

ENGENDERING PEACEKEEPING

THE CASES OF HAITI AND
DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF CONGO

A GENDER AND SECURITY ANALYSIS FROM
A LATIN AMERICAN PERSPECTIVE



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FOREWORD

Throughout history, the United Nations peacekeeping forces have proven to be an effective political tool when assisting countries affected by armed conflict. Our missions have supervised and helped maintain ceasefires, facilitated peace agreements and their consolidation in countries and regions worldwide. As conflicts have evolved and become increasingly complex, our missions have adapted to new scenarios of political and humanitarian crises.

While war and armed conflict affect millions of people and have a very high cost on the civilian population, it is without doubt women and girls that are the direct target of a widespread and generalized violence committed by all parties to the conflict. The existing war in Syria, the conflict in the Democratic Republic of Congo, or the crisis in Mali are some current examples in which women are often victims of the use of systematic sexual violence as a tactic of war, where they are discriminated against, displaced, tortured, mutilated and murdered.

In Latin America, we have also experienced different types of armed conflict and during the course of episodes of violence across our continent women have also been the victims of systematic violence. However, women have also been important actors in processes of political transition, have been active members in efforts to arrive at peace agreements and in the latter stages of reconciliation. From these experiences we have drawn valuable lessons and we have moved in the right direction in the search for greater respect for women's economic, social, civic, political and cultural rights. There is certainly a lot that remains to be done on the issue of women's rights and gender equality, but I'm sure most of our countries have already incorporated this priority into government agendas

In 2000, thanks to the unanimous adoption of United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325, the full and equal participation of women in all elements of the resolution of conflicts was called for. It is the first formal and legal document of the Security Council that requires the parties in conflicts to respect women's rights and to support their participation in peace negotiations and post-conflict reconstruction. Thanks to this important resolution, the gender issue has been integrated as an essential component into our peace missions. In this respect, we continue to request the inclusion of women in the armed forces and police units deployed in the field.

The Latin American Security and Defense Network (RESDAL) makes a valuable contribution by analyzing the gender situation in Haiti and through studies of the implementation of programs that the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti (MINUSTAH) is making to promote the gender perspective in the Caribbean country. The report also addresses the importance of training our contingents on gender issues, including prior to their deployment to MINUSTAH.

Following the earthquake in January 2010, the internally displaced persons (IDP) camps in Port au Prince were established, a phenomenon that led to a new situation of violence. While sexual violence was widespread in Haiti before January 2010, it was exacerbated by the circumstances created by the earthquake. The appearance of makeshift camps for displaced people left women and girls in a vulnerable position and with a higher risk of rape and sexual violence. This phenomenon, which is linked to a precarious situation with a weak judicial system that leaves perpetrators of violence unpunished, is concrete evidence of the urgency and priority that we must give to this subject in our Latin American agendas.

In my time as the Special Representative of the Secretary General I remember with admiration the Bangladeshi contingent of special police forces (FPU), a contingent made up exclusively of women and whose contribution has been very positive. Examples like this should be replicated in our peacekeeping missions in order to address situations of abuse and to assist in the protection of vulnerable groups.

In this report RESDAL also discusses the Latin American contribution to the United Nations Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of Congo (MONUSCO). Forced displacement and gender-based violence (GBV) are two current examples of the armed conflict in that country. In this specific context, women and girls make up more than 50% of the population and sexual violence is a common weapon of war. This widespread practice is difficult to eradicate and it is important that countries like Bolivia, Brazil, Guatemala, Uruguay, Peru and Paraguay currently contribute observers, po-

lice and military personnel to MONUSCO. Going beyond our region's borders and witnessing the problems of a complex armed conflict which has alarming figures on sexual violence is definitely a step in the right direction.

The report provides valuable recommendations to both missions. In my view, the incorporation and involvement of women in training is a key element in the process of providing our police and military forces with a greater knowledge and understanding of gender issues. A greater cooperation among all actors involved in the conflict and post-conflict reconstruction is required in order to focus the power imbalances that lead to inequality. Finally, if we increase the number of females within our contingents deployed in the field, our contribution will be even more significant. Without an understanding of the problem and without gender equity, the necessary conditions for the establishment of a real and lasting peace will not be achieved.



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PREFACE

RESDAL began studying gender issues through an investigation into the incorporation of women into the armed forces across the Latin American region and its derivatives in peace operations. The results of the project, which began in 2008, show the point to which the region was prepared for a discussion of this caliber: in two years the issue was placed on the regional agenda, it impacted the Conference of Defense Ministers of the Americas, it led to the issue being adopted by the countries themselves, studies and events were organized in this respect and, in some cases, the incorporation of women into branches of the armed forces that were previously closed to them was also planted. The result of the initial research is published in *Women in the Armed and Police Forces, Resolution 1325 and Peace Operations in Latin America*.¹

In 2011, the Network's general secretariat actively participated in the process that led to the issuance of the *Military Guidelines* on the implementation of Resolution 1325 in the field, a process which was undertaken by UN DPKO / DFS and OMA in New York.² This process was followed by the elaboration of training modules for peacekeepers based on those guidelines, a process in which RESDAL also directly participated.

The issue at hand was how to convey what life was like in the field, and especially how a peacekeeping mission can contribute to building a gender perspective and what the role is that military contingents play in this. Given the intense participation of Latin American countries in Haiti, the first field research on gender and peacekeepers focused on MINUSTAH. In June 2011 we covered substantially four large contingents across the Haitian territory: Argentina, Brazil, Chile and Uruguay. In September 2012, a second mission focused on contingents from other regions, such as Asia, and on MINUSTAH's civilian and police components, UN permanent agencies, and NGOs and government staff. This was accompanied by interviews in troop contributing countries themselves, with representatives from various ministries, parliaments, academia and civil society. The general idea: mobilizing and promoting debate on the subject within the region's capitals.

It was the combination of participation in the process headed by the DPKO Gender Unit and the Office of Military Affairs, together with the first experience in Haiti, which led us to propose an investigation on a mission located outside the American continent, and where a Latin American presence exists within the context of a majority contribution from other regions: MONUSCO, in the Democratic Republic of Congo. This implied not only a

1 Available both in English and Spanish in printed edition, and in electronic format on RESDAL's website, www.resdal.org.

2 DPKO/DFS. *Guidelines. Integrating a Gender Perspective into the Work of the United Nations Military in Peacekeeping Operations*. (DPKO/DFS: New York, March 2010).

challenge in terms of logistics and preparation, but also in terms of reception: the prior question for RESDAL was precisely how the intention of an organization with Latin American roots would be perceived there. However, the reception was unexpected, as was the clarity with which local actors expressed that far from being inopportune, the Latin American presence is necessary in the resolution of a conflict that impacts the heart of Africa.

All this was possible thanks to the support given by DPKO actors in New York and in the Missions themselves. It is thanks to this support that we can come together today to take a closer look at what happens on the ground, which is vital information for those who have to decide or analyze the contribution to peace operations. This support was also expressed in the frankness with which the interviews were conducted. These were carried out on an individual basis with civilian offices and military and police commanders, and on a group basis in the case of the contingents. The relationship with UN Women also allowed an important step to be made: the ability to present results and discuss the role of the Latin American countries in an international conference which was held in April 2012 in the presence of sixty representatives from ministries of defense, foreign affairs and gender, as well as parliamentary representatives from the majority of the Latin American countries.³ As this edition was closed, the news that Brazil would place a General at the command of MONUSCO's military component was the clearest evidence that the project was on track and that an adequate incidence was being achieved.

The work presented in this publication attempts to summarize complex realities, and countless points of view provided to RESDAL during fieldwork. The publication was possible thanks to financial support from the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Canadian Department of Foreign and International Trade. The two central works presented allow, in some way, to implant one's self into the situations in Haiti and the Congo, raising issues that go beyond the changes that naturally occur with staff turnover and the transfer of contingents. To this, a comparison between the two cases, and the speech of the then Executive Director of UN Women at the International Conference is added, which covers the essential points of a discussion that occurs throughout the international environment.

For RESDAL, thinking about gender in peace operations is related to the resolution of conflicts and the democratization of society. In the same way we believe that the growing relationship with other regions is the path that lies ahead.

Marcela Donadio

³ "Promoting Gender for Peace: Reflections on the Latin American Experience", organized by RESDAL, Buenos Aires, 25th - 26th April 2012.

WOMEN, PEACE AND SECURITY IN THE DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF THE CONGO: A LATIN AMERICAN VIEW OF MONUSCO

Prepared by Marcela Donadio*

A research on MONUSCO and the plight of a country not widely known in Latin America, where a gender perspective struggles within a context characterized by ethnic conflicts, sexual violence, a lack of civilian protection and the pillaging of natural resources.

No report can adequately describe the horrors experienced by the civilian population in Zaire, now the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), where almost every single individual has an experience to narrate of suffering and loss.¹

The Latin American experience confirms that women can do it. If we want to leave our children a better world, in which it's pleasant to live, without wars and conflicts, we must involve women at all levels.²

TO SUMMARIZE: A NECESSARY WARNING

In times of uncertainty and doubt about the future, in a time of rapid, sudden and deep social changes, many with undesirable results, times when reflection often comes late in the light of new data that completely changes the scenario (times of “liquid society”, as Bauman calls it), we believe it is possible to give a view from the “South” on another country from the global “South”.

The work presented here is part of the result of parallel investigations conducted by RESDAL in Haiti and the Democratic Republic of the Congo during 2011 and 2012. Both countries are in the process of a “post-apocalyptic dystopia”. The government does not function properly and institutions are

1 Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, *Report of the Mapping Exercise documenting the most serious violations of human rights and international humanitarian law committed within the territory of the Democratic Republic of the Congo between March 1993 and June 2003* (Geneva: OHCHR, 2010), p. 1.

2 Words of Jacqueline Rumbu-Kazang, Director of the National Agency for the Fight against the Violence against Women and Children, Ministry of Gender, Family and Children of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, in the International Conference *Promoting Gender to Build a Lasting Peace: Reflecting on the Latin American Experience*. RESDAL, Buenos Aires, April 2012.

*February 2013. Notes updated as of April 2013.

episodic at best, both in terms of their functioning and their territorial coverage. Society is in the process of restructuring; the traditional ways of coexistence are destroyed but there is no clear structure or body of values to replace them. Centuries old ways of living coexist with others of postmodern character. Resources and the environment are dilapidated. Recurrent public health problems cannot be addressed. In both countries, UN missions are seeking to overcome the crisis, but even following years of their presence in both, the problems seem difficult to resolve.

And, as in the case of the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), violence is a constant. This is what justifies a report on the situation, which seeks to interpret from a Latin American perspective this “string” of recurring crises.

For a non-Latin American reader or one which follows African conflicts, much of what is presented here may seem redundant or insufficient. We do not intend to replace the recent analysis of the Congolese conflict, but instead present, through Latin American eyes, a theme which is rarely on the agenda in the region. Therefore, in order to provide a context, summary references are made on the Congo’s history and its economic and social constraints, all based on our analysis and the interests of the project. This project points to the functions of a peace mission, attending to gender issues which exist both in the country and the mission. We provide information to the reader regarding additional readings to expand their knowledge of the country and the conflict.

We do this considering that very few Latin American countries have a diplomatic presence in the DRC.³ There is, however, a greater presence of some Latin American companies, especially those working on infrastructure projects, while – despite the contradiction - countries in the region contribute personnel to MONUSCO whether civilian, police or military (especially the latter, with the presence of Bolivian, Guatemalan, Paraguayan, Peruvian and Uruguayan personnel).

Some 70 million people live in the DRC, but, given that the last census was taken in 1984, the exact figure is not known. Experts maintain that the Congolese conflict from 1998 to date has resulted in the deaths of over 5 million people. Although these are estimates, the figures show that the conflict is one of the most horrific that has occurred in recent times. If we were to compare it with Latin America, with an estimated population of almost 600 million people, it is equivalent to the loss of about 36 million lives.

There is a constant critique in the media and numerous websites regarding UN peacekeeping missions, including MONUSCO. In more than one case, the examples given and conclusions arrived at point to glaring deficiencies in the missions. However, in the case of MONUSCO, and given the enormous complexity of the conflict in

³ As of 2013, only Cuba and Brazil have embassies in Kinshasa.

the Great Lakes, we believe that if it were not for the presence of MONUSCO, the situation would be far worse in terms of human lives lost and the quality of life of the local population.

The following document relates to what can best be described as a violent situation. It is sometimes characterized as a “war,” but as it occurs within a State and there are no clearly defined sides or fronts established, the concept fails to capture all the problems that arise in the course of the conflict. No national battle lines have been established, yet there is a situation in which peaks of violence are produced in areas where state and non-state forces co-exist. Within this violence, the use of sexual violence as a weapon of war is present, as are the difficulties of engendering a gender perspective that effectively improves the prospects for peace.

Since 2010, the United Nations has characterized the mission in the Congo as one of “stabilization”, being part of the discourse used by member countries which mandated the mission through the Security Council. Efforts have been made to advance towards the satisfactory completion of what has become a prolonged mission, covering more than a decade, but in practice the Mission operates in an environment where stabilization is far from being achieved. Violence recurrently manifests itself through aggression, destruction, lack of authority, acts of armed propaganda and even some of a terrorist nature. The constant disruption of social and family life and sexual aggression are used as modes of violence. They are a means of social destabilization, which, through the spread of fear and terror, generate distrust, resentment and a constant hunger for revenge. The Eastern provinces of the country are the main stage of these confrontations.

Within the report, historical references and a brief description of the conflict within the framework of a state lacking a functioning structure will be found. The elites have sought to unify the country from the capital, but the facts seem to cast doubt over this centralization, especially in the East, which is part of a larger transnational conflict covering different countries and regions from the so-called Central African Great Lakes.

It then refers to how MONUSCO fits into this context, its actions as the principal UN entity involved in the process and its integrated nature, especially in terms of gender and protection against sexual violence. The concept of being integrated implies that both the civilian, military and police sections of the Mission should act in coordination. This is a very advanced concept that is not easy to put into practice. Even within the countries that contribute officials, police personnel and military forces, they do not always operate as part of an integrated process, and the human and financial resources required to put this integration into practice are often scarce. It also takes into

account the permanent action of other agencies of the UN system, as well as other international cooperation partners.

Finally, we discuss in practical terms the role of the military in the protection of civilians, in an effort to provide information and encourage debate on a topic that has received little analytical attention.

We are aware that there is a gap between abstract, conceptual thinking, which informs the great ideas of the moment (defense of human rights, protection of civilians, and the defense of women and children's rights) and the practices for carrying them on, with the added difficulties of a context in which resources are scarce. It will not be difficult for the reader to note this tension throughout the report.

1. INTRODUCTION

2012, in the meeting room of one of the international offices in Kinshasa, the capital of the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC). The afternoon air is warm, the skies are grey, and we're awaiting the next meeting. Somebody looks up at the clocks hanging from the walls to find out the time and realizes that all of them – all three – have stopped. "Time stood still here, who knows when...". Whilst we continue waiting, sensations of the past appear. It's not the mysticism of the impenetrable, normally associated with the word "Congo", which impacts those that arrive there. The first permanent impression is that it is a place where time stands still. Stuck in a conflict which it desperately needs to overcome, nothing that one sees there is unknown to those who have experienced the turbulent periods of Latin America's past. What does have an impact, however, is observing one's own past converted into an almost permanent present for others, the apparent absence of a future.

The United Nations Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of Congo (MONUSCO) is the element that could potentially convert this future into reality. Even with all its weaknesses, with the times that seem to extend themselves indefinitely, or all the defects in the actions of governmental and non-governmental actors and those of the international community itself, the presence of MONUSCO is essential to the fragile process that may take a beautiful country, full of potential, into a peaceful, democratic future, full of opportunities.

This report is an analysis of one of the largest missions led by the United Nations, and is directed to a Latin American region that has witnessed firsthand arbitrariness, lack of individual rights, restrictions on freedoms,

and wide-scale loss of life. Two Latin American countries, Guatemala and Uruguay, contribute with military contingents to MONUSCO. They are very much valued. Others, such as Bolivia, Paraguay and Peru, have also sent military observers and police. Cooperation with Brazil is also growing. Latin America, it will be expressed in the interviews, needs to promote itself in a more active fashion and to play a greater role in helping the Democratic Republic of Congo overcome the conflict.

In 2011, RESDAL initiated a program which sought to strengthen the Latin American contribution to international security through United Nations missions. In particular, this focused on the promotion of a gender perspective as part of peace building in the framework of Security Council Resolutions 1325, 1820 and related. Starting from the exponential increase in the contribution (more than 1000% in the last twelve years) and the regional experience of democratization, development, economic growth and the inclusion of women into political and social life, RESDAL's work is based on the premise that the Latin American region has a lot to contribute to other regions in the world by sharing the experiences, perspectives, and political, social and cultural understandings that are derived from having passed through similar situations.

The RESDAL program has a strong rooting in fieldwork, with investigative teams that interview military and civilian personnel deployed in United Nations missions, as well as international agencies and local organizations. The objective is to see how a gender perspective develops in practice within the context of a peace mission, what the role of the military component is in relation to this, and what the experiences are of those personnel that have been deployed. As of 2013, the cases that have been developed are Haiti (MINUSTAH) and the Democratic Republic of Congo (MONUSCO).

The fieldwork in the Congo took place in 2012, covering the international deployments across an area of approximately 4,000 kilometers:

- The capital, Kinshasa.
- South Kivu (Bukavu).
- North Kivu (Goma).
- Orientale Province (Bunia and Dungu).

During this fieldwork, approximately one hundred individual interviews were carried out with civilian personnel from the Mission, military commanders, UN organizations, local and international NGOs, and international cooperation organizations. In the case of the military and police components, group interviews were carried out with military contingents from Bangladesh, China, Egypt, Ghana, Guatemala, India, Morocco, Pakistan and Uru-

guay, and from the Formed Police Units (FPU) of Bangladesh and Senegal.

With its geographical area stretching over 2,344,858 kilometers squared, it is said that the territory of the DRC is equivalent to two thirds of Western Europe. In terms of Latin America, it stretches from the US-Mexican border to the Colombian-Panamanian border, or, alternatively, it accounts for the combined territory of Colombia, Venezuela and Ecuador. It's the eighth largest country in the world in terms of territory, and 187th in terms of human development, the very bottom of the list.⁴ With Armed Forces derived from a complex past and present, military capacity to protect civilians from death or abuse lies in the hands of MONUSCO, which has 17,000 military troops to cover the whole territory. Of them, more than 1,100 are from Uruguay and 150 from Guatemala, to which 30 military observers contributed by Bolivia (2 being women), Paraguay and Peru are added.

Both the past and present of the Democratic Republic of Congo are dominated by flagrant violations of human rights. Gender issues are but one of the components of a complex conflict, and a clear display of how the conflict affects the human condition. This issue is covered throughout the report with a basic question: how, through the presence of a peace mission, can one protect victims from the use of sexual violence as a weapon and promote a gender perspective that collaborates with the democratization of society as a whole? And, consequently, what is the role of the military personnel in this?

Contributions to international security are foreign policy decisions that provide the opportunity to play some kind of role in the international arena. They also allow a country/region to contribute their own experiences of political and social processes to build peace in a world which is more integrated than before. The Latin American contribution of troops to peace missions gained impulse in the 90s as a form of making itself visible in the international arena, as well as an effort to find different missions for the Armed Forces. In order for this contribution to be sustained, it's necessary to have an informed reflection at the level of society and its representatives regarding points such as the following:

- The actual challenges of involving the country in a peace mission.
- A common understanding that the process of peacebuilding is something in which all of society should be incorporated, moving away from clichés and treating gender issues within a context of human rights, participation and economic development.

4 Territory: "World Atlas". Accessed June 20, 2012, <http://www.worldatlas.com>. HDI: United Nations Development Programme, *Human Development Report 2011 Sustainability and Equity: A Better Future for All* (New York: UNDP, 2011).

- The knowledge and debate about the role of the military in providing protection, including the necessities of training and maintaining a follow up of the deployed personnel.

Within this context, this study seeks to analyze and disseminate the experience of a peace mission operating in a context of gender violence where there is a clear need for security sector reform, and where Latin American countries are involved. By doing so it seeks to trigger a discussion of the above points amongst the distinct actors which play a role in this: governments, legislative branches, training academies, civil society organizations and society in general.

2. THE CONTEXT: AN HISTORICAL AND POLITICAL SYNTHESIS

In the mid twentieth century, the era in which “modernizing” dictators devastated the African and the American continents, the Democratic Republic of the Congo was known by the name of Zaire. Shortly after gaining its independence, and after already suffering the assassination of its first democratically elected leader following the period of colonial rule, a “re-foundation”, similar to that presented by dictators in Latin America, led to a change in name, but not a change in history.

Studies on the problems of the current conflict in DRC tend to focus on the 1996 Rwandan genocide (Rwanda being the country bordering the DRC to the northeast) and the accompanying flow of refugees to the DRC, many of which had played an active role in carrying out the genocide. The turbulent and tragic history of the Congolese population, however, has much longer-standing origins, beginning with the arrival of the Portuguese to the mouth of the River Congo in 1482 (marking the beginning of the slave trade); the Scramble for Africa on the part of the then European powers at the end of the 19th Century, placing the Congo into Belgian hands in 1895; its independence in 1960; the assassination of the young and promising first post-colonial leader Patrice Lumumba in 1961; the dictatorship of Mobutu Sese Seko between 1965 and 1997; and the Congolese wars which stretched up until 10 years ago (the first being from 1996 until the fall of Mobutu; the second, also known as the *African World War*, formally lasting from 1998 to 2003).

In order to appreciate the origins and the full depth of the issue, one has to stretch back to the era in which the heart of Africa remained the only part of the world which was still unknown to Western eyes. The extension of co-

lonialism to the African continent is referred to by historians as the “Scramble for Africa”, a process in which European countries fought for colonies and zones of influence across the continent. It was mid-way through this process, at the Berlin Conference (November 1884 – February 1885) that the Belgium King Leopold II obtained the free trade agreement for the Congo.⁵ Previously he had financed the third exploration by the travel journalist Henry Morton Stanley, who would be the first to venture beyond the rapids that had marked the endpoint of previous adventures.⁶ Whilst the African coasts were somewhat known to Europe, the interior of the continent, its heart, represented a great mystery to European imaginations. But even if it generated significant attraction, the lack of ambition to venture into its depths is effectively what opened up the path to the development of the Belgian King’s business venture.

When Stanley began the expedition contracted by the company set-up by King Leopold especially to operate in the Congo, he found more than 200 different ethnic groups which spoke 400 different dialects.⁷ During these travels, treaties were signed with tribal leaders which guaranteed the Company both land and monopoly control, which was a pertinent issue given that during this time France had begun to install itself on the neighboring shores of what is now Congo Brazzaville. On May 29th 1895, the King established the *Congo Free State*, private property which was unrelated to the Belgian State.⁸ The Congo was administered through a system of concessions and trustee-ships, providing an impulse to adventurers to colonize the unknown without too much central control in terms of paying the resulting riches to the State. The particular form of this regime encouraged, according to the testimonies, forms of inhumane exploitation as the objective became to achieve the solic-

5 In April 1994 the United States became one of the first countries to recognize the rights of King Leopold over the Congolese territories.

6 Entering through the Atlantic, a few kilometers from the Capital Kinshasa, the Congo River crosses a series of rapids that represent an insurmountable obstacle to maritime exploration. It is the world’s second largest river basin following the Amazon. It runs the length of 4,700 kilometers (the majority being through jungle) and passes the Equator two times, each time changing the direction in which it flows.

7 Details on the organizational structures prior to the Congo Free State can be found in: Adam Hochschild, *King’s Leopold’s Ghost. A Story of Greed, Terror, and Heroism in Colonial Africa* (New York: First Mariner Books, 1999), especially chapter 4. Stanley’s contract is publicly stated as being for scientific exploration. One of the concerns at the time prior to the Berlin Conference regarded the extent to which treaties signed between a private enterprise and tribal leaders would be juridically recognized in the international sphere. Hochschild’s book is one of the most respected pieces of work on the fight for human rights in the Congo during the era of the Congo Free State.

8 This status remained up until 1908, the moment in which the King sold its possessions to the Belgian State.

ited quotas and to obtain the greatest riches in the smallest time possible.⁹

If it was ivory which initially propelled exploration, it was the rubber boom by the end of the 1800s and the beginning of the new century that sealed the fate of the natives, given that the Congolese territory was home to the world's largest known rubber reserves.¹⁰ Rubber exploitation led to slavery, killing and unimaginable cruelty, and unleashed one of the twentieth century's biggest fights for human rights. Hochschild describes the system of forced labor, the holding hostage of family members in order to force the natives to work in the jungle's rubber plants, the physical damage caused by handling the liquid, and, one of the worst atrocities caused by the State, the act of amputating hands as a deliberate and systematic policy.¹¹

It is from the very initial attempts at creating a State in the Congolese territory that certain practices developed, having an important bearing on future events and, most importantly, on the molding of a social fabric: the use of force by the State and the use of coercion towards certain groups within society.

Violence against women as a method of domination has been used throughout the Congolese territory since the 19th century.

One of the first human rights activists in the case of the Congo, E.D. Morel, described, for example, how if cargo loaders did not arrive at work, or if they arrived without the required

9 Few passages in universal literature are as dramatic as those found in Joseph Conrad's 'Heart of Darkness', based on his own personal experience as a worker contracted by 'the Company' in order to transverse the Congo River by boat ("a mighty big river, that you could see on the map, resembling an immense snake uncoiled"), narrating the journey up until meeting the mythical Mr. Kurtz, a station boss who adorned the entrance to his house with human skulls. In 1887 the construction of a railway began, allowing the rapids to be traversed and thus completing a commercial system to the interior of the country. Marlow, the protagonist, observes this work upon his arrival and states: "A slight clinking behind me made me turn my head. Six black men advanced in a file, toiling up the path. They walked erect and slow, balancing small baskets full of earth on their heads, and the clink kept time with their footsteps. Black rags were wound round their loins, and the short ends behind wagged to and fro like tails. I could see every rib, the joints of their limbs were like knots in a rope; each had an iron collar on his neck, and all were connected together with a chain whose bights swung between them, rhythmically clinking". Joseph Conrad, *Heart of Darkness* (New York: St. Martin Press, 1996), p.30.

10 The natives were only able to sell what they collected to the companies that had been allocated to sell the rubber, and between which the quotas had been divided. The system, based on commission, in practice encouraged greed on the part of intermediaries in order to meet available quotas, thus leading to the exploitation of natives. To see a description of the commercial arrangements, read Martin Ewans, *European Atrocity, African Catastrophe. Leopold II, the Congo Free State and its Aftermath*. (London: Routledge Curzon, 2002), p. 157-161.

11 The right hand of a body acted as the evidence that soldiers provided to their superiors to prove that disciplinary force was being applied to the natives and that the subject in question had been killed. The more baskets of hands delivered, the more effective the public force was assumed to be being applied at the station. "As news of the white man's soldiers and their baskets of severed hands spread through the Congo, a myth gained credence with Africans that was a curious reversal of the white obsession with black cannibalism. The cans of corned beef seen in white men's houses, it was said, did not contain meat from the animals shown on the label; they contained chopped-up hands". Adam Hochschild, op. cit., p. 166.

cargo, troops would be sent to round up all of the women that they could.¹² The practice of taking women prisoner in order to force their husbands to work was thus a common one and, whilst some were later freed, others were forced into prostitution: “Our most respected men here... have told us with tears in their eyes and much vexation in their hearts, that they had recently seen a group of seven hundred women chained together and transported [to the coast on steamboats]”.¹³ The African-American missionary George Williams, who according to historical records raised the first objection against violations of human rights in the Congo, noted in his Open Letter of 1890 that “Women are imported into your Majesty’s Government for immoral purposes. They are introduced by two methods (...) black men are dispatched to the Portuguese coast where they engage these women as mistresses of white men, who pay to the procurer a monthly sum. The other method is by capturing native women and condemning them to seven years’ servitude for some imaginary crime against the State with which the villages of these women are charged. The State then hires these women out to the highest bidder, the officers having the first choice and then the men. Whenever children are born of such relations, the State maintains that the women being its property the child belongs to it also.”¹⁴

In the same manner, the initial experiences of an armed force and the perception that the population has of it are also an historical construct and, as such, are difficult to change. It’s in this period when the first signs of a Public Force (*Force Publique*) appear, created in 1888 by King Leopold and which, by 1900, had over 19,000 personnel. Officers and warrant officers were white, whilst the soldiers themselves were taken from those of the local population that believed it better “to be with the hunters rather than with the hunted”.¹⁵

The Congo didn’t experience a war of colonial liberation such as those which occurred in Angola, Kenya or Zimbabwe. Whilst it is the largest country in sub-Saharan Africa, during its history as an independent State it has experienced major difficulties in constituting itself as a unified State beneath central control. Diverse ethnicities, five different linguistic groups and sepa-

12 E.D. Morel, *Red Rubber: The story of the Rubber Slave Trade which flourished on the Congo for twenty years, 1890-1910*. (Manchester: The National Labour Press, 1920), p. 177.

13 Adam Hochschild, *op. cit.*, p. 126.

14 “An Open Letter to His Serene Majesty Leopold II, King of the Belgians and Sovereign of the Independent State of Congo By Colonel, The Honorable George Washington Williams, of the United States of America, 1890” in Adelaide Cromwell Hill and Martin Kilson, comps., *Apropos of Africa. Sentiments of Negro American Leaders on Africa from the 1800s to the 1950s* (London: Frank Cass and Company Limited, 1969), p.99-107.

15 Adam Hochschild, *op. cit.*, p. 127.

ratist tendencies meant the country was always on the verge of collapse. The granting of independence to the Congo in 1960 led to the first free elections within the framework of a difficult political process: a government had to build itself at a peculiar time of international politics, while the hopes of a new start conflicted with tensions regarding the country's unity (the threat of the secession of Katanga, a province rich in resources), that were further aggravated by foreign intervention assisting separatist forces.¹⁶ During this period, the Public Forces were converted into the Congolese Armed Forces, headed by Joseph Mobutu as the Joint Chief of Staff. The process thus occurred in the context of the restructuring of an armed force whose leadership had historically been in the hands of the Belgian military. The internal conflict that followed led to one of the few UN peace missions that were deployed during the Cold War (ONUC, 1960-64).¹⁷

Dark events occurred in the first post-independence years, of which one can highlight the assassination of Prime Minister Patrice Lumumba (remembered by many, even today, as one of the most promising African leaders in the post-independence period), and the tragic death of UN General Secretary Dag Hammarskjöld, who died in an accident as he was flying to the province of Katanga to take part in peace negotiations. The Lumumba government came to a quick end, wrapped up in a separatist conflict and facing accusations of being overly leftist/proto-communist, such as was the case of many Latin American countries during this era. Following his death, a coup d'état placed the head of the Armed Forces, Mobutu Sese Seko, in charge of the presidency, thus initiating a dictatorship that was to last almost thirty years (1965-1997).

16 After a Parliamentary inquiry the Belgian Government publicly apologized for its role on February 2002: "Some members of the government, and some Belgian actors at the time, bear an irrefutable part of the responsibility for the events that led to Patrice Lumumba's death", declared the Belgium Foreign Minister. "Belgium: Apology for Lumumba Killing". *The New York Times*, February 6, 2002. See *Enquête Parlementaire visant à déterminer les circonstances exactes de l'assassinat de Patrice Lumumba et l'implication éventuelle des responsables politiques belges dans celui-ci. Rapport fait au nom de la Commission d'Enquête par MM. Daniel Bacquelaire et Ferdj Willems et Mme Marie-Thérèse Coenen* (Brussels: Chambre des Représentants de Belgique: November 16, 2001), DOC 50/0312/007.

17 ONUC (United Nations Operation in the Congo) was established after the independence (SCR 161, February 21, 1961). The mandate was to ensure the withdrawal of Belgian forces, to assist the Government in maintaining law and order and to provide technical assistance. Subsequent Resolutions after the assassination of the Patrice Lumumba included maintaining the territorial integrity and political independence of the country. Its maximum strength was 19,828, a major peacekeeping force for the time.

“THIS IS THE HISTORY OF A FAILURE”

Argentina and Brazil contributed troops to that first UN peacekeeping mission. In those first years of the Mobutu government, a leader -Laurent Desiré Kabila-, began to emerge from within those militias that were opposed to the separation of Katanga, and, later, to the Mobutu regime. In those uprisings of revolutionary militias that were launched against Mobutu, especially in the East of the country (the Kivus), the revolutionary Congolese forces were supported, in 1965, by another Argentine, Ernesto ‘Che’ Guevara. He narrates in his diary his struggle in the Congo, depicting it as the history of a failure (including his views of the Congolese combatants and his doubts over Kabila’s leadership capabilities).¹⁸ But the history of failure goes beyond this attempt at exporting revolution; the phrase can be further applied to the impossibility of creating a social democratic order or a scheme for economic development following the granting of independence.

Mobutu’s regime dominated Congo’s (transformed into Zaire) institutions with an iron fist, using the Armed Forces as the principal instrument for exercising control, engaging in practices far from those required for the construction of a professional armed force. Maybe the most serious of these practices has been the Army taking from the local population the goods it needed to survive: whilst the State provided their arms, the same cannot be said of their salaries, understanding that the rifle itself brought the possibility of access to such goods. Such a concept not only hampered the professionalization of the Armed Forces; it laid a fearsome groundwork for civil-military relations.¹⁹ This is not only a State force that serves to impose a determined political order, as is commonly observed in dictatorships, but instead it goes beyond this, perverting the very values of the military force and of society itself: crime – in this case pillaging – became a sort of entitlement.

18 See Ernesto “Che” Guevara, *Pasajes de la guerra revolucionaria: Congo* (Barcelona: Mondadori, 1999). An interesting read which provides a description of the places, communities and local customs. It relates, for example, the belief in invincibility held by the soldiers in the face of bullets, provided that they complied with certain rites (a belief that remains evident today), and the historical differences between the Rwandans and Congolese, as well as noting the manner in which armies (from whichever group) have used the local population as a supply-source of the goods they require.

19 See the historical analysis of the armed forces in Jacques Ebenga and Thierry N’Landu, “The Congolese National Army: In search of an identity” in Martin Rupiya, ed., *Evolutions & Revolutions. A Contemporary History of Militaries in Southern Africa* (Pretoria: Institute for Security Studies, 2005), p. 69. They describe the different components of the armed forces during the Mobutu era: the Pretorian Guard (15,000 men), the Parachute Regiment, the intelligence service, and the regular force (some 50,000). This last group was “more of a phantom army, with their officers and generals making their living from corruption and illegal practices. These ‘soldiers in corners’ were mainly left to their own devices. To survive, these vagrant soldiers behaved so extortionately towards the civilians around them that they irreversibly destroyed the healthy relations that should have existed between the military and civil society.”

The effect on a military institution that serves a State that simultaneously summons it and then leaves it to fend for itself, is devastating. This institutional perversion that was present in the very beginning of the Congo's post-independence life generated problems that continue to have an impact today.

The lack of control or discipline and the corruption which is generated by the armed banditry in the name of the State have led, in practice, to a tendency to see a rifle as a sufficient tool for imposing ideas, forming a rebel group, or simply for looting. But it also has a devastating effect upon society. Beyond the impunity, it discourages all economic activities that go beyond mere subsistence. The already precarious situation has been further aggravated in the last decades due to the addition of national and foreign armed rebel groups, foreign armed forces, and of course armed conflict. The impact, in terms of economic development, of the lack of incentives on the part of the local population to produce goods that would likely be stolen from them is a topic for anthropological studies that would contribute to our understanding.

CONGO IN THE SCENARIO OF THE AFRICAN WARS: A HUMANITARIAN CATASTROPHE

The dispute over natural resources (diamonds, gold and then coltan being the most valuable) led to constant military incursions by neighboring countries during Mobuto's time in office, just as Mobuto also engaged in covert operations into neighboring countries. The end of the Cold War emphasized, for the regime, the necessity of modernization and of democratization in order to make changes in a country that was increasingly out of touch with the general trends of the post-Cold War era. Resistance movements against the Mobutu regime, which had decreased in strength somewhat following their failure in the 60s, renewed themselves in the 90s, linking up with political circumstances in neighboring countries and with the spreading of an ethnic conflict that had been buried during the regime.

Particularly in the East of the country, the influence of Uganda and Rwanda may be noted, countries in which political conflicts also developed into the path of armed conflict. One of the last genocides of the 20th Century, in Rwanda, had a huge impact in Congo, absorbing the Kivus provinces into part of the conflict. Whilst less publicized, the bloody conflicts that have developed in the Congo since the 90s represent a true humanitarian catastrophe. The intimate linkage between one and the other conflict relates to Hutu - Tutsi ethnic commonalities in both countries, the porous borders in the Eastern Congo, and the efforts by the Mobutu regime to support the Hutu regime in neighboring Rwanda at the time in which it took power and be-

gan its genocidal campaign. The progressive decline of Mobutu and his actions inside neighboring countries contributed to the generation of one of the worst points in the Congolese conflict: the rise of multiple armed groups that confronted one another, leaving a civilian population trapped in the middle. Foreign groups found refuge in Mobutu's Zaire, and local groups were encouraged by foreigners to take up arms and fight. According to one of the most knowledgeable experts in the field, in 1995 one could find at least 10 different rebel groups in Zaire, with origins from Angola, Burundi, Rwanda and Uganda, constituting a total of around 120,000 combatants.²⁰

The history spanning from the period prior to the fall of Mobutu in 1997, up until the transition in 2003, is complex and includes such a wide range of actors that it's difficult to count them all; for reasons of space they can't all be summarized here. It can however be said that a reading of the atrocities committed and the intricate relationships between the different parts matches the views held by many of the Congolese people: as long as we don't deal with the internationalization of the conflict, with the interventions that go beyond the UN mission or the Congolese government itself, it will be difficult to obtain a strong and stable peace that permits sustainable development. One of the best sources to appreciate the human tragedy that has struck the country in the last few decades is the report elaborated by the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights in 2010, also known as the *Mapping Report*. It's a document that relays the true horror of the conflict, and some Latin Americans will remember what it feels like to read the reports of the aberrant events that occurred in their own countries, such as the Report of the Truth Commission in Peru or the Argentina's *Never Again (Nunca más)*.

Generically it helps to distinguish between key stages:

1993-1998: The process that led to Mobutu's downfall and the First Congo War.

This period includes the impact of the genocide in Rwanda (1994); the flight of the Hutu population to the Congo (including many of the perpetrators of the genocide) once the rebels, led by Paul Kagame, took power in Kigali; the formation of the Alliance of Democratic Forces for the Liberation of Congo (AFDL, led by Laurent Desiré Kabila with the support of the new government of Rwanda, as well as those of Uganda and Angola); the seizure of power in Kinshasa in 1997 following bloody clashes with the armed forces of Zaire; and the subsequent military disbandment, leaving in their wake a devastated territory.

20 Jason Stearns, *Dancing in the Glory of Monsters: the Collapse of the Congo and the Great War of Africa* (New York: Public Affairs, 2011), p. 51.

It's estimated that 2 million refugees arrived in the Congo from Rwanda, setting themselves up in camps that were principally located in the Eastern part of the country (approximately 310,000 were installed in the Bukavu area alone). Permitting the installation of members of the Interahamwe²¹ is one of the strongest criticisms from within the Congo of the international community, which at that time faced major difficulties in providing a response to the killing of civilians -as was evident in the case of Rwanda, where a weak UN mission was unable to act.²² The failure of the international community in Rwanda and in the former Yugoslavia was indeed a turning point in discussions about the role of the international community in cases of flagrant violations of human rights, with subsequent mandates for the protection of civilians granted by the Security Council to UN missions. The panorama would be incomplete, however, if it didn't include, in addition to the regional context, an outline of the local context in which antagonisms and rivalries intervene, feeding the general violence.²³

In the **First Congo War**, ethnic groups, countries and provinces were mixed into a situation in which it wasn't always clear what exactly the motives of the struggle were, though it is clear that ethnic cleavages were used to ignite the conflict. As the Tutsi population crossed the Rwandan border in order to support the conflict, an anti-Tutsi sentiment later installed itself in the Eastern parts of the Congo. Both sides used the method of looting and violence against civilians. Arriving from Rwanda, AFDL forces achieved the successive capture of the interior's main cities, up to their arrival at the second largest city (Kisangani) in March 1997. From there they jumped to the capital Kinshasa, where on May 25th 1997, Laurent Kabila was proclaimed as President. The country was devastated, and even the State treasury and the few assets held by the military had been looted by the retreating regime. While the new government tried to install itself, with the presence of Rwandan officers, it received requests to investigate the killings carried out in the war, thus further complicating the international scene.

21 The Interhamwe were born in Rwanda as a paramilitary group that supported the Hutu government, in the end turning into the principal actor in the genocide of Tutsis.

22 The General which commanded the mission, the Canadian Romeo Dallaire, was on the verge of suicide following the mission. One Uruguayan officer lost his life on the mission, as did a group of Belgian soldiers.

23 Séverine Autesserre, *The Trouble with the Congo. Local Violence and the Failure of International Peacebuilding* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2010). The work is based on interviews and analyzes in detail the influence of local causes, such as rivalries between leaders, disputes over land ownership, etc., and invites "bottom up" explanations in addition to a "top down" understanding of the conflict. It also develops the problem of the absence of the State, refuting that violence is simply inherent and natural to the Congo, and addresses the problem of survival and the struggle for resources as a motivation for the participation of armed groups. It argues, for example, that local causes led to the development of a conflict that ignited after the genocide in Rwanda (see p. 141).

August 1998 – July 2003, the Second Congo War:

Following tensions over the influence that Rwanda held in the country, the Congolese government dismissed Rwandan officials. Amongst those was James Karabebe, who was acting Chief of Staff of the Congolese armed forces (FAC), and who was a close connection of Rwandan President Paul Kagame, with whom he had shared the rebel struggle.²⁴ The hint of an alleged anti-Tutsi policy lit a fuse within the FAC, where a group mutinied, launching a campaign to overthrow Laurent Kabila. Before long, a new political-military group was formed, the Congolese Union for Democracy (*Rassemblement congolais pour la démocratie*, RCD), with military support from Burundi, Rwanda and Uganda. Due to the scale of foreign intervention (the Kabila government was supported by Angola, Chad, Namibia, Sudan and Zimbabwe), the conflict has also been described as the African World War.

During the following years a bloody war developed: the quantity of deaths caused by the violence or by inaccessibility to health care between 1998 and 2004 has been estimated at 3.9 million people²⁵.

In the midst of the conflict armed clashes occurred which destroyed whole cities, such as Bunia and Kisangani. Whilst a failed peace

agreement was sought (1999 Lusaka Accords), it did give rise to the establishment of a UN mission: MONUC (United Nations Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo). Initially the deployment of 90 military and civilian personnel was authorized, but in November 1999 definitive support was given to support the agreement. On 16th June 2000, expressing concern at the continuation of hostilities and the renewed fighting between Rwandan and Ugandan forces in Kisangani, the Security Council initiated a series of resolutions which subsequently reinforced the mandate and the contribution of military personnel (up to 19,000 after 2008), the establishment of a police component and the development of civilian departments.

