United Nations Peacekeeping Operations and the Security Sector Reform: challenges and opportunities

Operações de Manutenção da Paz das Nações Unidas e a Reforma do Setor de Segurança: oportunidades e desafios

Operaciones de Mantenimiento de la Paz de las Naciones Unidas y la Reforma del Sector de Seguridad: desafíos y oportunidades

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ABSTRACT

Post-conflict societies struggle with several interlocking problems that often relate to security and legitimacy. To address these issues, the international community has often turned to Peacekeeping Operations (PKOs) or Security Sector Reform (SSR) programs. In this article, the authors present different aspects of these evolving concepts and what theoretical problems each tool aim to resolve. Furthermore, a symbiosis is found to exist between the ability of PKOs to provide protection in the immediate aftermath of conflict and the long-term benefits that SSR provides through the creation of accountable, efficient and professional security institutions. PKOs contribute to creating necessary preconditions successful SSR implementation, namely a safe environment. However, four additional preconditions must be met: a common vision, external support, local ownership and donor collaboration. Inability to provide these conditions will lead to a sub-optimal implementation and a security sector reform failing to deliver legitimate and professional institutions.

Keywords: United Nations. Peacekeeping operations. Security sector reform. Conflict resolution. Peacebuilding.

RESUMO

Sociedades pós-conflito enfrentam vários problemas interligados que geralmente se relacionam à segurança e à legitimidade. Para resolvê-los, a comunidade internacional frequentemente recorre às Operações de Manutenção da Paz (PKOs – acrônimo em inglês) ou a programas de Reforma do Setor de Segurança (SSR). Neste artigo, os autores apresentam diferentes aspectos desses conceitos em evolução e os problemas teóricos que cada ferramenta pretende resolver. Além disso, demonstram a simbiose existente entre a capacidade das PKOs de oferecer proteção após o conflito e os benefícios a longo prazo que a SSR fornece com a criação de instituições de segurança responsáveis, eficientes e profissionais. As PKOs

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contribuem para a criação de condições prévias necessárias à implementação bem-sucedida da SSR, ou seja, um ambiente seguro. Entretanto, quatro pré-condições adicionais devem ser atendidas: uma visão comum, apoio externo, ownership local e colaboração de doadores. A incapacidade de fornecer essas condições levará a uma implementação incompleta e uma reforma do setor de segurança que não conta com instituições profissionais e legítimas.

Palavras-chave: Nações Unidas. Operações de manutenção da paz. Reforma do setor de segurança. Resolução de conflito. Construção da paz.

RESUMEN

Las sociedades post-conflicto se enfrentan a una serie de problemas entrelazados que en general se relacionan a la seguridad y la legitimidad. Para abordar estos problemas, la comunidad internacional recurre a las Operaciones de Mantenimiento de la Paz (PKO - acrónimo en inglés) o a programas de Reforma del Sector de Seguridad (SSR). En este artículo, los autores presentan diferentes aspectos de estos conceptos en evolución y los problemas teóricos que cada uno pretende resolver. Además, demuestran la simbiosis entre la capacidad de las PKO de proporcionar protección tras el conflicto y los beneficios a largo plazo que brinda la SRR a través de la creación de instituciones de seguridad responsables, eficientes y profesionales. Las PKO contribuyen con la creación de condiciones necesarias a la implementación exitosa de SSR, es decir, un entorno seguro. Sin embargo, se deben cumplir cuatro condiciones previas adicionales: una visión común, apoyo externo, ownership local y colaboración de donantes. La incapacidad de proporcionar estas condiciones conducirá a una implementación incompleta y una falla de la reforma del sector de seguridad en la entrega de instituciones legítimas y profesionales.

Palabras clave: Naciones Unidas. Operaciones de mantenimiento de la paz. Reforma del sector de seguridad. Resolución de conflictos. Construcción de la paz.

INTRODUCTION

Reaching a ceasefire or a peace agreement is by no means the end of a comprehensive peace process. Many argue that the following step is to make sure that violence is reduced to acceptable levels, and only then can different actors invest in long-term peacebuilding efforts (UNITED NATIOS, 2008b). However, post-conflict environments, especially in the aftermath of an internal armed conflict, are usually characterized by ongoing violence and the state's inability to maintain public order and to provide security for the whole population (UNITED NATIONS, 2008b). Moreover, local and national security sector institutions are oftentimes characterized by excessive military spending, lack of professionalism, poor oversight, inefficient allocation of resources, politicization, ethnicization, and corruption (BRZOSKA, 2006).

