ISTANBUL TICARET UNIVERSITY GRADUATE SCHOOL OF SOCIAL SCIENCES DEPARTMENT OF AFRICAN STUDIES AND INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

THE U.N PEACEKEEPING MISSION IN CAR: CHALLENGES AND PROSPECTS

MA Thesis

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ISTANBUL, 2023

İSTANBUL TİCARET ÜNİVERSİTESİ

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Dedication

I dedicate all the required information in this title ‘The U.N Peacekeeping Mission In CAR: Challenges & Prospects’ has been written in accordance with the academic manners and ethical commitment. I would clarify that all the materials, sources, data and all extra inputs have been benefited well throughout the writing procedure of this thesis. All matters contained in this thesis are my personal opinion and do not reflect the official view of Istanbul Ticaret University.

Soufiane Merzoug

ABSTRACT

The nation of Central African Republic (CAR) has faced a prolonged period of turmoil and political unrest, leading up to a civil war in 2013 that resulted in over a million people being displaced and thousands of casualties. In response, the United Nations dispatched the MINUSCA peacekeeping mission to the region in 2014, with a mission to safeguard civilians, assist with disarmament, and reinstate security and the rule of law. However, despite the presence of peacekeepers, the situation in CAR continues to be unstable, with persistent conflicts and no established government. This investigation aims to assess the efficacy of the MINUSCA mission in promoting peace and stability in CAR. The study will analyze the complex conditions encountered by MINUSCA, such as security risks and logistical impediments, and the influence it has had on institution-building and legal governance. Additionally, it will explore the constraints of the mission and provide recommendations to enhance its effectiveness in managing the ongoing conflict and cultivating peace in CAR. By shedding light on the UN-led peacekeeping efforts and their success in promoting peace and stability in nations affected by prolonged conflict and instability, this inquiry will contribute to a better understanding of the efficacy of peacekeeping missions.

ÖZET

Orta Afrika Cumhuriyeti (OAC), uzun bir dönem boyunca çalkantılı bir süreç ve siyasi huzursuzluklarla karşı karşıya kalmış olup, 2013 yılında çıkan bir iç savaş sonucunda milyonlarca insan yerinden edilmiş ve binlerce kişi hayatını kaybetmiştir. Buna yanıt olarak, Birleşmiş Milletler 2014 yılında MINUSCA barışı koruma misyonunu bölgeye göndermiştir. Bu misyonun amacı, sivil halkı korumak, silahsızlanmaya yardımcı olmak, güvenliği ve hukukun üstünlüğünü yeniden sağlamaktır. Ancak, barış güçlerinin varlığına rağmen, OAC'daki durum hala istikrarsızdır ve süregelen çatışmalarla ve kurulmuş bir hükümetin olmamasıyla devam etmektedir. Bu araştırma, MINUSCA misyonunun OAC'de barışı ve istikrarı teşvik etmedeki etkinliğini değerlendirmeyi amaçlamaktadır. Çalışma, MINUSCA tarafından karşılaşılan güvenlik riskleri ve lojistik engeller gibi karmaşık koşulları analiz edecek ve kurum oluşturma ve hukuki yönetim üzerindeki etkisini inceleyecektir. Ayrıca, misyonun kısıtlamalarını araştıracak ve OAC'deki süregelen çatışmayı yönetme ve barışı tesis etme konusunda etkinliğini artırmak için öneriler sunacaktır. Bu soruşturma, uzun süreli çatışma ve istikrarsızlık yaşayan ülkelerdeki BM liderliğindeki barışı koruma çabalarını ve barışı ve istikrarı teşvik etmedeki başarılarını anlama konusunda daha iyi bir kavrayışa katkıda bulunacaktır.

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ABBREVIATIONS

ADF: Africa Defence Forum

APPR : Appel pour La Paix et La Reconciliation (Call For Peace and reconciliation)

AU: African. Union

CAR: Central African Republic

CPC: Coalition of Patriots for Change

DDR: Disarmament, Demobilization, and Reintegration

DRC: Democratic Republic of Congo

DPKO: UN Department of Peacekeeping Operations

ECCAS: The Economic Community of Central African States

EU: European Union

FACA: Central African Armed Forces

FDPC: Democratic Front of the Central African People

ICC: International Criminal Court

ICG: International Crisis Group

IPD : Inclusive Political Dialogue

MINUSCA: Refers to the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in the Central African Republic

MICOPAX : Refers in French to; Mission de consolidation de la paix en Centrafrique (Consolidation of Peace in the Central African Republic)

MISCA: The international Mission to Maintain Peace in the Central African Republic

PPCS: Kimberly Process Certification Scheme

SEA: Sexual Exploitation and Abuse

TCS: Troop-Contributing States

USMS: The Special Mixed Security Units.

UN: United Nations

UNSG: United Nations Secretary-General

UNDP: United Nation Development Project

UNSC: United Nations Security Council

UPC: Union for Peace in The Central African Republic

USMS: Unités Spéciales Mixtes de Sécurité (Special Mixed Security Units)

MPC: Central African Patriotic Movement

INTRODUCTION

Conflict and political instability have troubled the Central African Republic (CAR) for many years. In 2013, the country descended into a civil war, which resulted in the displacement of over a million people and the deaths of thousands. In an effort to promote peace and stability, the United Nations (UN) deployed a peacekeeping mission, known as MINUSCA, to the country in 2014 (United Nations, 2021). The mandate of the mission was to assist with the restoration of security and the rule of law, support the disarmament of armed groups, and protect civilians (United Nations, 2021).

Despite the presence of peacekeepers, the situation in CAR has remained volatile. Fighting between armed groups continues, and the country has been unable to form a unified national government. The peacekeeping mission has also faced logistical challenges, such as a lack of resources and difficulty in securing its base. Additionally, peacekeepers have been targeted in attacks, and some have been accused of committing human rights violations.

This paper aims to analyze and evaluate the MINUSCA intervention in CAR since its deployment in 2014. It will assess the extent to which the mission has contributed to building peace in the country. The study will explore the challenging conditions that the MINUSCA service endures in a country characterized by the absence of state and law. The study will also examine whether the UN peacekeeping mission has created an atmosphere that allows for institution-building and rule of law. The study will specify the areas of intervention of the MINUSCA and its limitations and will propose strategies and policies that can be adopted to enhance the levels of efficacy in humanitarian interventions of the MINUSCA based on the analysis of its experience.

This study will examine several research questions, including: What are the primary goals and specific areas of intervention of MINUSCA? What progress has the United Nations peacekeeping mission in CAR made in promoting peace thus far? What are the main internal and external obstacles that are impeding the achievement of peace in the country? Lastly, what is the potential for success of the overall peacekeeping operation in the CAR?

The United Nations peacekeeping mission is a critical aspect of global security and peace, and its evaluation presents a valuable opportunity for academic researchers. The UN peacekeeping mission is a dynamic and evolving area, with new challenges and prospects arising, making it a timely topic for research. The evaluation of the UN peacekeeping mission can bring new insights and perspectives to the fore, shedding light on current issues such as conflict resolution, peacebuilding, and human rights protection. The UN peacekeeping mission offers a unique opportunity for researchers to innovate and patiticipate to the development of new policies, practices, and approaches. The research findings can inform policy and practice and play an important role in the improvement of the UN peacekeeping mission, which in turn can lead to greater peace and security globally. By choosing to evaluate the UN peacekeeping mission as a thesis topic, a researcher can make a meaningful contribution to a crucial area of international affairs and impact the lives of countless people around the world.

1.1. Research objectives

The goals of this paper are as follows:

1- To analyze and evaluate the MINUSCA intervention in CAR since the year of its deployment back in 2014.
2- Asses to what extent the MINUSCA has contributed to building peace in CAR over the years spent in service.
3- Explore the challenging conditions that the MINUSCA service endures in a land where the absence of state and law is the main characteristic.
4- Define whether the UN Peacekeeping mission has created an atmosphere that allows institution-building and law rule.
5- Specify the areas of intervention of the MINUSCA and its limitations.
6- To propose strategies and policies adoptable to enhance the levels of efficacy in humanitarian interventions of the MINUSCA based on analysis of its experience.

The research study has set several objectives to guide its investigation on the MINUSCA intervention in CAR. Firstly, the study aims to analyze and evaluate the impact of MINUSCA since its deployment in 2014, assessing its contribution to peacebuilding in the region. It also seeks to explore the challenging conditions faced by MINUSCA in a context where state and law are absent. Additionally, the study aims to

determine whether the UN Peacekeeping mission has created an environment conducive to institution-building and the rule of law. Furthermore, the research aims to identify the specific areas of intervention by MINUSCA and understand any limitations encountered. Lastly, based on the analysis of MINUSCA's experience, the study intends to propose strategies and policies that can enhance the effectiveness of humanitarian interventions. To address these objectives, the research questions will investigate the objectives and interference areas of MINUSCA, its achievements in promoting peace, the internal and external challenges it faces, and the prospects for the overall peace operation in CAR.

1.2. Research questions

The research will aim to explore and provide answers to these questions:

1. What are the main objectives and specific interference areas of the MINUSCA?
2. What has the United peacekeeping mission in CAR achieved for the sake of peace until the present time?
3. What are the main internal and external challenges that hurdle its aim for achieving peace in the African Central Republic?
4. What are the prospects of the whole peace operation in CAR?

1.3. Hypothesis

The UN Peacekeeping mission in CAR has made some contribution towards peace and the rule of law in the country. However, the mission alone is not sufficient to achieve lasting peace as long as the people of CAR lack the strong will and desire for peace, and external interference continues to exacerbate the conflict.

1.4. Research Methodology

This thesis utilizes a qualitative method based on secondary data, which involves information from official reports of the United Nation and its affiliate organizations, as well as other NGOs that are concerned with the peace operation in CAR. With a view to providing the vision within the UN and the non-profit organizations peace factors in the African state. In the meanwhile, this paper tries to add an outsider vision as well as reflections of academicians and global peace actors through exploring books and

academic Journals that have been evaluating the United Nation peacekeeping mission in CAR.

1.5. Limitations of the study

Since this research is based on secondary data that is mainly formed on reports, evaluations, and statistics that were drawn from the different field results and experiences. thus, it would be difficult to draw final conclusions about the subject or absolute prospects of the whole peacekeeping operation.

1.6. Assumptions of the study

The UN mission has been very difficult and hazardous since its initial, mainly due to failure to gain the trust of all the conflict parties. However, The MINUSCA has been assisting in establishing relative state of peace in CAR and creating an atmosphere for law rule in the country, but it has not been sufficient.

The MINUSCA mission is becoming more arduous in the last few years and in the years to come due to foreign interference of regional powers and world powers, that are driven by ambition to gain control over CAR's natural resources, the fact that fuels the conflict and threatens the whole peace process.

1.7. Research Structure

1.7.1. Introduction

This chapter serves as a comprehensive introduction to the topic of research covered in this dissertation. It offers an accessible summary of the thesis content, including a concise review of the study's background, its main objectives, and the research questions that shape the study. By providing readers with an overview of the entire thesis, the introductory chapter aims to enhance comprehension of the research. This chapter covers various subtopics that define the thesis, including the context and background of the study, research objectives, research questions, limitations, and assumptions.

1.7.2. Chapter One: Literature Review

The literature review chapter aims at covering enough amount of necessary information and conclusions previously done by researchers who are concerned with the topic of the research. It will primarily give a definition and background of peacekeeping in general, as well as objectives of peacekeeping, then a scope of the latter in international law. The literature review will also cover the context of the United Nation peacekeeping intervention in CAR. Then, at the end a summary of the information provided in the chapter. Therefore, this chapter is the backbone of the dissertation in the sense that it uses secondary research to considerably examine the topic of research from a wide perspective.

1.7.3. Chapter Two: Motives Behind the Conflict in CAR

Chapter two is supposed to go through the several motives of the conflict in CAR, whether internal or external motives. This chapter is meant to explain and answer questions such as why the conflict has been going on for such a long time non-stop.

1.7.4. Chapter Three: Challenges Facing the U.N Mission

In Chapter Three I will try to define and explore the many challenges that have and still facing the United Nations Peacekeeping mission MINUSCA in The Central African Republic that might include several factors that could be internal or external.

1.7.5. Findings and Conclusion

The final phase of this thesis will primarily present the study's findings and conclusions. In this part I will discuss the significance of the research and its contribution to existing knowledge. Additionally, it will address the research questions and objectives posed earlier in the study.

1.8. Summary

The introduction section sets the groundwork for the study and outlines its key components. It begins by stating the research objectives, which highlight the specific goals the study aims to achieve. Following that, the research questions are presented, which serve as guiding inquiries for the research. The hypothesis, a proposed statement to be tested, is also mentioned.

The section then moves on to discuss the research methodology, indicating the approach and techniques employed to gather and analyze data. Additionally, the limitations of the study are acknowledged, acknowledging any potential constraints or restrictions that may impact the research.

The assumptions of the study are mentioned, stating any underlying beliefs or premises upon which the research is based. A brief overview of the research structure is provided, outlining the different chapters and sections that constitute the study.