It's estimated that 10,000 child soldiers participated in the AFDP rebellion that took place towards the end of the 90s. The *kadogo* (the little ones, in Swahili) formed one of the foundations of the Presidential Guard, and in January 2001, for motives which are still unknown, one of these assassinated Laurent Kabila, thus changing the course of the war.²⁶ Following his replacement by his son Joseph, a period of dialogue was initiated through the Inter-Congolese Dialogue, leading to negotiations for an agreement between the different actors and permitting UN observers to be deployed in order to verify the ceasefire. The hostilities continued, however, for quite some time in the east

24 In 2013 Karabebe serves as minister of defense of Rwanda.

25 International Rescue Committee, *Mortality in the Democratic Republic of Congo. An ongoing crisis*, 2007.

26 See Stearns, p. 151.

and north of the country. Finally, two agreements were made which were fundamental in bringing about a certain level of stability:

- The Sun City agreement of February 2002 (Inter-Congolese Dialogue) that led to the signing of the Transition Agreement at the end of that year. These were complex negotiations in which South Africa and international pressure played an important role in terms of arriving at an agreement.
- The agreement signed by Joseph Kabila and Paul Kagame in Pretoria in July of that year, which established the retreat of Rwandan troops from Congolese territory, and the dismantling of support to the Hutu militias that were operating within Congolese territory.

The terms of the transitional arrangements are important in understanding the scope for political action in the phase following it. The main points were: reunification and reconstruction, peace and territorial integrity, national reconciliation, elections, a new structure of government (a President and four Vice-Presidents representing the different parties involved in the agreement), and the creation of an armed force that was restructured / integrated in a process called *brassage*, which is one of the keys to understanding the difficulty faced by reform efforts to date.

Brassage basically meant that if fighters surrendered their weapons they would be inserted into the national armed forces. Unlike other similar processes in the world (such as those in Central America), the *brassage* in Congo did not have a start or end date. Over the years, as the groups were demobilized they joined the Armed Forces, with the challenges this poses to the consolidation of a professional force. This issue, along with the holding of elections, the continuing conflict in the East of the country and the overall vulnerability of the population, forms the backdrop to the UN peace mission's collaboration in the establishment of peace and institutions.

3. MONUSCO'S ROLE IN PROTECTING THE POPULATION AND THE DEVELOPMENT OF A GENDER PERSPECTIVE

ON HOW THE PRESENCE OF A PEACE MISSION SUSTAINS THE RESOLUTION OF A CONFLICT

The strong presence of the United Nations in the DRC began towards the end of 1999, with the deployment increasing the following year with the definitive formation of MONUC. Following the blows inflicted by the killings in Bosnia, Kosovo and Rwanda, the international community responded

with the establishment of a large peacekeeping mission in the Congo in an attempt to stop a conflict of great magnitude.

Operating throughout the whole country, MONUC faced major challenges in the years following its establishment: collaboration to sustain and further develop the transition towards an electoral process; security sector reform; the persistence of armed groups; and an infrastructure that was virtually completely destroyed. In the case of the electoral process, given the political conflict between the opposing actors, the Electoral Commission wasn't established until 2004, whilst the first elections weren't held until two years later.

Armed groups had tens of thousands of adherents, while their dispersion and multiplication had to be addressed both politically and militarily, with a further serious complication being that many of these groups operated from foreign bases. National groups, meanwhile, responded to various sectors and ideas, and given the local motivations and the objective of mere survival, it is not always clear what exactly lay at the root of their actions. One of the most complex tasks in this regard has been the gathering of information and the diagnosis of such groups, a necessity that gave birth to a UN panel devoted to the diagnosis of both national and foreign armed groups.²⁷ In 2002, the size of the different foreign armed groups operating in DRC was estimated at 17,500 combatants. By 2006 the number had fallen to half of that, but it continued to represent a significant number.

The holding of elections in 2006 (despite the difficulties, including a full-blown armed conflict taking place in Kinshasa that represented a major challenge to MONUC and in which the Uruguayan contingent was deployed) was a key point as it led to the establishment of an elected government for the first time in 70 years. Although the method of resolving political issues through armed conflict decreased in intensity, it did not end, and neither did the involvement of neighboring countries in the complex regional security situation.

Between 2006 and 2008 the combination of armed conflict and poorly formed national armed forces meant that UN forces, along with demobilization programs, were essential to the provision of security in the country. In

27 The first diagnosis of armed groups was produced by MONUC in 2002 at the request of the Security Council. The report initially refers to groups originating in Rwanda and other neighboring countries. Given the relevance that local groups, such as the Mai-Mai, have taken, they were also included in the report. The Mai-Mai are armed groups that form locally, declaring the objective of defending their territory. Their political alliances vary, they don't respond to a particular determined sector and neither do they have a fixed composition, and though they justify their existence because of the presence of foreign armed groups, like other groups they also take what they need from civilians. They were estimated to number 20,000 to 30,000 in the Kivus alone. According to the report, "The umbrella term Mayi-Mayi (...) includes *seigneurs de guerre*, traditional chiefs, heads of villages, and resistance groups. (...) A high proportion of Mayi-Mayi militia are reported to be child soldiers. United Nations Security Council, *First assessment of the armed groups operating in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, S/2002/341* (New York: April 5, 2002), Appendix p.3.

terms of the military contribution, the main task to be carried out by MONUC was the stabilization of much of the territory. Violent armed conflicts occurred during those years, and the peacekeepers played a key role in putting an end to them.²⁸ **The Conference on Peace, Security and Development held in Kivus** (January 2008, with 1,250 Congolese delegates from various factions) made an important difference, with armed groups agreeing to a ceasefire and to *brassage* (although no specific date for this was set).

Throughout the process, and especially since 2004, the protection of civilians has formed an essential part of the mandate. MONUC shares with its successor, MONUSCO, the responsibility for carrying out a complex mandate, to be achieved in a huge territory and facing the difficulties of a lack of infrastructure and scarce means. Tasks ranged from the demobilization of armed groups and support to the Congolese armed forces (FARDC) in their operations, to assistance to the electoral process.

Later, regional agreements signed between countries helped lead to greater stability, as did agreements in 2009 with other local groups.

The semi-stabilization and the progress made in demobilization led the UN to program a transition phase into the work of the peace-keeping mission, but in reality this

decision also responded to the wishes of the Congolese government which, for domestic reasons, desired a smaller international presence inside the country (a presence that albeit pushed for further progress, especially with regard to justice and the armed forces).²⁹ Whatever the motive was, the transition from MONUC to MONUSCO consisted also in the deployment of additional military and civilian capabilities to the East of the country, and the progres-

28 The principal one was led by Laurent Knunda, head of the *Armée Nationale Congolaise* (ANC), the armed wing of the National Congress for the Defence of the People (CNDP). Its path swept across the entire Eastern part of the country. The conflict was particularly acute in Ituri and in the Kivus: the cities of Bunia, Goma and Bukavu were the scene of mass displacement in the face of the terror of the arrival of Knunda's troops. He was later arrested in 2009 in Rwanda, but never being placed under the jurisdiction of the International Criminal Court. Knunda was succeeded by Bosco Ntaganda, who upon committing himself to *brassage* was given the rank of colonel in the FARDC. Despite this, in March 2012, and with his space to maneuver ever-dwindling in the face of international pressure over reports made by his victims and by NGOs and the accusation against him by the International Criminal Court, he rebelled and formed a new group, the M23. Since 2012 this group has placed in check the stabilization of the East. The regional discussion has centered around whether or not Rwanda has been aiding M23. In July 2012 the Rwanda and Congolese presidents signed an agreement for the creation of a multinational force supported by the African Union and the UN, in order to put an end to this armed group, as well as others in the East of the country. The United States suspended any military assistance to Rwanda, arguing that there was proof that it supports rebel groups such as M23 in the East. The note serves to illustrate the complexities of politics related to the conflict.

29 In the Strategic Revision presented by the UN Secretary General in 2009, the advances that have been achieved in terms of stabilizing the conflict were presented without concealing the worry regarding the need to consolidate this stability, especially where it refers to the capacity of the State's institutions. See United Nations Security Council: *Thirty-first report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, S/2010/164* (New York, March 30, 2010). The plans which existed at that time for the withdrawal of forces in 2011 were changed due to the realities of a conflict which does not cease.

SCR 2098 (March 28, 2013) established the inclusion of an Intervention Brigade within the authorized troop ceiling. It will consist of 3 infantry battalions, one artillery and Special Force Company

sive transference of functions from the Mission to the UN's Country Team. As part of the process that was taken forward in the previous

decade, in 2010 the Security Council decided to change the Mission's name to reflect the stabilization of part of the country, thus concentrating on the East and North, especially the Kivus and Orientale Province.

The Mission has a strong mandate to protect civilians, and is authorized to use all necessary means to carry out its mandate. The size of the authorized force is:

- 19,815 military personnel
- 760 military observers
- 391 police officers
- 1,050 members of Formed Police Units (FPU)

THE WEAPONS OF WAR: SEXUAL VIOLENCE

Such traumatic experiences are difficult to remove from a collective historical memory, and even more so when they cross over tribal and ethnic borders as in the Congo, where such experiences were shared at some point by all ethnic groups in the country. The weight which this violation of fundamental rights imposes upon the historical memory can be appreciated in the experiences of one of society's central components: women and children. Violence against women has a significant impact upon their children (tomorrow's citizens), their husbands, and also upon those that commit such acts. It affects the values, the parameters of coexistence, expectations of the future, and the vital energy of the country itself. There are, however, no widely known studies on the extent to which the transmission of the experiences of their ancestors, especially those of mothers and grandmothers, has affected each one of the Congolese generations. More recently, and given the spiral of public violence against women which became a weapon of war from the 90s onwards, there exists collections of testimonies which permit an intuition of the survivors' perceptions regarding human nature and what they can expect in their own future.

Sexual violence, along with looting, destruction and murder, has been one of the principal weapons of war in the DRC. Whilst it has been argued that such crimes have been part of all the wars of mankind, it is in recent times that it has begun to extend itself.³⁰ Furthermore, it is necessary to differenti-

³⁰ It is worth thinking, for example, in the cloak of silence over the outrage surrounding German women at the end of World War II, portrayed in the film: *Anonyma: A Woman in Berlin* (2008).

ate between what are two distinct phenomena: 1) the occurrence of sexual violence as a crime occurring during wars, and 2) the systematic and planned use of sexual violence as a method of achieving the objective of the struggle (for example, when it was part of the “counterinsurgency” torture methods in the 70s, such as during the last dictatorship in Argentina). Contemporary conflicts such as that in the DRC have made the population part of the very battlefield, and thus the target of the action. Indifference or justification for these practices as “common aberrations of war” thus succeeds only in impeding opportunities for a sustainable peace, burying what we fail to understand.

A 2010 study presents some starting points for understanding and debate, taking into account existing literature and analyzing how the taboo that had prevailed on the treatment of this topic has been lifted:³¹

- Attackers are not aberrant individuals, but instead normal people in abnormal situations in which the common rules of behavior do not apply. “In other words, theories about pathological behaviors would not help us much in understanding the perpetrators”.³²
- The use of rape as a systematic weapon seems to be typical of the conflicts of the 90s. It can be concluded that it targets the victims’ identity.
- Sexual violence seems an effective way of achieving that a certain group leaves a territory.
- Any analysis must understand the context of gender relations in the place of conflict.

To these concepts we can add that - especially in the case of the DRC - widespread sexual violence seeks to achieve that the woman/man is repudiated by their family and community, and as a result disengage the foundational solidarity of the society. They destroy the core nuclei of the family and its social expression, the community, so to:

- Prevent the formation of a social fabric, and
- Ensure, through terror, the suppression of individual wills.

Is it a systematic plan that the perpetrators actively engage in? The question is difficult to answer without the availability of more in-depth studies. What is

31 Inger Skjelsbaek, *The Elephant in the Room. An Overview of How Sexual Violence came to be Seen as a Weapon of War* (Oslo: Peace Research Institute Oslo PRIO, 2010), p.27 y 30.

32 Polemical as the affirmation is, how can the issue be interpreted when crime isn’t the exception but the rule?

clear is the mistreatment of the population up to the point of denying their human rights. In the great battle zone against the enemy “army”, rape and the murder of women, men and children multiply; people are obligated by force to provide food and other services; homes and communal buildings, such as schools or churches, are destroyed. The enemy “occupation” does not need to be a physical one, it only takes the assumption that the population is their base of support or that they sympathize with them. All that in rampant raids which finally destroy the minimum certainties needed for daily life. One can’t even identify an ideological or political source, as all parties to the conflict, including the armed forces themselves, commit the same atrocities, albeit some more than others.³³

The events take place in an organized and systematic manner, and it is necessary to banish conceptions that they are random acts committed by a few people, or that it is the local culture that explains these heinous acts. In what is a major source of information, the *Mapping Report* prepared by the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights established the existence of a systematic plan: “This report shows that the vast majority of incidents listed, if investigated and proven in a judicial process, fall within the scope of widespread or systematic attacks, depicting multiple acts of large-scale violence (...). Most of these attacks were directed against non-combatant civilian populations consisting primarily of women and children. (...) could be found by a competent court to constitute crimes against humanity.”³⁴ This same report proposes a classification of the type of crimes that are most widely committed: against women, against children, and the illegal exploitation of natural resources.³⁵

The cases repeat themselves and share common characteristics: children are forced to be present or to hold their mothers while they are gang raped, objects are inserted into the genitals, individuals are attacked regardless of their

33 For the period before the fall of Mobutu, a special report identified allegations of massacres and other human rights violations which were attributed to FDL (rebel forces), the Banyamulenge and their allies (68.02%); the Zairian armed forces (FAZ) (16.75%); the former Rwandan armed forces (FAR) and Interahamwe militias (9.64%); the Patriotic Rwandan Front (2.03%), the Burundian armed forces (2.03%); and mercenaries who fought with the national armed forces (1.52%). United Nations Economic and Social Council, *Report on allegations of massacres and other human rights violations committed in Eastern Zaire (now DRC) since September 1996*, E/CN.4/1998/64 (Geneva, January 23, 1998).

34 Office of the High Commissioner of the United Nations for Human Rights, *Report of the Mapping Exercise op. cit*, paragraph 26.

35 In regard to the child soldiers recruited from the Rutshuru zone in North Kivu in order to participate in the Congolese wars, for example, it is said that: “Recruiting officers went into the village schools, promising the children food or money. They also forcibly enlisted an unknown number of children. Some of the recruits were barely ten years old. Most of the area’s recruits received minimal military training at the Matebe camp located near Rutshuru town centre. During their stay at the camp, the children were tortured and subjected to various kinds of cruel, inhuman and degrading treatment. They were raped and received only very little food. They were then sent straight to the front line.” Office of the High Commissioner Of the United Nations for Human Rights, *Report of the Mapping Exercise op. cit*, 277.

age (children, women, young or old), and men are also raped. Such acts take place on a massive scale when such groups enter into villages, but the modus operandi also includes attacks on women in the middle of the plains or jungle, when they go to fetch water, or when they are working in the fields. Congolese society is primarily patriarchal, and women have an important role when it

Panzi Hospital in Bukavu is one of the specialized units where they perform vaginal fistula surgeries, which represent one of the most acute physical injuries. In an interview with the authorities, they expressed how, in the face of the overwhelming cases, doctors ended up doing a job that they never thought they would do: reconstruction. The hospital has established a home (City of Joy) where additional support is provided to victims, with teams providing social and psychological assistance. The issue, however, is not an easy one to deal with: one reported case refers to a woman who, after receiving medical assistance to deal with her physical injuries, received a small allowance with which she was able to establish a small business. Whoever attacked her first, and as a warning to others, returned to attack her once more and also to destroy her business. Impunity remains as one of the principal problems. The numbers of cases are overwhelming: Panzi Hospital recorded 3,300 patients in 2010 and a further 2,100 cases were recorded in 2011.

comes to subsistence work. Acts of violence thus attack the very heart of society, causing the isolation of the victim, who is stigmatized. It is for this reason that many victims refuse to acknowledge the issue, preferring instead to remain in silence rather than facing the social repercussions.

The silence of many of the victims is one of the reasons why it is difficult to access reliable figures on the subject. Another is the territorial separation, and the inaccessibility of villages that aren't located close to one of the larger cities. Such villages remain isolated places where the State doesn't possess any

meaningful presence and, in practical terms, neither do international forces. It's not necessary to travel very far from a city like Goma, for example, before you come across tiny villages located in the middle of nowhere, where self-management prevails and there exists a communal notion that is quite distinct and distant from the concept of a national policy or even a notion of the State.³⁶ One study published by the American Medical Association, based on a sample of 1,000 households in 67 villages in Eastern Congo interviewed in March 2010, showed that 39.7% of women and 23.6% of men had been affected by episodes of sexual violence, whilst 67% of households had suffered some kind of violation of their human rights since the conflict began in the late 90s.³⁷ A previous

³⁶ Forty kilometers can be an insurmountable distance when motorized transport can only travel at speeds of 10/20 kilometers per hour, and rain and mud add further discouragement. People walk and walk, especially to school, to church, or to the market to sell their produce. Physical activity is constant. They also run together during the morning in cities such as Goma.

³⁷ Kirsten Johnson, Jennifer Scott, Bigy Rughita, Michael Kisielewski, Jana Asher, Ricardo Ong and Lynn Lawry, "Association of Sexual Violence and Human Rights Violations with Physical and Mental Health in Territories of the Eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo" in *Journal of the American Medical Association* (Chicago: AMA, August 2010), Vol. 304, number 5, p. 553-562. The study also presents how women are also perpetrators.

study in 2004 that was conducted by local organizations shows that, of the nearly 500 cases of sexual violence studied in villages in Eastern Congo, 28.9% were committed by two attackers, 21.7% by three, and 19.2% by four or five, with the overall average of all cases being 4.5 perpetrators per victim.³⁸

These acts of violence, in addition to the deaths caused by machete attacks, the arson of huts and other similar acts, have acted as a major force impelling the displacement of large numbers of the population, disrupting social and individual structures and having a major impact upon development. Some such displacements have been of epic proportions, for example that of thousands of people in 1997 from the East of the country all the way to Kisangani, located about 500 kilometers away, travelling the initial parts through the jungle of Garamba National Park.³⁹

In a country where the last census was conducted in 1984, producing statistics is a very precarious process. It is estimated that the population oscillates between 65 and 75 million inhabitants - the number of voters registered for the 2011 elections was 32 million. There doesn't exist many known opinion surveys on the presence of the international Mission; one of the most recent is that carried out by the Red Cross (an organization with widespread activities in the DRC) and highlights some of the following points:⁴⁰

- 61% of the Congolese population has personal experiences of the conflict. To this, one adds the 15% that have suffered the direct consequences of the conflict, thus accounting in total for three quarters of the population.
- In 1 of every 4 cases a member of the family has been killed as a result of the conflict.
- At the same time, as the study concludes, in emotional terms the population is surprisingly optimistic, with 56% stating that they feel more knowledgeable, 42% more empathetic towards others, and the same percentage more optimistic about the future. Such statistics display the potential of the Congolese population, something which is also evident on the ground. There is constant movement in the streets and pathways,

38 Réseau des Femmes pour un Développement Associatif (RDFA), Réseau des Femmes pour la Défense des Droits et la Paix (RFDP), International Alert, *Women's Bodies as a Battleground : Sexual Violence Against Women and Girls During the War in the Democratic Republic of Congo, South Kivu (1996-2003)*, 2005, p.33.

39 The park is enclosed jungle; amongst the most feared bites is that of the large red ants, they are found everywhere and climb onto the body.

40 Ipsos/ICRC, *Our World. Views from the Field. Democratic Republic of the Congo, Opinion Survey and In-depth Research* (Geneva: International Committee of the Red Cross, December 2009), p. 6 and 21.

which is both energetic and decisive. As a foreign diplomat told us in Kinshasa, “they always search for the way to survive, and spend the day trying to find a way to make a living”.

Generally, the close proximity of an armed group is sufficient for the population to start looking for safer alternative places. This happened for instance in 2012 in Goma, where the population was faced with the proximity of the newly-formed M23 rebels headed by the –until then- former rebel Ntaganda, who during a different stage in his life held the position of Colonel in the National Army. Another example is provided by the people of Kimua (a town situated amidst the jungle, where Uruguay deploys a company which can only be reached by helicopter). Whenever the fighting rages between rebels and government forces, local people seek shelter near to the Uruguayan base. Everyone – both peacekeepers and the local population – are witnesses and victims to the soundtrack of rifles that has enveloped the Congo in the last twenty years.⁴¹

At the present time, the horrors of previous wars have declined markedly in their intensity but they have certainly not disappeared, as shown by the recurring conflicts in the East. The UN presence has been fundamental to this progress, but unfortunately analysis of this is not often produced. There has also been significant progress made with the elections in 2006 and 2011, the process of regional political negotiations, and some international pressure to cease the support other countries have provided to rebel groups. International media coverage of sexual violence in recent years often –and logically- emphasizes why peacekeepers are unable to prevent it from taking place. Some issues are discussed in the following sections. However, against a context such as that which has been succinctly narrated here, and with so few years to alleviate their effects, rather than debate the reasons for a peacekeeping mission, it is necessary to reflect on what would happen if the UN mission in the DRC was not in place.

⁴¹ See, for example, the shocking story of the massacre of Kasika, documented by the Mapping Report, in Jason Stearns, *op. cit.* p. 257, written on the basis of the testimonies or those who witnessed/experienced it. A village situated in the middle of a conflict, in which they were mere subjects, not protagonists, suffered the killing of their priest (central leader), his wife, nuns and villagers. A survivor tells how they disfigured the bodies, took the fetus out of a pregnant woman, ripped out the leader’s heart, raped the nuns and played with their dead bodies. “We had seen people killed before. But this was worse than killing. It was like they killed them, and then killed them again. And again.” Kasika, which is located at just 100 kilometres from Bukavu, was one of the three villages that was attacked on this day in August 1998, in which nearly 1,000 people were killed.

MONUSCO'S MANDATE AND STRUCTURE

The precarious stabilization in the West and South of the country led the Security Council, in July 2010, to convert MONUC into MONUSCO, giving a clear message both to the Congolese government and to the international community regarding the UN role: to collaborate and support the efforts of the government, rather than fulfill a leading role on its own. This position is a source of major criticism regarding the actions of the UN in the DRC, especially during times of aberrant violence. However, when evaluating its role, and in relation to the troop-contributing countries (TCC), it must be remembered that their work depends on the mandates provided to them by the Security Council itself.

The reappearance of media coverage of the rebel action in the East of the country (action that had never really ceased) rekindles debates and the accompanying accusations that the peacekeeping mission is inactive, or that peacekeepers simply observe conflict without taking actions, waiting to return home. However, this view of the situation is far from the reality of those that were interviewed on

the ground. Few of the debates or the news stories covering the issue actually point towards the origin of the problem, which in reality is the mandate that the Mission receives. In November 2012, major international media reproduced statements by a senior official of a country with a permanent seat in the Council, who was quoted as saying it was: "absurd" that the UN troops had allowed the rebels to pass in front of them, urging that the mandate be reviewed. Others noted that "The UN's failure to confront insurgents has raised questions about the largest and costliest peacekeeping mission."⁴²

Little mention, however, tends to be given to the responsibility of the UN Member States in the decision that seals the fate of a mission: its mandate, or in secondary decisions, such as the composition of the Forces and the military commands of the Mission.⁴³ The denial in some European circles about what is happening in Congo is directly proportional to the indifference of the Latin American countries. This latter issue was highlighted by Congolese actors during interviews, who requested greater involvement of countries such as those of Latin America, who have experienced civil wars and acute civil-military issues. The perspective changes according to the protagonist: in the case of the Uruguayan press (the Uruguayan contingent is based in Goma) they emphasized other problems, quoting an officer deployed in the

⁴² BBC News Africa, *UN condemns DR Congo rebel seizure of Goma*, <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-africa-20422053>, accessed on November 21, 2012. See also Morten Bøås and James J. Hentz, *African security in 2013: a year of disequilibrium?* (Oslo: NOREF, April 2013), p. 10.

⁴³ The military structure of a mission is often divided between different countries that assume part of the leadership. In the case of MINUSTAH, for example, Brazil has commanded the Force since the beginning. In the case of MONUSCO, the command of the Force is in the hands of India, whilst the deputy command is in the hands of Great Britain.

field: “If you give Uruguay the order to go out and to defend the Congolese people, we will.” He cited that the written order was that: “beyond the task performed, the peacekeepers shall not open fire on anyone unless they are attacked (...). That in fact, leaves all personnel with no chance of defending the civilian population.”⁴⁴

MONUSCO is in effect the largest integrated mission of the United Nations. If it is the costliest, then it merits specific analysis, given that the costs in any activity are supposed to be proportional to the size, and hence the evaluation depends on the effectiveness and the amount of the work carried out (we do not know of a comparative analysis between different missions)

The issue of integrated missions began to be presented as a necessity in the UN following the so-called Capstone Doctrine. The interviews carried out in the DRC, and the travels completed throughout different parts of the country, allowed us to observe an integrated mission in action.

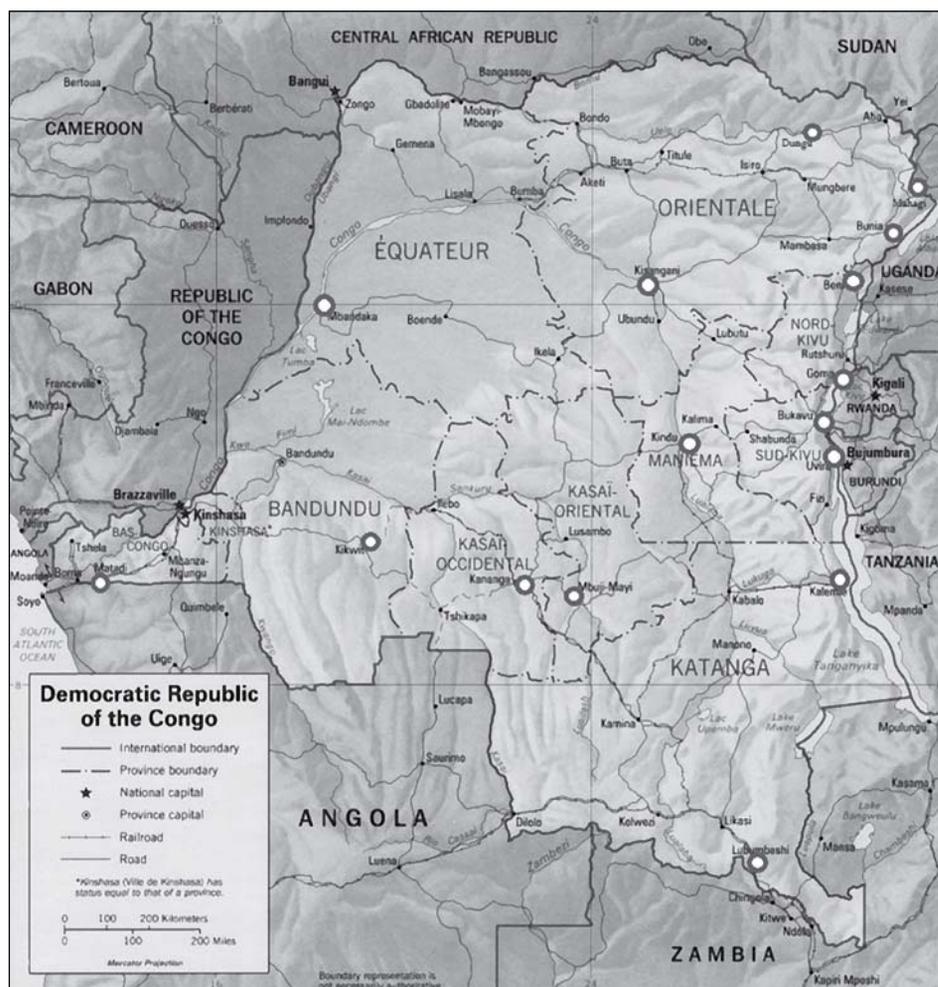
The integration basically supposes that three components (civilian, military and police) along with an essential element (Mission Support) are working together in order to carry out the mandate. In the case of MONUSCO the regional structure is divided into:

- The main headquarters located in the capital, Kinshasa.
- Offices distributed throughout the country, especially in the East and the North: Beni/Butembo, Bukavu, Bunia, Goma, Kalemie, Kananga, Kikwit, Kindu, Kisangani, Lubumbashi, Mahagi, Matadi, Mbandaka, Mbuji-Mayi, and Uvira.
- A logistics base in Kinshasa, although given that most of the operations are carried out in the East, they are largely dependent on the UN logistics base in Entebbe (Uganda), which also supports other UN missions in the area.
- Regional detachments in Kigali (Rwanda), Pretoria (South Africa) and Kampala (Uganda).

MONUSCO’s mandate is drawn from SCR Resolution 1925 (2010). Just as with other missions, and taking into account that the type of intervention by the international community in these cases does not replace or discard national sovereignty, the preamble to the Resolution stressed “the primary responsibility of the Government of the Democratic Republic of the Congo

44 El País Uruguay, *Los rebeldes pretenden avanzar hacia Kinshasa*, <http://elpais.com.uy/121121/ultimo-676994/ultimomomento/los-rebeldes-pretenden-avanzar-hacia-kinshasa-la-capital-del-pais/>, accessed on November 21, 2012.

Regional Distribution of the Mission's Offices



for ensuring security in its territory and protecting its civilians with respect for the rule of law, human rights, and international humanitarian law (...)"'. The two priorities are the protection of civilians and the stabilization and consolidation of peace. Regarding the first, the mandate includes the disposition to "ensure the effective protection of civilians, including humanitarian personnel and human rights defenders under imminent threat of physical violence, in particular violence emanating from any of the parties engaged in the conflict" and to "ensure the protection of United Nations personnel, facilities, installations and equipment". In both of these cases, the action is unilateral. An important directive is given to the provision of technical and logistical assistance to the electoral process, which has been one of the tasks to which resources and activities have been most heavily devoted in recent years. With regard to the other components of the mandate, which are di-

verse in nature, the task outlined is to support and sustain the efforts of the Congolese government in all matters in question, starting with security sector reform, demobilization, and the development of justice institutions.

The Mission is headed by a Special Representative of the Secretary General (SRSG), who holds the rank of Deputy Secretary in the Organization, and whose office is staffed by 38 members. Two deputies are placed beneath its control, one acting as the Deputy Special Representative and Rule of Law Coordinator and the other as Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator. The Command of the Military Forces and the Division of Mission Support are also dependent on the SRSG.

The breadth of the mandate is reflected in the number of staff, the geographical distribution and the offices of the civilian component which are devoted to each task. Gender, Rule of Law, Civil Affairs, Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration (DDR), Political Affairs, Human Rights, Electoral Assistance, Child Protection, Conduct and Discipline, Security Sector Reform, are amongst the main civil components. A Sexual Violence Unit was also created in this mission specifically to deal with the issue from within the Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Sexual Violence in Conflict.

The decentralization required by the activities carried out means that most of these offices have a center in Kinshasa as well as staff working in local offices situated in the interior of the country (for example in Bukavu or Dungu), in which a total of approximately 500 people are posted. In each city in which a Regional Office is located, one will usually find an installation of about 300 or 400 square meters, built across one single level in which the different offices are located. In the case of Dungu, given the security restrictions, civilian personnel live within the same camp, with living quarters located 100 meters from their offices. UNPOL and military forces have different locations (in the case of the military, there is generally a headquarters for the Regional Brigade in addition to one for each of the contingents).

Deployment between cities is one of the permanent challenges: given its impossibility by land, it is carried out by air, always travelling via Entebbe or some other city where the flight stops, and there aren't abundant modes available. Given the limited potential for face-to-face meetings, an annual meeting in Kinshasa is usually organized by each Section (for example, Rule of Law), whilst the rest of the time constant communication is maintained via email or telephone. Thus, one could say that the actions and relations circulate in an axis of: New York - Kinshasa - Regional Office. The effective distance between Bunia, for instance, and Kinshasa, can thus be equated to that between the capital and New York. In the Regional Offices, the Head of Office is responsible for coordination

in the local field. The physical disconnect of the inner cities is combined with the breakneck pace of Kinshasa in a phenomenon observed in those carrying forward the civil programs, for whom the notion of 'working hours' or a distinction between work and personal life simply doesn't seem to exist. Congo is not exactly the place for those who lack the devotion to serve in this kind of mission.

The integration at senior levels occurs once a week in the **Senior Management Team**. Those that participate vary from the SRSG to the Force Commander, to the heads of the various sections, and the themes discussed include security, elections and budgetary issues. The general impression is that it is a well-oiled and efficient mechanism, perhaps aided by the experience of the participants. The agenda includes requests from New York as well as covering the goings-on in Kinshasa and in the Regional Offices. One can perceive the weight of the budget issue and also the tension surrounding the high workload and the number of tasks, especially on how to integrate them within a context of a resource constraint that is general to the UN, and therefore to the missions as well. Negotiating the budget is one of the tasks carried out by the **Mission Support Division** which is in constant communication with New York. In a meeting it was explained to us how these budgets are designed, responding to the Results Based Budgeting mechanism, this is to say that it is based on objectives and expected results, and where the objectives are not achieved, the budget designated to the area is reduced accordingly.

Member States play an important role in this. The General Assembly selects the 16 individuals that represent them within the **Advisory Committee on Administration & Budgetary Questions**, which votes to affirm or reject items included in the budget as well as the amounts allocated to them. Member States, in practice, request and revise the information that the Committee elaborates. Once the final request is sent to the Fifth Committee of the General Assembly (Administrative and Budgetary) and if approved, it is submitted to the General Assembly. The decentralization of the Mission, which took form from 2005 onwards, occurred in the absence of the allocation of additional budgetary resources. The size of the territory and the need for decentralization continue to be cited as one of the major

The UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Actors (OCHA) has categorized the humanitarian situation in the Democratic Republic of Congo as one of the most complex in the world. Contributing to this is the difficulty of access to different locations, given the poor road infrastructure and transport problems. It is estimated that the number of people internally displaced by the conflict reaches more than 2 million.

challenges that the Mission has to cope with. In relation to resources, in recent years strategies to increase efficiency and reduce costs have been implemented, focusing, for example, on air transport through a centre for the control and integration of movements,

utilizing the personnel training centre in Entebbe and managing principally through this logistical base.

Despite its size, the Mission is one of many players operating in the country. In Haiti, for example, the weight placed upon MINUSTAH, and the knowledge about it, is much broader. The vast size of the DRC territory and the diversity of its problems represent a different case, with a mosaic of different actors of which the Mission is one of the most relevant. In addition to the Mission, other organizations from the United Nations system are also found, such as UNFPA, UN Women, UNHCR, UNDP and UNICEF amongst others, carrying out important activities and providing much needed resources. One must also include non-governmental organizations (especially the larger international ones) that in some cases have more resources than the Mission itself.

From within this plurality of actors, the UN is placed alongside other international humanitarian organizations as one of the most valued according to the Red Cross study cited above: when respondents were given the option to mention the three organizations that they believed helped most to alleviate suffering in the

Some other results of the study are illuminating for thinking about the military presence. When asked about the role of external actors, 49% said it should be devoted to the provision of peacekeepers. In second place, emergency assistance was noted by 45% of respondents. It should also be noted that 36% responded that the international community should intervene militarily to stop the conflict. Peace and security thus remain the main quest for the local population.

DRC, 19% mentioned the United Nations in first position, while an additional 31% placed it in either second or third place (with a total of 50%, the UN was thus ranked second in the table, following the International/Local Red Cross, which together received 61% of the mentions).⁴⁵

Within the work that the United Nations develops in the DRC, the integration and coordination of humanitarian assistance have led to the formation of so-called **clusters**, or groups in which the various agencies and offices of the Mission develop coordinated actions in relation to diverse themes. The Government is also a relevant actor to be taken into account in this respect, given that all the actions carried out must be undertaken with its consent or participation. The same should be said about non-governmental organizations if they accept to coordinate and participate in the clusters (not many of them do, given the warnings about so-called “humanitarian space”).

This practice of using clusters is in vogue in distinct parts of the world; it attempts to compensate for the jurisdictions and competences which intersect and overlap, and also to avoid the duplication of efforts. This is not an easy task in practice, however, and one of the problems across different Missions is exactly this duplication of efforts and the relative autonomy with which agencies oper-

⁴⁵ Ipsos/ICRC, *op. cit.*, p.28.

ate given their independence from the Mission. In each UN mission one of the Deputy Representatives serves as Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator.

In the DRC the entire system performs a full weekly briefing (**Programme Management Team Meeting**), in which all the programs are reported, and the various alternatives are discussed. It was there that the existence of thematic groups (such as that of Gender) was explained to us, and the various links that exist within each agency in order to communicate with the rest. To get an idea of the magnitude of actors, between 30 and 40 people gather together in these meetings.

GENDER PERSPECTIVE AND PROTECTION OF CIVILIANS

In the framework of an intermittent conflict and the still transitional character of Congolese democracy, the protection of the civilian population and the incorporation of a gender perspective that encourages and supports democratization are key issues and represent one of the principal challenges for international action.

Women occupy a central role in the community and family breakdown strongly affects them. In particular in the East, the conflicts and the threat to women of being attacked cause men (be them from the military, police, or rebel groups) to take their families with them, refusing to abandon them to luck. This, on one hand, creates a challenge for the construction of police and military institutions, which need to face up to the specific characteristics of the culture and the local situation. On the other hand, it represents a constant humanitarian risk, leaving women and children at high risk of being caught up in military actions.

From a broader perspective, gender issues are closely related to violence and particularly to sexual violence. The situation of women in the DRC is, as explained by the government itself, unequal in all domains, and this exacerbates violence, in particular of the sexual variety.⁴⁶

Young women who are yet to marry are looked upon as being “backward”; there is acceptance of polygamy in the face of the impossibility of being the husband’s first choice (although illegal, it has been reported that in 2007 such cases affected 40% of marriages in the provinces of Kasai Oriental, and 31% in Kinshasa)⁴⁷; there is a wide gap between men and women in terms of schooling rates, and there exists a requirement of the husband’s consent for women to engage in any type of legal action.

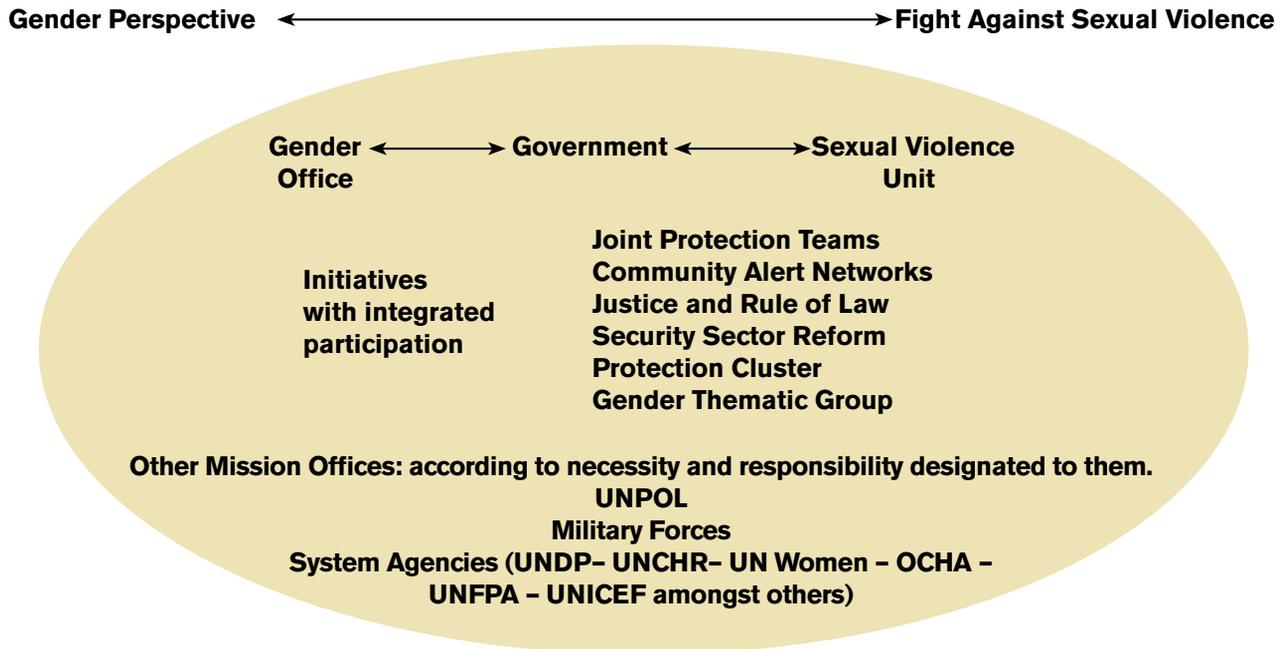
⁴⁶ République Démocratique du Congo, Ministère du Genre, de la Famille et de l’Enfant, *Rapport National Genre 2011* (Kinshasa: October 2011), p.14.

⁴⁷ *Rapport National Genre 2011 op. cit.*, p.38.

Such issues represent cultural or legal questions which require the consideration of multiple different factors. One cannot simply say, “It should be this way”. The definitive resolution of the conflict, and the possibility of initiating a path towards sustainable development, will give life to a democratic environment in which Congolese society itself (and the women who form a substantial part of it) write their own laws and make their own decisions. With regards to the international community, it is undeniable that since humanity has existed, violence has existed because someone stronger imposes or seeks to impose their will on another by means of force. It is also undeniable that the human rights of women should be guaranteed, including their right to equal opportunities.

The focus on gender-based violence as a form of physical, psychological, moral and social submission that affects the development of a social fabric is, in this regard, as relevant as the important role that women play in development. Constituting an estimated half of the Congolese population, the contribution of women to sustainable development is essential. In short, integrating a gender perspective encompasses both issues of equal opportunities and development, as well as the fight against gender violence.

The necessity for the Mission to integrate its programs and strategies means the gender perspective is a transversal issue that covers all offices. The actors and actions to which gender, violence and protection are relevant can be synthesized in the following way:



MONUSCO's Gender Office (OG) supports and assists the Congolese government, especially the Ministry of Gender, Family and Children, in the development of gender policies and actions, while working for the implementation of a gender perspective in the Offices and activities of the Mission.

With headquarters in Kinshasa (also linked with the Gender Unit that operates in the Department of Peacekeeping Operations in New York), it has officers who are gender focal points at different locations within the

interior of the country. Teams working in these offices (relatively few) cover promotional events up to assistance in the development of greater political participation. They are involved with the various components of the Mission, including the military, and it is them who participate in the induction training given to all staff on arrival to the Mission. When referring to the challenges and objectives of gender work in the DRC, they pose the following:

- In terms of prevention: that the conflict is reduced and an end is put to all forms of sexual violence.
- The issue of participation: the inclusion of women in decision-making processes.
- Protection is key: ensure the physical and mental health of women, and consolidate security and human rights.
- Assistance and Recovery: meet specific needs in the context of the conflict.

The Office's Action Plan is vast and covers seven principal points in which they are working, with such work always being carried out in an integrated manner with other offices, as shown in the diagram above.

- **The protection of civilians**, where they play a part in the Joint Protection Teams (see below), collaborating to build capabilities within the military forces within the framework of a gender perspective, linking up with local women in the work carried out by the Mission in the field, and also connecting them with the contingents.
- Providing **support to the electoral process**, a task that also consumes resources and to which they have worked intensively in training (for example, training workshops have been held throughout the country), in the design of security strategies for women who decide to vote, and in promoting greater female participation in politics.
- **The development of the security sector and the fight against impunity**: a key issue, in which codes of conduct are developed and gender training is carried out, not only of the military and police forces but also of judges.

It also involves the operationalization of the Military Guidelines that were developed by the DPKO specifically for military contingents.⁴⁸

- **Gender and DDR:** especially the issue of the women that - as discussed above - mobilize themselves along with their husbands and families. Also, the rehabilitation of soldiers' widows, no minor issue in a historical situation of intense conflict.
- The work of **gender focal points** within MONUSCO: as much for the civilian staff as for the Mission's military and police staff.
- In terms of **stabilization and peacebuilding**, supporting local initiatives to resolve conflicts through quick impact projects, for example, for the re-training of women working in mines, or to encourage micro enterprises.
- Finally, **strategy and communication**, essential in order to achieve the vast scope of the work presented by the DRC, and to promote awareness, counseling and training. As part of this the Gender Office also utilizes, as other offices do, Mission Radio (Radio Okapi), which is listened to widely by the local population and one of MONUSCO's most effective and appreciated projects.

