

Interviewee Quotes

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Interviewees

1. Senior UNDP, formerly OCHA
2. Senior International Organisation
3. Independent Consultant/Expert
4. Military, formerly deployed in MONUSCO
5. Independent Consultant/Expert
6. Senior Military, formerly deployed in MONUSCO
7. Senior Military, formerly deployed in MONUSCO
8. Independent Consultant/Expert, Academic and former UN political adviser
9. Senior UN DPPA-DPO
10. Senior UN DPO, Policy, Evaluation and Training Division
11. Former Senior Military Commander
12. Former Senior Legal Officer of the UN Office of the Legal Counsel
13. Office of the UN High Commissioner of Human Rights
14. Office of the Special Representative on Conflict Related Sexual Violence
15. Senior Political Affairs & Security Council (Member State mission team)
16. Senior Political Affairs Officer, UN DPO

1 Peacekeeping as Intervention

1. [MONUC/ The transitional committee] 'had a formal role under the peace agreement to monitor the implementation of the agreement and would issue communiques and had a pretty intrusive role.'¹
2. [MONUC → MONUSCO] "...the degree of international involvement or shall we say the degree of tolerance for international involvement has declined steadily, particularly after the elections in 2006..²
3. [MONUSCO] "Fast forward 20 years and anything, you know, that even hints at interference in the DRC's sovereignty, is, you know, obviously a no no. And we saw that during the last elections where they sort of refused to accept MONUSCOs logistical support even though it was mandated³ to provide it, even though there were 80 million dollars placed at the disposal of the mission, to support the elections, the Congolese, from the President on down, it was very clear that they were going to organise their own elections and didn't need that sort of interference or didn't welcome that kind of interference."⁴
 - Interviewee 16 identified this decline in tolerance for international involvement as a 'huge difference' between MONUC and MONUSCO and noted that 'maybe the pendulum is swinging back now with the new President. He's shown more openness towards cooperating with the UN'⁵
4. [Questionable intervention?] "Congo is huge but when you look at the position of where the UN are, it's all around the country at the borders... if they were inside it would probably be about 100 miles from the border, there isn't much in the middle. Where they are, you look around the country, it's not...a conspiracy theory, but really [questioning] their agenda, why they are here...Issues are happening inside the country too, with the Kasai, can't understand why there is no presence of UN in Kasai. There's no presence in Bas-Congo where there was a lot of trouble, which killed about 3000 people. As soon as you start going inside the country, you realise there is less presence of UN. I can understand, of course, the country is big and maybe that could be just as strategic."⁶
 - Congolese perspective

¹ Interviewee 16 (16.4).

² Interviewee 16 (16.3).

³ Interviewee 16 (16.5)

⁴ Interviewee 16 (16.5).

⁵ Interviewee 16 (16.6).

⁶ Interviewee 5 (5.4).

5. "I don't see them as an intervention because they don't intervene. If you're an intervention then you intervene, you don't just observe...there isn't anywhere where you see they have done something to look like intervention. But where they have done it often has been similar to the positive story...of MONUC [assisting with end of conflict and elections] has been often because government has approached them to be part of it. ...are you there to wait and enable the government to operate or the EU has asked you to work with them, or you can do it by your own initiative. Where the UN has done something, I don't see evidence or examples or where they operated any of those 3 mandates."⁷
 - Congolese perspective
6. [Colonial comparison] "it's often said that power of influence is either access to information or military or money. They have the three things. They have amazing military resources, that's the first thing that hits you when you go to Congo, you see the tanks, helicopters, you see capacity of finances, you see arrogance that actually probably haven't been in colonial times but probably arrogance similar to the colonial moment. Because for them, you can see that they are untouched from the local community, they live in luxury houses, they have luxury offices, they have luxury cars, the soldiers, ethical wise, these are things we think about much more to a top level New York."⁸
 - Congolese perspective
7. [Colonial comparison] "Something we often forget, the members of the UN intervention, we see it as UN intervention but actually we forget this is a contribution from poor countries e.g. Bangladesh, Pakistan, some very corrupt countries in Africa. Under the umbrella of corporate UN. I'm not trying to stereotype them but of all these things, of all the puzzles, you don't see them really joining, you don't see the capacity, the money. And, in fact, they don't even need to say anything in terms of cohesion or in terms of manipulating or obeying a colonial power, what they have is enough to dominate. The symbols of what they represent in the communities and as a neighbour is enough to dominate. So if you can imagine it's a chief of army who wanted to go anywhere from Coventry to London, he would use MONUSCO, so you depend on them, they have no resources, capacity to move anywhere. Any mission that the government want to do, they have to approach MONUSCO to make it happen and they use that as influential power, as imperialist power. So in all those things I have just said, I don't see them as an intervention, I just see them as a really power, I don't like to say that there is an agenda, there's a kind of security and military representation of global security or resource in Africa. I don't buy into that but what I see is a

⁷ Interviewee 5 (5.5).

⁸ Interviewee 5 (5.6).

bureaucratic organisation that presents itself as an imperialistic power that can be used by powerful member states of the UN.⁹

- *Congolese perspective*

8. [Justification for presence] "because it has taken so long, for 20 years, it become difficult to monitor, you know, why did we go in the first place, and where are we. There is a continued justification of why we should still be here. For example, before stabilisation it was really something else, kind of intervention but now they talk about stabilisation. It becomes a term we use in international relation discourses, in Afghanistan, in Pakistan, they just picked up because you sell and it brings funding and they can continue their mission in the Congo... it really sustains them quite a lot. In fact now, when they lost about 700 staff in the last two years, you saw there was almost another way to try and justify 'why are we still here'. Ebola was really another kind of something that could justify existence but they have done some joint mission with the government. One I am aware of is in South Kivu where they operated alongside the government, against a rebel group who were almost going to capture a town and I'm not aware of anywhere else, Goma was captured twice by a rebel movement whilst the UN where there."¹⁰
9. [Justification for perception] "Whenever I confront them as an individual, as a Congolese, I said 'why don't you intervene', they say 'well, we are neutral'. And then you ask them, well if you are neutral then at least you can do shelter and humanitarian things. That is neutral. Then you question again their intervention; if they cannot intervene in politics and the military and serving people, why can't they give food to people. And whenever they do, they take photographs, even if we have like five sacks of food, they will make a big deal about it, it's really undignifying. ... you don't see the difference with MONUSCO and the FARDC, and that is shocking because you think that they would be embarrassed to behave like that."¹¹
10. [UN as a host state tool] "[after 2011 elections] the arrangement they had allowed to happen [during MONUC] was going to end so what Kabila did was to use UN to get rid of his own opponent. ...UN became an instrument to sustain autocratic regime in the DRC and Kabila cleverly managed to get Jean Pierre Bemba, his most difficult opponent. He used the UN to displace demonstrators in Kinshasa and to capture Bemba. Similar story to 1960 with Patrice Lumumba. ... they [MONUC] cleverly would not want to be too much forceful otherwise they are almost siding

⁹ Interviewee 5 (5.7).

¹⁰ Interviewee 5 (5.8).

¹¹ Interviewee 5 (5.9).

with political leaders, but they did. They really did help Kabila. At that time, the UN, EU...I think they were feeling Kabila was really positive, one of the only political supporters they can support to win. [they thought] it was very dangerous, if one other opponent was going to become President, it was very dangerous for the country, [they thought it would be] much more stable with Kabila at that time."¹²

11. "they [the UN] have taken advantage of vacuum of leadership, vacuum of governance. And people go to them in Bukavu, I'm surprised to see a queue to report local issues, things you would report to the local council. And of course, the UN will cleverly just allow that queue to happen as if their presence it shows 'we are useful', where they want to go to, but they won't do anything. But still there is a queue."¹³
12. [Regional relations] "if you look at what Tshisekedi is trying to do now, it is what we always wanted Kabila to do which is to say to his neighbours – we have to come up with a different way of doing business in the Great Lakes. I have to provide some semblance of governance and decentralisation and you lot have to stop interfering in my affairs and when they reached that level of Nirvana, then we can start, you know, tackling with the armed groups and the illegal exploitation of minerals and all those other things that keep the conflict going. But Kabila wasn't quite ready to do that. It's no surprise to me that this year one senior commander has been killed and another one captured of the FDLR, it's not that Kabila didn't know where they were, he just didn't want to take any action against them. I mean, we have many stories where we, or others were on the heels of MediCura, only for him to squirrel away at the last minute and for us to have a deep suspicion that someone in the Congolese state was alerting him to where we were. And that deprived us of legitimacy in front of the Council."¹⁴
13. [Host State Relations] [speaking of difference between Tshisekedi and Kabila] "it's just so different and it just makes me regret all those years we spent knocking our head, trying to work with Kabila and his obstinacy."¹⁵
14. [Host state relations] "the events and the sovereign decisions of Kabila and Museveni to go against ADF, which was contested, I don't know why, by some people ... but they are head of state, so it is their

¹² Interviewee 5 (5.11).

¹³ Interviewee 5 (5.14).

¹⁴ Interviewee 9 (9.19).

¹⁵ Interviewee 9 (9.26).

sovereign decision .. we say [the UN/FIB] should go to FDLR or [other armed groups] but... it is their sovereign decision [as to which armed group is targeted]. So they make a decision and we contest them. And then you even create a tension which is not favourable because it is difficult to have these windows of opportunity so you lose the dynamic.”¹⁶

- *Referring to the political conditions/aligned stars, which allowed for the creation of the FIB*

15. [PK short term ‘aliens’ and local entities] “when you are a peacekeeper, and I would say the same when you are a Western troop operating in Africa, you are an alien, you are a foreigner. You cannot be part of a lasting solution. You will be gone tomorrow, so you need to build the solution with local entities, whether you like it or not. And I say that, having totally in mind the conditions under which the UN has to operate – HRDDP principles, human rights, whatever... I could not, myself, leave being aware that I am supporting people who are killers, criminals and the rest.” [goes on to discuss HRDDP and the UN’s problems in implementing this – see *HRDDP section below*] ... I think MONUSCO is paying the price of having [this need to build/support local entities] too low within their mandate... If you wait for those entities to be perfect, to be supported, it will never happen and the French have the same problem in Mali ... so what I can tell everyone, even publicly, that what we did efficient in Congo is in support of Congolese armed forces.”¹⁷
16. [UN lasting solutions] “when I speak about lasting solutions, having not only the short term need to protect but also the longer-term establishments of conditions for stability – and this is another problem where the UN is very very bad today in general.”¹⁸
17. [UN as the solution] “there is still a perception ... it’s like the solution is the UN but it’s totally nonsense! The solution cannot be the UN, UN has to be an enabler. Has to be in support of a process, has to be with these capacities, constraints and means, it has to be one actor but absolutely not the solution. And sometimes you can read a report on a situation, you never see the host country, institutions, entity and the rest – they are not there! It’s like protection is done by the UN – no! – protection is done also by others in the village, by your teacher, by anyone, they are never there. And when I say this is kind of a cultural problem because now, with social media and the rest, it becomes more and more transparent but you can imagine, we are seeing people with money, with

¹⁶ Interviewee 11 (11.24).

¹⁷ Interviewee 11 (11.28).

¹⁸ Interviewee 11 (11.29).

a lot of means, very rich, coming to people who, most of the time have nothing and we are kind of imposing a solution.”¹⁹

18. [UN as ‘solution’/ UN disconnect] “I have seen a number of, including civilian, including human rights staff, they go to a village, they don’t even salute the people, they speak, doing their job, they don’t ask the chief of the village to give his view. It’s even extremely impolite. So I don’t mean that it is a fact for a lot of people but when this happens, still now, after 20 years of presence, we have a problem and now, part of the reaction that we can see in Western Africa, in MINUSMA, or the Great Lakes is somewhat, I think, due to this type of attitude, which is seen as arrogant ... Even myself, I was coming with my helicopters, so I need to understand, I am seen as somebody very powerful. It’s not the same as somebody sitting and living in the conditions of the people. And we have been too far, with our camps, with our way of operating, to be too far from the populations, from the reality. While some humanitarians, I would say some people from UNICEF, or non-UN, MSF, or a number of people, they live the way of life of the people. So they have a totally different approach and UN is somewhat disconnected. And this is something that people should have more in mind because it explains a lot, some of the perceptions, so yes, this is a bit sad.”²⁰
19. [UN disconnect] “It was the first time I actually lived in Congo and I have never felt so far, so remote from the Congolese. I was in a container, it was very unhappy in my container, which is part of a container park. It’s not about containers, it is about containers as a metaphor how the UN is rooted in society. It is a parallel world.”²¹
 - *Interviewee was working within the SSU but left after 6 months as they felt that what they were doing was not relevant.*
20. [UN disconnect/lack of country knowledge] “It’s interesting and its painful, the people, intelligent as they are, they arrive, they know they’re not staying longer than one or two years, they know that’s not long enough to really understand the complexities of Congo’s conflict and to be honest, some of them don’t even try. Some of them just try to work and handle/juggle with their management tools, action plans, logical frameworks and that’s amazing but it’s not about Congo. It’s not about Congo as it is outside of the container park. It’s a virtual world. The extreme complexity of local situations or such things as the national political landscape, I only met a few individuals who really have the level you could expect. ... it’s very hard to integrate such people in the hectic but superficial institutional life of MONUSCO and the simple reason is that that life is not about Congo.”²²

¹⁹ Interviewee 11 (11.39).

²⁰ Interviewee 11 (11.40).

²¹ Interviewee 3 (3.1).

²² Interviewee 3 (3.5).

21. [UN disconnect] "the community, they see it [MONUSC], they see it as a giant people with so much money and so much military and so much capacity and so much information, they have workers who monitor information in the community everyday but then people who are just there, who they don't know, they don't know what they're doing."²³
22. [Disconnect/Stale] "I think what frustrated me the most about Congo was that the majority of peacekeeping countries that were there in big numbers, they've been there for so long, they've got cricket pitches and amazing hosting skills but they don't do night patrol or they don't patrol off a road. Yet it's at night time, off a road when most of these attacks against the civilian population take place. So I would say a low point is that the peacekeeping countries there are becoming stale. That they are focused on a very traditional outlook of peacekeeping, which is a mere presence and we monitor and we observe, but they are not proactive and they are not willing to take risks."²⁴
23. [Not engaging root causes] "I suppose that is it ultimately, UN peacekeepers, we don't look at the root cause, we're only there for a short amount of time so we're like an Elastoplast to a massive arterial wound and the surgeons, you've got to be there with really resources, but I think the FIB, in a way, or maybe the model of the FIB could have been better, but the UNHQ has got to change how it thinks UN peacekeeping is done."²⁵
24. [TCC Priorities] "I suppose a problem is that lots of the officers in the UNHQ are officers from those countries that don't really want to spill bloodshed, I'm talking about a real Mafia of Pakistan, Bangladesh, India. So that means out of the 110 officers in NY, I would say the lion share is going to those countries, and yet those countries, unless it's like weirdly fighting between themselves, where they get really willing to protect because it's for their own territory, I don't see that sort of willingness to take risk for Congolese civilians displayed."²⁶
25. [African solutions to African problems] "if you look at peacekeeping in general, or Africa in general, you see some trends happening. One of them, which is very key is what we may say, ownership of African solutions. There is a clear consideration that it's difficult to impose a model, to impose a proper approach, but MONUC/MONUSCO has been, we like it or not, as it is the case also for other missions, an illustration of this ongoing trend, including in what was not done properly. Because regional dynamics are important. People don't look too much at what

²³ Interviewee 5 (5.10).

²⁴ Interviewee 7 (7.6).

²⁵ Interviewee 7 (7.9).

²⁶ Interviewee 7 (7.10).

SADC is doing but actually there are some dynamics, important. So this is already one and the FIB, among other different things, was an illustration, also, of African regional solutions attempt to be provided in the problem."²⁷

26. [UN perception of conflict] MONUC "UN was very much influenced by EU policy in terms of building government capacity and bringing all those rebels together with the govt. ... I think what they did is they wrongly thought the issue was about bringing all these armed group leaders and government together and then they would have fixed Congo. So they did that and for me personally, the community...for the first time was acknowledged. The community was examined and I think what UN at that time advised was that there had to be a sort of representation, in their sort of Western ideas, they think it's about tribal killing each other so therefore if you take one from each group then therefore you are solving the issue, which really is not. You have to change policies of exclusion, change policies, not on numbers."²⁸
27. [Socio-Economic Impact] "And MONUSCO is really part of the socio-economic fabric of eastern Congo, in many places it's a major employer, its presence is almost taken for granted and it would be really interesting to see what happens. There has just been a strategic review which has recommended a 3 year drawdown and exit of the mission. But what will happen socio-economically in those areas where MONUSCO is."²⁹
28. [Socio-economic Impact] "if the plaster is ripped off it would be the worst is actually the entire sub-economy that has built up around the UN... the amount of money that swills around in Goma as a result of the force headquarters being there is absolutely astronomical."³⁰
29. [on Beni protests Dec 2019] "I think that's being instrumentalised for political reasons ... I think the entire way of dealing with the Beni situation is probably not very well thought through. There are armed groups that are just in there for monetary purposes and profiting and benefiting from the Ebola response and so a lot of what is being voiced at the official level is really got nothing to do with what is being said, they're instrumentalising the economy of those different aspects of things for their own purpose and I think the UN has a great responsibility in the sense of paying people to get access etc, which has always been

²⁷ Interviewee 11 (11.41).

²⁸ Interviewee 5 (5.1).

²⁹ Interviewee 8 (8.17).

³⁰ Interviewee 4 (4.13).

an issue. But when you create an economy around your own response then you're changing the dynamics of the conflict."³¹

- *Nb. Interviewee noted that in Beni it's not about PoC anymore, really it's about networks of economic, to some degree criminal, organisations built on past conflict and underlying grievances*

2 Peacekeeping in the DRC

30. "Maybe, if anything, the good point [about MONUSCO] is that it's making the UN aware that those old missions of observe and report and monitor they don't fit in to 21st century conflict and whilst it would be nice to imagine that you could just go to a country where a blue helmet, and just use binoculars, the international community isn't happy with that because you're not doing any good saying 24 people have just been killed, you're only doing good if you're saying '24 people have just been killed so we are now going in using force to prevent another 24 people being killed'. I don't know, I might be extending the length of Congo's influence, because in a way, I do think Rwanda, I hope, has in some way taught the UN that they can't just have these monitor and observe missions. And maybe that's why we've changed the name, in the UN it's no longer peacekeeping, it's just peace operations, maybe that just gives them a wider breadth to start being more kinetic. I suppose I've been in the military too long and I'm a little cynical but I definitely think that the military need to do more engagement with the local population but when an armed group is harassing the local population, I think that the UN should be prepared to step up and intervene."³²
31. [MONUC] "...it was a time of a lot of optimism, lot of hope and where the UN certainly had an absolutely critical role in implementing the provisions of the Lusaka Ceasefire agreement, that's how MONUSCO, or MONUC at the time, came into existence."³³ "So in a sense it was almost the ideal circumstances under which peacekeeping operations are supposed to be deployed [...] because of all the pressure that had been exerted internationally or what have you, the party themselves were interested in ending the war."³⁴ [very complicated situation, lots of foreign armed groups to disengage, with the inter-Congolese dialogue

³¹ Interviewee 13 (13.10).

