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ABSTRACT

STABILITY OPERATIONS IN THE UNITED NATIONS: THE CHANGING NORMS OF THE USE OF FORCE IN PEACEKEEPING OPERATIONS

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The United Nations (UN) started undertaking “stability operations” in the beginning of the 21st century. This may be simply defined as the use of proactive offensive force against targeted non-state actors to contain aggressors, establish authority, help enforce law and order, and ultimately ensure the protection of civilians, which also has long-term implications for lasting political solutions. This represents a change in the UN peace operations and adoption of the novel secondary norm, namely the use of proactive offensive force against targeted non-state actors defined as enemies. While primary norms refer to the collective expectations of appropriate behavior, secondary norms are engineered to support primary norms, in this case, responsibility to protect and protection of civilians. The UN has labelled four peace operations as stability operations to date, which include missions in Haiti in 2004, the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) in March 2013, Mali in April 2013, and the Central African Republic (CAR) in April 2014. These developments mark a profound change in the form and function of the UN peace operations as they seem to explicitly violate the foundational and core norms of UN peace operations, namely non- or minimal use of force. Focusing on the latest three cases, I explore this puzzle and begin with the question: What explains the adoption of an offensive use of force norm that is at odds with the core UN norms of non- or minimal use of force? The possible alternative explanations suggest the role of powerful states, the role of NGOs or transitional activist groups/networks, and the role of the institutional pathology. However, using qualitative content analysis based on data from UNSC meeting minutes,
resolutions, policy documents, reports produced by the UN secretariat regarding stability missions and secondary literature, I argue that the UN bureaucrats play a central role in adoption of the proactive offensive use of force secondary norm through mechanism of argumentative persuasion. To make my arguments, I conceptualize the UN bureaucrats and the UNSC state representatives as a community of practice (CoP). The unique institutional setup with permanent and non-permanent members, the importance of the UN secretariat, and a successful operation over seven decades make it possible to conceptualize it as a CoP. This project contributes to better understanding of peacekeeping, which has implications in the 21st century and beyond.

Additionally, the project shows the importance of international organizations’ (IO) innovative policy roles in general and the UN’s innovative policy in particular and reinforces the arguments that IOs are purposive actors and not merely the arenas in which states pursue their policies, but it is different from institutional pathology. My study shows that under certain circumstances and conditions, the UN bureaucrats exercise some degree of independent effects through peacekeeping operations by informing the state actors, making policy suggestions, and helping to build necessary consensus. However, the project reveals the plausibility of my argument as well as some limitations. We do not see concrete process tracing in action here mainly because of the nature of data I used. An ideal type of process tracing would require ideal data, for instance, interviews with the key officials/ bureaucrats in the UN and state representatives at the UNSC and/or ethnographic investigation at the UN. Even though we do not see ideal process tracing here, we see a process-tracing-inspired framework to offer plausible argument.
STABILITY OPERATIONS IN THE UNITED NATIONS: THE CHANGING NORMS OF
THE USE OF FORCE IN PEACEKEEPING OPERATIONS

BY

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

In the beginning of the 21st century, the United Nations (UN) started undertaking “stability operations,” which refers to the missions that explicitly allow for the use of offensive force against targeted non-state parties under the banner of peacekeeping operations. This represents a change in UN peace operations and adoption of the novel secondary norm, namely the use of offensive force against targeted non-state actors defined as enemies. Putting simply, while primary norms refer to the collective expectations of appropriate behavior (Jepperson, Wendt, and Katzenstein 1996; Jurkovich 2019), secondary norms are engineered so the primary norms are followed (Hein and Moon 2016). However, the UN does not explicitly define stability operations, but the core components are discernable. Cedric De Coning (2018, 97) found that the stability operations aimed to help states in crisis restore order and stability in the absence of a peace agreement through the use of force alongside political, developmental, and other means by helping national and/or local authorities contain aggressors, enforce law and order, and protect civilians, thereby leading to a lasting political solution. For the purpose of this investigation, stability operations may be simply defined as the use of proactive offensive force against the non-state actors in the short term with a view to helping the UN-recognized government contain aggressors, establish authority, help enforce law and order, and ultimately ensure the protection of civilians, which also has long-term implications for lasting political solutions.

The UN has labelled four peace operations as stability operations to date. These include missions in Haiti in 2004, the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) in March 2013, Mali
in April 2013, and the Central African Republic (CAR) in 2014. These developments mark a profound change in the form and function of the UN peace operations as they seem to explicitly violate the foundational and core norms of UN peace operations, namely non- or minimal use of force (UN n.d.). This thesis aims to explore this puzzle. I begin with the question: What explains the adoption of an offensive use of force norm that is at odds with the core UN norms of non- or minimal use of force?.

To account for the adoption of this novel norm, attention must be devoted to the period of peace operations in the 1990s. Important developments unfolded in the backdrop of the genocides in Srebrenica and Rwanda in the 1990s when UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan expressed a deep commitment to enabling the UN to never again fail to protect civilian populations from genocide or mass human rights abuses (UN 1999; Annan and Mousavizadeh 2012). Consequently, two important and similar, but ultimately different, norms evolved in the UN system: the Responsibility to Protect (R2P) and the Protection of Civilians (PoC). R2P refers to a set of principles to protect civilians from extreme situations like genocide, war crimes, ethnic cleansing, and crimes against humanity. In cases in which states fail in their responsibility to protect their citizens from physical violence, then the responsibility falls to the international community, which through approval of the UNSC can intervene in cases of large-scale loss of lives and large-scale ethnic cleansing (ICISS 2001). R2P is based on three pillars: the responsibility of the states to protect their people from genocide, war crimes, ethnic cleansing, and/or crimes against humanity (Pillar I); the responsibility of the international community to support the states to protect their people (Pillar II); and the responsibility of the international community to protect/intervene when a state fails to protect its people (Pillar III).
PoC refers to a broader set of threats and is concerned with violence directed at civilians in conflict and post-conflict settings (Rhoads and Welsh 2019). Both were adopted to safeguard vulnerable civilian populations from mass violence and widespread systematic human rights violations (Rhoads and Welsh 2019). However, with more cases of non-state actors’ involvement in widespread human rights violations, both R2P and CoP norms gradually seem to fall short of achieving the intended goals, as mass violation of human rights continues to occur.

Given changing perceptions of the efficacy of these norms, the UN has undertaken further norm change. However, there is no clarification from the UN about the stability operations. Moreover the UN does not recognize stability operations as “peace enforcement” operations under which the UN can use force (Coning 2017, p.152). Thus, stability operations signal an important and puzzling shift in UN operations, as missions appear to shift from adhering to foundational non- or limited use of force norms to protect civilians from large-scale physical violence.

I argue that the adoption of stability operations can be best explained by reference to the central role of the UN bureaucracy itself. One may see this as a causal explanation and/or relations while others may see this as a constitutive explanation and/or relations (Wendt 1998). My focus here is on the former, which may be dubbed the stronger, advocacy and policy recommendation role played by the UN bureaucrats (i.e., independent variable) as important and causing the UNSC to adopt proactive offensive use of force as a secondary norm (i.e., dependent variable). The UN officials working within and alongside the UN secretariat have actively promoted the use of force as a secondary norm in service of the R2P and PoC norms.
To explain this development, I examine the adoption of this novel mode of operations within the three most recent stability operations: DRC, Mali, and CAR. I further argue that this novel secondary norm has been adopted so the primary norms of R2P and PoC are upheld. While the primary norms are founded on general values or ideas shared by a community and upheld through social pressure, secondary norms are designed to make sure primary norms are observed (Hein and Moon 2016). In this case, the use of offensive force against non-state actors has been adopted as a novel norm under stability operations to ensure primary norms of R2P and PoC are defended.

This thesis is divided into eleven parts. Following this introduction, I present the puzzle. Then I present the alternative explanations in the third part, my arguments in the fourth part, and an overview of the research methodology in the fifth part. I present three case studies in the sixth, seventh, and eighth parts. In the nineth part I discuss my findings and limitations of the project. I briefly discuss the significance of the project in the tenth part and then offer a conclusion.
CHAPTER II
THE PUZZLE

The long-established core UN peacekeeping norms include consent of the involved parties, impartiality, and non-use of force except in self-defense and defense of the mandate (UN n.d.; Goulding 1993; Wedgwood 1995). The norm of consent of the parties refers to the consent of the main parties involved in a conflict to accept UN peacekeeping operations to carry out UN mandates. Consent of parties signals the involved parties’ commitment to a political solution. The norm of consent keeps the UN from becoming a party to the conflict itself (UN n.d.). The norm of impartiality refers to the UN peacekeepers remaining impartial in their dealings with the conflicting parties. Impartiality is different from neutrality or inactivity. The norm of impartiality boosts the credibility and legitimacy of the UN’s peacekeeping operations and helps to maintain the consent of the parties (UN n.d.). The norm of minimal or non-use of force is the first tenet of classical peacekeeping, with an ethos of non-violence rather than war fighting (Wedgwood 1995). The underlying logic is that the peacekeeping operations are not an enforcement tool; however, force may be used for self-defense and for defense of the UN mandate. Also, the UN should use force only as a measure of last resort (UN n.d.). The adoption of the offensive use of force norm under stability operations seems puzzling since it contradicts the UN’s core norms.

The UN adopted the norm of offensive use of force against non-state actors under stability operations and put it into practice in four UN missions: Haiti, DRC, Mali, and CAR. The adoption of this norm (and thus these missions) appears at odds with well-established norms of non- or limited use of force. This signals a puzzling continuity and change, something
akin to what Davies (2016) observed in the case of ASEAN’s diplomatic norm. Although the formal code remains locked in a traditionalist mode, so much has changed. The changes in the UN peacekeeping illustrate that the UN has developed new peacekeeping practices if not fundamentally changed. These changes led to a general puzzle about the underlying explanation of the adoption of the novel norm and a new type of missions. This is puzzling because these developments are at odds with the UN’s core norms; there is no clarification of these in the UN documents, although they have significant implication for international peace and security.

There has been a proliferation of the use of the term “stabilization” in the UN Security Council (UNSC) meetings since the beginning of the 21st century – from 10% in 2001 to 44% in 2014 (Curran and Holtom 2015), and the titles of four UN peace operations have included “stabilization” since 2004 (Gilder 2019b). Given these developments, it is surprising there is no UN-wide interpretation of the term. The mandates include varying activities under the heading of stabilization, which includes use of language like robust posture, active patrolling, and increased logistical support from Western military hardware etc. (Gilder 2019a). Moreover, some UN officials claim that no significance should be given to the fact that some missions have been identified as stability operations (Coning 2018). Coning (2018) notes that the term “stabilization” has infringed on the daily activities of the Security Council and the Department of Peace Operations, so such a claim is unsatisfactory. Similarly, I argue that the officials’ claim that no significance should be given to the fact that some missions are labeled as stability missions masks the obvious changes regarding the use of offensive force against non-state parties that came along with stability operations.
These developments are puzzling even in light of the development of the R2P and PoC norms. R2P and PoC emerged as a response to the failure to protect civilians in the former Yugoslavia and from genocide in Rwanda (Rhoads and Welsh 2019). The Canadian government created the independent International Commission on Intervention and State Sovereignty (ICISS), which provided an intellectual foundation for R2P. Then the concept of R2P entered the UN system as part of the 2005 World Summit. R2P affirmed the primary responsibility of states to protect their own populations from a set of four extreme situations in which any of four crimes have been committed: genocide, war crimes, ethnic cleansing, and/or crimes against humanity. It was established that there is a collective responsibility (for the states) to help each other take timely and decisive actions through the UNSC if the state authorities fail to protect their populations from the above-mentioned extreme situations (United Nations General-Assembly 2005). PoC, on the other hand, emerged and developed within the UN system. PoC addresses a broader set of threats and is concerned with violence directed at civilians in conflict and post-conflict settings (Rhoads and Welsh 2019). Annan’s 2001 report on PoC indicates that protection of civilians was conceived of as a “multi-layered process involving a diversity of entities and approaches” (United Nations Secretary-General 2001, para 6) and encompassing a range of activities from “the delivery of humanitarian assistance; the monitoring and recording of violations of international humanitarian and human rights law ... [to] institution building, governance, and development programmes; and, ultimately, the deployment of peacekeepers” (United Nations Secretary-General 2001, para 6).