The research structure includes an introduction section that sets the context for the study, followed by Chapter One, which focuses on the literature review. Chapter Two delves into the motives behind the conflict in CAR, while Chapter Three addresses the challenges facing the U.N. mission. Finally, the section mentions that the findings and conclusion of the study will be presented.

In summary, the introduction section establishes the research objectives, research questions, hypothesis, research methodology, limitations, assumptions, and research structure of the study, providing a clear outline of the subsequent chapters and the overall framework of the research.

CHAPTER ONE: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

Peacekeeping is a strategy utilized by the United Nations that is often challenging to define. Although it is not explicitly mentioned in the UN Charter, it has been predominantly shaped through practical implementation. The origin of peacekeeping dates back to the 1950s when it was introduced as a way to address the difficulty faced by the Security Council in reaching a consensus required to authorize enforcement measures (Bothe, 2012; Higgins, Webb, Akande Sivakumaran and Sloan, 2017). In order to garner the required political support for intervention, it was imperative that peacekeeping operations refrain from utilizing force beyond what is necessary for self-defence purposes (Bothe, 2012).

peacekeeping was designed to be impartial, unlike enforcement actions that pursue a specific objective against one party. Peacekeeping operations aim to collaborate with the Host State, seeking their consent and cooperation (Higgins; Webb; Akande; Sivakumaran and Sloan, 2017). As a result, three fundamental principles were established for early peacekeeping endeavors: securing permission from the Host State, utilizing force solely for self-defence purposes, and upholding impartiality amongst peacekeepers (UN Department of Peacekeeping Operations [DPKO], 2008). These principles were intended to guarantee the Host State's cooperation and gain the crucial political backing of the Security Council (SC), thereby establishing a viable and prosperous peacekeeping operation (Higgins; Webb; Akande; Sivakumaran and Sloan, 2017).

During the 1950s, peacekeeping missions typically consisted of tasks like monitoring the political climate, promoting peace through implementing peace accords, and monitoring the retreat of hostile forces (Bothe, 2012). The peacekeeping missions described here are typically referred to as "first-generation" or "traditional" peacekeeping. However, conflict situations have evolved significantly over time, becoming increasingly complex and transitioning from international to internal conflict, or a combination of both. As a result, obtaining consent from the Host State to deploy peacekeeping troops has become more challenging for such missions (Higgins; Webb; Akande; Sivakumaran and Sloan, 2017). Additionally, peacekeeping forces have frequently found themselves in rapidly deteriorating circumstances, which necessitated a more extensive definition of the

use of force, where self-defence would encompass protecting the mission's authority or safeguarding a community from a serious danger to their existence (Ibid.). At times, the way peacekeepers positioned themselves in a conflict also brought to question their impartiality (Ibid). The wider authorization to utilize force that may be required in a peacekeeping mission today can offer peacekeepers a greater opportunity to restore peace and security. Regrettably, that same authorization also has the potential to inflict more significant damage, which is an inevitable consequence (Blokker, 2015).

Over the past several years, there have been substantial modifications to the UN peacekeeping operations in terms of mission structure and responsibilities. Currently, most peacekeeping missions no longer adhere to the principles of impartiality and non-use of force, and instead operate with the agreement of the Host State (Bothe, 2012). The concept of using "all necessary means" has become prevalent in peacekeeping since 1990 (Bothe, 2012).

In modern times, there have been several terminologies used to delineate the various responsibilities of the United Nations in peacekeeping operations. These encompass the more recent creation of dual attributes for 48 distinct mission types that extend beyond self-defence and necessitate the use of force, such as peace enforcement, multidimensional peacekeeping, robust peacekeeping, and second-generation peacekeeping (Ibid).

In reality, the distinctions between the terminologies are frequently indistinct (DPKO, 2008). It is worth noting that while all of the above peace operations are UN-led, important differences do exist with regional coalition forces, which operate under UN authorization but have an independent leadership structure. For the purposes of this discussion, the focus will be on peacekeeping operations that have been authorized to utilize force outside the scope of self-defence in accordance with Chapter VII of the United Nations Charter (Berdal & Zaum, 2018).

2.2. Concepts and definitions

In order to construct a well-substantiated theoretical stance, it is important to begin with a precise definition of the key concepts and variables employed in the argument. This dissertation centers on United Nations peacekeeping operations, acknowledging that the

UN is only one of the several actors involved in the peacekeeping arena. In recent decades, other multinational organizations and independent nations have also conducted peacekeeping operations, including NATO, the African Union, and the European Union (Gowan and Johnstone 2007; Hultman, 2020). Although there are other organizations that conduct peacekeeping operations, the UN has been and remains the most significant actor in peacekeeping both historically and presently.

A significant number of peacekeeping missions that are not under the purview of the United Nations still receive their directives from the UN Security Council (United Nations, 2013). This thesis focuses on UN peacekeeping operations for several reasons. Firstly, the issue of fatality in peacekeeping operations and much of the research on the topic is specific to UN peacekeeping. Secondly, most research on peacekeeping is centered on UN peacekeeping, and the majority of background information used in this thesis pertains only to UN peacekeeping. Therefore, the term "peacekeeping" used in this thesis should be understood as referring to UN peacekeeping unless otherwise specified. The definition of conflict is crucial in this thesis since it is a necessary condition for the theory. According to Licklider and Renner (2018), conflict is defined as "a situation in which two or more parties perceive that their interests are incompatible and, as a result, they engage in actions that cause harm or block each other’s efforts to achieve their objectives" (p. 2).

The central theme of the thesis focuses on two pivotal notions that shape the foundation of the theoretical premise put forth in the paper. The first notion is the concept of a third-party military operation, which pertains to a military mission that is not a part of a UN peacekeeping operation and is primarily engaged in combat-oriented activities in a conflict zone. Moreover, this military operation is separate from the principal conflict parties involved in the conflict. The second concept is a rebel group, which is an armed non-governmental entity that is in opposition to the government of a particular country and is actively involved in a conflict. These two concepts are vital in understanding the theoretical framework of the thesis and need to be clearly defined.

2.3. Evolution of UN peacekeeping operations

To provide context for the thesis's main focus on modern UN peacekeeping operations and their mandates, it is crucial to present an overview of the key topics that will be

covered. Over the last thirty years since the end of the Cold War, the nature and frequency of conflicts around the world have changed dramatically, with a significant rise in civil conflicts and a steady decrease in traditional conflicts between states (Hultman, Kathman, and Shannon 2019). In today's swiftly global dynamics, with a rise in the number and complexity of domestic conflicts, UN peacekeeping operations had to adapt and grow quickly. The inadequacies of UN peacekeeping operations in Rwanda, Somalia, Angola, and Bosnia became apparent, leading to a realization that the doctrine of UN peacekeeping needed reform. The efficacy of UN peacekeeping came under global political scrutiny, leading to a shift away from its support (Fortna and Howard, 2008; Hunt, 2017).

The "Capstone Doctrine" of 2009 expanded the ability of UN peacekeepers to utilize force. The doctrine authorized the use of force at the tactical level to defend the mission mandate and in self-defence. Over time, the notion of "defence of the mandate" has expanded to encompass safeguarding civilians, neutralizing potential threats, and upholding the unrestricted mobility of peacekeeping forces (Hunt, 2017). The Capstone doctrine outlined the key functions of contemporary UN peacekeeping missions, which include peace-making, peace enforcement, peacekeeping, and post-conflict peacebuilding, often involving significant humanitarian efforts. The document emphasized the importance of integrating these activities to effectively promote peace and security in the modern world. This approach has led to the development of "multidimensional" peacekeeping operations that aim to address a range of objectives simultaneously (DPKO, 2020).

One of the primary objectives of current UN peacekeeping missions is to provide protection for civilians. In practice, the vast majority of peacekeepers are tasked with this responsibility, with over 95% of peacekeeping personnel dedicated to safeguarding civilians (DPKO, 2020). There is an increasing acknowledgement that the prevention of violence against non-combatants and the surveillance of human rights is a vital objective of current United Nations (UN) peacekeeping missions. This emphasis has played a significant role in the development of a peacekeeping doctrine that is more accommodating of the use of force (Hunt, 2017; Sloan, 2014). The MINUSMA mandate, for example, permits the mission to employ any necessary measures to achieve its objectives, and urges MINUSMA to execute its mandate with a proactive, robust, flexible,

and agile stance. The safeguarding of non-combatants is one of the primary objectives of the mandate (United Nations, 2020). However, protecting civilians is not the only reason for the trend towards a more permissive approach to the utilization of force. UN peacekeeping has also adopted a more coercive approach to resolving conflicts, which may involve using force as necessary to achieve their objectives. For example, in 2013, the United Nations Force Intervention Brigade was created within MONUC to primarily aim at neutralizing armed factions that jeopardized the authority of the state and the well-being of non-combatants (Sloan, 2014; United Nations, 2013).

2.4. Justification of Humanitarian Interventions in the International Law

2.4.1. Events of Genocide

According to international law, there are two instances where the use of unilateral force against a state's territorial integrity or sovereignty is permitted. The first exception is when the United Nations Security Council has authorized military intervention, while the second exception is when there is a legitimate act of self-defence (Kodra, 2016). According to international law, any military intervention, including those carried out for humanitarian purposes, must be conducted within the guidelines of the U.N. Charter (Boyle, 2008).

The United Nations Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide was established in 1948 after receiving unanimous support in the U.N. General Assembly. This convention criminalized acts committed with the intent to destroy ethnic, national, racial, or religious groups beyond national geographical boundaries (Boyle, 2008). The U.N. Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide, as articulated in Article I of the U.N. charter, commits the participating nations to acknowledge that genocide is a crime against international law, and they are obligated to prevent and punish it, whether it is committed during peacetime or wartime (United Nations, 1948).

Article II of the convention specifies that genocide is constituted by any act that is executed with the deliberate intention of annihilating a particular group of people. Essentially, from the U.N. Charter, the intentional perpetration of mass killings, causing severe physical or psychological harm, implementing measures to inhibit the

reproduction of a specific group of individuals, imposing deliberate conditions that result in extensive physical devastation upon a particular group, and forcibly transferring children from one group to another group are categorized as genocide (United Nations, 1948). However, the prerequisite for any of these acts to qualify as genocide is that they are executed with the intent to obliterate the targeted group (Kodra, 2016). Therefore, crimes that meet the threshold condition for genocide as outlined in Articles I and II of the U.N Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide are criminalized in international law and are punishable either through legal proceedings in the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court (ICC) or through legitimized (or justified) military intervention on humanitarian grounds (United Nations, 1948).

2.4.2. Authorization by the UNSC

The use of military interventions to avert humanitarian crises is legal under international law only when authorized by the United Nations Security Council (Paris, 2014). The primary responsibility for ensuring international peace and security lies with the Security Council, as stated in Article 24 of the United Nations Charter. Consequently, it has the legitimate authority to invoke Article 42, which permits it to sanction military intervention to prevent impending humanitarian catastrophes and sustain worldwide peace and stability.

Adhering to international law, threats to worldwide peace and stability encompass armed conflicts between states, the application or likelihood of military force by one state against another, serious breaches of humanitarian law executed by states against their people, and humanitarian catastrophes that generate broader regional disruption. Any of these elements can serve as a rationale for the Security Council to authorize military intervention to preserve international peace and security (United Nations, n.d.).

To permit military intervention to tackle a humanitarian emergency, the Security Council needs to obtain nine positive votes, and none of the five permanent members can exercise their right to veto. Additionally, if both the permanent and non-permanent members of the Security Council abstain from voting and there are still at minimum nine positive votes, with no veto being utilized, then the Security Council possesses the legal and rightful authority to endorse military intervention. (Berdal & Zaum, 2018).

2.5. Establishment of a Peacekeeping Mission

The initial step in establishing a peacekeeping operation is obtaining authorization from the United Nation Security Council, which gives the necessary authorization for a potential mission (Bothe, 2012). As the UN does not possess its own military forces, it relies on member States to provide voluntary contributions of troops (Crawford, 2013). Casually, the Council provide authorization to a peacekeeping operation with a resolution (Bothe, 2012).[1] The authorization provided by the Security Council does not in itself establish a peacekeeping operation, but rather enables the Secretary-General to request troops and take necessary steps to create the operation (DPKO, 2008).

A peacekeeping mission is comprised of two primary components: the United Nations, which provides overall political guidance and administrative support, and the troop-contributing states (TCS), which provide the manpower and resources for the mission. The relationship between these two components is contractual in nature (Bothe, 2012).

The relationship between the United Nations and the troop-contributing State (TCS) in a peacekeeping mission is typically governed by a contractual agreement or implied behavior. To provide guidance in such situations, the UN has issued a Model Agreement that outlines established practices for relations between the UN and TCS (United Nations, 1991). This Model Agreement is designed to be flexible and can be applied in situations where the parties have not established their own agreement for a specific mission (Bothe, 2012).