³² Interviewee 7 (7.8).

³³ Interviewee 16 (16.1).

³⁴ Interviewee 16 (16.2).

leading the transition] "And the mission was very much at the centre of all of that."³⁵

32. [MONUC] "At that time, I think...it wasn't about the military, it was more about building national government...that was the wrong formula, to focus on Kinshasa and that was what MONUC was doing."³⁶
33. [MONUC] "That's the only positive experience that I know about MONUC. [when it facilitated talks between warring factions] That's a short moment of being a catalyser, being able to bring those – it wasn't just about fragmentation of armed groups like now, it was a bigger rebel movement that they were managed to use money and resources, using lobbying and the EU especially to be able to bring those people together."³⁷
- *Interviewee notes the significant involvement of the EU in MONUC.*
34. "around 160 active armed groups in the East, requires certainly a much more comprehensive approach, not just a military approach, and I think that that has been definitely reiterated from 2013 onwards, that a military approach to protection always needs to be coupled with and complemented with the civilian components like better planning, better coordination."³⁸
35. [MONUC/MONUSCO] "...the SC may have set the mission up with a particular idea of the state in mind. But it's changed so much over time, so in the early 2000s it was about getting to an election and opening up a bit of political space and by the time I was there it was largely about how protection and human rights things around the election so it changes each time. MONUSCO isn't one thing, even its name has changed several times."³⁹
36. I think that the limits of the UN and more broad international approach has to do with the fact of not knowing enough of the specific Congolese context. People are a little bit stuck in their management tools and development models etc but they don't know the root causes and they have no idea how and why things move on in Congo and that's one of the reasons they are limited."⁴⁰

³⁵ Interviewee 16 (16.2).

³⁶ Interviewee 5 (5.2).

³⁷ Interviewee 5 (5.3).

³⁸ Interviewee 14 (14.1).

³⁹ Interviewee 8 (8.25).

⁴⁰ Interviewee 3 (3.7).

37. [SRSG] "Each SRSG had a different vision of what the mission would be like – Martin Kobler was largely using a stabilisation doctrine about [clearing] whole bills of armed groups, he had poor political leverage and entry points whereas Maman Sidikou had much better political entry points but very little leverage because he wasn't really using the rest of the mission; Leila Z comes from a human rights background and had a real moment of opportunity when Tshisekedi came in but I'm not sure the extent to which she has taken it. But there's a big problem that she faces now in the sense that Tshisekedi didn't win the election, so now they have to re-make MONUSCO as something that will help sure up the political cohesion going into the next elections.
38. So each mission is presented with a very different set of what needs to get done; and SRSGs need to interpret that in their own way. But I don't think any of them [have a model, but the closest to having one] was probably Martin Kobler, he had a very problematic model in mind and ones that been largely debunked by the scholarship.⁴¹
39. [SRSG] "One innovation in MONUSCO which, I think is interesting and unique to MONUSCO, which we maybe should have experimented with more in other missions is actually the position of the deputy SRSG for operations... there's a very unique set up in MONUSCO where that deputy SRSG, which was occupied by David Gressly for a long time until he recently moved to the Ebola special envoy, had very very significant operational responsibility for the whole mission. So it was very different from the tradition of two pillar structure and one of the ways in which it was different and I think better ultimately is that all the field offices report to the deputy SRSG of operations instead of the chief of staff and that position also for a long time was based in Goma, I think a couple of years ago David it back to Kinshasa but we've seen the geographic nature of the mission, the spread of the mission and the fact that most of the operation activities happen so far away from the capital, that's always been a sort of unique feature of MONUSCO and part of that deputy SRSG position when it was based in Goma, helped to kind of compensate for that vast distance in geography and more generally the challenge that is inherent in that."⁴²
40. [National and Regional relations] And that [the fact that the armed groups were always able to escape at the last minute, hinting that the host state may have alerted them or had known about their

⁴¹ Interviewee 8 (8.26).

⁴² Interviewee 10 (10.7).

- whereabouts] deprived us of legitimacy in front of the Council⁴³ as you can understand. I mean, the Rwandan ambassador at the time would bash us for one year taking such risk against the M23 and then being so flaccid when it came to the FDLR and the Americans would give us a hard time but it was difficult for our civilian leadership to get the military leadership in MONUSCO, and especially the FIB, to actually go after these guys because they knew very well that they faced two problems – 1) the capitals weren't exactly enthusiastic and 2) they could not count on the FARDC to accompany them in battle because of all the complicated relationships between the FARDC and the FDLR."⁴⁴
41. [MONUSCO SSR] "Every attempt we made at Security Sector reform was thwarted by President Kabila, our efforts to reform the republican arm, to professionalise the national intelligence service, to professionalise the army and the police – the police I think we made the most headway, because it wasn't as rapacious, the army clearly was and you know, I'm not saying that every individual soldier, far from it."⁴⁵
42. [UN as a 'target' for frustrations] "even in more regional hubs, like Goma, Bukavu, where you see more organised protests planned, there's a general frustration of course from the population but MONUSCO is also a kind of 'safer target' to take frustrations out on. Also, historically the state has been a predatory state against the local population and to express their frustrations towards the state, there could be like security consequences or protection consequences that they're up against, so I think it makes a lot of sense that the general population, citizens are frustrated."⁴⁶
43. [Including local actors in comprehensive approach] "there are certainly some mistakes which have been done, but there has been a lot of attempts to better put in place or in practice the need to work together, including in the mandate on the neutralisation or POC but the missing part, I think, and I always insist on that matter and that is very true for MONUC/MONUSCO, you cannot forget the local actors. It's not saying we are going to transfer what MONUC/MONUSCO is doing to other agencies, no, it doesn't make sense. Other agencies may follow up on some issues, in support of a local process, or a regional process, and this is the missing part of the comprehensive approach – the proper interaction with local entities."⁴⁷

⁴³ Interviewee 9 (9.19).

⁴⁴ Interviewee 9 (9.20).

⁴⁵ Interviewee 9 (9.24).

⁴⁶ Interviewee 14 (14.9).

⁴⁷ Interviewee 11 (11.42).

44. [On the offensive/forceful mandate] "we have learned that the temporary introduction of some specific capacities can make a difference but it cannot be done without consideration first, of a political approach, this is extremely important. And leading to that, and these are, for me, let's say the two big mistakes of my time, in Congo, 2013-16; there was a clear request from the Security Council in the 2015 Resolution, very clear, there was a bunch of recommendations in the report which were all endorsed by the Security Council and not implemented, which we are addressing in particular. And we were, the year before the elections, or the scheduled elections, presidential elections. It was about strategic dialogue because you cannot achieve something without speaking to different entities, starting by the local authorities, and in particular, because it has consequences on short term but also longer-term consequences. And the second was about force transformation, force transformation, and this is what we speak about – capacities, today, this is extremely important and it could also apply to non-military aspects. Force transformation is to adapt what is not working to the needs and this is not the job of the mission itself, it's the job of New York, of troop contributing countries, it came too late, too slow, or not well done. And if you are not on time, if you are not in a good timing, you lose your target, I think it's a big mistake and this has also been affected by financial budget considerations, as I said, so what we call force transformation, the Congolese armed forces needs to transform, to reform, to reach a level efficiency. I don't see why the UN having in mind its failures, its limits etc, should not also do...introspection, I think is very important to do that."⁴⁸
45. [Accountability] "accountable for me means to be able to explain what you have done and what you have not done. And this is something that has to take into consideration the whole chain, which, in terms of peacekeeping goes even to the capitals because some countries may have some approach in some forum or Security Council or General Assembly discussions but then they don't play necessarily the good game, the good role and as I said regarding Uruguay, you may have a political statement and you may have a different implementation but at the end, what matters is the result."⁴⁹

2.1 Lessons Learnt

⁴⁸ Interviewee 11 (11.43).

⁴⁹ Interviewee 11 (11.44).

46. "I think MONUSCO because it's so big and because it's been in existence for so long, you could look at it and certainly pull out some positives, even if it is 'don't do this, it doesn't work'; positives that you can then translate elsewhere."⁵⁰
47. "there is a lot to learn, I think, from that, and there is unfortunately not necessarily been enough lessons learned and looking at how we re-apply that, because the lessons, I think, you know, there has been some exercise over lessons learned but the problem is that there is not cross-fertilisation and there is no accountability and tracking of how that is implemented elsewhere."⁵¹
48. [Less ambitious mandate] "Overall, I think there's some macro issues, first of all, going into areas where there's as much to get done as there was in Congo in 2000, the Council should be less ambitious in designing mandates. Peacekeeping is not a good tool for achieving SSR in a context like that. And it barely pulled off mild SSR in Liberia, and that's under [less precipitous] conditions imaginable really in many respects. So less ambition from part of the Council."⁵²
49. [Corruption] "I think another important lesson is what you and I call corruption but I sometimes think of as other things, patronage, just the way the system works there, needs some taking into account in peacekeeping. Peacekeeping can sort of ignore things like corruption because its considered domestic criminality, but the way in which governance and the system in Congo works, the way its police force works, the way its military works, the way that appointment at the government level work – those are all things that we call corrupt and deviations from the Weberian norm of governance. All the stuff that you do in your PhD programme. But none of that is actually explicitly part of MONUSCO 's mandate, it's never fully accounted for. If you think about 20 years or whatever it is, \$1 billion a year, a huge amount of that money goes into supporting a state that has shown no desire or willingness or capacity to play the kind of games that its being asked to play, it's very good at talking that game but the amount of graft and corruption and the way the money is mismanaged or moved elsewhere can mean, it shows me that UN peacekeeping is a very poor tool to do state building, so that would be a big lesson, I would say, that is stop doing state building, not just peacekeeping, I'd say the UN should just stop."⁵³

⁵⁰ Interviewee 4 (4.26).

⁵¹ Interviewee 13 (13.18).

⁵² Interviewee 8 (8.21).

⁵³ Interviewee 8 (8.22).

50. [Political Leverage] "I think there is an inverse relationship between the robustness of the military mandate and the political leverage that the peacekeeping operation has had. Sounds kind of weird but bigger troops, the bigger, the more emphasis that is put on using troops in mission, I feel, the less attention span is put on finding political solutions. That's a broad over generalisation but I think it's borne out if you look at the missions in MONUSCO, UNAMID, UNMIS, UNMISS, MINUSMA, MINUSCA and a little bit Somalia. So if that's the case, and if you're in settings like Congo where the problem is intensely political, and where there isn't a peace agreement as a framework for you to work in, having whatever it is, 18,000 troops on the ground isn't going to get you any political leverage really. Not much. There are things that can do, I think a refocusing on what the political leverage is, how do you make a mission like MONUSCO now act like a bridge across the political parties, act like a regional coherence point for Rwanda, Uganda, Angola, Congo-Brazzaville and others that have a stake in the stability, that should be the emphasis, not so much on firing rockets into a canopy that you can't see through anyway, which is what they do."⁵⁴

2.2 **Negatives**

51. [UN PKO in General] "This is really unfortunate for me to say but I don't think the UN is a force for good. I think the other agencies were having a far greater impact."⁵⁵

2.2.1 **The Mandate**

52. [MONUSCO and Int Law] [On the frameworks operating within, the interviewee was given a terms of reference which linked to the mandate, the mandate they were given gave them the authorisation] "I would say the constraints were the Security Council mandate. I'm an international lawyer by training so I considered myself bound by IHL, human rights law, by virtue of being a human being. But I wouldn't say that international law was the major framework for us to make decisions about armed groups."⁵⁶
53. [MONUSCO and Int Law] "I remember some of my legal colleagues years ago pointing out that even when we act in self-defence to protect civilians or when we engage in extended firefight with an armed group

⁵⁴ Interviewee 8 (8.24).

⁵⁵ Interviewee 4 (4.11).

⁵⁶ Interviewee 8 (8.1).

that's trying to attack a base, we're a combatant. And with all the obligations that arise from that, in terms of use of force, in terms of taking care of wounded combatants, whatever. So that, I think, is irrespective of the mandate, that's just the function of the actions we take and what IHL consequences flow from those actions. What I haven't thought about for a long time and I'm a lawyer originally, I haven't really analysed legally to be honest. When peacekeepers attacked in Congo, we issued the same statements when peacekeepers attack anywhere else, and whether we always have that protected status that those statements serve, I think is a little bit doubtful, legally speaking. Is it always a crime to attack a peacekeeper? Not when they're combatants, at least, that's my understanding of IHL. I'm not against use, saying that we you shouldn't attack peacekeepers, but legally speaking, it's a little shaky in some cases."⁵⁷

54. [Mandate and Military/Field] "the drafting of the mandate has been a problem ... in the Security Council, it's a negotiation, it's a result of various discussions, you have people with different views. So at the end you get a kind of compromise, and compromise is not necessarily the good starting point for people to operate on the ground, So we cannot understand that, but people who operate on the ground, they need clarity and they need to avoid contradictions, they need to avoid too much interpretation."⁵⁸
55. [MONUC] "...the mandate of MONUC was a very clear mandate...I think what we've learned from the past 60 years of peacekeeping and certainly of 20/30 years of multi-dimensional peacekeeping is that there needs to be a peace to keep, there needs to be a political process to support and MONUC...is an example of that."⁵⁹
56. [MONUSCO] "But then sort of from 2010 onwards when it became MONUSCO, that's when the problems start to arise, because it's no longer helping parties emerging from a conflict implement a peace agreement, it's an open-ended, ill-defined state-building enterprise. [...] Coupled then with a protection of civilians mandate that over time has gone from being sort of protect civilians where you are and when you can to, you are responsible for protecting all civilians, everywhere at all times, including from threats emanating from their own security forces, right. And obviously, that's created a huge gap in terms of expectations versus what the mission is actually able to do and now, 20 years on we're looking for an exit strategy, we realise 'well, there is no exit!'. "⁶⁰

⁵⁷ Interviewee 10 (10.17).

⁵⁸ Interviewee 11 (11.19).

⁵⁹ Interviewee 16 (16.20).

⁶⁰ Interviewee 16 (16.21).

57. "I think the first weakness is a fairly obvious one is the SC gave it a task that they couldn't do; the entire kind of state building and central reform mandate is pie in the sky and in 20 years has been almost no meaningful improvement in the SSR side of things, anti corruption, things like that. Patronage is still the main modality for governance in eastern Congo. And so there is a big mismatch between what a peacekeeping operation can do and what the mandate said it should do. And that led to all kinds of other problems, but that's a big one."⁶¹
58. [Tasks. Military Gender/CP/POC adviser] "I turned up and there had previously been people in the appointment but there were no boundaries, no directives, no structure... in army terms, nobody gave me any orders. But you actually don't have to look very far for orders because they exist in the mandates. And I basically went through them, starting with what has MONUSCO been told to do and married that up with the UNSC Resolutions and what they were trying to do and then suddenly realised that one person is not going to be able to do this. At which point that's when I chose, what is the one thing that I can try and make a difference here and I put it down to engagement because, in my view, engagement cross cut a lot of it. I could achieve gender, child protection and PoC by better engagement."⁶²
59. [Tasks] "mandates of the peacekeepers, often very ambitious, very broad and it's also very confusing at the end of it. ... ambiguity, giving such ambitious, huge mandate, but as a matter of fact you can't fulfil them from the word go. You know it's not possible."⁶³
60. [Tasks/lack of clarity] "These are the two issues, often the mandate is ill-conceived and too ambitious and afterwards it gets kind of mixed up, the misperception of who is really doing what ... what complicates matters further are the different components of the UN, the political, humanitarian, peacekeepers, but then within peacekeepers, you have the troop contributing countries."⁶⁴

⁶¹ Interviewee 8 (8.18).

⁶² Interviewee 4 (4.6).

⁶³ Interviewee 2 (2.5).

⁶⁴ Interviewee 2 (2.6).

61. [Tasks] "what had to be clear was the mandate – whatever you want to achieve – the means – what they had at their disposal – and the money to operate and achieve what they wanted to achieve."⁶⁵
62. [Political Conditions-objectives-systemic problems] "The main problem I mention in my report when I left MONUSCO was political, as I said. If you have a political condition to operate, if you give priorities, objectives, you make a big difference on what you have on it. Another problem is adequacy of capacities and among the systemic problems that you have different logics between those who decide on budget and those who decide on political objectives and the rest. [noted that he was forced to disengage people from units so 50 people were withdrawn from Ituri with 60% of its armoured vehicles, whilst Ituri was not stable] So by a decision taken against our recommendation, you lose, not only for short term but also for longer term, a lot of flexibility. ... I think this dynamic is extremely damageable and you could say this is a problem in MONUSCO but also, beyond MONUSCO it is also a problem, kind of systemic problem"⁶⁶
63. [MONUSCO time] "I think the reason MONUSCO is where it is, is because it has been there for so long ... [contrasts the mission with MINUSMA which is new and it still doing what it was formed to do] ... whereas MONUSCO has morphed and developed and it's kind of kept these legacy things and people don't know why they do them anymore but they're still doing it and it would be much better if you sort of wiped the slate clean and completely started again."⁶⁷
64. [Mandate Timeframe] "One thing that always, I think, frustrates a lot of actors on the ground is, it seems a little bit futile to have a one-year mandate system and renewal and so much energy and time goes into discussing and negotiating and discussing the budget, when everyone really knows that in order to bring peace and stability to a context like Congo, you need much more medium and longer term solutions. It would be interesting if someone from the get go had [proposed a 10 year plan] to bring Congo out of the conflict and the international community get together and use all of the resources collectively ... to come really with a comprehensive, strategic plan, but then no one wants to make that kind of commitment or no one wants to also in some ways, I guess, de-sensitise the national government from playing its role, so I understand those aspects, I understand the political nature and the nature of how the Security Council works but I think that a conflict as complex as Congo and so many other conflicts we see around the world

⁶⁵ Interviewee 2 (2.11).

