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BLUE HELMETS AS SEXUAL PREDATORS: THE UNSPOKEN SECURITY THREAT?

Abstract: The paper analyses how the United Nations peace operations become new source of insecurity in conflict-ridden circumstances by contributing additionally to the ongoing sexual victimisation of local women and children. The author argues that the UN's legitimacy—based on its collective power to act and to affect the world by its performance—is being eroded gradually by persistent but unsanctioned misbehaviour of peacekeepers. While research on peace operations has largely demonstrated the success of the broadened mandate of peacekeeping in preventing the recurrence of conflict, few studies seek to understand how sexual predation undermines the peacekeeping goals of establishment peace and security for the local population. The analysis focuses on how the gender dimension of power dynamics constitute the peacekeepers' behaviour additional security threat for local communities in the host country. Since the protection of civilians in war-affected situations from violence is now at the forefront of the UN's responsibilities, a consistent leaning on human security and gender equality as cornerstones of serving the victimised population has to be among critical criteria for evaluating UN peacekeeping missions. The author concludes that the issue of sexual predator culture transcends the "logistical" downsides of UN peacekeeping in terms of legal loopholes and operational management and it leaps into the realm of moral sensitivity—the first requirement for true moral behaviour.

Key words: UN peace operations, Blue Helmets, peacekeepers, international security, global threats, sexual abuse and exploitation, gender, victimisation.

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The R2P policy against the mirror of global legitimacy

Global warming, devastating earthquakes, tsunamis, volcanic eruptions, floods and hurricanes, SARS and HIV, Islamic State and jihadism, transnational crime, extortion hacks, and the dark web—are some of the common buzzwords that make today's headlines. The media fuels much unease about uncertainties and dangers, and some scholars claim that we live in a "risk society" (Urlich Beck) in which "moral panics" (Chas Critcher) and "social anxiety" (Sheldon Ungar) are everywhere around us all the time.[2] Global news media coverage of the acts of extreme political violence brings the immediate worldwide publicity to those perpetrators, and cause the perception of exposure to forces which are out of the policy reach, either on the global and national level. Urlich Beck believes that the risk society is a product of *second reflexive modernity*, that is existential condition in which the modern man is—in contrast to his ancestors—quite aware of various sources of risk that endanger human civilisation itself, and thus requires public institutions to effectively cope with security threats.[3] New risks are global by their potentially adverse effects, they are often invisible because they escape human perception, and they are difficult to be reliably assessed and accurately measured. Globalization—understood as a reconfiguration of social geography marked by the growth of transplanetary and supraterritorial connections between people—directly or indirectly is associated with numerous heightened insecurities that are increasingly global in nature, while their implications are always local.[4] Negative outcomes have not flowed from globalization as such, but rather from both poor policy choices and inconsistent or ineffective policy implementation.

This is true for international organisations as well, because they are in turmoil over how to respond effectively to new planetary challenges in order to protect core human values. The problem emerges if an international organisation acts in a way that causes threats to well-being of

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[2] Urlich Beck, *Risk Society: Towards a New Modernity*, Sage Publications, London, Newbury Park and New Delhi, 1992; Chas Critcher (ed.), *Moral Panics and the Media*, Open University Press, Berkshire, 2006, p. 3; Sheldon Ungar, "Moral Panic Versus Risk Society: The Implications of the Changing Sites of Social Anxiety", *British Journal of Sociology*, Vol. 52, No. 2, June 2001, pp. 271–291.

[3] Urlich Beck, *Risk Society: Towards a New Modernity*, op. cit.

[4] Jan Aaart Scholte, *Globalization: A Critical Introduction*, Palgrave MacMillan, Basingstoke, 2005, p. 8.

people who it is supposed to protect. Over seven decades, the United Nations (UN) has played an increasingly important role in securing international peace and managing conflicts as well as in supporting development, and in protecting human rights around the world. After the paradigm shift towards new principle of international order, responsibility to protect (R2P), rooted in Francis Deng and associates' assertion of "sovereignty as responsibility", the UN has adopted and operationalised this international communitarian principle as a global imperative for the last decade or more.[5] While state has the primary responsibility to protect its populations from genocide, war crimes, crimes against humanity and ethnic cleansing, and their incitement, the UN has a responsibility not only to encourage and assist states to exercise this responsibility, but to use appropriate peaceful means, in accordance with Chapters VI and VIII of the Charter, in order to help to protect populations from these crimes if a state is manifestly failing to do it.[6]

The ever-growing policy challenges, which look set to feature on the UN's security agenda occupied with the day's most pressing problems, dispute the UN institutional capability required for the effective involvement in the implementation of newly conceived international obligations arising from the R2P doctrine. The UN's credibility has been shadowed by decades-long mismanagement, irregularities and unethical conduct that seems to show only a tip of an iceberg of the mounting problems with integrity of those who are mandated to act on the behalf of the universal organisation. For instance, the management of the UN peacekeeping operations has come under harsh criticism due to the persistent failures in protecting vulnerable groups of

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[5] Sovereignty can no longer be seen as a protection against interference, but as a charge of responsibility where the state is accountable to both domestic and external constituencies for their own citizens' welfare. Duty-to-protect formulation of sovereignty was further elaborated by International Commission on Intervention and State Sovereignty ("The Responsibility to Protect: Report of the International Commission on Intervention and State Sovereignty", 2001) and by UN General-Secretary High-Level Panel on Threats, Challenges, and Change ("A more secure world: Our shared responsibility", 2004).

