Peacekeeping & Violence against Civilians

THE DEPLOYMENT OF PEACEKEEPING MISSIONS IN INTRA-STATE CONFLICT AND ITS EFFECTS ON REBEL VIOLENCE AGAINST CIVILIANS

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1. Introduction and Background

1.1. Introduction

Civil Wars and intrastate conflicts are the most prevalent types of conflicts in the world today (PRIO, 2018; Uppsala Conflict Data Program, 2016a). Thus, intrastate conflicts are also the most devastating conflicts we see in modern times, claiming massive amounts of casualties every year, including civilians and victims of one-sided violence. Only in 2016 the Uppsala Conflict Data Program (2016) recorded 6363 deaths caused by one-sided violence. And the total number of casualties of one-sided violence recorded since the start of the program in 1989 is 787 365 deaths.

Looking at these highly concerning numbers, it seems only logical that there is an abundance of research revolving around intrastate conflict. This research has strived to identify why these conflicts occur, how they develop and most importantly how to prevent it or stop it from escalating (PRIO, 2018).

However, although massive amounts of research and effort goes in to the prevention of conflicts and thereby its consequences. It remains a big problem in today’s world (Uppsala Conflict Data Program, 2016a). Once an interstate conflict has started, there are limited options at hand when looking at bringing an end to an already ongoing conflict (Wallensteen, 2015, pp. 136–137).

One thing that immediately comes to mind when thinking about conflict resolution is Peacekeeping. United Nations peacekeeping got its start in 1948 when the UN security council authorized the deployment of a mission to monitor the armistice agreement between Israel and the surrounding Arabic states. Since then, peacekeeping has evolved and changed substantially. Going from encompassing mostly observing missions deployed to monitor ceasefires and armistice agreements, to missions where a so-called more “robust” mandates where the mission is more about creating a peace than monitoring an already present settlement (United Nations, 2017).

Considering that peacekeeping is still around and there are 15 UN peacekeeping missions deployed in 2017, almost 70 years after the original mission in the middle east, it seems only logical to think that it would be an effective means of handling conflict (United Nations, 2017b). And scientific research largely agrees (Hultman et al., 2014, p. 750). An abundance of
research has gone into exploring the effects of peacekeeping, both positives and negatives. Contemporary research provides some evidence supporting the statement that the long-term effect of peacekeeping missions, especially so-called “robust” missions issued under chapter VII of the UN Charter, is a decrease of the levels of violence against civilians in a conflict (Hultman, 2010, p. 31; Hultman et al., 2013, pp. 23–24).

However, there are several issues in the field of peacekeeping that remain to be studied. For example, in her article “Keeping Peace or Spurring Violence? Unintended Effects of Peace Operations on Violence against Civilians”, Lisa Hultman (2010) studies the short-time effects of the deployment of a peacekeeping forces on the level of violence against civilians in the countries. The findings in this study show that the deployment of a peacekeeping mission leads to a rise in violence against civilians inside a short-time timeframe. (Hultman, 2010, p. 42). This thesis will aim to further explore the short-time effects of the deployment of a peacekeeping force. In this thesis I further examine these findings by conducting a small-N qualitative study on selected cases. The results found are quite intriguing, as they suggest that there might be more than just statistical significance to Hultman´s (2010) results.

1.2. Purpose and Research Question

The purpose of this thesis is to examine the short-time effects of the deployment of a peacekeeping force. It strives to find patterns of violence against civilians during and in the year after the deployment of a peacekeeping force. And based on these patterns attempt to analyse the causes behind them.

The research question formulated for this thesis is: How does the deployment of a peacekeeping force in a conflict where there is still active fighting, impact the levels of rebel violence against civilians in the short-term?

The research question is very much inspired by the results of Hultman´s (2010) study, which shows a serious and problematic trend where the deployment of a chapter VII peacekeeping mission into ongoing conflicts seems to increase the levels of rebel violence against civilians. However, Hultman’s study is based off a quantitative analysis, and although it shows a worrying trend. It is limited in that it does not deeper analyse the reasons behind this increase in violence but only provide a statistical correlation. A problem that can be partially solved by this qualitative study.
This research question is significant for a couple of reasons. Firstly, the rapid development of peacekeeping in later years and the push for further reforms has meant that there is a continuing need for scrutiny and analysing the effect of the changes that for example, the so called “robust” peace-missions issued under chapter VII of the UN charter (United Nations, 2017a, 2017c). The push towards a more and more proactive approach to peacekeeping and deploying peacekeeping missions to countries where there is no peace, and the main mission being more towards creating peace, naturally creates new challenges both practical and ethical. And the results of Hultman´s (2010) study give a prime example of such a problem.

Considering this, this study hopes to contribute to the existing research in multiple ways. First, I aim to test the findings of Hultman (2010) by looking at quantitative measures of rebel violence against civilians before and after deployment of a peacekeeping force in the selected cases. Second and more importantly, the study will strive to possibly shed some light on the mechanisms and possible causal process that Hultman proposes would lead to this variation in rebel violence against civilians. Meaning, trying to identify any factors that might point towards these mechanisms being present in the given cases and thus potentially explaining the reasons behind any variation in violence against civilians.

1.3. History of Peacekeeping

For the purposes of providing some background on the issues discussed in this thesis and make the theory and concepts used easier to grasp, it is necessary to briefly go through the history and evolution of UN peacekeeping.