⁶⁶ Interviewee 11 (11.38).

⁶⁷ Interviewee 4 (4.16).

today, we're kind of fooling ourselves to think that we can have a 12 month approach to how we're going to tackle those issues. [...] peacekeeping operations could learn from, in a way, a private sector model, like having a 3-5 years and then a 10 year plan. And hope to bring peace and stability in 3 years but, if not, there are 5 year and 10 year objectives."⁶⁸

- Interviewee 14 noted that more donor programmes have started to work on this basis (a 3-5 year programme)

65. [Yearly mandate] "You are in the midst of people in the best case, in the best scenario they have goodwill and they are intelligent but they live in a context where the organisation goes from one year mandate into another, into another and another, and this is for 17 years which is as such some kind of eternity. So there was a contradiction, you can't plan things properly if you work within one year horizons. It is impossible to have sustainable impact if you work in such timeframe. And we did. Nobody was really thinking of Congo in the long term. What usually happens is that when people arrive in Congo, they start to think of what is next. Arriving in Congo is a good thing, it's nice on your CV, and then people start to think, now that I am here, what is next and they start to prepare that."⁶⁹

2.2.2 Appetite/Motivation

66. [Personnel Motivations] "most of the people are of goodwill and most of them are intelligent but they are very concerned in, my joke was 'I am supposed to be the local conflict analyst because I know more than the average person, relationships between communities in the Congo but the only thing I am learning here is about intra-MONUSCO tribal war. You have a lot of departments, everybody is trying to make his or her own relevance as visible as possible by denigrating the others and it's fascinating for a while, it doesn't help Congo at all, in fact, it doesn't influence Congo at all, it's a parallel world and, well, after a few months I had the impression that I learnt what I had to learn and let me move forward."⁷⁰

67. [UN disconnect/lack of country knowledge] "It's interesting and its painful, the people, intelligent as they are, they arrive, they know they're not staying longer than one or two years, they know that's not long enough to really understand the complexities of Congo's conflict

⁶⁸ Interviewee 14 (14.7).

⁶⁹ Interviewee 3 (3.2).

⁷⁰ Interviewee 3 (3.3).

and to be honest, some of them don't even try. Some of them just try to work and handle/juggle with their management tools, action plans, logical frameworks and that's amazing but it's not about Congo. It's not about Congo as it is outside of the container park. It's a virtual world. The extreme complexity of local situations or such things as the national political landscape, I only met a few individuals who really have the level you could expect. ... it's very hard to integrate such people in the hectic but superficial institutional life of MONUSCO and the simple reason is that that life is not about Congo."⁷¹

68. [UNPK motivations] "I don't think people who deploy on UN missions are doing it for necessarily the right reasons. There's too much money in the UN. My salary almost doubled whilst I was out there through the extra money that they give you to live while you're there, which you don't need because it's not expensive. And that's a person whose basic salary is paid in pounds. If you are Bangladeshi, it is life changing the amount of money you can earn there and that effects behaviours and motivations. And so it makes for a very very low risk appetite, and actually also no incentive to resolve the situation because if you resolve it then you are no longer needed. So you end up in this sort of inertia where things don't go anywhere but everyone is happy with that status quo. It's a really difficult thing to shift on, slightly, the only thing I agree with Donald Trump on, is cutting money to the UN. It genuinely is."⁷²

- Interviewee was only deployed for a few months and has previously deployed on NATO operations

69. [UN PK motivations] "people have a motivation to keep their job going, but also it is a little bit of empire building and having responsibility for certain things and ensuring that your area is going to continue to receive funding. Definitely a bit of that because a lot of UN jobs had been cut before I got there. And this civilian side was definitely feeling the pinch from that."⁷³

70. [MONUSCO motivation] A negative is the pace, of how slow things were. I did feel that there was no motivation to actually achieve anything. It was really quite unfortunate and sad. And when I say that, that's unfair, it's in the military component, the civilian component where definitely motivated to make a change, I was really impressed with the civilian component, they were all really committed to what they were doing."⁷⁴

⁷¹ Interviewee 3 (3.5).

⁷² Interviewee 4 (4.12).

⁷³ Interviewee 4 (4.20).

⁷⁴ Interviewee 4 (4.24).

2.2.3 Troop Contributing Nations (TCNs)

71. [TCN motivation] "...I think around elections they [Ghanaian and South African peacekeepers based in Kinshasa] basically went into lockdown. Because the risk appetite is so low, TCNs are not prepared for them to die on peacekeeping [operations]."⁷⁵
72. [TCN contributions/SEA reference] "very different kind of peacekeepers depending on who they are ... some troops come in, much more kind of focused, willing to engage and at least try to fulfil the mandate and others they are not willing or not able to even be a part of what they are supposed to be. ... by no means these troops have an interest or an appetite to engage into an environment that is often alien to them. They perhaps have no interest national or whatever. What they mainly do is make sure they are safe, first and foremost, then what is after it may be quite nice to have. You see quite absurd kind of stuff in many of these peacekeeping operations, which is quite discouraging, I must say."⁷⁶
73. [TCC continuity – civilian v military] "civilians will stay in a mission for a lot longer, whereas military would rotate in and out depending on the TCC or the PCC, if it's the police, 6 months to a year of rotation. I think, depending on the TCC, some of them have a better kind of historic passing on of information and institutional memory within their own ranks and files but I think that that's where there are sometimes clashes, where people come in and they're not familiar in even how a peacekeeping mission operates and functions."⁷⁷
74. [TCCs and RoE] "[noting that the military operates only under signed orders] if at the same time we have capitals who say something else to their contingents, if you have different chains of command, it is extremely difficult and it is going against, of course, efficiency and protection and security of UN personnel and the security of the people affected on the ground, so this is extremely problematic."⁷⁸

2.2.4 International v National

75. [UN PK in DRC in general] "In 20 years there are a lot of lessons. I think the key thing is this notion that outsiders can fix a country in the absence

⁷⁵ Interviewee 4 (4.25).

⁷⁶ Interviewee 2 (2.7).

⁷⁷ Interviewee 14 (14.2).

⁷⁸ Interviewee 11 (11.20).

of a genuine will on the part of the leadership to change things. And I think that's one of the biggest lessons."⁷⁹

76. [UN PK in DRC in general] "And the fact that over time, allowed the UN and MONUSCO to substitute itself for the national authorities, in particular, which creates then all sorts of perverse incentives, right, because if you have a peacekeeping mission at one point the largest and most expensive, then it creates a perfect opportunity for elites that are benefiting from a particular way of doing things to blame everything on the UN, we're seeing it today a little bit today [refers to Beni]. [...] are looking at MONUSCO, pointing the finger at the mission, hardly anyone's asking, well why isn't the government that dealing with this problem, you know, why isn't the FARDC not able to protect civilians [...] And to ask those questions would then raise more uncomfortable questions about the role of actors within the army..."⁸⁰
77. "...creating this fiction that a peacekeeping operation can [bring about change etc] in the absence of a...genuine commitment to change is one of the big lessons. [...] the mission's sort of very existence is sort of a symptom of not so much even the inability but the unwillingness of national actors to assume their rightful role."⁸¹
78. "if we want to preserve the investments that have been made over the past 20 years, it's the Congolese that are going to have to fill that space and there aren't many indications that they are genuinely interested in doing so, even though the President means well...but how much control does he actually have..."⁸²
79. "I think that's the big lesson and which, I think, should inform how we approach our mandates and how we, there's obviously a big debate now about performance and impact but are we ready to call a spade a spade and say there's only so much a peacekeeping operation can do. But ultimately, it's up to the host nation or those who are in charge to step up and create the conditions for that mission to be able to leave."⁸³

2.2.5 Internal Conflict

80. [Internal UN conflict in field] "MONUSCO is a civilian led mission because it's a civilian SRSSG who is head of the mission and...the military component is supposed to be imbedded in the mission concept and follow the civilian led SC mandate. [...] certainly the day to day planning for

⁷⁹ Interviewee 16 (16.23).

⁸⁰ Interviewee 16 (16.24).

⁸¹ Interviewee 16 (16.25).

⁸² Interviewee 16 (16.26).

⁸³ Interviewee 16 (16.27).

operations against the armed groups was done under the broad, general guidance of a civilian strategy but certainly with a military chain of command. [...] [civilians offered military more context analysis] But a recurrent complaint I had was that they never allowed civilians in the room for operational planning. So I think that divide [between civilian and military] is real. And then the FIB obviously they, in practice often pursued their own chain of command, separate from the Force Commander, although I never saw any major friction there. However, I met with the FIB Commander and he had always stressed that he reported to the SRSG, so I think some of it was a little bit blown out of proportion.”⁸⁴

81. [MONUC/MONUSCO location] “I think mistakes have been made over the years which have, over time...undermined the internal cohesion of the mission...this sort of toddling back and forth between the West and the East [discusses mission moving everyone to the West to then realise that] the East is inextricably linked with national politics and the politics of the broader region. ..when I compare MONUSCO today to what it was like back in the days of MONUC, I think there was a much stronger link between sort of the political centre of gravity in Kinshasa and what was happening elsewhere. [...] But because of that [the split/moving of the mission] it’s pulled the mission apart much more than in the past where the connective tissue, I think, was much stronger between... the strategic centre of gravity in headquarters and then the field offices that were helping to address the challenges in other parts of the country.”⁸⁵

82. [Military/Civilian integration and Planning] “I think MONUSO has struggled enormously, as most missions do to integrate the military within the broader kind of multi-dimensional mission structure, some of that has to do with the geographic distance, with the vast majority of the force...for many years being in the East, which has to do with the kind of structural challenges we have in many missions. I don’t know that’s necessarily unique to MONUSCO but to this day, I think some of the military operations are planned and productive, not necessarily in a way which is as integrated as it could be. I think MONUSCO has had very very many resources for planning and protection of civilians, the MONUSCO planning unit is tiny. And the POC advisers I think there are 2 or 3 of them. But again, that’s not unique to MONUSCO, we have severely under-resourced for planning in POC, that’s partly our fault, but is something that for a mission of the size and complexity and country the size of MONUSCO is tough.”⁸⁶

⁸⁴ Interviewee 8 (8.6).

⁸⁵ Interviewee 16 (16.22).

⁸⁶ Interviewee 10 (10.21).

83. [FIB/Military plans] “For the operations in October/November [2013] we were three or four in MONUSCO to be in the confidence of future plans. And this is something that people don’t understand, they want to talk planning publicly, which is extremely nonsense. And which is particular nonsense in the DRC because, and it’s not secret, there are infiltrated actors in there, so even the Congolese forces, when they operate, they don’t tell everybody what is going to happen, because somebody is going to speak to the adversary. So one of the conditions of success of the FARDC against M23 in October was secrecy of operations.”⁸⁷

84. [Military/Civilian] “the civilian component has primacy. They know what they’re doing, they’re the experts, they have made entire careers out of how to solve...a big problem but focused.”⁸⁸

85. [Military/Civilian] “these people [the civilians] are absolute experts in what they do but they need the military to be able to do it so it creates a really interesting dynamic between the two components. I don’t think the military realise that the civilians have primacy. But I think the military mindset wasn’t correct for the UN missions.”⁸⁹

86. [Military/Civilian] “I actually really liked the model of having civilian experts in the military but the working relationship between the two is really strange and it’s both ways. The military don’t understand the civilians, the civilians don’t understand the military, they’re really bad at communicating their requirements to each other.”⁹⁰

87. [Country Team Integration] “I think the level of integration between the country team has been made weak over the last few years ... It used to be one of the strongest in that domain, I think, but is now among the weaker ones.”⁹¹

2.2.6 UN and Other International Actors

88. [UN and Humanitarians] “Historically, the relationship between the mission and the humanitarians has been very difficult, I think, I don’t

⁸⁷ Interviewee 11 (11.34).

⁸⁸ Interviewee 4 (4.1).

⁸⁹ Interviewee 4 (4.2).

⁹⁰ Interviewee 4 (4.21).

⁹¹ Interviewee 10 (10.22).

know, I haven't been for a while but that's a legacy that goes back many many years." [tells story of being left out from parties in Goma]⁹²

89. [MONUC and OCHA] "it happened more than once where we felt that it was extremely difficult to have these two different approaches [OCHAs and MONUCs]. Of course, the colleagues from the mission have said of MONUC at the time (it was not MONUSCO) at the time said we can have one approach and that is ours so you just wait. And you don't operate in these areas where the rebels are controlling and we said we can't do that, we go where the needs are."⁹³
90. [MONUC and OCHA] "I think we managed, after that event [Nkunda rebellion] to get even closer to the mission so that we would not be in the situation where neither externally nor internally (when I say internally I mean in country team) would be perceived as having two UN approaches, it wasn't logic, it weakened the entire UN approach in the country and not only on the mission side but also on our side, we needed to have something/some approach that was a little bit more coherent. And we do understand that we had different goals and we were working on different principles and the more we discussed with the hierarchy of the mission and the more we reached the top hierarchy, the more understanding we got from the mission of also our prerogatives and the importance of our work. So we have after that, we have been working a lot more closely with the mission, also because we had joint security briefings, for example, where you have the political side, the military side, the humanitarian side and the development side together. And could look at the different elements so we could share this analysis, so a small group that was created to ensure that this analysis there was also a small group that was created to ensure that this analysis was strong and it was composed of different elements, political, military, humanitarian, to ensure that we would find a solution that is more suitable to everyone as much as possible. And in some cases it was extremely difficult but then when you receive instructions from the Secretary General then you follow those instructions. Clearly, there are situations where we could not go, whilst the NGOs could go and we support them as much as we could but remotely or after, we couldn't go with them."⁹⁴
91. [MONUC and OCHA/Humanitarians] "The issue I think when we are in a situation where we have a mission is the mission is very much working in a bubble and the humanitarian are very much working in a bubble. But the relationship between the mission and the authorities, for example, or the rebels is very much on the political or humanitarian level, but then you have a humanitarian affairs office in the mission, but

⁹² Interviewee 10 (10.23).

⁹³ Interviewee 1 (1.4).

⁹⁴ Interviewee 1 (1.5).

they didn't have the same level of information and knowledge that we had on the ground." [and they don't want to give the impression that the mission is the main actor as the humanitarians have their project too]⁹⁵

92. [MONUC and NGOs] in 2004/5 "NGOs, of course, particularly at that time because the mission was so heavily involved in military operations, they didn't want to interact with the military they didn't want to interact with the mission actually, because the mission was involved in the conflict. So they were going through us [OCHA], wherever possible, but it was not possible everywhere, so that has primarily limited both the operations, because there are places we couldn't go, the quality of some operations, because of course if we had more information or if we had worked together, and worked together doesn't mean hand in hand in the same cars, in the same convoys, sharing information to know who would do what and showing that the NGOs are not perceived as the agents of the mission, as they were afraid of."⁹⁶
- Interviewee noted that after returning 3 times since, most recently in 2016, the situation has evolved and whilst there are still different approaches, there is better cooperation and more sharing of analysis, although whilst military or humanitarians may share their findings, they are not willing to share data (which is understandable)
93. [MONUC – MONUSCO and humanitarians] "It [the relationship between the mission and humanitarians] has evolved a lot, positively. Because the difficulty for any of us, is to, when you don't really know how the others are working and what they are working for in a sense, is to understand how this joint engagement is possible."⁹⁷
94. [MONUC/MONUSCO and humanitarians] "with the mission its very much the same. You know there is this false...we have prejudice in a sense, we have to work on those prejudices on both sides and the more we talk together, the more we try to find solutions together, the more understanding there is and then the people we are engaging to this first operation know that it is possible and they can influence internally and definitely, MONUSCO already was different from MONUC in terms of approaching the entire situation and certainly the humanitarians have, within the international action, have again more space over the years then they had when I was there, and that is definitely because there is a better understanding from the mission."⁹⁸

⁹⁵ Interviewee 1 (1.6).

⁹⁶ Interviewee 1 (1.7).

⁹⁷ Interviewee 1 (1.8).

⁹⁸ Interviewee 1 (1.9).

95. [Working with other actors] "From an official UN perspective, no [I did not work with any other agencies/actors outside the UN] ... The only other people I met in an official capacity as the UN were UN ... Unofficially, I engaged with the Foreign Office UK ... When it comes to things like Save the Children, Norwegian Refugee Council all those other members, nope. The UN did not engage, had no official relationships with them. DFID and the FO did. ... [invited to a women's meeting organised by DFID but could not come in uniform] "she actively wanted me to disassociate from being with the UN."⁹⁹
96. [Humanitarian perspective] "the UN is a big animal ... we [ICRC] have an observer status in all these forums ... [but] because of our insistence on being independent, we don't want to be a part of the UN as such ... we are observer but in real terms we coordinate very closely on who is doing what in terms of analysing the situation, security, we compare notes, so we're part of all different forums at different levels – country, regional and even down to villages. But towards the outside you want to give a clear signal that we are different. Especially in the DRC, there you can see MONUSCO as part of the conflict."¹⁰⁰
97. [Humanitarian Perception/Distinction] "areas where there is even more sympathy for armed groups by a local population, then you are actually seen as the UN and as part of the problem or the enemy rather than the other way around. ... And that is problematic and there to some degree we try to keep our distance and try to make it clear that we are not one and the same. That might be understood in Kinshasa, in a meeting room in Goma, but it is very difficult to be understood in small villages out there, so this is for us, one of the big challenges."¹⁰¹
98. [Humanitarian Perception/Distinction] "when it comes to distinguishing themselves, how they work and what they do because often they come in and they go to do some humanitarian work as well, well this is okay to some degree but we cannot mix up everything. If they come and kind of started to do water projects, community projects and we confuse people even more. So it's this kind of concept of winning hearts and minds it's the UN peacekeepers they adapt this to some degree, the international troops, the Americans, the others, the French, they use this much more. And there you have a problem again when it comes to perception, if you do that fair enough, but make sure people really know who you are and what you do ... And then try to do it right because

⁹⁹ Interviewee 4 (4.10).

¹⁰⁰ Interviewee 2 (2.1).