These changes reflect significant developments for both the UN and the peacekeeping operations. International peace and security in the post-Cold War world are characterized by
peacekeeping operations that are likely to remain so in the future. Therefore, studying the changes in peacekeeping operations is important, as they are currently understudied, especially with the introduction of stability operations. This research demonstrates the importance of and pathways to IOs’ innovative policy roles in peacekeeping operations. The research also shows that the IOs are purposive actors and not merely the arenas in which states pursue their policies (Barnett and Finnemore 1999; Haftel and Thompson 2006), and it is conspicuous that under certain contexts and circumstances they exercise some degree of independent effects regarding peacekeeping operations decisions.

The research question I address in this paper is: What explains the adoption of the offensive use of force norm against non-state actors? Some may dub this as a causal question, that is, what is the effect of UN bureaucrats (i.e., independent variable) on stability operation decisions or on the adoption of secondary norms of the use of offensive force against non-state actors (i.e., dependent variable). Others may dub this as a constitutive question (i.e., how-possible? or what?) rather than a causal question (i.e., why? or how?) (Cross 1991; Wendt 1998; Keat and Urry 2011). I focus on the causal effect of the UN bureaucrats on the stability operations decision. International Relations literature offers a number of potential explanations for addressing this question. These potential explanations variably highlight the role of powerful states, NGOs, and transnational activist networks or groups: the UN officials and bureaucrats or the role of institutional pathology. To reiterate, the stability turn in peacekeeping operations is a puzzling development and is not well accounted for in existing literature, as I explore in the next section.
CHAPTER III

ALTERNATIVE EXPLANATIONS

There is rich literature on norm adoption and implementation that may explain this puzzling development. To underscore the puzzle and arrive at a potentiation explanation, I examine three existing explanations. The first two center on the role of power, either in the form of great power interests and/or the role of relationally powerful states in institutional contexts for shaping organizational norms and behaviors. The third explanation centers on the role of institutions. As I show, all three explanations offer partial insight into the puzzle at the heart of this project, but none individually appear sufficient to offer understanding.

One important potential explanation for why and how the UNSC may adopt novel norms like offensive use of force against non-state actors in stability operations highlights the explanatory importance of power to effect norm changes. In this line of inquiry, power is observed in one of two ways: first, on the basis of material power and states’ material interests and, second, on the basis of social skills, the ability of certain actors to motivate and engage other actors in collective action (Fligstein 2001, pp.105-106) within particular institutional contexts.

According to the first strand, the great powers avail international institutions to pursue their goals and influence institutional decisions to advance their interests (Abbott and Snidal 1998), which is another way of saying the international organizations are epiphenomenal to the global distribution of power (Mearsheimer 1994). This explanation assumes asymmetries in material capability (e.g., military hardware and other material resources) allow some states to coerce or otherwise compel other actors to change their behavior or accept their will – that is
A’s ability to get B do something that the latter would not do otherwise (Dahl 1957). This implies that the powerful states force adoption of the new norm. The rationale of acting through the UNSC may include causes like burden sharing and legitimacy for domestic and international purposes (Voeten 2001). This is not to say that this line of thought is not useful; instead, it provides a partial explanation since it leaves out importance of social dynamics, the role of ideas and identity, and the role of non-state actors. This tradition also cannot explain how small and/or medium-size states collectively advocate for adoption of norms (Ingebritsen 2002).

According to the second strand, besides possession of material capabilities or resources, how power resources emerge out of practical competence analogous to social skills through social relations is important (Adler-Nissen and Pouliot 2014). According to this strand, the P3 (i.e., USA, UK, and France) brought the stabilization operation into the UNSC by convincing other members through their negotiating and social skills, observable in the case of international intervention in Libya in 2011 (Adler-Nissen and Pouliot 2014). Many scholars have examined how each member has individually engaged in stability operations outside of the UN framework (see Yates 2005; Debos 2019; UK Stabilisation Unit 2019) and/or jointly in Afghanistan (Clay 2007; Barham 2016) and how they might be able to introduce this norm to the UNSC. In this view, for example, Gilder argues that the P2 (i.e., the UK and US) have developed extensive national-level stabilization policies that shed light on the UN’s understanding (Gilder 2019b). The UK Stabilization Unit defines stabilization from a broader approach. The UK focuses on a civilian-led approach to stabilization supported by the military. The US takes a narrower approach. Stabilization focuses on supporting the legitimate authority
for securing a monopoly on the use of force to enable the authority to protect the population. The US aims to use the military to defeat an insurgency while entrenching support for a domestically owned transition towards peace (Gilder 2019b). The existing literature also suggests that a group of small- or medium-size states may also collectively act to call for attention to certain issues and advocate for adoption of norms. For instance, the Scandinavian states played a crucial role behind adoption of the sustainable development norm (Ingebritsen 2002). While this framework provides an excellent explanation in other cases, for instance, the Libya intervention (Adler-Nissen and Pouliot 2014), it is not a good fit for stability operations since seemingly the proposal of stability operations did not come from P3 countries.

The third explanation comes from the institutionalist literature, which suggests international organization bureaucrats are autonomous actors and capable of exerting power and influence in world politics (Barnett and Finnemore 2004). According to this line of thought, the IO bureaucracies/staff have the authority to make rules and exercise power. The IOs are autonomous and act per their stated purpose and thus shape state action by establishing best practices and by articulating and transmitting norms that define what constitutes acceptable and legitimate state behavior (Barnett and Finnemore 2004). While this provides a good explanation, in the case of UNSC, the UN bureaucrats cannot be said to be completely autonomous as the state representatives; the latter are in fact more important. Due to the autonomous power of IOs, sometimes they produce undesirable, self-defeating, and even pathological outcomes, but that cannot be said either in case of the UNSC (Barnett and Finnemore 1999). Another important aspect within institutional literature is legitimacy, which according to Ian Hurd (2008) is central to the power of the UNSC. Legitimacy simply means
the righteousness or justness of action. Hurd defines legitimacy as an actor’s belief that a ruler or institution ought to be obeyed which is not motivated by “fear of retribution” or “self-interest” calculations but by a sense of “rightness and obligation” (p.30). In this case, the UNSC works as a legitimacy provider in the use of force in peacekeeping operations. The existing literature also suggests the international non-governmental organizations, social movements, and epistemic community may also play a crucial role in norm adoption (Raustiala 1997; Finnemore and Sikkink 1998; Keck and Sikkink 1999). However, in the cases I explore in this research, we do not see any concrete role played by INGOs, social movements, or the epistemic community in the adoption of the secondary norm of the use of offensive force against non-state actors.

Besides the above-mentioned explanation, existing literature in practice research also offers a rich account of the development of peacekeeping operations on the ground. For instance, Autesserre (2014) argues that various day-to-day habits and usual approaches of the peacekeepers about their areas of operation influence the effectiveness of peacebuilding, which often results in the failure of international peace interventions and prevents the operations from reaching full potential. Laurence (2019) argues that the new practices of peacekeeping have evolved on the ground (i.e., DRC), significantly rendering norms like impartiality only rhetorically powerful. However, everyday practices of the peacekeepers on the ground are not the focus for this research. I am focusing on the decision-making aspect of the UNSC in New York as well as how the key decision makers see, interpret, and act.

In sum, while capability and relational approaches to power and institutional literature provide insight into adoption of the use of force against non-state actors under stability
operations, they have limitations. I investigate the centrality of international bureaucrats within the community of practice for proposing and shaping preferences for the new norm adoption surrounding stability operation decisions in the UNSC. However, my focus is on the UNSC, so the roles of the permanent five and the elected ten members of the UNSC are highlighted in the analysis, but the roles of the other small or medium states who are not members of the UNSC are not accounted for.
CHAPTER IV

MY ARGUMENTS

Background

The horrible experience of the genocides in Srebrenica and Rwanda in the 1990s, the UN’s inaction, and the subsequent widespread criticism drove the UN towards more robust peacekeeping operations and creation of the primary norms of R2P and PoC. But the rise of non-state threats and ensuing inefficacy of these developments provide a background that facilitates the acceptability and nascency of a secondary norm in support of the primary norms of R2P and PoC: the use of offensive force against non-state actors under certain circumstances, even though it goes beyond the UN’s core peacekeeping norms. Among the likely explanations, namely, the role of powerful states, the role of NGOs or transitional activist groups/networks, the role of the UN bureaucrats or the UN officials, and institutional pathology, I argue that the UN bureaucrats’ role is the most convincing in adoption of the secondary norm because they work as protagonists to enact proactive and offensive force against non-state actors. Tharoor (1995) observed that classical consensual peacekeeping does not fully respond to the nature of the world we live in and the challenges the new world disorder pose to the international community. Thus, the UN’s international bureaucrats played a central role by sharing their findings from field visits (i.e., countries with human rights violation) and presenting their ideas and suggestions about required action to safeguard the civilians from mass physical violence in the UNSC meetings and in other communications (e.g., briefings). This helped the UNSC members to redefine their perception of appropriate action under certain circumstances and thus they developed a conducive belief.
They were able to reach a consensual and favorable decision. This decision-making process within CoP shows some degree of persuasion and/or of convincing the other actors or members of the CoP (e.g., state representatives, etc.) to adopt a stability operation because ultimately it is their decision. This reveals the importance of micro-level dynamics focusing on the interaction between international bureaucrats and state representatives at the UNSC, which reflects significant changes in the spectrum of the use of force by the UN. Although in principle the old norm of minimal or no use of force in peacekeeping persists, adoption of a new secondary norm of the use of offensive force against non-state actors in support of primary norms of R2P and PoC under stability operations reveals significant and puzzling changes.

**UN Bureaucrats and the UNSC as a Community of Practice**

The UNSC emerged as a unique political body within the UN system over the last seven decades. The UNSC has been designed to be a heterogeneous body as it consists of ten elected members to represent geographical regions of the world rotating every two years and it has made it possible for the five great powers to deal with each other cooperatively for more than seven decades. They have a found way of authorizing or endorsing operations that would have been unthinkable during the Cold War (Johnstone 2003). This shows a minimum sense of the emerging international community reflecting collective interests (Johnstone 2003, p.458). The peace and security focus encompasses both the traditional (e.g., support for territorial integrity) and non-traditional (e.g., human security) security aspects and the successful implementation of its goals is phenomenal in the history of world politics. While one can analyze the utility-maximizing behavior of the member states, especially the great powers, within the UNSC, the aspect of rule-guided behavior cannot be said to be epiphenomenal. The members seek to reach
mutual understanding based on reasoned consensus, and the governments feel compelled to justify their positions not based on their self-interest but on collective interest. The secretariat is also a significant part of it. I find the repeated requests from the UNSC members to the Secretary-General to prepare and share reports about updates from the ground or field and to offer recommendations to be significant and argue that it represents the importance of the secretariat. Oksamytna and Lundgren (2021) find that the UNSC actually followed or accepted a significant number of recommendations suggested by the secretariat.

