order to preserve a viable and balanced integrated approach of multidimensional peacekeeping.

Alexis Guidotti is a CIC Visiting Scholar and PhD candidate at the University of Paris II Panthéon-Assas. | Twitter: @AlexisGuidotti
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IS MONUSCO DOING A GOOD JOB AT PROTECTING CIVILIANS?

Jason Stearns

The Takeaway from this poll is that MONUSCO and the UN Security Council should redouble efforts to find a solution to the crisis in Kinshasa

The recent UN peacekeeping missions in the Congo are notable for their size and longevity. In 1999, the UN Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of Congo or MONUC was mandated to monitor the Lusaka Ceasefire Agreement. In 2010, it was transformed into the UN Organization Stabilization Mission in the DR Congo (MONUSCO), now the largest and most expensive peace operation, with 22,498 personnel and an annual budget of $1.2 billion. These missions have also been a critical laboratory for innovations in peacekeeping, especially with regards to the protection of civilians. Concepts such as Joint Protection Teams (JPTs) were pioneered in the Congo, and the mission experimented with various kinds of robust peacekeeping in Ituri and the Kivus, most recently with the Force Intervention Brigade (FIB).
However, since the 2006 elections and the end of the Sun City peace process, the mission has been marginalized from what it did best: the implementation of a political process. In 2010, it was transformed into a stabilization mission, mandated to help strengthen the Congolese and to protect civilians in imminent danger. Unfortunately, these two imperatives have often been at loggerheads. The government security forces with which MONUSCO has partnered have proven to be extremely abusive, and members of the army have backed other armed groups in the eastern Congo. What should the UN do when the same army it is sent to support abuses the civilians it is supposed to protect? Meanwhile, the mission has been unable to broker an effective peace process to deal with the remaining 70 armed groups in the eastern Congo or to play a critical role in bringing an end to the political turmoil in Kinshasa.

**THE BLUE HELMETS ARE ESPECIALLY UNPOPULAR IN THE VERY AREAS WHERE MOST OF THEM HAVE DEPLOYED**

It is in this context that the Congo Research Group (CRG) at the Center on International Cooperation set about to understand how the people feel about the mission that is supposed to serve them. The Bureau d’Études, de Recherches, et Consulting International (BERCI) and CRG conducted a nationally representative political opinion poll across the Democratic Republic of the Congo. Between May and September 2016, researchers interviewed 7,545 people in face-to-face interviews. This survey should be seen as complementary—and many of our findings were similar—to the Harvard Humanitarian Initiative’s surveys in the Congo.

We asked many questions, but the main ones related to MONUSCO were:

- Is MONUSCO doing a good job at protecting civilians?
- Should the mission downsize, stay, or leave?
- Is MONUSCO corrupt?

General public opinion is mixed regarding MONUSCO: 55.1 per cent think the peacekeepers should stay and 29.4 per cent think they should leave. But the blue helmets are especially unpopular in the very areas where most of them have deployed: in Nord-Kivu (56.7 per cent), Sud-Kivu (50.2 per cent) and Ituri (45.2 per cent) a preponderance of respondents said the UN mission should leave. An alarming high number of Congolese also felt that the peacekeeping mission was very corrupt (17.4 per cent) or slightly corrupt (an additional 18.5 per cent). Only 36 per cent felt it was not at all corrupt.

People also felt that the mission should not wait for government approval or partnership to attack armed groups. Around half of those asked said the mission should engage in unilateral operations against armed groups who pose a threat to the local population, while 29.2 per cent said it should not.

How should we interpret these figures? What should the mission do? MONUSCO has always suffered from the problem of excessive expectations and the poor popular understanding of its mandate. The mission cannot be everywhere at the same time, and carrying out an effective counterinsurgency is dangerous and extremely difficult. At the same time, the mission’s failings, especially in the area of civilian protection have been well-documented. Other parts of our poll can help us analyze this data.
First, MONUSCO is not alone in terms of Congolese antipathy toward foreign actors. Many Congolese feel that they do not benefit from foreign aid, private sector investments or humanitarian work. We asked whether the Congo would be better off without foreign aid—31.3 per cent said yes. Similarly, high levels said the country would fare better without international NGOs (33.4 per cent) and foreign investment (31 per cent). Surprisingly, these responses are even higher in some of the provinces most affected. For example, in Nord-Kivu, which sees most activity by international NGOs, 47.2 per cent said they would be better off without them.

