2 The Evolution of Local-Level UN Peacekeeping

> Though multinationality is meant to be a virtue of UN missions, the diversity yielded grave discrepancies in resources. Whereas Belgian troops turned up well armed and ready to perform the tasks assigned to them, the poorer contingents showed up "bare-assed," in [Romeo] Dallaire's words.
>
> Harvard Professor Samantha Power
> On UN peacekeeping in Rwanda
> September 1, 2001

> Today's UN peacekeeping is not your mother's peacekeeping. We are asking peacekeepers to do more, in more places, and in more complex conflicts than at any time in history. But [UN peacekeeepers] carry the unique legitimacy of having 193 Member States behind them – from the global North and South alike.
>
> Permanent Representative of the United States to the UN Samantha Power
> On the state of UN peacekeeping
> March 9, 2015

On April 8, 1994, ninety United Nations (UN) peacekeepers from Belgium set up camp at the *Ecole Technique Officielle* in Rwanda. They hoisted the UN flag above the school to designate it a safe haven for local Tutsi residents; Hutu militias were rounding up and murdering members of the minority Tutsi ethnic group. On April 11, the peacekeepers withdrew from the school and, ultimately, the country because they lacked the authority to protect civilians with force. In UN terminology, the Security Council had only provided the mission with a limited Chapter VI rather than an expansive Chapter VII mandate.[1] By the end of the next day, Hutu militias had slaughtered more than 2,000 Tutsis who had sought refuge in the school (Gourevitch 1998; Power 2001). UN peacekeepers were tragically unable (or unwilling) to halt communal violence on many occasions in the 1990s. In Rwanda and Bosnia,

[1] The UN Security Council authorizes mandates for peacekeeping operations (PKOs) according to Chapter VI or VII of the UN Charter (see p. 14).

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they stood aside while civilians were massacred. There were also other prominent failures in Somalia and Angola.

The UN has enacted major strategic reforms in its practice of PKOs since then, including a dramatic increase in the deployment of troops with Chapter VII mandates: Twenty-five years after Rwanda, more than 98 percent of all peacekeeping personnel – more than 100,000 individuals – serve in a mission with a Chapter VII mandate. These changes have introduced new possibilities for peacekeepers' engagement with civilian populations. Expanded mandates and broad rules of engagement allow them to use force to defend civilians and respond to communal violence. Samantha Power is right: These are not your mother's peacekeepers.

The reforms have helped broaden the missions assigned to peacekeeping troops. Deploying UN peacekeepers within a country's borders is relatively new; having them actively intervene to prevent disputes from becoming violent is even newer. These changes have also allowed the UN to exploit its greatest strength – a diverse membership base of 193 sovereign states. This has not always been the case. Officials broadly ridiculed peacekeepers from developing countries in the 1990s, echoing the sentiments of Canadian General Romeo Dallaire, who headed the failed peacekeeping mission in Rwanda. Of course, even the Belgian peacekeepers that Power praised in 2001 ultimately failed Rwanda. Yet even at that time, a transformation of PKOs was already underway that would make multinationality the advantage that she rightly stated it was "meant to be."

Drawing on the idea of this multinationality advantage, I argue in this book that deploying UN peacekeepers to fragile settings fundamentally changes the structural incentives facing communities in conflict. Scholars typically locate the source of UN success at the negotiating table: Peacekeepers help armed group leaders create lasting agreements that stabilize conflict settings from the top down. Yet the book's main argument is that UN peacekeepers succeed when local populations perceive them to be relatively impartial enforcers who are unconnected to the country of deployment, the conflict, and the parties to the dispute. Impartial peacekeepers convince all parties that they will punish those who escalate communal disputes regardless of their identity, which increases communities' willingness to cooperate without the fear of violence.

