Managing Communal Conflict in Africa

Assessing the role of the UN in communal conflict management

Daniel Torbjörnsson

FOI-R--4226--SE

January 2016

FOI

Daniel Torbjörnsson

Managing Communal Conflict in Africa

Assessing the role of the UN in communal conflict management

Bild/Cover: Tim McKulka/ UN Photo

Titel	Lokal konflikthantering i Afrika
Title	Managing Communal Conflict in Africa
Rapportnr/Report no	FOI-R--4226--SE
Månad/Month	Januari
Utgivningsår/Year	2016
Antal sidor/Pages	38
ISSN	1650-1942
Kund/Customer	Försvarsdepartementet/ Ministry of Defence
Forskningsområde	8. Säkerhetspolitik
FoT-område	
Projektnr/Project no	A16104
Godkänd av/Approved by	Lars Höstbäck
Ansvarig avdelning	Försvarsanalys

Sammanfattning

En stor andel av väpnade konflikter sker mellan ickestatliga aktörer, på lokal nivå. Dessa konflikter är vanligt förekommande på den afrikanska kontinenten, där de har haft förödande konsekvenser för mänsklig säkerhet: höga dödstal, förlorade möjligheter till försörjning och storskalig flykt. Vidare löper lokala konflikter en risk att ge bränsle till större, nationella konflikter och därmed bidra till att destabilisera hela länder, och i vissa fall även regioner. Lokala konflikter kan ofta uppstå i anslutning till inbördeskrig, och kvarstår i många fall även efter att det officiellt råder nationell fred. Denna tendens att nationella och lokala krig samexisterar ökar sannolikheten för att lokala konflikter utspelar sig i områden till vilka Förenta Nationernas (FN:s) fredsbevarande insatser sänds.

Sedan kalla krigets slut har FN:s fredsbevarande insatser satts in allt mer komplexa situationer. Ett större fokus på inbördeskrig, främst i Afrika, har medfört nya utmaningar som kräver nya strategier för fredsinsatser. Stora reformer har genomförts, vilka har breddat FN:s fredsfrämjande verktyg till att inkludera såväl politiska-, humanitära- och polisiära komponenter vid sidan av den militära funktionen. Trots detta omfattande reformarbete har FN:s fredsbevarande missioner visat sig vara ofullständigt utrustade för att hantera konflikter på lokal nivå.

Denna rapport ämnar utforska trender och orsaker till lokala konflikter i Afrika, samt illustrera hur FNs fredsinsatser har hanterat dem. Slutligen presenteras ett antal policyrekommendationer som, om de implementeras, kan öka effektiviteten med vilken fredsbevarande operationer tar sig an lokala konflikter och fredsbyggande på lokal nivå. Rekommendationerna kan delas in i fyra breda kategorier: ökad rörlighet för militär personal; ökat fokus på, samt mer resurser till, underrättelseinhämtning och analys; ökad prioritet för lokala konfliktlösningsinitiativ; samt undersöka möjligheterna att införa ett skarpare sanktionssystem för att sätta press på motvilliga regimer och eliter som agerar spoilers.

Nyckelord: Afrika, afrikansk säkerhet, konfliktanalys, konfliktlösning, fredsfrämjande insatser, Sudan, Demokratiska republiken Kongo

Summary

A large proportion of armed conflicts do not involve a state, but are rather fought between communities. Communal conflicts are a widespread problem on the African continent, where they have devastating effects on human security through loss of life, loss of livelihood and large-scale displacement. Furthermore, violence between communities has the potential to fuel conflicts on a national level, and thereby contributing to the destabilization of entire countries, or even regions. At the same time, national conflicts have the potential to give rise to autonomous conflicts on the local level, so that violence persists even after the war is officially over. This tendency for communal violence and national conflict to coexist means that there is high probability that communal conflicts are prevalent in the contexts to which UN peacekeeping missions are sent.

Since the end of the Cold War, United Nations peacekeeping operations have been sent to increasingly complex situations. An increased focus on civil war, mainly in Africa, has meant new challenges which demand new approaches to peacekeeping. Major reforms have been implemented, making UN peacekeeping operations broader and larger than ever before as missions now include political, humanitarian and police components as a complement to military personnel. Despite these reforms, UN peacekeeping missions have proved to be poorly equipped for handling conflicts on a local level.

This report aims to explore trends in and the causes of communal conflicts, as well as to illustrate how UN peacekeeping operations have approached them. Lastly, the report presents a number of policy recommendations that may, if implemented, increase the effectiveness of peacekeeping missions in terms of communal conflict management. The recommendations include: increasing the mobility of armed personnel; further prioritizing intelligence gathering and analysis; further prioritizing local conflict resolution initiatives; and investigating the possibility of imposing sanctions on reluctant regimes and elites acting as spoilers.

Keywords: Africa, African security, conflict analysis, conflict resolution, peacekeeping, peace support operations, Sudan, Democratic Republic of Congo

Table of Contents

Acronyms and Abbreviations

AU	African Union
CLA	Community Liaison Assistant
CNDP	National Congress for the Defence of the People
DRC	Democratic Republic of Congo
DSRSG	Deputy Special Representative of the UN Secretary General
JEM	Justice and Equality Movement
MINUSMA	United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali
MONUC	United Nations Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of Congo
MONUSCO	United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of Congo
MLC	Movement for the Liberation of Congo
NGO	Non-governmental organization
OSCE	Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe
R2P	Responsibility to Protect
RCD	Congolese Rally for Democracy
SLA/M	Sudan Liberation Army/Movement
UCDP	Uppsala Conflict Data Program
UN	United Nations
UNAMID	African Union/United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur

Preface

This report is published as part of FOI's Studies in African Security programme. The author of the report, Daniel Torbjörnsson, was an intern with the programme during the fall of 2015. During his internship, he focused on exploring the role that UN peacekeeping missions had played, and could, play in managing communal conflict. The results of the study are presented in the report and serves to shed a light on a topic which warrants more attention by many practitioners of peace operations as well as the research community.

Cecilia Hull Wiklund

Project Manager, Studies in African Security

1 Introduction

Since the end of the Cold War, UN peacekeeping missions have to an increasing extent been deployed to countries experiencing intra-state conflict, or civil war.[1] The nature of civil war is much more complex than that of inter-state war, and it is common for conflicts to comprise a great number of dyads, interests, incompatibilities and causes which all need to be addressed in order to create durable peace.[2] Active involvement in intra-state conflict is not limited to state armies and elites: internal conflict often permeates entire societies. For this reason, national intra-state conflict often also coincides with non-state conflict. Although less destructive in terms of fatalities than their state-based counterparts, non-state conflicts often feed into national conflict. In turn, national conflict can increase the risk of non-state conflict.

Non-state conflict is defined by the Uppsala Conflict Data Program (UCDP) as:

> "The use of armed force between two organised armed groups, neither of which is the government of a state, which results in at least 25 battle-related deaths in a year."[3]

Non-state conflicts can be categorized according to level of organization of the actors, as being between *formally organized groups* or *informally organized groups*. The first type includes fighting between large and well-organized rebel groups which tend to fight each other simultaneously as they are fighting the government, in order to accumulate resources or territory that may aid in their struggle for government power.[4] The latter rather tends to be more autonomous from, although often connected to, the national war, and will thus provide a larger challenge for peace-builders since these *communal conflicts* are not as easy to identify. An example of a communal conflict is fighting between villages over grazing lands.[5] The Uppsala Conflict Data Program divides the conflicts between informally organized groups into two different categories, one where the groups are strictly identity-based and one where the actors are supporters of a certain political party, candidate or organization. This report does not distinguish between these two sub-categories of informal actors in the data presented, since a division of the two is not relevant for the purposes of this report. The terms *local conflict*, *communal conflict* and *sub-national conflict* will be used interchangeably for informally organized conflicts throughout this report.

[1] Chawla 2008, p. 1898.
[2] Kalyvas 2003.
[3] Uppsala Conflict Data Program 2015a.
[4] Fjelde and Nilsson 2012, p. 605.
[5] Hazen 2013.

