



**University of Brasilia**

Zero Tolerance for whom? The United Nations and the cases  
of sexual abuse and exploitation committed by military  
peacekeepers

by

Ana Luísa Vitali de Araújo

Bachelor's Thesis

Submitted to the International Relations Institute

University of Brasilia

In Partial Fulfilment of the Requirements

for the Degree of Bachelor of Arts in International Relations

Supervised by Professor Thiago Gehre Galvão

May 2022

## Acknowledgements

Agradeço imensamente ao professor Thiago Gehre, por ter sido meu orientador e ter desempenhado essa função com dedicação e amizade desde o início da minha graduação. Ainda, deixo minha gratidão ao professor Juliano Cortinhas que me acompanhou durante minha fase de amadurecimento como pesquisadora enquanto tutor do PET-REL.

Ao lugar em que passei grande parte dos meus dias, o Instituto de Relações Internacionais, e especialmente à Francele, que forneceu apoio na Secretaria durante os últimos quatro anos. Sem dúvidas, sou grata à Universidade de Brasília, que me acolheu e foi essencial no meu processo de formação profissional e por tudo o que aprendi.

Aos meus amigos que viveram comigo não só uma graduação, mas uma graduação marcada por uma pandemia e isolamento social. Obrigada por terem feito o processo o melhor possível dentro das circunstâncias. Gostaria de agradecer ainda mais àqueles que participaram ativamente do processo de construção desse trabalho, seja com correções e sugestões, seja com apoio e encontrinhos de estudo: Jales Caur, Ana Beatriz Zanuni, Maria Mariana, Daniela Ribeiro, Nathália Mamede, Eduarda Dias, Juliana Ferreira e Lucas Serra.

Além disso, não poderia deixar de agradecer à minha família. Minha mãe, Helena, meu pai, Marcelo, e minha irmã, Paola. Obrigada pelo apoio durante este período e por acreditarem nos meus sonhos ao ingressar nesta graduação, foi essencial poder contar com este suporte. Além de tudo, aos meus companheiros de leituras, fichamentos, escritas e revisões: meus cachorros, Lexie, Chico e Guto. Os últimos meses dedicados neste trabalho não foram solitários e tampouco difíceis quando percebia que eles estavam sempre comigo.

Por fim, gostaria de expressar minha gratidão às mulheres e crianças que participaram como objeto de estudo deste trabalho. Apesar de não conhecê-las, ouvir suas histórias por diferentes meios mudou completamente minhas perspectivas, me trouxe um propósito e me forneceu aprendizados imensuráveis.

## **Abstract**

The United Nations has been dealing with cases of Sexual Abuse and Exploitation (SEA) committed by their own peacekeepers for a few decades. The scandals bring discomfort to the international community and break the trust of the people the mission was supposed to protect. However, even though there is an established Zero Tolerance Policy (ZTP), the problem is far from being controlled. This research aims to understand the issues around SEA perpetrated by military blue helmets, specifically by presenting a comprehensive history of the construction of UN's prevention policies, analysing the international frameworks around immunity and impunity of perpetrators, and discussing the root of the matter: why is SEA a practice during peacekeeping operations? In order to achieve this, the research focused on analyses of primary sources such as official resolutions, speeches, reports, statutes and treaties referring to the subject and the international law around it. Additionally, an extensive bibliographic review was conducted including articles, books and other relevant secondary sources addressing important topics like the connections between militarism and sexual violence. This paper argues that the ZTP is not enough to account for the prevention of SEA cases, not only because the UN lacks the international authority needed to prosecute the perpetrators, but because the current legal mechanisms are insufficient to protect the victims of human rights violations. Additionally, the international community lacks the will to address it more intensively because the UN hides the problem behind confusing and misleading data regarding the number of cases. Finally, one of the biggest mistakes this research found is that instead of looking deep into the causes of the issue such as militarised masculinity and gender norms, the organisation prefers quick fixes and inefficient solutions.

## Resumo

As Nações Unidas têm lidado com casos de Abuso e Exploração Sexual (AES) cometidos pelos seus próprios *peacekeepers* há décadas. Os escândalos trazem desconforto à comunidade internacional e quebram a confiança das pessoas que a missão deveria proteger. No entanto, mesmo havendo uma Política de Tolerância Zero (PTZ), o problema está longe de ser controlado. Esta pesquisa objetiva compreender as questões em torno do AES cometida pelos capacetes azuis, especificamente por meio de um histórico abrangente da construção das políticas de prevenção da ONU, dos marcos internacionais em torno da imunidade e impunidade dos perpetradores e discutindo a raiz da questão: por que AES é uma prática padrão durante as operações de manutenção da paz? Para tanto, a pesquisa se concentrou em análises de fontes primárias como resoluções, discursos, relatórios, estatutos e tratados referentes ao tema e ao direito internacional em torno dele. Além disso, foi realizada uma extensa revisão bibliográfica incluindo artigos, livros e outras fontes secundárias relevantes que abordaram temas importantes como as conexões entre militarismo e violência sexual. Este artigo argumenta que a PTZ não é suficiente para prevenir casos de AES, porque a ONU não possui a autoridade internacional necessária para processar os perpetradores e porque os mecanismos legais são insuficientes para proteger as vítimas das violações. Além disso, a ONU esconde o problema por trás de dados confusos e enganosos sobre o número de casos, gerando desinteresse internacional. Por fim, um dos maiores erros encontrados por esta pesquisa é que, em vez de se aprofundar nas causas do problema, como masculinidade militarizada e normas de gênero, a organização prefere soluções rápidas e ineficientes.

*"The list of women suffering wartime rape is long and will continue to grow unless we include women's wartime suffering in history books, commemorate the atrocities against them in museums, and remember the women and girls we lost."*

– Mary Lynn Bracht,  
White Chrysanthemum (2018)

## **Table of contents**

List of abbreviations	7
Introduction	8
Chapter One – The construction of the Zero Tolerance Policy	12
Chapter Two – Normative frameworks for cases of sexual abuse and exploitation	22
Chapter Three – Asking the right question: why peacekeepers rape?	33
Conclusion	42
References	44

## **List of abbreviations**

<b>CDU</b>	Conduct and Discipline Unit
<b>DMSPC</b>	Department for Management Strategy, Policy and Compliance
<b>DRC</b>	Democratic Republic of the Congo
<b>FIB</b>	Force Intervention Brigade
<b>GIWPS</b>	Women Peace Security Index
<b>HDI</b>	Human Development Index
<b>ICC</b>	International Criminal Court
<b>MINUSTAH</b>	United Nations Stabilisation Mission in Haiti
<b>MONUSCO</b>	United Nations Organisation Stabilisation Mission in the DRC
<b>MoU</b>	Memorandum of Understanding
<b>MTS</b>	Misconduct Tracking System
<b>PKO</b>	Peacekeeping Operation
<b>SEA</b>	Sexual Exploitation and Abuse
<b>SOFA</b>	Status of Forces Agreement
<b>TCC</b>	Troop-Contributing Country
<b>UNFICYP</b>	United Nations Peacekeeping Force in Cyprus
<b>UNSC</b>	United Nations Security Council
<b>UN</b>	United Nations
<b>WPS</b>	Women, Peace, and Security
<b>ZTP</b>	Zero Tolerance Policy

## Introduction

After almost three decades working for the United Nations (UN), Anthony Banbury, former Assistant-Secretary General, resigned from his position in February 2016, surprising the international scene. After breaking the news of yet another sex scandal inside the organisation, Banbury declared there was still a significant lack of criminal accountability in addressing those cases, and the UN was failing due to colossal mismanagement (Banbury 2016).

Unfortunately, the cases of sexual exploitation and abuse (SEA) are not unfamiliar for the UN, which has been dealing with stories surfacing since the 1990s, including sexual conduct with minors and involvement in human trafficking. Consequently, the UN created the Zero Tolerance Policy (ZTP) to address cases of SEA to prevent more damage to its reputation. The promise was to commit not only to prevent occurrences, but to guarantee investigations for all allegations and take all appropriate measures if they found substantiating evidence.

Nevertheless, the policy is insufficient to reduce SEA cases, mainly because the contingent of military personnel<sup>1</sup> in the missions remains under the exclusive jurisdiction of their national government. Therefore, investigations and subsequent disciplinary actions are the responsibility of the troop-contributing country (TCC). The immunity granted to peacekeepers generates practical inefficiency, as the UN cannot correctly control and ensure that the perpetrators are brought to justice.

The main objective of this research is to analyse the actions of the United Nations in the face of cases of sexual abuse and exploitation. Firstly, it will present the defining elements of the resolutions and policy in place. Following that, it will explain how these were

---

<sup>1</sup> UN peace operations have different categories of personnel, which may consist of military components, police components, and civilian components.



addressed within the organisation, considering the institutional processes, the actors, and the limits of the approach. In addition, it aims to assimilate how the determinations imposed by international law and by member states make the UN unable to act in the prosecution of military perpetrators, generating an environment of impunity caused by international immunity it provides. However, this research still presents possible solutions for that issue.

Finally, it proposes to conceptualise militarised masculinity and its connections with sexual violence. This stage is necessary in order to understand the links between the military stereotypes and a dominant anti-female view, which induces the number of cases to increase continuously. Additionally, it presents other reasons for the prevalence of SEA cases, such as the social and political context of the sending and host states, and criticises the UN's approach of using women as quick fixes.

The methods for carrying out this research consisted of documentary research with a historical analysis of primary sources available on official United Nations platforms, such as resolutions, speeches, and reports that refer to the theme and the construction of the Zero Tolerance Policy. Then, it collected information from international law alluding to the treatment of allegations of SEA committed by military peacekeepers.

Likewise, it provided a comprehensive bibliographic review of articles, books, and relevant secondary sources that addressed the relationship between militarism and sexual violence. The goal was to conduct critical analysis during the writing, highlighting other factors that are not purely institutional when analysing approaches to cases of SEA within the scope of peacekeeping operations (PKOs).