[6] "Outcome Document of the 2005 United Nations World Summit", A/RES/60/1, UN General Assembly, 24 October 2005, www.un.org/en/preventgenocide/adviser/pdf/World%20Summit%20Outcome%20Document.pdf# page=30, accessed on 31 July 2016, p. 30; "Implementing the responsibility to protect: Report of the Secretary-General", A/63/677, UN General Assembly, 12 January 2009, www.un.org/en/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=A/ 63/677, accessed on 31 July 2016.

local population, particularly women and children.[7] The latest in a series of scandals occurred in South Sudan in July 2016, when a 12,000-strong UN peacekeeping force failed to act when government forces and other armed groups targeted civilians, including looting of humanitarian supplies (mostly food) and raping. Although mandated to use lethal force if necessary to protect civilians, the peacekeepers did not react as government soldiers raped dozens of ethnic Nuer women and girls just outside their camp—where local civilians had sought protection from renewed fighting.[8] Moreover, UN peacekeepers failed to prevent this horrible crime simply by increasing patrols along the camp where women had been most vulnerable.[9]

The direct victims of all failures made by the UN are always the commoners, ordinary people who strive to survive both horrors of internal conflicts and failed states with their ineffective institutions unable to provide bare life. The poor performance of military, policemen and civil servants in peacekeeping missions widens the gap between the ideas and principles upon which the legitimacy of the UN is meant to be based and reality of the unfulfilled legitimacy expectations. I argue that the source of the UN's legitimacy is its collective power to act globally because all of its decisions affect the world—the very same decisions that largely, yet not always, reflect the shared views of member states on a particular policy issue. Some authors, like Cooper and Patterson, hold that responsibility of the UN for war crimes committed by peacekeepers and their inaction that allowed war crimes to be committed is not straightforward.[10] Since

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[7] In my analysis, I use definition of peacekeeping operation as it follows: "(...) today's multidimensional peacekeeping operations are called upon not only to maintain peace and security, but also to facilitate the political process, protect civilians, assist in disarmament, demobilization and reintegration of former combatants, support the organization of elections, protect and promote human rights, and assist in restoring the rule of law" ("United Nations Peacekeeping Operations: Principles and Guidelines", UN Department of Peacekeeping Operations, 2008, www.un.org/en/peacekeeping/documents/capstone_eng.pdf, p. 6). Peacekeeping includes monitoring of ceasefires, traditional peacekeeping, peace enforcement, humanitarian aid, nation-building, police training, and peacebuilding (ibid., pp. 17–30).

[8] Associated Press, "Reports: South Sudan soldiers raped dozens near U.N. camp", *CBS News*, 27 July 2016, www.cbsnews.com/news/witnesses-say-south-sudan-soldiers-raped-dozens-near-united-nations-camp/, accessed on 12 August 2016.

[9] Ibid.

[10] Ilan Cooper and Eric Patterson, "UN Authority and the Morality of Force", *Survival*, Vol. 53, No. 6, December 2011–January 2012, pp. 141–158.

member states train, equip, and loan troops to the UN, and since it is under UN political authority that such troops deploy in peacekeeping operations, Cooper and Patterson question whether the UN is also accountable for their (in)actions.[11] In my opinion, the fact that the UN is the source of legitimate authority via its Security Council in the determination of cause for intervention means that it holds accountability for the results of the missions under its mandate. The UN is also responsible for the conduct of peacekeepers because it is always possible to determine both along the organisational hierarchy and through implementation process who chosen wrong course of action(s) or to do nothing that eventually thwarted the peacekeeping operation's goals.

The modern legitimacy of political arrangements depends on how far they are answerable to everyone who is affected by them.[12] Since people everywhere are affected by decisions concerning the global processes that are made by international organisations, an international organisation is not only legitimate in the normative sense—that it has the right to rule—but also in the sociological sense, that it is widely believed to have the right to rule.[13] The UN thus has to act in the way that supports the universal values and principles best summarised in the view that human well-being today cannot be defined by geographical or cultural locations, because all human beings require equal moral respect and concern, and the priority of their vital needs.[14] By pledging the allegiance to the UN goals and principles, a peacekeeper must be morally disposed to desire to help "distant strangers" who are in need or suffering. This means that, when considering the course of an action, a peacekeeper has to ignore particularistic interests and to uphold decision-making that supports UN policies designed to address global concerns. The idea of serving the common good, either on national or global level, emphasises that it is not important what is done at the end of the day, but how

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[11] Ibid., p. 154.

[12] More details in: Andrew Linklater, "Critical theory", in: Martin Griffiths (ed.), *International Relations Theory for the Twenty-First Century: An introduction*, Routledge, Oxon and New York, 2007, pp. 47–59.

