LOCAL **CONFLICT**
LOCAL **PEACEKEEPING**

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Executive Summary and Recommendations

Although United Nations (UN) peacekeeping missions are mandated in response to major national- or international-level conflicts, missions are often confronted with a variety of locally-driven conflicts once they deploy. The 2015 report of the High-Level Independent Panel on Peace Operations emphasized two core objectives of peacekeeping missions: supporting political processes that lead to sustainable peace, and protecting civilians from violence. Managing local conflict can be critical to achieving both objectives. Local conflicts can destabilize national political processes in a number of ways, for example by undermining the parties' confidence in the process, creating local incentives to spoil the process, or creating so much insecurity that agreements cannot be implemented. In many current peacekeeping settings, local agendas are the primary drivers of violence against civilians.

Despite the fact that local conflict management is often necessary to achieve these two core peacekeeping objectives, it is rarely treated as a strategic priority. The UN Security Council mandates missions to manage local conflict inconsistently and without clear objectives. In the field, local conflict management is often conducted ad hoc rather than as part of a strategy. It is frequently treated as a marginal issue for Civil Affairs sections to manage, rather than a central priority. And missions often lack the capacities and mandates needed to address local conflict effectively.

This report explores each of these challenges and proposes ways for peacekeeping missions to manage local conflict in a more strategic and effective way. It recommends that:

1. Peacekeeping missions should prioritize addressing local conflicts that involve **high rates of violence against civilians**, a **risk of atrocities**, or a **risk of destabilizing the national political process**.

2. Peacekeeping missions should take a whole-of-mission approach to managing high-priority local conflicts, by coordinating action between different sections and between the field and headquarters. This will require Political Affairs and other sections, heads of field offices, and senior civilian, military, and police mission leaders to be more actively involved in managing local conflict.

3. The UN Secretariat should ensure that conflict analysis that informs the planning of missions, as well as induction training for senior mission leaders, includes analysis of high-priority local conflicts.

4. Joint Mission Analysis Center personnel in peacekeeping missions should conduct regular analysis exercises to prioritize local conflicts on the basis of the three factors identified above.

5. Peacekeeping missions should conduct mediations in active conflict areas, rather than simply supporting mediation efforts by others. The UN Secretariat and UN member states should allocate greater resources to local conflict management capacities, including deploying more civilian personnel and providing training on third-party neutral mediation.

6. Peacekeeping missions should allocate more staff to field offices to strengthen analysis and response to local conflict. This should include establishing or strengthening Joint Operations Centers and Joint Mission Analysis Centers in field offices near high-priority local conflict areas.

7. The UN Security Council should consistently mandate missions to manage local conflict and should clearly identify the protection of civilians and support to national political processes as the two primary objectives of local conflict management. In some cases, mandates should task missions or other UN entities to address drivers of widespread local conflict (e.g., disputes over land ownership or organized criminal activity).
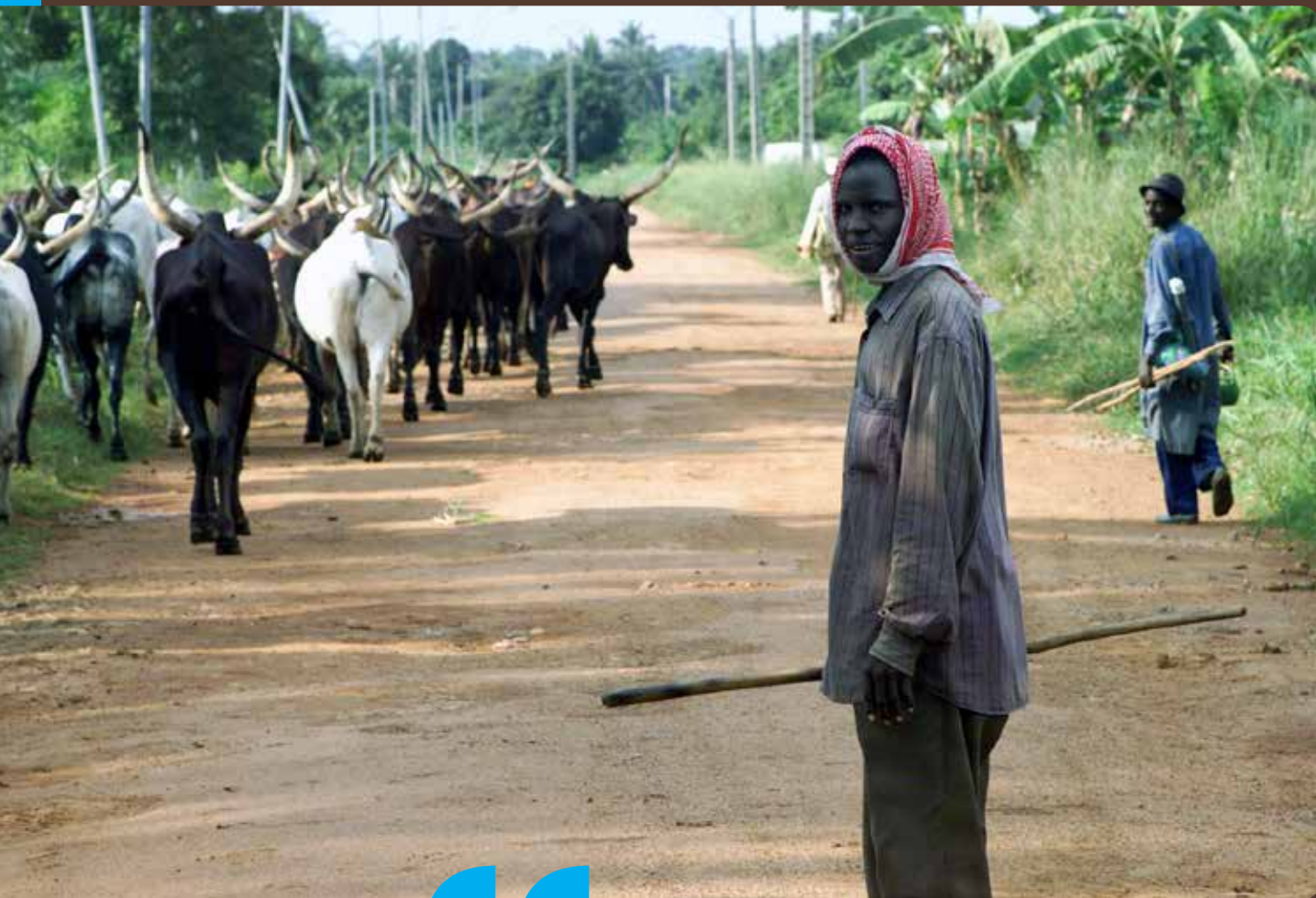
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Introduction

United Nations (UN) peacekeeping missions are deployed to support the resolution of a major national- or international-level conflicts. However, once they deploy, they often find that they are confronted with a variety of locally-driven conflicts in addition to the overarching conflicts they were mandated to address. Some of these local-level conflicts may be linked to the national-level conflicts — national conflicts often manifest in diverse ways at the local level, and national actors may deliberately manipulate and stoke local tensions to advance their interests. Other local conflicts may be largely unrelated to the national conflict, fueled instead by long-standing local tensions and grievances. UN member states, including members of the UN Security Council that are responsible for mandating peacekeeping missions, may not be familiar with the dynamics of these local-level conflicts, and the Security Council and peacekeeping mission leaders often treat local conflict as a marginal concern. Yet local conflict can have a significant impact on the success of peacekeeping missions and countries' transitions from war to peace.