Therefore, I contend that the UN bureaucrats and the UNSC state representatives can be usefully conceptualized as a community of practice (CoP). The CoP is a discrete group of officials bound together by common enterprise and dense interaction who share common tools and resources in pursuit of their goals (Wenger 1998; Adler 2008; Bueger 2013; Glas 2018; Glas and Balogun 2020). In this case, the CoP primarily consists of the UN bureaucrats and mission-related appointees (i.e., the Secretary-General, special representatives of the Secretary-General in specific mission, the head of the stability missions, the Under Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs and Emergency Relief Coordinators) and the state representatives at the UNSC (i.e., the permanent five and non-permanent ten members). They are active, have dense interactions through various meetings and briefings in the UNSC, share a common repertoire of action through the UN system and/or institutions, and share a collective enterprise to protect civilians from mass atrocities. While there is room for considering the UN bureaucrats and UNSC members as separate CoPs following the framework of Sondarjee (2020b), I conceptualise them to belong to one CoP, and this is important to understand how UN bureaucrats’ argumentative persuasion helped adoption of the novel norm of offensive use
of force against non-state actors. However, Sondarjee’s argument that learning not only requires new knowledge but also requires changing existing knowledge regarding how to deal with and/or solve problems is helpful because this provides hints about how the USNC was able to adopt a new norm contradictory to the core UN norms to deal with or to solve unique challenges to peacekeeping emanating from non-state actors. In sum, I argue that the UN bureaucrats within the CoP played a central role in the adoption of stability operations; resultantly, as a result, we see adoption of a new secondary norm of proactive and offensive force against targeted non-state actors.

**Primary and Secondary Norms**

As I advance my argument, it is necessary to clarify the distinction and, more importantly, the relations between primary and secondary norms. Primary norms are defined as the collective expectations of appropriate behavior of an actor with a given identity in certain contexts (Finnemore 1996; Jepperson, Wendt, and Katzenstein 1996; Finnemore and Sikkink 1998; Jurkovich 2019; Laurence 2019). While the primary norms are founded on general values or ideas shared by a community and upheld through social pressure, secondary norms are designed to make sure primary norms are observed (Hein and Moon 2016). While primary norms are about commanding or prescribing certain behaviors (sense of oughtness), the secondary norms are more about prescribing action in violation of the primary norm (performance of a specific act in violation of the norm). The primary norms may exist independently from the secondary norms, but not the other way around (Kelsen 1991). Hein and Moon (2016) note that to preserve the primary human rights norm of the “right to health,” the secondary norm of making essential medicines available (or in other words “universal
access to essential medicines”) has to be supplemented to make sure the primary norm of the right to health is achieved (Hein and Moon 2016, p.107).

As the twin norms of R2P and PoC seem to be susceptible to some newly emerging threats (for instance, non-state terrorist actors), the UNSC has successfully pushed for adoption of the secondary norm of the use of offensive force against non-state actors to achieve the primary norms of R2P and PoC. While primary norms go through a lifecycle of norms (emergence, cascade, internalization) [Finnemore and Sikkink 1998]), the secondary norms are mainly supportive to the primary norms, and so, secondary norms may be relevant in the short or long term and/or internalized or fall out depending on whether they serve the purpose.

**Stability Operations and Robust Peacekeeping**

Stability operations refer to a set of characteristics that include the use of offensive force to neutralize targeted group(s) to disband terrorist group(s), proactively attacking by anticipating attacks against themselves or civilians they find necessary to stop for human rights violations. The operations are deployed in the middle of ongoing conflicts and aim to restore and maintain stability in three precise ways: a) helping protect the government and its people against identified aggressors, b) helping the government reclaim control over territories previously controlled by the aggressors, and c) helping the government extend the authority of the state throughout its territory. The operations are undertaken alongside the security forces (and to build the capacity of the national forces) of the host nation (legitimate party) (Gorur and Giffen 2015; Coning, Gelot, and Karlsrud 2016; Coning 2018). Stability operations are different from peace enforcement or robust peacekeeping operations. Peace enforcement refers
to the use of force at the strategic level and without consent of the host nation/main parties in the conflict, an intervention authorized by the UNSC and executed by non-UN forces (Malan 2018, pp.51-53). Robust peacekeeping refers to the use of force for defensive purposes, and this happens at the tactical level with consent of the host nation or the main parties to the conflict (Malan 2018, p.51).

To reiterate, I contend that international bureaucrats within the CoP worked as key catalysts at the international level in the adoption of the secondary norm. The CoP has been successful in constructing a social reality reflecting the changing nature of the security scenario due to non-state actors violating human rights on a large scale when traditional measures are inadequate. The CoP has also been successful in framing the required actions in certain contexts that include proactive operations, use of offensive force, and identifying certain parties as enemies as well as supporting and building state (i.e., the legitimate party) security forces as a means necessary to the success of UN missions and to achieve UN peacekeeping mandates.

**Mechanism of Argumentative Persuasion**

I argue that the information regarding what is happening on the ground and the arguments put forth through the reports produced by the UN bureaucrats play an instrumental role in narrating and framing the changing security scenario and necessity for stability operations, especially the need for proactive offensive operations to fight non-state actors to protect civilians and ultimately to make the UN agenda successful. In contrast, the ad hoc approach of non- or minimal use of force meant that UN peacekeeping was always reactive rather than proactive (Ryan 2000). Scholars have studied socialization in a number of ways,
for instance, how new members gradually gain expertise in being informed by other competent members of the community (Finnemore 1993; Yanow 2004), how institutions socialize members to new behavior (Checkel 2005), and how communities learn from interaction with other communities (Sondarjee 2020a, 2020b). In this case, the UN bureaucrats have been successful in raising consciousness through sharing their findings from the field as well as their judgments and suggestions, which may be considered under a broader umbrella of argumentative rationality and argumentative persuasion (Risse 1999, 2000; Checkel 2001, 2005). Persuasion simply refers to the changing of minds, opinions and attitudes about causality and effect in absence of material or mental coercion (Johnston 2001).

According to Risse (1999), the logic of truth seeking or arguing is important, and through argumentative rationality, actors seek to reach a mutual understanding based on a reasoned consensus. They use arguments to persuade others that a particular action is appropriate under given circumstances or that situations should be viewed in such terms. According to Checkel (2001, 2003, 2005), argumentative persuasion is “an activity or process in which a communicator attempts to induce a change in the belief, attitude, or behavior of another person... through the transmission of a message in a context in which the persuadee has
<table>
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<tr>
<th>Cause</th>
<th>Causal Mechanism</th>
<th>Outcome</th>
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<tr>
<td>Believer/proponents (i.e., the UN bureaucrats) of civilians’ protection and responsibility to protect</td>
<td>The proponents share events of ongoing suffering and security threats to civilians by the non-state actors despite peacekeeping efforts and make argument persuasively that more forceful action is necessary.</td>
<td>Adoption of secondary norm of the proactive and offensive force use against non-state actors or stability operation.</td>
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<tr>
<td>The (possible) opponents (UNSC state representatives) are unable to make counter-argument against the proposed options and recommendations or propose alternative action; rather, persuaded by the arguments made by the UN bureaucrats.</td>
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some degree of free choice” (2001, p.562). Checkel continues that argumentative persuasion is a social process of interaction that involves convincing someone and changing their attitudes about cause and effect that occurs in the absence of overt coercion (p.562). The UN bureaucrats, having somewhat authoritative positionality due to the UN’s organizational setting and acting out of principles, could strive to persuade others within the CoP that the security situation should be understood through a particular lens and offensive action should be considered as appropriate under the given circumstances. As the security situation due to non-state activities is a relatively novel and uncertain environment, they play a central role in persuading other actors, setting UNSC agenda, influencing decisions about mandate approvals, and shaping stability operation decision outcomes. I particularly explore the intermediary process of stability decisions and how reports of various key players impacted the decision outcome. Thus, given the new security reality induced by non-state actors, the UN bureaucrats within the CoP around the UNSC sought use of proactive and offensive force as a secondary norm adoption in support of the primary norms of R2P and PoC. Therefore, I argue it is a useful framework for seeing how the UNSC CoP designed the secondary norms of offensive force use so the primary norms of R2P and PoC would be observed, which are susceptible due to new threats posed by non-state actors. This is crucial for the UN to remain relevant and make the UN missions and mandates successful in the 21st century and beyond.

I argue that proactive and offensive operations against the non-state actors are different from undertaking such operations against state actors, which creates a new scenario that partially explains why UN bureaucrats can advocate for adoption of a secondary norm that seemingly opposes one of the core norms of the UN. Also, the fact that the secondary norm
supports the other UN norms of R2P and PoC plays a supportive role in the process. Furthermore, it is necessary to note that the willingness of the troops-contributing countries (TCC) to undertake a new form of action is crucial because it is their soldiers who risk their lives and is a key factor when it comes to implementation of the UNSC mandates for stability operations. This success also partially explains why the stability operations continued over four cases: Haiti through Resolution 1542, DRC through Resolution 2098, Mali through Resolution 2100, and CAR through Resolution 2149 (Hunt 2018).

This development also shows that the relation between the member states (especially the great powers) and the UN as an organization emerged as mutually constitutive. While the powerful member states do use the organization for augmenting their goals, the organization also augments its agenda by building consensus among the member states. So I consider the stability operations decision outcome as a dependent variable and the role of the UN secretariat, mission appointees and UNSC state member representatives as the main independent variables. Additionally, even though I do not explore this in detail in this research, there are other possible dependent variables (e.g., partially integrated in the alternative explanation section, though) that may include the role of powerful states, the role of the NGOs or transitional activist groups/networks, and the institutional pathology as other independent variables.

Additionally, as previously mentioned, the practitioners surrounding the UNSC can be usefully understood as a CoP comprised of actors involved in stability-operation decision making, authorization, mission type, troops size, composition, funding, troops deployment and operations carrying out decisions at the UNSC. So it is important that the CoP has undergone a changed understanding of the appropriateness of the use of force norm in particular contexts
to effectively address the concerns of human rights and civilian protection against non-state actors. The UN secretariat and the key decision makers in New York successfully constructed the appropriate use of force narrative in meaningful ways to build a consensus.

For Bode and Karlsrud (2019), despite a solid normative foundation for the PoC, there is wide variation of implementation. They argue that normative ambiguity is supplemented by the practices and positions of the member states’ military advisers at the United Nations headquarters in New York, who play a key role as agents of norm implementation in the field. Relatabley, according to Laurence (2019), core UN norms like impartiality remain rhetorically powerful, whereas practices on the ground evolve differently. She argues that conflicting norms push the peacekeeper into negative uncertainty, so the constitutive norms and the impartiality norm become only a rhetorical security blanket. While they make important contributions, the role of UN bureaucrats remains unaccounted for; therefore, I advance the argument that the role of the UN’s international bureaucratic officials is also significant. However, I do not claim that norm implementation is not important. Instead, norm implementation on the ground remains another important part. The PoC is a good example.

The mandates of 90% of UN peacekeeping operations now include a PoC, including the use of force to protect civilians “under imminent threat of physical violence” (Security Council 1999; Bode and Karlsrud 2019). However, a report by the UN Office of Internal Oversight Services (General Assembly 2014) finds that “the use of force… appears to have been routinely avoided as an option by peacekeeping operations” to protect civilians (Bode and Karlsrud 2019). In the case of stability operations, we see consistency regarding the implementation of UN mandates through force, which is possible because of the decisions
coming from the key decision makers of the UNSC as well as the willingness of the TCC who risk the soldiers on the ground. However, norm implementation is not the focus of this paper. While I claim that the adoption of the offensive use of force norm was pioneered by the key decision makers within the CoP in New York, I do not claim the UNSC bureaucracy trumps the powerful state representatives in the UNSC, making the latter ineffective. Instead, I argue that under certain circumstances and contexts, the UN bureaucrats in the CoP around the UNSC may play a significant role and that the powerful effect of the bureaucratic layer is not well accounted for and often overlooked. This study is designed to assess the effect of UN bureaucrats’ role on adoption of stability operation decisions.
CHAPTER V
DATA AND METHOD

I use process tracing as the key technique for undertaking this research. Process tracing is a fundamental tool of qualitative analysis that focuses on observation of causal processes and how events or situations unfold over time (Collier 2011). Process tracing helps to “investigate and explain the decision process by which various initial conditions are translated into outcomes” (Checkel 2001, p. 565). The analytical added value of process tracing is that it enables strong causal inferences about how causal processes work in real-world cases based on studying within-case mechanistic evidence (Beach 2017). I use this mechanism to explore the three cases of stability operations (i.e., DRC, Mali, and CAR), which helps me to go beyond correlational analysis and strive for causal explanation. I particularly look for the observations from the field (developments on the ground) and recommendations proposed by the UN bureaucrats and their subsequent impact, for instance, recognition, press release, UNSC statement release, adoption of resolution, and the like.