Despite a series of concerns and caveats voiced by researchers and practitioners, Security Sector Reform (SSR) remains an essential element in maintaining a safe and secure environment in the long term. Although SSR programmes can be implemented independently by national governments or via bilateral agreements, the international community has increasingly taken a support role in this context (BRZOSKA, 2006). Perhaps more significantly, since 2008 the United Nations (UN), through its multidimensional peacekeeping operations (PKOs) and special political missions, has actively engaged in security sector reform (UNITED NATIONS, 2008a, 2013d, 2014b). As of 2018, five UN peacekeeping operations and four special political missions have a direct mandate to facilitate an ongoing SSR programme (UNITED NATIONS, 2018). Arguably, however, when compared to other forms of UN peace operations, it is the multidimensional missions which have the most comprehensive set of tools to engage in security sector reform.

The aim of this paper is to explain how SSR functions as a conflict resolution instrument and then contrast it with the role of United Nations peacekeeping operations in its support. Focusing only on multidimensional peacekeeping operations, this paper analyses how they can support security sector reform efforts, as well as the limitations to this role. This paper proceeds as follows: the first section outlines how security sector reform can facilitate the establishment of durable peace and long-term stability, as well as it elaborates on the ideal conditions for success and the caveats of SSR; the second section describes common characteristics of multidimensional peacekeeping operations that relate to security sector reform; the third section analyses the possibilities and limitations of SSR in peacekeeping contexts.

1 SECURITY SECTOR REFORM

A broad but also broadly agreed-upon definition of SSR, as presented in the report of the UN Secretary General on the role the United Nations in supporting security sector reform, describes it as "a process of assessment, review and implementation as well as monitoring and evaluation led by national authorities that has as its goal the enhancement of effective and accountable security for the State and its peoples without

discrimination and with full respect for human rights and the rule of law" (UNITED NATIONS, 2008a).

The development of a common definition of security sector reform has not been without competing and conflicting opinions. In the years since it was first popularised, the concept of SSR has been widened. What was originally a thrust for making police and military forces capable of providing physical security to civilians and institutions has developed into a society-wide attempt to establish good governance in the creation and implementation of security policy (BRZOSKA, 2006).

Authors such as Schnabel and Born (2011) champion the idea of the wider definition, including the establishment of media and civil society organisations capable of monitoring the activities of security forces, democratic reforms and the application of a gender filter when designing reforms. Schnabel and Born write that "not every activity that can be considered a useful component of an overall SSR strategy does by itself constitute SSR. SSR is a comprehensive undertaking that involves a variety of security institutions, oversight bodies and domestic as well as international stakeholders." (2011, p.29).

A comprehensive approach greatly increases the number of actors and actions involved in the process. In practice however, SSR processes usually focus on military and police forces (SCHNABEL AND BORN, 2011), the actors and institutions subject to reform (figure 1) include core security actors, management and oversight bodies, justice and rule of law institutions, and non-statutory security forces (OECD, 2009).

FIGURE 1 - SECURITY SECTOR REFORM ACTORS

Core security actors	Justice and law enforcement institutions	Security management and oversight bodies	Non-statutory security forces
▪ Defence forces ▪ Police services ▪ Intelligence services ▪ Coast guard ▪ Border guard ▪ Customs services ▪ Police and military reserve ▪ Paramilitary units ▪ Militias	▪ Judiciary ▪ Ministry of Justice ▪ Criminal investigation and prosecutorial services ▪ Human rights commissions and ombudspersons ▪ Customary and traditional justice systems	▪ Liberation and guerilla armies ▪ Private bodyguard and security companies ▪ Organized criminal elements ▪ Political party militias	▪ The executive and ministries of Defence, Interior and Foreign Affairs ▪ National Security Coordination and Advisory Bodies ▪ The Legislative Parliament and its Committees ▪ Traditional and customary authorities ▪ Financial management bodies (i.e., Ministry of Finance) ▪ Civilian Review Boards, Complaints Commissions

SOURCE: Adapted from Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (2009); REES (2008)

Especially in the aftermath of intrastate conflicts, security sector reform can play a significant role in establishing durable peace. As argued by Wulf (2004), SSR addresses different political, economic, social and institutional challenges and facilitates wider peacebuilding efforts. Ideally, after a comprehensive reform in the security sector,

security institutions are controlled and overseen by civilian and democratic institutions, including civil society organisations; security sector resources are managed and allocated accordingly; the population is protected without discrimination; and security institutions and actors are professional and efficient.

In this sense, the main objectives of SSR can be summarized as the development of an effective, affordable and efficient security sector controlled by democratic and civilian institutions (HÄNGGI; SCHERRER, 2008). Operationally, SSR covers different types of activities, ranging from comprehensive reviews, assessments, and planning; the actually restructuring and reforming of national armed forces, police and other law enforcement agencies, as well as the judicial and corrections systems; facilitating and strengthening civilian management and democratic oversight; post-conflict-related tasks, such as disarmament of armed groups, demobilisation of combatants, reintegration of ex-combatants, control of arms, and mine action; to cross-cutting concerns, such as gender issues and child protection (HÄNGGI; SCHERRER, 2008).