Secondly, Congolese have a remarkably sophisticated understanding of their political situation. Overwhelmingly, Congolese felt that elections should be seen as the priority. We asked: “The country is facing numerous challenges, including poverty, a complicated electoral process, and violent conflict.” Respondents then replied whether security and development should be prioritized over elections, go hand in hand, or elections are more important. The results were clear: most respondents (46.7 per cent) felt all three are linked and should be worked on at the same time, 39.1 per cent said elections were more important than any other consideration, and only 14 per cent said security and development are a greater priority than elections.

The takeaway is that MONUSCO and the UN Security Council should redouble efforts to find a solution to the crisis in Kinshasa. If there has been one lesson from seventeen years of peacekeeping and stabilization in the Congo it is this: Without an accountable and willing government as a partner, it will be extremely difficult for the UN mission—as well as other foreign actors—to make any headway.

The complete survey report can be downloaded here.

Jason K. Stearns is the director of the Congo Research Group at the Center on International Cooperation, New York University. | Twitter: @jasonkstearns
Land privatisation and climate change are costing rural Kenyans

Jonathan Rozen

IN KAJIADO COUNTY, VULNERABILITY AND CONFLICT CAN BE TRACED TO LAND SUBDIVISION, NOT JUST CLIMATE CHANGE.

Eddah Senetoi lives with her son in the small pastoralist community of Elangata Waus. They keep cows, goats, sheep and donkeys to buy food and pay school fees. For her and other pastoralists living in southern Kenya's Kajiado County, climate change is compounding challenges from land subdivision and privatisation, magnifying social tensions and community conflicts over access to resources.

As the world leaves the COP 22 global climate talks in Morocco with 'irreversible momentum' for action, Kajiado County offers lessons for preventing conflict and sustaining peace amid worsening climate conditions.

Rising global temperatures have caused increasingly variable rainfall patterns in many areas of sub-Saharan Africa, placing strain on weather dependent livelihoods like pastoralism. ‘Climate has affect[ed] my family and the community at large when there are no rains and the drought … animals which are the source of income become skinny and later die due to lack of pastures and water,’ Senetoi told ISS Today.

In Kajiado County, unpredictable climate patterns act as a ‘threat multiplier’ to existing economic and social challenges that stem from the privatisation of community lands.

‘Conflict will be experienced whenever animals trespass to other people's parcel [of] land since everyone has his/her own parcel,’ Senetoi explained. ‘Conflicts always arise … due to scarce water and grass.’

Land subdivision in Kenya began as a colonial proposition by the British in the 1950s to limiting land degradation. Privatisation policies were continued following Kenya’s independence in 1963, intending to incentivise better land management. However, research by Dr Esther Mwangi finds that individualisation of land rights does not precipitate ecological sustainability in arid and semi-arid areas, like Kajiado.

Before land subdivision, pastoralists could respond to seasonal variation and drought by moving freely across the land to find adequate grazing for their animals. But now private land titles have carved once common and increasingly scarce resources into pieces for individual use. In response, traditional social networks have helped Kajiado residents' maintain access to resources and sustain pastoral livelihoods. In many cases, long-standing clan, age group and family networks have been used to maintain access to land and resources during hard times.
While increased scarcity has brought conflict and division, it has also affirmed certain community bonds as people come together to support each other’s animals. Together, people are building climate resilience. In their Collective Action on Property Rights working paper, Drs Burnsilver and Mwangi highlight these networks and recommend land ‘re-aggregation’ to grant herders access to resources and reverse ecological decline associated with subdivision.

For the Maasai people, pastoralism is more than a livelihood – it is also a matter of cultural identity. Many youth in pastoral communities like Senetoi’s feel their traditional occupation is threatened by reduced access to water and grazing, leaving them without suitable employment alternatives. As traditional Maasai social structures leave both women and youth largely outside of formal land decision-making, some have sought to improve their chances of maintaining a pastoral livelihood by resisting land sales.

In Kajiado County’s Torosei area, for example, youth have organised to prevent further subdivision and deter land speculators. Non-governmental organisations such as the Mainyoito Pastoralist Integrated Development Organization also work to reduce land sales, strengthen people’s legal representation, and promote the court system for peaceful resolution of land disputes. Recognising public concern and despite political opposition, the Kajiado governor placed a freeze on land sales in 2014.

While the situation is not as violent as pastoral conflict in north-western Kenya, Dr Bobadoye Ayodotun Oluwafemi, former researcher at the University of Nairobi’s Institute for Climate Change and Adaptation, told ISS Today he is concerned about a possible escalation of violence over resources in Kajiado County. World Bank projections indicate that increasing global temperatures may result in increased rainfall across East Africa, but predictability remains uncertain.