The Model Agreement defines the allocation of responsibilities between the troop-contributing State and the UN. It encompasses the handover of national troop contingents to the UN's command and control, while the troop-contributing State retains authority over disciplinary measures, personnel administration, and criminal jurisdiction (organic control) (Model Agreement, 1991). The significance of the last aspect lies in the fact that it allows the UN to comply with its duties towards the host State and ensures that the

[1] Although the General Assembly (GA) is not exempt from the responsibility of maintaining international peace and security, it has not initiated a peacekeeping operation since 1963, leading to the development of a custom that may prevent it from starting new peacekeeping operations. As a result, this article will only focus on the Security Council as the entity responsible for authorizing peacekeeping operations.

peacekeeping troops are accountable for any potential criminal actions. This obligation is also a part of customary international law (Bothe, 2012).

2.6. Context of the UN intervention in CAR

CAR's history shares similarities with Mali as it was colonized by the French in the late 1800s. It was part of the French Congo and later French Equatorial Africa, along with Chad, Gabon, and the Republic of Congo. CAR gained independence in 1960, after abandoning plans to form a larger unified country with neighbouring nations (Encyclopedia Britannica, 2022). Within six years of gaining independence, CAR experienced a coup that led to authoritarian rule for the following twenty years (Encyclopedia Britannica, 2022).

France provided both military and economic support during this period to control the nation's diamond resources. However, in 1979, France became overwhelmed by the country's leader, Jean-Bédel Bokassa, who declared himself as Emperor Bokassa I and misappropriated the diamond profits (Encyclopedia Britannica, 2022). The French subsequently replaced Bokassa with a new president, but he was toppled by another coup d'etat two years later. General André Kolingba then ruled the country until 1993 when he was pressured to hold democratic elections.

The new government inherited a bankrupt treasury and a flawed civil service, resulting in chaos and multiple attempted coups. Both the government and opposing groups committed human rights abuses, including violence against civilians. The French withdrew their troops in 1997, and the UN peacekeeping mission MINURCA was deployed in 1998 to support legislative elections and maintain stability and security. The mission lasted until 2000 (Encyclopedia Britannica, 2022).

CAR faced ongoing turmoil throughout the 21st century, leading up to a coup in 2003. In 2004, a new constitution was introduced, followed by general elections in 2005. The former army chief, François Bozizé, emerged as the elected president. Despite Bozizé's success, the nation's conditions failed to improve, and confrontations between the administration and insurgent groups displaced tens of thousands of people in subsequent years. In 2011, after years of chaos, another presidential election was held, resulting in

Bozizé's re-election. However, his challengers accused him of electoral misconduct (Encyclopedia Britannica, 2022).

In the years after the election, conflict continued in CAR. In 2012, a rebel coalition known as Seleka launched a major attack against the government in the northern part of the country. A ceasefire and power-sharing agreement were reached between Seleka and the government in 2013 (Human Rights Watch, 2015). However, the Seleka was dissatisfied with the agreement's implementation and launched another offensive (Human Rights Watch, 2015). By March 2013, the Seleka had taken control of the capital and seized governmental power, with Michel Djotodia, the rebel leader, becoming the country's leader (Human Rights Watch, 2014).

In response to global pressure, Djotodia accepted the establishment of an intermediary governing body to rule until elections could be held (Human Rights Watch, 2014). However, the intermediary government failed to restore order in the country, with Seleka rebels continuing to loot and commit numerous human rights abuses against local populations (Human Rights Watch, 2015).

Following the 2013 coup in CAR, Djotodia's formal disbandment of the Seleka group had no effect. As a reaction, non-military Christian individuals started creating armed groups to safeguard their neighbourhoods, as the government was unable to fulfill this duty. This led to the emergence of the Anti-balaka (Encyclopedia Britannica, 2022). Due to the fact that the ex-Seleka insurgents were predominantly Muslim, CAR became engulfed in a continuous pattern of religiously motivated conflict. In an effort to mitigate the ongoing violence, the United Nations Security Council granted authorization for an African Union peacekeeping initiative to bring stability to the country in 2013, which in turn prompted a French military intervention to assist the African Union mission. Consequently, both France's Operation Sangaris and the African-led International Support Mission to the CAR (MISCA) were dispatched to the region in December 2013 (United Nations Security Council, 2013). Nevertheless, owing to the magnitude of the conflict, the African-led International Support Mission to CAR (MISCA) was succeeded by MINUSCA in 2014.

After being compelled to step down in January 2014, Djotodia was succeeded by Catherine Samba-Panza as interim president, but the country still witnessed ongoing

violence despite her endeavors. The year 2015 saw the occurrence of a constitutional referendum and general elections; however, no presidential nominee emerged as the majority winner (Encyclopedia Britannica, 2022). As a result, the elections were postponed to 2016 (United Nations, 2020; Encyclopedia Britannica, 2022).

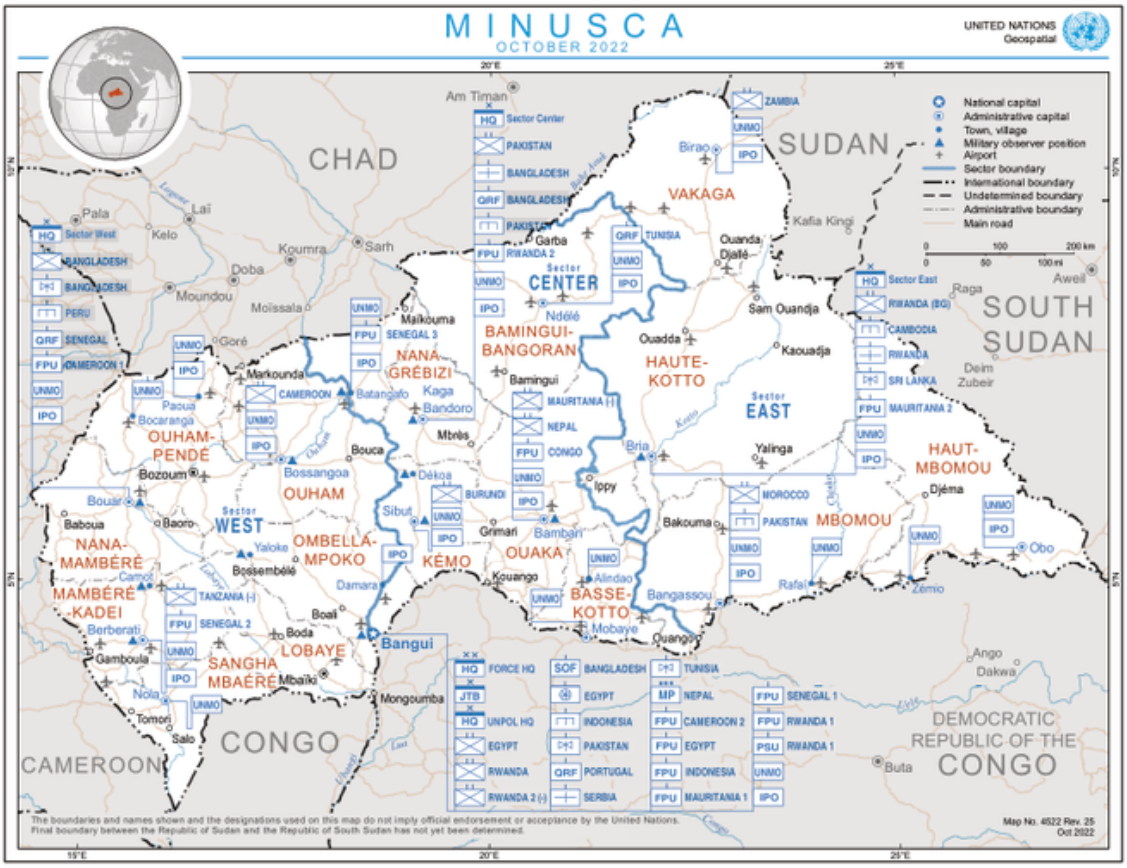
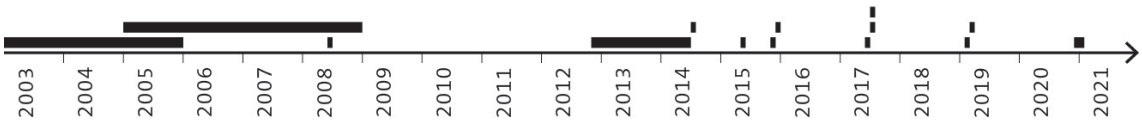


Figure 2.6.1 A map showing the MINUSCA points of distribution in CAR up to October 2022 (Source: OCHA via Relief Web)



2003–2005 Rebel leader Bozizé takes power and is elected president

2005–2008 Armed group violence in the north of the country

June 2008 Libreville Peace Agreement signed, requesting the DDR of armed groups

November 2012 – June 2014 Civil war: Séléka, a coalition of armed groups from the northeast take Bangui, remove Bozizé from power, and are later ousted by the Anti-Balaka

July 2014 Cessation of hostilities agreement signed (Brazzaville)

May 2015 DDR Agreement and Pacte Républicain signed (Bangui)

November 2015 Pre-DDR program launched

December 2015 Angola-sponsored peace agreement signed (Nairobi)

June 2017 Sant'Egidio Agreement signed (Rome), followed by EU roundtable of mediators

July 2017 Upsurge in violence leads to evacuation of humanitarian personnel

July 2017 Adoption of African Union Roadmap (Libreville)

February 2019 African Initiative for Peace and Reconciliation leads to signing of African Union-sponsored peace agreement (Khartoum)

March 2019 Inclusive government appointed

December 2020 / January 2021 Presidential elections. A new armed group coalition attacks several cities across the country

Figure 2.6.2 Timeline of the conflict in CAR (Source: Political Geography now)

2.7. Summary

This chapter delves into the topic of UN-led peacekeeping and humanitarian interventions, providing a comprehensive examination of peacekeeping and its motivations, as well as a brief history of the concept. It discusses the legal justification for peacekeeping and the conditions necessary to establish a peacekeeping operation. Additionally, the chapter provides context on the events in CAR that led to the deployment of the MINURCA and MINUSCA peacekeeping missions. The subsequent chapter will focus on these events in the CAR and assess the MINUSCA operation since its inception, evaluating its interventions in the field and examining the challenges and prospects for its mission.

CHAPTER TWO: MOTIVES BEHIND THE CONFLICT IN CAR

3.1.1. External Political Players

France has a vested interest in maintaining stability in the CAR's region, while Chad has a particular concern for the Vakaga region of the Central African Republic, which lies along its border with Sudan. The conflict in this region has political roots and has evolved into a violent division between Christians and Muslims. (Zahar & Mechoulan, 2017)

The political motivations of African and European countries played a significant role in the origins of the civil war. It has been suggested that Bozize's 2003 coup was viewed as a "regional coup d'état" and received support from neighbouring countries in CAR. In 2013, a comparable regional approach was utilized after Seleka seized control, with Djotodia's alliance obtaining backing from France, neighboring nations like Chad and Sudan, as well as ECCAS [2] (Marchal, 2009).

3.1.1.1. France and the ECCAS

Vasset (1997) argues that despite gaining independence from France more than six decades ago, CAR remains under the influence of French control over its political leadership. France has provided support to specific presidents and has intervened militarily to safeguard its interests in the region. These measures align with the defense accords between France and its previous African colonies, including CAR (Iwilade, 2015). France possesses a notable political stake in upholding its control in Africa, not just for financial motives but also to advance the French culture and language, which contributes to France's worldwide image as a dominant force (Iwilade, 2015).

According to O'Toole (1982), France has been actively involved in maintaining its control over Africa by installing presidents in its former colonies who are willing to serve French interests. The first president of the CAR after gaining independence, Daniel Dacko, is an excellent example of this strategy. Dacko was perceived as a suitable candidate for France because of his compliance and received support from the French government. When France decided to stage a coup, Colonel Jean-Bedel Bokassa took

[2] The ECCAS is comprised of ten member states, namely CAR, Chad, Gabon, Burundi, Cameroon, Angola, the Democratic Republic of Congo, the Republic of Congo, Equatorial Guinea, and Sao Tome and Principe, according to ECCAS records from 2014.

over in 1965. Bokassa's authoritarian government generated significant strains, causing France to withdraw its backing. In 1979, when Bokassa appealed for assistance from Libya, France reinstated Dacko as president to uphold its authority over the nation. Through this action, France restored what it considered to be a more suitable and reliable administration in CAR (O'Toole, 1982). France's sway over the political figures in CAR persists to this day. By collaborating closely with the ECCAS, France indirectly played a part in the initial time of the civil war and the religious clashes that broke out in 2013 (O'Toole, 1982).

In the past, Libya has been a challenger to French control over the African continent. In 1998, Libyan President Muammar Gaddafi established the Community of Sahel-Saharan States (CEN-SAD), and CAR joined this regional organization (Huliaras, 2001). During the time when Patasse was in power in the CAR, he received support from Libya and France. However, the regional ECCAS considered him an untrustworthy neighbour and preferred to have an ally who was loyal to both France and the ECCAS. When Bozize took control of the government in 2003 through a coup d'état, he had the support of France and other ECCAS states, which played a significant role in his ascent to power (Berg, 2008).