[13] Allen Buchanan and Robert O. Keohane, "The Legitimacy of Global Governance Institutions", in: Joel H. Rosenthal and Christian Barry (eds), *Ethics and International Affairs: A Reader*, Georgetown University Press, Washington D.C., 2009, pp. 155–156.

[14] David Held, "Cosmopolitanism, Democracy and the Global Order", in: Maria Rovisco and Magdalena Nowicka (eds), *The Ashgate Research Companion to Cosmopolitanism*, Ashgate, Farnham, 2011, p. 164.

it is done—in the morally right or wrong way.[15] Any policy goal attained in ways that override moral concerns can undermine the UN global authority in the long run, even if the outcome benefits the majority of targeted group.

In post-modern conflicts, civilians are explicitly targeted and have become the main victims in traditional combat operations, organised crime activities, and large-scale violations of human rights by state institutions and political organisations.[16] In the mid-1990s, the UN started defining humanitarian problems as security issues and became one of the major international proponents of the concept and policy of human security.[17] Proposed by a group of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) researchers, the concept was designed to shift the focus of policy securitisation towards the factors essential for safety of people, regardless of whether they live in post-industrial polyarchies, transitional countries or poor societies. The UNDP researchers maintain that the safety of people is not necessarily vulnerable because of the risks posed by another state or military bloc. New approach to security issues focuses on people and their communities, and stresses that the biggest threats now come from intra-states conflicts, pandemics, natural disasters, environmental degradation, massive migration, transnational crime, weak states, and structural violence.[18]

The genesis of human security as a conceptual framework for international actions concerned with the vulnerabilities of individuals and communities was expected to alleviate human suffering primarily by the UN peacekeeping operations. If human security can be seen as a global public good—as an inclusive good that benefits everyone—then there is a clear responsibility of the UN towards the well-being of individuals whose rights have been systematically violated.[19] Recognising gender as a significant dimension of the

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[15] See more in: Aaron Wildavsky, "What Is Permissible So That This People May Survive?: Joseph the Administrator", *PS: Political Science and Politics*, Vol. 22, No. 4, December 1989, pp. 779–788.

[16] Mient Jan Faber, "Human Security from Below: Freedom from Fear and Lifeline Operations", in: Monica den Boer and Jaap de Wilde (eds), *The Viability of Human Security*, Amsterdam University Press, Amsterdam, 2008, p. 150.

[17] See: S. Neil MacFarlane and Yuen Foong Khong, *Human Security and the UN: A Critical History*, Indiana University Press, Bloomington and Indianapolis, 2006.

[18] *Human Development Report*, United Nations Development Programme, 1994, http://hdr.undp.org/sites/default/files/reports/255/hdr_1994_en_complete_nostats.pdf, accessed on 1 August 2016, pp. 24–25, 32.

[19] Shahrbanou Tadjbakhsh and Anuradha Chenoy, *Human Security: Concepts and Implications*, Routledge, Oxon, 2007, pp. 185–207.

concept and policy of human security opens the door to better understanding of the importance of peacekeeping operations in curbing and preventing violence against women and girls in conflict areas.[20] UN Security Council Resolution 1325 was adopted in 2000 with the aim of ensuring that all efforts towards peace-building and post-conflict reconstruction would entail sensitivity towards gendered violence. The Resolution refers to the need for all member states of the UN to protect women and girls from gender-based violence, particularly rape and other forms of sexual abuse (Article 10) in the provision of international peace and security.[21]

Why the UN peacekeeping operations must not be gender-blind? There has been trivialisation of the life and value of women going on through history that stems from the belief of male superiority, which continues to be embodied in the social structures of power and transmitted through cultural mores perpetuated in formal and informal education and socialisation. Therefore, direct and indirect lethal and non-lethal violence against women does not happen by chance; it is rather normalised by socially constructed attitudes strengthened through power and domination relationship.[22] In conflict zones, the continuum of violence transcends the simple diplomatic dichotomy of war and peace as well as breaks through boundaries between public and private domains. The widespread incorporation of civilians into war—mostly of women and children—means that the idea that (feminised) civilian and (masculinised) military spaces are distinct and separate no longer holds; everyone is at the battlefront now.[23]

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[20] See more in Laura J. Shepherd, *Gender, Violence and Security: Discourse as Practice*, Zed Books, London and New York, 2008.

[21] "Resolution 1325 (2000)", S/RES/1325 (2000), UN Security Council, 31 October 2000, https://documents-dds-ny.un.org/doc/UNDOC/GEN/N00/720/18/PDF/N0072018.pdf?OpenElement, accessed on 3 August 2016.

[22] David Roberts, *Human insecurity: Global structures of violence*, Zed Books, London and New York, 2008, pp. 65–66.

[23] See more in Wenona Giles and Jennifer Hyndman, "Introduction: Gender and Conflict in a Global Context", in: Wenona Giles and Jennifer Hyndman (eds), Sites of Violence: Gender and Conflict Zones, University of California Press, Berkeley and Los Angeles, 2004, pp. 3–13.