This report begins by describing how local conflict can undermine two core functions of UN peacekeeping missions — the protection of civilians and support to political processes. Next, it examines how local conflict management is treated in the UN Security Council and in the field by UN missions. The final three sections each explore a different way that UN peacekeeping missions can address local conflict more effectively. First, it proposes a framework to help missions decide how to prioritize which local conflicts to address. Second, it describes how peacekeepers can take a whole-of-mission approach to managing local conflict. Finally, it lays out ways for UN member states and the UN Secretariat to empower missions to intervene more effectively in local conflict by strengthening capacities and mandates.

"Local conflict" in this report refers to conflicts involving violence or the risk of violence that are centered at the subnational level. These conflicts can be contrasted with national-level conflicts (with significant involvement by the national government and/or parties from a wide swath of the country) or international-al-level conflicts (with significant involvement by national governments or parties from multiple countries). These categories are not mutually exclusive; many conflicts that appear local have national or international dimensions. For example, conflict between two ethnic groups in a village may be triggered by regional violence involving those ethnic groups, or a national-level politician may mobilize a local militia to attack a community for personal political gain. Local conflicts can take many forms, including:

- Identity-based conflict (intercommunal, interethnic, interreligious, etc.),

- Conflict over local economic resources (land disputes, illegal mining, trafficking, banditry, extortion, etc.), or

- Local political disputes (disputes over control of formal or informal local governance positions).

Local conflict management is defined, following the UN *Civil Affairs Handbook*, as "activities undertaken to influence a conflict system in order to avoid an escalation of the conflict and prevent it from becoming violent. It is used as an overarching term by civil affairs to encompass efforts to prevent, mitigate and resolve conflict at the local level."[1]

"A focus on national-level conflict can obscure the fact that **the main drivers** of violence may be local.

Why Does Local Conflict Matter?

UN peacekeeping missions are mandated in response to conflicts that pose a major threat to international peace and security; smaller, localized conflicts do not provoke the UN Security Council to deploy peace-keepers. It might therefore seem reasonable to argue that peacekeepers should not expend their limited resources on addressing local conflicts that were not the impetus for their deployment in the first place. This section argues that local conflict management can in fact be essential to fulfilling two core pillars of peacekeeping missions' mandates: the protection of civilians and support to political processes.

Protection of Civilians

Local conflicts can present significant challenges for peacekeeping missions mandated to protect civilians. Even after the major violence associated with a national-level conflict has subsided, local-level conflicts may cause significant rates of violence against civilians. Failing to respond to this type of localized violence not only means that a mission is failing to implement its mandate to protect civilians, but also seriously under-mines the mission's credibility and legitimacy.

For example, in the Central African Republic (CAR), many experts agree that there is little violence at present driven by national-level agendas between Séléka and anti-balaka forces, but there is significant violence by these parties that is driven by local agendas.[2] The Armed Conflict Location and Event Data Project examined conflict trends in CAR in 2016 and found a decrease in lethal political violence in the first half of the year, followed by "a dramatic jump in violence from September to November."[3] After the national-level violence had subsided, disillusioned anti-balaka and Séléka leaders who did not secure government posi-tions and felt excluded from the political process "began to settle into provinces to assert their control over the local people and resources."[4] Attacks by Séléka fighters to intimidate local populations and secure local resources, retaliatory attacks by anti-balaka fighters, and intra-Séléka fighting over control of territory and resources led to the spike in violence in the latter part of the year in rural provinces.[5]

A focus on national-level conflict can obscure the fact that the main drivers of violence may be local. For example, Séverine Autesserre's extensive research on the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) led her to conclude that local-level agendas were to a large extent driving violence locally, nationally, and regionally.[6] Autesserre argues that international actors including UN peacekeepers privileged national- and interna-tional-level narratives of post-conflict peacebuilding and paid scant attention to local-level violence, which they assumed to be "innate" in the DRC.[7]

If peacekeeping missions underestimate the importance of local-level drivers of violence, it follows that the solutions they implement to reduce violence and protect civilians may be ineffective. In the DRC, Autesserre argues that the international community (including UN peacekeepers) failed to prioritize local conflict resolution, instead allocating resources to programming aimed at building peace at the national level. This focus on addressing violence that is considered nationally significant can still be seen today — for instance, the leadership of the UN peacekeeping mission in the DRC places greater emphasis on measures against armed groups considered to have foreign ties than the numerous local armed groups that continue to destabilize the country.[8]

Support to Political Processes

Local-level conflict dynamics can significantly influence the success or failure of a national political pro-cess. This can happen particularly when local-level conflicts are interlinked with a national-level conflict.

A forthcoming report by the UN Division for Policy, Evaluation, and Training on intercommunal conflict offers an example from Mali, where two armed group signatories to the national-level peace agreement have also embarked on local-level community reconciliation dialogues:

> On the one hand, the agreements brokered at the local level could serve to reinforce the national peace process by allowing local actors to take a more active lead in Mali's peace and stabilization agenda and by putting an end to deadly inter-communal violence, which has continued despite progress on the national level peace process. On the other hand, there is a need to carefully monitor and manage the risks associated with these local pacts. Chief among them is that of a reestablishment of a militarized political economic-system centred on illicit trafficking, which was one of the sources of much of the violence in northern Mali to begin with.[9]

But even local conflicts that are relatively independent from national-level dynamics or influence can derail a national political process. For example, intense local violence can create an insecure environment that disrupts the implementation of a peace agreement, or local actors that are not parties to a national political process can use local violence to try to gain a voice on the national stage. The different mechanisms through which local conflict can undermine national political processes are analyzed further, with examples from current peacekeeping settings, on page 20.

Addressing local conflict can thus be critical to a peacekeeping mission's objective of supporting a national political process. Yet, as the following two sections demonstrate, local conflict is often treated in an inconsistent and ad hoc way by the UN Security Council when it produces peacekeeping missions' mandates and by peacekeeping missions in the field.

Treatment of Local Conflict by the UN Security Council

From 1948, when the first UN peacekeeping mission was established, to the 1980s, the UN Security Council mainly authorized missions in response to interstate conflict. Since the end of the Cold War, the Security Council has mainly authorized missions in response to intrastate conflict. As peacekeeping missions have been tasked with responding more to conflicts within one country's borders, local conflict dynamics within that country have become more relevant to peacekeeping missions' activities and prospects of success.