Authors such as Kovath (2016) presented the importance of diversifying causal factors, as the intersectionality of levels creates a "perfect storm": the combination of analysis of the social, legal, and economic environment underlying operations that tolerate SEA. Dahrendorf (2006) corroborates this approach and concludes that substantiated allegations do

not come isolated, and are almost always connected to different forms of misconduct, whether in financial or personnel management or abuse of property and power.

The primary motive behind this research lies in its social relevance, as it analyses and discusses a criminal act that has affected the lives of predominantly women and children in situations of vulnerability for a long time. It is unacceptable that this violation continues to happen within the UN, the world's most influential international body, while it has the capacity to implement sufficient actions to avoid or at least drastically reduce the number of cases.

Regarding the impact of this article in the scientific community, the sexual exploitation and abuse of civilians by international peacekeeping forces are a poorly studied as a form of conflict violence (Moncrief 2017). Still, Grady (2016) states that the statistics released by the United Nations on the subject have attracted little to no academic attention, even though the organisation used them to reduce the space for criticism of their policies and undermine the search for better legal arrangements. Finally, Hernandez (2020) mentions how most studies on peacekeeping focus on the operation's ability to keep peace, but there are few that address SEA directly.

This study will operate with the feminist theory of International Relations as its leading theory to assemble its arguments, based primarily on the work of Sandra Withworth (2004) and Cynthia Enloe (2014). Both analyses highlight the circumstances that militarism creates for male sexuality and that sexual misconduct of security forces is more common in areas with military bases or other large congregations of service officials. Afterwards, the research will explore the concepts of militarism and masculinised militarism – examined by both aforementioned scholars – to further comprehend the work of the United Nations in the face of SEA cases.

The selection of feminist theory was due to the desire to understand and examine gender inequality and the "roles" of gender within society and their impact in cases of sexual violence in conflicts. Militarism, correspondingly, will regulate the military construction of men in a violent and anti-feminine manner, which contributes to the issues mentioned above. Additionally, cases of sexual exploitation can facilitate a culture of impunity, as well as nurture a conflict cycle (Anderson 2010). Therefore, to understand the continuance of SEA during peacekeeping missions, it is essential to clarify how immunity works for peacekeepers under their circumstances.

Critics may want to indicate that not all peacekeepers have the same characteristics and behaviours and are susceptible to involvement in acts of sexual violence, which invalidates a militarism-based analysis. However, as stated by Whitworth (2004), contemporary military training practices are very similar between nations, and one cannot assume that the militarised masculinity of soldiers automatically disappears during peacekeeping operations. In this sense, Kovatch (2016) states that when soldiers are in a militarised environment, they are more likely to commit violence, including those who were not previously susceptible to it.

Ultimately, according to Burke and Odello (2016), despite the existence of the Zero Tolerance Policy, the genuine impact of the UN's approach is not perceived. Similarly, Kanetake (2010) explains the failure of the organisation: although the UN has devoted energy to restoring public confidence in its missions, the implementation of the policy cannot be effective due to the limits of its command authority.

## Chapter One

### The construction of the Zero Tolerance Policy

The United Nations scandals regarding Sexual Abuse and Exploitation (SEA) are ongoing ever since the 1990s, when allegations surfaced during missions in Kosovo, Cambodia, and Timor-Leste (Zeid 2005). The reporting continued in the following years, especially in West Africa in 2002 and in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) in 2004. The latter was the breaking point for the UN to start reevaluating their SEA policies with the hope of decreasing the number of cases in those missions. The purpose of this chapter is to present a record of the most relevant official measures taken by the UN in the past two decades, analysing the actual consequences of the Zero Tolerance Policy in field operations.

In October 2000, the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) passed the celebrated Resolution (S/RES) n. 1325: Women, Peace and Security (WPS). This resolution is important because it was the first UNSC binding document that addressed the disproportionate and unique impact of armed conflict on women. Additionally, it aimed to encourage their participation in peace processes (Security Council 2000). Besides requesting to increase the number of women in missions, the resolution called for "all parties to armed conflict to take *special measures* to protect women and girls from gender-based violence, particularly rape and other forms of sexual abuse, and all other forms of violence in situations of armed conflict" (Security Council 2000, 3).

A few years later, the former Secretary-General (SG), Kofi Annan, defined the so-called 'special measures' in his Bulletin, released in 2003, named Special measures for protection from sexual exploitation and sexual abuse. This document is what the UN considers as its Zero Tolerance Policy, although it is not its official title. In this paper, the

Zero Tolerance Policy is considered in a wider sense, assembling all the organisation's measures to end SEA throughout their missions.

Following the scandals in West Africa in 2002, the Bulletin was the first document that defined Sexual Abuse and Exploitation for the UN:

For the purposes of the present bulletin, the term “sexual exploitation” means any actual or attempted abuse of a position of vulnerability, differential power, or trust, for sexual purposes, including, but not limited to, profiting monetarily, socially or politically from the sexual exploitation of another. Similarly, the term “sexual abuse” means the actual or threatened physical intrusion of a sexual nature, whether by force or under unequal or coercive conditions (Annan 2003).

Furthermore, the Bulletin labelled SEA as a serious misconduct and established how the power dynamics between peacekeepers and beneficiaries are part of the reasons not to engage sexually with the local population. However, even though the Bulletin serves as a decent code of conduct, it is where we can see the first drawback of the UN's proposal for SEA: it is not legally binding on military peacekeepers, since they respond to their government, and the United Nations doesn't have the authority to subject them to criminal procedures (O'Brien 2018). As jurisdiction has traditionally been viewed as linked to state sovereignty and is territorial (Dixon and McCorquodale 2003, 268), this legal issue is one of the central problems when considering the impunity of uniformed personnel who violate the codes of conduct.

Another relevant point highlighted by Annan was the role of the Force Commanders (FCs). They are the higher authorities within the missions and responsible for handling cases of misconduct, as well as reporting them to the Under-Secretary-General for Peace Operations at the UN Headquarters. I further discussed the accountability of the commanders during personal interviews with General Carlos Alberto dos Santos Cruz, a Brazilian military officer who previously held the post of Force Commander of the United Nations Stabilisation Mission in Haiti (MINUSTAH) and the United Nations Organisation Stabilisation Mission in

the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUSCO), and General Kristin Lund, the first woman to command a UN peacekeeping operation, who served as Force Commander for the United Nations Peacekeeping Force in Cyprus (UNFICYP).

Unfortunately, General Santos Cruz confirmed the systematic failure of the UN with male officials, which seem to deny the dimensions of abuse and tolerate extreme behaviours such as SEA (Maxwell 2010). He stated that there are more scandals than cases, as a lot of allegations turn out to be false. Also, he insisted that many peacekeepers were involved with local women in authentic relationships, and that he couldn't punish people for *falling in love*<sup>2</sup>, even though a lot of fake marriages take place during missions (Simic 2009).

Yet, General Cruz led operations during both of the largest UN scandals of all time: MONUSCO and MINUSTAH. To this day, MONUSCO still is the operation with the highest total number of registered allegations (Kovath 2016), and it accounted for 45% of all SEA cases between 2008 and 2013 (Cold-Ravnkilde and Mandrup 2017). Moreover, MINUSTAH recorded so many abuses that it generated an 'epidemic' of peacekeeper babies, the so-called *Petit MINUSTAH* (Nguyen 2021).

While some of what the General discusses may be true, as cases are low compared to the total contingent number, it is also proven that the said "substantiated" cases are way lower than the real cases, and the UN data is sometimes questionable (Grady 2016). It is intriguing how General Cruz seems to take a problem that is crystal clear and turn it grey. This defensive position seen between commanders that does not acknowledge the problem is a reason why abuse keeps happening.

On the other hand, General Kristin Lund was much more aware of her role in preventing abuse. She explained that the FCs are responsible for their soldiers and that it is up to the leader to decide the assertiveness of the codes of conduct within the mission. Later on,

---

<sup>2</sup> The question proposed to Santos Cruz was recorded and it is available at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=w2XjW0LmFq8&t=4423s>, at 1:00:40.

Lund affirms that it was natural for her to focus more on these issues since most women have first-hand experience with harassment, and she is confident that it takes only one case to destroy the trust that the community has given to the mission. Hence, this is the mentality lacking most FCs, especially males: it is not about how many allegations are registered, it is about how only one of them can severely affect the outcomes of the whole operation, and more importantly, how every victim should matter.

In order to prioritise the survivors, as General Lund mentioned, the Secretary-General has produced an annual report on the subject every year since the release of Annan's Bulletin. Usually, there is no new information, as they merely reaffirm the zero tolerance for SEA and provide data for the allegations. Yet, in 2017, António Guterres, the current SG, while announcing the implementation of a new approach, finally admitted something that the UN has struggled with throughout the years: that, certainly, not all cases are reported (Guterres 2017, 5).

Nevertheless, much happened before that realisation. In 2005, His Royal Highness Prince Zeid Ra'ad Zeid Al-Husseini (Zeid), Permanent Representative of Jordan and former civilian peacekeeper, produced the most decisive document on SEA. The well-known "Zeid Report" was the first comprehensive analysis of the problem, and it is still the most relevant today, as the issues mentioned have not yet been solved. This report is remarkable not only because it acknowledges the problem with attention to detail, but it also proposes solutions and a radical change within the UN.

When addressing the difficulties involved in taking action against alleged military perpetrators, Zeid points out that the investigation is one of the main issues. As legal systems are different in each country, if the process is done internally, the home country of the peacekeeper might not be able to accept the evidence to begin the trial. Still, Zeid suggests that when a case is reported, authorities from the country in question need to participate in the

investigations, which allows for transparency and access to documentation. Of course, this falls under budgetary limitations, but if the UN truthfully wants to tackle impunity, this is one of the necessary steps, which will ultimately be cost-effective.

Moreover, what is most valuable in Zeid's report is how the member states can also act to change the impunity scenario surrounding the operations. As mentioned, local laws (either in the home or host countries) can hinder the procedures for prosecution, as SEA and prostitution can or cannot be a crime. Most countries are often reluctant to admit to acts of wrongdoing, as it attracts sketchy publicity, which can lead to no will to court-martial the alleged perpetrators. This is proven by a shocking number: only 53 uniformed peacekeepers and one civilian peacekeeper have ever been sent to prison for sexual offences (Coen 2018).

