**ASSESSING THE PERFORMANCE OF UNITED NATIONS PEACEKEEPING IN AFRICA: THE CASE OF UN MISSION IN SOUTH SUDAN (UNMISS)**

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**A RESEARCH PROJECT SUBMITTED TO THE DEPARTMENT OF DIPLOMACY AND INTERNATIONAL STUDIES IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE AWARD OF POST GRADUATE DIPLOMA IN STRATEGIC STUDIES FROM THE UNIVERSITY OF NAIROBI**

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# DECLARATION

I declare that this project paper is my original work and hasn't been presented for an award at any institution.

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# LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

**AU**             African Union

**AUPSC**          AU Peace and Security Council

**GRSS**            Government of the Republic of South Sudan

**OAU**            Organization of African Union

**PKOs**           Peace Keeping Operations

**PoC**            Protection of Civilians

**SOFA**            Status of Forces Agreement

**SPLA/M**          Sudan People's Liberation Army/Movement

**SPSG**            Special Representative of the Secretary-General

**UNMIS**           United Nations Mission in Sudan

# ABSTRACT

This study largely analyses United Nations peacekeeping missions in Africa with UNMISS as a case study. It examined the opportunities and challenges facing UN operations in Africa, discussed the prospects for success, and finally concluded with a raft of recommendations to make UN peacekeeping in the region more effective. The study also set out two hypotheses; firstly, that peacekeeping missions in Africa face numerous challenges and prospects for success, and secondly, that the UN Peacekeeping in South Sudan, as are other missions elsewhere in Africa, produce mixed results. The study which relied heavily on secondary sources of data and the use of a thematic approach to present the information was set within the conceptual framework for the attainment of sustainable outcomes in peacekeeping missions and grounded on the critical theory by Max Horkheimer. The study established that Africa as a continent is engulfed in conflicts that necessitate periodic UN interventions. However, despite the concentration of UN missions in Africa, not much has been achieved in terms of bringing long-lasting peace as conflict continues around the continent. In the mission in South Sudan, the study found out that since its inception in 2011, UNMISS has faced criticism regarding its response to attacks on civilians. UNMISS, according to the findings of the study, has suffered fundamental flaws and challenges that have affected its effectiveness. Its challenges stem from a combination of internal UN-related factors as well as external factors arising particularly from the operational environment and from those involved in the conflict in South Sudan. The study further found that in spite of the challenges facing UNMISS, the study established that recent events present many opportunities and prospects for successful UNMISS operations in South Sudan. Lastly, the study has given several recommendations to address the challenges facing UNMISS and other UN missions in similar cases that include; the need for UNMISS to receive increased backing from the UNSC's permanent members and the need for increased cooperation between the local South Sudanese population and the peacekeepers. Another recommendation relates to the governments of neighbouring countries increasing their troop, diplomatic, and resource assistance to the countries affected by conflict in the region to reduce the politics and self-interests of European countries that often hinder effective peacekeeping in Africa.

**CHAPTER ONE**

**GENERAL INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY**

## 1.1 Introduction and Background to the Study

Internationally, peacekeeping operations form part of the most significant mechanisms for contemporary conflict resolution. However, the effectiveness of various international organizations, like the UN, has become the subject of debate and conjecture in both academic and policy communities.[1] In response, a number of mechanisms have been formulated with the aim of improving the capacity for these organizations' performance.

Regionally, the United Nations (UN) has for the last fifty years been proactively involved in Africa's insecurity affairs, by ensuring the attainment of security and brokering peace in interstate and sectarian conflicts. This is informed by the fact that since getting independence, most African states have experienced repeated conflicts, sectarianism, and religious animosity.[2] According to De Coning et al., due to rampant conflicts in the continent, over 40% of UN peacekeeping missions are situated in Africa. Of these, though, one of the most complex peace operations is the United Nations Mission in South Sudan (herein, UNMISS).[3]

UNMISS was founded in 2011 with the goal of consolidating security and peace as the world prepared for the formation of the South Sudan government. The mission, at this point, focused on firming up the capacity of the then-new government of South Sudan.[4] However, on December 15, 2013, conflict erupted in Juba between Salvar Kiir's and Riek Machar's-allied troops. The

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[1] Hultman, Lisa, Jacob Kathman, and Megan Shannon. "Beyond keeping peace: United Nations effectiveness in the midst of fighting." American Political Science Review 108, no. 4 (2014): 737-753.

[2] Mpanza, Siphesihle "UN Peacekeeping Missions in Africa, a Conundrum or Opportunity: A Case of the D.R. Congo, South Sudan and the Central African Republic." African Renaissance (1744-2532) 16, no. 4 (2019).

[3] De Coning, Cedric, and Mateja Peter. United Nations peace operations in a changing global order. Springer, 2019.

[4] UNMISS, "Background of UNMISS," UN Accessed 3rd March 2022 at: https://unmiss.unmissions.org/background.

unprecedented event which completely contradicted the vision of John Garang – the founder of South Sudan – necessitated a fresh deployment of peacekeepers. The rapid spread of the conflict fueled by political, ideological, and ethnic differences prompted the UN to issue fresh mandates to UNMISS and increase its capacity. The new mandate entrusted UNMISS with the responsibility of protecting conflict-affected civilians by temporarily sheltering them in UN compounds.[5] UNMISS at the time had to repurpose its activities from classical peace-and-state-building to humanitarian assistance, monitoring of human rights, and civilian protection.[6]

Subsequently, UNMISS became prominent as a source of peace for the South Sudanese population. However, reports indicate that humanitarian assistance is a problem, and the majority of the people are not well protected, despite the enforcement of the new UNMISS mandate.[7] The reports further reveal that since the beginning of the conflict, numerous violations of human rights have occurred such as torture, murder, rape, forced resettlements, and undue detention of civilians. This unfolding has raised questions regarding the significance of UNMISS. It is on the basis of this background that this research sought to assess the performance of UNMISS as a case study of UN peacekeeping operations in Africa.

## 1.2 Statement of the Research Problem

Conflicts have been the most prevalent mode of political competition in South Sudan long before the country became independent in 2011. Thus, the view of the country as a stable, legitimate, and single political unit has long been subjected to question in studies on the new country. However, the emergence of South Sudan bred agendas and hope for change. The hope was expressed by the

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[5] Francis, Deng" Was of Visions: Conflict of Identities in the Sudan," Brookings Institute Press, 2011, p.9
[6] Charles T. Hunt and Malan, Mark. "Between a Rock and a Hard Place: The UN and the Protection of Civilians in South Sudan." (2014).
[7] UNITAR, "Protection of Civilians in Peace Operations,"UNITAR, 2016, P.15

politicians in the new government formed by the Sudan People's Liberation Movement (SPLM) and went a long way to influence international support and intervention. The shared belief was that strengthening the legitimacy and capacity of the new state was significant for the development and peace in South Sudan. It was in this spirit that UNMISS was established to help build infrastructure for the new government. This hope, however, faded fast as Dec 15th, 2013 saw the beginning of a civil war that still rages on to date. UNMISS was once again called in though this time round, its mandate shifted from supporting the state to protecting civilians under threat.

Although the mission was formulated and mandated to protect civilian populations, things have not always gone as expected. The mandate has, therefore, been altered to allow UNMISS to address the emerging situations in the South Sudan conflict, in the process adopting a more radical approach. However, this strategy has not translated into an effective UNMISS protection strategy leading to constant criticisms against UNMISS' effectiveness. Though no single element or factor of the peacekeeping structure is seen as responsible for the failure of the mission, it is important to draw lessons from past UNMISS mistakes and develop planned responses that address the weaknesses present in the mission.

Despite the existing concerns regarding the effectiveness of UNMISS, there is very little research done to assess the performance of the mission. It is because of this insufficiency in research on UNMISS that this study is developed. The study sought to assess the performance of UNMISS with a focus on challenges and opportunities available for improved results.

**1.3 Objectives of the Study**

The general aim of the study is to assess the performance of United Nations Peacekeeping in Africa: The specific objectives of the study include:

1.3.1    To assess the performance of United Nations peacekeeping in Africa.

1.3.2    To examine the performance of UNMISS.

1.3.3    To analyze the challenges and opportunities for the UNMISS.

**1.4 Research Questions**

This study is guided by the following key questions:

1.4.1    How has the United Nations performed in peacekeeping operations in Africa?

1.4.2    What are the achievements and failures of the UNMISS?

1.4.3    What are the challenges and opportunities for the UNMISS?

**1.5 Study Hypotheses**

This research is based on the following academic hypotheses:

1.5.1 Conditions within the UN and in Africa pose numerous challenges to the success of UN peacekeeping missions in the continent.

1.5.2 Peace and stability in South Sudan have been realized as a result of UN Peacekeeping.

**1.6 Significance and Justification of the Research**

This study has both policy and academic justifications.

**1.6.1 Academic Justification**

Africa has for many decades been encountering challenges, particularly in peace and security. The region is characterized by political instabilities and civil wars leading to the deaths of millions of people. In regard to increased intrastate conflicts, the UN has expanded its scope of peacekeeping in the continent to cover the emerging conflict dynamics. For instance, intra-state conflicts in South Sudan have prompted the UN to participate in peace operations through the deployment of the UNMISS mission.

However, though acknowledged as a strong pillar in the protection of civilians in the country, UNMISS has faced constant criticism, especially with the increased violation of human rights in South Sudan. Despite the existence of several works of literature on UNMISS activities, there is very little literature specifically focusing on the performance of the mission. This study set forth to bridge this gap by assessing the performance of UNMISS with a focus on the challenges it is facing and opportunities available for improving its operations. By so doing, the study hoped to generate knowledge to fill the gaps in the existing literature on the effectiveness of UN missions in Africa in general and South Sudan in particular.

**1.6.2 Policy Justification**

Other than its academic significance, the findings of the study have the potential to have policy formulation importance. The knowledge generated will be valuable to policymakers in making objective and sound decisions leading to tangible policies regarding peacekeeping in Africa. Moreover, the findings of the research project will guide policymakers in making decisions and

direction on what type of mechanisms to be adopted by UNMISS to reduce cases of violation of human rights in South Sudan.

## 1.7 Literature Review

This study looks at the performance of UNMISS missions in Africa with a focus on UNMISS between 2011 and 2020. This section reviews both theoretical and conceptual literature on UN peacekeeping activities in general, and in Africa in particular.

### 1.7.1 Peacekeeping: Theoretical Review

This section reviews some of the theories that explain the performance of United Nations peacekeeping missions broadly. Although the literature on peacekeeping has increased prominently, it falls short of genuine theory to analyze peacekeeping. The debate on theoretical perspectives is somehow new with the existing literature on peacekeeping still majorly focused on policy-related and practical implementation issues. Until the late 1990s, almost all scholars viewed peacekeeping as a type of conflict management.[8] The literature at the time failed to address several issues such as the definitional and classification problems of peacekeeping, the dilemmas that peacekeeping operations (PKOs) face, the tools and concepts that peacekeepers require, and the most effective time and way to use them. This study hopes to address this gap by looking at key concepts surrounding peacekeeping operations in general and in particular cases.  The key theory that stands out is the Critical Theory whose proponent is Max Horkheimer. According to Pugh Michael[9], this philosophical approach tries to explain the foundation of social domination. The theory supports the argument that peace support operations have often been used to sustain a

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[8] Fetherston, Betts. "Putting the Peace Back into Peacekeeping: Theory Must Inform Practice." International Peacekeeping 1, no. 1 (1994): 3-29.
[9] Pugh, Michael. "Peacekeeping and critical theory." International peacekeeping 11, no. 1 (2004): 39-58.

certain international order – both economically and politically; keeping unstable or rich areas under the control of powerful states.