As previously mentioned, in 1948 the first mission was authorized by the security council to the middle east. The first peacekeeping missions where mostly observing missions and missions whose objective was maintain ceasefires and providing additional stability in post-war zones where a settlement had been reached. In the early years, the cold war also played a major part in UN decision making and the security council was often fund in a deadlock. The first armed peacekeeping operations were UNEFI which was deployed to handle the Suez crisis, and the ONUC mission in the Congo, which was also the first large-scale mission carrying almost 20 000 personnel at its peak. These early operations, based on monitoring and acting as a buffer force, that were only deployed where there was already a peace to keep, are commonly known as “first generation missions” or “Traditional peacekeeping” (Bellamy et al., 2010, pp. 175–176; Kenkel, 2013, p. 125; United Nations, 2017a). In many ways, the mission
in the Congo was an exception from the traditional peacekeeping formula, and a sign of evolution towards what was to come. This is because it was the first UN mission that to some extent, used explicitly offensive military action in order to stabilize the situation in the country (Diehl, 2008, pp. 47–48).

In the late 1980s, the deadlock on meaningful intervention that had been caused by the Cold War broke, and an abundance of peacekeeping missions could suddenly be launched. These missions brought with them a clear evolution of the whole concept of peacekeeping and became so-called “second-generation” missions (Diehl, 2008, pp. 49–50; Kenkel, 2013, p. 127). There were several things that differentiated these new missions from past ones. Namely, the so-called “Peace Building” characteristics seen in these missions. Meaning, implementing peace agreements, monitoring disarmament, delivering humanitarian aid and supervising electoral processes (Diehl, 2008, p. 50; Kenkel, 2013, pp. 128–129). This resulted in more “Multidimensional” (Fetherston and Macmillan, 1994, pp. 30–44) peacekeeping missions that did not only monitor the peace, but also helped rebuilding institutions and build a stronger peace.

The next big evolution to the so-called “Third generation” peacekeeping operations, also called “robust” missions (Diehl, 2008, p. 58). These missions do not differ substantially from the second-generation missions. The main difference between the second and third-generation missions is the willingness and focus on using force in order to complete the mission and protect the mandate. This generation of missions grew out of the devastating failures of the missions in Rwanda, Somalia and Bosnia, largely due to their chapter VI nature that did not permit the use of force (Kenkel, 2013, p. 130). The reaction to the failure of these missions was strong. In 2005 a milestone was reached when the “responsibility to protect” framework was adopted by world leaders at the UN world summit. This framework accepted the notion that the UN might need to adopt coercive measures in order to save civilian lives (Axworthy and Dorn, 2016, pp. 89–90; United Nations, 2017d). The protection of civilians has thus become a main objective in almost every peacekeeping mission deployed today and has been since the end of the cold war. But with the inclusion of the responsibility to protect in the UN doctrine, modern missions are now arguably more likely to complete this task properly (Hultman et al., 2013, p. 2).

Finally, the current discourse revolving around peacekeeping includes the term “fourth-generation” peacekeeping missions. These missions combine the coercive measures and higher
tolerance of use of force in a third-generation mission, with the peace-building aspects of the of a second-generation mission. The biggest difference being, according to Bellamy et al. (2010, p. 231) is that the civilian tasks in the missions are less careful about regional autonomy than in the second generation missions. This can include, involvement in shaping democratic government institutions, economic liberation, promoting human rights and in the most extreme cases, a transitional administration, wherein the UN mission temporarily assumes the governance over the given state/area while institutions are built and preparations for a smooth transition of power are made (Diehl, 2008, p. 84; Kenkel, 2013, pp. 132–134).

2. Theory

2.1. Previous Research and Literature

The existing research and literature on the effect of peacekeeping operations on violence against civilians in conflicts is plentiful. And after the responsibility to protect doctrine was accepted in 2005 and in 2007 there was a significant push to prioritize the protection of civilians in missions deployed, much of the scientific work draw similar conclusions. Namely, that long-term UN peacekeeping missions can be used as an effective tool to mitigate the problem of violence against civilians in civil wars. That is, provided the missions deployed are of the appropriate scale, and thus have adequate resources in forms of sheer numbers of armed personnel and equipment to deter potential perpetrators from engaging in violence against civilians (Bellamy et al., 2010, p. 297; Hultman et al., 2013, p. 23, 2014, p. 740).

However, there is some work that criticises the efficiency and political acceptability of the new generation of so-called “robust” peacekeeping missions that are deployed to active conflicts today with the explicit permission to use “all necessary means, up to and including the use of deadly force, aimed at preventing or responding to threats of physical violence against civilians, within capabilities and areas of operations, and without prejudice to the responsibility of the host government.” (DFS, 2015).

2.1.1. Critique of Robust Peacekeeping

Notably, Thierry Tardy, in his article “A Critique of Robust Peacekeeping in Contemporary Peace Operations” is quite critical in his discussion revolving around the effectivity of these
missions and their overall compatibility with the original principles of peacekeeping (Tardy, 2011, p. 152). While Tardy does not explicitly discuss the effects of the deployment of a robust peacekeeping-mission on the levels of violence against civilians. He does discuss a few key points crucial to the success of a robust mission.