1.1 CONFLICT RESOLUTION MECHANISM

The literature on security sector reform, however, tends to focus on its more practical and technical implications and policy recommendations. Scholars and experts, thus, usually do not relate SSR to broader theoretical challenges facing durable peace, such as the security dilemma, commitment problems and information asymmetry (BROZSKA, 2006; DONAIS, 2009; ENGELL; HALDÉN, 2009; HÄNGGI; SCHERRER, 2008; REES, 2008; SCHNABEL; BORN, 2011; SCHNABEL; EHRART, 2005; SEDRA, 2010; WULF, 2004). Nonetheless, the very objectives and principles of security sector reform are conducive to lasting peace and conflict prevention in many ways.

First, by allowing for an efficient and professional security sector, SSR manages to establish a safe and secure environment in the long-term. In a society protected by lawful security forces, potential spoilers are kept at bay and don't have enough leverage to gather support from the local population. As noted in the World Bank study *Voices of the Poor*, physical security is the core concern of poor populations around the world (NARAYANN et al., 2010). Likewise, only in a stable environment are foreign institutions able to invest in addressing the root causes of previous and future conflicts, such as socioeconomic and gender inequality, educational and health infrastructure, among others (UNITED NATIONS, 2008b; OECD, 2009).

Moreover, building on main theorists of civil-military relations (HUNTINGTON, 1981; JANOWITZ, 2017), we argue that the democratic control and good governance in the security sector help address the security dilemma by managing different perceptions of threat by security actors and institutions. For example, if decisions on the roles, responsibilities and limits of the security sector–such as military expenditure, the deployment of troops, and the role of intelligence bodies, just to name a few–are subject to the scrutiny of and held accountable to democratic institutions, it is less likely that military threats are overestimated and that a government decides on preventive

wars. Schnabel and Ehrhart (2005) slightly touch upon this topic when commenting on the security dilemma inflamed by private security companies and the arms industry. In addition, transparency and accountability facilitate information-sharing and shorten the information asymmetry gap between government institutions and potential spoilers. It is unlikely, for instance, that rebel groups will take up arms against a well trained and equipped military, or that criminals will engage in direct confrontation with a professional police force.

Finally, some authors briefly comment on the inclusion of security sector reform in recent peace agreements (HÄNGGI; SCHERRER, 2008; OECD, 2009; SEDRA 2010; SCHNABEL; BORN, 2011; UNITED NATIONS, 2008a). Even though literature on SSR fails to explain the theoretical relation between references to security sector reform and the success of peace agreements, practitioners and experts often agree that SSR provisions should be included in peace accords, mostly in order to facilitate the implementation of the reform (ASSN 2009; HÄNGGI; SCHERRER, 2008), or as a "point of entry" for the international community to engage in security sector reform (OECD, 2009; SCHNABEL; BORN, 2011). We argue, in addition, that SSR provisions may work as an effective tool to address commitment problems, especially if linked to disarmament, demobilization and reintegration provisions and rebel-military integration (GLASSMYER; SAMBANIS, 2008). SSR can help resolve seemingly incompatible needs of the state and rebel factions in the post-conflict environment through rebel-military integration strategies. By integrating former combatants into the formal military, the state establishes a monopoly on the legitimate use of violence, while the rebels can retain enough fighting capability to deter the state from reneging on a peace agreement once disarmament processes have been completed (GLASSMYER; SAMBANIS, 2008). Parties to the conflict may find confidence in the peace agreement if they believe that, through security sector reform, they will be protected by lawful security institutions in the future.

1.2 CONDITIONS FOR SUCCESS

A successful security sector reform is dependent on several conditions. For the sake of simplification, we have aggregated some of the conditions suggested by different authors (DONAIS, 2009; OECD, 2009; SCHNABEL; BORN, 2011; UNITED NATIONS, 2008a) into five main conditions which define the success or failure of security sector reform.

First, there must be a *safe environment*, in which violence is contained and where former parties to the conflict have been disarmed and opted for peaceful means of conflict resolution. Security sector institutions and actors face significant challenges to take part in meaningful reform if they are still engaged in high-intensity conflict. In these contexts, reforms are usually focused on strengthening the efficiency and effectivity of core security actors, while more independence is given to military and police actors in contradiction to civilian control and oversight (SCHNABEL; BORN, 2011). Likewise,

external peacebuilding support is very limited during conflict. Donors, as well as UN agencies and non-governmental organisations, are more likely to invest their resources in long-term projects in already relatively stable environments.

Second, all relevant stakeholders should share a *common vision* on the goals, priorities and responsibilities in security sector reform. This shared understanding should bring former conflicting parties and different actors together, and thus translate the common vision into shared responsibility and joint action (SCHNABEL; BORN, 2011). Moreover, many scholars agree that getting to a shared vision is facilitated if security sector reform provisions are included in peace treaties (HÄNGGI; SCHERRER, 2008; SCHNABEL; BORN, 2011; SEDRA, 2010).