This chapter explains how peacekeeping has changed over time, paying particular attention to how UN PKO mandates have evolved to address communal disputes. I begin with a general overview of the history of UN PKOs. I then briefly review the academic research on international interventions, which offers robust evidence that peacekeepers bolster peace

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and stability after conflict. However, I explain that this scholarship has not sufficiently examined whether (or how) UN PKOs limit communal violence. Communal disputes are a critical source of instability, violence, and disorder around the world, particularly in sub-Saharan Africa. Conflict from such disputes has killed nearly 250,000 people in the region since the turn of the century, more than violence from governments or rebel groups. And the problem is getting worse. Given that climate change, global migration patterns, and the growth of violent extremism will likely exacerbate communal disputes in the coming years, it is vital to understand how UN peacekeepers can help resolve them. I discuss what distinguishes communal violence from other forms of intrastate violence before concluding the chapter with a summary of local-level UN PKOs designed to address communal disputes.

UN PKOs from the Cold War to the Twenty-First Century

UN PKOs over Time

During the Cold War, there were only a few years in which the UN had more than five peacekeeping missions in the field. At the time of writing, it had sixteen. Operations have grown qualitatively as well (Bellamy, Williams and Griffin 2010). UN peacekeeping missions now have larger budgets, more troops, and broader mandates to implement peace processes. In the past, UN peacekeepers were primarily deployed to monitor ceasefires between countries and, on occasion, rebel group disarmaments. Over the past three decades, they have increasingly been deployed to conflict settings to rebuild social trust and restore confidence in local institutions (Hultman, Kathman and Shannon 2020).

Non-UN PKOs have also flourished since the end of the Cold War. Unilateral peace operations led by the United States, the United Kingdom, and France have been especially prominent. Those three states alone have led interventions in Panama, Somalia, Haiti, Comoros, Bosnia, Kosovo, Afghanistan, Sierra Leone, Iraq, Libya, Chad, Central African Republic (CAR), and Mali in the past three decades. US, UK, and French domestic debates on foreign policy frequently revolve around potential future interventions, most recently in Syria. Regional organizations such as the European Union, African Union, North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), and the Economic Community of West African States have also participated in more international PKOs in the post-Cold War era.

Over the past two decades, international engagement in conflict and postconflict settings has deepened even further. The UN has devoted

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Table 2.1 *UN PKOs since 1999*

ACRONYM	LOCATION	START	END	MANDATE
UNMIK	Kosovo (EUROPE)	June 1999	–	Chapter VII
UNAMSIL	Sierra Leone	Oct 1999	Dec 2005	Chapter VII
UNTAET	East Timor (ASIA)	Oct 1999	May 2002	Chapter VII
MONUC	Democratic Republic of the Congo	Nov 1999	June 2010	Chapter VII
UNMEE	Ethiopia and Eritrea	July 2000	July 2008	Chapter VI
UNMISET	East Timor (ASIA)	May 2002	May 2005	Chapter VI
MINUCI	Côte d'Ivoire	May 2003	April 2004	Chapter VI
UNMIL	Liberia	Sep 2003	Mar 2018	Chapter VII
UNOCI	Côte d'Ivoire	April 2004	May 2017	Chapter VII
MINUSTAH	Haiti (NORTH AMERICA)	June 2004	Oct 2017	Chapter VII
ONUB	Burundi	June 2004	Dec 2006	Chapter VII
UNMIS	Sudan	Mar 2005	July 2011	Chapter VII
UNMIT	Timor-Leste (ASIA)	Aug 2006	Dec 2012	Chapter VI
UNAMID	Darfur	July 2007	Dec 2020	Chapter VII
MINURCAT	Central African Republic and Chad	Sep 2007	Dec 2010	Chapter VII
MONUSCO	Democratic Republic of the Congo	July 2010	–	Chapter VII
UNISFA	Abyei	June 2011	–	Chapter VII
UNMISS	South Sudan	July 2011	–	Chapter VII
UNSMIS	Syria (MIDDLE EAST)	April 2012	Aug 2012	Chapter VI
MINUSMA	Mali	April 2013	Dec 2023	Chapter VII
MINUSCA	Central African Republic	April 2014	–	Chapter VII
MINUJUSTH	Haiti (NORTH AMERICA)	Oct 2017	Oct 2019	Chapter VII

Note: All operations in Africa unless labeled otherwise. Shaded rows indicate Africa Chapter VII operations.

an increasing amount of resources to local-level conflicts. It now sends military observers, peacekeeping troops, and police to unstable areas to limit the impact of communal disputes on hard-won national-level peace. Table 2.1 lists the twenty-two PKOs that the UN Security Council has mandated since 1999. The patterns are striking: thirteen of the twenty-two are Chapter VII mandated operations in Africa (shaded gray in the table). There have been only two Chapter VI operations in Africa during this time (Ethiopia/Eritrea and Côte d'Ivoire). No such operation has been approved in sub-Saharan Africa since 2003–2004 (Côte d'Ivoire, an operation that was later granted a Chapter VII mandate).