Firstly, Tardy problematises the compatibility between the traditional key-values of peace-operations and the new robust mandates given to operations today. These principles include impartiality, consent of the host state and non-resort to force (except in self-defence situations). This is an issue where especially some NAM (Non Aligned Movement) countries are critical of the change in direction seen in modern missions (Tardy, 2011, p. 158; UN, 2012). Especially the option to ignore non-consent by the host country and lowering the importance of non-partiality are seen as problematic, and could in some cases be seen as a form of neo-colonialism (Tardy, 2011, pp. 157–158).

Second, Tardy discusses the potential problem of a “commitment gap” in robust peacekeeping missions. The root of this issue lies, according to Tardy, in that the main decision-making process around peacekeeping remains dominated by the Security Council and its permanent member-states. Furthermore, these mostly western states remain the main financial contributors towards peacekeeping missions. Meanwhile the main troop contributing countries are to the most part developing countries and do not always have the same opportunities to influence the direction missions are taken. Naturally, this creates a situation where it may be perceived by the troop contributing countries that the higher risks that come with a more robust mission mandate are not shared equally between those who make the decisions and the main troop contributors, and this would in turn demotivate the main troop contributors from taking these risks themselves (Tardy, 2011, p. 159).

This connects closely to the next important issue that Tardy brings up, that is the requirements that the UN department of peacekeeping operations has listed to be met for a robust peacekeeping mission to be successful. These requirements, Tardy claims, are far too ambitious, and almost all main troop contributing countries fall short of meeting these requirements. It is not even certain that all NATO members would meet these requirements. This again decreases the feasibility of a successful robust peacekeeping mission because the countries that would realistically be the best equipped for such missions are not engaging in them (Tardy, 2011, pp. 160–161).
Finally, Tardy explores the issue of the deployment a robust mission with an effective military force, possibly disrupting the power dynamics of the conflict and causing fighting groups to suddenly change their tactics or areas of operation. Thus, it could cause unpredictable situations and further complicating the situation in the conflict (Tardy, 2011, p. 163). This is of course of great interest to this thesis because the objective is to explore a possible increase of rebel violence against civilians during and after the deployment of a robust peacekeeping mission.

2.1.2. A Positive View on Robust Peacekeeping

In a more positive view on the effectiveness of robust peacekeeping, Hultman et al. (2013) in their article “United Nations Peacekeeping and Violence against Civilians in Civil War” find that given the right resources and with adequate numbers of military personnel and police, UN peacekeeping can reduce the amounts of violence against civilians in a conflict. They find that as the number of military personnel and UN police increases in a mission, violence against civilians drops significantly (Hultman et al., 2013, p. 1).

The authors propose three mechanisms that might explain the results of the study. Firstly, the capacity of the mission to protect civilians is dependent on the number of military and police that it commits to the mission. This is because it directly affects the mission’s capability to intervene in violence against civilians. Also, a larger military deployment signals that the UN has a strong resolve to stop violence against civilians, which may deter fighting parties from stepping up violence. These missions are also more politically visible to domestic and international actors, raising the accountability of the Security Council members and main troop contributing countries. Thus, signalling that the UN is committed to the cause of ending violence in given conflict (Hultman et al., 2013, p. 8).

Then there is the “Mechanism of civilian Protection: Separating Combatants with UN Military Troops” (Hultman et al., 2013, p. 8). This mechanism states that it is the operations ability to physically separate factions on the battlefield that reduces the incentives for civilian victimization by warring parties. The authors claim that this is because fighting parties have a strong need to control territories along the frontlines of battlefields, and to do so, they might use violence to deter civilian defection and make it more difficult for the opponent to operate in these contested regions. All of which is only made worse if either side faces losses on the battlefield, and therefore look to improve their odds by gaining support of the civilian population (Hultman et al., 2013, p. 9). But the presence of large numbers of Armed UN
personnel might deter the parties from fighting each other on the battlefield, which in turn creates a situation where this kind of violence against civilians gives diminishing returns.

The authors then propose a third mechanism, namely the “Mechanism of Civilian Protection: Patrolling the Population with UN Police” (Hultman et al., 2013, p. 10). This mechanism states that by policing and patrolling the areas behind the frontlines, a mission will be able to increase the costs of forced recruitment of troops, violent looting raids and other kinds of victimisation behind the frontlines by acting as a physical barrier between the warring factions and vulnerable populations. Additionally, deploying police forces might help train and strengthen the development of the local police forces which will in turn further increase the security of civilians behind the frontlines (Hultman et al., 2013, pp. 11–12).

These mechanisms, especially when paired with the statistical results of the study, seem to make a very compelling case for the effectiveness of UN missions in dealing with violence against civilians (Hultman et al., 2013, pp. 22–25). However, Hultman et al. (2013) also raise some concerns over the effects that a mission composed of mainly observers and inadequate numbers of armed personnel can have on the violence against civilians. This could be seen as a fourth mechanism, explaining why a UN mission might not succeed in deterring warring parties from targeting civilians. According to the authors, observers have no capability in terms of physical means, neither do they possess the mandate to forcefully protect civilians. Thus, the deployment of observers does not initiate either of the mechanisms previously discussed. In fact, it might very well have the opposite effect. Signalling to combatants that the UN lacks the resolve to properly commit to end violence against civilians and thus not raising the cost of perpetrating violence against civilians. The authors also suggest a scenario where the deployment of UN observers might actually lead to an increase of violence against civilians. This is because theoretically, when observers are deployed, warring parties might have reason to believe that a stronger mission with military and police support might be on the way. Thus giving these parties a direct incentive to use coercive tactics against civilians in order to make territorial gains before the positions are solidified by a dividing force, as previously described in the second mechanism and improve their bargaining position in any future negotiations facilitated by the coming mission. (Hultman et al., 2013, pp. 12–14). According to the authors, this might lead to a positive relationship between the deployment of such a mission and the killing of civilians the authors suggest. And looking at the empirical findings of the study at hand, they all but confirm a trend showing that the deployment of UN observers might make a
bad situation worse and create incentives for warring parties to use coercive tactics against civilians (Hultman et al., 2013, p. 19).