Several authors tried to explain the criterion for successful PKOs in the past, though up to the end of the 1990s, there was little agreement among authors on the subject. Partly, the disagreement came from a lack of consensus on the goals that peacekeepers ought to meet and the major role of international peacekeepers in global politics.[10] This became more evident in the 1990s when so much critique was raised regarding the relevance and usefulness of this conflict management approach to both the practice and study of PKOs in the post-Cold War era.[11]

The growth of mid-range theories has offered clarity on some of the issues relating to PKOs that had earlier raised disagreements. While these theories do not provide clear-cut answers to part of the modern complex debates on the role and nature of international peacekeeping, they have firmly placed peacekeeping in the traditions of peace studies, conflict management, and international relations thereby making categorization, identity, and definitional issues easier to make.[12]

Regarding the involvement of the UN in peacekeeping, Harcsh Ernest traces the earliest UN involvement in PKO to the 1948 Middle East crisis. The aim of this operation was to observe and maintain a ceasefire between Lebanon and Syria and Israel during the 1948 war. Since then, UN peacekeeping has been active globally.[13]According to Richard and Emily, the goal of deploying peace-keeping forces in areas of conflict, or post-conflict is to improve peace processes. The authors observe that where international peacekeepers are involved in maintaining ceasefires

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[10] Fetherston, Anne Betts, and Carolyn Nordstrom. "Overcoming habitus in conflict management: UN peacekeeping and war zone ethnography." Peace & Change 20, no. 1 (1995): 94-119.
[11]Hatto Ronald. "United Nations Peacekeeping Theory and Practice." Peace Research 32, no. 2 (2013): 181-196.
[12]Peterson, Sandra J., and Timothy S. Bredow, eds. Middle range theories: Application to nursing research. Lippincott Williams & Wilkins, 2009.
[13]*Harsch*, Ernest. April 2004. "The World Reflects on Rwanda Genocide". United Nations.
Retrieved May 29, 2011.http;//www.un.or.ecosocde/genifo/afrec/newrels//Rwanda.htm

among the conflicting parties, the probability of arriving at a successful peace agreement increases. However, in spite of the sound intentions and good performance record by peace-keeping operations, peace-keeping forces have in the past been accused of crimes like sexual abuses, crimes against women and children, and child prostitution.[14]

Discussing the challenges and failures of PKOs Fortna Virginia [15]argues that Chapter VI and VII operations don't have an effect on stopping conflicts. She establishes the methods by which peacekeeping can reduce violence as economic and political, and are, therefore, not part of military capacity. According to her, economic and political leverages may be inadequate for deterring actors from involving in conflict, particularly when leaders lack control of their subjects. On the other hand, the methods of leverage work at the macro or institutional level and are independent of military capability.[16]

Fortna adds that peacekeeping could play a proactive role to impact commitment, instead of relying on passive monitoring compliance, including enforcing ceasefires, peace agreements, or reassuring actors. Both reassurance and enforcement need more proactive and engagement stances. Thus, they more than not rely on the operation's military capability. Enforcement operations aren't consent-based, which implies that one party must be forced to not use violence on others. Exerting effect needs a credible, clear, and visible threat to employ force. Moreover, reassurance is often linked to security guarantees provided by the UN, whose credibility is based on the presence of its military. Therefore, both reassurance and enforcement mechanisms depend on higher pedigrees of

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[14] Richard. J., & Emily. H. 2014. Human Rights Violations by Peacekeeping Forces in Somalia. Human Rights Brief, Volume 21 | Issue 2:2-11

[15] Fortna, Virginia Page. Does peacekeeping work? Princeton University Press, 2008.

[16] Ibid

force than other mechanisms. This literature provides a background on peacekeeping on which this study is based.[17]

**1.7.2 UN Peace-Keeping Operations in Africa**

In 1960, UN Police were deployed in Africa for the first time in the DRC during the crises that befell the country following its attainment of independence. Jeremy Sarkin, argues that since then, over 160 million people have been affected by civil wars in Africa while 3 million people died in the course of the violence. Sarkin observes that about half of the 32 intra-state violent conflicts that have taken place globally since 2004 have occurred in Africa. During civil wars, children bear the brunt of the violence as they are often used as soldiers, killed or wounded. To reduce the effect of conflicts in Africa, various steps have been adopted by stakeholders. These include the deployment of peacekeeping forces in the conflict zones.[18] The reviewed authors highlight the basis of intervention in civil conflicts in Africa. It is on this basis of humanitarian intervention discussed by these authors that UNMISS was formulated. However, there is a need to assess the performance of UNMISS further.

Adekeye Adebajo observes that about 40 percent of all UN peacekeeping operations have occurred in Africa. He adds that the most recent UN operation in DRC which began in early 2000 is the biggest and most expensive. The operation involved over 20,000 troops and police components. The author reiterates that despite the concentration of UN missions in the continent, they have not been successful in bringing peace. He observes that operations in Africa can be successful if a number of conditions are met. The first crucial requirement for success is backing by permanent

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[17] Ibid.
[18] Sarkin, Jeremy, 2009. "The Role of the United Nations, the African Union and Africa's Sub-Regional Organizations in Dealing with Africa's Human Rights Problems: Connecting Humanitarian Intervention and the Responsibility to Protect". Journal of African Studies Vol. 53, No. 1, pp. 1-33.

members of the UNSC as this increases the chance of peace-keeping operations to secure financial resources and diplomatic support. Secondly, the peacekeepers working directly with local populations must cooperate with local belligerent groups so as to neutralize likely spoilers. Lastly, neighbouring states and regional hegemons could increase the probability of success through the provision of diplomatic, military, and police aid to peace-keeping efforts. However, the three conditions hardly exist together leading to the failure of most UN missions in Africa.[19] Has this been the case in South Sudan? This study will assess this.

Chiyuki Aoi adds that peace operations in Africa have more negatives than positives. They can lead to increased corruption and criminal acts like drug trafficking, distort the economy of affected nations, increase acts of sexual abuse of women, and children, and leads to widespread HIV/AIDS. Aoi argues that every intervention effort in a complex system like a human society is bound to have more than one effect. Any effort to create bring change to a system leads to reactions in many ways. A number of the reactions may be intended while others are not.[20]

### 1.7.3 Appraisal of the UN Peace-Keeping Missions Globally

The UN was established in 1945 to serve as an international organization with objectives such as the prevention of war and the maintenance of peace. However, United Nations has been unable to fulfill its peace-keeping mandates often times throughout history. Throughout the globe, hundreds of thousands of people are displaced and/or killed yearly despite the existence of the UN. As from

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[19]Adebajo, Adekeye, 2012."UN Peacekeeping in Africa: From the Suez Crisis to the Sudan Conflicts.".Journal of Foreign Affairs Vol. 91, No. 3, p. 194.
[20]Chiyuki, Aoi, Cedric, Coning.,& Ramesh T 2007. "Unintended Consequences, Complex Peace Operations and Peace-building systems."International law, International Relations, Peace Studies, Political science and Security studies; UN University Press, pp. 1-12

the mid of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, many wars have occurred in the presence of the UN. Among the most disturbing indictments of the United Nation's ineffectiveness include:

Cambodian conflict (1975-1979): Here, following the termination of the Vietnam-US war and civil war in Cambodia in 1975, the Khmer Rouge government took power in Cambodia converting the country into a socialist state, following the ultra-Maoism policy. The regime conducted genocide for four years starting 1975 to 1979, in which over two million local people were killed. The other case is the Somali civil war that still goes on. Since the overthrow of SiadBarre in 1991, the civil war that began then has continued between different opposing clans in the state. The United Nations peacekeeping mission in Somalia, UNOSOM, established in 1992 has failed due to a lack of a stable government and repetitive attacks on UN personnel.[21]

The other case is the Rwandan civil war of 1994. In early 1994, the then Hutu-led government killed ten UN peacekeepers in order to stop international intervention and proceeded to kill over eight hundred Tutsi and Hutu moderates. In this instance, as was the case in Yugoslavia and Somalia in the early 1990s, UN peacekeeping was found wanting as UN peace keepers were withdrawn and perpetrators were given room to freely kill innocent people unchallenged.[22]

Those defending the UN's effectiveness have argued that UN peacekeeping operations take place in the most difficult and dangerous conflict environments around the globe. As such, success is never guaranteed. The argument is that United Nations peacekeeping has made a big difference in regions with on-going or recently complete missions such as Sierra Leone, Burundi, Côte d'Ivoire, Timor-Leste, Liberia, Haiti, and Kosovo. The view is that by offering basic guarantees for security and responding to conflict situations, the UN missions have aided political transitions and

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[21]Sarkin, Jeremy, 2009. "The Role of the United Nations…" Op cit.
[22] www.un/unpeacekeeping/globalperception.1529/098pvc/vcrq/pdf. Accessed 12.04.2022.

buttressed fragile state institutions. As such, the missions have supported countries in closing the chapter of crises and opened a way to development, even though many peacebuilding challenges still remain.[23] This literature has highlighted UN performances around the globe. However, South Sudan as a case remains unexplored. This study sought to address this.

## 1.8 Conceptual Framework

Several scholars in the field of peace keeping have put forward a number of frameworks that can be used in explaining the concept of peacekeeping operations in Africa and the globe at large. Among these is Virginia Fortna who has developed the conceptual framework focusing on the attainment of sustainable outcomes in peacekeeping missions.[24] The major question that Fortna attempts to answer in her perspective revolves around how peacekeeping processes can achieve the performance expected of a peacekeeping mission based on the stipulated mandates.

Peacekeepers, according to this framework, can attain practical positive outcomes by employing four major steps that include the following: i) Removing the fear and uncertainties that stimulate the taking up of arms by parleying for a ceasefire; ii) Ensuring the conflicting parties understand the significance of peace by demonstrating how expensive war can be; iii) Regulating the actions of rogue groups that can easily spark fighting after armistice is reached; and iv) controlling the political actions of the dominant side, often the incumbent government, which can readily lead to further fighting by the opposition. Fortna believes that if the warring sides are motivated to secure peace, the work of the peacekeepers is only to mediate the negotiation between them. However,

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[23] Ibid.
[24] Fortna, Virginia Page. "Does peacekeeping keep peace? International intervention and the duration of peace after civil war." International studies quarterly 48, no. 2 (2004): 269-292.

peacekeeping can become complex if the conflict benefits one or more sides of the conflicting parties while ignoring the other(s).[25]

This conceptual framework for the attainment of sustainable outcomes in peacekeeping missions is fundamental in helping this study to understand why UNMISS has not been fully effective or why the mission is not regarded to have totally failed. The study sought to assess how UNMISS has implemented some of these steps and failed to implement others thereby having mixed results. The framework was preferred in this study because of its ability to successfully analyze factors responsible for the success or failure of a peacekeeping mission.

**1.9 Study Design and Methodology**

**1.9.1 Research Design**

This research employed a qualitative research method involving the use of thematic analysis research methods. The study design was a descriptive survey. The design was selected because it was deemed effective as it enables the researcher to collect data that aid in answering key research questions. Descriptive survey design focuses on the design of data collection instruments, formulation of objectives, processing and analyzing data, collection of data, and reporting of findings. The design was adopted because it has the potential to provide a lot of information from large sources of data.

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[25] Ibid

**1.9.2 Data Collection**

This study is majorly based on the analysis of secondary data. In order to assemble qualitative data, a number of methods were used to collect the secondary data. The collection of this data involved a review of books, journal articles, and other existing documents on the topic of interest. These materials were sourced from various academic institutions including university libraries and scholarly online sources. There was also an extensive review of periodicals, newspapers and magazine articles, and other credible on-line sources on the topic under study.

**1.9.3 Data Analysis**

The study adopted a qualitative data analysis approach. Document analyses and data collected were categorized into themes and analyzed qualitatively through descriptive and narrative methods.

**1.9.4 Scope and Limitations of the Study**

The research focused on peace keeping in South Sudan. The study period ranges from 2011 to 2020. 2011 witnessed the formation of UNMISS; 2020 was the year that UNMISS began to close down some of its PoC sites in the country partly due to requests from the IDPs to be returned. While conducting the study, a number of challenges were encountered. They included difficulty in locating key respondents since the researcher is confined to college with limited movement into the study area. To address this challenge, the researcher primarily relied on secondary sources for much of the research.

# CHAPTER TWO

# THE PERFORMANCE OF THE UNITED NATIONS PEACEKEEPING MISSIONS IN AFRICA

## Introduction

The evolution of the African continent is full of conflicts that have regrettably surpassed the capacity of countries in the region to resolve them without resorting to foreign help, particularly in the field of military aid. The continent faces endless conflicts that arise from many factors including boundary disputes, competition for resources, despotic leaders, and the military overthrow of governments. Disappointingly, most countries in the region lack the capacity to redress the conflicts thereby resorting to the United Nations for help. However, the problem arising from this development is that the UN faces numerous problems in its intervention in the conflicts that demand an investigation. This chapter discusses UN peace-keeping operations in the continent, the challenges that such missions face, and the possibilities for resolving the challenges.