¹⁰¹ Interviewee 2 (2.4).

some of the militaries honestly, they think 'well humanitarian aid it's just easy' and have a discussion with the military and it's just punch a couple of holes in the desert and there's your water, what's your problem but we all know you don't fix a problem by kind of just providing infrastructure – a water hole or to point the ceiling of a hospital, you think afterwards it's all nice and functioning but the software around any kind of intervention project is much more complicated, it needs more engagement so if he comes as the military thinking he can fix stuff like that, also in terms of quality is often questionable, even the matter of doing more harm than good. When you do that kind of stuff in an ignorant kind of way."¹⁰²

99. [Humanitarian Perspective/Distinction] "They [UN] did some vaccination programs for humans and animals and people get confused."¹⁰³
100. [Relationship with humanitarian actors] "...in my experience with the UN and peacekeepers, we have a more open dialogue, they are more open to listen to people like us. How this afterwards is applied and put into practice is a different thing, it's always not an easy and straightforward at the end of a task."¹⁰⁴

2.2.7 Ineffective/Response

101. [MONUC – failure to listen to OCHA] "When General Nkunda started the uprising in the east and started with Bukavu, we saw it coming. We tried to work with our colleagues, we warned the UN Country Team, it was a very difficult situation because of course you know there is that much that we can also reveal as what we know or what we foresee. And the head of the mission at the time, actually the head of DPKO at the time was visiting and we had a very very different reading of the situation. Totally different. Where he was telling me that we was totally wrong, that actually the situation was improving and everything was fine, there were good talks with the different groups and that they were arriving to some kind of agreement so it doesn't explode. And we was saying it's going to explode in our faces."¹⁰⁵
- NB. Interviewee 1 notes that OCHA withdrew their personnel from certain areas and began to prepare for 'it to blow', which it did.
 - "we wanted to work more with the mission, it was important in some cases, we would have liked to have had security provided

¹⁰² Interviewee 2 (2.10).

¹⁰³ Interviewee 2 (2.10).

¹⁰⁴ Interviewee 2 (2.9).

¹⁰⁵ Interviewee 1 (1.1).

by the mission to go to some places and help, because in parallel to moving our staff, there were other places where we felt we could still help, particularly when people were fleeing from a place to another to make sure we was on the other side.”¹⁰⁶

102. [MONUSCO/Response] “To call the civilian protection brilliant is remarkable, I don’t know who said that, one of the issues about MONUSCO is they had/have a very good civilian alert network; its connected on whatsapp, it has a lot of people in it; Congo is a very well connected place so you always know when things are happening, even as a political officer, pretty quickly I developed a network so I knew what was happening. And so I think there was a sense within the civilian side of the mission that they could predict quite easily when there would be a hotspot popping up. We could have a hotspot popping up at the JMAC. [...] I think there was a sense that it wasn’t for lack of knowledge that MONUSCO wasn’t able to respond to things quickly, although often things would move quickly. But that many people said there was a reluctance by the force to act quickly to go into areas where there is a high level of uncertainty etc etc. So I think through that the force got a bad reputation.”¹⁰⁷

103. [MONUSCO/Response] “Some things worked, where I think the mission doesn’t have a good track record is when a threat of a massacre in Beni or something, when it comes in, it’s happening, it almost never responded in a way that was easy to say was quick or effective – and that’s where the bad reputation comes, that’s where there are riots now in Beni; there have been 23 people killed in the last two weeks and all of that falls on the shoulders of the FIB and the military. Not necessarily with justification by the way.”¹⁰⁸

104. [No response] “[do not blame all troops]... but I was also extremely upset when 800 metres from the camp they were not reacting against killing. Totally unacceptable. You can be engineering or infantry or special forces, it’s the same, you have to do something. It’s impossible. I cannot imagine how they can leave, having heard during hours people shouting or crying because they were killed and not having reacted, I don’t mean that they can stop and doing everything but sometimes, on many occasions, and it’s still happening today, we have not enough action. But we cannot blame only the contingent because we have also systemic problems and this is another issue.”¹⁰⁹

¹⁰⁶ Interviewee 1 (1.2).

¹⁰⁷ Interviewee 8 (8.9).

¹⁰⁸ Interviewee 8 (8.12).

¹⁰⁹ Interviewee 11 (11.26).

105. [Passiveness] “when I was preparing to deploy to the DRC, I fired more rounds through my rifle than the whole mission fired in the entire time I was there ... it’s a very different mindset being in a peacekeeping missions ... [referring to a journal article] Peacekeepers train for UN missions and they train for offensive action and when it doesn’t happen they’re really disappointed and they get bored and they feel unfulfilled and then the morale dips ... I think that’s a real problem within UN peacekeeping, from my short exposure to it. They drive around in armoured vehicles, they’re all tooled up, they have their helmets on and body armour and things but that’s not the posture that’s required.”¹¹⁰

106. [Security] “From a security perspective, I’m not even sure they provide much security. You know, 16,000 people spread over that size an area is utterly ineffective. So I think if you withdrew them from a security perspective, so if you took the military presence away, from a security perspective, I don’t think you’d see no difference.

107. There are places you would see a difference though. I think in Kinshasa the pressure it applies on the high levels of government, I think, is effective, you know, when Antonio Guterres flies in and speaks with (in my time) Kabila, that has a real impact, so that level, I do think there is influence and pressure. Lower down, military, no. Where, if the plaster is ripped off it would be the worst is actually the entire sub-economy that has built up around the UN... the amount of money that swills around in Goma as a result of the force headquarters being there is absolutely astronomical.”¹¹¹

108. [Military effect] “I think soldiers in armoured vehicles driving round streets, I just found it really ineffective military force.”¹¹²

109. [Easy Target] “I think maybe the downside is that definitely because MONUSCO has been there for so long, I think there’s very much part of the frustration currently in the country is, it’s such a visible entity it’s very easy for multiple stakeholders, when things don’t go well to point the finger at the peacekeeping operation, even though it very clearly does not have the mandate nor ever should it, to provide all protection, that is very clearly the responsibility of the state. But for so long, because the state hasn’t had the capacity to play that function, people

¹¹⁰ Interviewee 4 (4.3).

¹¹¹ Interviewee 4 (4.13).

¹¹² Interviewee 4 (4.14).

kind of forget that and by default think that that should be the peacekeeping operation.”¹¹³

110. [Protection/language/knowledge barriers] “The reality is its just, even if the troop size was doubled or tripled tomorrow, on a territory that vast, it would be impossible to provide the kind of protection that is needed and also it shouldn’t be underestimated that TCCs, even if they have pre-deployment training and all these great briefings, they’re not Congolese, they don’t know the local context, they don’t speak the local languages, you can deploy translators or community liaison assistants to try and help facilitate that but they’re never going to know the communities, the local populations concern, or be able to speak to them in a way that like national police should be doing, by protection.”¹¹⁴

111. [Systemic problems] “we have systemic problems, so systemic problems mean that even with a good will, with very good people, you are limited in your ability to act because of this problem and MONUSCO because of the specific context that they are facing, I think that they have been, in particular, affected by this type of problem. ... you have procedures in the UN which go totally against efficiency, and which explain a lot why capitals don’t want their troops to deploy contingents within the UN because they don’t trust the efficiency reliability of the UN. You cannot send your troops to risk their lives if the medical system is a static, infrastructure approach...”¹¹⁵

112. [MONUSCO effect] “I always had the impression that MONUSCO being the biggest and most expensive peacekeeping mission was extremely under achieving and people are very aware of that in Congo. On the other hand, I always defended MONUSCO, insisted that if you take it away from Congo, I think that the process of assimilation...will accelerate, even if they are not very present in the field, if you see what happens, and it is happening now, when MONUSCO units are taken away from the field, the insecurity is on the rise immediately. So it made sense but people did not live up to their mandate, were terribly inefficient, but it does not mean they’re meaningless but for me it was not the place to materialise my potential added value let’s say.”¹¹⁶

¹¹³ Interviewee 14 (14.5)

¹¹⁴ Interviewee 14 (14.6).

¹¹⁵ Interviewee 11 (11.37).

¹¹⁶ Interviewee 3 (3.4).

2.2.8 FIB as a weakness

(NB. More FIB analysis under use of force section)

113. “I think the FIB had its moment where it was potentially useful, it had a political role ... the political importance of the FIB in terms of having SADC as a regional entity who had invested in Congo. But as a military concept, I think the FIB is flawed and shouldn’t be repeated and my recommendation when they asked about the MONUSCO review was to suggest that the FIB have its neutralisation mandate removed and it be turned into a protection force only. I doubt they will take my advice but that’s okay. So that’s a conceptual weakness.”¹¹⁷

114. “the whole time I was there they [FIB] didn’t do any operations. They did do a bit of planning but it always fell through and they didn’t do it.”¹¹⁸

115. [FIB and Ebola] “the Force Commander said that they [the FIB] were still going to conduct offensive operations, despite Ebola, which I thought was a really bold call. Because normally, when you conduct military operation, the civilian population flee and if that civilian population is carrying Ebola and if they cross the border into Uganda, you will be responsible for giving Uganda Ebola because of military action. So I was really surprised they went down that route.”¹¹⁹

2.2.9 Personnel/Human Resources

116. “I think that there’s almost a human resources weakness which is that there is a lot of people who spend a lot of time in Congo in that mission and that made them often quite knowledgeable but it also had a lack of new blood coming into that mission; often meant there was a lot of malaise, cynicism, and a sense that nothing was ever going to work there, so when I came in as a new political officer/adviser, I wanted to try ideas that I thought had a good grounding, I often had to fight uphill against a sense of kind of inertia, but I think that’s something about being a large, extremely well established mission.”¹²⁰

117. [Language Barriers] “this is a small one [lesson] but is interesting – why the hell do they have so many people that don’t speak French in a

¹¹⁷ Interviewee 8 (8.19).

¹¹⁸ Interviewee 4 (4.17).

¹¹⁹ Interviewee 4 (4.18).

¹²⁰ Interviewee 8 (8.20).

mission. The Canadians are good with that. The lack of connectivity between troops and people.”¹²¹

118. [POSITIVE Human resources] “...many of the people in key positions in that [CAR] mission are former MONUSCO people. It’s interesting to see how subtle innovations and sort of good practise out of MONUSCO were carried over to MINUSCA and adapted to MINUSCA. So the head of civil affairs from MONUSCO is now in MINUSCA; former deputy civilians adviser has gone there and a few other people like that who came over from DRC to CAR and generally that has been a very good thing as MINUSCA tends to be, I think, quite strong in some of those areas.”¹²²

119. [Ineffective use of resources] “I met a lot of people who were afraid of Congo and the Congolese and who have a fundamental distrust against Congolese. People who spoke national languages and local Congolese languages or even one of the four national languages – Swahili, Lingala, Kikongo, Tshiluba – they are extremely, extremely rare. I thought that MONUSCO does not use in an efficient way the Congolese resources, human resources, which there are. There are Congolese staff members, but the Congolese staff members who really have access to information and have the possibility to formulate their input, these people are very very very few.”¹²³

2.3 Positives

120. “UN has a lot of example of very positive situation, but still a long way to go in general.”¹²⁴
Cited the Uruguayan’s; the Guatemalans, the South African air support as examples

121. “I think we can’t deny that aspect of deterrent [for rebels] ...it is a threat and their symbolic presence when they’re moving around town, it kind of sends a message, people forget they won’t do anything, but it still sends a message that maybe we are protected...But for more people who are aware, they know they are not protected.”¹²⁵

122. [UN PK in General] “The UN, I think is the most incredible social experiment, it shouldn’t work on so many levels when you just put all

¹²¹ Interviewee 8 (8.23).

¹²² Interviewee 10 (10.8).

¹²³ Interviewee 3 (3.6).

¹²⁴ Interviewee 11 (11.45).

¹²⁵ Interviewee 5 (5.12).

these people together but there are some things that are really impressive that it does work. ... So one of the things the UN does do is sort of tear away nationalities... the positive I think is managing to get all those disparate nationalities to work.”¹²⁶

2.3.1 Test Bed/Innovation

123. “it was kind of a test case for a lot of ideas, I think it’s very geographically spread out, which can be good and has a network of hundreds of civil affairs officers that are a good set of eyes and ears so I’d call that a strength.”¹²⁷

124. “the UN is learning from the DRC aswell ... the biggest theatre in which these things [peacekeeping issues/WPS] are being considered.”¹²⁸

125. “It’s been the furnace of the evolution of peacekeeping, I would say.”¹²⁹

126. “There was a former head of peacekeeping who said ‘the fortune of peacekeeping would rise and fall in the Congo’ and I think that’s true. We’ve done so much in terms of peacekeeping in the Congo, the lessons for protection, all the community assistance networks, community liaisons, all of that was developed in the Congo – intervention Brigade was in the Congo; first drones which ever flew were in the Congo. So there’s a whole bunch of innovation. The attack on Semuliki, second most lethal attack on the UN in its history, allowed us to then implement a programme in 2018 that we more than halved the number of peacekeepers killed. So there’s lots of innovations that came out of that. And it is right that we constantly try to learn from things.”¹³⁰

127. [Innovation] “in part driven by just the enormous challenges that have been in Congo. It’s an incredibly difficult mission that they have, forced to come up with all of this. They had no choice! I also want to give credit to a lot of the people who were in MONUSCO and MONUC over the years, because a portion of them. In some ways it was driven

¹²⁶ Interviewee 4 (4.23).

¹²⁷ Interviewee 8 (8.15).

¹²⁸ Interviewee 4 (4.27).

¹²⁹ Interviewee 12 (12.12).

¹³⁰ Interviewee 9 (9.32).

by headquarters, the HRDDP was in part driven by headquarters, I would say.”¹³¹

128. [Adaptable] “I think, overall, MONUSCO has shown itself to be quite adaptable, not always but over time, and quite proactive in initiating changes from within the mission, rather than waiting for the Council or waiting for headquarters to tell them.”¹³²
129. [Innovation] “They have been very innovative and I think a credit of that goes to many of the senior colleagues in MONUSCO and also more junior colleagues in MONUSCO.”¹³³
130. [Pilot] “it’s definitely not a perfect organisation by any means but I think there’s like always been a kind of willingness to try and pilot new things. And I think that’s a bit of a strength of maybe the spirit of that mission, Congo is such a complex, multi-faceted conflict so I also think it’s naïve for us to think that even though MONUSCO does have a lot of staff there, military and civilian, and it has been there historically for so long, there’s so many dimensions at play and particularly the political dimensions which I think we cannot underestimate. And the regional factors to that conflict as well.”¹³⁴
131. [Solutions] “It seems to be the fountain head of many of the problems and therefore many of the solutions. ... for lack of a better word, the furnace that it is, the long-standing nature of the mission, it is also where a lot of the best stuff has come up, so that’s the kind of dichotomy that it represents.”¹³⁵

2.3.2 Innovative Frameworks/Policies

132. [Integrated Office] [Congo has been the catalyst for quite a lot of new peacekeeping policy] “The integrated office that existed many many years ago in MONUC [...] was an interesting kind of construct that pulled together the country team and the mission in a way that very few other missions had done, it then kind of disintegrate and became quite weak. I think it still exists on paper but is a shadow of its former self. That isn’t necessarily policy but more structural innovation, where a lot of agency

¹³¹ Interviewee 10 (10.9).

¹³² Interviewee 10 (10.18).

¹³³ Interviewee 10 (10.19).

¹³⁴ Interviewee 14 (14.3).

¹³⁵ Interviewee 12 (12.10).

people were seconded into the integrated office, within the mission and became a pretty powerful and effective coordination tool. That’s one example [of Congo as a catalyst for change].”¹³⁶

133. [Field Offices] “...the way the field offices have been changed and David Gressly deserves a lot of credit for that. The heads of field offices were recruited with a totally different kind of profile, the field offices were turned into sort of centres of gravity for planning and programming and coordination as opposed to kind of political outputs of the mission that conduct political analysis and report back to Kinshasa and the profile of the field offices has changed dramatically over the last 3 or 4 years and we’re learning a lot from that experience, for other missions as well. Of course, the size of some of the MONUSCO field offices as well is bigger than some of our peacekeeping missions, the problem is people, with thousands of troops, it’s a massive scale.”¹³⁷
134. [Stabilisation] The SSU, the stabilisation unit, hasn’t been replicated in any other mission but I think a lot of the thinking that has come out of the SSU on how to do stabilisation in a way that’s much conflict-central [...] And I’ve kind of tried to connect other stabilisation sections and units with the SSU, we’ve convened a couple of workshops and other kind of cross-mission engagement around stabilisation where the SSU is probably very helpful.”¹³⁸
135. [POC] “Protection of civilians, I think if you look at the trajectory of POC doctrine since the early 2000s, MONUSCO and MONUC before that has been quite influential during different stages, with different innovations coming out of the MONUC/MONUSCO kind of laboratory, if you will. Joint protection teams, probably soldiering, kind of POC strategies were probably written in that mission as well. I’m sure that now, the sort of protection projection mantra which originated from MONUSCO is still mostly MONUSCO specific and I hope it stays that way because I’m not a big fan of that terminology.”¹³⁹
136. [Protection Innovation] “I think the strength of MONUSCO is its innovation and I think the strength of MONUSCO despite some of its shortfalls is that it put a system in place and that it’s the best system and I look at all missions, right, so I can really evaluate that the degree

¹³⁶ Interviewee 10 (10.4).

¹³⁷ Interviewee 10 (10.20).

¹³⁸ Interviewee 10 (10.5).

¹³⁹ Interviewee 10 (10.6).

of savviness and refinement of the MONUSCO protection architecture and systems is way ahead of any other UN mission. Does it work perfectly? Absolutely not. Again, it will depend on your leaders and your senior management. But the structures and the processes are there, the problem is implementing them and making them work. Whereas in other missions, the structure and the process may not even be in place.”¹⁴⁰

2.3.3 Analysis

137. “I’d say, having been there for 20 years, they had an analytical capacity that was deeper than most of the missions I’d been in.”¹⁴¹

138. “And I think that the peacekeeping mission really does it best to try to at least start to analyse and understand some of those factors when it’s doing its planning around POC. And I think when I joined the mission to even now when I went back, I think its progressively been getting more sophisticated over time which I think is really good.”¹⁴²

139. “I think MONUSCO is particular good in terms of analysis. I think the profiling project under the Human Rights Joint Office has been a tremendous support to any POC endeavour because it has complimented the JMAC capacity in terms of analysis of the ‘who’s who’ of conflict etc and here now we’ve got real profiles of the big leaders and some of the units etc so we know who the security forces are and where the risks are and where the armed groups are etc and we know the links between those different groups, so we’re at a level of refinedness and granularity in MONUSCO where you have that in very few other missions, frankly. So I think the analysis system is excellent. I think at this point the triggering of decision making and response is still lagging and so transforming that analysis and an actual action from senior leadership as well as the force is an issue. And that’s definitely a weakness.”¹⁴³

2.3.4 Effective/High Points

140. “There were different phases in MONUSCO’s 20 year history were it was, before it was MONUSCO, were it was very effective in certain moments. So after the 2003 elections, 2006, there were moments when it was really around something which the Congolese could rally and have

¹⁴⁰ Interviewee 13 (13.13).