A few examples can outline the importance of this argument. In 2012, Uruguay had to prosecute five peacekeepers for raping a child in Haiti after the case got a lot of mediatic attention. Even with video evidence available, a technicality of internal laws caused all of them to leave without any charges (Novick 2012). The same issue happened in France after investigations and testimonies from witness, the jury decided not to bring charges against French peacekeepers that committed sexual crimes in the Central African Republic (Morenne 2017).

In the rare cases in which peacekeepers are sentenced, the sentence does not seem fair. For example, two Pakistani officers were found guilty of raping a 14-year-old boy in Haiti, however, they were only sentenced to a year in prison (Novick 2012). However, the most surprising case is from the only civilian ever sentenced: Didier Bourguet, that admitted several times to raping more than 25 children – and not even remembering the total amount – only took charges related to two of those cases (Navai 2018). Although not the object of this study, the statements made from this civilian peacekeeper clearly outline a culture of UN workers getting involved with prostitutes, young women and children (Einbinder 2018).



The General Assembly and the Security Council need to address a shared commitment to act in their national laws or sign binding international treaties to eliminate this concern. In the end, awareness is not enough, as measures need to be enforced since the responsibility is not only at the individual level. Those countries participating in and financing operations must create legal systems to be accountable for violations.

Subsequently to Zeid's extensive report, 2005 marked the date that the UN created the Conduct and Discipline Unit (CDU)<sup>3</sup>. However, this apparent advance in the fight against SEA has been criticised for its conflict of interest (O'Brien 2018, 4). The CDU is in charge of training and policies around preventing SEA, but is also responsible for receiving and processing complaints. Hence, this double tasking can be a reason for low reporting when compared to the occurrences (Beber et al. 2017, 27). Even though the CDU is also present *in loco*, there is low awareness of its presence, making it ultimately a counterproductive and high-spending initiative for the United Nations.

In the following years, other resolutions mentioned the subject of SEA, although it was not their main focus. In 2008, Resolution (S/RES) n. 1820 noted that SEA can constitute war crimes, crimes against humanity, and even acts related to genocide. Then, the UNSC agreed that it is necessary to exclude sexual violence crimes from amnesty provisions and that member states cannot shy away from prosecuting the persons responsible for such acts. Eventually, the end of impunity for such deeds is a part of a comprehensive approach to seeking sustainable peace, justice, truth, and national reconciliation.

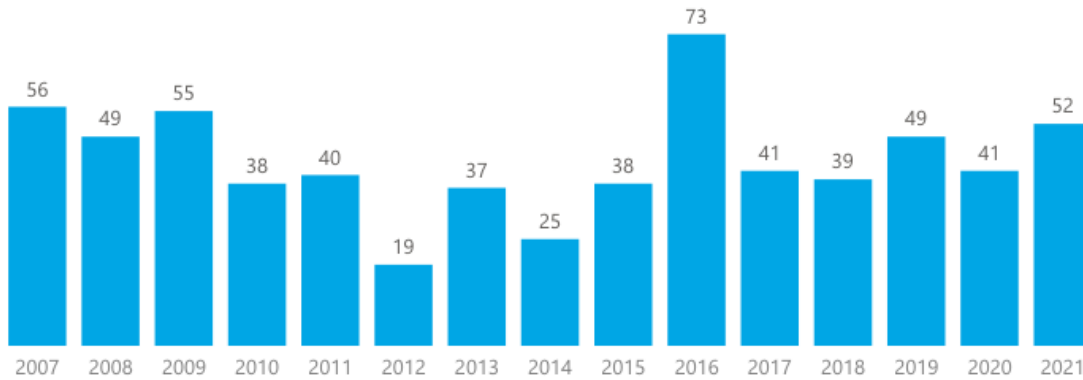
In 2009, Resolution (S/RES) n. 1888 urged legal and judicial reforms, acknowledging the limited number of perpetrators brought to justice. If the changes were to be made in conformity with international law, in order to prosecute accordingly, they would be able to ensure that survivors can be treated with dignity. Although these topics were discussed in

---

<sup>3</sup> The CDU provides overall direction and policy guidance for conduct and discipline issues and maintains global oversight of the state of discipline in peacekeeping operations. It also oversees standardised induction training modules on conduct and discipline for all personnel arriving in UN peacekeeping operations.

institutional spaces, little to no change was made regarding national policies in host countries, and cases of abuse continued to increase in the subsequent years during the operations.

**Figure 1:** Sexual Exploitation and Abuse committed by military peacekeepers during UN Operations



**Source:** United Nations (2022)

It is compelling how these discussions on the responsibility of host countries were active over ten years ago, and yet the UN delayed to “name and shame”<sup>4</sup> the host countries of their alleged perpetrators in their official website, even though the Misconduct Tracking System (MTS) was available since 2008, having its data kept confidential from the public for over eight years (General Assembly 2016). This public record should have been in place earlier, as external pressure can lead to specific states to take action.

In this regard, also in 2016, Resolution (S/RES) n. 2272 finally led to a stricter and radical conclusion: all military units of a TCC that have not taken the appropriate measures after an allegation of SEA shall be removed from the mission. In this case, appropriate measures are investigation and prosecution, but also informing the SG of the progress and actions taken (General Assembly 2016).

Although it is of the most straightforward and effective solutions ever proposed, it is doomed for demise. For example, considering the data provided by the Department for

---

<sup>4</sup> The term "name and shame" is defined by the Cambridge Dictionary as "to publicly say that a person, group, or business has done something wrong". In this case, it means that the UN started providing data on the countries where the perpetrators came from.

Management Strategy, Policy and Compliance (DMSPC) of the United Nations, since 2015, nationals from Nepal and Pakistan have been implicated in allegations on SEA (United Nations 2022a). Simultaneously, those countries are, respectively, the third and sixth most significant contributors of personnel for operations, together accounting for almost ten thousand people (United Nations Peacekeeping 2022). Thus, it's not technically feasible for the UN to stop these countries' contributions, as it would severely affect the development of the missions.

A clarifying statement was made by Isobel Coleman, US Ambassador to the UN for Management and Reform, regarding the issue. She said that the legal requirements placed by the UN are bent in times of extreme need – which is all the time in a peacekeeping mission. Her declaration showed that there are more important things than asking questions about SEA training or why soldiers were vetted when there's genocide happening somewhere (Collins, 2018, 23:52). This mindset is an example of gender-based violence not being considered a security threat inside the UN, even after several resolutions such as 1820.

However, there are other forms of punishment in place that do not cancel the whole operation and only affect the perpetrators. In 2015, the UN began a payment suspension for members of contingents if there was any record of a substantiated allegation of SEA (United Nations 2022b). Although interesting, the proposal fails: most cases are not reported, and the ones that are rarely end up being corroborated enough for the UN, due to a lack of materials to perform the correct investigation procedures.

After the payment suspensions, in May 2016, individual members started being vetted before being deployed to missions if there was proof of prior misconduct during other United Nations operations. The TCC is also required to check if the officer being deployed has committed any violations of international human rights law or international humanitarian law (United Nations 2022b). This action is barely an effort, as the names of the offenders should

have been blacklisted from the beginning, and this system allows perpetrators to get inside the organisation without a proper background check, as former Assistant Secretary-General Anthony Banbury pointed out:

When we took over peacekeeping responsibilities from the African Union there (Central African Republic) in 2014, we had the choice of which troops to accept. Without appropriate debate, and for cynical political reasons, a decision was made to include soldiers from the Democratic Republic of Congo and from the Republic of Congo, **despite reports of serious human rights violations by these soldiers**. Since then, troops from these countries have engaged in a persistent pattern of rape and abuse of the people — often young girls — the United Nations was sent there to protect (Banbury 2016).

Surprisingly, the design of a specific code of conduct for peacekeepers, another preliminary measure, was also only taken into account in 2016. The CDU created the Ten Rules Code of Personal Conduct for Blue Helmet, which expressly forbids sexual abuse and exploitation, as other documents have previously worded. However, since SEA has been and continues to be committed by peacekeepers, it is possible to conclude that codes of conduct or resolutions are insufficient as a measure to prevent this behaviour, as they are not legally enforced.

In 2017, in his annual report, Guterres announced and established a high-level task force on the UN response to SEA, insisting on a new groundbreaking approach to the subject. The goals of the task force were to develop a clear strategy to improve prevention and the response of the organisation. Yet, there are no actions outlined in the report regarding working with member states to ensure that they install the necessary legislative means to prosecute SEA, or even support the nations with these changes.

While the discussion inside the organisation rightfully centres around prevention, it is also relevant to discuss victim assistance and support after the cases of SEA. One of the best initiatives by the UN is the Trust Funds in support of victims (General Assembly 2015). With funds from the suspended payments of perpetrators, it subsidises organisations, within and

outside the UN, that provide assistance and other services for survivors, including medical care and legal services, especially for the children who were born from abuse. Unfortunately, these funds rarely reach the people who need them.

A 2018 PBS documentary shows the reality of the operations and the disorganisation that the UN tries to conceal not only in the Trust Fund initiative but in the policy as a whole. While interviewing victims, witnesses and officials, Ramita Navai uncovered the hard truth that the UN doesn't even try to find the survivors, leaving them with promises of justice and support that seem unreachable. The correspondent discovered that the UN abandoned a victim after she was abused at the age of 10. In an excerpt from the documentary, Navai confronts David Gressly, the acting head of MONUSCO in 2018, asking why the UN does not track the victims of abuse:

NAVAI: And nobody from the UN has ever talked to you about this or interviewed you about this?

VICTIM: No one has ever asked me. I wish they would look for us to help pay for our education and help us recover the time we lost.

(...)

NAVAI: Why hasn't the UN tracked any of his victims down?

GRESSLY: Well, that's, that's a history that goes way back many, many years, more than a decade. I can't explain all of that. But I think it's helpful that you've identified these individuals so that we can do so.