"Boys will be boys": UN peacekeepers' life in denial

Widespread micro-nationalist and religious revivals have caused a substantial rise in intrastate warfare in the Third World since early 1990s. The UN as a universal organisation with global responsibilities to maintain international peace and security supply various important benefits that neither states nor traditional treaty-based relationships among nation-states can provide in early years of the 21st century. Despite limited success of some of these efforts, transplanetary connections have facilitated emergency relief and peace operations as one of the most effective tools available to the UN to manage intrastate conflicts.[24]

The boundaries between conflict prevention, peacemaking, peacekeeping, peacebuilding and peace enforcement have become increasingly blurred. Peacekeeping has become a flexible and multidimensional operation for the last two decades and today. While it is, in principle, deployed to support the implementation of a ceasefire or peace agreement, UN peacekeeping operation is also authorised to facilitate the political process, protect civilians, assist in the disarmament, demobilisation and reintegration of former combatants as much as to support the organisation of elections, protect and promote human rights and assist in restoring the rule of law.[25] UN peacekeeping operations may use force to defend themselves, their mandate, and civilians, particularly in situations where the host state is unable to provide security and maintain public order. But, what if peacekeepers are responsible for committing crimes in the country of deployment?

Because of the nature of their assignments and their foreign origin, peacekeepers have to live in a unfamiliar or even hostile societal environment in which they are deployed, and they still have to interact with local population in managing daily life. UN peacekeeping operations are largely staffed with men who are single or unaccompanied by partners or

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[24] The UN have been deployed 69 peacekeeping operations, most of them for the last three decades. Today, around 124,000 military, police and civilian personnel are serving on 16 peace operations led by the UN Department of Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO) on four continents directly impacting the lives of hundreds of millions of people ("UN Peacekeeping – Factsheet", www.un.org/en/peacekeeping/documents/factsheet.pdf).

[25] Allen G. Sens, "From Peace-keeping to Peace-building: The United Nations and the Challenge of Intrastate War", in: Richard Price and Mark W. Zacher (eds), *The United Nations and Global Security*, Palgrave Macmillan, New York and Basingstoke, 2004, pp. 142–147.

families (or "single for the mission"), which makes fertile ground for the rise of sex industry as an informal sector of local economy.[26] Peacekeepers usually hire citizens of the host country for domestic service (cleaning, laundry, ironing, cooking etc.), which are dominantly considered as "women's work". The established business relation between a peacekeeper as foreigner with good income (and protected by diplomatic immunity) and a socially marginalised local woman hides the power dynamic founded on the traditional construct of male domination. The combination of formal and informal sources of peacekeeper's power, on the one side, and weak status of local women, on the other side, increases the opportunities for violence against or exploitation of the hired woman by her employer. Another dimension of the background power dynamic is manipulative, since a typical peacekeeper often enjoys the sentiment that his local (woman) should be grateful for being employed by him as opposed to another local. The falsely presumed *quid pro quo* expectations can motivate peacekeeper to disregard moral concerns and sexually harass employee.

When it comes to sex work as a vital part of the peacekeeping economy, women and men are available for international personnel either in the context of regular prostitution or involvement in long-term but also transactional relationship based on in-kind payments. Even though this sort of "business relation" seems to be clear in terms of agreed ("paid") expectations and eliminate reasons for abuse, there is still abusive practice going on. The peacekeepers misuse their UN affiliation and privileges in order to cheat sex workers by refusing to pay the agreed price, and then calling in UN security to kick them out when they protest; the UN always takes the side of the UN.[27] However, the most common types of exploitation and abuse are employment for sex, sex with prostitutes, sexual assault, rape, sex in exchange for food or assistance in kind, as well as organised crime industries such as: trafficking for forced prostitution and production of pornography.[28] Regarding child sexual abuse, most commonly identified

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[26] Kathleen M. Jennings, "Service, sex, and security: Gendered peacekeeping economies in Liberia and the Democratic Republic of the Congo", *Security Dialogue*, Vol. 45, No. 4, 2014, p. 314.

[27] Ibid., p. 320.

[28] Sarah Martin, "Must boys be boys? Ending sexual exploitation and abuse in UN peacekeeping missions", Refugees International, Washington D.C., 2005, http://genderandsecurity.org/sites/default/files/sarah_martin_consortium_lecture_2-1-2006.pdf, accessed on 12 August 2016, p. 5.

crimes are forced sex, indecent sexual assault (kissing, touching or making a physical sexual display towards children), and verbal abuse (saying sexually indecent words to a child), and to a lesser extent prostitution, pornography, trafficking, and sexual slavery.[29]

Given the nature of sexual abuses and the environments in which they occur, allegations are often difficult to prove, and thus grossly undercounted with a view to actual offenses, which means that peacekeepers accordingly have gone unsanctioned. In separate reports, Jenna Stern and Corinna Csáky describe the complexity of intertwinned operational challenges that lead to the chronic under-reporting and uneffective curbing of sexual exploitation and abuse in UN peacekeeping.[30] Firstly, cases of abuse go unreported due to the lack of will to jeopardise the survival tactic relied on the international material assistance that often is followed by the pressure of the entire benefitted community. Secondly, fear of facing stigmatisation from the family and local community, the fear of retaliation by the armed perpetrator, and the belief that the peacekeeping mission management will always take the perpetrator's side are additional key deterrents against reporting abuse. Thirdly, many victims are either illiterate or minors, and thus do not know how to report an allegation of sexual abuse. Finally, structural gender inequalities fortified by traditional cultural norms and values can impose on victim a certain level of acceptance of, or resignation to, abuse. On the side of UN peacekeepers, the cultural diversity brings different, and sometimes opposite, attitudes and experiences with a view to the legality of prostitution, the age of consent and the age of marriage ability.