As Bobadoye and colleagues highlight, differences exist between pastoralist perceptions of climate change and meteorological rainfall data. He found that while rainfall in Kajiado County has not decreased since 1970, 83% of surveyed pastoralists believe it has. For Kajiado’s pastoralists, shortened and more variable rainfall periods, as well as land subdivision, have heightened perceptions of declining precipitation.

This is not to say that pastoralists are unaware of climate patterns. In fact, Bobadoye notes there is significant and accurate indigenous climate tracking that should be integrated into broader adaptation strategies. Failure to integrate local knowledge of climate change risks eroding communities’ trust in larger national or international adaptation plans, jeopardising peacebuilding opportunities.

For Senetoi, rainwater collection methods and government provision of hay and food supplements are welcome support. They help her community and the animals they rely on in the face of unpredictable seasons.

Efforts to ‘harness momentum’ for climate action from COP22 should include reflecting on systemic issues like land privatisation in Kajiado, which predate current climate realities but also contribute to climate vulnerability and conflict.

Jonathan Rozen, Research Associate, Peace Operations and Peacebuilding Division, ISS Pretoria

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SUSTAINING PEACE REQUIRES URGENT CLIMATE ACTION

Jonathan Rozen

DUAL UN RESOLUTIONS HIGHLIGHT THE SDG PRIORITIES OF ‘SUSTAINABLE ECONOMIC GROWTH’ AND ‘POVERTY ERADICATION’ AS IMPORTANT FOR SUSTAINING PEACE - BOTH OF WHICH ARE THREATENED BY CLIMATE CHANGE.

Worsening climate conditions directly threaten prospects for attaining the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), and with them the conditions for peaceful societies.

As the Paris Agreement comes into force on 4 November, the world will be committed to the best existing global strategy for limiting and reversing climate change. Advancing sustainable development and peace will require bold climate action that looks beyond short-term political constraints.

‘Sustaining peace,’ which recognises the comprehensive social, political and economic factors that contribute to conflict prevention and maintenance of peaceful societies, has become a cornerstone for current peacebuilding thinking. ‘How can we avoid conditions that can lead to conflict in the first place?’ asked Juan José Gómez Camacho, Permanent Representative of Mexico to the United Nations (UN), during a meeting on sustaining peace and preventing conflict on 22 September.

While the UN often cites the SDGs as a powerful tool for achieving these conditions, climate action and the Paris Agreement to limit the global temperatures temperature rise to below two degrees Celsius have so far remained on the periphery of the discourse on sustaining peace.

In 2015, the UN conducted a Peacebuilding Review, which noted that climate change is a driver of conflict, and also underlined limitations in the understanding of links between climate and fragility.

Last April, drawing on this review, the UN General Assembly and Security Council adopted identical resolutions on sustaining peace. While the final texts do not explicitly mention climate conditions, they do state that, ‘development, peace and security, and human rights are interlinked and mutually reinforcing.’

By expanding the perspective of conflict prevention to include the holistic maintenance of environments that are conducive to peace, the UN linked building safe and peaceful societies to the full spectrum of SDGs. Given the significant threat that climate change poses to African developmental gains, efforts on sustaining peace require responses to rising global temperatures.

Climate change directly threatens socio-economic development outcomes. As a 2013 World Bank report outlines, the impacts of climate change are widespread and increasingly severe, with successive degrees of warming beyond pre-industrial levels. For example, a temperature increase of up to two degrees Celsius by the 2050s could reduce total crop production in sub-Saharan Africa.
Africa by 10%, with further warming increasing the potential loss to around 15 to 20%. These reductions correspond to potential increases in hyper-arid and arid areas across the continent, especially in southern Africa.

Reduced water access will dramatically affect both food security and livelihoods, not least because agriculture is predicted to remain the employer of 46% of Africans by 2020. Warming is also forecast to increase undernourishment and the prevalence of diseases, such as malaria, which may hinder childhood education. Climate change will impact the social, political and economic landscape of the continent, and with it the potential to achieve the SDGs and conditions for sustaining peace.

The dual UN resolutions highlight the SDG priorities of ‘sustainable economic growth’ and ‘poverty eradication’ as important for sustaining peace – both of which are threatened by climate change.

As outlined in a paper by Health and Environment International Trust researcher Tord Kjellstrom, the physical and mental stresses of exacerbated heat exposure negatively impact working capacity around the world. Correspondingly, it inhibits countries’ ability to achieve sustainable economic growth.