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Multidimensional PKOs

Although the end of the Cold War emboldened UN leaders to become more interventionist in civil wars, it took a while for the practice of peacekeeping on the ground to catch up. The failures of the early post-Cold War period in Rwanda and elsewhere triggered major strategic reforms in the practice of multidimensional PKOs, which culminated in dramatic doctrinal changes that emphasized local-level peacekeeping. In March 2000, UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan convened a panel led by former Algerian Foreign Minister Lakhdar Brahimi to assess the shortcomings of past UN peace operations. The panel's recommendations, published in August 2000, emphasized the importance of localized patrolling to stop communal disputes from escalating. The Brahimi report ushered in sweeping changes in a UN eager to avoid the disasters of the early 1990s. By the turn of the century, peacebuilding (multidimensional UN PKOs) dominated all other types of peace operations, and local-level operations had become a mandated part of peacebuilding.

To fully appreciate the importance of the qualitative growth in peace operations, it is crucial to understand how such operations differ. The UN distinguishes between four types of UN peace operations in conflict settings: (1) peacemaking, (2) peace enforcement, (3) peacekeeping, and (4) peacebuilding.[2]

Peacemaking and *peace enforcement* refer to diplomatic and military efforts to resolve intrastate conflicts between governments and rebel groups, respectively. Both have the same objective: Ending a conflict that has already begun. They differ primarily in how they achieve these objectives and which international actors are involved. Whereas peacemaking employs civilian diplomats, peace enforcement relies upon military troop contingents. Both are, by definition, top-down strategies: They target government and rebel leaders. The most effective peace operations combine peacemaking and peace enforcement to coerce armed groups to sign a peace agreement. For example, the US-led NATO mission known as Operation Deliberate Force flew over 3,500 sorties against more than 300 Bosnian Serb targets to bring the Bosnian civil war to an end (peace enforcement). NATO and the UN used the aerial assault to maximize Bosnian Muslim and Bosnian Croat leverage against the Bosnian Serbs at the negotiating table (peacemaking) (Holbrooke 1998).

[2] Official UN policy also refers to a strategy of conflict prevention, which entails any efforts conducted by international actors to stop a civil war from breaking out. The targets of conflict prevention are typically elites and leaders of potential armed groups. Conflict prevention typically manifests as diplomatic and political missions to a state in which tensions between the government and members of the opposition are high. These are nonmilitary missions staffed mainly by UN officials or civilian diplomats from regional powers.

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The UN Security Council authorizes *peacekeeping* under Chapter VI of the UN Charter. Peacekeeping refers to the deployment of international civilian and military personnel to maintain peaceful relations between belligerent groups following a civil war, primarily in accordance with a negotiated peace accord (Fortna 2008). Peacekeeping primarily targets elites – government officials, rebel leaders, and military commanders. As part of UN peace operations in Mozambique (ONUMOZ), for instance, UN peacekeepers had to ensure that the leadership of FRELIMO (the government and its armed forces) and RENAMO (the rebel opposition) adhered to the Rome General Peace Accords signed in October 1992. A key challenge for the UN was disarming and demobilizing RENAMO's armed forces. When RENAMO lost the October 1994 presidential and assembly elections and did not violently contest the results, this marked a key success for UN peacekeeping.