NAVAI: But it took our Congolese producer a day to track quite a few of them down. So, what's happening there?

GRESSLY: I'll have to find out. I'll have to find out. (Collyns 2018, 45:30)

To this day, Zeid's recommendations of the need for reinforcement of national law are urgent and still not being acted upon, as the UN tries to search for every other answer but the most proper path to a long-term solution. The so-called Zero Tolerance Policy allows for impunity, despite it being almost 20 years in the making. In the following chapter, the legal framework will be presented more extensively, in order to discuss more ways in which the United Nations can act to end sexual exploitation and abuse.

## **Chapter Two**

### **Normative frameworks for cases of sexual abuse and exploitation**

In the previous chapter, this article presented the defining elements of the United Nations Zero Tolerance Policy elaborating on some critical thinking on their limitations. The legal legitimacy of the UN became restricted due to difficulties of implementation, an excessive reliance on flawed legal mechanisms and the political interference of external actors. The UN especially fails to target military personnel, the most relevant perpetrators, becoming practically an advice giver. Nonetheless, there are still legal frameworks surrounding peace operations. This chapter will present these frameworks and discuss their limitations, including the reliability of data, but most importantly, it will propose solutions for mitigating the current accountability gap.

The two most relevant binding instruments between the United Nations and states participating in Peacekeeping Operations are the memorandum of understanding (MoU) and the Status of Forces Agreement (SOFA). Generally, MoUs are bilateral agreements between parties, and in the case of the PKO, they refer to arrangements between troop or police-contributing countries and the UN. It is necessary to note this difference as the SOFA will include the host government and the UN, but not the sending state (O'Brien 2011).

The model MoU is a part of the Manual on Policies and Procedures Concerning the Reimbursement and Control of Contingent-Owned Equipment of Troop/Police Contributors Participating in Peacekeeping Missions (COE Manual), always being its ninth chapter. The initial purpose of the MoU was to establish administrative, logistics, and financial terms and conditions to guide the contribution of personnel, equipment, and services provided by the Government in support of the United Nations peacekeeping mission. However, the current MoU is a revised version (A/61/19) released after the Zeid Report called for changes.

The first revision was related to its purpose. It remained essentially the same, but the UN added the following sentence at the end: "and to provide for the maintenance of discipline and good order among such personnel and the investigation of, and accountability for violations". As a result, this addition made it clear from the beginning of the document that the MoU would present guidelines for conduct during the mission. Those guidelines such as the Ten Rules, We Are the UN Peacekeeping Personnel, and Prohibitions on SEA are now inserted as an annexe of the memorandum.

Likewise, Article 2 was altered to make sure that the standards of conduct would be binding for all members of its national contingent under the laws of the sending state. This revision hopes to solve the issue mentioned by Zeid that local regulations hinder nations in the prosecuting process. Still, even though the obligation to readjust local laws is present under the MoU, not all countries have adjusted their legal frameworks to accommodate SEA charges. This chapter will address this concern later.

The following article (3) provides instructions on pre-deployment training. It obligates the government to guarantee that all members of its national contingent go through some training to understand the standards of conduct effectively. This matter was part of my discussion with General Lund, and she emphasised that many peacekeepers arrived in the missions without proper training, and it was up to the Force Commander to decide if they wanted to reinforce it or not. In her experience, most FCs often did not take the time to support it. This example shows, once again, that UN documents are not enough to make practical changes.

In terms of the discordance between theory and practice, it is relevant to mention a study by Gehre (2008) that discussed ideologies, discourses and actions as three dimensions related to cognitive dissonance. This hypothesis can be explained through the case of the FC's actions towards the Zero Tolerance Policy: first, there is the idea force, which for the UN is

that PKOs involve peace, stability and respect. However, this idea gets distorted along the way through discourses from the military commanders that preach aggressiveness, acceptance of casualties and a self-defence mentality. Finally, the results of the initial idea of stability are in fact violence and even SEA.

Furthermore, the seventh article was the one that changed the most. Currently, it is a confirmation of the exercise of jurisdiction by the sending state and reassures that military personnel are subjected to the exclusive jurisdiction of the TCC in respect of any crimes or offences committed by them while assigned to an operation. Nevertheless, the understanding of exclusive jurisdiction needs to be made based on the assurance of the sending state of exercising such authority when necessary.

Unfortunately, as presented by Kanetake (2010), political stakes may be high for the UN to keep following up the cases and pressuring the much-needed contributors of contingents into taking necessary disciplinary and criminal procedures, but the pressure should be directed to other international human rights institutions as well. There is also low political and financial interest for the state to prosecute its citizens. If they know the UN can't and won't intervene, why would they stain their international reputation, spend money and time on overseas investigations when they can simply remove the alleged perpetrator from the mission and move on?<sup>5</sup>

Regarding the other legally binding document, each mission is required to have a SOFA because it includes the application of the Convention on the Privileges and Immunities of the United Nations, which determines the levels of immunity for each category of UN personnel. As mentioned, the difference between the SOFA and the MoU is that the latter is related to the TCC and the UN, and the SOFA is between the host government and the UN.

---

<sup>5</sup> This question intends to provoke the reader and the answer will not be fully addressed in this paper. However, it is an inspiration for further research which analyses states' political willingness in changing domestic laws and confronts new demands from the international community. Additionally, it aims to question the limitations of the UN's agency.



The UNSC needs to request the conclusion of a SOFA in the first 30 days of the adoption of the resolution that establishes the mission. However, if the agreement is pending, the model (A/45/594) applies temporarily (examples in resolutions (S/RES) n. 2149 of 2014, (S/RES) n. 2100 of 2013, and (S/RES) n. 1996 of 2011). Therefore, the model needs to be more comprehensive since there is a risk of the mission starting before the signing of a specific SOFA.

The most significant article in the agreement is 47b, the one that establishes all UN legislation regarding military members. It states that "military members of the military component of the UN peacekeeping operation shall be subject to the exclusive jurisdiction of their participating states in respect of any criminal offences which may be committed by them in (the host country/territory)". The following article expresses that the details of this jurisdiction shall be presented on the MoU.

Yet, the issues with that approach consider the lack of a legal framework inside the country, which generates an accountability gap. As discussed, the only way that the sending state can haul the perpetrators into court is if there were domestic laws enabling the investigation of extraterritorial crimes and the crime committed is also a crime in the sending state, which is not the case in most nations (Wills 2013). Resolving the issue of double criminality is central to cases of SEA (Burke and Odello 2016).

The Democratic Republic of Congo is an example of the lack of double criminality. In DRC, having sexual relations with a child was only considered a criminal offence if the child was less than 14 years of age (Kanetake 2010). Fortunately, the penal code was amended in 2006 and raised it to 18, but the UN already had an operation in place before that year. Additionally, according to the World Population Review (2022), prostitution is currently legal or has limited legality in over 40 countries, including the DRC.

Considering the above, many military officers from DRC might not understand why they are not allowed to engage in sexual activities with prostitutes when they are off duty, or have consensual sex with people over 18 years of age<sup>6</sup>. If the practice is legal in their home country and the host state, it is not clear in which ways they are violating the law (Quénivet 2007). That is why the United Nations needs to address properly where their policy is coming from, and the Force Commanders need to reinforce such messages.

The UN has a collection of which nations have provided legal frameworks around SEA. Even though the provision of those documents is required under the revised MoU, several TCCs do not send their information. A few of the principal troop and police contributors are part of that list: China (ninth-largest contributor with over two thousand nationals deployed), Tanzania and Chad (13th and 14th largest contributors, with almost 1.5 thousand people each) (United Nations Peacekeeping 2022a).

Again, the United Nations makes another mistake, allowing impunity and generating an unsafe environment for women and children of the host state. If the TCC fails to provide such documents even after agreeing under the MoU, the UN should hinder the nation's participation in the mission. This action is a type of prevention as critical as providing a background check on the officers, as it guarantees that, if a case happens, the country will be able to investigate and prosecute. By allowing TCCs with no SEA laws in place to join missions, the UN is not only turning a blind eye to possible crimes, but it is also sending a message of complacency – the opposite of what it preaches.

Gladly, there are still a lot of feasible solutions for ending the accountability gap currently supported by the UN's policies. This chapter will discuss the possibility of special/ad hoc courts and the use of International Criminal Courts, the adoption of a

---

<sup>6</sup> This subject has been a central theme of feminist studies in International Relations, specially by author Cynthia Enloe in her classical work *Bananas, Beaches and Bases*, which will be discussed more in the next chapter.

comprehensive global framework through binding security council resolutions, and a new review of the MoU and the SOFA.

When a state decides not to prosecute or does not handle the process as seriously as needed, it goes against its duty to prosecute cases of abuse, as those often violate international human rights norms (Ndulo 2009). The UN should be able to do more. As such, it could create special in-site courts for mitigating the issue of getting the peacekeeper and all collected evidence back to its country, having compositions that can be put together and apart after the case ends. Yet, this can be limited by the UN's budget since it involves the movement of staff and structure.

Another option, which does not involve budgetary issues for the United Nations, is using the International Criminal Court (ICC). Under the Geneva Conventions, sexual violence can be considered a war crime<sup>7</sup> and consequently prosecuted at ICC<sup>8</sup>. This approach does not go against the MoU, as the exclusive jurisdiction of TCCs is regarding the host state, not necessarily other states and/or bodies (Burke and Odello 2016). However, there are some limitations considering those states which are not parties to the Rome Statute, and it may also be argued that the Statute is lacking an explicit provision which would enable peacekeeping personnel to be prosecuted for sexual exploitation (O'Brien 2011).

In order to solve the issue of countries that do not participate in ICC, the UN could make more efforts regarding the creation of a global legal framework through the UNSC, that embodies binding resolutions to its members. Nevertheless, this will require domestic and international legislation as the problem cannot be handled at one level and lead to the exclusion of the other. Some might say that this alternative is unrealistic, but it has happened

---

<sup>7</sup> A war crime is a violation of the Geneva Conventions committed during an international armed conflict. The crimes include murder, torture, using children as parts of conflicts, sexual violence and many others. A full list is available at <https://www.icrc.org/en/war-and-law/treaties-customary-law/geneva-conventions>.