The first allegations of massive sexual misconduct emerged in Cambodia (1992–1993) and Somalia (1992), and were followed by reports from Bosnia and Herzegovina, Haiti, the Democratic Republic of Congo, East Timor, Liberia, Sierra Leone, Sudan, Guinea, Côte d'Ivoire, Burundi, Haiti,

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[29] Corinna Csáky, "No One to Turn To: The under-reporting of child sexual exploitation and abuse by aid workers and peacekeepers", Save the Children UK, 2008, http://resour cecentre.savethechildren.se/sites/default/files/ documents/no_one_to_turn_to_1.pdf, accessed on 13 August 2016, p. 5. The most vulnerable children include orphans and children separated from their parents.

[30] Jenna Stern, "Reducing Sexual Exploitation and Abuse in UN Peacekeeping: Ten Years After the Zeid Report", *Civilians in Conflict*, Policy Brief No. 1, February 2015, Stimson Center, https://www.stimson.org/sites/default/ files/file-attachments/Policy-Brief-Sexual-Abuse-Feb-2015-WEB_0.pdf, accessed on 11 August 2016, p. 10; Corinna Csáky, "No One to Turn To: The under-reporting of child sexual exploitation and abuse by aid workers and peacekeepers", op. cit., pp. 12–14.

and Kosovo. The UN's zero tolerance policy, announced by the UN Secretary-General only in 2003, forbids in Section 3 peacekeepers to buy or exchange goods or services for sex when on mission, to have sex with persons under the age of 18, to involve in sexual exploitation and abuse.[31] Moreover, peacekeepers are strongly discouraged from having any sexual relationships with all local residents. Punishment for violations of the zero-tolerance policy include, for civilian peacekeepers, repatriation from the mission and blacklisting from further participation in UN peacekeeping; military peacekeepers are subject to punishment according to the rules of their home military.

Despite the proclaimed zero tolerance policy, sexual exploitation and abuse still hinder the implementation of peacekeeping mandates. The zero-tolerance policy on sexual exploitation and abuse—now a key principle of the UN Standards of Conduct—was firstly introduced in Code of Personal Conduct for Blue Helmets (1998), and later in Directives for Disciplinary Matters Involving Civilian Police Officers and Military Observers (2003).[32] It was not until 2005 that the UN Department of Peacekeeping Operations established the Conduct and Discipline Team to train peacekeepers about the new policy, to enforce it, and to conduct investigations.[33] But it was not until 2006 that the UN started collecting data on the allegations. The Security Council's Resolution 2272 of March 2016 requested the Secretary-General to repatriate a particular military unit or formed police unit of a contingent when there is credible evidence of widespread or systemic sexual exploitation and abuse by that unit; to appropriately addressed allegations or confirmed acts of sexual

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[31] "Special measures for protection from sexual exploitation and sexual abuse", ST/SGB/2003/13, Secretary-General's Bulletin, 9 October 2003, https://oios.un.org/resources/2015/01/ST-SGB-2003-13.pdf, accessed on 3 August 2016. "Sexual exploitation" means any actual or attempted abuse of a position of vulnerability, differential power, or trust, for sexual purposes, including, but not limited to, profiting monetarily, socially or politically from the sexual exploitation of another. "Sexual abuse" means the actual or threatened physical intrusion of a sexual nature, whether by force or under unequal or coercive conditions (ibid).

[32] "Ten Rules: Code of Personal Conduct for Blue Helmets", United Nations, 1998, www.un.org/en/peacekeeping/ documents/ten_in.pdf, accessed on 22 July 2016; "Directives for Disciplinary Matters Involving Civilian Police Officers and Military Observers", The Department of Peacekeeping Operations, DPKO/CPD/DDCPO/2003/001, 2003, https://cdu.unlb.org/portals/0/pdffiles/policydocg.pdf, accessed on 17 July 2016.