## 2.1 The Evolution of the UN Peacekeeping Missions in Africa

Between the 1950s and 1960s, Africans were preoccupied with the common struggle against colonialism with the overriding ambition being the independence of these countries from domination and colonialism. The end of decolonization led to the challenge of nation-building that replaced the liberation struggle. One of the most crucial developments in the process is the level to which internal tensions, differences, and conflicts emerged once independence had been gained. The conflicts have regrettably increased in scope going beyond Africa, therefore, leading to a new

type of dependency on foreign countries, particularly in the area of peace-keeping.[26] This gave rise to UN intervention in African conflicts.

The first UN intervention in Africa was in the DRC (formerly Congo) crisis of 1960-64. After that, the DRC witnessed another United Nations intervention beginning in 1999-2000 when the United Nations Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUC) was activated. This operation was on 1st July 2010 replaced by another UN operation –the United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUSCO).[27]The mission is mandated to assist the DRC government to end the spreading of conflicts. Besides DRC, the UNSC, in 2004, activated the UN Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in the Central African Republic (MINUSCA), to facilitate the stabilization and protection of civilians in the Central African Republic. Other UN operations in the continent include United Nations Mission on Sudan (UNMIS); UN Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS); the UN Interim Security Force for Abyei (UNISFA); the UN Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali (MINUSMA); and UN Mission for the Referendum in Western Sahara (MINURSO), among many others.[28]

As UN members, African countries must commit to the stipulations of the United Nations charter, Article (1), which requires members "to foster security and peace internationally, to implement efficacious steps towards removing and preventing threats to peace. It is, therefore, binding on them, when they plunge into severe conflicts, to make use of the instrumentality of the world body to help resolve such conflicts, especially where the state in question does not have the capacity to resolve the particular feud internally.

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[26] Basu, Richard, 2001. "The United Nations Organization: The structure of an international organization". New Delhi: Sterling PVT Limited, 76.
[27] https://peacekeeping.un.org/en/mission/monusco)
[28] Scott A Snyder. September 2020 "The Role of Peacekeeping in Africa".

Initially, African leaders frowned at what they considered to be a grave issue of foreign power interventions in the continent's affairs during an Organization of African Unity summit in Libreville Congo in 1977. However, the problems seem to have intensified as conflicts within the continent persisted instead of abating. As such, the UN has been proactively involved in the continent's security affairs brokering for peace in interstate conflict, and inter-regional and sectarian violence. By 2009, for instance, the UN had undertaken over 22 peacekeeping operations in Africa. By 2019, UN peace keeping missions in the continent stood at seven out of the fifteen that were ongoing globally.[29]This highlights the level of the conflict engulfing Africa.[30]

Because of the complexity of wars in Africa, the UN is repeatedly using sub-regional and regional governmental structures in the continent for the role of peace-keeping.[31]Peacekeeping operations in the region differ depending on the magnitude and scope of the conflict and the body responsible for authorizing and monitoring the peacekeeping operation. However, the general activities and reasons for peacekeeping include restoring the rule of law and helping in elections - simplified as promotion and protection of human rights, reintegration, disarmament, and demobilization of ex-combatants.[32]As of 2021, a large part of troops taking part in UN peacekeeping operations in Africa have been from Ethiopia, Rwanda, and Bangladesh,[33] while the funds largely come from developed nations with Japan, US, and China being the top donors of the UN peacekeeping in Africa. Individual peacekeepers are paid by their Nations.[34]

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[29] United Nations. 1945."United nations charter". New York: United Nations Press. www.un.org/peacekeeping/2019.
[30] Mays Terry. 2002. "Africa's First Peacekeeping Operation: The OAU in Chad, 1981-1982". Greenwood Publishing Group.
[31] Lyytikäinen, Minna, et al. 2007. "Gender Training for Peacekeepers: Preliminary overview of United Nations peace support operations". United Nations International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women.
[32] International Peace Institute, Security Council Report, and Stimson Center, "Prioritizing and Sequencing Peacekeeping Mandates" .2018
[33] IRIN, "Central African Republic, Part 3: 'I have no power to complain,'" July 25, 2018
[34] Scott A Snyder. 2020. Op cit.

## 2.2 The Performance of UN Peace-Keeping Missions in Africa

Tisdall argues that the United Nations secretary general has to deal with the many crucial failures of United Nations peacekeeping missions in Africa. He mentions that the UN spends about 8bn US dollars yearly on peacekeeping operations around the globe, with most of this utilized in Africa. Yet, that huge sum has nothing to show for it as the continent continues to be conflict-ridden.[35]On the other hand, a German research group reported that the UNMISS had been accused of giving weapons to rebel groups in Bentiu in 2013, while the UN operation in CAR, has also faced accusations of inaction during attacks on civilians. 130 people, for example, were massacred in Alindao town as UN troops responded late.[36] This has often led the government of the Central African Republic (CAR) to accuse United Nations peacekeepers of working with armed rebels rather than helping in the restoration of peace.

In DRC, distrust of UN peacekeeping has often led to demonstrations by affected people affecting the overall execution of the UN mission in the country.[37]Khadiagala George states that the ongoing conflict in the mentioned countries paints a bad picture concerning peace-keeping in the continent and the overall UN effectiveness.[38] Arnold Phillips stated that peace-keeping operations in the African continent suffer legitimacy crises as the United Nations presence in the continent is

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[35]Tisdall, Simon. 2009, January 15. "Sudan Fears US Military Intervention over Darfur."The Guardian. Retrieved from: https://www.theguardian.co m/world/2009/jan/15/sudan-unamid-obama

[36]Topona, Enerst. (2017, September 12). "Central African Republic: Powerless UN, Helpless Government". Retrieved from: https://www.dw.com/e n/central-african-republic-powerless-un-helpless-government/a40473664.

[37] Daily mail. (2018, February 2018).18 New Sexual Abuse Claims against UN Peacekeepers in DRC. Retrieved from: https://www.dailymail.co.uk/wires/afp/article-5392467/18-newsexual-abuse-claims-against-UN-peacekeepers-DRC.html.

[38] Khadiagala, George. (Ed.). 2017. "War and Peace in Africa's Great Lakes Region". Springer International Publishing. New York

increasing, even though conflicts in Africa are also increasing, raising questions on the true role played of UN peacekeeping operations.[39]

Moreover, the legitimacy of United Nations peace-keeping operations in the continent is being questioned majorly due to many factors like the failure to protect civilians and widespread cases of human rights abuses by peace-keepers including pervasive allegations of exploitation of women and sexual abuse of children. In 2019, for instance, the UN withdrew several Gabonese soldiers from CAR and opened a probe following allegations of sexual abuse of young girls. These cases have however increased over the years with few leading to prosecution, and none leading to a conviction. These flaws have reduced the confidence of United Nations peace-keeping missions in the continent.[40]Genugten stated that United Nations is to blame as major contributing states often times sway decisions in favor of their own interests. In turn, this impacts peace-keeping operations. In Africa, during the Sierra Leone war, for example, the United Nations failed to activate an arms embargo in spite of the fact that European countries were selling arms to Liberia and then later to Sierra Leone itself.

Genugten adds that it, therefore, can't be said that United Nations operations in the continent have reduced violence. Nonetheless, the increase in violent conflicts, forced displacement; logistical problems, and elite inference in peacekeeping operations often overshadowed the accomplishments of United Nations peacekeeping missions in Africa.[41]

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[39] U.N. Peacekeeping, Fatalities by Mission and Incident Type, data as of July 31, 2019
[40] Phillips, Anorld. 2017, February 01."Losing Legitimacy? UN Peace Missions in Africa Africa Up Retrieved from: https://africaupclose.wilsoncent er.org/losing-legitimacy-un-peace-missions-in-africa/
[41] Genugten, William. 2008. "UN Peacekeeping in Africa and Good Governance: Challenges and Prospects". Potchefstroom Electronic Journal, 11(2).

On his part, Badell argues that United Nations is squeezed resource-wise and can't therefore, be expected to effectively address all conflicts scattered around the continent.[42]Autesserre (2019) asserted that despite the claim by the UN that it has assisted in ending conflicts and fostering reconciliation by carrying out effective peace-keeping missions in many countries, United Nations peace-keepers most times fail to realize their very basic goals.[43] In 2014 a UN Internal investigation showed that peacekeepers in Africa only responded to one of five situations where civilians were threatened and they failed to use force in deadly attacks. In most deployments, peacekeepers end-up watching while conflict and wars go on. For instance, *Médecins sans frontières* reported that in 2018, UN forces in CAR failed to protect civilians and acted as spectators in the town of Batangafo when civilians were attacked by militia groups. Melvern (2014) declared that since the failure of the UN in Rwanda, many African states have become skeptical of UN operations. Nevertheless, they still allow the UN to intervene in domestic conflicts.

Having assessed these glaring failures of UN missions in Africa, it is fundamental to look at the challenges that hinder the success of UN missions and the opportunities for improved performance at a continental level.

## 2.3 The Challenges of Peace-Keeping Operations in Africa

UN operations in the continent have and still face numerous challenges which have led to repeated ineffectiveness and failure to respond quickly when civilians are in need, mismanagement, rights abuse by peacekeeping personnel, and financial problems. These challenges include:

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[42] Badell, Dann. 2018. "The age of outsourcing: UN peacekeeping operations. In peacekeeping: global perspectives, challenges and impacts" (pp. 125-138). Nova science publishers.

[43] Oladipo, Thomas. 2017, January 01. 'The UN's peacekeeping nightmare in Africa'. BBC. Retrieved from: https://www.bbc.com/news/worldafrica-38372614

The first problem faced by missions in Africa is the exponential increase in UN peace-keeping operations in the continent. In recent years, a number of United Nations peacekeeping missions have seen an unprecedented rise going above the anticipation of players in the international peacekeeping system. The sheer increase in peace-keeping missions has put the United Nations and its operations under immense constraint in Africa; an eventuality that affects its activities in the affected countries as personnel required for peace-keeping operations has greatly been reduced by their spread to different conflict zones of the continent. In just under seven years, the United Nations has initiated eight operations in succession in the continent. As a fact, there are currently seven peace-keeping operations in the African continent alone, with the largest operations situated in the DRC and South Sudan.[44]

Secondly, there is the challenge of poor collaboration in host countries. United Nations peace-keeping missions are jointly hosted by host states and the UN. However, sometimes the mandate of peace-keeping missions doesn't align with the expectations of the host countries which may sometimes lead to poor or lack of cooperation and friction. For instance, countries such as Western Sahara and Eritrea have in the past expelled United Nations peace-keepers majorly due to the incompatibility of their mandates. This impacted peace-keeping operations in those countries.[45]UNMIS faced this problem due to the government of Sudan's uncooperative behavior towards the UN operation in the country. Repeatedly, the government of Sudan refused to cooperate with humanitarian workers and peace-keepers often denying them freedom of access and movement, denying visas for personnel needed and sometimes blocking the supply of logistics

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[44] Rice, 2007, p.33.
[45] United Nations. (2000, October 9). "Challenges of United Nations peacekeeping operations reviewed by countries with first-handexperience. Retrieved from:https://www.un.org/press/en/2000/200 01109.gaspd201.doc.html.

needed for the effective of the UN operation. These challenges have also been experienced by UNMISS.[46]

There is also the challenge of ambiguous and over-ambitious mandates from the UNSC. The UN is currently asked to assume harder, ambiguous, and riskier mandates with immeasurable success levels, particularly in Africa. Member countries of the United Nations particularly the Five Permanent Members of the UNSC rush the UN into peace-keeping missions with little to no capabilities and support needed from the members.[47]According to Adebajo Adekeye, "initially peacekeeping operations in South Sudan and the CAR were mandated to undertake specific tasks, but changing dynamics and increased conflict led to the change of the mandates, as they had to relocate resources to deal with other emerging issues arising during the conflicts. This further increased the inability of the missions to deal better with conflicts in those countries. Thus, ever-changing mandates became a bottleneck to successful and effective peacekeeping in the Central African Republic and South Sudan."[48]

The other challenge concerns the negative impacts of the UN's internal politics on the operations, mobilization, and deployment of peacekeepers. The United Nations is the singular greatest organization made up of a collection of independent countries as members all with unique ideological, political and socio-cultural interests. As a result, prior to reaching resolutions in the UN either at the Security Council or General Assembly, members consider a number of factors, especially those that indirectly or directly affect their national interests. Thus, whenever an African country experiences a conflict requiring immediate UN assistance to avert erosion of state law or

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[46]SiphesihleE.Mpanzan and Victor H. Mlambo, 2019. "UN Peacekeeping Missions in Africa, a Conundrum or Opportunity: A Case of the DRC, South Sudan and the CAR.
[47]Galadima, 2008, p.11. Op cit.
[48]Adebajo, Adekeye. 2012. "UN Peacekeeping in Africa: From Suez Crisis to the Sudan Conflicts." Jacana Media. Sunnyside.

prevent a humanitarian disaster, UN member countries deal with the matter as a normal international political game. This was conspicuous in the efforts to marshal UN troops for UNMIS.[49]

There is also the challenge of language and culture. Here language and cultural differences do severely challenge UN peace-keeping missions not just in Africa but also in other countries as well. The issue of language and cultural differences became a crucial obstruction to UNMIS as troop members could not understand the existing culture and language in Sudan - a thing that led to delays in operation. This also occurred in Somalia as most contingents arrived in the country with little or no knowledge of Somalia, its culture, history, and the reality on the ground.[50]

Another challenge faced relates to inadequate or shortage of logistical support. Doyle and Sambanis assert that 'peacekeeping operations in the Sudan and DRC often lack the required resources, and this means the missions struggle whenever faced with an increase in the rate of conflict. The shortage of logistical support and weapons are major factors hindering effective peace-keeping missions. UN peace-keeping operations have become overstretched due to an increase in conflicts. This implies that the resources needed have diminished putting hundreds of thousands of people at risk of displacement, hunger, and death." Manuel Christopher adds that the peacekeeping troops that operate in Africa often have little self-sufficiency in both material and equipment supplies. [51]This affects the effective implementation of their mandates.