Third, *external support* must be assured and adequate, in terms of financial, technical and political commitments. Security sector reform is most needed in post-conflict environments, when states are more likely to need external support in various ways. External support should be guaranteed throughout the often lengthy and struggling SSR process, even in the face of setbacks and failures along the way (SCHNABEL; BORN, 2011).

Fourth, *local ownership* must be at the core of every security sector reform. Local ownership not only works as a disciplinary mechanism, but also as a tool to overcome discrimination and facilitate reconciliation (DONAIS, 2009). In addition, there should be effective and inclusive civil society participation throughout the process, taking into consideration cross-cutting issues such as child protection and gender concerns. This condition also implies that local institutions are ready to assume their responsibilities and there is political will to carry on the necessary changes.

Finally, effective *coordination* among different actors is crucial for SSR success. In such a complex environment, where various organisations have different mandates, structures, decision-making processes, timeframes, perspectives, and organisational cultures–even though they share a common strategic view–, getting all the relevant actors engaged in security sector reform to work together is not an easy task. However, as Schnabel and Born (2011) point out, unless a comprehensive and integrated reform is carried out, SSR processes are likely to fail in creating efficient and accountable security institutions.

Although these conditions are never to be found in the contexts where security sector reform is needed, external intervention may facilitate the establishment of an environment more conducive to SSR.

1.3 CAVEATS AND LIMITATIONS

Security sector reform is evidently recognised as a core peacebuilding requirement. The all-encompassing nature of the concept, however, could arguably be both the reason for its popularity and criticism. When moving from a theoretical concept to a reform programme that aims to address issues in diverse societal institutions, from the security sector to the judiciary system, from human rights to transparency and

governance, implementation becomes increasingly complex. Sequencing becomes difficult as problems interlock, and progress in one area could possibly be prohibited by lack of progress in another.

If the armed forces are modernised before necessary steps are taken to ensure democratic control over the military, autocratic or authoritarian leaders could strengthen their hold on political power (SCHNABEL; BORN, 2011). The capacity-building ambitions of SSR can thus counteract the democratisation process. In a similar vein, increased efficiency within the police force loses its value if a lagging judicial reform prevents sentencing of criminals (SCHNABEL; BORN, 2011).

Furthermore, each reform programme transpires in a unique combination of governmental traditions, judiciary systems and experiences of conflict, making a centrally agreed-upon blueprint for implementation hard to reach. Despite implementing partners being keen on adapting to local circumstances, the Western ideal of a centralised state lies in the heart of the SSR concept. Monopoly on legitimate use of violence, separation of powers, and the responsibility of the state to uphold human rights are all different aspects vital to the ideal of the liberal state, but whose applicability, critics argue, is dependent on the political-historical experiences of a society (BOEGE et al., 2009; HUGHES, 2010).

With a majority of resources funding SSR programmes being provided by OECD countries, it should come as no surprise that the field is built upon experiences shared by these donor countries. The dependency on external funding and expertise risks countering the ambitions to provide a context sensitive SSR, an issue that could be further worsened by unequal power relations and influence on reform programming and management. Yet, conducting a comprehensive overhaul of a country's security sector without external support is likely too resource demanding for a post-conflict state to pursue.

If a reform programme manages to tap into pre-existing justice systems and incorporate them, the newly reform security sector could likely benefit from the legitimacy enjoyed by these informal institutions while at the same time decreasing the dependency on external actors. Hughes (2010) provides several examples of actors within a security or justice system that do not fit into a classical, Weberian-state model, but who are mandated with certain aspects of justice provision.

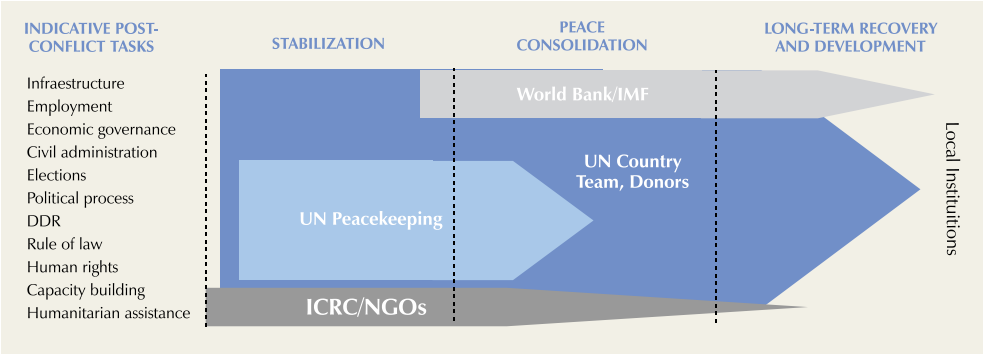
Even though much of the decision-making power and funding for UN peace operations lies in the hands of Western powers, they still hold a high level of international legitimacy and impartiality. Likewise, peacekeepers are tasked to interact with formal and informal security sector actors. In the next sessions, we argue that UN missions may play an important role in bridging the theory and practice of a broad SSR concept.