I use a qualitative content analysis research method for this project. I rely largely on a document analysis technique to review and evaluate computerized, digital, and internet-transmitted UNSC archival documents, policy papers, and other print sources (Bowen 2009). I investigate how the UN international bureaucrats interpreted or understood the security scenario in each of the three cases (i.e., DRC, Mali, and CAR) and attach meanings while suggesting the necessity for offensive force against a targeted party through the reports they generated and the speeches they delivered at the UNSC. I also center attention on how the UNSC state officials followed the narrative, whether they adopted similar interpretation of the
security scenario and reflected that through accepting or contesting such meaning and suggested action during their speeches or when they shared their views in UNSC meetings. I use an inductive analysis of the texts to develop common themes of how situations were assessed and possible actions recommended based on their communication. My focus is to unveil contextual understanding of the stability operation cases.

The observable implications for the role of the UN bureaucrats to adopt stability operations include UN bureaucrats’ discussions and arguments about grave humanitarian situations due to activities of non-state actors and the need for the use of force for civilian protection vis-à-vis the reaction of the UNSC state representatives and its effect on the decision outcome. I trace evidence of talk or discussion about civilian protection by the UN bureaucrats through the UNSC meeting minutes, reports, and presentations. I look for the rhetoric of non-state actors’ activities causing danger for the civilians and risking their lives.

Data for this research mainly come from the UNSC meeting minutes, resolutions, policy documents, and the reports produced by the UN secretariat regarding stability missions. I specifically investigate the issue proposals, discussions, contestations, voting patterns, and the UNSC members’ (i.e., P5 and E10 representatives) stated reasons for voting as documented in the meeting minutes. In most cases, after voting on a resolution, the UNSC president opens the floor to those members who wish to make statements where they explain why they voted in favor and so on. For instance, after the Resolution 2098 for DRC, Mr. Gasana, Rwanda, explained he voted in favor of the intervention brigade under Resolution 2098 (UNSC 2013a) to support the Congolese government’s territorial integrity and to bolster regional peace.
However, since all members do not speak or share reasons in the UNSC, it is not possible to capture the reasoning of all of them.


I attempt to comprehend and illustrate how the UNSC determines if a matter is a threat, its seriousness, and the required action to address the threat. The UNSC has been instrumental in constructing the threats in particular ways as well as shaping other members’ perceptions of the necessary action to address it in the form of adopting stability operations. Therefore, the meeting minutes and resolutions are important sources for the research. I look at who initiated discussion about the necessity for stability operations, how the operations were justified, if the members made reference to other norms, how a particular case was discussed and/or security situation interpreted, if there was any contestation or protest from other members (e.g., through UNSC votes), and if they referred to other missions and their success and/or failure. I also try to capture how the new (in)security situation and/or threats posed by non-state actors were understood and explained by key actors in the CoP by using recorded meeting minutes and the UNSC-generated documents as well as how the discussions helped to generate understanding about an appropriate use of force norm in the three cases of investigation.
The UNSC resolutions provide the exact actions determined by the UNSC for the cases. Focusing on the rhetoric of the decision makers or suggestions made in the UN headquarters in New York and their understanding and positions on the degree of force implemented on the ground, I contribute to understanding the UN’s use of force norms, continuity and change of the UN’s use of force, as well as some fresh empirical insights related to peacekeeping operations and effectiveness. I try to remain actively reflexive (Soedirgo and Glas 2020) by continually interrogating my own positionality while I derived data from the above-mentioned sources and documents. I also try to focus on self-knowledge and my role in the process of knowledge generation by monitoring my biases and beliefs (Berger 2015).

In a similar study, Bode and Karlsrud (2019) used interpretivist analysis of data generated through an online survey, a half-day workshop, and interviews with selected delegations. Laurence (2019) used a qualitative and interpretative method, including discourse analysis and content analysis. She used data gathered from analysis of UNSC resolutions, policy documents, media sources, and fifty semi-structured key informant interviews. I think my method for this study is sufficient because I aim to flesh out the role of the UN bureaucrats and responses from the UNSC state officials documented in the UNSC archival and official documents mentioned above. While it is not possible to provide the full account of the cases here, I provide a concise account of how the events unfolded to the degree necessary to showcase and support my arguments.
CHAPTER VI

CASE OF DRC

The first case I investigate to trace the role of the UN bureaucrats in stability operation decisions is the United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the DR Congo (MONUSCO) (UN 2020d). MONUSCO took over from an earlier UN mission, the United Nations Organization Mission in DRC (MONUC), in 2010. The stability operation decision for the DRC came out in March 2013 through Resolution 2098. However, to have a closer look at how the decision unfolded, we need to look at the past. But again, I provide a concise account of how the events unfolded in the case of DRC to support my arguments, as illustrating the full story is not possible. There has been a clear change from the UNSC’s intention to adopt or renew targeted sanctions against individuals involved with human rights violations and acts of sexual violence that resonated in Resolution 1960 (adopted in 2010) towards adoption of proactive and offensive operations against non-state actors under stability operation in March 2013.

In the first week of April 2010, Enyele insurgents attacked the national assembly and took control of the airport in Mbandaka, the capital of Equateur Province. The Congolese army (FARDC) took back control of the airport soon after with the help of the MONUC. Special Representative of the Secretary-General and Head of MONUC Alan Doss briefed the MONUC troops- and police-contributing countries in private and the UNSC in open debate afterward. Under Secretary-General and Emergency Relief Coordinator John Holmes visited South Kivu, Orientale Province, and Equateur Province and briefed the UNSC experts upon return. In the meantime, the permanent representative of France, Gerard Araud, briefed the UNSC on 13-16
May about the situation in DRC. He noted, “The humanitarian and human rights situations in particular are worrisome” (UNSC 2010a).

From 30 July to 2 August 2010, some rebel groups raided 13 villages in the North Kivu Province’s Walikale area and committed mass rape. Human Rights Watch reported a grave human security scenario on 11 August 2010. The report says that the Ugandan-rebel Lord’s Resistance Army (LRA) had abducted more than 697 adults and children in the Bas Uele district of northern DRC and in the Central African Republic (CAR) over a period of 18 months. By the end of August, the director of Africa II Division of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations, Raisedon Zenenga, briefed the UNSC about the Walikale incident to ensure the perpetrators were brought to justice (UNSC 2010b).

In October 2010, the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs reported that the security situation in North and South Kivu Provinces continued to deteriorate, with daily reports of assassinations, rapes, and extortions. On 14 October 2010, the Secretary-General’s special representative on sexual violence in conflict, Margot Wallström, informed the UNSC about concerns over recent reports on the involvement of soldiers of the FARDC in rapes and looting. Approximately fifty men attacked a UN peacekeeping base in North Kivu Province on 23 October 2010.

In January 2011, MONUSCO reported that at least 53 rapes were committed in the Moyens Plateaux in South Kivu, allegedly involving members of the Democratic Forces for the Liberation of Rwanda (FDLR). In February 2011, Margot Wallström reported that at least 182 rapes had allegedly taken place in January in seven border villages along the DRC-Angola
border. Wallström added that many of these acts were committed by various official forces of Angola.

The UN Secretary-General’s report on DRC in May 2011 (S/2011/298) points to the continued presence of armed groups and violence against civilians. The report notes “Continued presence of armed groups in North and South Kivu and Orientale provinces; serious acts of violence against civilians; limited progress in building professional and effective national security and rule of law institutions” (United Nations Secretary-General 2011b). In the same report, the Secretary-General expressed his concerns about increasing terrorists attacks on civilians, “I remain concerned by the increase in LRA attacks against civilians and the abductions carried out by this armed group in the border area between the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Southern Sudan and the Central African Republic” (United Nations Secretary-General 2011b).

The Secretary-General’s report reveals that an estimated 1.738 million people remained displaced in the DRC, including some 1.25 million in North and South Kivu and 437,000 in Orientale Province in May 2011. Continued insecurity contributed to some 96,500 new displacements in North and South Kivu and northern Katanga and 33,000 new displacements in the Uélé in Orientale Province. In the meantime, 33,740 displaced persons returned to their area of origin. Humanitarian activities were suspended in several areas in the Kivus due to insecurity and attacks against humanitarian actors. The report further noted that key challenges remained: the presence of armed groups in North and South Kivu and Orientale Provinces, serious acts of violence against civilians, and limited progress in building professional and
effective national security and rule-of-law institutions (United Nations Secretary-General 2011b).

Margot Wallström, the special representative of the Secretary-General on sexual violence in conflict and the special representative of the Secretary-General and head of MONUSCO, briefed the UNSC in November 2011. The briefing reiterated some concerns raised by the Secretary-General and led the UNSC to issue a press statement expressing deep concern about the persistent high levels of violence, especially sexual violence, and human rights violations and abuses against civilians (UNSC 2011b).

The UN Secretary-General submitted another report on DRC in November 2012 (S/2012/838) in which he again depicted serious threat to the civilians by the non-state actors:

The mutiny by M23… continues to pose a serious threat to peace and security in the eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo and the Great Lakes region… I am deeply concerned that M23 continues to consolidate de facto control in Rutshuru territory, North Kivu, and is attempting to expand its reach and form alliances with armed groups elsewhere. In other parts of the eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo, armed groups have taken advantage of security voids to remobilize, recruit and broaden their attacks in the Kivus and in Ituri… (United Nations Secretary-General 2012c)

The Secretary-General in his 2012 report to the UNSC further expressed his concerns about the suffering of the civilians:

I am deeply disturbed by the humanitarian consequences of the mutiny by M23 and by the scale and magnitude of the suffering of the population in North Kivu and other parts of the eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo… Reprisal attacks on civilians are intensifying, fuelling cycles of hatred and violence among communities. Humanitarian organizations have also increasingly been the target of attacks and restrictions on their freedom of movement. I vigorously condemn the violence and serious human rights abuses committed by M23 and other armed groups against civilians… [T]he widespread acts of sexual violence in the eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo, in particular by armed groups,
remain a serious cause for concern. Children have also been targeted by these armed groups, in particular M23, for forced recruitment, killings and other human rights violations… (United Nations Secretary-General 2012c)

Illustrating the security scenario, the Secretary-General, therefore, welcomed vigorous action to put an end to the destabilizing acts: “I welcome the strong condemnation by a number of Member States of any provision of support to M23 and other negative forces in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and call upon all those responsible to immediately and permanently end such destabilizing assistance” (United Nations Secretary-General 2012c).

Roger Meece, special representative of the Secretary-General, briefed the UNSC on 21 November 2012 and reiterated some suggestions and observations of the Secretary-General’s 2012 report (S/2012/838). He noted:

The security situation in North Kivu and some other areas of eastern Congo has seriously deteriorated…. in addition to the large-scale humanitarian crisis affecting hundreds of thousands of Congolese…. [S]ince the occupation of Goma by the Mouvement du 23 Mars (M-23), we are facing violent and spontaneous demonstrations targeting both the Congolese symbols of power and United Nations personnel and installations. (UNSC 2012a)

Meece expressed concern that, like other areas occupied by the M23, the occupation of Goma also posed a major risk of increased serious human rights violations such as killings and forced recruitment of civilians, including minors (UNSC 2012a). Similarly, Valerie Amos, Under Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs and Emergency Relief Coordinator, noted that the plight of civilians warranted continued attention. She stated that the intensified military operations in North Kivu between the Congolese armed forces and the March 23 Movement (M23) had displaced over 220,000 people. Meanwhile, the redeployment of some Congolese forces to fight the M23 left a security vacuum elsewhere that was being exploited by the Forces
Démocratiques de Libération du Rwanda and other armed groups to take control of mines and towns, which resulted in the displacement of tens of thousands of civilians (UNSC 2012c).