In the sphere of assistance to the Government, the Gender Office provides support and assistance, coordinated by the Ministry, within the **Gender Working Group (GWG)**.⁴⁹ The Government convenes meetings that involve UN system organizations, NGOs, and international cooperation organizations. In 2012, for the first time, the Government drafted an action plan which has a specific focus dedicated to the fight against discrimination and sexual violence, strengthening women's economic skills, the promotion of gender equality, and the empowerment of the legal status of women in the country, as well as the coordination of interventions. Although ambitious in its outlook, it is important that the Government itself has displayed the intention to carry out such work, addressing what they see as being necessary. The issue of resources was listed in the references that local actors attached to this plan of action, together with the fact that the majority of the resources provided by the international community are directed to

48 DPKO/DFS. *Guidelines. Integrating a Gender Perspective into the Work of the United Nations Military in Peacekeeping Operations*. (DPKO/DFS: New York, March 2010).

49 It's interesting to give at least a minimal reference to the issue of assistance and support. In the case of the DRC, and specifically the work between the Gender Office and the Government, one was able to appreciate how the actors skillfully handled the issues of assistance/advice/impulse, avoiding attitudes that could harm local sensitivities. This is a point on which international cooperation needs to reflect in order to be more effective, analyzing what are the things that help a more natural communication with local stakeholders. For example, coming from a national environment which has similar experiences, geography or culture, seems to be one of those points.

the Eastern part of the country, as opposed to supporting a more inclusive national strategy.

Another area of support to the Government is in the design and implementation of a *National Action Plan*, based on the United Nations Security Council's Resolution 1325. The Plan aims to develop a gender perspective within the country's general policies, and its realization would be a significant achievement for both the Government and for the Mission. The Ministry of Gender has outwardly expressed that collaboration from countries and regions that have made advancements on the subject would be much appreciated, including in this the Latin American countries. The three basic problems that require advancement are: the finalization of the plan, its

operationalization, and the mobilization of the resources needed to implement it.

The Sexual Violence Unit has an office in Kinshasa, as well as offices in Bukavu and Goma, located in the East of the country where there

The **Sexual Violence Unit** (SVU) is the MONUSCO office specifically responsible for the fight against sexual violence, and for supporting the Congolese government in the implementation of the Strategy.

is a greater incidence of sexual violence. This does not mean to say, however, that the staff is large: only about 10 staff members are distributed throughout the entire country.

The history of the recently established Unit begins with the request by the Security Council in 2008 (SCR 1794) for the development of a *Comprehensive Strategy on Combating Sexual Violence in the DRC*. This strategy involves not only many of the Mission's civil offices, but also agencies from the wider UN system and, importantly, the Government, with work being carried out on its *National Strategy on Combating Gender-based Violence*.

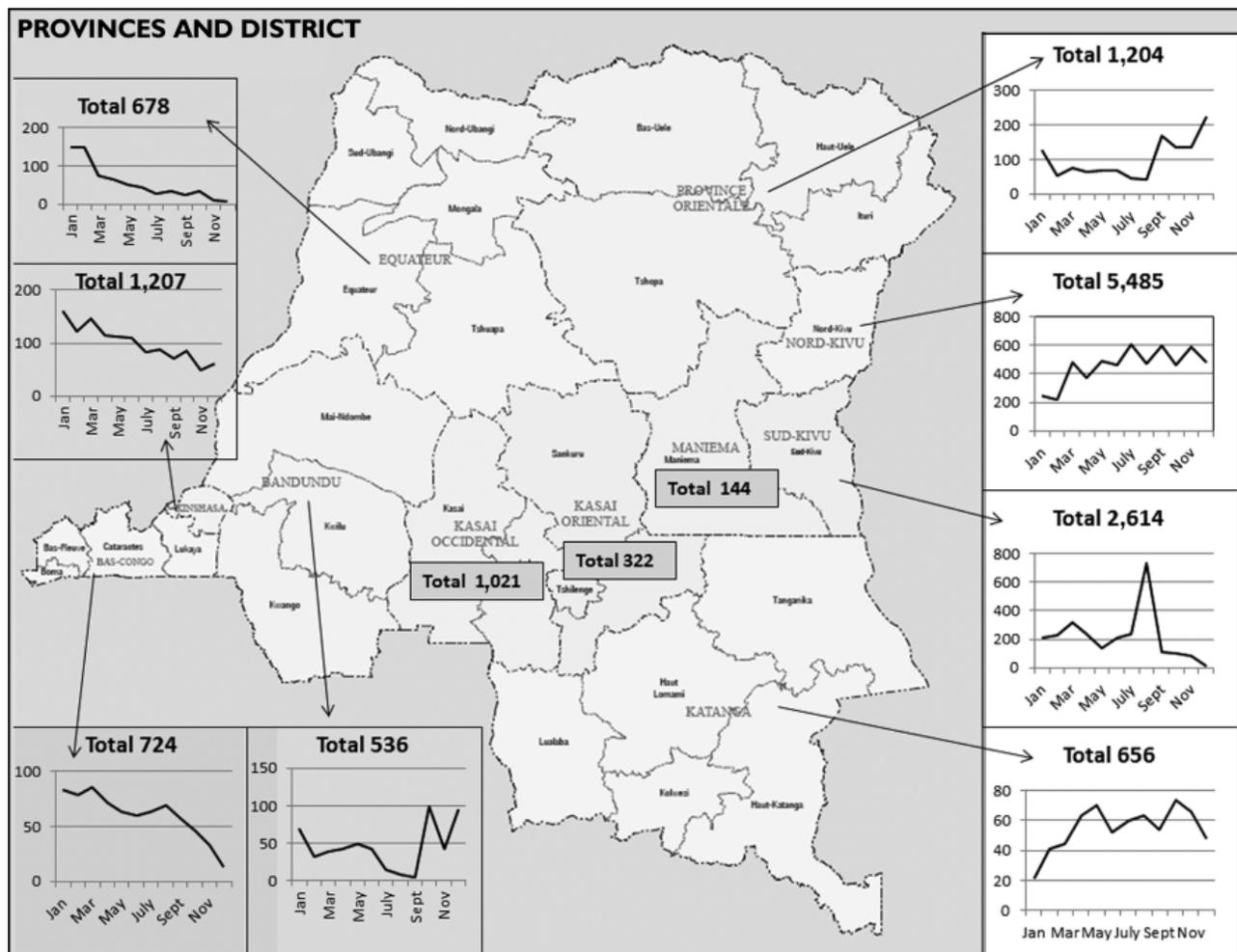
The *Comprehensive Strategy* acts as the framework of the Unit's work. It is built around 5 key axes, and different elements of the Mission, the system, and the government, head the operations of each of these:

- 1) **Fight Against Impunity** (Ministry of Justice/UN leading entity UNJHRO)
- 2) **Protection and Prevention** (Ministry of Social Affairs/UNHCR)
- 3) **Security Sector Reform** (Ministries of Defense and Interior/MONUSCO Security Sector Development Office)
- 4) **Multi-Sectoral Assistance for Survivors** (Ministry of Health/UNICEF)
- 5) **Data & Mapping** (Ministry of Gender, Family and Children/UNFPA)

The different axes constitute themselves through working groups comprising all government and United Nations offices, meeting on a monthly basis. A coordinating group also organizes monthly meetings between those responsible for each of the five axes, with a primary role being allocated to the SVU in supporting the Government with this task.

According to figures provided by the Unit, between 2008 and 2010 there were 45,502 cases of sexual violence in the country, with a particularly high prevalence in the East, where armed conflict continues, as shown on the map with figures from 2010:

Registered Cases of Sexual Violence, 2010



Source: Sexual Violence Unit, Office Bukavu.

Between January and September 2011, using the same method, in Orientale Province and South Kivu a total of 3,420 cases were recorded. In the case of South Kivu, most of the attackers were uniformed men (38% from illegal groups and 18% of the FARDC). Data collection provides a serious challenge, as work carried out by the SVU is influenced by the reluctance of victims to report the incident, the inaccessibility of the sites, and the existence of multiple sources of data that are impossible to compare. In addition to this, for a variety of reasons many of the international NGOs are reluctant to share the data they produce, and thus the Mission is unable to rely on a resource that would otherwise clearly be highly valuable.

One of the points that those interviewed highlight is the need to devote human resources within the Mission to analyze the data, and thus to plan appropriate prevention strategies. This is something that was being developed through a project called “**Landscape**”, in which the SVU completes a mapping of the different interventions and projects in the country. Otherwise, *“we have the data but no real understanding of what happens.”* The same arises in respect to the Strategy: there is a need to analyze the impacts, what has been done and what results were achieved.

Returning to the subject of the data, much still needs to be done in order to coordinate the various actors; it presents a general challenge (getting all actors to report to the same place and with the same format and categories) but also a horizontal challenge (guaranteeing that those who work have the precise data, without having to clamber through countless amounts of bureaucratic red tape). This latter issue, for example, is the case for the incident reports completed by military contingents, which are those that are most likely to come across a case on their rounds. Each contingent reports the incidents that it comes across to the Brigade to which it depends (this was verified by the testimonies of soldiers and officers from different countries), and from there the report continues its route on to Kinshasa.

That path should be parallel to communication made by the contingents, or by the Brigade itself, to the offices located in the same city that works on the theme: simultaneous communication with the military command in the capital and civilian field offices. Obvious as it seems, such practices are still yet to be developed in all regions, creating the need for the Force Commander to institutionalize it in order to provide greater fluidity in the relationship between field commanders and their civilian counterparts, thus preventing that such a form of integration depends on individuals as opposed to the system itself.

The challenge of creating a nationwide database in collaboration with the Government corresponds, in the case of the DRC, to the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), and is carried out within STAREC guidelines (the Stabili-

zation and Reconstruction Plan in Eastern DRC conducted by the Government with international funding).⁵⁰ UNFPA is developing an information system in order to manage the data, and it has assisted the Government in developing guidelines and procedures for data collection, the training of actors in the field, and the harmonization of indicators to standardize the collection of data. The plan is to equip and train local NGOs so that they collect the data under the coordination of the Ministry of Gender.

In humanitarian terms, the **Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs** (OCHA) is the actor charged with carrying out the coordination between the Mission, the system's agencies, and other international organizations. A **Humanitarian Action Plan** is designed to provide emergency response in areas that are considered to be most at risk of humanitarian abuses. It is organized into 10 different groups (clusters), with the OCHA coordinating the overall effort, whilst UNHCR is the lead agency for the protection cluster, which includes a specific area for protection against sexual violence.

All the work completed by humanitarian agencies operates parallel to that of MONUSCO (in all scenarios in which a Mission is involved, its structure and actions are differentiated from those of the agencies of the so-called "UN system"); the liaison is the Deputy Special Representative, which serves as Humanitarian Representa-

tive. Additionally, it is the OCHA that carries out the coordination between Kinshasa and the field and that plans responses, and, occasionally, establishes terms of reference so that all actors operate among the same lines. The OCHA is a major player in any UN work involving humanitarian action. A gender adviser serves in its Kinshasa office and is tasked with mainstreaming the issue in all actions carried out, and especially for the integration of a gender perspective in all humanitarian actions. Everything is interlinked: the Gender Working Group, headed by the Ministry of Gender and Family, also participates.

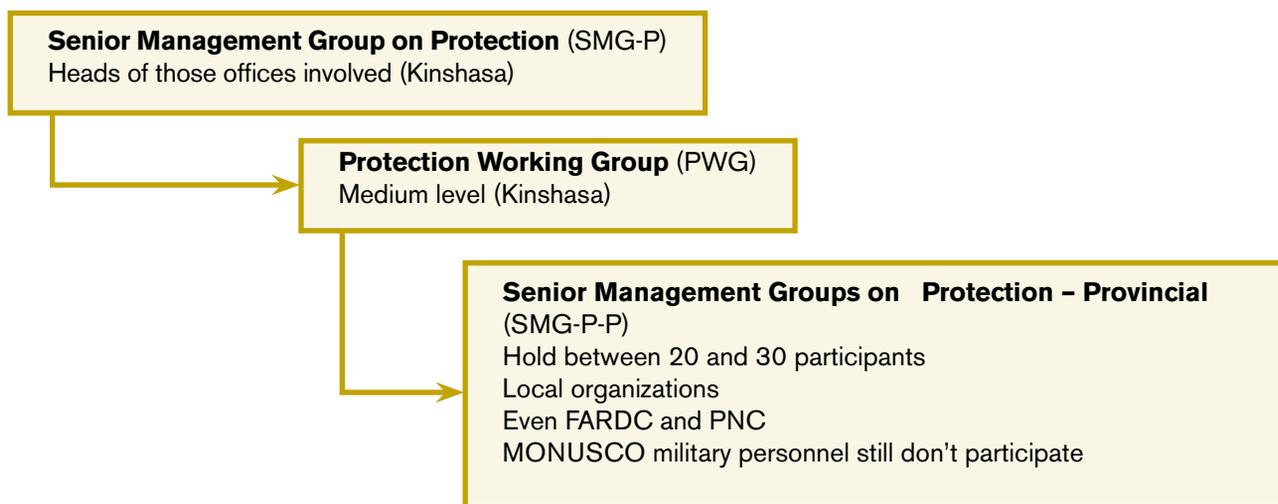
It's a bit difficult for the observer to distinguish between the different responsibilities and programs. What may be obvious to an agent of the United Nations is not so for those looking in from the outside. There is a need to reflect on how, in a context of crisis or conflict, those affected are able to find out what actions to take. Beyond the population, one must also think about the police and military personnel operating in the DRC, and the time staff consume in meetings (in South Kivu, for example, the SVU has developed a concise card which provides military and police personnel with information regarding who to contact).⁵¹

50 STAREC (**Stabilization and Reconstruction Plan for War-Affected Areas**) is the Government plan which was born from the **International Security and Stabilization Support Strategy** (ISSS), which was launched in 2010 as a reference point for actions in the East of the country. Supporting the Strategy is one of the priorities which MONUSCO has been tasked with.

51 Confusion may also affect the Agencies staff themselves, and understandably so. At a meeting of the GWG, one representative of the UN system agencies questioned the Government representative regarding the status of one of the projects that was being discussed, arguing that they were not giving sufficient information; patiently the Government representative let the staffer know that it was in fact his own agency which was in charge of project.

Despite the crossover of UN agencies (an issue that goes far beyond this report) it is worth recognizing the achievement of having developed a single strategy, *the UN-system wide Strategy for the Protection of Civilians in DRC*⁵². The channels can be summarized as:

- The **protection cluster** within the Humanitarian Action Plan, with general responsibility given to the OCHA, and particular responsibility to the UN-HCR, which serves the work carried out by the system, and where MONUSCO is involved as a participant.
- The **Protection Working Group (PWG)** in MONUSCO, which attends to the work carried out by the Mission's offices, in which system agencies are also invited, going from the high-level, located in Kinshasa, to the provincial level in a scheme which is similar to that which follows:



As can be seen in the diversity and breadth of the actors responsible (which in turn bring together the actors working in each axis), the development of the *Comprehensive Strategy* and the protection of civilians is one of the UN's and the government's strongest bets with regard to an issue that strikes hard in international public opinion. Much is at stake surrounding the issue: the violation of the population's human rights, the State's ability to put a brake on the exercise of indiscriminate and unpunished violence, and the image and the support of the international community towards the Mission and the government's efforts (and, therefore, the support received in terms of resources). If

52 See United Nations, Security Council, *Thirtieth report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, S/2009/623* (New York, December 4, 2009).

one were to cite the actions that, in a short time, cause the most damage to a post-conflict situation, and to UN actions in any part of the world, one would quickly cite outbreaks of internal violence, sexual violence, and cases of misconduct by UN troops or civilian staff. Despite the efforts that are made across all areas, it is known that this kind of situation, rightly or not, places the UN's general work into question, and that perceptions of the this work effectively account to the reality in which policies are carried out.

The emphasis that MONUSCO and the UN system in the DRC place on fighting sexual violence is pertinent to the recognition of this situation, and it has shown both intelligence and creativity. It should also be recognized that this fight takes place in a context in which many actors come from all over the world who want to make their own contribution, though sometimes it seems to the observer that the theme, or even the victim, is made a subject of observation.⁵³ Of all the interviews carried out, it is observed that there are many things that people feel they cannot do, that exceed their resources or impact their decisions,⁵⁴ but they are clear that the issue of sexual violence in the DRC is far from simply being a 'fashionable' topic, whose pertinence will be short lived. Instead, they emphasize that it has deep roots and a history linked to structural issues, which involved issues of justice, education, economic interests (such as mining) and regional interests that are also at stake.

The fight against sexual violence in this conflict has two core issues to analyze:

- What initiatives can be developed (a subject in which the Mission has shown creativity and integration, despite the difficulties).

53 It's impossible not to remember the relief with which an officer of the Mission reacted when she learned that on our visit to Panzi Hospital, we had only asked to speak with authorities. There were no comments, but we asked ourselves how many people go there to ask for seeing around and the victims. It's a complicated issue finding the balances between the clear need for organizations to know the terrain, and the confusion that can result from the immaturity of some staff member. The issue of generating expectations in those that are suffering is a further complicated issue. There is a need to reflect upon and analyze with more data.

54 One of the aspects that was continually highlighted in the interviews, and shared in general with all the offices of the Mission that work on issues surrounding gender and sexual violence, was their willingness to discuss issues and the clarity of their diagnoses. Far from wanting to hide the problems, there is an explicit, almost anguished, recognition on behalf of the actors of the need for more, but that it is out of their hands and might even dare to say, of the hands of the Mission. In the case of the Gender and Sexual Violence Offices, the impression left is that this is a resource of "brilliant minds with weak arms", as one member of the RESDAL team put it there. In the interior, for example, where movement is extremely complicated due to the need to transverse large distance by foot, but also because due to security issues, it's difficult to get a vehicle. In addition to their administrative functions, two or three people are involved in meetings; liaison with other agencies and local and international NGOs, UNPOL, and the military; carry out training; meet with the local population; and prepare materials.

- What elements of physical protection can be implemented (covered, basically, by the work of the police and military), how to increase it, and what are the keys to a roadmap in this regard. This will be discussed in the following section.

JUSTICE, HUMAN RIGHTS AND PROTECTION INITIATIVES

From the time that MONUC was given the mandate to protect civilians up until the redeployment preparations to cover the majority of the Eastern part of the country, since late 2008, a series of initiatives began to be developed under the umbrella of the Protection Strategy described above. These innovative initiatives eventually became a model to be analyzed by other missions, especially due to the integration of the actors involved in them. Basically, it aimed to:

- Generate a closer proximity between the Mission and the population on the ground, allowing, furthermore, a better diagnosis of what happens beyond the major urban centers.
- Integrate the various components of the Mission (civilians, police, military) into the action.
- Provide the local population with a means of communication in cases of emergencies.
- Fundamentally improve rapid accessibility, taking into account the transit problems.

Initiatives for the Protection of Civilians

The Strategy for the Protection of Civilians was translated into the practical implementation of:

- Joint Protection Teams – JPT
- Community Alert Networks - CAN
- Community Liaison Assistants – CLA
- Establishment of the concept of Temporary Operations Bases (TOBs, basically, place military locations closer to those populations which are located far away from the cities).
- The development of protection matrices, which are then handed to the military.

Joint Protection Teams (JPTs) consist, basically, of sending a team of representatives from different civilian sections, police and the military, to a site that has been assessed as being medium or high risk. There they assess the needs of the local population, make recommendations, and establish immediate initiatives both for their own offices and for the overall Mission. They are also

deployed following news that some event has taken place (in this case they are called **Joint Assessment Teams - JAMs**). All these operations take place under the direction of the Mission’s Office of Civil Affairs.

The JPTs principally include the Offices of Political Affairs, Civil Affairs, DDR, Human Rights, and Child Protection; Gender and Sexual Violence Units are added according to the case and system agencies also participate. What is new and interesting about the initiative is the level of integration and the role of the military: to protect the team, as well as share with it the information they have received and know about the local population (as it is often the military who receive information during their patrols).

Between 2009 and 2012 there were approximately 200 missions. Prior to the crisis involving the M23, between January and March 2012 alone there were 13 JPTs deployed in the Kivus. In some cases, humanitarian corridors have been established to protect the displaced population; in others distinct needs have been assessed. For the various military con-

tingents interviewed, this is a new experience for them and also one that places them in closer proximity to the civilian offices that can implement the programs.

The mobilization of a JPT is not easy in terms of resources; with on average 70 being realized per year. As recounted by an agency representative in Bunia (in the North), who participated in four of these missions and witnessed the deteriorating security situation in 2012, *“In certain areas there aren’t FARDC, MONUSCO military personnel, or the police. MONUSCO confronts a resource problem: it must choose its priorities, because it can’t go to all the places where it should be needed to.”* To this end it also serves a **Protection Matrix**, which is being implemented throughout the East and North of the country. All the members of the protection cluster evaluate the necessities and list them according to three principles: what needs to be, what should be, and what could be protected: *“Must, Should, Could”*.⁵⁵

Priority coefficient		Example of how this qualification is arrived at
1 = between 120-150 points	Must protect and deploy	If there is a presence of illegal armed groups; refugees and displaced persons are at risk; there is a possibility of confrontation between groups and FARDC.
2 = between 65-119 points	Should protect if the capabilities are sufficient	Humanitarian capabilities are present.
3 = between 40-64 points	Could protect, for example with regular patrols	If there is a strong presence of FARDC. Data for 2012 shows that there are few cases qualified as a 3.

Source: Office of Civil Affairs MONUSCO.

⁵⁵ All information is analyzed by the Groups of high level protection at the provincial and national level; one of the most challenging issues, given the difficulty of access to remote places, is the updating of information.

Community Alert Networks (CAN) began in 2010 and in 2012 they covered a total of 225 communities. They basically provide cell phones to focal points which have been designated to certain populations (assessed as requiring a high level of protection), allowing them to be communicated in the case of an emergency. The cell phone issue is far from being in vain: the DRC was the first African country to develop telecommunications infrastructure for cell phones. The recurrent conflicts virtually destroyed the little fixed-line infrastructure that had existed, and telephone lines do not exist outside the big cities. Nor does the electricity grid: one of the main criticisms to the CANs relates to bringing apparatus requiring power to areas where there is no electricity.⁵⁶ Another weakness is the lack of coverage in the most remote places, forcing the selection of locations where there is access to coverage, usually at a distance of no more than one hour from the nearest military base. As a result, it has been proposed that work is done towards the possibility of remote populations having satellite phones, an issue that would require specific donations. In some places, and with assistance from the Catholic Relief Service, high-frequency radios are being installed, which will constitute a phase that overcomes some of the problems of coverage.

Despite the criticism, the initiative is an example of some consensus within the Mission about something that isn't directly stated, but is perceived: if we are going to stop because of difficulties or because the plan isn't enough for the objective to be achieved, nothing would be done at all. The CAN identify focal points in villages, to which they provide the cell phone equipment and the information needed to communicate in an emergency. There have been cases of focal points that disappeared from the place in question. To get an idea of who forms part of the network, in the case of Dungen (a city in the North with high ratings of insecurity, where the LRA –Lord Resistance Army- operates), 12 phones have been distributed to 9 focal points, one Civil Affairs Officer and 1 to a Moroccan Contingent Commander at the scene, in addition to one in stock.

These focal points are chosen by the community, or sometimes identified by the Mission. The initiative also depends on community participation, a highly complicated issue given the context in which the remote villages can be "punished" for having links with a particular actor within the complex theatre that is the Congolese conflict. However, the CAN also have the effect of promoting greater liaison and public participation in the peace process itself, and according to testimonies collected, the initiative enjoys support amongst the population.

⁵⁶ Despite this it can be seen that, through generators accessed somewhere or through some unknown mechanism, the local population has an intensive use of cell phones.

Community Liaison Assistants (CLAs) have had a high impact, especially in relation to the military contingents. These are local people who are able to speak both French and English, who have been recruited and provided basic training by the Mission in order to serve, in general, at a military base. Their role greatly enhances the communication abilities of the contingents, with most unable to speak French and, in some cases, also English. Some CLAs also have some knowledge of Spanish, and in such cases are sent, for example, to a Uruguayan base. They work as translators, but also act as a source of information and a liaison with the local community, and at least two of them are present in operational bases, accounting in total for some 300 people.

Temporary Operating Bases (TOBs) respond to the greater need for military mobility, and their use has increased in recent years. It is the high command of the Mission that decides where to locate them, whilst the selected contingent is charged with deploying, for instance, a company to the chosen site.

The basic idea behind these initiatives is the fight against impunity, especially in relation to human rights violations perpetrated by State agents. And, consequently, supporting efforts to build the State's capacity to investigate, prosecute and make judgments regarding crimes. These issues are directly related to the question of the National Armed Forces (FARDC), which is developed in the next section.

Protection and Human Rights

Protection, due to the characteristics of the Congolese conflict, also goes hand in hand with human rights policies and initiatives. The main ones to highlight are:

- The adoption of a conditionality policy applied in operations with the FARDC.
- The establishment of joint UNHJRO/MONUSCO teams to investigate allegations of mass incidents.
- The development of Prosecution Support Cells (PSPs) to support military justice, which is a key issue.

The **conditionality policy** makes MONUSCO's participation in military operations with the FARDC conditional on the non-participation in an operation of those who face human rights related charges against them.⁵⁷ In practice, this means that before each operation, FARDC should provide MONUSCO with a list of the personnel which will participate in it, thus allowing them to check

⁵⁷ This was reaffirmed once again following the events at the end of 2012 in Goma, where reports of human rights violations were made both against the M23 and the FARDC. At a press conference SRSR Roger Meece, the Deputy Humanitarian Coordinator and the Police Commissioner specifically laid out that the policy of conditionality requires that every act in support to the FARDC presupposes that they are informed by the respect of human rights. MONUSCO's Division of Public Information, *MONUSCO's Weekly News Programme*, n. 14, November 29, 2012.

that they have no record against them, or that they are currently the subject of a complaint. Underlying this decision is MONUSCO's mandate to support the development of security sector institutions, and among them, the Congolese armed forces (FARDC). Once the mandate to provide support and assistance was given (for example, incorporating FARDC into military operations where UN troops also operate), it would not take long for the international community to claim supervision over who was participating and was, therefore, legitimized internationally, when it could be the case that they have committed crimes for which they had not been tried. This conditionality policy has been established especially since 2009. But the policy has had a side effect that constitutes one of the many dilemmas facing international action: in practice, and in order to avoid the vetting, the FARDC have a tendency to act unilaterally, with the result being that the UN has less influence in military operations than before.

Joint investigations between MONUSCO and the Office of Human Rights involve the deployment of investigative teams, with corresponding security assistance, in order to promote the reporting and the extraction of conclusions, generally in serious cases.⁵⁸ The reports they produce have helped significantly in placing issues of sexual violence in conflict firmly into the realm of international public opinion, and to give the victims a minimal sense that there may be justice. From failures of the Mission or of the system's agencies, to the documentation of crimes committed by State actors or by rebel groups, up to picking apart the responsibilities of international military personnel and the contributing countries, the function of making victims visible and giving them a voice is also achieved.

Some of the most relevant have been:

- The Report that gave birth to the subsequent policy of conditionality. Murders, robberies and rapes of women were committed by the FARDC in the context of the fight against the CNDP group in Goma.⁵⁹
- The Report covering the massacre of Walikale, where in three days between the end of August and the beginning of September 2010, there were mass rapes in 13 villages that affected, according to those cases documented, 300 women, 23 men, 55 girls and 9 boys. The perpetrators in this case were the Democratic Forces for the Liberation of Rwanda.⁶⁰

⁵⁸ The UN Joint Human Rights Office (UNJHRO) was created in 2008 following the integration of the Human Rights Division of the Mission and the DRC Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights.

⁵⁹ MONUSCO / UNJHRO, *Special Report, Consolidated Investigation Report following Widespread Looting and Grave Violations of Human Rights by the Congolese National Armed Forces in Goma and Kanyabayonga in October and November 2008* (September 7, 2009).

⁶⁰ MONUSCO / UNJHRO, *Final Report of Mass Rapes and Other Human Rights Violations in Walikale Territory* (July 2011).

- The Report investigating rapes carried out on the New Year's Eve of 2010 and perpetrated by the FARDC in the territory of Masisi.⁶¹

Prosecution Support Cells were born out of the requirement by the Congolese Government to strengthen the investigation of crimes against humanity, especially in the East of the country. In this context, an assistance agreement was signed in December 2011 that made clear the specific support to be provided: support to the Military Court in logistics, specialized training, technical expertise and general recommendations. They consist of advisers in military and civil criminal proceedings, police and military investigations, and at least two UNPOL members, all experts in investigation and prosecution of serious crimes, war crimes and crimes against humanity. The PSC, in addition to logistical support, also provides support to a fundamental priority: the safety of victims and witnesses.

Since its inception it has established a cell in Goma (North Kivu) and another in Bukavu (South Kivu). The plan is to also cover Kalemie (Katanga), Maniema (Kindu) and Bunia (Orientale Province). These units do not carry out the investigation themselves, but instead support them. The issue they face is not a small one, given the limited capacity that the military justice system has to process cases, and interference in the proceedings. These are linked to the fact that military justice (al-

though it depends on the Ministry of Justice) is located within the Ministry of Defense's structure and it is thus a dependent unit (as in the familiar arguments which have more than once been wielded in Latin American cases where auditors and judges hierarchically respond to their superiors that may be involved in a case, or have an interest in it).

Conditionality, investigative teams, and criminal prosecution

support cells are closely related to one of the great dilemmas and challenges of the institutionalization of the security sector, which is that of military justice and justice in general. It is for this reason that there are many actors from the Mission that emphasize the need for changes to be tied indispensably to improved justice.

On the other hand, the provisions of the Congolese penal code not only cover the FARDC and the PNC, but also those who commit crimes with weapons of war (thus including the rebel groups). Furthermore, it's through the military justice system where the investigation and prosecution of crimes within the Rome Statute are carried out, as no other justice institution is able to do it. Of the massacres which have been revealed, only one or two people have been brought to justice, be it due to the disappearance of those accused or due to a lack of evidence. In the case of the massacre of Walikale, for instance, after a year and half of penal procedure only one suspect had been detained.

61 MONUSCO / UNJHRO, *Report of Mass Rapes and Other Human Rights Violations in Masisi Territory* (July 2011). It's the type of situation that generates impotence in those Mission's human rights and justice actors that were interviewed: 47 women raped, degrading treatment of 15 others, and 100 houses looted, but the sources were not able to identify to which battalion the perpetrators belonged to.

UNPOL AND THE POLICE QUESTION

Although the characteristics of the conflict lead to an immediate focus on the armed forces, the question of the police in the DRC is also central to the future, to peace, and to the possibilities for the prevention and detection of criminal acts and, therefore, to some kind of justice. As experienced by several Latin American countries, the reconstruction of peace and the development of a democracy begin with the end of armed conflict and the subjection of the military apparatus to the law, and lawfully constituted authorities. However, as important as this is, the creation of a police force as a public law enforcement force that also provides support for the peaceful coexistence of the country's citizens contributes to a situation in which the State has an effective presence and impact on everyday life.

Nationally there have been some efforts to this ends, such as the enactment of the Police Act, which describes a properly functioning police force, but there is a long way left to go before such a situation is arrived at.⁶² For example, the salary received by officers of the PNC, when they receive it, amounts to 40 US dollars regardless of their rank, whilst it can be seen at the first glance that they lack not only the most basic equipment, but also proper attire.⁶³

The structure of the PNC appears to be better in Kinshasa, and police officers can be seen seeking to control the chaotic traffic. In Kinshasa there is a unit named the *Légion nationale d'intervention*, a riot and rapid response unit, which have at least about 6 small vehicles and personnel with equipment that seems to be more or less adequate for the task of maintaining law and order. Parallel to the police apparatus, there also exist private security agencies, with companies that have a large staff that perform their duties unarmed.

In this context, and certainly with far less weight than the military issue, the United Nations deploys UNPOL and Formed Police Units (FPU), in order to assist the PNC in providing security to the civilian population.

The FPUs are a kind of militarized police, which live and operate as a contingent. Their task is to protect UN personnel and facilities, support the PNC, and maintain order. Bangladesh, Egypt, India and Senegal contribute a total of 1,046 personnel.

62 Organic Law 11-013, August 11, 2001.

63 In a country with an extensive rainy season, they do not even have low cost rain coats. Perhaps the most depressing of our visit was going to a local PNC station in Bunia one Saturday. It was about 4 square meters in size. The sub-commissioner who greeted us was friendly and could speak basic French. He had many papers on his small and dimly lit desk and, as his only equipment, a very old typewriter in poor condition. A half naked prisoner was taken out of a decrepit dungeon. The kitchen was outdoors.

UNPOL thus carries out its work, on average, with approximately 350 police officers and the close to 1,050 members of the FPU. The number of women is not high, but substantially improves on the proportion of females within the military component, with women forming 10% of total personnel in November 2012. Another virtue of UNPOL is the notable presence of personnel from French-speaking countries, which assists in their relationship with the local population and means they are able to communicate with members of the PNC, to whom their role is to assist.

In general, the task being carried out by UNPOL can be summarized by these four areas:

- **Capacity building:** training and the provision of experts. Major activities include the re-training of 6 police battalions trained in intervention, education of personnel in themes related to sexual violence, and the construction of a training center.
- **Collaboration in the stabilization of the Eastern region:** this part of the task given to UNPOL is far from being a reality. It assumes that in the future the military will be withdrawn from the area, with the task of providing security being taken up by the police.
- **The protection of civilians:** basically, educating the PNC in this task, and participation in the Joint Protection Teams (JPTs).
- **The protection of UN facilities and personnel.**

One of the most important projects carried out by the UNPOL in the East is the **training center in Muganga**. This center –built from scratch– houses those who have already been selected for training in basic policing tasks. It is located 15 kilometers from Goma, about forty-five minutes of travel by vehicle. The site has a capacity of 300 police personnel (men and women), who train full time for six months; hence the construction includes accommodation, nursing, kitchens and bathrooms in addition to classrooms. The building stands out in surroundings of abandoned or destroyed buildings, which are abundant in the East. In early 2012 it was nearly finished. The construction is simple and austere, sufficient to provide the accommodation and basic needs of those training there. It is exactly the kind of infrastructure needed to endure and support the presence of the State in an environment where it is otherwise difficult to observe a State presence.

The center is under the command of a senior PNC officer while UNPOL is in charge of training. The idea is that UNPOL personnel stationed in the East will rotate, providing training in their area of specialization, with 15 trainers in total, accompanied by 20 additional trainers which are provided by the PNC.

The 300 members selected for the first batch of training came mostly from different parts of the interior of the country and would be redeployed to the same areas upon finishing the training process. The upper age limit is set at 40 years. It is basic police training for officers who have not received any kind of prior training. It is hoped that the process will lead to the achievement of the ultimate goal of training 1,500 police officers.

Whilst they are not numerous in size, enthusiasm is perceived in the UNPOL officers who were interviewed. They were aware of the difficulties, but willing to face up to them. This same attitude was observed in MINUSTAH (Haiti), and it would be worth studying the reasons for the difference in outlook between police and military personnel.

It is important, in this sense, to highlight that UNPOL in the DRC has no executive mission (they cannot carry out policing duties), but instead this role rests entirely with the PNC. Their importance, in this respect, is

UNPOL develops a gender policy, which seeks to raise awareness amongst TCCs of the need to send as many women officers as possible, and to sensitize the PNC on the subject. All UNPOL receive training regarding sexual violence, and each province has a focal point that also works with UN agencies and NGOs (one of its tasks, for example, is to register women's organizations which operate locally, an important point since the plans of almost all offices and agencies are based on the provision of local support). One **Sexual Violence Unit** in UNPOL deploys specialist officers deployed to various sectors, participates in protection clusters, and also carries out the background checks of those joining the PNC.

the provision of training and assistance. But still, as one of the chiefs acknowledged, *"We have the experience but not the funds to implement it"*. Many of its programs, therefore, are kept for future development.

4. THE ROLE OF THE INTERNATIONAL MILITARY IN THE PROTECTION OF CIVILIANS

An immediate and logical assumption amongst the public, and even amongst those analyzing the theme in different countries, is to assume that the presence of a peacekeeping mission is equivalent to military forces intervening to stop a conflict, especially in a scenario such as the one presented by the Congolese conflict. Even whilst those working within the theatre of such missions or those who have experience on the ground know that the doctrine of integrated missions responds precisely to the notion that military personnel are just one of several components that must operate in a conflict or post-conflict situation, it is undeniable that where military forces are present in a given scenario, the local and international community expect definitive action on their behalf in order to tip the balance from conflict to peace.

Equally as certain as this, however, is that such a question is not so straightforward. From the interests held by diverse countries in relation to aspect X or Y of the conflict, to the precautions taken by TCCs in the face of the risks that their troops face during military actions, through to the effective capabilities that contributing troops actually have to intervene in combat activities, diverse issues affect the mandate that is finally given to a mission regarding the use of military force.

As a result, a dilemma exists for the United Nations, and, in particular, for the Mission itself: take action even where it hasn't been mandated by Member States nor agreed with the local government, and bear the costs entailed, or not act and accept the criticisms of local and international public opinion. "We are a force of peacekeepers, of blue helmets established by the Security Council, we are not a military force designed to take part in a war. But our priority is the protection of civilians" stated MONUSCO's SRSG during a press conference in late 2012 when interrogated by the media regarding the actions of peacekeepers in response to the taking of Goma by M23 rebels.⁶⁴ As an institutional brochure reads, "The blue helmets do not replace the Army or the Congolese police".⁶⁵ It is the clear dichotomy with which MONUSCO lives in its work contributing to peace and security in the DRC.

Everything mentioned above contextualizes the delicate balances that form part of the work carried out by almost all UN missions in the face of armed conflict. But, of late, it appears that the situation in which the interna-

⁶⁴ Division de l'Information Publique de la MONUSCO, *MONUSCO's Weekly news Programme*, n. 14, November 29, 2012.

⁶⁵ Groupe de communication des Nations Unies en République démocratique du Congo, *Unis dans l'action*, p. 14.

tional community finds itself is evolving at an accelerated pace regarding the need to diminish the contradictions in UN policy and action. The international economic crisis also plays a role in this respect, and the growing reluctance to provide resources in the context of multiple countries facing economic recession. Addressing these issues is one of the most important challenges facing troop-contributing countries. Something that the recent creation of the Intervention Brigade appears to recognize to a certain point.

WHAT, AND TO WHAT END?

Adding together the number of troops and military observers, MONUSCO's military force averages 17,500 personnel (the maximum authorized by the Security Council is about 20,500). 90% of the total military force is concentrated in the two Kivu provinces and Orientale Province, where conflict zones on the borders with Rwanda, Uganda, Southern Sudan and Burundi, among others, are located (the cross-border nature of the conflict cannot be forgotten, especially when analyzing military capabilities). If one adds the forces in Katanga, the East Brigade and the so-called 'sector 2', the picture is completed.

The shift in deployment occurred as part of the transfer from MONUC to MONUSCO, which, from 2009, led to a new strategy of concentrating forces in the East, while in the West forces are increasingly dedicated to a policing role. From 2010, MONUSCO combines, in this sense, the maintenance of peace in the East (which, for some, should become peace enforcement), with the consolidation of peace in the West. Meanwhile, the headquarters remain in Kinshasa, seat of the National Government and of the Mission, with the Force Commander and Staff located there.

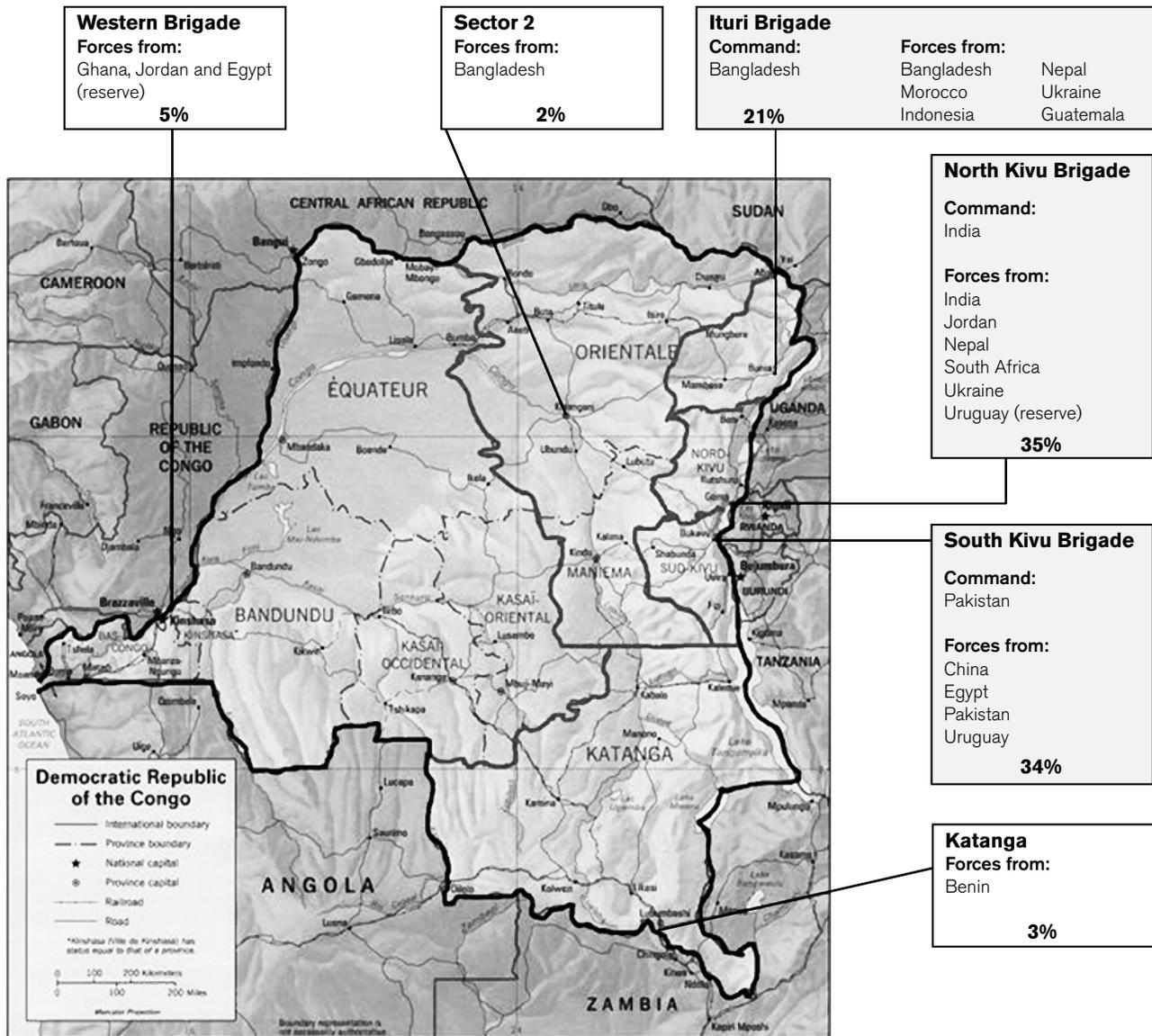
The force is structured into four brigades:

- Ituri brigade, with its headquarters in Bunia.
- North Kivu brigade, with its headquarters in Goma.
- South Kivu brigade, with its headquarters in Bukavu.
- Western brigade, with its headquarters in Kinshasa.