¹⁴¹ Interviewee 8 (8.14).

¹⁴² Interviewee 14 (14.4).

¹⁴³ Interviewee 13 (13.14).

an electoral process that worked. I think those were high water marks.”¹⁴⁴

141. “I’d say another moment was in early 2013 when the FIB was created and participated in, I wouldn’t say led or even made a huge amount of difference, participated in driving the M23 out of Goma. I think that’s a big moment, that showed some effect.”¹⁴⁵

142. “And I think that the peacekeeping mission really does it best to try to at least start to analysis and understand some of those factors when its doing its planning around POC. And I think when I joined the mission to even now when I went back, I think its progressively been getting more sophisticated over time which I think is really good.”¹⁴⁶

2.3.5 MONUC /Historic Significance

143. “So MONUSCO, as you know, is much much more than just the military and the mission, first of all, is the largest, most expensive mission we’ve ever deployed over such a long period and we’ve spent billions and billions of dollars. I think its historic significance is, in the early days, helping rid Congo of the foreign armies so that the countries essentially one. Not what we found it back in 2000.”¹⁴⁷

144. “...don’t forget the old nemesis, LRA, for sometime the LRA was a huge menace in North East Congo, in an area the size of California, we had a battalion of Moroccan troops and yet we deterred the LRA from operating and carrying out the savage attacks. Yes, there was a time when they killed some peacekeepers – 2006 – they killed in 2008, the famous Christmas massacres, 2009, but after 2011, the LRA has never carried out a large scale attack and that because of whole bunch of things that MONUSCO was involved with – patrolling, working closely with the Ugandans and the Congolese, captured LRA prisoners – we used them to, dropped leaflets, saturated the radio waves with messages saying how they’re not ill treated when they surrender. So no one is putting together a strategy that would reduce the lethality of the LRA.”¹⁴⁸

¹⁴⁴ Interviewee 8 (8.15).

¹⁴⁵ Interviewee 8 (8.16).

¹⁴⁶ Interviewee 14 (14.4).

¹⁴⁷ Interviewee 9 (9.27).

¹⁴⁸ Interviewee 9 (9.31).

2.3.6 Civil Society/Institutions

145. "I believe that Kabila, unlike most of his neighbours, was not able to change the constitution to allow himself to run again. I think we contributed to developing a civil society and other institutions, which made it impossible for him to do that."¹⁴⁹
146. "Radio Okapi, I think has played a key role. The fact that there is an outlet available to the average Congolese, where he or she can get unfiltered news without a spin, I think is tremendously important."¹⁵⁰

2.3.7 Protection

147. "I do believe that despite the failures which are well known, we have, overwhelmingly protected people, not just through military force but through political engagement, through developing some institutions and, eyes physical force, when we are the only entity that can take a Congolese magistrate from Goma to some village, in our helicopter, protect him, whilst he is dispensing justice and then take him and the prisoner back to Goma, I believe we are carrying out important work."¹⁵¹
148. "the proper implementation of all these systems there's not always an accountability is still lagging for actual implementation but the systems are still in place. I mean, could they be better, I'm sure we could refine them, but generally speaking, I think the protection architectures and systems are good enough."¹⁵²

3 Fundamental Principles of Peacekeeping

149. "They've stood the test of time in the sense that.. the problem is what the UN is being asked to do in a lot of places is not peacekeeping so the principles apply and are still valid for peacekeeping, they're clearly not valid for peace enforcement or whatever else it is, counter terrorism, which the Council under the guise of peacekeeping is asking the UN to do."¹⁵³

¹⁴⁹ Interviewee 9 (9.28).

¹⁵⁰ Interviewee 9 (9.29).

¹⁵¹ Interviewee 9 (9.30).

¹⁵² Interviewee 13 (13.15).

¹⁵³ Interviewee 16 (16.14).

150. "The principles very much apply to peacekeeping. The problem today is...increasingly, the UN is being pulled in directions [or] asked to do things which really can't be described as peacekeeping anymore. And maybe there's a need to articulate new principles, to define that something else..."¹⁵⁴
151. "There was [a lot of discussion about the fundamental principles and the use of force and IHL] and there was an element of what I call buyers remorse. I must say the former SG, from the minute we sold him the concept, always liked it, so he was an early convert, but some of the others on his staff and in other departments were a lot more sceptical, partly because of the principles but also just, you know, for most people quite rightly, they don't join the UN to carry out neutralising operations. You know, you join other entities for that, so I understand that, and they wanted to make sure that we had, and I'm speaking metaphorically now, that we had a lawyer behind every soldier, and we did to a certain extent build a regime to make sure that if we did undertake an operation, that we were going to take a lot of care in how we carried out operations. Part of this was for very good principled reasons, part of it was just practical because, you know, there was a concern from our humanitarian partners that at any time in Eastern Congo we had so many humanitarian workers and if we suddenly went around eastern Congo acting like cowboys could they not themselves become a target and that was a legitimate concern. We had another concern which is, if you stop being a peacekeeper and you become subject to the laws of war, does that make the Secretary General as a sort of commander in chief of the intervention brigade, a legitimate target. In other words, in fictional terms, if the M23 sent a group of people here to New York to assassinate Ban Ki Moon, would that have been authorised in terms of the laws of war, because he's part of the chain of command. So we kind of role played all of these things, and I think it's good that we did that and looked at all of these angles and I am, years later, now you know, being a fat arm chair critic, proud to say that we've not had instances where we've used too much force or we've abused the mandate that we got; we've shown care and diligence."¹⁵⁵
152. "MS are devoted to these principles. And I think the P5, with the exception of the French and more recently the Chinese, the P5 don't contribute troops, to lull other governments in, to assure them its business as usual and everything's great and hunky dory..."¹⁵⁶

¹⁵⁴ Interviewee 16 (16.18).

¹⁵⁵ Interviewee 9 (9.14).

¹⁵⁶ Interviewee 12 (12.13).

153. [Pre-FIB talks/the development of robust peacekeeping] “we were part of those pushing the cabinet in that direction saying ‘if we stick only to the principles, if we have a very low reading of what peacekeeping can do and not do, we are going to have a lot of failures’. ... I want to be clear on that matter, that for me, peacekeeping cannot cover all the spectrum of security and military matters ... you need to compliment other solutions and you need to be part of a broader approach to deal with the peacekeeping tool in security situations, so this was the context.”¹⁵⁷

3.1 Consent

154. “it’s obvious that without host government consent, there is very little you can do. We see it right across the board, South Sudan, Congo being another case. And even the most ‘dysfunctional state’ still has multiple tools at its disposal to basically bring the mission to its knees or stop it from carrying out its basic functions. So consent is an absolute must.”¹⁵⁸

155. “The consent of course is the primary distinction, so I mean, that goes without saying between peace enforcement and peacekeeping.”¹⁵⁹

156. [Withdrawal of consent] *de jure* consent is maintained, as this “cannot be withdrawn within a mandate but *de facto* the host Government can rescind its effective cooperation.” [Sustaining consent then becomes a political issue] with “either a re-definition of the mandate to appease the host government and/or some kind of political pressure” [to get the host to agree to a mandate extension].¹⁶⁰

157.

158. [Govt Relationship] “Kabila had been trying so much to get rid of them [MONUSCO] but he knew obviously that would be very risky, he could risk his own power by putting so much pressure on UN end. So he lived with them and he used them to get rid of his own opponents, for example Jean Pierre Bemba. ... So Kabila has really manipulated it so much, [such as assisting the UN with prosecuting war criminals in international courts] as long as they leave him alone, they can have them, like a sacrifice.”¹⁶¹

¹⁵⁷ Interviewee 11 (11.9).

¹⁵⁸ Interviewee 16 (16.15).

¹⁵⁹ Interviewee 12 (12.15).

¹⁶⁰ Interviewee 12 (12.18).

¹⁶¹ Interviewee 5 (5.11).

159. [Joint Operations/de-facto withdrawal of consent] “during the political crisis, we started 2014/15 into early 2016 in the DRC between MONUSCO and the government the supreme commander, Kabila, signed an order forbidding his troops to operate with MONUSCO. [But] in South Kivu we operated normally, in North Kivu, we operated normally, in Ituri, normally, in parts of the Beni region we operated normally, I have been flying helicopters twice a week, I had been using artillery attack helicopters many times, I have never requested the Congolese government to give me the authorisation, never. Now, you can go to South Sudan, you can go to Sudan, Darfur, you could go to Cote d’Ivoire, UN could do nothing without approval of the local government. So to say that the government was the player against UN efficiency is just a lie, so I don’t mean that they have always been supporting and playing always crystal clear game, of course not. But in terms of freedom of action, you cannot imagine the freedom of action that we had. And if I say that is because if we had better political conditions, we would have been much more efficient because we had some means that FARDC didn’t have and we could have been much more efficient on a number of occasions. I think that if we had not this game played some time ago, FDLR would be dismantled totally, already. And ADF would not be as strong as it is today.”¹⁶²

3.2 Impartiality

160. “...if we subscribe to the notion that a peacekeeping operation is above all a political tool, right, or that it is a tool to further a political objective and that political objective is basically to promote or help parties in a conflict situation arrive at some sort of settlement, you can’t do that unless you’re impartial. So it’s pretty obvious now, the interpretation of the principles has evolved over time so that... it’s very clear that impartiality doesn’t mean neutrality, ... particularly when you’re dealing with armed groups that are posing a threat to civilians... trying to undermine a peace process, the fact that you’re impartial doesn’t prevent you from taking action to neutralise or to diminish the ability of those actors to derail a peace process or a political process.”¹⁶³

161. “I don’t think joint operations with the government are necessarily a violation of the impartiality principle. There’s a difference between neutrality and impartiality, which I’m sure you’re aware of; you can still be impartial and do joint operations with the government. I was more worried about the effectiveness of doing joint operations in an area

¹⁶² Interviewee 11 (11.36).

¹⁶³ Interviewee 16 (16.16).

where it was clear that the government, or at least the state actors in the area, were highly complicit in the field. The armed group activity as well, so I was less focused on defensive use of force and impartiality (although they're important things) and more focused on whether the approach that MONUSCO was taking was having an effect on it."¹⁶⁴

162. [impartiality] it becomes "harder to sustain the notion of impartiality of the UN mission, if its military component is engaged in military assistance to one of the parties to the conflict; the notion of impartiality can be respected, however, while the civilian component is assisting the government in other mandated activities such as judicial sector reform and human rights reform".¹⁶⁵

163. [local perception] "really the challenge that MONUSCO has had for a long time now, and the UN in general, some people differentiate between, as they would say, their blue UN and black UN, but I think, especially the more kind of isolated locations you go into that maybe don't have all the UN entities at play, people don't really know what's in a Security Council mandate to understand why it is that the UN is there."¹⁶⁶

164. [Joint operations] "in 2010, when it was almost still MONUC, there were already co-signed orders, including at the strategic level or operational level, higher level for the military between the Congolese and MONUSCO. In our time, we had, starting by the brigade level, the sector level, South Kivu, Ituri, North Kivu, we had co-signed orders between MONUSCO and FARDC and of course, all these orders were endorsed at the Kinshasa level by the senior military. So I can tell you that in terms of interaction and joint planning, lot of things had been done and where possible. And in this planning you can include consideration for IHL, consideration for a number of things which are extremely important in general of course for the UN."¹⁶⁷

3.2.1 UNHRDDP – Due Diligence Policy

165. [Conditionality – HRDDP] "The DDP didn't start as the DDP, it started as a conditionality policy, it was a direct response from the Kiwanja massacre in 2008 and the lack of response and some of the joint support

¹⁶⁴ Interviewee 8 (8.2).

¹⁶⁵ Interviewee 12 (12.16).

¹⁶⁶ Interviewee 14 (14.8).

¹⁶⁷ Interviewee 11 (11.35).

and joint operations that we were supposed to go into with the FARDC and heavy concern in terms of behaviour of the FARDC when conducting operations and the frankly possibility of being complicit to that behaviour by their providing support or engaging directly in joint operations, although at that time it was less the case than now with the FIB."¹⁶⁸

166. [Conditionality – HRDDP] "So with that and with the mounting criticism, myself and, at the time, the protection adviser under DSRSG, RCHC, who was detailing with OCHA and the protection cluster, we drafted a non-paper on the conditionality and how we should be engaging or not and the criteria's for deciding on who we could work with or not. This was a very sensitive topic and some of the senior mission leadership at the time was not keen because obviously from a political partnership point of view this was a difficult message to carry to the government and national counterparts but also there was not necessarily support from all quarters of UN membership so it took a while to take hold, in fact, it took quite a few disasters (as regular human beings usually do) before it could occur.

And so, at first, that paper was just a paper and then you know, growingly, we started to put in place, under the leadership of the DSRSG RoL who is now the SRSR in MONUSCO, Leila Zerrougui. We put in place mechanisms to show that it could actually work in terms of implementing conditionality and coming up with a system of who we could work with and what were the criteria, but this was, this took, this didn't gain traction before basically we had an OLA opinion that came, which said that there are legal responsibilities and including individual legal responsibilities for Force commanders or SRSRs if we are either aiding and abetting or being complicit to international crimes."¹⁶⁹

167. [First use of Policy] "Once that OLA opinion came back then there was a bit more openness in terms of implementing this and so we were mandated to come up with a system, which we did, of listing and assessing who were the units, their backgrounds etc, supposedly there was systems to suspend support which were not used until at the time, USG Le Croix came and did a visit and just at that time there was a big incident with one of the battalion or company, I can't remember, that we were supporting, I think it was in Mbandaka at the time but I'm not sure. And he was publicly taken to task in a press conference, by the international press on, you know, how was that possible, the UN and MONUC are supporting those that are committing these massacres and of course serious human right abuses. And on the spot he said that he would suspend support for that battalion and so this is the first time ever that support was suspended, it actually defied all procedure because it was done in a very kind of executive fashion but as a result, that created a precedent obviously and we could really enter into serious discussions

¹⁶⁸ Interviewee 13 (13.1).

¹⁶⁹ Interviewee 13 (13.2).

with the national counterparts about the fact that we were serious in terms of possible suspension of support and then after that we also made sure that the conditionality made it into the SC mandate for MONUC, which it did.”¹⁷⁰

168. [The need for the policy] “There was a whole discussion between the political and the legal people ... [the political argued that they had a mandate to support so had no choice, they had to support, but the lawyers argued that they had other obligations] and the fact that you have a mandate doesn’t absolve you of your other international obligations in terms of IHL and human rights and others. So it was important to change the mandate so that argument could not be used anymore and have a caveat to support – that it should be in compliance with the conditionality policy.”¹⁷¹

- NB. *The first draft of the paper on the conditionality policy was completed in April 2009 and then in 2010, approximately February, the UN commissioned a study on the policy to review the matter and they came up with the HRDDP policy.*

169. [Conditionality] “I don’t know why we should be extremely strict in conditioning our support, to have these conditions being on the table and then we continue to play with the people who are the real sponsors of instability, we do it everyday! So I think it’s a total contradiction. It’s a total contradiction and complicity, there is also complicity. You cannot blame also only this general or these people who are corrupt, they are responsible – no! It’s a collective responsibility. And this is a big issue.”¹⁷²

170. [HRDDP] “when you first tackled it, it was very Congo specific, there was a sense of urgency, that we could no longer support operations that inflicted harm on civilians in terms of civilian casualties, displacement etc, that we were essentially being accessory to those kinds of crimes.”¹⁷³

171. [HRDDP] “...then once it was in place for Congo, I think we very quickly realised that this wasn’t a Congo specific issue, ultimately, we needed to apply that same policy across the board.”¹⁷⁴

172. [Conditionality – DDP Evaluation] “The DDP takes into account way more than just human rights. It’s called the human rights due diligence

¹⁷⁰ Interviewee 13 (13.2).

¹⁷¹ Interviewee 13 (13.3).

¹⁷² Interviewee 11 (11.31).

¹⁷³ Interviewee 10 (10.1).

¹⁷⁴ Interviewee 10 (10.1).

policy but it’s really a DDP overall because its balancing the different imperatives that we have so – the need to protect, the need to act, the political needs, with the risks. It’s a risks mitigating approach, so you’re assessing the risks, including the same thing that we were assessing with conditionality and then you’re assessing the risks of doing something with the risks of not doing something, which is also a risk in human rights, protection, political, operational, military domains. So it’s much more well-rounded. And I would say it’s much more of a realistic tool adapted to real life. That being said, I think the risk with the DD approach is not to ever suspend support and I think that’s an issue in some cases, not so much in the case of MONUSCO because they come from the conditionality framework and so they are enough precedent that it’s a reality that support could be suspended, but in other context, if you’ve never suspended support then it might not be taken very seriously.”¹⁷⁵

173. [HRDDP] “...now I think it’s got to a point where people are expanding it to non-mission settings aswell, which is quite difficult I think, of course it’s always applied to the mission and the country team collectively.”¹⁷⁶

174. [HRDDP] “Congo, I think, is still probably the main example or is probably the mission that invests the most resources into the implementation of the HRDDP, if you look at the staffing table and how many people are I think within the human rights component, implementing the HRDDP, monitoring the database of different FARDC leaders is very very comprehensive, so I think in terms of investment of resources, it’s probably still at the top. But it now applies across the board.”¹⁷⁷

175. [HRDDP] [mentioned the two red generals] “who couldn’t be worked with, for good reason by the way, but the problem is by saying, or without having a condition that you could work with them, it just meant that we had written off those generals and created a crisis with the government, which then told us to basically get out of the country at that time, although not that seriously and out of that experience, they developed a more nuanced human rights due diligence policy, which really would say there are concerns about an individual and here are the conditions under which we would work with him ... And so it’s more of a mitigation strategy than a red flag strategy.”¹⁷⁸

176. [HRDDP] “So during my time we saw the HRDP as a useful and necessary path to do effective operations and to limit the risk, I mean,

¹⁷⁵ Interviewee 13 (13.4).

¹⁷⁶ Interviewee 10 (10.2).