Of the eight modern, multidimensional UN peacekeeping missions currently operating around the world (that is, those missions with sizable military, police and civilian components and authorized to use force in defense of their mandates, including protection of civilians), five have been tasked with local conflict management activities. The joint UN-African Union mission in Darfur (UNAMID) was first mandated to support local conflict resolution mechanisms in 2010,[10] and the mission in Côte d'Ivoire (UNOCI) was tasked with supporting local reconciliation activities starting in 2011.[11] The mandates of the three most recent missions in South Sudan, Mali, and Central African Republic (respectively, UNMISS, established in 2011; MINUSMA, established in 2013; and MINUSCA, established in 2014) have included local conflict management from the outset.[12] UNMISS and MINUSMA have been mandated specifically to address intercommunal conflict since 2014 and 2016 respectively.[13]

The missions in Liberia (UNMIL, established in 2003), Haiti (MINUSTAH, established in 2004), and the Democratic Republic of Congo (MONUSCO, established in 2010) have not been specifically tasked with local conflict management.[14] However, UNMIL has been tasked with monitoring the progress of the Liberian government in facilitating political and ethnic reconciliation between communities since 2006[15] and MINUSTAH has been tasked with "community violence reduction" (i.e., supporting disarmament and livelihood programs to deter gang or armed group violence) since 2006, which also includes supporting some elements of community reconciliation.[16] In practice, MONUSCO engages in significant local conflict management efforts despite the lack of an explicit mandate, as will be discussed later in this report.

Although the Security Council has mandated most of these modern missions to manage local conflict, it has framed the objectives of local conflict management differently in different mandates, reflecting an ad hoc approach. Even if local conflict management is mandated to one mission year after year, the objective of this mandate is sometimes framed differently from one year to the next.

In some mandates for UNMISS and UNAMID, local conflict management has been explicitly linked to the protection of civilians. UNMISS has been tasked with facilitating intercommunal reconciliation under the mandate heading of "Protection of civilians."[17] UNAMID has been tasked with supporting local conflict resolution mechanisms in the context of the Council's concern over localized violence against civilians.[18]

In some mandates for MINUSMA and UNOCI, local conflict management has been explicitly linked to support for the political process. MINUSMA has been tasked with managing conflict at both the national and local levels under the mandate heading of "Support for the implementation of the transitional road map, including the national political dialogue and the electoral process."[19] UNOCI has been tasked with supporting reconciliation processes at the national and local levels in order to provide "political support for the efforts of the Ivorian authorities to address the root causes of the conflict."[20]

In other mandates, local conflict management has been variously framed as an activity aimed at extending state authority,[21] promoting reconciliation and social cohesion,[22] or building the legitimacy of political institutions.[23] In the two most recent UNAMID mandates, local conflict management was identified as one

of three "strategic priorities" for the mission and thus framed as an end in itself rather than contributing toward some other mandated objective.[24]

In addition to tasking some missions with local conflict management activities, the Security Council has occasionally chosen to condemn or express concern about specific instances of local conflict in resolutions extending mission mandates. Throughout the deployments of the eight peacekeeping missions whose mandates are analyzed in this section, the Security Council has called attention to nine specific instances of local violence. These nine instances are summarized in the text box on page 13 (note that several of these local conflicts also had significant national-level conflict dimensions). All incidents involved significant threats to civilians, and many were cases where the mission's credibility was undermined by an inadequate protection response. This provides implicit support for the argument that the Council understands the protection of civilians to be one of the core objectives of local conflict management efforts by peacekeeping mission.

References to Local Conflict in Mission Mandates

WALIKALE, DRC: In July and August 2010, a local coalition of self-defense militias and armed group combatants systematically attacked 13 villages and raped 387 civilians over the course of four days.[25] Peacekeepers did not intervene although they were based just 20 miles away and had been informed that the attacks were happening.[26] The Security Council condemned these attacks and urged the DRC government to implement appropriate responses.[27]

DUEKOUE, CÔTE D'IVOIRE: On July 20, 2012, a camp that was home to an estimated 2,500 internally displaced persons was attacked and destroyed by a large crowd of local townspeople and state-sponsored militiamen.[28] The UNOCI peacekeepers charged with guarding the entrance to the camp were overwhelmed by the size of the crowd and withdrew,[29] and victims of the attack accused the UN of failing to protect them.[30] The Security Council "strongly condemned" the attack.[31]

JONGLEI, SOUTH SUDAN: In August 2011, and again from December 2011 to January 2012, intercommunal violence between the Murle and Lou Nuer ethnic groups in Jonglei State led to the estimated deaths of hundreds of people.[32] On the ground, UNMISS was criticized for its inadequate response to the violence.[33] In 2012, the Security Council expressed "deep concern" regarding this violence.[34]

CROSS-BORDER ATTACKS, CÔTE D'IVOIRE: In March 2013, armed militias attacked three villages in western Côte d'Ivoire, aiming among other things to destabilize the local peace process and intimidate Burkinabe populations.[35] The Security Council strongly condemned these attacks, noting that they "resulted in the temporary displacement of an estimated 8,000 persons, including 500 to Liberia."[36]

KATANGA, DRC: In 2013, national security forces clashed with local Mai Mai militias, causing the displacement of an estimated 12,000 people.[37] The Security Council expressed concern at the increased activity of these Mai Mai groups in Katanga Province.[38]

BENI, DRC: Between October 2014 and December 2015, more than 500 civilians were killed in Beni, constituting the most significant series of massacres the DRC had experienced in over a decade.[39] These massacres were perpetrated by various national- and local-level actors.[40] Hundreds of people staged protests outside the UN compound in Beni, accusing MONUSCO of failing to protect them.[41] The Security Council condemned the killings and called on the DRC government to take military action to end the threat posed by armed groups in Beni.[42]

MALAKAL, SOUTH SUDAN: On February 17-18, 2016, armed actors associated with the South Sudan armed forces attacked the UN protection of civilians site in Malakal, killing 30, injuring 120, and burning a third of the camp to the ground.[43] The attack was in part a manifestation of local interethnic tensions between the Dinka, Nuer, and Shilluk populations living in Malakal.[44] The mission was widely criticized for failing to meet its responsibility to protect civilians,[45] including by an internal UN investigation.[46] The Security Council condemned this attack and requested the UN Secretariat to "ensure that lessons learned from that incident are applied in the future operation of the mission."[47]

BAMBARI, CAR: On February 27, 2016, clashes between farming and herding communities in Bambari led to the death of six people in the first outbreak of violence CAR had seen since the successful election of President Touadera 13 days earlier.[48] The Security Council condemned this violence.[49]

NGAOUNDAYE, CAR: In mid-June 2016, a spate of retaliatory violence between farmers and herders in Ngaoundaye on the border with Cameroon killed 10 people and displaced more than 6,000.[50] The Security Council condemned this violence.[51]

Treatment of Local Conflict in the Field

Like the UN Security Council, peacekeepers in the field often take an unsystematic approach to local conflict and generally do not approach it as a strategic priority. Many missions treat local conflict as a marginal concern, and tend to focus on interventions aimed at the national level at the expense of the local level. For example, MINUSMA is primarily mandated to support the implementation of ceasefire arrangements and measures related to the Agreement on Peace and Reconciliation in Mali.[52] It thus focuses most of its military and civilian efforts on the northeast area of the country, because that is the area that is most relevant to the peace agreement.[53] However, this focus has led to other crucial conflicts, especially in central Mali, being overlooked or ignored.[54] In the center of Mali, violent extremist groups have been using interethnic tensions to radicalize members of the Fulani herding community and undermine state authority.[55] Unaddressed by the national peace agreement, this local conflict still poses a large potential threat to civilians (especially considering that central Mali is significantly more densely populated than the north),[56] and has the potential to sever the Bamako government's access to the north of the country, destabilizing the peace process in the north.[57]