The UN Security Council authorizes *peacebuilding* under Chapter VII of the UN Charter. Peacebuilding refers to an international actor's holistic efforts to provide temporary, physical security to state citizens in the aftermath of civil war and to create new (or bolster existing) formal or informal institutions that can peacefully resolve new disputes or conflicts that arise.[3] Peacebuilding includes peacemaking, peace enforcement, peacekeeping, as well as other policies. Peacebuilders also promote the disarmament, demobilization, and reintegration of armed groups, security sector reform, mine removal, human rights, the return of displaced persons, the prosecution of sexual exploitation and abuse, and free and fair elections in order to directly address the root causes of conflict.[4] As these practices suggest, peacebuilding operations target elites as well as locals, and military as well as civilian leaders. Peacebuilders draw upon their full staff of civilian, military, and police personnel to achieve these objectives.

Previous Research on UN Peacekeeping

Peacekeeping plays a central role in our understanding of how civil wars end. For instance, enforcement by peacekeepers makes negotiated settlements in civil wars possible, deters belligerents from returning to violence, and promotes postconflict institution building (Doyle and Sambanis 2006; Fortna 2008). Prior research has highlighted the effectiveness of UN peacekeepers, noting their ability to contain the spread

[3] This definition builds on existing conceptual work by Doyle and Sambanis (2006), Fortna (2008), and Autesserre (2015).

[4] See Theidon (2007), Muggah (2006), Joshi, Quinn and Regan (2015), Karim (2019), Buss et al. (2017), Olsson et al. (2020), Nomikos (2021), and Matanock (2017).

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of violence (Beardsley 2011), limit violence against civilians (Hultman, Kathman and Shannon 2020), and forge power-sharing institutions (Nomikos 2021).

Prominent ideas about the effectiveness of peacekeeping mostly focus on how operations shape the behavior of armed groups and their leaders. However, conflict research has increasingly emphasized how communal disputes between civilians are a major cause of political violence and are thus central to successful postconflict reconstruction (Krause 2018; Carter and Straus 2019). Although communal violence has been central to recent UN PKOs, few empirical studies have examined their ability to resolve such violence. Prominent scholarship on UN peacekeeping has centered predominantly on the top-down effects of missions to address violence by organized armed groups (Autesserre 2010; Walter, Howard and Fortna 2021). Previous studies have shown that UN PKOs are an exceptionally potent tool for ending civil war violence (Doyle and Sambanis 2006; Fortna 2008; Howard 2008). And, though recent work has localized these findings using geocoded measures of peacekeeping deployments, the conceptual focus remains armed groups and their leadership (Ruggeri, Dorussen and Gizelis 2017; Fjelde, Hultman and Nilsson 2019; Hunnicutt and Nomikos 2020). Accounts of efforts to end civil wars focus on *civilian* efforts to reduce communal violence (Smidt 2020*b*); much less is known about how UN peacekeeping troops employing coercive force directly affect intergroup relations at the individual, family, or community levels.[5]

Communal Violence

Conceptualizing Communal Violence

The primary difference between communal violence and other forms of political violence is the absence of the state. The actors involved in communal violence are individuals or social groups with low levels of organizational complexity operating independently of the state. Groups typically organize around a common identity such as race, ethnicity, clan, or tribe (Sundberg, Eck and Kreutz 2012). In sub-Saharan Africa they are often fighting for control over land for agricultural production or cattle herding. The sources of the initial conflicts vary: Traditional land boundaries may come into conflict with formal boundaries; civil wars or mass droughts may have displaced groups of people; and political parties

[5] See Howard (2019*b*) for a discussion of the importance of military deployments relative to civilian mission components.

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or armed groups may seek to ethnicize communal disputes. Communal disputes may arise anywhere within a country, in rural as well as urban settings.[6]

As mentioned in Chapter 1, I use the terms local and communal interchangeably to describe the dynamics between civilian members of a community. I apply the term "local" to describe direct interactions between individuals or groups of individuals. While local is very often used to describe the country as a unit of analysis, I use it exclusively to denote the communities *within* a country. I use "dispute" to describe a disagreement between at least two civilians or civilian-led social groups (e.g., families, clans) residing in the same community. I adopt Kalyvas's conceptual demarcation of civilians as "individuals who are not full-time armed members of a faction, [including] collaborators of various stripes, part-time fighters killed outside armed action, and unarmed prisoners" (Kalyvas 2006, p. 415).