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[49]Abubakar, Ahmad 2009." Peacekeeping in West Africa: The Nigerian experience". In Jonah, G. J. &Zabadi, I. S. (eds.) Peace support operations in the new global environment: The Nigerian perspective. Abuja: National Defense College, p.43.

[50]Duffey, Timothy. 2000. "Cultural issues in contemporary peacekeeping". In Woodhouse, T. &Ramotham, O. (eds.) Peacekeeping and conflict resolution. Oxon: Frank Cass Publishers, p.142

[51] Christopher, Manuel. 2005. "Supply chain management: creating value and adding networks". Edinburgh: Pearson Education Limited, P.66.

Doctrine, training, and the challenge of command also come to focus as part of the problems of United Nations peacekeeping in the continent. UN peace-keeping missions often consist of multinational forces with personnel and troops drawn from several countries with different military doctrines and training. The differences appear in the field and often negatively impact the command and control of the force during the operation. Command and control are part of the major challenges that reduce the United Nations' effectiveness since some contingents can't cooperate or work with others.[52]

Finally, this study established that the other challenge facing UN operations in Africa is the difficult environment of operation and poor infrastructure which affect most African states where UN peace-keeping missions are ongoing or have occurred. With these constraints in place, peace-keepers find it very difficult to provide security and patrol in the interior. In Liberia, DRC, Sudan, Sierra Leone, Darfur, Burundi, Rwanda, Chad and CAR, and South Sudan, there are few functioning court systems, municipal or prisons, and few paved roads, while under conflict. The lack of such basic infrastructures greatly affected United Nations peace-keeping missions in these states and unnecessarily extended the lifespan of some of the conflicts.[53]

## 2.4 Prospects for United Nations Peace-keeping in Africa

The United Nations as the single organization charged with maintenance international security and peace is uniquely able to conduct multi-faceted operations all over the world. Drawing upon the expertise and experience of personnel from member countries, the UN can pull diplomatic, political, military, human rights, police, development, and electoral activities together under the

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[52]Alli, W. Osman. 2012. "The role of Nigeria in regional security policy". Abuja: Friedrich Ebert Stiftung, p.53.
[53] Ibid.

command of a single person that is mostly the Force Commander or Special Representative of the Secretary-General (SPSG) in an operation field and be successful. [54]

Although peace-spoilers and warlords abound in continental African conflicts, the United Nations can offer the practical and political reassurances needed by warring parties so as to implement cease-fire agreements. Deployment of peacekeepers can assist in limiting or stopping the spread of conflicts and prevent the eruption of a war. United Nations peacekeeping provides tens of millions of African people with the prospects of a more dignified, prosperous, and secure future. Thanks to the help of United Nations peace-keeping, African countries facing wars are able to better provide for their citizens and meet international commitments and obligations including protection of their boundaries, policing their territories, halting the flow of illegal weapons and drugs, and denying safe homage to transnational terror groups and international organized criminal gangs.

Thus, despite the challenged faced by peace-keepers in the African continent, the UN aware of the missions' limitations has out-sourced and in-built mechanisms to assist in checking the effectiveness of its missions. Noticing that existing conditions in the continent tend to overwhelm its missions beyond the plan, the United Nations is developing a reform-based agenda, especially on peace-keeping missions. It is hoped that the reforms will make peace keeping more effective than before and in tune with realities on the ground, particularly in places like Africa with changing conflict contexts.[55]

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[54]Akpan, NseEtim and Olisah, Christopher Ikem, July 2019, "The Challenges and Prospects of United Nations Peacekeeping Mission in Africa. Africaqn Research Review, International Multi-Disciplinary Journal, Ethiopia Afreeva Vol. 13 (3), Serial No 55, July, 2019: 80-91 ISSN 1994-9057 (Print) ISSN 2070-0083 (Online) DOI: http://dx.doi.org/10.4314/afrrev.v13i3..
[55] Ibid

**2.5 Conclusion**

This chapter analyzed the performance, challenges, and prospects for success of UN peace keeping missions in Africa. It established that Africa has been a host to many UN peace operations in the past and at the moment. The study has taken note that most African countries are yet to put in place good governance and the means of resolving conflicts between involved parties. The continent continues to experience intrastate conflicts with regional impacts necessitating UN intervention via peacekeeping. From the findings, it cannot be denied that the UN interventions in African countries have been effective in evading all-out conflicts that might have decimated regional states besides deteriorating the tenets of regional security. However, this is not to say that UN missions have been fully successful in delivering on their mandates.

# CHAPTER THREE

# AN APPRAISAL OF THE UNITED NATIONS PEACEKEEPING MISSION IN SOUTH SUDAN (UNMISS)

## Introduction

Both before and after attaining independence, the country of South Sudan has gone through humanitarian crises, civil unrest, and political instabilities for many years. Reports show that not less than 1.5 million individuals faced internal displacement due to political strife while at least fifty thousand civilians have lost their lives due to the civil unrest that started in December 2013.[56] Due to the severity of the conflict, IGAD initiated negotiations that on August 26, 2015, led to the signing of a Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA) between President Salva Kiir and his opponent Riek Machar.[57] On 26 April 2016, the efforts of the peace treaty led to the swearing-in of Riek Machar for the second time as Vice President. However, just over two months after this, war broke out between factions loyal to the opposition and the incumbent government. More than ten thousand individuals were displaced as a result. This led to UNMISS mandate shifts and increased financing to enhance its capacity. However, little has changed. This chapter examines the dynamics of the South Sudan conflict and the performance of the UNMISS mission.

## 3.1 A Brief Background to the Conflict in South Sudan

South Sudan bears a rather unique background since it is the second country in Africa, apart from Eritrea, to obtain independence by secession. [58] The people of the country protested being

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[56] De Waal, Alex. 'When kleptocracy becomes insolvent: Brute causes of the civil war in South Sudan." African Affairs113, no.452 (2014): 347-369, p.356.
[57] Ibid, p. 359.
[58]Maria Cristina Ercolessi Johanna Siméant 2015. "State-building South Sudan. Discourses, Practices and Actors of a Negotiated Project (1999-2013)".

marginalized through two wars. The first war was waged by the rebels of the *Anyanya*I from 1955 to 1972, while the second war was fought by the SPLA from 1983 to 2005. However, none of the previous two wars had a clear-cut north-south front.  In fact, both saw the rise of multiple southern armed rebels fighting against each other while others opportunistically allied with different sides to the conflicts. During the second civil war, alliances and in-fighting reached such high levels that it is approximated that southern wars led to more casualties than the clashes between SPLA and Sudan Armed Forces (SAF).[59]

Though political tensions based on ethnic factors were common already at the beginning of independence in the south of Sudan, 1991 marked a turning point in the history of ethnic politics in the region. At the time, Lam Akol and Riek Machar a Shilluk from Upper Nile and a Nuer respectively, broke away from the SPLA/M that was led by Dr. John Garang - a Dinka from Bor - blaming the SPLA/M for being Dinka-dominated and accusing Garang of authoritarianism.

Years later, the Dinka-Nuer rivalry became very serious internally. Cases of mass atrocities committed by the parties to the conflict against one another were high.[60] However, when the war with Khartoum was coming to an end, the SPLA reabsorbed most of the militias right before or soon after the signing of the CPA. This led to the incorporation of their leaders either into high military ranks or into the government. Garang's aim was a united South Sudan, though his position was that of a minority. Upon his death - six months after the signing of the peace agreement (July 2005), all the attention turned to the process of secession of South Sudan through the 2011

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[59] Dougl Sara Pantuliano, "Donor-Driven Technical Fixes Failed South Sudan: It's Time to Get Political," Think Africa Press, January 9, 2014, http://thinkafricapress.com/south-sudan/donordriven-technical-fixes-failed-time-put.
[60] Human Rights Watch, Sudan, Oil, and Human Rights; African Rights, Food and Power in Sudan: A Critique of Humanitarianism, 1997.

referendum, and the government of Southern Sudan focused its attention on keeping key forces in harmony so as to not undermine the peace process.

Despite being seen as a post-conflict context, from 2005 to 2011 ethnic conflict continued to feature in South Sudanese people's daily lives. In 2010, for instance, greatly contested elections in the states led to some politically motivated insurgences against the SPLMA/M, which were resolved majorly through amnesty of their leaders and incorporation into the military/government apparatus. This incorporation strategy went on even after independence, though by then, there were no more common enemies to use to foster cohesion.[61]

Fault-lines within SPLM leadership began to re-emerge when calls regarding political reforms by a section of party members were brushed aside by President Salva Mayardiit Kiir. In the year 2013, after a few years of austere policies that had led to large cuts to state-expenditures especially affecting the salaries of low-ranked military and government officials, tension began to increase. Riek Machar Teny declared his plan to run in the SPLM leadership election in 2015. The growing tension culminated in December 2013 when a group of senior SPLM leaders held a conference and accused Salva Kiir of being dictatorial. Less than a week later, the senior members walked out of a National Liberation Council meeting. Then just a day later, clashes started in Juba among factions of the presidential guard. The clashes quickly spread to other areas of the nation relying mostly on the locally formed militias dissatisfied with government measures. Vice President Riek Machar placed himself as the head of the rebel movements, code-named SPLM/A-In-Opposition.[62] Though accusing one other of targeted ethnic killings and tribalism, none of the rivals openly used ethnicity to get support. However, by constructing alien-ethnic dander, the Nuer-Dinka fault line

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[61] Ibid.
[62] Ibid

was reinvigorated in a most subtle manner.[63] What was surprising was, however, the extreme ease with which a political difference was turned into an ethnic conflict, based upon the idea of ethnicity as an immutable and natural attribute of humans.[64]The rapid spread of the conflict necessitated UN intervention through peace keeping giving rise to UNMISS.

## 3.2 The Establishment and Mandate of UNMISS

A key part of the UN efforts in South Sudan is its peacekeeping operation, the UNMISS. However, it is worth pointing out that the first peacekeeping mission to encompass South Sudan was the UNMIS, created during the phase for the implementation of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement in 2005 to assist in facilitating a path to peace. The CPA was a symbol of the end of the lengthy violent conflict between the northern and southern regions of Sudan. Once South Sudan became independent on July 9, 2011, UNMIS' mandate was considered complete, and a separate peacekeeping mission was created specifically for the newly independent country. As such UNMISS was established on 8 July 2011. According to UNSC Resolution 1996, which established UNMISS, its mandate was:

> "to consolidate peace and security, and to help establish the conditions for development in the Republic of South Sudan, with a view to strengthening the capacity of the Government of the Republic of South Sudan to govern effectively and democratically and establish good relations with its neighbours".