For example, using the Climate Vulnerability Monitor, Kjellstrom notes that Ghana and Nigeria's 2030 projections have total climate change costs amounting to 8.9% and 7.6% of GDP respectively. While workplace-cooling schemes may be used to alleviate these losses, recommendations maintain that the ‘global mitigation of climate change’ is the most effective means of protecting health and economic progress.

Climate shifts disproportionately impact vulnerable populations, often with limited government support. ‘There won't be durable peace unless people can enjoy the benefits of development,’ Miguel Ruiz Cabañas, Undersecretary for Multilateral Affairs and Human Rights at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Mexico, said at the 22 September UN meeting.

**INCREASINGLY VARIABLE WEATHER CONDITIONS HAVE BEEN LINKED TO THE OUTBREAK OF CONFLICT**

Anticipating increasing climate changes, the UN has prioritised resilience-building strategies that seek to sustain peace by preparing communities for climate shocks and increased resource stresses.

The Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction, for example, is a non-binding agreement adopted by UN member states in March 2015 aiming to reduce the substantial ‘disaster risk and losses.’ Similarly, the UN Secretary-General’s Climate Resilience Initiative seeks to ‘accelerate action to strengthen climate resilience in support of the 2030 Agenda.’

If successful, improved resilience may better insulate vulnerable populations against excessively negative climate impacts that could contribute to a breakdown of peaceful social relations.

In certain cases – northern Mali, for example – extreme and increasingly variable weather conditions have been linked to the outbreak of conflict. However, the relationship between climate change and violence is complex, and is often viewed as a compounding factor rather than a root cause. A report by adelphi, titled *New Climate for Peace: Taking Action on Climate and*
Fragility Risks articulates this relationship, defining climate change as a ‘threat multiplier’ that can ‘aggravate fragile situations and may contribute to social upheaval and even violent conflict.’

Despite the link between conditions for sustaining peace and climate change, action to improve these conditions is far from assured. Proactive strategies will help people manage climate change peacefully. But proponents of sustaining peace must also look beyond improved anticipation and preparation toward advancing the necessary changes in energy production and consumption to keep global temperatures well below the two degrees stated in the Paris Agreement.

Encouraging politicians and businesses to invest in climate action to sustain peace over the longer-term can be difficult. ‘We live in a world that has become highly enamoured and driven by short-term gains and short-term returns,’ explained Macharia Kamau, who holds the three positions of Permanent Representative of Kenya to the UN, Peacebuilding Commission Chairperson, and UN Special Envoy on El Niño and Climate.

Lacking incentive to think beyond current election or business cycles may lie at the heart of abbreviated timelines for investment and policy action on issues like climate change and conflict prevention. But this does not make the shift in thinking any less necessary.

During numerous meetings at the UN General Assembly this September, senior diplomats and UN officials emphasised the emergence of a proactive mindset associated with the adoption of Agenda 2030 and the sustaining peace resolutions. This prioritises reimagining the UN’s role as less of a crisis response unit, and more of a pre-emptive long-term planner for crisis aversion.

Mexico’s establishment of a Group of Friends on Sustaining Peace, which currently includes 30 UN member states with four from Africa, is a good step toward galvanising and normalising long-term, comprehensive thinking for sustaining peace. But more political momentum is certainly necessary.

As the Paris Agreement comes into force with over 55 ratifications (only 16 from Africa) representing over 55% of global emissions, this broad-based political momentum must be harnessed to highlight the links between climate action and conflict prevention.

‘Action and implementation’ of the Paris Agreement commitments is the stated objective of this November’s COP22 meeting in Marrakech, Morocco. Action on climate change will require looking boldly past immediate political and economic costs in favour of long-term stability, developmental dividends, and conditions for peace. In the short term, countries may see the economic rationale for immediate investment in climate action, but countries should also realise and act upon the opportunity this provides for sustaining peace.

This piece was written as part of an ongoing partnership with adelphi, and adopted from its original publication in the Resilience Compass Blog.