France’s close ties with the ECCAS, of which CAR is a member state, played a significant role in the military coup that overthrew Bozize. This is because France provides training and political support to the ECCAS, with the aim of promoting stability, peace, and security in the region (Awoumou, 2008). Chad, one of the members of the ECCAS, played a key role in the oust of Bozize and the rise of Seleka, which started the civil war and religious conflict in CAR. While France and other ECCAS members did not directly participate in these events, their close relationship with Chad may have indirectly influenced the situation (Berg, 2008). Chad had previously supported Bozize's coup against Patasse in 2003 by providing Chadian elite soldiers to support the coup, highlighting Chad's political importance in the region (Berg, 2008).

3.1.1.2. Border Regions of Chad, Sudan, and CAR’s Neighbouring Countries

To gain insight into Chad's true motives in the CAR's leadership, it is necessary to examine the border region shared by the CAR, Sudan, and Chad. Specifically, the Vakaga

region in the CAR's northeast is a critical factor in understanding the causes of Seleka's rise, both politically and socially.

Weyns et al. (2014) reported that Chad played a significant role in supporting Bozize's rise to power in 2003 with the aim of stabilizing the Vakaga region, which was known for its lawlessness and presence of Chadian opposition groups. However, Bozize failed to provide financial compensation to the Chadian soldiers who had aided him in coming to power. This led to a sense of betrayal among the soldiers, who formed the UFDR rebel group. Michael Djotodia led the UFDR, which eventually became the Seleka alliance. Therefore, the emergence of Seleka can be attributed to Bozize's inability to fulfill his promises to the Chadian soldiers who had supported him (Weyns et al., 2014).

To ease tensions and restore stability in the Vakaga region, Bozize failed to achieve his goal. This resulted in Chad’s President Idriss Deby withdrawing his backing for Bozize in September 2012. Instead, Deby reached out to the leaders of Seleka, hoping that they would bring stability and curb the activities of Chadian rebel groups that threatened his country. Bozize also tried to reduce his reliance on France and Chad by seeking support from Libya and South Africa, which led to Chad withdrawing its support for him. As a result, Bozize's regime fell (Berg, 2008). In early 2013, Chad extended military aid to Seleka. It can be inferred that Chad's decision to switch its allegiance from Bozize to Seleka played a significant role in the success of the latter's coup d'etat (Weyns et al., 2014).

Chad's involvement in aiding the rebel coalition of Seleka, can be attributed to the instability in the border regions shared by Chad, CAR, and Sudan. This area is prone to instability due to the presence of armed rebel groups that can easily cross borders, leading to unrest. Additionally, there are conflicts between herders, traders, and pastoralists over resources such as water and pasture, which exacerbates tensions between agriculturalists and herders and further contributes to the instability in the region (International Crisis Group [ICG], 2014).

Similarly, to Chad's concern for stability in the northeastern region of CAR, Sudan was apprehensive about the increasing presence of Sudanese armed opposition groups seeking refuge in the area. Consequently, Sudan provided support to the Seleka group by offering medical aid, training, and weapons to the coalition (Weyns, 2014). The conflict in Darfur,

which began in 2003, has led to a rise in the number of Sudanese refugees in Chad and the CAR. As a result, both Chadian and Sudanese rebels have crossed the borders seeking refuge in the CAR, causing destabilization in the region (Giroux et al., 2009). Furthermore, it is worth noting that most of the military equipment, including arms, used by the Seleka coalition was manufactured in Sudan or imported from Iran and China through Sudan, implying that Sudan may have provided support to Seleka (Conflict Armament Research, 2015).

3.1.1.3. Russian Intervention through The Wagner Group

During 2021, various forces including UN troops, CAR military, Rwandan military, and the Wagner Group have worked to recapture cities and towns from primarily Muslim rebel groups, resulting in progress in the conflict (Centanni and Djukic, 2021). At the start of 2021, the CPC, a political faction that endorsed former President Bozizé, initiated assaults on regions near the capital, Bangui, as a reaction to the 2020 election outcome. In February, with support from Rwanda and the Wagner Group, the Central African Republic military was able to repel some of the insurgent troops. In March, the runoff elections were conducted successfully, and Touadéra was inaugurated for his second term as president (ICG, 2021). Additionally, in response to the intensification of the conflict, the United Nations deployed an additional 2,750 troops in April.

The conflict persisted, leading to some factions splintering from the CPC due to sustained defeats (ICG, 2021). In the months of May and June, the Wagner Group and other forces continued to assist the government in gaining ground, however, numerous allegations of human rights violations were raised against them. Notably, France terminated its military alliance with the central government due to their reluctance to hold talks with the opposition and the dissemination of anti-French propaganda by the Russians (ICG, 2021).

In the months of July, August, and September, there were still ongoing fights and reports of war crimes. However, in October, there was some hope as a ceasefire was reached. Regrettably, all parties have breached the agreement, and the conflict seems to persist (ICG, 2021). The scale of fighting in the CAR may not be as significant as earlier in 2021, but it has not yet ceased entirely. The nation continues to be in a condition of utter

lawlessness, with millions of individuals in need of humanitarian assistance and more than 1.5 million people forced to evacuate their homes (The UN Refugee Agency, 2021).

It is unclear why Russia is involved in the ongoing conflict in the CAR, which has yet to be resolved. The Kremlin has not provided an official statement regarding its objectives in the country, but its activities and findings from investigations may provide some insight into its motives. In 2018, The Guardian obtained leaked Russian documents that indicate that Russia considers the CAR's central location to be of strategic importance and expects that establishing a presence in the country will enable the expansion of Russian influence throughout Africa (Harding and Burke, 2019).

One of the objectives of Russia in the CAR, according to leaked documents obtained by the Guardian, is to remove leaders in the government who are seen as pro-French and install leaders who are more aligned with Moscow (Harding and Burke, 2019). The Guardian obtained leaked documents which reveal that a key aim of Russia in the CAR is to depose leaders in the government perceived to be pro-French and replace them with leaders who are sympathetic to Moscow (Kyzy, 2020). CAR has the potential to contribute to Russia's strategic objectives by increasing Russian influence in Africa and reducing Western influence, particularly that of France. The exploitation of resources such as diamonds, gold, and oil could enrich Russian oligarchs, leading to economic growth and regime survival. The establishment of bases in the CAR could expand Russia's projection of power capabilities, while securing CAR's vote in international bodies could increase Russia's voting power. Putin's plans in the CAR align with his main objectives, but their success is not guaranteed (Ngoupana, 2021)

What activities has the Russian PMC Wagner group undertaken in the CAR is another important question to ponder. The Wagner Group arrived in the CAR in 2018, with weapons deliveries and instructions to train CAR forces, according to Marten (2019). Additionally, the group provided security to President Touadéra (Marten, 2019). Prigozhin's mining enterprises have been awarded resource extraction deals due to the aid extended to the country (Clancy, 2021).

Miners who spoke to journalists from CNN revealed that the Russian mining firms came to the nation simultaneously with Russian instructors (Wagner Group) and that any discoveries they make must be handed over to the Russians (Lister et al, 2020). The

Guardian's 2018 report on leaked documents revealed the objectives of the Wagner Group in the CAR, which included: providing security guarantees by strengthening and training the military, stabilizing the political situation, replacing French-leaning representatives in the national assembly and foreign ministry, providing assistance in the founding of state institutions, owning media outlets, and helping develop the "Khartoum Declaration" as a basis for negotiating a peace deal between warring factions (Harding and Burke, 2019). One of the key objectives outlined in the leaked documents from the Guardian regarding the Wagner Group's mission in the CAR is to train the military to ensure security. This is significant as the forces trained by the Wagner Group may have stronger ties to Russia than those trained solely by the UN.

The Wagner Group has effectively secured financing for Russian radio stations in the CAR to circulate pro-Russian and pro-government news to the citizens (Lister et al, 2020). While a study indicates no evidence of Russian intervention in the country's national assembly, the removal of Karim Meckassoua, the former assembly president, in 2018 was thought to have been guided by Russia. Additionally, the Russians were able to persuade all 14 insurgent groups to ratify a peace treaty, which regrettably didn't endure (Al Jazeera English, 2019).

Usually, the Wagner Group operates in a secretive manner, but there has not been a lot of media coverage about their presence in CAR, even from the Wagner Group members stationed in the CAR. On June 1, 2021, the RTV network published a brief YouTube documentary showcasing the activities of the Wagner Group and potentially other Russian PMCs. However, the RT network is known to be a prominent disseminator of Russian propaganda and is not likely to share information that contradicts the interests of the Kremlin (Scott, 2020).

In the brief documentary, the audience is taken on a tour with "Russian instructors" who were dispatched to CAR in response to a request for assistance. The video opens with their assertion that Russia played a significant role in aiding the CAR government to recapture 90% of the territory from several rebel factions (Russian Television [RT], 2021), The documentary showcases discussions with certain trainers, with one stating that they are present "for the greater good." Surprisingly, the footage also features a mine where the instructors assert that the community is allowed to keep all their discoveries,

which apparently has generated goodwill towards the presence of Russians among the locals (RT, 2021). Though obviously none of these sources explicitly mention the Wagner Group, they are the primary Russian private military company operating in the CAR.

Apart from the mentioned endeavors, it is apparent that the Wagner Group has engaged in actual combat operations, collaborating with the Central African forces they have coached. As of June 2021, it is estimated that around 2,100 personnel from the Russian private military company were present in the CAR (BBC News, 2021).

Prior to the election, reports suggested that the CAR military, aided by the Wagner Group, had suffered defeat at the hands of rebel groups who had managed to seize two crucial cities situated in proximity to the capital, Bangui (Sukhankin, 2021). Since then, the Wagner Group has been collaborating with different rebel groups alongside the Central African and Rwandan military forces. Despite being limited to advisory and training functions, the Wagner Group has assumed an active role in combat and has even launched its own independent operations (Jones et al, 2021).

Although the Bangui government has received significant support from the Wagner Group, their actions have caused massive destruction. The United Nations has accused the Russian private military company of crimes like killing innocent civilians, including over 20 people in a mosque, sexually assaulting women, and perpetrating acts of torture (Lister et al, 2020). Additionally, reports suggest that at least 11 Wagner personnel were killed in the conflict between August and mid-October, indicating the active involvement of the Russian "instructors" in the CAR conflict (Modern War Institute at West Point [MWIWP], 2023).

As per General Thomas Waldhauser, a former commander of US Africa Command stated; "the Wagner Group has engaged in efforts to influence "the highest levels of government, including the president" (MWIWP, 2023). The Russian intervention has undoubtedly improved the security situation for CAR's government, resulting in a close partnership between the two entities. As evidenced by recent developments in July 2021, the government and its supporters have succeeded in expelling most of the rebel groups from the country's inhabited regions (Centanni and Djukic, 2021).

Russia's military intervention CAR has granted the country a significant amount of influence, not just within the CAR, but also in the surrounding region. Many governments that require assistance but do not adhere to Western human rights standards are pleased to enlist Russia's aid. In recent developments, the Malian government appears to have expressed confidence in the Wagner Group's capabilities and has authorized their deployment in Mali, another former French colony (Council of Foreign Relations, 2022). It appears that the Kremlin has achieved significant progress with limited and manageable negative effects. As a result of these signs, it is predicted that the Wagner Group will persist in operating in CAR, and Russia's impact will persist to expand in the area.

3.1.2. Internal political players

The international community, comprising France, ECCAS, Sudan, and Russia, provided support to the Seleka coalition to bring about political change in a region that had been persistently afflicted by instability. Furthermore, the two warring factions in the conflict, Anti-Balaka and Seleka, had separate political objectives that added to the conflict's initiation (BBC News, 2014). It is important to highlight that Seleka's formation was primarily driven by political reasons, whereas Anti-Balaka emerged as a response to social issues (Kron, 2015).

3.1.2.1. Creation of Seleka and its Political Intentions

As previously mentioned, in the northeastern part of the CAR, there is a coalition of rebel factions known as Seleka. Formed in 2012, the group united to address President Bozize's failure to adhere to the ceasefire agreements signed between the government and rebel groups following the CAR Bush War (2004-2008), which occurred in the northern part of the country between 2007 and 2008 (France 24, 2013). Two main peace agreements were signed between the government (led by Bozize) and active rebel groups in the Vakaga region that is located in north-eastern CAR, the 2007 Birao agreement[3] and the Inclusive Political Dialogue (IPD)[4] (ICG, 2013).

[3] The government and two rebel groups, namely UFDR and FDPC, affixed their signatures to the document in 2007 (ICG, 2008).
[4] The agreement was signed in Libreville, Gabon, in 2008 (ICG, 2008).

Around 200 individuals from various groups, including civil society, civil services, opposition parties, and representatives from four rebel groups (APRD, UFDR, MLCJ, and UFR), convened in December 2008 to form the Inclusive Political Dialogue (IPD) in CAR (ICG, 2010). The participants unanimously agreed to integrate rebel representatives into the country's political representation and to incorporate members of the rebel groups into CAR's national army. Furthermore, they called for the disarmament of rebel groups and the implementation of security sector reforms (ICG, 2010).