[33] More details on: https://cdu.unlb.org.

exploitation and abuse by their personnel; and, to gather and preserve evidence before investigations in order to ensure that the peacekeeping operation concerned took immediate steps to prevent future incidents of sexual exploitation and abuse.[34]

Even though the number of total personnel serving in peacekeeping operations has increased in period 2005–2015, there has been a general downward trend in allegations of SEA—with a slight increase in the number of new allegations in 2015 (99) comparing to 2014 (80).[35] Unfortunately, the statistics hide the inconvenient truth that the UN efforts against sexual exploitation and abuse have been ineffective due to "a complex architecture, prolonged delays, unknown and varying outcomes and severely deficient victim assistance".[36] The High-level Independent Panel on UN Peace Operations was established by Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon in 2014 to make a comprehensive assessment of the state of UN peace operations today.[37] In its Report, the Panel stresses that addressing abuse and enhancing the accountability of peacekeepers has to be among essential shifts in the future design and delivery of UN peace operations if real progress is to be made. In short, the Panel recommends the establishment of immediate response teams to gather and preserve evidence of sexual exploitation and abuse for use in investigations; the obligation of the troop-contributing countries to investigate and prosecute all credible allegations of misconduct and crime, especially sexual violence involving rape and minors, over the members of their military contingents; the creation of an effective victim assistance programme; the ban on governments from

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[34] "Resolution 2272 (2016)", S/RES/2272, UN Security Council, 11 March 2016, www.securitycouncilreport.org/atf/cf/%7B65BFCF9B-6D27-4E9C-8CD3-CF6E4FF96FF9%7D/s_res_2272.pdf, accessed on 2 August 2016.

[35] Special measures for protection from sexual exploitation and sexual abuse – Report of the Secretary-General (2016). A/70/729, UN General Assembly, https://documents-dds-ny.un.org/doc/UNDOC/GEN/N16/040/56/PDF/N1604056.pdf?OpenElement, accessed on 25 May 2016, p. 2.

[36] "Evaluation of the enforcement and remedial assistance efforts for sexual exploitation and abuse by the United Nations and related personnel in peacekeeping operations", IED-15-001, Office of Internal Oversight Services, 2015, https://oios.un.org/page/download2/id/13, accessed on 4 August 2016, p. 27.

[37] "Secretary-General Appoints High-Level Independent Panel on Peace Operations", Press release SG/SM/16301-SG/A/1521-PKO/451, 31 October 2014, www.un.org/press/en/2014/sgsm16301.doc.htm, accessed on 3 August 2016.

contributing troops to UN missions whose forces are listed in the UN reports on conflict-related sexual violence.[38]

Trapped in the contrast between its own *lexis* and *praxis*, the UN failes to fulfil the global duty to protect individuals in societies torn apart by armed conflicts. The effectiveness of peacekeeping operations in securing the victimised local population has been under harsh criticism, and the UN has become "notorious for dodging the question of responsibility for the actions of their troops".[39] In June 2016, Andreas Kompass resigned from the UN Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, where he ended a 17-year career as the director of field operations. His open letter to the public uncovered that many UN civil servants have been the victims of retaliation or have witnessed retaliation against those who have internally reported on unethical conducts.[40] The typical forms of retaliation have been sidelining, harassment, sudden transfers, poor evaluations, and non-renewal of contracts. Kompass himself was irregularly suspended from his job and was under internal investigation after he had reported and had provided evidence of the child sex abuse in Central African Republic. The secretary-general and UN body responsible for investigations had ignored the horrific reports of children sexual abuse by the peacekeepers until the leaks to NGOs and the media forced them to stop punishing those who try to hold an ethical stance. Kompass explains the UN's systemic failure to uphold the principles and standards set out in its Charter, rules, and regulations by widespread calculation that the benefit of not behaving ethically is perceived as greater than the cost of taking an ethical stance.[41]

The most worrying part of the blurred division of civilian and military spaces is that the institutionalised man dominance produces an unspoken alliance between male perpetrators of crimes against women and the "understanding" forgiving sanction by state or international institutions of the male criminal. A "hyper-masculine" culture has encouraged tolerance for

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[38] "Report of the High-level Independent Panel on Peace Operations on uniting our strengths for peace: politics, partnership and people", A/70/95–S/2015/446, 17 June 2015, www.un.org/sg/pdf/HIPPO_Report_1_June_2015.pdf, accessed on 3 August 2016, pp. 87–88.

[39] Ilan Cooper and Eric Patterson, "UN Authority and the Morality of Force", op. cit., p. 154.

[40] Andreas Kompass, "Why I resigned from the UN", *IRIN – The inside story on emergencies*, 17 June 2016, https://www.irinnews.org/opinion/2016/06/17/exclusive-ethical-failure-%E2%80% 93-why-i-resigned-un, accessed on 22 August 2016.

[41] Ibid.

extreme sexual behavioural patterns for a long time by defining them as normal for male-oriented institutions.[42] In the early 1990s, the UN Special Representative of the Secretary-General Yasushi Akashi to Cambodia responded to NGO concerns about sexual misconduct by UN peacekeepers by playing down the gravity of the allegations, saying, "Boys will be boys".[43] Even if not all soldiers engage in the misbehaviour, the patriarchal beliefs on female subordination—vested by cynical statements of the UN's top officials—remain an important factor that makes some individuals more prone to committing abuse than others.[44] The UN's gender insensitivity is clearly seen in its controversial claims that sexual abuse reflects the behaviour of a handful of peacekeepers, and that it is thus a matter of individual responsibility, since sexual exploitation constitutes off-duty acts, so the UN cannot have any legal or financial liability for those acts.[45] All of this has gradually created a predatory sexual culture that goes hand in hand with culture of silence.