The operation's focus on the institution and state building was a shift from the UNMIS' previous mandate. UNMISS was a bit more expansive and aimed at supporting the newly formed government to accomplish key goals in the fields of security, development, rule of law, and

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[63] Sara de Simone and Andreas Hirblinger, "What Is 'Tribalism' and Why Does It Matter in South Sudan?" African Arguments, December 24, 2013, http://africanarguments.org/2013/12/24/what-is-tribalism-and-why-does-is-matter-in-southsudan-by-andreas-hirblinger-and-sara-de-simone/.

[64]John Prendergast, "How the World's Newest Country Went Awry: South Sudan's War, Famine, and Potential Genocide" (Washington: The Enough Project, March 2017), pp. 2–4, available at http://www.enoughproject.org/files/SouthSudanAwry_March2017_EnoughProject.pdf.

institution building. Initially, the UNMISS mandate called for a contingent force of 900 civilian police and 7,000 troops. Troop contributing countries and the UN at large anticipated that the mission would support the South Sudan government to protect civilians, and also fill the existing gaps through active patrols and deployments whenever the government failed.

In terms of leadership, UNMISS is headed by a Special Representative of the Secretary-General (SRSG) of the UN, who is assisted by two deputy SRSGs, as well as the commanders of the UN peace-keeping force and police.[65] UNMISS bases are located in the capitals of each of the 10 states.[66] Peacekeepers are drawn from over 50 contributing countries, and police officers from over 30 countries.[67] In the year 2020, UNMISS hosted 212,969 civilians across five PoC bases located in Malakal, Juba, Bentiu, Bor, Melut, and Wau.[68]

Shortly after violence broke out in December 2013, the UNSC authorized the expansion of UNMISS from 900 police and 7,000 troops. UNSC resolution 2132 authorized a rise in military components from 7000 troops to 12,500 and police from 900 to 1,323. [69] A few months later - as mediation failed to end the violence - the UNSC again altered the mandate of UNMISS through Resolution 2155. The mandate shifted from that of supporting state-building, peace-building, and the extension of the national authority to one that pursued four crucial roles under Chapter VII. These tasks included; investigating and monitoring human rights abuses, protecting civilians, supporting cease-fire monitoring, and facilitating the delivery of aid.

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[65] UNMISS. 2017c. "Leadership". Retrieved from https://unmiss.unmissions.org/leadershi
[66] United Nations General Assembly. (2016). Approved resources for peacekeeping operations for the period from 1 July 2016 to 30 June 2017. Retrieved from www.un.org/ga/ search/view_doc.asp?symbol=A/C.5/70/24
[67] United Nations. 2017. "UNMISS – facts and figures". Retrieved from https://unmiss. unmissions.org/facts-and-figures
[68] UNMISS Communications & Public Information Office. 2017. "Update: UNMISS "Protection of Civilians" (PoC) Sites, p. 1Retrieved from https://unmiss.unmissions.org/ sites/default/files/170921_poc_update_-_176.pdf
[69] UN Resolution 2132 (2013).www.un//unmis/resolution2132/unpeacekeeping.southsudan

In August 2015, the Security Council once more increased the force size of UNMISS after the parties to the conflict signed a peace agreement. UNSC added to the UNMISS mandate the duty of supporting and monitoring the implementation of the peace deal. In April 2016, the warring parties formed a Transitional Government of National Unity (TGNU), though this arrangement failed three months later, and the conflict resumed. UN Security Council, in a bid to facilitate the safe return of the opposition to Juba and reestablish the peace agreement, authorized further increase of the UNMISS troop ceiling, including the formation of a Regional Protection Force (RPF), with 4,000 troops drawn from countries within East Africa. The roles of RPF were to include, the provision of a secure environment around Juba, with the capacity to be deployed elsewhere if needed.

UNMISS as authorized through March 2020 Resolution, is the UN's second largest peace-keeping operation with an annual budget of just over $1 billion from July 2016 – July 2017. By March 2021, it was composed of 2,228 civilian workers, 1,446 police personnel, and 14,222 military personnel, alongside a contingent of volunteers, experts, and staff officers.[70] As a huge, multi-dimensional peace-keeping mission with troop numbers rising to 2,000 civilians, 2,000 police, and 17,000 military troops – UNMISS has currently been offered an extremely ambitious mandate and significant resources. The language in the UNSC resolutions, specifically describing the responsibility of UNMISS as it relates to the PoC in South Sudan, has evolved over the years as a response to the requirements that have arisen from the outbreak of violence.[71] Despite this, there

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[70]"UNMISS Fact Sheet – United Nations Mission in the Republic of South Sudan" (https://pea cekeeping.un.org/en/mission/unmiss). UN. Retrieved 22 December 2017.
[71] UNSC. (2011). Resolution 1996 (2011): Adopted by the Security Council at its 6576th meeting, on 8 July 2011. Retrieved from www.un.org/en/ga/search/view_doc.asp? symbol=S/RES/1996(2011)

are still many serious questions about the UN's performance and ability to effectively fulfill its mandate in South Sudan conflict zones.[72]

## 3.3 The Performance of UNMISS

To ensure that its operations are as effective as possible, UNMISS has used a variety of strategies and methods. These methods include a two-pronged strategy for citizen protection and peace-building - an outcome-based approach, and a distribution-based approach. Important strengths and police functions related to prioritizing protection, such as assisting players, building capacity in local police, and increasing the workforce in risky areas.[73] According to the reports of several stadium offices, the team has proved to be very effective in a number of crucial areas, including the ability to conduct joint events. [74]This strategy has reportedly proven to be very effective in a number of key areas, including in integrated conflict resolution activities.[75]

According to Adam Day et al, the two-pillar strategy has brought a credible and appealing political process to South Sudan by holding inclusive national dialogue to promote peace forums. According to UNMISS reports, conflicts and levels of violence between groups have decreased since the adoption of this strategy.[76] The spatial approach has improved worker safety and security by fostering friendly environments with local people in their assigned areas.

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[72] Da Costa, Diana Felix. "Contextualising liberal peace-building for local circumstances: UNMISS and local peace-building in South Sudan." Journal of Peacebuilding & Development 7, no. 2 (2012): 53-66.
[73] Zambakari, Christopher, et al."The Role Of UNMISS in South Sudan". p 36. 26 Feb 2018

[74] Day, Adam, Charles T. Hunt, He Yin, and LiezelleKumalo. "Assessing the Effectiveness of the UN Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS)." EPON Report (2019).
[75] Blanchard, Lauren Ploch. "The Crisis in South Sudan." (2014).
[76] Day, Adam, et al. "Assessing the Effectiveness of the UN Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS)." EPON Report (2019

Other achievements by UNMISS over the years include some successful cases of civilian protection and the verification and documentation of incidents. Hilde Johnson, Head of UNMISS, discussed the Lou-Nuer attacks in the state of Jonglei where UNMISS' ability to deploy peacekeepers and alert the government saved the lives of thousands of civilians, and helped achieve progress in areas such as democracy, policing, and justice.[77]

The UNMISS personnel has also been lauded for their bravery and sacrifices. On April 9, 2013, for instance, seven civilian UNMISS employees (five contractors and two UN staff) and five Indian troops died in a militia ambush in the state of Jonglei when escorting a United Nations convoy between Bor and Pibor. According to South Sudan's military spokesman, "the convoy was attacked by David Yau Yau's rebel forces believed to have been supported by the Sudanese government". A UN spokesman said that "the fierce resistance put up by Indian peacekeepers forced the rebels to withdraw and saved the lives of many of the civilians".[78]

Moreover, UNMISS has repeatedly released reports on violations of human rights by both the rebel groups and the government of South Sudan. In 2005, it released a report on the campaign of violence by SPLA and associated rebel groups in Unity State. Citing witness accounts, the report revealed cases of rape, abductions, and the burning of people alive in dwellings.[79] These reports led to a reduction in violent conflicts due to international condemnation of SPLA acts.

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[77] "Near Verbatim Transcript of Press Conference hosting United Nations Special Representative of the Secretary-General for South Sudan, Ms. Hilde F. Johnson" (https://ww w.un.org/en/peacekeeping/missions/unmiss/documents Retrieved 10 April 2021.

[78]Bodies of five martyrs likely to reach India tonight" (http://www.firstpost.com/world/bodies-offive-martyrs-likely-to-reach-india-tonight-693364.html). First Post. 10 April 2013. Retrieved 10 April 2021.

[79] "New levels of 'brutality' in South Sudan, says UN rights report" (https://www.un.org/apps/ne ws/story.asp?NewsID=51296#.ViB43dIrLIU). UN News Centre. 30 June 2015. Retrieved 16 March 2021.

## 3.4 Failures and Criticism against UNMISS

Since its inception in 2011, UNMISS has faced criticism about its responses to cases of violence in the country, and its ability to fulfill the protection of civilians (PoC) mandate. UNMISS currently hosts about a quarter of a million displaced people. However, investigative reports and media reveal that civilians are left vulnerable during violence and conflicts that UNMISS is mandated to act upon.[80] The shift in the humanitarian situation following the 2013 conflict, as well as the inadequacies of UNMISS to fulfill its duties, led to key changes in its mandate with a focus on civilian protection as well as an increase in the number of peacekeepers. This shift was heavily supported by stakeholders and donors of the mission. However, despite the changes enacted in 2014, UNMISS has continued to underperform in areas of protecting civilians.[81]

In Juba, violence and conflict have been meted out on civilians since 2013 even with the presence of UNMISS headquarters and there being several early warning signs.[82] In addition to fighting between the armed groups, humanitarian organizations noted the targeting of civilians from particular ethnic groups, as well as government soldiers preventing civilians from approaching the UNMISS base in Tomping to seek safety. Women passing through the checkpoint area or leaving the PoC site for market were sexually assaulted.[83]

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[80] Oxfam International. (2016). Violence fuels South Sudan's humanitarian crisis. Retrieved from www.oxfam.org/en/pressroom/pressreleases/2016-07-28/violence-fuelssouth-sudans-humanitarian-crisis

[81] UNSC. (2014). Resolution 2155 (2014): Adopted by the Security Council at its 7182nd meeting, on 27 May 2014. Retrieved from www.un.org/en/ga/search/view_doc.asp? symbol=S/RES/2155(2021)

[82] Cammaert, Patrick. 2016. "Executive summary of the independent special investigation into the violence in Juba in 2016 and the response by the United Nations Mission in South Sudan".

[83] UNMISS. 2015. "Attacks on civilians in Bentiu&Bor, April 2014." Retrieved from www.ohchr.org/Documents/Countries/SS/UNMISS_HRDJanuary2021.pdf

In the year 2014 Bor attack, the Bor PoC camp was targeted. The incident left 58 IDPs dead and almost 100 more injured. Early warning signs were noted in the UNMISS report detailing events, including threats by perpetrators to attack the camp a few days earlier. Yet UNMISS failed to secure the camp. Besides the killings, women and children were abducted and items looted from shops and homes located in the camp. In Malakal, the PoC camp became a site of conflict in 2016 resulting in the death of 30 IDPs and 123 injuries.

A report by Zambakari Christopher et al. on "*the role of the UN Mission in South Sudan in protecting civilians*", details that the most frequently occurring crimes necessitating UNMISS intervention in South Sudan in 2018 were violence against civilians and battles.[84] The report found that most UNMISS activities were concentrated on ending battles, riots or protests, and nonviolent events. The results indicate that UNMISS involvement was a small proportion of events that occurred during this time period and did not cover the events affecting violence against civilians.[85] To assess and obtain a better understanding of the 11 events that UNMISS was involved in, the researchers coded the descriptive information into five categories: (1) protection of civilians, (2) buffer between warring factions, (3) UN troops attacked, (4) sites and installation attacked, and (5) violence against civilians. From these categories, it was found that in four events the UN was involved in executing its mandate of PoC, in one event the UNMISS acted as a buffer between warring factions; in six cases the UN troops, sites, and installations were attacked; and in one case UN peacekeepers used tear gas to suppress IDP protestors causing more harm.

