



Radboud Universiteit Nijmegen

Beyond the Dark Continent

UN Peacebuilding: An Obsession with Elections

By Jan-Maarten van Westen



Photograph front page: Hatcher-Moore, P. (2011), Smoldering ballot paper from a by rebels attacked truck on election day in 2011. Retrieve from <http://philmoore.info/stories/elections-in-the-democratic-republic-of-the-congo/>. Copyright 2017 by Phil Hatcher-Moore.



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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This thesis started from the observation that transitional elections implemented during United Nations (UN) peacebuilding missions in the Central African Republic (CAR) and the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) were followed by a resurgence of violence. Especially the situation in the DRC showed that elections are not a mechanism for peace and stability in fragile African states. Nevertheless, the United Nation's belief in the implementation of elections seemed persistent with the UNSOM mission in Somalia focusing on the holding of the first post-conflict 'one person, one vote elections' in 2021. Therefore this thesis raises the question why the UN is so obsessed with elections.

By exploring the literature of dysfunctional behavior of international organizations combined with the concept of organizational learning, two cultural explanations were further elaborated and united in a conceptual model to provide a theoretical foundation for analyzing the UN's dysfunctional behavior. Data were gathered through interviews with UN officials, Dutch government officials and respondents from the NGO and epistemic communities. In addition multiple UN documents such as mandates, resolutions, reports and news items were used to unravel the UN's persistent belief in elections.

The analysis identified two causes of the UN's persistent belief in elections. The first and most substantial cause begins with the UN's adoption of the cultural frame of democracy as ideal state apparatus that became dominant after the Cold War. The cultural frame was internalized by the UN to gain symbolic legitimacy and stood at the base of the UN's tunnel vision on elections. This tunnel vision became visible in the UN's shift from peacekeeping to peacebuilding centralizing the conduct of elections as mechanism to establish peace and stability. The second cause obstructing the UN to learn and change its dysfunctional behavior is the assisting nature and structure of UN peacebuilding missions. Because the missions only are mandated to give electoral support and assistance when this is requested by the states themselves, the missions do not have evaluation capacities to measure the longer-term impact of elections on peace and stability.

Striking to conclude was that the persistent belief in elections is not only present within the UN and the broader peacebuilding community, but is also shared by the fragile states and their people, despite elections in fragile states have proven to result in turmoil. This observation was at the same time the most prominent argument used by UN officials to legitimize the UN's tunnel vision on elections.

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ACRONYMS

AU – African Union
CAR – Central African Republic
DPKO – Department of Peacekeeping Operations
DRC – Democratic Republic of the Congo
HIPPO – High-level Independent Panel on Peace Operations
HRW – Human Rights Watch
IO – Intergovernmental organization
MFA – Ministry of Foreign Affairs
MINUSCA – United Nations Multidimensional Stabilization Mission in the Central African Republic
MISCA – African-led International Support Mission to the Central African Republic
MONUC – Mission de l’Organisation des Nations Unies en République démocratique du Congo
MONUSCO – United Nations Multidimensional Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo
PBC – Peacebuilding Commission
PBPS – Peacekeeping Best Practices Section
SG – Secretary-General
TNC – Transnational corporation
UNSOM – The United Nation Assistance Mission in Somalia
UNSC – United Nations Security Council
UNTAC – United Nations Transitional Authority in Cambodia

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 UN PEACEBUILDING IN THE DARK CONTINENT

The newsfeed about Africa tends to be negative and focused on all the problems and human suffering on the continent. This year a famine broke out in the Horn of Africa and parts of Nigeria, 'man-made' by unwilling and incapable governments, and reinforced by armed groups plaguing the anarchic regions prone to conflicts, all together causing major human suffering. In Nigeria and neighboring countries the violent uprising of Boko Haram caused one of the world's largest and most neglected human crises, the Lake Chad Crisis. And conflict is not just feeding human suffering in Nigeria. Somalia, one of the other countries hit very hard by the famine, has known instability for decades, with Al-Shabaab in the south as biggest obstacle, hindering sustainable development and emergency aid when it is needed.

It all feeds the image of Africa as the 'Dark Continent' inherently related to conflict and human suffering. The Dark Continent is a western discourse, portraying Africa as inferior to the West, barbarous and primitive (Jarosz, 1992, p. 105). Conflict and human suffering are the main features of Africa as it is portrayed in the western media. This Afropessimism is spread by the media in western societies. Reason enough for De Beer (2010, p. 597) to speak about a 'bad news syndrome'.

This will not be the start of an advocacy denying the serious issues that Africa faces. This thesis is rather an advocacy to switch lenses when looking at Africa's challenges. Afropessimism has far-reaching consequences for Africa, because contemporary policy makers are influenced by this vision according to b'Béri & Louw (2011). After the Second World War there is a long tendency visible of western interference in Africa, to 'solve' the problems of the continent. The used approaches originated from a perspective of the western Self as superior and the African Other as inferior. According to western standards, something was wrong with Africa, holding it back from developing socially and economically in a global economy build up by the West.

In the '80s and '90s a state centric approach was adopted, based on western standards like democracy. The West believed it could tackle the root causes of Africa's problems, but it turned out differently. The complex reality based on ethnicities was not compatible with the western definition of democracy. The people tended to vote for politicians of their ethnicities, dividing the country again along ethnic lines.

Still, these western standards are visible in policies towards Africa's challenges. Across the continent multiple severe conflicts are creating a realm of instability. The United Nations (UN) has deployed several peacebuilding missions in response to these conflicts¹. Striking enough the mission mandates and goals seem to be drained with western standards including democracy and the implementation of elections. At the same time, it becomes clear the UN lacks the ability to stabilize countries and help the country forward.

Exemplifying for this phenomenon is the UN's most recently deployed peacebuilding operation in the Central African Republic (CAR). It is March 2013 when Bangui, the capital of the CAR is overrun by the united Muslim rebel group Selaka, a merger of three rebel groups: the Union of Democratic Forces for Unity, the Union of Republican Forces and the Convention of Patriots for Justice and Peace. President Bozizé, who is president since his coup in 2003, flees the capital. In December 2012 Selaka starts to capture cities in the not densely populated north and threatens to march to Bangui. A peace deal between the government and the rebels, signed on 11 January 2013 in Gabon's capital Libreville, prevents this from happening. This deal does not hold for long though. When the rebels accuse Bozizé from failing to fulfill his promises the rebels take up their weapons and this time they do overrun the capital Bangui. Rebel leader Michel Djotodia is installed as president in August 2013 (The Guardian, 2013; Torres, 2013).

In response to the violent regime of the Selaka, the Christians and animists in the country start to unite themselves in Anti-Balaka militias. Their reprisal violence against Muslims spreads across the whole country. This leads to the formation of self-defense militias by the Muslims. In the end a myriad of armed groups in the country comes into existence. More than a million people flee from their homes, when these Muslim and Christian armed groups start plundering.

¹ The UN uses the following definition of a peacebuilding mission: *"peacebuilding involves a range of measures targeted to reduce the risk of relapsing into conflict by strengthening national capacity at all levels for conflict management, and to lay the foundations for sustainable peace and development"* (PSBO, 2017).

By unanimously adopting resolution 2127 in 2013, the UN Security Council (UNSC) mandates the MISCA mission, led by the African Union (AU) and supported by the French operation Sangeris, to protect civilians, stabilize the country, restore state authority and create the conditions to provide humanitarian assistance. The scale of the crisis in the CAR exceeded the capabilities of MISCA. Violence and human rights violations continue to take place and MISCA is unable to tackle the root causes of conflict (UNSC, 2013b). The distressing situation in the CAR showed the urge for a larger multidimensional UN peacekeeping mission, replacing the MISCA. In resolution 2149 the UNSC (2014) establishes the United Nations Multidimensional Stabilization Mission in the Central African Republic (MINUSCA) on 10 April 2014. The mission comprises 10,000 military personnel and 1,800 police personnel and authorized the French to support the mandate within their capacities. In the same year on 15 September, the official transition from MISCA to MINUSCA is made. The mandate of MINUSCA elaborates on MISCA, additionally focuses on national dialogue, demobilization, institution-building and support for the organization and conduct of elections (UN, 2013; UN, 2017c).

With the establishment of MINUSCA sectarian violence and human rights violations do not vanish and there is little progress on disarmament, reconciliation and the reassertion of state control (Human Rights Watch (HRW), 2017a). The transition to democracy does not go without violence either. A constitutional referendum is held ahead of the elections on 13 December 2015 about limiting the presidency to two terms, enforcing the parliament by creating a Senate and establishing a Special Criminal Court to try serious crimes. This referendum is marked by violence. The elections are delayed by continuing violence between the rebels and Anti-Balaka militias. The first round of the elections is held on 30th of December in 2015 and the second round, again delayed by violence, is held on 14 February 2016. Both election rounds were conducted peacefully. A former prime minister, Faustin Archange Touadéra, wins the elections. But the elections do not reunite the country. Instead, Muslim rebels in the north of the country declare their own autonomous state just before the elections. Furthermore, the violence across the country continues and large parts of the country are still in control of different armed groups. With this ongoing conflict, the existing anarchy and thousands of people killed and displaced, question marks can be placed by the efficiency of the UN peacebuilding mission (Benn, 2016; Global Centre for the Responsibility to Protect, 2016; Kokopakpa, 2015; Marboua, 2015; Torres, 2013).

Nowadays the situation in the CAR remains fragile. An UN Report dated 1 February 2017, reports about rising tensions and outbreaks of violence, exacerbated by the absence of progress in tackling the root causes of conflict. Armed groups clashed, causing hundreds of civilian casualties and tens of thousands displaced people. The outbreaks of violence undermined government efforts to establish state control across the country (UNSC, 2017a).

But how was the situation in the CAR perceived within the UN? An UN News Centre (2017) message stated: "*Despite significant progress and successful elections, CAR has remained in the grip of instability and sporadic unrest*". It is doubtful how successful these elections really were, with large parts of the country outside control of the state. Of course, there was a president elected, but what had it brought the country? The statement implicates an underlying belief that the conduct of elections are key for tackling violence and instability.

And this belief is visible in multiple other African countries where UN peacebuilding operations were conducted. The Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) is such an example where despite elections, the violence could not be tackled and instability remained. The peacebuilding mission in DRC has been heavily criticized by Autesserre (2009). A same striking pattern of violence after the holding of transitional elections supported by the UN is visible in the DRC. In the first months of 2004 rebels under command of 'renegade colonel' Nkunda captured Bukavu, an eastern city in the Congo. In 2006 it became clear this capture was the start of Nkunda's attempt to build up a quasi-independent state in the North Kivu province. This was the prime example of how the violence in the DRC continued. Still the UN initiated elections that were held in July 2006, but not surprisingly the violence continued (Autesserre, 2009).

Nowadays, the country remains instable. President Joseph Kabila clung to power beyond the constitutionally established two-term mandate, which ended on 19 December 2016, stalled plans for new elections and repressed the growing opposition against him. Demonstrations were banned or violently oppressed resulting in tens of innocent casualties, media outlets were shut down, movement of the opposition-leaders was restricted and both opposition and activists were arbitrarily arrested and imprisoned (HRW, 2017b). The \$700 million spent on elections in 2006 by the UN had brought the country a democratically chosen leader, without the ambition to continue this just started democratic tradition. Another obstacle for new elections came from the minister of budget, who stated it would

be difficult to acquire the necessary \$1.8 billion for organizing elections. More recent developments are that DRC's Catholic Church is negotiating with the government and opposition about organizing new elections and the transition of power (Africa News, 2017; Burke, 2017).

In the resource-rich eastern Congo, dozens of armed groups remained active and continued committing war crimes, like ethnic massacres, killing of civilians, rape, forced recruitment of children and plundering villages. The Congolese security forces as well as MONUSCO forces were accused of committing these war crimes (HRW, 2017b).

Where elections did not seem to put the DRC on its way to stability, in Somalia the UN's obsession with elections and the senselessness of it may be even more painfully visible. In Somalia, the UN is involved since the 1990s in a so far unsuccessful attempt to establish stability across the country. In this period the country has been without effective control and in the hands of warlords. Nowadays, there are still large parts that are not under government control. The problems in the south are most striking, where Al-Shabaab controls large parts of the country. Another example of the lack of government control and stability can be found at the Somali coast, a former operation base for pirates, who targeted merchant ships and took their crews hostage until 2012. The concern is that piracy is rising again with a new hostage taking on a merchant ship in March of 2017. In the beginning of the same year, a famine started to plague the country. The control of Al-Shabaab makes it impossible for development agencies to get access to large parts of the country, feeding the fear of a huge human catastrophe that is already evolving (BBC, 2017; UN, 2017a). On its way to 'one person, one vote elections' in 2021, Somalia 'elected' president Farmaajo in February 2017 via a clan-based selection procedure. The elections were delayed four times. Firstly, because of security issues concerning the increased attacks of Al-Shabaab and to illustrate the security situation, the elections were held in a hangar on the international airport in the capital Mogadishu, the only place safe enough. Secondly, members of parliament, consisting out of the 275-seat Lower House and the 54-seat Upper House, that are supposed to elect the president, were not all elected themselves by the 14,025 clan representatives as should be expected during elections. Just as in 2012, this celebration of democracy was interrupted by reports that parliament seats were sold for up to 1.3 million dollars. Still it is perceived as 'progress', because at least there was a president elected by the people's representatives (Gaffey, 2016). And as UN Special Representative for Somalia, Michael Keating, stated: "the most important thing at this moment is that there are elections

in the first place” (Lindijer, 2017). Again, it illustrates how important elections are in the eyes of the UN. But the drawn context in the states makes one wonder why this belief in elections persisted despite the signals against its effectivity. It is clear the member states in the UNSC decide on the mandate, but it seems like the UN bureaucracy that has a key part in carrying out and assisting the missions is totally on board with it despite there are no indications elections do contribute to peace and stability in fragile states.

While democracy is perceived by the UN as the starting point of the development for fragile states, there is no consensus among academics on the sequence in which states develop. In the spectrum of research on this topic there is on the one side the mostly statistical cross-country analysis that identifies significant correlation between the good governance agenda, including democracy, and development. The correlation makes sense as the majority of the developed countries scores high in terms of good governance. This type of research tends to overgeneralize and does not pay any attention to the country-specific context. Without clear guidelines about how states develop, this type of research is ambiguously translated into a long list of ‘universal’ things with a prominent place for good governance that need to be done to develop a country, thereby assuming causality between good governance and state development. The relevant international organizations (IOs) and bilateral donors use these research results to legitimize their focus on good governance as crucial part of the development agenda (Grindle, 2011).

On the other side of the spectrum there is a strong focus on historical analysis and the specific context to explain the development of states. Khan (2004) strongly advocates for such a context-based approach. First of all, he disagrees with the assumption that good governance leads to development and claims that there is no historical evidence of a country that has been able to implement a good governance agenda with such a low level of income per capita as seen in African states. Second, he argues that underdeveloped African and Asian states have other challenges of which the neo-patrimonial political structure is the most prominent one. Neo-patrimonial states are the opposite of the modern state regarding its impersonality, accountability and non-corrupt character. Rather it is based on informal personal relationships. The ruling elite, the patron, is unaccountable and corrupt, using the public domain as a personal fief. Democratic elections will not solve this as is visible in the DRC where Kabila tries to stay in power despite it is going against the constitution. The legitimacy of the ruling elite is based on this patron-client relationship. This results in fewer incentives to provide public goods for the country with the scarce

resources available. Instead these resources will rather be used to gain the support of the powerful constituencies that are of prime importance for the ruling elite. The most important challenge of African governments is to reduce the influence and damage of the patron-client relationships existing between the political elite and the people. This thesis derives from the point of view that the state specific context is crucial to understand state. A blueprint for state development including the good governance agenda is not what is desirable in pursuing stability in fragile states.

With good governance and democracy ruled out as a political solution for the reality in underdeveloped countries the question arises what does work. Although this thesis will not focus on this question, research of the Crisis States Research Centre does provide suggestions. In their report "*Meeting the Challenges of Crisis States*", Putzel & John (2012, pp. iii-iv) view the state as a political settlement drawing the attention to the crucial role of elites in securing the stability in fragile states. The inclusion of the important elite groups should therefore be the main goal of a political settlement in a fragile state, when necessary without formal democratic institutions. The danger with democratization is the 'winner takes all' outcome that will lead to an exclusion of important elites creating incentives for conflict².

1.2 RESEARCH QUESTION

The aftermath of the conduct of elections during peacebuilding missions in the CAR and DRC showed that elections are not a mechanism for peace and stability in fragile states. Still Somalia is being prepared for its first one person, one vote elections. Although, by now it should be clear that it is not realistic to expect that organizing elections in countries that only have known instability since their founding caused by conflict between ethnicities or warlords will result in a transition towards stable, well-functioning democracies. Nevertheless, this belief is strongly visible within the UN bureaucracy.

What recent developments in the world teach us is that even relatively stable perceived democracies are still vulnerable for sliding back. Within the EU, countries like Poland and Hungary show a move towards authoritarianism with a lack of respect to the

² Also read Martin Koper's dissertation "*Helpt Democratie Afrika?*" (2016), a historical analysis that shapes a deeper understanding of the problems of western democracy in Kenya, Uganda, DRC, Rwanda and Ethiopia.

rule of law and basic freedoms (Dawson & Hanley, 2016). Establishing stable democracy is more complicated than the people's call for democracy and simply implementing democratic institutions. Illustrative is the Arab Spring that was considered as a democratization revolution led by the people, ended in instability and anarchy. Also Turkey is drifting away by firing judges, teachers and arbitrarily imprisoning people. Considering these cases the question why the UN keeps believing in the implementation of elections in shattered countries like the CAR, DRC and Somalia becomes even more striking. To find out what explanation can be given for the persistence of this belief despite all these signals against the effectivity of this approach, the following research question is formulated:

Why is the UN so obsessed with the implementation of democratic elections during their peacebuilding missions in the CAR, DRC and Somalia?

This behavior of the UN is puzzling, because from both the empirics as well as the literature one would expect the UN to come to the conclusion that implementing elections is not what is needed in these fragile states. Empirically, the implementation of elections does not realize stability in the fragile states and could even be the start of new tensions that further increase the instability in the countries. Academically, theories of organizational change suggest the organization uses its ability to change its course, when its behavior is not in line with the organization's overall mission. The goal of UN peacebuilding missions is to establish stability, but with the elections not contributing to stability a rejection of the belief that elections will stabilize fragile states would be expected. The goal of this thesis is to explain why the UN is not coming back on this conviction despite it would make sense from both empirical and academic perspective.

Different sources will be used to answer the research question. First, to unravel the origins of the UN's obsession with election a historical analysis of the UN will be carried out, primarily by using the available literature on this topic. Secondly, interviews will be conducted with UN-staff related to the selected peacebuilding missions or the work on peacebuilding in general and representatives from different fields like policy making, NGOs and the academic world. Additional used sources are UN resolutions and reports and scientific publications.

1.3 SCIENTIFIC RELEVANCE

The described stubbornness of the UN's belief in the implementation of elections during peacebuilding missions although it proved to be ineffective in realizing peace and stability relates to the academic literature on organizational change and dysfunctional behavior: a behavior of "*creating and implementing policies that defy rational logic, for acting in ways that are at odds with their states mission [...]*" (Barnett & Finnemore, 2004, pp. 34-35).

The theoretical frame of this thesis is based upon a matrix drawn by Barnett & Finnemore (2004, p. 36) giving four explanations of organizational change and dysfunctional behavior distinguished as an internal or external and material or cultural explanation. This matrix is useful as it presents a good starting point with a set of explanations to further analyze the drivers of organizational change and dysfunctional behavior.

In two ways this thesis makes a scientific contribution. First of all, this thesis sets out to construct a model that could be used as a new starting point to explain dysfunctional behavior of IOs. The remark has to be made that this model should not be interpreted as an all-encompassing and enclosing framework, because construction of such a model from the ground up extends the capacities available for this thesis. Where Barnett & Finnemore (2004) focus their attention on the internal cultural explanation leaving aside the other three explanations for the most part, this thesis will elaborate on all four explanations to analyze which ones have relevant explanatory power. The intention of this effort is to see if there are connections between the explanations that can make it possible to construct a model that uses the stronger points of multiple explanations and bridges the gaps between them. In this way this thesis will give in addition a better view on the usefulness of the complete matrix.

Secondly, regarding the literature on the UN and the obsession with elections, this thesis will make a contribution to a relatively unexplored field of academic knowledge. The criticism on the obsession with elections has been present for a while (Gowan, 2008), but an analysis where this belief in elections originates from remained largely absent. Only Autesserre (2009) criticizes the focus on elections during peacebuilding missions and assigns this to the tunnel vision of the UN, the discursive frame. This tends towards the internal cultural explanation, used by Barnett & Finnemore (2004) as well. As Autesserre tends to be somewhat black and white in her explanations without a complete and clear theoretical framework, she might have overlooked the variety of explanations as Barnett

and Finnemore (2004) presented and the potential bridges between the different explanations. With this matrix as starting point and a model as desired outcome this thesis will make an attempt to come with more nuanced explanations for the still unchanged belief in the failing holding of transitional elections in fragile states.

1.4 SOCIETAL RELEVANCE

This thesis is in the first place an attempt to look beyond the Dark Continent frame, used by the western media to report about the worrying situation in African countries. As earlier said this thesis is an attempt to switch lenses. Yes, the problems in Africa are very concerning, but that does not mean the West should perceive violence and human suffering as inherent to Africa. This thesis shows how interference of the international community with the use of western standards can have detrimental effects on the development of African states and how this behavior can be explained. This is an effort to show that western ideas of the ideal state with democratic institutions are not the medicine for African fragile states. It seems like it is forgotten how long it took western states to become stable democracies. In addition, recent developments across the world, mentioned earlier, show how fragile democracy still can be. Just as there is a growing criticism on western interference in the Middle East, with the invasion of Iraq by the USA linked to growing instability in the region and the rise of Daesh, a same critical stance should be taken considering the western interference in Africa. The western standards and values cannot be molded into a blueprint of how every state in the world should look like in order to prosper.

In the second place, this thesis is an advocacy to revise the way the UN amongst other bilateral and multilateral actors interferes in African states. Societies in the DRC, the CAR, Somalia and other countries suffer from civil wars, killings of innocent civilians, poverty, injustice, dislocation, disease and environmental degradation, creating a new breeding ground for conflict, crime and terrorist activity. The UNSC is the main actor to intervene in such situations. The input from the UN bureaucracy in acquiring knowledge and forming a peacebuilding strategy determines the fate of these fragile states. Yet, the UN has not been able to succeed in this mission. This thesis will research why the UN bureaucracy has such a persistent belief in elections, although results remain absent. This thesis will be a first step in addressing the issue regarding the focus on the ineffective and even counterproductive elections. Ideally, more efficient and realistic peacebuilding

strategies will be created in the future, solving conflicts and better succeeding in rebuilding and stabilizing states, creating a brighter future for these societies.

In the third place this thesis touches upon the root causes of migration to Europe. Last years, one of the most important topics in European politics was migration to Europe. The migrant flows from Africa and the Middle East proved to be a heavy burden on the EU. Not just logistically, but politically as well, because large parts of the population heavily resisted the ongoing influx of migrants. One of the major drivers of migration to Europe is the ongoing conflicts as in the three states that this thesis focuses on. Although the people in the CAR are too poor to flee all the way to Europe and people from DRC fled to neighboring countries, this threat of conflicts is a broader issue. Future conflicts in Africa could be a cause of new migrant flows to Europe. A better understanding of how the UN should effectively tackle the root causes of the conflicts, creating stability, could play an important factor in preventing the people to migrate to Europe. It would not only improve the situation in these regions, but also would reduce the tension created by this issue in European societies. A first step to break through this persistent belief in elections, visible within the UN and to acknowledge current peacebuilding missions lack effectiveness and explore what exactly goes wrong. This thesis is just a small step in the right direction. In the next chapter the theoretical frame will be presented, exploring different explanations how organizations change and how dysfunctional behavior can obstruct change.

CHAPTER 2

THEORETICAL FRAME

With the downfalls of the UN's peacebuilding strategy focused on implementing elections that were explored in the introducing chapter of this thesis, one would expect this strategy would change. The start of this chapter, section 2.1, will embed this expectation in the theoretical frame of organizational change. In section 2.2 the absence of change in the peacebuilding strategy will be embedded in the theory on dysfunctional behavior. Leading in this whole chapter will be two matrixes of Barnett & Finnemore (2004) with four explanations of both organizational change and dysfunctional behavior. After exploring these explanations the chapter will discuss in section 2.3 how these different explanations of dysfunctional behavior can be modeled into a hypothetical explanation why the UN does not change its peacebuilding strategy by letting go of the belief on elections.

2.1 ORGANIZATIONAL CHANGE IN INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS

Institutional and organizational theorists provide theories to explain why and how (IOs) change. Barnett and Finnemore (2004) state international theorists rarely applied the wealth of explanations from institutional and organizational theories for addressing organizational change. The most often used explanation for changing IOs arguing states demand the IO to change, has never been empirically researched in a systematic way or weighed against other possible explanations.

Barnett and Finnemore (2004, p. 42) identify four explanations of organizational change in IOs that deserve further elaboration. Distinction between the explanations is made by on the one hand internal and external variables and on the other hand material and cultural variables. The internal and external variables not necessarily mean reasons of organizational change can be found internally or externally. Rather it refers to which dynamics are perceived crucial to understand organizational change, those within or

outside the organization. As will be showed in this chapter internal dynamics can also be influenced by outside forces.

The result is a matrix of four explanations of organizational change (see Table 2.1). This matrix forms an important and useful foundation for systematically looking for explanations on organizational change. Ironically, Barnett & Finnemore do not explore all these explanations, but argue the internal cultural explanation has the most explanatory power on why IOs change. This section will explore all four explanations to get an overview of their implications and to approach this systematic matrix of explanations from a more unbiased perspective. By exploring these explanations a first indication about their relevance for this thesis and the model at the end of this chapter can be made.

Table 2.1: Explanations of organizational change in IOs

	Internal	External
Material	resource conflict	statist/functionalist
Cultural	bureaucratic form and culture	world polity

Source: Barnett and Finnemore, 2004, p. 42

Further exploration is needed, because Barnett & Finnemore’s (2004) elaboration of the matrix has some downfalls. First, these explanations are somewhat basal and lack detail on the underlying mechanisms, necessary to analyze the whole process of organizational change within an IO. The basal character of the explanations will be addressed by further elaborating on Barnett and Finnemore’s (2004) work to deepen the understandings of these explanations and to find out what underlying mechanisms are at play.

A second downfall that should be addressed is that it does not assume connections between the different explanations, but displays the explanations as mutually exclusive. Although this matrix is used to simplify reality to be able to analyze it in a systematic way, it is important to stress that there is a possibility that multiple explanations have relevance and that links exist between these explanations. The aim of this chapter is to identify those links and to draw a model on it.

In the remaining part of the chapter Barnett & Finnemore’s (2004, p. 42) matrix will be elaborated and its downfalls will be addressed. First, the four explanations of organizational change will be explored to embed this thesis in the theory of organizational change. Secondly, section 2.2 will zoom in on the four explanations for dysfunctional

behavior. At the end section 2.3 will conclude on to what extent the four explanations of dysfunctional behavior can complement each other by drawing a model on dysfunctional behavior of the UN's on belief in the implementation of elections during peacebuilding missions as mechanism of peace and stability.

2.1.1 RESOURCE CONFLICT EXPLANATION

The first possible explanation for organizational change given by Barnett and Finnemore (2004) is the internal material explanation: the resource conflict. Pfeffer & Salancik (1978, p. 259) point out the meaning of resources is organization specific. This can be financial resources, but information or legitimacy as well. Pfeffer & Salancik bring in the notion of power, which is crucial to understand the actions of an organization (further elaboration later in this section). Power organizes around critical and scarce resources, which again is organization specific.

Two different resource conflict arguments are presented by Barnett & Finnemore (2004) to explain organizational change, namely the conflict between bureaucratic unit driven by power, rivalry and prestige and the conflict between interdependent organizations.

In the first explanation Barnett and Finnemore (2004, p.42) distinguish two sub-explanations, one focused on the struggle of power and prominence and the second presenting the conflict over resources as primary driver of organizational change. Remarks can be placed in how far this distinction is easily visible in reality. Both sub-explanations seem to be interrelated as units with higher priority and more power within the organization logically have a stronger claim on more resources. Corwin (1969, p. 507) argues bureaucratic units compete over the division of responsibilities between the units. Some units will achieve a greater deal of autonomy and will be able to influence on the formation of the organization's mandate. Pfeffer & Salancik (1978, p. 259) add that coalitions within the organization who require resources should attempt to control and influence the organization. They use their own resources to gain more control in the organization to eventually initiate actions that are for their own interests, including the organization's resource flow.

During the empirical analysis it is therefore not necessary to be too fixated on finding this distinction, but rather to look for evidence of bureaucratic units successfully attempting to increase their influence by convincing the organization of the importance and

legitimacy of their work. Important to note is that although there is spoken about a resource conflict, it should rather be perceived as an indirect competition between bureaucratic units given the strict hierarchic structure of a bureaucracy³. A more realistic scenario is that every unit for itself will try its best to convince the people higher in the hierarchy about the importance of the unit's work. In this way, each unit will indirectly compete with each other over the available resources, but without such a direct confrontation between bureaucratic units as presented by for instance Singleton & Henkin (1985). Corwin (1969, p. 507) remarks the bureaucratic units also have to cooperate, because they are interdependent to accomplish various objectives. A rather indirect competition over resources, therefore also seems to be more desirable for an organization as a direct confrontation and competition could lead to less cooperation between the units.

Barnett and Finnemore's (2004, p. 42) second resource conflict argument focuses on the conflict between interdependent organizations. Just as bureaucratic units want to show the legitimacy of their work, so do organizations themselves. This second given explanation might be confusing, because it seems an external explanation, while it is mentioned in the internal explanation. As mentioned in the beginning of section 2.1.1 the internal explanation refers to the internal dynamics. These can also be influenced by outside forces as is the case in this second resource conflict argument.

Peters (2001) identifies the presence of competition between organizations and their policies within a bureaucratic system. To get grasp on the mechanisms of the resource conflict between organizations, Parsons (1956) argues organizations are dependent on their environment for resources. This is the start of the explanation how external factors can influence internal dynamics of organizational change. The resources they use could easily be used for other organizations instead. The legitimacy of the organization is crucial for access to these resources. Therefore, the appropriateness of their activities and the usefulness of their output are constantly assessed.

Pfeffer & Salancik (1978, p.261) focus on this external control of organizations as well to explain the organization's internal power distribution. They go a step further than Parsons. The organization's environment does not assess the organization's actions and

³ See Singleton & Henkin (1985) on the influence of the centralization of power on the competition between units and Barnett & Finnemore (2004) on the strict hierarchy of bureaucracies

outcomes, but tries to influence them, just as the organization itself tries to influence other organizations, creating interdependency. Actors, who provide resources to the organization, acquire power to influence in the organization's actions in return. This creates a dilemma between on the one hand receiving scarce resources resulting in more stability and on the other hand the organization's pursuit for autonomy for future adaption and modifying its actions. To address this tension organizations take different actions. The most relevant actions for the UN are restructuring the organization, stabilize the exchange relations regarding its dependency on resources, and grow and expand its activities to gain more control over its environment.

If one thing, the second argument makes clear that the context and environment of an organization have to be taken into account to look for explanations showing a resource conflict as driver of organizational change.

The two resource conflict arguments entirely differ from each other. While the first argument focuses on the internal factors influencing the internal dynamics, the second argument led by Pfeffer and Salancik (1978) focuses on the external factors (context and the environment) to explain organizational change from a resource conflict perspective. For the empirical analysis the second argument shows that the first argument might not be accurate enough to analyze an organizational change of IOs as a result of a resource conflict, given the fact they are highly dependent on resources from external actors. Intuitively, the first explanation seems somewhat too static and inward looking, as if the organization is separated from its environment by an enormous wall, excluding the entire environment's influence. What has become clear, focusing on Parsons (1956) and Pfeffer & Salancik (1978) is that the (external) environment of the organization influences the internal material struggle as well. In both explanations, first glimpses of mechanisms that might result in dysfunctional behavior became visible. These mechanisms will be explored in 2.2.1. In the next section, a second explanation of organizational change, the bureaucratic form and culture explanation will be addressed.