<sup>8</sup> Fourth Geneva Convention, Article 27, second paragraph (ibid., § 1556); Additional Protocol I, Articles 76–77 (adopted by consensus) (ibid., §§ 1560–1561).

before. The only step missing is the recognition by the international community that SEA is a security threat and a severe human rights violation.

After the attacks on the World Trade Center in 2001, terrorism became a priority for many countries, and it wasn't different for the United Nations. The UNSC adopted Resolution (S/RES) n. 1373, which required states to ensure that terrorism is a serious criminal offence under their *domestic* laws, and consequently, the state had the means to prosecute the offenders. Afterwards, the UN went even further and established a committee to oversee the implementation of those laws in no more than three months (Ndulo 2009). If the women and children victims of sexual crimes were treated with half of the dignity of terrorism victims, more legal frameworks would be in place.

Accordingly, the lack of prioritisation of the subject can have an additional explanation. The WPS Agenda was released at the end of October 2000, less than a year before the 9/11 attacks, and the macrosecuritisation of terrorism obscured any other security area from the international society for the following ten years. While the subject received disproportionate amounts of attention (Balzacq 2005), the war on terror did not succeed in securitising other processes and actors indirectly involved, a paradox pointed out by Vila (2014).

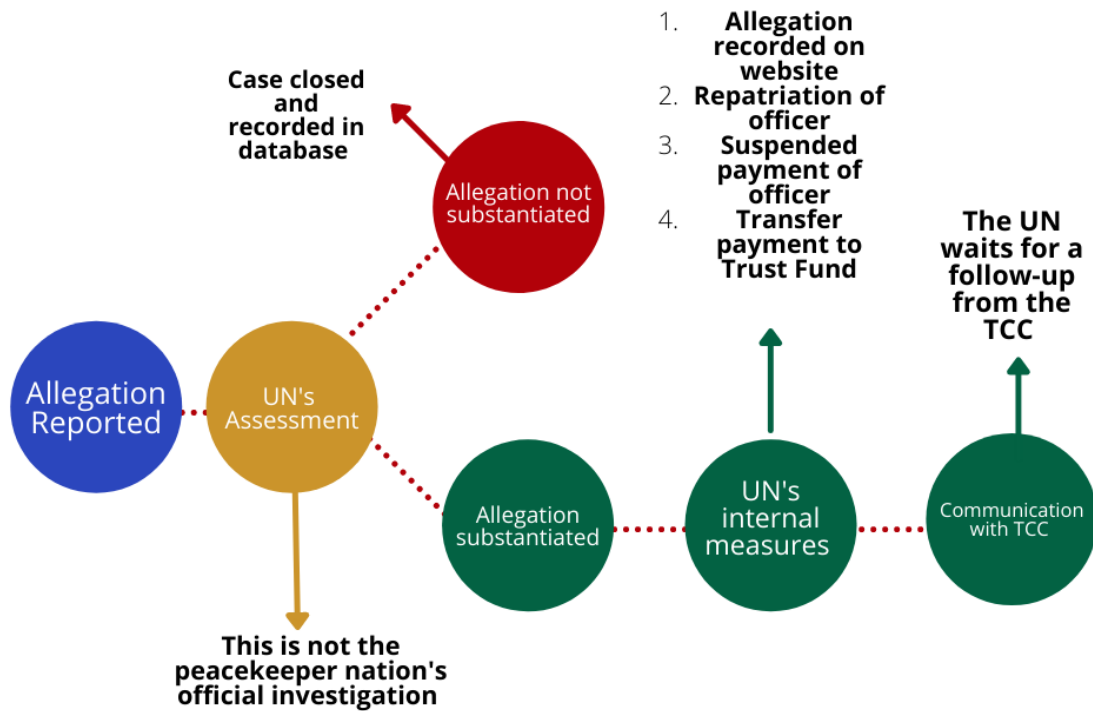
Again, if the UN still does not feel like getting the UNSC to discuss crimes committed by their own staff, that affected thousands of people over the past three decades, there is still another path available. Both documents mentioned at the beginning of this chapter are bilateral agreements that have been amended before, therefore they could be amended again. The UN can restrict the immunities granted to military members under both the SOFA and the MoU with easy changes that would make a significant difference in getting justice for victims. Finally, this is ultimately just a matter of consistency. If the UN respects human rights, member states should also respect them, especially under the mandate of an operation.

For example, the UN could add to the SOFA/MoU that immunity for military members is only for on-duty tasks (as it already is for other types of servers). Hence, sexual offences would be considered as non-official activities and would allow for the host state to prosecute the perpetrators. As Burke and Odello (2016) have stated, the immunities granted to peacekeepers should only be as extensive as the needs for the UN to function effectively and independently. Since this change would not alter the functionality of the mission, it is way past the time for a change inside UN models.

Nevertheless, there is one massive impediment to starting those internal and external reforms: political will. What could push states into action would be seeing SEA as the threat that it currently is. However, the data provided by the UN shows a decrease in recent years – so why go through all that trouble if the Zero Tolerance Policy is working? The problem is that without the willingness, the UN does not try to obtain more substantial data to affirm the functionality of their policy or the effective decrease in cases, instead, they provide manufactured information because that is just enough.

The works of Palermo and Peterman (2011) shine a light on the issue that the current understanding of sexual violence dynamics is particularly poor. Firstly, it is still viewed as a "feminist agenda" or a "gender issue", and not a broad security issue. A great example is, once again, the DRC, the so-called "rape capital of the world" (Ingelaere and Wilén 2017). A study using data from 2006 to 2007 showed that the rate of rape among women aged between 15 and 49 years old in 12 months was 26 times higher than the estimates based on reports to the United Nations authorities (Palermo and Peterman 2011). Considering that, the following figure explains the data collection and management process:

**Figure 2:** Simplification of SEA allegation process



**Source:** United Nations (2022). Graphical representation designed by the author.

Regarding the graphical representation above, some issues are easily identified, such as the fact that the UN cannot do more than wait for a response from the TCC. Besides that, what many fail to notice is that the data presented by the UN is inconsistent in many ways. Firstly, for many years, the organisation presented a number of "cases" and "allegations" without defining the meaning of those terms. Even today, the concept is flawed: allegations are counted by the number of reports received. An allegation of sexual exploitation and abuse can implicate one or more alleged perpetrators, and it can involve one or more victims (United Nations 2022a).

Consequently, the number of allegations reflects neither the number of victims nor the number of perpetrators, but the number of communications received. Hence, since one allegation can represent more than one victim and/or more than one perpetrator, the data under-reports the scale of the phenomenon, masking its magnitude. Therefore, if a person

reports that a peacekeeper abused them and their child, this will be counted as only one allegation, when in fact it denotes two victims. As a result, the numbers provided are unreliable, deflated, and do not reflect reality<sup>9</sup>.

Yet, the United Nations does not seem to mind this critical mistake. For example, in the SG Report of 2009, the recorded decrease in cases from 2007 to 2009 proves that the UN Zero Tolerance Policy was supposedly working. However, it is hard to believe that experts worked on this document, as it implies that correlation always means causation. It should be clear that merely because the number of reported allegations has decreased, it does not confirm that this is due to the success of the UN response (Grady 2016).

Another revolting statement is that even when numbers increase, the UN still manages to turn them into a positive outcome. In 2006, the annual report said that the growth reflected the greater availability of reporting mechanisms that were reaching more individuals, thus accounting for more complaints. After linking correlation to causation, now the UN makes conclusions based on unrecorded data from previous years. These errors seem to have passed unnoticed by the media, other nations and international organisations, which blindly consume the data provided without questioning the explicit conflict of interest.

So why does the UN create this narrative? Because if they are successful in handling SEA cases, their responsibility for solving the issue diminishes and the organisation is not as criticised as it was when the first scandals leaked. This exercise of global governance shifts the attention away from the legal challenges and much-needed reforms, as the UN uses inaccurate statistics to silence its analysts (Grady 2016).

In conclusion, the need for a legal reform seems less pressing in light of statistics which seem to show limited numbers of allegations which are diminishing. However, this essay still stands on the position that the current legal mechanisms are insufficient to protect

---

<sup>9</sup> It is difficult to change the way in which those cases are processed, but the UN should be more clear – including in the website – that one allegation can account to one or more victims/perpetrators, in order to not benefit from this confusion.

civilians and allow for human rights violations. The main issue is the ineffectiveness of the prosecution by states, and this should be the UN's main priority, no matter how it tries to run away from it.

Besides the steps outlined previously, the UN needs to stand by its already approved proposals such as declining troops without a legal framework or a poor accountability record, even if it means difficulties to find contributors (Zakrisson 2015). The organisation cannot allow the possibility of further increasing the vulnerabilities in crisis-struck nations. The international community cannot forget that human rights are universal, and it is unacceptable to have different standards for military soldiers solely based on their nationality.

After debating the need for a comprehensive global response, the following chapter will discuss more critical views of SEA, going beyond the frameworks and policies currently in place. It will aim to answer why SEA is still taboo and not being treated as seriously as it must, and ultimately start a discussion around something that the UN fails to think about: why peacekeepers rape?



## Chapter Three

### Asking the right question: why peacekeepers rape?

The previous chapters discussed how the United Nations resolves SEA cases and their policies to try to get perpetrators to respond for their crimes. However, the UN focuses too much on punishment, when it should have been asking the questions of why the soldiers are committing those crimes in the first place. From that analysis, it is possible to have a better understanding of military sexual assault and how to stop it.

This chapter argues that answers lie in a combination of the culture from both the TCC and the host state, as well as the militarised masculinity that goes on during training<sup>10</sup>. These proposals have been raised by scholars such as Cynthia Enloe and Sandra Whitworth for over a decade, but a link between sociological reasons and sexual violence is missing from UN policies, analysis, and training materials.

