

Building Bright Futures or Bringing the Blues?
The Contribution of UN Peacekeeping Operations to Durable Peace

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Since 1948, the United Nations has intervened in conflicts by means of peacekeeping operations. Not only were these operations often different in character, but time and again, the context in which they were deployed also differed. Nonetheless, one can distinguish a 'generational' change of peacekeeping operations throughout history, not in the least because the United Nations does learn from lessons of the past. The purpose of this study is to provide answers to the following three research questions:

1. To *what extent* do UN peacekeeping operations with peace-building aspects contribute to 'durable peace'?

2. How do UN peacekeeping operations with peace-building aspects contribute to 'durable peace'?

3. How can these results be explained with reference to factors for success or failure?

To answer these questions, a methodological framework for the evaluation of peacekeeping operations has been developed. By cutting-up the units of analysis, a more structured and focused comparison can be made. A UN peacekeeping operation with peace-building aspects in this study is defined as a collection of 'policy tools' that may be used to contribute to durable peace. These tools can range from ceasefire monitoring to the organisation of elections. Durable peace is defined as the extent to which violence is absent and the extent to which the 'causes of conflict' are addressed. It is divided into eight variables: negative peace and seven clusters of the causes of conflict - *inter-group relations*; *group demography*; *state weakness*; *state unwillingness and good governance*; *state/government legitimacy*; *unemployment and economic decline*; and *external relations*. These clusters are distilled from the literature and are analysed through the use of conflict indicators.¹

Within the methodological framework for the evaluation of peacekeeping operations, the developments with regard to each variable are reviewed through the periods of ante-presence (five years), and presence and post-presence (again five years); subsequently, an assessment is made of the extent to which and how the policy tools contributed to these developments. The relationship between a policy tool and a variable of durable peace is only reviewed if the policy tool was intended to contribute to durable peace according to the *mandate of the operation*, if it is *expected* to contribute according to the *literature*, or, if *in practice* it contributed - while this was unintended by the mandate or unexpected according to theory. Subsequently, for the purpose of the structured, focused comparison² of the case studies, eight hypotheses are formulated in which it is expected that UN peacekeeping operations with peace-building aspects contribute positively to the eight variables of durable peace.

The cases

Correspondingly, a comparison of the four cases of UN peacekeeping operations with peace-building aspects - the second generation of peacekeeping operations - can be made in a structured, focused manner. These four cases are Cambodia (UNAMIC and UNTAC), Mozambique (ONUMOZ), Rwanda (UNAMIR), and El Salvador (ONUSAL). The four selected cases are the only ones that meet the following criteria: the United Nations was

the lead organisation in the peacekeeping operation; the operation was deployed between 1989 and 1997; the operation was based on a peace agreement; and the operation was deployed in an intrastate conflict.

Cambodia: From 1991 to 1993 the United Nations was present in Cambodia with two operations, UNAMIC and UNTAC. Both operations aimed to implement the Paris Agreements between the Khmer Rouge, the Phnom Penh regime, the royalist FUNCIN-PEC and the republican KPNLF. The Cold War had come to an end, and the major powers supported a solution for the Cambodian conflict that would allow them to distance themselves without loss of face. Unfortunately, the deployment of the operation was sluggish and its implementation too weak according to the Khmer Rouge, which led this party to withdraw from the peace process. The remaining parties decided to continue, which resulted in the more or less full demobilisation and disarmament of the republicans and royalists and the successful organization of elections. Although the royalists won the elections, the Phnom Penh regime managed to retain its position in government through the threat of violence. The resulting coalition government continued to struggle for some years against the Khmer Rouge, but without the support of China, Thailand and the population, this organisation was eventually doomed to waste away. Nowadays, Cambodia is a peaceful, albeit very weak democracy.³

Mozambique: ONUMOZ was deployed from 1992 to 1994. The aim of the operation was to assist in the implementation of the General Peace Agreement, which was signed in Rome by the FRELIMO government and RENAMO. Although the conflict in Mozambique had only partly been related to the Cold War, the peace process was able to ride the wave of its end. More importantly, however, was the fact that in the meantime the apartheid regime in South Africa had come to an end and Pretoria started to cooperate with Frontline States, such as Mozambique. As a consequence, RENAMO lost an important cornerstone of its strength. Nonetheless, even until after their start, the participation of RENAMO in the elections remained uncertain. The demilitarization of the country was eventually nearly complete. Though Mozambique would certainly not become a textbook example of a well-functioning democracy, the struggle between RENAMO and FRELIMO was in the end continued within the political arena.⁴