A Battalion located in Katanga, in addition to a Sector located in Orientale Province, completes the geographical distribution.

There are also reserve battalions (two from Egypt in the West and one from Uruguay in North Kivu), and one Riverine Company (Uruguay), despite the number of lakes and rivers that make up the territory's physical geography.

Distribution of MONUSCO Forces, 2012



Source: Own elaboration based on data collected and a presentation by a military representative of the Mission at the International Conference: "Promoting Gender to Build Peace", RESDAL, 2012

In each of the Brigades situated in Ituri, North Kivu and South Kivu, at least two infantry battalions are deployed (except in the West, where just one Ghanaian battalion exists), along with an aviation unit, an engineering company and a Level 2 medical facility.

The major contributors to the Mission are India, Pakistan and Bangladesh, which is reflected also in the command role that each of these countries has over the main brigades in the East and North of the country. Uruguay makes a significant contribution, both in terms of number of personnel and the diversity of its services. Guatemala, meanwhile, deploys one of the three Special Forces, which is relevant to the type of conflict in question.

	Personnel in the Contingents			
	Men	Women	Total	%
Bangladesh	2,514	14	2,528	14.8
Belgium	20	1	21	0.1
Benin	438	12	450	2.6
China	206	12	218	1.3
Egypt	999	0	999	5.9
Ghana	421	40	461	2.7
Guatemala	145	5	150	0.9
India	3,704	0	3,704	21.7
Indonesia	175	0	175	1.0
Jordan	216	4	220	1.3
Morocco	831	0	831	4.9
Nepal	1,006	17	1,023	6.0
Pakistan	3,695	0	3,695	21.7
Serbia	4	2	6	0.0
South Africa	1,083	151	1,234	7.2
Ukraine	154	0	154	0.9
Uruguay	1,109	71	1,180	6.9
Total	16,720	329	7,049	100

Source: DPKO, UN Mission's Contributions by Country, November 30, 2012.

The “what for” of the international military presence is related to the functions that the military forces in the DRC have. While the focus is often placed on intervention in the face of a conflict situation, in reality the protection of civilians has much broader implications. Analysis of the military role in civilian protection concerns two central questions:

- What should be expected from military personnel in relation to protecting civilians in the face of what is possible, and the capacity they possess.
- What cannot be achieved, even in a peaceful conflict, without a military presence.

“It is very difficult to carry this forward without soldiers”, one Sexual Violence Unit official says, with the Unit carrying out programs in the East with very few resources. When we met, this official had just received a vehicle to be able to move around, following months of being there. She was happy, irrelevant of the age and slightly damaged nature of the vehicle: that vehicle was the equivalent of being able to move to where events take place. In another location facing complications, Bunia, the UN system organizations spoke of their essential need for military escorts: organizations like UNICEF, OCHA and the like cannot move around in that area (which, among other things, faces the threat of the LRA) if the military are not escorting them. The same happens in Dungu, where all routes on the Mission’s maps are marked in red. In this sense, the discussion of the “humanitarian space” does not appear very often in interviews in the DRC. In early 2012, an unprecedented event occurred: for the first time in its history, the Red Cross enlisted the assistance of military helicopters, which represented the only way to evacuate the wounded following a massive attack in Shabunda. They were, in that case, Uruguayan helicopters.⁶⁶

Another traditional discussion also failed to appear often in interviews regarding MONUSCO: military vs. civilians, who has the largest role in the mission? A story told by a gender officer deployed in the East illustrates how the military role is perceived amongst civilian personnel:

“One day, in a meeting with a group of women in a village in the interior, we were discussing a major problem, the stigmatization of women regarding matters of witchcraft. Often, women who present a nuisance to the family or the husband or the community are accused of being witches and sometimes stoned by the community without anyone intervening. Then, one of the women who was at the meeting raised her hand and asked me if I could give her my phone number to call me and come to support them in the case of an attack. I gave it to them, but that night I was thinking about it. The place is about two hours from where I am based. I feel responsible for the protection of these women, but it is impossible in such a case to take a car and drive two hours on these roads to go to defend a

66 “(...) various population centers were attacked and burnt, transcending news reports of 30 deaths. The survivors, the majority women and children, found themselves fleeing from the two locations which had been attacked in order to seek refuge in another population centre, Nzovu, which is located some 120 kilometers to the west of Bukavu.

“On the 6th of January UN support is requested to evacuate large numbers of people from the village of Nzovu, because health conditions had declined and resources had been used up due to the large number of wounded from other locations that had taken refuge there.”

“At 15:30 on January 6th 2012, and despite the bad weather conditions present at the site and on the road, the two Uruguayan ‘Bell-212’ aircraft head towards Nzovu to constitute, what up until now, is the largest medical evacuation by the contingent since being deployed on African soil in 2003.”

“At 17:45 both aircraft landed at Kavumu airport, moving a total of 16 people (13 adults and 3 children), with traumas and wounds of differing severities. They were treated and taken to hospital by members of the International Red Cross.” *Fuerza Aérea Uruguaya realiza su mayor evacuación aeromédica en la RDC*, http://www.fau.mil.uy/20120106_medevac_congo.html

*woman, I probably wouldn't make it or I'd arrive late. As a result, many of my responsibilities as a gender officer cannot be fulfilled if I am working alone; I need to be supported by both the police and the military. This collaboration is absolutely necessary if civilians are really going to be protected."*⁶⁷

Security, as a basis for the protection of civilians, covers a range of issues, some obvious and some not so:

- The defense against imminent threats to physical integrity.
- The possibility of access to humanitarian aid (mainly medical supplies and services).
- Roads linking the villages, thus avoiding the large areas of territory in which there is no one, which fuels violence and crime, as well as providing faster access to help in the case of emergencies.
- That the various programs implemented by the international community reach their desired recipients in a context of violence and a complicated infrastructure.
- That State forces are structured and equipped to serve the people, and that it isn't one of the local population's worst enemies.
- The construction of a secure public space where economic activities can develop, markets can be formed, and the natural resources of the country be exploited.
- Strengthen border control and, through this, combat illegal trafficking, which is an important source of crime.

As it is observed in the field, in a scenario such as that of the DRC, it is not an exaggeration to say that - even with the limitations and the issues surrounding the strategy and MONUSCO military activity - it is virtually impossible to develop most, if not all, security bases without the presence of international military personnel. Amongst others, they carry out the following functions:

- **Presence, albeit limited, in areas prone to conflict:** The strategy is based on the deployment of COBs (Company Bases) in inaccessible areas. India in Walikale, for example, or Uruguay in Kimua. Temporary bases (TOBs) are also established for a few days, however some end up remaining in place for much more than that. The Guatemalan Special Forces, for instance, are usually deployed in the middle of the jungle, from where patrols are deployed. The Bangladeshi battalion in Ituri also explained, how, in addition

⁶⁷ Interview carried out in February 14, 2012.

to patrols, many contingents also establish temporary bases as part of their patrols, spending two or three days at the site.

- This latter point refers to another question relating to the protection of civilians, **data collection**: the military are often those who, due to their presence in the TOBs and COBs, are in communication with isolated populations, sending information to the civilian agents of the Mission. The Uruguayan Riverine Company, for example, lands in various villages and performs data collection at the request of civilians as part of their routine work.
- Whilst formally it is discouraged, it provides **emergency medical care** to residents near the bases they use. All contingents generally have their own emergency medical care for military personnel, and it is common for the local population to approach them in search of medical assistance.
- **Security escorts** for civilian personnel and UN organizations as well as international humanitarian organizations. From participation in the JPT to specific activities such as the distribution of healthcare, in the Kivus and Ituri regions security conditions make military escorts an imperative, and over the years there have been attacks both on UN and NGO staff.
- **Transfer** of such personnel in impassable conditions (generalized). These are roads that even in 4x4 vehicles are traversed at an average of 5 to 10 km per hour. In the rainy season, even military trucks often get stuck.
- Collaboration (in practice, development) of **engineering projects**, such as the repair or reconstruction of roads and the opening of communication corridors. In 2012, for example, the Chinese engineering company re-opened 55 of the 135 kilometers of the Baraka-Fizi-Minembwe road, in South Kivu, a work that will be completed in 2013. Such projects add as much to security as economic development (in this case, in an area devastated during the Congo Wars).
- **Custody of public market spaces**. Whilst it is not the main activity that they carry out, the formation of safe corridors for men and women to go to the market, or the provision of security on specific days of spaces where goods are exchanged, is highly relevant to the provision of security.
- **The bases as “safe havens”**: in remote locations, but also in cities, witnesses speak of how local people know that in the case of a clash between armed groups, or if there is an attack on villages, they are able to gain safer refuge near to MONUSCO military bases.
- **Training** of the FARDC, and participation in joint actions with them. It is critical to the possibility of peace in the DRC. As was seen in previous sections, the FARDC is a disintegrated force that has never been professionalized.

THE 'HOW' OF MILITARY ACTION: PUTTING THE PUZZLE TOGETHER

The number of troops, their distribution and their functions represent one part of the equation of peacekeeping missions, whose result (in theory at least) would be peace and a safe everyday life for the local population, guaranteed, inter alia, by the presence of a military force. In the internal and external political reality of conflict situations, the other part of the equation is a sum of structural and political considerations which must be taken into account for political action to take place or, put another way, for change to be achieved.

Observation and interviews in the field are, in this sense, invaluable assets when carrying out analysis, and allow you to add several pieces to a puzzle that is completed through the addition of documentary sources, or, in the case of policymakers, with reports provided by their own diplomatic and military spheres.

The role of international military forces in the maintenance of peace and in the protection of civilians in the DRC involves several key issues that need to be taken into account. Do they have different hierarchies? Maybe, and this is an issue for analysts and decision makers. With the aim of assisting the discussion, the issues that arise through observation of the role of the international military in the DRC, and that impact each other and, in general, the success of the mission, are:

- **The characteristics of the terrain, the type of units and the available means:**

"In many parts the ground is totally uneven. The weather is unpredictable. There is no radar coverage. These are our biggest challenges" stated a Bangladeshi aviation commander in Ituri. This was a direct parallel to an experience during our stay in Goma: the Commander of the Uruguayan battalion trying to go by helicopter to Kimua (where a company is deployed) for three consecutive days. The helicopter was unable to land due to the lack of visibility, but, even with favorable weather conditions, this mode of transport can be difficult. According to the individual in charge of one of the largest concentrations of the Mission's aircraft, *"We cannot go to some places due to the difficulties of refueling; the distances are very large. In such cases, we usually resort to the option of taking fewer people in order to use less fuel and thus have enough to be able to arrive"*. *"The unpredictability of the weather has a significant impact on maintenance"*, explained one of the mechanics in a separate interview, while a soldier next to him added that *"Yes, and there have been cases where we have had to stay in the places to which we had been due to technical problems; the other time we stayed 10 days close to Isiro [Orientale Province, an area with LRA presence]. We slept in the helicopter. It's risky, but here that's how it is"*.

In order to appreciate the state of the land routes it is not necessary to go to the DRC. It is sufficient simply to use Google Maps to compare the lack of roads and highways and the vast empty spaces with any of its neighbors to the east. One of the constant requests, as much from the Mission's authorities as from the Secretary-General himself, is that the TCCs provide modes of air transport (including, but not restricted to, helicopters). To this one can add the need for engineering companies which, as in cases such as Haiti, could contribute to reconstruction and development and thus strengthen security.⁶⁸

59% of Congolese territory is jungle. It is the eighth country in the world in terms of the quantity of waterways (15,000 km). It is estimated that less than 2% of the roads are paved. MONUSCO has about 23 helicopters, and one naval company, the Uruguayan. The contributions made by countries and the make-up of their forces continue to be focused, overwhelmingly, in infantry.

The characteristics also represent a special challenge for military observers (MILOBS). It is worth remembering that observers are deployed in teams (usually of two), and they are not armed, given that their role is to observe rather than to appear as a military force. They patrol every day, visiting villages, interviewing village chiefs and

going to medical wards: their primary mission is to obtain security information but also help the humanitarian survey. Their reports are sent to the offices of the chief of MILOBS in each district, on a daily basis.⁶⁹

It's paradoxical that in one of the very sectors of the military component in which women play a greater role, on occasions they cannot be sent to the most remote places. According to the head of the military observers in Bunia in 2012, close to 100 MILOBS in the district of Ituri were deployed mainly in the forest *"but there are places where you just cannot send a woman, it is not safe"*. The phrase made us recall the comment of a Bolivian official with extensive experience as a military observer, saying that one of the first instructions and materials received upon arriving in the DRC was related to what to do immediately in the case of being raped. In fact, in this area the MILOBS stay with the military contingents due to security problems, even if they lament it given that the doctrine states that they must be separated from armed troops in order to promote a more positive image to the population.⁷⁰

68 Some themes aren't capricious for those contributing countries: maintaining means for aerial transport is very costly, and, according to the testimonies collected, the reimbursement made by the United Nations doesn't cover the expenses of such a contribution. Apparently, such contributing countries have requested that the cost of replacing a helicopter be reformulated (they requested 50%).

69 Much of the work was explained to us by Rafa Medina, a Spanish observer, during a meeting in Goma. To find out about our experiences and day-to-day details, please check the blog he maintained while with the Mission: misionrdcongo.blogspot.com/

70 As the chief observer himself explained, "our security is the local population, it's them who alert us, and for this reason it's not good that we have to be escorted".

- **The effective capacity to relate with the local population and assess the environment:**

One of the biggest problems facing the troop contingents is the language barrier. In a peacekeeping mission the dominant factor is not combat, but instead presence, achieving the confidence and cooperation of the local population so that the locals themselves reconstruct their lives following a conflict. The only way to operate in a peacekeeping mission is through the native language of the local population or, in cases where this cannot be achieved, through the closest language to this that is familiar to those who live there. Otherwise, you are an “incrustation” in the country, a “bubble” that operates within a military base and a formal framework.⁷¹

The official language of the DRC is French, the colonial language. Beyond the dialects, which are estimated at around 250, there are four national languages whose usage varies according to the region: *Swahili* (especially in the Kivus), *Tshiluba* (Kasai, center), *Kikongo* (in the area stretching to the Atlantic), and finally *Lingala*, which is widely spoken in the North and Northwest but also in Kinshasa and large urban centers, as it was historically the language used by the military since colonization, thus influencing its expansion. Despite this diversity – a diversity which exists in all of the most important missions of today - in the academic, political and military realms which are

Knowledge of French is not a luxury, but instead a necessity for the Mission to be effective. It's recommendable that a section of the military officers deployed to the DRC have knowledge of the French language. And, in all cases, the very minimum is adequate knowledge of English.

linked to sending troops, the widely held conception is that “basic English” is sufficient for personnel to be able to operate.

In a mission that demands not only military knowledge and capabilities, but also military-diplomacy skills, specific knowledge of the country's cultural diversity and of the other contingents, a frequent communication with the Mission's civilian personnel, NGO staff and the Government, French is not a luxury but a necessity.

It could be argued that training personnel in French takes time, given that it is not the language which is most widespread amongst the populations of the countries that now constitute the majority of contributors to peacekeeping missions (such as those who speak Spanish). This is of course understandable, and it would be desirable that such plans could be put in place.

Yet few explanations come to mind when you wonder why so few of the military contingents have a minimum level of English proficiency. In prac-

⁷¹ Some of the presentations that we received during our visits to contingents cited as a central component WHAM (winning hearts and minds), an old counter-insurgency concept that has been proclaimed many times, but that is difficult to put into practice. Precisely it would involve a number of skills that do not form part of military training and education.

tice, it's the same as stating that 80% of the military force is unable to communicate with others who are not from their own contingent. They cannot communicate with Mission personnel, nor personnel from other contingents, let alone communicate with locals. It is widespread amongst troops, but, more disturbingly, amongst officers. As a result, local translators, or officers that have these language skills and thus end up acting as liaison or public relations officials, become central figures.

In many cases, personal decisions to work to better fulfill their mission prevail, and officers take language courses that are provided to them by the Mission itself.⁷² In other cases, the problem affects those operating with them, who have to work double, both in order to understand others and to make themselves understood. According to what was related by an individual in charge of providing local translators to contingents in Goma, local translators speak English and French, but a case still arose where a translator called, in desperation, to ask to be moved to a different contingent. The translator could only be understood by three or four officers in a base that housed more than 400 personnel. Another testimony taken in Bunia concerned a military observer who was unable to speak either English or French, and therefore was unable to write a single one of the situation reports that, one supposes, is one of the central tasks carried out by military observers.

The lack of communication further prevents an appreciation of the “environment”, a task which a protection force should be better equipped to do. Indeed, following reports of the massacres of 2008 and 2010, MONUSCO has made a significant effort to provide translators for each contingent. However, it is clear that the contributing countries themselves need to make an extra effort, at least in the prior training of officers. The alternative is for the contingents themselves to recruit a greater number of translators, an issue which entails other factors, such as the confidence that contingents feel that they can, or not, place in local staff.

Languages are also necessary for the exchange of information amongst the Mission staff itself. A UNHCR worker stated that on one occasion the head of a regional office had told the military personnel in the area about the work that the UNHCR produced, something they valued a lot, and they asked if the UNHCR could also please prepare those reports not only in French but also in English so they could understand them.

- **The gender perspective amongst military personnel:**

Overall, the scarce contribution of female staff by contributing countries is a notable factor: given the high level of sexual violence in the area, a greater

⁷² For example, we met a commander taking a French course, and a police officer from UNPOL taking Swahili classes.

presence of women amongst the troops would be hoped for. The few women who are deployed are concentrated within contingents from countries that send larger numbers of personnel, and few perform tasks outside of the bases themselves (usually occupying a role in nursing, administration or the kitchen). Important contingents do not deploy women; with the principal reason given being that they don't serve in infantry.

The presence of female military personnel is one of the indicators of a gender perspective. It also displays, to a certain extent, how TCCs envisage the type of conflict and the local needs of the mission; in this case their limited presence on the ground could lead to reflection in capitals regarding the type of personnel which should be sent and what should be their preparation, based on a careful analysis of the type of conflict faced.

This is not to fall into clichés on the subject, such as the belief that everything can be solved if there are more women among staff, or, at the other end,

In a conflict scenario where over 50% of the population requiring protection are women and girls, and where sexual violence against women is one of the most salient issues, only 1.97% of the military are women. At the beginning of 2012, it was 2.25%.

the classic "there are no women; therefore gender is not an issue".

A broader perspective speaks of the **operational need** for a gender perspective in a conflict in which women and girls are frequently

brutally attacked. This begins with a greater involvement of the contributing countries in personnel selection and training. Sensitization is relevant and necessary for all military personnel, both men and women, if they are to adequately fulfill their role. As was posed by civilian personnel in Bunia, "*The military must be prepared for what they will find, and be sensitized to the issue.*" A Uruguayan Sergeant summed up the same in a striking phrase: "*One thing is to be a soldier, and another is to be prepared for what you're going to see here*".

Operationally, a more effective protection of civilians in the DRC involves such requirements as the following:

- That military medical personnel are trained to apply post-exposure kits to victims of rape or sexual assault.
- That patrols are scheduled according to an assessment of the vulnerability of women in certain areas, and that the possibility of incorporating women into operational roles is evaluated.⁷³

⁷³ One Uruguayan riflewoman that was interviewed assured us that she would not hesitate to go again and again to the base in Kimua, a 'hot zone' of conflict where she had been several times for between 35 and 40 days. Her colleagues, present at the meeting supported the argument that her being a woman did not inhibit or affect the performance of the company. The issue also has a social impact, such as the one recounted about the Uruguayan captain who piloted a helicopter, and that had an impact on the women of the villages where she landed.

- That commanders, officers and troops are open to the local culture and can thus capture the operational needs of the area without always relying on the mediation of men.
- That military bases allow for the accommodation of the Mission's female staff, especially in high-risk areas.⁷⁴
- That base and battalion commanders incorporate, as part of their routine operations, links with gender and sexual violence officers in their area of responsibility, exchanging data with them and providing them with the means and security which is within their scope.⁷⁵
- That they participate in working groups focused on protection that operate in their area of responsibility.
- That, if there are no women in their contingent, they are trained to know when to turn to these offices and other organizations to better fulfill the task they have been assigned (including knowing where to refer cases). And, in the case of having women in their contingent, that they can better profit from their presence in activities with the local population.
- That they are prepared in order to develop a relationship with the local community, especially women's groups, in order to obtain adequate surveys of information.⁷⁶
- That the role of the gender focal point in the contingents is more fully developed.

Another fundamental point is linked to conduct and discipline (SEA - sexual exploitation and abuse). The contingents often immediately associate gender with SEA, and more training on what a gender perspective really involves may help to resolve the defensive responses that they naturally have. There is, in this sense, a window of opportunity in many of the contingents

74 One civil official who was interviewed in Goma recounted a case that had touched him personally, in which it was necessary to go with another woman to a jungle area where there had been acts of violence, to develop a program linked to the villages of the area. When evening came, the commander of the military base, the only Mission structure in the area, said they could not spend the night there, as women were not allowed and that it was for their own protection. Thus, they sent them to sleep in the village church. *"There, alone, without any protection, weren't we running a greater risk than in the base?"*. It's not the only such case that we came across during the various interviews we carried out.

75 It would be important, for example, that the reports of the meetings held with the community at bases in far-flung places reach these civil offices in Goma, Bukavu and Bunia from the brigades operating in the zone, without having to resort to a long bureaucratic road (which includes not only the interior-Kinshasa axis but also the civil-military in Kinshasa itself).

76 *"If you arrive at a very remote village, you should take advantage of the opportunity"*, said a sexual violence officer. *"But it's not just about arriving there; it's also about understanding and communicating. The importance of the military personnel is that it is them who know the most places, and which are able to visit them"*. *"It's Okay to carry out patrols, but there is also a need to listen to local women,"* they said in the gender office in Goma.

visited to receive and exchange information and views on gender issues in the DRC, especially in its operational derivations.

Regarding SEA, it is clear that an abuse committed by Mission personnel tarnishes, in a matter of days, everything that may have been achieved up until that point. And, in the case of military personnel, the chances of bringing justice to the victims are more complicated: personnel are repatriated for the case to be carried out in their home country, leaving the burden of public opinion with the Mission, which is unable to do anything to counter it. Although in recent times there have not been any high profile cases, the image of the Mission in the DRC has been marred numerous times by the sexual abuse of civilians by troops, or by involvement in prostitution.⁷⁷ This is a complex issue for all missions, but as was stated by the official in charge of conduct and discipline in the north of the country, *"We cannot allow that people, who are already traumatized, are abused by those that come to protect them. Countries should take pre-deployment measures. Here we assume that when the troops arrive, they already have a certain level of training on the subject, that they received foundational training in their countries"*.

The training that is received on arrival at the Mission is an induction, two days in which numerous different themes are addressed, and within which gender or conduct and discipline may occupy thirty to forty minutes each. For contributing countries, the challenge is to provide training prior to deployment, with programs designed to develop greater awareness and individual responsibility. Military personnel should be aware of the role they are playing and what society expects of them. Within this theme there also exists a series of clichés, such as "well, it is a very long time", arguments that do nothing but talk about poor military professionalization and the lack of understanding of what a peace mission is in the world today. Those who cannot meet the demands of a mission environment should not participate in it, whether they are young or old, male or female, civilian or military.

The commanders of the contingents said they were aware of the magnitude of the problem, which they often addressed with permanent reminders to the troops regarding UN regulations (for example, the need for officers to accompany troops on outings). It must be accepted, however, that it is during pre-deployment when most can be done in respect to this issue.⁷⁸

77 The cases which had the greatest impact in the international media were those of 2004, when it was reported that the peacekeepers traded sex with women and girls in exchange for food (a loaf of bread) and money (\$1 or \$2). See United Nations, General Assembly, *Investigation by the Office of Internal Oversight Services into Allegations of sexual exploitation and abuse in the United Nations Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, A/59/661* (New York, January 5, 2005).

78 An important point is the personnel's welfare, which also depends on what the contributing country itself provides. Some countries provide incentives to those deployed (a supplement that is separate from the UN salary), they facilitate contact with the family, provide a camp with certain amenities, or funds for projects that help QIPs create a link with the local population (some send a survey team prior to the deployment of the contingent that evaluates projects, including the possibility of CIMIC activities).

• **The mandate and the military strategy derived from it:**

The Mission's mandate is intimately linked to the idea that it is the Congolese government that has the primary responsibility for peace, security and development. From there, the various programs and actions are based around working with the Government, assisting it, etc. In reference to the protection of civilians, the mandate provides authorization for the use of force in cases where there is an imminent physical threat to the population, as well as providing for the protection of facilities, equipment and UN personnel. Within this framework the mandate requests that the Mission supports the Congolese government to strengthen military and institutional capabilities, which requires supporting reform of the security and justice sector. Reinforcing the authority of the Congolese state will be key in this process, and it is addressed within the framework of the Stabilization and Reconstruction Plan (STAREC) and the International Support Strategy on Security and Stabilization (ISSSS).

But the gap between this proposal and the reality is notable. State presence is minimal across vast parts of the country.⁷⁹ The Armed Forces (estimated at around 150,000 members) are far from a professional force, and are affected by the continual process of *brassage* as well as by mutiny, rebellions and human rights violations. At least since 2005, all reports of the UN Secretary General argue that the construction of a capable armed force and a State that can extend its authority across its entire territory, are essential prerequisites for security.

The question of the FARDC generates similar responses from diverse sectors: *"These guys are the worst"* (military observer in the North), *"The most important security problem is the Congolese Army"* (member of an FPU in Bukavu), *"Maman, ça c'est terrible!"* (leader of a women's organization in Goma). These interpretations are neither random nor taken out of context. They are recognitions of a situation that official reports recognize themselves when they state, for example, that the FARDC are one of the main perpetrators of sexual violence, or evaluate that *"as the number of incoming soldiers from FARDC increased, the security situation deteriorated"*.⁸⁰

The problems of reinserting combatants and constructing a national armed

79 A few kilometers from the cities there is no symbol, building or staff to remind you of the existence of the State. It is an absent figure. A small distance from Rutshuru, for example, the empty landscape is interrupted by a church, a school funded by an international cooperation or by churches, and by the small villages that dot the landscape. There exist loyalties to diverse groups, whilst local chiefs are preponderant, as is the tendency for the preponderance of the local above regional or national concerns, a subject which would merit further analysis and understanding.

80 MONUSCO / UNJHRO, *Special Report, Consolidated Investigation Report following Widespread Looting and Grave Violations of Human Rights by the Congolese National Armed Forces in Goma and Kanyabayonga in October and November 2008* (September 7, 2009), p.10.

force - complex and problematic in the majority of peace processes - are exacerbated in the case of the Congo by the mechanics of the permanent incorporation not only of troops that had previously formed enemy units, but, fundamentally, of officers who, in many cases, demand high level positions within the military hierarchy as part of their conditions for reintegration. One can imagine the feelings of victims who see an individual who had burned down a village, then

The policy determining that the role of international military forces was to provide support to the Congolese armed forces was based on a flawed premise: a local force minimally constituted and professionalized. Any strategy derived from it faces the risk of irrelevance or failure. To achieve change, it is necessary to review the premises.

dressed in the uniform of the National Army and with officer rank.

Adding all of this to the aberrations committed during the wars, the indiscipline and criminal offenses are a major challenge for any reform process. The scenario:

badly or unpaid troops, living in tents in the middle of a lonely landscape or in overcrowded living accommodation in the cities, together with their own families that they do not want to leave due to fear of leaving them alone. There is not a lot the Mission can do with such a situation, at least within the present context and mandate. Although there is a unit devoted to security sector reform, the internal balance of power politics still do not allow the theme of the Congolese armed forces to be touched upon (according to what they say, in order as not to stir the mood, they do not speak in Kinshasa of reform, but of *development* of the sector). It is a sensitive issue, and requests by the Government usually refer to the provision of technical assistance and collaboration in the construction of the National Police (PNC). The issue of support and reform of the FARDC appears to be derived bilaterally, where the usual lack of coordination between donors that is present in any similar context allows for a wide margin of maneuver.⁸¹

The situation of security sector reform and, in particular, of the military, is extremely complex, and should be carried out on two fronts simultaneously: the depuration and the motivation and professional well-being of those who are called upon to be the basis of a true professional force. Just as there are corrupt officials and criminals, there are personnel who live in appalling conditions and to whom it is difficult to find a professional motivation. It would be appreciated if the Mission were to involve itself more in the matter. It is maybe something in which the Latin Americans could contribute, providing civilian and military experts.

81 Following years of promises by the government to carry out reform of the Armed Forces, in 2011 the Armed Forces Act was finally sanctioned. It includes provisions typical of such laws, provisions which must pass from paper into actual practice. *Loi organique 11/012 du 11 Août 2011 portant organisation et fonctionnement des forces armées* (Kinshasa: Journal Officiel de la République Démocratique du Congo, August 22, 2011).

• **The skills of military personnel:**

In a mission such as that of MONUSCO the military operates in a very diverse context. Besides military knowledge, other skills need to be cultivated, linked to what is known as the “strategic corporal” doctrine. This is especially true of the officers, who live with situations in which they are supposed to be, at once, combat soldier, military diplomat, and keen observer of the situation. For example, the possession of negotiating skills if you are in command of units, however small, is one of the main requirements to successfully carry out a foreign mission in the framework of a multinational conflict.⁸²

The ability to adequately communicate with the local population and other contributing countries is another one of those skills. Explanations and a diverse array of information are useless if unknown to the public. Nobody hears those explanations when aberrant things happen. The level of social communication of the MONUSCO military component is poor and does not seem adequate for the context, nor for today’s world. If in order to know certain issues related to the actual possibilities of military action one needs to travel hundreds or thousands of miles, it is clear that there exists a problem of proper communication, especially towards contributing countries and the entire international community in general. The contingents also need to open their doors to, and relation with, the Mission’s civilian personnel, local and international NGOs, and journalists, thus feeding the transmission of information.

In regards to communication with the population, for example, military personnel do not seem to be very up to date, something that the MONUSCO Mission is, *inter alia*, through Radio Okapi. This station operates 24 hours a day, and is widely heard by the population: it transmits the Mission’s own programs, but also programs which are of a general interest.

A policy to such ends, which emanates from TCCs and from the general command would probably strengthen some emerging capabilities, and develop others. Some contingents (Egypt and Bangladesh, to name a couple) showed interesting capabilities in their communication with their countries’ capitals regarding the activities which are carrying out, as well as to visits: photos, activities, videos, cameras and professional staff. In others it is more difficult to observe. It is definitely a relevant issue when it comes to support from the contributing country and managing the external image of the country, as seen by occasional visitors.

The Uruguayan battalion in Goma has a radio station, which is broadcast locally. Another notable factor is their openness to receive their country’s journalists,

⁸² It caught our attention that some contingents in the North, for example, were unaware of the presence of some 100 US military personnel who had been sent to train the FARDC due to the presence of the LRA, something which had been announced by the US government itself. We, ourselves, saw some of them.

who spend a few days there and then periodically publish articles in Uruguay about the situation. In general, however, one does not observe much enthusiasm by military contingents to develop a mode of communication with the population at large. In fact, it would seem that a certain fear of contact predominates together

One could say that COBs or TOBs are structures that, in addition to increase the force's mobility, also increase the force's level of social communication and, through this, the image of the entire Mission. The structure in battalions instead favors isolation.

with a preference for isolation, probably the result of security-related factors as well as cultural issues.

Other skills relate to the ability to interact with diverse audiences and successfully assess different situa-

tions. The language barrier, as discussed above, is a serious constraint faced by several contingents. In addition to this, a certain cultural sensitivity and openness is also needed when gathering information and analyzing intelligence, skills which are necessary to prevent attacks on the local population. Building trust is a task that should be carried out by every unit commander, and this linkage with the local population should be something sought by contingents to bolster the success of their operations. The involvement of the local population is an issue that goes beyond the military, but it is worth touching upon because their work is also affected by this: *"if the community does not get involved, whilst we can train the military and the police, little will be achieved"*, stated the individual in charge of the Bunia office.

Some troops show greater understanding of the situation and go beyond the others in their actions, for example using local translators to interact with the local population during the day, and seeking more contact with local village chiefs and even with the heads of the FARDC in the area. Others find it harder to overcome the challenges, *"We cannot be everywhere... protection is extremely difficult, especially in remote areas on which we have no information, There is an additional problem in that the local population is so reluctant to give out information as they fear the revenge of the militias."*

- **The theme of the patrols:**

The patrols are a central theme both to the protection of civilians and the creation of trust within the local population. The accusation that the military is locked up in their military bases or in their trucks runs like wildfire in any peacekeeping mission, and unfortunately often it is justified.

From the interviews carried out, the perception gained was that there are different interpretations about the mandate. While some argue that even in cases where there is no FARDC presence there is a necessity to act, others believe they should avoid situations that, to the Government, resemble any

type of imposition (it should be noted that, in general, civil officials inside the country mostly lean towards the option of more action than that which is currently carried out). In this context, the main victim is the local population, which continues to suffer the effects of the conflict, and, secondly, the Mission itself, whose image becomes tarnished.

“There is a feeling amongst the population that we are not doing as much as we should be doing” said a civilian official interviewed in Bukavu. *“They have a base there and do nothing”*, said a representative of an organization of the UN system in the North. *“They could do more but they don’t”* was a phrase heard in three interviews.

No less certain than the difficulties of operating with the FARDC is that sometimes military contingents exploit grey areas to justify inaction. An example is the case of the patrols. It was related to us that in the North, in a region where it is impossible to even leave unescorted and where FARDC had withdrawn as part of their restructuring, some contingents refused to do patrols (*“they say patrols have to be joint, and with that they excuse themselves”*, stated a representative of a humanitarian organization).

Due to the characteristics of the conflict and the operational scenario, it is clear that in order to at least minimally meet the requirements dictated by the protection of civilians, there is a need to conduct foot patrols in areas which are located outside of the cities, as well as the need to intensify the use of night patrols. Or, as it was put in a more direct fashion by the director of the Panzi Hospital, *“What kind of protection do they provide if they only provide it to those who are closest to them?”*⁸³

Influence the flexibility of commanders: *“MONUSCO confronts a problem in terms of its means,”* said a humanitarian worker, *“they must choose priorities, and decide where to go, because they cannot go everywhere”*. The interviews held with humanitarian actors allowed a better understanding of what the military presence means in certain parts of the country; how humanitarian agencies need international forces in order to do their job. However, the same respondents also criticize the use by some contingents of fixed and routine patrols schemes, following schedules and routes that are well known to all those who live there.⁸⁴

83 Although the blue helmets are authorized to use force to protect civilians, it was noted by some contingents that, according to the memorandum of understanding signed by each country with the DPKO, each one makes reservations about the effective use of force. One of them explained that consultation with their capital is required prior to mobilization. In 2012, following the advance of the M23 towards Goma, UN and FARDC artillery helicopters were initially used, but this was then ceased, with the reason for the cessation of their activities unknown.

During an interview, the Director of Panzi Hospital, managed by the Swedish Pentecostal Church and present in Congo since 1921, asked “what is MONUSCO’s plan of action?” adding that he considers it opportune to maintain the mission but that it must be used to stop the violence. He said that many of the soldiers “know more than they say”. Dr. Mukwege is known for being very “vocal” in his criticism of Rwanda and their actions in the Congo, and in 2012 he was forced into temporary exile.

84 *“The infrastructure is bad. But it’s also certain that if they were to set a target each week, and provided a presence, it would act as a dissuasive measure”*, they told us in Bukavu.

It is also the case that sometimes military personnel are reluctant to get involved, for fear of becoming engaged in combat. It is a particular risk for the TOBs, for example, a contingent spoke of a case in which a group of militia was engaged in the theft of goods. A patrol engaged with them and was fired upon, and the driver was shot in the chest.

This latter issue touches upon the question of the “double hat”, and what kind of instructions or support is received from their own countries regarding carrying out certain riskier actions, such as a foot or night patrol. If, given the terrain, mobility and flexibility within the contingents is necessary, the question that this implies regards the willingness of the TCCs to use the appropriate force and accept the risks that this entails.⁸⁵

As part of its security measures, MONUSCO’s military command developed the initiative of temporary deployments (Standing Combat Deployments - SCD), where a unit is deployed to a particular territory, where it settles for a few days until its replacement or transfer is decided. An example shows the limitations of coverage in such a vast territory and the diversity of the threats which exist. In May 2012, two SCDs were deployed in the Masisi territory, where villages had been attacked, but had to be redeployed in July to cover the security of Goma before the advance of the M23.

Until contingents are encouraged (by the military command of the mission or by the TCCs themselves) to avoid routine patrol schemes, increase the frequency and number of patrols, or take the risk of getting out of the vehicle, little will be achieved by patrols, and even less so in relation to generating confidence in the local population.

Between April and September 2012, some 250 ethnicity-linked murders were committed in that territory.⁸⁶

85 “I call on TCCs to ensure that their contingents are willing and able to act in such a manner to help deter attacks on civilians in line with the Force Rules of Engagement”. United Nations, Security Council, *Twenty-seventh report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, S/2009/160* (New York, March 27, 2009), p. 96.

86 “Groups of up to 250 armed individuals attacked the villages, often early in the morning: many civilians were killed while trying to escape. Many victims were killed with machetes in the back, neck or head. Others were burned alive in their homes. Most of the victims were children, women and the elderly who could not escape”. MONUSCO / UNJHRO, *Report on Human Rights Violations perpetrated by Armed Groups during Attacks on Villages in Ufamandu I and II, Nyamaboko I and II and Kibabi Groupements, Masisi Territory, North Kivu Province, between April and September 2012* (November 2012), p.4. Unlike other reports, this does not reference the contingents located close by.

GUATEMALA, URUGUAY AND THE LATIN AMERICAN CONTRIBUTION

The Mission in the DRC has involved a large Latin American contribution, given that until the restructuring in 2010, a Bolivian contingent was also deployed in MONUC. In 2013, the contribution of the Latin American contingents is provided by Guatemala and Uruguay, while Bolivia, Paraguay and Peru deployed, along with Uruguay and Guatemala, 82 military observers towards the end of 2012.

Guatemala: the Special Force in the North

Guatemala has a contingent of 150 troops in Congo, which is known as the GUASFOR. Most are based in Dungu, whilst a small logistical cell is maintained in Bunia, where it works to send the supplies and materials needed to operate. Guatemala has already sent 11 troop contingents to the Congo, with a mission period of 9 months each. All members go through *Kaibil* training (“he who has the strength and cunning of two tigers”), one of the most respected commando courses in Latin America.

The only real way to get to Dungu is by air from Bunia, an hour by plane or nearly two hours in helicopter, flying over huge swathes of jungle. By land, it could take three days even though the distance is about 300 kilometers, or up to eight days in the rainy season. There, almost at the most northeasterly point of the country, Guatemalan Special Forces (GUASFOR) are deployed. Literally in the middle of nowhere, ten kilometers from a town that lacks even the most basic infrastructure, a special place for the Guatemalan *Kaibiles*. It was there that the contingent and its commander were interviewed.

Dungu’s geography is made up of rainforest and the weather is very volatile, in fact it is common for flights to return to Bunia when conditions worsen or, in some cases, it may not even depart as approach and landing conditions are not the best. The area is also characterized by the presence of small rivers with bridges that are usually damaged, hindering further any journeys by land. For example, travelling the 94 kilometers between Dungu and Niangara (one of the villages in which MONUSCO should operate) can take a week in the rainy season.

In the Haut-Uele, which is the area of the country in which Dungu is located, the main threat is the LRA, the “Lord’s Resistance Army”, a force originating from Uganda which installed itself for years in the coverage of the Garamba National Park. Over time, thousands of children have been abducted to fight as child soldiers or to act as sex slaves. Although their strength and size has decreased dramatically - we were informed by several MONUSCO

representatives in Bunia and Dungu that they currently have no more than 100 active members – they hide themselves under the natural protection of the National Park, attack villages, rob stores, start fires or rape women, men and children. Congo is so invisible that even the “Kony 2012” campaign, which became a worldwide viral video in a matter of days - focused on Sudan and didn’t even mention the DRC,⁸⁷ where, up until March 2012, 341,000 people had been displaced. The combined total of displaced people in the three affected countries, the Central African Republic, South Sudan and the DRC, is estimated at 445,000.⁸⁸

In Garamba National Park, which is about an hour away from the contingent’s base, eight Guatemalan peacekeepers were killed in an ambush in 2006. It is one of the most dangerous places for military or civilians who are deployed in the Congo.

Given that commando forces in Guatemala do not allow the inclusion of women, the Guatemalan government’s decision has been to incorporate fe-

male staff in other services, especially medical officers and translators. There are usually five of them, and prior to deployment they must complete physical training, which we were told is very demanding.

GUASFOR’s primary mission is to protect civilians and escort UN civilian personnel. Due to the characteristics of the force, they can be sent anywhere at short notice. Their specialization and the way they handle protection makes them a preferred choice for the civilian agencies who need permanent military escorts for their

MONUSCO and the LRA - The “Lord’s Resistance Army”

The problems in the DRC caused by the presence of the LRA go back to 2005, when they were first detected making continual movements between Sudan and the Congo, taking advantage of the porous border of Garamba National Park.

About 1,200 troops are located in the Haut-Uele, conducting their own military operations as well as those in conjunction with the FARDC.

Temporary bases have also been constructed, from where diurnal and nocturnal patrols are carried out and humanitarian workers are escorted on visits to the local population.

MONUSCO Engineer units have carried out work to rehabilitate the region’s roads, in order to facilitate access throughout the region.

It provides logistical support to FARDC units, including rations and transportation for about 2,000 troops.

It supports the establishment of an African Union Regional Task Force.

87 Not even a single reference to the situation in the Congo, or the DRC itself, was made in the massive public opinion campaign. In 2013, although the website of the organization that spread it locates Joseph Kony on the border between Sudan and the Central African Republic, it points the finger at MONUSCO, saying that one of the ten measures that would end the problem would be “that the region’s armed forces and MONUSCO increase civil protection measures “. View <http://invisiblechildren.com/a-comprehensive-approach/> accessed January 16, 2013. Although it is paradoxical, it illustrates how the mission’s communication and the military must improve to avoid leaving empty spaces in communication, such as these.

88 United Nations, Security Council, *Report of the Secretary-General on the activities of the United Nations Regional Office for Central Africa and on areas affected by the Lord’s Resistance Army, S/2012/421* (New York, June 11, 2012), p.32.

activities, but also for NGOs (due to the security level in the area, even military observers should be escorted during their activities). The GUASFOR comment that sometimes they are unable to meet all the orders they receive, something that was reaffirmed by civilian officials in the Dungu office as well as by aid workers, who said that they always request to be escorted by the Guatemalan unit *"because they have no problem going anywhere"*.

Another activity linked to the operations they perform to protect civilians is the establishment of temporary bases in places where they are destined to carry out operations, and from where they conduct foot patrols. Part of their role may also include spending several days camping at night somewhere in the middle of their route, for example, carrying out a three-day mission to Faradje accompanying a research team from the MONUSCO civilian component. Another example is their involvement in the so-called 'Operation Santa Claus', which was carried out by MONUSCO in tandem with Congolese forces in December 2011 in order to deter LRA activity during the holiday season. On that occasion they covered more than 1,100 kilometers over a period of six days. The GUASFOR can sustain itself for a period of up to thirty days in a patrol base. The contingent deployed until mid-2012 covered 12,000 kilometers in eight months. Over the last two years, they have added further tasks to their role: providing basic training to a FARDC commando unit.

The contingent's camp is simple, constructed from Corimec, which the UN provides for facilities. There is a dining room for the troops, and a smaller one for the officers, but successive contingents have given the camp a Guatemalan touch: a small pyramid built in the center of the square, whose sides are adorned with a tribute to the *Kaibiles* killed in combat there. Operationally the GUASFOR answers to the Force Commander in Kinshasa, whilst in Ituri they are also responsible to the Brigade that is installed there. During the 2011 elections they were deployed in Kinshasa, before hastily being redeployed to Dungu due to the large number of requests by agencies for their services.