2.1.2 BUREAUCRATIC CULTURE EXPLANATION

The explanation of bureaucratic form and culture looks inward into the organization to understand organizational change. The explanation emphasizes the shared understandings within the organization that shape staff action and create change. Barnett and Finnemore

(2004, p. 43) define the essence of this explanation as *“the processes by which staff interpret and negotiate the meanings of their rules and actions and the ways staff understand their overall mission shape how they respond to external stimuli.”*

This internal cultural explanation is grounded in Weick’s (1995) sensemaking. In this process of interaction with the environment, a reciprocal constitution of the self and its environment takes place. With sensemaking people give meaning to objects based from a personal perspective. One’s perspective is in reality in the past world, as everything around the perceiver is understood based on its memory defined by Hartshorne (1962) as the experience from the past. Therefore, the past experiences give meaning to what is now. There is not a truth out there to be found, but objects have multiple meanings. As Fiske (1992, p. 879) puts it: *“sensemaking takes a relative approach to truth”*. The organization perceives the information in such manner that it supports the claimed accuracy of the outlined activities. This triggers a self-fulfilling prophecy as acting on information, as if it is accurate, gives it instantly more substance. Weick’s (1995) sensemaking puts the bureaucratic form and culture explanation in a postmodern ontology. In this way it helps understanding Barnett and Finnemore’s insights in the core features of a bureaucracy, based on Max Weber’s vision on bureaucracies.

Max Weber believed the modern bureaucracy is the most efficient organizational structure to perform social complex tasks, because of four core features that are crucial to understand the bureaucracy’s working. First, it exhibits hierarchy, meaning that there is a rigid division of labor and between chains of command. Each official has a clearly defined sphere of competence within a division of labor, performing regular tasks and within a clear hierarchical structure. The higher levels supervise their lower levels. The other way around the lower levels can appeal through strictly regulated channels within this hierarchical structure to their superordinate. This structure continues all the way to a final authority at the top of the organization. Second, continuity refers to the salary system that is bound to the hierarchical structure offering a prospect of regular advancement. The third feature is impersonality. The rules and operating procedures are prescribed, eliminating arbitrary and politicized influences. And last, expertise, meaning that officials are selected according merit and are trained for their function and control access to knowledge stored in files. With these core features, the bureaucracy breaks challenges in manageable and repetitive tasks, that are appointed to the relevant departments within its organization and that are performed within a hierarchical structure (Barnett & Finnemore, 2004, pp. 17-18)

Concerning the impersonality, Barnett & Finnemore (2004, pp. 18-19) point out that theories of organizations are often theories of rules, rule making and rule following. These rules define the social world and the behavior of actors in it. Bureaucracies are collections and procedures of rules that define the social tasks. Following these tasks, the bureaucracy establishes impersonal divisions of labor to accomplish them. Barnett & Finnemore (2004) identify four effects of these bureaucratic rules that are most interesting, because they can constitute the organization's identity, shape the lens through which a bureaucracy is looking to the social world and prescribes action. Rules shape how bureaucrats see the world by classifying and categorizing the world, defining what distinguishes a civil war from genocide and a refugee from an economic migrant. By shaping the social world, bureaucrats tend to make rules that justify an intervention by the bureaucracy itself. Identifying the self comes with a lens through which the bureaucrats perceive the world. Simon (1991) calls this bounded rationality that limits and frames the way the complex environment is understood by the organization's staff. An example of this bounded rationality is given by Autesserre (2009), who argues that the UN looked for the main causes of the conflict in the DRC on the regional and national level, because the UN as organization was founded to operate on the national and international level and in this way prescribed action-taking by the UN itself.

Besides framing the social world, it also prescribes action for actors within and outside the organization. Standard operating procedures make it possible for the organization to respond more effectively and predictably. Outside the organization, the organization prescribes behavior for parties in a conflict for example. Bureaucratic rules also can constitute the identity of the organization. By developing a general consensus on the organization's core mission, means, ways to measure results and a shared discourse, an identity is shaped. In this way, the organization can distinguish itself from other organizations and help define the organization's position in its environment.

An aspect that Barnett & Finnemore (2004) do address later on as feature of most IOs, but not categorize as a key feature of a bureaucracy is the differentiated goals that are pursued by the different bureaucratic units within the organization. Although Barnett and Finnemore mention the clear defined sphere of competence within each official is operating as key feature, it does not touch upon the different bureaucratic units and their differentiated goals. They do mention the competitiveness between bureaucratic units, but the fact that these bureaucratic units have their own mission, is not mentioned.

All the units within the bureaucracy are not primarily streamlined to pursue one specific mission. Weick (1995, p. 61) mentions this phenomenon as the “politics of interpretation” leading to a political struggle. Although a bureaucracy is founded for a certain purpose, a core mission, the exact content of this mission and the way it is carried out is shaped by the bureaucratic units. All these units have their own interpretation of the organization’s core mission and an own set of goals that can counteract with goals of other units. Whose interests prevail will be decisive for how this core mission of the bureaucracy will take shape⁴.

How this political struggle over interpretation could work out is illustrated by Starbuck & Milliken (1988). They argue people with expertise in newer tasks, situated lower in the hierarchy, tend to interpret events in terms of a greater focus on their tasks to deal with this event. On the contrary, people with expertise in older and more stable tasks, situated higher in the hierarchy tend to maintain the focus on the ‘traditional’ tasks. As result of a different context, different cues on which they act become salient.

In short, the policies of a bureaucracy are realized through an internal struggle (although this sounds somewhat harsh) between the bureaucratic units.

So far has been explained what the core features of a bureaucracy are and how these constitute its behavior, all embedded in the postmodern ontology of sensemaking. What has remained unclear is what processes change the bureaucracy’s behavior. What internal incentives and mechanisms drive a bureaucracy to change? Barnett & Finnemore (2004), based on Weber, identified at the heart of bureaucratic power, the control on knowledge. By creating knowledge out of information, the bureaucracy creates a social reality and prompts action. Using the literature on organizational learning therefore seems to be the most promising tool to explain organizational change as it centralizes knowledge. Fiol and Lyles (1985, p. 803) point out different interpretations were derived from Simon’s definition of organizational learning in his work “*Sciences of the artificial*” (1969). Different terms like learning, adaption (see Barnett and Finnemore, 2004), change or unlearning were distilled from his work and used without consent in the discourse about their precise definition. The common assumption in this differentiation is this process leads to improving

⁴ See also Pfeffer & Salancik (1978), who speak about “coalitions of interests”.

actions in the future through better knowledge and understanding. Therefore, not surprisingly there is not a theory or model about organizational learning widely accepted.

Simon (1996, p. 17) defines organizational learning as knowledge about the environment that is updated or new knowledge that is gained by individuals, because organizations itself cannot learn. The organization only learns from its members or by attracting new members to the organization with new knowledge. Hedberg (1981, p.6) explains organizational learning is not simply accumulation of the individual members' learning. Organizations do have cognitive systems and memories preserving "*certain behaviors, mental maps, norms, and values*". Where members and leadership change over time, organizations develop world views and ideologies with their cognitive systems and memories. The new knowledge acquired through its members is reflected in outcomes of the organization and a structural change in the capacity of the organization to adapt to its environment. At the base of how the organization perceives its roles lays its own representation or multiple representations if it's not uniform throughout the organization. The representation comes with an understanding of the environment (Simon, 1991).

Before learning takes place, first a problem has to be identified by the organization's members. As earlier mentioned Barnett and Finnemore (2004) speak about the lens through with the organization's staff perceives the world, or in Simon's (1991) words the bounded rationality to understand the complex environment. Understanding the world also includes the problems that have to be solved. As earlier mentioned, bureaucracies, including the UN tend to perceive problems in a way that they themselves are the suitable actor to address the problems.

Fiol and Lyles (1985, pp. 804-805) identify three contextual factors affecting the probability learning will occur, that are acknowledged within the organizational learning literature. (1) *Culture*, consisting out of shared believes, norms and ideologies influence organizational action-taking. Not only the behavioral development, but also the cognitive development is influenced by the organization's culture as it gives direction to organizational change. The other way around organizational learning can change an organization's culture. (2) *Structure*, influences the possibility of learning as well. More centralized, complex, formal and mechanistic structures tend to reinforce past behaviors, retarding learning. More decentralized organic structures allow shifts in beliefs or actions and encourage learning by reducing the information demand and the cognitive workload for its staff, thereby facilitating new learning processes.

There exists a field of tension regarding the last contextual factor (3) *environment*. Hedberg (1981, p.5) phrases the tension as "*learning requires both change and stability [...] between learners and their environments.*" Too much stability in an organization does not stimulate organizational learning, because behavior never becomes obsolete. On the other hand a too dynamic organization makes it hard for the learning staff to create new, but lasting patterns in the organization, just as a too dynamic external environment will be too hard to get a grasp on.

Understanding the contextual factors determining the probability of organizational learning to occur, the next step is to identify the types of learning that could take place. Fiol and Lyles (1985, p. 806) identify two types of organizational learning, a higher-level and a lower-level learning. Higher-level learning changes the organization's overall norms and values for the long term. The context wherein this higher-level learning level happens is ambiguous and ill-defined. This type of changes occurs after some sort of crisis, for instance when the organization gets a new leadership. Higher-level learning is associated with the higher levels of management. Higher-level learning refers to the adoption of new frames to interpret the organization's environment. Lower-level learning is a result of routine and repetition in an organization, like the implementation of successful programs. The desirable outcome is a change in behavior, which only does affect a part of the organization, mostly but not always the lower and middle levels of management, and has a short and temporary duration. Nevertheless, any level of the organization could be involved in this process of learning. The concepts higher- and lower-level learning give the impression it refers to the level within the organization it occurs, while this is not necessarily the case. It refers more to the type of learning⁵. The UN's belief in the implementation of elections during UN peacebuilding missions should be understood by conceptualizing it as higher-level learning, because the belief in elections transcends the UN's behavior and routines, but shows the presence of a norm that elections are needed to stabilize a fragile state.

The concept of organizational learning brings three difficulties with regards to the analysis of this phenomenon. First, organizational change does not necessarily imply that learning took place. Second, it are the individuals in the organization that learn, meaning that finding out if learning occurred the researcher has to rely on the statements and

⁵ For further reading on the two levels of learning, see also Agyris and Schön (1996).

actions of these individuals. Third, learning could occur, but without resulting in outcomes of a structural change in the organization's capacity to adapt to its environment.

Hirschmann (2012, p. 370) identifies a gap in the IR literature of theoretical and empirical analyses applying organizational learning on the UN and other IOs. Studies on UN peace operations are mainly focused on lower-level learning and the success and effectiveness of the missions analyzing the implementation of the mandate and generic existing goals like conflict abatement, that are relevant for all the peace operations⁶.

Hirschmann (2012) did focus on higher-level learning to explain the shift in UN's peacekeeping exit strategies from an election-based approach in the 1990s to a peacebuilding approach in the 2000s. Organizational learning is the transformation of the available knowledge in a shared collective understanding. Hirschman conceptualizes higher-level learning as a three-step process of knowledge acquisition, interpretation and institutionalization based on frameworks of Haas (1990) and Huber (1991). These three steps are not easy to distinguish and can overlap, but do provide theoretical clarity. Knowledge acquisition consists of taking apart the problem. By performing boundary-spanning activities, members at the boundaries of the organization are looking for new knowledge and problem solutions. These activities are essential for learning as they form the interaction with the environment and filter the new knowledge that comes into the organization. Examples of knowledge acquisition are expert panels collecting new knowledge and information flows that come from the field level, where new knowledge can be acquired from the experiences of peacebuilding missions. The knowledge interpretation refers to linking the new knowledge to an issue and establishing new causal-chains (Haas, 1990). Previous strategies are reevaluated with the new knowledge. As result of the process of interpretation, new shared meanings are developed through reflection and internal debates to conclude whether or not the new knowledge is more appropriate to deal with the issues than the existing knowledge. During the knowledge institutionalization phase, the new and now consensual knowledge changes the organizational rules with as final goal to change the organizational practices. As the new knowledge becomes part of the organization's memory, through the process of socialization, the members become inducted by the new knowledge.

⁶ See Diehl, 2008; Druckman & Diehl, 2013 and Howard, 2008

In short, the bureaucratic form and culture explanation argues the dominant mechanisms explaining organizational change are situated within the organization. Weber identified the control of knowledge at the heart of bureaucratic power, making organizational learning most suitable to explain the mechanisms of organizational change, because it centralizes knowledge. Arguing the UN's belief in the effectiveness of elections during UN peacebuilding missions is linked to a higher belief in the greater good of democracy, Fiol and Lyles' (1985) higher-level learning should be applied to create an understanding on the so far unchanged belief in electoral processes. Hirschmann (2012) provides a more detailed framework to help understand the three-step process of higher-level learning from knowledge acquisition and interpretation to institutionalization.

In the next section, the third explanation of organizational change will be explored. The statist/functionalist approach looks for explanations of organizational change to material factors outside the organization, focusing on the influence of states.

2.1.3 STATIST/FUNCTIONALIST EXPLANATION

The traditional statist and functionalist explanations claim that states who desire power and cooperation, cause organizational change in IOs. Rationality and self-interest are key concepts in this way of thinking as it is embedded in neorealist and neoliberal institutionalist theories. Multiple scholars focus on institutions as a tool for Great Powers in order building and the creation of a balance of power.

Ikenberry (2001, p. 259) perceived the constitution and delegation of power to IOs from an order building perspective by powerful states that became the leading states after the major wars in 1815, 1919 and 1945 and what explains the increasing use of institutional strategies. In the institutional model of order building Great Powers want to conserve their power and create a legitimate order that reduces its requirement to coerce. The greater the asymmetries in power between states, the higher the risk weak states will be worried about domination and abandonment. The institution as umbrella for the world order will give states the confidence that power is restrained and all states abide their principals and play by the same rules. Weaker states will feel more secure and confident when they are better able to defend their interests against Great Powers now their power is restrained. Great Powers benefit from a more stable and legitimate order with greater compliance by subordinate states, resulting in less compliance costs for the Great Powers. In exchange for restraining their power, Great Powers are able to commit weaker states to certain

institutional commitments. The institution will not require active engagement of the Great Powers to realize and maintain a balance of power.

Keohane (1984, pp. 8-9) emphasizes that IO's construction and maintenance relies on the power of the political hegemony, just like the IO is built on the principles of the hegemony to suit the hegemony's interests. A declining hegemonic power will be visible in a decline in the IO's power. That the UN serves just as instrument of United States' interest is maybe most strongly visible, when the UNSC was actually disapproving the United States' plan to invade Iraq. Instead of seeing the decision of the UNSC as binding, the US enjoyed the freedom and power to invade Iraq anyway and get away with it (Malone, 2004, p. 139). In view of both Ikenberry and Keohane, the IO is just a tool for the powerful states or hegemony, not even considering any agency of the IO.

For a less one-sided story one can turn to the principal-agent approaches. The core of these approaches is the relationship between the principal and the agent, as is defined by Ross (1973, p. 134): *"One, designated as the agent, acts for, on behalf of, or as representative for the other, designated the principal, in a particular domain of decision problems."*⁷ The principal-agent approaches can be used to explain organizational change in IOs. A strong and a weak position can be identified. First, the strong position claims organizational change can be largely attributed to the decisions by states, like delegating new tasks to the IO or amend its contemporary tasks. This position tends towards the above mentioned school of thought supported by Ikenberry (2001) and Keohane (1984).

The principal-agent approach shows that organizational change is a difficult process, because of states' diverging interests and their fear to lose control over the IO (Thatcher & Sweet, 2002). States that are hesitant to delegate functions to the IO, with effective control mechanisms to be able to enforce states to commit to the regulations, will restrain the IO in fulfilling its purpose. The rationale of effective control includes substantive levels of discretion for IOs in the execution of their powers. If IOs' decisions can be overturned by states, its effectiveness will vanish. The IO is there to monitor if states comply to the policy commitments with means to force and sanction non-complying states. Monitoring mechanism can be established prior to delegating tasks to the IO, related to the agency design, legal instruments and administrative procedures. The other variant is not

⁷ For a further background on the principal-agent approaches and their explanations for why states constitute IOs see Sobol (2015), Tallberg (2002) and Thatcher & Sweet (2002)

established in advance, but is exerted by principals with hearings, scientific studies and field observations. But if the agent is monitored by its principals, by whom it is supposed to be monitored on complying behavior, it raises the questions about the IO's effectiveness and why the IO exists at all. In this case the ideas of Ikenberry (2001) and Keohane (1984) that IOs are an instrument for powerful states, seems a legitimate answer. It could potentially explain dysfunctional behavior in UN peacebuilding missions if powerful states in the UNSC try to strive for a mandate that also suits their own interests. What it could not explain convincingly is where the belief in elections as mechanism for peace and stability comes from other than the UNSC's interest in peace and stability.

Barnett & Finnemore (2004, p.42) argue that in reality organizational change without state interference is common. This is linked to the second position in the principal-agent approaches; the weak position, held by most principal-agent scholars, claims that IOs use their autonomy to broaden their variety of tasks within a zone of discretion. When they cross the border of these zones, the assumption is states will force the IO back within this zone by sanctions or rewriting the contract with the IO. To illustrate, EU membership is heavily criticized in multiple countries. The United Kingdom left the EU to regain its sovereignty and also in France EU-membership was one of the core subjects in the election campaigns of Macron and Le Pen. It shows the EU is bumping against the borders of the zone of discretion in the eyes of many people.

According to the weak position the IO enjoys autonomy enabling it to perform its tasks more effectively. But too much autonomy could lead to the IO exploiting this position for its own agenda. This touches up the core challenge in weak position of the principal-agent approach. How can states be sure the IO is pursuing what it is intended for instead of pursuing another agenda in its own interest? Not only the principals, but also the agents are rational utility maximizers (Sobol, 2015, p. 336). This creates tension between on the one hand delegating tasks and power to the IO to perform its tasks and on the other hand the risk that too much delegation leads to an IO pursuing its own agenda at expense of the states' agendas, called "shirking". Principals strive to minimize this behavior of "agency loss", to make the agent as effective as possible for its purposes (Tallberg, 2002, pp. 36).

The weak position completely lacks explanatory power for the question why the belief in elections persists, although it could provide an explanation why the UN remains focused on the holding of elections, despite it has not proven to be effective by looking at the tasks and autonomy given by its member states. The weak position and shirking have

explanatory power with regards to questions about the success of mandate implementation⁸ and why providing electoral assistance remains ineffective in terms of logistics and technicalities⁹ rather than the fundamental beliefs behind it as this thesis set out to do.

To summarize, the statist/functionalist argument centralizes the relation between the IO and its member states. The dominant view stems from a neorealist and neoliberal institutionalist view that IOs are a tool for powerful states to serve their own interests. The principal-agent approaches give a deeper understanding in the reasons behind the question why states shape IOs and what kind of challenges this brings up. The strong and weak position in the principal-agent approaches have been explored. It resulted in the conclusion that both seem to lack the tools to explain and conceptualize the UN's belief in elections. From different starting points, both explanations do provide similar explanatory power by tracing the origins of the UN's behavior, like the implementation of a peacebuilding mandate, back to the will of powerful states (strong position) or the zone of discretion given by the states (weaker position). In the next section the fourth and last explanation of organizational change given by Barnett and Finnemore (2004) will be explored.

2.1.4 WORLD POLITY EXPLANATION

The world polity theory rejects the realist notion of states as central actor from which one should understand the world. The world polity conceptualizes the cultural frame larger than states as it evolves around the notion that actors are "*entities constructed and motivated by enveloping frames*" (Boli & Thomas, 1997, p. 172). It not only constitutes actors, but also provides the normative frame through which actors understand the social world. Instead of centering the national development, world polity approaches centralize the institutional character of transnational development. The nature, behavior and meaning of actors, from individuals to organizations, are redefined and change as the cultural and institutional frames change. That does not mean states are not relevant in the world polity explanation. On the contrary, states are centralized in the world polity, because their action-

⁸ See Howard (2008)

⁹ Further reading on the weak position explaining dysfunctional behavior: Sobol (2015) on lack of incentives to obey, "slippage", when agents have incentives to shirk on its principals that failed to establish efficient control mechanisms and Thompson (2007) for information gaps favoring the agent

taking and interaction are substantially motivated by the general principals of the world culture (Meyer, Boli et al., 1997).

What makes the world polity theory valuable is its explanatory power about the structural isomorphism¹⁰ of national societies although there are huge differences between the states regarding resources and traditions. In the postwar era, the world polity became especially useful given the intensified cultural and organizational development within the polity (Meyer, Boli et al, 1997, p. 145). The world as a single polity or unitary social system has a growing distinct culture as it gets more and more interwoven with networks of exchange, competition and cooperation. It has mostly an ontological and cognitive character and consists of fundamentals and models concerning all the aspects of the social life (politics, business, religion, science, but also family and religion), rationalizing and organizing them. These sectors of social life are expected to meet general principles (for example: democratic values and institutions). The difficulty of the cultural frame is the fact that direct evidence of its existence is rare.

Meyer, Boli et al. (1997) identify the dominant actors in the world society, especially the hegemon, as shapers of frames. Here they borrow some explanatory tools of realists by acknowledging the role of power and the influence of the hegemonic state on the cultural structures¹¹. Besides states, transnational corporations (TNCs) and IOs are identified as dominant actors as they are defined to wield economic, political and military power. It can be claimed that dominant actors shape a cultural frame (Boli & Thomas, 1997, pp. 173). Boli & Thomas (1997, p. 172) focus on the less well conceptualized international NGOs who unlike states, TNCs or IOs do not wield economic, political and military power, but are concerned with “*enacting, codifying, modifying, and propagating world-cultural structures*”. NGOs can become leaders of social change by mobilizing around and elaborating world-principles by lobbying, criticizing and convincing states to act on those principles.

Important to understand is that the dynamics of the world culture are not just outcomes of the behavior of the dominant actors driven by self-interest. The world-cultural forces for

¹⁰ Also see Hawley (1968) identified isomorphism as the mechanism that drives the adaption of the world culture by different actors. Powell & DiMaggio (1991) make a distinction between coercive, normative and mimetic isomorphism.

¹¹ See Meyer, Boli et al. (1997) for a hypothetical case study of a newly discovered island and society to explain the working and existence of the world polity and how it would affect this society.

change itself are incorporated in the actors they construct. This means these actors are functioning as agents for collective goods, universal laws and broader meaning-systems of the world culture even though the actors themselves interpret their behavior as self-interested rationality. Institutions like the UN and the World Bank are a good example of an agent promoting democracy and liberal reforms that are part of the contemporary world culture. Therefore, the work of these institutions should not be perceived solely as actors' self-interested activity, but as action originated from and constituted by the world culture.

The more actors compete over influencing the cultural frame, the more dynamic the frame becomes. This competition is triggered by the conflicting dualities and inconsistencies within the world culture. Dualities like equality versus liberty, standardization versus diversity and efficiency versus individualization are visible from global to local level. Understanding the dynamics of and change in the world culture is not just a competition of power between actors, but originates from the inconsistencies and dualities in the cultural frames of the world culture itself, fueling the conflicts between the different actors on different levels in the world society.

What yet has remained mainly untouched is how organizational change should be explained from the world polity perspective. As argued, the cultural frame shapes the action of agents. A normative change in this frame will cause organizational change along this normative change. From the organizational perspective, it changes to stay relevant for its intended purpose. Staying relevant means it enlarges its chances to keep its legitimacy. Legitimacy should be perceived as a vital drive for organizations to change. When new norms become dominant in the world culture, it is up to the organizations to adopt these new norms in their policies. A world polity theorist will argue that the UN's policy has changed because it functions as agent for the principles of the world culture. A change in the world culture from democracy to communism would explain why the UN peacebuilding strategy changed. Such a change could be caused by the rise of a new communist hegemon that will translate into a changing world culture with communism as ideal state apparatus.

In short, the world polity explanation regards organizational change from a different perspective than the first three explanations, where an actor, state or organization, was centralized. Instead of an actor, this explanation centralizes the world culture, a normative frame, to understand organizational change. The most substantial advantage of this approach, increasing its credibility, is its ability to explain the structural isomorphism

visible in different actors, like states and organizations like the UN. It shows strong potential to explain the origins of the norm democracy, what has been missing in the other three explanations.

Its strong point can be perceived at the same time as its weakness. With a macrophenomenological perspective, the world polity could explain the drivers of organizational change from a macro-level perspective, but probably will have difficulty in identifying the mechanisms within the organization, for example the process of organizational learning described in 2.1.2 that are triggered by the macro-level drivers of organizational change, like a changing world culture. Valuing the world polity theory for what it can explain, it could be a potential starting point to understand the UN's dysfunctional behavior.

Section 2.2 will explore the four explanations of dysfunctional behavior. It will elaborate on the explanations of organizational change that provided the necessary tools and insights to analyze dysfunctional behavior. The final section 2.3 will conclude how these theories, and in which composition, will form the theoretical model of this thesis.

2.2 DYSFUNCTIONAL BEHAVIOR

In the previous section explanations for organizational change were explored. In these explanations first glimpses were visible of the fact that organizational change not necessarily means a rational logic change that improves the organization in its performance regarding its core mission. IR scholars have rarely investigated this dysfunctional behavior. Barnett and Finnemore (2004, p. 35) suspect this is, because their statist approach assumed IOs behave in line with state interests. In this framework dysfunctional behavior was therefore not perceived as such, but rather as an expression of this state-centric-utility-maximizing approach.

To explore different explanations to eventually create a framework to explain dysfunctional behavior, criteria have to be set to identify dysfunctional behavior. Barnett and Finnemore (2004, p.35) have three main criteria: *degree*, *perspective* and *kind*. *Degree* speaks for itself. Nothing in social life is perfect or completely inefficient. In an IO there is always some sort of noise in the system. What is meant with dysfunctional behavior is behavior that completely exceeds the minimal and always present noise in the system.

Perspective is a more interesting and significant one. IOs have multiple missions and audiences. To claim IOs' behavior is dysfunctional without considering perspective would be unjust to the complex reality of an IO. To understand the seemingly dysfunctional behavior, the focus should be on whose interests are served with this behavior and for whose interests it is dysfunctional. As stressed by Pfeffer & Salancik (1978) one should look at the power relations in the IO to understand its behavior. At last the *kind* of dysfunctionality is about the nature of the behavior, like the UN's obsession with the conduct of elections during peacebuilding missions, while it has proven not to be effective for the country's stability.

As earlier stated Barnett and Finnemore (2004) were focused on the internal cultural explanation, in this case the bureaucratic culture. The other three explanations lacked elaboration. In this section all four explanations will be explored (see table 2.2) to identify in how far these provide the relevant explanatory power for this thesis. In section 2.3 a final conclusion is drawn in the form of the construction of a model.

Table 2.2: Explanations of dysfunctional behavior in IOs

	Internal	External
Material	resource conflict	statist/functionalist
Cultural	bureaucratic form and culture	world polity

Source: Barnett and Finnemore, 2004, p. 36

2.2.1 RESOURCE CONFLICT EXPLANATION

Barnett & Finnemore (2004, p. 37) turn to the bureaucratic politics theory to understand the pursuit of material interest within organizations leading to dysfunctional behavior. Although this explanation does explain how dysfunctional behavior comes into existence, it is doubtful if it has enough explanatory power to address the UN's belief in elections, because of the material focus of this explanation versus the ideational character of the UN's observed dysfunctional behavior. On first hand, bureaucratic politics theory seems more relevant for explaining dysfunctional outcomes regarding task division within an organization.

The bureaucratic politics theory focuses on the 'bargaining game' that constitutes policies and is the opposite of rational behavior. The behavior relevant for an issue does not consist out of well consistent and coherent policy-decisions. Rather it should be perceived

as a collage of bargaining games of which the outcomes are determined by the skills of the players, who are driven by their organizational reputational and personal goals.

Following this line of reasoning from a material interest perspective in an organizational setting, decisions are made through competitive bargaining games over resources, like budget and staff and not through a rational process. This can benefit parts of the organization at the expense of the organization's overall goals (Allison, 1969).

Allison's (1969) drawn model of the bureaucratic politics theory is very blunt, misses detail on the decision-making process and therefore fails to provide analytical tools to analyze the mechanisms of dysfunctional behavior. It does not conceptualize terms like power or skills and one of the main heard critics is that it does not incorporate hierarchy amongst the players (Bendor & Hammond, 1992, pp. 316-317).

The use of information in the competition between bureaucratic units gives more insights in how this bargaining game leads to dysfunctional behavior. The competition between bureaucratic units competing over power and resources as elaborated in section 2.1.1 has implications that negatively influence the flows of information and their accuracy. Halperin et al. (2006, pp. 149-150) argue that units within an organization compete with each other to show that they are more effective than their competitors. This leads to units overstating their results and holding specific information back out of fear to lose resources. Patterns like these create flows of false information to the decision-makers that easily could lead to dysfunctional behavior¹².

Although the bureaucratic politics theory has its flaws, its argument is clear that decision making is a bargaining game rather than a rational process. Players in the bargaining game do not serve the organization's overall goals, but their unit's goals with the misuse of information. Overstating results or holding information back are methods used to be as competitive as possible vis-à-vis other units. Policy makers will as result base their decisions on false information. This creates a double loop for dysfunctional behavior.

As argued in the beginning of this section, the bureaucratic politics does not meet the analytical requirements to explain the UN's dysfunctional behavior, but could have explanatory power when it comes down to the dysfunctional behavior regarding task

¹² See Halperin et al. (2006, pp. 149-150) for the American navy example on the misuse of information

division within an organization. The bureaucratic politics theory does explain competition within the organization, but lacks the ability to explain the fundamental ideological base on which the UN's peacebuilding strategy is based. It can probably explain who is responsible for setting up a peacebuilding strategy or execute (components of) a peacebuilding mission, but cannot explain why fundamentals like the belief in elections persist at the expense of other possible political solutions intended to stabilize the country. The answer would probably not evolve further than it was the outcome of a bargaining game, which is not a satisfying answer for this thesis.

The next explanation focuses on the internal cultural dimensions of the organization to explain dysfunctional behavior.

2.2.2 BUREAUCRATIC CULTURE EXPLANATION

The internal culture of an organization can be cause of dysfunctional behavior as well. Barnett and Finnemore (2004) focused on this explanation, providing more theoretical handles to explore this explanation of dysfunctional behavior. In this explanation dysfunctional behavior is conceptualized as pathological behavior: the behavior in the internal culture that generates behavior that goes against the self-understood core goals of the organization.

Two of the core features of the bureaucracy (see section 2.1.2) are identified by Barnett and Finnemore (2004, p. 38) as possible causes for pathological behavior. First, the impersonality, the bureaucracy's organization around procedures and rules and second the expertise and strict division of labor. Barnett and Finnemore (2004, pp. 39-40) identify two pathologies stemming from these organizational characteristics that have potential explanatory power for the dysfunctional behavior of the UN: (1) *bureaucratic universalism* and (2) *insulation*.

(1) *Bureaucratic universalism*. As mentioned in 2.1.2, the bureaucracy has standard operating procedures and rules in place to respond effectively and predictably. This neglects the different local contexts in which the bureaucracy has to operate. This is justified by the belief that technical knowledge is transferrable to different contexts. However, in some cases the situation is not appropriate to apply the bureaucracy's universal rules and procedures. This can have disastrous effects. The danger lurks that bureaucratic universal rules become an end on itself and are automatically applied consecutive cases, while its efficiency was highly contested in the prior cases. Without

having the desired outcomes, the bureaucratic procedures and rules, originally constituted to operate efficient, become ineffective and counterproductive regarding the bureaucracy's overall mission.

(2) *Insulation*. The degree, in which organizations receive and process feedback, varies greatly. Insulation of feedback can result in pathological behavior, when flawed worldviews produce goals, procedures and classifications that routinely ignore information crucial to accomplish the organization's goals and create a tunnel vision. With the presence of a tunnel vision the universal rules and policies will not be questioned as long as they are in line with the organization's worldview and norms that shaped the tunnel vision. Barnett and Finnemore (2004) identify two causes of insulation for IOs.

The first is professionalism. Professional training of staff does not purely focus on technical knowledge, but also transmits the organization's worldviews and normative orientation to the staff resulting in an organizational worldview distinct from its environment that is shared by its staff.

The tunnel vision makes the staff unconsciously selective in the information they collect. It is likely the UN staff is not able to see the negative consequences of their universal rules and policies, because everything is translated into the organization's worldview and normative frame they have obtained and through which they understand the world. Information not in line with these frames will be overlooked or ignored. When the tunnel vision informs the staff that elections should be perceived as desired solution for fragile states, it makes sense for them to believe in the implementation of elections in fragile states where the UN intervenes. It makes this first cause of insulation a useful addition to the first pathology with potential explanatory power for the persistence of the belief in the holding of elections during UN peacebuilding missions.

This could be enforced by the second cause of insulation. The second cause of insulation is the lack or absence of external pressures for the IO in the form of competition. With the UN as great example, IOs are more valued for what they represent, then for their results. The UN represents the whole international community. It does not have another authority as direct competition. Of course there are regional organizations like the AU and EU, who also have missions focusing on peace and security are representing parts of the international community and NGOs that work on stabilizing countries and building institutions. But as representor of the whole international community with the influence that comes with it, the UN does not know any competition. Competition would have created

incentives to perform as effective as possible to prove its legitimacy. Without competition the legitimacy will not be questioned quickly, resulting in a lack of incentives to make radical changes to improve the organization's effectivity, such as letting go of the belief that implementing elections is crucial for stabilizing fragile states.