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[84] Christopher Zambakari, Tarnjeet K. Kang, and Robert A. Sanders, 2018. "The role of the UN Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS) in protecting civilians". Routledge, 2018-11-28 12:50:29
[85] Ibid

**3.5 Public discourse on UNMISS and civilian protection in South Sudan**

The data analyzed in this study illustrates that out of the numerous incidents that have occurred in South Sudan since independence in 2011, UNMISS has been involved in very few of them, indicating that it has done little to intervene during times of conflict to protect civilians and prevent them from being killed, injured and displaced. The change in the mandate by the UN Security Council in 2014 meant that the mission and activities of UNMISS were significantly reduced to focus on the protection of civilians' obligations, and away from capacity-building activities.[86] However, a parallel change is not reflected in the data analyzed in this study which continued to show minimal involvement of UNMISS in incidents following the change in mandate. This lack of intervention was also documented in the public discourse on incidents in Malakal, Bor, and Juba, which is constituted of UN-led investigations, third-party reports that drew upon civilian accounts, as well as media reports, that emerged after the conflict. In tracking the root causes of these failures, five trends are evident in the discourse: issues with UN leadership; inaction of peacekeepers; inadequate resources to fully support the mission's mandate; failure of early warning systems; and a lack of accountability mechanisms.[87]

In 2016, UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon ordered an investigation into UN deployment in South Sudan to be made after reports emerged that on July 11, South Sudanese government troops had rampaged through Juba raping and killing foreign aid workers and civilians in presence of

[86] UNSC. (2014). Resolution 2155 (2014): Adopted by the Security Council at its 7182nd meeting, on 27 May 2014. Retrieved from www.un.org/en/ga/search/view_doc.asp? symbol=S/RES/2155(2014)

[87] UN Headquarters Board of Inquiry. 2016. "Note to Correspondents – Board of Inquire Report on Malakal." Retrieved from www.un.org/sg/en/content/sg 2021-03-05/note-correspondents-board-inquiry-report-malakal

UNMISS. The event resulted in the death of 300 civilian deaths and 2 UN peace-keepers. The investigation revealed that UNMISS' force was heavily disorganized and lacked leadership.[88]

## 3.6 Conclusion

UNMISS has been present in South Sudan since 2011. However, as demonstrated herein, there are many incidences that point toward the mission's inability to protect civilians. However, it should be noted that UNMISS is operating in a complex and difficult environment in which conducting multi-dimensional and integrated peace support operations with traditional instruments is proving to be difficult to implement the mission mandate. This chapter assessed the South Sudan conflict and the performance of UNMISS including its achievements and failures.

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[88]Hersher, Rebecca 1 November 2016) "A 'Chaotic and Ineffective Response to the Violence' By U.N. In South Sudan" (https://www.npr.org/sections/thetwo-way/2016/11/01/500    239640/a-chaotic-and-ineffective-response-to-the-violence-by-u-n-in-south-sudan. National Public Radio. Retrieved 2 March 2022.

**CHAPTER FOUR**

**CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES FOR THE UN MISSION IN SOUTH SUDAN**

**Introduction**

UNMISS is the current international community's main interventionist force formed to protect civilians from violence and conflict that has characterized almost a decade-long war in South Sudan. UNMISS is one of the United Nation's most challenging peace-keeping operations. Its mandate has overtime changed to deal with emerging situations in South Sudan adopting a more proactive approach. This, however, has not translated to a comprehensive protection strategy. This chapter assesses the challenges facing UNMISS and available opportunities for success.

**4.1. Challenges facing UNMISS in implementing its Mandate**

Despite its significance in protecting civilians, UNMISS has suffered fundamental flaws and challenges that have affected its effectiveness. Its challenges stem from a combination of internal UN-related factors as well as external factors arising particularly from the parties to the South Sudan conflict. Some of the challenges are:

**4.1.1. The Dilemma of Protecting Civilians**

The primary pillar of UNMISS's most recent mandate is the protection of civilians. Within this pillar, UNMISS is asked:

> "To exercise good offices, confidence-building, and facilitation in support of the mission's protection strategy, especially in regard to women and children, including to facilitate the prevention, mitigation, and resolution of inter-communal conflict through, inter alia, mediation and community engagement in order to foster sustainable local and national reconciliation as an essential part of preventing violence and long-term state-building activity."[89]

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[89] UN Resolution 2514 (2019), UN doc S/Res/2514, March 12, 2019, para. 8(a)(vi).

UNMISS protection of civilians (POC) sites are based in Bentiu, Bor, Juba, Wau, and Malakal. The sites were created when South Sudan descended into civil war, and thousands of people across the nation flee to UN bases to escape brutal and widespread ethnic and political-based killings. As of September 2019, more than 180,000 people were still sheltering at five (POC) sites, though this rose to more than 200,000 by 2020.[90]Although the opening of the bases was an unprecedented and courageous decision by UN peacekeepers, the sites created a range of problems for the mission.

For instance, the presence of large numbers of civilians seeking protection extends the borders of the United Nations POC sites designated by the government. This situation raises logistical challenges that influence effective civilian protection. In this situation, protection of the site perimeter is needed and is achieved by increasing the number of military troops and the police. Humanitarian needs, including shelter, also should be increased. This leaves limited resources available for patrolling in violence-affected areas. Furthermore, the perimeter walls around the UN sites are often porous and lack adequate lighting thereby contributing to cases of insecurity such as easy and quick movement of contraband weapons and goods.[91]

As a result of the burgeoning challenges, UNMISS has found it difficult to effectively protect civilians in and around the POC sites. Additionally, the responsibility for providing security to those locations reduces its capacity to protect humanitarian workers and civilians elsewhere. Consequently, cases of women and girls being victims of sexual harassment when moving in and

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[90] UNMISS, Sept 2019, "Future Planning for the Protection of Civilians Sites in South Sudan – Report of the Secretary-General," U.N. doc. S/2019/741.

[91] Sharland Lisa and GorurAditi,2015. "Revising the UN Peacekeeping Mandate in South Sudan: Maintaining focus on Protection of Civilians," Sydney: The Stimson Center and Australian Strategy Institute, 2.

about the sites in search of firewood or going to the market place have become prevalent. Poor in-camp security has led to rebels attacking the camps repeatedly.[92]

The crowding at POC sites has also created camp management problems leading to the rise of societal issues in the camps like cases of sexual harassment, ethnic tensions, and among other crimes. Therefore, cases of clashes within the POC have increased.[93] The large number of immigrations into the camps has limited UNMISS' capacity and resources available for effective protection of civilians. Summarizing UNMISS challenges in regard to POC, Alison Giffen notes:

> UNMISS faces an unprecedented challenge in South Sudan. Yearly, over 100,000 people seek shelter from violence inside the U.N. bases. These bases are targets for attacks with potentially huge casualties. Even with the 12,500 military and police authorized to serve under UNMISS in South Sudan, the peacekeeping operation will not be able to protect everyone in the country who is vulnerable to violence.

## 4.1.2. UN leadership and UNMISS Command Structure

Understanding UNMISS and its mandate would not be complete without considering the role that the leaders of the mission play, particularly the agenda that they have chosen to pursue in implementing the mission's mandate. Writing in the New York Times, Mahmood Mamdani (2017) blamed the UN for not putting adequate accountability measures in place. He noted that:

> The Security Council discussion on accountability for violence in South Sudan was limited to South Sudanese involved in the killing, ignoring members of the United Nations Mission in the Republic of South Sudan (UNMISS) who were charged with "responsibility to protect" civilians but failed to prevent violence. The UN seemed to have learned little from the Srebrenica massacre and the Rwandan genocide in the 1990s.[94]

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[92] Sullivan Daniel. November 2018. "Displaced Nation: The Dangerous Implications of Forced Returns in South Sudan", Refugees International; IOM/UNHCR Intention-Perception Surveys of POC sites.
[93] Ibid, p.18
[94] Mamdani Mohammed. & Hilde Johnson. 2017. "Who's to blame for the chaos in South Sudan?" Retrieved from https://soundcloud.com/duverden/ep11-whos-to-blame-for-thechaos-in-south-sudan

For Mohammed Mamdani, a significant portion of the blame for the South Sudan crisis lies with the experiments of state-building from above as implemented under the auspices of the UN and its agencies.[95]He adds that in South Sudan, the focus of the international community led by the UN, the US, the UK, and Norway was on building a state and not a cohesive nation. They focused on the military, the ruling political elite, and numerous militias ignoring the general populace.[96]Therefore, the causes for the inability to protect civilians haven't been addressed, and important change in UNMISS' performance hasn't been evident as the same critical failures keep on reappearing whenever there is an outbreak of conflict in the country.

Besides this, weaknesses in UN leadership, and command structure ineffectiveness in UNMISS have been reported. Alli, note that:

> The differences in training and doctrines, and the problem of command and control are major challenges that reduced the UN's effectiveness because some contingents would not work with or cooperate with others.[97]

A report by the Humanitarian Practice Network adds that:

> The command structure of UNMISS is considered one of the greatest problems facing the mission. Investigation of the effectiveness of UNMISS reveals that poor leadership heavily contributes to many of the operation's operational challenges. Moreover, coordination of the civilian component of UNMISS is also ineffective despite the strong joint operations. The ineffectiveness reportedly stems from a lack of unified command. Moreover, the appointment of UNMISS commanders has for some time been questionable.[98]

Ellis Stammes explains that constant shifts in the appointment of commanders result in confusion and affect the command link in the UNMISS structure. This has created security gaps.

[95] Mamdani Mohammed. 2016. "Who's to Blame in South Sudan? Boston Review. Retrieved from http://bostonreview.net/world/mahmood-mamdani-south-sudan-failed-transition.
[96] Zambakari Christopher. 2014, 8 July. "South Sudan's Preventable Crisis. The Fletcher Forum of World Affairs' 2014 Global Risk Forum. Retrieved from www.fletcherforum.org/2014/ 07/08/zambakari-3/
[97]Alli, W. O. 2012. "The role of Nigeria in regional security policy". Abuja: Friedrich Ebert Stiftung, 53.
[98] Humanitarian Practice Network, "The Crisis in South Sudan," Humanitarian Exchange, No 68, January 2017, 14

### 4.1.3. Inadequate Humanitarian, Financial, and Logistical Facilities

According to Badell, peacekeeping missions in Africa lack the needed resources, hence struggle when faced with increasing rates of conflict. The UN resource constraints have put hundreds of thousands of needy people at risk of hunger, diseases, and death.[99] Regarding UNMISS, it has been noted that the troops often have little self-sufficiency in material and equipment supplies. United Nations standards of operation require contingents from contributing states to be self-sufficient for the first sixty days and to be held in-theatre stocks nationally for thirty days.[100] However, many troop-contributing countries in Africa cannot always afford their contingents' self-sufficiency for the days stipulated under UN standards.

Due to the shrinking of peace-keeping budgets, UNMISS has limited resources to carry out the development projects that would provide a peace dividend and strengthen peace. UNMISS also faces management issues with overcrowded camps with few shelters, sanitary and other necessities. In this situation, fulfilling humanitarian needs is a problem as UNMISS is often overwhelmed because of government constraints that restrict the involvement of other humanitarian players to help ease the humanitarian burden. Though the resources available don't meet the standards of the users, the situation is worsened by inefficient camp management.[101]

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[99] Badell Daniel 2018. "The age of outsourcing: UN peacekeeping operations: global perspectives, challenges and impacts", Nova Science publishers, 125-138.

[100] Galadima Hillary 2008. "Peace support operations in Africa. In Best, S. G. (ed.) Introduction to peace and conflict studies in West Africa"(Ibadan: Spectrum Books Limited), 12.

[101] Stammes Elis, "The United Nations Mission in the Republic of South Sudan (UNMISS): Protecting Civilians in a Volatile Environment," Norwegian Institute of International Affairs, Policy Brief 24, 2015, p.16.

## 4.2 External Challenges to UNMISS

There are numerous external problems that emanate mainly from the South Sudan government and rebels that have contributed to the poor performance of UNMISS. They include:

### 4.2.1. Dilemmas of State-centrism, Weak Political Will, and lack of Commitment

UNMISS initially was to support the South Sudanese government in building a viable country. However, when the war started, the United Nations refocused on civilian protection.[102]According to Lauren Spink;

> The dramatic shift in the UNMISS mandate was met with resistance from many parties involved in the conflict, particularly the government. The alleged violation of human rights by SPLA further deteriorated the relationship. In response, in some instances, government officials accused UNMISS of taking sides and publicly discredited the mission. This complicates UNMISS operations since the credibility of any peacekeeping mission is dependent on the relationship between the mission and conflict actors.[103]

Reports also indicate that the South Sudanese government has periodically been restricting UNMISS peace-keepers from carrying out their duties including using air support for operations and conducting patrols in armored cars. Anti-UN demonstrations in South Sudan coupled with obstructions of UNMISS staff and violent entry of government troops into UN camps threaten the mission. Under these conditions, the rationale for having peace-keepers in the country is considered unnecessary thus exposing many civilians to further humanitarian crises.[104]

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[102] Adam Day, and Charles T. Hunt. 2021. "Distractions, Distortions and Dilemmas: The Externalities of Protecting Civilians in United Nations Peacekeeping, Civil Wars" DOI: 10.1080/13698249.2022.1995680

[103] Spink Lauren, "Challenges and Conditions for Deploying and Effective Regional Protection Force to South Sudan", Center for Civilians in Conflict, (2017): 34.