Every day they perform training exercises, and practically every day they carry out an operation. The hardest thing for them, as for all troops, is leaving their families. In this case, maintaining contact is much harder than in other parts of the country. During the rainy season it is even more difficult: hail, thunderstorms and strong winds destroy equipment. Only one of the country's phone companies provides coverage to Ituri, and they often climb up the side of the pyramid to get signal. Every thirty days they have one day off, but in practice the remoteness of the place makes it difficult to move around, and security rules mean that wherever they go out they

must be escorted, but they say that the continual activity in which they are involved makes time go faster.

The soldiers interviewed are, in general, very young. For many of them it is their first mission, and they expressed that what is striking to them is their appreciation for their own country and the desire to work together to bring stability to the Congo. *“The constant activity helps time go faster, every day we do something different”*, they say. They comment that the longest patrol that they have undertaken was for fourteen days, and they feel proud to escort agencies like UNICEF and the World Food Programme while doing their work. They also provide insights to their counterparts from other Latin American countries, stating that *“we have suffered war, we live with injustices, this allows us to understand and provide assistance”*.

Uruguay: an Intense and Historical Experience

In 2013 Uruguay deploys 1,177 troops to the Congo, making it the fifth largest contributor of troops to MONUSCO. The contingent deployed there is made up of:

- An Army Battalion based in Goma and detachments in other locations. It is constituted by a Reserve Battalion which, as such, reports directly to the Force Commander. The battalion commander is also the national contingent commander.
- A naval unit in Uvira, whose current area of operations is Lake Tanganika.
- An engineering company located in Bukavu, South Kivu.
- An Air Support Unit and Aviation Unit also located in Bukavu.

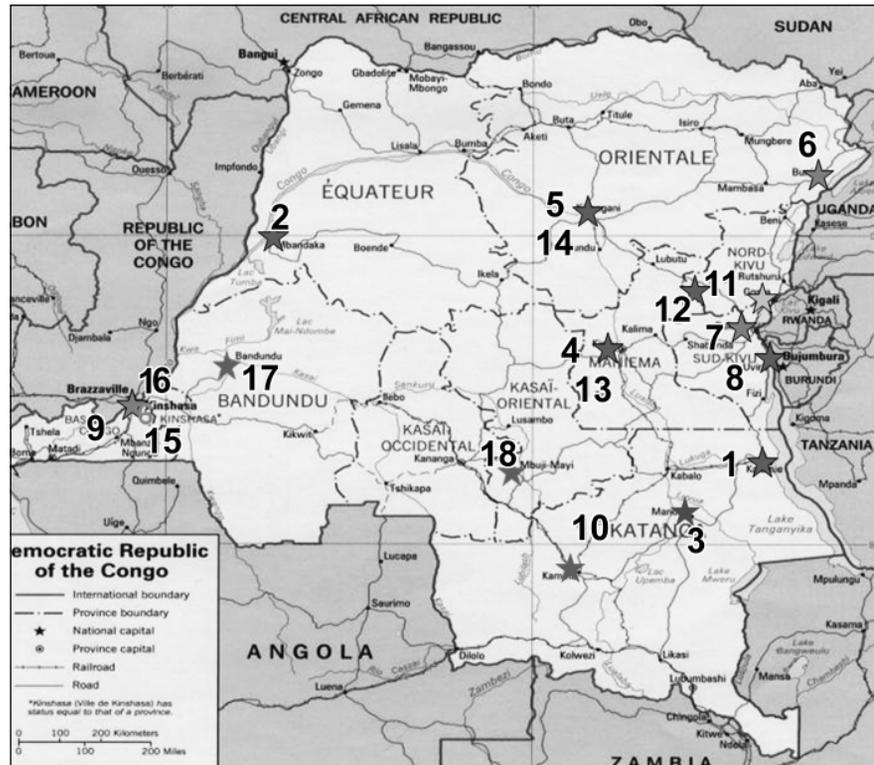
Uruguay has been in the DRC since the beginning of the mission, in 2001, and has been present in all major political and security crises that the country has experienced since then: the advance of rebels and ethnic fighting in Bunia in 2003, the crisis in Bukavu with Knunda Laurent, clashes after the first elections in 2007 in Kinshasa, and, in 2012, the progress of the M23 in Goma.

The Uruguayan Navy has provided security in order to allow for navigation on the Congo River between the Kisangani falls. Ground troops have also been deployed across the entire geography of the DRC, as shown below:

History of Deployments 2001-2011

1. Apr. 2001 Kalemie
2. Jun. 2001 Mbandaka
3. Oct. 2001 Manono
4. Feb. 2002 Kindu
5. Feb. 2002 Kisangani
6. Apr. 2003 Bunia
7. May. 2004 Bukavu
8. May. 2004 Uvira
9. Feb. 2005 Kinhasa
10. Mar. 2006 Katanga
11. May. 2007 Goma
12. Sep. 2009 Kimua
13. Jul. 2010 Kindu
14. Apr. 2010 Kisangani
15. May. 2010 Kinhasa
16. Sep. 2011 Kinhasa
17. Oct. 2011 Bandundu
18. Nov 2011 Mbuji Mayi

Source: Presentation given by the Uruguayan Battalion in Goma, 2012.



The Battalion usually numbers 750 (including about 30 women) and is divided into four companies. Currently it is located in Goma, at the base of the active Nyiragongo volcano, which last erupted in 2002 (streets and houses display the lava stones which are used in construction), and Uruguayan troops are aware that they are at the bottom of a potential natural disaster.

One company is deployed in **Kimua** and is replenished each week, and the captain in charge of the Company is replaced once a month. *“After going by the volcanoes, hills and forests, it is where you find Kimua,”* says the Battalion commander. The place is accessible only by helicopter and the Uruguayan base is located on a hill. It is considered one of the most dangerous places in the Congo today and the two armed groups, the Democratic Front for the Liberation of Rwanda (FDLR) and the Congolese Democratic Front (CDF) who operate there are in constant confrontation for control of the region. When problems erupt, civilians go to the precarious Uruguayan base for refuge (located, in practice, in the crossfire), which is of great concern to the Uruguayan troops. The personnel sleep in tents, and live with all kinds of insects and rodents. In the area, according to what they told us, there are serious health problems (the local population completely lacks basic infrastructure), and there is a

regular Red Cross helicopter that delivers medication and provides medical care. There is no presence of the Congolese State, or FARDC or the PNC.

One of the missions of the company in **Kimua** is simply to maintain a presence. They express regret, however, that they can only carry out day patrols, as they have no means for overnight capacity outside the base. They conduct foot patrols once a day to different nearby villages. It is important to note, at this point, that the Uruguayan contingent, like the Guatemalan, was one of the few cases in which reference to foot patrols was made spontaneously when asked about patrols. According to them, maintaining constant patrols is a key element in providing protection for civilians, especially because:

- It's the most effective form of interacting with the population.
- It acts as a dissuasive element.
- It allows personnel to maintain an adequate readiness without being a hostile or threatening activity.
- It allows the most vulnerable to approach them during conflicts.

Tasks in the Battalion stationed at Goma vary from providing security or safeguarding the airport, to providing reinforcement to troops that have been deployed, and participating in the security plans made by the commander. Being a reserve battalion, they know they may be deployed to any part of the country at the Force Commander's request. As a result of this, they have been

In Kimua, women were deployed, despite it being a specific combat role. This is another important difference between Uruguay and the experiences of other contingents.

deployed across the country and experienced the distinct political vicissitudes that have developed during the years. And as Uruguayan personnel usually have extensive experience in peacekeeping missions, for the majority of personnel it is their second, third or fourth mission. When interviewed, they all expressed the feeling that the DRC is a true mission, where there are many things to do and collaborate in. They remember, for example, events in Bunia when *"rebels killed half the police, we saw bodies beheaded, priests impaled. They entered the hospital and killed them all"*. All Uruguayan peacekeepers have anecdotes and testimonies which allow for a better understanding and knowledge of the conflict.

For them, the main challenges of being in the Congo are summarized in three points: the lack of infrastructure (and of better means, we might add) that prevents them from doing everything they would like to, being away

from their families, and what they see around them. *"I have seen many things"*, said an officer who was stationed in Rwanda at the time of the genocide. *"Crushed bodies. Mountains of them. You have to block them from your mind in order to survive"*. *"If I tell my wife, she will not let me come back"*, said a sergeant. Another said: *"I'd never seen children eating rotten things"*.

As part of their mission, they understand that they should give something to the people and therefore they perform two CIMIC tasks: providing aid to a school and an orphanage. Both places receive, from the Battalion's

The school is supported by a local organization, APROFIME, and was initially managed by local women for girls who had suffered sexual violence, but ended up becoming a place for children in general up until they reach 18 years of age. The orphanage is for children with disabilities, and consists of a small house where 68 children live and carry out a workshop where they make their own braces.

own food supplies, a daily ration that is delivered to them by the troops themselves. The only help that these two places receive is the assistance provided to them by the Uruguayans. It was observed how the local population has great affection towards the Uruguayan

staff, and also how the situation affects them and how they strive to do something to improve it.

It's upon observing these activities that one thinks of the contribution that could be made. The issue goes beyond this specific case involving Uruguay; it's something that touches upon all Latin American contributing countries. How much, and with so little, can be done in places such as the school and the orphanage supported by Uruguay in the DRC, if a more concerted effort was made by governments in terms of their participation in peace missions. On the ground, greater knowledge amongst the military regarding the support of the Mission through Quick Impact Projects (QIPs) is also important. This is related to what was referred to above: the necessary capacity for officers to interact with civil officials.

But this is a topic for serious discussion in the capitals of these countries. In terms of the beneficiaries of the simple daily assistance provided by military personnel, Uruguay is at the top of the list.

In the case of **URPAC** (the naval unit) until 2012 the base was located in Bukavu, on the shores of Lake Kivu, when in the middle of that year they were redeployed to cover Lake Tanganika. It consists of about 180 troops, and their duties consist mainly of:

- Patrols to carry out reconnaissance and surveillance, both day and night.
- Monitoring and reporting the activities of different actors who operate in the location.

- Transporting and providing security to military observers, the Mission's civilian personnel, and to humanitarian workers.
- Protecting civilians under imminent threat both on the lake and in the coastal villages.
- Search and rescue.
- Controlling illegal activities, such as smuggling.

The patrols are carried out daily. *"When we patrol – stated those interviewed – we leave the boat on the shore and go to the riverside villages. There, with the help of translators, we carry out interviews that serve as surveys for the Mission's offices and humanitarian agencies". "People crowd around us when we arrive, we see what they are lacking and at the end you wonder what you did and what you did not do, what you could have done".* It is also often the case that the village's population gives them a list of requests to carry out.

The company has women deployed, who perform logistical and other tasks but can also ask to go on patrols, and in fact actually do. Regarding the experience of being in the Mission, one of them said, with a smile on her face, *"Being a woman, being a mother, being a peacekeeper, it is very difficult".*

The **Uruguayan Air Force**, meanwhile, operates the Bukavu airport, where about 100 troops are deployed. The airport is a vital point of communication for MONUSCO, and any other organization working in the area, given the poor condition of the roads. In 2004 the Uruguayan base had a dangerous moment of fame when it hosted negotiations between Laurent Knunda (who, after being appointed General for the reintegration of the Congolese Armed Forces, formed a rebel group of about 5,000 fighters) and the Congolese government.

The aviation contingent also contains women, who account for over 10% of its personnel, including a lieutenant navigator, pilot and a woman responsible for check-in services. At the airport there is also a medical evacuation unit and two transport helicopters, and in 2012 one of the pilots was a female captain. They also provide weather services and flight monitoring (a question that is particularly dangerous in the DRC, where civil aviation is considered one of the world's riskiest due to, among other things, the lack of radar installation). Between their arrival in 2003 and 2011, they have carried out some 35,000 aircraft operations, overseeing a movement of more than 300,000 passengers and a load of more than 310 thousand tons. Some of those deployed, having been on previous mis-

sions in the same place, say *“there is a difference now with other times”, “we sometimes think about what it would be like if it wasn’t for MONUSCO. There would have been no elections. The country would be plunged into civil war”*. They recognize, however, that *“the population applies pressure, they want something more”*.

It is a highly technical unit, and one of the problems that arise is the difficulty of effective personnel rotation, given the high degree of expertise required to carry out the tasks.

The presence of Guatemalan and Uruguayan contingents is the largest contribution made by the Latin American region to the resolution of the conflict in the DRC. These are countries that do not have large defense budgets or apparatus, but nevertheless are recognized in the Mission due to their disposition to tackle new and complex tasks. It is certain that the language barrier is present, an issue that still needs to be worked on, not only in these countries but in the region in general.

In addition to their disposition to involve themselves, which was cited by numerous interviewees, we could add that the social characteristics of personnel and, even historical and cultural issues, collaborate to the contribution of Latin American countries in activities related to the local population and, specifically, gender issues. It is precisely this that calls the attention, as much of locals as of the observer himself, to the question of why a larger contribution isn’t made by the region, for example by countries with the capacity to provide air assets, or engineering companies.

5. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

- Violence against women as a form of domination by men and society as a whole is not a new phenomenon in Congo's history. It was present during colonization, under the Mobutu dictatorship, during the Congolese Wars and up to the present. It has become common practice, increasingly blurring the boundaries between the permissible and the punished in the country's social and cultural history.
- The Congolese conflict is an example of how sexual violence is used as a weapon of war in contemporary conflicts. Understanding the changing nature of conflict will allow better attention to be paid to it, especially in regard to the preparation of military personnel.
- The Congo, in this sense, needs to be analyzed within a transnational framework. As clearly presented by various reports made by groups of experts, the conflict is also infused by the interests of transnational mining companies, with their interest in the exploitation of coltan (columbite–tantalite) and tin oxide (cassiterite) primarily, but also gold, diamonds, potential oil and known gas reserves in the zone, uranium, etc. One also has to consider the impact of decisions taken by the international community following the genocide in Rwanda (such as allowing those that committed genocidal acts to settle in the refugee camps), and a local historical context in which antagonisms and rivalries involve and encourage violence. There are no unambiguous explanations, and ultimately the problems that have dragged on for centuries, or decades, someday need to be addressed and resolved.
- Following the massacres in Bosnia, Kosovo and Rwanda, the establishment of a large peacekeeping mission in the Congo was the response of the international community to collaborate in putting an end to what was a large-scale conflict. It represents a turning point, or a break, in the way the international community considers their duties and responsibilities in international security, especially in terms of the protection of civilian populations.
- One of the key points in this regard is the length of the Mission. Given that there is a need for constant rotation of military personnel, that distance from the local population remains, and that changes are slow paced and resources ever fewer, the conclusion quickly arrived at is that this is a problem which doesn't have a solution. Additionally, other recent crises on the international stage compete for attention and require action. It is important not to forget the long-term problems that remain unresolved, nor the fact that the successes and failures of what began in 2000 with MONUC are part of an ongoing

ing process that goes far beyond the specificity of the Mission, and will have consequences for the future road map of international interventions.

- UN member states should distinguish between conflict zones and post-conflict zones in the DRC, acting according to different parameters in each. For example, it's clear that the situation in Kinshasa is different from that in Goma or Bukavu. Without closing the headquarters in the capital, there could be a need for a secondary headquarters in the East of the country, subordinate to the previous and operating as a mechanism for coordinating operations.
- The general mandate to protect human rights, women and children and civilians at risk varies markedly between recurrent conflict zones and those in a post-conflict situation, where the major problem is combating marginalization and poverty. In the latter, development is the focus of concern, beginning with the substantial improvement of infrastructure, providing education and public health, and the institutional correlation between good governance and good management skills. Programs for urbanized areas (albeit marginal or "rurban") and rural areas (many of them in the midst of a process of change, disintegration and loss of population) should have different emphases and objectives. Since the mass of the population is under 15 years old, it is important to place an emphasis on children and young people as the main target population.
- In areas of recurrent conflict, the central objective is to secure peace and the disarmament of the various groups operating in the region. Central to this is the issue of State authority and the presence of legitimate and capable armed forces. But the idea of *brassage* has not worked properly. Without a correlation between the training and reassessment of personnel, it will not work. There is a need not just for tactical training, but also to instill certain values and a sense of national identity.
- Therefore, the mandate of international military forces in the DRC should be readdressed, and it should be clear about what it means in practice. Whilst the constant need for humanitarian aid is of course important, the most important requirement is to achieve peace, which in the beginning may involve the effective use of force. TCCs are often reluctant to do so, but they should be convinced that it is better for the outcome of the Mission, avoiding the perception of failure that is spreading. When reflecting on this, there is no denying that the policy which determined that the role of international military forces was to support local forces was based on a flawed premise: a local armed force that was at least minimally constituted and professionalized. Any strategy derived from it faces the risk of irrelevance or failure. To achieve change, it is necessary to revise the premises.

- The country's infrastructure is not conducive to social integration tasks or action by the authorities. In many cases there are no proper roads linking villages, and what prevails in the resultant situation is thus isolation in large areas of the territory. This breeds violence and crime and impedes rapid response, and consequently the various programs implemented by the international community do not always reach the intended recipients. It requires the implementation of programs to improve roads and dredge rivers and lakes, actions which require both security and the involvement of engineering companies and military brigades specialized in this area.
- Building a safe public space where economic activities, exchange markets, and the extraction of the country's natural resources can develop is a difficult but essential goal to achieve. There is a need for greater efforts to establish effective border controls and combat the illegal trafficking of goods: international military forces are currently minimally involved at best in this task and local forces have no means, preparation, resources or will to do so. The DRC does not have porous borders; it is as if it simply had no borders at all. Changing this would involve constant advocacy work, and Latin American countries, many of whom may also have direct financial or economic interests, should make their voices heard.
- The practices of an armed force and the perception that the population has of it are an historical construction and are difficult to change. In the case of the DRC, the collective record of killings, looting and exploitation by members of the armed forces in different historical eras is so numerous that it has practically become associated with the military's image. Rebuilding the State's authority will also be dependent on the extent to which the public can trust in law enforcement forces. For the Congolese population and also for international actors present in the DRC, the Armed Forces are part of the problem rather than the solution, and thus there exists the need for a serious reform program.
- It is estimated that the DRC has a military force of approximately 150,000 troops, and that it is equipped with heavy equipment. The Gendarmerie no longer exists, but they do possess a police unit specialized in riot operations: the National Legion of Intervention. The PNC may have around 15,000 troops, but their quality leaves much to be desired and reflects the problems of the country's social and institutional disintegration. The total number of uniformed MONUSCO personnel is equivalent to around 10% of the DRC's national security forces. Perhaps an important focus for MONUSCO would be to allocate more of its efforts to training the FARDC and the PNC. Of course this means overcoming the distrust that involves training people who can quickly become part of organizations dedicated to destabilization, or even crime.

- It is difficult to protect civilians within a context of constant conflict, where it is difficult to distinguish between civilians and hostile forces. More dramatic still is the problem of the recruitment of child soldiers; a mechanism that is not primarily military, but social, in terms of family breakdown and the use of those who still lack the maturity to bear arms. The humanitarian situation that involves the use of sexual violence as a way to make “gains” in the conflict implies the need to combat this way of thinking, not only through police action, but with media campaigns and other techniques that will leave a lasting impact in the population, such as community theater.
- Some issues are central when it comes to improving the Mission, of which language is one of them. Mission personnel are able to use English according to what prevails in the UN headquarters. In the same manner, as French is the official language of the country, the leadership and almost all civilian and police personnel must have a mastering of the language. As for the military, no such requirement is put in place and only personnel from the General Staff are thought to have the compelling need to have knowledge of the language in order to do their job. This, however, is not enough, and the military must depart from this way of thinking. It is not only in the DRC that this problem needs to be remedied, but in any country where peace missions are deployed and the dominant language is not English.
- The UN utilizes local translators, given the diversity of local languages and dialects which vary according to the region, and the efforts to establish links with local translators is one of the most important tasks carried out by MONUSCO. This, however, should not lead to the conclusion that the issue is resolved. The information is mediated by the translators’ intervention (which could sometimes manifest the preferences and interests of certain sectors), and in practice it is impossible for them to attend to all of the Mission’s requirements.
- On occasions, mission personnel may attain a certain ability to communicate in the local language, but continue to be distant from the community and its culture. In other cases the person could be an expert on the language, but not on the specific affairs the Mission is dealing with. Normally, the interpretation of cultural patterns takes place through Western models and perspectives - we ourselves recourse to them, with citations to Conrad and Che. These cultural differences shouldn’t be forgotten.
- Maybe this is one of the biggest challenges facing the United Nations and all international organizations operating in conflict and post-conflict areas, and it’s not easy to tackle. The principal military leaders should master French, and civilian personnel could be given brief instruction in one of

the local languages, according to where they are deployed. Whilst it would consume resources, these would be well spent.

- The defense against imminent threats to the physical integrity of the population presupposes having adequate information to act preventively and together with the Congolese authorities and society. Perhaps one of the greatest contributions the United Nations could provide would be to improve the Mission's information services, not only of the military and police, but to try to establish an information system for the entire DRC.
- The development of protection strategies and initiatives is one of the most important and most innovative bets made by the Mission. Much is at stake in this and has come to include the military. Coordination between offices and increased knowledge about the various initiatives within the military component would work to reinforce these strategies.
- Security as the basis for the protection of civilians covers a range of issues to be taken into account when discussing the need for a military contribution. Many of them - such as escorting humanitarian actors, the provision of structures and logistics, and mobility, etc. - cannot be met under the current conditions of the DRC without a military presence.
- But the international military intervention should be up to the scale of the challenges that lie ahead; the flaws in it bring down the whole Mission. Central themes to rethink are: the possibility of effective communication with the local population and with the rest of the Mission; the redesigning of their missions in the DRC according to the critical issues (borders, natural resources, actions of rebel groups, and widespread sexual violence) in order to re-legitimize their presence; effective training of the FARDC; and work on the gender perspective in order to adjust themselves to the reality of the Mission
- In a mission such as MONUSCO, the military operates in a very diverse context. In addition to military knowledge, there is a need to cultivate other skills, related to what is known as the "strategic corporal" doctrine. This is a clear challenge to the Troop Contributing Countries.
- Latin American military personnel in MONUSCO are quite foreign in terms of the culture and norms of daily life to what you see in the Congo, with the same being true of the major Asian contingents. Military contingents in their own countries are sometimes bound to rules of misconduct which stem from the norms emanating from the Mission and the DPKO headquarters in New York. Although it is assumed that all should receive adequate training to participate in a peacekeeping mission, many of the troops receive only brief information and a list of prohibitions, but not a clear instruction on how to act proactively. In relation to issues of domestic violence and sexual abuse, it

is not known if they are discussed in their own countries. Therefore, there is a need to set parameters and eliminate the fear of talking about it, to address cultural differences, the needs of those personnel deployed and the expectations of local people. Although it seems that the situation cannot be changed, reforms in pre-deployment training and a higher incidence of training during the deployment would achieve better results.

- In specific regards to gender, it is important to emphasize the need for better linkage between the activities of the UN system agencies and those of the Mission (Gender Office and Sexual Violence Unit). There is also a need to provide the Mission's offices with resources so that they continue to promote the positive relationship that has been made with government and civil society entities. It requires a lot, but any progress will be important, as was the case in the creation of these two offices.
- Military openness is a key challenge. Integration within the Mission, given budgetary constraints, should presuppose that military gender focal points provide better support to the Gender Office and to the Sexual Violence Unit. Since military contingents play a very relevant role in protection, a more fluid and stronger interaction could foster greater creativity, impact and support. For example, while female civilian officers cannot spend the night on a base, due to not being allowed to if they were part of a member force, or due to not having even minimal facilities for it, it will be difficult to work in locations distant from the cities, in the middle of the jungle or simply in rural areas, which are precisely those which are in the most need of being visited and surveyed.
- In a conflict scenario where over 50% of the population needing protection are women and girls and where sexual violence against them is one of the most salient, only 1.97% of the military are women. At the beginning of 2012, this figure was 2.25%.
- Regarding protection itself, contingents should be encouraged (both by the military command of the Mission as by TCCs themselves) to avoid routine patrols schemes, to increase patrols, and to take the risk of stepping out of their vehicle. Until they work on this, there is little that can be achieved through patrols, and even less in terms of winning over the confidence of the local population.
- Finally, one cannot fail to express that, while there is much to do to improve and make corrections to MONUSCO, without its presence the situation in the DRC would be a lot worse, especially in regard to the gender situation.⁸⁹

⁸⁹ It appears this has finally been recognized by the countries within the framework of the African Union and the Great Lakes Regional Conference. See *Acuerdo Marco para la paz, la seguridad y la cooperación para la República Democrática del Congo y la región*, Addis Abeba, February 24, 2013. The Security Council debates in 2013 are also important in this regard.

GENERAL RECOMMENDATIONS

For the international community and troop contributing countries:

- Promote studies with anthropological contributions that will allow for an understanding of the true impact of systematic aggression against women in the community's social, political and economic development.
- Include examples of, and specific work on, the use of sexual violence as a method of dominating the opponent in training programs in the contributing countries.
- Support, and at the same time question, regional efforts which are under way, assuming the transnationalization of the conflict in the DRC.
- Coordinate better the efforts of donors in the DRC, and avoid as much as possible that bilateral aid for security sector reform remains isolated.
- Address as part of SSR medium term programs on civil-military relations.
- Ensure bilateral cooperation from countries that have undergone successful military justice reform processes.
- Reinstate some kind of budget planning for the defense and security sector as well as minimum standards of transparency.
- Incorporate issues related to the relocation and displacement of the families of military and police personnel in the preparation and budgeting programs that form part of security sector reform, such as in the pre-deployment preparation of international actors.
- Ensure a greater availability of aircraft and engineering companies to the Mission.
- Ensure the increased deployment of female personnel in an operational role.
- Specifically in relation to the Latin American region, increase interest and presence in the Great Lakes region and in the Congo, promoting South-South cooperation.
- Evaluate bilateral cooperation programs especially for the development of policies and legislation on issues related to gender, defense and military justice.
- Explore the possibility of training Congolese military and police personnel in military colleges and police academies, taking into account the limits arising from the French language.
- Engage with the DRC through academia and civil society through programs like that carried out by RESDAL, and others that impulse exchanges and greater incidence between countries.

- Within a long-term vision, increase government grants for young Congolese people in educational institutions in Latin America.
- Evaluate language problems in all ranks, and design changes necessary to better adapt to peacekeeping missions.
- Intensify gender training and sensitization during pre-deployment, encouraging greater individual responsibility.

In relation to the MONUSCO military component

- Incorporate language skills which make it possible to communicate with the local population and Mission staff as one of the evaluative factors when deciding locations and tasks.
- Encourage a greater presence of women among local translators.
- Make sure that reports prepared by patrols are immediately sent by the contingent to the offices responsible for gender and sexual violence in the area of responsibility.
- Encourage, in the East, the formal and systematic involvement of military officers in Provincial Protection Groups.
- Include specific provisions regarding tasks related to natural resources and border control in the instructions to contingents.
- Request Latin American troops to share their experience on gender issues during training of the FARDC.
- Ensure that military medical personnel are trained to apply post exposure rape kits.
- Schedule patrols according to an evaluation of the vulnerability of women in certain areas.
- Increase non-routine and foot patrol activities.
- Evaluate critical steps in each contingent for the incorporation of women into operational roles or patrols.
- Enable housing facilities for female Mission staff in all operational bases, in particular in risk areas.
- Instruct base and battalion commanders to incorporate links with gender and sexual violence offices in their area of responsibility into their routine operations, exchanging data and providing them with the means and security available to them.
- Elaborate a list of the key names and organizations to attend to gender and sexual violence emergencies in their area of responsibility, making it available to each section leader, or battalion.
- Develop guidelines for gender focal points in each contingent.

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Assistant, Office of Gender Affairs in Kinshasa

Bangladesh Aviation Unit

Bangladesh Battalion I

Bangladesh FPU commander and personnel in Bunia

Bangladesh FPU commander and personnel in Kinshasa

Caucus de femme Congolaise in Bukavu

Chief of Civil Affairs, Kinshasa

Chief of Conduct and Discipline in Kinshasa

Chief of MILOBs in Bunia

Chief of Office, Office of the Deputy SRSG (Rule of Law) in Kinshasa

Chief of Rule of Law Section in Kinshasa

Child Protection Officer in Dungu

Child Protection Officer in Kinshasa

Civil Affairs Officer, Dungu

Civil Affairs Officer, Goma

CONAFED in Kinshasa

Deputy Director Mission Support

Deputy Security Sector Reform Adviser

Director of Political affairs Officer in Kinshasa

Egyptian FPU commander and personnel in Bukavu

Field Officer for the Office of Gender Affairs in Bukavu (South Kivu)

Field Officer for the Office of Gender Affairs in Bunia (Orientale Province)

Field Officer, Sexual Violence Unit in Bukavu (South Kivu, Maniema and Katanga Provinces)

Field Officer, Sexual Violence Unit in Goma (North Kivu and Orientale Provinces)

Gender Adviser, Office of Gender Affairs in Goma (Eastern region)

Ghana Battalion

Guatemalan Special Forces (GUASFOR)

Head of Field JHRO in Bunia

Head of Field JHRO in Goma

ICRC representatives in Goma

ICRC representatives in Kinshasa

Indian Battalion IV

Indian FPU personnel in Kinshasa

JHRO representatives in Kinshasa

Judicial Affairs Officer, Rule of Law Section in Bunia

Judicial Affairs Officer, Rule of Law Section in Goma

Judicial Affairs Officer, Rule of Law Section in Kinshasa

Military Observer from Senegal

Military Observer from Spain

Military Observers from Paraguay

Minister of Gender, Children and Family

Moroccan Battalion

MSF representatives in Bukavu

North Kivu Brigade Commander

OCHA coordinator for the gender program in Kinshasa

OCHA representative in Dungu

OCHA representative in Kinshasa

Office of Gender Affairs in Kinshasa

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Prosecution Supporting Cell team from Goma

Public Information Officer, Sexual Violence Unit in Kinshasa

REFED in Goma

Reseau Action Femme in Kinshasa

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UN Voluntary, Sexual Violence Unit in Kinshasa

UNFPA Coordinator for the Gender Program in Kinshasa

UNFPA representative in Bunia

UNFPA representative in Dungu

UNHCR representative in Bukavu

UNHCR representative in Bunia

UNHCR representative in Dungu

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Uruguayan Aviation Unit

Uruguayan Battalion (URUBATT)

Uruguayan Naval Company

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ACRONYMS

AFDL - Alliance of Democratic Forces for the Liberation of Congo

CAN - Community Alert Network

CIMIC - Civil-Military Coordination

CLA - Community Liaison Assistants

DDR - Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration

DFS - Department of Field Support

DPKO - Department of Peacekeeping Operations

FDLR - Democratic Forces for the Liberation of Rwanda

FARDC - Armed Forces of the Democratic Republic of Congo

FPU - Formed Police Unit

GWG - Gender Working Group

JPT – Joint Protection Teams

LRA - Lord’s Resistance Army

MILOBS - Military Observers

MONUSCO – United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of Congo

NGO - Non-governmental Organization

OCHA - Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs

OG – Gender Office

PNC – Congolese National Police

PSP – Prosecution Support Cells

PWG – Protection Working Group

QIP - Quick Impact Projects

SCD - Standing Combat Deployment, temporary deployments

SCR - Security Council Resolution

SRSG - Special Representative of the Secretary General

STAREC - Plan for the Stabilization and Reconstruction of War-Affected Areas

SVU - Sexual Violence Unit

TCC - Troop-Contributing Countries

TOB - Temporary Operating Bases

UNDP - United Nations Development Programme

UNFPA - United Nations Population Fund

UNHCR - United Nations Agency for Refugees

UNJHRO – United Nations Joint Human Rights Office

UNPOL – United Nations Police

UN Women - United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women

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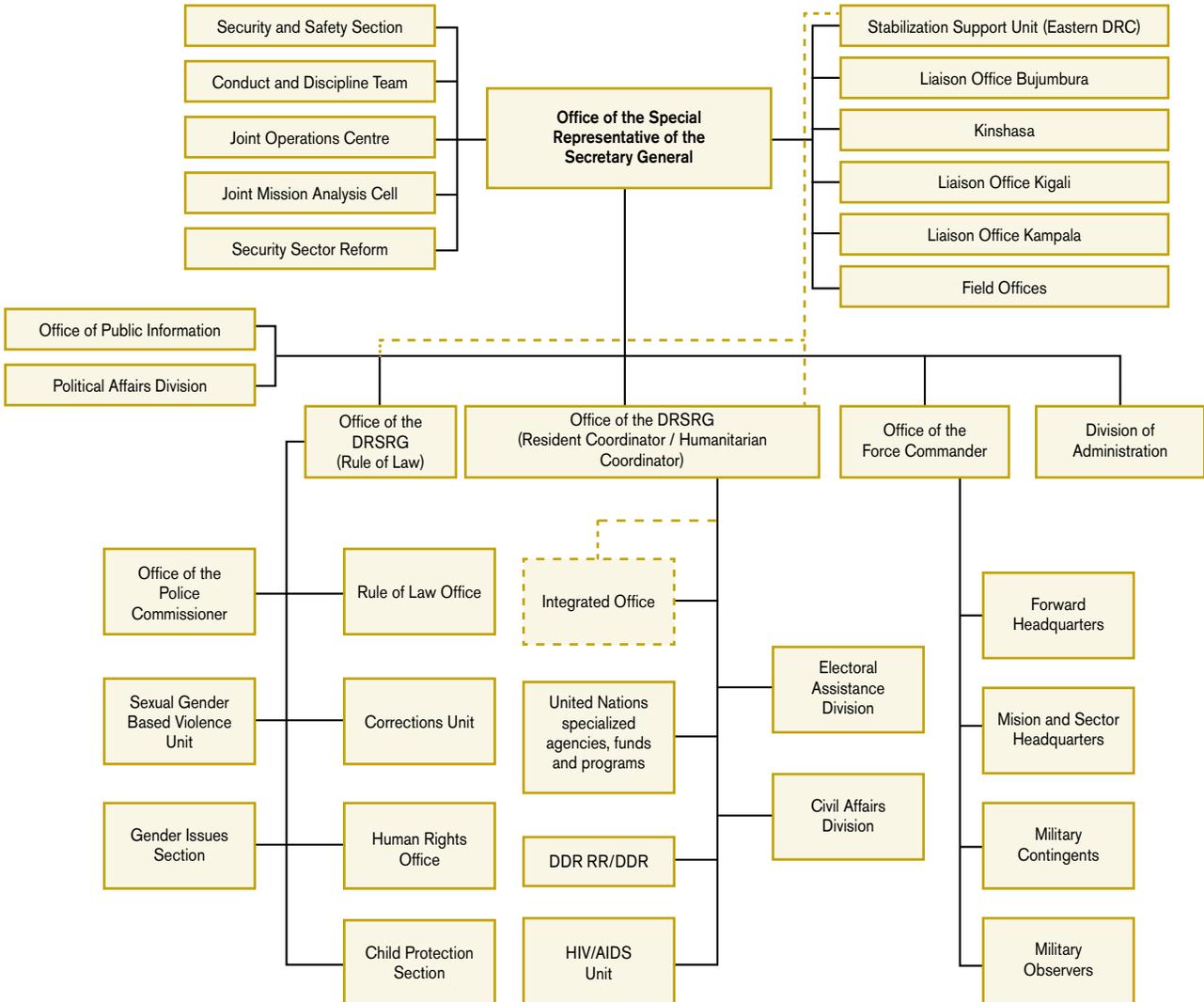
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ANNEX: MONUSCO ORGANIZATION CHARTS



GENDER PERSPECTIVE IN AN INTEGRATED MISSION: THE CASE OF MINUSTAH IN HAITI

A Mission in one of the poorest countries in the world, where development and public security dominate the scene.

Prepared by Juan Rial*

1. INTRODUCTION

The gender situation in Haiti recognizes two major situations: the cultural, legal and societal aspects - including gender roles, and the need for the development of specific legislation for gender based violence and for increased capacities in the security and judicial sectors. The lack of active participation by women in public life, including their scarce participation in political posts as parliamentary representatives, is also a major obstacle to the incorporation of women's perspectives at all levels. The devastating effects of the earthquake led to a worsening of the situation, whilst it created major challenges for the protection of women and children, especially those related to their situation in the IDP camps.

Haiti is an important case to Latin American countries, both due to being on the same continent and due to the participation of many of the region's countries in MINUSTAH, the UN mission established there in 2004. For that reason, RESDAL conducted an investigation to assess the gender perspective in the environment of the Mission, and especially its role within the military contribution that so many countries in the region are involved in. The main focus of the study has been the military and challenges for the full incorporation of the gender perspective into their activities.

The role of the different components regarding a Mission's gender perspective and its promotion in a society is not only an issue of political correctness but an operational necessity that needs to be addressed at the UN Headquarters, by UN field missions and Troop Contributing Countries. This is particularly challenging when referring to the security sector forces.

The document presents the preliminary conclusions from an extensive consultation process involving two visits to MINUSTAH to engage with the military, police and civilian component, UN partners, local authorities and civilian population. In June 2011 a first visit was deployed with the aim of covering the largest Latin-American military contingents. Prior to the field visit,

*February 2013

RESDAL's team held meetings in NYC with UN DPKO representatives in order to share the objectives and the methodology for the visit. A second visit was conducted in September 2012, with the purpose of interviewing civilian offices, the police component and military contingents from Asian countries. During the last, comprehensive field visit we followed an agenda previously arranged and coordinated by the Mission's Gender Unit (GU), the Civil Military Coordination Office (G9) and the UNPOL Gender Office. It included contact with offices involved with gender such as the Integrated Mission Training Centre (IMTC), Civil Affairs, Child Protection Unit (CPU), Community Violence Reduction (CVR), Conduct and Discipline Unit (CDU), Human Rights (HRS), Rule of Law and the Joint Mission Analysis Centre (JMAC). The visit of military and UNPOL's units followed afterwards. More than fifty five (55) interviews were then conducted. We also met with representatives from UN Agencies, such as OCHA, UNDP and UNHCR in order to gather the broadest view possible regarding the gender-based situation in the Mission, and especially in the work of the military.

The interviews of military contingents involved individual interviews held with commanders and their staff, and group interviews held with non-commissioned officers and troops. Interviews were semi-structured and anonymous. The questionnaire collected information regarding their tasks there, their daily activities, their perception on the problems related to gender within both the country and the contingent, and examples of situations and experiences.

This paper will focus on the gender situation in an integrated Mission (MINUSTAH); it seeks to reflect the current status of MINUSTAH regarding the gender perspective and thus contribute with recommendations that could be implemented to improve the gender-based situation. It will not discuss the Mission's operational premises or reference its framework. The goal is somewhat more "modest", although very relevant: to contribute with recommendations that could be implemented to improve the gender-based situation and identify specific challenges for the implementation of SCR 1325 on women, peace and security.

It aims to make the work that the Mission carries out in Haiti in relation to the gender situation known to a wider audience, and examine the Mission's gender perspective in a post-conflict mission scenario. This includes those who do not have access to field information or who are not related to peacekeeping or the theme of gender in peacekeeping.

2. MINUSTAH AND THE INTEGRATED APPROACH

MINUSTAH is a long-term Mission established in 2004 after the adoption of UN Security Council Resolution 1542. It is one of a number of missions deployed in Haiti, given that between 1993 and 1996 other UN peacekeeping missions were also present in the country.¹ Since its creation, six Special Representatives of the Secretary-General (SRSG) - the Mission's highest authority - have been designated and eight Force Commanders (heads of the multinational military contingents) have been in command, all of them Brazilian Generals.

The Mission's mandate is extended every year and essentially involves supporting the Haitian government in the country's institutionalization process.² The Mission continues while the negative effects of the lack of

1 The so-called UNMIH was operational from September 1993 to June 1996. In September 1991, the government was overthrown; the coup was followed by a pact to restore the constitutional government. The UNMIH was established in 1993 to support the modernization of the Army and creation of a new police force. However, a military movement prevented the mission's deployment. In 1994, multinational forces restored the government preceding Bertrand Aristide and UNMIH started operating again to provide security, create a professional corps of national police force, thus eliminating the Army and paving the way for new elections. This mission was followed by UNSMIH, operational from July 1996 to July 1997. Its mandate was to assist the Haitian Government, elected by the popular vote, consolidate a secure environment and continue with the practical training of the national police force, reinforcing the role of the Special Representative in the coordination of activities to promote institution-building, national reconciliation and economic reconstruction. Two missions that followed, UNMITH (August to November 1997) and MIPONUH (December 1997 to March 2000), were established to support the training of the UN Civilian Police in Haiti, placing special emphasis on the training of the higher ranks and specialized police units, in close coordination with the United Nations Development Programme (UNPD).

2 The original mandate has been modified from time to time. See for instance SCR 1608 (2005), 1702 (2006), 1743 (2007), 1780 (2007), 1840 (2008). By extending the Mission's mandate for an additional year on 13 October 2009, the Security Council charged MINUSTAH with new tasks to support the political process under way in Haiti, promote an all-inclusive political dialogue and national reconciliation, and provide logistical and security assistance for the upcoming elections in 2010 (SCR 1892).

After the devastating earthquake that struck Haiti on 12 January 2010, SCR 1908 of 19 January 2010 and 1927 of 4 June 2011 increased the overall force levels of MINUSTAH to support the immediate recovery, reconstruction and stability efforts in the country. The Council requested MINUSTAH to continue, within its current mandate, its collaboration with the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) and the United Nations Country Team in supporting the humanitarian and recovery efforts. The Council encouraged MINUSTAH to provide logistical support and technical expertise to assist the Government of Haiti to continue operations to build the capacity of its rule of law institutions at the national and local level, and to speed up the implementation of the Government's resettlement strategy for displaced persons. It further requested MINUSTAH to continue its support to the Haitian Government and to the Provisional Electoral Council in the preparation and conduct of Haiti's elections, and to coordinate international electoral assistance to Haiti in cooperation with other international stakeholders, including the OAS. The earthquake knocked down MINUSTAH's headquarters, killing the Mission's civilian command. The military commander lost his wife and MINUSTAH's military contingents lacked the capacity to handle the arrival of international assistance. The United States sent an ad hoc task force which took over the airport, operated an emergency port with artificial piers transferred to Port-au-Prince and coordinated initial rescue tasks. In October 2011, by Resolution 2012, the UN Security Council extended the mandate of MINUSTAH until October 2012. It reduced its overall force levels to 7,340 troops and the police units and UNPOLs to 3,241. The downsizing of military forces was deepened by SCR 2070 on October 2012 which extended the mandate until October 2013.

institutionalization are still felt, in spite of the efforts undertaken by MINUSTAH, the Haitian government and the political settlement processes under way. The government is weak, and has no effective control over its territory, territorial waters or air space. A high number of displaced persons (369,000 as of August 2012 according to IOM)³, as well as people living in precarious conditions, are reported. All this was worsened by the earthquake that struck the country in January 2010, with high levels of poverty prevailing in the country, especially in urban areas.

The Mission structure reflects the concept of an integrated UN mission:

The Civilian Component. The Mission's civilian organization is broken down into administrative, operating, social communication, protection and control units. In relation to the focus of this report, it is important to mention the following units: Gender, Civilian Affairs, Conduct and Discipline, Human Rights, Rule of Law, the so-called JMAC (Joint analysis conducted by multiple components) and JAC (joint operations), Child Protection Unit and the Community Violence Reduction Unit. All these units usually act in coordination with representatives of UN agencies with a permanent presence in the country, such as OCHA (humanitarian aid) UNHCR (refugees), UNICEF (children), UNFPA (population), UNDP (development agency acting in multiple areas), among others. They perform most of the activities together with the National Government, according to the mandate of supporting Haiti's stabilization.