2 UNITED NATIONS MULTIDIMENSIONAL PEACEKEEPING OPERATIONS

Since the early 2000s, when it officially recognized the need to actively engage in security sector reform (UNITED NATIONS, 2008b), the United Nations has made significant improvements in this area. In 2007, the UN Secretary-General established the Inter-Agency Security Sector Reform Task Force (IASSRTF), co-chaired by the Department of Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO) and the United Nations Development Programme. IASSRTF has operational and policy mandates towards enhancing overall UN capacity to support security sector reform processes. Under the DPKO, the Security Sector Reform Unit acts as the chair of the IASSRTF and is the focal point on SSR for the United Nations system (UNITED NATIONS, 2018).

Among United Nations peace operations–and in contrast with observer or traditional peacekeeping, peace enforcement and special political missions–, multidimensional peacekeeping operations[1] have unique mandates, structures and capabilities. Particularly, their core functions (figure 2) are to create a secure and stable environment, facilitate the political process, and provide a framework for country-level coordination with other actors (UNITED NATIONS, 2008b). In addition, multidimensional peacekeeping operations are comprised of three main components, namely a usually "robust" military component, authorized to use the force in protection of the mandate; a police component, consisted of individual police officers and formed police units; and civilian components dedicated to political, humanitarian and early peacebuilding tasks, as well as logistical and administrative duties (UNITED NATIONS, 2008a). Accordingly, multidimensional peacekeeping operations are positively associated with peacebuilding success (DOYLE; SAMBANIS, 2000; 2006).

FIGURE 2 - THE CORE BUSINESS OF UNITED NATIONS MULTIDIMENSIONAL PEACEKEEPING



SOURCE: United Nations (2008b, p.23)

Although the mandate, structure and capabilities of each peacekeeping operation are mission-tailored, some common features can be identified as relevant

[1] All concepts should be understood in this paper as they are defined by the United Nations Department of Peacekeeping Operations and Department of Field Support (see, for example, UNITED NATIONS, 2008b).

to supporting security sector reform. First, recent operations have been directly mandated to support SSR in UN Security Council resolutions. Among the 15 ongoing peacekeeping operations, five[2] are directly tasked to support SSR and three[3] carry out SSR-related tasks, even though there is no direct reference in their mandates (UNITED NATIONS, 1991; 2006; 2007; 2011b; 2013a; 2013b; 2014a; 2017d). Except for the United Nations-African Union Hybrid Operation in Darfur (UNAMID)[4], the remaining six peacekeeping operations[5] mostly deal with interstate disputes and do not engage in early peacebuilding tasks, i.e. observer or traditional peacekeeping operations (UNITED NATIONS, 1948a; 1948b; 1964; 1974; 1991; 2007; 2011a).

Second, multidimensional peacekeeping operations usually have a "robust" military component mandated to create a secure and stable environment. Often referring to Chapter VII of the UN Charter, those missions are authorized to use "all necessary means" to implement the mandate, including the use of deadly force (UNITED NATIONS, 2008b, p.34). Although the operational and tactical capabilities of operations may also vary significantly depending on the threats on the ground, robust peacekeeping operations act under permissive rules of engagement and are equipped with muscular military means, enabling them to effectively engage in security operations and deal with spoilers to the peace process (UNITED NATIONS, 2008b).

Third, the police component (commonly referred to as "United Nations Police", or UNPOL) of multidimensional peacekeeping operations is usually comprised of formed police units and individual police officers. While the former is tasked to protect United Nations personnel and property, contribute to the protection of civilians, and support police operations (UNITED NATIONS, 2016); the latter is oftentimes directly engaged in monitoring, training, mentoring and advising local security forces (UNITED NATIONS, 2015; 2017b). It is worth noting, though, that the scope of UNPOL is not limited to the local police forces, but encompasses a broader range of security actors, such as judiciary police, correction officers, or customs and border control authorities.

Fourth, the overall responsibility for managing and coordinating the support to security sector reform falls under the mission's civilian component. Oftentimes there is a dedicated SSR section responsible to deal with the subject, in addition to senior advisors appointed to key mission leadership positions. In other words, the civilian component

[2] United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in the Central African Republic (MINUSCA); United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali (MINUSMA); United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUSCO); United Nations Mission in the Republic of South Sudan (UNMISS); United Nations Mission in Liberia (UNMIL).

[3] United Nations Mission for Justice Support in Haiti (MINUJUSTH); United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL); United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK).

[4] Although UNAMID is considered a multidimensional peacekeeping operation, it has a clear and more limited mandate addressing immediate challenges, such as the protection of civilians, supporting humanitarian assistance and facilitating the political process in Darfur (UNITED NATIONS, 2007).