In Africa, especially, conflict on the sub-national level between communities or local militias is a wide-spread problem. In fact, the continent saw 386 individual conflict years in the communal conflict category between 1989 and 2014.[6] As many as 81% of communal conflicts in Africa between 1989 and 2011 occurred in a country that had experienced state-based conflict at some point during that time period.[7] This co-variation, along with the high prevalence of peacekeeping operations in Africa, signals a likelihood that communal conflicts will occur simultaneously with a UN peacekeeping deployment. Notable cases where communal conflicts have coexisted with a UN peacekeeping presence include the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), Somalia, Burundi, Sudan, South Sudan and Mali.[8]

The UN has drastically reformed its approach to peacekeeping in order to meet the challenges of today's conflicts. Operations have become more multidimensional and include political, police and humanitarian components along with armed personnel, to be better suited for the more complex situations with which they are faced.[9] Besides explaining what communal conflict is and how it puts the national peace at risk, this report aims to describe the challenges that the UN has faced in managing communal conflicts and identify ways in which UN peacekeeping operations can become more effective in managing conflict on a sub-national level.

1.1 Purpose, scope and delimitations

The main purpose of this report is to identify ways in which a multidimensional peacekeeping mission (in this case as performed by the UN), can more effectively manage sub-national violent conflict in the settings to which it is deployed.

Since all but one of the UN's modern multidimensional missions have been deployed to Africa, the African context is a natural delimitation of the study.[10] Non-state conflict is also much more common in Africa than in any other region. The UCDP has recorded that 547 out of 853 (64%) conflict years between 1989 and 2014 in the general non-state category occurred in Africa. Leaving aside cases where more organized rebel groups are fighting each other, which leaves so-called communal conflicts, Africa stands for 386 out of 463 (83%) conflict years.[11] This is possibly due to the prevalence of environmental degradation or resource scarcity and weak state institutions.[12]

[6] Uppsala Conflict Data Program 2015c.
[7] Brosché and Elfversson 2012, pp. 47 -48.
[8] Uppsala Conflict Data Program 2015c; United Nations 2015g; United Nations 2015a.
[9] United Nations 2015b.
[10] United Nations 2015a.
[11] Uppsala Conflict Data Program 2015c.
[12] Brosché and Elfversson 2012, p. 42; Kahl 2006.

This report aims to investigate conflicts within a civil war that are not entirely caused by the national conflict. Therefore, rebel-on-rebel conflict, often over resources that may aid in the struggle for government power, is not in focus and the study rather focuses only on so-called communal conflicts.[13]

Although non-state and communal conflict remain generally understudied topics, there is a growing literature on, and a generally increasing interest in, the phenomenon of localized violence in Africa. However, the literature is often descriptive and seldom asks normative questions, such as: *How should communal conflicts be handled?* This report aims to contribute to filling that research gap.

The report further seeks to illuminate trends regarding communal conflict in Africa. In addition, this study provides an illustration of the importance of managing these local conflicts, even in larger civil war contexts, by addressing ways in which local armed struggles can cause, as well as be caused by, larger state-based conflicts.

In sum, the report seeks to answer the following questions:

- *What are the trends in and causes of communal conflict in Africa?*
- *Why do peace support operations need to address communal conflict?*
- *How can communal conflicts be handled within the framework of a peacekeeping mission?*

1.2 Method and sources

This report is based on a literature review regarding non-state and communal conflict, as well as local conflict management. In addition, the author has conducted a number of interviews with leading researchers on the subject, in order to identify possible reforms of current peacekeeping and peacebuilding methods to better accommodate sub-national conflict.

The report uses academic papers, books and databases, as well as non-governmental organization (NGO) reports and documents from the United Nations. These sources are generally deemed trustworthy. The numerical data presented in this report are mostly gathered from the Uppsala Conflict Data Program. Although generally of good quality, they suffer from data collection difficulties that are inherent in the study of armed conflict. Estimating death tolls is a difficult task since many deaths are not reported. This is especially true in regard to non-state conflict since it often shows fewer warning signs before it escalates. Furthermore, these conflicts tend to attract less attention from

[13] Fjelde and Nilsson 2012, p. 605.

journalists, NGOs and governments than do state-based conflicts.[14] For a conflict to be included in the UCDP dataset, it needs to have reached over 25 battle-related deaths in a given calendar year, meaning that less intense conflicts, and conflicts from which the flow of information is scarce are excluded. Therefore, when looking at the estimated death tolls and number of conflicts that are included in this report, one needs to keep in mind that there is a high probability that they are underestimates. It is also important to remember that these estimates only cover deaths caused directly by the conflict. Indirect casualties are not counted.

The interviews were conducted with persons with diverse academic and regional backgrounds in order to generate generalizable answers. The researchers are from peace and conflict studies and political science as well as from anthropology. In terms of regions, their knowledge is derived from the Sahel, West Africa, the Horn of Africa and the Great Lakes Region. A complete list of the experts interviewed can be found in the bibliography.

The Case studies

To illustrate the challenges that UN peacekeeping operations are facing, two cases are presented in chapter 3. These were selected for the availability of data regarding both the peacekeeping operations and communal conflict. Furthermore Sudan and the DRC are two of the worst affected countries in the world in terms of fatalities.[15] The cases perhaps provide "worst cases" in that they are particularly complex and have proved difficult to manage. The severity of the situations in these two contexts is apparent from the fact that the peacekeeping operations deployed to them are among the largest in history.[16] Therefore, the case descriptions do not seek to illustrate a typical peacekeeping context, but rather provide clear examples of the difficulties of managing local communal conflict. Finally, the case studies are based on work done by other researchers and do not result from field studies conducted for this report.

1.3 Reader's guide

In the following chapter, the concept of communal conflict will be explained. Additionally, data regarding regional distribution, fatalities and the causes of the conflicts will be presented. Lastly, the chapter explains how communal conflict can jeopardize peace on a national level, as well as how communal armed struggles can be created by national conflict. Chapter 3 addresses how the UN has acted in terms of local conflict, in part by presenting two illustrative cases which demonstrate the consequences of neglecting communal violence and provides examples of some of the shortcomings of UN peacekeeping. Some recent

[14] Human Security Report Project 2012, p. 87.
[15] Uppsala Conflict Data Program 2015c.
[16] United Nations 2015f.

developments and initiatives are also presented in chapter 3. Chapter 4 constitutes the core of the contribution this report aims to make by presenting policy recommendations that, if implemented, may aid in managing local violence and preventing resumed national conflict. The report ends with some concluding remarks and reflections.

2 Communal Conflict Explained

2.1 Definitions and trends

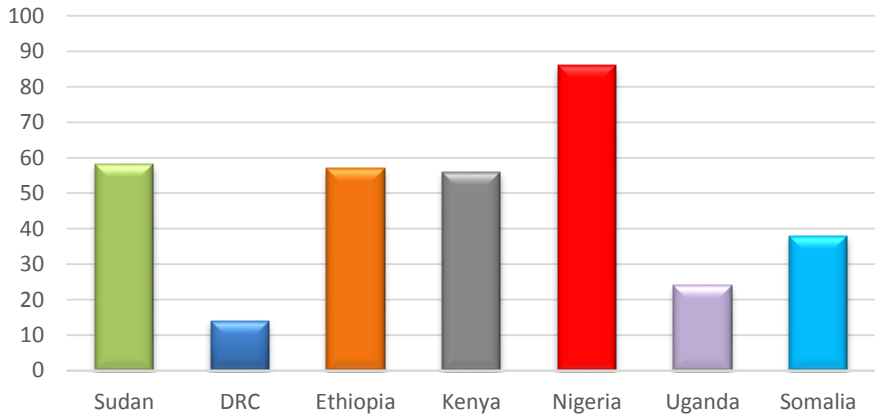
This report uses a definition of communal conflict developed by Brosché and Elfversson: "Violent conflict between non-state groups that are organized along a shared communal identity".[17] Conflict, on this definition, refers to "A social situation in which a minimum of two actors strive to acquire at the same moment in time an available set of scarce resources".[18] The actors may be villages, ethnic groups, religious groups or self-defence militias. The common factor is that they are organized according to an identity. This definition does not necessarily exclude conflicts between supporters of different political candidates, as it is common for politics and ethnicity to be connected in Africa, which means that political support is often mobilized through communal identity.[19]

Communal conflicts are often shorter and less destructive in terms of fatalities than state-based conflicts.[20] The explanation for this may be that the parties in these conflicts are less strong in terms of destructive power such as weapons and soldiers. Furthermore, communal conflicts tend to be more symmetrical,[21] which may also create a local "terror balance", making attacks more risky and therefore also less frequent.