To address the issue of active rebel fighters in the country, the United Nations adopted the Disarmament, Demobilization, and Reintegration program (DDR), as a strategy to reestablish peace in volatile areas of CAR. The DDR program included a disarmament process to regulate arms in circulation, a demobilization program to assist rebels in leaving their respective groups, and a reintegration process to ensure a smooth transition from a rebel to a civilian lifestyle with alternative means of livelihood (United Nations [UN], 2016).

The challenges encountered during the implementation of the DDR program resulted in its failure. One of the major challenges was the internal conflicts within the rebel groups, including changes in their representatives and the withdrawal of some groups from the agreement, which made it hard to implement the program effectively. Additionally, the program lacked comprehensive reintegration strategies for the armed groups, which hindered the successful reintegration of the ex-combatants into society. Furthermore, the program's incentive approach, which involved paying rebel fighters to surrender their weapons and leave the group, was not sustainable (Nest, 2014).[5] Nonetheless, the existence of other functioning armed groups made rebels hesitant to surrender their weapons, as there was no guarantee of safety in a country with inadequate national security measures (ICG, 2010). The unsuccessful implementation of the DDR program had a significant effect on the subsequent years and was a factor in the instability in CAR's northern parts, the outbreak of the civil war, and the resulting sectarian conflicts.

The failure of the DDR program and the proliferation of weapons in CAR and neighbouring countries such as Sudan and Chad posed a significant national security

[5] As part of the demobilization process, the DDR program provided food and non-food items to each fighter worth 130 dollars (ICG, 2010)

threat that the government was unable to manage (Berman and Lombard, 2008). They state that the government's capacity to control the possession of firearms by civilians is effectively non-existent (Berman and Lombard, 2008). Moreover, it is worth noting that some of the weaponry employed in the conflict has European roots and was initially intended for the national armed forces during Bozize's reign. Lack of sufficient national security coupled with the pandemonium that ensued after the conflict's eruption ultimately fell into the hands of both Anti-Balaka and Seleka militant groups (Conflict Armament Research, 2015).

Bozize, however, failed to honor the terms of the agreement, and according to reports, he never displayed a genuine intention to address the grievances against his regime. As an example, the rebel group representatives who were merged into civilian political life were given little political authority (ICG, 2008). The leader of APRD was appointed as the environment and ecology minister, while the leader of UFDR was appointed as the housing minister (ICG, 2008).

The government under Bozize demonstrated a lack of concern for the complaints raised by the rebel groups and neglected to enforce the conditions outlined in the peace accords. As noted earlier, the peace agreement resulting from the Inclusive Political Dialogue included power-sharing, which typically involves a significant realignment of domestic power dynamics, as external actors work to level the political playing field in favour of insurgents and at the expense of state leaders (Tull and Mehler, 2005). Bozize declined the power-sharing agreement because he was concerned that rebel groups would depose him. The agreement's implementation would have entailed alterations to Bozize's regime. The failure to execute these peace agreements ultimately inspired Seleka to topple Bozize, resulting in the onset of the civil war and the religious strife (ICG, 2008).

3.1.2.2. Political Aspirations of Anti-Balaka

The Anti-Balaka group was formed by several self-defence units with the aim of safeguarding their communities. Their initial engagement in the conflict was not politically motivated but rather had a social context. However, over time, the group's motives changed, and they began to develop political ambitions (Le Pape et al., 2019).

After Bozize was overthrown by Djotodia in 2013, several of Bozize's followers, including former members of the national armed forces and his Presidential guard, joined the Anti-Balaka self-defence factions to safeguard civilians from Seleka's assaults (Weyns, 2014). It can be contended that the Anti-Balaka movement was established when Bozize loyalists joined these groups. The Anti-Balaka grew quickly in size and structure, benefiting from the knowledge of national army and presidential guard members. Supported by the international community, these local defense groups became a substantial opponent to the massively armed Seleka. Moreover, the participation of Bozize loyalists lent a political aspect to the movement as they aimed to reinstate Bozize to power instead of simply defending against Seleka's attacks (Weyns, 2014).

The national armed forces' members and Bozize's Presidential Guard joined the Anti-Balaka movement because, after Djotodia seized power in 2013, Bozize escaped to Cameroon but continued to exert his influence from a distance. Bozize threw his weight behind the Anti-Balaka movement and endorsed their operations (Bodansky, 2014). Some even argue that Bozize founded the Anti-Balaka movement and pledged financial and logistical assistance to the group following the coup (United Nations, 2014). A year later after Bozize left CAR, In May 2014, the United Nations Security Council Committee designated him as someone who participates in or facilitates actions that impede the peace, security, and stability of CAR (United Nations, 2014). The objectives of the Anti-Balaka movement evolved over 2014 from safeguarding themselves and attacking Muslim minorities to pursuing official political representation. This shift suggests that the rivalry between Seleka and Bozize was one of the political drivers intensifying the conflict. (Weyns et al., 2014).

3.1.3. Ethnic, Social, and religious factors

As previously suggested, political circumstances allowed and encouraged Seleka to move towards Bangui, overthrow President Bozize, and trigger the civil war. Nonetheless, this section will investigate how social issues in the CAR played a crucial role in converting the political discord into a religious conflict, rapidly drawing in an escalating number of Christian and Muslim civilians. Two primary societal factors contributed to the religious clash: ethnic biases in national politics and the exclusion of Muslims in the CAR.

3.1.3.1. The significance of Ethnicity and Religion in CAR's Politics

According to the Joshua Project in 2016, the Central African Republic has a population comprising 82 distinct ethnic groups. The Baya (33%), Banda (27%), and Mandjia (13%) are the most significant ethnic communities, with members of all three groups identifying as Christians. Roughly 50% of the population of CAR are Christians, whereas only 15% are Muslim (Joshua Project, 2016). This section will investigate how the religious and ethnic diversity of the CAR instigated social fragmentation among its population and played a role in the emergence of a religious conflict.

From 1960 to the 1980s, ethnicity was not a prominent factor in the lives of Central Africans or in national politics following their independence. However, the arrival of Andre Kolingba in power in 1981 marked a turning point in the political scene of the Central African Republic, as ethnicity gradually became a more important consideration for the country's political leaders. Kolingba, who hailed from the Yakoma ethnic group, exhibited a strong preference for his fellow ethnic members, appointing them to vital roles, particularly within the national army. As a result, Kolingba made ethnic identity a vital component of the CAR's political culture. After President Kolingba was ousted by Patasse following 12 years in power, it was discovered that a significant proportion (70%) of the military personnel in CAR were of Yakoma ethnicity.

This phenomenon set a precedent for future leaders who also appointed their own ethnic kin to their inner circles. Patasse, who emerged victorious in the country's first relatively open election in 1993, mirrored Kolingba's behavior by selecting members of his own ethnic group, the Kaba, for key government positions, including the presidential guard (Berg, 2008). This practice created divisions between the presidential guard and the rest of the army, leading to three violent uprisings between April and November 1996. Ethnic favoritism remained a significant factor in politics even after Bozize took power in 2003, as he selected his close relatives from the Gbaya ethnic group for important government roles (Berg, 2008).

The rise of ethnicity in national politics during the 1980s resulted in the formation of social divisions among Central Africans from different ethnic backgrounds. This not only impacted their social standing, but also affected their socioeconomic opportunities. According to a study conducted by Franck and Rainer, the ethnicity of the leader in the

CAR is pivotal in determining the government's policies on education and health. Consequently, access to healthcare and education opportunities is largely influenced by an individual's ethnicity (Franck and Rainer, 2012). The ethnic partiality exhibited by the political figures had a significant influence on Central African society, causing ethnicity to become a source of conflict that resulted in prejudice and aggression, primarily directed towards ethnic minority groups (World Bank, 2012).

In the Central African Republic, ethnic communities are frequently linked with a specific religion, such as Christianity, Islam, or Animism. Of the 82 ethnic groups in the CAR, 53 are Christian, 19 adhere to Animism, and 10 practice Islam (Joshua Project, 2016). As a result of the intense religious affiliation of the ethnic groups, the ethnic bias previously mentioned indirectly leads to religious discrimination.

3.1.3.2. The Marginalization of Northerners and Muslims

The majority of Muslim ethnic communities in CAR are situated in the northern and northeastern regions., which includes the region of Vakaga. This section will discuss the significance of the Vakaga region in the events leading up to the civil war and the inter-religious conflicts that arose afterwards.

Though The region of Vakaga is part of the Central African Republic, it has a population that is more closely tied to Chad, Sudan, and South Sudan in terms of culture, society, and language. The official language of the CAR, Sango, is rarely used in this region, which is predominantly comprised of Muslim ethnic groups (ICG, 2007) The division of society between the northern region and the rest areas of CAR resulted in the Christian majority of the country viewing those from the north as being from Sudan and Chad rather than as fellow citizens (Weyns et al., 2014). The state has neglected the region and its infrastructure. Due to its remote location and poor road conditions, the area is detached from the rest of CAR for half the year and is difficult to reach. Additionally, the people residing in Vakaga face restricted access to essential services such as education and healthcare (ICG, 2007).

In 2008, when Bozize and the rebel group signed the Inclusive Political Dialogue, the had agreed to work on ending the discrimination against Muslims and northerners (ICG, 2010). Despite this agreement, Bozize did not implement it, and both groups continued

to face unfair treatment compared to Christians. As an illustration, Islamic holidays were not recognized as national holidays in the Central African Republic, and obtaining national identity cards was more difficult for Muslims than Christians (ICG, 2010). The political and social discrimination that Muslims and northerners endured was the primary motivation behind Seleka's push to remove Bozize from power.

The perception of Muslims and northerners as foreigners by many in the Central African Republic has a crucial role in understanding the reasons behind the religious strife. Since Seleka's fighters were primarily Muslim, including its leader Djotodia, many people viewed Seleka as a strange rebel group from Chad, which was reinforced by its support from Chad. When Seleka took control of Bangui, the state saw its first Muslim leader since independence.[6]

The marginalization of Muslims in the Central African Republic persists to this day. The government's lack of control has resulted in widespread abuses of human rights, particularly religious freedoms. In areas controlled by Anti-Balaka, there have been cases where Muslims were converted to Christianity through coercion. People who refuse are prohibited from practicing their religion openly and are forbidden from wearing traditional Muslim clothing or rebuilding their mosques. In addition, they are sometimes compelled to use Sango or Gbaya[7] instead of their own native language (Amnesty International, 2015). Reports indicate that in Balego, a town situated in the central part of the Central African Republic, Anti-Balaka militants have been enforcing penalties on Muslims who refuse to change their religion. Furthermore, Muslims residing in western regions do not have guaranteed safety when it comes to their mobility or participation in the diamond trade, which used to be a typical economic activity for Central African Muslims before the civil conflict (Amnesty International, 2015).

3.1.4. Economic Factors and Natural Resources

Contrary to the political and social factors that have been noted as the main factors driving the conflict, the economic factor had a more indirect impact. This section will argue that

[6] All the presidents who held office in the Central African Republic, namely David Dacko (1960-1965 and 1979-1981), Jean-Bedel Bokasa (1965-1970), Andre Kolingba (1981-1993), Ange-Felix Patasse (1993-2003), and Francois Bozize (2003-2013), professed the Christian faith.

[7] Bozize belongs to the Christian ethnic group of Gbaya.

the economic factors contributing to the religious conflict in the Central African Republic (CAR) did not directly trigger the conflict, but rather served as a means of financing both the Seleka and Anti-Balaka groups, potentially prolonging the civil war and the subsequent religious strife. To better understand the situation, it is necessary to provide some context regarding the economic factor, particularly the abundant natural resources in the Central African Republic (CAR).

The abundance of natural resources in Africa has long been a source of interest for non-African nations. The borders of African countries were drawn in such a way as to give colonial powers access to these resources, resulting in the enrichment of industrialized economies in the north while also causing the colonies to become dependent on imported industrial goods (Mentan, 2014). CAR is rich with plentiful natural resources, such as gold, oil, timber (which was initially found in 1912), and diamonds (discovered in 1914). These resources have significantly influenced the country's economy and history.

3.1.4.1. The Mining Industry

Artisanal miners are the primary force behind diamond and gold mining, and their operations are officially recognized as "Artisanal and Small-Scale Mining."[8] and is mainly located in the central and western parts of the CAR (World Bank, 2008). In 2008, the Central African Republic had around 80,000 artisanal miners, and the sector employed around 300,000 to 400,000 people who depended on it as a source of income. The illegal exploitation of minerals was widespread, and mining areas had higher rates of social issues like drug abuse, poor sanitation-related illnesses, sexually transmitted diseases, and prostitution compared to the national average. Moreover, the percentage of school-aged children attending school was low, with only 25% attending (World Bank, 2008). The informal sector of diamond and gold mining offers a means of income for many people and is often not subject to government regulation. Artisanal mining, which is typically a traditional and family-based livelihood that often takes place in remote locations, has proven difficult for authorities to regulate or monitor due to its unique characteristics (World Bank, 2008).

[8] According to a report by the World Bank in 2008, artisanal miners are responsible for operating in 98% of the mining sector in the country.