Similarly, MONUSCO has focused particularly on operations against the Democratic Forces for the Liberation of Rwanda and Allied Democratic Forces, two armed groups that are perceived to have international links, over local Mai Mai militias.[58] One MONUSCO representative argued that the mission had ample information to be able to disrupt Mai Mai activities, but that because the mandate and mission leadership focused on foreign armed groups, the mission chose not devote the necessary political will or resources to address local armed groups.[59]

In recent years, some peacekeepers in the field have taken steps toward treating local conflict as a strategic priority. For example, even as South Sudan was embroiled in a national-level civil war, UNMISS's Civil Affairs section invested resources in trying to address local conflict in areas that were not directly involved in the broader war.[60] Civil Affairs personnel reasoned that they could have significant impact in these "green states" by preventing local conflicts from being manipulated by national-level actors and drawn into the broader civil war.[61]

Several peacekeeping missions have also recently embarked on specific analysis initiatives to identify links between local and national conflicts. UNMISS's Joint Mission Analysis Center and Joint Operations Center undertook to produce a comprehensive analysis of links between local and national conflict in South Sudan in 2016 (this analysis was interrupted by the resurgence of violence in Juba in July 2016).[62] MINUSMA analysts have attempted to map relationships between groups involved in local intercommunal conflicts and groups involved in the national-level conflict.[63] MONUSCO analysts have tried to determine how the prospect of elections or the deferral of elections may affect intercommunal conflict dynamics.[64]

Notwithstanding this recent progress, open-ended interviews conducted by the authors in the DRC, South Sudan, Mali, and CAR reveal three overarching deficiencies in how peacekeeping missions respond to local conflict in the field:

Local conflicts are often addressed ad hoc and not on the basis of any strategy. While missions' Civil Affairs sections may be very active in implementing local conflict management programs, decisions about where and when to implement these programs are rarely part of a broader political strategy. In CAR, one MINUSCA representative described the mission's approach to community dialogue as reactive, saying "we go when they call us for help."[65] In DRC, different MONUSCO sections' efforts to deal with local conflict are often disjointed; for example, both the Civil Affairs section and the Stabilization Support Unit conduct

local dialogues for different programming purposes, but they have not collaborated to develop a cohesive strategy.[66] Moreover, both sections' efforts may conflict with the activities of the mission's military component. One MONUSCO representative noted that MONUSCO's joint operations with the Congolese security forces have made the civilian sections' local reconciliation work more difficult.[67]

Local conflicts are often assumed to be an issue for Civil Affairs sections to manage. Missions often adopt a division of labor that views Civil Affairs section as responsible for analyzing dynamics, engaging interlocutors, and designing interventions at the local level, while viewing other sections, particularly Political Affairs, as responsible for managing similar issues at a national level. For example, one UNMISS representative said that the Political Affairs division only deals with the national level, and the Civil Affairs section deals with the sub-national level.[68] A MONUSCO representative similarly stated that the Political Affairs division did not engage in any local political dialogue or community outreach work.[69] Another MONUSCO representative described Civil Affairs as the link to the "local reality."[70] A MINUSCA representative said that the military component concerned itself with defeating armed groups, and the Civil Affairs section concerned itself with intercommunal violence.[71] Even in missions with relatively large num-

bers of Political Affairs staff deployed to field offices, Political Affairs personnel often view their portfolios narrowly to include engagement with local political authorities but not engagement with other stakeholders involved in local conflict such as armed groups or ordinary members of the community.

Missions often lack the capacities to address local conflicts effectively. Military capacities are often not effective at addressing local conflict, particularly intercommunal conflict. For example, the Armed Conflict Location and Event Data Project draws attention to interethnic violence in the DRC in 2016 between Bantu and Batwa communities and Hutu and Nande communities noting that "these types of conflict tend to escalate rapidly through cycles of reprisals which threaten to quickly spiral out of control."[72] UN troops may find it difficult to intervene in these conflicts because of the rapid escalation, and also because they may be reluctant to use lethal force against communal groups (compared to more formal armed groups), citing the difficulty of distinguishing a civilian from a combatant.

Even when dealing with attacks by local armed groups, military components of peacekeeping missions may be ineffective at deterring local violence. This may be a problem of capabilities (for instance, if peacekeepers are not agile enough to prevent an attack from occurring, or do not have adequate intelligence to anticipate an attack), or it may be that the military tactics available to a peacekeeping mission are not an effective way of influencing the behavior of a particular armed group. In northwest CAR, an armed group known as 3R aims ostensibly to protect minority Fulani communities from anti-balaka militia violence.[73] According to a report from Human Rights Watch, the group attacked civilians in Bocaranga and Koui subprefectures

in November 2016, killing at least 50, raping women, and displacing at least 17,000.[74] Although there were around 100 MINUSCA troops stationed in Bocaranga, they reported that their patrols had been ineffective at deterring either 3R or anti-balaka movements in the area.[75]

Yet many missions lack the civilian capacities that may be more effective at addressing local conflict — particularly with respect to mediation, where the UN Department of Peacekeeping Operations' approach has been for peacekeepers to support mediation efforts by others but to avoid conducting mediations themselves. This decision to refrain from mediation has deprived peacekeepers of a critical conflict management tool. For example, there is wide agreement among experts consulted in CAR that violence there is increasingly unmoored from national conflict fault lines and is instead driven by local agendas. Even armed groups that were active in the national-level conflict are now, in the eyes of many experts, motivated by more local concerns — though they continue to use national-level agendas such as political decentralization or partition as justifications for their violence. Local-level mediation could have a significant effect on reducing these threats (as discussed further on page 25), but MINUSCA has only one trained mediator[76] out of 760 civilian personnel.[77] MINUSCA's community liaison assistants and some other Civil Affairs staff have started to receive three-day trainings on conflict analysis and one-week trainings on third-party neutral mediation, but this training is inadequate to enable them to serve as mediators.[78]

The following three sections propose ways to address each of these three deficiencies, enabling peacekeeping missions to take a more strategic approach to managing local conflict.

"Many missions treat local conflict as a marginal concern and focus on interventions aimed at the **national level.**

Strategically Prioritizing Local Conflicts

Many peacekeepers in the field raise the challenge that a huge number of different local conflicts coexist with national-level conflicts. One expert in CAR observed that there are probably as many conflicts as there are villages in the country.[79] It is impossible for peacekeeping missions to address every local conflict, nor are peacekeepers necessarily the right actors to address every one. This section proposes a framework to help peacekeeping missions identify which local conflicts to prioritize by considering three factors: the rate of violence against civilians, the risk of atrocities, and the risk of destabilizing the national political process.

Local Conflicts with High Rates of Violence against Civilians

All peacekeeping missions are required to implement their mandates impartially.[80] For peacekeeping missions with mandates to protect civilians, this means protecting them on the basis of need, without regard to the identities or affiliations of the victims or the perpetrators. Missions with protection of civilians mandates should therefore prioritize local conflict management in areas with the highest rates of violence against civilians. Peacekeeping personnel often mention this factor when asked how they decide where to deploy troops or where to set up local conflict management programs. MONUSCO pioneered a process of conducting analysis to determine areas where the mission "must" intervene, "should" intervene, or "could" intervene, largely on the basis of risk to civilians. MINUSCA has also put in place a similar "protection matrix" to identify flashpoints throughout the country and influence decisions on the allocation of resources to address local conflicts.