[104] Christopher Zambakari,Tarnjeet Kang, and RobertSanders,"The role of the UN Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS) in protecting civilians," *Journal of Peace Studies*3 (2020): 7.

Access and movement restrictions by the government limit the capacity of UNMISS to carry out its operations, affecting the transport and movement of supplies and personnel. This significantly affects troops' willingness to undertake high-risk missions because of the delays in getting orders to undertake medical and casualty evacuation. The general lack of situational awareness because of the restrictions has restricted the mission's capacity to get the full account of threats to civilians in many parts of South Sudan, and to intervene forcibly to deter attacks against civilians.[105]

## 4.2.2. Difficult operational environment and poor infrastructure

This challenge is not only applicable to South Sudan but also to most African states where UN peacekeeping operations are ongoing or have taken place. The operational environment in the country is very challenging for a peacekeeping operation charged with the maintenance of protective presence and operational awareness in large and difficult-to-access areas. The country is vast with very poor infrastructure. South Sudan has few paved roads, a barely functioning court system, municipal governments, or prisons. With these issues confronting UNMISS, peacekeepers have found it quite difficult to provide security and patrol the interior sections of the country. The inadequate basic institutional infrastructures hinder United Nations peace-keeping activities and unnecessarily extend the conflict.[106]

These issues, combined with other obstructions by the South Sudan government have often restricted the capacity of the mission to execute its mandate fully.[107]To partly address the infrastructural challenges, the UNMISS's rehabilitation of main supply routes and protection of

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[105] Neudorfer, K. 2014. "Sexual exploitation and abuse in UN peacekeeping: An analysis of risk and prevention factors". Lexington Books; Lanham.
[106] SharlandandGorur, 2015, *Revising the UN Peacekeeping*, 17.
[107] Assessing the effectiveness of United Nations Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS). Report2/2019. Available at:www. un.unmiss.pdfg

humanitarian convoys have opened access to over 100,000 people affected by conflict who would otherwise have been out of reach of lifesaving aid. However, this is far from sufficient considering the expansiveness of the country and the huge population in need.

### 4.2.3. Stalled peace process

Joan Abrisketa and Mariano Aguirre while discussing issues affecting UN peace-keeping operations noted that:

> Effective peacekeeping is significantly dependent on existing peace. As such, lack of peace to keep is one of the major challenges facing UN peacekeepers. In this way, truces, peace treaties, and peace deals should be in place to warrant peace-keeping missions. This explains the essence of keeping the peace. However, in South Sudan peace remains elusive yet peace-keepers are actively involved in protecting civilians against humanitarian problems resulting from the unending conflict.[108]

The establishment of UNMISS hoped to consolidate security and peace in the country in preparation for the South Sudan government.[109] The intention was to strengthen internal security. Once the new government was formed, the mandate of the old (pre-war) mission ended on July 9, 2011. However, on December 15, 2013, conflict broke out starting in Juba and then quickly spreading out.[110] This was in line with the previous warning by Francis Deng that the failure of the people of South Sudan to be their "brother's keeper" would have consequences after South Sudan's separation from the north.[111] This shows that security and peace in South Sudan depend on peaceful co-existence among the different political formations and ethnic groupings. In this case, UNMISS has been ineffective since peace could not be guaranteed unless the peace is availed for UNMISS

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[108] Aguirre Marriano and Abrisketa Joana. Sept 2018. "Pressing Issues for UN Peacekeeping Operations", Transnational Institute, https://unmiss.unmissions.org/background.
[109] UNMISS,"Background of UNMISS," UN, Accessed 30th March 2022 at: https://unmiss.unmissions.org/background
[110] Ibid.
[111] Francis, Deng "War of Visions: Conflict of Identities in the Sudan," (Brookings Institute Press, 2011): 13

to keep and support the keeping of that peace. The lack of peace and divisions in the country have led to questions of legitimacy on the UNMISS side. Furthermore, the continuation of violence severely contributes to the persistent and massive violation of human rights. By mid-2018, the UNMISSs five POC sites hosted about 180,000 to 200,000 South Sudanese. A report released that year claimed that UNMISS was attending to just 10% of the civilians that required its attention. Thus, lack of peace implies continued displacement leading to more people needing UNMISS protection.

### 4.2.4. Broad Mandate and Unrealistic expectations

Adebajo Adekeye argues that changing dynamics and increased conflicts in South Sudan have resulted in a periodic change to UNMISS mandates, leading to the reallocation of resources to deal with other issues arising from the conflict.[112] As such, besides POC, the other complex tasks carried out by UNMISS include, deterring violence against civilians; supporting justice reform and rule of law; facilitating the delivery of humanitarian aid; monitoring violation of human rights; and supporting the implementation of the peace deal. Generally, there are about 207 different duties in UNMISS' current resolution. Providing UNMISS with a broad scope should have been accompanied by appropriate resourcing in all areas. However, this has not been the case. UN has repeatedly admitted that UNMISS' responsibilities given through its mandate largely exceed its ability to offer sufficient protection. The UN report on Juba's 2016 conflict noted that:

> the PoC site concept had set unrealistic expectations for the protection that UNMISS could feasibly afford 48,000 IDPs residing in a congested environment, where civilians can move in and out freely, where weapons and

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[112]AdebajoAdekeye. 2012. "UN Peacekeeping in Africa: From Suez Crisis to the Sudan Conflicts". Jacana Media. Sunnyside.

ammunition can easily be smuggled in and hidden and where even SPLA soldiers in civilian clothes could enter freely to visit friends and relatives.[113]

Similar conclusions were presented in the UN investigation on Malakal which notes:

As highlighted by the United Nations board of inquiry for Malakal, protecting the protection of civilian sites – effectively small cities of thousands of people – is beyond the capability of UNMISS or any peacekeeping mission and a task that raises unreasonable expectations.[114]

The broad mandate has led to an increase in effectiveness. For instance, a Stimson Research report cited that in 2014, UNMISS responded to fewer than 10% of security incidences – among the lowest response rates in all UN operations.[115] Regarding UNMISS expectations and complicated mandate, former UNMISS leader, Hilde Johnson, wrote in 2016 that citizens had:

unrealistically high expectations of what UNMISS could do … seemed to think that UN peacekeepers were so many and had such powerful assets that we could protect not only their new country but also their communities and individual families – whatever the threat was – anywhere.[116]

Furthermore, UNMISS' mandate largely remains vague and open to misinterpretation, particularly as it regards the mission "to use all necessary means," in the field.[117]

## 4.3. Opportunities and Prospects for UNMISS' Success

In spite of the many challenges facing UNMISS, recent events present many opportunities and prospects for successful peacekeeping operations in South Sudan. For instance, despite the

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[113] UN Headquarters Board of Inquiry. 2016. "Note to Correspondents – Board of Inquire Report on Malakal", para. 19. Retrieved from www.un.org/sg/en/content/sg/note-correspondents/ 2016-08-05/note-correspondents-board-inquiry-report-malakal

[114] Cammaert, Peter. 2016. "Executive summary of the independent special investigation into the violence in Juba in 2016 and the response by the United Nations Mission in South Sudan": 6. Retrieved from www.un.org/News/dh/infocus /sudan/ Public_Executive_Summary_ on_the_Special_Investigation_Report_1_Nov_2016.pdf

[115] UNMISS Short Mission Brief. World Peace Foundation and African Politics, African Peace.

[116] Johnson, Hilde. 2016. "South Sudan: The Untold Story from Independence to Civil War," New York: I. B. Tauris.

[117] UNMISS. 2016. "UNMISS Mandate". Retrieved from www.un.org/en/peacekeeping/ missions/unmiss/mandate.shtml

existence of many warlords and peace spoilers in the South Sudan conflict, the UN troop level has increased since 2014 helping limit the spread of the conflict and staving off the spread of war in some areas of the country. Among other developments increasing the possibilities for UNMISS success include:

### 4.3.1. Renewal of UNMISS Mandate with a Wider Focus

The renewal of UNMISS's mandate in 2016 and constant annual reviews down the line have provided opportunities to address part of the challenges hampering the UNMISS's ability to effectively protect civilians. The UNSC has had the time due to several peace agreements between the opposing parties to draw on advice provided and apply assessment during the revision of the UNMISS mandate. As a result of the revisions to the UNMISS mandate, the duties shifted from the one that focused on supporting state-building, peace-building, and the spread of state authority to one that focused on DDR among other duties.[118]These reinforcements have been and will continue to be particularly significant as the operation tries to project more force beyond the POC camps.

### 4.3.2. Increased involvement of AU and IGAD in South Sudan peace negotiations

Increased attention from the regional actors and international community on the situation in South Sudan has been witnessed, as evidenced by the momentum given to the peace deal and as a result of the discussions on the Addis Ababa talks. Numerous actors have invested significant political capital and time in a bid to arrive at a political solution to the conflict. The support of these stakeholders and their common voice on the implementation of the peace agreement is crucial to the effectiveness of UNMISS. Alongside IGAD and UN efforts, the AU has been engaged in South

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[118]Gorur and Sharland *R*evising the UN Peacekeeping Mandate in the South Sudan, 17.

Sudan's conflict resolution in numerous situations. For instance, the African Union High-Level Implementation Panel on South Sudan (AUHIP) has involved SPLM and GRSS in an effort to resolve their political dispute in recent years. In support of the mediation led by IGAD, the African Union played a proactive role in calling for African Union military observers and advocating for a robust "Protection and Deterrent Force" to work under or alongside UNMISS command. To support UNMISS, the African Union Peace and Security Council (AUPSC) has advocated for unhindered access for the UNMISS to fulfill its duties.[119] These efforts are likely to speed up peace negotiations creating an environment in which UNMISS will finally have the peace to keep.

### 4.3.3. The Broadening of UN participation in the political process

Though the initial UNMISS mandate stipulated great responsibility for the protection of civilians, it didn't provide a role for UNMISS in the political process something that is crucial in ending the conflict. The situation has, however, changed with increased UN involvement in pushing for a political solution to the conflict in South Sudan. UNSC has the power and authority to influence the conduct of the main actors by drawing focus on those failing to comply with the peace deal, violating the ongoing Status of Forces Agreement (SOFA), and attacks on UNMISS staff. The UNSC has recently been using this tool publicly through meetings and statements and also privately in demarches and consultations on the stakeholders to the conflict.

### 4.3.4. Increased Personnel and Logistical support

In 2013, UNMISS peacekeepers numbered 7,000 troops and 900 police.[120] The UNSC shifted the UNMISS mandate and troop levels in 2014 under Resolution 2155. As such, by June 2015,

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[119] UN Security Council, Report of the Secretary General on South Sudan, 21 August 2015, UN doc. S/2015/655.
[120] Resolution 2132 (2013), op cit.

UNMISS comprised 796 international civilian staff, 12,523 uniformed personnel, 1,204 local civilian personnel, and 409 UN Volunteers. UNSC, in an effort to create conditions for the opposition's safe return to the capital, authorized further increase to UNMISS troop level, with new 4,000 troops assembled from East African neighbouring countries. Financially, in March 2014, UNSC passed Resolution 2155 which was accompanied by an increase in budget for UNMISS of 1.1bn US dollars yearly, showing the international community's commitment to the protection of civilians in South Sudan.[121] Due to rapid increases in personnel and finance, UNMISS is currently the UN's second largest peace-keeping operation.[122] As the second largest multi-dimensional peacekeeping mission, UNMISS has been offered significant resources to carry out its duties.

## 4.4 Conclusion

This chapter assesses the challenges and opportunities for the success of UNMISS. The most evident finding of the chapter is that there exist many internal and external challenges and flaws in UNMISS which have hindered its effectiveness. A revised framework surrounding it was necessary to operationalize its temporary focus to shift from mainly peace-building activities to protecting civilians etc. This revision has been made providing the mission with significant areas of opportunity to raise its effectiveness. The revision, in addition to increased AU involvement, raises the possibilities for a better scorecard for UNMISS in the future.

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[121]   UNMISS.   2016.   "UNMISS   Mandate".   Retrieved   from   www.un.org/en/peacekeeping/
missions/unmiss/mandate.shtml
[122] Ibid.