Communal disputes precede civil wars, continue during them, and typically are not over when conflicts end (Krause 2019*b*). Communal disputes involving civilians are conceptually distinct from civil wars instigated by elite-led organizations; during civil wars, existing institutions often lose the capacity or legitimacy to resolve communal disputes. In practice, however, the cleavages in a communal dispute may mirror those of a wider civil war. For example, the salient elite-level cleavage in South Sudan's civil war has been between the Dinka and Nuer ethnic groups. Yet communal disputes between these groups were not limited to the civil war. The country's communal conflicts have also frequently involved members of the Murle ethnic group. And violence between these communities over cattle-herding rights continues despite peace agreements signed in 2015 and 2020.

As the South Sudanese case suggests, even if local cleavages mirror those of a larger conflict, communal disputes are not initially connected to the civil war in the sense that they do not simply constitute civilians fighting on behalf of elites. Even when such disputes escalate and jeopardize a peace agreement, those civilians are not necessarily "spoilers" trying to disrupt the peace negotiations. For example, communal violence in the eastern provinces of the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) has frequently disrupted peace agreements since the formal end of the Second Congo War in 2003 (Autesserre 2010). Yet civilians involved in these clashes are not acting on behalf of elites trying to spoil a particular negotiation.

[6] This definition builds on the conceptual work undertaken by Krause (2018).

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Incentives to Escalate Communal Disputes

Civil wars rip apart the social fabric that connects individuals to one another, making cooperation unlikely. In the aftermath of conflict, individuals, families, or clans enmeshed in a dispute over local issues such as cattle herding, land use, or the value of goods in a marketplace have little reason to trust that others will comply with an agreed-upon resolution. When members of a community are involved in a dispute, they must each decide whether to resolve the disagreement peacefully or escalate it using violent means. For example, they may directly attack the other party or call upon allies associated with their family, clan, tribe, or ethnic group to do so. In conflict settings, community members may request reinforcement from an armed group. The actors involved may use deadly force or nonlethal violence, including sexual violence, torture, kidnapping, and forced displacement. In this way, a local dispute about an ostensibly trivial issue such as land, stolen goods, or market prices, for instance, can draw in groups that operate across a larger area or with more deadly resources. If they escalate in this manner, communal disputes may trigger riots, communal clashes, pogroms, or massacres.

Individuals living in postconflict settings must assess several factors when weighing the costs against the material and social benefits of a cooperative solution to a dispute. These factors are a function of both (1) the probability that a potential adversary will choose to reciprocate cooperation and (2) the risk that a potentially straightforward interaction may escalate into violence. Bargaining theory maintains that individuals should always be able to find a mutually beneficial deal to resolve a dispute because violence is always costly (Fearon 1995; Matanock 2017). That is, since escalating a dispute may harm all parties involved, a set of deals that will produce the same outcome without the violence must exist. Yet for residents of conflict and postconflict settings, resolutions may not be worth the risk. In game theoretic terms, the bargaining space is very small in such fragile settings. In the absence of an enforcement mechanism that punishes escalation, they have no incentive to cooperate. Parties to a dispute will obtain a better deal by escalating than by agreeing to any peaceful bargain or deal. Individuals engaged in a communal dispute know there is no reason for others to resolve a dispute peacefully, and will thus prefer violence.

Just as there are different ways to resolve a dispute violently, there are multiple ways to do so peacefully. In conflict and postconflict settings, formal institutions lack the capacity or legitimacy to resolve disputes. For instance, the 2011 civil war violence that forced hundreds of thousands of members of the Guéré ethnic group living in western Côte d'Ivoire to flee their homes created pervasive communal disputes when these

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individuals tried to return. The government would not (or could not) compel those who had seized Guéré land to return it, which exposed the inability of formal institutions to resolve these disputes. Civilians may be able to settle their own clashes, especially if there is social cohesion within communities or strong informal dispute resolution institutions (Arjona 2016; Kaplan 2017).[7] Traditional leaders are critical in this regard, though even their capacity may be limited. In the Ivorian case, victims complained that the perpetrators simply ignored traditional leaders. The pervasive communal violence that resulted from these institutional failures threatened the country's hard-fought peace. Ultimately, a renewed focus on resolving communal disputes within the UN PKO deployed to Côte d'Ivoire (UNOCI) facilitated a return to peace in the country.