Jonathan Rozen, Research Associate, Peace Operations and Peacebuilding Division, ISS Pretoria | Twitter: @rozen_jonathan
December 8, 2016

ACCOUNTABILITY FOR PEACEKEEPING FAILURES MUST BE SHARED BY THE UN IN NEW YORK

Lauren Spink

THE UNSC AND THE UN SECRETARIAT MUST ALSO SHARE ACCOUNTABILITY FOR PEACEKEEPING FAILURES

At a recent training for peacekeepers that brought together soldiers and police officers from a dozen key United Nations troop contributing countries (TCCs) to focus on improving civilian protection and civil-military coordination, participants ranging from majors to former sector and force commanders expressed frustration over what they perceive as undue scrutiny of their actions and performance while deployed to peacekeeping missions. A key example raised by several participants was the dismissal of the Kenyan Force Commander of the UN Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS) in November 2016 following the release of a report by a UN Special Investigation into July violence in Juba which found that, “a lack of leadership on the part of key senior Mission personnel culminated in a chaotic and ineffective response to the violence.”

Soldiers also commented that their actions are frequently examined by UN investigations for any shortcomings, they are not equipped with the proper tools by the UN Security Council (UNSC) and Secretariat to perform as expected, and that punishment for peacekeeping failures falls disproportionately on the shoulders of military actors rather than their civilian colleagues: points that many training participants felt were demonstrated by the dismissal of the UNMISS Force Commander. He had only been on the ground in South Sudan for three weeks when the July crisis broke out and had reportedly not received the proper induction training normally provided to incoming Force Commanders.

The perception that accountability for peacekeeping failures in South Sudan has fallen squarely on the shoulders of military leadership is not entirely accurate. The civilian head of UNMISS, Special Representative of the Secretary-General (SRSG) Ellen Løj, has also faced criticism for her handling of the Juba crisis. However, Løj was allowed to quietly resign with an announcement designed to brand her departure as a voluntary and planned exit from the Mission; a far cry from the public dismissal of the Force Commander.

The fallout from the decision to dismiss the Kenyan Force commander has not been insignificant. As a result of the dismissal, Kenya announced that it would withdraw all of its troops from UNMISS and would cancel plans to contribute additional troops to a special Regional Protection Force authorized by the UNSC to be deployed to increase the Mission’s capacity in Juba. Notably, the Kenyan Government has also disengaged from the peace process in South Sudan. In the past, Kenya played a prominent role in negotiations to end violence between Sudan and South Sudan and amongst rival factions within South Sudan.
The security situation in South Sudan has deteriorated significantly over the last several weeks. On November 11, the UN Special Advisor on the Prevention of Genocide raised, “concerns that there is a strong risk of violence escalating along ethnic lines, with the potential for genocide.” On November 30, members of UN commission on human rights stated that, “there is already a steady process of ethnic cleansing under way in several areas of South Sudan using starvation, gang rape and the burning of villages.”

Escalating ethnic violence and genocide make a legitimate peace process in South Sudan more necessary than ever. Moreover, while discussions on additional UNSC sanctions against individuals deemed responsible for violence in South Sudan are currently stalled, if the UNSC does decide to pursue additional sanctions, it will be difficult to enforce them without the assistance of regional actors, including the Kenyan Government and banks.

The intention behind presenting the views of frustrated military peacekeepers and the cost of accountability in the case of UNMISS is not to imply that the dismissal of the Kenyan Force Commander was a misstep. Accountability for peacekeepers who fail to appropriately protect civilians in times of crisis is needed to create an incentive structure that promotes robust peacekeeping action and leads to better civilian protection by peacekeeping missions. However, the UNSC and the UN Secretariat must also share accountability for peacekeeping failures. Wider reform of UN peacekeeping is needed to effectively support peace missions on the ground.

The recommendations of the Special Investigation into the July violence in Juba outline several needed reforms, including measures to address national caveats that restrict what tasks peacekeepers are willing to perform and increased support by DPKO and the Department of Field Support (DFS) for improved, scenario-based training, particularly those that cover the use of force to protect civilians and stop sexual violence.

The High-level Independent Panel on Peace Operations (HIPPO) report outlined other changes needed to improve UN peace operations. Most notably, it highlighted the need for political solutions to drive the implementation and design of peace operations, the Secretariat to be more field-focused, and operations to become more responsive and accountable to people affected by conflict.

While some work has been done to improve analysis, planning, and strategic force generation, the results of many of these developments remain to be seen and more serious and sustained reforms are needed. For example, in line with the HIPPO recommendations, communication between the UNSC, Secretariat and troop- and police-contributing countries must be improved, more authority vested in DFS, and the Secretariat's administrative systems improved to make them less bureaucratic and more responsive to the needs of field operations.

Without serious and sustained efforts to reform how the UN supports peace operations from New York, accountability for peacekeeping failures during crises will ring hollow and leave military peacekeepers and troop contributing countries disillusioned.