# CHAPTER FIVE

## SUMMARY, CONCLUSION, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

**Introduction**

This study sought to assess the performance of UNMISS, and this chapter, therefore, brings to an end the study by presenting the summary, conclusion, and recommendations drawn from the findings established. The conclusions drawn are based on the objectives of the study which were; to assess the performance of United Nations peacekeeping missions in Africa; examine the performance of UNMISS, and explore the challenges and opportunities for the mission.

**5.1 Summary**

The first objective established that Africa is engulfed in conflicts with far-reaching impacts on populations. To reduce the effect of conflicts in the African continent, the UN has taken various steps including periodic deployment of peacekeeping forces in conflict zones. The earliest UN peacekeeping operation in the continent was in the Democratic Republic of Congo during the crises that befell the country following its attainment of independence in 1960. Since then, over 160 million people have been affected by civil wars and conflict in Africa while 3 million people died in the course of the violence. This has necessitated heavy involvement of the UN in peacekeeping in Africa with 40 percent of all UN peacekeeping missions in the world in the 21st century taking place in Africa. Currently, the multidimensional peace operation in DRC is the biggest and most expensive UN peacekeeping operation globally. However, despite the concentration of UN missions in Africa, they have not been successful in bringing lasting peace to the continent as conflict rages on.

The second objective of the study found that as part of its efforts in resolving the civil war and strengthening the government in South Sudan, the UN in the year 2011, established UNMISS. However, since its inception, UNMISS has faced criticism regarding its response to conflicts among civilians, and its ability to meet the protection of civilians clause of its mandate. The reasons for UNMISS' underperformance stem from a chain of fundamental flaws and challenges that have affected its effectiveness. Its challenges originate from a combination of internal UN-related factors as well as external factors arising particularly from the operational environment in South Sudan.

The third objective documented that in spite of the challenges and past failures of United Nations Peacekeeping missions in Africa, recent developments in the peace process in the region and within the UN structure present many opportunities and prospects for successful peace operations in South Sudan and African in general.

## 5.2 Conclusion

This paper sought to assess various objectives. Objective one focused on assessing the performance of United Nations peacekeeping in Africa. The study established that the political evolution of Africa is full of conflicts. Conflicts in Africa take different forms and include boundary disputes, the struggle for resources, military interventions in governance, and undemocratic and despotic leadership. Disappointingly, most countries in the region lack the capacity and ability to resolve the conflicts, and therefore, usually seek UN assistance in bringing back peace.[123]

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[123]Basu, Richard, 2001. "The United Nations Organization: The structure of an international organization". New Delhi: Sterling PVT Limited, 76.

The study established that the African States, as members of the UN, are adherent to the statutes of the UN charter that require member states to foster international security and peace and to have in place effective measures toward preventing and removing impending threats to peace. It is binding on them and therefore when they face conflict situations, they have to resort to the instruments of the UN in resolving them, particularly where the state in question does not possess the internal capacity to resolve the conflicts.[124]

Among the most common UN operations conducted in Africa include the United Nations Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUC) which began in the year 2000 and was concluded in July 2010. This mission was replaced by the United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUSCO). Besides DRC, other UN operations in Africa include the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in the Central African Republic (MINUSCA); United Nations Mission for the Referendum in Western Sahara (MINURSO); the United Nations Interim Security Force for Abyei (UNISFA); the United Nations Mission on Sudan (UNMIS); the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali (MINUSMA); and the UNMISS, among many others.[125]

On objective one, which relates to the hypothesis that peacekeeping missions in Africa face numerous challenges, the study concludes that despite the heavy involvement of UN peacekeeping in African conflicts, there has not been a wholesome success in peace operations in the continent.

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[124] ibid

[125] Scott A Snyder. September 2020 "The Role of Peacekeeping in Africa". Available at:https://peacekeeping.un.org/un/mission/africa)

The failures result from a number of factors including internal UN flaws as well as external operational challenges which hinder effectiveness.[126]

To improve the effectiveness of UN operations in Africa, the study established that a number of conditions are necessary. They include increased backing of the operations by the permanent members of the UN Security Council as this increases the chance of peace-keeping operations to secure financial resources and diplomatic support. Secondly, the peacekeepers working directly with local populations must cooperate with local belligerent groups so as to neutralize potential spoilers. Additionally, neighbouring countries and regional powers could increase the probability of success through the provision of diplomatic, military, and police aid to peace-keeping efforts.[127]

Objective two sought to assess the performance of UNMISS. The study established that South Sudan has encountered civil strife, political conflict, and humanitarian crises for many years before and after independence. Due to the severity of the conflicts, several peacekeeping and conflict resolution efforts have been made by different international agencies including IGAD, UN, and other agencies. The most recent UN peacekeeping effort in South Sudan has been the subject of this study.[128]

As such, on 8 July 201, UNMISS was established through UNSCR 1996 and its mission's mandate was to consolidate security and peace and to help secure a suitable environment and conditions that can promote development in the Republic of South Sudan. This was done with the goal to strengthen the government's capacity to rule effectively and democratically and foster favorable

[126] Ibid
[127] Akpan, Nse Etim and Olisah, Christopher Ikem, July 2019, "The Challenges and Prospects of United Nations Peacekeeping Mission in Africa. Africaqn Research Review, International Multi-Disciplinary Journal, Ethiopia Afreeva Vol. 13 (3), Serial No 55, July, 2019: 80-91 ISSN 1994-9057 (Print) ISSN 2070-0083 (Online) DOI: http://dx.doi.org/10.4314/afrrev.v13i3..
[128] De Waal, Alex. 'When kleptocracy becomes insolvent: Brute causes of the civil war in South Sudan." African Affairs113, no.452 (2014): 347-369, p.356.

relations with its neighbors. At the start, the mandate specified a force comprising 900 civilian police and 7,000 troops.[129]

However, not long after the war began in 2013, the U.N. Security Council sanctioned an expansion of the mission from its previous capacity of 900 police and 7,000 troops to something much greater - UNSCR 2132 authorized a military force made up of not less than 1323 police and 12,500 troops. Moreover, the mandate of the mission also changed from one that had supported state-building, peace-building, and the extension of state authority to one that pursued four key tasks of civilian protection, facilitating conditions favorable for delivery of aid, investigating and monitoring abuse of human rights, and supporting a ceasefire monitoring.[130]

In general, this objective established that within the decade in which UNMISS has been active, the UNSC has repeatedly increased its budget and personnel. However, conflict still rages on and cases of human rights violations have not ceased. As such, UNMISS has faced criticism regarding its ability to meet the PoC clause of its mandate. Despite the failures, UNMISS has also been successful in a number of instances including repelling rebels attacking civilians in a POC camp and sheltering displaced populations.

Objective three examined the challenges and opportunities for UNMISS. The objective relates to the hypothesis that Peace and stability in South Sudan have been realized as a result of UN Peacekeeping. Here, the study established that despite its significance in protecting civilians, UNMISS faces fundamental challenges that have affected its effectiveness. Its challenges stem from a combination of internal UN-related factors as well as external factors arising particularly

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[129] United Nations. 2017. "UNMISS – facts and figures". Retrieved from https://unmiss. unmissions.org/facts-and-figures
[130] Ibid

from the operational environment and from the parties to the South Sudan conflict. Some of the challenges are dilemmas of protection of civilians; weaknesses in UN leadership and UNMISS command structure; inadequate humanitarian, financial, and logistical facilities; state-centrism, weak political system, and lack of commitment; poor infrastructure and difficult operational environment; stalled peace process; and broad mandate to include unrealistic expectations.[131]

In spite of the many challenges facing UNMISS, recent events present many opportunities and prospects for successful UNMISS operations in the country. For instance, despite the existence of many warlords and peace spoilers in the South Sudan conflict, the UN troop level, and budget have increased immensely helping limit the escalation of the conflict and staving off wider war in some areas of the country. Among other developments increasing the possibilities for UNMISS success include the renewal of the UNMISS mandate with a wider focus, more involvement of AU and IGAD in South Sudan peace negotiations, the broadening of UN participation in the political process, and the aforementioned increase in personnel and logistical support. The study established that due to rapid increases in personnel and finance, UNMISS is currently the second largest of the UN's peacekeeping missions with 2000 civilians, 2000 police, and 17,000 troops. Being such a large and multidimensional peacekeeping endeavor, UNMISS has been imbued with various resources to perform its mandates.[132]

The objectives of the study were examined within the conceptual framework for the attainment of sustainable outcomes in peacekeeping missions. According to this conceptual framework, peacekeepers can attain positive outcomes that are sustainable in the long run if they employ four steps that include: Ensuring that the conflicting parties understand the significance of peace by

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[131]Sharland Lisa and GorurAditi,2015. "Revising the UN Peacekeeping Mandate in South Sudan: Maintaining focus on Protection of Civilians," Sydney: The Stimson Center and Australian Strategy Institute, 2.
[132] UN Security Council, Report of the Secretary General on South Sudan, 21 August 2015, UN doc. S/2015/655.

making them see how expensive war is; removing the fear and uncertainties that fuel war by advocating for an armistice; controlling rogue parties or groups that can trigger further conflicts after the peace has been restored; and controlling the actions of the dominant political factions, often the ruling government, that can readily prompt further hostilities by the opposition.[133]

This framework was quite significant in helping understand why UNMISS has not been fully effective or why the mission is not regarded to have totally failed. The framework revealed how UNMISS has implemented some of these steps and failed to implement others thereby having mixed results.

## 5.3 Recommendations

On the basis of the findings, this study makes the following recommendations,

### 5.3.1 Support of UNSC by first increasing African representation

This study established that overall, the UN has become constrained regarding resource availability and cannot, therefore, be expected to effectively handle all the conflicts which are scattered all over the continent of Africa. Despite this, the study also found that peacekeeping missions in Africa face financial and logistical limitations that hinder their effectiveness. As such this study recommends that peacekeeping operations in Africa including in South Sudan should receive the backing of the permanent members of the UN Security Council. This is important because it is likely to increase the chance of peace-keeping operations in the continent to secure resources and diplomatic support. This should be done by increasing the number of African representatives in the UNSC.

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[133]Fortna, Virginia Page. "Does peacekeeping keep peace? International intervention and the duration of peace after civil war" International studies quarterly 48, no. 2 (2004): 269-292.

### 5.3.2 UNMISS to cooperate with all Actors

This study found out that the legitimacy of UN peacekeeping missions in Africa, and to a large extent, in South Sudan has been questioned especially due to several factors such as failure to protect civilians and the rampant allegations of human rights abuses by peacekeepers including pervasive allegations of sexual abuse and extortion of women and children. As a solution, the study recommends that peacekeepers in the region work directly with local populations in South Sudan. This cooperation must also be extended to the belligerent groups for effective operation so as to neutralize potential spoilers known to hinder or slow down the progress of peacekeepers and mediators. This should be achieved by involving women and youth groups in key peacekeeping decision-making.

### 5.3.3 Support of Neighboring Countries and Regional Organizations

The study also established that major troop-contributing countries to the UN often sway decisions to favor their interests at the expense of the affected countries. In turn, this impacts peacekeeping missions. In Africa for instance, the UN failed to impose an embargo on arms during the war in Sierra Leone due to selfish interests from eastern European countries that were provisioning Liberia and Sierra Leone with weapons. As a solution, the study recommends that neighbouring countries and regional powers could increase the probability of success in UN operations in South Sudan and Africa at large through the provision of diplomatic, military, and police aid to the UNMISS peacekeeping efforts. This will reduce the influence of foreign countries with selfish interests from interfering with peace efforts in the region. This could be realized by increasing the number of troops contributed by neighbouring countries.

### 5.3.4 Review of UNMISS Internal Operational Structures

This study established that there exist many internal and external challenges and flaws in UNMISS which have hindered its effectiveness. As a solution, the research recommends a revised framework of UNMISS which is deemed necessary to operationalize its temporary focus to shift from mainly peace-building activities to the protection of civilians. This revision will provide the mission with significant areas of opportunity to raise its effectiveness. The revision raises the possibilities for a better scorecard for UNMISS in future operations.

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# APPENDICES

## Appendix I: Turnitin Anti-Plagiarism Originality Report

ASSESSING THE PERFORMANCE OF UNITED NATIONS PEACEKEEPING IN AFRICA: THE CASE OF UN MISSION IN SOUTH SUDAN (UNMISS)

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