Modern UN PKOs

Civilians have become an increasingly important part of peace operations that are authorized to engage in peacebuilding. UN peace operations now commonly protect civilians and deploy peacekeepers to civilian neighborhoods to prevent them from fighting each other. The rise of transnational extremist organizations following the attacks of September 11, 2001 has increased the potency of local-level conflicts, making the resolution of communal disputes an urgent concern for peacekeepers and states seeking to combat terrorism at home and abroad.

Local-level peacekeeping is now a critical aspect of multidimensional peace operations. Within the broader framework of peace operation strategies, it falls under the umbrella of peacebuilding. However, the UN acknowledges that the stakes of communal disputes in particular are high. In an October 2017 report to the Security Council on the progress of the multidimensional UN peace operations in the CAR, the UN Secretary-General emphasized the danger of local-level disputes to the success of the entire operation:

> Following the end of the political transition more than a year ago, the Central African Republic had seemed to be recovering steadily from its deep crisis. It is tragic that the deterioration in the security situation in recent months, particularly in the south-east, has put the country back into a cycle of violence, despite the efforts of many to prevent the conflict from escalating. Civilians have suffered the brunt of that violence. Entire communities have been torn apart. Armed groups have fragmented and expanded their areas of control. *Intercommunal tensions have risen, fueled by a broad, deliberate campaign of misinformation designed to inflame communities and undermine peace and stability. If this trend*

[7] Krause (2018) further distinguishes between three social processes of communal nonescalation: depolarization of social identities, consolidation of civilian control, and engagement with armed groups.

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continues, there is a serious risk that the situation will worsen, with potentially catastrophic consequences for the people, the country and the subregion.[8]

Local-level peacekeeping differs from other peacebuilding practices in that it is designed to contain the impact of communal disputes by strategically deploying international military and police forces. Local-level peacekeeping forces serve as a substitute for weak state capacity, discouraging individuals from using violence and incentivizing them to cooperate to resolve communal disputes. Because these disputes can easily escalate to destabilize entire countries, local-level peacekeeping has become an integral part of multidimensional peacebuilding. Thus, even though peacekeepers pursue the short-term goal of containing these disputes at the local level, the long-term goal is peace and self-sustaining development at the country level.

Peacekeepers are increasingly deployed in the middle of civil wars with active insurgencies, armed groups that employ terrorist tactics, and rebel organizations that recruit transnationally (Hultman, Kathman and Shannon 2020). Doctrinal changes and expansive mandates have brought PKOs closer than ever before to fully fledged counterinsurgency (COIN) operations (Friis 2010; Howard 2019*a*). The US government defines COIN operations as "comprehensive civilian and military efforts taken to simultaneously defeat and contain insurgency and address its root causes" (Kilcullen, Porter and Burgos 2009, p. 12). The core goal of such operations is political: They seek to reestablish state control over contested territories and populations via a broad mandate that coordinates economic, political, and military activities. As a result, peacekeepers in contemporary missions wield far greater coercive capacity than their predecessors. For instance, the UN peacekeeping missions in the CAR (MINUSCA) and the DRC (MONUSCO) have attack helicopters and artillery units at their disposal to support the infantry they deploy in large numbers.[9]

PKOs typically use these capacities to support the government. For example, MINUSCA launched "peace caravans" in the CAR that "[brought] high-level government officials to areas at risk or affected by violence for direct talks with the population and local officials" in 2017.[10]

[8] S/2017/865, p. 18 (emphasis added).

[9] See Fiston Mahamba, "Militants attack east Congo bases, killing two U.N. peacekeepers," Reuters, October 9, 2017, www.reuters.com/article/congo-violence-idINKBN1CE0SU; United Nations, "Armed group attacks civilians; UN in Central African Republic overnight; peacekeeper killed," May 13, 2017, https://peacekeeping.un.org/en/armed-group-attacks-civilians-un-central-african-republic-overnight-peacekeeper-killed, both accessed June 16, 2021.