Upon a request from the USNC, the Secretary-General submitted another report on DRC in February 2013 (S/2013/119). He depicted ongoing conflict in DRC and the continuous suffering and humanitarian crisis: “[A]s exemplified by the current crisis in North Kivu, which started in April 2012, eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo also continues to be plagued by recurrent waves of conflict, chronic humanitarian crises and serious human rights violations, including sexual and gender-based violence…” (United Nations Secretary-General 2013c).

The Secretary-General outlined the proposal and basics for establishing an intervention brigade to tackle the security threat posed by the non-state actors:

In support of the objectives of the Framework for Peace, Security and Cooperation for the Democratic Republic of the Congo and the region…. it is proposed that a dedicated intervention brigade be established within MONUSCO for an initial period of one year… [T]he intervention brigade would have the peace-enforcement tasks of preventing the expansion of, neutralizing and disarming armed groups… [T]he brigade would carry out targeted offensive operations, either on its own or jointly with FARDC, in a robust, highly mobile and versatile manner… (United Nations Secretary-General 2013c)

The Secretary-General further shared his observations:

While progress has been achieved over the past 14 years in the promotion of stability in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, the crisis brought about by the M23 rebellion has underscored the continued fragility of the situation in the eastern part of the country, highlighted the similarities with past crises instigated by previous rebellions and demonstrated that the underlying causes of continued instability in eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo have yet to be adequately addressed… I am convinced that the situation today offers an opportunity to collectively address the underlying causes of the conflict in eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo and the Great Lakes region and to break the pattern of recurring cycles of violence. I call on all stakeholders to
honour their commitments as outlined in the Framework for Peace, Security and Cooperation for the Democratic Republic of the Congo... (United Nations Secretary-General 2013c)

In August 2012, the UNSC issued a press release condemning attacks by the M23 rebel group and called for the cessation of all outside support to M23. In September 2012, Head of Peacekeeping Hervé Ladsous updated the UNSC on regional efforts to address the crisis in North Kivu caused by the mutiny of the M23 rebel group (UNSC 2012f).

Edmond Mulet, Assistant Secretary-General for Peacekeeping, informed the UNSC about the deteriorating situation in the eastern DRC and the M23 activities in October 2012. He reported the rebels were creating a parallel administration in eastern Congo and continuing to fight the DRC army. In the meantime, a presidential statement expressed deep concern that neighboring countries had provided support to the M23 (President of the Security Council 2012).

The previous peacekeeping initiatives were nullified by the armed groups operating in the DRC. The Congolese army and the UN attempted to merge fighters from some groups into the Congolese army but had only limited success. Particularly, the M23 became reckless and seized the regional hub of Goma in 2012. The UNSC then mandated a stand-alone force intervention brigade (FIB) consisting of troops from South Africa, Tanzania and Malawi to neutralize the militia (International Crisis Group 2019). The idea of FIB, however, came from UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon in his special report, which he later presented in the 6928th meeting of the UNSC to draw support from all the members.
Afterward, Resolution 2098 was adopted unanimously at the 6943rd meeting of the UNSC on 28 March 2013 that authorized MONUSCO to include an intervention brigade consisting of three infantry battalions, one artillery and one special force and reconnaissance company with headquarters in Goma under direct command of the MONUSCO force commander. The brigade was authorized to undertake joint offensive operations in collaboration with the Congolese military against the M23. The mission was mandated to neutralize armed groups and to contribute to reduce threats posed by armed groups to state authority and civilian security in eastern DRC and to make space for stabilization activities (UNSC 2013a). The Resolution 2098 states that the UNSC:

- decides to extend the mandate of MONUSCO in the DRC…
- takes note of the recommendations of the Special Report of the Secretary-General on the DRC and in the Great Lakes Region regarding MONUSCO, and decides that MONUSCO shall… include an “Intervention Brigade” consisting inter alia of three infantry battalions, one artillery and one special force and reconnaissance company with headquarters in Goma… with the responsibility of neutralizing armed groups… and the objective of contributing to reducing the threat posed by armed groups to state authority and civilian security in eastern DRC and to make space for stabilization activities… (UNSC Resolution 2098, p.6)

Thus, the UNSC expressed full support to MONUSCO and recommended active measures to implement its mandate in eastern DRC, especially to protect civilians, and encouraged continuation of these efforts (UNSC 2012d). The FIB with offensive combat capability particularly targeted M23, a terrorist group who had been causing civilian suffering, and successfully neutralized it. FIB jointly worked with the Congolese army (FARDC); it also had support from the DRC, TCC, Southern African Development Community (SADC), International Conference of the Great Lakes Region (ICGLR) and the African Union (AU) (Gilder 2019a). Additionally, Margot Wallström, the special representative of the Secretary-
General on sexual violence in conflict, Herve Ladsous, head of peacekeeping September 2012, and Edmond Mulet, assistant Secretary-General for peacekeeping, briefed the UNSC about the deteriorating situation and reiterated the reports, arguments, observations, and recommendations presented by the Secretary-General. These all contributed to convincing the UNSC state representatives.

My investigation suggests the key primary actors in the case of MONUSCO were the people who held the following UN posts: the Secretary-General, Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Special Representative of the Secretary-General for the DRC, Special Representative and Head of MONUSCO, Special Envoy, Under Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations, and Secretary-General’s Chef de Cabinet. The UN secretariat actively promoted the use of force as a secondary norm in the case of DRC through argumentative persuasion reflected in the reports and briefings, etc. They worked as agents to effect change and did so through highlighting the violations of human rights by non-state actors and the grave suffering of the civilian population in the DRC through argumentative persuasion of appropriate action communicated through briefings, speeches, and reports in the UNSC.

This reveals the use of force norm shift under peacekeeping from minimal or non-use of force to proactive and offensive force use by FIB to neutralize target rebel groups. In the process, the FIB took a side in the conflict and identified one group as the aggressor (Gilder 2019a; Laurence 2019). Thus, the case of DRC shows a change from previously targeted sanction-based approaches (i.e., noted in Resolution 1960) to adoption of offensive use of force against the non-state actors’ acts of sexual violence (i.e., adopted in Resolution 2098) in which the UN bureaucrats played a significant role.
CHAPTER VII
CASE OF MALI

The second case is the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali (MINUSMA; UN 2020b). The stability operations decision for Mali came out in April 2013 through Resolution 2100. To reveal how the stability operations decision unfolded, we need to look at how events unfolded over time. There has been a shift of the UNSC’s previous support of regional organizations, like Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), to help shape outcomes and fight threats of terrorism, mass rape, sexual violence, and threats to civilians and to restore peace and security in Mali towards adoption of proactive and offensive operations against non-state actors under a stability operation decision in April 2013. I provide only a concise version of the story to show the validity of my arguments, as providing full description is not feasible.

Mali had experienced perennial instability since its independence from France in 1960. While the majority of people live in the south, Tuareg and Arab groups living in the north rebelled against the government in 1963, 1990, and 2006. They tried to gain autonomy for the region they call Azawad (International Crisis Group 2019). The government was unable to control the north, and hence the groups threatened to destabilize the country. The top rebel groups in Mali included the Tuareg rebel groups: Ansar Dine, Movement for Unity and Jihad in West Africa (Mujao), al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM), the Signed-in-Blood Battalion and the Islamic Movement for Azawad (IMA; BBC 2013). The main concerns included that the militant groups in Mali were growing in number and strength, along with the violence spreading throughout the country and across
neighboring borders. While some groups – for instance, the al-Qaeda affiliate Group for Support of Islam and Muslims (JNIM) – were taking advantage of the communal tensions, others kept carrying out attacks in the capitol, Bamako. A branch of the self-proclaimed Islamic State, known as the Islamic State in the Greater Sahara, also increased concerns about militant threats. Furthermore, a Tuareg separatist group, the National Movement for the Liberation of Azawad (MNLA), in the north rebelled for a fourth time. The MNLA was supposedly backed by a collection of Islamist militant groups: Ansar Dine, al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM), and the Movement for Unity and Jihad in West Africa. Together the groups moved to take over territory in the north. (CFR 2020). The persistence of over 100 armed groups in the eastern DRC was a threat to both Congolese civilians and regional stability. The country’s neighbors also often used these militias as proxies to control economic resources and to attack one another (International Crisis Group 2019).

The UN Secretary-General submitted a report on Mali in November 2012 (S/2012/894). The report provides an illustration of the grave humanitarian situation in Mali, which included but was not limited to extrajudicial executions, sexual and gender-based violence, and recruitment and use of child soldiers:

Since mid-January, when the rebel military offensive began, the humanitarian situation in the country has gradually deteriorated. The scope of the humanitarian crisis has increased for local populations who are unable to cope with both the chronic and generalized food and nutrition insecurity in the region and the massive inflow of displaced persons. Civilian displacement as a direct consequence of fighting in the north has occurred on a large scale. According to the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, as at 1 November, a total of 412,000 persons had been forced to flee their homes. This figure includes some 208,000 refugees who are currently hosted in Algeria, Burkina Faso, Guinea, Mauritania, the Niger, and Togo. An additional 204,000 individuals have
been internally displaced and are currently living in extremely difficult circumstances… The human rights situation in Mali, especially in the north, has continued to deteriorate since January. Extremist Islamist groups have reportedly committed gross human rights abuses, including summary and extrajudicial executions, sexual and gender-based violence, recruitment and use of child soldiers, torture and looting of hospitals… (United Nations Secretary-General 2012a)

The UN Secretary-General in his 2012 report illustrated that the security situation in northern Mali continued to deteriorate as foreign jihadists and terrorist elements kept joining the armed groups. Multiple drug traffickers and criminal elements also established themselves and were building cooperative relationships with the terrorist groups. Various armed groups, including terrorist and affiliated entities, continued to control northern Mali. He shared his observation:

I am gravely concerned by the deepening crisis in Mali, which poses a clear threat to international peace and security. Northern Mali is at risk of becoming a permanent haven for terrorists and organized criminal networks where people are subjected to an extremely strict interpretation of sharia law and human rights are systematically abused… a military operation may be required as a last resort to deal with the most hardline extremist and criminal elements in the north. (United Nations Secretary-General 2012a)

This clearly indicates the suggestions made by the UN personnel for adoption of the use of offensive force norm. Even though he expressed optimism about dialogue, he noted, “There will ultimately be some terrorists and criminals with whom no dialogue is possible.” He further warned, “Inaction by the international community may prolong the suffering of those in the north who are living under the brutal yoke of the extremists and are seeing their cultural heritage being destroyed” (United Nations Secretary-General 2012a).

In the 6741st meeting of the UNSC, held on 26 March 2012, the president expressed serious concern about the rapidly worsening humanitarian situation in the region, which was
further complicated by the presence of armed and terrorist groups. He further expressed concern that the proliferation of weapons from within and outside the region threatened peace, security, and the stability of the regional states. He strongly condemned the forcible seizure of power from the democratically elected government of Mali by some elements of the Malian armed forces. The president also condemned the attacks initiated and carried out by rebel groups against Malian government forces and called on the rebels to cease all violence and to seek a peaceful resolution (President of the Security Council 2012). The UNSC issued a press statement condemning the forcible seizure of power and calling for the immediate restoration of the deposed government.

In April 2012, the ECOWAS brokered a framework agreement under which the military junta agreed to give up power and return to constitutional rule and elections in return for an amnesty and the lifting sanctions. The UNSC unanimously adopted Resolution 2071 in October 2012. The UN expressed its readiness to respond positively to a request from Mali regarding an intervention force to help the Malian armed forces reclaim the northern half of the country pending a report by the Secretary-General on the military planning for such an intervention.