Rwanda: In 1993 UNAMIR was deployed on the basis of the Arusha Peace Agreement. This agreement between the Government of Rwanda and the RPF was very detailed on many aspects, but did not provide the United Nations with a role on many essential issues such as human rights and elections. In addition to France, no other major power was interested in the developments in Rwanda. This expressed itself in the size and mandate of the operation. At the same time, although President Habyarimana had signed the agreement under heavy pressure from the international community, a large share of his supporters fiercely opposed it. After the civil war between the Hutu and Tutsi flared up again in neighbouring Burundi, relations in Rwanda also polarized sharply. When subsequently President Habyarimana was killed after his plane was shot down, the Hutu elite, out of fear of losing their position and with overwhelming support from the Hutu population, started to perpetrate genocide on the Tutsi. Next, UNAMIR and the rest of the international community stood by and watched from the sidelines while about 800,000 Tutsi were slaughtered, and the genocide was only eventually ended by the RPF when it took over power. In spite of the fact that UNAMIR remained in Rwanda until 1996, with the genocide it lost its aim to implement the Arusha Agreement. Under the authoritarian regime of the RPF, the tensions between the Tutsi and the Hutu were not removed, but merely suppressed. Nonetheless, there is relative negative peace in Rwanda for the time being, albeit at the cost of stability in the Democratic Republic of Congo.⁵

El Salvador. ONUSAL commenced in 1991 before the 1992 Chapultepec Agreement was reached. In addition to the human rights component, the rest of the operation was also

deployed after the signing of this agreement between the Government of El Salvador and the FMLN. Although there was no confidence between the parties for a long period and the implementation of the accord had to be continuously renegotiated, in the end El Salvador was demilitarised. This result was reached in spite of the fact that during the process secret arms caches of the FMLN were discovered and some of the right wing found it difficult to leave the era of the death squads behind. In 1995, ONUSAL was eventually closed after the FMLN had successfully made the transition from rebel organisation to political party, which participated fully in a peaceful and democratic country.⁶

To what extent do UN peacekeeping operations with peace-building aspects contribute to 'durable peace'?

Opposed to the tenor of public opinion, the conclusion arising from a comparison of the above four cases is that UN peacekeeping operations with peace-building aspects do make a positive contribution to durable peace. Firstly, this is the case for the individual operations. In El Salvador, the contribution of ONUSAL to durable peace was positive in many areas. In those areas where it did not contribute, contribution was not intended. The operation made both a little positive and a little negative contribution to the variable of *state weakness*. The negative contribution, the lack of capacity of the police force to combat the crime wave, was temporary, while the positive contribution was more durable. Also in Mozambique the contributions of ONUMOZ to durable peace were positive. It was remarkable in this case that, although unintended, the operation made both a minor positive and a minor negative contribution to the variable of *inter-group relations*. In Cambodia, it was striking that the contribution was positive to the two variables which were not intended to be addressed by UNTAC.

Contribution of peacekeeping operations with peace-building aspects

	Cambodia	Mozambique	Rwanda	EI Salvador
Negative peace	+	++	0	++
Inter-group relations	++b	+/-b	0	++
Group demography	--	++	+ a	+
State weakness	++	+ a	+ a	+/-a
State unwillingness and good governance	+ a	+ a	0	++
State/ government legitimacy	++b	++	Ob	++
Unemployment and economic decline	++	+/-	Ob	Ob
External relations	++	++	+ a	Ob

- + Minor positive contribution
- ++ Positive contribution
- Minor negative contribution
- Negative contribution
- +/- Not clearly negative or positive contribution
- 0 No contribution
- a Contribution was only temporarily
- b Variable was not intended to be addressed

Furthermore, it is noteworthy that the operation made a negative contribution to the variable of *group demography*. Even in the worst case, Rwanda, a minor and only temporary, though far from insufficient, positive contribution was made. The fact that the contribution was only temporary resulted from the genocide and its aftermath. As most critics of UNAMIR argue, the reason the contribution of the operation was only minor and temporary was not because the operation did not have a positive influence, but rather the opposite - more was needed: a larger, stronger, tougher and more comprehensive operation. Not only do UN peacekeeping operations with peace-building aspects contribute positively to the different cases, but it has to be noted that they generally also make a positive contribution to the different variables of durable peace, negative peace and the causes of the conflict. In other words, the eight hypotheses formulated within the context of the methodological framework are confirmed. The extent of the positive contribution to the variables does, however, differ. The contribution proves to be particularly positive with respect to the legitimacy of the state and government. The contribution to negative peace and the improvement of *external relations* is also clearly positive. Operations contribute the least to the addressing of economic causes and demographic problems. Nonetheless, UN peacekeeping operations with peace-building aspects often do not intend to address the economic causes, although, if they are mandated to do so, they generally prove to be relatively successful. The lesser results with regard to the variable of *group demography* result mainly from the fact that if repatriation is not followed by the sufficient reintegration of refugees, it can increase demographic pressure. Furthermore, it is remarkable that the contribution of operations with regard to the addressing of weakness of the state and the stimulation of good governance is sometimes only temporary. Finally, it is rather rare that an operation as a whole contributes negatively to the developments with regard to one of the variables of durable peace. It is, however, more common for individual policy instruments to make negative contributions to the variables of durable peace, but in such cases these contributions are generally compensated for by the positive contributions of other policy instruments.