To summarize, while these two examples of research around the effectiveness of modern robust peacekeeping might provide slightly different points of view on the matter. One criticising and doubting the capabilities and ethical correctness of robust peacekeeping missions. The other strengthening the claim that robust peacekeeping missions can be very effective at diminishing the occurrence of violence against civilians in a conflict and possibly further stabilizing the conflict if done right. They are very similar on one point. Tardy (2011) makes the argument that there are many problems in robust peacekeeping, and points to unrealistically high requirements to be met in order for such a mission to be effective. Hultman et al. (2013) also to some extent, argue that there are specific conditions that need to be met in order for robust peacekeeping to work, namely that it needs to have the right composition of armed troops to be able to properly use coercive tactics. Hultman et al. also find that there is a risk of worsening the situation regarding violence against civilians if a mission lacks the proper mandate or composition. Something that ties in to Tardy’s argument that disrupting the power balance in a conflict might lead to the warring actors unexpectedly changing their tactics and possibly even increase their coercive behaviour (Hultman et al., 2013; Tardy, 2011).

2.1.3. Strategical Violence against Civilians

Another field of study that is just as important to the theory and to this study, is the use of strategical violence against civilians. Much of Hultman´s (2010) theory and the mechanisms proposed in the study rely on the premise that violence against civilians in civil wars is not totally random and on the contrary, very much coordinated, premeditated and strategical.

For example, Wood (2010) suggests the possible use of strategical rebel violence against civilians in a couple different ways. He suggests that firstly, rebel groups have an incentive to claim support by making collaborating with the enemy costly for the civilian population and using violence as a low-cost alternative to providing public services or pay wages to keep support when they do not have the economical or organizational means to do so. Second, Wood talks about rebel groups using violence to directly motivate civilian populations to support them instead of remaining neutral, due to expectations of this increasing their odds of escaping the violence being exerted. Also, this would serve to show the civilian population that the government is unable to protect them against various threats and therefore entice them to
choose the side of the rebels (Wood, 2010, pp. 603–604). As previously mentioned, Wood argues that especially weak rebel groups, that are unable to provide other incentives for the civilian population to support them, can and will resort to strategical violence in order to gain support (Wood, 2010, p. 612).

Hultman (2007) argues that when rebel groups suffer losses on the battlefield, they are inclined to change their tactics and turn to attacking soft-targets, such as civilian populations. This is done in order to impose costs on the government in the form of a loss of civilian support and thus, make geographical areas ungovernable for the government. Which makes sense since geographical control is often a large factor in intrastate conflicts (Kulkarni, 2017, pp. 10–11). Hultman finds statistically significant evidence of a correlation between the number of rebel fighters killed in battle and the amount of rebel violence against civilians (Hultman, 2007, p. 209–210,218).

These studies and the results they provide show that there is a high likeliness that rebel groups have both the ability and the motivations to use violence against civilians strategically in a conflict situation. As such it strengthens the theoretical story of this thesis.

2.2. Theoretical Framework and Mechanism

As the theoretical ground that this thesis builds on rests heavily on the results of Lisa Hultman’s (2010) article and the proposed mechanisms explaining the findings of that article, it is of importance that the findings of the article in question and these mechanisms are explained thoroughly.

Hultman explores the deployment of peacekeeping operations in conflicts where there is still active fighting ongoing. This is with the intention of examining the immediate short-time effects of the deployment on the levels of one-sided violence against civilians. The argument of the article is that these missions might not always be equipped to immediately handle the ongoing conflict they are deployed into. Thus, there is a negative short-time effect on violence against civilians in the conflict. Meaning, violence against civilians increases temporarily (Hultman, 2010, p. 29).

And while the findings of the quantitative empirical study support this claim, that peace-operations, when deployed to still ongoing conflicts, have a high correlation with the increase of violence against civilians in given conflict (Hultman, 2010, p. 30). The important part for
the theory of this thesis are the theoretical mechanisms that Hultman claims might offer some explanation to the findings.

Hultman presents three mechanisms that might be able to provide an explanation of the results:

Mechanism 1

First, Hultman argues that violence against civilians can be used in order to gain control over a certain geographical territory. Strategical violence can be used to deter civilians from defecting or collaborating with enemy factions in fear of further retaliation. Territorial control is an important asset in bargaining situations, and therefore, if the warring parties are expecting negotiations in the near future because of imminent deployment of peacekeeping forces, these parties might turn to increasingly coercive tactics towards civilian populations in order to maximize territorial control and thus, improve their bargaining position (Hultman, 2010, p. 33).