As argued in section 2.1.2 organizational learning is the most promising concept to use in the bureaucratic culture explanation, because it centralizes the role of knowledge and knowledge was identified by Weber at the heart of the bureaucratic power. There is a duality in the relationship between pathological behavior and organizational learning. On the one hand, Hirschmann (2012, p. 369) argues that organizational learning has the capacity to address pathological behavior, while pathological behavior and the characteristics of the bureaucracy triggering the behavior also obstruct organizational learning.

Fiol and Lyles (1985) argued bureaucracies in general tend to be very stable and unchanging. To indicate in how far higher-level learning is obstructed, the above explored pathologies will be evaluated with the three contextual factors identified by Fiol and Lyles affecting the probability learning will occur (see section 2.1.2). Relevant for the first contextual factor, culture, is the UN's tunnel vision shaped by worldviews and norms that are distinct from its larger environment. This provides the UN's staff with interpretive frames from which they generate meaning about the environment they operate in. In this way, the culture of the UN gives direction to organizational change and learning. For organizational learning in other directions a breakthrough in this set of worldviews and norms is needed. It is a difficult barrier to overcome as it threatens and fundamentally clashes with the existing culture. In this light, it seems unlikely organizational learning will occur towards the understanding that elections during UN peacebuilding missions is not contributing to stability in the targeted fragile states.

Obstruction of learning is reinforced by the structure of the UN. The bureaucracy is founded to perform complex social tasks which are broke down in repetitive tasks based on universal rules and procedures. Besides, the strict hierarchical structure focused on expertise narrows the vision of bureaucrats to their own realm of work. This mechanic structure of the UN provides only limited space for the dynamics within the organization that stimulate learning. This includes the cognitive space for learning to occur. The high

information demand within bureaucracies causes a high cognitive workload. As consequence there is a lack of cognitive space which is needed for learning.

Where the UN itself seems to be too stable for organizational learning to occur, the opposite can be claimed about its environment, the third contextual factor. Although this thesis has a critical stance against the UN peacebuilding strategy, it goes without saying that the environment where the UN peacebuilding missions are deployed in is highly complicated and dynamic. It might be open for discussion in how far higher-level learning on fundamentals, like the UN's belief in elections, can be obstructed by such an environment. Intuitively, this seems more relevant for lower-level learning focused on the UN's routines on the ground, like disarmament, security reform or handling logistics. Nevertheless, the environmental issues should be mentioned as it complicates UN peacebuilding.

Interpreting the environment as the existence of possible competition for the UN it has already been concluded with the pathology insulation, that the UN lacks any form of competition. In this sense, the environment is too static to incentivize the UN to be as efficient and competitive as possible. Without external pressures in the form of competition it is less likely organizational learning will take place.

In short, it can be concluded that the pathologies seriously limit the probability organizational learning occurs. Important to remember is that learning is conceptualized as a three-step process. As already mentioned in section 2.1.2., the process of learning could partially occur. As example people at the boundaries of the UN could acquire new knowledge on the effect of the holding of elections in fragile states. This does not necessarily mean this knowledge automatically will be interpreted and institutionalized.

It seems likely the mechanic, hierarchic and information demanding structure identified within the UN is less prominent at the borders of the organization where new knowledge is acquired, leaving more room for dynamics that are more stimulating to acquire knowledge. Because the interpretation and institutionalization of knowledge should occur more centralized within the UN where this mechanic and strict structure is fully present, the probability that these steps will be completed seems nihil.

In conclusion, the bureaucratic culture explanation gives clear insights in the dynamics of pathological behavior. Some of the characteristics that make the bureaucracy effective in performing complex social tasks also result in a cumbersome organization with a tunnel

vision based on hardly changing worldviews and norms that are used by its staff as interpretive frames to make sense of the world. The mechanic organizational structure and fixed routines, combined with a lack of incentives in the form of competition keep the organization's worldviews and norms unchallenged, even if they are pathological for its overall mission. Higher-level learning is obstructed by the very same characteristics and pathologies that are supposed to change through learning.

While the bureaucratic culture explanation offers substantial tools to analyze and understand dysfunctional behavior within the organization, it lacks explanatory power to address where the norm of democracy as ideal state apparatus for fragile states comes from, necessary to identify the origins of why the UN is so obsessed with the implementation of elections. As the bureaucratic culture explanation focused on the internal dynamics of the UN and could not provide answers on the origins, it is necessary to explore the external explanations. This seems to be supported by the observation that the norm of democracy as ideal state apparatus is not solely present within the UN, but seems to originate from a larger context. This argument can be supported by the presence of democratic states in the world, but also the development cooperation given by the West and institutions like the EU and the World Bank that is linked to different types of conditionalities such as democratic reforms and good governance. Another indication is the EU's democracy promotion strategy. The EU is global leading actor in sending Election Observation Missions to multiple countries in the world and observes if the electoral processes are not obstructed (EU External Action, 2016). Explaining the presence of this norm within the UN, as part of a larger context is outside the explanatory range of the bureaucratic culture explanation.

The next two external explanations could provide an extra dimension to the explanation of the UN's dysfunctional about the origins of the worldviews and norms existing within the UN. In the next section the realist and neoliberal institutionalist explanation will be explored.

2.2.3 STATIST/FUNCTIONALIST EXPLANATION

Realists and neoliberal institutionalists attribute dysfunctional behavior to material sources outside the organization. Mainly states' preferences and constraints limit the policy choices the IO can make. It sometimes means the IO has to choose between bad and worse policies, explaining its dysfunction (Barnett & Finnemore, 2004).

The state-centric approach of this explanation resulted in the conclusion that both the strong and weak position in the principal-agent approach explored in section 2.1.3 do not offers viable tools to UN's dysfunctional behavior.

Among others, Sobol (2015) and Thompson (2007) identify a gap in the principal-agent literature that is mainly blaming the agent for dysfunctional behavior, but tends to overlook the incentives for principals to cause dysfunctional behavior, the strong position in the principal-agent approach. This agency blaming has been adopted blindly by IR scholars. Sobol (2015) labels this antithetical behavior of slippage as 'pathological delegation': the structure of the delegation and the features of the principal-agent contract provide incentives for the principals to pursue own interests undermining the agent's work. But also this alternative explanation would look how the UN's behavior is influenced by its agents rather than addressing the underlying beliefs.

Therefore, it must be concluded that the statist/functionalist explanation does not provide relevant explanations for the UN's belief in elections. As stressed before in section 2.1.3 its main problem is it cannot conceptualize the UN's belief in elections. The underlying cultural structures to understand where the interest in elections originates from are neglected.

The next section will elaborate on the world polity model that does focus on these underlying cultural structures as shown in section 2.1.4.

2.2.4 WORLD POLITY EXPLANATION

Section 2.1.4 explained how the world polity model centralizes the normative frames that form the world culture instead of a specific actor to explain organizational change. Following this reasoning, dysfunctional behavior of the UN should be identified in the connection it has with the normative frames.

Two main causes for dysfunctional behavior resulting from the world polity model can be identified. The first reason is that IOs search for symbolic legitimacy rather than efficiency. This could result in IO behavior more focused on the legitimacy criteria of the cultural frame, rather than on efficient implementation of its core mission. By doing so, the IO gains resources provided by its member states, stability and increased prospects of survival (Meyer & Rowan, 1977). This could provide useful leads to answer the research question of this thesis.

Secondly, as already stressed in section 2.1.4 the world polity is full of contradictions. Barnett & Finnemore (2004, p. 37) give the example of the liberal world polity that has several defining principles like human rights, democracy and markets that could interfere at any moment with each other. It makes the world polity ambiguous about missions given the often conflicting functional, normative and legitimacy imperatives. Because the IOs are embedded in this world polity, it reproduces these contradictions leading to dysfunctional behavior.

The latter cause of dysfunctional behavior does remind to Weick's (1995) politics of interpretation (see section of 2.1.2). On the one hand this commonality shows that the four different explanations in the matrix (table 2.2) should not be seen as totally separate explanations, but to a certain extent as interconnected ones. But more importantly it indicates that this cause of dysfunctional behavior is not relevant for the question raised in this thesis. It focuses on the conflicting elements of an IO's mission and therefore would be very relevant for questions about effectiveness in carrying out a certain task, but not to answer the question why an ineffective element, like the belief in implementing elections, keeps on persisting within the UN.

The former cause on the contrary gives more leads to answer the research question of this thesis, because it links the behavior of an IO directly to the presence of a cultural frame in this case focused on democracy as ideal state apparatus. By centralizing the IO's legitimacy, it has potential explanatory power about the persistent belief in elections present in the UN, despite its proven inefficiency. What should be added and emphasized in this causal argument is the presence and working of the cultural frame. Meyer & Rowan (1977) do stress the difference between the policies and practices focused on symbolic legitimacy versus the ones focused on efficient policies. What they not distinguish is that according to the world polity explanation the policies and practices of symbolic legitimacy are perceived by the organization as most efficient. This finds its roots in the fact that the cultural frame is deep embedded in social life, favoring a certain world view, but also creating a blind spot or even a stigma on alternative options. As stated in section 2.1.4 the world-cultural forces are incorporated in the actors they construct and interpret their actions as motivated by self-interest. This shows exactly how the presence of a cultural frame can remain very persistent in social life.

To summarize, the world polity argument explaining dysfunctional behavior is not just about the IO striving for symbolic legitimacy and choosing to neglect efficiency, but goes beyond this mechanism. The symbolic legitimacy is enforced by the fact that it informs actors 'under the spell' of the cultural frame about the rationality and self-interest character of their actions. In conclusion, the world polity explanation does provide useful explanatory power to explain both where the idea of democracy as ideal state apparatus stems from as well as how this can lead to dysfunctional behavior of actors in the world polity.

With the exploration all four explanations of dysfunctional behavior, the concluding remarks section will look for middle ground on the cultural explanations of dysfunctional behavior which provided the most useful tools to explore the UN's dysfunctional behavior.

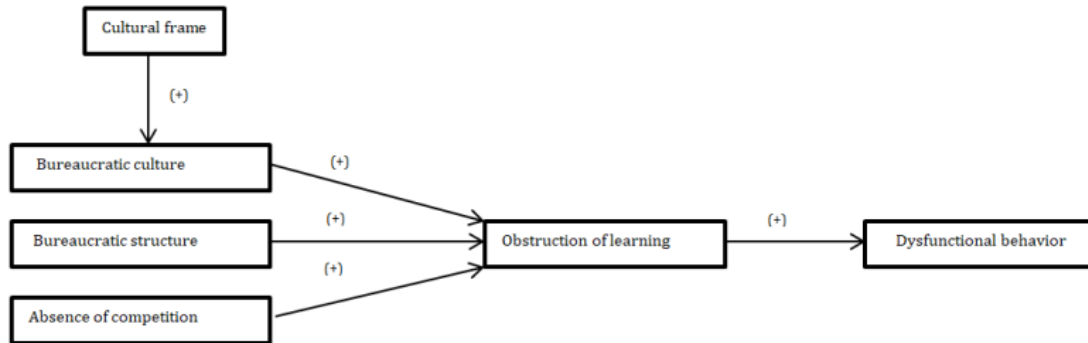
2.3 CONCLUDING REMARKS

In the previous sections Barnett and Finnemore's (2004) matrixes of organizational change and dysfunctional behavior have been explored. The final goal was to test if these explanations also have explanatory power on the question why the UN keeps on believing in the effectiveness of conduct of elections during peacebuilding missions in Africa, while this is not contributing to the whole purpose of these missions: bringing peace and stability. The two material explanations did not provide relevant explanations to analyze the fundamentals of the UN's belief. These explanations would be more suitable when the success of the UN peacebuilding missions would be assessed with parameters such as to what extent the mandate is implemented.

The question now rising up is how to both explanations can be connected to construct a single framework to explain UN's dysfunctional behavior. As argued in this chapter, separately both explanations do not provide all the tools to explain the whole picture of the UN's dysfunctional behavior. This thesis opts for a top-down approach wherein the cultural frame of the world polity explanation is the starting point to understand the existence of the belief in democracy as ideal state apparatus. The dynamics explaining the obstruction of organizational learning as elaborated in the bureaucratic culture explanation should be interpreted as dynamics primarily directed by the cultural frame and secondary as a result of certain intra-organizational dynamics. Figure 2.1 shows the conceptual model stemming from the two cultural explanations explored in this chapter. The arrows stand for the causal mechanisms and the "+" indicates an increasing or

enforcing effect of the one variable on the other variable, while the “-” would have meant a decreasing or weakening effect.

Figure 2.1: Conceptual model of IO’s dysfunctional behavior



In the next chapter the methodology of this thesis will be explained and the conceptual model will be further specified in line with the case study of this thesis.

CHAPTER 3

METHODS

In this chapter the used methods in the analysis will be discussed. The analysis is based on qualitative methods to gain in-depth knowledge about how despite all the negative signals, the UN keeps believing in the necessity of elections with the expectation it stimulates the process of stabilization in fragile states. With the focus on the role of ideas and norms directing actor's behavior qualitative methods provide the most explanatory power. Stepwise the different elements of the analysis will be addressed, starting with the research methodology.

3.1 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This section will be explained what research method is used to come to an answer on the research question: Why is the UN so obsessed with the implementation of democratic elections during their peacebuilding missions in the CAR, DRC and Somalia? To answer the research question, the peacebuilding missions in the CAR, DRC and Somalia will be analyzed, using a qualitative method for multiple reasons.

First of all, the type of research question already implicates a qualitative type of answer, because the nature of the why-question is open-ended. Statistical methods will therefore most likely not suit the results of the analysis. Of course it is possible to use quantitative methods, when inquiries or other types of data are categorized in groups on which statistical analysis can be deployed to look for correlation or causation, but these categories will be highly arbitrary and hard to define.

The choice use qualitative research is enforced by the second reason that the core concepts are characterized by a post-modern ontology as they focus on the 'world of ideas'. Core concepts like the cultural frame and organizational learning, are derived from the two cultural explanations of Barnett and Finnemore's matrix (see table 2.2) that were found relevant for this thesis. These explanations centralize the influence of ideas on the social

reality. Although the study of organizational learning it is not uncommon to use quantitative methods, it lacks the explanatory power to uncover complex processes in organizational learning (Easterby-Smith et al., 2009, p. 444), which relates to the third reason to use a qualitative method.

This third reason is that the prime purpose of this research is to be able to generalize, but rather to create a deeper understanding of the single phenomenon under study (the obsession with elections) visible in one organization (the UN). Qualitative methods suit this purpose best. It does not mean that this research could not create insights that are applicable on other cases of IOs and the influence of the cultural frame, but it is not this research's main purpose.

3.1.1 PROCESS TRACING

Given the fact that this thesis attempts to uncover the working of a complex social phenomenon, process tracing is the most suitable qualitative method. Many scholars believe unraveling causal mechanisms is a theoretical practice and not a statistical one. Gerring (2007, p. 173) argues the causal relation between the X and Y is often opaque for which process tracing provides the best tools to identify and analyze the causal relations. Process tracing gives the opportunity to create a deeper theoretical understanding of the causal relationship, like its working and direction. This process starts with the researcher observing an association between the X and Y. In order to look if there is causation the researcher looks for mechanisms between the cause (X) and effect (Y). This exploration of causation is what Mahoney (2004, p. 89) identified as the most powerful to technique to overcome the uncertainty about whether the observed association is causal or a spurious product of an antecedent variable.

With process tracing multiple types of evidence are collected, also meaning that individual observations are not comparable. Process tracing often comprehends longer causal chains ($X_1 - X_2 - X_{...} = Y$), which is exactly what can be expected in this thesis looking back to the previous chapter. It is imaginable the process starting at the cultural frame consists out of longer causal chains all the way down to the peacebuilding mission strategy, because it is too simplistic to argue the cultural frame is directly affecting the UN's peacebuilding strategy. Besides, the ability to use different types and pieces of evidence for analysis will enable the researcher to make a more convincing argument for the existence of

a cultural frame and the causal relationship with the UN peacebuilding strategy given the fact that direct evidence for the cultural frame's existence is rare.

3.1.2 VALIDITY

For the validity of this research it is crucial to be able to prove the observed relationship between the independent and dependent variables in the conceptual model is causal. With this research focusing on exploring and creating a deeper understanding of dysfunctional behavior related to UN peacebuilding, the primary concern is the internal validity of this research. Because this research is not an experiment that meets the *ceteris paribus* conditions, the main threat to the internal validity is how to rule out confounding variables for the observed Y. Gerring (2007, pp. 181-184) provides several criteria for process tracing to establish internal validity. The first criterion is the creation of a model out of the causal chain in an explicit way. The value of this model lays in the fact that the author is forced to make a precise and explicit statement of his argument providing clarity about the assumed causal relationships. The conceptual model based on the theoretical frame was already presented in section 2.3 and will be further specified in section 3.3.1 to meet this criterion. Secondly, the researcher should be able to prove each single step in the model and in addition give an assessment about the relative uncertainty of each step and the model as a whole. This is predominantly relevant for the concluding chapter 5 of this thesis, when the conceptual model will be evaluated with the results of chapter 4. A third criterion is the use of different types of sources. A greater confidence in the validity of this research can be placed, when all these different types of sources indicate the existence of a causal relationship as presented in the conceptual model. The use of different types of sources could overcome potential bias in one source, for instance the interviews. Section 3.3 will elaborate on the different used data sources and the possible danger of biases. If these criteria are met, process tracing offers increased internal validity versus other research designs for the reasons mentioned in section 3.1.1.

The external validity of this research is more complicated. While process tracing creates a deeper understanding of the causality, it does not directly give confidence in the generalizability of the results, like statistical analyses do. A risk for the ability to generalize the results of this thesis is that a single case study easily could result in a list of causal relationships leading to the observed outcome, without adding anything new to existing

bodies of literature or creating new ones. Generalizability of this kind of process tracing studies is nihil. Bennett & Checkel (2014a, p. 269) observe that overall process tracing studies have too modest theoretical objectives, focusing on delivering a coherent account of a specific case forgetting about its generalizability and theory testing and building. What has been endorsed by prominent scholars in political science is the focus on middle-theories as the way forward in contemporary political science. These theories are positioned between general theories that are too remote to account for and test what is observed in social life and detailed descriptions that do not allow any generalization. Middle theories produce partial generalizability in for instance a particular period or of time or a particular region. To produce a middle theory it is therefore prerequisite that a research is strongly embedded in a theoretical frame. This is the way forward for process tracing and this thesis that has been embedded strongly in the theoretical frame of IO dysfunctional behavior presented in chapter 2 that has been translated into a conceptual model.

Establishing causal relationships in this method it cannot be done without resorting to some conjecture. Therefore, Gerring (2007) argues process tracing is ideally used in addition with another method. Bennett & Checkel (2014a) stress the combination of quantitative methods with process tracing increases the external validity. That would mean that this thesis focusing purely on process tracing lacks the ideal methodological foundations for providing external validity.

To be able to produce generalizable results in the analysis, the study of the case itself inductively could provide a way out. Bennett & Checkel (2014a) argue that in this way the external validity could be increased when researchers do not know to what extent their results are generalizable over which exact population or without a clear theory about the working of the causal mechanisms. According to Bennet & Checkel (2014a) the conceptual model does not necessarily need to be tested in other cases. An alternative to increase its generalizability is to address the equifinality; the alternative causal pathways that could explain the observed outcome. A beginning of such an attempt has already been made in chapter 2, where besides the cultural explanations also two material explanations were explored and assessed against the observed outcome, the UN's dysfunctional behavior.

In conclusion, process tracing provides the tools to explore its external validity. Therefore, if the observed causal relationships displayed in the conceptual model are proven valid, this thesis could be able to make a contribution to the theory accumulation on IO dysfunctional behavior.

A last argument in favor of the external validity of this research, but not directly related to process tracing, is the fact that a typical case study has been selected, which will be further explained in the next section. Schimmelfennig (2014) states that in order to maximize external validity while checking internal validity the typical case study is the best case study to pick, because it contains cross-case similarities and therefore is 'typical' and representative for the whole population. The next section will elaborate on the selection of the typical case study.

3.2 CASE SELECTION

On a more abstract level this thesis explores how a cultural frame shapes dysfunctional behavior of an IO in its policymaking. As mentioned in the previous section this thesis has an exploratory character. With at its core the cultural explanations of Barnett & Finnemore (2004), the causal chain from the presence of a cultural frame until the dysfunctional behavior will be explored. Gerring (2007, p. 41) argues subjectivity of the case study allows for the generation and testing of a great number of hypotheses, fitting well with the longer causal chain link that will be established with the process tracing method. Furthermore, the definitions of cases, variables and outcomes have to be less fixed compared to a cross-case study giving more space to exploring the causal chain. Altogether, the case study, provides the best possibilities to explore and model the causal chain of dysfunctional behavior.

In this thesis a typical case study will be executed in an inductive manner. Gerring (2007, p. 49) explains that typical case studies can be used when the cases are especially representative for the phenomenon under study: the IOs' dysfunctional behavior. Typical does not necessarily refer to the UN as typical IO, because with hundreds of IOs currently existing, with different mandates with a focus varying from monetary and military to environmental issues, a typical IO is hard to define. Rather the dysfunctional behavior can be defined as typical. As argued in chapter 1, this thesis starts from the observation that UN's belief in the implementation of elections seems to be untouched despite the failures of these missions to provide at least a progressive line towards peace and stability. This persisting belief in a failing peacebuilding mission defies rational logic as was integrated in Barnett & Finnemore's (2004) definition of dysfunctional behavior.

The failure of peacebuilding strategy focused on implementing elections became clearly visible in the three observations of this case study: the UN peacebuilding missions in the CAR, DRC and Somalia. Chapter 1 illustrated the tremendous issues regarding peace and stability plagued these countries. Not surprisingly all three countries are ranked in the top 10 of the Fragile State Index 2017 with the CAR on the third place, DRC on the seventh place and Somalia on the second place (Fund for Peace, 2017). What makes these cases more interesting is that these states are in different stages of the implementation of elections. Somalia is still waiting for its first one person, one vote elections in 2021, the CAR had its first elections held in the December 2015 and the DRC already had two elections and is now over time for its third elections, because Kabila so far refuses to leave his presidential seat.

From a methodological perspective the typical case selection is desirable for this research, because of the exploratory character of this research. The previous section already mentioned Gerring's (2007) argument that the typical case study maximizes the external validity while checking the internal validity. If the hypotheses of this thesis will hold in this case, they are likely to hold in other cases of dysfunctional behaving IOs.

The inductive character of the case study fits this research well, because as earlier mentioned, Meyer, Boli et al. (1997) argue that direct evidence of an overarching cultural frame is hard to find and the existence of the phenomenon only can be demonstrated by an argument based on specific observations that together make a case for the existence and working of this cultural frame. This is exactly the path inductive research normally follows; making a generalization about a phenomenon based on specific observations. To analyze how the causal process leading to this phenomenon (UN's dysfunctional behavior), multiple proto-hypotheses can be used. Bennett & Checkel (2014b, p. 18) argue that some of these proto-hypotheses quickly prove to be dead ends while other become plausible and are worthy of more rigorous testing. This process has already been visible in chapter 2, where two of the four explored explanations of dysfunctional behavior were proven useful to explain the phenomenon under study. This process continues by testing the conceptual model in the chapter 4. A last characteristic of the induction is that the conclusion is not logically inevitable as with deduction, but is rather a matter of probability which fits well with the reality that direct evidence on the existence of the cultural frame is rare.

3.3 DATA ANALYSIS

This section focuses on what data is analyzed from the different four different types of sources that were used in this analysis:

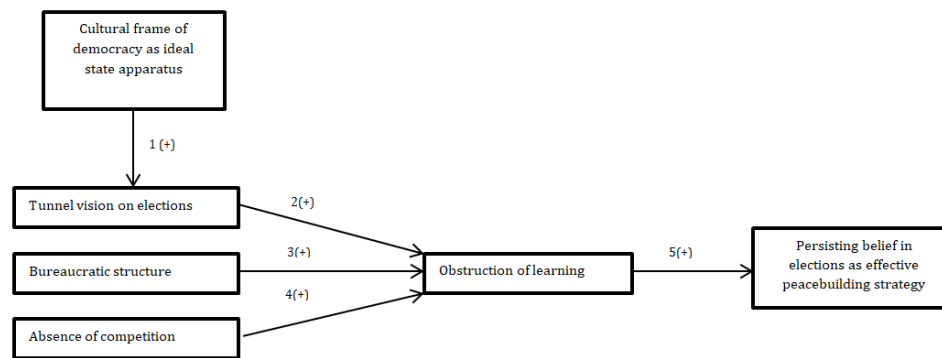
- Interviews
- Academic literature
- UN documents (mandates, news items, resolutions)
- Online sources

Furthermore this section will explain how data will be used and interpreted. Where needed, justifications for choices made in the data analysis will be given. The first section will focus on the conceptual model and the operationalization after which the analysis of the data will be further explained.

3.3.1 CONCEPTUAL MODEL & OPERATIONALIZATION

Stemming from the theoretical frame a conceptual model has been drawn in section 2.3 explaining the IO's dysfunctional behavior. This section will further specify the model and apply it on the case of the UN's dysfunctional behavior with a persisting belief in the effectivity of elections during peacebuilding missions. This model presents the assumed causal relations that should give answer on the question why the implementation of elections never seems to be questioned seriously within the UN bureaucracy. In figure 3.1 the model is displayed followed by explanations of the multiple steps drawn in the model. The numbering is not necessarily based in a chronological order, but merely follows the explanation from the cultural frame on the global level all the way down to the organizational level, where democracy is perceived as ideal state apparatus. Just as in figure 2.1 the arrows stand for the causal mechanisms and the "+" indicates an increasing or enforcing effect of the one variable on the other variable, while the "-" would have meant a decreasing or weakening effect.

Figure 3.1: Conceptual model of UN's dysfunctional behavior



The model is operationalized in the following matter:

(1) The dominant cultural frame of democracy as ideal state apparatus is embedded in the DNA of the UN since its founding, because the internalization of this frame increases the UN's symbolic legitimacy. Democracy, but more importantly the belief in elections becomes a core part of the UN's culture consisting out of worldviews and norms through which the UN's staff understands the world. The internalization of this cultural frame should be visible in the UN's overall mission, agenda and documents on peacebuilding for instance written by the Secretary-General (SG).

(2) With the cultural frame embedded in the UN's DNA, it generates a tunnel vision on the implementation of elections as mechanism for bringing peace and stabilizing fragile states. This tunnel vision gives direction to and learning and is transmitted to its staff with the process of professionalism. The tunnel vision obstructs learning on the mismatch between elections and fragile neo-patrimonial states, because it clashes with the world view and norms that shaped the tunnel vision. Main indicator will be the interviews, wherein the UN staff expresses rhetoric reflecting the belief in democracy and where the problem with realizing stability is not linked to the conduct elections and that it is beyond imagination to come up with alternatives for elections to establish national leadership.

(3) The structure of the UN is highly mechanic and static. The high cognitive workload and information demanding structure leave no cognitive room for learning to take place. In a way the UN is locked up in its own thinking by its structure, which should reflect in interviews with UN staff experiencing the existence of such a static structure and a high workload.

(4) The absence of competition that could lead a peacebuilding mission causes a lack of incentives from external pressures to strive for optimal efficiency. Instead the UN is more worried about their symbolic legitimacy position by implementing policies that support the overarching cultural frame of democracy as ideal state apparatus. Direct measurements are hard to find, apart from identifying other potential peacebuilding actors with a different vision on the necessity of implementing elections. Symbolic legitimacy could become visible in the interviews or UN documents that refer to the fact that they do what the UNSC stipulated in the mandate what the peacebuilding mission should do, which does not include the critical assessment on the effectivity of the goals stipulated in the mandate.

(5) The obstruction of learning means the UN's dysfunctional behavior of keeping perceiving the implementation of transitional elections as effective peacebuilding strategy remains unchallenged. Without the process of organizational learning informing the UN's staff about the inefficiency of implementing elections in fragile states, the frame through which they make sense of the world stays the same. A clear measurement of obstructed learning is when the interviewed UN staff is stuck in their thinking on elections as necessary component of rebuilding a fragile state, not identifying its downfalls or be able to consider alternative ideas about creating a national leadership in another way.

3.3.2 INTERVIEWS

The interviews are the central element in this analysis. The most interviews were held with UN staff members mostly working or previously working at the missions MINUSCA, MONUSCO and UNSOM. These interviews are the main source of this thesis and crucial to analyze the presence of a tunnel vision within the UN, learn more about the bureaucratic structure to finally observe in how far organizational learning takes place or is obstructed. As Fiol & Lyles (1985) stated, the process of organizational learning happens at the individual staff member-level. Therefore, a researcher has to rely on the statements and actions of the staff to analyze if organizational learning (partly) occurred.

Reaching out to UN staff required some time and patience. During an internship at the Dutch MFA in the Horn of Africa division various contacts were made with people relating to the topic of this thesis working at the AU and the UN of which only the former Chief Commander of MONUSCO was willing to speak with the researcher.

The response via official channels of communication on the websites of the missions and other UN units, related to Africa its development, peace and security challenges, was very limited¹³. Also emails send to some NGOs¹⁴ remained unanswered. Because of the disappointing response, another strategy was adopted. With a stronger focus on finding respondents working at the missions themselves, multiple UN officials were contacted to ask for their participation in an interview. This was done contacts at the Dutch MFA, but more successfully by reaching out on LinkedIn. The more personal approach resulted in a higher response. Finally, through the snowball effect, additional UN officials were found willing to participate in this research. As example a former MINUSCA electoral officer was interviewed, who just started working at UNSOM, making it easy to arrange an interview with an electoral officer who already had worked at UNSOM for a longer time.

Other interviews were held with multiple officials at the Dutch MFA and a researcher in DRC. Various respondents requested for anonymity to a certain extent, for varying reasons ranging from security to the fact they could not speak for the whole organization they were working at. One respondent wanted to stay completely anonymous meaning no transcripts of these interviews were included in appendix 1. Eventually, the aim was to have a minimum of two interviews related to one peacebuilding mission and one at the Department of Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO) in New York. Unfortunately despite multiple attempts via a contact at the Dutch MFA nobody working at the DPKO was found available for an interview. Also questions raised with emails remained unanswered, because of busy schedules. In the final stages of the thesis Professor Mushtaq Khan of the University of London and Professor Ian Johnstone of the Tufts University were emailed with questions about their experience with the UN's attempts to reach out to the epistemic communities advocating alternatives for the focus on elections. Both scholars came up with alternatives for the strong emphasis on implementing elections, as part of the UN peacebuilding strategy. Professor Ian Johnstone did respond on the central question about the level in which the UN did reach out to epistemic communities, especially those focusing on more deliberative approaches towards UN peacebuilding.

¹³ Emails were sent to the UNDP in Somalia, PSBO, OSAA, UNOCA, MONUSCA and MONUSCO (also see appendix 3 for their position in the organization)

¹⁴ Crisis Group and Security Council Report




The interviews were held semi-structured. The topics were identified beforehand, but without fully structuring the interview question by question. In appendix 2 an used example of an interview template is shown. The interviews were recorded which were used to make transcripts. In the next section about the operationalization, explanations will be given how these interviews are analyzed. In the next section will elaborate on the coding scheme used to analyze the interviews that were held.

3.3.2.1 CODING SCHEME INTERVIEWS













In order to analyze the interviews in a structured way, a coding scheme has been set up (see table 3.1, p. 56). This coding scheme is predominantly based on the X-variables of the conceptual model that together explain the persistent belief of the UN bureaucracy in implementing democracy in fragile states. In addition categories have been added during the analysis of the interviews, when it was found necessary. The different codes will be marked with a different color. Overall the coding scheme is not very complex, but helped the researcher in creating oversight and carry out this analysis efficiently.

Table 3.1: Coding scheme interviews


Cultural frame

Broad consensus on implementing democracy in peacebuilding community	
UNSC prioritizes restoring sovereignty by implementation of elections	
Intervened states request democratic elections	

Bureaucratic culture

Tunnel vision - Democracy brings stability - Democracy needed for legitimate government/sovereignty - Democracy more than elections - The people want elections - Problems with implementing democracy not perceived as reason not to hold elections - No alternatives for democracy - UN training focusing on UN's core values - Democracy is contested	       
UN is just here to assist on request	
Ineffective evaluation Success elections technically measured Other factors (political, violence) measured as well Different measurements of success within UN	  





Bureaucratic structure

High cognitive workload	
--------------------------------	---

No competition

Inefficiency stemming from no competition	
--	---

Obstruction of learning

Higher-level learning - Knowledge acquisition - Knowledge interpretation - Knowledge institutionalization	  
Lower-level learning	

3.3.2.2 DATA REJECTING THE CONCEPTUAL MODEL

This coding scheme represents almost solely features of what is expected to be found in the interviews supporting the assumed causal relations in the conceptual model. Nevertheless it cannot be ruled out the interviews will present matters differently from the conceptual model.