What is assumed, both at the UN level and for most individuals, is that the war/post-war environment conditions cause the SEA cases. Nevertheless, this superficial understanding causes policy-makers – including the UN and its Zero Tolerance Policy – to forget the pre-war social relations that lead to the assaults. The feminist theory has long called for a closer examination of underlying institutions and relationships that form violence in a patriarchal and militaristic society, more than just assuming that war contexts lead to brutal acts (Enloe 2014).

Even now, the UN still portrays sexual violence as just a gender problem in its policies, failing to analyse it from the political, social, and economic perspective. Particularly through an outlook in which sexual violence is made meaningful and constructed as a part of

---

<sup>10</sup> It is acknowledged that the reasons that sexual violence occurs are not only the two presented in this chapter and the discussion of the subject is extensive, with strong contributions, such as the 'rape culture' concept (Nicholls 2021). However, this research analyses specific details that can lead military peacekeepers into committing SEA while deployed to a PKO.

normal social relations during so-called times of “peace” (Meger 2021). This chapter will now present two central reasons for misconduct that can be targeted by the international community in order to avoid more SEA cases.

Firstly, the socialisation in both the state hosting the mission and the troop-sending state have an impact on how soldiers act. Beyond the conflict of internal laws – as the prostitution example provided in the previous chapter –, it is even more meaningful to analyse the traditions within those nations, as many troops come from a hypermasculine culture that encourages sexual exploitation and abuse and a tradition of silence (Martin 2005).

As presented by Karim and Beardsley (2016), on average, individuals from more patriarchal societies – measured in terms of the practices of gender equality within the state – are more likely to hold those patriarchal values and thus more prone to commit SEA or at least less willing to denounce it, creating not only an environment susceptible to abuse but also susceptible to impunity.

Accordingly, there are higher risks of SEA in missions in which the peacekeepers originate from nations where the importance of women’s rights are low and sexual violence rates are high. This is confirmed by analysing soldiers coming from the DRC, previously described as a dangerous environment for women, as the Congolese troops remain the ones with the highest number of allegations in the UN's database.

Furthermore, analysing global indexes such as the Human Development Index (HDI)<sup>11</sup> and the Women Peace Security Index (GIWPS)<sup>12</sup> can demonstrate the links between culture and cases of SEA. For example, the top countries of the soldiers that commit SEA are

---

<sup>11</sup> According to the United Nations Development Program (UNDP), the HDI is a measure of human development based on a long and healthy life, being knowledgeable and having a decent standard of living. Although not the object of this study, links between higher educational rates, bigger GDP and quality of life in general reflect on gender equality rates (Karim and Beardsley 2016), as proven by UN's own Sustainable Development Goals (Objectives 1, 3, 4 and 5).

<sup>12</sup> The global Women Peace and Security Index (WPS Index) draws on recognized data sources to measure women’s inclusion, justice, and security in 170 countries. The WPS Index is published by the Georgetown Institute for Women, Peace and Security and the PRIO Centre on Gender, Peace and Security with support from the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs. More on: <https://giwps.georgetown.edu/the-index/>.

Cameroon, South Africa, Gabon and DRC (United Nations 2022a). These also score low in the 2020's HDI, in 153rd, 114th, 119th and 175th places respectively (UNDP 2020). More importantly, these countries are low when it comes to gender indexes like the 2021's GIWPS: 126th, 66th, 140th and 163rd, also respectively.

It can be argued that South Africa's position in the ranking makes the argument incorrect. Yet, as stated, the TCC is not the only part of the problem, the host state matters too. Even if South Africans rank best in women's rights – although definitely not very high compared to other nations such as Nordic countries –, their soldiers depart to a more permissive country and commit several crimes of sexual assault. This reinforces that PKOs are complex settings and an assortment of factors contribute to developing the mission culture.

Hence, while deployed, soldiers can easily leave their stations and connect with local counterparts, who do not necessarily hold the same values or standard of conduct and usually come from masculine militarised societies. The poor socialisation of peacekeepers with locals can have a numbing effect, and the ingrained culture of impunity can lead to sexual exploitation and abuse (Moncrief 2017).

Therefore, there is consistent support for the argument that contingents from countries with better records of gender equality experience lower levels of military SEA allegations (Kovath 2016). This means that recruitment should be targeted, and potential recruits should be evaluated based on their values for gender equality. Currently, as there are several requirements for individuals to join missions, there is no reason why the United Nations could not add gender equality to these requirements, unless it is not a priority for the organisation.

That seems to be the case, as the organisation is still denying the socio-economic causes. There cannot be a universal Zero Tolerance Policy when wars in Africa suffer from a

higher prevalence of sexual violence than those in Asia and Europe (Williams 2016). The UN needs to address both its policies and the roots of the issue together, instead of shifting the attention to the “few bad apples” that compromise and damage the image of the peacekeepers.

Regarding another origin of the problem, it is crucial to consider the impacts of the militarised masculinity intrinsic to the peacekeeper's military training, additionally to their home country's culture. Firstly, this paper will present the concepts of militarised masculinity and then discuss its implications for the United Nations missions and how the organisation turns away from facing the issue and presents 'quick fixes' instead.

According to Whitworth (2004), militarised masculinity is a type of gender performance that equates masculinity with the physical domination of enemies and the social devaluation of women. In a simpler way, it means acquiring traits stereotypically associated with masculinity through military service and especially through combat (Lenander 2017). As such, Enloe (2014) argues that the masculine nature of the armed forces can result in extremely negative outcomes for women in the military sphere.

Considering this interpretation, peacekeeping troops socialised to understand themselves as 'warriors' who perpetrate sexual violence against civilians as an expression of this identity. However, it is relevant to ask how military service leads to these ultra-masculine behaviours. Returning to Whitworth, the author claims that soldiers are made – i.e. not born<sup>13</sup> –, and that the making of a military officer is aggressive and reinforces insecure elements of masculinity, promoting violence, misogyny, homophobia and racism.

In her studies, she found that those depreciating messages were delivered through the basic training and initiation exercises associated with most national militaries. The punishment for not succeeding in some activity is accompanied by insults such as "whore",

---

<sup>13</sup> This relates to Simone de Beauvoir's notorious quote "One is not born, but rather becomes a woman" in her book *The Second Sex* (1949). Whitworth explains that the aggressive nature of military men is socially constructed as well.

"faggot", "sissie" and even calling the soldier "you woman" (Whitworth 2004). These are crafted to work around gender anxiety, and the soldiers that cannot meet the standards of being "masculine" use the only tool they were provided to live up to the norms: violence.

The issue is surprisingly magnified around peacekeepers, as the officers are trained military men that do not get to practise militarism. Two of the three central pillars of peacekeeping are impartiality and the non-use of force (except in self-defence and defence of the mandate) (United Nations Peacekeeping 2022c). Therefore, the soldiers are trained inside a militarised masculinity but do not get to act on those principles of force and violence, which disrupts prevailing notions of military purpose and structure.

In this way, the soldiers-turned-peacekeepers are stuck in the middle of a military's legitimation crisis, which then translates into an individual crisis of masculinity (Kovath 2016; Lenander 2017; Lopes 2011). Hence, the confusion about the "warrior" vs. "peacekeeper" identities may help with the understanding of why some soldiers deployed on peace operations perpetrate acts of violence, as the majority are trained to fight and use violence as a tactic of war, including, in some cases, violence toward women (Simić 2009).

As discussed, violence is more present in certain areas than in others. When analysing the DRC, once again, the high rates can be attributed not only to the culture of the peacekeepers and the country, but also to the culture of the mission itself. If peacekeepers practise sexual violence to remind themselves that they are warriors during monitoring operations, the impact can be even higher in missions where violence is allowed.

As such, the Force Intervention Brigade (FIB) was established in 2013 as an offensive branch of MONUSCO. It was the first force allowed to perform offensive operations under the Organisation's scope, with the aim of *neutralising* rebel groups in the country, using *all necessary means* to reach that goal (Serra and Vitali 2020). Although heavily criticised, the

FIB is still ongoing and the access to weapons and clearance for the use of violence can be one of the reasons why the DRC is the country with more registered allegations of SEA.

Ultimately, the argument is that a soldier's willingness to sexually exploit women cannot be found in biological explanations. Instead, sexual exploitation of women is a form of legitimisation among soldiers because of militarised masculinity, meaning that soldiers constantly need affirmation of their identity from peers (Lopes 2011). Therefore, SEA is not about attraction, it is about power. In the realm of peacekeeping, it is about the sense of authority and superiority that comes from using the uniform (Hernandez 2020).

Thus, this understanding is what is lacking in the United Nations' policies. Rather than seeing SEA for what it is, the UN maintains a "boys will be boys" belief and figures that men have high sex drives and cannot control themselves (Lenander 2017). For that reason, the organisation tries to improve "recreational facilities" for soldiers to relax (Zeid 2005) but it is just making SEA to be a problem of boredom, not a problem of violence and masculinised military behaviour.

In addition to failing to understand the real causes of SEA inside the missions, the UN misunderstands gender relations once again and uses the participation of women in operations as a solution to all of their problems. According to the UN, female peacekeepers increase the likelihood of 'civilised' behaviour among staff and add legitimacy to missions (Security Council 2000).

The approach of affirming that women are needed in peacekeeping because they can be expected to behave better than their male counterparts or to influence their male colleagues to behave better (Fasulo 2009) tells the international society that men are not completely responsible for their actions and women must play a role in curtailing less desirable aggressive male tendencies, which they were not responsible for creating.

This problematic notion is, in part, responsible for unreasonable and failed approaches to dealing with acts of SEA during conflict. Only diverting the responsibility to women does not address the central issue and is a mediocre quick fix (Hernandez 2020). To truly understand the conditions in which peacekeeping occurs and design appropriate responses to allegations of SEA by UN personnel, the role of women cannot be marginalised or mythicised as a magical tool.

Again, not even in the military sphere, women are free from double standards and excessive burdens. Their role as peacekeepers is the same as the men's, however, they have increased responsibilities such as protecting the host population from their male peers and bolstering the UN's credibility for improving the missions' image (Baldwin and Johnson 2020). All of those unfair expectations come to women only because the UN refuses to place the responsibility on where it is: the men.