The absence of state control in the country has led rebel groups and criminal gangs to utilize mines as a source of funding, by smuggling minerals over the border for sale (World Bank, 2008). In an effort to address this issue, CAR joined the Kimberly Process Certification Scheme (KPCS)[9] in 2003, but in May 2013, it was suspended from the KPCS for failing to meet one of its minimum requirements (Kimberly Process, 2013). According to reports, rebel factions were active in the eastern region of the country, which includes areas that produce diamond like Bria, Sam Ouandja, and Bamingui (Kimberly Process, 2013).

The Kimberly Process has confirmed that the Seleka rebel group seized diamond mines in the eastern region of the Central African Republic and imposed fees and taxes before taking control of Bangui in March 2013. Once in power, they extended their reach to the western parts of CAR, imposing taxes on miners, traders, and transportation companies at the borders between CAR and Cameroon. While the Seleka eventually withdrew from the capital and regions in the west, they maintained control over mining areas in the center and northeast of the country. Subsequently, the Anti-Balaka group took control of diamond-rich areas in the west. Although a report by Amnesty International from May 2015 suggests that the Anti-Balaka continues to participate in diamond extraction activities in the west, either by direct mining or by levying unlawful fees and extorting payments for safeguarding the mining sites.

After CAR was suspended from the KPC at the start of the conflict, there has been speculation that substantial amounts of diamonds were illegally taken out of the country through the borders of Cameroon or the Democratic Republic of the Congo, and sold on the global market. Furthermore, buying entities in Bangui have reportedly been obtaining diamonds from mines under the control of Anti-Balaka and Seleka forces, and keeping them in storage until the Kimberly Process suspension is lifted, allowing for exportation (Amnesty International, 2015).

Before their involvement with Seleka, some members of the group were engaged in diamond mining. In 2003, when Bozize assumed power, the CAR became a part of the

[9] The World Bank's report in 2008 stated that the Kimberly Process Certification Scheme was established in 2003 to prohibit the trade of diamonds that were used to fund armed conflicts, both in terms of imports and exports.

KPC and he attempted to establish more authority over the diamond industry. This caused friction with local individuals who had interests in the sector, prompting some of them to become more inclined towards joining Seleka. Additionally, Bozize substituted diamond merchants with individuals from his own ethnic community, which provoked dissatisfaction among past diamond traders and prompted them to try to regain power by removing Bozize from power (Weyns, 2014).

3.1.4.2. The Timber Industry

The timber industry CAR has historically been a significant contributor to the country's export earnings, reaching as much as 40% (EU FLEGT Facility, 2014). According to a Global Witness report in 2015, Seleka rebel groups financed their operations before and after the 2013 coup by exploiting the timber resources of the country. The report claimed that Seleka received approximately 3.4 million euros in bribes from three foreign logging companies, including a company from France, Lebanon, and China, for various services such as assistance in passing roadblocks, armed escorts, and protection of their logging sites. However, the Central African Republic government denies these allegations and refutes the claim that Seleka and Anti-Balaka gained control over the forestry areas in the southwest, where most logging activities take place. The government argues that the logging companies were coerced into paying members of these groups at illegal road checkpoints (Le Citoyen, 2015).

Unlike the KPC for diamonds, there is no equivalent scheme for timber. However, various export agreements have been established to regulate the process of exporting timber. One such agreement is The European Union's Voluntary Partnership Agreement has been tackling the issue of illicit timber exports from CAR to the EU since 2012, while simultaneously enforcing economic, social, and environmental conditions. This agreement is still operational, according to the European Commission. (European Commission, "Voluntary Partnership Agreement (VPA) with the Central African Republic", 2012).

Despite the limitations imposed on diamond exports by the Kimberly Process, the conflict in CAR has not led to a cessation of timber exports. This has allowed the forestry sector to continue to finance the ongoing conflict (EU FLEGT Facility, 2014).

3.1.5. Summary

Chapter Two delves into the motives behind the conflict in the Central African Republic (CAR). The chapter examines various external and internal political players, as well as ethnic, social, religious, and economic factors contributing to the conflict.

The section on external political players explores the involvement of France and the Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS) in the conflict. France, in particular, plays a significant role in CAR's affairs. Additionally, the neighboring countries of Chad, Sudan, and CAR's other border regions have a stake in the conflict and their actions impact the situation.

The chapter also highlights the Russian intervention through The Wagner Group, shedding light on the role played by Russia in the CAR conflict and its implications.

Moving on to internal political players, the chapter discusses the creation of Seleka, a rebel group, and analyzes its political intentions. Furthermore, it explores the political aspirations of Anti-Balaka, another armed group active in CAR.

Ethnic, social, and religious factors are examined as crucial elements in CAR's politics. The chapter discusses the significance of ethnicity and religion in shaping the conflict dynamics. It also touches upon the marginalization experienced by Northerners and Muslims within CAR.

Economic factors and natural resources are also significant contributors to the conflict. The chapter investigates the impact of the mining industry and the timber industry on the conflict dynamics, shedding light on how economic interests play a role in fueling tensions in CAR.

Overall, this chapter provides a comprehensive analysis of the motives behind the conflict in the Central African Republic, covering a range of external and internal political players, ethnic and religious factors, and economic considerations related to natural resources.

CHAPTER THREE: CHALLENGES FACING THE UN INTERVENTION IN CAR

As noted by the United Nations Secretary-General in 1994, peacekeeping operations operate amidst numerous armed factions and terrorist groups, leading to occasional direct and indirect assaults on UN personnel, frequently resulting in fatalities and damage to equipment (United Nations, 1994). The High-Level Independent Panel on Peace Operations (HIPPO) report in 2015, emphasized that peacekeeping operations are frequently stationed in intricate conflict-ridden environments that are insecure and lack the essential capabilities needed to execute their mandates (United Nations, 2015). In some situations, these operations function without a strengthened peace process, resulting in significant challenges that impede their effectiveness in meeting their objectives (United Nations, 2015). Given the aforementioned details, it is clear that our case study presents a highly perilous environment in which the United Nations (UN) mission cannot easily establish peace. Nevertheless, MINUSCA has faced significant risks and obstacles, including opposition from warring factions, CAR's government, and occasionally, even within the mission's own ranks.

3.2.1. APPR (Appel pour la Paix et La Réconciliation) 2019 Peace Agreement

According to ‘’the 2019 Accord pour la Paix et la Réconciliation (APPR)’’, joint units composed of government forces and former rebels were to be formed within sixty days of its signing (CAR Presidency, 2019). However, due to the complex nature of the agreement, which involved 14 armed groups, determining the composition of the units was challenging. According to a report by the CAR Presidency (2019), quotas for armed group participation in the three Units for the Security of the President (USMS) were established during a meeting in February 2019. The report states that twelve rebel groups were allocated between one and 23% of the available positions, while two smaller armed groups did not receive any representation in the units (CAR Presidency, 2019).

The level of involvement in the three Units for the Security of the President (USMS) varies, with each unit stationed in different regions of the country, namely the northeast, northwest, and southeast (CAR Presidency, 2019). Each unit comprises 662 personnel, making a total combined force of 1,986 individuals, which accounts for over a quarter of the national military known as the Central African Armed Forces (FACA) that had an

estimated 7,000 to 8,000 personnel in 2019 (World Bank). The USMS units are mostly composed of armed groups, with 60% of the total force size, which amounts to 1,191 individuals (CAR Presidency, 2019). The remaining 40% of the personnel are from various national security forces, such as the FACA, gendarmerie, and police (CAR Presidency, 2019).

This complex composition of the joint units established in the APPR agreement poses a challenge to its implementation. As not all groups are equally represented in each unit, implementing the plan in a certain order risks benefitting some groups over others. The asymmetric approach to mitigating rebel groups involves balancing a smaller group presence in one unit with a larger presence in another. For instance, the Union for Peace in the Central African Republic (UPC) will only have 40 troops stationed in the northeast USMS, while they will have 200 troops stationed in the southeast USMS (CAR Presidency, 2019). Although there was a significant level of detail included in the plan, other crucial details were either postponed for later or overlooked entirely.

One example is the allocation of troops for the Union for Peace in CAR (UPC), which is expected to have the most significant number of rebel forces in the southeast USMS. It is unclear whether the UPC forces will be distributed evenly across the four companies that make up the unit in the region, or if they will be concentrated in only a few companies, which could cause imbalance. While the former option might achieve fairness among the armed groups, it could also result in weaker individual companies.

The agreement known as APPR requires the USMS to ensure the safety of civilians, maintain public order, safeguard migration routes, and carry out any additional duties related to security arrangements as assigned to them (CAR Presidency, 2019). A latter presidential decree, the protection of mining sites was added to the list of responsibilities of the USMS. However, right from the beginning, there were disagreements regarding the functional objectives and practical organization of the joint units (ICG, Egmont Institute, 2020).

According to a report, the meaning of "securing transhumance corridors" was differently interpreted among the armed groups. Some considered it as external security measures that involved border protection and escorting transhumant at their point of entry to the country, while others saw it as a task-based approach to responding to violent incidents

(CAR Peace Agreement Monitoring Dashboard, 2020). However, both interpretations failed to acknowledge that the former rebels were the ones that the transhumant had previously feared as security threats, making it difficult for the transhumant to trust the former insurgents now tasked with keeping the peace.

The understanding of the USMS by armed group representatives during peace talks in Khartoum differed from its envisioned implementation (International Crisis Group, 2019). The inconsistencies comprised various factors such as the quantity of rebels to be incorporated, the leadership of the units, and the method of execution. The armed factions were primarily enticed by the USMS proposal as it provided an opportunity to house their combatants, receive monetary incentives, and retain a competent and devoted military force, instead of fulfilling the task of safeguarding the citizenry. Nonetheless, the absence of harmony among competing armed factions generated fresh divisions, causing at least one group to lose faith in the idea because of the hostile actions of a rival group designated to join the USMS (T. Vircoulon, 2020).

In April 2020, the leaders of the UPC, MPC, and FDPC expressed their concerns about the slow of progress in the operationalization of the transitional security arrangements, the USMS, which had led to a stall in the APPR (Corbeau News, 2020). On June 9th, the training facility in Bouar was attacked by the 3R group, which was ranked fifth among the armed groups supporting the USMS. This event marked a significant deterioration in the situation (UN Security Report). It is believed that the attack on the training facility in Bouar was carried out by individuals with insider knowledge, specifically USMS deserters from the 3R, due to their targeting of specific areas of the facility (ReliefWeb, 2020). The APPR agreement necessitates that the USMS is responsible for ensuring the protection of civilians, upholding public order, securing migration corridors, and fulfilling any other security-related responsibilities assigned to them (T. Vircoulon, 2020).

Although the demission of rebel leaders from the MPC and 3R who were advisers to the prime minister in charge of the USMS drew concern that the peace agreement was at risk, it did not lead to the abandonment of the USMS concept. However, by May 2020, there were reports of lower-ranking personnel defecting from the USMS, taking weapons and ammunition with them (UN Security Council, 2020). After almost a year and a half

since the signing of the APPR, defections occurred in July, September, and November. It is noteworthy that the finalization of the roles, rules of engagement, and control and use of weapons and ammunition for the USMS had not taken place during this period (CAR Presidency, 2019).

Several rebel leaders who were supposed to integrate into the USMS reportedly formed a new armed coalition to challenge the government in the lead-up to the national elections held in December 2020, allegedly due to President Touadera's attempts to manipulate the vote (ICG, 2020).

By the end of 2020, there had been some improvement in the situation. However, reports of aggressive behavior by USMS members persisted, and in November, the country's primary supply road was once again blocked by USMS members in a pay dispute, resulting in imports being cut off (IBID). The African Union military observers, whose task was to supervise the USMS units, had not yet been sent for deployment (IBID). Despite attempts to establish the USMS, most of its ambitious goals have not been achieved due to various difficulties and delays. Political will and proper follow-through have been lacking, resulting in only one of the three units being partially operational. In addition, there are recurring reports of misconduct by USMS personnel against the population (UN Security Council, 2012).

Given the subsequent events and ongoing national turmoil, it appears doubtful that the USMS will achieve its objectives and may even exacerbate existing insecurity and inconveniences. Additionally, the APPR remains unstable and at risk of collapse (Global Observatory, 2019). Although previous concerns about the composition of the USMS have been overshadowed by recent events, The USMS's departure strategy remains a question that has not been answered yet. It is unclear whether the USMS elements will fully integrate into the FACA and CAR’s police, and this uncertainty may provide justification for current USMS elements to remain in place for a while longer, particularly since the formation of the other two units is still uncertain (Reliefweb, 2021).

3.2.2. Previous Peace Agreements

For successful implementation of a third party's mandate, it is vital to adhere to the exact terms and spirit of peace agreements. Conflict management and the effectiveness

of peace agreements require a comprehensive analysis of the conflict, including an examination of the actors, interests, positions, and conflict mapping (Kleiboer & Gómez-Sánchez, 2019). The conflict in CAR has persisted since the 1950s and is characterized by autocratic rule, a culture of revenge, ineffective governance structures, and a pervasive sense of impunity (Horward, 2019). While the 2012 outbreak of armed conflict that prompted UN intervention in 2014 may have been seen as opportunistic rather than deeply rooted, it is essential to comprehend the conflict's underlying causes to address it effectively (Horward, 2019).