Uppsala Conflict Data Program estimates that 131,563 people lost their lives directly in non-state conflicts between 1989 and 2014. Almost half of those fatalities arose from battles between informally organized groups in Africa.[22] However, there is reason to believe that this number is greatly underestimated for the reasons explained in chapter 1. As many as 23 countries in Africa experienced communal conflict between 1989 and 2014.[23] Although the tendency is for communal conflicts to be shorter and less deadly than state-based conflicts, there are exceptions where non-state dyads have been both long-lasting and destructive, especially in the Democratic Republic of Congo, Sudan and Nigeria. The countries in which this conflict type is most common are Nigeria, Ethiopia, Somalia, Sudan, Kenya and Uganda, but Nigeria and the DRC have seen the most deadly cases.[24]

[17] Brosché and Elfversson 2012, p. 33.
[18] Brosché and Elfversson 2012, p. 34.
[19] Eifert, Miguel and Posner 2010.
[20] Brosché and Elfversson 2012, p. 36.
[21] Brosché and Elfversson 2012, p. 36.
[22] Uppsala Conflict Data Program 2015c.
[23] Uppsala Conflict Data Program 2015c.
[24] Uppsala Conflict Data Program 2015c.

Figure: Most affected countries in number of conflict years between informally organized groups, 1989-2014.[25]



2.2 Conflict issues

Naturally, the causes of communal conflicts are diverse but some patterns are identifiable. The communal conflicts that turn violent seem to be centred around three broad categories: authority, lootable resources, and territory.[26]

Conflicts over *authority* make up almost a third of the non-state conflict years between 1989 and 2011. This conflict type includes conflicts where the parties' main goal is to control the other party. The category includes election violence, such as the events following the Kenyan election in 2008 when the supporters of one candidate fought the supporters of the other.[27] Conflicts over informal power, or traditional chiefdom also occur in Africa, although they are considerably less common than those over formal authority.[28]

A second category includes conflicts over *lootable resources*, which in most cases in Africa has meant fighting over livestock. Of the conflict years recorded by UCDP between 1989 and 2011, 23% where over lootable resources and of those, 93% were about cattle. This is a common conflict type among pastoralist groups on the Horn of Africa and in the Sahel. Other contested resources have been timber and food relief.[29]

[25] Uppsala Conflict Data Program 2015c.
[26] Pettersson and Uexkull 2013, p. 7.
[27] Claes, Elder and Stignant 2014.
[28] Pettersson and Uexkull 2013, pp. 7 -8.
[29] Pettersson and Uexkull 2013, pp. 9 -10.

Around 68% of the non-state conflicts in Africa that saw over 25 battle-related deaths in a given year between 1989 and 2011 were fought over *territory*. This category includes conflicts where two or more groups are striving to control the same piece of land, but not the other group. Many of these conflicts are based on an incompatibility over who has the right to use grazing lands or water resources. There are also numerous examples of conflicts between different identity groups over local administrative borders.[30]

As stated above, the majority of communal conflicts in Africa are over land. Furthermore, conflicts over authority often have a land component as power means access to land and vice versa. Resource conflicts are also often connected to land. In other words, conflicts belonging to other categories often originate in issues over land. Therefore, it is of value to elaborate on the different types of land disputes that occur in Africa.

Land is at the centre of life in many African contexts and is, for many, the principal source of livelihood. Naturally, it is also at the centre of many African conflicts. Moreover, it provides status, wealth and security for those who control it. Land is therefore a much contested resource, and the root of many violent disputes currently, as well as historically.

A majority of households in Africa depend on land for their daily survival, through agriculture, grazing or mining, giving it obvious importance. The economic importance of land is, however, not the only factor making it such a dominant conflict cause on the continent. Access to land is often secured by tradition, and a large portion of rural Africans occupy the same land as their ancestors did. This method of land distribution creates issues when communities are faced with migrants, who do not have traditional rights to the land.

In several contexts, so-called "sons of the soil" conflicts between groups who consider themselves indigenous and groups who are seen as non-natives have occurred.[31] The case study of the Democratic Republic of Congo below contains these types of conflicts, occurring between migrants (and descendants of migrants) from Rwanda and "sons of the soil".[32] Northern Nigeria has also been prone to these types of native vs. non-native conflicts.[33] Sons of the soil conflicts are prone to escalate beyond their initial communal nature, and run a substantial risk of developing into full-fledged civil war. Around one third of ethnic civil wars since the end of World War II started with migration into regions inhabited by fairly homogeneous minorities. These conflicts are particularly dangerous if the

[30] Pettersson and Uexkull 2013, p. 8.
[31] Hazen 2013, pp. 103-107.
[32] Autesserre 2010, p. 7.
[33] Brosché and Elfversson 2012, p. 39.

government intervenes on the side of the migrants, spurring the indigenous population to challenge the state for either secession or government power.[34]

Access to land also gives access to political power. Land is often communally owned, and access to it is determined by the chief.[35] Access to authority thus means access to land, which entails that it is not always easy to distinguish between conflicts that are over authority, and those that are over territory. Access to land and distributive power over it may be at the root of authority conflicts as well.

Land reforms with the purpose of altering the distribution of, and access to, land sometimes have violent consequences. Land reforms were carried out by colonial powers, as well as by governments more recently.[36] Sometimes they have led to resistance from traditional leaders who lose much of their power, because it is connected to the land. Furthermore, the modernizations have in some cases led to confusion over which rules apply, due to a discrepancy between statutory and customary law, leading to several individuals or groups having claims to the same piece of land according to different systems.[37]

Violence between pastoral communities, and between pastoralists and settled farmers is a common occurrence on the African continent.[38] The Horn of Africa, Sudan, South Sudan,[39] Uganda[40] and Mali[41] are examples of countries that have been particularly affected by this type of conflict. So-called pastoral conflicts have become more common since privatization of land, and artificial borders have replaced traditional institutions of land usage. The conflicts arise when pastoralist communities move their livestock to areas that are claimed by another group, pastoral or sedentary. Due to harsh climatic conditions, herders are often forced to move their cattle over large areas to find grazing lands or water. During these migrations, disputes over access to land often arise. Furthermore, cattle rustling, a practice whereby pastoral communities steal livestock from one another, has become more violent due to an increase in the supply of small arms, and the decreasing influence of traditional means for the settling of disputes.[42]

[34] Fearon and Laitin 2011, p. 199.
[35] Hazen 2013, pp. 106 -107.
[36] Hazen 2013, pp. 106 -107; Amnesty International 2014, p. 11.
[37] Autesserre 2010, p. 130; Amnesty International 2014, p. 11.
[38] Hazen 2013, p. 121; Elfversson 2013; Brosché and Elfversson p. 38.
[39] Hazen 2013, p. 106-107.
[40] Hazen 2013, p. 120.
[41] Benjaminsen and Ba 2009.
[42] Hazen 2013, p. 121.

2.3 Links to national dynamics and actors

This section aims to discuss the connection between national and local conflicts, as well as illustrate some of the ways in which national conflicts and actors can trigger local violence.

Dynamics on different conflict levels have a tendency to affect each other as they are often interconnected and the lines between them are blurred. Local conflict can turn into, or fuel, larger national or regional wars. In turn, larger conflicts can create incompatibilities on the local level, which have the potential to turn violent.[43] Thus, there is a greater likelihood of communal violence occurring in a post-conflict context than otherwise. This, in turn creates a high risk of communal conflicts erupting in settings where UN peacekeeping missions are deployed. This fact further legitimizes the claim that UN peacekeeping missions need to spend resources on the management and resolution of these conflicts in order to create a durable peace.