Findings that could reject the conceptual model will show that there is no consensus at all within the UN about the efficiency of implementing elections during peacebuilding missions. Instead the interviews show the effectivity and implementation of elections is heavily contested within the UN organs. Instead of perceiving elections as crucial part of the peacebuilding strategy it is acknowledged by a substantial part of the organization that elections so far have not proven effective in realizing peace and stability.

This would indicate that the previous tunnel vision on elections has been challenged within the organization through the process of organizational learning. In this case, interviews should reflect that substantial processes of knowledge acquisition are ongoing throughout the whole organization and are or will be followed by knowledge interpretation. When interviews indicate only sporadic knowledge acquisition by some individuals in the organization, it will probably not lead to knowledge interpretation (yet) and will therefore not be interpreted as a rejection of the assumption in the conceptual model that organizational learning within the UN bureaucracy is obstructed. The final process of organizational learning, knowledge institutionalization, would show the new vision on elections is not only present within the UN, but also accepted and is changing the organizational rules and practices. Even if the first two phases of organizational learning will be visible, the last phase will almost certainly not, because the observed missions in this thesis show no signs of a change in organizational rules and practices. Although the interviews could provide a lot of useful information there are some challenges and difficulties that will be addressed in the next section.

3.3.2.3 CHALLENGES AND DIFFICULTIES WITH INTERVIEWS

The main problem with interviews is the bias it contains. The critical stance of this thesis against UN peacebuilding could provoke a defensive attitude during interviews. Critical questions about for example the strategy of the mission could be taken personally by staff that worked for these missions. Or questions about whether or not there is disagreement within the organization about the implementation of elections could be trivialized in order

to 'protect' the organization and its reputation. A defensive response could lead to a bias in the answers ignoring the problems the missions faced and obstructing the ability to reflect more objectively on the mission. Therefore a more careful approach of the researcher during the interviews is required, to avoid this defensive behavior as much as possible. Follow-up questions when such behavior is detected, could be a way to get more insights despite the defensive stance of the respondent. A related problem could be that the interviewed UN staff is such in the middle of things regarding UN peacebuilding activities that they lack to oversee objectively the structures of and biases within the organization. A respondent most likely will not identify a presence of a tunnel vision on implementing democracy, because the respondent is part of the organization and has internalized the organization's core values. By asking follow-up questions to go deeper into a specific issue, the researcher might identify whether or not a tunnel vision is obstructing the respondent's ability to critically reflect.

3.4 ROLE OF RESEARCHER

Because of the qualitative nature of this process tracing analysis the researcher will have unintended influence on the research results with the choices he makes. The way the researcher will carry out the interviews, as has been shortly reflect on in the previous section, will influence the data that will be acquired from the interviews. Furthermore, the way the researcher interprets these data will influence the results. Acknowledging this influence of the researcher, all steps in the research have and will be explained to create transparency and to pursue for maximal objectivity.

CHAPTER 4

RESULTS

In this chapter the results of the analysis will be presented to explore the process assumed causal mechanisms of the conceptual model presented in section 3.3.1. The chapter is divided in two time frames. Section 4.1 will explore the presence of the cultural frame of democracy as ideal state apparatus within the UN since its founding after the WWII and the process towards the establishment of peacebuilding operations with the implementation of elections as core feature until roughly the beginning of the 21th century. From the early 2000s, the period wherein the peacebuilding missions in the CAR, DRC and Somalia were deployed, section 4.2 will continue.

4.1 UNITED NATIONS AND DEMOCRACY

In this section the development of the UN since its founding until the start of the 21th century will be explored to identify in how far and since when the belief in elections became embedded in the organization as reflection on the cultural frame of democracy as ideal state apparatus. This section has been split up in two parts exploring two time periods that are crucial for the UN and its peacebuilding activities. The first part will start with the founding of the UN after the WWII. The second part focuses on the post-Cold War period.

4.1.1 UNITED NATIONS AFTER THE WWII

On 24 October 1945 the United Nations was established by 51 states. Although the UN was established in the period when the US was building its multilateral order, the UN should rather be interpreted as an institution emanated from agreements between Great Powers and other states of which a substantial part was not even democratic (Ninkovich, 1999).

The UN's initial four purposes were (1) to maintain international peace and security, (2) develop friendly relations among nations, (3) realize cooperation in solving international problems and promote respect for human rights and (4) to be a center for

harmonizing actions of nations. Initially, the UN charter did not make any mention of democracy, although the charter starts with “*We the Peoples*”, reflecting “*the fundamental principle of democracy, that the will of the people is the source of legitimacy of sovereign states and therefore of the United Nations as a whole*” (OHCHR, 2017). In the post-war period allusions towards democracy and its promotion were made, like the in 1948 ratified Universal Declaration of Human Rights that stipulated the will of the people through elections are basis for the government’s authority and that the rights and freedom of a person only can be limited as much as is accepted in a democratic society (OHCHR, 2017). In the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (1966) the democratic society is mentioned three times in combination with the rights of individuals to a fair court process, freedom of association and the freedom of assembly. In the Covenant the right to vote and get elected during genuine periodic elections were stipulated for the first time in an UN treaty.

In reality democracy and its promotion were not really an agenda item and therefore not part of the UN’s DNA, despite the democratic West’s dominant position within the UN. This can be attributed to the rising Great Power tensions in the Cold war centralized around the face-off between the capitalist and the communist world. First priority of especially the US was the containment policy of communism, not the promotion of democracy. Illustrative that democracy promotion did not have priority is the focus of US’ foreign aid in the period of 1960-1980. Although promoting democratic institutions became an official foreign aid goal in 1961 with the enactment of the Foreign Assistance Act, the given aid can better be characterized as anti-communist and anti-revolutionary than pro-democratic (Brown, 2005, p. 181). Unable to overcome the Cold War tensions the UN became ineffective and did not play any significant role in world politics during the Cold War. The UNSC was paralyzed, because participation of the US or Soviet Union in peacekeeping missions would be interpreted as a move against the other to expand its sphere of influence. Therefore, peace operations did mainly focus on the cessation of hostilities in interstate conflicts (Ninkovich, 1999). The end of the Cold War would significantly change the role of the UN and the nature of UN peace operations, which will be explained in the next section.

4.1.2 UNITED NATIONS AND PEACE OPERATIONS AFTER THE COLD WAR

The collapse of communism and the end of the Cold War triggered the start of the 'Third Wave of Democracy', a global wave of democratization driven by western democracy promotion that spread across Eastern Europe, Latin America and Sub-Saharan Africa. Democracy promotion activities in Sub-Saharan Africa were the result of the western donor community reformulating their policy goals now Cold War considerations had become irrelevant (Huntington, 1991).

The rise of democracy and its promotion cannot be seen separate from the democratic peace theory gaining momentum. This approach to international security argues democratic states do not tend to fight other democratic states, because leaders of democratic states are controlled by checks and balances in the system that constrain them from starting wars, creating a window of opportunity for state officials to settle disputes between democratic states peacefully (Baylis, 2010, p. 104; Gowa, 2011, p.154).

The end of the Cold War provided a possibility for the UN to finally become a relevant actor after years of being overshadowed by the Cold War tensions. In this light it is no surprise that the renewed interest of the West in spreading democracy after the Cold War became visible within the UN. Since the 1990s democracy has become a cross-cutting issue in major UN conferences and summits and in outcomes like the Millennium Declaration and agreed development goals, wherein world leaders pledged themselves to promote democracy (UN, 2017b). This became reflected in the design of peace operations as well. In response to the UNSC's request former SG Boutros Boutros-Ghali drafted "*An Agenda for Peace*" (1992) on strengthening the preventive diplomacy, peacemaking and peacekeeping activities, wherein he introduces the concept of peacebuilding for rebuilding a state's institutions and infrastructure. In this report he emphasizes the relation between democratic practices and the establishment of true peace and security followed by a call of promoting these practices at all political levels.

Boutros-Ghali's call for promoting democratic practices shows how the UN adapted itself to the post-Cold War era, recognizing this was becoming the global norm. By committing the UN apparatus to the western agenda of promoting democracy (and good governance) it gained the necessary symbolic legitimacy it needed after half a century of being irrelevant. Where the UN at its founding did not play any role of significance in the world order under US hegemonic leadership, here it found its way to serve the interests of this order. UN peacekeeping activities sharply increased after the Cold War with 20 new operations authorized by the UNSC between 1989 and 1994, raising the number of

peacekeepers from 11,000 to 75,000 (UN Peacekeeping, 2017) and the UN peacekeeping budget (mandatory contributions to all UN member states) became three times larger in 1992 compared to 1991 (see table 4.1). From here on an upward trend in UN peacekeeping expenditures is visible.

Table 4.1: Explanations of organizational change in IOs

Year	UN Peacekeeping budget (million USD)
1991	490
1992	1,767
2013	7,257

Note. Adapted from Total UN System Contributions (2017), by Klaus Hüfner, retrieved from <https://www.globalpolicy.org/un-finance/tables-and-charts-on-un-finance/un-system-budget/27505.html>. Copyright 2017 by Global Policy Forum.

In contrast to the post-WWII period there was global support for democracy. With both the member states and the UN promoting democratic values the cultural frame of democracy as ideal state apparatus became more persistent.

Hirschman (2012) identified UN peacebuilding missions became designed purely focused on the final goal of organizing elections. Elections became an end in itself as was strikingly visible during UNTAC mission in Cambodia (1992-1993). Besides the organization of elections, demobilization and administrative reform were two main priorities in the mandate, but because the latter two were not progressing, elections became the focal point of all the UNTAC divisions. This matched with the UNSC's conviction expressed in resolution 745 (UNSC, 1992) that "*free and fair elections are essential to produce a just and durable settlement*". Although violence was reduced during the mission, neither UNTAC nor the elections in 1993 did result in a lasting settlement or gave rise to freedom and democracy. With a coup in 1997 Cambodia moved towards an authoritarian style of rule, lawlessness and corruption. It showed relative free and transparent elections were not a warranty for national reconciliation (Caplan, 2005, pp. 17-18; Howard, 2007, pp. 131-179).

Acknowledging the serious flaws of the election-based exit strategy, former SG Kofi Annan appointed an expert panel led by Brahimi that in 2000 for the first time in history systematically complemented UN peacekeeping experiences with relevant academic knowledge. The panel acknowledged the various root causes like ethnicity, poverty, discrimination or access to resources of conflicts. Furthermore, it recognized the challenges to bring multiple actors with diversified interests to the negotiation table and to overcome the grievances created by the conflict by justice and reconciliation techniques. With these

insights the panel concluded elections should be part of a broader longer-term strategy to strengthen the government, rule of law institutions, democracy and civil society, promote the respect for human rights and demobilize and reintegrate fighting factions. In short, elections only would create stability when the people “*accept the ballot over the bullet*” (Brahimi, 2000, p. 7). It was believed embedding elections in this broader approach would guarantee that elections would not result in a tyranny of the majority or that the government would be overturned by force after the mission ended.

Instead of challenging the efficiency and intrinsic value of elections, the report focused on the conditions under which elections are supposed to be effective in producing peace and stability. Although the Brahimi report identifies patrons as relevant actors to take into consideration for conflict settlements, it does not display a thorough understanding of the African neo-patrimonial context. The patrons are only mentioned two times in a very brief way and as relevant actors to take into consideration during conflict settlement. Although an extensive analysis of the neo-patrimonial character of these societies should not be expected in this report that predominantly focuses on a higher abstraction level outlining a new peacebuilding strategy, it is the non-challengeable attitude towards conducting elections that proves strongest that the African neo-patrimonial context is not fully understood .

The Brahimi report also evaluated the learning infrastructure of UN peace operations. The report concluded DPKO’s Lessons Learned Unit’s learning capacities were limited and insufficient. With evaluations most of the times after the missions and did not impact and improve the peace operations practice. The panel recommended to enhance this unit in order to improve the UN’s learning capacities resulting into an integration in the Peacekeeping Best Practices Section (PBSP).

The UN did not just open up to the epistemic communities. Also NGOs were more involved, because of their field-expertise their input was requested in UNSC discussions wherein Brahimi’s recommendations on peacebuilding were debated. In the UN’s discourse ‘exit strategies’ was replaced with ‘transition towards longer-term development and sustainable peace’. The institutionalization of these insights in peacebuilding came with the establishment of the Peacebuilding Commission (PBC) to connect the fields of security and development and to bring together relevant actors, resources and knowledge needed for further development of peacebuilding strategies (Hirschman, 2012).

In conclusion, the cultural frame of democracy as ideal state apparatus gained traction after the Cold War with the “Third Wave of Democracy, which also became visible in the establishment of UN peacebuilding missions with election-based exit strategies. With the identification of a beginning tunnel vision on the conduct of elections within UN peacebuilding, the set is staged to analyze why this tunnel vision remained despite the inability and counterproductive effects of elections in the establishment of peace and stability in the CAR, DRC and Somalia.

4.2 UN PEACEBUILDING IN THE CAR, DRC AND SOMALIA

By having identified that the cultural frame came into existence after the Cold War followed by the resurgence of the UN and a transition from UN peacekeeping to peacebuilding, this section will focus on peacebuilding starting from late 1990s until present. In this time period the peacebuilding missions in the CAR, DRC and Somalia were established with the conduct of elections as important focus point.

In resolution 1234 the UNSC stressed the importance of holding an all-inclusive dialogue with as one of the primary goals the organization of elections (UNSC, 1999) Former UN SG Kofi Annan stressed his belief in the transitional elections in the DRC held on 30 July 2006 by stating “*it is vital for the country’s future that these elections, which are a symbol of hope for the whole of Africa, should be credible and transparent*”. In addition UNDP Country Director at that time, Babacar Cisse stressed “*these elections are critical for stability in the DRC and in all of Central Africa*” (UN News Centre, 2006).

For the CAR, the UNSC (2013b) demanded in resolution 2127 “*the swift implementation of transitional arrangements [...], which shall lead to the holding of free, fair and transparent presidential and legislative elections 18 months after the beginning of the transition period*”. Despite a delay of almost a year SG Ban Ki-Moon spoke about a “historical moment” (UN News Centre, 2015). In the case of Somalia the UNSC mandated in resolution 2102 (2013a) and 2275 (2016) UNSOM to assist in the electoral process of 2016 and 2021 as well. The UNSC emphasized after the election of president Farmaajo to adhere to “*the political road map in order to reach one-person, one-vote elections in four years time*”, showing the UN’s commitment to the one person, one vote elections (UNSC, 2017b).

Koper (personal communication, 2 August 2017) argues there is a tendency in these fragile states that the transitional elections of a post-conflict country will be relatively

successful and peaceful, because the elite feel they have a fair chance of winning in this election. The elections, where the president must receive over 50 percent of the votes in a run-off system, result in a winner-takes-all-outcome. In many African states this is enforced by the fact the opposition will be weakened, targeted with propaganda and blamed for the country's ills. That means that the losers become more desperate to win power at any cost by rejecting the results or worse to contribute to election-based violence. This also shows the lack of strong democratic institutions in these fragile states and the difficulty of implementing those. On the other hand the winners will do anything to remain in power (ISS, 2010).

Koper (personal communication, 2 august 2017) explained these societies have a more vertical structure, wherein the political elites represent the different population groups in the country. Taking these electoral dynamics in consideration, he argues it becomes a prerequisite that the whole political elite feels itself represented in the national government to prevent domestic conflicts, which is opposite of what happens after the holding of elections in these fragile states.

A deteriorating situation after the transitional elections is exactly what is visible in the CAR, but most strongly in the DRC, because the transitional elections there were held more than a decade ago. After the elections the conflict in the east of Congo resurged. Over the years Kabila began to limit democratic space and repress the opposition. In 2011 Kabila passed laws to abolish the second round of the elections, because Kabila's biggest opponent Etienne Tshisekedi had a bigger chance of winning this round. Former Chief Commander of MONUSCO (personal communication, 8 June 2017) identified dissatisfaction among parts of the population with the transparency and credibility of the elections, causing an increase in protests and violence, especially in the east of the DRC. These protests were answered by the Congolese security forces with arbitrary arrests and killings (HRW, 2011).

A researcher based in Goma (personal communication, 7 July 2017) explained how the democratic space has diminished further in the last years. Currently Kabila has been postponing the elections of 2016 to April 2019, thereby torpedoing a deal with the opposition about the conduct of elections before the end of 2017 (Reuters, 2017). This has caused a new wave of protest and violence, especially in Central Congo, where 3,000 deaths and 100,000 refugees were reported by the Catholic Church. Kabila's efforts to repress the opposition and shrink the political and democratic space affect the whole society. The freedom of speech and a national ban on demonstrations obstruct all the described

grievances to be expressed, dangerously leaving the use of violence as a last resort for many people.

Kabila's intentions to cling into power could be motivated by the fact he wants to protect his family's corporate empire, consisting out of dozens of companies across the country. Instead of trying to restore the Congolese economy, undermined by government budget slashes and an uninviting investment climate, personal enrichment is Kabila's leading motivation (Kavanagh, Wilson & Wild, 2016; Researcher based in Goma, personal communication, 7 July 2017).

Also in the CAR violence continued after the transitional elections, but so far the international community has faith in the intentions of Touadéra as he seemingly is trying to help the country towards stability and is endorsed by many of his political opponents, but mainly lacks the capacities to make a change (UN official, personal communication, 23 July 2017). On the other hand, if history tends to repeat itself, the peacebuilding community should be less hopeful Touadéra wants to make a significant change for the better. Since the CAR's independence from France in 1960, the political system runs on neo-patrimonial relations. The Bangui Carousel (2016) written by the NGO Enough Project is an interesting report that stresses how the self-serving political elite rotate on the seats within the regime on top of a state system that chronically lacks the capacities. Thriving from the anarchy and funded by the control of natural resources, the elite sustains themselves and compete with each other through patronage jobs, the use of armed groups and the suppression. Not surprisingly, Touadéra served as prime minister from 2008 until 2013 under Bozizé's presidency, just like his last opponent in the second round Dologuélé, who served from 1999-2001 (Day, 2016).

A scenario like in the DRC and the CAR is also lurking for Somalia with its first universal elections postponed to 2021. Interestingly enough the previous election procedure seems alike the approach Koper (personal communication, 2 August 2017) among others suggested. This process truly included the whole the elite. The elected president Farmaajo has the support from two most powerful clans in the country¹⁵ and the international community, because of his reputation of being integer and a man of the

¹⁵ The Darood (he is member of one of its sub-clans) and the Hawadle, who are dominantly present in Mogadishu

people. The competing element of elections could stir up the violent rivalry between clans that has plagued the country for decades.

By having stressed the characteristics of a downwards spiral after transitional elections, this section will look for the root causes of the UN's dysfunctional behavior regarding its obsession with elections obstructing its ability to learn.

4.2.1 TUNNEL VISION ON ELECTIONS

To identify the presence of a tunnel vision on elections as a mechanism for peace and stability this section will look into the argumentation and discourse used by the UN. In this way there will be analyzed to what extent their belief in elections is based on a set of norms and values rather than the actual situation in the fragile states as result of the conduct of elections.

An underlying notion in the UN's line of reasoning is the principle of sovereignty. One of the interviewed UN officials (personal communication, 23 July 2017) could subscribe to the notion that underlying all international law and diplomacy is the notion of sovereignty, because the whole international system is grounded in the principle of sovereignty. The UNSC prioritizes a fragile state regains its sovereignty after the UN intervention (Coordinator UN affairs at the Dutch MFA, personal communication, 4 July 2017). This is visible in resolution 2127 on the CAR reaffirming the UNSC's "*strong commitment to the sovereignty, independence, territorial integrity and unity of the CAR*" (UNSC, 2013b). Within the UN machinery the belief exists that elections are the best way to produce a sovereign government with which the UN as an intergovernmental organization is able to deal with legally speaking. The link between elections and sovereignty is made due to the cultural frame of democracy as ideal state apparatus. This link is visible in resolution 64/155 (2009) adopted by the UN General Assembly that states the UN will "*strengthen its role in enhancing periodic and genuine elections and the promotion of democratization*".

It basically comes down to assumed mechanisms stemming from the intrinsic value that is attributed to democracy and elections. The resolution reaffirms democracy as universal value based on the freely expressed will of the people to determine the future of their lives, including the political system through the conduct of elections. According to resolution 64/155, elections will build confidence in a representational and therefore accountable and legitimate government that will contribute to national peace and stability.

The people can choose their leaders, who in return are morally obliged to serve the people's interest. A legitimate government is able to exercise the state's rights of sovereignty and self-determination. Resolution 64/155 in addition argues the legitimacy of a democratically chosen government is further enforced by the belief that "*democracy, development and respect for all human rights and fundamental freedoms are interdependent and mutually reinforcing*" (UN General Assembly, 2009).

An important prerequisite for elections to be a mechanism for peace and stability is the credibility and transparency of the elections. Former Chief Commander of MONUSCO (personal communication, 8 June 2017) stressed all stakeholders have to agree on the elections to establish credibility. When multiple UN staff members were asked about the causes of the resurgence of violence or how Kabila's crackdown on the democratic institutions should be interpreted versus the success of elections, no convincing answer could be given. Kabila was 'reminded' that he should obey the constitution (Former Chief Commander of MONUSCO, personal communication, 8 June 2017). A former electoral officer at MINUSCA (personal communication, 4 August 2017) argued there was no problem with democracy, but with the individuals like Kabila.

Within the UN the signing of a roadmap by all relevant actors towards elections seems to be interpreted as a normative commitment to establish a stable democracy. The UN bureaucracy and UNSC push for inclusive national dialogue, because it believes this will pave the way for transparent, credible and inclusive elections. A UN official (personal communication, 10 September 2017) stated about elections that when "*the process is transparent and accepted and everybody agrees and sticks with it and does not find anything to refute it, than it is definitely acceptable*".

The DRC is example of what happens after "*acceptable*" elections in a neo-patrimonial society. The agreement signed during the Inter-Congolese Dialogue stipulated the DRC would become a democratic state with free transparent elections. In September 2016, SG Ban Ki-Moon had to call upon the Congolese political actors to participate in the national dialogue again to realize "*timely and credible elections*" (UN News Centre, 2016). By this time it was started to become clear that Kabila was not planning to let the election take place or honor the Inter-Congolese Dialogue. As stressed before Kabila has too much to lose when his presidency ends. He used democracy as a means to get in power and hold it as long as possible. The UN is naïve by assuming everything a normative commitment to

democracy and elections is made, when a roadmap towards elections is signed. To argue democracy is not the problem, but these individuals are, does not do justice to severe problems and the neo-patrimonial character of African societies.

The relevant actors in the CAR had signed the declaration of the 3rd meeting of the International Contact Group on the Central African Republic on 8 November 2013 stipulating the conduct of elections within 18 months (AU Peace and Security, 2013). As these 18 months expired the international community, especially France who had operation Sangeris running in the country, began to push the electoral commission and the transitional government to hold the elections, threatening to stop the financial support when elections would not be held before 31 December 2015. UN officials were quite positive and even proud to be part of this process realizing the elections because of the shared belief elections are a possibility to get out of the crisis in a fragile state (former electoral officer at MINUSCA, personal communication, 4 August 2017). Furthermore, an UN official (personal communication, 23 July 2017) raised the question what the benefits would be of postponing the elections and which problems would be solved, because the elections seemed to have produced a government that appeared to be willing to cooperate with the international community. The coordinator UN affairs at the Dutch MFA (personal communication, 4 July 2017) added the international pressure on the conduct of elections also forced the different parties to compromise and (temporarily) sort their differences out. The UN official (personal communication, 23 July 2017) did mention the timing of elections had been a discussion point within and without the UN, but a general consensus was reached on the necessity of implementing elections to establish a sovereign, legitimate government. That the international community did push the CAR to the holding of elections, although it was stipulated in an agreement, does show the timing of elections has not been interpreted as a really concerning issue.

In addition to this rather optimistic view on the elections in the CAR, the UN officials could not link the resurgence of violence in any way to the political elite level and the losers of elections (UN official, personal communication, 10 September 2017; former electoral officer at MINUSCA, personal communication, 4 August 2017). To a certain extent this might be the case, because during the elections the UN and national security forces increased their activities to protect the electoral process explaining the decreased level of violence. Nevertheless, it is very questionable if this violence is not linked to the political elite. Although the main threat to the CAR's security, the Anti-Balaka, do not have a clear

hierarchy, a report by a former MINUSCA official in 2014 claimed these groups were backed by former president Bozizé (Ingerstad, 2014). Combine this with the long tradition of armed groups used by the political elite for personal ends it is most likely the reoccurring violence can be linked to certain parts of the political elite¹⁶.

Question is how this shared belief in elections gets transmitted to the UN staff. It appeared some, but not all UN staff members receive training before they start working. This training is primarily focused on the technicalities related to the specific work activities of for instance an electoral officer. Nevertheless, the training is given to overcome cultural differences of the UN staff and does pay some attention to the core values of the UN. Still, UN officials did not give the impression that the latter part of the training was very substantial or that their belief in elections was created during this part of the training. One of the UN officials pointed out this belief in elections was not just supported within the UN, but had more widely support within the peacebuilding community (IOs like the UN, AU and the World Bank, donor countries and NGOs) (UN official, personal communication, 23 July 2017; UN official, personal communication, 10 September 2017).

A same belief in elections was observed in an interview with a researcher based in Goma (personal communication, 7 July 2017), who even noticed a regional pattern of “*big men*” who refused to step down and changed the constitution to stay in power¹⁷. When asked about if this was not proof of the failing mechanism of elections putting power-obsessed men in power, the response was be that there was no problem with democracy, but with individuals refusing to obey the constitution.

The arguments given by the respondents representing the peacebuilding community show to what extent the belief in elections has become the dominant global norm. The researcher based in Goma (personal communication, 7 July 2017) argued DRC was ready and the people were ready, but the political chiefs were not. These arguments are also the most dominant ones in case of the CAR and Somalia. First of all the respondents pointed towards the fact the states themselves have to explicitly request for UN assistance of

¹⁶ The documentary “The Ambassador” (2011) by Mads Brügger shows connections between the elite of the country and the illegal trade of blood diamonds

¹⁷ E.g. Burundi, Congo Brazzaville, Rwanda and Uganda

elections and promotion of democratization, as is stipulated in resolution 64/155 (UN General Assembly 2009).

It shows the elections are initiated by the fragile states themselves and supported by their people. The logo of the CAR's national electoral commission of the last held elections illustrates what is believed to be the outcome of elections (see figure 4.1). The country colored in with the CAR's flag represents the unification of the country and the peace dove represents the peace that will come with the conduct of elections. At this point should be concluded that the belief in elections is not only shared within the peacebuilding community but in the broader global society as well. It enforces the view that democracy has become the global norm.

Still, the tunnel vision on elections within the UN and the peacebuilding community distinguishes itself from the tunnel vision in the countries themselves. First, there is a western bias that is best illustrated with Somalia where the donor community did push for woman participation in parliament, although this is a complete disconnect with Somali religious and cultural habits that does not acknowledge the level of woman emancipation as in the West. An electoral officer at UNSOM (personal communication, 8 August 2017) called it a "*miracle*" 24 percent of the selected Lower House members is female. Considering the position of the female in society it is questionable what this percentage really says about women emancipation. It also remains unclear how woman participation seemed to be accepted in a way. The electoral officer stressed the Somali people are very resilient and cannot be forced to elect a high percentage of woman. At the same time it is unknown how these topics are addressed on higher diplomatic level between donors and the Somali representatives and if any pressure is used to force this kind of 'western ideas' into the Somali democratic practices. Or, it is possible the Somalis adopted this aspect to meet the modern standards of women participation.

What stays problematic with the 'states and people want elections argument' used by the respondents from the peacebuilding community is the fact it does not address any of the observed problems with elections. The strong desire for the conduct of elections does not necessarily imply that the state and its people are ready or that they ever will. Somalia

Figure 4.1 Logo National Electoral Commission of the CAR



Note. Reprinted from ANERCA, by ANERCA, retrieved from www.anerca.org. Copyright 2016 by ANERCA.

is a good example of a mismatch between the society and the conduct of elections, because the clan-system is still the dominant way people identify themselves. Organizing transitional elections in 2021 would mean the people should let go of their clan-based thinking. Although Somalia itself is pushing for these elections to happen in 2021, the UN electoral officer at UNSOM (personal communication, 8 August 2017) doubted if the Somalis fully grasped what it would take to become a functioning democracy and move away from the clan-based system. The electoral officer gave as example that it is normal for a Somali to introduce him or herself with name and clan and when someone is appointed the first question will be from which clan this person is. It made the electoral officer question if it was desirable for Somalia to implement the western idea of democracies and if it might not be a better idea to look further for a new form of democratic governance that would take into account the clan-based structure of society. Ironically, the used electoral system earlier this year, which is perceived as temporary solution towards the universal elections in 2021 wherein clan elders select the parliament members, seems to fit Somali's clan-based society better than elections.

Without being able to identify any mechanism that could argue in favor of the conduct of elections, the argument of this violent phase through which countries needed to go was brought up. Former Chief Commander of MONUSCO (personal communication, 8 June 2017) realistically stated it was impossible for the UN forces to contain all the violence in such a large country as the DRC. All MONUSCO could do was bring the violence down to an acceptable level for the elections, so the civilians could safely vote. More problematic was the assumption raised by the researcher based in Goma (personal communication, 7 July 2017) that this violence was a phase through which a fragile African state has to go through by comparing this phase with the decades and many conflicts it had taken Europe to establish stable democracies. It is a fallacy to assume fragile states are on the road to become a stable democracy, because they show signs of instability as European states did. Instability is instability and not an irrefutable feature of process towards stability. Besides, Koper (personal communication, 2 August 2017) argues this comparison cannot be made, because Europe and fragile African states were positioned in a completely different stage of development when the process of democratization started and furthermore the way societies are built up is completely different as well.

Reflecting on what the DRC needed, the researcher based in Goma (personal communication, 7 July 2017) illustrated the deeply rooted tunnel vision on elections. He

identified the neo-patrimonial structure of DRC's society, the greed of the political elite in a zero-sum game for resources, the absence of spirit to serve the public interest and all these other problems with the current system. He argued there was need for a new political system and a strategic change at the top, but was not able to come up with alternatives for elections. He argued that politics is elections: the competition of political interests. "*I do not know what else there could be*" summarizes this whole section on the tunnel vision present not only within the UN and the peacebuilding community, but in the fragile states themselves as well. Especially the argument that the countries themselves want it, believing that elections reflect the will of the people and create a legitimate government, blind the UN for what consequences of elections really are and obstruct the UN from learning.

The next section will explore if and to what extent the bureaucratic structure of the UN hinders organizational learning on the problems with the conduct of elections.

4.2.2 BUREAUCRATIC STRUCTURE

This section will explore to what extent the bureaucratic structure obstructs organizational learning within the UN. Especially in the UN headquarters the bureaucratic structure of the UN should be identifiable. Benner (et al., 2011, p. 35) argues that a small group of career UN officials works in New York, while the majority working at the peacebuilding missions has short-term contracts. Unfortunately, the UN in New York, especially the DPKO were not able to participate in this research. This made it impossible to analyze to what extent the absence of organizational learning could be contributed to the bureaucratic structure. The main problem was that all respondents were almost solely working at one of the UN peacebuilding missions. Attempts to reach out to the UN headquarters did not result in interviews. Therefore, a limited view on the UN's bureaucratic structure was obtained through the interviews.

The interviews did provide insights about the mission structure and its influence on the evaluation process. From peacebuilding mission perspective, an UN official (personal communication, 10 September 2017) explained it was neither the high workload nor the high information demanding structure that limited the efficiency of their work. The main downfalls he addressed were on mission level. He argued there is a lack of continuity and expertise within the mission. In July 2016 after the conduct of elections in the CAR, 82 percent of electoral officers was send home. The UN works with yearly contracts and if an electoral assistance mission is requested, a team will be formed based on the availability of

these electoral officers. Shaped by the budget cycles, this results in discontinuity within the organization. Every individual has a different expertise on for instance logistics or reporting and are therefore not always interchangeable. When the officers arrive at the mission they have to get to know each other and their qualities, which takes time and has negative influence on the team's effectivity.

Still, this does not provide a fundamental argument why the identified problems with the holding of elections in fragile states are not perceived as challenging for the existence of an election-based strategy. An answer could be found in the nature of the mission and the way this influences the role of the mission, the staff and the way in which the evaluation is carried out. The UN's support and assistance for the organization of elections is only given on a state's request in their exercise of sovereignty (UN General Assembly, 2009).