Lauren Spink is a Peacekeeping Program Officer at Center for Civilians in Conflict (CIVIC). She is also the co-author of a recent CIVIC report Under Fire: The July 2016 Violence in Juba and UN Response. | Twitter: @lspink01
December 15, 2016

OLOF SKOOG: SWEDEN IS PREPARING FOR AN ACTIVE TWO YEARS ON THE COUNCIL

Jim Della-Giacoma: Your membership will start with a challenging task with the Council Presidency in January. What will Sweden’s main priorities be? Given the challenges faced by the global system and the UN, how do you plan to move these priorities forward?

Ambassador Olof Skoog: We have a two-phase plan. The first phase is setting ambitions regarding our Council Presidency in January, and to successfully conclude this task. The second phase relates to what we want to achieve over our two-year membership term.

Let’s start with the two-year term. I think there is a broad expectation for Sweden to be active in key horizontal issues: human rights, the implementation of the resolutions on women, peace and security, respect for international humanitarian law, peacebuilding and sustaining peace, and conflict prevention. Instead of solely organizing big debates at the Council on these thematic issues, we want to move towards a Security Council that deliver on its responsibilities and is more results oriented, inclusive and transparent in its working methods. We want to ensure that there is concrete implementation and an improved way of dealing with these horizontal issues, by bringing them into the day-to-day work of the Council. For instance, on women, peace and security, we would seek to consistently integrate this perspective in all our deliberations, bringing examples and making proposals on how to operationalize the agenda in the field. So when Mali appears on the agenda, for instance, we would like to ask about the role of women in peace negotiations, and make sure that the Council implements its commitments on this issue.

January will be a challenging month, to be very honest. The working climate at the Council is not at its best; and we see that the Council is not able to take decisions in some key conflicts as a result. The UN, the international community and the Council are criticized for not taking sufficient responsibility. We have to work towards reversing this trend, starting the first of January. As a
member of the Council, we would want to put conflict prevention and peacebuilding at the core of UN efforts. Preventing conflict is not only morally right; it’s also economically smart. We need a shift in mindset, to prioritize prevention, peaceful resolution of conflict and addressing root causes of conflict in our engagement.

**JDG: Next month will also be the first for the new UN Secretary-General António Guterres. What do see as being the impact of this change?**

**OS:** The appointment of a new Secretary-General provides a unique opportunity for a fresh approach. After all, the UN system was set up to sustain peace, and we want to help António Guterres move towards this vision. We want to re-energize the relationship between the Council and the Secretary-General’s office on prevention and reaffirm the commitment that the Council has made on sustaining peace. Beyond the day-to-day challenges regarding peacekeeping operations, the Council should be able to conduct a real analysis on what are the threats to peace in the countries on its agenda, and which instruments and tools are available to the UN system to address these threats. I would love to have a Secretary-General that comes to the Council and says: “Here are the issues on the horizon, here are my suggestions to the Council to act on these issues”. I would like to see different parts of the system, the ECOSOC or the PBC, or UNDP, UNICEF, and OCHA, to work holistically in identifying and addressing threats to peace and security. It should not only be DPKO that brings issues to the Council, but the Secretary-General, based on input from the broader system. So that’s a little bit of paradigm shift.

**JDG: Peace operations will be a preoccupation for both the new SG and Sweden from your first day. What urgently needs to be done to address current crises, such as UNMISS and South Sudan? At the same time, how can the Council move forward some of issues identified by the High-level Independent Panel on Peace Operations (HIPPO) such as prioritizing prevention, having better focused mandates, improving triangular cooperation, and making better use of Council field visits?**

**OS:** South Sudan is a perfect example that once the genie is out of the bottle, it is difficult to put it back in. We can talk as much as we want about prevention, but the prevention issue is not on the table when it comes to issues such as Syria. For some of the worst conflicts right now, the most important first step is about finding a new unity within the Council for it to act. Syria is also proof of the importance of finding political solutions to conflict, as military solutions do not work. We have to think what can we do now to promote political process in South Sudan, and how to ensure the Council is united on this.