Civil wars often lead to the displacement of large sections of the population. When the war is over, many choose to return only to find their property occupied by someone else. Naturally, this is a source of conflict. Even where land has been privatized previous to the war, deeds and documents of ownership may not have survived and thus cannot serve to decide conflicting claims. War-induced local violence may also originate in antagonisms between groups or communities who fought on, or supported, different sides of the conflict and if a spark is lit tensions may turn violent. [44]

Uganda, Angola, Sudan, Liberia and Côte d'Ivoire have had considerable problems with local conflicts, generally over land, since the end of their respective civil wars.[45] In the DRC, the national conflict of the early 2000s both exacerbated existing tensions and created new ones. The Rwandan Army along with the other armed groups removed many traditional leaders in favour of people of Rwandan descent, fuelling the already existing antagonisms between Congolese of Rwandan descent and indigenous Congolese.[46] Conflicts that were entirely war-induced were rooted in forced power shifts, resentment towards former combatants of groups who committed atrocities, and a young-versus-old cleavage that arose as young militiamen took over authority from older traditional leaders.[47]

As described above, the consequences of national conflicts can trigger conflict on the local level. In addition, interaction between actors on the national and local levels carries the same risks. Elites, politicians or businessmen often use

[43] Hazen 2013, p. 109.
[44] Hazen 2013, p. 109.
[45] Hazen 2013, p. 109.
[46] Autesserre 2010, p. 145.
[47] Autesserre 2010, pp. 148 -151.

grievances for their own greedy purposes. There are countless examples of people in power manipulating local grievances for their personal enrichment. In contexts of great poverty, such as post-conflict situations, people with poor economic prospects are easily mobilized for cattle raiding or capturing resources for extraction by exacerbating already existing antagonisms on the local level.[48] In the DRC this has been a lucrative activity for politicians on the national and provincial level, made possible by a state of insecurity and in turn creating insecurity. The manipulation has included the funding of local militias, as well as use of exhortatory rhetoric with a destabilizing purpose. No effective tools for preventing this, or for putting pressure on problematic elites, have been put in place.[49]

In Darfur, local conflicts over land and cattle were used by national elites in order to neutralize what was perceived as a threat to the government. The government attempted to weaken groups that were perceived as a threatening to the regime by siding with their local enemies, and by attempting to change local power balances by making revisions to administrative borders and bodies.

Central elites who fund local conflicts may not have the same interests as the peripheral elites who fight them. However, these "violence entrepreneurs" are able to link the national cleavage with local disputes, making elite manipulation particularly dangerous in terms of local violence spreading to the national arena.[50]

[48] Hazen 2013, p. 114.
[49] Interview with Judith Verweijen, 3 Nov 2015.
[50] Hazen 2013, p. 114.

3 UN Communal Conflict Management

As stated previously, the state-based armed conflicts that UN peacekeeping missions in Africa are deployed to manage often coexist with organized violence on the local level. While communal conflicts are generally less deadly, there is a great risk in neglecting them as research shows that the presence of local conflict affects the likelihood of large-scale violence resuming.[51] Allocating UN resources to identify, analyse and address communal conflicts as well can thus be a cost-effective means of avoiding a prolongation of large-scale fighting and thus reduce the duration of the peacekeeping mission.

Before 2010 no comprehensive grass-roots conflict resolution projects had been implemented in any United Nations peacekeeping mission.[52] Violence that can be accredited to sub-national conflicts has often been treated as a symptom of the national or regional conflicts which the peacekeepers are there to resolve, and thus state capacity building has been regarded as the best solution.[53] However, communal conflicts are to varying degrees connected to national incompatibilities, and to a varying degree autonomous. Consequently, a civil war is not necessarily ended by pacifying the main national actors.

3.1 Case studies

This section presents two case studies that will illustrate some of the problems connected to the practice of leaving these violent disputes to their fate, as well as the short-comings of the UN response to communal conflict.

3.1.1 The DRC

The *United Nations Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo* (MONUC[54]) was authorized by the Security Council in 2000 following the Lusaka Agreement.[55] The peace agreement was initially signed by the DRC, Angola, Namibia, Rwanda, Uganda and Zimbabwe,[56] and eventually by the main rebel groups of the Congolese war, namely the different factions of the *Congolese Rally for Democracy* (RCD) and the *Movement for the Liberation of Congo* (MLC).[57] The first peacekeepers were deployed in 2001, after President Laurent-

[51] Autesserre 2010; Elfversson 2013, p. 1.
[52] Autesserre 2010, p. 9.
[53] Autesserre 2010, pp. 84 -125; De Coning et al. 2015.
[54] In 2010 the mission was slightly reconstituted and renamed the UN Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of Congo (MONUSCO); United Nations 2015c.
[55] Autesserre 2010, p. 49.
[56] United Nations 2015c.
[57] Uppsala Conflict Data Program 2015b.

Désiré Kabila had been assassinated and his son Joseph Kabila had taken his place. Throughout 2002, the national and regional warring parties participated in the Inter-Congolese dialogue, which was concluded with a signing of the *Global and Inclusive Agreement on the Transition in the Democratic Republic of Congo*, and the decision that Joseph Kabila was to remain president during a transition period leading to a democratic election. This marked the beginning of the transitional period, which lasted until 2006.[58]

Much of this case study is based on the writings of Séverine Autessere, who has conducted research in the DRC for many years resulting in an award winning book.[59] Her work provides an insight into local conflicts in the DRC, as well on the response from MONUC.[60] During the transition, UN personnel as well as diplomats working with the peace process labelled the DRC a post-conflict state, and focused largely on the upcoming national elections. National rebel groups had been integrated into the Congolese state military and regional armies had, with a few exceptions, been withdrawn from Congolese territory.[61] However, the eastern parts of the country were all but calm. The Uppsala Conflict Data Program estimates that nearly 1000 battle-related deaths occurred in non-state conflicts during the transition.[62] Furthermore, over 4000 deaths through one-sided violence were recorded between 2003 and 2006.[63] It is important to keep in mind that, for reasons discussed in chapter 1, these numbers are likely to be greatly underestimated.

Much of the violence that persisted throughout the transition occurred on the local level, between local actors and with local causes and spoils. In the Ituri region, North Katanga, North Kivu and South Kivu a vast number of militias and armed groups remained active during the transition and civilians still lived under the threat of massacre, systematic rape, torture, murder, and looting.[64] Violence was mostly a manifestation of disputes over land, authority and resources between ethnic groups, communities and local militias. The actors as well as conflict issues were intertwined with each other as well as with national and regional issues and actors. Some of the conflicts were old and had been started long before the civil war, such as the pastoralist versus settled farmer conflicts in Ituri, where land conflict was common before, during and after the war. Other disputes had been created or worsened during the war due to, for instance, local shifts of power from traditional leaders to leaders of armed militias. Conflicts over local authority, both

[58] Uppsala Conflict Data Program 2015b.
[59] Autesserre 2010
[60] Reviews on Autesserre's research has been surveyed for this report and, although it is not exempt from criticism, the empirics, the importance of local conflicts, or the claim that MONUC did not do enough regarding local conflicts has not been disputed to the knowledge of the author.
[61] Autesserre 2010, p. 69.
[62] Uppsala Conflict Data Program 2015c.
[63] Uppsala Conflict Data Program 2015d.
[64] Autesserre 2010, pp. 126 -178; 234.

traditional and formal, were common. Furthermore, ethnic antagonisms, fueled by the rhetoric used by national leaders, led to violence in all above-mentioned regions. Additionally, the lack of opportunities for young men was exacerbated by the conflict and persisted during the transition, which amplified tensions and increased the incentives for young men to join armed groups as a source of livelihood. As the eastern DRC is rich in natural resources, some of the violence can also be understood as a struggle for control over mining sites.[65]

The persistence of large-scale violence despite the peace agreement indicates that the national and regional elites did not have control over all of the fighting that took place on the ground. Thus, they had limited power to end it, or interest in doing so, which meant that peace-building on the national level was not enough. Much of the violence must instead be understood as essentially local and – even though in many cases it was intertwined with national cleavages – largely autonomous.