The UNSC at its 6898th meeting adopted Resolution 2085, which approved stronger assistance to help Malian defence and security forces liberate the northern part of the national territory from the armed extremist and terrorist groups, for instance, the Movement for Unity and Jihad in Western Africa, al-Qaida in the Islamic Maghreb, Ansar Dine and their allies (UNSC 2012b). Tayé-Brook Zerihoun, the assistant Secretary-General for political affairs, briefed the USNC members about the political developments on the ground and the progress in setting up a UN office in Bamako in February 2013.
Jeffrey Feltman, Under Secretary-General for Political Affairs, briefed Council members on 27 February in a discussion of Mali’s request for rapid deployment of AFISMA to restore state authority prior to AFISMA’s possible transformation into a UN stabilization and peacekeeping operation. Feltman noted:

 spite concerted international efforts, the political landscape in Mali remains complex and fragmented… [As the] Secretary-General notes in his report, a military operation may be required as a last resort to deal with the most hard-line extremist and criminal elements in northern Mali… As a first step, international support should be focused on supporting the Malian authorities in conducting an inclusive national dialogue aimed at reaching a national consensus on a transitional roadmap that addresses the full return to constitutional order and the grievances of groups in the north… Secondly, efforts to bring about a negotiated political settlement with armed groups that have disavowed ties to terrorist groups should continue in earnest. Finally, a well-conceived and executed military intervention in the north should be conducted as a last resort to address terrorist and criminal elements, and planning should be undertaken for stabilization efforts in recovered areas. (UNSC 2012e)

Valerie Amos, Under Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs and Emergency Relief Coordinator, raised concern in the Security Council meeting that fighting in northern Mali had forced 174,000 people to flee the country and an additional 170,000 to be internally displaced. Insecurity in the north was severely restricting humanitarian access and forcing a number of humanitarian organizations to stop their operations. This was troubling, given reports of arbitrary detentions; extrajudicial executions; sexual violence, including rape; and other violations of international humanitarian and human rights law by the parties to the conflict (UNSC 2012c). These had an impact on formulating a resolution seeking a solution. Then on 25 April, the UNSC adopted Resolution 2100 and established the UN Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali (MINUSMA) to take over from the
African-led International Support Mission in Mali. The resolution authorized a force structure of 11,200 military personnel and 1,440 police personnel.

The UN Secretary-General submitted another report on Mali in March 2013 (S/2013/189), which illustrates that

AFISMA and the Malian security forces remain engaged in significant combat operations against terrorist groups in key areas in the north and the centre. A significant diminution or cessation of French operations would likely heighten the risk of resurgence by these groups. If this were to occur, there would be a continued need for limited targeted offensive operations… Terrorist groups and tactics, the proliferation of weapons, improvised explosive devices, unexploded ordnances and landmines are expected to pose significant threats to the safety and security of civilians and any United Nations personnel deployed in Mali. (United Nations Secretary-General 2013b)

In his 2013 report about the future options for UN operation in Mali, the UN Secretary-General pointed that

Operation Serval [French military operation in Mali] has achieved impressive gains…. [in] the reduction of the threat posed by Islamic armed groups. With these troops soon to begin their drawdown, Mali and its international partners must determine how best to ensure that the security gains achieved are durable. The main tasks will be to contain the threat posed by armed extremists’ groups; stabilize population centres in the recovered areas; protect civilians; and create an environment conducive to humanitarian assistance, including the return of refugees and internally displaced persons… Alongside the continuation of the current responsibilities of the United Nations, the key question before the Security Council is the extent to which the Organization can or should assume responsibility for security and stabilization, in the light of the gains achieved by Operation Serval. Ultimately, security and stabilization efforts will need to be underpinned by a viable political process and serve as an incentive for the parties on the ground to engage in that process… Option 1. Multidimensional integrated political United Nations presence alongside an African-led military force… Option 2. Multidimensional integrated United Nations stabilization mission under Chapter VII alongside a parallel force… (United Nations Secretary-General 2013b)

He further elaborated on the two options:
Option 1. Multidimensional integrated political United Nations presence alongside an African-led military force… The United Nations would work with AU, ECOWAS, troop-contributing countries, and bilateral partners to rapidly build and enhance the operational capability of AFISMA…. In addition to providing AFISMA with urgently needed operational capability, such support could also facilitate a smooth transition to a United Nations multidimensional stabilization mission… Option 2. Multidimensional integrated United Nations stabilization mission under Chapter VII alongside a parallel force… Subject to an assessment of political and security conditions on the ground, the United Nations would deploy a multidimensional integrated presence under Chapter VII of the Charter. UNOM would be subsumed into that presence. The United Nations force would support the political process and carry out security-related stabilization tasks, with a focus on major population centers and lines of communication, protecting civilians, human rights monitoring, the creation of conditions for the provision of humanitarian assistance and the return of displaced persons, the extension of State authority and the preparation of free, inclusive and peaceful elections. The force would likely face asymmetric attacks against itself and Government institutions, demonstrations of force and the use of rockets, improvised explosive devices and suicide bombs... The force would operate under robust rules of engagement with a mandate to use all necessary means to address threats to the implementation of its mandate, which would include protection of civilians under imminent threat of physical violence and protection of United Nations personnel from residual threats, within its capabilities and its areas of deployment. (United Nations Secretary-General 2013b)

Through unanimous adoption of Resolution 2164 on 25 June 2014, the UNSC further decided the mission should focus on ensuring security, stabilization, and protection of civilians; supporting national political dialogue and reconciliation; and assisting the reestablishment of the state authority, rebuilding the security sector, and promoting and protecting human rights (UN 2020c; UNSC 2014b). Moreover, Resolution 2364 (adopted in the 7991st meeting of the UNSC) authorized the MINUSMA to take all necessary means to carry out its mandate and asked the MINUSMA to protect civilians under threat of physical violence as well as anticipate and deter threats and take robust and active steps to counter asymmetric attacks against civilians or United Nations personnel. It sought to ensure prompt and effective responses to
threats of violence against civilians and to prevent a return of armed elements to those areas engaging in direct operation to serious and credible threats (UNSC 2017).

MINUSMA started engaging in direct offensive operations against the threats in 2016. MINUSMA carried out operations to neutralize the threats, targeting improvised explosive devices and area and axis control of crucial supply routes to identify and arrest terrorists (Gilder 2019a). The UN peacekeeping in Mali was an illustration of the use of sophisticated military hardware that included short-range drones and transport helicopters. The MINUSMA was given a stability mandate to progressively dominate areas adjacent to population centers to prevent access to terrorist groups and criminals. The main function included support for the restoration of state authority, protection of civilians, promotion and protection of human rights, and humanitarian assistance without prejudice to the primary responsibility of the Malian authorities as well as stabilization of key population centers and other areas where civilians were at risk, notably in the center and north of Mali (UN 2020b). In addition, Jeffrey Feltman, Said Dinnit, and Taye-Brook Zerihoun updated the UNSC about the development on the ground and highlighted the arguments and recommendation of the Secretary-General in the UNSC meeting, which further helped to persuade the state representatives in the UNSC to adopt the decision of stability operations.

The United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali (MINUSMA) to support political processes in that country and to carry out a number of security-related tasks was unanimously established by UNSC Resolution 2100 on 25 April 2013. The mission was asked to support the transitional authorities of Mali in the stabilization
of the country and implement the transitional roadmap (UN 2020c). The Resolution 2100 states that:

The UNSC condemns strongly the offensive launched on 10 January 2013 by terrorist, extremist and armed groups towards the south of Mali and stresses that terrorism can only be defeated by a sustained and comprehensive approach involving the active participation and collaboration of all States, and regional and international organizations to impede, impair, and isolate the terrorist threat... (UNSC 2013b)

The resolution further states that the UNSC decides to establish the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali (MINUSMA)... [for] cessation of major combat operations by international military forces in the immediate vicinity of and/or within MINUSMA’s envisaged area of responsibility and a significant reduction in the capacity of terrorist forces to pose a major threat to the civilian population.... MINUSMA will comprise up to 11,200 military personnel, including reserve battalions capable of deploying rapidly within the country as and when required, and 1,440 police personnel, [and] calls upon Member States to provide troops and police with adequate capabilities and equipment in order to enhance the capacity of MINUSMA to operate. (UNSC 2013b)

My investigation reveals that the key primary actors at that time held the following posts: the Secretary-General, Under Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs and Emergency Relief Coordinator, Special Representative, and Assistant Secretary-General for Peacekeeping. They worked as agents for effecting the change and did so through the mechanisms or processes of highlighting the grave suffering of the people in Mali in their briefings, speeches, and reports presented at the UNSC. They argued and advocated the necessity for the use of force to protect civilians and human rights and fulfill the UN mandate. Therefore, the UN secretariat evidently promoted the use of force as a secondary norm in the case of Mali. Thus, the case of Mali shows the use of force norm shift under peacekeeping from
minimal or non-use of force to proactive and offensive use of force by the stability mission in Mali to neutralize targeted non-state actors and strengthen state capacity.
CHAPTER VIII

CASE OF CAR

The last case I explore is the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in the Central African Republic (MINUSCA; UN 2020a). The stability operations decision for CAR came out in April 2014 through Resolution 2149. This was a change from the UNSC’s previous action of adopting and/or renewing targeted sanctions; travel bans; and freezing assets of the people involved with human rights violation, sexual violence, threats to civilians through other means toward adoption of proactive and offensive operations against non-state actors under a stability operation decision in April 2014. I provide a brief account of how the stability operations decision unfolded in the case of CAR by exploring the immediate past events and dissemination in the UNSC leading to the decision change.

Since its independence from France in 1960, CAR has always been subject to social and economic problems caused by mutinies and coups. A peace agreement between the rebels and the government, known as the Bangui Agreement, was signed in 1997. The UNSC adopted Resolution 1125 in 1998 and deployed the Inter-African Mission to Monitor the Implementation of the Bangui Agreements (MISAB), which had an 800-strong force under the command of Gabon along with logistical support from France. In the 1999 presidential election, President Patassé was reelected, defeating former-President General Andre Kolingba. Even though representation in the national Parliament remained roughly equal, political tension remained high. The hostility between the Army and the Presidential Guard was apparent. The Presidential Guard was dominated by Patassé’s northern Sara group, and the Army was dominated by the southern Yakoma tribe led by the former President General Andre Kolingba.
In 2001, former President Kolingba launched a coup. However, the coup was defeated with assistance from Libyan and Chadian troops and Congolese rebels. Patassé’s government was blamed for committing atrocities against members of Kolingba’s Yokomba tribe. Following the failed coup, then-Army Chief of Staff General Bozize was forced to resign. General Bozize refused to cooperate with the special inquiry committee, which resulted in a political crisis. As the government tried to arrest Bozize in November, he fled to Chad. Afterward, an insurgency began. In 2003, the country experienced a coup by Francois Bozize. In May 2005, Bozize won a national election, which was reported to be free and fair by many national and international observers.

By September 2005, many rebels, including some previous supporters of Bozize, started complaining, saying Bozize did not keep his promises to provide bonuses. Bozize instead responded offensively by sending elite Presidential Guard units into the northwest. This ultimately triggered civilian fears the soldiers would burn the villages on the one hand and the armed bandits would involve with agriculture fund extortion on the other hand, which in turn would cause further unrest. Thus, the conflicts between the Army and anti-government forces gradually worsened.

In August 2006, the UNSC adopted Resolution 1706 mandating a multidimensional UN presence in Chad and the Central African Republic. As the rebel activities continued, CAR was able, with the support of France, to regain control over the northeastern town of Birao by 2007. John Holmes, Under Secretary-General, briefed the UNSC on the humanitarian situation in the region in 2007. He proposed deploying a UN mission solely in the CAR. During this time, the humanitarian crisis, particularly for refugees and internally displaced persons in Chad
and the CAR, continued to worsen. In CAR, the number of displaced people was reported to be 300,000. In the northwest, with the army raids and increased rebel activity, particularly on the Cameroon border, the situation worsened further.