MONUSCO intensively supported the holding of elections in the DRC in 2006 and 2010, providing *“technical and logistical support for the organization of national and local elections, upon explicit request from the Congolese authorities”* (UNSC, 2010). Resolution 2149 (UNSC, 2014) stated as one of MINUSCA's core activities: *“To devise, facilitate and provide technical assistance to the electoral process [...]”*. UNSOM, the United Nations Assistance Mission, has its assisting role in the name and in resolution 2275 (2016) UNSOM's electoral support was extended for *“an inclusive, free, fair and transparent electoral process in 2016 and universal elections by 2020.”*

This assisting role stipulated in the mandate is also reflected in the kind of personnel the UN hired and in the way elections are evaluated. The electoral office brings together people with a variety of expertise on the technical and logistical aspects of holding elections, but not on measuring the long term impact of elections on the country (UN official, personal communication, 10 September 2017). A former electoral officer at MINUSCA (personal communication, 4 August 2017) explained the elections are predominantly evaluated based on the roadmap which stipulated when each phase related to the elections had to be completed. An example is the voter registration or the adoption of a legislative framework. Confusingly, another UN official (personal communication, 10 September 2017) explained the evaluation embodied more than solely the implementation of a roadmap. He added that the roadmap comprised both an electoral calendar based upon political decisions and the technical aspects like the voter registry. In addition he argued

that elections are a continuous process and that participation and endurance of the results are crucial for the success of elections.

Still, when recalling the lack of continuity within the staff of UN peacebuilding missions working on short-term contracts, it cannot be argued the impact of elections is thoroughly reviewed over the years. The focus lies rather on the roadmap towards elections and the way in which elections proceed. Used parameters are to what extent the electoral process is politically supported and how free and transparent the elections took place.

The elections of 2006 in DRC illustrated that the years after the elections show how successful the implementation of election really is and to what extent a democratic state is developing. After the elections of 2011 in DRC the SG Ban Ki-Moon had to admit there were serious issues regarding the transparency and the EU Observer Mission noted that 1.6 million votes were not even counted. Ban Ki-Moon forgot to mention Kabila's constitutional adjustment to prevent losing the second round of elections by abolishing it. In addition, Kabila expanded the Supreme Court that officially names the president after elections with 18 new judges to a total of 27 judges during the electoral campaign. All Ban Ki-Moon could do was express his concerns and urge the Independent National Electoral Commission to take corrective measures the shortcomings in consultation with Congolese and international stakeholders and review the electoral process (UNSC, 2012).

When two UN officials during an interview were asked if this should not lead to the conclusion that elections are not a successful tool in fragile states, they argued that the UN peacebuilding missions took place on request of these states and that their job was to assist in the holding of elections not to judge whether or not elections are successful. Looking back at how electoral officers explained elections are evaluated, it can be concluded the evaluation capacities of these missions match with the assisting role of UN peacebuilding missions (UN official, personal communication, 23 July 2017; UN official, personal communication, 10 September, 2017).

The next section will explore in how far the absence of competition for the UN could explain the lack of learning within the UN.

4.2.3 ABSENCE OF COMPETITION

The tunnel vision argument has basically ruled out the 'absence of competition argument' as explanation for the lack of learning within the UN. By having established that the states themselves want elections and the people want elections as well, the argument of absence

of competition has lost relevance. The states' and their people's will to have elections and the principle sovereignty underlying the current world order would withhold any competing organization to interfere in these domestic issues.

The absence of competition argument could be made when a fragile state was pressured by the UN into the conduct of elections and a competing organization believed the conduct of elections is not what fragile states need. In that case the presence of a competitor to the UN could make the UN more critical on its own policies. A starting point could be to look at a somewhat comparable case wherein western standards were challenged. Western development aid in Africa got a competitor with the rise of Chinese development aid agenda that unlike the West did not attach conditionalities such as good governance to its aid packages. Brautigam (2009) showed how western institutions like the World Bank were, especially at first, very critical on this Chinese approach, instead of looking critical at their own approach. Later on these critics on the conditionalities would be made by mainstream economists in the West.

By having ruled out the absence of competition argument, the following section will explore the processes of organizational learning within the UN that were obstructed by the UN's tunnel vision and the lack of evaluation capacities.

4.2.4 ORGANIZATIONAL LEARNING

Having identified what hinders higher-level learning, this section will explore in how far higher-level learning takes place within the UN. A first stage of learning is to acquire knowledge from within the UN, especially at the field level of peacebuilding missions or outside the UN via for example epistemic communities.

Within the UN there are different signs the UN is acquiring knowledge identifying problems with the current design of transitional elections in fragile states. In 2007 an interesting article, *“Shaping the future of UN peace operations: is there a doctrine in the house?”* (2007), was written by the Michael Keating, contemporary Special Representative for the SG in Somalia, Ugo Solinas working at the DPKO and Salman Ahmed who earlier wrote a critical report on the UN’s role in Srebrenica (Benner et al., 2011, p. 34). The purpose of this article was to lay the foundations of an UN peacebuilding doctrine. They criticized the international community for assuming the successful holding of elections equaled the successful establishment of a democracy. They touched upon the election-based exit strategy in 1990s and concluded that *“time and again the crucial questions were being ignored. Had the underlying economic, social, cultural and humanitarian causes of conflict been addressed? Was a real political process and were political systems in place that could sustain the transformation of conflict objectives into non-violent domestic politics?”* (Ahmed et al., 2007, p. 14). These are exactly the type of questions that should be raised when a mission is set up in a fragile state. Despite raising the right questions, the article concluded the *“new doctrine”* established after the Brahimi report (2000), focusing on a broad range of civilian, post-conflicts peacebuilding tasks had brought the desired results. In the DRC they observed MONUC was able to keep *“major urban centers in the east from being overrun by armed militias and to assist the country to hold its first democratic elections in decades”* (Ahmed, Keating & Solinas, 2007, p. 21). Time has learned that the authors of the article fell into the same trap they warned for by assuming the successful holding of elections combined with first signs of overall improvement in the country equals the successful implementation of democracy.

Fifteen years after the Brahimi Report (2000), the by SG Ban Ki-Moon appointed the High-level Independent Panel on Peace Operations (HIPPO) which drafted a new report (2015)

that barely paid attention to the holding of elections. The two paragraphs focusing on elections predominantly reproduced the existing consensus within the peacebuilding community on elections by identifying legitimate politics and elections at heart of sustainable peace and concluding peace is not established with just the holding of elections. More interestingly was a new rhetoric emphasizing the implementation of elections “*should aim at sharing political power in an inclusive manner rather than concentrating it*” (HIPPO, 2015, p. 41).

Without further explanation it is difficult to understand what exactly is meant and intended with this statement. The way in which shared political power should be accomplished remains completely unclear. Looking at the limited amount of attention paid to the conduct of elections it seems that the future adjustments should remain within the paradigm of elections. But the period after the transitional elections have shown a power sharing formula is hard to establish. As example for a phenomenon visible in the whole region, Kabila has shown the weak institutions in fragile states make it not very difficult for an elected president to gain more and more power and tear down the democratic institutions (researcher based in Goma, personal communication, 7 July 2017).

Although these two examples of knowledge acquirement show that the knowledge is interpreted and compared to the existing practices of UN peacebuilding, it does not result in fundamentally challenging the existent practices and beliefs. Predominantly, the circumstances under which elections should take place are reconsidered, which leads to the conclusion the acquired knowledge is interpreted in such a way that it should be categorized as lower-level learning.

A third and last example of the knowledge acquiring phase of organizational learning within the UN is an interview with an electoral officer at UNSOM (personal communication, 8 August 2017). Brainstorming about how elections should be implemented in Somalia in 2021, she also came up with a power sharing formula, but could not say how this would look like, because the whole electoral process and political system still had to be stipulated in the constitution. Brainstorming about a suitable political system, she argued Somalia maybe needed a totally new political system that would account for the clan-based structure of the country. As earlier mentioned she argued Somalis would not be ready to let go of the clan-based thinking and maybe a gradual process towards elections should prepare the country for universal elections.

Although this acquired knowledge does show a deeper understanding of the problems with the implementation of elections, it is highly doubtful if any of these insights will be seriously interpreted or even institutionalized. First of all, the thoughts that the electoral officer shared during the interview came forth out of a short process of spontaneous brainstorming about the subject. Secondly, the focus of the electoral office is on assisting in the needs of the Somali national electoral commission that tries to move away from the clan-based structure with one person, one vote elections in 2021.

The epistemic communities are a source for acquiring knowledge outside the UN. Johnstone (personal communication, 17 November 2017) who pleads for a more deliberative approach in fragile states instead of an election-based focus, explained that the UN in the field of peace operations only reaches out to a narrow cluster of experts of think tanks based in New York¹⁸ and other cities like Washington, Geneva, Oslo, Accra and Pretoria. He criticizes the lack of outreach to a broader range of academics in peacekeeping and peacebuilding. Although the UN acknowledges the deliberative approaches as useful, their understanding of it is somewhat marginal and the approaches are solely used complementary to the holding of elections. Examples are national dialogue or on the local level with community engagement initiatives. Johnstone adds the UN as intergovernmental organization, struggles to engage with actors other than the national political leadership, especially because the national leadership in fragile states is still in the process of trying to assert authority and gain legitimacy. This limits the UN in its effectivity to promote more inclusive politics, because in some circumstances a bottom-up approach through engaging with actors other than the national political leadership will have the biggest impact according to Johnstone.

When UN officials' reflected during the interviews on what could be improved regarding the holding of elections, they came up with almost solely improvements on the practice of implementing elections regarding for example the refugee participation or the continuity of expertise in the electoral office in other words lower-level learning. With After Action Review and the Lessons Learned assessment the electoral officers assess what did go well

¹⁸ International Peace Institute, Center on International Cooperation, Conflict Prevention and Peace Forum, Security Council Report

and what would go better which is shared with the UN headquarters in New York (former electoral officer at MINUSCA, personal communication, 4 August 2017). In addition there is a best practice unit which is accessible for UN staff in which the lessons learned are shared (former electoral officer at MINUSCA; 4 August, 2017; UN official, personal communication, 10 September 2017).

What can be concluded is that the amount of knowledge acquired as first step for higher-level learning is very limited exemplifying that the tunnel vision on elections (section 4.2.1) and nature and structure of UN peacebuilding missions (section 4.2.2) obstruct organizational learning.

The knowledge that is acquired barely seems to get a serious follow-up equivalent to the phases of knowledge interpretation and institutionalization. Great example of this lacking attention is the sentence in the HIPPO (2015) report about the focus of elections that should be on power sharing rather than concentrating it, without giving any further recommendations how this should be achieved.

By having established in this chapter in which way and to what extent organizational learning is obstructed within the UN, the next chapter will discuss the results of this thesis by answering the research question and evaluating the conceptual model (section 3.3.1).

CHAPTER 5

DISCUSSION AND REFLECTION

This thesis started from the observation that the implementation of the conduct of elections during UN peacebuilding missions did not result in the establishment of peaceful, stable and democratic states. Elections positioned patrons in the government, who used the public domain as their personal fief, further destabilizing the country. Despite the UN's focus and belief in the implementation on elections as solution for fragile states endured. This led to centralize the research question: why is the UN so obsessed with the implementation of democratic elections during their peacebuilding missions in the CAR, DRC and Somalia? With a focus on the CAR, DRC and Somalia, starting point of understanding the UN's obsession was to identify the origins of the belief that fragile states need elections to stabilize. These origins can be found in the presence of the cultural frame of democracy as ideal state apparatus that gained momentum after the Cold War and during the Third Wave of Democracy. After decades of irrelevance, the UN was able to obtain symbolic legitimacy within the post-Cold War world order by adopting democracy as one of its core values. This became visible in its transition from peacekeeping to peacebuilding centralizing the assistance in the conduct of elections.

Two causes were identified for the persistent belief in elections and the obstruction of organizational learning, despite the elections did not bring the desired stability and democracy in the fragile states: (1) the tunnel vision on elections and (2) the structure and nature of the peacebuilding missions. The most substantial one is the tunnel vision on the necessity of elections which is strongly embedded in the UN's culture and created and sustained by the cultural frame. The shared understanding on elections within the UN is that on the longer-term it will create a peaceful, stable and democratic state, but without being able to explain the observed deteriorating situation most clearly visible in the DRC.

This thesis identified a broad consensus within the peacebuilding community about the importance of holding of elections which is also supported by the fragile states and their people. The latter is used within the UN and the broader peacebuilding community as one of

the most prominent arguments in favor of the conduct of elections. The assumed mechanism in work here is that a by the people elected government creates a responsible and legitimate government. But even when is acknowledged this mechanism did not work out in DRC, the UN does not let go of this belief, which also seems to be sustained by a perceived absence of alternatives; “*what else could there be*” as political solution? The challenges and threats of violence and anarchy that the DRC, the CAR and Somalia face are perceived as a phase through which they need to go to become a stable democracy.

The assisting nature and structure of the UN peacebuilding missions also explain why the UN does not challenge its belief in the holding of elections in fragile states based on its experiences from the peacebuilding missions. Highly valuing the principle of sovereignty, the electoral support and assistance are only given when this is requested by states. Therefore, the mission design is fully focused on supporting and assisting in elections and the staff of the electoral office is hired for this purpose, meaning there are no available resources to measure the long term impact of (transitional) elections in fragile states. Judging whether or not elections work is not the job of the missions’ staff.

These two causes explain the almost absence of higher-level learning within the UN. Although in different settings knowledge acquirement and interpretation were identified, the consensus on the necessity of elections as transitional tool in fragile states has so far not been seriously challenged. The tunnel vision keeps blocking the UN in interpreting knowledge on data that conflict with the consensus and the nature and structure of the missions obstruct substantial processes of knowledge acquirement. Furthermore, the outreach to epistemic communities outside this consensus was identified as very limited.

This cycle that obstructs higher-level learning explains the persistent and unchallenged dysfunctional behavior of the UN: an obsession with elections.

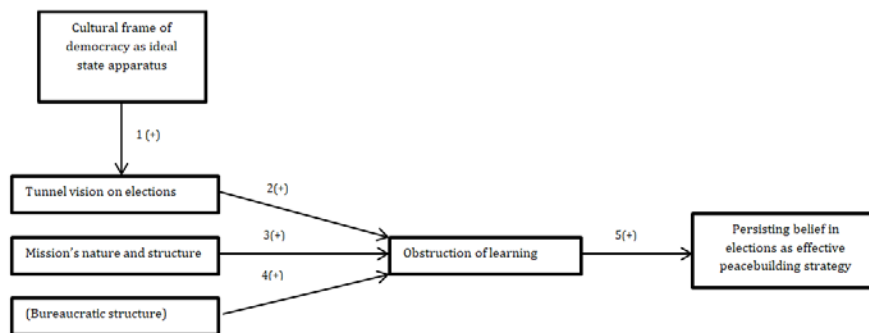
These findings confirm substantial parts of the conceptual model (see section 3.3.1), but also require some adjustments to it. Although the broader concept of the tunnel vision in conceptual model seems accurate it needs some adjustments. First of all professionalism has not proven to be the process through which the UN staff internalizes the tunnel vision. The UN does not have distinctive world views compared to the broader peacebuilding community or even the fragile states and the people themselves, which is explained by the presence of the cultural frame. The exact process, through which the internalization of the

view occurs that (transitional) elections are desirable for fragile states, has not been identified.

Secondly, a causal link that has been added to the model is the mission’s nature and structure of UN peacebuilding that does provide explanatory power for the limited evaluations obstructing learning and especially acquiring knowledge.

This thesis has not succeeded in analyzing if the bureaucratic structure obstructed organizational learning and therefore cannot conclude whether or not this causal link has explanatory power. The absence of competition argument that was rejected as explanation for obstructing organizational learning has been removed. These adjustments result in the conceptual model presented in figure 5.1

Figure 5.1: Revised conceptual model of UN’s dysfunctional behavior



The external validity of this conceptual model can be assessed by addressing the equifinality. In chapter 2, two material explanations for dysfunctional behavior were explored as well, but not assessed as useful to this research (see chapter 2). Also in hindsight, the resource conflict explanation (internal explanation) is not able to explain the UN’s tunnel vision. It would argue this tunnel vision is the outcome of an organizational bargaining game, but cannot cope with the shared normative belief in elections within and outside the UN.

The statist/functionalist explanation has the same problems coping with the (origins of this) broadly supported belief in elections. This explanation does provide an argument for the absence of evaluation of the longer-term impact of the elections. From a statist perspective it could be argued the critical evaluation on the implementation of elections would clash with the interests of the UNSC members and other states financially supporting the mission. Therefore, the mission would not be capacitated for such

evaluations. This would not be sufficient to provide an alternative explanation for dysfunctional behavior explaining the UN's obsession with elections. This gives confidence in the external validity of the conceptual model of this thesis and its applicability on other IOs displaying dysfunctional behavior.

Future research on IOs dysfunctional behavior should address the shortcomings of this thesis. First of all, it remains unclear how exactly the UN's tunnel vision on elections is transmitted to its staff. An answer might lie not only within the UN, but outside the organization as well, because it was observed the belief in elections has such a broad support throughout the world society from organizational to individual level. Secondly, the impact of the bureaucratic culture obstructing organizational learning could not be addressed in this thesis, because UN officials at the core of the bureaucracy in New York could not be reached for interviews. Assessing the impact of the bureaucratic culture at the core of the UN bureaucracy also could give new insights in how all the knowledge that is acquired is interpreted and possibly institutionalized. Thirdly, a stronger focus on New York could provide more insights in the way in which the UN reaches out to epistemic communities and why it seems to be so limited in scope.

Fourth and finally, besides unraveling the UN's obsession with elections, this thesis has attempted to go beyond the Dark Continent frame. Instead of perceiving African societies as the problem of why elections not work, this thesis has turned this way of thinking around by asking why the wrong method to establish a national leadership in African fragile states still has the support of the UN. Because so far a real alternative political solution has not been found for neo-patrimonial societies, future research should look for new ways to establish a national leadership in these states that will be a good step towards peace and stability.

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APPENDIX 1: INTERVIEWS

INTERVIEW FORMER CHIEF COMMANDER OF MONUSCO

8 JUNE 2017

*Introduction *

Can you tell about your work at MONUSCO? How do you look back on it? What were your responsibilities?

I was force commander of MONUSCO from August 2010 – March 2013. I was the head of the military component of the mission. Our job was to execute and implement the mandate as given by UNSC. Just to give you a background. Before, the mission was called MONUC. It became MONUSCO, the S being added, meaning there was some resemblance of peace and stability had to be assured. Mandate had two components. One was assuring peace and the second stabilization. They also had the mandate in supporting the elections, the conduct of elections, which were held in November 2011. Apart from that a basic mandate was protecting civilians under imminent threat, protection of UN personnel and UN assets. We had the mandate of DDRRR (Disarmament, demobilization, repatriation, reintegration and resettlement). If I remember the language correctly, we were also supposed to provide technical support for the conduct of elections (technical and logistic support). Those were presidential elections. We saw the elections through, the preparation started in 2010 they were conducted throughout 2011. We had a team from the UN who were advising on the conduct of elections in the DRC. There were observers from outside, primarily from the EU. This is in a nutshell my job there.

What were the strong achievements of MONUSCO?

We were able to bring down the level of violence, the human rights violations, stabilize certain areas, conducting successful operations against the FDLA, the main rebel group of that time. The elections were conducted reasonably peacefully. The problem started after the elections, because of the fact that some components of the populations felt the elections were not credible, were not transparent and too be honest they were poor in logistics. Not because MONUSCO failed to provide logistics. But the prime responsibility of the conduct of elections was in the hands of the election commission of the DRC. We are only there if they asked for the support. We were not even asked to monitor the elections. One thing that is very sure, as MONUSCO we provided a reasonable peaceful environment for elections. What happened after that is an entirely different story.

What were the points MONUSCO lacked or were you would do things differently?

The issue is not about that MONUSCO lacked, but the issue is: what is the given mandate, what are the resources made available.

I'm also talking about the mandate, could it be made more effective?

I would say the mandate was rather good. I have no complaints about that. I would rather say the mandate was too comprehensive. With the resources available MONUSCO did an excellent job. Be aware: the mandate is a difficult diplomatic document. It tends to include everything it is desirable to that extent that some people say it becomes a Christmas tree mandate. If you put the expectations too high the reality is any mission will fall short on these expectations.

I've read some critics on the missions. There is an article of Autesserre about MONUSCO. She claimed the focus of the UN was too much top-down. The problems of the conflict were wrongly identified on the national and regional level, while the problems of the conflict were situated on local level (bottom-up) with for instance the Mai Mai armed groups, between different ethnicities and rebel groups trying to found their own independent state and get control over resources. Would you agree with that?

I would put it differently. It is not top-down or bottom-up. There are different problems. It is not a clear-cut bilocation. I would rather say it was a combination of multiple problems that had to be resolved with both a top-down and bottom-up approach. There were localized problems, political problems, control over resources and also issues with the neighbors. There were also ethnic issues. There was also the baggage of the past. There were also issues with the national authorities and the armed groups. I would not like to say specifically it is top-down and bottom-up, but that the problems only can be resolved with multifaceted solutions involving all stakeholders.

Focusing on the problems that were local; Autesserre claimed that UN perceived the problems more as criminal problems, meaning the Congolese authorities had to intervene. Escalation was thus blamed on the Congolese authorities because problems were perceived as crime not as acts of war. Do you recognize this?

There were issues of criminality. The acts done by some of the armed groups were pure criminal acts. But to say there were only criminal acts that would not be right. Criminal acts are a symptom but not the actual problem. I can assure you that it is the mission concerned where it was about criminal of war activities, the UN would do its best to protect the citizens.

Would you say the priorities of the mission were right, or should there be a different balance between different aspects like human rights violations or root causes of conflict.

I would rather say that the focus of the mission was the protection of civilians. Protection is not just physical, it is all encompassing. The credibility and legitimacy of the mission depends for a large extent on how to deliver on civilian mandate. At the same time I would also like to state, it is not possible to protect every civilian in all the remote places, but the expectations were very high. So the expectations have to be managed. Unfortunately when a mission has been there for a long time expectations go up or down. The expectations of MONUSCO were very high. Under these circumstances I would rather say that the mission did their best with whatever resources they had at hand. But had it shortcomings? Yes.

Would you say the elections were necessary for the legitimacy of the mission?

I would not say that elections are necessary for the legitimacy of the mission. I would rather state that elections are necessary in a conflict state for sustaining peace and ensuring the credibility and legitimacy of the government.

If there were elections you would think the situation would be worse? There were a lot of financial costs for organizing elections, around half a billion for the first.

Yes the election of 2011 costed around 750 million. Elections are costly, but contribute towards stabilization, peacebuilding, sustaining peace. That is something they have to go through. The issue is that the elections, to be able to meet the objective of sustaining peace, have to be conducted in a credible and transparent manner and has to be credible for all the stakeholders.

And the timing of the elections? Would it have been better to slowly implement the elections? Was it too soon? Is it necessary to have elections as soon as possible like in the CAR and Somalia is visible as well (in the early stages of the peacebuilding process)? If you look to stable democracies in the world, it took them ages to get there, and in countries like Turkey you see how hard it is.

I would like to say it is very difficult to say what the right time is to conduct elections. Certain parameters must be met. If there is a constitution of the country, that should be elections in a time period, then there should be elections. The security situation should be reasonable. **If you cannot conduct elections safely in elections there is no point in conducting in elections.** Then the timing has to be such that elections are seen as credible, the manner should be transparent and should be legitimate and the right kind of administrative procedures ready. The timing has to be right. The question is not if it is too soon or too late. The right timing is according to the right parameters I just ascribed.

If I summarize it so far: It is unreasonable to ask for a complete stop of violence, certainly in a big country like the DRC and elections should take place, because the violence is inevitable. There will never be a perfect situation where everything is secure and there is no violence. But the level of the problems has to be manageable before elections can take place. You cannot conduct elections, when electoral boots get captured. You have to guarantee a reasonable safety for civilians who want to vote. If they fear people will not come out and vote and the elections will not be fair.

Maybe to finish the DRC part. How do you look upon the situation nowadays with president Kabila trying to remain in power against the constitution? What does that tell you about the implementation of elections if the president does not want to leave and it looks like he used the elections to get in power with the goal to stay there.

I personally feel that it's not Kabila, it's any leader. If it does not go by what is stated in the constitution the chances are that it will not be accepted to high segments of the population and the opposition. **But having said this, the constitution must be respected.** If there are certain issues or legitimate reasons that the elections cannot be conducted in time that is another story.

In short you say it was worth the investments to implement elections and a democratic system in the DRC.

Yes

More about the decision-making: Where does the idea come from to implement elections? Is it input of the states or the UN secretariat who say this is the most effective way to go? Or is it worldwide accepted norm that is just blindly adopted?

I don't think it is the UN secretariat. It is the UNSC. The Secretariat is in a supporting role.

So it is political?

Yes it is a political issue. Important to remember is that elections are a milestone in stabilizing a country. And therefore good elections conducted in a credible manner provide legitimacy to the authorities and that is very important for long-term peacebuilding. How long do we continue? I have another appointment. I have another 5 minutes

We can wrap it up in 5 minutes. On the decision-making, it is political you said. Is the feedback from the ground (like MONUSCO) going into the decision-making or is it pure political without looking to input from on the ground and the UN secretariat.

The input comes from multiple units. The mission, UN Secretariat, the neighbor countries and experts.

I'm also focusing on Somalia and the CAR. How do you perceive on the elections there? Do you see enough support for the elections? Or would you say it is not the right time.

To be very honest with you I do not have any ground knowledge on Somalia.

Same counts for the CAR?

Yes I do not have any ground knowledge

Ok, thanks for this interview. Do you know any other people on this subject who I might interview?

If I find somebody who's suitable to provide you information I will send you an email.

Thank you very much.

INTERVIEW COORDINATOR UN POLITICAL AND LEGAL AFFAIRS AT THE DUTCH
MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS

4 JULY 2017

Introductie

*Mijn thesis gaat dus over peacebuilding, en ik heb me gericht op de implementatie van verkiezingen en wat de rationale daarachter is. Ik heb de Centraal Afrikaanse Republiek, Somalië en Congo als studiegebied. Ik focus nu meer op het bredere plaatje, ik ga niet erg specifiek op landen vragen in principe. Ik wilde met een introductie beginnen van: wat zijn voor Nederland kernpunten als het om vredes opbouw gaat in een missie, wat is voor Nederland het belangrijkste of de belangrijkste punten?
Vredesopbouw in algemene zin?*

Wat ze verrichten op Afrikaanse landen. zoals DRC, CAR en er zijn er natuurlijk meer
Ja. Wat ik al zei net: ik werk dus bij de multilaterale directie, dus ik kan vooral wat zeggen over vredesopbouw in een multilaterale setting. Maar ik ben geen vredesopbouw expert, daarvoor moet je weer bij DSH bijvoorbeeld zijn, daar zit vredesopbouw. Daar zit thematische expertise op vredesopbouw en transitional justice en dat soort thema's. En onze toegevoegde waarde, de directie waar ik werk, dat is het hele idee van zo'n matrix bij buitenlandse zaken, dat je elkaar versterkt. En wij kijken naar: hoe doet de VN het op het gebied van vredesopbouw?
Het is voor Nederland heel belangrijk dat de VN zo geïntegreerd mogelijk samenwerkt. Dat er bij een bij het aflopen van een conflict, maar ook al tijdens een conflict, aandacht is voor goede vredesopbouw, stabilisering, goede verbinding met ontwikkelingsactoren, of dat nou VN actoren zijn zoals UNDP zijn, of andere, maar dat er bij voorkeur bij een vredesmissie al een vredesopbouw strategie is, die je meeneemt in de transitie naar vrede en wederopbouw. Hetzelfde geldt voor conflictpreventie: als je goede preventie wilt doen, dat begint als een land uit een conflict komt, of er is een conflict geweest, dat begint bij peacebuilding en dan doe je ook aan preventie van het opnieuw oplaaieren van zo'n conflict. En verkiezingen, ja, zijn heel vaak, dat zal jij wel beter weten dan ik, een ijkpunt voor goede vredesopbouw in die zin van, dan spreek ik even vanuit de VN, als er een conflict gaande is of afloopt, en er ligt een vredesakkoord, dan zit daar altijd of heel vaak een afspraak in over verkiezingen. En dat is het meetpunt in de zin van, als die vredig verlopen en eerlijk, dan is dat een startpunt voor nieuw ontstaan. Maar het kan ook een punt zijn waarop het weer helemaal misgaat, kijk naar Kenia.

*Ik focus me dus op waarom ze het blijven doen, maar ook de besluitvorming: waarom die besluitvorming en hoe het gaat dat het steeds weer gebeurt. Misschien is dat laatste dan relevanter wat ook met jouw werk te maken heeft?
Bedoel je besluitvorming door wie?*

Ja hoe die tot stand komt. De staten hebben wel het mandaat, maar bijvoorbeeld wat de VN instituties daar aan bijdragen, of bijvoorbeeld het secretariaat met, laat zeggen tips komt zo kan je het het beste doen, of dat ze bij een mandaat zeggen: dit zou ik niet doen als ik jullie was? Daar probeer ik een beetje achter te komen.

Ja. Ik kan het niet heel specifiek aan landen linken, maar wat je vaak, laat zeggen, je hebt een conflict fase, of een conflict ergens. En bijvoorbeeld de Veiligheidsraad houdt zich daar mee bezig, want het raakt bijvoorbeeld ook aan vrede en veiligheid voor de regio. Dat is wanneer de raad zich ermee bezig gaat houden. Dan kijken zij naar het secretariaat, dus de secretaris-generaal en de organisaties die daaronder vallen zoals Department for Political Affairs, die eigenlijk dus via de SG de Veiligheidsraad moeten brieven of adviseren over opties en over besluiten die de Veiligheidsraad zou kunnen nemen. Bijvoorbeeld over een resolutie waarin ze de strijdende partijen oproepen een wapenstilstand te realiseren, en afspraken te maken over de overgang of een transitie naar een regering en uiteindelijk verkiezingen. En ook kan de Veiligheidsraad besluiten om een vredesmissie en die stabilisatie en het staakt het vuren te waarborgen of te monitoren in de periode naar een verkiezing. Maar het kan ook, je hebt vredesmissies, echt peacekeeping, maar je hebt ook politieke missies, of dat er een vertegenwoordiger van de secretaris generaal in een land zit.

Ja ik focus echt op peacebuilding.

Ja, peacebuilding of political missions, net de titel die ze krijgen, ook met instemming van het land vaak. En die een soort bruggenbouwer, of een brug zijn tussen de VN en die regering, en die ook adviseren over verkiezingen en andere manieren om uit dat conflict te komen. Alleen als een land die adviezen naast zich neerlegt, zoals in de DRC gebeurd, dan wordt het wel heel ingewikkeld.

Precies. Daarom kwam ik op dit onderwerp, omdat het af en toe ingewikkeld werd.

En dan is de vraag: wie kan politieke druk uitoefenen om te zorgen dat het de goede kant op gaat?

Ja precies. Qua monitoring en evaluaties van die missies. Ligt dat dan ook bij het secretariaat echt, of komt dat vanuit landen zelf? Ik probeer te ontdekken hoe die informatie stromen gaan waardoor ze uiteindelijk weer een besluit nemen over een volgende missie en wat ze van hun vorige missie hebben geleerd. En of de staten in de Veiligheidsraad hele andere ideeën hebben dan zo'n VN secretariaat, of dat ze wel op 1 lijn liggen.

Het secretariaat heeft meer ene onafhankelijke rol, in zekere zin. En de Veiligheidsraad is een politiek orgaan, in zekere zin. Dus de Veiligheidsraad kan gewoon, dat zijn landen die kunnen besluiten om ergens een vredesmissie of ene politieke missie neer te zetten, maar een politieke missie in de zin van een special representative of een special advisor of een special envoy van de secretaris generaal, daar kan de SG zelf toe besluiten. Die rol heeft hij - zijn good offices kan hij zetten, en daarmee ook DPA of zijn vertegenwoordigers in de vorm van zo'n special envoy om de regeringen of partijen in een land te ondersteunen bij stabilisering of wat dan ook. Maar als de Veiligheidsraad besluit voor een peacekeeping missie, dat doen ze door middel van een resolutie waarbij ze het mandaat van die missie vaststellen, en in die mandaten staat dan waarvoor die missie daar zit en vaak staat er iets van: moet de partijen of regeringen begeleiden bij het instellen van een verkiezing. Zij vragen vaak de SG om te brieven over de voortgang die de missie boekt. En dan nodigen ze bijvoorbeeld een special representative van de SG, of tegenwoordig dus van DPA uit om te brieven ook over die voortgang dus dat is in wezen de monitoring. Soms bezoeken ze zelf zo'n land, dat gebeurd ook wel eens - of vrij regelmatig tegenwoordig. En op basis daarvan

besluit de Veiligheidsraad om het mandaat van de peacekeeping missie aan te passen. Zoals net voor de missie UNAMIT in Darfoer is het mandaat aangepast en het troepenplafond aangepast, omdat de raad stelt dat het daar 2 jaar al erg rustig is. En zo kunnen ze dus ook ervoor kiezen om een missie helemaal af te bouwen. En dat is nu gebeurd in Ivoorkust en Liberia bijvoorbeeld, en in Haïti.