Mechanism 2

The second proposed mechanism is somewhat similar in that it assumes that when a peace-operation is deployed, the warring parties might expect soon-to-come negotiations and therefore rush to achieve the best possible bargaining position. The difference being, that in this case, targeting civilians are targeted as a direct means of imposing costs to the opposing party. For example, a rebel group might target civilians that are under protection of the government to show that the government is unable to protect them and thus, possibly causing the government to lose crucial support among that population allowing the rebel groups to make territorial gains. This kind of secondary-means of imposing damage would supposedly be more likely if the warring parties are not able to make advances on the battlefield. The deployment of a peace-operation with a robust mandate might very well deter the warring parties from engaging each other directly on the battlefield and thus, cause them to turn to these alternative methods of inflicting damage to the opponent (Hultman, 2010, p. 33).

Mechanism 3

Finally, the third mechanism proposed by Hultman, is somewhat different from the previous two. Instead of suggesting that the warring parties might expect imminent settlement-negotiations and therefore rush to secure the best bargaining position possible, it suggests that rebel groups are resource-driven groups that seek to secure their survival. Stipulating that rebel groups that are dependent on natural resources might feel that their access to the resource and thereby, their survival, is challenged by the deployment of a robust peacekeeping operation.
And therefore, these rebels might increase the level of violence against civilians to maintain control of the resources. It is also suggested that these groups, due to their control of natural resources might attract large numbers of opportunistic fighters searching riches. Such an influx of new members would theoretically make the rebel group hard to control, and as such lead to higher levels of indiscriminate, non-strategic violence against civilians (Hultman, 2010, pp. 33–34).

Hultman, also discusses the fact that while the results show a clear positive covariation between the deployment of a peacekeeping force and an increase of rebel violence against civilians. This was not the case when applied on government violence against civilians. This is attributed to the fact that if the government can see a chance of remaining in power after an eventual settlement, it would probably gain from cooperating with the UN or any other intervening actor (Hultman et al., 2013, p. 34).

In this thesis I will largely borrow the theoretical proposition offered by Hultman as a possible explanation to her findings. However, I will modify the theoretical story to a certain degree, in order to eliminate some isolation problems that the last of the three proposed mechanisms bring with it. And which may be detrimental to identifying a variation in the variables of the study as well as identifying a possible causal mechanism.

So, I will argue that it is a combination of the first two of Hultman’s proposed mechanisms that might explain a surge in rebel violence against civilians when a robust peacekeeping mission is deployed to a intra state conflict. The two mechanisms are very similar in that they both suggest that it is the expectation of imminent settlement negotiations following the deployment of a peacekeeping force that trigger the rebel groups increasingly coercive and aggressive behaviour towards civilian populations. Both mechanisms 1 and 2 propose that by increasing these coercive tactics, the both sides hope to make geographical gains, and therefore gain a more favourable bargaining position in the negotiations-to-come. The only difference really being that according to mechanism 2, rebel groups will actively harass and kill civilians enjoying the protection of the government to inflict a loss of morality among given population and thus make them more likely to switch over to supporting the rebel side. While Mechanism 1 doesn’t emphasize violence against specifically government-loyal populations. And thus, states that this type of accelerated violence against civilians is just a means of retaining already controlled geographical areas and possibly tilting the allegiance of non-aligned civilian populations towards the rebel side through deterrence (Hultman 2010, pp. 33-34). This means
that these two mechanisms are not mutually exclusive, and thus either one, or a combination of the two could be observed in a case where there is an increase of rebel violence against civilians after the deployment of a peacekeeping mission.

Now, there are reasons as to why I have chosen to exclude the third of the mechanisms from the theoretical reasoning in this study. First, mechanism 3 is reliant on resource-dependent rebel groups being present in the conflict, and thus natural resources being a large factor in the conflict. Furthermore, for this mechanism to kick in, the rebel groups would have to be in control of these natural resources at the time of deployment of the peacekeeping force for the mechanism to activate. But maybe most importantly, it is suggested by Hultman in her study that this kind of resource-driven rebel groups, might experience a larger influx of opportunistic new recruits. Which could, as previously mentioned, lead to a less control over the group, and thus an increased risk of non-strategic violence against civilians. As such, a group like this might not be able to act collectively in a manner that would enable it to exert strategic and coordinated violence against civilians as a reaction to a peacekeeping deployment (Hultman 2010, p. 34). Finally, a high prevalence of indiscriminate and non-tactical violence against civilians could make it hard to identify patterns of strategical violence possibly caused by the deployment of a peacekeeping force.

Also adding to the feasibility of this theoretical argument. As mentioned in the previous research and literature section, Tardy (2011, p. 163) also warns of possible unexpected consequences as a reaction to the deployment of a robust peacekeeping mission. This is clearly in line with the mechanisms proposed and strengthens the case that robust peacekeeping missions might cause unexpected side effects. Furthermore, Hultman et al. (2013, p. 19) produce results which clearly imply that missions deployed without the necessary means to effectively battle violence against civilians might cause an increase in the amount of violence against civilians. I claim that in the early stages of any peace-mission deployment, no matter the planned composition of the mission, be it observers only or a heavily armed military mission, it should be possible to observe similar patterns. This is because the deployment of peacekeeping missions can in many cases be slow and somewhat ineffective (Langille, 2014, pp. 1–2; Reuters, 2014). The result of the ineffective or slow deployment of UN troops is that it could create incentives for various rebel groups to speed up the acquisition of geographical territories. In other words, it would trigger mechanism 1 or mechanism 2, or even both. Again, this is because as stipulated by these mechanisms, the deployment of a mission might lead warring parties to expect incoming negotiations for a settlement which would cause them to
rush to improve their bargaining position, and the slow and ineffective deployment of a UN mission would give the rebel groups at hand time and opportunity to do so largely unhindered.