In South Sudan, we need to talk about the possibility of a genocide happening. Peacekeeping as a Band-Aid solution in war-torn countries is not going to work; this is exactly what we see in UNMISS in South Sudan. Someone has to come and say that the peacekeeping operation is not strong enough or robust enough or efficient enough in a way to protect civilians. I can also understand the UN’s limitation here about turning that kind of very difficult information into a coherent and practicable plan for action. To move forward, we need more coherent input from the SG from the ground, in terms of what his system sees as a whole and thinks as a suggested way forward. We need peacekeeping with political mandates, empowered to do the necessary work to find (or underpin) solutions to conflict and bed for the possibility of sustained peace. Again, the onus is on the Council but also the Secretariat and the troop contributing countries (TCCs). The triangular cooperation you mention can happen both informally and formally, the most important is that there is a joint vision as regards the mandate and what the UN ultimately is there to do – resolve conflict and keep the peace.
One other lesson from contexts such as the DRC is that when things are not going well in a country, even when there is road-trip diplomacy, it is difficult to ensure practical outputs from the Council, even in the form of presidential statements. Of course, there are different views on how these statements can change the situation on the ground, but at least the mediators on the ground know that there is a united Council behind them. In January, we want to start looking into the possibility of the Secretary-General giving more detailed information from the ground to the Council, as well as options to move forward. Worrisome trends can also be discussed discreetly, in more private settings. Through these informal meetings, the Council can identify the most credible actors to work with in advance, such as the African Union and the European Union.

JDG: 2015 was a year of big reviews and processes: The reports from the HIPPO and the Advisory Group of Experts (AGE) on the UN’s Peacebuilding Architecture. There was also the Global Study on the Implementation of UNSC resolution 1325. During your two years on the Council, how do you plan to move forward some of the ideas and recommendations in these reviews?

OS: The Women, Peace and Security agenda is a top priority for me and for my Government. We now have a solid normative framework, but implementation and follow-up is lacking. As member of the Council, we would seek to consistently integrate this perspective in all our deliberations, bringing examples and making proposals on how to operationalize the agenda in the field.

AS A MEMBER OF THE COUNCIL, WE WOULD WANT TO PUT CONFLICT PREVENTION AND PEACEBUILDING AT THE CORE OF UN EFFORTS.

I think all the reviews and processes of 2015 make it clear that the system is working in silos. They also emphasize that there is too much faith in military solutions to what are essentially political problems. For us, we see the need to reverse the thinking towards the primacy of diplomacy, and the primacy of politics, detecting crisis before they erupt. We need to make sure there is a connection between peace and security and development and human rights. This is one of big conclusions from both the AGE and HIPPO reports. And they are very coherent, the three of them fit together nicely in the innovations they suggests.

Gizem Sucuoglu: Sweden was a key actor during the peacebuilding review, and has assumed several positions at the PBC, most recently the Chair of the PBC Configuration and the Chair of the PBC. What do you see as the biggest opportunities brought forward by the sustaining peace concept, the AGE report, and the sustaining peace resolutions? Which opportunities do you see as the best ones for taking forward this agenda in the Council in a concrete way?

OS: I think the resolution on peacebuilding is a commitment to a paradigm shift, for the UN system to act in a more holistic manner and to place prevention or sustaining peace at the core of what this organization should be about. The Council has committed to the agenda through its Resolution 2282. For me, sustaining peace can be seen as an instrument to get better information to the Council, deriving information in a holistic manner from different parts of the system. It also stipulates that the UN system works more holistically than in the past, accepting that, in essence, everything that the UN system does on the ground relates to upholding and sustaining peace. From this angle, there is nothing disturbing with bringing the UNDP perspectives, for example, to the Council, in relevant situations. The UN is sensationaly well represented globally through its field missions and has access to
important information. The whole system should be able to analyze and use this information, and work in holistic way based on joint strategic analysis. This idea is very important. The implementation is of course difficult, but at least I think it helps break down the barriers where countries used to say 'hang on, prevention is not part of the book'. It's clear that this is no longer true. I think we have broken down these walls with these resolutions and I think that's very crucial.

GS: Sweden has played a key role as the Chair of Liberia configuration. You have worked to improve the PBC's relationship with the Security Council. Liberia is now transitioning from a Security Council mandate and the challenge is to find holistic responses together with the UN country team. Can you tell us more about how Sweden has focused on fostering these holistic responses, including through a stakeholders forum it put together in Monrovia?