Despite the high level of violence in the DRC during the transition, the UN did little in terms of local conflict resolution, local peace-building, or even protecting civilians from direct attacks. The few initiatives that were taken within the UN, were quickly discontinued. For instance, the Deputy Special Representative of the UN Secretary General (DSRSG) for the DRC identified grassroots tensions as being crucial to peace-building in the country as early as 2002. Initially, these signals had some effect, leading to local conflict resolution being included in the recommendations for a new mandate for MONUC. The DSRSG was thereafter appointed to lead a local conflict unit that was to start implementing an action plan for local conflict. However, many of the policies never materialized. In fact, additional staff planned for this unit were never installed. Only parts of the plan were ever implemented, and measures were limited to the Kivus. Ambitions to apply the plan to other provinces were never followed up. Internal resistance within MONUC has been described as a major contributing factor to the local conflict project being discontinued. Despite this, the policies that were implemented received praise from the Secretary General.[66]

UN officials themselves often claimed that the neglect of local-level tensions and conflicts was due to resource constraints, both in terms of financial means and in terms of knowledge. The local-level violence was deemed too complex for the UN to get involved. Autesserre believes that the reason for the UN not addressing local conflicts was that, due to a culture that was common within the peace-building community, it misinterpreted local violence as a mere symptom of national dynamics. Therefore, the UN considered that any attempt at building peace should be directed at national and regional actors. Additionally, the UN's swift redefinition of the DRC as a post-conflict state, and its view of the country as being

[65] Autesserre 2010, pp. 151 -175.
[66] Autesserre 2010, pp. 193 -198.

inherently violent contributed to its interpreting of the ongoing violence as something other than war.[67]

The military component of the UN mission to the DRC was poorly equipped for the mandated task of protecting civilians outside the cities. First, they were largely isolated from civilian personnel, including conflict analysts, who almost exclusively resided in larger cities. The peacekeepers had limited access to intelligence and information, and therefore had difficulty foreseeing attacks. Furthermore, due to restrictions, limited mobility and poor infrastructure, they were not able to move far from the bases, which left countless communities outside the radius of operation. Restrictions could include not being allowed to patrol on foot or to spend the night outside the UN base, which meant that armed groups were not deterred by the presence of MONUC because its responses were slow and were restricted to roads. On occasion, massacres took place within walking distance of UN bases without response from the peacekeepers.[68] Seemingly, at times, the UN troops were preoccupied with protecting their own personnel and equipment, which points to a discrepancy between available resources and mandated tasks.[69]

In 2006-2008, large-scale fighting resumed in the eastern parts of the DRC between the Congolese army and the *National Congress for the Defence of the People* (CNDP). The conflict had an ethnic dimension and the CNDP was formed to protect those Congolese of Rwandan descent from local militia attacks, from government forces as well as from a decrease in influence. The CNDP managed to take control over a number of villages, and set up a quasi-state which fought the government with low intensity until 2006, when the CNDP launched an attack on the city of Sake and later on Goma, which marked an escalation.[70]

As an answer to the renewed war, MONUC increased its troop size to almost four times what had been originally mandated, to a strength unprecedented in any previous UN mission.[71] In 2009, a peace agreement was reached between the CNDP and the Congolese government. As a result, the rebel fighters were integrated into the national army. However, the rebellion had spurred a return of Congolese of Rwandan decent to the rebel-controlled areas, leading to grass-roots land disputes between returnees and those who had stayed.[72] Local ethnic tensions, mainly between indigenous Congolese and people of Rwandan descent played a major role in the resumption of the war. Furthermore, due to the DRC previously being labelled a post-conflict state, the peacebuilders were led to view the rebel group as criminals, instead of recognizing them as a warring party with a potential

[67] Autesserre 2010, pp. 179 -230.
[68] Interview with Judith Verweijen, 3 Nov 2015.
[69] Autesserre 2010, p. 270.
[70] Uppsala Conflict Data Program 2015b.
[71] United Nations 2015d.
[72] Hazen 2013, p. 117.

to jeopardize the national peace. These two views naturally suggest quite different answers.[73]

3.1.2 Darfur

Since 2004, when a rebellion was launched against the central government in Khartoum, the Darfur region of Sudan has seen violence on multiple levels. The region was the most violent sub-national region in Africa during 2014.[74] The original rebellion had its roots in violent competition over land between the different tribes of the region, and is a good illustration of how local conflicts can evolve and become large-scale civil wars. In fact, between 1989 and 2009 Sudan as a whole was the scene for about a fifth of battle-related deaths recorded worldwide.[75]

In 2003, the *Sudan Liberation Army/Movement* (SLA/M) and the *Justice and Equality Movement* (JEM) launched rebellions with the aim of overthrowing the government in Khartoum. The cause was in part the neglect that the central state had shown Darfur since it came to power in 1989. However, it was also the result of long-standing communal conflicts between Arab groups and the three black African tribes who inhabit the Darfur region. The SLA/M drew their support mainly from the Zaghawa, the Masalit and the Fur, the three largest black African tribes in the area. Its Leaders of SLA/M were recruited from different self-defence groups that had been established to protect their villages during conflict with Arab groups.[76] In these ethnic clashes, the central government had given strong support to the Arab tribes, as part of an arabization campaign.[77] As the extent of this support became clear to the Masalit, the Fur and the Zaghawa, their attention was diverted towards Khartoum, which marked the start of the bloody civil war in Darfur.[78]

The response from the government was harsh repression. Pro-government militias by the joint name of Janjaweed were formed, and together with government forces they carried out major atrocities against civilians from black African communities. The one-sided violence reached the proportions of ethnic cleansing, and was mainly targeting areas with fertile soil, which implies a connection to previous land-based conflicts. The result of the government response was mass displacement, and much of the land that traditionally belonged to black Africans was left vacant. Communal conflict between black Africans and Arabs declined during the state-based conflict. However, the abandoned land that resulted from

[73] Autesserre, pp. 37; 67; 102.
[74] Kishi 2015.
[75] Human Security Report Project 2012, p. 194.
[76] Brosché and Elfversson, pp. 52 -56.
[77] Brosché 2014, pp. 68; 74; 76.
[78] Brosché and Elfversson, pp. 52 -56.

the ethnic cleansing created disputes within the Arab communities over who should control it.[79] Most of the militiamen had been recruited from tribes that lacked their own tribal land, and had therefore been incentivized to join the militias by government promises of land.[80] These promises were not kept which caused an upsurge of non-state conflict between different Arab tribes.[81]

A non-comprehensive dyadic peace agreement was reached in 2006, but it was only signed by the government and one faction of the SLM/A, meaning that it did not apply to the JEM or other SLM/A groups (by that time, the SLM/A had split into different factions).[82] Following the agreement, an African Union (AU) peacekeeping force was deployed to Darfur. In 2008, the United Nations sent a peacekeeping force to collaborate with the AU, forming the *African Union/United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur* (UNAMID), with protection of civilians as its primary mandated task. Additional tasks included creating and upholding the preconditions for humanitarian action, aiding an inclusive political process, monitoring the implementation of the peace agreement, promotion of the rule of law and human rights, and monitoring the situation in areas bordering Chad and the Central African Republic.[83] Furthermore, the UN and AU ran a parallel mediation operation that proved fruitless.[84]

Since its deployment, UNAMID has had major difficulties in performing the tasks that its mandate demands. The main obstacle appears to have been the reluctance of the Sudanese government to give the peacekeepers unrestricted access to the most violent parts of Darfur. Therefore, UNAMID has been unable to reach the conflicts and conflict parties,[85] and thus it has also largely failed in its task of protecting civilians. The government restrictions were apparent from the start when complete deployment was hindered. One year after the deployment deadline, UNAMID had not even managed to deploy half of the planned troops (12,000 out of 26,000 had been deployed).[86] The member states have not provided the means to give the troops mobility, such as helicopters, which is a significant shortcoming in a region with such poor infrastructure as Darfur.[87]

Violence has remained on a high level in Darfur until today, and much of it can be attributed to communal conflict, mainly between different tribes over resources, land and power. Atrocities carried out against civilians have caused many deaths

[79] Brosché and Elfversson, pp. 52 -56.
[80] Brosché 2014, p. 71.
[81] Brosché 2014, p. 80; Brosché och Elfversson, pp. 52 -56.
[82] *Darfur Peace Agreement* 2006.
[83] United Nations 2015e.
[84] Uppsala Conflict Data Program 2015e.
[85] Amnesty International 2014, pp. 24 -25; Uppsala Conflict Data Program 2015e; interview with Johan Brosché, Stockholm, 8 Oct 2015.
[86] Uppsala Conflict Data Program 2015e.
[87] Uppsala Conflict Data Program 2015e.

and mass displacement.[88] UNAMID has been unable to handle the volatile situation and has largely been a bystander, restricted to monitoring and reporting on the limited information that it manages to collect.[89] Naturally, the paralytic state of the operation has left it bereft of credibility with the local population.[90]

Darfur provides an excellent example of how communal conflict can cause a larger, state-based conflict. It also illustrates that new communal conflicts can result from rebellions. In addition, it shows the complex interlinkages that often exist between different types of conflicts and actors in civil war. In terms of peacekeeping, Darfur provides an example of the importance of government cooperation in order for the operation to be successful.