Lamine Cissé, the Secretary-General’s special representative, briefed the UNSC in July 2007. The published briefing expressed serious concern about the use of disproportionate force by CAR government forces. Jean-Marie Guéhenno, the Under Secretary-General, briefed the UNSC about the prospects for peacekeeping in eastern Chad and the Central African Republic in the ongoing situation in the end of July. In August 2007, the Secretary-General unveiled new recommendations for peacekeeping, including an EU military component. In September 2007, Guéhenno again briefed the UNSC about the major aspects of the proposed deployments in the CAR and Chad.

Resolution 1778 was unanimously passed in September 2007, which established the UN mission in the Central African Republic and Chad (MINURCAT). In March 2008, a group of Ugandan rebels belonging to the Lord’s Resistance Army (LRA) entered from the DRC and further worsened the security situation in the CAR. The Secretary-General submitted a report to the UNSC focused on development from January to June 2008. He mentioned some progress, like the signing of a comprehensive peace agreement with all of the country’s rebel groups and the improved security situation in the northeastern provinces of Vakaga and Bamingui-Bangoran after troop deployment. However, he also mentioned the serious risk of confrontation among various clans within UFDR and a new zone of tension in the southeastern part of the country due to the emergence of armed elements, supposedly renegades from Uganda’s Lord’s Resistance Army (LRA) who infiltrated into that part of the CAR close to the
bases in southern Sudan. He also reported on new violent attacks in the relatively peaceful southeastern region. He further noted that the majority of the population in CAR, especially in the northwestern and northeastern parts still lived in fear and insecurity due to the government’s armed forces activities, rebel groups, and criminal gangs. He further revealed that roughly a third of the 100,000 refugees and internally displaced persons had fled their homes due to organized banditry rather than political conflict between the government and rebel groups. His overall assessment of the human rights situation during this time was concerning, mainly because of frequent violations of the right to life and physical integrity. He expressed pessimism in that the situation was further compounded by the fragile security situation, particularly in the zaraguinas’ activities (United Nations Secretary-General 2008).

François Lonsény Fall, special representative of the Secretary-General and head of BONUCA, briefed the UNSC about the situation in CAR in March 2009. He said that there had been much progress, except for some negative developments that included attacks and civilian suffering conducted by rebel groups like the Convergence des Patriots Centrafricains pour la Justice et la Paix (CPJP) and Abdoulaye Miskine’s rebel group, the Front Démocratique du Peuple Centrafricain (UNSC 2009). The Secretary-General’s second report on children and armed conflict in CAR revealed serious concern about the recruitment of children by local militias. He called on the government to prohibit recruitment of children.

The Secretary-General’s special representative and head of the UN briefed the Council in July 2011, remarking that CAR faced serious challenges despite the progress made since the establishment of BINUCA (UNSC 2011a). The Secretary-General submitted a report on CAR (S/2011/739) in November 2011. His report revealed a severe security situation in CAR: the
lack of state capacity on the one hand and the activities of the armed groups on the other. He noted, “The lack of State authority outside the capital has led to a serious security vacuum in many parts of the country… The presence of armed groups with large numbers of foreign fighters continues to pose a serious threat to peace and stability in the country and in the region as a whole…” (United Nations Secretary-General 2011a).

Additionally, the Secretary-General shared his observation about the peace process having mixed results with ongoing threats to the civilians. His observation hinted that there was an emerging need for further action in the continuing peace process:

There have been mixed results in the peace process with armed groups… the last armed group not party to the Libreville Comprehensive Peace Agreement, the Convention des patriotes pour la justice et la paix (CPJP), signed a ceasefire agreement with the Government (June)… a major step towards durable peace in the country… in September the Union des forces démocratiques pour le rassemblement (UFDR) and CPJP clashed in HauteKotto and Vakaga provinces, causing considerable material damage and claiming the lives of dozens of belligerents and civilians. (United Nations Secretary-General 2011a)

The Secretary-General’s 2011 report drew attention to a grave humanitarian situation due to the number of displaced civilians:

In September, the fighting between UFDR and CPJP in the Vakaga and Haute-Kotto provinces displaced some 15,000 people. In early August, local violence between herdsmen and villagers in Ouham province forced another 2,500 to flee. There are now an estimated 169,500 victims of displacement in the country. This figure includes 103,000 internally displaced persons and 66,500 recent returnees… who have gone back to precarious and volatile provinces, mainly in the north-west, and remain in need of humanitarian assistance. A total of 17,750 refugees from neighbouring countries remain in the Central African Republic… . (United Nations Secretary-General 2011a)

He also shared his concerns and observations, “I am concerned that the recent fighting between armed groups has had severe repercussions on the humanitarian and security situation…
women continue to suffer severe discrimination despite all the encouraging efforts made by the Government and civil society organizations…” (United Nations Secretary-General 2011a).

In 2012, the Secretary-General revealed that the CAR started experiencing increased tension between the Muslim community (Chadian descent) and the local communities, especially following the joint Central African/Chadian offensive against the Front Populaire pour le Redressement (FPR). He mentioned that although the security had improved in many parts of the country, two foreign-armed groups continued to operate in the Central African Republic: FPR and the Lord’s Resistance Army (LRA). These groups posed a serious threat to the continuing stabilization efforts. LRA had been particularly active in the Zémio, Rafaï, Obo, and Bambouti areas (United Nations Secretary-General 2012b).

In 2013, Jeffrey Feltman, Under Secretary-General for Political Affairs, briefed the UNSC regarding recent developments related to the uprising by the Seleka rebel alliance in CAR. The UNSC issued a press statement calling for cessation of the hostilities and for the parties to engage in a political dialogue. On January 11, Margaret Vogt (Nigeria), Zainab Hawa Bangura (Sierra Leone), also briefed the UNSC. The UNSC adopted Resolution 2088 extending BINUCA for twelve months. In March 2013, Vogt further reported on the renewed fighting in the region, as the Seleka rebels argued the government had not fulfilled the promises it made (under the Libreville Agreements). The UNSC condemned the attack by releasing a press briefing.

Valerie Amos, Under Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs, and Ivan Šimonović, the Assistant Secretary-General for Human Rights, briefed the UNSC in August 2013. Due to
their convincing information, the UNSC issued a press statement expressing grave concern about the security situation, violations of international humanitarian law, and widespread human rights violations in the CAR. As per the suggestions from the Secretary-General, the UNSC unanimously adopted Resolution 2121 in October 2013. This helped to update the BINUCA mandate in five areas: implementation of the transition process, conflict prevention and humanitarian assistance, stabilization of the security situation, human rights, and coordination of international actors.

Upon request from the UNSC, the Secretary-General submitted another report (S/2013/671) in November 2013. His report drew attention to the worsening situation in CAR and the urgency to address it:

The situation in the Central African Republic continued to deteriorate and to have growing regional implications… multiple and increasing incidents of violence and abuses committed against the civilian population by armed elements… Violence increased in the countryside… alarming increase in intercommunal violence with religious underpinnings, and a cycle of attacks and reprisals with the new “anti-balaka” groups and ex-Séléka combatants. This cycle, if not addressed now, threatens to degenerate into a countrywide religious and ethnic divide…. (United Nations Secretary-General 2013a)

His report also drew attention to the instability causing civilians to take refuge in neighboring areas: “more than 63,000 persons originating from the Central African Republic have sought refuge in neighbouring states… violence in the country has forced almost 400,000 people to flee their homes. The continued instability and insecurity in the country also fuelled tensions with some of its neighbours…” (United Nations Secretary-General 2013a).

In the 7072nd meeting of the UNSC, Resolution 2127 was adopted, which deployed MISCA (the prior mission) with a mandate to protect civilians and restore security and public order through appropriate measures, stabilize the country, and restore State authority over the
whole country (UNSC 2013c). Finally, in the 7153rd meeting of UNSC, Resolution 2149 was unanimously adopted to establish the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in the Central African Republic (MINUSCA). Resolution 2149 reads that the UNSC decides:

to establish the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in the Central African Republic (MINUSCA)… [It] will initially comprise up to 10,000 military personnel, including 240 military observers and 200 staff officers and 1,800 police personnel, including 1,400 formed police unit personnel and 400 individual police officers, and 20 corrections officers, and calls upon Member States to provide troops and police with adequate capabilities and equipment in order to enhance the capacity of MINUSCA to operate and discharge its responsibilities effectively… Authorizes MINUSCA to take all necessary means to carry out its mandate, within its capabilities and its areas of deployment…. (UNSC 2014a)

Resolution 2149 further notes:

The mandate of MINUSCA shall initially focus on the following priority tasks… to protect the civilian population from threat of physical violence, within its capabilities and areas of deployment… provide specific protection for women and children affected by armed conflict… identify and record threats and attacks against the civilian population…. facilitate the immediate, full, safe and unhindered delivery of humanitarian assistance… promotion and protection of human rights. (UNSC 2014a)

Jeffrey Feltman, Under Secretary-General for Political Affairs, briefed the UNSC in January 2014 and explained the dire situation in the CAR (UNSC 2014c). He reiterated some of the Secretary-General’s proposal, like transformation of MISCA into a UN peacekeeping operation to address security better (United Nations Secretary-General 2014). The MINUSCA, therefore, took the authority from MISCA on 15 September 2014 (UNSC 2014a). Kongo-Doudou, CAR council member, noted in the UNSC meeting that UNSC’s unanimous adoption of Resolution 2149 paved the way for a solution that could end the crisis the CAR had
undergone for more than a year (UNSC 2014d). Cherif, Chad council member, emphasized it was imperative the international community demand those responsible, including the various militias, to bring all attacks on the peaceful civilian population to an immediate halt and refrain from any other action that might compromise efforts to restore peace, security and stability and to promote national reconciliation in CAR (UNSC 2014d). In February 2017, with the UN’s stabilization mandate, the MINUSCA began Operation Bekpa to stabilize the town of Bambari by securing an agreement with the armed groups who had been causing civilian suffering. The MINUSCA used armed helicopters to engage armed groups attempting to re-enter in the town and undertook robust operations to expel the Front Démocratique group from the roads between Baboua and Beloko. Later a joint disarmament and arrest operation alongside the CAR armed forces (FACA) was launched against criminal groups in Bangui’s PK5 neighborhood, where MINUSCA participated in armed raids that led to the exchange of fire (Gilder 2019a).

The key primary actors at that time held the following UN posts: the Secretary-General, Under Secretary-General for Political Affairs, Assistant Secretary-General for Political Affairs, Secretary-General’s Special Representative and Head of BINUCA, UN Assistant Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations, Under Secretary-General of the Prospects for Peacekeeping, Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict, and Special Adviser on the Prevention of Genocide. They worked as agents for effecting change through highlighting the grave suffering of the people in the CAR through their briefings, speeches, and reports at the UNSC. They persuasively argued and advocated for use of force to protect civilians and human rights to fulfill the UN’s responsibilities and mandate. Thus, the UN secretariat justified and explained the necessity of the proactive
offensive use of force secondary norm in the case of CAR and successfully persuaded the
UNSC members through their arguments.
CHAPTER IX

FINDINGS, DISCUSSIONS, AND LIMITATIONS

The case studies demonstrate not only the plausibility of my argument but also the limitations of this investigation. Given these findings, we can see my arguments stand in two ways. First, all the cases indicate the centrality of the UN bureaucrats’ role within the CoP through proposing and providing convincing reasoning to the state representatives at the UNSC to convince them to adopt the secondary norm of offensive use of force against non-state actors under stability operations. This shows a change from the previous sanction-focused approach to the non-state actors towards offensive use of force norm adoption in the three cases that I explore. Second, the UN bureaucrats’ reasoned arguments and strong advocacy for adoption of the use of force norms to address new (in)security situations posed by non-state actors was significant enough to persuade the state representatives. The CoP around the UNSC developed a sense of collective intentionality (Adler 2021). I find some minor disagreements or contestations with the UNSC officials’ reports and opposing responses from the P5 and/or E10 members in the recorded meeting minutes to explain their positions since use of force had been a controversial matter in the past. This may be seen as organization of differences in a CoP setting (Adler 2019).