The Police Component. In 2013 several countries provide personnel deployed on an individual basis to UNPOL, their role is key due to its relationship with the local population and the Haitian National Police (HNP). Its main task is to help train the HNP, develop SOP's (Standard Operating Procedures), promote coordination mechanisms with the judiciary, and serve as the first contention element in cases of violence, though always conducting actions under the control of the HNP. Three Formed Police Units (FPU) (deployed for anti-riot control and other roles) are contributed by Jordan (one of them being a special force unit), three by India, three by Bangladesh (one of them staffed by women), two from Pakistan and one by Nepal, Nigeria, Rwanda and Senegal. There are no police units from any Latin American countries.

The Military Component. Most military contingents are from Latin American countries. Except for Colombia and Venezuela, all South American forces are represented in these contingents:

- Argentina contributes with an infantry battalion, a level-2 military hospital and a helicopter unit, with its corresponding pilots and maintenance technicians.

³ IOM, *Displacement Tracking Matrix*, August 2012.

- Bolivia has an infantry company which makes up a reserve force at the disposal of the Force Commander.
- Brazil has two infantry battalions with responsibility in Port-au-Prince, the country's largest city, where the major threats to security are faced. The second battalion, fully funded by the Brazilian government, was added after the 2010 earthquake and has an engineer company. It is expected to return to Brazil by 2013.
- Chile contributes with an infantry battalion, an air unit with helicopters and an engineer company also staffed by Ecuadorian personnel.
- Paraguay provides a multi-purpose engineer company.
- Peru has deployed an infantry company, many of its members being specialized command personnel, which also acts as a reserve unit.
- Uruguay has two infantry battalions and a sea patrol unit.
- To these South American forces, we should mention a military police company provided by Guatemala, which works mainly on the maintenance of discipline and law and order.

Military personnel from other countries also take part in the international contingent, such as some infantry battalions from Jordan, Nepal and Sri

There is also a Level-2 field hospital provided by the Argentine Air Force and most of the contingents also have a level-1 hospital. Their mission is mainly to assist their own personnel and, generally, MINUSTAH personnel. They are not mandated to provide medical care to the Haitian people or to the personnel of the UN permanent agencies. The air units present in the country are few and also serve the Mission, so they conduct no actions related to the local population.

Lanka, engineer companies from Japan, South Korea and Indonesia and a headquarters services company provided by the Philippines.

Several countries contribute with staff officers, even if they have no full contingent deployed to the island. There have been no military contingents in a confrontational status since 2004 and no military observers

are present in Haiti as is often seen in most missions (see map).

A significant part of the work performed by military forces has involved strictly police tasks. Especially at the beginning, the Mission tried to contain the violence in marginal neighborhoods of Port au Prince. In 2004 and 2005, police operations started in Cité Soleil, a community near the port, in order to control the activities of armed gangs involved in various criminal activities. Occasionally, in support of UNPOL and the HNP, some actions still continue, especially in Port-au-Prince.



Source: <http://www.un.org/depts/Cartographic/map/dpko/MINUSTAH.pdf>

The chart below summarizes the Mission personnel as of January 2013.

- 9,298 uniformed troops
 - 6,684 military personnel
 - 2,614 police agents (including formed units)
- 451 international civilian personnel
- 1,317 local civilian personnel
- 206 United Nations volunteers

MINUSTAH has achieved significant progress in coordinating the activities performed by the civilian, military and police components of the Mission. A further step towards integration was taken by planning joint work with UN Agencies permanently present in the area. These changes are taking place at a time in which progress is being made in terms of Haiti's institutional-strengthening, and MINUSTAH's actions seem to have improved the overall situation. However, we still lack sufficient studies that may clearly prove this state of affairs. The promotion of this kind of research could certainly help not only the contributing countries but also the promotion of MINUSTAH's image amongst the population.

3. A GENDER-BASED PERSPECTIVE IN AN INTEGRATED MISSION. THE EFFORTS TO INTRODUCE AN ISSUE TO THE AGENDA

With the passing of time, a gender vision has been gradually introduced into the country's agenda and advances have been achieved. The Ministry for Women's Affairs and Women's Rights (MCFDF, *Ministère à la condition féminine et aux droits des femmes*) was created in 1994, but it was during recent years that generalized stabilization in the country led to its enhanced institutional development.

One of the most challenging themes that the UN and the Haitian government are dealing with is related to violence. According to *Concertation Nationale* (a Haitian network composed of civil society, government and international cooperation agencies, created in 2004 and formally constituted in 2007) 19,658 cases of violence against women were registered across the country between 2002 and 2011, and the figure increases to 24,369 when men are included.⁴ These cases are probably just the tip of the iceberg, as the reporting of such acts is not a common practice due to several reasons, with fear of reprisals and the lack of confidence in the legal system perhaps being the salient ones, as stated in a report released by the Human Rights Section in 2012.⁵

In this context, the Ministry of Women's Conditions of the Haitian government has set as priorities the promotion of gender equality, the reinforcement of capacities of the national institutions, sensitization and education,

4 Concertation Nationale contre les violences faites aux femmes. *Violences spécifiques faites aux femmes. Données partielles: Juillet 2009 à Juin 2011*. (Concertation Nationale: November 2011).

5 Section des droits de l'homme. *Rapport sur la réponse de la police et du système judiciaire aux plaintes pour viol dans la région métropolitaine de Port-au-Prince*. (MINUSTAH: Port-au-Prince: June 2012), p. 2.

and the defense of women's rights. At the country level there is a working group coordinated by the Ministry, where the UN also participates.

MINUSTAH's mandate includes the provision of assistance to the Government and, in relation to gender, this is basically achieved through: the provision of technical assistance by the Gender Unit to the MCFDF, implementing violence reduction programs, providing electoral assistance, raising awareness amongst the various offices, training and carrying out work with the police through UNPOL, and supporting CIMIC programs that impact women, within which the military participate. The Mission further coordinates its activities with those carried out by the UN County Team (UNCT) which is formed by the various UN system agencies in Haiti, and supports its activities when required. In keeping with the needs of the general scenario, gender is now considered as a transversal issue throughout the Mission and by UN agencies in the field.

All major cultural and social changes in a democratic process involve, at some point, dealing with the fear that strangles people's feelings and actions, thus affecting the reporting of crimes. With regard to the question of sexual and gender-based violence, the main question for those analyzing and guiding the issue is how to arrive at the situation in which victims lose their fear of their perpetrators, as well as the social and family environment (which in some cases results in discrimination against the victim). The implementation of appropriate safeguards, clear and universal mechanisms for filing and processing complaints, sensitivity amongst law enforcement agencies, and the fight against impunity are key to medium and long term objectives. In the short term, the question of how to encourage the filing of complaints and provide access to treatment appears to have been addressed by MINUSTAH through the following three initiatives:

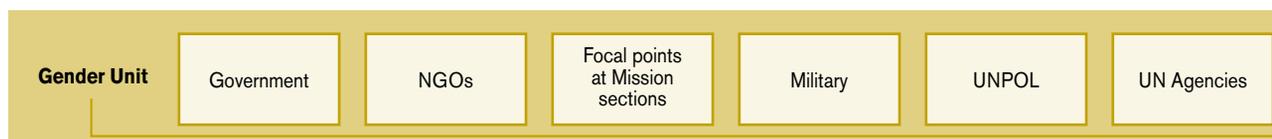
- The establishment of a proper location to receive victims inside Internally Displaced People (IDP) camps. This is one of the biggest projects that the Haitian Government is undertaking with the Mission. These modest buildings will stand beside the police station in each camp (five of them have already been set-up). They consist of three rooms: a reception, a private room for victims, and a room for sensitization meetings. The space was designed with the collaboration of local women's organizations and the government. Both UNPOL and HNP are present at the location.
- The promotion of special units within the Haitian Police.
- The creation and presence of a Mobile Gender Unit inside IDP camps.

THE ROLE OF THE CIVILIAN COMPONENT

The civilian component of MINUSTAH has considerable knowledge, and is fully aware of the gender issue. This includes not only those directly involved in the matter, such as the members of the GU or the CDU, but all professional officials have a thorough knowledge of UN regulations and make an effort to communicate them to the rest of the Mission and to collect data. Their biggest problems lie in the bureaucratic complexity of the Mission and the time it takes to coordinate actions among its various components.

Within MINUSTAH, the office in charge is the **Gender Unit** (GU) and it is placed under the authority of the Deputy SRSG and also related to a central DPKO Gender Unit located at the UN's New York headquarters. The GU is responsible for promoting, facilitating and monitoring the incorporation of a gender perspective in the implementation of the Mission's mandate, as well as supporting the efforts of the Government and civil society organizations in promoting equality between men and women, particularly in increasing women's political participation and fighting against sexual and gender-based violence.

This Unit works in an integrated manner with the different components and the UN agencies and with the Haitian government. The complexity of this task and the derivations in terms of interagency coordination can also be appreciated when analyzing the scope of the MINUSTAH gender office's relations:



In 2011 a **Gender Focal Point Network** and strategy was established by the Gender Unit in order to facilitate the implementation of the Mission's mandate and effectively ensure gender equality in all of the Mission's activities. Focal points were established and they work for ensuring effective coordination and the integration of a gender perspective in all substantive sections.

Sections within MINUSTAH have been mandated to implement a gender perspective. The **Human Rights** office, for instance, is working on the monitoring of the reports received by the police and the judicial process as a way of fighting both institutional weakness and impunity. The **Community Violence Reduction Section**, which has a portfolio to develop projects targeted to diminish and prevent violence, is working to increase women's participation in their projects include activities based around skills training. Another section where gender is pushing inclusion is the collection of

information: the **Joint Mission Analysis Centre** (JMAC) is incorporating information on rape cases into a geographic database, thus serving as an analytical tool for different sections.

Out of the work that MINUSTAH does to seek to implement a new gender perspective, the most striking issue to emphasize is the combined activities of the civil, police and military components. The Gender Unit, the UNPOL Gender Advisor and the military component's Gender Focal Point (G9), as those with the responsibility for overseeing gender issues within each component and mandated to do so by their respective authorities, have been developing since 2010, and especially during 2012, an intense relationship that permeates their activities. This is evident as much in the number of initiatives that they have developed, as in the gains made through this inter-relation (fundamentally, through the interchange of views between civil, police, and military members, which naturally hold distinct visions).

In 2012, and for the first time, a different initiative was put into practice and the experience and lessons may be replicated in other Missions: a three-day seminar with the gender focal point of the battalions (twice, once in Spanish and once in English). It is organized by the Gender Unit in collaboration with the military component's G9, and it is attended by the gender focal points of each unit. A specific material has been prepared for this course, based on the Military Guidelines of DPKO / DFS. In addition to addressing issues of gender and gender-based violence, it also covers the specific context in Haiti, involves its own case studies, and stimulates debate and interaction. It would be interesting, especially for the application process that DPKO seeks in relation to its Military Guidelines, that this experience is analyzed and disseminated.

THE CONTRIBUTION OF THE UN SYSTEM

The UN efforts to promote a gender perspective across the system have led to the creation of a **Gender Thematic Group** (GTG), currently led by UN Women. This group meets every single week and has a sub-cluster for sexual and gender-based violence led by UNFPA, an agency which is working on data collection with the Government. UNHCR, working with refugees, has developed a **Safe Houses** project for victims. Nowadays there are two safe houses, one in Port-au-Prince (2011) and the other in Petite Godive (2012), located 100 kilometers from the capital city.

UNDP is mainly focused on gender mainstreaming and the empowerment of women. The Development Programme is also involved along with

UN Habitat, UNOPS and IOM in one of the most important projects for the Haitian population in the camps: the **16-6 Program**, which aims to relocate people from 16 camps to 6 neighborhoods. The project is also controversial: in September 2012 we witnessed a massive gathering in a camp whose theme was the discussion between “being ICRC” or “being IOM”. As ICRC has provided humanitarian aid to the population in the camps and people fear they won’t have it if they are not living in a camp anymore, discussions are under way among the residents. This example illustrates the complexity of the task that MINUSTAH sections, UN agencies and international organizations actually have when implementing a program.

In general, all UN agencies today have a gender vision and a gender-based policy, and some even work specifically on the matter, such as UN Women. It is clear that in many cases competition between organizations and the duplication of efforts exist, but this will probably be overcome with time. According to one of the interviewed officers “interagency coordination in the field is tricky” and is one of the major challenges. While the recognition of mandates and jurisdictions is important in terms of efficiency, as a matter of fact the population does not necessarily know the difference between agencies and tend to identify international personnel as MINUSTAH personnel no matter which section or agency they are.

Even the Organization personnel sometimes have difficulties in identifying bureaucratic responsibilities: for instance, as some testimonies gathered in IDP camps show, a victim may be referred by the police to the UNHCR, IOM, or to another agency. Trying to get every police or military personnel aware of the complexity of an integrated Mission is certainly important and also a responsibility of TCCs, but it is almost impossible in practice. The production of small cards for police or military in the field with specific mechanisms for the referral of victims or camps’ needs would help on this, as it would be the continuation and reinforcement of practical linkages between sections and agencies.

OTHER INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS AND NGOs

The International Organization for Migration (IOM) is not an UN agency but works closely with MINUSTAH and the UN system. It is one of the most important actors from the international community in Haiti, and it is recognized as the most specialized organization regarding sexual and gender based violence. Its contribution seems to be key for securing victims (relocation programs) especially when they are threatened.

As regards other international organizations, it is important to note the known resistance of agencies such as the **Red Cross**, or other large international NGO's, to work jointly with UN military or police units. As their view of the conflict requires them to act with neutrality between opponents, even in stabilization phases or, as in the case of Haiti, in environments with no confronting groups, they believe it is convenient not to be associated with the uniformed presence. Usually, the degrees of coordination for actions are very low or simply do not exist.

UNPOL: REDUCTION AND CONTENTION OF GENDER-RELATED VIOLENCE

As the main liaison with the host country's law-enforcement agency, the HNP (Haitian National Police), the United Nations Police (UNPOL) has a primary role in the contention and prevention of all forms of sexual abuse issues, including domestic violence. Also, several UNPOL's are involved in training Haitian personnel at different levels.

UNPOL's structure for gender activities relies in three elements:

- **Pillar I**, Operations: consisting of the permanent relationship with the MINUSTAH Gender Unit, the UNPOL Gender Mobile Unit at the IDP camps, and the Gender Focal Points deployed at 13 police stations in Port-au-Prince and 10 Departments in the country.
- **Pillar II**, Development: with the SGBV project and the work at the Police Academy as the main tools for training the HNP.
- The presence of a Gender Advisor as reporting officer to the Police Commissioner.

UNPOL has established a **Gender Adviser** who reports directly to the Police Commissioner and has been deployed to the Gender Unit since 2010. There is a special room at the Gender Unit facilities where four UNPOLs work daily thus enhancing relationship and coordination.

The biggest limitations actually come from the mandate, which prevents them from taking on an

operational role, and only allows them to be advisors and liaisons of the HNP: a mentoring mandate. However, some UNPOL components, such as the mobile gender unit operating in internally displaced people (IDP) camps, in practice have an initial operational role in victims' protection, before following the protocol and transferring the responsibility to the HNP, hospitals, NGO's, etc. subsequently trying to involve the judicial authority.⁶ Regarding sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV) cases, it is the responsibility of the HNP to follow up the cases; UNPOL can in any

⁶ According to the Haitian Penal Code, rape is considered a common crime. The maximum punishment that can be imposed is imprisonment for a term not exceeding ten years, or fifteen years if the victim is under 15 years old.

case train and mentor. It is important to have this in mind at the time of appreciating what the UN can actually do (in this case either UNPOL or the military). One officer summarized what is actually thought by many in the police and military contingents: *“we have to hand over to the HNP, after that it’s in police and justice hands, we cannot do more than that”*. As in any other case or Mission, there exists a thin line between the reality of this argument and the fact one could also take advantage of that and do nothing, letting the time pass on. That’s the challenge for the authorities in the Mission, but also for contributing countries as they should be aware of the

actual procedures their personnel are involved with.

Given that all UNPOL members in their own countries are either senior personnel or equivalent NCO’s with many years of experience, they have a clear idea that their role is to protect children and women. A great deal of UNPOL members come from French-speaking African countries, as well as Québec, Canada, and some are French or Spanish with a good command of the French language. As creòle is the main language spoken in the sectors of society most prone to suffer

sexual abuse or violence, this places UNPOL personnel who do not speak French at a disadvantage, compared to their colleagues who do have a command of the local language. For some African police members who speak in their countries of origin some ad-hoc language form derived from French, it becomes easier to be understood by the local community. Also, for some UNPOL members, their long stay in the host country enables them to have a better understanding of the challenges they are required to confront.

Training is a serious issue for the HNP. It is difficult to get a stable police corps, as the pay is not very good. In spite of that, there seems to be a very high number of candidates willing to enter the police force. Though no con-

The standard operating procedure for SGBV cases indicates that the major role is for HNP due to the non-executive mandate of UNPOL.⁷ In the case of crime,

- If the crime is in the process of being committed, UNPOL must intervene to stop the threat or the suspect with or without an HNP officer present.
- If it has already been committed, it must involve the HNP and assist them with the planning of the suspect’s arrest.
- In camps, in the event a case must be handled and no HNP officer is available on site, they must contact the team leader attached to the commissariat having jurisdiction, so that an HNP officer can be immediately dispatched to the offense location. This must be done so that the complaint can be investigated conjointly with the HNP initially.

⁷ Definitions for these SOP indicate that sexual violence is “Any act which constitutes sexual violence committed on a person regardless of age or gender.” Regarding domestic violence, “Any of the following is considered an act of domestic violence: assault, voluntary or involuntary manslaughter, murder or any other form of assault; all forms of assault or physical violence inflicted upon a person in a spousal relationship.”

crete studies are available that indicate the level of corruption in the HNP, especially the type of small corruption practiced by the lower-level agents to earn a better income, it is clear that it continues to pose a serious problem that impacts the professionalism of this force. UNPOL is actively supporting training at the **Haitian Police Academy**, where 25 UNPOL from different nationalities are serving. There is a basic training for police agents, but also specialized training in fire control, child protection, anti-trafficking, etc.

SGBV training for the police is another current UNPOL project and it's under the auspices of the Norwegian cooperation. The project is targeted at HNP development and capacity building in this area:

- Build up capacities for the HNP to investigate and prevent sexual and gender-based violence by strengthening sexual and gender-based crime police cells and units, through specialized training. The training is given by HNP members themselves, so the program is developing and applying the concept of « train the trainers ». Those who have taken the course are generally experienced members of the police, with an average of 9.3 years in duty. The trainees have been 77.5% male and 22.5% female.⁸
- Contribute to HNP professionalization in the area by building a **National Coordination Office for Gender and Women's Affairs** at the headquarters that can work on policies and gender mainstreaming in the police.

Observance of the groundwork carried out by the **Gender Mobile Unit's** personnel confirmed that their enthusiasm was contagious and their presence attracted local women, with the general impression being that they generate a feeling of closeness and ease amongst them. We witnessed how, in practice, women will approach those that make them feel most secure, in this case being female police officers. One adolescent female victim entered into the police station where there were fifteen people present, going straight to the member of the Mobile Unit, who made a sign to the female staff and with an almost maternal attitude the teenager was discreetly surrounded by an officer of the HNP and three UNPOL members and taken outside. Later we found out that the victim was driven to the IOM to be relocated. Everything was carried out with the utmost discretion, and we were only aware of this due to one of the team being close to the door in the moment it occurred, and thus hearing the girl say that she had been sexually attacked.

8 Jon Christian Moller. *Performance evaluation, MINUSTAH Police Component / HNP Development Pillar, Project 19 – Gender Based Violence – Strengthening sexual and gender based crime police cells and units.* (UNPOL MINUSTAH. SGBV Team: Port-au-Prince, June 2012), p. 9.

The **SGBV project** began in 2011, and by September 2012 they had trained 400 members of the police across the country and built-up the office for the National Coordination at the Police Headquarters. It is a successful project which manages its own modest budget, timelines and activities, it is based on local ownership and it is part of MINUSTAH and not an isolated project. There is a strong support from the gender actors at the Mission and UNPOL at the time of collaboration in the activities, and it is expected that several countries will add financing to this particular model of administration of an international cooperation project.

The **National Coordination Office for Gender** is run by a Haitian female Commissioner who has an extensive experience, along with an assistant. It is expected that the HNP will add more personnel to this Office in the near future and that is something MINUSTAH will certainly have to work on. It will be also important to continue supporting the development of local authorities and capacities, even if processes seem to be slow.

The **Gender Mobile Unit** was established in 2011 and has become a distinctive initiative. 15 UNPOL members are serving there, 12 female and 3 male. Most of them come from francophone African countries and have experience in post-conflict environments. Three teams are deployed on the ground covering the IDP camps (a total of 650 are under its jurisdiction), working shifts of 7am - 3pm, and 10am - 6pm. If any cases present themselves, police procedures are followed and the victim is referred to hospital and, if necessary, the UNPOL personnel present in the camp's police station collaborate in these processes. If the victim has been threatened, the UNHCR will also be involved in the process through collaboration in the relocation of the victim.

• The Haitian National Police and the Judiciary

The contact between MINUSTAH and the HNP is established by civilian components of the Mission for aspects such as policies to be implemented and decisions to be taken, and UNPOL for training and the initial management of operational situations. There has been an apparent decrease in the number of sexual offences committed by members of the HNP, but we do not have access to exact data.

As for the judiciary and its scope of action, some officials have posed the question –in a very pessimistic tone– of “what judiciary” are we talking about? Others show a more positive attitude, and in an expression of wish, state that this is a matter that takes some time so as to attain a long-standing institutional-building in the area. The police work with the judiciary is usually reduced to training activities at the basic levels. Though Haiti follows the European continental law system, as in most of Latin America, in the areas of criminal and procedural

law, some rules have been imposed showing more similarity to the Anglo-Saxon adversarial model with oral jury trials.

Informal non-legal settlements to resolve sexual abuses continue to exist, though several legal experts believe that the law has to be adhered to and those who commit abuses must be punished accordingly. However, in practice, compromises continue to exist and these are usually managed by the men of the extended family where the victim belongs.

• **The Formed Police Units (FPUs)**

The case of police personnel who operate in formed units is actually different. In practice, their status is closer to that of military contingents, as their action is mostly aimed at restoring law and order or controlling civil riots, as required. Under the new condition, in which several provinces no longer have a military presence from MINUSTAH, some FPU's are the only forces present in the territory, as in the north / southwest of the country. Therefore, it is up to them to conduct patrol tasks to show some presence. In practice, many of the FPU contingents are "military police" companies, with very similar procedures and organization as military units.

For some time, Bangladesh has deployed an FPU mostly composed of women (men are serving as support staff), under the command of a female police officer, though its present contingent reports to the general commander of that country's contingent who is a man.

The presence of an all-female contingent could significantly serve to get closer to the local population, but given their training as an anti-riot control force and a lack of command of the local language, they are not able to contribute much in this regard. On the other hand, the task of the FPUs is, according to those interviewed, to operate in support of the UNPOL and the PNH. Their contact with the population is more similar to that of the military than of the police. They are a militarized force, with quasi-military means and training and a quasi-police doctrine.

The issue of culture is also significant; as testimonies stated, the differences between the culture of most FPU members and that of the Haitian population pose an extra hurdle while trying to respond to the local population.

THE MILITARY AND THE GENDER PERSPECTIVE

The mission of a military force in Haiti, in support of the mandate, is to generate a secure and stable environment in order to facilitate MINUSTAH's objectives. Then, according to the location where they are, the distinct divisions and contingents are responsible for maintaining control within their area of responsibility, contributing to the work of local authorities, and providing humanitarian assistance in the case of natural disasters.

A gender perspective of a military force in a peacekeeping operation involves as much the activities and projects that they carry out with the local population (such as CIMIC, for example) as the perspective within the contingent (basically the situation of female personnel and conduct and discipline). In MINUSTAH's environment the perspective which has been

furthest developed refers to that within the military force, whilst the perspective in relation to the activities and projects outside the bases is being developed incipiently.

Several years after Resolution 1325, the resolution itself has become more widely known and has been partially implemented. In the case of MINUSTAH, in 2011 a great deal of the military contingents that we visited were barely familiar with it or had a general idea of what it meant. Nowadays it can be said that they show no surprise when SCR 1325 is mentioned to them. Though having different degrees of understanding, military contingents displayed a different attitude. More than once, they not only knew about the mentioned Resolution and subsequent ones, but had also started to implement it.

The appointment of a **gender focal point** in each unit represents an important step forward. In March 2011, the Office of Military Affairs in New York issued an order in this respect and, by 2012 every contingent in Haiti had designated a gender focal point.⁹ The designation of an official to take charge is the first step, to which a clear description of their roles and responsibilities needs to follow: when asked about their actual role there seems to be a general lack of knowledge about it. This is a task that surely will involve the Gender Unit and the military component's G9. For the moment, it should be recognized that if the designation sought to comply with the norm of "political correctness", it has avoided the other side of tokenism:

Gender issues often provoke a certain element of discomfort in military contingents, and a desire to show that "we have women and we treat them well" or, in the case of those who do not have female staff, "we talk a lot about gender issues". This is almost expected given the nature and history of military institutions, and checking if what they say is actually a fair reflection of what is done will be the responsibility of military commanders, as it is them who witness the development of everyday life in the contingents themselves.

officers designated as the gender focal point are mostly men, consciously or unconsciously avoiding the common appointment of women to address gender issues.

It is possible to recognize different elements to build into the analysis of the gender perspective of the military serving in Haiti:

- *Military contingents associate gender to sexual exploitation and abuse (SEA)*. All of them express that they have had regular meetings and communications regarding the theme.
- Some commanders were reluctant that visitors speak with female members of the contingent and invited them to speak about their experience in front of, for instance, high-level officials. Whilst it should be recognized that

⁹ They vary. For instance, the Jordanbatt has appointed as its gender focal point the officer who is also responsible for the unit's religious affairs.

such cases are dwindling, *situation still remains more dependent on individual personalities* than upon nationality or the number of women deployed. Other commanders placed them in the foreground, or invited them to speak in private. What the commander does and thinks is a supervision task that should also involve the TCCs.

- *The contingents that don't deploy women demonstrated openness to discuss the issue.* They look at the theme of gender as an operative necessity. This is to say that the contingent can and should develop a gender perspective, despite not having any female personnel, and that this perspective is related to the everyday tasks they carry out, and in the manner and issues to which the contingent can, or can't, contribute to the situation of local women.
- In this respect, it can be noted that *some contingents are beginning to develop CIMIC programs within which they incorporate a gender perspective:* actively seeking the participation of local women, whilst placing emphasis on the involvement of women deployed within the contingent, albeit in the service sector. As a result, doctors and nurses are increasingly in personal contact with young local women, speaking to them about issues such as HIV prevention, or pregnancy etc. Much of this seems to be a result, at least in part, of the work carried out by the Command of the Mission's military component.
- Only one of the interviewed contingents uses the *Military Guidelines* on integration of a gender perspective elaborated by DPKO/DFS in their sessions with personnel.
- *Women deployed show a clear desire to be considered equal,* both in terms of their rights and their obligations. Accommodation is an interesting topic for a deeper analysis of the military, as we saw women generally sleep together and it is difficult to distinguish the differences in treatment: the traditional distinctions of officers/non-commissioned officers, professional/combatant appear to become diluted in relation to women, and such an analysis could serve to draw further conclusions about what kind of military institution is needed in a peacekeeping mission.
- *The vast majority of female staff are employed in support tasks,* and few of them are in contact with the local population. It is unclear how far the grades and specializations are flexible within the environment of the Mission: for example, it depends upon who is asked as to the response on whether it's possible to take women on patrols even if they have been deployed as support staff. Some commanders decide to allow it, while others state that regulations prevent it.

- *It is clear for military personnel that in relation to cases of gender violence, the main role is played by UNPOL and HNP. They emphasize, however, that the population does approach them, and that in cases of flagrant crimes their mandate permits them to intervene until UNPOL or HNP arrive, and that they value that greater military presence has been authorized this year in the field of protection and patrols in IDP Camps.*
- *The general feeling, after having spoken to military contingents, is that be it out of conviction or due to knowing that the subject cannot be avoided, most of them would be open to receiving more information on the subject of gender.¹⁰ There exists a window of opportunity for unstructured sessions that should be exploited, perhaps driven by external actors that are not perceived as “inspectors”, or civil-military teams that work to translate into military practice the UN language directives on women, peace and security.*

The last point leads to the issue of training. Troops receive pre-deployment training which is based on the core pre-deployment training modules, whose content is basic and general in character. All countries deployed in Haiti have their own training center for peacekeepers. Once they have arrived at the Mission they receive the so called ‘induction training’, which lasts two days: the first devoted to military subjects, and the second thematic issues. Gender is one of these latter issues, occupying 40 minutes and covering the following topics: what is gender, social roles and relationships, gender in all aspects of life, social expectations based on gender, gender roles about power and how it is shared, gender and sex, and Resolution 1325: gender for peacekeepers. These are given under the leadership of civilians from the Gender Unit and military members from the IMTC (training), who try to make them more understandable to military personnel. Across the two days, they receive a total of 16 different topics.

All the contingents participate in the induction training. In some cases, especially when the number is very large, some prefer to send the company commanders, who then take charge of providing the training to those under their command. This is the case of the Brazilian battalions, or the Chilean one in 2012, which sent a team of 50 members who then acted as instructors to the troops. Given the size of the Uruguayan contingent, they have participated in several courses. Jordan, Japan, Korea, Sri Lanka, Nepal, are countries that have sent the whole contingent to the training. Even when there is a language problem officers usually take it, and they are then responsible for transmitting this to their companies.

¹⁰ Just as an example, the Commander of the Sri Lankan Company in Killick made all the troops available to talk with visitors.

4. CHALLENGES TO THE IMPLEMENTATION OF RESOLUTION 1325

THE DEMAND FOR NEW CAPACITIES FOR PEACEKEEPERS

Given the United Nations guidance specifying that international missions must be mainly aimed at protecting civilians,¹¹ promoting human rights, and within that framework, promoting gender equality¹² while reducing sexual violence,¹³ this poses greater challenges as personnel with different and new skills are now required to address such issues.

The problem is how to obtain that type of personnel. Many countries are able to send a military contingent or militarized police contingent, as in the case of the Asian contingents in MINUSTAH, but it is more difficult to send police experts in the various areas, given the need of countries to keep the maximum number of police personnel, because of problems of insecurity situation in their countries.

Humanitarian assistance workers, and generally those devoted to development and promotion efforts, are not easy to recruit and usually work for international government agencies, or non-profit organizations. Governments do not have national civilian contingents with such skills working for them on a permanent basis, neither have personnel who could be recruited on short notice and deployed to another country.

In October 2012 MINUSTAH's mandate was renewed and its personnel will most likely be reduced, especially in terms of the number of military

11 Since Rwanda's genocide, the debate on how to act in similar situations has intensified. At first, "international humanitarian interventions" were discussed. In 2006, the UN Security Council passed Resolution 1674, which established the need to protect civilians during armed conflicts. Based on the debate held in 2005 at the UN General Assembly, it was agreed that in order to prevent genocide, crimes against humanity, war crimes and ethnic cleansing, the international community must help States avoid these acts, thus justifying their intervention. Progress was made from the concept of humanitarian intervention to RtoP (Responsibility to Protect or R2P). Resolution 1706 on Darfur and later resolution 1973 (2011) on Libya (approved by 10 votes including the United States, United Kingdom and France -which promoted it- and the abstention of five members -Germany, Brazil, China, India and Russia) made further advancements on the concept. Meanwhile, Resolution 63/308, approved by the General Assembly, generated a strong debate among Latin American countries. Some raised some doubts about this new concept that was advancing over the concept of sovereignty. Others were enthusiastic as long as it was limited to the cases mentioned above. Other countries thought that the responsibility to protect should also be applied to development and economic and social rights, turning it into a concept impossible to implement (Cuba and Venezuela's position). The subsequent events in Libya have called for a strong caution in relation to Syria's current crisis, and there is no certainty on how much further this concept can be developed.

12 UN Security Council Resolutions 1325 (2000), 1820 (2008), 1888 and 1889 (2009), and 1960 (2010). See www.unwomen.org.

13 Resolutions mentioned in footnote 12, especially 1889 and 1960. The United Nations appointed a Special Representative to address sexual violence issues. In addition to the gender unit, several UN Missions created a unit to fight against sexual violence.

personnel. In the face of it, military and police personnel will have to adjust to the new demands of the Mission. Already some military units on the southwest and northeast of Haiti have been repatriated and replaced by FPU personnel. (In July 2013, presumably new adjustments will be made when the Mission budget is voted). In the face of it, it is critical to polish up the objectives and nature of operations regarding the gender issue, and adjust them according to the new personnel and financial resources available. The role of the different components regarding a Mission's gender perspective and its promotion in a society is, in this context, not only a politically correct issue but an operational necessity that both the UN at HQ and field Missions and TCCs need to address. This is particularly challenging when referred to the security sector forces.

THE SPECIAL ROLE THAT MILITARY ENGINEER UNITS MAY PLAY

As in any UN peacekeeping mission, the engineer units are primarily employed for movement and assistance to the activities of the Mission's contingent members. Only as a subsidiary mission, they also take on other tasks such as supporting infrastructure work to benefit the local population. As they have specialized heavy equipment, military engineers can repair roads and highways, fix bridges and maintain airport runways etc. They are highly needed in Haiti, because of the lack of a parallel organization in the Haitian government, neither military nor civilian. At present, the U8 from the military staff, as well as the U9, coordinate the use of military units in these tasks in conjunction with MINUSTAH's civilian engineer unit.

Engineering tasks are a very relevant part of efforts to support the reconstruction of Haiti. If before 2010 the need for engineer brigades was a common discussion at TCCs capitals, this need has exponentially grown after the earthquake. The task of supporting the stabilization of Haiti also requires collaboration to generate development structures, such as basic projects that seek to aid peaceful coexistence and increase citizen security.

The blurring of lines between public and private spaces in places like Port-au-Prince represents an obstacle to the development of practices that enhance security, such as a private place to take a bath or change clothes.

Public security is fed from the development of public spaces in such cases where the social fabric at the community level is also regenerated, and from the existence of private spaces where

citizens are able to develop their private lives. The lack of street lighting is another vital issue to which the Mission has been actively working to

change. In 2011 the lack of street lighting in the capital meant that darkness was notorious, but in 2012 several projects have been developed in order to install lighting systems, thus contributing to, and reinforcing, public security in Haiti.

It is necessary to train Haitians as experts in this area. Some contingents, such as the Japanese, teach courses on how to operate heavy machinery. Various Latin American contingents have started training courses on various matters as part of their CIMIC activities. Haiti's senior leaders have held discussions with the governments of Brazil and Ecuador on the possibility of training students at their military academies exclusively in the area of military engineering. However, they have yet to determine the structure for the students who graduate from those courses. The engineer company from Paraguay, called multi-role, conducts "horizontal" tasks –according to his commander– in support of infrastructure development and maintenance, and "vertical" tasks, including carpentry, painting, plumbing and similar activities, destined to the support of the local population.

CIMIC ACTIVITIES, CIVIL-MILITARY COORDINATION, AND THE ROLE OF THE MILITARY IN HAITI

Civil military coordination activities (CIMIC) allow interacting with the local community, have a sense of their feelings and ideas, relying heavily –especially in the latter case– on the work of translators or local people from the community who speak Spanish and can interact with the Latin

From the perspective of the military component the directive is clear: although they are keen to use CIMIC activities as a way to gain the respect of the population and, at the same time help their staff to channel their desire to help, CIMIC activities are a complementary activity that each country can, with its own resources, provide, taking into account that the military is the last resource on the subject.

American contingents. However, this may lead to a dependency syndrome and people may thus get the idea that they have an acquired right to receive such help permanently.

It is instead the primary responsibility of the civilian component of the Mission. An important development in 2012 was the constant communication between OCHA and the military component's G9 office on what kind of activities the military wanted to carry out, and how these could be combined with the activities of other agencies, or even NGOs.

In July 2012 the Force Commander issued a directive to all the contingent commanders in order to familiarize them with the **Guidelines for the Engagement and Coordination of Humanitarian Actors and the Military**

in Haiti. These guidelines were developed by the Humanitarian Country Team (HCT) under the leadership of the Humanitarian Coordinator (HC), who is also the Deputy SRSG and Resident Coordinator. Endorsed by MINUSTAH, they specify the role of the military in carrying out humanitarian assistance, the difference between CIMIC activities and civil-military coordination, and the principles and mechanisms for coordination. Among the most relevant, *“The use of military assets, armed escorts, joint humanitarian-military intervention, and any other actions involving visible interaction with the military must be the option of last resort, and its use limited in time and scale, where there is no comparable civilian alternative available to meet a critical and urgent humanitarian need.”*¹⁴

Such principles are not easy to assimilate for a military organization anywhere in the world, and it’s necessary to work to disseminate this during the pre-deployment preparation. It relates to the enormous amount of work that remains to be done in understanding the role of military forces in a UN Mission, and the new capabilities that must be generated amongst personnel beyond the heroic images traditionally linked to the military mindset.

An important fact that helps in this understanding is the structure that the UN takes regarding emergencies in Haiti. The MINUSTAH **Joint Operations Tasking Centre (JOTC)**, which converts into EJOCC in the case of an emergency, is under the leadership of OCHA. Tropical Storm Isaac in 2012 was a positive experience in this regard according to the military itself, helping in the understanding that the military force can operate under civil coordination that includes many other assets, and still carry out an effective role.

For a number of the contingents, in practice, CIMIC activities are narrated with the emotional charge of carrying out an important activity. This seems to be more pronounced in the case of the Latin American infantry contingents. Perhaps due to having a greater attachment to the local culture, they manifest the need to carry out this kind of actions. With adequate coordination, this could be used to develop gender-sensitive activities, as the Brazilian contingent has begun to do (celebration of Mother’s Day, or the Saturdays Bombagay market under the jurisdiction of BRABAT, which favors employing large numbers of women), or the Bolivian contingent, which provides medical care for pregnant women.

14 OCHA HAITI. *Guidelines for Civil-Military Coordination in Haiti*. (OCHA: Port-au-Prince, August 2011), p.5.

LANGUAGE AS A BARRIER AND AS OPPORTUNITY

All UN Missions use English as the official language for their internal communication. In the case of Missions in French-speaking countries such as Haiti, the large majority of civilian professionals of the Mission also speak French. However, it is uncommon to find officials who speak the most common language of the country, the Creole. In this case, the local personnel of the Mission provide that knowledge.

The situation of some UNPOL's who do not belong to a French-speaking country and must trust what their translators tell them is more difficult. Even for French-speaking UNPOL members, especially those from Africa where there are some languages derived from French, such as Creole, it is not always possible to establish an easy communication, and these are the people who must be in daily contact with the local population. The biggest problem is found in the FPU and military contingents. In Haiti, except for an FPU unit from Rwanda and one from Senegal, the rest of the personnel come from countries where neither French nor Creole are spoken.

To make matters worse, only a few of those troops speak English. As a rule, NCO's only speak their local language and their capacity to interact with the local people, in the few occasions that may arise, is limited. Therefore, they must rely fully on their translators. On the other hand, in the case for instance of Jordan or the Asian countries, as troops don't speak English they are provided with small cards on gender and sexual violence issues translated into Arabic or the country's language, which they are instructed to carry with them. So in this case, language is an opportunity to get with the same and permanent message to every soldier, an opportunity that in the case of other contingents relies on sessions and verbal transmission.

There are only a few female translators. However, in order to improve the gender situation, there is a strong need precisely to have women translators.

THE URBAN HABITAT, SECURITY AND SEXUAL VIOLENCE

•Lack of Privacy and Gender. Life in the Streets. IDP Camps that become Permanent.

Port au Prince is the main city in the country and thus presents the largest number of crimes. Its metropolitan area covers about 112 square kilometers and its population is about two million inhabitants. The most highly-populated area, covering 36 square kilometers, concentrates near 900,000 people.

No proper statistics are available on the crimes committed in the city,

and this is probably due to the precarious nature of government institutions and the aggravated situation derived from the earthquake in 2010. On the issue of sexual violence, there are partial statistics available, but the information is not always properly geo-referenced. As to qualitative information, it varies greatly depending on the interests of the stakeholders involved.¹⁵

About two thirds of the HNP, a force with a little less than 10,000 people¹⁶, are probably deployed in the metropolitan area of Port au Prince. As in the rest of the world, most criminal acts are committed in the capital city, especially in scarcely regulated areas,¹⁷ and there is lack of adequate capacity to control them properly.

Although several military units perform patrolling, they are restricted to the main streets and the heavy traffic does not allow introducing the surprise factor. Without accurate prior information, not much can be achieved with this kind of actions. Also, due to the language issues, it is not easy to understand each particular situation.

As regards the gender situation of this population, not much can be said except that the existing social structure protects gender violence “as it has always been done”. It seems to be a “natural” behavior. The inadequate schooling and low literacy levels of the lowest strata of society conspire against a change in that state-of-affairs. As to rapes, they are often compensated with money or equivalent goods. Sometimes they are even followed by marriage.

Most of the life in Port-au-Prince takes place in public spaces. The predominant form of commerce is an urban informal market present in the streets, almost the only place where the lower classes frequently go. Privacy is almost not existent for some people, especially those living in IDP camps. However, even in improved habitats, such as light-material housing, large families or groups of up to 6 or 8 people of very different ages live together in reduced spaces, even in one room. Toilet and bathing facilities are very

15 It should be noted that here, as in many other parts of the world, people have also learned to blackmail peacekeepers, making it very difficult to distinguish between crime and mere abuse, and to determine the different degrees of guilt. Reporting and media coverage of a tragic or blameworthy act are usually very difficult to confront. Even in cases in which no judicial decision is made against the defendant(s), the original stigma created by the media is almost impossible to eliminate.

16 According to the HNP data, about 9,000 are agents (categories 1 to 5), 650 are inspectors and 150 are commissioners. In addition, the higher command is made up of 9 general inspectors, the Director and Deputy Director. See *Une force de Police*. Commemorative Book, July 2012.

17 Apparently, in 2010 the HNP made about 21,500 arrests. Kidnappings amounted to 73 in 2009 and rose to 120 in 2010. Reported homicides reached 795 in 2010, compared to 409 the year before. Recorded killings reached 86 in 2009 and 83 in 2010. The most problematic communities are Cite Soleil, La Saline, in the port area, and Pelerin, La Boule, Thomasin, on the other side of Petionville. (Data provided verbally by the Mission in 2012).

precarious. The lack of privacy is a breeding ground for domestic violence, making it common for children to watch sexual acts.¹⁸ Rapes are considered for many as “normal” sexual practices.

In this framework, about 20 to 25 IDP camps of very different sizes exist in Port-au-Prince. Some are small but others such as Jean Marie Vincent, Tabarre Issa, Carredeux and others are well known. It is however not possible to fully calculate how many of the 800,000 people initially estimated to

In a context of poverty, for many of the displaced people it is better to continue living in a place where aid is provided rather than away from it. Even people who did not lose their homes completely during the earthquake chose to move to IDP camps as it was more convenient given the work of NGOs,¹⁹ UN agencies and even military personnel who perform CIMIC activities.

live in shelters after the 2010 earthquake still live in those camps or in temporary housing structures such as those built by IOM.