Although the conflict in CAR was believed to be a religious conflict between the Séléka, who were predominantly Muslim, and the Anti-Balaka, who were Christian, the actual underlying causes were due to the inadequate political state infrastructure. Additionally, state forces had little involvement in the conflict (Raleigh, Clionadh, and Caitriona Dowd). The peace agreement that followed on May 3, 2015, focused solely on the three parties that signed the pact, neglecting any involvement of other actors. However, due to the conflict's underlying economic motivations, this agreement was not upheld, and the government postponed crucial matters, such as Disarmament Demobilization Reintegration Repatriation (DDRR) and intercommunal reconciliation (Stimson Center Report, 2019).

The MINUSCA faced challenges in implementing its mandate due to the non-adherence to the peace agreement and the splintering of armed groups into various factions with competing interests. It became problematic to identify the groups withdrawing from the agreement as it was unclear which faction had signed it. Furthermore, the peace agreement failed to address other local conflict dynamics, such as those between farmers and pastoralists (Ibid). These are conflicts that predominantly aimed at civilians, resulting in the notion that the MINUSCA is incapable of putting an end to the violence (Institute for Security Studies, 2019).

In the past, conflict resolution in CAR has mainly been carried out through negotiations between political elites and rebel leaders (Institute for Security Studies, 2019). However, these negotiations are unlikely to succeed as they take place in an environment of deep distrust, with both sides primarily seeking to gain access to power and resources (Zahar and Marie-Joëlle, 2017).



Figure 2.7.1 Numbers of PK Personnel Serving in CAR (Source: MINUSCA Official Website)

3.2.3. Poor Government Institutional Capabilities

The MINUSCA PKO is heavily relied upon by CAR's national security forces, as the police and gendarmerie lack the capability to secure the regions that were stabilized by MINUSCA (International Peace Institute, 2021). The authorized number of military personnel for MINUSCA is 14,400, which includes 480 military observers and staff officers, 400 police personnel, and 108 corrections officers (United Nations, 2021). As a result of this, armed groups have been able to retake control of these regions, nullifying the progress that had been made. In 2017, the United Nations Secretary-General acknowledged that there was a resurgence of violence in the Central African Republic that had stretched the resources of the mission (UNSG Reports, 2017). As a result of the situation, the United Nations Security Council passed UNSCR 2387 in 2017, which authorized an extra 900 troops to be deployed. The security forces of the state in CAR have limited involvement in the conflict due to their inadequate equipment and being overwhelmed (United Nations Security Council, 2021).

The absence of effective coordination in the negotiation processes among different armed groups, the African Union, and MINUSCA-sponsored efforts posed a challenge.

This resulted in a complicated situation where there were several partially completed ceasefire agreements and conflicting dialogues, leaving MINUSCA to work alone due to insufficient national capacity (International Peace Institute, 2018). Apart from the responsibility of protecting civilians and facilitating the peace process, MINUSCA has been given the mandate to promote the rule of law, create a safe atmosphere for the provision of humanitarian aid, and support the expansion of state authority as well as the Central African Armed Forces (United Nations Security Council, 2017). This is outlined in United Nations Security Council Resolution 2387. MINUSCA is mandated to work closely with the Central African Republic's government and security forces to effectively carry out its mission (United Nations Security Council, 2017). However, the national police force and civil servants in the country have limited capability, low morale, and poor motivation due to prolonged periods without payment of salaries.

To address this issue, the United Nations, World Bank, and European Union collaborated to pay the salaries of these officials, even though there were no verifiable payrolls (Human Rights Watch, 2021). In summary, MINUSCA started its mission in the Central African Republic where the police and civil servants were demoralized, posing a challenge in obtaining cooperation from some government agencies. The payment of salaries by the United Nations, World Bank, and European Union helped alleviate the situation, although potential negative consequences still existed (Carayannis, Tatiana, Fowlis, and Mignonne, 2017). Parfait Onanga-Anyanga, the United Nations Special Representative for CAR and head of MINUSCA, asserted that in 2017, the severe criticism of the mission within the country stemmed from the government's limited capacity and self-inflicted persistent insecurity. Each side had an expectation for MINUSCA to combat their perceived adversaries, which caused frustration (Ministère des Affaires étrangères, 2019).

3.2.4. Lack of Authority to Eliminate Armed Groups

MINUSCA faces a significant obstacle in that its mandate does not permit the use of force specifically aimed at eliminating or neutralizing armed groups. In certain instances where MINUSCA has taken pre-emptive action against such groups while carrying out its Protection of Civilians (PoC) mandate, it may have exceeded its authorized jurisdiction, thus compromising its impartiality. Moreover, while supporting the

government's security forces to establish a peaceful environment for political processes has made the peacekeeping operation vulnerable to accusations of partiality and perceived as an extension of the national armed forces (FACA). This has compromised its capacity to aid in political processes at both national and sub-national levels.

3.2.5. Conflicting Mandates

Prior to the current United Nations intervention in CAR, an African Union-led mission (MISCA) was in place (Zahar, Marie-Joëlle, 2017). However, both missions have encountered difficulties in working with the French mission (Sangaris), which was pursuing its own objectives. The mandates and leadership of MINUSCA and French Sangaris are distinct, with differing goals. The French intervention in CAR in 2013, under "Operation Sangaris," further complicated the situation, hampering the effective execution of the mission's objectives. In 1960, France signed a quadrilateral defence agreement with Chad, the CAR, and the Republic of the Congo, which granted them the ability to deploy an intervention force in CAR (Zahar, Marie-Joëlle, 2017). Before the completion of rehatting from the AU to the UN, both organizations faced difficulties in managing the intricate and often rivalrous relationships with sub-regional organizations (Carayannis, Tatiana, Fowlis, and Mignonne, 2017).

The transfer of responsibility from the AU to the UN was not without difficulties. The process of incorporating African divisions and preparing them for UN operations encountered obstacles related to equipment, training, and the way these divisions operated (Carayannis, Tatiana, Fowlis, and Mignonne, 2017). The notion that the UN could single-handedly overcome the capacity deficit by re-hatting was impractical. Certain African contingents, including those from Equatorial Guinea and the DRC, were omitted due to specific concerns regarding their appropriateness (Brooks, 2017). In addition, some of the troops from MICOPAX under ECCAS, which were integrated into MINUSCA, were ill-equipped and under-trained, and some were not paid regularly, particularly those from the DRC (Carayannis, Tatiana, Fowlis, and Mignonne, 2017). Therefore, ensuring order and security among them posed a challenge for MINUSCA, a challenge that had also faced the AU before it (Carayannis, Tatiana, Fowlis, and Mignonne, 2017). At the outset, this initiative was a peace undertaking within the sub-region, whereby the majority of

troops were obtained from neighboring nations, including some with minimal or no peacekeeping experience (Brooks, 2017).

3.2.6. Resource limitations

The UN acknowledges that its mandate is hindered by the issue of unsuccessful security sector reforms. While political obstacles may be a factor, a lack of financial resources is also a significant cause of the inadequate funding of these SSR initiatives (United Nations, 2015). In the case of CAR, MINUSCA is faced with a funding shortage that hinders its ability to effectively execute its mandate, while the government has postponed critical matters such as DDRR (Stimson Center. Report). This indicates that certain operations need to be scaled down to align with the current situation. One of the difficulties confronting the MINUSCA forces was the absence of attainable objectives that were not supported by realistic resources or political determination for sustained peacekeeping efforts (De Coning and John Karlsrud, 2017).

An additional obstacle is the inadequate transportation means caused by a lack of sufficient aerial resources, specifically helicopters equipped for night-time operations. This issue is further complicated by logistical difficulties caused by the inadequate road infrastructure that is required to support the movements of the troops (Stimson Center Report, 2016). As per the United Nations' peacekeeping principles and guidelines, sending military and law enforcement personnel to a region of conflict requires a parallel effort to reinstate the government's exclusive authority to use lawful force, reestablish the rule of law, advocate for human rights, form legitimate and functional governance bodies, and aid in the socioeconomic rehabilitation of the affected populace (DPKO, 2008).

3.2.7. Credibility of Peacekeepers

The UN's credibility was weakened because of accusations of sexual exploitation and abuse perpetrated by certain members of its military forces (UNICEF Report, 2015). In early 2016, fresh accounts emerged of sexual exploitation and abuse (SEA) transpiring in Bambari, purportedly carried out by peacekeepers from the Republic of Congo and the Democratic Republic of Congo who were affiliated with MINUSCA (UNICEF, 2015). The repatriation of these peacekeepers did not prevent significant damage to MINUSCA's reputation. The UN and the AU were criticized for failing to properly evaluate the troops

that had been passed on from the previous MISCA and MICOPAX missions. The soldiers from DRC were not formally enlisted by the African-led International Support Mission to CAR (MISCA), but instead volunteered themselves owing to their proximity to the conflict in CAR. Following MISCA's transfer to the United Nations (UN) mission, these soldiers were incorporated into the MINUSCA (Carayannis, Tatiana, Fowlis, & Mignonne, 2017).

The United Nations Department of Peacekeeping Operations (UNDPKO) had previously expressed concerns regarding the competency of these troops and the conduct of some of their leaders. Due to the absence of any other Troop Contributing Country (TCC) willing to deploy troops in CAR, the Republic of Congo was forced to provide troops to MINUSCA. However, their acceptance proved problematic as a report by Human Rights Watch (HRW) uncovered that RoC soldiers functioning as peacekeepers in CAR carried out summary executions of 18 civilians, including women and children, in the vicinity of a peacekeeping base located in Boali, CAR, during the period between December 2013 and June 2015. It is noteworthy that these peacekeepers were part of the MISCA mission initially and later deployed under MINUSCA (HRW report, 2016). It is noteworthy that third-party intervention in CAR has been occurring since 1997 as displayed in the table below.

Table 1 List of all Peacekeeping and Peacebuilding Missions Deployed in the CAR

Acronym	Official Name	Date Authorised	Mandating Organization
MISAB	"Inter-African Mission to Monitor the Implementation of the Bangui Agreements (Mission Intera-fricaine de surveillance des accords de Bangui)"	January 1997	OAU
MINURCA	"Mission in the Central African UN Republic (Mission des Nations Unies en République Centrafricaine)"	April 1998	UN
BONUCA	"Peacebuilding Support Office in UN the Central African Republic (Bureau des Nations Unies pour la consolidation de la paix en République Centrafricaine)"	December 1999	UN
	"CEN-SAD Peacekeeping and Security Force in the Central African Republic (CEN- (Force de maintien de la paix et de la SAD)"	December 2001	Community of Sahel- Saharan States (subsequently sécurité de la CEN-SAD en endorsed by the AU) Centrafrique)
FOMUC	"Multinational Force in the Central (Force multinationale en Centrafrique) African States (CEMAC)"	October 2002	Economic and Monetary African Republic Community of Central
EUFOR	"EU Force in Chad and the Central Chad/CAR African Republic (Mission de l'Union européenne au Tchad et en République Centrafricaine)"	October 2007	UN
MICOPAX	"Peace Consolidation Mission in the Central African Republic (Mission de consolidation de la paix en Centrafrique) (ECCAS)"	June 2008	Economic Community of Central African States
BINUCA	"UN Integrated Peacebuilding Office in the Central African Republic (Bureau Intégré de l'Organisation des Nations Unies en Centrafrique)"	April 2009	UN
ICR-LRA	"Regional Cooperation Initiative for the Elimination of the Lord's Resistance Army (Initiative de coopération régionale contre l'Armée de résistance du Seigneur)"	November 2011	AU
MISCA	"African-led International Support Mission to the Central African Republic (Mission internationale de soutien à la Centrafrique sous conduite Africaine)"	December 2013	AU
MINUSCA	"UN Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in the Central African Republic (Mission multidimensionnelle intégrée des Nations Unies pour la stabilisation en République Centrafricaine)"	April 2014	UN

Source: Marie-Joelle Zahar and Delphine Mechoulan, Peasce by Pieces?: Local Mediation and Sustainable Peace in the Central African republic.

3.2.8. Fatalities Among Peacekeepers

MINUSCA has been confronted with significant fatality and dangers throughout its mission in the CAR The peacekeeping operation has faced a multitude of challenges that have endangered the lives of its personnel and hindered its efforts to bring stability to the country (ICG, 2023).

One of the most prominent dangers faced by MINUSCA is the persistent threat of armed groups and rebel forces operating in CAR. These groups often engage in violent confrontations, targeting both the civilian population and peacekeepers (ICG, 2023). MINUSCA troops are frequently caught in the crossfire, resulting in casualties and fatalities. These attacks not only pose a direct risk to the lives of peacekeepers but also undermine their ability to carry out their mandate effectively (ICG, 2023).

According to the MINUSCA website, there have been 164 fatalities of its blue helmets deployed in CAR since from different nationalities since its begining (MINUSCA Website, 2023). A number that shows the high risk and insecurity of the work conditions in a state where law has been absent throughout its history.