This perspective is present even in the WPS Agenda (S/RES n. 1325). Although a milestone for gender issues inside the United Nations, it acknowledges both the disproportionate impact of conflict on women and their crucial role in *resolving* it. In trying to transform international peace and security by challenging its gendered construction, the resolution painted women as both victims and agents of change, roles that appear difficult for any individual to reconcile together (Wright 2017).

Once again, the United Nations' refusal to see what is right in front of them leads to another mistake. While the organisation still sees women as pacifists and men as militaristic, it fails to recall that women have been in military settings during the twentieth century and continue to be present in the military in the twenty-first century (Eichler 2015). That means that women have been inside militarised societies for a long time, learning how they work and adapting to their patterns to survive and thrive.

In other words, the UN forgets that the military structures remain gendered, thus perpetuating their values for whoever is participating in them (Smith 2020). As such, the hypermasculine environment often found in male-majority units may mean that only women who are the least interested in working with or supporting other women seek to join such units (Pruitt 2016). Therefore, women tend to be absorbed into these settings rather than challenge them, making the women military officers not the greatest choice for fixing the issue of SEA.

As long as the United Nations keeps implying that women are made for addressing "feminist" agendas even when they are not gender experts, the real impact of the Zero Tolerance Policy or the WPS agenda will not be seen accordingly. While having a greater representation of women can aid in reducing SEA propensity, introducing policies that displace the entire burden of SEA onto the shoulders of one group is likely to have limited effectiveness in addressing the fundamental roots of the issues (Karim and Beardsley 2016).

In summary, this chapter argued that the problem of sexual violence in PKOs requires more than an approach of just adding women into the mix, and instead the social construction of both individuals and their countries' cultures should be considered. If so, there is a real possibility of change within the missions, as a culture – even one as strong and ancient as the military culture – can be changed and discarded.

Although Enloe (2014) points out that militarised masculinities are difficult to unlearn because only the military truly knows what goes into creating it, and it is the military that is most unwilling to reconstruct it, it is well known among feminist and gender scholars that masculinities and femininities are not fixed. Instead, they are always being produced and reproduced. Therefore, there is hope that all of those systematic values can be reconstructed.

That hope is needed especially because soldiers are a key component of peacekeeping missions, and that probably will not change. Soldiers are needed, as there are no other large



groups of people who could be deployed to conflict zones as quickly and legitimately (Lopes 2011). Thus, if peacekeeping operations are to defend women's security, there has to be a foundational transformation in the way many peacekeeping soldiers identify as militarised men.

The crucial dilemma is that none of the UN policies, including the ZTP, address the root problem of SEA. They all treat the consequences and symptoms because it is hard to look at the cause: the hypermasculine environment in which PKOs operate and in which the soldiers come from, and lack of accountability, in particular. The recommendation is that all future policies should address gender inequality, poverty and especially the peacekeepers' immunity as the key obstacles to achieving justice for victims of SEA.

## Conclusion

In summary, this study aimed to understand the processes for the creation of the United Nations Zero Tolerance Policy, which addresses the prevention and punishment of peacekeepers involved in cases of sexual exploitation and abuse. While working through that process, the legal frameworks surrounding the prosecutions of blue helmets were discussed, as well as trying to find explanations for the issue of why the abuse is a normalised practice during peacekeeping operations.

The results indicate that the central issue regarding punishment and correct prosecution is the current immunity that military peacekeepers possess. If the UN does not take a leadership role within the international community to change the current insufficient mechanisms, the ZTP will keep allowing for the impunity of perpetrators despite being almost 20 years in the making.

Further findings also show that any policy, but specially the ZTP, needs to tackle the underlying causes of SEA, and not only try to remediate the action after it has already happened. This research argued that militarised masculinity culture, as well as the culture of all states participating in the mission – the troop-contributing country and the host country – contribute to the willingness of peacekeepers to commit sexual violence.

One of the most surprising discoveries during the writing process was the issues around the reliability of the UN data, which compromises the analysis of the number of recorded cases. It was presented how the actual procedure is clouded and the definitions keep changing, making it difficult to account for the truthiness of the figures. However, the most significant conclusion regarding the data is how these errors seem to have passed unnoticed by the media, other nations and international organisations, which blindly consume the evidence provided without questioning the explicit conflict of interest.

Nevertheless, this paper recommended several possibilities for reforms and changes that can be made within the United Nations with the support of member states to prevent SEA cases. Firstly, there is the chance of using international courts such as the ICC or pleading for the creation of a legal framework through the UNSC. Additionally, an easier and more effective way would be to review and modify the current binding documents already in place, such as the SOFA and the MoU, to restrict the immunities granted to military members.

Ultimately, there is a need for a transnational law and rights-based approach to enable international cooperation and standards. These standards must incorporate the modern ideas of SEA as a form of gendered harm, recognising the complex range of vulnerabilities of those who are entitled to protection from harm during times of conflict.

Yet, this research shines a light on how the UN ignores such options and searches for a quick fix that integrates with their own Women Peace and Security agenda: adding more women into PKOs, hoping that they will prevent SEA from happening. Therefore, there is a need for a more comprehensive understanding of gender and socialisation and for the UN to step up and stop using women to "fix" problems they have not created.

Further research is needed to determine more underlying causes of SEA, and I believe that a better approach would be to have the opportunity to be *in loco* and interview local communities and peacekeepers directly. As well as the necessity of looking deeper into the problem of data collection and sharing by the United Nations, another concern that might be best investigated inside a mission.

Finally, this work will make future studies easier as it has already synthesised the basic understandings of current frameworks necessary to conduct more in-depth projects correctly. Furthermore, it shines a light on a forgotten problem by scholars, as most studies focus on the effectiveness of PKOs, but not on the particularities that surround them, especially regarding sexual abuse and exploitation.

## References

- Anderson, Letitia. 2010. "Politics by Other Means: When does Sexual Violence Threaten International Peace and Security?". *International Peacekeeping* 17, no. 2 (2010): 244-260. doi: 10.1080/13533311003625134.
- Annan, Kofi. 2003. *Secretary-General's Bulletin: Special measures for protection from sexual exploitation and sexual abuse*. United Nations Secretariat (ST/SGB/2003/13).
- Baldwin, Gretchen and Dustin Johnson. 2020. "Women in Peacekeeping: Signs of Change at the United Nations?". *IPI Global Observatory*. 17 September.  
<https://theglobalobservatory.org/2020/09/women-in-peacekeeping-signs-of-change-at-united-nations/>.
- Balzacq, Thierry. 2005. The Three Faces of Securitization: Political Agency, Audience and Context. *European Journal of International Relations*, 11 no. 2 (2005): 171–201.  
[doi:10.1177/1354066105052960](https://doi.org/10.1177/1354066105052960).
- Banbury, Anthony. 2016. "I Love the U.N., but It Is Failing." *The New York Times*. March 18, 2016.  
<https://www.nytimes.com/2016/03/20/opinion/sunday/i-love-the-un-but-it-is-failing.html>.
- Beber, Bernd, Michael J. Gilligan, Jenny Guardado, and Sabrina Karim. 2016. "Peacekeeping, Compliance with International Norms, and Transactional Sex in Monrovia, Liberia." *International Organization* 71, no. 1 (2016): 1-30.  
[doi:10.1017/s0020818316000242](https://doi.org/10.1017/s0020818316000242).
- Burke, Róisín, and Marco Odello. 2016. "Between immunity and impunity: peacekeeping and sexual abuses and violence." *The International Journal of Human Rights* 20, no. 6 (2016): 839-853. doi: 10.1080/13642987.2016.1176810.
- Coen, Susie. 2018. "United Nations 'failed the sex abuse victims of its own peacekeepers' after more than 1,700 allegations in 15 years". *Daily Mail UK*. 30 July.  
<https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-6005135/amp/United-Nations-failed-sex-abuse-victims-peacekeepers.html>.
- Cold-Ravnkilde, Signe Marie, and Thomas Mandrup. 2017. "SEXUAL EXPLOITATION AND ABUSE IN THE DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF CONGO." *Danish Institute for International Studies*, 2017. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/resrep13248>.
- Collins, Sam, director. 2018. *Frontline: UN Sex Abuse Scandal*. PBS. 53:17.  
<https://www.pbs.org/wgbh/frontline/film/un-sex-abuse-scandal/>.
- Dahrendorf, Nicola. 2006. *Sexual Exploitation and Abuse: Lessons Learned Study – Addressing Sexual Exploitation and Abuse in MONUC*. United Nations Department for Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO), 2016.
- Dixon, Martin and Robert McCorquodale. 2003. *Cases and Materials on International Law*. Oxford University Press.

- Eichler, Maya. 2015. *Gender and Private Security in Global Politics*. Oxford Scholarship.
- Einbinder, Nicole. 2018. "French Police to Investigate New Abuse Claims Against Former UN Peacekeeper". *Frontline*. 24 July.  
<https://www.pbs.org/wgbh/frontline/article/french-police-to-investigate-new-abuse-claims-against-former-un-peacekeeper/>
- Einbinder, Nicole. 2018. "French Police to Investigate New Abuse Claims Against Former UN Peacekeeper". *Frontline*. 24 July.  
<https://www.pbs.org/wgbh/frontline/article/french-police-to-investigate-new-abuse-claims-against-former-un-peacekeeper/>
- Enloe, Cynthia. 2014. *Bananas, Beaches, and Bases: Making Feminist Sense of International Politics*. 2. ed. University of California Press.
- Fasulo, Linda. 2009. "Peace Operations". In: *An Insider's Guide to the UN*. Yale University Press.
- General Assembly. 2015. *Special measures for protection from sexual exploitation and sexual abuse*. Resolution 69/779.
- General Assembly. 2016. *Special measures for protection from sexual exploitation and sexual abuse*. Resolution 70/729.
- Gehre, Thiago. 2008. A Política Externa Brasileira durante os governos militares: ideias, práticas e imagens (1964-1984). *Textos e Debates* 15, (2008): 112-125..
- Grady, Kate. 2016. "Sex, Statistics, Peacekeepers and Power: UN Data on Sexual Exploitation and Abuse and the Quest for Legal Reform." *The Modern Law Review* 79, no. 6 (2016): 931-960. doi:10.1111/1468-2230.12225.
- Guterres, Antonio. 2017. *Special measures for protection from sexual exploitation and sexual abuse: a new approach*. United Nations General Assembly (A/71/818).
- Hernandez, Brianna Nicole. 2020. "Sexual Abuse in UN Peacekeeping: The Problem of Viewing Women as a 'Quick Fix'". *E-IR*. 20 February.  
<https://www.e-ir.info/2020/02/20/sexual-abuse-in-un-peacekeeping-the-problem-of-viewing-women-as-a-quick-fix/>.
- Ingelaere, Bert and Nina Wilén. 2017. "War-torn Congo has been called the 'rape capital of the world.' Here is how fighters think about sexual violence." *The Washington Post*. August 31, 2017.  
<https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/monkey-cage/wp/2017/08/28/what-do-rebels-think-about-sexual-violence-in-congo-we-asked-them/>.
- Kanetake, Machiko. 2010. "Whose Zero Tolerance Counts? Reassessing a Zero Tolerance Policy against Sexual Exploitation and Abuse by UN Peacekeepers." *International Peacekeeping* 17, no.2 (2010): 200-214. doi: 10.1080/13533311003625092.