OS: In Liberia, we have made special efforts to contribute in our advisory role. In my capacity as chair of the configuration, I travelled to Monrovia in October to consult a wide range of stakeholders in Liberia to identify peacebuilding priorities during the upcoming transition and beyond the peacekeeping presence in the country. A primary objective of the trip was to co-host the Multi-Stakeholder Forum on “Sustaining Peace through Transition in Liberia” together with the Government of Liberia. The Forum sought to deliberate on the longer-term peacebuilding needs in light of the Security Council’s upcoming decision on the future UN presence in the country. Throughout the visit in Liberia, two questions were at the forefront of the deliberations: “What must be done to address remaining root causes of conflict in Liberia?” and “What should UN support look like after UNMIL?” The outcomes and recommendations of the visit have been put forward to the UNSC, in the form of a trip report, a briefing at the formal meeting of the UNSC last week, as well as through an informal consultation at the expert level between the Chair of the configuration and UNSC members. The stakeholders forum was very successful, a prime example of having the government
and national stakeholders owning peacebuilding processes and engaging with the UN system. We were very well received by the
government and had excellent bilateral meetings. This helped making the Council interested in hearing our conclusions from the
trip.

GS: And, so far, how have the UN Security Council and PBC worked together on Liberia?

On substance, our concern in Liberia is that the peacebuilding agenda has not been sufficiently advanced, despite many years of
UNMIL presence. There are important outstanding elements on reform agenda that has not been implemented. Our concern is,
if the security presence pulls back too early, there might be repercussions that the Council should consider. This has ben the core
of our discussion with the Council.

The relationship between the PBC and the Council is far from ideal. The peacebuilding commission is unique in its working methods,
because it can actually work with countries and meet with different stakeholders from the countries on its agenda. This sort of
working method is lacking in the way the Council works. However, the PBC will never be completely relevant, if the Council is not
ready to take on its advice or listen to it, even if it is not exactly what every member of the Council wants to hear. The PBC should
be allowed to bring a fresh perspective into deliberations. I think there needs to more readiness and openness from the Council,
including permanent members in particular, to listen to the advice from the PBC, so there is room for improvement.

JDG: I remember being in Liberia in 2003 to 2005 when Swedish troops were participating in UNMIL as members of the
rapid response force. Looking back now at Liberia using your peacebuilding lens, how would you evaluate the UN's role
overall?

OS: I haven't seen Liberia when you were there. I was there at the end of the 90's, probably a much worse time. To answer your
question, probably yes and no; I have mixed feelings. I have no doubt that the contributions of peacekeeping operation have been
huge, I don't see a huge risk for this country falling back to the kind of conflict we have seen fourteen years ago. That's already
a huge achievement. We are soon to have another set of elections; with high hopes for a peaceful transition from one elected
President to another. These are big achievements, compared to the devastation thirteen years ago. This is all despite the bad
economic situation in that part of the world, falling prices of raw materials, and Ebola. Having said that, I still wonder, how much
better it could have been, if the peacebuilding agenda had been more prominent from the outset. What if we had more coordinated
international support from the beginning, including from donors such as my own country, working with the Americans and the EU
and other big players, to ensure that there is one coordinated message about what we want and expect the government to do in
terms of reconciliation, land reform and similar reforms. I do believe we need the mission to stay on for a while, but I also think
there could have been much more work done on the peacebuilding agenda over the years. Given the amount money and human
resources invested in peacekeeping, I'm still concerned about the lack of economic development, the many outstanding issues in
Liberia. For instance, 63 per cent of the kids still do not go to school, despite some years of pretty good economic development.

JDG: Now that you are going to be the Council President, do you have plans to change the way the Council and the PBC
relate to each other? How do you plan to interact with the PBC as President? How will you encourage other members of
the Council to do so?
OS: I think there isn’t any way around this right now. If you are a chair of configuration, you are invited to brief the Council, in accordance with what has been agreed by the entire PBC membership. Of course, you can also make use of that opportunity to additionally offer your personal account as the PBC Chair. This way, the Council will hear what you really think.

I think, as a Council member, we can work together with other countries that are keen to improve the way we deal with peacebuilding more broadly. The approach on women, peace and security that I have mentioned earlier could provide a model. When the time for briefing on a country situation arrives, with input coming to the Council from the secretariat, there is need to put out control questions: ‘Hang on...What is the UN system doing to ensure the effectiveness of the peacebuilding components of the mandates in Libya or Côte d’Ivoire?’. This will ensure looking beyond the DPKO brief, that highlights the immediate current challenges for the mission, and looking for broader information on the whole peacebuilding agenda. We are already talking to other members of the Council to ensure this kind of an approach.

Ambassador Olof Skoog is the Permanent Representative of Sweden to the United Nations. | Twitter: @OlofBSkoog, @SwedenUN

Jim Della-Giacoma is the Deputy Director at the Center on International Cooperation and editor-in-chief of the Global Peace Operations Review. | Twitter: @jimdella

Gizem Sucuoglu is a Senior Program Manager at the Center on International Cooperation. | Twitter: @GizmouS
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