[10] S/2017/865, p. 7.

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Missions now rely more heavily on frequent patrolling to gather information from civilians on the whereabouts of armed groups, which enables them to deter civilian victimization (Fjelde, Hultman and Nilsson 2019). Peacekeepers also help restore the rule of law and secure civilian access to public goods and services (Blair 2019, 2020; Karim 2020). For instance, when civilians in the Kidal region of Mali expressed an immediate need for medicine in October 2015, peacekeepers swiftly intervened to provide $32,000 worth of supplies through a local nongovernmental organization as part of UN-branded Quick Impact Projects.[11] Noting the similarities between modern peacekeeping missions and COIN operations also helps explain why armed groups are increasingly deploying complex insurgency tactics against PKOs. Ambushes of peacekeeping patrols, mortar and rocket attacks on UN bases, and improvised explosive device attacks on UN convoy routes have become more commonplace and more fatal over the last decade. These attacks are designed to inhibit peacekeepers' access to civilians, and are perpetrated by rebels who perceive peacekeepers as proxies of the state (Howard 2019*b*) rather than impartial third parties deployed to enforce peace agreements.

The increase in PKOs' coercive capacities has coincided with policy reforms that give peacekeepers the clear legal authority to fire on armed groups: PKOs are generally authorized under Chapter VII of the UN Charter. The expansion of peacekeepers' capacity and legal authority on the ground is reflected in the adoption of new doctrines designed to more adequately protect civilians.[12] Although PKOs have not fully implemented all of these changes, they have generated a substantial shift in the practice of UN peacekeeping over the past decade. For example, in response to the emergence of the M23 Movement in the DRC in 2012, the Security Council authorized the creation of a Force Intervention Brigade (FIB) within MONUSCO to undertake the "peace-enforcement tasks of preventing the expansion of, neutralizing and disarming armed groups."[13] The Brigade supported Congolese armed forces in multiple

[11] See page 2 of the October 2015 report at https://minusma.unmissions.org/en/archives-2015, accessed June 17, 2021.

[12] These doctrinal changes are summarized in the following reports: High-Level Independent Panel on United Nations Peace Operations, "Uniting our Strengths for Peace – Politics, Partnership and People," 2015, www.globalr2p.org/resources/report-of-the-high-level-independent-panel-on-peace-operations-on-uniting-our-strengths-for-peace-politics-partnership-and-people/; UN Department of Peacekeeping, *Improving Security of United Nations Peacekeepers: We need to change the way we are doing business*, 2017; and United Nations, *Handbook: The Protection of Civilians in UN Peacekeeping*, 2020, https://peacekeeping.un.org/sites/default/files/dpo_poc_handbook_final_as_printed.pdf.

[13] United Nations Security Council, "Special Report of the Secretary-General on the Democratic Republic of the Congo and the Great Lakes region," S/2013/119, February 27, 2013, p. 14.

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engagements with M23, deploying infantry, mortars, artillery, and attack helicopters in the clashes.[14] Although the M23 Rebellion ended in late 2013, the Brigade continues to operate. Alongside the FIB's offensive duties, its mission includes "creating an environment conducive to the restoration of State authority."[15]

How UN Peacekeepers Address Communal Disputes

The UN increasingly designs PKOs and their mandates based on the understanding that communal violence is a central part of the conflicts to which they will be deployed. I rely on the UN's own handbook, *The Protection of Civilians in United Nations Peacekeeping*, which details the strategy and tactics employed by peacekeepers in the field, to conceptualize peacekeeping patrols for the purposes of this study. To alleviate concerns that the handbook may not reflect practices on the ground, I also include examples of real-life peacekeeping throughout the discussion drawn from firsthand accounts of PKOs. Although UN peacekeepers rarely use offensive force, this does not mean they are not mandated or allowed to do so. The UN estimates that more than 95 percent of all deployed peacekeepers are mandated to use force to protect civilians, even if this means using force against a party in a local conflict. The handbook identifies three phases in which peacekeepers can take action to protect civilians endangered by communal disputes.