Peacekeeping is aimed at bringing "freedom from fear" by eliminating the use or threat of violence from people's everyday lives, i.e. by ensuring their physical integrity and satisfaction of basic needs. Predatory sexual culture "promoted" by some Blue Helmets substantially negates efforts towards shielding people from acute threats and empowering them to take charge of their own lives. The empirical studies show that the presence of UN peacekeepers has several negative consequences in a host state with long-term effects on the success on the mission. Firstly, Blue Helmets not only cause physical and psychological trauma by the acts of sexual abuse and exploitation themselves, but they also increase risk of spread of diseases (such as HIV/AIDS), and unwanted pregnancies—phenomenon of so called "peacekeeper babies", children fathered by UN peacekeepers.[46] Although

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[42] See more in Sarah Martin, "Must boys be boys? Ending sexual exploitation and abuse in UN peacekeeping missions", op. cit.

[43] Colum Lynch, "U.N. Faces More Accusations of Sexual Misconduct", *The Washington Post*, 13 March 2005, www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/articles/A30286-2005Mar12.html, accessed on 12 August 2016.

[44] Sabrina Karim and Kyle Beardsley, "Explaining sexual exploitation and abuse in peacekeeping missions: The role of female peacekeepers and gender equality in contributing countries", *Journal of Peace Research*, Vol. 53, No. 1, 2016, p. 103.

[45] Machiko Kanetake, "Whose Zero Tolerance Counts? Reassessing a Zero Tolerance Policy against Sexual Exploitation and Abuse by UN Peacekeepers", *International Peacekeeping*, Vol. 17, No. 2, April 2010, p. 202.

[46] Ragnhild Nordås and Siri C. A. Rustad, "Sexual Exploitation and Abuse by Peacekeepers: Understanding Variation", *International Interactions*, Vol. 39, No. 4, 2013, p. 512; Sabrina

there has been no clear evidence to support for the hypothesis that all "peacekeeper babies" are born from sexual exploitation, the unwanted pregnancies can deeply affect relations between local women and men and their social status, and can eventually contribute to more gender inequality.[47] The outlined negative consequences can create the serious imbalance of the already vulnerable local economies that may induce the vicious circle of poverty. This assumption is partly supported by Nordås and Rustad's findings that the poorer the host country in terms of GDP per capita, the more likely there is sexual abuse happening.[48]

Besides bringing more suffering to victimised part of the host country population, a peace operation leader's tolerance towards sexual predatory behaviour undermines the mission's ability to achieve its mandate by damaging both the image and the credibility of the UN in the eyes of local communities. Grady stresses that tolerating misbehaviour in UN peacekeeping breaches the principle of impartiality, defined as unbiased interference associated with core universal values, because sexual exploitation and abuse bring about financial and propagandist benefits for the warring parties—i.e. UN peacekeepers enemies. By taking part in the sex trade, for example, peacekeepers support illicit economies that maintain instability in the region, further entrench systems of inequality and exploitation, and, thus, thwart a return to real peace and security.[49]

Beyond sexual misconduct:
The dangers of an empathy deficit

In his analysis, Neudorfer shows that deterrence measures undertaken in peacekeeping operations in form of the introduction of a conduct and discipline unit have likely contributed to a recent reduction in the number

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Karim and Kyle Beardsley, "Explaining sexual exploitation and abuse in peacekeeping missions: The role of female peacekeepers and gender equality in contributing countries", op. cit., p. 101.

[47] On this issue see more in Olivera Simić and Melanie O'Brien, "'Peacekeeper Babies': An Unintended Legacy of United Nations Peace Support Operations", *International Peacekeeping*, Vol. 21, No. 3, 2014, pp. 345–363.

[48] Ragnhild Nordås and Siri C. A. Rustad, "Sexual Exploitation and Abuse by Peacekeepers: Understanding Variation", op. cit., p. 530.

[49] See details in Kate Grady, "Sexual Exploitation and Abuse by UN Peacekeepers: A Threat to Impartiality", *International Peacekeeping*, Vol. 17, No. 2, April 2010, pp. 215–228.

of committed acts of sexual abuse and exploitation.[50] Rather, the problem of sexual predator culture goes deeper into human nature; it is not value-free "logistical" downside of UN peacekeeping associated with legal loopholes and operational management flaws. The persistent nature of this type of unethical conduct steps into the realm of empathy as a building block of moral sensitivity, which is the foremost requirement for true moral behaviour. This is most evident in the crime of rape. Rape is not a simple violation of law because it includes devaluation of the potential victim. The typical perpetrator is an individual with anti-sociality, i.e. with menacing antisocial attitudes and beliefs, particularly hostility toward women and acceptance of interpersonal violence.[51] A man who is devaluing women in general and the women who he is interacting with in particular is therefore more likely to rape. The presence of sexual exploitation and abuse is likely to be higher in specific circumstances of peacekeeping operations in often hostile surroundings where male dominance encourages negative views towards local women and children, when there is tacit organisational tolerance of the misbehaviour driven by pragmatism, and when potential victims are easy targets for manipulation.