3.2 Recent developments within the UN

Recently, the UN has started to recognize the importance of local dynamics in the peace-building process, and consequently some measures have been taken. For instance, in 2010[91] the UN mission in the DRC employed a number of Community Liaison Assistants (CLAs) in a bid to improve relations with local communities. The CLAs are local employees who are trained by the UN to serve as a link between peripheral communities and the peacekeeping mission. Their main function is to create communication networks, provide early warning on threats to communities, and assess and report the needs of the local population. The CLA initiative has been perceived as a success and has therefore been exported to other peacekeeping missions including those in the Central African Republic, South Sudan, Darfur and Mali.[92]

In 2005, the UN General Assembly adopted a resolution to create a peacebuilding commission. The commission serves as an intergovernmental advisory body with the purpose of collecting resources for post-conflict recovery and reconciliation, fostering attention to reconstruction and institution-building, and assisting in further integrating the different actors within and outside the UN system in order to achieve better coordination and information flow.[93] According to Peter Wallensteen, the commission has, however, become somewhat marginalized in the UN system and needs more member states in order to be more effective. In terms of communal conflict, the commission's work is too focused on general development matters to have a significant effect on the level of individual conflicts.[94] In 2006, a peace-building fund was established with the purpose of

[88] Amnesty International 2014.
[89] Amnesty International 2014, pp.23 -25; interview with Johan Brosché, Stockholm, 8 Oct 2015.
[90] Amnesty International 2014, pp.23 -25.
[91] MONUSCO Civil Affairs Section- Ops East 2014.
[92] De Coning et al. 2015, p. 9.
[93] United Nations General Assembly 2005.
[94] Interview with Peter Wallensteen, Uppsala, 23 Oct 2015.

facilitating funding, especially during the critical early stages of the peace process.[95]

Based partly on experiences from the DRC, the UN has developed a new attitude towards intelligence gathering within peacekeeping operations. Traditionally, the UN has viewed intelligence as a practice impossible to integrate into peacekeeping missions due to fears that national interests may affect the function, a lack of capability to handle secret information and difficulties in motivating member states to contribute qualified intelligence personnel and reconnaissance troops. The realization that today's more complex contexts of operation for UN peacekeeping missions, which has been followed by stronger mandates, demand better access to information has led the UN to revise its initial views, despite some continued reluctance from certain member states. Therefore, the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali (MINUSMA) has incorporated an intelligence function into its mission.[96] The incorporation of intelligence units into peacekeeping operations marks a much-needed change in the UN approach to complex conflict settings in Africa. However, the intelligence system in peacekeeping operations is in its infancy which is bound to entail space for improvement. Lack of experience in handling intelligence has meant that reconnaissance units have, so far, not been used to their full potential.[97] MINUSMA thus provides an excellent opportunity to develop the methods of gathering and handling intelligence which may lead to a greater access to quality information, and consequently a more nuanced view on the conflict, which includes local level violence.

The UN Panel of Experts released a report in 2015 with recommendations for shifts of focus in UN peacekeeping. Some of the advice presented may, if implemented, have positive implications for the UN's capabilities to manage communal conflict within peacekeeping missions. For instance, the panel calls for analysis, strategy and planning to be strengthened in order to create more context-specific solutions. In addition, they recommend further integrating all UN components present on the ground, and they advise that the secretariat should become more field-focused and that it should be more of a focus for peacekeeping missions to engage with the local population. The panel's report does specifically address local conflict and it recommends both analysis and action on the community level,[98] which may be seen as an acknowledgement of their importance to the overall success of peacekeeping operations, although the report is lacking in concrete solutions.

[95] United Nations Peacebuilding Fund 2015.
[96] Nilsson and Tham Lindell 2014, p. 43.
[97] Nilsson and Tham Lindell 2015, p. 70.
[98] High-level Independent Panel on Peace Operations 2015.

4 Concluding Remarks and Recommendations

Communal conflicts in Africa are not likely to decline in the near future. In fact, environmental degradation combined with rapid population growth and an increasing supply of small arms point towards the opposite.[99] Thus, the capability of UN peacekeeping operations to identify, analyse and manage local violence may become even more important in the future.

This chapter will discuss why the UN, rather than the state, may in some cases be better suited for the management of communal conflicts. Thereafter, policy recommendations within four broad themes will be presented.

4.1 Is the UN the right actor?

It may be argued that communal violence is the responsibility of the state and not of the UN. However, in some cases the state may be unsuited for managing local conflicts, especially when the country has been plagued by civil war, and tensions persist while state capacity is low.

The government is likely to have stakes and interests in conflicts that take place on its territory. It may therefore not want a peaceful solution as much as it wants the outcome to be favourable for one of the groups. In other cases, a continuation of conflict, and consequently an unstable situation, may be in the government's interest in order to incapacitate potential competitors for power.[100] In sum, government involvement may in some cases have an aggravating, rather than stabilizing, effect.[101]

Civil war often severs state-society relations.[102] Communal groups engaged in local conflict in the aftermath of civil war may therefore have limited trust in the state, and thus not perceive government security guarantees as credible. A government military presence may even be seen as threatening as security force deployment is sometimes accompanied by human rights abuses.[103]

A UN peacekeeping force, however, has a larger chance of being perceived as impartial, while it also possesses the often necessary leverage in terms of "carrots and sticks", as well as the capacity to uphold an agreement militarily. Thus, UN peacekeeping operations have some advantages in facilitating the peaceful

[99] Hazen 2013, p. 126.
[100] Elfversson 2013, pp. 7 -8; Brosché 2014, p. 168.
[101] Elfversson 2013, pp. 7 -8.
[102] De Coning et al. 2015.
[103] Elfversson 2013, p. 8.

resolution of armed communal conflict as well as protecting civilians from its consequences.

4.2 Recommendations

Through the literature and interviews this report finds that four broad areas need reform in order for UN peacekeeping missions to be better geared for managing conflict on the sub-national level:

- *Troop mobility*
- *Intelligence and analysis*
- *Conflict resolution*
- *Pressure on government and elites*

4.2.1 Troop mobility

Poor infrastructure is often the reality in the areas in which UN missions operate. This has made the peacekeepers less able to fulfil their mandate of protecting civilians, since troop mobility has not been properly adapted to the terrain of the host territory. The troops are often infantry and lack the mobility necessary for operations and patrols in rural areas, far from their base. Combined with restrictions regarding foot patrols and overnight operations, the lack of mobility has in some cases limited peacekeepers to working only in the vicinity of their own base. This has permitted battles between local conflict parties to take place without a response from the peacekeepers. Furthermore, it has allowed for atrocities such as massacres to occur without the peacekeepers being able to respond.[104] Naturally, the credibility of the UN peacekeepers is damaged by their failure to protect civilians, and their role as a deterrent is weakened.[105] Moreover, the difficulty for peacekeepers to operate in remote areas reduces their ability to collect information and intelligence on local conflicts and threats to civilians.

In African conflict zones in Sudan, South Sudan and Mali, nomadic communities represent another challenge to the peacekeeping system. Entire villages move, leaving stationary peacekeepers increasingly ineffective. Mobility is important in order to interact with, as well as protect, pastoral groups who do not always move along roads, or close to UN bases.[106]

More context specific solutions are needed. In areas with poor infrastructure smaller, more mobile troop units could be deployed instead of slow and immobile

[104] Autesserre 2010, p. 41.
[105] Interview with Judith Verweijen, 3 Nov 2015.
[106] Interview with Johan Brosché, Stockholm, 8 Oct 2015; Hazen 2013, p. 113.

infantry units. Furthermore, vehicles that can only travel on roads would need to be replaced by terrain vehicles and helicopters which would permit a swift reaction from the peacekeepers when alerted to a threat. Additionally, it would allow for patrols in more remote areas, and thus improve information and intelligence in inaccessible areas, as well as creating better relations with remote communities and increasing the deterrence effect and credibility of the peacekeepers. Naturally, these mobile units need to be supported by an intelligence system that can provide early warning, as well as fairly detailed descriptions of the nature of the threat.[107] In addition, the abolition of such inhibiting restrictions as described above, should be considered.

4.2.2 Intelligence and analysis

In order to improve the way in which communal conflict is handled by UN peacekeeping operations, intelligence gathering, intelligence analysis and conflict analysis must be better resourced and prioritized than they currently are.[108] Mapping of the specific context on a micro level, as well as on a macro level, is necessary in the planning stage prior to an operation in order to create a context-specific solution. Furthermore, due to changing allegiances and new conflicts as a result of the volatile nature of a state attempting to recover after a major conflict,[109] intelligence and analysis should continue being a prioritized task throughout the duration of the operation.