First, peacekeepers seek to prevent spirals that will eventually lead to violence. This phase includes "ensuring a visible presence of UN military and police components, particularly in areas at risk where the state security forces are not present, by: assuring the population of the mission's intent to protect them from physical violence; and establishing community engagement and alert mechanisms" (p. 139). For example, Gladys Ngwepekeum Nkeh, a Cameroonian officer in the UN police force deployed as part of the UN Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in the CAR (MINUSCA), conducted daily patrols in a neighborhood of Bangui, the capital of the Central African Republic. On one such patrol Nkeh discovered that a resident of the neighborhood had raped a 13-year-old girl. In a country with limited security and judicial institutions, such events can ignite a cycle of retaliation and counter-retaliation between families and community members. Nkeh and her UN police contingent quickly apprehended a suspect, helping to bring him to justice swiftly and prevent the situation from escalating.

[14] S/2013/581, p. 4; S/2013/757, p. 8.
[15] S/2013/119, p. 14.

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In a second phase, peacekeepers preempt communal violence once threats have been identified and attacks appear to be imminent. In this phase of action, peacekeepers engage in security operations either unilaterally or jointly with domestic or international authorities. Security operations "can entail credible deterrence actions or engaging in offensive operations to prevent violence against civilians" (p. 141). However, the handbook urges field commanders to consider alternatives to the use of force, where possible, including the rapid deployment of police and military patrols to the at-risk area.

Third, peacekeepers respond whenever a threat has materialized in order to stop the spiral of violence. Appropriate actions include the use of force "in accordance with the military ROE (rules of engagement) and the police DUF (Directives on Detention, Searches and Use of Force), including to apprehend and temporarily detain hostile persons or groups and, where appropriate, hand them over to the national authorities" (p. 141). For instance, in Central Mali, UN patrols have engaged in frequent firefights with Dan Nan Ambassagou, a militia composed of ethnic Dogon targeting Fulani cattle herders in the area.

I focus on peacekeeping efforts as *practices* rather than designated roles. Peacekeepers are distinguished from other international actors by their practices (e.g., enforcers of peace as opposed to aid supervisors, police trainers), not necessarily by their given roles (e.g., military troops, military observers, and police). In addition, practices can overlap between peacekeepers with different official roles; individuals with different roles may therefore undertake the same practices. An individual with the same role can also undertake different practices, or be involved in peacekeeping duties one day, localized peace enforcement the next, and statebuilding the following day. Thus, in my conceptualization, peacekeeping encompasses international military contingents as well as police patrols.

Conclusion

Some observers have suggested that peacekeepers do not actually deal with communal conflicts but instead focus exclusively on armed group violence (Autesserre 2010; 2015; Pouligny 2006). However, the shift in the apparent posture of UN peacekeepers is obvious. Although UN peacekeepers are still sometimes criticized for being too passive, overall, operations are much more aggressive now than they were in the past. For example, during the period of June 1–8, 2020, UN peacekeepers conducted patrols in almost thirty rural communities in Central Mali, establishing temporary operating bases near many of them.

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Over time, UN PKOs have shifted from interstate to intrastate conflicts (i.e., civil wars). Within the set of missions that focuses on the latter, peacekeepers have increasingly emphasized the resolution of communal disputes. Prior research has centered on international actors' efforts to bolster local conflict resolution institutions and the rule of law (Blattman, Hartman and Blair 2014; Blair 2019; Smidt 2020*b*). However, troop patrols that can rapidly deploy from military bases when disputes erupt are arguably even more important (Ruggeri, Dorussen and Gizelis 2017; Howard 2019*b*). These patrols seek to deter community members from resolving disputes violently.

Chapter 3 outlines the theoretical conditions under which these patrols succeed in preventing the violent escalation of communal disputes. The theory asserts that the efficacy of UN PKOs hinges upon whether local populations perceive peacekeepers as impartial enforcers of communal disputes. As the empirical chapters show, this condition does not always hold: UN peacekeepers are sometimes unable to prevent communal violence. However, the contribution of the theory – and the book – is in articulating the circumstances in which UN peacekeepers are most likely to successfully deter individuals or groups from resolving communal disputes violently. As this chapter explains, preventing communal conflict is one of the most important components of modern UN PKOs.

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