¹⁷⁷ Interviewee 10 (10.3).

¹⁷⁸ Interviewee 8 (8.3).

these were people that had showed a willingness to target civilians or to engage in activities that we weren't willing to participate in, so I think it was a good thing, I think it could have been applied much better obviously, but then at least the view of myself and the SRSG at the time was this was certainly a necessary thing to use as part of our operational planning."¹⁷⁹

177. [HRDDP Implementation] has been impeded by "the constant fear that the host government will stop cooperating with the UN mission altogether and/or ask the UN mission to leave its country." [The proper implementation of the HRDDP is therefore not only] "the right thing" but also "the practical thing, because if you lose your moral credibility, it will inevitably undermine your operational effectiveness."¹⁸⁰

178. [HRDDP] [on the Red Generals] "I believe that Kabila did this [appointed the two commanders to work with MONUSCO against the FDLR] deliberately, knowing full well that there were limits to what we could do with these guys. When we became aware of this, my boss at the time, the Head of Peacekeeping, spoke to the Foreign Minister of Congo at the AU summit, which must have been January 2015 and basically said – 'you have two weeks to remove these Generals'. Well, no Congolese politician is going to remove Generals because the UN says so and of course they didn't. And we then put ourselves in an awkward position because it quickly became known that we had set this as a condition -that if these generals were not going to be removed, we were not going to launch our own operations. Because even though the mandate of the intervention brigade suggests they can undertake unilateral operations, it doesn't actually mean that we can just say to the FARDC, to hell with you, we're going to do what we want. It doesn't work like that. So we were in a bind. And I have to be a little bit critical of us, I think we put ourselves in a bind because there were things we could have done, leaving the generals in place but finding mitigating circumstances to work around it.[...] But we put ourselves at logger heads with them, so we was essentially paralysed. And all of that contributed to what, overtime, came to be a reduction in the effectiveness of the Intervention Brigade."¹⁸¹

179. [HRDDP implementation] "I think the profiling project of the human rights component is something that's never been replicated elsewhere and it's a shame because as I say, I think it's got great analytical power but also great power in terms of leveraging even for our protection purposes, not only military protection, but in political engagement and parties to the conflict engagement etc. I think that the HRDDP

¹⁷⁹ Interviewee 8 (8.4).

¹⁸⁰ Interviewee 12 (12.4).

¹⁸¹ Interviewee 9 (9.21).

implementation now and the way that the HRDDP Secretariat and the HRDDP decisions are made is the most sophisticated level of implementation of HRDDP. It is taken seriously by all the other components, which is not the case in other missions, where you still have to fight with the military or the other components to take that seriously, whereas now there is no question, they may not like it, but there is no question that you will have to do that. And that the military won't be able to go into any kind of support or operation without having had that go through the HRDDP Secretariat, I think there's an ownership of that HRDDP by political actors that there is not anywhere else, in any other mission, who mostly still see HRDDP as a human rights thing, rather than a political responsibility. So in a way, MONUSCO is the most sophisticated version of what the UN knows how to do on POC and integration of human rights, into political and security processes."¹⁸²

3.2.2 Relationship with FARDC/Host State

180. "Wherever we operate, it's always been to operate with local forces and it's always best to prepare local forces to take over from us. Clearly in Congo, we have been there now 20 years, this has not been our greatest success. There have been times when the FARDC has done better and times when it has proven very difficult, but we have always wanted to work with local forces, so I have no problem with that principle."¹⁸³

181. [FARDC problems] "The FARDC though [...] for many many many years, was not a professional army, it was a constellation of different armed groups, many times ethnic or tribally based, and more often than not, using the uniform as a type of rental economy, so in other words they were not really interested in playing the traditional role that an army plays, they were in the army because it was a good way to earn a living and the higher up they went in the chain, the better the living became. When you had senior commanders who were, in their part time, providing the rations for the army, you know, that just smacks of corruption, when you have salaries being paid to commanders and then commanders distributing the salaries down to the individual soldiers, you have a system that is prone to corruption."¹⁸⁴

182. [FARDC relationship] "So while we had these competing priorities such as by mandate to support the Congolese army, and sometimes being attacked because we was supporting the Congolese army, like for

¹⁸² Interviewee 13 (13.17).

¹⁸³ Interviewee 9 (9.22).

¹⁸⁴ Interviewee 9 (9.23).

example, the attack on us in Semiliki two years ago, was precisely because we were supporting the Congolese army, but at the same time, they were not always the most reliable partner for us, but we could not operate without them, both at the planning and at the operational stage. And... one of the things... looked at [in the strategic review] was the amount of support we were giving the FARDC and we tracked that the more support that we gave them, the fewer violations they carried out. There was an absolute correlation. Later on, when our own resources started to be reduced and we couldn't support the FARDC, you saw again an uptake in violations carried out by them."¹⁸⁵

3.3 Use of Force

183. [The Principle] "Use of force is the one where we see, where certainly there's a degree of drift which then has knock on effects on the other two. And so something like the intervention brigade in DRC, which is a sort of conscious departure, even though its couched in all sorts of caveated language, about 'without prejudice to the principles of peacekeeping'... But even that, and there's a debate going on right now about the future of the intervention brigade, questions of performance, questions arising, why isn't the UN engaged in unilateral operations, but of course, they can't if the FARDC are not on board, ultimately it's a sovereign country, no matter what the mandate says there's really no prospect of the UN sort of charging off and doing its own military operations without there being a degree of consent from the Government."¹⁸⁶

184. [Self-defence] the right "has been interpreted broadly to include not only defence of the personnel, premises, property and freedom of movement of the UN operation but also defence of the mandate itself. By expanding the latter concept to include any impediment to the fulfilment of the mandate" [it renders the concept of self-defence] "meaningless".¹⁸⁷

185. [MONUC part of the conflict] "the issue we had is that the mission started to be part of the conflict. There was one contingent particularly from a country I'm not going to cite. That was heavily engaged in the fight together with the government and the UN was perceived as a supporting ... and we were in rebel territory with the UN seen as supporting the government. So our situation was extremely difficult, our

¹⁸⁵ Interviewee 9 (9.25).

¹⁸⁶ Interviewee 16 (16.17).

¹⁸⁷ Interviewee 12 (12.17).

cars were stolen because OCHA doesn't have a special logo it's an office of the Secretariat so it's the UN on the side. ... the peacekeepers had the black logo and we had the blue logo but who knows that. So we were not welcome everywhere, it has been extremely dangerous for some of our staff sometimes and they escaped. It was too close to be comfortable."¹⁸⁸

186. [Peacekeepers using force] "It [the FIB] cannot be the model for any situation, and it is the discretion that peacekeeping has to operate in a dimension which cannot cover the whole spectrum of situations. I think that it can be extended at least what we call, tactically in the use of force, which means for specific short-term purposes, you can be strong, but not as a perpetuation of offensive during or as a campaign. The campaign with the peacekeepers to go to the offensive doesn't make sense."¹⁸⁹

187. [Use of Force/'Neutralise'] "I think, [neutralisation has generally been interpreted as] defeat. And that doesn't mean go at every last one of them, but every defeat ... A framework brigade can attack a group, whether they're in their base or moving when problems appear, or planning to attack civilians, and they can do that pre-emptively and pro-actively whether it's an imminent threat and the FIB can attack a group when they're not planning on attacking civilians. And that's the where there is a clear distinction. So the FIB has a mandate to attack them *because* they are that group, not because of what they are doing but because they are that group. And that's the big difference. Also, I think politically. And that isn't the case in any other mission."¹⁹⁰

188. [Neutralisation] "[in 2014] everybody was aware, that part of the mandate included protection of civilians language, but I think there was still this feeling that you would protect civilians by neutralising – which is very much a British army word, not a UN word – but the word 'neutralising' just to give you a lesson in UK doctrine or war fighting, it doesn't necessarily mean killing, destroying, it just means 'rendering ineffective'. So when I say neutralise...it's more just rendering effective – make it that whatever the threat is, it can no longer pose a threat to the local community."¹⁹¹

¹⁸⁸ Interviewee 1 (1.3).

¹⁸⁹ Interviewee 11 (11.27).

¹⁹⁰ Interviewee 10 (10.16).

¹⁹¹ Interviewee 7 (7.2).

189. [Neutralise - Interpretation] "the current [2019] mandate... has a paragraph 'neutralisation of armed groups' which is part of the POC chapter, its one sentence of 255 words. And if you look at the mandate in 2013, of course, the language was slightly different, it has been a little bit clarified and a little bit strengthened but there was, as I said, already a lot of place for interpretation.¹⁹² ... they didn't say that [neutralisation] in 2013, they say it's a collective endeavour, it has to be a comprehensive approach, but at the same time they say offensive, through the FIB .. [people have asked for the language to be changed because of the problem of interpretation] those who are not part of the FIB said 'neutralisation is not for me' and today, the neutralisation, they say through the FIB but they say also it has to involve all the support of MONUSCO."¹⁹³
190. [Neutralisation Interpretation] "today the main problem ... when you say 'neutralisation through the FIB' it gives the impression that neutralisation is a military approach, which is totally not true. Offensive operations have to be in support of a political process. ... a Commander needs to ask the political decision maker: 'what is your intent, what is your objective, what process do you want me to support?' and in Congo you don't have that."¹⁹⁴
191. [Use of Force Perception and Impact] "you can see MONUSCO as part of the conflict ... international peacekeepers being an active part of the conflict, that creates, obviously, it creates confusion and creates a resentment with part of the people."¹⁹⁵
192. [Use of force/MONUSCO perception] "But people get frustrated because they attack and then the security forces, the armed forces, they kind of are unable to stop this; populations are suffering and who is not able to stop this is not only the Congolese armed forces but also MONUSCO and the international community is not able to prevent this stuff happening so that creates a lot of negatives sentiments and resistance to the international community as a whole. And there is a problem. On that. Things are bad, nothing more can be done."¹⁹⁶
193. [on 'non-performance'] "I don't like too much the term because sometimes it's not very useful because troop contributing countries don't like to be named as 'non-performer'. And I think, as it is rightly said, it

¹⁹² Interviewee 11 (11.16).

¹⁹³ Interviewee 11 (11.16).

¹⁹⁴ Interviewee 11 (11.18).

¹⁹⁵ Interviewee 2 (2.2).

¹⁹⁶ Interviewee 2 (2.3).

is not only a question of military, it's also sometimes a systemic problem."¹⁹⁷

194. [On IHL] Humanitarian actors noted that ensuring they are not embedded in the mission ... its fundamental if you want to work in some places and its fundamental in some situations if you want to defend and support IHL."¹⁹⁸

3.3.1 The FIB

195. [FIB] "I think that the expectations are raised very high when you bring in an entity like the FIB and talk about their offensive use of force, in my view, the neutralisation mandate of MONUSCO and the activities that happened during my time there were not effective in reducing the scope of strength or territorial control of any of the armed groups that I was focused on. And for me the missing piece was the link to the local engagement.
196. Where it did have a better engagement was the FRPI in Ituri because there was more local engagement, but for a group like the ADF which is deeply embedded in the communities, I think the idea shouldn't be to bomb the ADF out of the community; it should be to make the communities turn against the ADF. And that's a local engagement strategy."¹⁹⁹
197. [FIB conceptualisation] "It was slightly my child [...] when the M23 was pursuing its strategy around the summer of 2012, the AU and ICGLR got together and came up with this proposal to establish a neutral force and they sent a couple of teams down to meet with a team in MONUSCO to see what could be done, but it was quite clear that this neutral force was always going to lack the means to be deployed, but it had clearly garnered some support from Kinshasa and other parts of the region. So, of course, when Goma fell in 2012 and we were casting about for something that could perverse this, I thought that there was enough support for this concept but that it would best work within a UN platform. And so together with a small team, we put together the concept and then sold it both our leadership here, the ICGLR, the AU and SADC."²⁰⁰

¹⁹⁷ Interviewee 11 (11.8).

¹⁹⁸ Interviewee 1 (1.10).

¹⁹⁹ Interviewee 8 (8.5).

²⁰⁰ Interviewee 9 (9.1).

198. [FIB conceptualisation] "There's a long history to how the FIB, within the mandate and within the mission structure kind of became more integrated, if you will. initially I think, in terms of how we conceptualised it and how people talked about it was very much kind of a distinct entity within the mission and then has been kind of shifted to one mission, one mandate. The framework brigades also being put more towards it, more proactive posture and more aggressive POC implementation etc. So that kind of shift over time, I'm sure you know, it took a while."²⁰¹
199. [FIB and Political Approach] "...what I've always felt about the intervention brigade, it was not an isolated instrument, it was an instrument within a broader political strategy. [...] at the same time as we introduced the intervention brigade, we also introduced this framework for peace and security in the great lakes and it was, in other words, our military approach was buttressed by a political approach, one in which Rwanda saw great benefit in. Having been in the dog house with many key Western countries, including the US and UK, for much of 2012, in 2013, by signing this framework/agreement, they were able to get out of the corner they were in by saying and committing, not to interfere in their neighbours affairs. I'm not saying that they've entirely kept up to that. But overwhelmingly, the M23 has never repeated itself... I think the framework has, in fact, outlasted; the benefits of the framework have outlasted the benefits of the intervention brigade, but, of course, one is more spectacular than the other."²⁰²
200. [FIB and the legal/normative boundaries] [under any PoC mandate] "force is authorised against any individual or group that commits physical violence against civilians or threatens to do so... regardless whether the perpetrator is a State or non-State actor – the source of the threat is a legitimate target". [Within the FIB's mandate] "the M23 is named in the resolution as the target, regardless of whether they're physically attacked civilians or jeopardising the safety of civilians in any particular moment... this is the new dynamic, the tectonic shift in the mandate" [not the fact the FIB is using robust force which was already authorised under MONUSCO's PoC mandate]. "to the extent that the FIB was an integral part of MONUSCO... [the FIB's mandate resulted in MONUSCO] "being deemed a party to the conflict – not just the FIB."²⁰³

²⁰¹ Interviewee 10 (10.10).

²⁰² Interviewee 9 (9.18).

²⁰³ Interviewee 12 (12.9).

201. [FIB pre-deployment] "already at that time it was 2013, we were seeing MONUC/MONUSCO for far too long so there is a need to change and a need to finish, also, with this armed group, and there was, on the other hand, a positive context, that Mr Ladsous was calling, you know, when the stars start to align, and you get a space for something to happen. It seemed that the support for some support of armed groups in the east of Congo was going down and this maybe has not been recognised enough, there was a will of countries in the region, what we would call today and what we see today as being a move for African solutions to African problems. ... SADC, who is also a very dynamic regional organisation, wanted to act themselves, they wanted to create what they called a neutral force. I think it's a term that was used. Neutral doesn't mean that they are not acting, it means that they are not composed of countries directly involved in the problem. ... And the Council, as it is still the case, didn't want to finance as it was the case in Somalia, a new African force."²⁰⁴
So we said... we can find a solution within MONUSCO. And this is where the idea of offensive action mandate, given to the FIB came, which may, I think for us it was the best solution. I don't mean that it was the solution for all peacekeeping missions at all, but it was, for that situation, the best solution."²⁰⁵
202. [FIB-M23 deployment] "in August we took part directly to the action against the M23 in the surroundings of Goma and... at that time we had very strong protests, somewhat similar to what happens today in North Kivu. We had protests, including with civilian casualties...these protests were extremely violent but ... the message was extremely clear – the mission was action. MONUSCO take action. And actually, this is what we did with our means, within political context, which was favourable to this type of action, but mainly under the pressure of the population which was bombarded. ... some months before, during a visit to Goma, Ban Ki Moon and his Deputy, Hervé Ladsous said clearly to MONUSCO (I was in Congo but I was not part of MONUSCO) he said if M23 attack again, you have to take action, you have to defend Goma, so the order was very clear."²⁰⁶
203. [FIB logistics] "When I say support, it was mainly logistical and the air fire support, no troops taking part in offensives on the ground because we had no support from the political side and because our troops, I have to mention, were not very keen, to take the risk and to conduct offensives in the forest."²⁰⁷

²⁰⁴ Interviewee 11 (11.10).

²⁰⁵ Interviewee 11 (11.11).

²⁰⁶ Interviewee 11 (11.1).

²⁰⁷ Interviewee 11 (11.6).

204. [Military and political] "we have, in the difficult conditions, tried to put in place a system which is more effective whilst there was a political crisis between MONUSCO and the Government."²⁰⁸
- *Referring to October 2014, after the death of General Bakumba and a pause in operations when the ADF moved closer to the civilian populations in the 'Triangle of Death'; interviewee 11 noted that they met a lot of the population affected by the casualties.*
205. [Troop separation] "you cannot have a physical separation between those who were going to go on the offensive and those who are going to go in the protection or whatever part, it doesn't work like that, its overlapping."²⁰⁹

3.3.2 FIB Use of Force

206. [Use of Force] "Occasionally, use of force helped – 2015 the operations against the FRPI in Ituri reduced by 400, that group and opened the space for political dialogue, that, for a while at least, reduced civilian casualties."²¹⁰
207. [Use of Force] "the UN itself didn't endorse necessarily the fact that a UN force may have to act offensively, and there were debates from the beginning within the Secretariat..."²¹¹
208. [Use of Force] "...we almost never get into trouble for using too much force, but we always get into trouble when we use insufficient force. I mean, if you look what's happening in Beni today, the people are protesting that we're not being robust enough, which is so ironic because the debate in 2012 and 2013 about the intervention brigade was all the more squeamish side of the house saying oh my god, we can go around killing people, and what we get criticised for is not being robust enough."²¹²
209. [Use of Force] "...sometimes, yes, it's been frustrating for me, when I was covering Congo, that we weren't using all the authority against the FDLR or we were slow against the ADF, but it was never, I did not

²⁰⁸ Interviewee 11 (11.7).

²⁰⁹ Interviewee 11 (11.17).

²¹⁰ Interviewee 8 (8.11).

²¹¹ Interviewee 11 (11.12).

²¹² Interviewee 9 (9.13).