Nevertheless, as discussed previously on page 14, decisions about which local conflicts to prioritize are often approached ad hoc and are not consistently influenced by rates of violence against civilians. Moreover, misunderstandings about the protection of civilians persist among peacekeepers and may influence decisions not to intervene in local conflicts with high rates of violence. For example, one senior military UNMISS representative argued that violence that occurred during cattle raids between different tribal groups should be dealt with by the host state government.[81] This representative suggested that such intercommunal violence was more akin to a road accident than a "war scenario," and questioned whether a protection of civilians mandate conferred a responsibility on UNMISS to intervene.[82] Underlying this view is an assumption, which Autesserre describes as widespread in international interventions, that local intercommunal violence is normal in some areas and is therefore not the business of the international community.[83]

Local Conflicts with a High Risk of Atrocity Crimes

Atrocity crimes — that is, genocide, war crimes, crimes against humanity, and ethnic cleansing[84] — have a particular ability to shock the conscience. Protection of civilians mandates arose largely as a reaction to peacekeepers' failure to intervene as atrocity crimes were committed in Rwanda and Srebrenica.[85] The widely recognized "responsibility to protect" principle confers on the international community a responsibility to intervene to protect civilian populations from atrocity crimes.[86] Finally, the failure to intervene as atrocity crimes are committed can seriously erode the credibility and legitimacy of a peacekeeping mission. Missions with protection of civilians mandates should, therefore, assess the risk of atrocities when determining which local conflicts to prioritize.

In many cases, the local conflicts that carry a high risk of atrocities may be the same as those involving high rates of violence against civilians, but this is not necessarily the case. Local conflicts may have high rates of violence against civilians without involving a risk of atrocities. For example, clashes between local militias

where civilians are not deliberately targeted but suffer high rates of incidental violence may not qualify as atrocities. It is also possible for a local conflict to carry a high risk of atrocities in the future while still manifesting a relatively low rate of violence in the present. Consequently, analysis to identify areas with high rates of violence against civilians will not suffice to also identify areas with a high risk of atrocities.

Missions can assess the risk that atrocities will be committed using the UN Framework of Analysis for Atrocity Crimes, produced in 2014 by the UN Office on Genocide and the Responsibility to Protect.[87] This framework identifies eight common risk factors and six context-specific risk factors that indicate potential for atrocities, and provides a number of indicators that measure each risk factor.[88] Regular analysis of local conflicts using this framework's risk factors can allow missions to predict high-risk areas earlier, in turn allowing missions more options for intervention.[89]

Local Conflicts with a High Risk of Destabilizing the National Political Process

As the High-Level Independent Panel on Peace Operations noted, the fundamental obligation of a peace operation is to support the implementation of a political process to establish a sustainable peace.[90] While short-term interventions by peacekeepers to protect civilians are a critical moral and practical imperative, a successful political process is necessary to create a lasting protective environment. It follows that peacekeeping missions should prioritize intervening in local conflicts that are likely to destabilize the national-level political process that the mission was primarily deployed to support.

However, this is easier said than done. Unlike the two previous criteria for prioritizing local conflicts (rates of violence against civilians and risk of atrocities), there is no existing framework for calculating the risk that a local conflict may disrupt a national political process. To assist peacekeeping analysts in identifying local conflicts that may fall into this category, the following examples illustrate different mechanisms by which local conflicts can destabilize national political processes.

Actors excluded from a national political process can use local violence to try to gain entry to a national process. For example, disenfranchised ethnic groups in Mali that were excluded from the peace agreement, such as the Songhai communities in the northwest, could mobilize and use violence as leverage to be included in disarmament, demobilization, and reintegration (DDR) negotiations.[91] If local parties succeed in their efforts, the addition of new parties to the political process may require the renegotiation of terms and thus delay implementation. If the local parties do not succeed, the local violence can still succeed at delaying or eroding public confidence in the political process.

Intense local violence can create a challenging security environment that stalls the implementation of a fragile political agreement. While the preliminary outline of a national peace agreement and DDR program in CAR were signed in May 2015,[92] negotiations to solidify and implement the process have reached a stalemate.[93] In the meantime, outbursts of intercommunal violence across the country as armed elements vie for local control and resources have threatened civilians and created an increasingly unstable security situation.[94] This insecurity serves as a serious obstacle to an already struggling political process. The proliferation of Mai Mai militias in the DRC as a community self-defense mechanism from local violence has similarly interfered with the implementation of the Peace, Security, and Cooperation Framework.

As a variation under this category, the radicalization of local elements represents an increasingly relevant way for local violence to destabilize national security in peacekeeping settings, and thus derail a national political process. This risk is illustrated by the radicalization of Fulani youth in central Mali. The Fulani, a nomadic ethnic group in the Sahel, have been marginalized by the Malian government and have been involved in often ethnically charged land disputes with local farming communities.[95] Extremist groups

have taken advantage of these grievances to recruit and radicalize Fulani youth.[96] Some MINUSMA representatives believe that this situation could escalate and violent extremists could take control of central Mali, effectively cutting off the government's control over the center and north of the country.[97] While radicalization as a major threat is currently limited to Mali among UN peacekeeping settings, some MINUSCA personnel are also concerned that the political marginalization of Muslims, combined with high youth unemployment, will create opportunities for the radicalization and recruitment of youth by violent extremists in CAR.[98]

Local violence involving parties to the national conflict can undermine a national political process. When the South Sudanese government under President Kiir increased the number of states from 10 to 28, it created numerous local sources of tension related to the new distribution of power and resources. Among these local tensions, the 28 states decision reignited a long-standing land dispute between the Dinka and Shilluk ethnic groups over the economically and culturally significant town of Malakal in former Upper Nile State. Armed Shilluk elements disassociated themselves from either of the signatory parties to the South Sudan peace accord and renounced the agreement altogether.[99] Shilluk youth mobilized and the resulting "war of intermittent clashes"[100] between the Shilluk and the Dinka over control of Malakal led to numerous violations of the ceasefire.[101] According to many South Sudan analysts, these local tensions had a high potential for destabilizing the South Sudanese peace process.[102]

As a variation within this category, local violence involving parties to the national conflict can also prompt those parties to fracture, thus jeopardizing the political process. In March 2013, the Séléka — an alliance of armed groups representing the interests of marginalized Muslim communities in CAR — captured the capital of Bangui and overthrew CAR's President, Francois Bozize.[103] Shortly thereafter, fractures within the coalition deepened, creating new dynamics that the UN Secretary-General believed had the potential to complicate the conflict's resolution.[104] This fracturing was in part due to conflicting local agendas and interests. For example, political differences among different Séléka groups in the east of the country joined tensions over the sharing of rent-seeking activities and intergroup cattle-raiding violence to cause the breakaway of a new faction, the Republican Front for Change (FRC).[105] The FRC announced its support for the ceasefire accord that had been negotiated in Brazzaville in July 2014, despite that the Séléka group it had just broken away from had rejected it.[106] This complicated the accord's potential for widespread success.