Gender policies must therefore be framed within that context and this does not entail an easy task, also considering that the Haitian

government, through its institutions such as the HNP and the judiciary, appear as very weak.²⁰

• Is It Possible to Mobilize Local Communities or does the Individualist Approach Prevail? Attempts to Strengthen Community Organizations.

In Creole, the expression “se pa fòt mven” is commonly used to say that “it is not my fault, it is not me who should be blamed”, and thus to evade the problems. Port-au-Prince is the place where the phrase is used most widely. The movement of people to the city, leaving behind their place of origin, leads to a strong social breakup and loss of collective references. In that context, individualism grows and purely personal solutions are sought.

18 In September 2012, during a CIMIC activity in an IDP camp, one of RESDAL’s members heard a boy younger than 11 years old tell a 10-year old girl that he would “make love to her”, using more explicit language.

19 A very significant number operates in Haiti. The IOM, in coordination with MINUSTAH, tries to have a global view of those IDP camps, but the Red Cross also does it. Viva Rio had major projects in Port-au-Prince, but they had to be changed after the earthquake. Large NGOs, such as Oxfam or Médecins sans Frontiers, are present in Haiti as many other organizations.

20 A study on “Sexual violence in IDP camps” conducted by the Center for Human Rights and Global Justice at New York University (www.chrgj.or) in 2010, when the number of IDP camps’ residents in Port-au-Prince only was estimated in around 800,000 people, distributed in 11 camps, stated that 14% of those interviewed reported some kind of sexual harassment. Five percent of the victims were men, 4% were boys and 12%, girls, while 74% were adult women. Researchers considered 14% to be a high figure, given that the question was inappropriate for a country such as Haiti, as it seems as a question more typical of middle class university sectors of the NYU which inquired about some undesired form of touching the human body. Within the context of the prevailing culture and considering that the interviewees would be IDP camp residents, the question should have been otherwise. Questions are not easy to formulate when the cultural context is different.

The attempts to strengthen the community are led by various Haitian social and political movements as well as by local or international NGO's, with different degrees of success.

The existence of IDP camps allows creating alternative communities, where "small chiefs" show their resentment and force by pressuring MINUSTAH members. They know that the international community cannot do much against them and they constantly demand some service or good without anything in return, such as work. This becomes clear in some CIMIC activities, including some that require the cleaning of rainwater pipes or waste removal in which personnel from MINUSTAH work while beneficiaries look.

• Conduct and Discipline: a Responsibility for the Mission and the Contributing Countries

It is one of the most complicated issues to deal with, yet at the same time one that significantly influences the views of the population towards a peacekeeping mission. In relation to instances of misconduct and abuse, it's pointless discussing statistics or the issue of whether there are few or many cases when you consider that a single case tarnishes (and even collapses) everything positive a Mission has built up in front of the local population. The impact is felt both in the location of the Mission itself (there exists, amongst some, for example, the opinion that troops are occupation forces that have nothing to do and, as a result, commit abuses), and also within the contributing countries themselves, where the same argument can be found in newspaper articles when such a case hits the headlines.

In addition to taking preventive measures, further studies should be carried out relating the incidence and possibility of cases of misconduct or sexual abuse to the level of military activity, and the psychological and cultural context in which the Mission takes place. Various testimonies collected from soldiers themselves indicated that they feel that the more work they are involved in, the lower level of mental conflict, and that with more physical work they feel a greater satisfaction. On part of the Mission itself, but especially from the contributing countries, it may be useful to re-evaluate the level of activity of the various contingents.

Some contingents have access to counselling and/or religious support, saying that it helps staff to channel their concerns. Others carry out psychological evaluations within their own countries prior to being deployed, but the proportion of these is low. Sexual exploitation and abuse reaps terror across the contributing countries and the Missions and there is a clear need, both at the national and regional level, for more candid reflections on the theme. In

this sense, and despite it tarnishing MINUSTAH's reputation, the Mission welcomed the open and quick response of the Uruguayan government in 2011, in relation to its denouncement of the abuse of a Haitian minor in a Uruguayan naval base in the south of the country. One of the most serious problems facing the UN is precisely that such cases fall within the jurisdiction of national authorities, thus leading ultimately to negotiations and dialogues between gov-

Any sort of links with the local population are highly discouraged in the case of police or civilian personnel, and strictly forbidden in the case of the military. Nevertheless, it's impossible for the Mission to maintain absolute control, and there is still the case of personnel that are on leave (in the Dominican Republic, for instance). For these reasons, it is important to engage in activities on the norms of conduct and build a sense amongst police and military commanders and the heads of the civilian personnel that good conduct is also an issue of personal accountability.

ernments, with the UN being unable to intervene. As a result, public opinion is directed at the Mission, yet it itself is unable to act.

Currently, military commanders report on a monthly basis to the CDU, which itself is able to conduct research on civilian and police personnel, but does not possess this power in relation to military personnel. Another issue

enters the frame here for consideration on behalf of those countries contributing personnel: military justice. And to which extent legislation has been updated to meet the challenges of personnel on a peace mission.

A frequent case that isn't so well known is that of babies which are not recognised by their fathers as being their own. A mother wishing to issue a demand for paternal recognition, must search for legal assistance and issue the demand to the contributing country, all of which is, in practice, impossible. In the case of civilian personnel, the UN is able to dock their salaries if the case is proved, but in the case of the police or the military that is not possible. In the end, it is a significant problem for MINUSTAH; these cases have a grave impact on the Mission's image yet it does not have the necessary funds to provide legal assistance to the victim and it cannot target military or police personnel.

In the case of military contingents, preventive measures include the prohibition of movement alone: be it a walk to the beach or a visit to the supermarket the staff are always accompanied by an officer. This, however, does not guarantee anything if adequate awareness doesn't exist, or if "controls" are mechanical: for example, a higher turnover of shifts could be promoted if services are being offered to those who are on duty in the contingent's surroundings. Whilst far from being politically correct, it should be noted that the Mission's environment, the remoteness of the structural context that supports one's personality, triggers different aspects in different people, and that is an important issue that commanders have to manage in the field, as well as TCCs.

5. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

- Rather than conferences and PowerPoint presentations, which may be seen as abstract or even boring, we need to transmit live experiences. Short films, role-playing and other tools may be more appropriate. Non-commissioned officers (including soldiers) must be specifically trained in those skills. The case-study methodology is more relevant, instead of more general considerations at a higher level. References must always be made to the country where the personnel will be deployed, rather than choosing abstract or simulated situations that can apply generically to any country.
- The knowledge of the country and its base culture by the troops and non-commissioned officers –and not only by officers—is essential, and a reasonable level of knowledge cannot be achieved only through conferences. It is important to disseminate the experience of those who have been previously involved, after a proper evaluation and proper rephrasing.
- It is necessary to work at the TCCs' level on the dissemination of the guidelines and principles established by the UN. The channels for communicating materials such as *Military Guidelines* or the *Guidelines for Civil-Military Coordination* would need to be reevaluated. It is the responsibility of the contributing countries to enhance coordination between actors in foreign affairs and defense, for example embassies and missions to the UN through the ministries located in the capitals.
- As troops will receive an average of just 40 minutes basic training upon arrival in the Mission, there is a need to consider a more expansive pre-deployment training that enhances the understanding of the gender perspective in a peacekeeping mission and helps military units to quickly adjust to the context.
- Several testimonies indicate that a large part of gender issues encountered in everyday life and in the tasks carried out by the contingents are related to how the commander perceives the mission. It is important that reporting mechanisms to the capital on these issues are established.
- The issue of implementing a gender perspective into the military's work would need to be addressed from the early stages of military education and maintained during the whole professional career. Within this, the use of concrete cases would lead to a greater awareness of the operational need to have a gender perspective in the military's work within a peacekeeping mission.
- A case of abuse not only puts a stain on the Mission, but also on the contributing country. It is important to recognize that conduct and discipline problems are not solved only through training. They relate to the values,

personalities, and psychological and cultural issues of the individual in question, and primarily involve a strong sense of impunity. Personal accountability must be reinforced. Psychological testing, such as the evaluation of latent variables by specialized civilian personnel, could collaborate to what is essentially a task of the contributing countries.

- Some contingents are already producing “cards” in a small format (the size of a credit card or similar), in their own language and the format of a military order specifying “what can and cannot be done”. There should be one card specifically on gender, or else include some gender considerations in the general guidelines.²¹ It is also important to make sure that the troops will follow them as an order and as a standard procedure (SOP).
- It would be important to provide manuals and documents adapted to the military language, without the “nuances” of the civilian one. Some officers regard some manuals intended for their training as “too long” and “vague in nature”.
- The establishment of a gender focal point network in the military is one of the most important results of the integrated work on gender. Another singular and important initiative has been the realization of a workshop for gender focal points, conducted in an integrated manner by the civilian, police and military component. Its institutionalization would be an asset for the Mission as well as its dissemination across the UN missions.
- Many of the CIMIC-type activities undertaken by the units create a dependency on assistance and do not ask for anything in return. People tend to consider that they have permanent rights on such aid. That practice does not stimulate the search for solutions that may involve the community as a whole. There must be practical examples. If a space is cleaned, that work should not be done only by the troops. The community must be more than an observer.
- Regarding conduct, the safer way to avoid abuses is to restrict the contact of personnel with the local population as much as possible. In general, this vision is shared by the national commands of the deployed forces, who try to avoid any negative reporting by the media due to some excesses or improper behavior by their troops. Several of the civilian members of the mission also share this view. It is known that an abuse committed by uniformed personnel is much more harmful for the Mission than one commit-

21 In Brabatt 1, during RESDAL’s visit in September 2012, the team was given a blue card of about 7x12 cm, which is provided to each battalion members so have it present in their minds. Item 4 states: “Não tolere atos imorais de abuso ou exploração sexual, física o psicológica, da população local ou de pessoal das Nações Unidas, especialmente mulheres e crianças” (do not tolerate immoral acts of sexual, physical or psychological abuse or exploitation of the local population or UN personnel, especially on women and children.)

The commander of JORBATT also showed the team a similar card in Arabic, but we do not know the exact content of it.

ted by a civilian. However, the lack of continuous contact with local population reinforces the perception of a uniformed occupation force, which does not help much to the overall goal of the Mission.

- This key point must also relate to constant activities so that military personnel may assume a responsible personal attitude towards their country, the Mission, the Haitian people and, what's even more important, to themselves. Personnel cannot be kept in the barracks all the time. But at the same time, it is also risky to let them act on their own initiative interfacing with the local population, regardless of any controls that might be in place. It would be also important on this regard to analyze the activities and routines personnel in different bases have. Some testimonies refer to the importance of activity.
- The use of engineer units in development projects is desirable. This presumes that such units should not be reduced but rather be augmented. It is also probably necessary to train local components. This leads us to the question of where these new units should fit: should they fall under a civilian context, such as a public works ministry, or become a specialized branch of the HNP, or else a part of the new autonomous security structure?
- Studies should be made on that subject considering the gender perspective. Public works, many times related to urban planning and housing, can improve or not the problems of lack of privacy and related risk factors that contribute to sexual violence.
- Much of what was mentioned for military personnel also applies to the members of the Formed Police Units. Regarding the cultural approach to population and given that in several parts of the country FPU's will replace military contingents, there is a need to analyze which the relation with the population will be.
- Diversity is a predominant feature among UN police elements. The different legal frameworks in their countries of origin compared to the host country, the different permanent work procedures, and even their objectives, require a strong coordination effort for such personnel. It is often the case that a group has a dominant presence, as with the French-speaking police elements, about 150 in the country (to be soon reduced to 100), but they are scattered in different points of the country, thus diluting their influence.
- Regarding lessons learnt and dissemination of the Mission's work, the Gender Mobile Unit seems to be an innovative approach and it would be important to promote further research on the experience of UNPOL at police stations and the Gender Mobile Unit.
- The civilian component of the Mission and the need to coordinate actions with the police and military. Efforts in MINUSTAH in this regard can be currently seen in the integrated work among the Gender Unit, G9 (military) and

UNPOL Gender branch. In 2012, the relationship developed among civilians, police and military regarding gender issues was observed as an interesting experience of an integrated approach. Even if it may at first depend on personalities, it would be important to manage its continuation and support it.

- Probably one of the clearest problems of any peace mission is the “detachment” exhibited by the uniformed and civilian personnel of a peacekeeping operation. This is also the case in Haiti, though some progress has already been seen. In spite of the physical closeness of boarding sites and offices, their culture is very different due to their professional background. Ultimately, this is a military force used for peace purposes but with a deeply-rooted war fighting ethos. The police components operate under concepts of prevention, serving with proximity to the citizens but also making use of force in a very limited violence context. Civilian components must purely focus on peace principles.
- Understanding the other’s dominant culture and personality is very important. Having in mind that the military are the last resort, UN agencies could benefit from incorporating military assets and capacities to the analysis.
- This is also translated to the gender-based approach. It is common to see many women officials among civilian components, some of whom are chiefs. It is however not very common to see them in military cadre. The police is ranked in the middle as to women’s presence. It is important to encourage the presence of more women among uniformed personnel and to gain, through training for all, a better understanding of the goals, duties and predominant features of the culture of each mission component.
- For the best performance of the Mission, it would be important to have diagnosis on the perception of the situation in the Mission by components. The convenience of conducting studies on military contingents, FPU’s and UNPOL’s should be stressed. They will help assess the level of trust in MINUSTAH’s uniformed personnel and would impact positively in the field and in TCCs capitals.
- Language barrier and translation issues: It seems clear that contingents must rely on translators to interact with the local population. As regarding gender specifically, it is very important to have women translators in each unit and to make them work not only internally inside the unit, but also assign them to regular communication with the local population.
- It is not easy to find people who are proficient in all three languages: Creole, French and English. However, each troop-contributing country who commits forces around the world in places where conflicts are extended in time unresolved, an effort should be made for their personnel to have a minimum knowledge of the local language.
- Meanwhile, while relying on the work of translators, for the gender issue,

it is important to raise the number of women translators, who should take part in field activities conducted by contingents and be embedded, so the necessary facilities should be provided to them.

- How to manage the transition and the gender issue: It is known that the military presence will be gradually reduced within MINUSTAH, and that part of the territory will be controlled by the FPU's for security tasks previously provided by the mission. Eventually, the HNP aspires to be the only force operating in the country. The plan sounds logical, but implementation difficulties are many. There are no sufficient FPU forces and the HNP is far from being a consolidated, well-trained and reliable force at the present time.
- Lastly, we take into account a matter that constantly arose during RESDAL's Mission in 2012: i.e. the possibility of creating a public force that would join the HNP. It is a sensitive matter, as it has been politically promoted to protect the interests of people who would like to re-create a military force. Those who have a say in the international community, and their representatives in the Mission command structure, believe this is not a good idea, especially because some groups of young people have been set up under the leadership of a few members of the former military forces dissolved in 1994. These groups have been claiming the re-constitution of the Army, in a movement with a partisan and political objective.²²
- However, some Haitian sectors would welcome the creation of an independent military-type force: probably some form of *gendarmerie*, including military engineering components, which could act as a force to counter-balance and serve as a mirror to the HNP. At the same time, some believe it necessary to have a coast-guard service and an air transport and police service, both independent from the HNP.
- Therefore, we think it would be convenient and timely to analyze all these alternatives and, in the case of TCCs, analyze what can be contributed to Haitian institutions in terms of capacity building. The military contribution of Latin American countries has played a key role, but this is not the only aspect they can contribute with; a potential bilateral cooperation is still a pending issue and the development of gender policies at all levels of society is another area Latin American countries could contribute with. In this sense, some of the locals interviewed posed a question to contributing countries: what did you leave as countries in Haiti? A reflection on that challenging question is not only necessary, but urgent.

²² On May 18, 2012, the Haitian Flag Day, several ceremonies were held with the presence of MINUSTAH leadership in various educational centers. Meanwhile, the troops from the Brazilian battalions were expelling the crowd that had gathered in a demonstration to claim the reconstitution of the Army. They wore uniforms and some were even armed with light weapons.

GENERAL RECOMMENDATIONS

For the Military Contribution

- *Pre-deployment:*
 - Utilize short films, role playing and other tools and convey live experiences on to all ranks.
 - Make full use of the “case-study” methodology.
 - Provide practical references on the gender situation in the country where personnel will be deployed.
 - Ensure that people that have previously worked in the Mission in different areas and at different levels pass their experience on to troops and non commissioned officers.
 - Re-evaluate the current channels of communications between the UN Headquarters and the TCCs regarding the transmission of guidelines and documents to the military.
 - Enhance pre-deployment training so as to, once arrived in the Mission, those in charge of training can work on specific points relevant to the Mission.
 - Establish or enhance if existing, monitoring mechanisms from the countries’ capitals on how the contingent deals with gender issues in the field.
 - Promote further international studies linking the gender perspective and military education.
 - TCCs should enhance accountability, professional and personal responsibility.
 - Promote during the military education and training the notion that they are assuming a personal responsibility towards their country, the Mission, the local population and more important to themselves.
 - Apply pre-deployment psychological testing, by specialized civilian personnel.
 - Appoint and train the officer that will be serving as conduct and discipline focal point from the pre deployment stage.
- *In Mission:*
 - Produce a small card specifically on gender, and include directives on it.
 - Make sure that the troops will follow them as an order and as a standard procedure (SOP).
 - Incorporate military officers during the elaboration on SOPs in order to help the use of a more standard military language into the documents.
 - Standardize into the annual planning the realization of the seminar for gender focal points.
 - Disseminate the experience of this seminar throughout UN missions.

- Any CIMIC action should have one goal for setting the example and training.
 - Instruct the officer in charge of conduct and discipline within each unit to convey to troops different experiences, showing the problems faced in the Mission, including the “temptations” they are exposed to.
 - Conduct in-mission studies analyzing effects on personnel of contexts and levels of activity.
 - The gender perspective should inform such developments projects undertaken by the engineers units, as such public works (usually related to urban planning and housing), may or may not improve the problems of lack of privacy and related risk factors that contribute to sexual violence.
 - Revise and prioritize the QIPs projects serving to a better situation for women in the IDP camps.
 - Promote the training of Haitian engineering units.
- *For the Police Contribution*
 - Study, for instance, how troops from Senegal and Rwanda (francophone countries), relate to the population in the southern sectors recently assigned to them.
 - Continue supporting ad hoc gender projects, such as the one supported by Norwegian cooperation that was finally implemented.
 - Add the experience of UNPOL at police stations and the Gender Mobile Unit to the studies on gender-based violence data that the Mission is undertaking.
- *Integration and General Challenges*
 - Promote the establishment of a permanent desk for a U9 representative within the space allocated to the GU and the UNPOL Gender Adviser.
 - Enhance and raise awareness among leadership on the effectiveness of the coordination of activities and integration of objectives.
 - Conduct a survey on the level of trust of the population in MINUSTAH’s uniformed personnel.
 - It may be useful for troops to have a booklet containing common expressions; especially courtesy phrases that facilitate communication with local populations.
 - Raise the number of women translators, who should take part in field activities, conducted by contingents, so the necessary facilities should be provided to them.
 - Enhance women’s involvement in the transitional process, especially at decision-making level.
 - Promote bilateral programs with countries that have developed militarized police forces.

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The following actors were interviewed throughout the September 2012 field work:

Bangladesh Female Formed Police Unit

Bolivian Company (BOLCOY)

Brazilian Battalions (BRABATT I and II)

Chief of CIMIC

Child Protection

Civil Affairs

Community Violence Reduction

Conduct and Discipline

Contingents Gender Focal Points

Deputy Police Commissioner

Deputy Special Representative of the Secretary General - Humanitarian Coordinator

Force Commander

Gender Mobile Unit

Gender Unit

Guatemala Military Police	Argentine Battalion (ARGBATT)
HNP Unit for the Coordination of Women's Affairs	Argentine Military Hospital
Human Rights Section	AVSI
Indian Formed Police Unit	Brazilian Battalions (BRABATT I and II)
Integrated Mission Training Center	Chilean Battalion (CHIBATT)
Joint Military Analysis Center	Chilean Helicopter Unit
Jordanian Battalion (JORBATT)	Chilean-Ecuadorian Engineer Unit
Ministry for Women's Affairs and Women's Rights	Concertation Nationale
Nepalese Battalion (NEPBATT)	Deputy –acting- Force Commander
Norwegian Police Team	Deputy SRSG –acting SRSG
OCHA Agency	Deputy SRSG– Resident Coordinator
Paraguayan Engineer Company (PARENCOY)	Doctors without Borders
Peruvian Company (PERCOY)	Gender Unit
Rule of Law	G9
Special Representative of the Secretary General	HIV Office
Sri Lanka Battalion (SRIBATT)	International Organization for Migration
U9 – CIMIC & Military Gender Focal Point	JMAC
UNDP Gender Program	Lawyers without Borders
UNHCR	Police Commissioner
UNPOL Gender Adviser	Red Cross
UNPOL Police Academy Team	SOFA
	UN-Women
	Uruguayan Battalion (URUBATT I and II)
The following actors were interviewed throughout the first field work:	Uruguayan Naval Unit (URUMAR)
Argentine Aviation Unit	Viva Rio
	World Vision

ACRONYMS

CDU - Conduct and Discipline Unit	MINUSTAH - United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti
CIMIC - Civil-Military Coordination	NGO - Non-governmental Organization
CPU - Child Protection Unit	OCHA - Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs
CVR - Community Violence Reduction	OMA - Office of Military Affairs
DFS - Department of Field Support	PC - Police Commissioner
DPKO - Department of Peacekeeping Operations	RESDAL - Security and Defense Network of Latin America
FC - Force Commander	SCR - Security Council Resolution
FPU - Formed Police Unit	SGBV - Sexual and Gender-Based Violence
GTG - Gender Thematic Group	SRSG - Special Representative of the Secretary-General
GU - Gender Unit	TCCs - Troop Contributing Countries
HNP - Haitian National Police	U9 - Civil Military Coordination & Military Gender Focal Point
HRS - Human Rights Section	UNCT - United Nations Country Team
IDP - Internally Displaced People	UNDP - United Nations Development Programme
IMTC - Integrated Mission Training Centre	UNHCR - United Nations Refugee Agency
IOM - International Organization for Migration	UNPOL - United Nations Police
JMAC - Joint Mission Analysis Centre	UN Women - United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women
MCFDF - Ministry for Women's Affairs and Women's Rights	

MINUSTAH AND MONUSCO: TWO PEACEKEEPING MISSIONS ON THE EVE OF CHANGE

Why they are important for Latin America

Juan Rial

1. MINUSTAH, A LONG-TERM MISSION

MINUSTAH is a long-term mission in which, from its establishment in 2004, Latin American countries have made a strong commitment and one that is expressed primarily in terms of a military contribution. The contribution had a political framework, the meeting known as the “2 X 9: the meeting of ministries of defense and foreign affairs from the participating Latin American countries: Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Ecuador, Guatemala, Paraguay, Peru and Uruguay. In the early years they met frequently, but these meetings became progressively less frequent, and more so once a number of the issues were absorbed into the UNASUR framework following its creation in 2008.

Brazil’s current foreign minister, Celso Amorim, is indicative of the general position held by the diplomatic and academic community when he openly expresses the need to reduce the military’s role and increase the participation of civilians working on development. Such a view has been further echoed by the military commander, also Brazilian, indicating the view that even if the security problems and assassinations continue, it is time to reduce the military presence in Haiti.¹

While there are military contingents from eight South American and one Central American country in Haiti, only Argentina, Brazil and Chile have embassies in Port au Prince, whilst Peru maintains a consulate and the others maintain only an honorary consulate. This represents a significant shortcoming in the management of adequate relations with Haiti, thus pos-

¹ The military presence will be substantially reduced in the country. In October 2012 the Security Council recommended the reduction to the levels prior to the earthquake. Brazil is reducing the size of one of its Battalions, the one that it sent and funded immediately after the earthquake (BRABAT II). Uruguay has also been changing the deployment and the naval contingent has been reduced.

ing questions regarding the true relevance of Haiti to other Latin American countries.

In general terms, Haiti has little relevance as a trading partner of the Latin American countries, while its relations are more important to the US and other Caribbean States. Haiti and the Dominican Republic share a porous 380 kilometer long land border, which remains impossible to control given the current lack of resources. Being part of an island (it occupies the eastern third of the island of Hispaniola), Haiti has some 1,770 kilometers of coast, while its perimeter measures 2,131 km. Its proximity to Cuba, its role as a major zone in drug trafficking, and the issues surrounding immigration, mean Haiti is always a priority US security interest. Furthermore, given the influence of the so-called “black caucus” within the US Congress,² the importance of Haiti transcends into the domestic sphere.

It’s always difficult to calculate the exact number of immigrants of a certain origin. As the flow of Haitian migration to United States is continual, many descendants consider themselves solely descendants rather than expatriates, whilst the fact that large parts of the immigrant population don’t have documents further complicates estimations. US authorities estimate there to be one million such Haitians living in its territory. While probably excessive, the Dominican Republic places its estimate of the number of Haitians living in its territory at around two million. Beyond the numbers, however, there is no doubt that the issue is a matter of concern for Haiti’s neighbors.

Therefore, a closer approximation of the interests of the Latin American countries in relation to Haiti is required, taking into account that the maintenance of a military force is far from sufficient, yet it may well be the case that removing it wouldn’t help much either.

2. DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF THE CONGO: A MISSION IN AN UNSTRUCTURED COUNTRY

The Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) also has a past which is difficult to overcome. While the country’s elites maintain that Congo is a unified nation, the frequency of these remarks could in fact be an expression of the doubts which remain.

Many of the sectors that promote this notion of unity are, paradoxically, those that make up the State’s precarious bureaucratic apparatus and the constantly unstable political classes, whilst it also includes a good part

² Congressional Black Caucus created in 1971, an influential bipartisan group of African American legislators, although more inclined towards the Democrats,

of those representing commercial and industrial interests: it is easier to deal with a central authority that clearly lacks authority across the whole country than with warlords and local powers that are subordinate to nobody. Consequently, despite the lack of a unified State exercising authority throughout the country (as in Haiti), all efforts are carried out in the name of this State.³

The result is best defined as one of ‘*controlled chaos*’, although this situation has never been proclaimed and doubts remain over whether it was consciously sought by all the actors involved in the process. International action aimed at protecting civilians in a country characterized by weak governance and lacking the ability to effectively exercise control over its territory deals with this reality: an unstructured country.

Although the name of the Mission was changed in 2010 (becoming MONUSCO), thus indicating that its principal work was that of stabilization in a post-conflict context,⁴ in zones of operation the situation remains one of confrontation. In some zones, the level of insecurity has reached 4 or 5 according to the scale used by the United Nations itself.⁵

The eastern Congo is currently the scene of “small dirty wars” which lack a clearly defined front. There are no defined zones of conflict, no battle zones, and practically no clear distinction between civilians and combatants. Given that the conflict extends beyond national borders it is best defined as a conflict of the Great Lakes, a definition which actually conforms to a set of politico-economic interests. In this zone, beyond the mixture of interests there exists a society and an ethnicity that transcends State's borders.

The actions of diverse armed groups provide a clear indication that the conflict has not been overcome.

There exists an apparent advance after years of violent confrontation. Today many of the actors restrain their use of violence, despite the horrific methods they utilize as resources in the war, such as human shields, sexual violence, and child soldiers. The UN’s military contingents, organized in a “traditional” form, practically don’t play

3 Due to this the “rational” plan of the former SRSG Alan Doss, which sought to limit UN action to the eastern zone, was not acceptable. It was never presented formally; the idea was closing the representation in the capital Kinshasa.

4 Congo didn’t have a war of colonial liberation of the same style as that which occurred in Zimbabwe, Guinea Bissau, Angola, etc. It was instead part of peripheral wars fought by third countries, such as the USSR and the US, as well as the great conflicts of the 1990s affecting the entire Great Lakes region, which also occurred in Liberia and Somalia, thus threatening the very existence of these precarious states. To read more on the recent history of DRC, see Jason K. Stearns, *Dancing in the Glory of Monsters: The Collapse of the Congo and the Great War of Africa* (New York: Public Affairs, 2012).

5 The classification scheme runs from 1) minimal, 2) low, 3) moderate, 4) important or substantial to 5) high. When it is classified as either a 4 or a 5, the Mission’s security management team meets on a bi-weekly basis. There is also a level 6, where the risk is deemed to be ‘extreme’, putting the responsibility under the SRSG.

an active combatant role, despite wanting to. Their role is one of providing presence and removing fields of operation available to irregular combatant forces, which act carefully in order to avoid harm to the mining businesses that provide the resources for their operations. The victims of MONUSCO are the undesired result of the close proximity of action between the FARDC (the Congolese armed forces), irregular forces, and MONUSCO personnel. Such cases represent an exception, not the rule.

As mentioned, in July 2010 the Mission was re-designed in accordance with Security Council Resolution 1925. This Resolution states two primary objectives as being: 1) The protection of civilians, which involves the provision of support to the Congolese government in protecting human rights as well as supporting the government in DDRRR⁶ activities and in the management of operations against the FDLR⁷, the LRA⁸ and other armed groups. 2) The second mandate focuses on the stabilization and consolidation of peace. It requests that the Mission provides support to the Congolese government in strengthening military and police capacities, an activity which also presupposes involvement in supporting reform of the security and justice sectors.

Strengthening the authority of the Congolese State will be the key, and this should be realized within the plan for stabilization and reconstruction (STAREC) and the international strategy supporting security and stabilization (ISSSS).⁹ The mandate also takes a regional approach promoting cooperation between the diverse countries with interests in the zone. With concerns for the humanitarian situation in mind, the Security Council makes explicit reference to the fight against sexual violence, whilst the Resolution makes reference to previous resolutions on women, peace and security - 1325 (2000) and 1889 (2009), Resolution 1894 (2009) regarding the protection of civilians, and 1882 on children and armed conflicts.

The gap between what is written at the UN headquarters in New York and the reality on the ground is significant. There doesn't exist a Congolese State that exercises its functions across the entire territory, making it highly

6 Disarmament, demobilization, repatriation, reintegration, and resettlement of combatants.

7 Forces Démocratiques de Liberation du Rwanda, mainly formed of Hutus that enlisted members of the ethnic group living in Congo and act in line with their interests in Rwanda, where they were defeated in 1994.

8 Lord Resistance Army, Armée du Resistance du Seigneur, group created in Uganda in 1996, currently reduced to a small group of combatants that acts on behalf of numerous interests. Up until 2010 it was utilized by the government of Northern Sudan. It is currently well-known due to the movement centered on its leader, Kony. A US Congressional resolution authorizes the use of a force (numbering 100 military advisers) in order to eliminate the force completely.

9 The International Security and Stabilization Support Strategy (ISSSS) is the name given to the policy of stabilization in the East of the Congo led by MONUSCO.

difficult to place policies in this direction into practice. There arise different interpretations, normally fairly restrictive, regarding the realization of the Resolution's objectives. To this one must add the constant process of renewing the mandate, and the current lack of resources, heightened by the economic crisis affecting many of the UN's major donor States, which brings additional difficulties to the progress of the Mission.

Two Latin American countries participate with military contingents in the mission in the DRC. Guatemala provides a Special Forces Unit (GUASFOR), which is deployed under the Force Commander and has its headquarters in Dungu, in the northern part of the country (with a small logistic cell in Bunia).

Uruguay contributes one of the Mission's two Reserve Battalions, which is again deployed under the orders of the Force Commander. However, for a while its principal base has been in Goma (currently named "Siempre Presente"), with a variety of different outposts, the most recent and relevant being the one deployed in Kimua (a COB -Company Operating Base). Furthermore, there is an engineer company in Bukavu as well as operators of a water-distilling plant in Bunia. The Uruguayan Air force operates the airport in Bukavu and deploys a unit of two helicopters that are used, principally, for medical evacuations. One Riverine company (URUMAR M – which, at the time of our visit, had its base in Bukavu, from where it carried out operations on Lake Kivu) has been moved to Uvira in order to patrol Lake Tanganyika.

Kinshasa is the headquarters of the SRSG, as well as of the Force Commander, the Police Commissioner and the principal directors of the diverse MONUSCO offices. One small military unit from Ghana, together with small detachments from other countries, makes up a small brigade in the capital. The majority of the military personnel are located in the three provinces to the East and Northeast of the country, with its main brigade commanders from Bangladesh, India and Pakistan. 68% of the military forces are concentrated in the two provinces of Kivu and Orientale Province. If to these the small forces in Katanga are added, the number rises to 84%, with 5% devoted to the West Brigade and 6% to the so-called sector 2 of the central part of the country. The rest is comprised of those which are directly under the authority of the Force Commander, logistic cells, MILOBs, etc.

While the fundamental interest of the mission in Haiti rests in the political realm and in the possible displacements of the Haitian population, in the DRC the substantial interests that fed - and continue to feed- the conflict are fundamentally economic in character. Although they present themselves in the form of political and ethnic confrontations, which are undoubtedly important, they remain of secondary importance.

3. THE INTENTIONAL PROCESS OF (DIS)INFORMATION THROUGH SECONDARY SOURCES REGARDING THE IMPORTANCE OF CONGOLESE MINING

It is known that Congo is an important source of mineral resources, but the key issue regards the relevance this has to the conflict. The sources intentionally give very different and confusing versions. Some state that Congolese *coltan* represents only 5% of world trade in this mineral,¹⁰ while others stress that the country possesses 60% or more of the world's reserves of this rare and coveted mineral.¹¹ Others maintain that Uganda is the second most important world exporter of coltan, obviously from Congolese origin. The same can be said in relation to the importance of diamonds, gold, cassiterite (a tin oxide mineral, SnO₂), and even oil and natural gas. In relation to uranium it is difficult to state figures given that any data is, in general, highly guarded.

What is certain is that whether mineral production, in terms of physical volume, is large or small, it represents the theatre in which disputes are played out, principally between companies and, secondly, diverse governments, armed groups and other actors. Both the more-or-less legal Congolese authorities, diverse armed groups and neighboring countries confront each other for control of the mining territories. As a result the real beneficiaries, obviously the large companies that run this business, remain hidden on the sidelines, together with some governments that have either positive or negative interests (intending to hide their exploitation).

It's also clear that in all of the estimations the money received by the actual mine workers is minimal, and that they have to follow the diverse games of those controlling the business (which are armed), following the chain between the "*negociant*" and the "*comptoir*" before arriving to the market... where the real money is. The Congolese State itself receives nothing, or very little, but more than one person obtains very good money (which may make them not only 'well-off' in international terms, but somebody who is extremely privileged in the local context).

10 See Peter Eichstaedt, *Consuming the Congo. War and conflict minerals in the world's deadliest place* (Chicago: Chicago Review Press, 2011), p.140-141.

11 In eastern Congo coltan is extracted by hand by informal workers involving child labor. According to the UN Group of Experts, the Great Lakes Metals group, controlled by the Rwandan army, have excavated and exported more than 1,200 tons of coltan. United Nations, Security Council, *Rapport du Groupe d'experts sur l'exploitation illégale des ressources naturelles et autres richesses de la République Démocratique du Congo* (New York, April 12, 2001), p. 130. It represented 60% of the overall production of 2,000 tons.

The action of a “bureaucratic gangsterism” is not alien to all of this; it simply charges its part in the business.¹² The similarities between this business, more or less legal (if you ignore the commission earned on the contraband), with the illegal production and sale of drugs, are noteworthy.

In terms of timber and other important natural resources, what is known is even less. It is clear that a conflict that evolves into generalized violence does not occur purely due to economic interests, but it is also clear that such economic motives are a major driving force behind this evolution.

4. DIFFICULT SOCIAL SITUATIONS

Haiti: A Devastating Outlook

Haiti occupies a territory of 27,750 squared kilometers and has a population of almost 10 million inhabitants, to which one must add the large community of expatriates in the Dominican Republic and the US. The IMF estimates that GNP per capita is 663 dollars annually. Whilst these statistics in themselves say little, it is clear that the mass of the Haitian population live in terrible conditions.

Little is known about social stratification. Studies from the 1980s indicate that the upper classes constituted 2% of the population but obtained nearly 44% of GNP. The middle class, formed primarily from the service sector, accounted for 5% of the population. The class situation also expressed itself clearly in terms of ethnicity. The majority of the population, more than 90%, is of black skin. In those years Haiti was still overwhelmingly rural with 75% living in rural poverty and 15% in urban poverty.¹³ The situation has now changed due to urbanization, with the urban population now accounting for 46.5% of the population, according to the estimations made by the World Bank in 2009. The same study considered that in 2009 the labor force was some 4.3 million people, of which 42% were female, and a large part of which worked within the informal economy.

Haiti is desperately in need of a plan for development and investment, but without a government exercising control over the country it's very difficult to realize such projects. At successive conferences the international community has promised to provide much needed funds but the capacity

12 The term “bureaucratic gangster” is drawn from Carina Perelli, who used the term in relation to diverse situations. I remember back to 1993, during my first visit to Equatorial Guinea, the only book I found about the country was an account by a consultant of the World Bank entitled “Tropical Gangsters”.

13 See for example Glen R. Smucker, “Social Structure”, in Richard A. Haggerty, ed., *Haiti. A Country Study* (Washington: Library of Congress, 1989).

to complete such projects does not exist and much of the talk fails to be converted into concrete action.¹⁴ This fact isn't completely removed from the fact that one third of public servants lost their lives in the 2010 earthquake. Public security leaves much to be desired given that inefficiency and corruption are rife within the new police force.

The Democratic Republic of the Congo: mining and other interests in the largest country in sub-Saharan Africa

With a territory covering some 2,345,409 square kilometers, the DRC, following the partition of Sudan, became the largest country in sub-Saharan Africa and the second largest in Africa. The only population census available, that of 1984, states that the population was 31 million inhabitants. Whilst a new census was scheduled for 2011, it has subsequently been postponed.¹⁵ It is estimated, however, that the figure will likely be between 65 and 70 million. In the 2011 Presidential election, which led to the re-election of Joseph Kabila, it was estimated that the registered voters totaled 32 million, while those that actually voted were approximately 18 million in number.

As can be appreciated, the figures aren't particularly precise. The estimated life expectancy currently stands at between 47 and 49.8 years and the infant mortality rate in the first year is 111 per 1000. The mortality rate amongst pregnancies stands at 1,100 per 100,000 successful births, which, according to the demographer Richard Dackam, is one of the highest in the world. The same can be said of fertility rates, which are estimated to reach 6.3 per woman of fertile age.

If we take into account the lack of reliable records, that children are not given a name until they reach 4 or 5 years old (and have thus surpassed the "minimum barrier of survival") these statistics are merely illustrative.

GNP per capita is just 210 US dollars at purchasing power parity, but this figure demonstrates little given the notable inequality between those that live in the primitive rural parts of the country and the diverse 'rurban' sectors (the crowded centers which in many cases continue being rural in terms of their lack of infrastructure, be it electricity, running water or sewers). In a country where a large part of the population still lives at the level of economic subsistence, and where monetization is low, such a statistic really means very little. The measure of inequality, the GINI index, may

14 The UN Special Envoy, and former President of the US, Bill Clinton, stated that since the creation of the conference of donors for Haiti in March 2010 the total amount of funds promised had reached 41,100 million dollars, of which 52% would be allocated by December 2011.

15 The cost is estimated to be some 172 million dollars, counting on the support of the UNFPA.

also tell us little, but the distance between the relatively privileged and the masses is phenomenal.¹⁶

Illiteracy is widespread despite the existence of statistics stating 60% literacy rates. In large parts of the ‘rurban’ centers, such as Goma and Bukavu, there aren’t newspapers or libraries and there are few Internet cafes, but in Goma there is one university. To this one must add the linguistic differences that often pertain to the different ethnicities.

As in Haiti, in Congo the international community moves between French – the official language of the country – and English, the spoken language of all international organizations, while the various other languages of the country remain unknown, meaning that members often have to trust the “*lenguaraces*” (local “translators” that go between different languages because they have the knowledge of the basics of different ones). Obviously, however, we can often apply to them the old Italian maxim: “*Traduttore, traditore*” (a word game meaning traitorous translator). If in Haiti Creole is the dominant language amongst the population, in the DRC it varies according to region.

The distrust that results from the lack of understanding of the local languages impacts, in particular, security. Military personnel remain reluctant to trust their translators, despite many having worked with the military contingents for long periods.¹⁷ Some of the most important NGOs recruit local people to perform trusted humanitarian tasks, but obviously this is not easy to do when talking about security issues or policy, especially those involving sensitive relations with UN Member States.

16 The following note was taken from my observations in Kinshasa in 2012: You have to see the Congolese that are able to frequent hotels in Kinshasa or other urban centers, whose consumption capacity starkly contrasts that of the mass of people in candlelit markets in the dusty and muddy streets. Or, alternatively, witness the products in the supermarket of the neighborhood of *Gombe*, where most of the international embassies and offices are, behind the INEC (the electoral body) and nearby to the MONUSCO HQ. These are products that are practically out of reach of the majority of the population. Income differences can be exemplified with the following anecdotes. A MILOB working in Walikale told us that he and his seven MILOBS colleagues paid 200 US dollars (\$) for the services of two people, a cook and a handyman. Three Congolese policemen working with them earned just \$ 3 each day. Rental housing, averaging five occupants, or a maximum of seven, cost \$ 10 a day. In Goma, the average salary of the hotel staff where we stayed was one hundred dollars, and such wages are outstanding.

One Sunday, the Congolese guard that escorted us along a road which was in a deplorable state from Goma to Rutshuru, told us that the school in his area charged \$ 3 per child per month; as he had 7 children he had to pay US\$ 21 per month.

The salary of a police officer is around \$ 40 per month.

It’s difficult to actually know what these figures account to. Several studies that have been realized display that the social situation in the country is very difficult. In a short length of stay, we saw huge social differences noticeable in every place we visited in Congo.

17 MONUSCO provides translators but many contingents provide their own. For example URUBATT has nine; MONUSCO hired six translators and the other three were hired by the Battalion itself. They are paid about 100 dollars a month.

5. RELIGION AND BELIEFS: AN IMPORTANT COMPONENT

The relevance of syncretism, especially in the Caribbean countries and Brazil, is well known. In Haiti, 'voodoo' is an important part of local life and many popular beliefs and explanations of events are expressed in terms of beliefs and faith.¹⁸ The 2010 earthquake, for example, was explained in terms of punishment inflicted by supernatural forces. There still exists, however, very 'rational' conduct: in the aftermath of the earthquake many Haitians who didn't lose their homes still went to live in the refugee camps due to the possibility of receiving external assistance.¹⁹

In the DRC, the belief system (a mix between Animism and diverse Christian religions) also plays an important role in daily life. The Catholic Church holds power due to its wealth, but it is clear that it is a mere 'superstructure'.²⁰ Little by little Muslim believers are increasing, but the influence of the Pakistani, Bangladeshi, or Moroccan contingents does not appear to be significant beyond its bases given that they don't include locals apart from translators, in whom they have little trust. But the growing influence of Arab interests in the region appears to be a relevant factor. Influence of course varies according to the place, but the influence is greatest in the relatively more 'prosperous' areas.²¹

Despite this, modernization in the 'rurban' centers points towards secularism. Furthermore, the fact that in the worst years of the conflict prostitution increased notably, as a form of meeting the basic needs for survival (not just women, but the very nucleus of the family), may be related in part to this. With this phenomenon, those who practice prostitution exclude themselves from the traditional cultural pattern, taking up a new route.

Now it seems that there is less prostitution, according to a number of

18 The Haitian anthropologist Gerard Barthélemy provides examples of the incapacity of rural communities to complete certain activities due to their beliefs. See *Le Pays en dehors: essai sur l'univers rural haïtien* (Port-au-Prince: CIDIHCA, 1989).