The complex and volatile nature of the conflict in CAR amplifies the dangers faced by MINUSCA. The conflict is characterized by deep-rooted ethnic tensions, political rivalries, and competition over resources. These factors contribute to a highly unstable and unpredictable environment, making it challenging for peacekeepers to operate safely. The lack of a clear front line and the presence of multiple armed groups further exacerbate the risks faced by MINUSCA personnel (ICG, 2023).

Additionally, MINUSCA faces significant logistical challenges that heighten the dangers of its mission. The vast and remote geographical terrain in CAR, coupled with poor infrastructure and limited access to basic amenities, hampers the mission's ability to deploy and provide timely support to its personnel (Zahar, Marie-Joëlle, 2017). This logistical strain not only increases the vulnerability of peacekeepers but also limits their capacity to respond effectively to threats and protect civilians.

Furthermore, MINUSCA has encountered instances of hostility and resistance from local populations. While the mission aims to protect civilians and promote stability, it is

sometimes viewed with suspicion or hostility by certain communities (ICG, 2023). This mistrust can manifest in attacks on peacekeepers or acts of non-cooperation, further complicating the mission's objectives and placing personnel at risk.

The prevalence of armed groups, logistical challenges, and local resistance are compounded by the presence of natural resource exploitation, such as the illegal trade of minerals and weapons. These illicit activities create a cycle of violence and instability, fueling the dangers faced by MINUSCA. The mission is often caught in the middle of these dynamics, struggling to address the root causes of conflict while also ensuring the safety and security of its personnel (Zahar, Marie-Joëlle, 2017).

In conclusion, MINUSCA's mission in the Central African Republic has been marked by significant fatality and dangers. The presence of armed groups, logistical challenges, local resistance, and the exploitation of natural resources contribute to an environment of insecurity and volatility. Despite these risks, the dedicated efforts of MINUSCA personnel continue in their pursuit of peace, stability, and protection of civilians in the Central African Republic, as they work towards overcoming these challenges and fostering a safer future for the country.

3.2.9. Summary

Chapter Three examines the various challenges encountered by the United Nations (UN) intervention in the Central African Republic (CAR). The chapter begins by discussing the APPR (Appel pour la Paix et La Réconciliation) 2019 Peace Agreement, highlighting its significance and impact on the peace process in CAR.

Previous peace agreements are also examined, shedding light on the historical context and the challenges faced in implementing sustainable peace in the region. The chapter then delves into the poor institutional capabilities of the CAR government, which hinder effective governance and the ability to address the conflict.

One of the major challenges identified is the lack of authority to eliminate armed groups operating in CAR. This limitation compromises the UN's ability to establish lasting peace and stability. Conflicting mandates among different actors involved in the

intervention, such as the UN, regional organizations, and national forces, further complicate the situation.

Resource limitations pose another significant challenge. The chapter explores the constraints faced by the UN intervention in terms of funding, personnel, and logistical support. These limitations impact the mission's effectiveness and its capacity to address the multifaceted challenges in CAR.

The credibility of peacekeepers is also discussed as a challenge. Factors such as allegations of misconduct, lack of trust from local populations, and perception of biased actions undermine the credibility of the UN intervention. This affects the mission's ability to build rapport and gain cooperation from the local communities.

Furthermore, the chapter highlights the fatalities among peacekeepers as a significant challenge. The risks faced by peacekeepers in volatile and hostile environments contribute to casualties and impact the overall effectiveness of the mission.

In summary, Chapter Three sheds light on the challenges facing the UN intervention in CAR. These challenges include the limitations of peace agreements, poor government institutional capabilities, the lack of authority to eliminate armed groups, conflicting mandates, resource limitations, credibility issues, and fatalities among peacekeepers. Addressing these challenges is crucial for the successful implementation of the intervention and the achievement of sustainable peace in the Central African Republic.

FINDINGS and CONCLUSION

4.1. Findings

In April 2014, MINUSCA was established with the aim of stabilizing the country and providing protection to civilians amidst a period of intense conflict. The mission has had some success in helping to reduce violence and protect civilians, but it has also faced significant challenges.

MINUSCA, established in 2014, has played a significant part in protecting civilians in CAR. The mission has deployed peacekeepers to areas affected by violence, creating safe spaces for people to seek shelter and assistance, which has helped to protect civilians. Furthermore, MINUSCA has facilitated the disarmament, demobilization, and reintegration of former fighters, which has contributed to reducing the number of weapons in circulation and decreasing the risk of violence (UN News, 2019).

MINUSCA has played An important role in facilitating the re-establishment of government control and upholding legal standards. The mission has assisted with the deployment of the Central African armed forces, police, and judicial institutions, which has helped to improve security and has also provided support to the country's electoral process and human rights institutions.

However, the mission has also faced significant challenges. One of the main challenges has been the continued violence and insecurity in the country, despite MINUSCA's presence. The mission has been targeted by armed groups, and peacekeepers have been killed and injured in attacks. This has made it difficult for the mission to fully carry out its mandate of protecting civilians and promoting stability.

Another challenge has been the limited capacity of the Central African government to take over security responsibilities from the peacekeepers. Corruption, political instability, and lack of resources have hindered the deployment of national security forces and the ability of the government to maintain stability and rule of law.

In summary, MINUSCA has made some positive contributions to peace and stability in CAR, but it has also faced significant challenges. Despite these challenges, the mission

continues to play a significant part in helping to protect civilians and promote stability in the country.

4.2. Conclusion

This thesis focuses on the conflict in the Central African Republic (CAR) and the role of the United Nations peacekeeping mission (MINUSCA) in addressing the conflict and promoting peace in the region. The thesis begins with an introduction that highlights the importance of the topic and provides an overview of the paper. The research objectives are outlined, including the analysis and evaluation of MINUSCA's intervention, the assessment of its contribution to peacebuilding, exploration of the challenging conditions faced, examination of institution-building and rule of law, identification of intervention areas and limitations, and proposing strategies for enhancing efficacy. The research questions are also presented to guide the investigation.

Chapter One, the Literature Review, introduces the topic, explores relevant concepts and definitions, traces the evolution of UN peacekeeping operations, justifies humanitarian interventions in international law, examines the establishment of peacekeeping missions, contextualizes the UN intervention in CAR, and summarizes the chapter's content.

Chapter Two delves into the motives behind the conflict in CAR. It discusses external political players such as France and the ECCAS, the border regions of Chad, Sudan, and CAR's neighboring countries, and the Russian intervention through The Wagner Group. Internal political players, including the creation of Seleka and its political intentions, and the political aspirations of Anti-Balaka, are also analyzed. The chapter further explores the role of ethnic, social, and religious factors in CAR's politics, particularly the significance of ethnicity and religion and the marginalization of Northerners and Muslims. Additionally, economic factors and natural resources, such as the mining and timber industries, are examined.

Chapter Three focuses on the challenges faced by the UN intervention in CAR. It discusses the 2019 Peace Agreement (APPR) and previous peace agreements, poor government institutional capabilities, the lack of authority to eliminate armed groups, conflicting mandates, resource limitations, and the credibility of peacekeepers.

The thesis concludes with the Findings and Conclusion. The findings derived from the research are presented, and a comprehensive conclusion is drawn based on the analysis conducted throughout the thesis. Finally, the references used in the research are listed.

Overall, this thesis provides a thorough exploration of the conflict in CAR, the motives behind it, the challenges faced by the UN peacekeeping mission, and the findings and conclusions derived from the research.

As stated earlier in this thesis, it is challenging to provide a clear projection of the conflict's future or anticipate the effectiveness of the peacekeeping mission in CAR. This is because the ongoing conflict continues to attract more foreign actors who seek to exploit the country's resources, posing a significant challenge to the peace process.

The Hypothesis of this thesis is a conclusion that the UN mission has been very difficult and hazardous since its initial, mainly due to the failure to gain the trust of all the conflict parties as well as the lack of collaboration with citizens. However, The MINUSCA has been assisting in establishing relative peace in CAR and creating an atmosphere for law rule in some parts of the country, but it has never been sufficient.

The MINUSCA mission is becoming more arduous in the last few years and in the years to come due to foreign interference of regional powers and world powers, that are driven by ambition to gain control over CAR’s natural resources, the fact that fuels the conflict and threatens the whole peace process.

Based on the findings of the study, it is evident that MINUSCA, the UN peacekeeping mission deployed in the Central African Republic (CAR) since 2014, has played a crucial role in protecting civilians and facilitating the re-establishment of government control. The mission's deployment of peacekeepers to violence-affected areas has created safe spaces for civilians, allowing them to seek shelter and assistance, thereby contributing to their protection. Additionally, MINUSCA's efforts in disarmament, demobilization, and reintegration have helped reduce the number of weapons in circulation, thereby decreasing the risk of violence.

Furthermore, MINUSCA has played a significant role in supporting the CAR government in restoring security and upholding legal standards. By assisting in the

deployment of armed forces, police, and judicial institutions, the mission has contributed to improving overall security in the country. Additionally, MINUSCA's support for the electoral process and human rights institutions has helped strengthen democratic processes and promote respect for human rights.

However, the study has also highlighted several challenges faced by MINUSCA in its mission. One notable challenge is the persistent violence and insecurity in CAR despite the presence of the peacekeeping mission. MINUSCA has been targeted by armed groups, resulting in fatality among peacekeepers of 147 deaths and posing difficulties in fulfilling its mandate of protecting civilians and promoting stability.

Another significant challenge is the limited capacity of the Central African government to assume security responsibilities from the peacekeepers. Factors such as corruption, political instability, and resource constraints have hindered the government's ability to effectively deploy national security forces and maintain stability and the rule of law.

In conclusion, the findings of the study demonstrate that MINUSCA has made valuable contributions to peace and stability in the Central African Republic. Its efforts in protecting civilians, facilitating disarmament, and supporting the government in restoring security and upholding legal standards have had positive impacts. However, the mission continues to face significant challenges, including ongoing violence and insecurity, as well as limitations in the government's capacity to assume security responsibilities. It is imperative for future research to delve deeper into these challenges and explore potential strategies to address them effectively. Additionally, further investigation is warranted to examine the long-term sustainability and impact of MINUSCA's interventions, as well as to explore other dimensions of UN peacekeeping in the CAR, such as the social, economic, and humanitarian aspects of peacebuilding efforts. Such research will contribute to enhancing the understanding and effectiveness of UN peacekeeping missions and their role in conflict-affected regions like CAR.

4.3. Scope for Future Research

In order to further advance our understanding of UN peacekeeping in CAR and explore the future of peacekeeping and conflict resolution, several key areas can be investigated. Firstly, there is a need to evaluate the effectiveness of local community engagement in

UN peacekeeping efforts within CAR. This research could involve assessing the impact of community participation in decision-making processes, exploring the concept of local ownership in peacebuilding initiatives, and examining the role of traditional and informal conflict resolution mechanisms.

Another significant area for future research lies in examining strategies for the sustainable reintegration of former combatants into society. By studying successful reintegration programs and identifying the challenges and barriers faced by ex-combatants, researchers can contribute to the development of innovative approaches that support their transition to civilian life.

Gender perspectives in peacekeeping represent an important research avenue. Exploring the role of women in peacebuilding efforts, analyzing the gendered impacts of conflict, and evaluating the effectiveness of gender mainstreaming initiatives within UN peacekeeping missions in CAR can provide valuable insights for future interventions.

To assess the socio-economic impact of peacekeeping in CAR, researchers can investigate the contributions of UN missions to local economic development, job creation, infrastructure projects, and the provision of essential services. Additionally, studying the economic opportunities and challenges in post-conflict reconstruction will yield valuable insights for future peacebuilding efforts.

The potential of technological advancements in enhancing peacekeeping operations should also be explored. Researchers can investigate the impact of technologies such as drones, remote sensing, and data analytics on conflict prevention, early warning systems, and post-conflict reconstruction, ultimately contributing to the development of more efficient and effective peacekeeping practices.

Examining the intersection between UN peacekeeping and humanitarian assistance is crucial. Future research could analyze the coordination and cooperation between peacekeepers and humanitarian actors, explore the challenges faced in delivering humanitarian aid in conflict-affected areas, and identify strategies for improving their collaboration to better meet the needs of affected populations.

The involvement of regional and international actors in supporting UN peacekeeping efforts in CAR is another important area of study. Research can focus on analyzing the contributions, challenges, and coordination mechanisms among actors such as regional organizations, donor countries, and non-governmental organizations, providing insights into collaborative approaches to peacekeeping.

Finally, evaluating exit strategies and transition planning in UN peacekeeping missions is essential. Research can delve into the development and implementation of these strategies, assessing the criteria and processes for mission withdrawal, analyzing the challenges and successes of transitioning to local ownership, and examining the sustainability of peacebuilding efforts beyond the mission's presence.

By conducting research in these areas, scholars can contribute to a comprehensive understanding of UN peacekeeping in CAR and its implications for the future of peacekeeping and conflict resolution. The insights gained will inform policy decisions, enhance peacekeeping effectiveness, and contribute to the development of sustainable peace in conflict-affected regions worldwide.

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