Local interests or allegiances can eclipse parties' willingness to commit to a national political process. In eastern DRC, despite some efforts at the national level to restore stability per the Peace, Security, and Cooperation Framework signed in 2013,[107] local state representatives often partner with armed groups and local self-defense forces "to secure access to local resources and to bolster their powerbase."[108] Local politicians call on armed groups to intimidate electorates into voting them back into office,[109] or else instrumentalize local conflict to create a security situation unconducive to elections, thereby extending their local political mandates.[110] Furthermore, local elites and Congolese army commanders cooperate with armed groups in order to profit from illicit economic revenue from mining or extortion, often creating a security situation of intimidation and fear in order to maintain control over lucrative areas.[111] One MONUSCO representative observed that many Congolese army commanders operating in the east have local economic interests enabled by local conflict that are more valuable than their military paychecks, giving them little incentive to work for national peace.[112]

"A multidimensional peacekeeping mission can apply **military, police, and civilian** capacities to address local conflict strategically.

Taking a Whole-of-Mission Approach to Local Conflict

Sarah Brockmeier and Philipp Rotmann observe that Civil Affairs sections of peacekeeping missions can have certain advantages compared to non-governmental organizations (NGOs) in addressing local conflict. They note that Civil Affairs personnel can "back up their own work with political advocacy capacities and access to government authorities … at the local, provincial and national levels," and can take advantage of "the military capabilities and air assets of a mission … [to] access insecure areas."[113] This statement hints at the greatest advantage that a multidimensional peacekeeping mission has in addressing local conflict — namely, that it can apply the full range of its military, police, and civilian capacities, in coordination with humanitarian, human rights, and development agencies in the UN Country Team and with other members of the international community, to address local conflict strategically.

An example from UNMISS demonstrates why a purely local and purely Civil Affairs-led approach to local conflict can be ineffective. The Civil Affairs sections in the towns of Rumbek and Wau used similar techniques to address local cattle-raiding violence, but saw different results. In Rumbek and the surrounding former Lakes State, the intercommunal violence was relatively unrelated to the national conflict. Different Dinka subclans clashed in cycles of retaliatory violence related to cattle-raiding, marriage disputes, and assassinations of local leaders. The Civil Affairs section in Rumbek worked with local NGOs and civil society organizations to host peace conferences with local interlocutors. The resulting peace deals were relatively successful. Occasional setbacks or lapses were caused by local community dynamics and tensions, and could generally be addressed by renewed local dialogues.[114]

Conversely, much of the intercommunal conflict between Dinka pastoralists and Fertit farmers in and around Wau, although also related to cattle, was fueled by dynamics in Juba.[115] Following the outbreak of the civil war, Nuer soldiers defected from the armed forces and fled to Fertit communities. The Dinka-dominated SPLA government in Juba subsequently began to view Fertit communities as collaborating with the opposition and exacted harsh retaliation against them.[116] Tensions between these two ethnic groups have been further aggravated by disputes over local political power surrounding the decision of the national government to divide the country into 28 states,[117] and by the fact that significant numbers of cattle belonging to political elites in Juba are believed to reside in the region.[118]

These links between the national conflict and local violence in former Western Bahr-el-Ghazal State have made it difficult to resolve disputes through local-level engagement alone. While the Civil Affairs section in Wau also held numerous intercommunal dialogues and peace negotiations with local representatives, these participants were "not the actors that had the power to make change happen."[119] Several UNMISS representatives said that negotiating only with local-level actors was proving to be insufficient because national-level actors that benefited from violence in the region would then exert their influence and undermine the local peace deals.[120] For example, one UNMISS representative observed that while the Civil Affairs section collaborated with the governor of Wau to negotiate and implement local peace deals, the SPLA commanders in the region did not answer to the governor. Instead, they received orders directly from senior authorities in Juba, who would order them to commit violence that violated the agreements in order to retaliate against Fertit communities accused of abetting the rebels, or maintain Dinka authority through fear and intimidation.[121] Without pressure on political elites in Juba from UNMISS headquarters, mediation aimed at mitigating and preventing local violence in former Western Bahr-el-Ghazal State was not successful.[122]

MINUSCA's efforts to reopen access to a Muslim cemetery in Bangui offer a good example of successful cooperation among partners within and outside the mission to address local conflict with national conflict

linkages.[123] Christian residents were preventing Muslims from circulating freely in the neighborhood of the cemetery. Inability to access the site was the source of significant tension between Muslim and Christian communities, and the CAR government had established a field committee to find a solution. A MINUSCA community liaison assistant (national staff working within Civil Affairs and liaising with local communities) deployed in the neighborhood brought this new initiative to the mission's attention.

MINUSCA then worked on several fronts to address this issue. The mission convened dialogues with community representatives, mediated discussions, and supported the drafting of a "nonaggression pact" signed by representatives on both sides to allow free movement of Muslims in the neighborhood. Recognizing that the French embassy had good relations with armed group leaders who could influence the parties to accept and respect the agreement, the mission also requested the embassy's support. The mission's Political Affairs division and the French embassy reached out to influential interlocutors in the government and in armed groups to solicit their support for the initiative.

Finally, once the agreement was signed, the mission coordinated with others to develop a plan for activities to consolidate the gains made. These activities included regular patrols around the vicinity of the cemetery by the mission's police component to monitor and deter security incidents. They also included activities undertaken jointly by the mission and the UN Development Program to build social cohesion by sensitizing communities to the agreement, supporting income-generation projects in the neighborhood, and supporting infrastructure projects intended to support community resilience.

This example demonstrates how complex it can be to address local conflict, but also how effective missions can be when they take advantage of their multidimensional capacities and partnerships. It is worth noting that this strategic approach was facilitated by the fact that the local conflict happened to be in the country's capital. MINUSCA personnel acknowledged that this type of strong coordination to address local conflict was very rare in field offices. Not every local conflict management effort will require such exhaustive coordination, but the example demonstrates that effective local conflict management may require the participation of several sections within a mission, and even outside a mission, at different levels.

Moreover, such an elaborately coordinated effort and extensive effort (the project took more than eight months) is not possible without the buy-in of senior mission leaders, who can mobilize action by the appropriate personnel within or outside the mission. Mission leaders, including special representatives of the Secretary-General and their deputies, force commanders, and police commissioners, must be better informed about the importance of local conflict to core mission objectives, and must be regularly briefed about local conflict dynamics to facilitate a whole-of-mission approach. Induction training for these leaders should consistently include analysis not only of the national-level conflict, but also significant local-level conflicts. Induction training should also include guidance on how to prioritize local conflict interventions, with reference to the three factors identified in this report (high rates of violence against civilians, risk of atrocities, and risk of destabilizing the political process).

Empowering Missions to Intervene in Local Conflict

The previous two sections discussed steps that peacekeeping missions can take to improve their response to local conflict. But missions must also be empowered by the UN Secretariat and UN member states with the right capacities and mandates to manage local conflict effectively. Decisions about what capacities and mandates to provide are informed by conflict analysis conducted by the UN Secretariat before a mission deploys and during its deployment. This conflict analysis must include analysis of local conflict dynamics, including the drivers of local conflict and the links between local- and national-level violence. Local experts, who are likely to have far greater understanding of these local dynamics than international experts, should be consistently consulted during the analysis process to ensure the accuracy and detail of local conflict analysis.

In addition to ensuring that the UN Secretariat gives local conflict adequate consideration during its conflict analysis, the UN Secretariat and member states can improve local conflict management by strengthening missions' mediation capacities, analytical capacities, and mandates.