The concept of peace cannot be binary if UN peacekeeping operations are to approach the context in a more nuanced way: A peace agreement on the national or regional level does not necessarily entail a reduction of violence to a level that can be associated with peace.[110] As shown by the cases above, although national actors have agreed on a path to peace, there can still be a state of war at the ground level. Labelling an area of operation as being at peace or at war generates different approaches from peacekeepers and peace-builders. If a context is prematurely defined as "post-conflict" this may lead to attempts to put square pegs in round holes.

As discussed through most of this report, civil wars are complex. There is variation in the dynamics both within and between different countries of operation. Therefore it is difficult to act according to "blue prints", which is inherent in the current personnel rotation system. The UN could consider lengthening contracts in order to avoid analysts and officers relocating just as they have started to

[107] Interview with Judith Verweijen, 3 Nov 2015.
[108] Interview with Johan Brosché, Stockholm, 8 Oct 2015; interview with Judith Verweijen, 3 Nov 2015; Autesserre 2010.
[109] Interview with Johan Brosché, Stockholm, 8 Oct 2015.
[110] Interview with Johan Brosché, Stockholm, 8 Oct 2015; Autesserre 2010.

understand the context.[111] Furthermore, hand-picked context-specific experts, for example researchers who specialize on the country or region in question, could contribute to a deeper and quicker understanding of the area of operation.[112]

In terms of analysis of local conflict dynamics and early warning the UN peacekeeping system has taken some measures. The introduction of community liaison assistants has been well received and is thought to have been a good initiative.[113] However, it is not exempt from criticism. First, the definition of "local" may in some contexts need to be narrowed. In the DRC, for instance, being Congolese does not necessarily entail that one has an understanding of local dynamics, or that one has an advantage in the building of trust among the population.[114] In countries as large and heterogeneous as the DRC, the UN could consider recruiting CLAs from close cultural and geographical proximity to their area of operation, and the person or persons in question should be considered legitimate by the local communities.[115] This is, however, not an easy task since it has been difficult to identify legitimate representatives for local communities in the past.[116] This may be especially true if tensions exist locally. The selection of CLAs must therefore not be taken lightly. Lastly, it might be beneficial if contract periods, as for other UN personnel and for the same reasons, were lengthened.[117]

In Iraq and Afghanistan, where local armed struggles have also been prevalent, the United States military introduced so-called *Human Terrain Teams*, where a civilian analyst/researcher was integrated into a military unit in order to collect and analyse information on local conflict dynamics. The initiative produced some interesting and useful results. For instance, in Afghanistan a civilian researcher joined the 82nd Airborne Division in the Shabak Valley, where a better understanding of the local tribal and land disputes was needed. The initiative resulted in the creation of local councils, which seemingly had a significant effect as the number of combat operations decreased by 60% in the following eight months.[118] It may therefore be beneficial to investigate the possibility of implementing a similar solution, perhaps in combination with the more mobile patrols as described above.

[111] Autesserre 2010; interview with Johan Brosché, Stockholm, 8 Oct 2015.
[112] Interview with Mats Utas, Uppsala, 15 Oct 2015.
[113] De Coning et al. 2015.
[114] Interview with Judith Verweijen, 3 Nov 2015.
[115] Interview with Judith Verweijen, 3 Nov 2015; interview with Johan Brosché, Stockholm, 8 Oct 2015; De Coning et al. 2015.
[116] Interview with Johan Brosché, Stockholm, 8 Oct 2015.
[117] Interview with Judith Verweijen, 3 Nov 2015.
[118] Autesserre 2010, p. 249.

4.2.3 Conflict resolution

Conflict resolution practices must be undertaken not only on the national and regional levels, but also for local disputes in order to prevent smaller disputes from becoming violent and ultimately to prevent a resumption of war. The UN could consider cooperating to a larger extent with and facilitating for local organizations engaged in peacebuilding and conflict resolution.[119] Furthermore, the UN could provide mediators if needed.[120]

The concept of power-sharing in peace agreements should be more inclusive and take into account the interests of non-warring parties in order to prevent the creation of new armed groups or conflicts as a result of the agreement being perceived as unfair by certain parts of the population.[121]

In Kenya, as well as in Sudan, traditional means of resolving disputes have had success. In Kenya, where pastoral conflict is widespread, locally driven conflict resolution processes which have drawn upon customary methods of settling conflicts have managed to reach solutions in a legitimate way.[122] In Sudan, the eastern parts of the country had functioning native administration institutions that were successful in preventing violence from erupting.[123] In Darfur, communal conflict has been widespread since the native administration stopped functioning in the mid-1980s, partly due to government manipulation of ethnic relations.[124] Local ownership of conflict resolution processes thus has some advantages. However, these solutions often lack a proper monitoring system, as well as credible security guarantees.[125] The UN should consider to facilitate, and sometimes initiate, local conflict resolution processes, by monitoring the implementation of agreements as well as acting as a security guarantor.

As described in chapter 2 of this report, land is a major cause of communal conflict in Africa. Many of these conflicts are rooted in a discrepancy between traditional land rights and formal land regulations. The UN could consider aiding the state in clarification, and/or reform of land regimes in order to prevent confusion about ownership.[126]

[119] Interview with Judith Verweijen, 3 Nov 2015; interview with Emma Elfversson Uppsala, 15 Oct 2015.
[120] Interview with Mats Utas, Uppsala, 15 Oct 2015; interview with Emma Elfversson, Uppsala, 15 Oct 2015.
[121] Interview with Johan Brosché, Stockholm, 8 Oct 2015.
[122] Elfversson 2013.
[123] Interview with Johan Brosché, Stockholm, 8 Oct 2015.
[124] Brosché 2014; interview with Johan Brosché, Stockholm, 8 Oct 2015.
[125] Elfversson 2013, p. 1.
[126] Interview with Johan Brosché, 8 Oct 2015.

4.2.4 Pressure on government and elites

As illustrated by the Sudan case in chapter 3, the government can be a major obstacle for UN peacekeeping missions. Restricted access to areas, actors and conflicts may make it practically impossible for an operation to adhere to its mandate. Therefore, the UN could investigate methods by which, in accordance with the responsibility to protect (R2P), and with the aid of the Security Council, it can sanction governments who fail to protect their own population; who in themselves constitute a threat to civilians; and who restrict UN peacekeeping missions from performing their mandated tasks.[127] Operating without the consent of the host state is controversial due to the intergovernmental nature of the UN. The introduction of R2P, however, does provide legal space for action even if it is still entirely dependent on the will of the member states.[128]

In addition to methods of putting pressure on governments, the UN should explore methods of investigating, as well as demanding accountability from political and economic elites who manipulate local conflicts for personal gain.[129] War by proxy, instigated by national or provincial elites should be seen as a breach of the peace agreement and should be sanctioned accordingly.

The High Commissioner on National Minorities within the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) has the authority to intervene, for example by initiating mediation efforts, when he or she deems that inter-ethnic tensions within a member-state runs the risk of developing into violent conflict. Furthermore, the commission monitors and analyses ethnic relations within its jurisdiction. Most importantly, the commissioner is mandated by the OSCE to intervene without the consent of the state in which the intervention is performed.[130] The UN should investigate the possibility of establishing a function similar to that of the High Commissioner on National Minorities, in order to bypass state consent when action on identity group disputes is needed.[131]

[127] Interview with Peter Wallensteen, Uppsala, 23 Oct 2015.
[128] United Nations 2015h.
[129] Interview with Judith Verweijen, 3 Nov 2015.
[130] Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe 2015.
[131] Interview with Peter Wallensteen, Uppsala, 23 Oct 2015.

5 Bibliography

Amnesty International. 2014. *Sudan: We Can't Endure Any More - the Impact of Inter-Communal Violence on Civilians in Central Darfur*. London.

Autesserre, Séverine. 2010. *The Trouble with the Congo*. New York: Cambridge University Press.

Benjaminsen, Tor A., and Boubacar Ba. 2009. "Farmer-herder Conflicts, Pastoral Marginalisation and Corruption: A Case Study from the Inland Niger Delta of Mali." *The Geographical Journal* 175 (1): 77-81.