[5] United Nations Truce Support Organization (UNTSO); United Nations Military Observer Group in India and Pakistan (UNMOGIP); United Nations Peacekeeping Force in Cyprus (UNFICYP); United Nations Mission for the Referendum in Western Sahara (MINURSO); United Nations Disengagement Observer Force (UNDOF); United Nations Interim Security Force for Abyei (UNISFA).

is responsible to manage and coordinate the efforts carried out by the police and the military components regarding security sector reform within the mission and vis-à-vis local and external partners (UNITED NATIONS, 2017a).

Fifth, peacekeeping operations are a huge pool of human resources. Missions gather experts in several areas related to security sector reform, from military and police officers specialized in, for instance, management and maintenance of military assets, small arms control, and ammunition and explosives; to civilian experts on human rights, sexual and gender-based violence, child protection, just to name a few. Furthermore, these men and women collectively represent the accumulated experience from dozens of different countries, backgrounds and cultures. Such a rich diversity, while acknowledging the potential communication and coordination problems, is a valuable source of problem-solving and innovative approaches (UNITED NATIONS, 2017a).

Sixth, multidimensional peacekeeping operations are usually headed by a Special Representative of the Secretary-General (SRSG), which is a civilian position appointed by and directly subordinated to the United Nations Secretary-General, and thus represents the link between strategic and operational levels. The SRSG is also responsible for the activities of the entire UN system on the ground and for personally leading the political process. In integrated missions, one Deputy Special Representative of the Secretary-General (DSRSG) also takes up the roles of Resident Coordinator (RC) and Humanitarian Coordinator (HC) (UNITED NATIONS, 2008b). In short, the Resident Coordinator is the senior UN official in the country after the SRSG and is responsible to coordinate the long-term development activities undertaken by all the UN Agencies, Funds and Programmes in the country. The Humanitarian Coordinator is mainly responsible for coordinating the efforts of the humanitarian community, in preparation for, response of or recovery from humanitarian emergencies. The tripled-hatted DSRSG/RC/HC is, therefore, the very link between stabilisation, development, and humanitarian assistance, i.e. the peacekeeping operation, the UN Agencies, Funds and Programmes, and the humanitarian community (UNITED NATIONS, 2009a).

Finally, and building on the previous features, peacekeeping operations usually hold high levels of legitimacy. To begin with, peacekeeping operations are authorized and mandated by the United Nations Security Council, representing the concerns on international peace and security of all UN Member States. Peacekeeping requires the consent of the host country and the main parties to the conflict. Moreover, the missions are staffed by international civilian staff and are supported by Member States, which contribute with military and police personnel, creating a legitimate and impartial international task force. In practice, however, these very features may backfire. The dependence on the Security Council may at times fuel the perception of reliance on the permanent members; overrepresentation of specific nationalities in number of troops or the appointment of senior leadership positions (such as the heads of the military and police components) may be controversial and subject to internal political debate; and consent may not be consistently granted in local and sub-national levels, or by specific actors.

Next, the section describes how these unique features of multidimensional peacekeeping operations may support security sector reform in facilitating its conditions for success.

3 SUPPORTING SECURITY SECTOR REFORM

According to United Nations official guidelines, peace operations assist national authorities to: facilitate national dialogue; develop national security policies, strategies and plans; strengthen oversight, management and coordination capacities; articulate security sector legislation; mobilise resources; harmonise international support; training and build institutional capacity; monitor and evaluate programmes and results; undertake public expenditure reviews; undertake reforms of specific security sector components, such as defence, policing, border security and management (UNITED NATIONS, 2013d). By matching the main features of multidimensional peacekeeping operations with the necessary conditions for the success of security sector reform, we try to explain not what PKOs do to support SSR, but how peacekeeping does it.

Despite a lot of criticism towards UN peacekeeping operations, many authors agree that they have a significant impact in providing a *safe environment* in the aftermath of violent conflicts. This body of literature has shown that the presence of peacekeepers makes peace more likely to last (DOYLE; SAMBANIS, 2006; FORTNA, 2008; GILLIGAN; SERGENTI, 2008), decreases the intensity of fighting (HULTMAN; KATHMAN; SHANNON, 2014), and is effective in protecting civilians (HULTMAN, KATHMAN; SHANNON, 2013). Peacekeepers address commitment problems between conflicting parties, ensuring compliance with the peace agreement and preventing accidental violations from reigniting the conflict; peacekeeping operations also increase the costs of opportunistic spoilers to inflict violence by providing protection to vulnerable populations (WALTER, 1997; FORTNA, 2008).