- Karim, Sabrina and Kyle Beardsley. 2016. "Explaining sexual exploitation and abuse in peacekeeping missions". *Journal of Peace Research* 53, no. 1 (2016): 100–115. [doi:10.1177/0022343315615506](https://doi.org/10.1177/0022343315615506).
- Kovatch, Bonnie. 2016. "Sexual Exploitation and Abuse in UN Peacekeeping Missions: A Case Study of MONUC and MONUSCO." *The Journal of the Middle East and Africa* 7, no. 2 (2016): 157-174. doi:10.1080/21520844.2016.1192978.
- Lenander, Hanna. 2017. "Rape, the masculine thing to do? A comparative study of rape in DRC by the DRC military and the peacekeeping force". Bachelor's Thesis. Lund University.
- Lopes, Hayley. 2011. "Militarized Masculinity in Peacekeeping Operations: An Obstacle to Gender Mainstreaming". *Peacebuild*, (2011) 1-19.
- Martin, Sarah. 2005. "Must Boys be Boys? Ending Sexual Exploitation and Abuse in UN Peacekeeping Missions". Refugees International, 2005.
- Maxwell, Caitlin. 2010. Moving beyond rape as a "weapon": an exploration of militarised masculinity and its consequences. *Canadian Woman Studies* 28 no.1, 108-120.
- Meger, Sara. 2021. "Sexual Violence in times of war and peace." In *Routledge Handbook of Feminist Peace Research*, edited by Tarja Väyrynen, 115-125. Routledge.
- Moncrief, Stephen. 2017. "Military Socialization, Disciplinary Culture, and Sexual Violence in UN Peacekeeping Operations." *Journal of Peace Research* 54, no. 5 (2017): 715-730. doi:10.1177/0022343317716784.
- Moncrief, Stephen. 2017. "Military socialization, disciplinary culture, and sexual violence in UN peacekeeping operations". *Journal of Peace Research* 54, no. 5 (2017): 715–730. [doi:10.1177/0022343317716784](https://doi.org/10.1177/0022343317716784).
- Morene, Benoît. 2017. "No Charges in Sexual Abuse Case Involving French Peacekeepers". *The New York Times*. 6 January. <https://www.nytimes.com/2017/01/06/world/africa/french-peacekeepers-un-sexual-abuse-case-central-african-republic.html>.
- Navai, Ramita. 2018. "I don't know how many children I raped while working for the UN". *The Sunday Times*. 29 July. <https://www.thetimes.co.uk/article/i-dont-know-how-many-children-i-raped-while-working-for-the-un-c99qx5mzn>.
- Ndulo, Muna. 2009. "The United Nations Responses to the Sexual Abuse and Exploitation of Women and Girls by Peacekeepers During Peacekeeping Missions". *Cornell Law Faculty Publications*. 2009. Paper 59.
- Nguyen, Anh. 2021. "Haitian Court Delivers Landmark "Petit MINUSTAH" Decision: New Light Shed On Decades Of UN Peacekeeper Sexual Abuse." Human Rights Pulse. May 5, 2021. <https://www.humanrightspulse.com/mastercontentblog/haitian-court-delivers-landmar>

[k-petit-minustah-decision-new-light-shed-on-decades-of-un-peacekeeper-sexual-abuse](#).

- Nicholls, Tracey. 2021. *Dismantling Rape Culture: The Peacebuilding Power of 'Me Too'*. Routledge.
- Novick, Natalie. 2012. "When those meant to keep the peace commit sexualized violence". *Women's Media Center*. 25 May. <https://womensmediacenter.com/women-under-siege/when-those-meant-to-keep-the-peace-commit-sexualized-violence>.
- O'Brien, Melanie. 2011. Sexual Exploitation and Beyond: Using the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court to Prosecute UN Peacekeepers for Gender-based Crimes. *International Criminal Law Review* 11. (2011): 803-827. [doi:10.1163/157181211X587661](https://doi.org/10.1163/157181211X587661).
- O'Brien, Melanie. 2018. *Criminalising Peacekeepers: Modernising National Approaches to Sexual Exploitation and Abuse*. Palgrave Macmillan.
- Palermo, Tia, and Amber Peterman. 2011. "Undercounting, Overcounting and the Longevity of Flawed Estimates: Statistics on Sexual Violence in Conflict." *Bulletin of the World Health Organization* 89, no 12 (2011): 924-25. [doi:10.2471/blt.11.089888](https://doi.org/10.2471/blt.11.089888).
- Pruitt, Lesley J. 2016. "Increasing Women's Participation in Peace and Security". In: *The Women in Blue Helmets: Gender, Policing, and the UNs First All-female Peacekeeping Unit*. Oakland: University of California Press.
- Quéniwet, Noëlle. 2007. "The Dissonance between the United Nations Zero-Tolerance Policy and the Criminalisation of Sexual Offences on the International Level." *International Criminal Law Review* 7, no 4 (2007): 657–76. [doi:10.1163/156753607x241256](https://doi.org/10.1163/156753607x241256).
- Report of the Secretary-General. 1990. *Model status-of-forces agreement for peace-keeping operations* (A/45/594).
- Report of the Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations and its Working Group. 2007. *Revised draft model memorandum of understanding* (A/61/19).
- Security Council. 2000. *Resolution 1325 (2000)*. S/RES/1325 (2000).
- Serra, Lucas and Ana Luisa Vitali. 2020. "Inovações na imposição da paz: Uma discussão sobre perspectivas da Brigada de Intervenção na MONUSCO". *Revista de Estudos Internacionais*, 11, no. 1 (2020): 80-95.
- Simić, Olivera. 2010. "Does the Presence of Women Really Matter? Towards Combating Male Sexual Violence in Peacekeeping Operations". *International Peacekeeping* 17, no. 2 (2010): 188–199. [doi:10.1080/13533311003625084](https://doi.org/10.1080/13533311003625084).
- Simić, Olivera. 2009. "Who Should be a Peacekeeper?". *Peace Review* 21, no. 3 (2009): 395–402. [doi:10.1080/10402650903099492](https://doi.org/10.1080/10402650903099492).

- Smith, Sarah. 2020. *Gendering Peace: UN Peacebuilding In Timor-Leste*. Routledge.
- United Nations. 2022a. "Data: Sexual Exploitation and Abuse." Conduct in UN Field Missions. <https://conduct.unmissions.org/sea-data-introduction>.
- United Nations. 2022b. "Timeline on conduct and discipline." Conduct in UN Field Missions. <https://conduct.unmissions.org/timeline>.
- United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). 2020. Latest Human Development Index Ranking. <https://hdr.undp.org/en/content/latest-human-development-index-ranking>
- United Nations Peacekeeping. 2022a. "Standards of conduct." United Nations Peacekeeping. <https://peacekeeping.un.org/en/standards-of-conduct>.
- United Nations Peacekeeping. 2022b. "Troop and police contributors." United Nations Peacekeeping. <https://peacekeeping.un.org/en/troop-and-police-contributors>.
- United Nations Peacekeeping. 2022c. "What is peacekeeping?" United Nations Peacekeeping. <https://peacekeeping.un.org/en/what-is-peacekeeping>.
- Väyrynen, Tarja et al. 2021. *Routledge Handbook of Feminist Peace Research*. Routledge.
- Vila, Rafael. 2014. O Paradoxo da Macrosegurização: Quando a Guerra ao Terror não Securiza Outras “Guerras” na América do Sul. *Contexto Internacional*, 36 no. 2. <https://doi.org/10.1590/S0102-85292014000200002>
- Whitworth, S. 2004. *Men, Militarism & UN Peacekeeping: A Gendered Analysis*. Boulder, Colorado: Lynne Rienner Publishers Inc.
- Wills, Siobhán. 2013. "Continuing Impunity of Peacekeepers: The Need For a Convention". *Journal of International Humanitarian Legal Studies* 4, no 1 (2013): 47-80.
- World Population Review. 2022. "Countries Where Prostitution is Legal 2022". Accessed March 18, 2022, <https://worldpopulationreview.com/country-rankings/countries-where-prostitution-is-legal>.
- Williams, Paul D. 2016. *War and Conflict in Africa*. 2nd edition, Polity.
- Wright, Katharine. 2017. "Gender Matters: Mainstreaming Women, Peace and Security at NATO". *E-IR*. 17 November. <https://www.e-ir.info/2017/11/17/gender-matters-mainstreaming-women-peace-and-security-at-nato/>
- Zakrisson, Fanny. 2015. "Addressing impunity through State Accountability? A study on responsibility for human rights violations committed by UN peacekeepers". Graduate Thesis. Lund University.



Zeid, Zeid Ra'ad. 2005. *A comprehensive strategy to eliminate future sexual exploitation and abuse in United Nations peacekeeping operations*. United Nations General Assembly (A/59/10).