Strengthening Mediation Capacities

The UN Secretariat should consider building capacities for missions to conduct third-party neutral mediation interventions in areas with active violence. The current approach is not to conduct mediation directly, though missions do provide political backing and support capacity-building for local stakeholders to conduct mediation. Moreover, local conflict management is largely seen in the peacekeeping context as a peacebuilding tool — a way to consolidate peace gains and prevent future violence. Examples of local conflict management from the Civil Affairs handbook are set in low-intensity or preventive contexts, such as organizing dialogues with herder and farmer communities engaged in cycles of attacks and counterattacks in Côte d'Ivoire,[124] or organizing dialogues to prevent violence between Lou Nuer and Murle communities in South Sudan.[125]

In CAR, the Danish Refugee Council (DRC) and the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) implemented a unique mediation initiative in areas with humanitarian operations and high levels of active violence.[126] Staff were trained in conflict analysis, the "Do No Harm" approach, and mediation skills. The mediation programs were implemented in towns with high rates of casualties and displacement such as Boda, Dekoa, Berberati, and Carnot, tailored to the local environment in each place. In Boda, which was at the time the second-largest Muslim enclave in CAR, separate dialogues were held with Christian and Muslim communities every two weeks to discuss how to improve security in the area and develop plans of action. Summaries of the discussions were shared with each community and eventually, at the communities' own suggestion, they met jointly. Local leaders were trained to engage in community mediation and facilitation. The mediation and training team used a third-party neutral mediation approach — that is, it positioned itself as a neutral facilitator, and did not attempt to advocate for community reconciliation, in line with the belief that reconciliation is a choice owned by local actors and cannot be imposed or even suggested by external actors. The approach depended on an in-depth understanding of conflict dynamics at the local level, "Do No Harm" analysis, and technical capacity in community mediation and facilitation. Although intercommunal tensions persist in Boda, there has not been a recurrence of violence since mid-2014.

The third-party neutral mediation approach applied in this initiative could serve as a model for UN peacekeeping missions to adapt and apply to reduce local violence and manage local conflict. This approach recognizes that political processes negotiated at the national level will not stop violence that is driven by

local-level dynamics and agendas, and recognizes that civilian capacities can be effective at managing even very active conflict. Peacekeeping missions may not always be the right actors to implement this approach (for example, if they are viewed locally as biased, or if their military character undermines their legitimacy as a mediator). But in areas with high rates of locally driven violence, where peacekeepers are perceived as impartial and legitimate, the UN should consider training and deploying significant numbers of civilian staff to systematically implement large-scale emergency third-party neutral mediation programs. This approach would require a shift in thinking in several parts of the UN system: conflict analysts would need to place greater focus on analyzing local conflict dynamics, planners would need to design missions around a civilian mediation-driven concept and recommend corresponding capacities, and member states would need to be willing to fund additional training, mentoring, and supervision, as well as additional civilian personnel. Where UN peacekeepers are viewed as biased or illegitimate and therefore cannot undertake mediation directly, they should request and support emergency mediation efforts by UN agencies or NGOs that have the appropriate capacities.

Strengthening Analytical Capacities

Identifying priority local conflicts and designing effective interventions requires thorough analysis of local conflict dynamics including links to national conflict. A forthcoming draft report from the UN Division for Policy, Evaluation, and Training identifies three shortcomings in peacekeeping missions' analysis of intercommunal conflict, which also apply to other types of local conflict.[127] First, missions rarely conduct systematic analyses of political dimensions of intercommunal conflict, including links to national conflict dynamics. Second, the analysis rarely includes a gender perspective. Third, analysis rarely identifies common triggers of violence. Interventions are unlikely to be effective if they are designed on the basis of analysis that lacks these elements. This type of thorough analysis to effectively prioritize local conflicts requires time, resources, skills, and information-sharing that cannot be managed by Civil Affairs alone.

The UN Secretariat should instruct Joint Mission Analysis Centers (JMACs) to conduct regular analysis to inform the prioritization of local conflicts on the basis of the three factors identified earlier in this report: high rates of violence against civilians, risk of atrocities, and risk of destabilizing the national political process. The 2015 JMAC Guidelines already require JMAC personnel to "contribute to the implementation of [protection of civilians] mandates through the provision of integrated threat/predictive assessments, helping to identify trends of violence against civilian communities, assessing the intentions and capabilities of perpetrators of violence against civilians, and analysing conflict dynamics to predict how civilians might come under threat."[128] The guidelines thus mention analysis of violence against civilians but do not draw particular attention to the risk of atrocities, and do not mention analysis of the risk of destabilizing the national conflict. The JMAC analysis role should be expanded and adjusted to include all three prioritization factors. This analysis should be conducted in consultation with the protection of civilians advisor (if there is one), and/or with UN agencies and NGOs in the Protection Cluster, as well as with Civil Affairs and Political Affairs sections.

Greater decentralized capacities for analysis of local conflict dynamics can better inform mission leadership about ongoing violence or upcoming crises. The UN Secretariat should instruct missions to allocate greater proportions of personnel to field offices, and heads of field offices should be more actively involved in local conflict management. Member states and the Secretariat should provide resources to support missions to establish or strengthen Joint Operations Centers (JOCs) and JMACs in field bases where local conflicts are deemed to be high-priority. Field JOCs and JMACs can supply the heads of field offices, and all civilian, military, and police personnel serving in field offices, the analysis they need to anticipate violence and design effective interventions.

Strengthening Mandates

The section on the treatment of local conflict by the UN Security Council on page 11 shows that many (though not all) missions are specifically mandated to address local conflict, and that the objectives presented for local conflict management activities vary from one mandate to the next. The Council should more clearly and consistently address local conflict by 1) including local conflict management in the mandates of all multidimensional peacekeeping missions and 2) specifying that local conflict management should be conducted to further the objectives of the protection of civilians and support to the political process.

In some cases, mandates could also go further to empower missions to address widespread drivers of local conflict, based on analysis and recommendations from the UN Secretariat. For example, in the DRC, South Sudan, CAR, and Mali, many local conflicts are driven by disputes over access to or ownership of land because of the absence of effective state legislation and enforcement. In CAR, traditional communal mechanisms to govern pastoralists' access to grazing land have been disrupted by violence.[129] This is also true in South Sudan, where the introduction of 28 new states — with poorly defined borders and divisions of administrative power — has added even greater uncertainty about legal mechanisms and authorities to manage land conflict.[130] The Security Council could mandate peacekeeping missions to assist the host state government to conduct consultations with local communities about land disputes and develop legislation on land ownership and use, to fill the legal void that drives local violence.

Similarly, in the DRC, Mali, and CAR, many local conflicts are driven by organized criminal agendas. Armed groups, communal groups, political figures, and others may participate in local conflict in order to gain access to natural resources, smuggling routes, illegal taxes, or other forms of wealth. The revenues generated by these organized criminal activities both motivate and enable local violence. In Mali, there is widespread agreement among MINUSMA representatives that much of the violence in the country is driven primarily by different groups' efforts to secure trafficking routes for drugs, weapons, humans, and more.[131] Many mission personnel also agree that much of the violence in CAR is driven by armed groups' efforts to generate money by controlling diamond mines and trafficking diamonds, stealing and selling cattle, and other criminal activities.[132] The Security Council could mandate these missions to analyze organized criminal activities in order to understand their effect on local conflict, better predict and deter future local conflict, and design more effective and lasting interventions.