En zo'n mandaat, ik sprak een oud force commando van MONUSCO, en die zei: "Het is eigenlijk gewoon een soort kerstboom waar elk land wat inhangt waardoor het soms zo breed kan worden dat het te allesomvattend is en daardoor niet meer uitvoerbaar". Zo stelde hij het. Ja dat is soms zo. Nederlands ziet meer iets in een gefocust mandaat met duidelijk wat de belangrijkste taken van die missie zijn. Dat is ook een advies wat gegeven is door de High Level Panel on Peace Operations, die hebben in 2015 een rapport uitgebracht waar dat ook in staat. Daar staat in: een vredesmissie zou een kortere mandaat moeten hebben, steeds weer kijken naar hoe is de situatie nu, en daar een taak eraf of erbij, maar gefocust - focused and sequenced noemen ze dat. En daar zijn wij absoluut ook voorstander van. Je ziet dat het in de praktijk lastiger is dan je denkt, onder andere omdat de Veiligheidsraad leden, maar ook vanuit het secretariaat wordt er niet goed en niet scherp genoeg geadviseerd. Het secretariaat is ook een soort kerstboom - daar heb je ook de office voor, de high representatives, high commission for human rights, en je hebt de humanitaire poot, en de politieke poot, en die komen ook allemaal met hun ballen die in de kerstboom moeten. Dus het advies vanuit het secretariaat is vaak al niet scherp genoeg, of stelt onvoldoende prioriteiten, en de Veiligheidsraadleden hebben ook allemaal hun eigen stokpaardjes. Sommige permanente leden zien niet zo veel in het mensenrechten aspect in een vredesmissie, maar andere permanente en niet-permanente leden juist weer wel. Het is toch een onderhandeling van die leden en dat is helaas waarom het op een kerstboom uitdraait. In de praktijk is het voor degene die het moet uitvoeren natuurlijk ontzettend lastig. Want in grote landen zoals Mali of de DRC, als je en burgers moet beschermen en stabiliteit moet brengen en security sector reform moet doen, en verkiezingen... het is vaak te veel.

Ja want dat viel op, waarom landen als China en Rusland met zulke missies akkoord zouden gaan, terwijl dingen als verkiezingen hen totaal niet liggen, maar het is gewoon een kwestie van onderhandelen en misschien de taart groter maken dat iedereen heeft wat ze willen hebben?

Ja.

Dat viel me ook op - aan de ene kant heb je het spanningspunt van het wordt te breed, maar als het een gefocust mandaat wordt en er blijft geweld, dat is in DRC onvermijdelijk, misschien, die spanning daartussen.

Ik denk dat als er op grote schaal sprake is van geweld tegen burgers in zo'n conflict, dan moet zo'n missie altijd die burgers kunnen beschermen. Dat is uiteindelijk wel een van de belangrijkste redenen waarom zo'n missie daar zit. Er zijn wel missies waarbij die kerstboom bestaat uit heel veel extra dingen, zoals demobilisatie, waarbij heel lastig is als je het niet doet, ja, wanneer dan wel? Het hangt heel erg met elkaar samen en dat maakt het ook zo ingewikkeld. Als je niet snel begint met die security sector reform en goed civiel oversight, over politie veiligheidsdiensten en het leger, dan blijf je het probleem vaak in stand houden in landen. En dat is het probleem ook met die kerstboom.

Ja, inderdaad. want de verkiezingen bijvoorbeeld in DRC - ik vroeg die oud force commandor: waren de investeringen het waard? Want de eerste verkiezing was 700 miljoen dollar, de tweede ook een half miljard. En heeft het zin om dat per se te doen, terwijl het geweld tegen burgers blijft doorgaan, en lokale conflicten ook blijven doorgaan. En of je dat geld niet beter kan besteden aan security reform of puur het geweld weghalen, waarvoor die missie in eerste instantie was? Want het lijkt een soort automatisme om heel snel te denken: we moeten hier verkiezingen houden, en nu zie je met Kabila die heeft de verkiezingen gewonnen maar die wil nu niet meer weg, of in Somalië is het gewoon bekend dat die zetels gewoon zijn verkocht voor een miljoen dollar. En er is dan wel een soort geschikte kandidaat uitgekomen, maar het proces is niet zoals het zou moeten. En dat is de puzzel waarmee ik zit: waarom toch steeds terugkomen op verkiezingen?

Ik weet niet of je dat HIPPO rapport wel eens hebt doorgenomen, maar het is een heel goed rapport om te lezen, of althans de samenvatting, want het is heel dik. Maar dat is het ook: uiteindelijk kan alleen een politieke oplossing een oplossing zijn voor een conflict. Wat jij zegt: je doet SSR, en je probeert de burgers te beschermen zoals in Zuid-Sudan. Het is uiteindelijk geen oplossing. En als ondertussen die verschillende partijen elkaar blijven bestrijden, omdat ze allemaal de macht willen, kom je nooit tot een blijvende oplossing. En verkiezingen zetten druk op partijen om tot een compromis te komen en geven uiteindelijk de wel de middelen om te kunnen kiezen wie ze willen dat hun land bestuurd, met alle mitsen en maren en alle dingen die mis kunnen gaan bij verkiezingen. En ik denk dat die verkiezingen te snel gepland worden he, want dat vergt heel veel zorgvuldigheid, en dat gaat denk ik in sommige situaties te snel. En de grote uitdaging is gewoon: wat doe je inderdaad als de uitslag van die verkiezingen niet gerespecteerd wordt? En daarom is zo'n politieke oplossing gepaard met politieke druk, afhankelijk van het land, van buurlanden, van regionale organisatie, in ons geval de EU, maar ook de AU of anderen. Dat moet ervoor zorgen dat het wel gerespecteerd wordt. Maar het kan ook de Veiligheidsraad zijn, of de secretaris-generaal, die de politieke druk erop houden. En dat schiet ook wel eens te kort, omdat de Veiligheidsraad wel met 20 landen 60 landensituaties op hun agenda staan.

Ja. En dan moet er dus een statelijk gezag komen in zo'n land. Maar zouden er alternatieven zijn voor zo'n democratische verkiezing? En dan niet voor altijd, maar toch korte termijn? Soms zie je dat er een tijdelijk VN-bestuur in zo'n land wordt neergezet, in Oost-Timor en Cambodja is dat toen ook gebeurd.

Ja. En dan neemt de VN het bestuur over. Maar ik ken die situaties niet goed genoeg om te zeggen waarom het destijds is gedaan, en het vraagt ook nogal wat van de VN. Het zou wel kunnen dat in Oost Timor het land hier zelf om heeft gevraagd. Dat is natuurlijk wel een belangrijke voorwaarde, ook voor Veiligheidsraad leden, om zoiets op te leggen, want krijg je heel moeilijk voor mekaar.

Dus eigenlijk is democratie het meest realistische alternatief, omdat uiteindelijk de VN het niet aankan om zelf de regering op te zetten?

Nou ja, niet aan kan... Het is soevereiniteit wat een rol speelt, en heel veel landen en lidstaten van de VN, en met name Veiligheidsraad leden, vinden soevereiniteit het allerbelangrijkste. En dus niet opleggen van de VN of van andere landen wat er in zo'n land moet gebeuren.

Ik kan me voorstellen dat eentje zeker weten China is. Natuurlijk.

Oke. Heb ik verder nog vragen...

We hebben het gehad over de Veiligheidsraad en DPA, maar je hebt natuurlijk ook de Peacebuilding Commission, en de Peacebuilding Support Office, en de Peacebuilding Funds, dat zijn eigenlijk de drie VN-organen die zich echt met vredesopbouw bezighouden. En begin volgend jaar, dat is te laat voor jouw scriptie, maar dan komt er een rapport uit over de rol van die organen, en dat zijn wel hele interessante clubs die heel goed werk doen, wel achter de schermen.

Ik heb inderdaad al contact proberen te zoeken, maar dat is heel moeilijk. Ik denk dat ik ze alle drie heb gedaan. Maar ik heb nu misschien een ingang bij DPKO.

R: DPKO, ja. Maar dat is een andere club. Dat is de partner voor Peacekeeping Operation. Dan raad ik je ook aan, ik had het over het HIPPO rapport, maar er is in 2015 ook op verzoek van de lidstaten een review gedaan van de VN peacebuilding architectuur. Daar is ook een rapport over verschenen, dus over de rol van de peacebuilding commissie. Dat rapport is door zowel de AVVN als de Veiligheidsraad verwelkomt, en ze hebben de SG gevraagd om over de aanbevelingen, de implementatie van de aanbevelingen uit dat rapport te rapporteren aan de AV en de Veiligheidsraad en dat is begin volgend jaar.

Oke. Zouden er al tussentijdse stukken van zijn?

Je kan zeker dat rapport vinden, peacebuilding architecture review heet het volgens mij. Uit 2015. En die resoluties. En daar staan heel veel goede aanbevelingen in die lang niet altijd in de praktijk worden gebracht, maar die PBC, daar kan je ook best wat over vinden denk ik. Je hebt daar een organizationale committee, waarbij we nu net niet meer in zitten. Maar je hebt ook PBC landen configuraties, dus je hebt PBC clubje voor Burundi, die wordt voorgezeten door een ambassadeur in New York, die heel specifiek op Burundi met de regering en met anderen praat over vredesopbouw en manieren om vredesopbouw te doen. Die brieven ook in de Veiligheidsraad. Die doen meer met vredeopbouw diplomatiek achter de schermen. Maar er staan vaak hele goede adviezen en evaluaties in van situaties in landen.

Ik heb inderdaad die commissie proberen te bereiken, maar van de 20 mailtjes krijg je 2 keer antwoord. Dus daar heb ik nog geen reactie van.

Nederland is een top-5 donor van het Peacebuilding Fund. In september was er ook een meeting van het donor Peacebuilding Fund, kan je ook wel wat over terugvinden denk ik. Het Peacebuilding Fund doet aan kleine projecten die landen net dat zetje kunnen geven om die vredesopbouw te kunnen bestendigen. En wij zeggen eigenlijk dat er veel meer geld moet naar dat Peacebuilding Fund. Nu gaat een hele grote chunk van het VN-budget naar peacekeeping, en naar DKPO, en dat is verplichte contributie, Nederland heeft ook een verplichte contributie voor die vredesmissies. Maar die vredesopbouw, dat is allemaal vrijwillig. En dat vinden wij niet logisch, want je zou veel meer moeten investeren in vredesopbouw en conflictpreventie voor en na een conflict, in plaats van tijdens een conflict.

En waar komt dat vandaan? Zijn dat belangen van landen om te zeggen: de vrede moet er zijn maar niet direct belang erbij om in de toekomst van een land te investeren?

Nou, het is nooit zo geweest en dat Peacebuilding Fund is pas later gekomen, pas sinds 2005 bestaat dat. En vroeger hadden vredesmissies een andere rol, dat was om een wapenstilstand of een staakt het vuren te bewaken en die hadden ook een meer vredesopbouwende rol. En er zijn nu veel landen die belangen hebben bij behoud van de

status-quo wat betreft die financiering en die bang zijn dat als er meer geld gaat naar het Peacebuilding Fund en peacebuilding, dat dat zal leiden tot het groter worden van het VN-budget. En daar zijn veel landen natuurlijk op tegen, en wij op zich ook.

Gewoon de eigen portemonnee beschermen?

Wij willen natuurlijk ook niet dat het VN budget gaat groeien, maar wij zien meer in een slimmere, of andere manier van financieren

Ik ken dit verhaal, ja. Heb ik ook een artikel over gelezen.

Wat ook nog interessant is - de peace and development advisors. Kan je ook niet veel over vinden denk ik, maar dat zijn mensen die gezamenlijk door de UNDP, de UN development Programme en de DPA gestuurd worden. Dat zijn vredesadviseurs die vaak bij een special envoy van de SG in een kantoor zitten, bijvoorbeeld in Myanmar of Sri Lanka, of Nepal, en die een rol hebben om te adviseren over slimme vredesopbouw. Zo'n SSG is ook maar iemand die weer ergens vandaan wordt geplukt, en expertise en goed advies over vredesopbouw en wie moet je betrekken uit de gemeenschap, kerken, of gemeenschapsleiders, dat vraagt bijzondere expertise. Dat doen deze mensen. Het zijn er niet zo veel.

Hier kan ik kijken of ze online bronnen en artikelen hebben.

Peace and development advisors. het is niet erg bekend, het is ook achter de schermen omdat ook dit voor sommige landen gevoelig ligt. Maar ze zijn er wel.

En heb jij nog ingangen bij zo'n Peacebuilding Commission. Ik heb probeer meer via via te doen omdat dat beter gaat dan via emailadressen.

Nee, het lukt niet direct - bij mij gaat het ook via de PV in New York.

Misschien zeggen ze - dit zijn professionele relaties, die ga ik niet...

Nou ik heb ze niet direct. Maar het zijn ambassadeurs die een landenconfiguratie in New York voorzitten. wat wel nog een interessante website is is "Peace Operations Review" ken je die?

Die hebben ook niet geantwoord.

Die hebben wel veel interessante info op hun site staan.

Volgens mij hebben we alles gehad dan.

Prima. Ja je kan nog een poging wagen om degene die PBC deed op PV die komt naar Nederland Ingrid Kersjes

Oké. Weet je toevallig ook wanneer?

Nee, ik denk dat ze op vakantie is. Ben je aan het afronden?

Nee, maakt mij niet uit, maar ik wil niet teveel van jouw tijd opnemen - meestal een half uur houden.

Nou, prima. En daarom had ik ook contact met DAF gezocht, mijn landenkennis reikt ook zover. Goed om oude DAF collega's te spreken over landensituaties.

Nog 1 ding kort samenvatten om te kijken of het klopt: De focus is dus om nationaal omdat er een politieke oplossing moet komen, en dat Veiligheidsraad landen soevereiniteit belangrijk vinden?

Absoluut. De VN staat in dienst van landen, het bestaat uit landen. Dus als een land of een regering aangeeft, als die er is, in Libië wordt het wat lastig, maar als die aangeeft wat zij willen, dat is wel de eerste startpunt voor de VN: dat is waar je mee spreekt. Alleen als een land niks wil zoals Burundi dan wordt het lastig.

INTERVIEW RESEARCHER BASED IN GOMA

7 JULY 2017

Introduction

Can you tell about your work in Goma?

I came in early 2013. I'm doing research, documenting what is happening on the political insecurity front. Research on DDR, integration of rebels, m23 rebel group, FDLAR, the relationship between those and the Congolese army. I worked as consultant, did something on corruption in Congolese security sector and was with the International Center of Justice, working of the capacity of Congolese prosecutors to bring on cases of human rights and war crimes. As researcher we follow the situation in mostly the Kivu's, in Katanga, the fighting between the communities, doing some work on the LRA bordering CAR and South Sudan. I'm doing something now on the Central Congo, where large violence has sparked. 100.000 refugees, 3.000 deaths reported by the Catholic Church that concerns us. The electoral process concerns us. Mostly in urban areas we see political oppression, we see arrests of the opposition without access to family or lawyers. But also journalists and media organizations have been shut down. Work permits have been refused as well; harassment and threats. With documentation I mean we follow the news and journalists we reach out to, to speak to them, understand the situation, bring it down on paper and publish it to help others to understand the situation. We also focus on advocacy, we provide recommendations and are solution-oriented as best as we can. Advocacy means that the information we collect we share with everybody involved; regionally and internationally. Use the research as entry point to have our recommendations heard. We follow the mission MONUSCO, documenting what they are up to, possible violations, sexual abuses, excessive use of force, dealings with armed groups, that concerns us. Like I said with CAR there are 30.000 refugees crossed into Congo. South Sudan has lot of IDP refugees in Congo. Then there are problems with armed the group m23 along the border with Rwanda and Uganda. There are big problems along the border with Burundi, there is this refugee camp and several Burundi armed groups are active on Congolese soil. Then we follow the situation between Angola and Congo. There is a heavy conflict in Central Congo that has effects on Angolan side. We focus in short on the developments with a heavy focus on human rights violations.

First the situation in DRC at the moment. What do you think are the main problems of the situation in the DRC at this moment? Of course the violence against civilians, Kabila who doesn't want to leave his presidential seat. Where can you locate the causes, more on the national of a local scale?

This is a recurring question. Eventually it is a combination of all these factors. Most outspoken advocate for local conflicts is Severine Autesserre of Columbia University.

Her article was the reason I'm writing this thesis.

I looked her work up as you introduced the topic. Do you have seen the debate between her and Jason Coon and others?

No I don't think so.

This is the first, I'm sending it to you. A bunch of academics responded trying to undermine her argument. She responded again. Let me see, I don't have the password for Foreign Affairs. Autesserre and her book *Trouble with the Congo*. What she says is that we missed the local component, land ownership, issues about identity, citizenship, especially in eastern Congo, with the Rwandophone population, Hutu or Tutsi from the 2 communities who by some are considered the true Congolese. It also relates to the many refugees we still have from Rwanda. We also speak about FLDR group from Rwanda who came after genocide in 1994. Land is about economically income, but also an integral part of someone's identity. Many Congolese will say without land you don't exist. You have no rooting, you have no sense of belonging, no ownership. It is not just a material basis, but it constitutes people's identity. It is about pride, manhood, identity, so it is very important. There are conflicts between communities, over time ethnicity has been politicized, what has been going on for decades. The Congolese army is not able to protect the population, but often harm the population they have to protect. Civilians formed in eastern Congo self-defense groups to protect the community against armed groups and the Congolese armies. This led to self-fulfilling prophecy; these armed groups have unnecessary militarized politics and social life. They are coopted by influential power brokers, personal ends and interests. These armed groups do not represent the community at large. The community is very often the prime victim of these groups. This is especially the case with FRPI, north Kivu, bordering Uganda. They committed a lot of sexual violence against the own people. Over time you have these communities pitted against each other. One attack fueled that vicious cycle, feeding what you call the selfishness of the victim. Once you suffering injustice your ability to emphaticize with somebody else is limited. And this in the backdrop of severe poverty, lack of education. When you speak to some of the armed group members they sometimes don't share the armed groups ideas, sometimes even oppose it, but for as little for 25-30 dollars they do little assignments, which is a daily struggle. Poverty is a very important in this and the lack of economic opportunities. When I talk about education, many are people in urban areas like Goma are educated, but there are no jobs. Overeducated, underemployed. You got all these local conflicts.

Autesserre advocates to make this the primary vocal for conflict analysis. I tend to disagree and so do the scholars who reacted on her article. These factors are definitely fueling conflict and you need to address them. But these also exist in other countries and for the violence that we see, the extensive systematic violence across space and time, to reach that momentum, to have such a blow up effect, we need other effects to come in, to blow the conflict up. Land conflicts are very severe and serious and need more attention, so she is right in that sense. The real motor and driver of conflict somewhere else on is locatable on a higher level. You have armed groups from abroad in the DRC. In the North the LRA, from Rwanda, several armed groups from South Sudan, like SPLA of Machar. You have ADF from Uganda, FLDR from Rwanda, some argue M23 is from Rwanda, that is only partially true. It is true they are supported by Rwanda and Uganda. You also have FNL, from Burundi. You have units from Angolan civil war as well. This is a huge problem and comes with high numbers of refugees that especially from 1994 that led to a collapse in societal other, social cohesion was weak, under Mbutu 32 years of dictatorship the country was economically ran down, a lot of lack on basic services like health care. The ground was fertile for conflict and then you have this massive influx from refugees from neighboring countries with heavy traumas that upset the balance. You also have meddling from neighboring countries, Burundi, Rwanda and Uganda. That also is a factor. You also have over 70 armed groups, they also have been heavy politicized and manipulated by power brokers on the provincial

and regional level. This is important to take into account. When you focus exclusively on local conflict you miss out on these spoilers. They have the capacity, materially, to fire the conflict up. If you have local villagers sit around and mediate you do not take into accounts, these are the stakeholders that have a larger say in peace and ward than the ordinary villagers that do not have the means. The Congolese that we are in contact with know very well, better than I do as foreigner, about the need for peace. You don't need to educate them. They are up against structural flaws in the system that they can't change alone as ordinary citizens.

The biggest system we have known is locked into the stalled electoral progress. It is a slippage. Kabila was supposed to step down last year, didn't and thereby violated the constitution of 2006 when first democratic elections were held. He is in power since 2001 after his father was shot. You have this electoral process and that declined the current political context. Severine and this article in Foreign Affairs says we should not make too much of a buzz about this thing called elections. I definitely disagree, because it is so overwhelming a problem and it is not really an agenda set by the international community, but HRW, MONUSCO and especially embassies, but if you look to the Congolese society it is the one big elephant in the room. What is required in eastern Congo and many other places, you have conflict but also underdevelopment that needs to be addressed. You need real political, societal transformation and it doesn't take a regime change, I'm not calling for a humanitarian intervention that's never going to be on the table and is not desirable, but you need a new political system. It is going to take a long time. The opposition is weak. There are a few alternatives, meaningful changes, candidates with vision to bring the country forward. But you need a strategic change at the top. It is a mixture of both. You need grassroots, but you need do not forget about the top, because the top is here very powerful. We call a lot about the weakness and abusive character of the army that are a reason for the continuous existence of armed groups. To reform the army, it is a mixed bag. You have 135,000 people in there, some good some bad. You have a recycle bin for armed groups in the late 2000s that were often integrated in the army. To reform this it is politics; Kinshasa politics. You can't these intricate problems on the local level.

You cannot address the persistence of refugees on own soil on the local level. You need power to influence that. That is what politics are about. It is about political change. However Kabila does not want to step down. Around 200 people were killed during demonstrations over the course of last year. Over the course of last year and 2015 we counted several dozens of people killed. The internet at large was shut down or interfered with, media outlets were closed, journalists were kicked out, independent researchers, like colleagues of mine, were expelled, the head of MONUSCO human rights section was kicked out in 2014. Political space, democratic space is shrinking as related to electoral process. Similar in Rwanda, when democratic space is shrinking, it is not only about politics. It influences everything in society. For instance what we see in the Congo is that we see because of the stalling of elections that the government is repressing youth movements who are dissenting, expressing their worries. More than a hundreds were arrested. A particular case, Fred, was imprisoned for 17 months. Why do I mention this specific case; youth at large as considered as state enemy. When it comes to the increase to student fees, students can no longer protest. They are locked up and mistaken for members of political movements. Student fees are political in nature but it is not directly about elections, Kabila and power in Kinshasa, but in today's environment caused by this gridlock, the freedom of speech is limited, there is a ban on demonstrations across the country. The economy is very much suffering, the inflation has risen, GDP forecasts have been repeatedly change, the state budget has been severely slashed. Grievances are mounting. People are very poor. For all

this you need open political space, political debate to express people's grievances otherwise they will turn to violent means possibly. This is the overall framework we are working in. local problems are very important, land, citizenship, refugees, corruption, you need this framework. Conceptually it is difficult, the state is now registering voters. In central Congo is violence, the electoral commission says it cannot register voters there. They say, you the population should say if we have elections with central Congo or shall we just forget about them or later. Maybe we can change the constitution, a referendum, so Kabila can stay past its term limit. This is a problem that everybody in Central African region has problems with. In Uganda president Museveni changed the constitution a few years ago so he could run again. Rwanda, Kagame, changed the constitution, and is going to have elections next month. In May 2015 Nkurunziza changed the constitution, hundreds of people were killed in violence with thousands of Burundian refugees across the region. It is a closed society at this point, there is not any independent reporting coming from out of the country. In Congo Brazzaville, president Sassou he also changed the constitution and there was also violence. This problem affects the whole region. These big men don't want to step down and in the case of Congo they sacrifice a lot.

That is also why I am writing this thesis, because it strikes me that after elections you don't really see improvements from, at least not from my perspective nor that from Autesserre, so that's why I came up with the elections. You say elections are necessary, but don't you think then that they are maybe too fast. You mention these big men staying in power and change the constitution. Don't you think a peacebuilding mission like MONUSCO needs more long term vision, more gradual progression and not just get over with the elections as soon as possible. This is sometimes the case as states want to leave the fragile country, like the France in the CAR, who interfered first and then said you have to sort out your own problems, let get over with these elections as soon as possible so we can scale down. Don't you think the elections come too quick for countries like the DRC and the CAR. Somalia same thing and you mentioned some others as well.

It is a good debate to have. In the case of MONUSCO, if you include the first mission in 1999, the mission is a bit of everything, I don't even think it is a peacebuilding mission; that is Burundi, until they left in 2015. MONUSCO is called stabilization mission. It's kind of happening and not happening. At the same time it is a peacekeeping mission. This is working somewhat, people had higher hopes. It stuck a little bit, there is definitely a mission creep. They came in with limited set of tasks and eventually they branched out. Inside MONUSCO we have sections on civilian affairs, political affairs, DDR, child rights, you name it, stabilization, all kinds of things and they are working with the UN country team, humanitarian organizations, UNICEF, UNDP, UN Habitat, UNHCR, it is a big industry and elections are one part of it. In 2006 if you read Trouble with the Congo of Autesserre they really threw in a lot of it, a lot of money. DRC is logistically a difficult country with little to no infrastructure. You need a lot of money also for candidates. Only the rich can become president in the country. This has wings, there is not as much attention on the electoral process and support to it as it used to be. The mission is still supporting, with logistics of distributing voting packages, you name it. At the same time eastern Congo really is the headache since August last year in Kasai, and it always has been with ups and downs. South eastern Congo, so Katanga province. I mean we have different stages of the conflict. We are still very much stuck in eastern Congo in an emergency setting. They are accused of not doing enough on peoples suffering. They have difficulties on moving the conflict from an emergency setting to a recovery setting let alone a development stage. There is little transformative stuff happening. More could be done on changing institutions, the

interaction between state and the people. Stabilization is going from the mission point of view to get into this. I think overall the country is ready and has been ready, but the current political chiefs are not ready. They are picking a fight to do what it takes to withhold the elections. It is not like the CAR or Somalia with elections that the country is not in the right phase. The country is ready, the people are ready. If you look for instance Jason survey it shows the people want elections and Kabila to step down. It is difficult for the mission, but they should not tell the people what they wish for and what they strive and desire. The country asked for the constitution that the regime has subscribed to, that demands elections at the end of last year. It is a power wrap. There was a Bloomberg study last year, Tom Wilson, he very much shows that Kabila and its family are a corporate family and have hands in all kind of business dealings and domains. Money and greed is very much on the forefront. Not exclusively, but we shouldn't forget how corrupt the political elite are and how power hungry they are. They are still stuck in a zero-sum approach. You are in power and have everything, or you are not in power and have nothing.

You said the country is ready now. Where they ready when the first elections were organized? Or was it too soon?

I can't tell you out of personal experience. There was violence between Kabila's party and its main opponent Bemba, who is now sitting a sentence from the ICC in prison. There was violence and Angola came in and supported Kabila. There were shootouts in Kinshasa. 2006 the transition from 2003 did bring rebel leaders together. We had 4 vice-presidents, many of them former leaders of armed groups. I think that the elections did help to bring peace. From what I can see it did have a suing effect in the conflict. It was the next step following the peace agreement of 2003. Did it transform the country or end the conflict? It didn't. In the early 2000s you had a regional war, Gerard Prunier, a good scholar speaks of Africa's world war. This was brought to an end. The conflict in eastern Congo did continue. There was a continuation of Rwandan backed and sometimes Ugandan backed rebel leaders. I think overall the elections did have a suing effect on the larger conflict.

Elections did provide for a meaningful constructive framework to get the conflict out of what was then a regional war. It was not a silver bullet, it was not a recipe for peace and a prospering economy. Some conflicts even intensified in eastern Congo. When we're talking about the international community, foreign interventions, embassies, all kind of groups, international aid workers, who are here on an average of 2 years with few institutional memory, it isn't the best thing you can bet on. There is an absence of creative thinking. Right now we are stuck in the system; we are going for the elections. Even if there are going to be elections, are they going to be free and fair and transparent? I doubt. What is the framework we can work under? I can remember reading reports before coming to the Congo about recommendations that you need to better coordinate.

* no connection*

We are back.

Elections are not perfect, it is the most visible of democracy, but democracy is everything from justice to checks and balances, anti-corruption measures. The full package. The democratic spirit that comes with voting that takes years to take root into people's hearts and minds, especially when it is implemented in a country with few or none experience with democracy. It takes time. What Churchill says it is the least worst option. And I mean right now a lot of the violence we see in the country is due to the fact that the president in power does not want to step down. If you not address it you're going to have problems. If you wish

to have students demonstrate about the increase in student fees, which has effect on people's education and access to learning and knowledge, you need to have the right political space. Right now there isn't, it is still shrinking. There is still space in Rwanda, where civil society is not as active as here. We have discussions and have to be careful not to be cry wolf and not to be alarmist about it. But to give you a flavor of the thinking and discussions here, some talking about a war coming to DRC, a full blown confrontation. I do say it is going to get worse before it's going to get better. A lot of it is due to the fact that the regime does not want to step down and is taken the fight to the people. In about 2 weeks we are going to have reports on what the regime has done in December when the protests happened. They used forms of violence that very shocking. That provokes the opposition, armed groups. Some armed groups say we are here to take down Kabila, for political change. Believe them or not but they do make reference to it. These elections are important.

I don't know what else there could be. What is politics; it is elections, competitions of political interests. The political interest right now of the ruling elite is self-serving. There is no spirit to serve the public interest. Sharing of resources is still zero-sum. Academic literature says about public/private good. As government it is not so much about merit, but about relationships, you feed of your friends and family, you coopt, buy your position, play armed group against each other. It is very much short thinking. In many ways what we see right now in the DRC it is a huge conflict, the Catholic Church says 3,000 killings if not more, 52 mass graves. Two UN-experts, friends of mine, were killed. This is to a large part due the handling of the government. They have created this mess. Again it was about local conflict, but there were national interests at play. The government wanted to cement power at the customary local level in support of the sitting regime.

We have to get through this phase of more national political mess, call it like that.

You need to be careful with this dichotomy. Local and national. Eventually it is all intertwined. The one does not exist without the other. We got a limited conceptual thinking. There is a reason why people tend to focus on conflict minerals and sexual violence. It is messy, violent and it is learning like a language, the Chinese of conflicts. And all this you need to be strategic where you want to insert yourself. This is more complicated because you're a foreigner. You need to be culturally appropriate. You need to function in your own administration. You got your own donor reports, reporting schedule and evaluation, monitoring frameworks, you name it. Against all that working on the elections from the MONUSCO point of view is the best bet you can have. They are trying for better or worse to come from a holistic point of view, some stabilization and fighting with armed groups. About the fighting, the absence of a credible DDR process leads to almost nothing really. It is complicated. Look, this conflict is 20 years. If you think about it. 20 years is not that long. If you look at statebuilding in Europe, it took centuries. When the European states were at the pinnacle of state formation they went for WWI and II bombing each other back to the Middle Ages.

I mentioned the same argument, but gave it another twist. I mentioned countries like Turkey, how fragile democracy remains, Hungary and Poland and therefore why we are turning to elections so fast. But you say it is something we have to go through.

There's a lot of buzz about these elections, but if anything, elections do provide for meaningful change if done correctly. It is not so much about the elections itself, but about the process and how to go about it. And also you need to sell it correctly in the sense that you need to know what you want out of it as donor. Eventually it is a step towards transformation which the country needs. You don't need conflict management, you need to

get out of this thinking an cycle of violence. It is one of many steps. It is going to take time, make mistakes and it is going to be very costly especially in the DRC. I definitely see, Autesserre made her point for my master thesis as well and talked a little bit about the elections. They have templates and use it on Haiti and Timor. With this system in place I don't want to be cynic or defeatist, but this whole thing is imperfect, foreign intervention is imperfect.

I will also try to wrap it up, but what can the UN learn from MONUSCO focusing on elections. MONUSCO is best as is politics. The UN is not good in fighting armed groups. Especially you only sticks and no carrot, the DDR process. You shoot at them they run into the bush. They are locals with a gun or machete, difficult to identify. The state is a big problem if not the biggest. In 2009 they became complicit in serious human right violations, because they forgot to count for the fact that the Congolese army are the biggest perpetrators of human rights violations, also because they have the biggest numbers. It is a pact with the devil. Now do they have any other change? No. It is geopolitics and they do need the consent of the state, we're talking about UNSC politics. They need to focus on good office. Back in 2006 they have done a good job mediating. You also need the right context for it. The window is shrinking, MONUSCO's on a really weak footing these days especially since January with the Trump administration they had to cut at least 200 million dollars. They are very much under attack, are forced to make extreme military cuts, 5 military bases at least if not more of MONUSCO will be closed in North Kivu province in eastern Congo and also the government wants to see it shrinking. Now the civilian component is very important. Something as a radio channel has been very meaningful in the democratization process of the country. The human rights office has been very vocal and strong, it can always be better. But I think overall they have done a great job. Civilian and political affairs are very important and it is always limited, but the mission only can do as much as the government is willing to do.

I also spoke with a former MONUSCO force commander and he said the mandate is more of a Christmas tree so every country can put something in it they like and I also spoke of the Dutch MFA who said the UN itself is a Christmas tree because of all their divisions and their priorities. So maybe we want too much of MONUSCO. And some goals are not in line with each other. We have the forces to protect civilians, but maybe in protecting civilians they can't really offer the carrot to the rebel groups that are attacking the civilians. That's a thought that came up. You can argue MONUSCO is too complicated and should have less focus points, although you can question how justified that will be if there are less troops on the ground to protect the civilians. On the other hand we know we can't do really a lot there against armed groups as you just said. Should we just see it like that, realistically?