19 Timothy T. Schwartz, a US anthropologist, published the study *Travesty in Haiti. A True Account of Christian Missions, Orphanages, Fraud, Food Aid, and Drug Trafficking* (Booksurge, 2008), in which he summarizes a decade of work in the country and criticizes the aid organizations that arrive with their own ideas and agendas and pay little attention to the realities and particularities of the local situation. This extends, of course, beyond the experience of Haiti.

20 The "Petit Séminaire" in Dungen (whose outskirts we rode around in 2012) occupied several blocks, but there was little activity at the facility. There was, instead, a much greater abundance of activity at the small places of worship of various Protestant groups. Moreover, as one interviewee told us, "anyone who realizes he can make a business puts a few sticks and an encampment together, calls it a 'temple' and says he can 'comfort and heal'.

21 In Kinshasa one can see the building of the Islamic Community of Congo and the ASIAD (*Association des Cheikhs en Imams pour le développement du Congo*).

locals who were interviewed; this is also the perception of a number of foreigners that have participated in various missions in the country since the beginning of the century and further back.

6. RURAL LIFE

While in Haiti and the DRC there is a growing tendency of 'rurbanization', there remains a significant rural population.

Many of these are dedicated to subsistence agriculture (and in the DRC to farming) with many traditional markets, where goods are exchanged in return for other goods, still in existence. Furthermore, in Congo the practice of cultivating by 'slash and burn' continues in certain parts, provoking, at times, rural fires. In volcanic zones solidified molten lava is used for construction, but there are also fertile soils. Grasslands predominate in the eastern regions where the great lakes are located and the distances between settlements are great, with a notable absence of proper roads. In such areas there is a notable lack of infrastructure, owing in part to aerial routes and the growth of digital communication.

In Haiti, deforestation especially affects the northern part of the island. In 1923, 60% of the territory was forest while, in comparison, the current level barely surpasses 2%. This phenomenon has accelerated soil erosion, compromising water quality and further reducing possibilities for a rural lifestyle. According to the UNDP, in rural regions, where close to 52% of the population live, 88% are considered to be poor, of which 67% are considered to live in extreme poverty.

Demographic growth determines problems in maintaining these traditional modes of life.

These are, without doubt, countries with young populations. In the DRC, the estimates say that the average age is 19.5 years and that 47% of the population is less than 15 years old with 66% less than 25. Such statistics would indicate that

the living memory of the conflict is easier to manage than in populations with older age profiles.

The de-structuring of the family is one of the most important phenomena affecting Congolese society, itself a result of demographic and technological changes as well as rural-urban migration, more-or-less recurrent periods of violence – especially against women - and the effects resulting from the introduction of western customs and fashions.

The Haitian population reaches some 7 million habitants, of which nearly 40% are below the age of 14. Life expectancy is around 49.3 years, given the high infant mortality rates (estimated at 95 per 1000 in 2001). Fertility rates in 2001 were estimated to be around 4.4 per woman of reproductive age. Obviously such figures are approximate as the 2003 census failed to produce a

final report. Other investigations give other figures, but in nearly all cases the overall view indicates a young population with serious problems.²²

Whilst, as we indicate, the number of Haitian immigrants in other countries is subjected to constant debate, speculation,²³ and political manipulation, little is known about the Congolese expatriate community, starting with the fact that it is not always known who is Congolese.

7. THE EFFORT OF MAINTAINING LONG-TERM MISSIONS IN THE ABSENCE OF A FUNCTIONING STATE.

While obvious differences exist between the two countries, in both Haiti and the DRC the UN peace missions have the goal of stabilizing and promoting the institutionalization of the States in which they operate. Many of the problems evident in the functioning of both of these Missions result from this premise, which is a product of the particular interests of the UN Member States, that exercise a great influence over these conceptualizations.

For this reason, many of the peacekeeping missions end up being of an almost permanent character. They simply do not take into account the incapacity of the States in question. As a consequence, those in charge of the missions need to adapt themselves to this reality.

All long UN missions obviously generate bureaucratic inertia, and with these the fixed routines of such organizations determine the need to work within limited hours and require constant reports, and usually have redundant offices or those in competition with others.

In DRC the mix between centralized command and logistics and the decentralized nature of operations in the East fails to coincide with the sporadic nature of the Congolese State, which is centered in large 'rurban' centers beginning in Kinshasa and whose presence vanishes as it moves away from them. There, other groups appear, such as local bosses, 'warlords' and diverse armed groups. A modernizing force is noted, and in relation to this we can cite one detail; the most modern building in Kinshasa is the headquarters of the Ministry of Finance.

In January 2012 the total number of uniformed personnel in MONUSCO

22 Athena Kolbe and others estimated that in 2006 the average number of inhabitants per house was 4.5 persons. The average age was estimated to be 25 and more than a third of the population was estimated to be less than 15 years old. See A.R. Kolbe and Royce A. Hutson, "Human Rights abuse and other criminal violations in Port-au-Prince, A random survey of households in *The Lancet* (Detroit: Wayne State University, School of Social Work, August 31, 2006) available at <http://www.ijdh.org/pdf/Lancet%20Article%208-06.pdf>.

23 A few sources indicate an emigration of around 10,000 and 20,000 Congolese per year. The statistic, however, does not appear reliable.

was 19,070, of which 16,795 were military personnel, 723 MILOBS, and 1372 members of formed police units. The number of international civilian personnel numbered 976, supported by 2868 Congolese and 588 UN volunteers.

Nearly all of MONUSCO's regional offices follow the same centralized scheme. The Head Office is supported by various units, the most relevant being the office of administration, itself supported by a logistics operation, the Movcon - which assures aerial communications-, and the engineering sector amongst others. Under the Head Office are the Gender Unit, the Sexual Violence Unit, and offices for Conduct and Discipline, Rule of Law (which, in practice, is responsible for promoting and monitoring human rights), Civil Affairs, and Security. Parallel to this, and depending on MONUSCO and on central channels, there exist military units, police, etc.

UN system agencies and programs also operate in parallel, such as UNHCR (refugees), OCHA (humanitarian aid), UNDP (development and implementation of various projects), UNICEF, Habitat, WFP (food security) WHO (Health) and UN Women.

There are independent offices such as UNPOL, or DDR that are part of MONUSCO, but some of the tasks that they complete are replicated by other agencies of the system and must also take into account the partnerships formed with NGOs, both international and local, and other intergovernmental organizations. Here come into play the IOM (International Organization of Migrations) and organizations whose main task is the reintegration and rehabilitation of former combatants.

In the area of sexual violence and the protection of women and children, a good number of NGOs operate.

Management in Haiti is almost entirely centralized, but Latin American countries push to accelerate the withdrawal of military contingents, considering that the central problem is that of development and not a military issue. However, an additional problem is that Haiti has almost no reliable force itself. The National Police has about 10,000 members but does not have an adequate degree of professionalism, does not possess the trust of the population, and is affected by on-going corruption.

8. THE DILEMMAS OF NATIONAL POLICE FORCES

In Haiti, the army was abolished after 1994. However, there remain former army personnel, or those close to them, who continue to stir the possibility of recreating an armed force. Furthermore, President Martelly was a

student at the Military Academy and in his discourse he supports the idea of re-installing a military force²⁴, whilst there also still exist recurring demonstrations from those claiming to be former military members, demanding the reinstatement of the army.

Meanwhile, the only force in existence is the Haitian National Police (HNP). There are also some small specialized units, such as a Coast Guard, which virtually has no ships. A presidential security guard is also only nominally part of the HNP, as it has its own budget.

In the Congo there are both military and police forces. The military, almost formed in its entirety of a land army, totals about 173,000 individuals; however, their professional capacity is doubted. Perhaps the best definition was provided in an interview, which referred to the following anecdote: the soldiers are provided with a “quasi” uniform and an AK-47 rifle. Informally the message they receive with the rifle is “this is your food, your house, your girlfriend”. It is obvious what their conduct may be like when they don’t receive their pay, which happens very often. This policy is in line with the view publicly expressed by then President Mobutu in 1997, when he stated that State funds could not sustain the military and police forces, and that they should be arranged autonomously.

It is also clear that *brassage*, (the integration of former militia combatants in the regular Congolese Army), is not working properly. Former combatants are integrated with their old ways intact and can change sides at any time. It is not a reliable force.

The Congolese National Police (PNC) may have 150,000 members, but, as with all figures, these are estimates. It was created in 1997 to replace the so-called Civil Guard and the Gendarmerie. Their ability to perform operations, however, is constrained by the absolute lack of resources. According to what we were told by its members, when the salary is paid it is equivalent to about forty dollars a month, whatever their grade. Police generals have no salary; however we found that depending on the area of the country the situation and capacities of the police varied.

24 The DDR process had to reach both former soldiers and Lavalas militants (the force that supported former President Aristide) as well as the old “*Tonton Macoutes*” militias. In practice scope was limited to certain groups since it lacked the basic prerequisite of any DDR process: a general agreement to demobilize weaponry of both the old army and armed gangs. See Robert Muggah, Desmond Molloy and Maximo Halty, “(Dis)integrating DDR in Sudan and Haiti? Practitioners Views to Overcoming Integration Inertia” in Robert Muggah (ed.), *Security and Post-Conflict Reconstruction. Dealing with fighters in the aftermath of war* (New York: Routledge, 2009).

9. THE SITUATION OF WOMEN AND VIOLENCE AGAINST THEM

In the DRC, the breakdown of a family strongly affects women and the same is true in the case of Haiti.²⁵ The on-going violence in the eastern DRC means that many become a part of the permanent rear-guard of the FARDC, the PNC, or the various armed groups operating there. Consequently, they are close to “their men” and many of their male offspring become armed at an early age. Orphans become dangerous in this context. The testimonies of women fighters are contradictory. Some say that women also operate as fighters in some illegal armed groups while others deny it.

In Haiti the situation for women is one of subordination in the framework of the “traditional” culture that still dominates. In several villages they seek to maintain the traditional way of life, but the introduction of modern technological trends makes it difficult to maintain long-standing customs. For example, in the DRC there are many villages where it is clear that self-subsistence is practiced, but where many men carry cell phones and in more than one case his “work” is almost non-existent. Recharging their batteries requires electricity, provided by generators... and that’s a ‘man’s job’, but in few cases they possess them. The price of fuel is expensive.

Sexual violence and, within that, the practice of rape, is the most powerful issue faced in the DRC. It is not so much the problem of sex itself that is the major point in question, but instead the social and medical problems that are more worrying. A raped woman can be a victim also of HIV-AIDS transmission; an additional and serious consequence for both the individual and for society. In Haiti, given the continuing situation of domestic violence, rape is also endemic.

Socially, rape is a “weapon of war” and an act of torture. It seeks the re-putation of the woman on behalf of the family and community, as a result targeting society’s social fabric. It also seeks to extort and force marriages involving the exchange of goods. Furthermore it inflicts huge moral and psychological problems on the victim, who often lacks support to overcome their problem.

There also exist ‘traditional’ compensatory mechanisms, such as in the DRC, where arrangements are made that lead to forced marriages, no longer as sustainable as in the past. They also include the exchange of goods, agreed among “petty chiefs” or families in diverse ‘rurban’ centers.

It is unclear exactly how often sexual violence occurs, which is also practiced

²⁵ It would require serious anthropological and sociological study. While promotion and advocacy is needed, the only way to gain strength is through serious study and not the mere projection of the western notion of what ‘ought to be’.

against men so as to cause humiliation and repudiation in the community.²⁶ The possibilities of establishing a court case are low given the lack of institutions in both Haiti and the DRC, leaving traditional customs to resolve the issue.

In Haiti the situation has certain similarities to the DRC, but it mainly occurs within the framework of domestic violence, as well as the actions of gangs. The actions of a number of NGOs have increased public knowledge of the issue, but the situation further worsened after the 2010 earthquake.

FINAL CONSIDERATIONS

- It is important to inform Latin American Ministries of Defense, Foreign Affairs and Public Security (Interior or Governance) about the need for greater presence and attention to the issue of peacekeeping missions.
- Many of the contingents are aware of the political relevance of peacekeeping missions. They know that the military character of the mission is subordinated to the political one and, consequently, it is important to pay attention to social communication with the local population on a daily basis. The Latin American contingents in the Congo have a clear deficit in terms of their ability to communicate at an adequate level in spite of the efforts of their officers. For some of them, the lack of support from the Ministries of Defense in their capitals is clear, whilst there are also deficits in training that lead to difficult situations.²⁷
- Racism and discrimination. Although the subject is hardly touched, it is clear that many of the military contingents of MINUSTAH or MONUSCO, composed of staff coming from the lower strata of society, contain a strong element of "racism" and consider "the blacks" or "the dark-haired" to be inferior, despite not treating them as such. Indeed, paradoxically, the translators in the Congo are almost entirely black, many with college degrees, and are those who know the environment and customs, so they are highly valued. But they are also feared because it is believed that their action may involve a security risk (which may be true). But that does not

²⁶ Some of the UNPOL in the DRC stated that there was roughly one case of rape per day in their area, at least, but such acts didn't always lead to actions against the perpetrators.

The experts of the UNFPA (which are in the process of establishing a database of statistics covering more-or-less all known cases), estimate that there are approximately 3.5 cases of rape per day. The principal force supporting denouncements are NGOs. But when asked about how many cases involving members of the FADRC or the PNC had led to sentencing by military tribunals, we were referred to a military official that we couldn't get hold of, and there was no time to organize an interview.

²⁷ The episode of misconduct of the Uruguayan navy personnel in a base in Port Salut in Haiti in 2011 is a clear example.

obscure the overall perception, which views locals as “inferior”, and this is expressed in newspaper reports.²⁸

- Few of the military contingents have women serving there, and those which are deployed are mostly support staff rather than combatants. Muslim countries have no women on their units. Women are most evident in the Uruguayan and Guatemalan contingencies in MONUSCO and in most Latin American contingents in MINUSTAH, but there are very few who have a combat role. The same occurs in police units and UNPOL, where few members are female. There is only a very small minority group of women among the MILOBS.
- There is much more to be done in the specific realm of peacekeeping and women, and firstly within the contingents themselves.
- The missions abroad, almost in their entirety, are not fully covered from a legal standpoint. Many countries do not agree to participate in peace enforcement missions, however all existing missions are drawn from Chapter VII of the UN Charter. Neither do they meet certain standards involving the clear separation between police and military functions that are imposed in domestic settings.
- Missions that are based on the necessity of having a supplementary salary for subordinate staff are not sustainable in a time when the situation in Latin America, especially in the south, means that such options are unattractive to lower classes of the population, placing limits on recruitment.
- Considering the future means taking into account the changes that can be foreseen. While it is unclear what will happen to MINUSTAH, one fact is inescapable: it will count upon the assistance of far fewer troops. Furthermore, MONUSCO will also have trouble maintaining the current budget and thus the current deployment. Many of the Latin American military forces must prepare for a new era of peace missions. The era of sending large contingents can be assumed to be coming to an end.
- The new conflicts that have developed in the second decade of this century do not target peace settlements between combatants, neither land-based intervention. As a result, it is likely that we witness a profound redefinition of the concept of peacekeeping.

28 In January 2012 a video was broadcast in *El Observador de Montevideo* regarding participation in peacekeeping missions. The journalist, who had accompanied the rotation of personnel from a Uruguayan Battalion, interviewed a translator and asked him to tell him a common expression used by Uruguayan personnel. He began saying, “*A ver, negrito*” (“Look, little black boy...”). It is known that this *rioplatense* expression, a mixture of racist condescension and affection, is not accepted in the “politically correct” world of today. See the series of notes made by Patricia J. Madrid in *El Observador de Montevideo*, 17th, 18th, 19th, 23th and 27th January 2012.

SPEECH BY MS. MICHELLE BACHELET

FORMER EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF UN WOMEN, DURING THE RESDAL INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE “PROMOTING GENDER FOR PEACE: REFLECTIONS FROM THE LATIN AMERICAN EXPERIENCE” APRIL 25, 2012

Ladies and gentlemen,

Yesterday I went to the UN Security Council, along with my colleague, the Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations, in order to promote the importance of gender and the role of women in the prevention of violence, peacekeeping and peacebuilding. We went through the current conflicts and the events of the last few months and we demanded more attention be paid to the role of women in conflict resolution and, in particular, access to post-conflict justice.

The issue before us today could not, therefore, be more relevant.

Most of you are familiar with the nature of the problems that particularly affect women and girls in modern conflicts. Just weeks after my appointment as Executive Director of UN Women, a report was published based on a UN investigation into a recent rebel attack in a very impoverished region of eastern Congo. According to that investigation, rebels raped nearly 400 people - mostly women - in just four days. That is, violence against women and girls as a weapon of war.

Atrocities like this repeat themselves all too often. The proliferation of irregular armed groups and their fragmentation involves the use of tactics designed precisely to redress the imbalance in military capability against regular armies, hence the increasing use of deliberate attacks on schools and hospitals, or the strategic use of sexual violence to cause terror or displace entire populations. Statistics on sexual violence gathered from the wars of the past two decades confirm this: from the refugee and displaced persons camps in the Horn of Africa or those affected by the earthquake in Haiti, villages in eastern Congo, or the recent conflicts in the Ivory Coast and Libya, we hear similar stories.

It is estimated that over 70 percent of displaced persons - currently over 40 million - are women and chil-

dren. Women who survive violence or unhealthy conditions in refugee camps often lack the ability to earn a livelihood, and are deprived even of access to land by customary practices that penalize them for being a woman. And yet they still have to care for the sick, feed their families and educate their children. Without security, women cannot perform their economic role, critical to the recovery of families, communities, and entire nations, or participate in public life, a key factor in the resolution of conflicts.

We are therefore concerned that in five of six elections in countries with peacekeeping missions in 2011, the representation of women in parliaments recorded either a slight decrease or only a modest improvement. The average in these contexts was that women occupied just 10% of the seats in legislative chambers, barely half of the world average, which itself is less than 20 percent and remains unacceptably low, and far below the 30 percent representation that is considered the minimum desirable.

We are also concerned by the continued adoption of amnesties in recent conflicts such as that in Mali or in Yemen, despite women's organizations stressing to us that such a climate of impunity contributes to the escalation of gender violence during the post-conflict phase. Or that in the transition processes driven by the *Arab Spring*, setbacks have been produced in the field of women's rights, such as the foreseen decrease in the average age of girls marrying amongst displaced populations affected by the conflict in Yemen, where there is no law that stipulates a legal minimum.

We are also alarmed by the low number of prosecutions for war crimes committed against women, the lack of reparations programs for survivors, the lack of security in refugee camps, and the serious shortfall in funding for the specific needs of women and girls in post-conflict recovery plans.

We are even more concerned that, twelve years after

the unanimous adoption of Security Council Resolution 1325, there are still so few women involved in peace talks and peace agreements continue to ignore them. In 585 peace agreements signed between 1990 and 2010, only 16 percent made references to women – and even then normally only as a passing mention - 7 percent mentioned gender equality, and in 3 percent one can find reference to either sexual or gender violence. This includes conflicts where it has been used in a large-scale and systematic manner, and as a weapon of war.

Despite realization of this situation, it is important also to mention those advances that are being made, and for which efforts will be intensified in order to achieve even more.

Since its inception, the United Nations Security Council has adopted more than two thousand resolutions. I assure you that very few are as well known by name and number as the “thirteen twenty-five”. Between 2008 and 2010, four new resolutions were adopted to move the international community from words into actions, and although it is still not enough, never in the history of the United Nations has so much attention and so many resources been devoted to the issue of gender in peace and security. This includes normative recognition that mass sexual violence is not just a women’s issue or a humanitarian problem, or a violation of human rights, but a challenge to international peace and security.

The gender perspective now has a much more prominent role in the planning, execution, reporting and evaluation of our peacekeeping missions. The current Secretary-General is appointing women to lead peace operations as special representatives or deputy representatives at a rate that is unprecedented in the Organization. Several countries that contribute blue helmets have deployed police units composed exclusively of women, and these units are having great success both in terms of their contribution to the effectiveness of the mission’s operations, but also in their symbolic impact within the countries where they are deployed.

The Department of Peacekeeping Operations aims, before 2014, to double or even triple what are low percentages of women deployed on current missions. Several countries are making significant efforts to recruit and retain more women in the armed forces and police. The Argentinean Ministry of Defense is a prominent example in the world in terms of the number of recent steps taken towards that end: from removing legal and administrative barriers, implementing campaigns to combat stereotypes and discrimination, and measures to combat sexual harassment, accommodate maternity or paternity leave, or even specific details such as the design of uniforms.

Today, it is unusual to find resolutions for the establishment or renewal of missions that do not confer to them a mandate for integration of the gender perspective and for the provision of specific protection to women and girls.

Peace missions now operate in a different way. Patrols have been adjusted so as to take into account the movement patterns of women when they go to the market or to collect firewood and water, for example, and reports reaching us from our mission in Darfur indicates that this is now being done in a systematic manner - twenty-six thousand patrols of its kind in the first nine months of 2011 - and that it is reducing the incidence of attacks on women during the growing season. Furthermore, joint protection teams with female staff are being deployed in order to improve the level of interaction with women in the communities and to obtain information not only about their needs, but also on their perception of threats to security in the territory.

The installation of lighting in camps where there is little visibility and where women are attacked frequently, or the distribution of energy-efficient cookers to reduce the amount of hazardous trips made by women and girls to collect firewood, are some practical steps that are receiving good results.

Given that hundreds of thousands of women experience violence in remote zones and far from clinics or tribunals, peacekeeping missions are providing logistical support to courts and mobile clinics. In the Congo, in the last year a number of prosecutions and convictions of military personnel for cases of sexual violence were registered, something that would have been unthinkable just a few years ago.

The availability of legal advice and support has provided some justice for women in places like Sierra Leone and Somalia, where the percentage of convictions for crimes of gender violence was virtually nonexistent. A few weeks ago the first sentence of the International Criminal Court was issued, but in 2010 the first international trial based primarily on allegations of sexual violence began. It was the first where most of the witnesses were women, and the first where the prosecution, headed by a woman, went to a panel of judges made up of three women.

The Secretary-General has committed himself to promoting the participation of women in peacebuilding as one of the five objectives of his mandate, and the United Nations system will reserve 15 percent of the funds designated to the consolidation of peace for the promotion of gender equality. If this does not sound like much, it’s important to remember that this represents triple the

current levels. Post-conflict countries such as Rwanda and Burundi have reached world record levels in terms of women's participation in politics, and in the world's newest country, South Sudan, the representation of women is almost 30 percent, outperforming many developed countries.

And in our peace operations, each time there is a greater realization that an increased participation of women in the missions is not simply a question related to gender, but instead for many commanders it is a question closely connected to the mission's operational effectiveness. For example, the practice of forming joint protection teams, integrated not only by military and police personnel, but instead by civilians that are experts in protection, human rights, gender, or other areas, which are better prepared to communicate effectively with the civilian population and obtain more useful information, such as by gaining their confidence, improves the work carried out by analysts and military observers and provides the mission with a more complete picture of reality. When they are consulted in the appropriate manner, women can provide early warning about the trafficking of light arms, or the diffusion of violent and extremist discourse within the community, or warnings regarding the danger that soldiers loot from civilian properties due to not receiving their salaries, for example.

For this reason, in addition to strengthening the presence of UN Women in 22 countries, many of which are considered as fragile or in a state of conflict, we are collaborating with the Department of Peacekeeping Operations in order to improve specific training to blue helmets in gender issues and in the prevention and response to sexual violence, such as the mechanisms for prevention and early warning.

There are many things that are beyond our control. For example, resources are insufficient to provide our missions with everything that they need in order to protect the civilian population in such vast regions with infrastructures so damaged or inexistent. Or we stumble over the obstacle of the lack of political will on behalf of the host government, or the direct hostility towards anything related to gender equality. But there are things that we can control. The preparation level of troops, for example, depends on each troop contributing country. It should depend on us that each blue helmet sent to a peace mission knows what is the behaviour and the protocol for adequate action in order to protect the civilian population, including women and children; what options exist and what actors should be involved; what the mandate of the mission and the rules for engagement allow them to do, or beyond this, that it obliges them

to intervene in case where a woman has been raped; that violence against women isn't permissible or understandable as part of a country's culture, but instead that it is treated as a crime; that all abuse of the civilian population perpetrated by a blue helmet should immediately be reported and investigated, demonstrating that the United Nations maintains a zero tolerance policy; that the stigma that falls on victims of sexual violence, for example, means that only a tiny percentage of cases are communicated to the authorities.; and that a good military observer should be attentive to other indicators in order to discover what is often otherwise invisible.

Where peace operations have increasingly broad mandates and act in increasingly complex contexts, it is not possible to demand that the condition of women is improved, or that macho attitudes or oppressive practices are changed in host countries, or to achieve the end to violence against women. But we can demand of ourselves that we lead by example; a minimum of preparation and diligence, and a willingness to actively make a difference in the communities in which we are present.

This conference is about the role of the Latin American region in promoting gender equality to achieve peace. I believe that as this region has achieved significant levels of female representation in politics, it can convert itself into a leader in the effective mainstreaming of gender in peacekeeping operations. We could aspire to a situation in that, by 2014, there is not a single Latin American blue helmet which has not received practical training on the gender perspective or the prevention and response to sexual violence; that, as a region, the Latin American contingent in peace missions consists of at least 20 percent female participation in the police component and 8 percent in the military component, and that each commander or civilian manager give detailed explanations at the end of their mission on the measures they have taken so that the provisions of the mandate concerning women, peace and security were implemented. That should be our collective goal.

When a few months ago the Nobel Committee awarded the Peace Prize to three extraordinary women - the first African Head, Ellen Johnson Sirleaf, and two brave activists - this was an important boost to the morale of those who insist on the important role of women in conflict prevention and resolution.

We are witnessing the gradual realization that gender equality, equality between men and women, is a centerpiece of any progress, advance or development proposed by countries and their societies. At all levels and in all subjects, equality between men and women is key to progress.



Joint Protection Team during a mission (Photo courtesy of Civil Affairs, Dungu, DRC).



Entrance of MONUSCO's headquarters in Dungu. The arrow marks a level 4 risk, from a scale which goes from 1 to 5.

HINDI	ENGLISH	FRENCH	SWAHILI
जापके परिवार में कौन-कौन है?	Who all are there in your family?	केल लो दे पैरलोन दी वोज़ फ़मीय?	अंय्यायो वाको हुके कटोका टोमोली फको
आप कौन तक पढ़े है?	Up to what level have you studied?	केल ए वोज़ नीवो देयू कसियो?	अंय्यायो गान्नी जे अलीसोमा
आप किस जाति से सम्बंध रखते है ?	You are from which tribe?	वु आघार तेन आ केल त्रीयू	वेदे अंय्यायो कलीला
क्या आप मुझे रास्ता बता सकते हो?	Could you please give directions to reach—	कोमा जश पू चुवे... ..?	उनावेवा तकदली मैलेको जु ली कुरीका पयाली
कितनी दूर	How far is ___?	एस क-ए तोजा ?	जीनसो इयी सना नी रोयु अय्यायो जे कसा कुया किजी
क्या आप कुछ लोने ?	Would you like to have some thing ?	वुले वु.....	

Page of the translation guide used by the Indian troops (DRC).



Inside the headquarters in Dungu. Personnel live in a similar place, situated 50 metres away.



Head of the Gender Office in Goma (DRC).



Personnel from the Civil Affairs Office, Dungu (DRC).



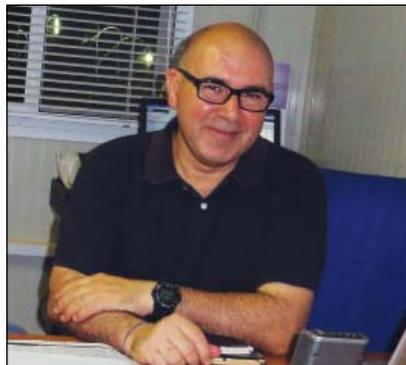
Members of the Prosecution Support Cell in Goma (DRC).



Officers of Gender and Sexual Violence, Bukavu (DRC).



Officer from the Sexual Violence Unit, Goma (DRC).



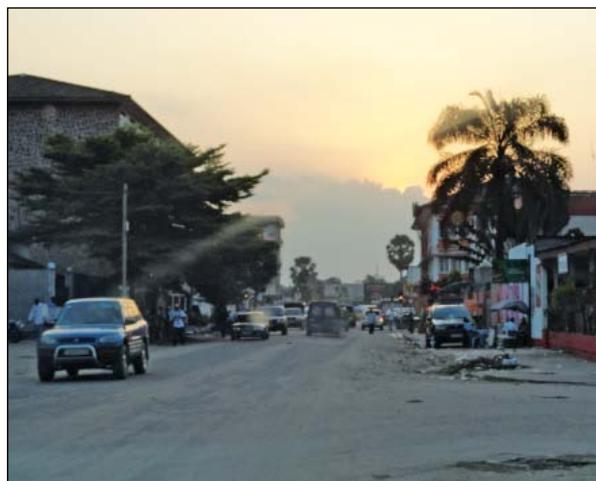
Public Information Officer Dungu (DRC).



Chief of Military Observers, Bunia (DRC).



The surroundings of a town square (Goma, DRC).



A typical street next to the main avenues (Kinshasa, DRC).



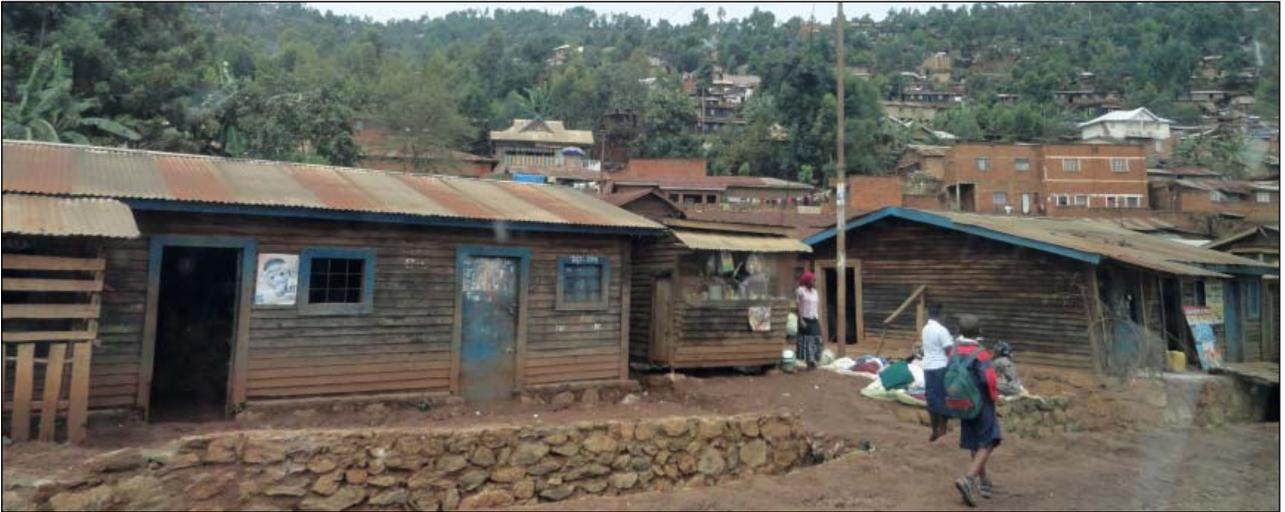
The centre of Kinshasa (DRC).



Landscape in Bukavu, on the shores of Lake Kivu. The potential for tourism, if it wasn't for the conflict, is notable (DRC).



The centre of Dungenu (DRC).



Bukavu, on the road to Panzi Hospital (DRC).



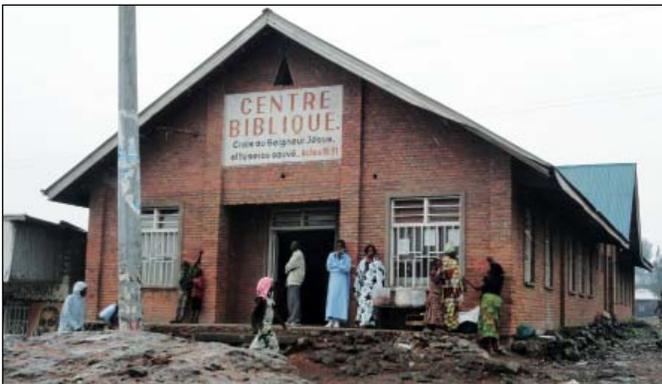
A typical scene on a road in Goma. The main modes of transport are observed: bicycle, moto taxi and van. Moto taxis are very common.



An example of the type of building that prevails in Dungenu (DRC).



A school located outside Rutshuru built by international cooperation. The only building visible in the landscape (DRC).



Another example of scarce buildings: a religious center (DRC).



A building linked to government finance (Goma, DRC).



UNPOL. Police training center in Muganga (DRC).



Young members of the Guatemalan Kaibiles Force, and female personnel which have been assimilated.



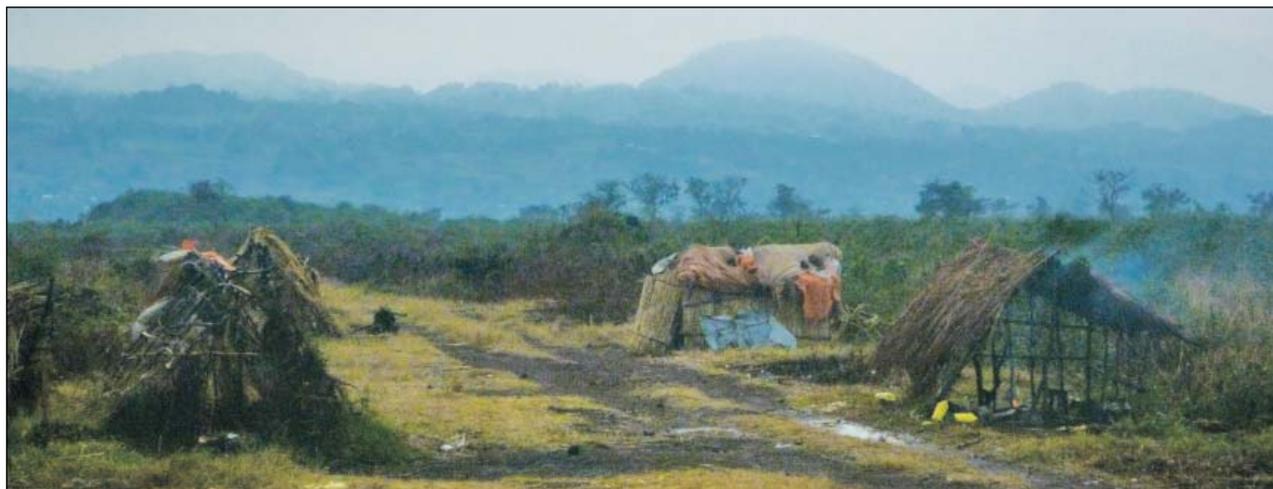
Troops of the Guatemalan Special Forces during a mission. The young man looking away holds his rifle. (DRC. Photo: courtesy of GUASFOR).



Guatemalan staff in dialogue with local representatives during a mission. (DRC. Photo: courtesy of GUASFOR).

The Kaibiles company and its Commander in the Plaza de Armas in the base in Dungu (DRC).





Congolese armed forces camp outside of Rutshuru (North Kivu). Precarious tents amidst a desolate landscape, the closest population centres were kilometres away.



Members of the National Police (Goma, DRC).



Military justice building in Dungu (DRC).



FARDC control point in Dungu (DRC).



Commander of the COB of India in Walikale explains the characteristics of the place (DRC).



Members of the Pakistani Battalion, escorting the RESDAL team in Bukavu. In the centre, the CIMIC officer from the South Kivu Brigade (DRC).



Members of Bangladeshi Support and Signaling Unit, following the interview (Bunia, DRC).



The Chinese Engineer Company's base (Bukavu, DRC).



Two images that show a positive relationship between mission personnel and the local population: a child next to the guard post of the Guatemalan base (several were stood around), and people helping personnel whose vehicle had broken down in Goma. The relationship in the field is strong (DRC).



The streets are where people buy and sell goods. Here, covered to keep out the rain, the sellers wait beneath the cover (DRC).

A bicycle as a mode of transporting goods (DRC).



Aerial view of the zone around Dungu (DRC. Photo: courtesy of GUASFOR).



Aerial view of Kimua, where a Uruguayan company is deployed (DRC. Photo: courtesy of URUBATT).



A UN truck attempts to make progress following rains (DRC. Photo: courtesy of GUASFOR).



Typical state of a road (Goma, DRC).



The interior of the home for disabled persons, to which the Uruguayan company provides food once a day (Goma, DRC).



Uruguayan personnel arriving at APROFIME (Goma, DRC).



One of the courses in the school sustained by APROFIME funding and support, and to which the Uruguayan batallion provides food. (Goma, DRC).



Female staff from the Uruguayan Riverine Company (DRC).



URUBATT personnel at the base (DRC).



Uruguayan Battalion base in Goma. In the background the Niyragongo volcano can be seen (DRC).



Uruguayan Aviation Base in Bukavu (DRC).



Uruguayan riflewoman who served repeatedly in Kimua, in the Battalion base in Goma.



Base of the Uruguayan Riverine Company, when it was deployed in Bukavu on the shores of Lake Kivu (DRC).



Michelle Bachelet, then Executive Director of UN Women, at the opening of the first Latin American conference on gender violence and peace operations.



From left to right: DRC Minister of Gender, Head of the MONUSCO Gender Office, and a member of the RESDAL Board.



Heads of the MONUSCO Gender Office, the Sexual Violence Unit, and the representative of the Force Commander presenting the Mission to representatives of Latin American countries at the international conference.

Heads of the MINUSTAH Gender Unit together with the Head of CIMIC of the military component and his deputy (Haiti).





Members of the Norwegian Police and the Office of the UNPOL Gender Advisor at the headquarters of the project on training on sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV), together with the Gender Commissioner from the HNP.



UNPOL Gender Advisor (Haiti).

Police Academy installations (Haiti).



Location of the HNP National Coordination Office for Gender at the police quarters, constructed by the SGBV project (Haiti).



Meeting of women in IDP camp. Centre, a police officer from Burkina Faso that was called up to serve in Haiti due to her experience during her previous deployment: the Congo, where we met her during her work there (Haiti).



Members of the UNPOL Mobile Gender Unit (Haiti).



Member of the HNP, in the headquarters of a police station located inside a camp for displaced persons (Haiti).



Section of the all-female FPU from Bangladesh, taking guard outside a police station. Front, a UNPOL member (Haiti).



Members of the Guatemalan Military Police (Haiti).



Members of the Nepalese Battalion (Haiti).



Sri Lankan Company in Killick (Haiti).

Officers from the Jordanian Battalion (Haiti).





Argentine Hospital in Port-au-Prince (Haiti).



Female officer from Chile during a CIMIC activity (Haiti. Photo: courtesy of the Ministry of Defense).



Base of the Peruvian Company (Haiti).



Base of the Paraguayan Engineer Company (Haiti).



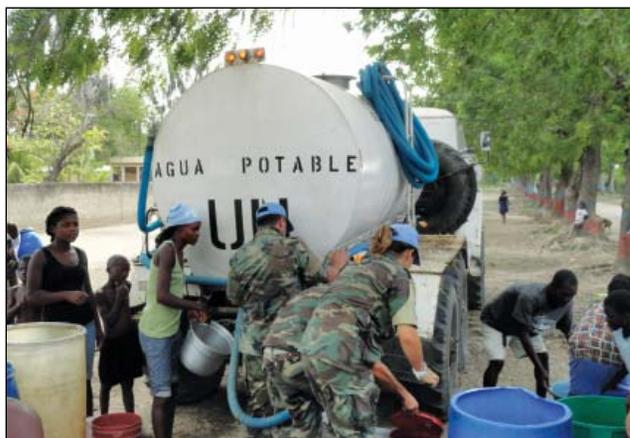
The beginning of work led by the Brazilian contingent in Place Fierté (Photo: courtesy of BRABAT I, Haiti).



Aerial view of Place Fierté, Cité Soleil (Photo: courtesy of BRABAT I, Haiti).



CIMIC activities of the Bolivian contingent in a displaced people camp (Haiti).



Distribution of drinking water by Uruguayan personnel (Haiti).



The Commander of BRABAT I shows the location of the contingent on a map of Port-au-Prince, and the distance to the company deployed by the coast (Haiti).



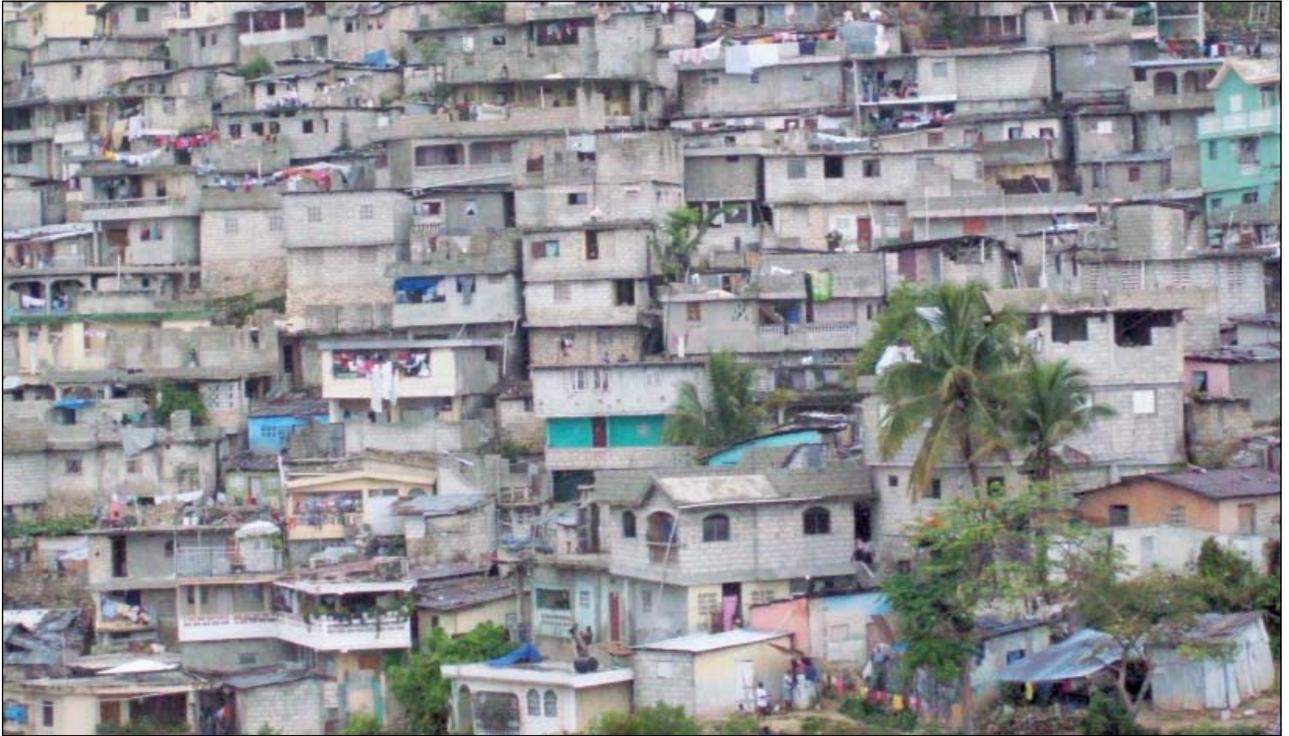
Personnel in the situation room, BRABATT II (Haiti).



Telecommunications installation, BRABAT I (Haiti).



In the BRABATT II base (Haiti).



Hillside houses, Petion-Ville. They live together with the main commercial centre, located in front (Port-au-Prince, Haiti).



As in the DRC, invocations to God are constant in the names of small businesses.



In the outskirts of the main streets, Port-au-Prince.



Religious space –Christian or Muslim–, in the Indian FPU base in Haiti.

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