Peacekeeping missions may not always be the best-placed actors to intervene on all such issues that drive widespread local conflict. For instance, entities like the UN Office on Drugs and Crime, UN Panels of Experts, and Interpol may have comparative advantages and may be able to play important roles in analyzing and supporting responses to organized crime. The UN Security Council should ensure that drivers of widespread local conflict are included in mandate deliberations and should consider whether and how peacekeeping missions and other UN entities could address those drivers.

Conclusion

Local conflict management can be critical to the success of a UN peacekeeping mission's core objectives of protecting civilians and supporting a national political process. The UN Secretariat, UN member states, and peacekeepers in the field must adjust their approaches on three fronts to reflect the reality that local conflict management is not tangential but fundamental to a peacekeeping mission's work. First, missions should stop treating local conflict as the concern of only Civil Affairs, or of one field office, but as a whole-of-mission priority. Second, missions should prioritize their interventions among the many local conflicts in the mission area according to a three-factor prioritization framework: those with high rates of violence against civilians, those with a risk of atrocity crimes, and those with a risk of destabilizing the national political process. Third, UN member states and the UN Secretariat should empower missions to more effectively manage local conflict by strengthening mediation and analytical capacities and strengthening mission mandates. These changes will enable peacekeeping missions to address local conflict more strategically and effectively, creating more conducive conditions for peace.

Endnotes

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12. UN Security Council Resolution 1996, UN Doc. S/RES/1996, July 8, 2011, para. 3(b)(i); UN Security Council Resolution 2100, UN Doc. S/RES/2100, April 25, 2013, para. 16(b)(ii); UN Security Council Resolution 2149, UN Doc. S/RES/2149, April 10, 2014, para. 30(b)(iv).

13. UN Security Council Resolution 2155, UN Doc. S/RES/2155, May 27, 2014, para. 4(a)(v); UN Security Council Resolution 2295, UN Doc. S/RES/2295, June 29, 2016, para. 19(b).

14. While MONUSCO has never been tasked with local conflict management, its predecessor MONUC (established in 1999) was tasked with local conflict management in 2009, when it was authorized to assist parties to the March 23 Agreement to fulfil their commitments, including by helping to establish local dispute resolution mechanisms (UN Security Council Resolution 1906, UN Doc. S/RES/1906, December 23, 2009, para. 36).

15. UN Security Council Resolution 1712, UN Doc. S/RES/1712, September 29, 2006, para. 4.

16. UN Security Council Resolution 1702, UN Doc. S/RES/1702, August 15, 2006, para. 11.

17. UN Security Council Resolution 2155, UN Doc. S/RES/2155, May 27, 2014, para. 4(a)(v); UN Security Council Resolution, UN Doc. S/RES/2187, November 25, 2014, para. 4(a)(v); UN Security Council Resolution 2223, UN Doc. S/RES/2223, May 28, 2015, para. 4(a)(v); UN Security Council Resolution 2252, UN Doc. S/RES/2252, December 15, 2015, para. 8(a)(v); UN Security Council Resolution 2327, UN Doc. S/RES/2327, December 16, 2016, para. 7(a)(vi). Note that the mandate language prior to 2015 says that intercommunal reconciliation should be undertaken "as an essential part of long-term State-building activity." In 2015 the language was amended; the mission was tasked with managing intercommunal conflict "to foster sustainable local and national reconciliation as an essential part of *preventing violence and* long-term State-building activity" (emphasis added). In addition, in its first mandate, UNMISS was tasked with managing conflict at the national, state, and county levels under the heading of "Support the Government of the Republic of South Sudan in exercising its responsibilities for conflict prevention, mitigation, and resolution and protect civilians." (UN Security Council Resolution 1996, UN Doc. S/RES/1996, July 8, 2011, para. 3(b)(i).)

18. UN Security Council Resolution 1935, UN Doc. S/RES/1935, July 30, 2010, para. 17; UN Security Council Resolution 2003,

UN Doc. S/RES/2003, July 29, 2011, para. 21; UN Security Council Resolution 2063, UN Doc. S/RES/2063, July 31, 2012, para. 20; UN Security Council Resolution 2113, UN Doc. S/RES/2113, July 30, 2013, para. 23; UN Security Council Resolution 2173, Un Doc. S/RES/2173, August 27, 2014, para. 13; UN Security Council Resolution 2228, UN Doc. S/RES/2228, June 29, 2015, para. 11; UN Security Council Resolution 2296, UN Doc. S/RES/2296, June 29, 2016, para. 15.

19. UN Security Council Resolution 2100, UN Doc. S/RES/2100, April 25, 2013, para. 16(b)(ii); UN Security Council Resolution 2164, UN Doc. S/RES/2164, June 25, 2014, para. 13(b)(ii).

20. UN Security Council Resolution 2226, UN Doc. S/RES/2226, June 25, 2015, para. 17(b); UN Security Council Resolution 2162, UN Doc. S/RES/2162, June 25, 2014, para. 19(b); UN Security Council Resolution 2283, UN Doc. S/RES/2283, April 28, 2016, para. 15(b).

21. In MINUSCA's mandate, local conflict management has been consistently listed under headings related to the extension of State authority. (UN Security Council Resolution 2149, UN Doc. S/RES/2149, April 10, 2014, para. 30(b)(iv); UN Security Council Resolution 2217, UN Doc. S/RES/2217, April 28, 2015, para. 32(b)(iv); UN Security Council Resolution 2301, S/RES/2301, July 26, 2016, para. 34(a)(i)-(ii).)

22. In MINUSMA's 2015 and 2016 mandates, the mission is instructed to "exercise good offices, confidence-building and facilitation at the national and local levels, in order to support dialogue with and among all stakeholders towards reconciliation and social cohesion." (UN Security Council Resolution 2227, UN Doc. S/RES/2227, June 29, 2015, para. 14(c); UN Security Council Resolution 2295, UN Doc. S/RES/2295, June 29, 2016, para. 19(b).)

23. UNOCI's 2011 mandate listed local conflict management tasks under its "reconstitution and reform of security and rule of law institutions" heading. (UN Security Council Resolution 2000, UN Doc. S/RES/2000, July 27, 2011, para. (f)).)

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LOCAL CONFLICT
LOCAL PEACEKEEPING

Although United Nations peacekeeping missions are mandated in response to major national- or international-level conflicts, missions are often confronted with a variety of locally-driven conflicts once they deploy. The 2015 report of the High-Level Independent Panel on Peace Operations emphasized two core objectives of peacekeeping missions: supporting political processes that lead to sustainable peace, and protecting civilians from violence. Managing local conflict can be critical to achieving both objectives.

Yet local conflict management is rarely treated as a strategic priority. The UN Security Council mandates missions to manage local conflict inconsistently and without clear objectives. In the field, local conflict management is often conducted ad hoc rather than as part of a strategy. It is frequently treated as a marginal issue for Civil Affairs sections to manage, rather than a central priority. And missions often lack the capacities and mandates needed to address local conflict effectively. This report explores each of these challenges and proposes ways for peacekeeping missions to manage local conflict in a more strategic and effective way.

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