Yes, you need prioritization, what I said: mission creep. MONUSCO can't do everything. They need to pick their battles. Over time there are changes. MONUSCO is part of the furniture in the Congo. All these components were created in response to a new challenge. This happens to a lot of missions, they are stuck. The mission in Ivory Coast closed after I think 13 years.

Should we say the UN just focus on politics or is it too much.
Maybe not just politics but create greater emphasis on politics.

One last question. If we say the UN should focus more on the political levels. Is there space for other agents to act on the local level? I know in the DRC the Catholic Church is quite prominent, or local NGOs.

These groups are in place. NGOs bringing people together, mediation, working on peacebuilding, direct dialogue with armed groups. UN Habitat works on lands. So these groups are in place. You can always have a better strategy and complementarity to bring everybody's advantages together to streamline it more. I don't want to be defeatist, but look what we've got. I'm proud of the people I work with, but it starts with who wants to work with people in eastern Congo. We have tools here, but the best and the brightest like to stay in London or Paris. Maybe I'm becoming more pragmatic as I evolve in my career, but again you need to make it work with what you got. We've got stuff you know. MONUSCO got 1.4 billion dollars to throw around. To give you a clear answer, definitely more politics. But there always be role for MONUSCO of another international intervention. You need the right timing and willingness. There is only so much you can force on parties in the conflict if they come around.

It's interesting we concluding the opposite of Autesserre, who claims there is too much focus on the national political level, but maybe it is the other way around. I think I have it all, you told me a lot so thank you for that.

INFORMAL INTERVIEW UN OFFICIAL

23 JULY 2017

Introduction

From your experience, could you tell a little bit more what the role is of elections during peacebuilding missions?

This all is my personal opinion. I think the point of elections is legitimacy. It is one of the key mechanisms for the population of a country to express its needs and desires and thereby hopefully resulting in a government and administration that is in this sense legitimate and hopefully in turn provides those services and meet the needs of the population. That the system works is a crucial part to the success of peace operations, because at the end of the day the responsibility for the country resides within the country itself. The UN is always there in a supportive, helping role. Elections hopefully result in a legitimate government providing in the needs of the population.

Can you tell what the origins are of the idea of implementing elections and democracy?

From a generic perspective it is hard to say. I don't have a very specific answer to that. I allow myself a little bit of speculation. Over the decades in the 20th century and afterwards there was a cultural idea that did wind up across the world that legitimacy derives from the will of the voters of the population. But certainly in the post-war and decolonization phases arguably that cultural notion propagated itself across the world. How it happened I can't really say, but it did happen. **It inevitably finds its way in the policies of national governments and organizations.** It is all pretty vague, but the best way I can explain is.

My idea was that the UNSC's main concern is sovereignty in the CAR and DRC and that implementing elections and democracy is the first thing that comes into mind to restore its sovereignty. Do you recognize this or are there other interests?

I suppose I could subscribe to that point of view personally, but I don't think I would it express it in that matter. I would not have said that the upmost concern of the UNSC is sovereignty. That may or may not be true. The first thing would be that there may be some more immediate concerns depending on the context. I would subscribe the notion that **underlying all international law and diplomacy is this notion of sovereignty. I would agree that there is this idea, perhaps not always expressed, in the machinery that elections result in a sovereign government with who we as the UN are able to deal with correctly and legally speaking.** I think that a lot of people do not immediately formulate it that way. But I do agree with the notion underlying all operations. That is at a generic level. But in more specific circumstances there could be other ideas that individual members of the UNSC might say are more important.

I will no zoom more in on the United Nations. I was wondering, maybe from your own experience as well, when employee starts at the UN, is there some sort of training where also the worldview and norms are transmitted to the new staff. For example norms like democracy or others, do you recognize such training at the start of the UN career?

Yes, there is. The training will concern more of course the constitutive texts of the organization, its policies and practices etc. But inevitably these values are inherently part of that. There is, but not always. I did such training for my first post. It is not always.

Do you think there are also alternative ideas present within the UN on implementing elections or is everybody personally on board as well?

Well, the idea of the implementations is not universally supported. There is often times controversy as to whether elections will be held at any moment and that elections might hurt the situation by introducing this competition element into a fragile context, which might not be precisely what the country needs at that time. These are often arguments that are raised within and outside the organization. Within the broader peacebuilding community this question is contested. But as we've seen in the practice of international diplomacy and politics within the UN as well with the politics of the major partner donors and players on a state level is that they all believe in elections should be held in order to institute that sovereignty and that hoped for legitimacy.

I heard for example that in the CAR France intervened and wanted to retreat and the solutions for that was the implementation of elections maybe faster than should be. The UNSC is making the calls, but is there a lot of controversy about it within the UN itself?

Certainly, that is what many individuals say within and outside the organizations. Let's get over with the elections quickly so they can leave. Personally speaking I don't really comfortable pronouncing on that, because I don't have really an opinion on it. But I know that this argument exists.

About the evaluation: Someone called the UN a Christmas tree, there all different kind of interests within and between the units and that's makes it hard to define what success is. There might be an unit focused on human rights but that interferes with other units interests. Do you recognize that in evaluation there is not really a clear frame to measure success?

I would not put it this way. The reality is this: so it is true, I think we all know. The UN from organizational perspective is rather decentralized actually. Since its founding and where the current SG is focusing on as well is the need for further integration. Turning to the specific example you bring up, I'm not sure this creates competition across units. It is inevitable in any organization that organizations fight for their equities, finances and power. But more specifically that makes it more difficult to evaluate success, I am not sure I would really say that. There goes a lot of work in these types of evaluation in how well missions are doing. It is hard to measure, but that is inevitable because the range of issues is so diverse. But that is inherent to what the accepted idea is within the organization and the peacebuilding community; that peacebuilding missions are multidimensional. And when it is accepted the evaluation is more difficult of course. I would disagree with an assertion that work of evaluation is not done well or that bad faith competition is going on in the evaluation process or that the tools are unavailable. I would say it is difficult to do.

Do you know more about how elections are evaluated or other sources who know that?

I am not electorally focused. I do not know the specifics of that.

To add, when I read of reports of the UN I come across quotations as "despite elections has not moved forward as we expected". It sounds like elections on itself are a success. When there are elections without large portions of violence it is seen as a success on itself. Do you recognize this?

Yes, but at risk of stating the obvious, success is not a static phenomenon as if there is a condition of success. There are simply successes in my opinion anyway. So therefore sure an election in this sense, that is conducted in a peaceful environment that seems to be free fair transparent, is a success. Very few to no one will say it is the success and therefore everything is done. Very few to one in my opinion will make such a statement. And anything written in that way, the author would say “no that is not what I meant”, but I can’t put words in their mouth. My personal opinion it is a success when it happens, but it is one point along the road and I find it very difficult to believe that anyone would have a different opinion, frankly.

It occurred to me the UN is an open organization with a lot of research, but sometimes I have the idea that there might be a tunnel vision on elections that cannot be questioned, that might obstruct learning different alternatives on elections. Do you recognize that the culture and bureaucratic structure obstruct learning on peacebuilding missions and their strategies?

I think it is a bit going back to what I said before. For better and worse, I would not use the word tunnel vision, I would say that there is a belief that elections are an important part of the process. But again there is a relatively settled consensus within the broader peacebuilding community, not just the UN bureaucracy but also other members, state-actors, that this is a multidimensional process. Very few to no one will say elections are the most important thing. People will say it is very important, but frankly I do not think recognize or think this comes at the expense of other aspects of the work.

The international peacebuilding community, I think you refer to the donors and also the NGO-community I guess?

I use that as kind of a short hand. Yes it includes the UN structure, state actors, NGOs, local civil society, I mean everyone throughout that chain working on these issues.

Then I want to focus as last topic on the CAR and MINUSCA, with a focus on elections of course. What stroke me the most when elections were held in the CAR, there was still a lot of violence and also a rebel group that wanted to found their own independent state, but still elections were held. I saw a same pattern in DRC and it made me question why are elections implemented right now and not later or not at all. Can you understand my feeling about this?

What you basically ask is should elections be postponed. Frankly, it is difficult what does postpone mean: a month, three months or a year? Not to deflect the question, but when people talk about postponing, what does that mean? Is it a bad thing that will change in a month, you maybe see what I am saying. If not now, when? In the CAR context there was an international commitment where the region had put down a marker that elections will be held by the end of the year 2015, that deadline has been extended previously. That deadline is not the best word, but let’s just use it for the short hand. That has been pushed back at least once or twice. That was part of the calculus, yes this has been pushed off before, but we really need to get this done, let’s get it done. That is the idea generically speaking with the concept running in the back the UN machinery of having a legitimate sovereign government, that is true as well as everywhere else. Therefore if you look at the aftermath, the actual election was pretty good all things considered, that has to be recognized. It has produced a government in my personal opinion is certainly doing the best that can and is working well with the international community. It is not in my capacity to judge whether it is a good government or not, but from a personal opinion the outcome was pretty good and I think a lot for people working on the situation say the same thing. As regards to the DRC, postponing the elections is a different story, on the one hand you have a great deal of

violence going on in the country and this is one of the arguments of the Congolese government why the elections should be postponed. But on the other hand the continual postponing in that context is one of the major points of contention that is resulting in the current crisis. So frankly speaking: if you're looking for to call into question elections. CAR you might be to play with a little bit, but it is not my opinion although there was a lot of discussion about it.

In DRC I meant the first elections held. I recognize that the current crisis is also feed by Kabila who does not want to leave his presidential seat.

The thing is, the previously elections you mean in 2006?

Yes also regarding the costs to organize elections. It was I think 700 million dollars and critics that said all this money spent on this while it is hard to involve the whole country and all people and could we not spend this money on other priorities like local reconciliation for example.

Would the Congolese people want that(?), to throw the question back. Generically speaking people want elections, because people generically think it is a good thing in an attempt to force accountability to try to force legitimacy. I confess I see it as a false choice to spend it rather on this than that. A lot of money has been spent on local reconciliation. Does it mean that if more money was spent it would have result in better results without that extra money? People set up false dichotomies and this is one of them. We have to spend money on something else, ok but make a good argument what the fruits of that will be versus the losses of nothing having those elections of anything else.

I also heard the counterargument the elections did solve other conflicts.

The thing is, it comes back to this idea that almost everyone is in agreement on the multidimensional aspect of peacebuilding missions. The understanding and believe is that you have to do everything in a certain sense, but it has to be properly sequenced and inevitably there have to be priorities drawn so it is not to say that everything is doing everything at one time. But generically speaking there is the concept that says peacebuilding is not just about elections or is not just about reconciliation or SSR. This is the whole point that all points have to be carried out. So this is a false dichotomy. The other things are being done as well.

Do the countries themselves also directly request for elections. It is not just the international community that wants it, but also the countries itself request for elections. I don't know if that is right or wrong.

No one in the international body is setting the elections. No matter what, elections are the prerogative of every state. They are being set and run at the base by themselves. What you're talking about, request for assistance, which sure they will do, these things are already inserted in the SC mandates such as in MINUSCA and MONUSCO. I'm not aware of any case, certainly not in MONUSCO and MINUSCA, where the international communities says here we go here is the time plan here is it is. They must be the one to want it. They have to act to make this process official so to say. Certainly the UN is not doing that or any other actor.

As last question on MINUSCA, what can we learn and do better regarding elections?

When it comes to elections, I just have general knowledge; I am not an electoral officer. It is difficult to say how it could be done better. I am not competent to answer that.

I only had one question. Do you know colleagues at the UN at the DPKO or an electoral officer?
I will reach out to some people and explain the situation and if I get some positive responses back I will let you know.

Thank you so much for your time and this interview.

INTERVIEW MARTIN KOPER (DISSERTATION 'HELPT DEMOCRATIE AFRIKA?')

2 AUGUST 2017

Introductie

Jouw proefschrift sluit goed aan op mijn thesis.

In algemene zin wat ik probeer aan te tonen zijn de gevolgen van verkiezingen in met name negatieve zin voor zogenaamde fragiele staten zoals Somalie, DRC en CAR. Ik geloof dat Coyer heeft opgeschreven dat wanneer een land uit een conflict komt of nog deels in zit zal de eerste ronde van verkiezingen vreedzaam zijn, omdat iedereen denkt kans te maken. Maar in de tweede ronde gaat het dan goed mis. Eigenlijk alles wat niet goed kan gaan aan verkiezingen en de boel erger maakt dan het was wordt een beetje uitvergroet als de mensen elkaar naar het leven staan. Er bestaan spanningen die per definitie in een fragiele staat nog hoger oplopen dan in een relatief stabiele staat, die doen zich extra gelden. Denk aan het gebrek van monopolie op geweld, etnische spanningen, verdeeldheid onder de elite. En waarom dan tegen beter weten in verkiezingen als een oplossing van alle problemen worden beschouwd. Ik heb geprobeerd inderdaad te omschrijven dat het zo'n integraal onderdeel uitmaakt van westerse good governance agenda, dat het tegen beter weten in als oplossing wordt gezien om iedereen een kans van spreken te geven en dat iedereen zich erkend voelt en wat daar uit voort komt. En dat het een regering is die verantwoording schuldig is aan degene die hen gekozen heeft en dat daar de oplossing van het probleem ligt. Er is een soort contraredenering als je het niet doet wordt het alleen maar erger; that remains to be seen.

Het centrale argument was in relatie tot ontwikkeling. Er kan niet worden van verwacht dat wanneer er een meerpartijendemocratie wordt ingevoerd de gekozen regering een beleid kan of wil invoeren dat economische ontwikkeling stimuleert.

Er is de centrale redenering van de VN en veel bilaterale donoren dat je verkiezingen nodig hebt omdat je dan mensen aan de macht krijgt die verantwoording schuldig zijn aan het volk en dat daarmee een voorwaarde voor ontwikkeling is gecreerd. En dat democratie een soort intrinsieke waarde heeft. Ik heb geprobeerd aan te tonen dat dat bij ons misschien wel goed werkt waar we in een hele andere fase van ontwikkeling bevinden, maar niet in Afrika waar de tegenstellingen en gebrek aan institutionalisering zo groot zijn en manier van politiek bedrijven zo anders is dat het niet zo werkt en dat het tegendeel is. In relatie tot andere factoren zijn de omstandigheden veel doorslaggevender of een land zich aan armoede kan onttrekken of niet. Met name de politieke voorwaarden waar aan voldaan moet worden. Dus die politieke voorwaarden zijn niet zodanig dat wanneer er een parlementaire democratie is en dat er verkiezingen zijn en dat iedereen zo redelijk vrij een stem uit kan brengen maar dat er een bewind is dat voldoende inclusief is en voldoende doorzettingsmacht heeft om een ontwikkelingsagenda te implementeren en dat een tijdje vol te houden. Je hebt het niet zozeer over de westerse manier van democratisch rekenschap afleggen alswel een soort van politiek arrangement die zodanig is georganiseerd dat de belangrijkste groepen van de elite zich vertegenwoordigd voelen en dat

men een dusdanige machtspositie heeft dat wat men opschrijft ook daadwerkelijk voor langere tijd tot uitvoering kan brengen.

Is voldoende inclusiviteit dan per se nodig? In het geval van Ethiopie leek het lang goed te gaan. Het was wel een federale regering, maar was die dan ook inclusief?

Wat ik met inclusief bedoel is dat niet hele belangrijke delen van de elite worden buitengesloten. Dat bedoel ik met inclusiviteit. Als je naar Ethiopie kijkt, was het niet zozeer dat grote delen van de elite buitengesloten waren. Die zijn door toedoen van het bewind zelf zwak en stellen niet zo veel voor. Deel van de aanhangers, de bevolking, herkende zich niet meer in die regering. Je kreeg veel geweld. Dat heeft betrekking op het feit dat men misschien weliswaar geen gevaar had van elite die was buitengesloten, maar het gegeven disconnect met de potentiële aanhang, dat ze het beleid niet meer konden uitvoeren, wat op de lange termijn ook negatief effect heeft op de ontwikkeling. Het was dus niet zozeer dat de elite die was buitengesloten zich sterk maakte en dat daardoor de regering onder druk komt te staan, maar dat de vermeende basis van politieke arrangement met name de boeren op het platteland dachten er anders over en gooide het bijltje erbij neer. Het heeft ook sterke etnische ondertonen. Je ziet nu een moeizaam proces om het politieke arrangement aan deze nieuwe realiteit aan te passen. Dus dat vertegenwoordigers van sommige etnische groepen meer macht in Addis Abeba gaan krijgen. Dat zie je hier met eigen ogen gebeuren.

Wat ik uit het proefschrift opmaakte is dat het meer verkiezingen is maar niet zozeer meer democratie. Het is de bestaande politieke elite die een nieuw jasje aan doet maar nog steeds hetzelfde spelletje speelt.

Iedereen zal zeggen good governance is meer dan verkiezingen, maar verkiezingen is wel een wezenlijk onderdeel (de hoegmis van de democratie). Verkiezingen en meerpartijensysteem zijn niet identiek aan een good governance agenda, maar zonder deze twee is ook niet mogelijk. Daar wordt altijd de meeste nadruk op gelegd, zoals je zelf al zegt, ook als landen een burgeroorlog achter de rug hebben. Dat is dan de oplossing. Dat werkt dus niet. En wat je dan krijgt is natuurlijk een soort van set-up waarbij noch de democratische uitgangspunten gehonoreerd kunnen worden, want het zijn alleen maar verkiezingen en voor de rest is het een grote bende. En aan de andere kant de daadkracht van een autocratische staat als die een ontwikkelingsagenda heeft, kunnen ook niets afdwingen omdat de verdeeldheid alleen maar verder toegenomen is.

Ik heb al meerdere mensen gesproken binnen de VN, NGOs en ik heb ze kritische vragen proberen te stellen over democratie. Ik krijg een redelijke lijst aan tegenargumenten. Zoals het land wil het zelf, het volk wil het zelf.

Zullen we ze 1 voor 1 doornemen anders? Ja ik kan wel constateren dat het niet helpt en af en toe de situatie slechter maakt, maar het is gewoon waar dat als ik me beperk tot Afrika dat de meerderheid van de bevolking het wel wilt. Waar het op aankomt vanuit het perspectief van de internationale gemeenschap is om zoveel mogelijk de negatieve gevolgen van een meerpartijensysteem, wat eigenlijk niet past bij de Afrikaanse realiteit, te mitigeren. Daar gaan die 10 geboden over. Dus het is helemaal waar. Je kan constateren dat het niet echt helpt bij ontwikkeling, en in aantal omstandigheden slechter maakt voor landen die in een fragiele situatie bevinden. Maar wat kan je anders doen dan kijken hoe we de meest negatieve gevolgen kunnen ondervangen, wat ik uitwerk in de 10 geboden.

Ander argument was dat het wel conflict oplost. Ik sprak een onderzoeker in DRC en die had het over het conflict tussen Kabila en Bemba wat wel werd opgelost door de verkiezingen toen Kabila aan de macht kwam.

Wat in eerste instantie wel geholpen heeft na de tweede Congolese oorlog is dat er onder de druk van de internationale gemeenschap een regering van nationale eenheid kwam, waarin de vier belangrijkste partijen deel uitmaakten van de regering. Dan had je Kabila, Bemba, de Rwandese factie en de nationale oppositie. Er was voldoende inclusiviteit, alle partijen die er toe deden hadden een deel van de macht, voordat er verkiezingen gehouden werden. Daarmee is er vrede gebracht door een politiek arrangement tot stand te brengen waar iedereen die er toe doet ook een greep in de kast kon doen om het even cynisch te zeggen. Na een aantal jaren zijn er verkiezingen geweest in 2006 en toen werd er al niet meer op grote schaal gevochten. Die verkiezingen zijn relatief vreedzaam verlopen en hebben zin gehad omdat het inzicht bood in de bestaande machtsverhoudingen, maar vervolgens is het conflict in het oosten van Congo gewoon doorgedaan. Bemba is opgegeven moment na de verkiezingen, toen er nog aantal gevechten zijn geweest tussen aanhangers van Bemba en Kabila, en vervolgens is Bemba gearresteerd op verdenking van van oorlogsmisdaden in Congo-Brazzaville en is gewoon uit de vergelijking gehaald. Het argument klopt niet helemaal. Als je het een beetje uit elkaar haalt zijn er hele andere dingen die een rol spelen.

Wat er nu gaande is met Kabila is dat hij democratie gebruikt heeft om aan de macht te komen als een tool en nu gewoon democratie laat varen omdat hij toch al aan de macht zit. Ja precies. In 2006 kan je zeggen dat hij meerderheid van stemmen heeft gekregen en dat het redelijk free en fair is gegaan voor zover dat in de DRC kan. Dat heeft hij mede bereikt dankzij de steun in het oosten, omdat hij gezien werd als degene die vrede bracht. In 2011 was dat al meteen een stuk minder, want dat conflict in het oosten is gewoon doorgedaan. Toen heeft hij het systeem veranderd. Het was eerst een systeem van twee rondes. Als iemand in de eerste ronde niet meer dan 50% heeft, blijven de twee met de meeste stemmen over en wie dan de meeste stemmen kreeg die had gewonnen. Omdat Kabila doorhad dat hij de tweede ronde wel eens zou kunnen verliezen bestonden de verkiezingen in 2011 uit een ronde. En wat er nu gebeurt is duidelijk, hij wilt gewoon aan de macht blijven en daar kunnen ze verkiezingen niet bij kunnen gebruiken.

Het blijft opvallend dat als ik mensen binnen de VN spreek dat er toch vaak wordt gezegd democratie werkt wel voor ontwikkeling en als ik dan dit proefschrift doorkijk dan denk ik waar baseren we dit op.

Soms is het een goede manier, want er zijn niet zoveel andere manieren, als de machtsverhoudingen duidelijk zijn om de overdracht ordentelijk te laten verlopen. Een duidelijk voorbeeld misschien wel de verkiezingen in 2006 in DRC, maar de eenheidsregering had door moeten gaan dan was het een stuk rustiger geweest. Maar in Kenia is in 2002 toen was het duidelijk dat de partij die aan de macht was sinds de onafhankelijkheid, die had nauwelijks meer steun in de samenleving, de partij implodeerde en het was duidelijk dat de oppositie aan de beurt was. Die waren tijdelijk eensgezind. De verkiezingen konden de overdracht van de macht doorgang geven. Dat was een goede manier om de wisseling van de macht tot stand te brengen. Maar er zijn genoeg voorbeelden waar verkiezingen tot grotere tegenstellingen leidden. Maar wat ik probeer aan te tonen is dat waar opvallend genoeg verkiezingen niet uit de klauwen lopen, de landen zijn waar verkiezingen er niets toe doen; dat zijn halve dictaturen. Dat wil niet zeggen dat een dictatuur goed is voor ontwikkeling. Ik probeer alleen maar aan te geven dat een meerpartijensysteem en verkiezingen eerder negatieve implicaties hebben voor

ontwikkeling dan positieve, uitzonderingen daargelaten. Dat wil niet zeggen dat ik het tegendeel ondersteun. Ik wil alleen aangeven dat verkiezingen niet een doorslaggevende factor zijn, maar dat er andere dingen bij komen kijken.

Wat er ook tegenin werd gebracht is dat er in Europa ook zoveel jaar voor nodig was voordat er een beetje stabiliteit was.

Je moet maar eens kijken naar mijn literatuuroverzicht. Wat ik uiteindelijk opgeschreven heb is de ondersteuning van de vertelling dat het weinig zinvol is of productief om politieke instituties van een langdurige historische ontwikkeling in het westen om die te plakken op samenlevingen die een hele andere fase van ontwikkeling verkeren. Dat past dus niet en dan krijg je allemaal rare dingen.

Langzaam gaan we dan naar het punt toe wat kan er wel. Ook omdat er binnen de VN wordt gezegd dat in feite de VN een regering nodig heeft om mee te communiceren en andere landen vinden soevereiniteit heel belangrijk. En dat een land geregeerd wordt door een buitenlandse/VN regering werkt dan ook niet. Welke kant moet het dan wel op.

Het bevorderen van een bewind waarin de belangrijkste delen van de politieke en maatschappelijke elites zich vertegenwoordigd weet. Verkiezingen maakt dat moeilijk omdat de winnaar de winnaar is en de verliezer de verliezer. Winner takes all, dus als je out bent ben je out. Dus ze hebben er veel voor over om niet te verliezen. En de regering waar je zaken mee kan doen en die ook kan bijdragen aan een consolidatie van het fragiele vredesproces is volgens mij per definitie, daar zitten ook nadelen aan, een regering waar alle belangrijke partijen zich in vertegenwoordigd zien. Dat betekent dus ook dat verzoening boven gerechtigheid moet gaan. Dus wat betreft de hele ICC discussie; je moet bereid zijn, een moreel dilemma, om aan tafel te gaan zitten die bloed aan hun handen hebben. Dat is de enige manier waarop zo'n land een zekere periode van stabiliteit gegund kan worden.

Is dat ook lokale verzoening, wat in Rwanda veel is gebeurd?

Ja, laat ik het voorbeeld van een stuk van mij nemen. Na alle ellende in Kenia is er uiteindelijk een regering van nationale eenheid gekomen en toen werden de vermeende aanvoeders van de twee etnische groepen die het met elkaar aan de stok hadden door ICC vervolgd. Vervolgens zijn die twee een coalitie gaan vormen en hebben ervoor gezorgd dat de boel in Kenia vreedzaam bleef. Als je kijkt naar het verleden hadden de president en vice-president het met elkaar aan de stok. Dus wij steunen het ICC omdat er gerechtigheid moet komen. Die mensen hebben aangezet tot geweld. Tegelijkertijd doordat die lui zijn gaan samenwerken is de boel tot rust gekomen, dus wat is dan belangrijker.

In feite komt het dan weer neer op dat het land zelf moet willen dan met name de elite.

Over het algemeen wordt het in Afrika ook zo gevoeld dat wij als internationale gemeenschap altijd maar achter gerechtigheid aanlopen. Dat selectief toepassen op Afrika. Heel veel landen zitten zoveel in de pineut. Eerst moet het land verzoend worden en daar hoort de politieke elite bij, want zo zit het systeem in elkaar. Het is veel verticaler dan bij ons. En dat heeft prioriteit en niet om de schuldige aan te pakken, dan zorg je er voor dat het conflict blijft voortduren.

En verkiezingen hoort gewoon niet in dit plaatje thuis dan. Dan komt weer het competitieve element er in.

En dat met de sterke etnische dimensie in Afrika is dat een dodelijk mengsel.

We zijn er aardig doorheen gegaan zo. Bedankt.

INTERVIEW FORMER ELECTORAL OFFICER AT MINUSCA (NOW UNSOM)

4 AUGUST 2017

Introduction

Can you start introducing yourself and what you do as electoral officer?

As electoral officer with the UN we are providing technical and logistic support to national counterpart to support and the local authority. The National Counterpart depends on the country. For example in Mali, the organization of elections was handled by the Ministry of Interior. The electoral commission was just playing a role of “certification” which means to make sure things are going well according to the international standards. Just to be brief, our role is to support the local authority in the organization of free, fair, inclusive and transparent elections. We are mostly working with national independent electoral commission in each country. We are providing technical expertise and support for elections. This includes logistical support and also support for training, legal framework, outreach activities and all other activities related to the organization of the elections.

Also evaluation?

Yes, at the end of each electoral process within the UN we have what we call ‘After Action Review’, reviewing the whole process and provide recommendations. The team participating in this process discusses with all the stakeholders involved in the organization of the elections, including UN. The report serves to correct mistakes and improves UN support. There is another kind of evaluation “Lessons Learned”, I can call it in country evaluation of the process. It helps seeing what went well and what did not go well and provided recommendation to correct it.

Can you tell me about the elections in Somalia that were held in the beginning of this year?
Unfortunately I was not there, I started in March. About the CAR I can tell you more.

Do you already have a little bit of insides how the democracy is working in Somalia?

The elections in Somalia started in December 2016, but I don’t think we can call it a real election. Normally that is not an election, because it was just a clan-based selection. Let put it as “selection”, not election. In 2020 there is a one person one vote election. What happened at the end of 2016 and beginning of 2017, the clan elders came together and selected the person who will represents their clan in the parliament. The security situation in Somalia has obstructed the entities in charge of the organization of this selection to carry out a full operation all over the country. They were gathering people in a secure area for a selection.

Do you have an idea about the situation right now and if the 2020 elections are a realistic goal?

I will honestly say the 2020 is a realistic goal, for it to be achievable, we have some prerequisites. We need to have a legal framework, without it we can’t move forward. We have to carry out voting registration based on the legal framework. We are currently

working with the independent electoral commission to start the drafting of some key documents while waiting for the legal framework to be adopted. During a meeting with the chief of operation within the electoral commission we agree that we don't have to wait for the legal framework before starting the drafting of some operational documents. We have to start drafting our operational plan and we can adapt it as soon as the legal framework is completed.

There are still a lot of challenges with Al Shabab in the south.

Yes, Our UNSOM colleagues in charge of security are handling that aspect. But the security situation cannot prevent us to hold elections. I am going to give an example so you can understand what I am saying. There was a crisis in Mali. The northern part of Mali was an insecure place. Many people do not think the election could be held there as it was a no man land in certain area. The situation especially in the region of Kidal was not appropriate for election on security point of view. It was what happened is that there was an international agreement that we need to open at least some polling stations in Kidal. So no region would be excluded. You see the idea behind it was to have the population in the region to participate in the electoral process. The second point, if in the Al Shabab region it is hard to open a polling station than we can open some polling stations in another secured area and hold the election.

Ok, but then it is hard to reach all the people I think.

Yes it will be hard to reach out to all the people I agree with you. We need a secure environment.

Don't you think that what happened at this election is a good solution? I think that all the clan elders were invited, so there was an inclusive selection of people, who could choose their leader and provided a good solution for the problem with security.

That selection was just to solve the problem to change the government which was not the implementation of democracy which I understand as the expression of each individual. The main target is one person one vote. If we are just basing democracy on the clan selection, I don't think we reach the goal of one person one vote.

Ok, I may come back later on it. But let's continue with the CAR. Can you tell me about the electoral situation there? I know Touadera was elected. How went the elections and can you tell me more about the aftermath?

Yes, but we need to understand that the UN based its intervention in each country in crisis on the basis of the UN Security Council resolution. With regard to the electoral support, it is the country itself who requests a support from the UN. Following this request, a Need Assessment Mission is conducted to determine if the country needs the support or not. If the Need Assessment Mission recommends the support, that is when the UN can set up an electoral unit. The mandate in the CAR was clear in the UNSC resolution; the Resolution requested the UN to provide technical and logistic assistance for the holding of presidential and legislative elections in the CAR. That is how we ended up there supporting the independent electoral authority to organize these elections. It was a huge challenge. The elections were postponed and postponed due to lack of agreement between actors for several months and due to a poor security situation. I started there in February 2015 and the international community was pushing and pushing the electoral commission and the government to hold the election. And at a certain point there was a statement saying that if by December 31 2015 the election was not held then the CAR may not receive international

support (finance) from the international community and was maybe in trouble. That was a push on international community side to have these elections. I'm really proud that I was part of that process. All the stakeholders were gathering including the members of government to push for these elections to happen. There was a meeting called the strategy committee preside by the prime-minister himself and with all the stakeholders including the UN, EU commission, the ambassadors, the Electoral Commission, African Union and Government Members. Key decisions to advance the process were taken during this meeting on the legal framework, operations, etc. The push was to have thing moving in the right direction to be able to have the election by December 31st. What I have learned is that Political and technical aspects have to go together. The strategy commissions had played a key role there. But at a certain point, it fails to take into consideration expertise from technician (technical experts) especially on the time needed for the material deployment. The consequence was the delay in the deployment of electoral material, the annulment of several legislative results, the conduct of voting on several (3) days.

It was France who pushed for the elections I heard.

It was not just France, it was everybody. The push was on every side. The crisis was there for so long it was time to move on.

I'm interested in how far the government represents the elite. I sometimes hear it is important to have the elite represented in the government to create stability, because they are linked with the people. And in how far is Touadera representing the whole elite of excluding important parts of the elite.

I understand it very well. That situation, there was a 3-man political party. But most people elected were independent, so there were not linked to any political party. At the end it was difficult to say this party is representing this group. But what we tried to do is to make this an inclusive election. As example we tried to push for refugee participation in Cameroon, Chad and the Congo. It was a success. So it was representing all the population.

Do you know who the voters of Touadera are? Are they from the same ethnicity, you sometimes here that so that's why I'm asking. Or is it pure his ideas or maybe from the same region?
No not ethnicity. This election was an inclusive election and happened everywhere in the country. People elected were sometimes from that region. The people elected in the northern parts were from that region.

I found striking to see that violence continued after the elections. And during the elections there was a rebel group claiming an independent state. Is this violence bottom-up or linked to the elite? I try to link violence with politics and the elite.