I found that the P3 has a role in shaping the stability operations since they are involved in the process of drafting the resolutions (e.g., France was involved with drafting Resolution 2098 for the DRC) given their national-level experience. I found evidence of UN bureaucrats playing a central role by taking the initiative and shaping perceptions of the key stakeholders in the decision-making process – in other words, shaping and giving the form stability
operations took. Specifically, I found supporting evidence in the reports, security situation assessments, and suggestions made by the Secretary-General, Under-Secretary-General for Political Affairs, the head of the United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission, the representatives of the states at the UNSC, the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, and the UN-appointed officials called on to share their observations and policy prescriptions at UNSC meetings.

My investigation shows that all the stability operation resolutions received unanimous votes from all permanent and non-permanent UNSC members, which suggests unanimous consensus regarding all the stability operations. So, based on the UN bureaucrats’ reports about developments on the ground and policy suggestions, the UNSC members understood and agreed with them.

In the three cases I explored, the key personnel holding key UN posts included the Secretary-General, Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Special Representative of the Secretary-General for the mission, Special Representative and Head of the particular mission, Special Envoy, Under Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations, and Secretary-General’s Chef de Cabinet. They played important roles in shaping the issues to the extent they persuaded the UNSC member states to vote in favor of stability operations. This signifies a form of compliance of the UNSC members to the UN bureaucrats.

In the case of the DRC, key primary actors held UN positions. The Secretary-General’s report on displaced people in the DRC, Raisedon Zenenga’s UNSC briefings on the Walikale incident, Hervé Ladsous’s briefing on the regional response due to the crisis in North Kivu,
and Edmond Mulet’s reports on the deteriorating situation in the eastern DRC and M23 activities were instrumental for informing the UNSC members about the ongoing situation. The Secretary-General’s report highlighting the remaining challenges and the presence of armed groups in North and South Kivu provided a boost. Moreover, Roger Meece and Martin Kobler brought updates of the deteriorating situation and large-scale humanitarian crises that were supportive of creating consensus in the UNSC.

In the case of Mali, the key primary actors were UN-centric. The UN Secretary-General’s report about the deteriorating security in northern Mali due to foreign jihadists and terrorist elements pointed to the need for serious consideration. He also expressed grave concern about the deepening crisis in Mali. Tayé-Brook Zerihoun’s briefings in the UNSC were about political developments in Mali and the need for further involvement. Valerie Amos also expressed concern in the UNSC about the fighting in northern Mali. These all depicted the necessity for adopting a use of force norm in the case of Mali, which was accepted through a unanimous vote.

In the case of CAR, key influential actors were from within the UN. John Holmes briefed the UNSC on the humanitarian situation in the region and in 2007 proposed to deployment of the UN mission in the CAR. Lamine Cissé briefed the UNSC, expressing serious concern about the CAR government forces’ disproportionate use of force. Jean-Marie Guéhenno briefed the UNSC about the prospects for peacekeeping in eastern Chad and the Central African Republic in an ongoing situation. The Secretary-General’s report (2008) on BONUCA to the UNSC highlighted the serious risks of confrontation among various clans within the UFDR and new tension in the southeast part of the country due to the emergence of
armed elements (renegades from Uganda’s Lord’s Resistance Army). Highlighting the fact that 100,000 refugees and internally displaced persons fled homes due to organized banditry rather than political conflict between the government and rebel groups showed the dire human rights situation. François Lonsény Fall briefed the UNSC about civilian suffering due to the activities of rebel groups like the Convergence des Patriots Centrafricains pour la Justice et la Paix (CPJP) and Abdoulaye Miskine’s rebel group, the Front Démocratique du Peuple Centrafricain. The Secretary-General’s report (2012) reveals increased tension between the Muslim community (Chadian descent) and the local communities in the CAR, which was more apparent in the aftermath of the joint Central African/Chadian offensive against the Front Populaire pour le Redressement (FPR). Jeffrey Feltman highlighted the uprising of the Seleka rebel alliance and the dire situation in CAR. Margaret Vogt reported on renewed fighting of the Seleka rebels’ activities because the government had not fulfilled promises it made. Also, Valerie Amos and Ivan Šimonović expressed grave concern about the security situation in the CAR because of violations of international humanitarian law and widespread human rights violations. These contributed to adopting the use of force norm in the case of CAR.

I find evidence that supports stability operations being interpreted as successful for achieving the stated goals, which signifies its effectiveness and the possibility for continuation. On the one hand the UNSC members achieved new and updated information from the UN bureaucrats about the ongoing humanitarian situation in the countries and on the other hand they got suggestions from the UN bureaucrats about appropriate action to address them. The effectiveness of the new secondary norm of offensive operations against non-state actors paves the way for determining to what extent it will be contested and/or if it will last. It also partially
helps to understand why the use of force continued over four cases even though it contradicted foundational UN norms. For future implications, I assume whether it will stay in the UN peacekeeping agenda depends more on its success in supporting the primary norms of the R2P and PoC and its continued unanimous acceptance by actors inside and outside of the CoP, giving it legitimacy in a greater scope.

While the cases demonstrate the plausibility of this argument, there are some limitations to this research. First, we do not see concrete process tracing in action here, which is largely because of the nature of data used in this project. An ideal type of process tracing would require ideal data like interviews of key officials in the UN bureaucrats and state representatives at the UNSC and/or ethnographic investigation at the UN. Such ideal data would allow me to unveil what happened behind the scenes, uncover meaning making, and showcase the changes in policy position over time through the interactions and negotiations between/among the bureaucrats and the state representations at the UN, especially the P5 or P3. Talking to the key officials and/or state representatives would reveal the nature of their interaction with other key actors and their experience during the process; for instance, talking to the state representatives may have revealed if and how their positions or decisions changed due to interactions with the UN bureaucrats and the reports and documents published by the UN secretariat (e.g., the Secretary-General’s reports). Unfortunately, due to time constraints and lack of logistical support, ideal data collection was not possible for this project.

However, even though we do not see ideal process tracing here, we see a process-tracing-inspired framework to offer plausible argument. Similar work has been undertaken by social constructivist and practice-oriented scholarship, including Celeste Wallander and
Severine Autesserre. Wallander (1999) in her book titled, *Mortal Friends, Best Enemies: German-Russian Cooperation After the Cold War*, used an extensive set of interviews (more than 100) to trace the process of how German and Russian interest was formed in the post-Cold War period through interactions with institutions like NATO. Checkel (2014) summarized that she theorized specific ways and conditions under which international institutions influenced Russian-German relations through analyzing evidence on processes, sequences, and conjunctures of events within a case (pp.78-79).

While Wallander highlights the IO’s role in promoting cooperation as intended consequences, Autesserre shows pathologically produced unintended consequences. Autesserre (2010), *The Trouble with the Congo: Local Violence and the Failure of International Peacebuilding*, used multi-sited ethnography, semi-structured interviews, and document analysis and traced out that unintended failed interventions in the post-conflict situation in sub-Saharan Africa were neither because of the interest of states nor of the organization but the processes and mechanisms at work within the organization. Checkel points out that Autesserre’s focus has been less to do with capturing independent and dependent variable relations but more to do with how the ideas, actions and environmental constraints mutually constitute each other (Checkel 2014, pp.86-87). So, therefore, such ideal data (either in-depth interviews and/or ethnographic investigation) on top of documents analyses that I have undertaken here would help to illustrate more clearly how the UN bureaucrats shaped the perceptions and policy preferences of the state representatives at the UNSC.
CHAPTER X

SIGNIFICANCE OF THE PROJECT

This project is significant on three fronts. First, UN peacekeeping operations have been significant in the post-Cold War world order of international peace and security and are likely to remain so in the foreseeable future. Therefore, developments in peacekeeping operations are significant for international peace and security. There has seemingly been a stability operation turn in UN peacekeeping operations; however, the turn remains understudied and hence needs more research. This project contributes to better understanding of this phenomenon within peacekeeping, which has ramifications to better understand evolving international peace and security in the 21st century and beyond.

Second, this project shows the importance of IOs’ innovative policy roles in general and the UN’s innovative policy in particular. While the use of force has been a controversial topic throughout the UN’s history, the developments along with the stability operations show that the UN can use force for the purpose of achieving important goals: protecting civilians from non-state actors’ violence. This comes along with the fact that use of offensive operations under the banner of peacekeeping operations contradicts the core norm of the UN. The UN advocates for such change in the short term for the preservation of its long-term policy commitment to civilian protection. Relatedly, this study also contributes to compliance study and constructivist research programs adding another instance, as Checkel (2001) points out the importance of integrating institutional factors into compliance study.

Lastly, my work reinforces the arguments that IOs are purposive actors and not merely the arena in which states pursue their policies (Barnett and Finnemore 1999; Haftel and
Thompson 2006). My study shows that under certain circumstances and conditions, the UN bureaucrats, through peacekeeping operation decisions, exercise some degree of independent effects by informing state actors, making recommendations, and building consensus and thus help to shape the latter’s perception regarding the appropriate expectation in a given context, forms, and function of UN peacekeeping operations. However, this is not what is conventionally understood to be institutional pathology (Barnett and Finnemore 1999); instead, the UN bureaucrats’ effect in the UNSC is quite different.
CHAPTER XI

CONCLUSION

The UN does not see itself as fit for peace enforcement operations and denies stability operations as peace enforcement operations (Coning 2017, pp.152-153), but Gilder (2019a) argues that as the UN forces itself into situations that are no longer acting in self-defense, rather engaging an enemy to silence sources of deadly fire, it makes the UN a party in the conflict. The UN has seen a qualitative shift in its use of force norm from non- or minimal use to offensive use of force to effectively address human security concerns since R2P and CoP norms have not been successful. The three above-mentioned cases clearly illustrate the shift from the non- or minimal use of force norm under peacekeeping operations to offensive use of force norm under stabilization operations. These cases also illustrate how the UN bureaucracy within a CoP surrounding the UNSC plays a central role in shaping an adjusted collective expectation of appropriate behavior from the non- or minimal use of force norm under traditional peacekeeping. This change marks a clear departure from previous sanction-focused approaches to deal with non-state actors.

Since the UN started undertaking stability operations, there have been many ambiguities. John Karlsrud, for instance, argues that the UN has been at war since the UN has shifted toward counter-terrorism operations (Karlsrud 2015). I argue that seeing the adoption of stability operations and offensive use of force as secondary norms in support of the primary norms of R2P and PoC provides a convincing explanation. Additionally, while Karlsrud (2015) argues that such operations will undermine the UN’s international legitimacy, I argue this is unlikely as long as the stability operations contribute to achieving the goals of the UN mandate.
The cases of DRC, Mali, and CAR show that the UN stabilization operations work as a secondary norm to fulfill the primary norms of the PoC and contribute to making the UN mandates successful. As long as the stability missions serve as a secondary norm in support of achieving the primary norms of PoC and R2P, they are likely to stay. However, they may not occur without inviting criticism from time to time.

This project develops an explanation for how under certain circumstances international bureaucrats can play a central role in the decision making within the CoP, which is observable in the case of the USNC’s adoption of the secondary norm of use of force against non-state actors to protect civilians from mass atrocities. On a broader scale, this project contributes to understanding how the UN shapes peacekeeping designs, behaviors, and outcomes, which explains how institutions significantly impact governance behavior and international outcomes (Simmons and Martin 2002).

However, one possible weakness of the project is that the data exclusively come from official sources and these by nature are unlikely to contain information about things that happen behind closed doors. Perhaps key informant interviews and/or ethnographic study would supplement the data. Another possible weakness of this project is that the three cases explored here do not represent any case in which the great powers’ interest is directly opposed to the UNSC-mandated stability operations. Unfortunately, we do not have such a case to explore yet.
BIBLIOGRAPHY