- have a single conversation with any commander or civilian leader in MONUSCO saying you use too much force, it never happened."²¹³
210. [Use of Force] "There was 2017 when Ivuri was under attack by Katumba and here again, Ivuri is 3/400,000 people and again the FARDC fled and we ended up destroying those naval boats that he was using but we've never, not the ICC, not the Congolese judicial process, said 'dear MONUSCO, you use disproportionate force that you were not authorised to use and, you know, I'm not going to go to Beni and say this to people today – well, we saved Ivuri yesterday and, now you're complaining that we're not."²¹⁴
211. [Use of Force/Int Law] "We had another concern which is, if you stop being a peacekeeper and you become subject to the laws of war, does that make the Secretary General as a sort of commander in chief of the intervention brigade, a legitimate target. In other words, in fictional terms, if the M23 sent a group of people here to New York to assassinate Ban Ki Moon, would that have been authorised in terms of the laws of war, because he's part of the chain of command. So we kind of role played all of these things, and I think its good that we did that and looked at all of these angles and I am, years later, now you know, being a fat arm chair critic, proud to say that we've not had instances where we've used too much force or we've abused the mandate that we got; we've shown care and diligence."²¹⁵
212. [FIB and the M23 offensive] "we were with General Cruz in the trenches, North of Goma, we invented a means to support with the Tanzanian, the South Africa, of the FIB, the FARDC offensives, we coordinated our fires, including attack helicopters from Ukraine, in order to avoid mistakes, which means civilian casualties yes, but also fires in Rwanda because the border is very close, and finally, we got a very effective mean to support the Congolese offensive which were successful. So 9 days and after 9 days the situation stopped. ... And to my knowledge, these operations didn't cause any civilian casualties, this is extremely important ... this has been an accomplishment."²¹⁶
213. [FIB and M23 Offensive] "In October, after our final round of negotiations in Kampala, the M23 operations resumed and I have to mention that nobody in MONUSCO and New York asked us to resume the planning of the operations incase of failure of these negotiations. But as military we planned, in secret, these possible operations. We did

²¹³ Interviewee 9 (9.15).

²¹⁴ Interviewee 9 (9.16).

²¹⁵ Interviewee 9 (9.14).

²¹⁶ Interviewee 11 (11.2).

it with very few key people in the FARDC and we were ready actually, we were ready and we supported, with our means and Malawi was there at the time, the offensive.”²¹⁷

214. [FIB and Int Law/PK] “theoretically, the idea is a good one, but it has a lot of, I think it has a lot of caveat in the sense that obviously it changes the nature of the mission, it really transforms peace operations into targets and legitimate targets, from a legal perspective.”²¹⁸

215. [FIB and Impartiality] “it’s very difficult, it puts us completely on one side because you’ve got a defined enemy and so, in terms of the political work and the mediation or the conflict resolution or the good office political work, you’re saying that that’s not going to be the priority for the UN, because you have to choose, it’s not possible to do both. At least that’s my view.”²¹⁹

216. [Concerns on Use of Force] “The President of Uruguay at that time sent a letter to Ban Ki Moon saying ‘I don’t agree with the robust peacekeeping’. He was totally against [the FIB] but the reality that his troops on the ground, Uruguay, did a good job.”²²⁰

217. [FIB use of force] “there was a lot of debate and for us to act on the ground, it was crystal clear for us because we were seeing the consequences of non-acting when you have civilian protected and bombarded and civilian casualties, you need to act because you are the one having the means. You may not be given clear orders but you have [.. *trailed off*] So there was this type of debate on the FIB.”²²¹

218. [Inadequacy of Peacekeepers doing FIB/force tasks] “the adequacy of the tool [is a problem]. Imagine that you operate with a blue helmet, with white vehicles against people who are hiding, who are spying, who have people in the population paid to give them information, it’s totally nonsense. No normal country would send soldiers to do this type of task and under these conditions. Impossible! You need special forces, you need people, I have to say, able to operate somewhat similarly to the armed group they are combating, of course, not killing people and civilians... so I cannot blame too much the fact that a lot of contingents were extremely reluctant to operate.”²²²

²¹⁷ Interviewee 11 (11.3).

²¹⁸ Interviewee 13 (13.6).

²¹⁹ Interviewee 13 (13.7).

²²⁰ Interviewee 11 (11.13).

²²¹ Interviewee 11 (11.14).

²²² Interviewee 11 (11.25).

219. [FIB and counterterrorism link] “the FIB, I do wonder about the link between the broadening of the peacekeeping operation to allowing the use of force in order to protect civilians, which is what counterinsurgency is trying to do. ... maybe there is a link between the FIB and a hardening of peacekeeping in other areas.”²²³

3.3.3 FIB Powers

220. [FIB powers] “...there was a big discussion in the house about the extent to which we could use the full powers of the intervention Brigade. Now, to be perfectly honest, when we put in the SG’s report to the Council, what we wanted this intervention brigade to do, very few of us thought the Council would actually agree to everything we was asking for, because we was asking for extraordinary powers, powers that had not been granted to any UN entity before – the ability to undertake targeted defensive operations and things like that. ‘Neutralise’ – I mean even the word was so loaded and it was meant, I think, as more of an attention getter. And yet, the Council bought into all of that ... they obviously accepted what we were trying to do, and really didn’t make a lot of changes to it.”²²⁴

221. [FIB exercising powers] “...then of course the M23 did something incredibly stupid, which was it attacked MONUSCO. So we didn’t even actually need to invoke the offensive nature of the force because we was defending ourselves ... [*discusses conversations between SRSG Martin Kobler and UN NY headquarters – omitted to maintain anonymity*]... he had authorised use [of force] and were we okay with it, he framed it in such a way that we didn’t really need to invoke all those special measures that we had established to be able to use the FIB.”²²⁵

222. [FIB exercising powers] “they [M23] gave us obvious reasons to intervene, we had to stop the threat, we had to stop the source of what was killing civilians and we had the means to do it, we had accurate means to do it, we had the conditions to do it, which means that we were able to fire without causing civilian casualties so yes, they made this mistake.”²²⁶

223. [FIB powers] “as you can understand the UN at the best of times is made up of a wide range of views, and not everyone in the UN was comfortable with creating such an instrument and so there was a big

²²³ Interviewee 7 (7.4).

²²⁴ Interviewee 9 (9.3).

²²⁵ Interviewee 9 (9.5).

²²⁶ Interviewee 11 (11.22).

discussion about how to use it, when to use it etc. And so we developed a fairly elaborate system, whereby if we needed to use it, who would eventually clear or authorise an operation. But we never needed to invoke that in the early days, simply because it was never an offensive operation, it was always a self-defence.²²⁷

224. [FIB and Framework Brigades] "the regular troops, the non-FIB troops, or some of the contingents, were extremely concerned because they say if part of the contingents in MONUSCO start to conduct offensives, we will have retaliations against our contingents. And the problem is that those contingents, and I could name the Indians, in particular, they were in the middle of the groups which were the target, so they had a level of acceptance to be kind, sometimes almost fraternisation, which became, quickly, unacceptable, this created a lot of problems which led to managers/commanders in the field."²²⁸

3.3.4 FIB Precedent?

225. [Precedent?] [Is the brigade setting a precedent?] "No, I don't think so. [Noted how the possibility of an intervention brigade came up for Mali and CAR at the same time as the FIB in DRC, but nothing occurred] "Well, of course, in legal terms, yes, we now have a precedence, there's no denying it. But, the alignment of stars that existed in the Council, on the ground, in MONUSCO, is so hard to replicate, I've tried. It's not that we haven't tried. I mean, I know this is not your research, but I'll just tell you, why couldn't we do that in Mali, in Mali we simply didn't have as capable forces that were going to be MINUSMA as the SADC contingents. We never had, and even to this day, we cannot overcome the scepticism in the Security Council for becoming a counterterrorism force, we can do an element of counter insurgency as we do in eastern Congo but counterterrorism is a whole different thing and, you know, it's not by chance that the Council, in all of its years of doing business has never authorised a PKO to do counterterrorism. Its authorised others to do it, but not the PKO."²²⁹

226. [Precedent] "An intervention brigade should always be very special and very much a last resort, I think we had plenty of authority in the mandate of MINUSCA, plenty of authority in the mandate of UNMISS to be able to protect civilians, and I dare say, there probably were instances when, in CAR, the force acted as an intervention brigade, asking if they could. They had a pretty good reading and they knew that armed group X was advancing on civilian population Y and if they didn't do certain things, and so they just did them, we didn't put a banner,

²²⁷ Interviewee 9 (9.6).

²²⁸ Interviewee 11 (11.15).

²²⁹ Interviewee 9 (9.11).

calling it a this or a that operation, but I think by virtue of the fact that we raised the bar, the threshold in terms of kinetic operations in peacekeeping."²³⁰

227. [Precedent] "In terms of doctrine and policy development, we have always treated the FIB as a Secretary General's exception as does the Council ['s approach] so that's in MONUSCO resolution, noted in the [symposium?] that it doesn't create a precedent etc. And I think from the perspective of people in New York and peacekeeping policy people, we're very glad that it hasn't been replicated anywhere else because it is such an exceptional mandate that runs counter to, arguably runs counter to, tried and test peacekeeping doctrine and principles."²³¹

228. [FIB Neutralise/Precedent] "lots of papers have been written about the FIB, I think, generally speaking, as I said, the fact that the mandate specifically says that it's to 'neutralise armed groups' I think is seen by most people as a the crossing of a line that is very problematic for a peacekeeping operation and, thankfully, MINUSMA doesn't have that mandate, MINUSCA doesn't have that mandate, nor do the other missions. That's from the perspective of the sort of broader peacekeeping community and of course the FIB experience, post-M23 shows how problematic that [companion?] is."²³²

3.3.5 FIB Analysis

229. "FIB was political. It was a clash between Tanzania and Rwanda."²³³
230. "mainly NGOs and other agencies, they don't like the black UN as opposed to the blue UN."²³⁴
231. [In 2014/15] "I didn't really see them in action, they were not doing what I would describe as kinetic activity."²³⁵
232. [FIB analysis] "I think the FIB had its moment where it was potentially useful, it had a political role ... the political importance of the FIB in terms of having SADC as a regional entity who had invested in Congo. But as a military concept, I think the FIB is flawed and shouldn't be repeated and my recommendation when they asked about the

²³⁰ Interviewee 9 (9.12).

²³¹ Interviewee 10 (10.11).

²³² Interviewee 10 (10.15).

²³³ Interviewee 5 (5.12).

²³⁴ Interviewee 7 (7.1).

²³⁵ Interviewee 7 (7.5).

MONUSCO review was to suggest that the FIB have its neutralisation mandate removed and it be turned into a protection force only. I doubt they will take my advice but that's okay. So that's a conceptual weakness."²³⁶

233. [Post-FIB effect] "Unfortunately, the dynamic which was created in the liberation of some occupied territory by some armed groups, M23, was not used to create a positive move and we started to hesitate, in particular because the plan of the DRC was then to go back to ADF in the region. I have to mention clearly one point which has been ignored and sometimes misreported, the request to go to ADF was not at all as has been said, even by officials as a way to avoid combat against FDLR, it was the request of President Museveni, and the planning against ADF started in early October 2013. At the time, M23 was pushed out of Goma ... there was no means to know at that time that M23 would be defeated, so this is extremely important because the story has been told differently. We have proof it has been even, of course the planning which was conducted with UPDF, the army of Uganda in the DRC, Kisangani, was secret but the press was convened at the end of every meeting and they had reported, at least some statements by officials at that time. The record of that."²³⁷

234. [FIB ADF operation] "The support to operations against ADF was extremely low, the interest was extremely low, and it is again, the circumstances which led us to act around Beni."²³⁸

235. [FIB practicalities] "I think it's very difficult to do these kinds of tasks, even for a national, very well organised and strictly command and controlled, well trained military, I don't think the UN has the configuration, the authority or the resources to carry this necessarily adequately. Particularly the lack of command and control. And the politicisation of the forces that are inside of this, so their lack of impartiality to me, is an issue. And it's not an issue that the UN will be able to solve, because of the nature of the organisation."²³⁹

236. [FIB] "... even after everybody had become so used to MONUC and MONUSCO, here was a new entity that was changing the way that business had been done..."²⁴⁰

²³⁶ Interviewee 8 (8.19).

²³⁷ Interviewee 11 (11.4).

²³⁸ Interviewee 11 (11.5).

²³⁹ Interviewee 13 (13.8).

²⁴⁰ Interviewee 9 (9.4).

237. [FIB Effect] "FIB can create a kind of window of opportunity or can support a dynamic, it can establish conditions ...when we pushed M23 outside of DRC, we had a situation which could have been exploited, it has not been exploited. ... we [the military] create conditions but after it has to be exploited. And sometimes it is not what is happened and if you operate and you kill some leaders or some combatants, this is not the problem, you need to have also a broader set of conditions to establish, so you need reconciliation, you need to have some compromise."²⁴¹

238. [FIB Impact] "what the intervention brigade did, which was a bit different to the neutral force is, it married the political interests of the three SADC countries with a greater degree of effectiveness then we had with some of the other contingents and so when they eventually deployed in 2013, I'll come back to some other aspects later, you could immediately see that they were going to make a difference one the ground. Actually, even before they deployed, the fact that Rwanda was sending messages to South Africa and other places shows that they were rattled. And you know, of course, famously, Rwanda was on the Council when the FIB was approved. So they couldn't disown it because they had voted in favour of it."²⁴²

239. [FIB Impact/ An African Solution] "The Force Intervention Brigade has made a lot bit of difference but then we are talking about the military aspect which is only one dimension of MONUSCO but it is indeed extremely important. We have seen how there has been a round or two of arm wrestling between the classic international community and the African players and then secondly within the African, between the African multinational institutions and FIB has been a result of that. And with a bit of distance you can see that. FIB was a successful attempt of African situations to claim, take and keep ownership of the African conflict - which Congo is. And this has important consequences until today, I think the way/role Angola is playing at this moment, the role SADC by extension is playing wouldn't have been possible without that key moment where they claimed, obtained and kept ownership so that cannot be overestimated."²⁴³

240. [FIB 'success'] "It has been a success against the M23, it has been a success because M23 made terrible mistakes, including bombarding civilians in Goma."²⁴⁴

- NB. Interviewee noted that M23 "operated like traditional military forces, so they were easy to target"

²⁴¹ Interviewee 11 (11.30).

²⁴² Interviewee 9 (9.2).

²⁴³ Interviewee 3 (3.8).

²⁴⁴ Interviewee 11 (11.21).

241. [FIB as a solution] "at that time, 2013, FIB was a good solution or the best solution possible in those circumstances and the second fact, which is extremely important, it was composed of countries or contingents coming from countries which were politically involved in finding a solution for the region... more willing to take risks, to have casualties ... so we had those good conditions and we had...the political window of opportunity to be able to operate... But then on FDLR, on ADF, you lose some of these conditions, starting with the political. ... you need to have the political conditions and we lost it."²⁴⁵
242. [FIB Effectiveness/Positives] ONE: [Initially, between August and November when it first deployed it was] "kind of feeling its way around, it wasn't as effective as it eventually became... there is a body of opinion that says, that they were not supermen, there were a few decisive operations which they undertook but what they did and what happened around the FIB was a game changer, which included ... that the Congolese FARDC was suddenly able to overcome the boogeyman of Rwanda. And so they started fighting better, I mean, the mere fact that they were standing up to fight was a good sign because in 2012 they would abandon positions. The M23 would advance to them, they would abandon positions and then leave us alone. That is certainly what happened in Goma. So the FARDC, for a change, was standing and fighting and doing a pretty decent job. So that was one component and it was an important component."²⁴⁶
243. [FIB Effectiveness/Positives] TWO: The second component was certainly the FIB, you could feel it bucked up MONUSCO, the South Africans, and to some extent the Malawians, brought the A team; they were SA special forces, there was weaponry, there was of course the Roi Faults, and the Roi Faults, they arrived, it's not exactly like this but they arrived on Saturday and by Monday they had destroyed the headquarters of the M23. They were decisive very very quickly on the ground, in the field and all made a difference."²⁴⁷
244. [FIB Effectiveness/Positives] THREE: "the third element, which hardly anyone recognises was the extent to which we, and others, put pressure on Rwanda not to intervene, not to provide covert support to the M23."²⁴⁸
245. [FIB fighting/M23 success] "And I believe it was that combination of factors that eventually allowed us to prevail. Of course, the M23 fought

²⁴⁵ Interviewee 11 (11.23).

²⁴⁶ Interviewee 9 (9.7).

²⁴⁷ Interviewee 9 (9.8).

²⁴⁸ Interviewee 9 (9.9).

- like a conventional army so it was easier to operate against them, as we've seen with other armed groups, it's been more of a challenge. When the end came, it came pretty swiftly and, you know, you've seen the headlines in most major newspapers how effective peacekeeping certainly was. And I think it showed many of us that when you have a sufficient degree of political consensus and the military means, you can achieve things. Of course, if you ask me, well what happened in 2014, well, one or both of those went on holiday. And the intervention brigade was not as effective and I don't believe it has ever been as effective or decisive. Of course there have been individual battles where it's been significant but in terms of you know, a set of political achievements, and military achievements, I think that was its heyday."²⁴⁹
246. [FIB] "it was efficient against M23. Against ADF, it could have been more efficient at the beginning if we had the political support and we lost it because we created a struggle between MONUSCO and the government at that time."²⁵⁰
247. [FIB, post-M23] "[referring to the recent work of the FARDC in the Kivu's to halt armed groups] And where is MONUSCO in that matter – nowhere! And we come back today to a situation here it is obvious that we should have started by addressing the presence of foreign groups – ADF, M23, FDLR, ADF and FNL or other Burundi groups in South Kivu. It was the kind of cornerstone of the build-up of all the armed groups in the region and it has not been done and it has been a huge mistake, something that was lack of strategic understanding of the situation by a number of people in New York and elsewhere."²⁵¹
248. [FIB effectiveness] "...in terms of training and posture, I think you know that after the initial kind of heyday of the FIB, when they were quite effective against the M23, the track record of the FIB has been mixed, at best. And the quality of the contingents within the FIB ... in terms of training, equipment, command control, combat and discipline ... some of the FIB contingents are very problematic. What happened recently, that something to do with that, in Beni, the force headquarters of the FIB also was widely known to be dysfunctional."²⁵²
249. [On the FIB and SEA] While politically, it's [the FIB] also untouchable because of the SADC role, the Congolese interest as well in keeping those MS in, because South Africa's role in New York more generally etc etc.

²⁴⁹ Interviewee 9 (9.10).

²⁵⁰ Interviewee 11 (11.32).

²⁵¹ Interviewee 11 (11.33).

²⁵² Interviewee 10 (10.12).