Brosché, Johan. 2014. "Masters of War: The Role of Elites in Sudan's Communal Conflicts." Uppsala University.

Brosché, Johan, and Emma Elfversson. 2012. "Communal Conflict, Civil War, and the State: Complexities, Connections, and the Case of Sudan." *African Journal on Conflict Resolution* 12 (1): 33–60.

Chawla, Shalini. 2008. "Trends in United Nations Peacekeeping." *Strategic Analysis* 24 (10): 1895–1909.

Claes, Jonas, Claire Elder, and Susan Stignant. 2014. "Elections and Violent Conflict in Kenya - Making Prevention Stick." *Peaceworks 101*.

Darfur Peace Agreement. 2006.

De Coning, Cedric, John Karlsrud, and Paul Troost. 2015. *Towards More People-Centric Peace Operations: The Need For a Shift in Mandates from the "Extension of State Authority" to "Strengthening State-Society Relations."*

Eifert, Benn, Edward Miguel, and Daniel N. Posner. 2010. "Political Competition and Ethnic Identification in Africa." *American Journal of Political Science* 54 (2): 494-510.

Elfversson, Emma. 2013. *Third Parties, the State, and Communal Conflict Resolution: A Comparative Study of Evidence from Kenya*. Paper presented at the *Thomas Ohlson Memorial Conference*, Uppsala, 18–20 April 2013.

Fearon, James D., and David D. Laitin. 2011. "Sons of the Soil, Migrants, and Civil War." *World Development* 39 (2): 199–211.

Fjelde, Hanne, and Desirée Nilsson. 2012. “Rebels against Rebels: Explaining Violence between Rebel Groups.” *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 56 (4): 604–28.

Hazen, Jennifer M. 2013. “Survival at Stake - Violent Land Conflict in Africa.” In *Small Arms Survey 2013- Everyday Dangers*, edited by Small Arms Survey: 102–31. New York: Cambridge University Press.

High-level Independent Panel on Peace Operations. 2015. *Report of the High-Level Independent Panel on Peace Operations on Uniting Our Strengths for Peace: Politics, Partnership and People.*

Human Security Report Project. 2012. “Non-State Armed Conflict.” *In Human Security Report 2012: Sexual Violence, and War: Beyond the Mainstream Narrative*, edited by Human Security Report Project: 186–230. Vancouver: Human Security Press.

Kahl, Colin H. 2006. *States, Scarcity and Civil Strife in the Developing World.* Princeton: Princeton University Press.

Kalyvas, Stathis N. 2003. “The Ontology of ‘Political Violence ’: Action and Identity in Civil Wars.” *Perspectives on Politics* 1 (3): 475–94.

Kishi, Roudabeh. 2015. “Inter-Communal Conflict in Sudan.” *Armed Conflict Location & Event Data Project*. http://www.crisis.acleddata.com/inter-communal-conflict-in-sudan/.

MONUSCO Civil Affairs Section - Ops East. 2014. *CLA Best Practice Review*.

Nilsson, Claes, and Magdalena Tham Lindell. 2014. “FN:s Stabiliseringsinsats i Mali - Resultat och Utmaningar för MINUSMA.” *Swedish Defence Research Agency (FOI)*.

Nilsson, Claes, and Magdalena Tham Lindell. 2015. “Framåt Sahel - En Insatsanalys av Sveriges Förbandsbidrag till FN i Mali.” *Swedish Defence Research Agency (FOI).*

Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe. 2015. “High Commissioner on National Minorities- Mandate.” *Osce.org*. Accessed November 30. http://www.osce.org/hcnm/107878.

Pettersson, Therese, and Nina von Uexkull. 2013. *What They Are Fighting for: Conflict Issues in African Non-State Armed Conflicts 1989–2011*. Paper prepared for presentation at the *Meeting of the European Network of Conflict Research (EnCoRe)*, Amsterdam, 24–26 April 2013.

United Nations. 2015a. “Current Peacekeeping Operations.” *Un.org*. Accessed October 29. http://www.un.org/en/peacekeeping/operations/current.shtml.

United Nations. 2015b. “Post Cold-War Surge.” *Un.org*. Accessed November 2. http://www.un.org/en/peacekeeping/operations/surge.shtml.

United Nations. 2015c. “MONUSCO Background.” *Un.org*. Accessed October 24. http://www.un.org/en/peacekeeping/missions/monusco/background.shtml.

United Nations. 2015d. “MONUC Facts and Figures.” *Un.org*. Accessed November 17. http://www.un.org/en/peacekeeping/missions/past/monuc/facts.shtml.

United Nations. 2015e. “UNAMID Background.” *Un.org*. Accessed November 16. http://www.un.org/en/peacekeeping/missions/unamid/background.shtml.

United Nations. 2015f. “Peacekeeping Fact Sheet.” *Un.org*. http://www.un.org/en/peacekeeping/resources/statistics/factsheet.shtml.

United Nations. 2015g. “Past Peacekeeping Operations.” *Un.org*. Accessed October 29. http://www.un.org/en/peacekeeping/operations/past.shtml.

United Nations 2015h. “The Responsibility to Protect.” *Un.org*. Accessed December 22. http://www.un.org/en/preventgenocide/adviser/responsibility.shtml.

United Nations General Assembly. 2005. *Resolution 60/180. The Peacebuilding Commission.*

United Nations Peacebuilding Fund. 2015. “The Peacebuilding Fund.” Accessed November 20. http://www.unpbf.org.

Uppsala Conflict Data Program. 2015a. “Definitions.” *Department of Peace and Conflict Research, Uppsala University*. Accessed October 16. http://www.pcr.uu.se/research/ucdp/definitions/.

Uppsala Conflict Data Program. 2015b. “DR Congo (Zaire) - War and Minor Conflict - DR Congo (Zaire): Government.” *Uppsala Conflict Encyclopedia*. Accessed October 20. http://www.ucdp.uu.se/gpdatabase/gpcountry.php?id=38&regionSelect=2-Southern_Africa#.

Uppsala Conflict Data Program. 2015c. “UCDP Non-State Conflict Dataset v. 2.5-2015, 1989–2014.” *Department of Peace and Conflict Studies, Uppsala University.*

Uppsala Conflict Data Program. 2015d. “UCDP One-Sided Violence Dataset v. 1.4-2015, 1989–2014.” *Department of Peace and Conflict Studies, Uppsala University.*

Uppsala Conflict Data Program. 2015e. "Sudan - War and Minor Conflict - Sudan: Government." *Uppsala Conflict Encyclopedia*. http://www.ucdp.uu.se/gpdatabase/gpcountry.php?id=145&regionSelect1-Northern_Africa.

Interviews

Brosché, Johan (PhD). Researcher, Department of Peace and Conflict Research, Uppsala University. Stockholm, 8 October 2015.

Elfversson, Emma. Researcher, Department of Peace and Conflict Research, Uppsala University. Uppsala, 15 October 2015.

Utas, Mats. Senior Lecturer and Researcher, Department of Cultural Anthropology and Ethnology, Uppsala University. Uppsala, 15 October 2015.

Verveijen, Judith. Researcher, Nordic Africa Institute, Uppsala and Conflict Research Group, Ghent University. Interview by telephone, 3 November 2015.

Wallensteen, Peter. Senior Professor of Peace and Conflict Research, Uppsala University; Sr. Research Professor of Peace Studies, University of Notre Dame. Uppsala, 23 October 2015.

This report addresses communal conflict in Africa, and its implications for UN peacekeeping on the continent. It suggests that communal conflict can, in itself, have devastating effects in terms of displacement as well as loss of life and livelihood. In addition, communal conflict can fuel larger and more destructive conflicts on a national or regional level. At the same time, civil war carries with it a number of mechanisms that may create new conflicts on the local level, as well as exacerbate already existing local tensions. This means that there is a high probability that UN peacekeeping missions in Africa will operate in contexts where communal conflicts are prevalent.

In order for UN peacekeeping missions to be more effective in the future, the United Nations could consider implementing reforms that would increase the mobility of the military personnel of its peacekeeping missions; further prioritize intelligence gathering and analysis; facilitate local conflict resolution mechanisms by providing security guarantees and expertise; and investigate the possibility of imposing sanctions on reluctant regimes and elites acting as spoilers.

FOI

ISSN1650-1942

www.foi.se