How do UN peacekeeping operations with peace-building aspects contribute to 'durable peace'?

The different peacekeeping operations with peace-building aspects contribute or intend to contribute through the policy tools implemented in the operations. In the four case studies surveyed, 25 different policy tools were used. Not all of these different policy tools were actually implemented in each operation and if they were, they did not always have the same contribution to durable peace. In the four case studies, a relation or intended relation between an implemented policy tool and a variable of durable peace existed a total of 115 times.

The areas of attention

The policy tools used in UN peacekeeping operations with peace-building aspects are mainly directed at the military, strength of the state and governance issues, and at the directly visible demographic consequences of conflict. They are much less directed at the social, economic and external causes of conflict.

It is remarkable that more than half of all the 25 instruments implemented contributed or intended to contribute to negative peace. Furthermore, many policy tools contribute or intend

to contribute the variables of *state weakness*, and *state unwillingness anti good governance*. Although not many policy instruments contribute or intend to contribute to the variable of *group demography*, those instruments that do - mine clearance, repatriation, and reintegration of refugees -are implemented frequently. Consequently, operations also devote, relatively speaking, a lot of attention to this subject. Only a few instruments contribute or intend to contribute to *inter-group relations*, *state/government legitimacy*, *unemployment and economic decline*, and *external relations*. The positive or negative contributions of the implemented policy tools to these variables are even often not intended.

The proportion of attention and results

The fact that a certain area receives a lot of attention does not mean that they are also the areas where the contribution is most positive. The terrain where UN peacekeeping operations with peace-building aspects score best - die legitimacy of the state and government - receives, if at all, only the attention of a few policy tools. This positive contribution of the operations as a whole is therefore borne by only a small number of policy instruments. This underlines the importance of those instruments: institution building, the organisation of elections and election monitoring. This is also the case with the few instruments that are implemented to improve *external relations*. At the same time, it is remarkable that if one keeps in mind how much attention is provided to positively influence negative peace, the contribution of the policy instruments is actually relatively small. Finally, it is striking that the results in another field which receives much attention, *group-demography*, are actually the least positive.

The most striking instruments

The instruments that have the greatest chance to deliver a positive contribution are not implemented most frequently. The instruments which generally have the greatest chance to make a positive contribution are reintegration of ex-combatants, institution building, verification of foreign forces withdrawal, winning the hearts and minds of the local population, providing pay to the newly formed national army, human rights verification, human rights education, truth commissions, the organisation of elections and election monitoring. With regard to the most successful relations between the implemented policy instruments of UN peacekeeping operations with peace-building aspects and the variables of durable peace, it has to be said that none of the policy tools was implemented in all four cases with a positive result. Only the relationship between election monitoring and the variable of *state/government legitimacy* was, in the three cases where the instrument was implemented, positive. Although also very positive, the relations between the organisation of elections and institution building with *state/government legitimacy*, the verification of foreign forces withdrawal with *external relations*, humanitarian aid with *group demography* and institution building with *negative peace* are less frequent. It is not uncommon for a policy tool to be implemented with the aim of making a positive contribution but fail to do so. The instrument that catches the eye in this respect is civilian police monitoring, which was applied four times with the intention of contributing towards the improvement of good governance, but failed to do so all four times. The contribution of disarmament to the strengthening of the state does not perform much better.

Finally, it is striking that policy instruments sometimes make a negative contribution to the variables of durable peace. Important examples of such negative relations are, if not followed by sufficient reintegration of the ex-combatants and the refugees respectively, the contribution of cantonment and demobilisation on the variables of *state weakness* and *unemployment and economic decline*, and of repatriation on the variable of *group demography*. This only emphasises the need to improve these tools.

How can factors for success and failure explain these results?

Nine factors for success and failure can be distilled from the structured, focused comparison to explain the differences in contribution by UN peacekeeping operations with peace building

aspects. The probability that such an operation makes a positive contribution to durable peace increases if it meets the factors given below.