2.2.1. Hypothesis

Based on the theory and mechanisms proposed in the previous section, as well as previous research in the field, the hypothesis for this thesis is: The deployment of a peacekeeping force to a still ongoing conflict will cause a rise in rebel violence during and in the year after the deployment.

2.2.2. Variables

The objective of this study is to investigate the effects of the deployment of a robust peacekeeping mission on the levels of rebel violence during and in the immediate future after the deployment. Based on that, the independent variable of this study is: “The deployment of a peacekeeping mission with a robust mandate to an intra-state conflict where there is still active fighting going on”. And the dependent variable is: “The level of rebel violence against civilians in the conflict”. In short, the theory driving this study is that when a peacekeeping mission with a robust mandate is deployed into a conflict with parties still actively fighting each other, it might create incentives for rebel groups in the countries to improve their bargaining position in negotiations-to-come. These groups do this by using strategical violence against civilians in order to gain their allegiance and make geographical territorial gains. And the reason that the effect is imminent is that the peacekeeping mission, once fully deployed might have the means to prevent any such gains, thus creating time-pressure for the rebel groups in question.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Independent Variable</th>
<th>Intervening Variable</th>
<th>Dependent Variable</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The deployment of a robust peacekeeping force in active intra-state conflict</td>
<td>Rebel groups under time-pressure to improve bargaining position for potential negotiations</td>
<td>Increase of rebel violence against civilians in given conflict</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
2.2.3. Scope Conditions

Drawing from Hultman results, which show that the deployment of peacekeeping missions have no significant effect on the level of violence against civilians by governments (Hultman et al., 2013, p. 42). I have chosen to limit the scope of this theoretical argument to encompass only rebel violence against civilians. The reasoning behind this limitation is strengthened by prior research into the accountability of governments towards the international community. Carey et al. (2015) discuss the fact that governments might use so-called pro-government militias to carry out violence against civilians in order to escape accountability to the international community. This is important because it shows that governments in intra-state conflicts are inclined to avoid using violence against civilians because they may face consequences in the form of sanctions and condemnations from the international community (Carey et al., 2015, p. 854-855). The risk of being held accountable for human rights violations and crimes against humanity and thus severely hurting its chances of remaining in power after a potential settlement is reached is a strong argument as to why the deployment of a peace-mission would not significantly increase the levels of government violence against civilians.

3. Research Design

3.1. Comparative Design & Method of Analysis

This study will make use of a the method of case control (Powner, 2014, p. 124). This is a qualitative method of study that makes use of the so-called Mill’s method of difference in order to attribute the change in the dependent variable to variation in the independent variable and also possibly identify the proposed mechanisms causing this variation. This method entails carefully selecting cases that are as similar as possible on a number control variable but differ in the independent variable. If the Cases then also vary on the dependent variable, one can argue that this variation is caused by the difference in the independent variable. There are however some challenges to this approach. Mainly, that it can be very difficult to find perfectly matched cases and thus, one can experience difficulties in isolating the independent variable as the cause of variation in the dependent variable. Another caveat of this approach is that the results can be very dependent on the selection of cases, which can lead to skewed results that
are not supported when the amount of cases increases (Powner, 2014, pp. 124–125). The reason for using this method of analysis to conduct this study is because there is already statistical evidence of a possible covariation between the variables and it offers the opportunity to take a more intricate and detailed look on the proposed mechanism to possibly validate it. One of the bigger challenges with this research design is of course its reliability. But this can be somewhat alleviated by being as transparent as possible and thus making sure that the study can be replicated (George and Bennett, 2005, pp. 105–106).

3.2. Case Selection

This study is a comparative small-n study and the case population of interest are countries that have experienced the deployment of a peacekeeping mission. The objective of the study is to study the effects of deploying such a mission in an active conflict in on the levels of rebel violence against civilians in given country. As previously mentioned, the design of the study makes use of Mills method of difference, making the case selection very important (Powner, 2014, p. 125). I will strive to select one case, where a peacekeeping mission is deployed into an active conflict, and a second case with a more traditional peacekeeping approach, that is deployed where hostilities have stifled, and no significant fighting is going on. This will enable me to look at any potential variations in the dependent variable and depending on those results, observe either of the proposed mechanisms in action. The decision to make the second case a case where there is no active fighting and a more traditional peacekeeping mission is deployed was based on one deciding reason. This being the very apparent problem with comparing the deployment of a mission to a non-deployment. Since if there would be no deployment in the second case, there would be no set point in time from which to start observing and comparing, thus making case selection and isolation impossible. Also, choosing one case with a traditional peacekeeping mission, where there are no significant hostilities left, could show that the factor which is causing the positive dependent variable, is the deployment of a peacekeeping force to a still ongoing conflict with active warring parties. Not the deployment of peacekeeping forces in itself.
3.2.1. Control Variables

To ensure the similarity of the selected cases and to isolate the variation in the independent and dependent variables from alternative explaining factors, I have come up with a number of control variables that need to match in the cases selected.