Others argue, however, that peacekeeping often fails to achieve lasting peace. The intervention of peacekeepers may simply artificially freeze the conflict and deepen commitment problems, information asymmetry, and security dilemma. Without a clear end to the war and no threat of defeat or loss, warring parties have no incentives to negotiate nor implement a peace agreement; this uncertainty leads parties to rearm and reorganize in preparation for future war (LUTTWAK, 1999; SMITH; STAM, 2003; WERNER; YUEN, 2005). In the end, peacekeeping may reinforce previous rivalries that sparked the conflict in the first place (GREIG; DIEHL, 2005). Drawing on blatant failures of the United Nations, such as in Rwanda and Somalia, many authors argue that peacekeeping operations are in practice underfunded, tied by bureaucratic procedures, poorly equipped and manned, or simply asked to do too much (HOWE, 1995; CLARKE; HERBST, 1996; JETT, 2001; JONES, 2001; DALLAIRE, 2004).

As it relates to security sector reform, most of the criticism on the effectiveness of peacekeeping operations draws on interstate conflicts (LUTTWAK, 1999; SMITH; STAM, 2003; GREIG; DIEHL, 2005; WERNER; YUEN, 2005), thus not being relevant

for the context in which SSR usually takes place. Moreover, the criticism on the effectiveness and efficiency of operations often refer to the lack of a clear mandate, rules of engagement and resources to protect civilians (particularly DALLAIRE, 2004 and Jones, 2001). This has significantly changed and evolved since the early 2000s with the concept of "robust" peacekeeping (UNITED NATIONS, 2008b). MONUSCO, MINUSMA and MINUSCA are clear examples of recent developments in robust mandates, rules of engagement and resources in order to protect civilians. While these missions showcase that improvements in regulations and funding, it does not fully eradicate issues relating to the protection of civilians.

There are numerous criticisms in the SSR and PKO literature regarding the lack of a shared understanding on the role of the United Nations in support of security sector reform (HÄNGGI; SCHERRER, 2008; REES, 2008). However, since 2008, the UN, through the Inter-Agency Security Sector Reform Task Force, has developed a series of guidelines and policies towards establishing a *common vision* of the security sector reform (UNITED NATIONS, 2008a; 2013d; 2014b; 2015; 2016b; 2017b). The so-called "delivering as one" approach calls upon all relevant UN system actors to support the security sector reform and implement the strategic guidelines (UNITED NATIONS, 2018). On the ground, the dedicated SSR personnel assures a common understanding of the goals, priorities and responsibilities within the mission and when engaging with external partners.

External support is vital to security sector reform. Donor countries can not only mobilise resources to finance reforms and the modernisation of the security sector, but also provide expertise on how accountability and transparency can be established. Peacekeeping operations can ensure the creation of a secure and stable environment, so that other actors can engage in security sector reform. Support to SSR is also provided directly by the mission, through its pool of military, police and civilian experts. Even though this contribution may seem minimal, it paves the way for future engagement of UN specialized agencies, as well as governmental and non-governmental organisations. Likewise, minimal but consistent results in the first phases of the mission–such as training a class of new police officers–may work as a showcase for donor support in the longer run.

The political leverage held by the SRSG helps guarantee international awareness and support for the ongoing SSR process. Moreover, it facilitates bilateral agreements, especially in those areas requiring specific expertise (such as forensics and magistrate) or long-term engagement. At least some of the time, this is a result of countries acting to further their own interests (SCHNABEL; BORN, 2011). The negative effects are not limited to decreased efficiency or an unbalanced implementation, but could also be an obstacle to local ownership. However, with donors evidently exercising influence on how SSR is implemented, whether or not the will of the people lends full legitimacy to the reforms can be questioned. American funds channelled to strengthen the security forces and border control of Haiti, in order to stem the flow of illegal drugs and migrants into the US, provides an example of such behaviour (HEINE; THOMPSON, 2011). The

use of bilateral, conditioned agreements to ensure external support thus risks having a negative effect on the democratic ambitions of SSR.

External actors thus have a key role to play in both the successful implementation of SSR and in creating a sense of local ownership. Difficulties arise, however, as donors rarely manage to coordinate their efforts (BRZOSKA, 2006). Overall coordination of the security sector reform process often falls under the responsibility of national authorities. However, UN peacekeeping missions can play a key role in facilitating coordination and information-sharing. As previously mentioned, the mission SSR section is tasked to manage and coordinate security sector reform support within the mission, including the military and police components. Another important coordination mechanism lies with the DSRSG/RC/HC, who serves as the link between the peace operation and the various UN system and humanitarian actors present in the country.

Local ownership is facilitated by the mission capillarity and outreach capacity. Peacekeeping operations often cover large extents of the host country. While military and police personnel engage in daily patrols, they interact and establish relationships with local communities and organisations. This network is used to share information and receive and give feedback on the ongoing SSR process. A common practice in peacekeeping operations is to carry out joint patrols with military or police peacekeepers and their national counterparts. This works not only to monitor and educate local security forces, but also as a means to share responsibility and incorporate local perceptions in the security sector reform (UNITED NATIONS, 2016b).