The parties are willing and sincere. For the conflicting parties to be sincere, they must view the continuation of the conflict as an unwanted possibility and the durable peace provided by the peacekeeping operation as the best alternative. The reason why willing-ness and sincerity are needed is that peacekeeping operations with peace-building aspects are not mandated, prepared, equipped or sized for peace enforcement actions. Moreover, even if one can start building peace, if the parties only hope to restart the conflict once the United Nations leaves, the results cannot be lasting.

The operation is able to provide a sufficient sense of security to the parties. A short term danger is lurking at the start of the operation, because although the parties may view the projected durable peace as the best alternative, the road towards that future will be perceived as, and often is, a bumpy one. The conflict and the history extending far before the conflict have often created a perception amongst the parties that the other party is not to be trusted and that one has to provide for one's own security against the threat of the other. In order to stop this spiral and to enable disarmament and demobilisation, an operation needs to provide alternative sources for a *sense* of security. Parties generally perceive their security to increase if the cease-fire is monitored by a credible, large, well-trained, well-equipped, and robustly mandated force.

The operation has sufficient attention for the causes of the conflict both in depth and in breadth. One can perhaps reach negative peace, but if the causes of conflict persist, it will eventually flare up again. The probability that an operation sufficiently addresses the causes of conflict increases if more of these causes are addressed - the breadth - and if more attention is given to each cause - the depth. If not all causes receive sufficient attention, the chances increase that the conflict resumes and previously addressed causes intensify again, therefore undoing the work that has already been done. In the short term, however, the lack of good governance and legitimacy of the state or government are especially important causes of conflict to be addressed

The operation receives co-operation from important outside actors and parties. In particular, the support of the permanent members of the Security Council is important because they need to accept the necessary resolutions and mandate; in addition, they may need to pressure proxies into compliance. The co-operation from neighbouring countries is essential because these countries often support one of the parties and the implementation of certain policy tools requires their assistance.

The operation is deployed in a timely fashion and at the right time. If the timing is right, a UN peacekeeping operation with peace-building aspects can aid and play an accommodating role. If the conflict is not yet ripe, the role of an operation is much more limited because UN peacekeeping operations with peace-building aspects seem to be less able to ripen conflicts. Furthermore, the interval between the signing of a peace agreement and deployment of the operation should be kept to a minimum in order to maintain the momentum for peace.

The operation has at its disposal competent leadership and personnel and clear command structures. The leadership is especially important with regard to the continuing mediation role during the presence of the operation. Furthermore, competent personnel are the foundation for each policy tool. Moreover, command structures are also important, especially in extreme situations.

The operation is part of a long term approach. In order to contribute sufficiently to negative peace and especially to the addressing of the causes of the conflict, time is needed. Consequently, it should not come as a surprise that many of these processes may be started by a peacekeeping operation, but cannot be finished within the period of its presence and therefore need to be embedded in a wider approach. In the absence of sufficient follow-up, it is likely that the short period of presence is not enough to allow durable changes to take root, and the contribution is likely to be only temporary in such a situation.

Within the operation and externally, the different 'policy instruments' are co-ordinated. The implementation of many policy tools depends on the implementation of other policy tools.

Coordination between them is essential for optimum implementation. There are two main problems in this respect. First, important processes are sometimes rushed in order to be completed in time for another. Second, two complementary policy tools fail to link up with each other, and consequently too much time may elapse between these two linked processes. External co-ordination is indeed another important factor. Again there are two main problems. First, if all these actions are insufficiently co-ordinated with other organisations present in the field, they may thwart each other. Second, lack of co-ordination with the organisation taking over the task after departure of the operation may badly affect the sustainability of the contribution

The operation provides ownership. ‘Ownership’ is important both during and after the presence of the operation. Parties, in the end, need to be enabled to decide for themselves what they deem necessary in order to ensure that the operation does indeed deliver what they require it to. After the departure of the operation, the former conflicting parties and the population must view and feel the contribution to be something they want to maintain.

Concluding remarks

In the end, one can conclude that UN peacekeeping operations with peace-building aspects contribute to durable peace. There remains, however, a lot of room for improvement. Not only can individual policy tools still be improved, but the above factors for success and failure are also frequently ignored. Taking these factors into consideration would enhance the chances for success for UN peacekeeping operations with peace-building aspects and most likely for peacekeeping operations in general.

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1 For a more elaborate description of these clusters of causes of conflict, see: Jair van der lijn (2006), *Walking the Tightrope: Do UN peacekeeping operations actually contribute to durable peace?* Amsterdam; Dutch University Press/Purdue University Press/ Rozenberg Publishers.

2 Alexander L George (1979), "Case studies and theory development: the method of structured, focused comparison", in: Paul G. Lauren ed., *Diplomacy. New approaches in history, theory, and policy*, New York - London, pp. 43-68.

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