Firstly, we will want to make sure that there are no rebel-controlled areas in these countries with access to easily-obtainable natural resources, such as for example diamonds. This is to isolate from the third proposed mechanism in Hultman’s (2010, pp. 33–34) study. This mechanism proposes that the presence of natural resources might lead to rebel groups relying heavily on these resources and thus feeling threatened to their existence at the deployment of a peace-mission. However, in these cases there is also a high risk of indiscriminate violence against civilians caused by opportunistic new fighters that are hard for the rebel groups to control (Azam, 2002, p. 134; Hultman, 2010, p. 34; Weinstein et al., 2006, pp. 7–8). Again, this would create a direct problem for the analysis. Namely, it would be very challenging to distinguish this seemingly random violence from strategical violence used by the rebels.

The second control variable is that there must be a record of rebel violence against civilians at least one year before the peace-mission is deployed. This is because Hultman (2010, p. 41) finds in her statistical analysis that the levels of violence against civilians in one year of a conflict is highly dependent on the amount of violence against civilians the year before. That is, it is more likely that there is violence against civilians if such also occurred in the previous year.

I have also elected to include a control variable considering the terrain in the country. This is because there is significant evidence that otherwise efficient peacekeeping missions might be hindered by rough mountainous terrain (Hultman, 2010, p. 36; Weiss, 2005, p. 192). This variable could be especially significant for this study, considering that rebels residing in mountainous and sheltered terrain might not be as concerned with the threat caused by the deployment of a peacekeeping mission, and thus, not act the same way as rebels based in more approachable locations.

Finally, both the conflicts should be fought over the same entity, that is, either governmental power or control over territory. This is because the statistical analysis by Hultman (Hultman, 2010, pp. 40–41) find that conflicts fought over government power tend to be much more
violent than conflicts about territorial control. Including violence against civilians. And thus, selecting one of each type of conflict might cause the results to be skewed.

3.2.2. Cases

Based on the Control variables listed and variation in the independent variable, I have selected two cases to be part of the analysis. The United Nations Operation in Burundi (ONUB) and the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission (MINUSCA) in the Central African Republic. These cases were selected out of all cases where a peacekeeping mission has been deployed to an intrastate conflict and because they were matching on the control variables. Alternative cases would have been for example the conflicts in South-Sudan and the preceding as well as the current conflict in Sudan. But especially the control variable regarding the presence of natural resources in the country was a deciding factor in eliminating a multitude of cases, especially in sub-Saharan Africa, South Sudan being among those cases because of the country’s dependency on its oil resources (Uppsala Conflict Data Program, 2016b).

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<th>MINUSCA</th>
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<td>conflict.</td>
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<td>VARIABLE: Increase in the level of rebel violence against civilians in the conflict.</td>
<td>*YES</td>
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*(Values of the DV have been added in after the completion of the empirical analysis)
3.2.2.1. **MINUSCA**

MINUSCA was originally deployed in April of 2014 with one of the primary objective of protecting civilians in the Central African Republic at any cost with the backing of a chapter VII resolution. Its other tasks include supporting the process for peace in the country, to support the creation of, and protect the delivery of humanitarian assistance and to protect UN personnel and equipment.

Regarding the Control variables, there are some concerns, but nothing that would expel this case as a good candidate for analysis. First, there is the matter of natural resources. While there are certainly plentiful deposits of mineral resources, including diamonds, in the Central African Republic (BBC News, 2017). Reports claim that in 2014, at the time when MINUSCA was deployed, the rebel groups in the CAR did not have access to these natural resources, nor did they have any means of extracting them effectively and by doing so, becoming dependent on them (Weyns et al., 2014, p. 60,66,69). So, in summary, the rebel groups did not have access to areas with natural resources.

Then there is the question whether there was rebel violence against civilians in the year before the deployment of MINUSCA. The answer is yes. In 2013, the UCDP recorded 1214 deaths caused by rebel violence against civilians (Uppsala Conflict Data Program, 2016c).

Third, there is the matter of the terrain in the country. And particularly the presence of vast mountainous regions. Data from World Atlas (2018) shows us that the vast majority of the CAR is covered by woodlands and savanna, with only a very small part of the country right on the border to Cameroon showing slightly mountainous terrain. This part of the country is so small and isolated however, that it would hardly offer any proper sanctuary for rebel groups.

Finally, the conflict incompatibility in the Central African Republic is about governmental power, where different ethnical groups continue to mount challenges against the government (Uppsala Conflict Data Program, 2016c).

3.2.2.2. **ONUB**

The United Nations Mission in Burundi was deployed in May 2004 with the primary objectives to support the peacebuilding efforts undertaken by the Burundians and stabilize the country. Bring national reconciliation, assist disarmament and demobilization, rehabilitation and re-integration of ex-combatants, promote human rights, rule of law and monitor the ceasefire
agreement in the country as well as support the democratic elections that were to be held in the country.

Checking the first control variable, being the presence of easily obtainable natural resources in rebel-controlled areas. We can see that while Burundi has some amount of mineral deposits consisting of minerals such as for example gold, there is no evidence that this would have played any significant part in the conflict of the country. Especially since at the time when the peacekeeping mission was deployed, these deposits were already under government control (Kok et al., 2009). Thus, this is not a problem for the selection of this case.