The violence continued and I think that has nothing to do with politics. If the violence continues it is to control an area. That has to do with control of an area, not the politics. The UN is there to make sure that the country recovers. They are trying to push to have everyone on the same table and they are working on the one side with the government and other side the fighting parties to realize peace. But to link fight with political elite, I think not. That has to do with control of resources and an area.

Also there is no elite from a region stirring up violence?

No I don't know of elite involved in violence. The Balaka and Selaka are confrontations between people.

The elections, how can you see that they did contribute to peace and stability?

The election is contributing to peace and stability to have everybody participate in the management of the country. On the executive level you can get elected to participate in the management of the region or country or city council. That is how elections contribute. If we can just take an example in Burundi, 2004: There was a fight there. The UN succeeded to get everybody on table. There was decided to implement the UNSC resolution and facilitate the holding of election. All those parties agree to participate and the elections were a success. That contributed to peace and stability in Burundi. Same goes for Ivory Coast even though people refused to accept the results. At least the elections contributed to peace and stability. The first 6 months after the elections in the CAR there was peace. And the fight started again in a couple of months.

Why?

As I was telling you people want to control a region and we don't really understand why people are still fighting. There is something behind it that we don't know.

There is also a theory. He says in fragile states, the first elections are rather peaceful, because everybody thinks we have new chances, we can win and get power. And after the elections they see we can't win and they go back to fighting.

No, that is not the situation. In the UN we have a political department. They are there to take care of that aspect. The thing is it not just holding the election. We can hold the election, but we have many things to do. After the election we have to stabilize the country. After the election the political department works with the opposition, the government, all the entities and the population to stabilize the country and maintain. That is why the mission is called a stabilizing mission.

Can you summarize in your work what are the used parameters to measure the elections? What is success, what are downfalls? Can you measure elections?

Yes to measure elections, what we are trying to do is, especially in our division, is to have a roadmap to try to measure elections based on the roadmap. By this time this has to be accomplished. Let's say the legal framework has to be adopted within this period of time. We have a team following that part and at the end we can say yes the legal framework was adopted within the time frame. If not there will be consequences. Then we are trying to all our activities based on the roadmap.

Can I find this roadmap you think?

The roadmap, I have to write a colleague for that. The roadmap is also based on the independent electoral commission's plan. I can try to find it otherwise I can ask a colleague. You can see all the details and the dates. We can measure the activities with the roadmap.

Can you identify downfalls of elections? Are there people within the UN on implementing elections, like it is not a good idea to implement elections?

No as UN we work as one. We are working on the electoral division and have to forget about politics and the political division. We discuss all our ideas and everything within the UN and the offices in the country. We cannot say different things. Imagine, in the CAR we had an elections task force that is with all the UN entities in the country. If somebody thinks differently and says this is what I think. We would be discussing it among ourselves and solve the issue. As example there was a discussion about refugee participation in the

elections. There was no consensus. But if we are striving for inclusive elections, the refugees need to participate.

Ok are there sometimes downfalls of elections and challenges?

Yes, we have several challenges, not only logistic challenges, but other challenges relating to the legislative framework, the security aspect. Those are the challenges we always face in post-conflict country.

Do you have the idea, because you worked at multiple missions, all the things that are learned are implemented in the next mission and how this process works?

I was in the CAR and we're called to focus on refugee participation. Now here in Somalia they have refugees all over the region: Kenya, Djibouti, Ethiopia. I'm now starting on how refugees can participate for the elections. I bring an experience here from the CAR. Same thing in Mali with the refugee participation that is the same experience I'm bringing here with me to this mission.

Do you also think the knowledge you gain is saved in the memory of the organization? So the UN Secretariat knows what you learn and inform the UNSC what is learned in previous mission.

Yes there is a tool where you are keeping all your information. Also the missions are keeping all the information. This is what is done; these are the challenges and the difficulties. How did we correct these? In the CAR at the end of each week we provide a report and share it with the UN headquarters and among ourselves as well. We have a database to put these reports in. If you can ask in the CAR they would be willing to share with you.

I have a few more questions. I read researches that are sometimes critical on implementing elections. There are different reasons. Sometimes it seems that elections are more valued for what they are than what they do. Everybody wants elections, but there also people who claim that a multiple party democracy does not work in fragile states, because the level of development and because European and African countries are different. Ethnicity is playing a role in African countries and people say we should not implement a western concept of elections on fragile African states. What do you think about that?

For me, those people are just seeing the bad example. Let see the good example. Recently, there was an election in Ghana and the country is doing very well with democracy. The thing is, those who are ruling the country are sometimes the problem, not the democracy. For them they understand the democracy as the winner wins it all (the winner takes everything including the country resources). There are many examples where the democracy is doing well, like in Senegal and Ghana things are working very well. You can see a couple of countries where democracy is a solution. In other countries some people while in the opposition make their voice heard all over in the world. When they come to power, it is a different language and attitude and they don't do what it is expected. We can't blame the democracy here.

But Ghana and Senegal are stable countries, so can you compare them to the CAR, DRC or Somalia? Is that a fair comparison? I understand the people want elections, because they want to have a say in the future of their country. But for instance in the DRC as example, there was a government of unity. The four main factions of Kabila, Bemba, the opposition and Rwandan faction were in the government. From what I've heard things went pretty well and the country was stable. Then the first elections came, Kabila won, it was still good. Afterwards the violence

started again, because people lost the elections and took up arms again. Now Kabila, he seems to refuse to leave his presidential seat. Do you understand what I try to argue here?

Yes, but what we have to understand is like this. It is not because I'm the ruling party I cannot work with the opposition. It is not because I'm in charge that I cannot include people from the opposition to rule the country. That is a human problem, because sometimes the idea is when somebody wins the elections, he is also winning the country resources for himself and his party. That should not be the case as the head of state, you have to manage the country in such a way everyone should feel not to be excluded. The main problem is not the democracy, it is the way people are managing the country. This includes corruption and people blame it now on democracy. No they have to blame the way the country is managed.

But the people chose Kabila and he is now more against the democracy and the constitution. Then it seems democracy has a play in it well.

I understand it. But if a leader in a country has won two consecutive elections and has spent his 2 mandates according to the constitution, if after the 2nd mandate the leader decides to change the constitution and run again, democracy has nothing to do with it. It is the people who use the power and don't want to leave it and go. That is the problem in many countries and democracy has nothing to do with it.

No, but I'm not trying to say that democracy is bad.

What I think is that, people (leaders) have to understand that at a certain point other people are better than them and after their 2nd mandate they have to leave. The country would not collapse. By doing that you are presenting yourself as a real head of state, a true leader. In Senegal Abdou Diouf the former president conceded the defeat to the opposition leader: he acknowledged that he did not win the election. If advisors push a leader to change the constitution, he can decide not to, because he had done his part. By doing so, he will be praised all over the world

Thank you very much.

INTERVIEW ELECTORAL OFFICER UNSOM

8 AUGUST 2017

Introduction

I am with the electoral support group in Somalia. This is the integrated support group. It is a joint program with UN and UNDP working together.

Can you maybe start with a short reflection on the past electoral process? I know how the clan leaders chose the parliament, but were there many obstacles or not?

I would say there could have been some things better. First, it was not an electoral, but a political process. To a very limited extent it had some components of elections. But it wasn't representative, but based on power sharing. Somalia is very clan-based. The system they used over the years is a clan-based system and they have not been moved towards a democratic system as we know. In context of Somalia it is an electoral system that suits the country. There was a consultative process that informed whether they should go on with universal elections (one person, one vote) in 2016 or go clan based. By the time they had this forum in 2015. There was no way they could have an universal election in 2016. They concluded they were not ready for these elections and therefore thought about what would be realistic. So all regions were consulted and they came up with a clan-based selection system.

Somalia itself proposed this system?

Yes it were the Somalis themselves who proposed to the clan-based system. The majority supported it.

Can you tell me more about Farmaajo, who he is and how he represents? Has he a specific group he represents, a part of the country or is he not really affiliated with specific clans?

Well, you must still understand that Somalia's organization is still relatively clan-based, there is not a transition visible away from it. Even the way the cabinet was elected. The delegates, 51 were selected to vote on each seat of parliament. Of those 51 each of them represented a particular group. For a seat 51 votes were needed. So that gives 51 delegates times 275 is 14,025 people. The way the people voted was about which clan would these delegates represent. The delegate seats were distributed clan-based. Everybody on a seat should represent that particular clan or sub-clan. The president is elected by the House of the People (parliament). This was done by behind the scene agreements.

I read stories about bribery for seats. Do you know if it happens and how do you perceive these 'elections' if there was a bribery going on for the parliament seats?

It is hard to say if there was a lot of bribery, although the news about that was all over the place. I would not have evidence for it. There is a strong believe there is bribed and there was a lot of money and exchanged hands, but the biggest problem with that is proving, because I do not know of any hardcore case that could present hardcore evidence.

Can you already see improvements on the situation in Somalia after this selection now there is a central government? And did it contribute to peace and stability for example?

It is still early days, what I can say that the good thing is the structure is in place. The President has put ministers in place, put their cabinet in place. It seems functional. But it is still remains over the long run to be seen how much capacity these ministries have. They need still a lot of institutional capacity even in the government itself, just as development, issues of governance within those ministries. All is work in progress. As you know in post-conflict countries it is still working on elements that need to be put in place in terms of finance, professionalizing the own institutions. The structure is in place and now it needs capacity, checks and balances have to be in place and accountability has to be promoted for a proper democratic state. You should also understand that there is a lot of work still being done in terms of laws, the constitution. From the adopted constitution new laws have to be drafted as well, because from the whole legislative framework a lot of it is anchored on the finalization of the constitution. If you ask me what the timeframe is, your guess is as good as mine. The committee is already in place that is supposed to oversee the drafting of all those laws and the constitution. Those committees are working on it, workgroups are in place, but it is all work in progress. There is still so much to be done. What we can do to help is to keep feeding you with information with developments, electoral laws. The envisaged timeline for universal elections is probably 2021. I don't mind to give you an update on the developments if it helps you in any way. So your final paper is updated.

It would be interesting, but I'm finishing at the end of September or the beginning of October. So time is really short. If there is something interesting I'm always interested in it. I was also wondering whose idea it was to hold elections in 2020. Came that also from Somalia itself or was it more the UN?

No look it came from the Somalis who indicated that they wanted elections in 2016, but the state of readiness did not allow it. It was not supported in hindsight with enough political will that it was done in 2016. In 2012 there was an indication it was the last time the selection process took place. That is how they concluded 2016 was the last selection time. You can look up UNSC also indicated that this clan-based continued. If you look at the latest London Conference 2017, Somalia stated it wanted to have elections in 2020. It came from the Somalis themselves. Of course with quite number of post-conflict countries it is supported by the international community.

If I look to different UN peacebuilding missions, I always see the implementation of elections. It gives the impression the UN or UNSC wants them to implement elections. I always get the answer that the countries themselves want elections. But is there not any form of force from maybe the UNSC on implementing elections or not at all?

I really wouldn't say it is forced, because they would not succeed. Somalia is a very resilient nation they are not the kind of nation that you can tell what to do and they will say yes and will do it. They are very resilient. Even if the UN would drop a bombshell on them, they will probably not do it. That is just the nature of the Somalia. You cannot tell them what to do because you are Mr. moneybags. They will do what they want. This is a classic example of what happens in 2016. The fact that they were unable to carry on with universal elections, they said it can't be done. Any international community would have a hard time attempting. I am not ruling out those attempts. For the sake of peaceful, progressive advancement, from who's angle, whose point of view. In 2016 process what emerged even in universal elections, there would be a serious challenge with the division of seats, because Somalis are not used to this western electoral systems. My understanding is it should anchor on some power sharing formula. Maybe it should be a completely new developed system. How do you include the clan-based structure is the question.

It is also a point of my thesis, why would you implement a western form of democracy in a clan-based country.

It is so difficult and that is why in my point of view, how in case it comes to the allocation of seats how it should happen. It is a question of a negotiated process. You have to wait until something happens and then we can go back and sit and negotiate. It is really not a straightforward path, it has to be negotiated.

It is not clear how the elections in 2020 will be implemented

No it is not clear. There is no system in place other than the clan-based one. The committee has not decided on the election system. The type of elections has to be stipulated in the constitution and that has not been done yet. 2021 is around the corner when you start from scratch. It is a little scary. Let's hope by end 2017/beginning of 2018 there is a new electoral system adopted. But it will be a long process.

In my opinion it looks like 2020 is way too early to change a clan-based country to a democracy and also combined with critics of some NGOs who claim the UN and Somalia is too focused on elections instead of Human Rights or Security Reform, although I know they are working on it, but it is not enough. If I hear you as well it will be hard to implement these elections, so why should we hurry with it instead of focusing on other aspects like human rights.

Yes there are a lot of human rights violations. It was a struggle to accomplish woman representation in the 2016 process. It was removed from the constitution, it was completely pulled out. Even during the time of elections, because the clan elders were the ones identifying delegates, they were not identifying woman delegates. The question was why there are no woman representations, they said talk to the clan elder, who said this is what we have or whatever reason. It also goes against the religious and cultural habits. They had excuses not having women. It was miracle this high percentage of woman ended up in the lower house.

Ok, are there other people who share the concern the implementation of western democracy in Somalia and what happens with these opinions; are they also communicated with Somalia for instance or the UNSC or UN Secretariat?

The UNSC moves along and wants democratic elections. If you talk with our colleagues they really say we should move away from clan-based kind of system to be honest. They would like to see an emerging democracy. The thing is, even though it is what is said we do not seem to know in detail what should be done. Everybody sees things through the own clans, but at the same time they say it would be nice for people to vote. I think the understanding and the outcome of a movement away from clans and a different electoral system, is very hard to predict.

I heard you talk about minorities but the sound went away.

I think the country is still clan-based. When a person is appointed the first question is from what clan the person is. Even though people would like to move to universal democratic elections, I am not sure if they would embrace it that the representation would still be based on clans. If you look at the political party law in place, it requires all the political parties to have representation throughout the whole country and not clan-based. I was thinking because candidates come from political parties and there is a support throughout the country, then you might have a mixed group of candidates coming from different kinds of

clans, not necessarily one clan. The political party, representing only one clan, should not be registered. Again the issue of implementation will now be of prime importance. You might end up with clan-based political parties.

Do you think there is maybe a tunnel vision within the UNSC and UN Secretariat. Because you said they don't really know what is going on in Somalia, do you think they are too focused on the Western concept of democracy?

It does become a bit of a problem, but there is an emphasis on elections I think, but I think also human rights are taken seriously. There are quite a number of initiatives and programs to address human rights violations where it is prevalent, not so much in Mogadishu but in the regions.

What I hear you say is more focused on an inclusive government and not the western concept of democracy? But then you said the UN wants election. It looks like the UN wants elections for the sake of elections, not considering the situation in Somalia.

I think it is not so much the UN, because I said if you listen at the representation of Somalia at the London Conference 2017, they themselves are the one stipulating and stating that they want elections. Even if 2016 the plan was to have universal elections, but realizing state of readiness was no were close to have it, yet again there was chosen for a clan-based selection.

It is basically Somalia who wants it.

The UN is there to support their ideas and what they want.

Would the UN also support a government of unity without elections? There are some theories that we should not focus on elections in fragile states, but more on a government represents the whole political elite of the country, because they do represent the population. Could this be a solution for the upcoming elections?

I think the whole idea is to do the best to move the country forward in terms of unifying the country. There are lot of security issues and a need to stabilize the country and move it forward, for that reason anything that brings all parties to the table and negotiates the necessary building blocks for peace would not be ruled out.

I ask this because I also looked into DRC. What you saw there was the first elections went well and afterwards it went back to the old situation. Nowadays Kabila wants to change the constitution to remain in power. Isn't that a danger for other states as well?

Of course it does pose a danger. Somalia is still in a construction phase and federalism is still not quit emerged in the true sense. What kind of federalism does Somalia want? There are quite a number of issues to be answered. Some states are stronger than the central government. How does that come, where does the power seats? Ask yourself why doesn't want Somaliland to be part of Somalia. That's why I am saying federalism is still very fragile.

As a last question, if you would be honest and Somalia says we want elections in 2020 and maybe also focused on the western democracy style, what would you advise them?

The kind of electoral system that will be adopted is not just a copy of what we see in other democracies. You've pointed out the example of the DRC, we don't want the country to regress. Whatever system is adopted, I don't think it is going to be easy immediately for the country to move forward. But when something happens they immediately think in clans. When someone is appointed people want to know from which clan. When someone

introduces you they talk about clans. Issues of clan are still very visible. Maybe it should be a gradual progress until they fully embrace the concept of what the electoral system without the component of clan would mean and the impact it has on the country.

Thank you very much for your time.

INTERVIEW UN OFFICIAL

10 SEPTEMBER 2017

Introduction

I was curious about the situation in the CAR. During the elections the violence diminished, but it rose up again after the elections. Do you know why this happened?

Back in 2015 it was not just elections we had to do. We had to reregister the entire electorate from scratch because the voter registry had been destroyed. So when you talk about elections you had voter registration, the referendum on the new constitution and then the presidential election that consisted out of two rounds. It is true that during that process that went from December all the way to June of the following year at least, there was not any violence linked to the process. There had been an attempt to disrupt the process, but that was contained. As we were launching the electoral phase we had worked with the various security elements that consisted of the UN force and police, Sangaris and the national police and gendarmerie forces. They worked there in developing an integrated security plan that was covering the entire territory. This was highly resource intense operation. That coordination and planning enabled us to control or minimize on high level any kind of interference. This also involved civilian contingence such as the political affairs the JMEC that is the UN intelligence structure. All the units got together to make this integrated security plan.

I also saw a same pattern in DRC and some say it had to do with the parties thinking that they could win the election and after the election there are winners and losers and the losers start again with violence. Do you think this is the case in the CAR and DRC?

CAR is a complicated country with regards to the security. These groups were not necessarily focusing on disrupting the electoral process in the CAR in 2016. The difference between electoral violence and the overall banditry and other security incidents. These armed groups didn't disarm, they were left alone and not focused on. In DRC in 2006/2007 that controlled parts of the country ended up providing some assistance to the process itself ironically. Electoral processes are not always hijacked by armed groups. In the armed groups category you have all sorts of entities, legitimate armed groups, rebel groups and bandits, entities that see an opportunity to create havoc to bring their own gains for it. You need to identify these players and approach them differently. What happened in CAR was interesting. After the second round of presidential elections you had Touadera and Dologuele. Now when Touadera won on the results claimed so, Dologuele did take the public speech and conceded defeat while admitting the election were not perfect. I think that approach did manage to avoid any kind of electoral violence. There must have some preparation by some key members of the mission and embassies that were keen on making sure that no violence linked to the electoral process.

So it seems like everybody accepted the election results.

For the presidential, that's what it looked like. On the legislative side we did not see any real violence either. Nothing clearly linked to the winners and losers of the process.

So the main reason there wasn't violence was because of the security package that was rolled out during the elections.

There was that and people saw it as an opportunity to move forward. That was key in the process. They wanted to end the transitional process and go into a more stable constitutional process. The actors involved agreed with that. It might be different with local elections for instance that end up producing a different type of violence because it is extremely localized. It is much closer to the people and it is easily more mustered in that this type of issues, related to land.

And Touadera is not necessarily representing one ethnicity or part of the country?

We couldn't see a party that really covered the entirety of the country. They were strong in certain areas and this is probably why Touadera had to go for an extremely wide coalition. We had I believe 30 presidential candidates. Some know they don't have a chance of winning. But the votes they have can tip the balance. So everyone is thinking, while thinking when I enter a coalition towards the second round than maybe I can get a ministerial post.

It is interesting to hear, because what I've heard about DRC it is more a winner-takes-all idea. Kabila won the election and now he does not want to leave. In the CAR it sounds really inclusive.

Yes, but you don't know how much influence they really have. Sometimes they are extremely localized. The party that had the widest support was the Bozizes former party. They were the more structured ones and could mobilize more in volume and were a bit more mature compared to other parties.

And maybe more about the evaluation of the success of elections that is maybe more part of your work if I understood it well. How can you measure progress in an electoral phase? I understood there is a roadmap. But is that just based on implementation of democratic institutions or also focused on peace and stability? Can you maybe tell me more about that?

An election is a continuous process. Some people see it as one event every few years. It is not. The success of the technical point of view is you being able to deliver the goods on time and also the political inclusion endurance of the process. If the process is transparent and accepted and everybody agrees with it and sticks with, and does not find anything to refute it, than it is definitely acceptable. There are also other factors like violence, but I think the key element of the successful election is participation and endurance to the results. That means there is a process that is governed by an electoral body but also political players that endure to it and don't try to sabotage one another.

So the roadmap is not just about the technicalities or is it?

We have two types of things: an electoral calendar and an operational calendar.

I just heard that there was a roadmap when it comes down to electoral work.

We have two sorts of timelines. You have an electoral calendar published by the entity running the electoral process. It is a public document setting out the key benchmarks, like voter registration, candidate registration, appeals process, voting rounds, appeals rounds again if you have a second round. It is a mixture of both technical and political aspects. The roadmap has to be accepted by the various players. The entity running the elections has to convince the players it is a feasible process. That is there engagement. The electoral commission engages itself in enduring to that process to ensure transparency. Now on an internal phase, there is a much more detailed technical document that outlines the

distribution of material, delivery timelines, deployment and training of staff and all sorts of things like that that aren't really political per se. In CAR I must admit that these recent elections, that is the difficulty of an electoral calendar, you need to balance the political and the technical pressure. It is always difficult to find an equilibrium there. Because these elections were to exit the transition. A lot of the regional actors were already engaged that the transition finished in a number of months. Now these dates slipped over time and we had to readjust accordingly. The technical aspects of the calendar were sometimes under extreme pressure to adhere to the political calendar. These dates are based on pre-negotiations of the various entities linked to the conflict back in December. They had to agree on timelines to establish a transition and to end the political transition. For this you needed elections. And some of the regional entities like the mediation for Congo-Brazzaville and the AU had to engage themselves in ensuring that the process was finalized by a date. We had to fit in the technical part of the elections within that timeframe.

Do you know where I can find both documents.

I don't know if it is still up and running: <http://www.anerca.org/>.

So it is a combination of technical and the political situation.

You have to balance the two. The transition was agreed upon, a political approach. The transition for all the parties to be happy should have end on a specific date. In order to end that transition you need to hold elections. To hold elections you need these technicalities of how you need to register the electorate etc.. We had a plan for the election with certain deadlines and timelines. We had to inject these technical timelines within the overall calendar of the election which had to fit in the larger calendar of the election. This is where you start to have symbiosis between the different calendars you have to play around with. The politicians will say this needs to be done tomorrow while the technicians, in order to be professional, say there are these technical steps necessary to guarantee a transparent process but which needs time. You sometimes have clashes between the politicians and the technicians. Ideally what you should have when you design a technical calendar, is a technician who can say on the political side that there are certain technicalities to consider when constructing a political timeline. What happens if you don't take these things into consideration it can embarrass you further down the line and cause trouble. Otherwise it will cost you more resources to reassure the progress in the process.

Do you see progress in the missions? Do you see the UN is learning from previous missions and implementing it in next mission, focusing on the elections part?

Yes and no. there is a best practices, you can find them. There are a lot of guidelines based on lessons learned. How does the UN determine how it should support the electoral process, what are the prerequisites, what are actors involved. There are many guidelines gathered over the years on which the UN is building. These guidelines are visible in most of the processes that I have been involved since 2006. They guide us in our work. They are based on a given time and given events. We need to adjust to different situations. Budget constraints are one huge factor. The political environment is a huge factor. Certain countries that we assist have good electoral commissions or almost non-existent as in the CAR or might not have the independence we seek. They also might not have the level of technical knowledge. It might be poor from resources which requires the UN to be more involved in logistics. There is the political pressure to hold elections. We are learning, but the environment is very different, almost unique from case to case. In DRC 2006, we put in huge budgets focusing on high level of voter registry. Everyone, although no election was perfect,

was quite happy about it. In 2011 we saw, while the UN was still providing support, a decline of the quality of the electoral process. And now we see they are not even enduring according the constitution. The elections that were planned for last year, they still don't have a calendar for it. It is not necessarily due to technical failure. It is a political assessment that could have done better by the UN or not or maybe they couldn't do any better. It is difficult to assess. It are high level assessments.

I did an internship at the MFA here and got to know how a bureaucracy works. Do you think the bureaucracy structure obstructs learning? The cognitive workload is very high, there is a high information demand to the bigger gods.

I don't think learning is obstructed. We are not obstructed in providing assistance. The problem is we have yearly contracts and we are shed of after elections. To give you an idea I got here in 2014. The transitional process was supposed to end in March 2015. We didn't hold elections until December 2015. In July 2016 we're shedding 82% of our staff. And these staff members are basically send home. There is not real continuity and expertise in the house. If an election pops up and you're free, great and if not, too bad. The problem is this discontinuity. I understand it is expensive to continuously have a staff employed, but this is also one of the consequences. You're dealing with budget cycles, we can't have at the same staff size the whole year. For UN technical expertise experience and knowledge we can access the best-practices. But the problem is you are recreating your teams over and over again. You ask these people from different missions and backgrounds to work as a team. The corporate identity is difficult to settle immediately. The minute you arrive you are thrown in the operational aspects of your tasks. You get to know your colleagues as you go along. It is difficult to optimize the given resources. You sometimes got to have to do it with who is recruited, because you don't always choose your colleagues.

It sounds like the people learn, but the organizational memory is not implementing what you learn. Because new people might do it different in a less good way.

Yes or miscommunication or this lack of corporate identity within the team. We all have electoral expertise, but all in different ways. We have people specialized in logistics, training, communication, reporting. We are not always interchangeable. If you work with someone for years you can anticipate, but if you know your colleagues on the same day you start working it sometimes clashes. We bring different types of knowledge especially on the management side. This is the UN, we have a cultural bias which we bring to the missions, we try to manage it with all sorts of trainings that the UN offers to ensure the UN is a respected actor. We have to adapt, there is a lot of adaptation, a new process, new colleagues and it is always on the go. The problem is the UN can't retain its staff, this is one of the consequences and makes the process more fragile in the beginning.

You speak about cultural biases. Do you know if there are different ideas about implementing elections. Are there also people who say we shouldn't implement elections? I also found scientific articles on it speaking about the neo-patrimonial relations. So, let's say Kabila is the patron and he uses the resources for its own good to get the votes he needs, but not the development the country as a whole and that's why they say we shouldn't implement western democracy in African countries. Do you think this idea is present within the UN as well?

We techies, we are here to implement a process. The process we are here to support, we rarely organize it. We are not here to criticize the process. If they want elections they can have elections. We can give some technical orientation as to some of the choices in the process, biometric on non-biometric voter registration for instance. The rest resides in the

national government. DRC is interesting because the majority of the electoral process is based on western democracy, they still have retained a national approach to it through certain seats in the parliament that are dedicated to outside the electoral commission's mandate. Here they don't have that, but there are people considering who say we need to reinject the traditional chiefs in the system. If it leads to something I have no idea. There are some traditional aspects of political and cultural life that are viewed quite worthy by a lot of people and appeasing it.

There are a lot of scholars present within the UN. I thought maybe there are people among them criticizing the idea of elections. I found some articles written by a few UN staff members. So maybe from an academic perspective.

From my field experience I see the added value of the electoral processes and I would disagree with people saying that we should not get involved in elections. But we have to retain neutrality in this and a professional approach. As said, this is not our process. We intervene generally, when there is such a request. That is a requisite condition. Very rarely does the UN to decide to intervene itself. There has to be a process of inviting the UN. If the UN decides to organize elections itself, you pretty much hit rock bottom on the political process of the country you intervening in. How to measure this is not a question, how far do you want to get involved in the process? This is why part of our best-practices we send an assessment mission before we intervene in all these processes. That is composed of various elements of the UN and HQ and experts, including consultants, technical experts. They do make an assessment and recommendations that is presented to the under-secretary general of DPA (political affairs) and that is presented to the UNSC and the General Assembly. The recommendations form partly the base of a mandate at least the part dealing with elections. I think there is a need for this support. There are rules dictating this, guidelines. I'm for supporting but we have to be careful how. The UN is still learning. DRC process is a case study until today. Should the UN have pulled out earlier? I don't know. This is where you start shifting to start shifting away from a technical approach to a political approach.

That was my last question as promised. Thank you very much for your time.

APPENDIX 2: INTERVIEW TEMPLATE

Introduction

- ❖ Work as electoral officer

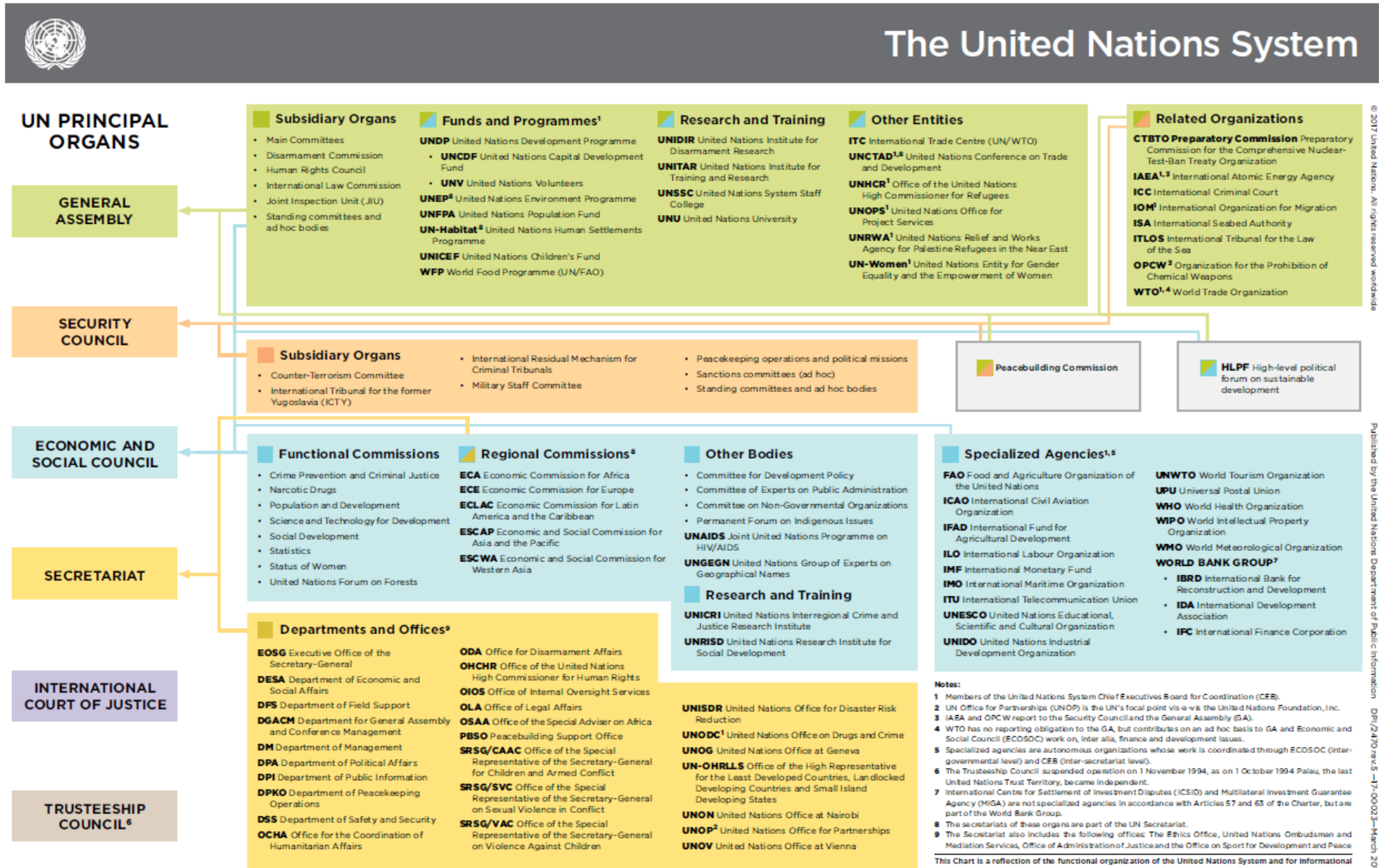
MINUSCA

- ❖ Electoral situation in the CAR
 - Violence started again, why? Same pattern in DRC, related to losers of elections?
 - Who is Touadera, who he represents? Inclusive government (for the elite)?
 - Evaluation
 - Contribution of elections to peace and stability
 - How to measure progress? Used parameters (universal/ country specific)
 - Roadmap?
 - Downfalls?
 - What happens with this evaluation report within UN?
 - Learning? Other views within the UN of implementing elections?

Criticism

- ❖ Intrinsic value of elections (for what it is not what it does). Example: DRC→Kabila
- ❖ Western democracy does not work in Africa/scientific articles on development stage and democracy→Patrimonial relations: Patron uses resources for the votes to stay in power
- ❖ Government of Unity?
- ❖ Too much focus on justice and accountability?

APPENDIX 3: ORGANOGRAM UN



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