But, are not Blue Helmets supposed to help vulnerable groups of the host country's population? The problem is that we have learned to value the lives and well-being of our compatriots more than the lives and well-being of foreigners. The concepts of human security and gender equality itself is profoundly connected not only with ethical possibilities of human beings, but also to the notion of empathy, which lies at the very centre of the psychological basis of morality. Human ability to act morally is grounded on the ability to identify and understand other peoples' emotions. Martin Buber holds that human behaviour is determined by two contrasting types of relations: 1) *relation I–You* is established as a two-way relationship between humans as free and equal persons; 2) *I–It* experience rather depicts the attitude of a man as sole self-consciousness subject to things.[52]

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[50] Kelly Neudorfer, "Reducing Sexual Exploitation and Abuse: Does Deterrence Work to Prevent SEAs in UN Peacekeeping Missions?", *International Peacekeeping*, Vol. 21, No. 5, 2014, pp. 623–641.

[51] See more in Martin L. Lalumière et al., *The Causes of Rape: Understanding Individual Differences in Male Propensity for Sexual Aggression*, American Psychological Association, Washington D.C., 2005.

[52] See more in Martin Buber, *I and Thou*, (scanned copy version), Morrison and Gibb, Edinburgh and London, 1937, pp. 3–34.

Modern social alienation remodels the relation I–You into the relation I–It, so other humans are now identified as mere objects, things thrown out of the realm of good and evil that can be easily targeted by a wide range of immoral actions—from indifference to manipulation. Treating people as they are mere objects or means to achieve someone else's goals stems from the weak empathic connectedness, thus missing the feeling of involvement innate to genuine sympathy.

An individual with no ability to empathise with others poses a huge threat to the success of peacekeeping missions aimed at helping foreign people who are devalued as victims by wide array of insecurities in conflict-affected areas. For Korsgaard, to commit an evil action means to lose the ability to reflect upon ourselves under the description under which we find our life worth living and our actions worth undertaking.[53] For an individual with no internalised moral prescriptions applied to his/her own action, we cannot claim that he/she has a moral sensitivity. Moral judgment is essentially not an act that occurs exclusively in the mind of an individual, but is a continuous communicative process in which the judgement is confirmed through collective bargaining. The pervasive predatory sexual culture, vested by sort of international bureaucratic *omerta*, desensitizes peacekeepers to feeling of guilt and makes them devoid of the capacity to distinguish between what is right and wrong conduct. The victimised women and children are coerced or deceived to be "tools" for peacekeepers satisfaction or "human resources" for lucrative illicit business; they are treated as if they were inanimate objects.

Conclusion

In a plethora of traditional and new global security threats, there has emerged another one over the last two decades—continuing sexual misconduct of military, police, and civil personnel in UN peace operations worldwide. Other security threats alike, this one comes from the international organisation responsible to protect the well-being of people who are already suffering from much insecurity in conflict-ridden areas.

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[53] Christine M. Korsgaard, "The Sources of Normativity", The Tanner Lectures on Human Values, delivered at Cambridge University, 16–17 November 1992, www.tannerlectures. utah.edu/lectures/documents/volume25/ korsgaard_2005.pdf, accessed on 3 August 2016, pp. 84–85.

Empirical studies and anecdotal evidence show that UN peace operations are still contributing to the ongoing sexual victimisation of local women and children despite well-established internal regulations and mechanisms aimed at curbing and preventing the sexual misbehaviour. The analysis of the gender dimension of complex power dynamics in communication between peacekeepers and local women and children of the host country finds that traditional male dominance behavioural patterns—those brought from the societies of peacekeepers' origin and those existing in the host society—are successfully reproduced thanks to many factors related to vulnerabilities of local communities. Extreme poverty, the feeling of disempowerment and social disconnectedness, heavy dependence on international aid assistance, and targeting by local organised crime industries facilitate sexual predation and maintain the vicious circle of vicitimisation.

Women and children are insecure insofar as they are in danger of being injured, maimed, or killed by those who organise to harm them. Freedom from violence is important, but what makes that violence potent is that it is organised, which is true in regard to peacekeepers misconduct. Even though only some of UN personnel are involved in sexual abuse and exploitation, the fact that the misbehaviour has been persistently tolerated and left unsanctioned displays the presence of the deliberate organised activity aimed at covering up misdeeds of country fellows. This is why the problem of sexual predator culture transcends the "logistical" downsides of UN peacekeeping in terms of legal loopholes and operational management and it leaps into the realm of moral sensitivity—the first requirement for true moral behaviour.

The legitimacy of the UN as a universal organisation can be made, can be used, and can also be lost in the context of UN peace missions if they continue to produce the human security and gender equality deficits. Who will believe in the UN's cause when the behaviour of Blue Helmets has been so unjust and has violated human rights of those who were supposed to be protected? The decline of trust in UN peacekeeping might be a structural problem for the success of future R2P doctrine implementation in the early 21st century in the case of continuing pressure on the UN to rescue innocent people who are suffering by joint military force from outside instead of standing by and watching. Less trust generates less security, something that defeats the purpose of the desired universal goal to protect local population in conflict and post-conflict zones.

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