Peacekeeping operations can assist SSR in the pursuit to establish trustworthy and accountable security forces. Oftentimes, trust between the police or military and the civilian population is tattered in the post-conflict environment. If peacekeepers manage to effectively lower the levels of violence and provide a safe environment, interaction between different segments of society can increase. Likewise, joint patrols can provide the guarantee of proper conduct required to overcome hesitant or hostile attitudes towards a reformed police or military.

While interaction does not necessarily indicate an increase of trust, be it between former enemies now integrated into a reformed security force or between civilians and the police, findings in social psychology suggest that positive experiences between diverse individuals decrease negative attitudes towards one another (OLSSON et al., 2005; PETTIGRE; TROPP, 2006). While further research exploring the relationship between trust, prejudice, violence and a well-functioning security sector is required, peacekeeping operations could potentially allow for a long-term improvement of societal attitudes towards the state and the population.

Engagement with oftentimes corrupt and inefficient local security forces, however, may damage mission credibility and perception of impartiality, especially if deplorable actions of local security sector actors are perceived to be endorsed or supported by the United Nations. In comparison, local security forces may be perceived as less efficient and reliable than military and police peacekeepers. As a result, the local population may also show discontentment when the overall responsibilities within

the security sector are transferred to local security forces. To address these issues, peacekeeping operations should develop transition strategies, designed to progressively transfer the responsibility for security and law enforcement from the military to the police component, and then to the local security actors (SEDRA, 2010).

United Nations multidimensional peacekeeping operations also facilitate the inclusion and mainstreaming of cross-cutting issues in security sector reform, such as human rights, protection of civilians, child protection, and gender. The mission leadership ensures that UN strategic directives on these matters are adopted by the mission; while trainers, advisors and monitors implement them on the ground when working with their national counterparts. Especially in gender mainstreaming, female peacekeepers can act as role models and set the example for the inclusion of women in the security sector, as suggested by Keiser et al. (2002) and Meier and Nicholson-Crotty (2006)[6].

CONCLUSION

According to Mark Sedra, the current SSR model, and the liberal peace project, is facing severe challenges. Subject to establishing a technocratic approach, treating the recipient state as a blank sheet, these reforms could be externally driven, imposing a high cost to the local populations and disregarding the everyday political approaches (SEDRA, 20117, p.30-43). Cases like Afghanistan, Sierra Leone, Liberia, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Timor-Leste and Bosnia-Herzegovina, have demonstrated some common elements: an active level of insurgency and rebellions, a weak and fractured institutional structures, a very low level of human capacity to undertake holistic reforms, and a lack of political common ground on SSR (SEDRA, 20117, p.302). All these unfavoured conditions met were a severe obstacle to the security sector reform benefits.

Emerging powers, bilateral donors, and international intergovernmental organizations have been trying to consider other forms of governance outside the Weberian-Western circle as an alternative to the current donor-driven perspective (SEDRA, 20117, p.299). Even though a paradigmatic change seems to be following a slow pace within the UN and other multilateral spaces, there is still a recognition from practitioners and policymakers that PKOs can be extremely positive by narrowing the policy-practice gap of the SSR (SEDRA, 20117. p.299).

A sustainable and bottom-up conflict resolution framework can be used within the PKOs structure, attending the micro-level causes of war-torn societies. PKOs represents an important tool for ending collective violence, and to advance a more legitimate political process and pressure local authorities to pursue the causes of peace and security. In addition, the Department of Peace Operations has a consolidated record of well-known procedures and diplomatic channels to adopt a tailored package of reforms.

[6] Karim and Beardsley (2013), however, find no evidence in empirical data to support this claim.

The article demonstrated that SSR can be understood as a necessary but insufficient peacebuilding and conflict prevention mechanism that, in the long term, supports the peace process with effective and efficient security forces, thus increasing the costs of opportunistic spoilers to inflict violence; and addresses the security dilemma and information asymmetry by managing the perception of threat via civilian control of the security sector institutions, in addition to measures of transparency and accountability. Moreover, the prospects of SSR may play an important role as a peace-making tool, by addressing commitment problems with the promise of more inclusive security sector institutions.

United Nations peacekeeping operations have increasingly taken up the role to support SSR. Multidimensional peacekeeping operations often have mandated tasks, dedicated personnel and resources to enable a conducive environment for security sector reform. UN PKOs create a safe environment, provide and facilitate external support, mainstream a common vision on the SSR process, support local ownership and play a leading role in coordinating an integrated effort. In addition, peacekeeping operations facilitate the inclusion and mainstreaming of cross-cutting issues along the security sector reform process. Finally, UN peacekeeping operations ultimately enjoy a high degree of legitimacy and impartiality, as provided by UN Security Council mandates and its multinational nature. When compared to other interventions, UN PKO support to security sector reform should help mitigate the Western bias suggested by SSR critics.

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