But it's troubling that we have a contingent, a SA contingent, in particular, and this is one backbone for me, that also has not really improved at all, when it comes to combat investigation and you still get a significant number of SEA allegations against them/FIB every year. So they kind of stand out unfortunately as very problematic and some Council members have been raising concerns about that but haven't really pushed hard either and for that to be remedied.²⁵³

4 Democracy

250. [MONUC/2006 elections] "Kabila...largely owes his position to the support he had from key players in the international community, when he first came to power...Because, I remember in the inter-Congolese dialogue in the inter-Congolese dialogue, for example, for the first few weeks of the negotiations, the question, the main focus of the negotiations was whether or not Kabila should be recognised as President. You had all the rebel movements saying, no-ones won the war, we're here to negotiate, what's to say that Kabila is president, on what basis. So he's come a long way and through that process and then the subsequent elections in 2006, he was able to gain a degree of legitimacy which... over the ensuing decade... declined year on year..."²⁵⁴

251. [2006 elections] "...which were basically organised by the international community. But where the result was deemed credible, not necessarily just because of the international community's involvement but because at that particular time, Kabila was extremely popular, particularly in the Eastern part of the country, where there was a rejection of anyone associated with the rebellion that was controlling that part which was seen as an agent of foreign powers. And so the result of those elections, that election is sort of viewed as a high water mark because the result was legitimate and credible, but it has as much to do with where Congo was and some of the policies that Kabila pursued and he really prioritised re-unifying the country, getting the foreign troops out, getting the peace process completed, ending the war, which, he largely managed to achieve and benefited from that politically."²⁵⁵

252. [2011 elections] "[which were] preceded by a change in the constitution which was extremely controversial, going from two rounds to one round, an election that was, by all accounts, rigged, didn't meet minimum standards of sort of fairness, credibility. And where the international community and the UN was involved, but less involved. And so you almost have this directly proportional relationship with the

²⁵³ Interviewee 10 (10.14).

²⁵⁴ Interviewee 16 (16.7).

²⁵⁵ Interviewee 16 (16.8).

decreasing level of international involvement and the increasing levels of rigging, basically."²⁵⁶

253. [2016 elections] "...in 2016 when the elections took place but where there was a complete rejection of international involvement, [on the grounds that both the sum from Western donors and MONUSCO's logistical support came with too many strings attached] And, you know, the Government essentially found a way to organise its own elections, brought in these machines, even though there was enormous pressure from the US about this, over that decision. And where, as you rightly pointed out, huge controversy around results but where the outcome was a first, not only in Congo's history but for the region."²⁵⁷

254. [DRC elections in general] "20 years on, with your third presidential election, its entirely legitimate that a country organises its own elections, it shouldn't have to rely on outsiders to organise an election for them. And I think part of the problem that we had, and why the UN was put in a difficult position, was that for a number of Western donors, in particular... they made no secret of the fact that they saw these elections as a tool to effect regime change. And saw MONUSCO and its logistical and technical support as a vehicle through which to exercise a degree of oversight and influence over the electoral process. On the assumption that Kabila would do everything in his power, if not to get himself re-elected, to get his chosen successor elected and perpetuate the system and that MONUSCO could be a tool to counter. But of course, in doing so, it played into the hands of Kabila's regime who played the nationalist card for all it was worth with some success in terms of regional diplomacy, where they were able to drive a wedge between the Security Council, particularly the Western members of the Security Council and SADIC, for example, who came to the conclusion that a credible election was synonymous with stability but were also incredibly sensitive to any kind of western interference in the DRC elections and so that put the UN in an extremely difficult position where I think credit needs to be given to the head of mission who kind of navigated all of that in such a way that the UN was able to maintain its impartiality which is absolutely critical for the success of any peacekeeping operation, and maintain an ability to engage a communicate with all the key political actors across the spectrum. Even though there was enormous pressure being placed on the mission to basically choose a side. And which, you know, the head of mission refused to do at some personal cost, because she was being directly attacked by states and also internally, as well as siding with the regime."²⁵⁸

²⁵⁶ Interviewee 16 (16.9).

²⁵⁷ Interviewee 16 (16. 10).

²⁵⁸ Interviewee 16 (16.11).

255. [Elections/Democracy promotion] "...a serious question which needs to be asked about how realistic, how helpful it is to expect a peacekeeping operation, that operates on the basis of consent, impartiality, to essentially play the role of an arbiter in an electoral process..."²⁵⁹
256. [Elections/Democracy Promotion] "... if the Council's role in a peacekeeping operation is an expression of the Council's will and the main focus is addressing threats to international peace and security, I think there's a real question as to whether turning a peacekeeping operation into a tool for 'democracy promotion' but when there's a clear regime change agenda behind that is the best way to approach upholding that responsibility, certainly the Russians and the Chinese and others argue very strongly that that's a red line."²⁶⁰
257. [Elections in general] "[when thinking of positives of the UN operations] I don't know, there must be high points. I mean, they've had an election although I think the elections probably abit of a puppet because I've heard just recently that there's a deal being done by the guy who's just got in and Kabila, that's just left."²⁶¹

5 Protection of Civilians

258. [POC in Congo] "it was the first POC mandate, not by virtue of the design of the mandate but... Hammarskjöld's announcement that he would be reading the mandate as allowing ONUC to have the authority to save lives .. [there was] of course [some objection for members of the Security Council] his interpretation of ONUC's mandate prevailed."²⁶²
259. [FIB v Framework Brigades] "I think the issue though is that both the framework brigade and the FIB are meant to be doing protection and I think one of the downsides of the FIB is when the FIB came, some of the framework brigade said 'okay now we've got our robust bit of our mission, now we can relax abit and not be so robust'. And I actually talked to a couple of contingent commanders who essentially said as much – so the negative side of having a separate mandate; a 'neutralisation' mandate for the FIB, is it may have sent a message to the others that they weren't meant to be quite as robust as they could

²⁵⁹ Interviewee 16 (16.12).

²⁶⁰ Interviewee 16 (16.13).

²⁶¹ Interviewee 7 (7.7).

²⁶² Interviewee 12 (12.1).

- have been and I think that's unfortunate. It's possible they just took advantage of that to pass that message to themselves."²⁶³
260. [The FIB/conflict and POC] "I don't think you can do PoC without addressing the conflict. And so you know, I think you can't be everywhere and its clear to me from a security and military perspective that you need to basically deal with the threat, which doesn't necessarily mean neutralising that threat, there's many ways to deal with a threat. But just kind of fencing, I mean, having PoC as a fence, to immediate, clear and present danger is bound to fail, we can't be everywhere and we don't have enough capacity and even from a practical military perspective, that's not how you actually defend or protect."²⁶⁴
261. [POC in DRC in General] "First of all, there was a mission wide PoC strategy, I don't think I ever met anyone who had read it. It was long. It was certainly not a part of the bloodstream, military or civilian."²⁶⁵
262. [POC tools] "The eyes and ears of the UN are their liaison officers, the guys out on the ground, they're amazing. ... Those guys live in houses in the community and get out and about and they find out what's going on... and report it."²⁶⁶
263. [POC/reducing conflict] "The things that I saw that helped reduce conflict the most were almost always done by the civilians and it was about community reconciliation [e.g. Hutu-Nande work] [...] I think where there was effective protection, it was mainly around helping communities come together to talk through problems and come up with a solution."²⁶⁷
264. [POC 'success'] "Of course, every single person who feels they're not being protected is right, I totally understand that but talking to you as a researcher who must take a more macro view, it's important to take all of these instances into account, not just the more obvious ones where we just can't protect everybody, you know, one time, the governor of North Kivu said 'you have so many peacekeepers and you can't protect everybody' yeah, sure, and you have 10 times the military and you can't either. So who do you want to start blaming here first."²⁶⁸

²⁶³ Interviewee 8 (8.7).

²⁶⁴ Interviewee 13 (13.5).

²⁶⁵ Interviewee 8 (8.8).

²⁶⁶ Interviewee 4 (4.22).

²⁶⁷ Interviewee 8 (8.10).

²⁶⁸ Interviewee 9 (9.17).

265. [POC] "Protection of civilians, I think if you look at the trajectory of POC doctrine since the early 2000s, MONUSCO and MONUC before that has been quite influential during different stages, with different innovations coming out of the MONUC/MONUSCO kind of laboratory, if you will. Joint protection teams, probably soldiering, kind of POC strategies were probably written in that mission as well. I'm sure that now, the sort of protection projection mantra which originated from MONUSCO is still mostly MONUSCO specific and I hope it stays that way because I'm not a big fan of that terminology."²⁶⁹

266. [POC engagement] "one of the interesting things that I pinned it [POC] down to was you've got soldiers who don't speak the local language, are not familiarised with the local culture and are driving round in armoured vehicles with weapons on edge waiting for the worst case scenario, that combination means that they are not protecting civilians because they are not *engaging* with civilians. So one of my big things was trying to work out a way that you could train a Bangladeshi or Pakistani soldier to effectively engage with the local population."²⁷⁰

267. [Discussing Female Engagement Teams] "...what we was suggesting when I was there was that every patrol that goes out, whether its DRC, South Sudan, Mali, CAR, is that they have at least two women in the patrol to engage with local communities, not just women, but your patrol looks totally different if its mixed. If it's all men it can look a little bit hostile."²⁷¹

268. [FETs] "New York wanted me to develop Female Engagement Teams and I went back to NY and said, firstly, only 3% of the mission is female ... its almost gendered to take those women out of their day jobs and make them do female engagement because of their gender. It shouldn't be female engagement teams I am developing, it should be engagement teams. Full stop. So for example, the Indian brigade, I think they had about 4000 troops with not a single female on the ground. I can't not create female engagement teams, I need to create a way for them to engage."²⁷²

- NB. Interviewee 4 was deployed within MONUSCO for a few months – started to develop a course for engagement, which ran into language barriers and didn't get beyond test run before they left the DRC and is obviously unsure if this was continued by their successor

269. [POC and leadership] "I think leadership of the mission is key here and I think we've seen moments where PoC was taken extremely

²⁶⁹ Interviewee 10 (10.6).

²⁷⁰ Interviewee 4 (4.4).

²⁷¹ Interviewee 7 (7.3).

²⁷² Interviewee 4 (4.5).

seriously and moments where it wasn't. And I think it all depends on the SRSG and the Force Commander. With a strong SRSG, strong protection focused SRSG and good force commander, I think MONUSCO and MONUC in the past have had moments of excellent performance in terms of PoC and I think these get overridden by moments of great failure, but I don't think that the general picture that is being painted in the press is necessarily a realistic evaluation of how much the mission has achieved in terms of protection. Not to say that, there's not a great number of failures and a great number of shortcomings, but I would say, on the whole, where, in periods where you have had the adequate SRSGs, and I insist on that, the mission has done quite a lot in the very difficult context and with very inadequate means. And by that I don't just mean means in terms of assets, although that's true too, but in terms of, as I said, the configuration of the uniform personnel, the force, the caveats of TCCS etc, so in fact, it's a miracle that the mission has managed to do anything at all, if you ask me, considering the constraints that its operating under, but that's why it takes extraordinary leadership to actually get to that point and if you are an SRSG that's politically minded and not protection minded or not military minded then you're not going to know how to, and so, again, we go back to depends on what you see as the priority, if the priority is protection, that means the type of profile you should have in the missions are different than if your priority is brokering a peace agreement. Because you're not using the same avenues or skills at all, and you can't have it both ways."²⁷³

270. [POC 'success'] "In terms of achievements and shortfall, I think if you look at all of the period of the M23 etc, I think MONUSCO had a lot of success and I think they protected Goma and a lot of the population etc, so I think that needs to be recognised. I think there were a number of places that are not known, because they're in the bush, where MONUSCO also by presence or by civilian engagement protected locally people. Of course, these are all hotchpotch in the sense that it doesn't make a full protection, again because you can't be everywhere, it's not a matter of you're not going to be able to create local protection plan at every village, so I think that there is a lot of innovative ways of dealing with protection that was experienced in MONUSCO. I mean the urgent alert networks, the CLAs, the JPTs, those local protection plans were all good and have had all good impacts.

Was that enough and adequate? Absolutely not, and that's why you will always have shortcomings and the idea that you won't is illusory. I mean, even the biggest military of this world can't protect Afghanistan, so the UN with its small budgets, inadequate training people, procedures, can't. And I don't think it's reasonable to expect it. They can mitigate harm and I think, you know, they should probably look at

²⁷³ Interviewee 13 (13.9).

mitigation as a framework, rather than protection, but they can't protect."²⁷⁴

271. [POC 'success'] "I think that the level of complexity and refinement of the structures, mechanisms and systems for PoC is something that it [the UN] could learn because it has transposed some of it elsewhere but not all of it and the practices that have been, again, not perfect but still much better than elsewhere have not reached that level in other missions. I deal with MINUSCA, Mali and with all its fault, MONUSCO is still the best in POC. Far, far ahead of any other missions, and I think what others could learn is the degree of seriousness by which these mechanisms and systems get implemented, they're still, not that there isn't shortfall but that there's a lot higher level of accountability and follow up for ensuring that the systems are actually put to bare than there is in other missions."²⁷⁵

272. [POC and the Host State] "I also think that it's a very convenient approach to have the UN being in charge of protecting and defaulting on a very inadequate organisation an outlet to protect when these are you're basically substituting to Regalian powers that the state cannot implement, so again, I think the lens of PoC as wanting to protect everyone is just in itself an idea and a wonderful idea but an ideal. Which doesn't mean by any way that we shouldn't be doing things, that's not what I mean to say. I think we have to do the most we can within, but it's more like the doctors right, it's more like an obligation of trying and means rather than an obligation of results. That's what I mean. So yes, you have to try, you have to protect as many people and lives as you can but the way that it's presented is of the UN or MONUSCO or any other mission would be the saviour and would be able to bring protection to every corner of the country as big as Congo is just wrong."²⁷⁶

6 Sexual Exploitation and Abuse

273. [On the FIB and SEA] While politically, it's [the FIB] also untouchable because of the SADC role, the Congolese interest as well in keeping those MS in, because South Africa's role in New York more generally etc etc. But it's troubling that we have a contingent, a SA contingent, in particular, and this is one backbone for me, that also has not really improved at all, when it comes to combat investigation and you still get a significant number of SEA allegations against them/FIB every year. So they kind of stand out unfortunately as very problematic and some

²⁷⁴ Interviewee 13 (13.11).

²⁷⁵ Interviewee 13 (13.16).

²⁷⁶ Interviewee 13 (13.12).

Council members have been raising concerns about that but haven't really pushed hard either and for that to be remedied."²⁷⁷

274. [SEA and SA troops] "That's a major problem and my personal opinion is that far more serious consequences should have been resulted from that and should result from that."²⁷⁸

275. [Responding to SEA] "...course we could [do more]. We could escalate the pressure quite significantly, we could be more public about it, alternatively we could repatriate it. Weirdly that's difficult. Of course, the SG has that prerogative but the backlash he would receive in return would be severe. I mean, we threw out the two Congo's from MINUSCA for SEA related reasons, we have repatriated other contingents under [HR reasons?]. And if you look at the consistent pattern over time, year after year, the trajectory is pretty depressing. And I don't know exactly how responsive they are, the UN now to our demands for kind of investigations and accountability, but the numbers are bad ... but South Africa doesn't happen to be in many missions, so if you see the South Africa have X number of relations/accusations, you know that's the FIB."²⁷⁹

276. [Factors increasing SEA] "[discussion of some brigades (Ghanaians and South Africans) who engage/interact with local Congolese quite well, noted how some Ghanaians would go into homes and cook/talk with the women] "Often women are the key to holding were the knowledge is lying... this creates problems with SEA. [...] When I arrived SEA was a hot topic within DFID and the FO because of the Oxfam/Save the Children scandal and in my first or second week, DFID came out as part of their survey and they were looking at the DRC [...]"²⁸⁰

277. [A Ghanaian lawyer within the mission identified a number of factors that lead to SEA] the South Africans, despite having the most females, also have by far the highest rate of SEA and it was really very high and it was an issue but they had now recognised it. And instantly people blame poor discipline and bad leadership and things like that and it's far more complex than that to understand it."

278. [1] "Firstly, the South Africans were based in bases right next to towns and villages so they were much closer to the local population whereas the Bangladeshis, Pakistanis and Indians had isolated themselves in isolated outposts so the SA's had the opportunity to engage. They were also African so they were culturally closer so when it

²⁷⁷ Interviewee 10 (10.14).

²⁷⁸ Interviewee 10 (10.24).

²⁷⁹ Interviewee 10 (10.25).

²⁸⁰ Interviewee 4 (4.7).

came to fraternisation, it was much easier. Also some of them had similar dialectics ...”

279. [2] “Someone else actually told me, the South Africans didn’t discipline their people for it either, so they would just send them home to South Africa and that was it. So there wasn’t that punishment factors”

280. [3] “And the last thing somebody told me is SA has one of the highest rates of domestic violence and abuse anyway. I’ve actually never checked that statistic but if you put all of those little factors together you understand the problem a lot better than it is just poor command and leadership.”²⁸¹

281. [SEA and SA] “I think this is one of the reasons the South Africans sent a female brigade commander. She came in and that was like her top priority. To prevent it and stamp it out and I had lots of meetings with people about it.”²⁸²

282. [SEA internal attitudes] “I got very annoyed one day when a Bangladeshi officer tried to tell me that the reason the SA’s commit such SEA is because they have the most females and those females sexually frustrate the men. So it’s the women’s fault and if you just deployed men only then it would [...] So that was their viewpoint on it.”²⁸³

283. [SEA from humanitarian perspective] “You see quite absurd kind of stuff in many of these peacekeeping operations, which is quite discouraging, I must say. ... I had lots of discussions with commanders because often, these various contingencies, they report first and foremost with their captains and this was very obvious in Juba, I was there in 2016 when fighting was intense in Juba itself. The role of the peacekeeper within that was quite telling to say the least. [referring to SEA].²⁸⁴

284. [SEA accountability] “I think the commitment to accountability by TCC and Member States is not where it needs to be and I think it’s not at the mission level that there is necessarily some huge things to be done, even though I am sure there is still progress that can be done and I don’t know MONUSCO in particular really on that topic. However, the one thing that’s absolutely clear is for now there is still resistance into having adequate accountability from MS and TCCs and as long as that’s the case the UN will only be able to do so much.”²⁸⁵

²⁸¹ Interviewee 4 (4.7).

²⁸² Interviewee 4 (4.8).

²⁸³ Interviewee 4 (4.9).

²⁸⁴ Interviewee 2 (2.8).

²⁸⁵ Interviewee 13 (13.19).