The second control variable regarding the level of violence against civilians in the year before the deployment of the peacekeeping mission, UCDP data shows us that in 2013 there were 210 fatalities resulting from rebel violence against civilians in the country. While not nearly on the same level as in the CAR, it is still a significant number, fulfilling the requirement of this control variable (Uppsala Conflict Data Program, 2016d).

Regarding mountainous terrain, providing potential shelter for rebel groups, this is where Burundi might not be a perfect fit. Burundi is a very mountainous country (World Atlas, 2018b). And there is even reports of rebels being based in mountainous terrain outside of the major cities (BBC News, 2003). However, while not denying that this might have an impact on the results of the analysis, there are factors that somewhat mitigate this issue. Most importantly, considering the small sizer of the country, and the relatively large size of the mission deployed (Jackson, 2006, pp. 9–10; World Atlas, 2018b). It can be seen as unlikely that the rebel groups in the country would think the mission would not be a threat to them. Thus, this factor doesn’t disqualify this case from analysis, but nonetheless is important to keep in mind.

Controlling for the final control variable, being the variable of type of incompatibility. We can see that the conflict is about power over government, and as such matches that of the other case selected (Uppsala Conflict Data Program, 2016d).

3.3. Operationalisations

The Independent variable, that is; “The deployment of a peacekeeping mission with a robust mandate to an intra-state conflict where there is still active fighting going on” is operationalised as: A period of one year from the start of the deployment of a peacekeeping
mission with a mandate issued under chapter VII of the UN Charter to a intra-state conflict where active fighting is still going on. This is based on the notion that most UN peacekeeping missions, even infantry-heavy ones tend to be at least 70-80% deployed one year after deployment (Rappa, 2016). Thus, the proposed mechanisms are most likely to activate and impact the dependent variable immediately after, or at least inside the first year of deployment.

The main challenge in this research design lies in the operationalisation of the dependent variable which is: “The level of rebel violence against civilians in the conflict”. Since the aim of the study is to identify whether there is a change in the levels of rebel violence against civilians, we first need to define the concept of violence against civilians. Violence against civilians will in this thesis be operationalised by; the number of deaths caused by one-sided non-government violence. This might seem rather restrictive in that violence against civilians does not always result in fatalities and there is an argument to be made that an operationalisation this narrow ignores large amounts of data. While this may be true, Hultman (2010, pp. 34–35) makes use of the “UCDP One-Sided Violence Dataset” (Eck and Hultman, 2007) which only provides death counts, and that is what the theoretical argument is built on. Thus, using this data and the same operationalisations will add to the validity of the study (Powner, 2014, pp. 48–49). Additionally, there is a big problem with data-availability when proposing measuring violence against civilians more broadly, e.g. including severe injuries or rape in the data. Exact data on such events is not available at the time of conducting this study and thus, prevents me from including it.

Regarding operationalising the causal story, there are some indicators that I expect to observe, were the proposed mechanisms activated. First, there is the increase of rebel violence against civilians, but specifically, this violence should be of a highly strategical and coordinated nature. Also, this violence would be geographically targeted at certain areas at a time, which would supposedly indicate rebel groups trying to gain influence in those areas. Also, since the mechanisms proposed imply that the violence used mainly serves the task of scaring the target-population. Logically the nature of this violence would be quite brutal, including e.g. beheadings, rape or other extraordinarily violent acts.

3.4. Sources of Empirical Material

There are a couple of things worth noting when thinking of the selection of sources that this analysis will be based on. First and foremost, many, if not all the sources used will inevitably
be secondary sources. This is only to be expected, considering the scope of the study, the timeframe in which it is to be conducted and the fact that there is no way for me to collect first-hand empirical knowledge on the issues at hand. However, the theory and design of the study is fully based on prior academic work, published in reputable journals and publications. And the raw data or statistics used in the analysis will be collected from highly trustworthy sources such as for example the Uppsala Conflict Data Program (2016). Additionally more analytical and descriptive data will be collected from highly reputable NGO sources such as the Human Rights Watch (2018) Amnesty International (2018) and eventual news articles are also taken from carefully selected news provides such as Reuters (2018) or the BBC News (2018).

The caveat of relying entirely on secondary data, is that there is a risk that the results of an analysis might be coloured because of any potential agendas that the sources, in this case, news providers or NGOs might have. However, this is a one can’t possible escape as impartiality is virtually impossible to reach when working with secondary data.

4. Analysis and Discussion

4.1. Analysis of the Cases

Central African Republic

I will start by analysing the empirical patterns found in the case of the UN mission in the Central African Republic.

As previously mentioned, the mission was deployed in the midst of an active conflict in the beginning of 2014. The mission was designed to take over the authority from the already-present African-Union led mission to the CAR (MISCA) (United Nations, 2015). Despite the presence of a mission before the deployment of MINUSCA, the case fits the theoretical proposition of this study very well. This is because one of the main reasons of the deployment of the mission was the ineffectiveness of MISCA. It was especially the inability of the mission to properly protect civilians, that led to MINUSCA to be deployed with a robust chapter VII mandate and taking over the operational responsibility of the mission (African Arguments, 2014; Brosig, 2015, pp. 222–223). Thus, the presence of this mission had no major impact of the levels of violence against civilians, tying in to Tardy’s (2011) argument that a poorly
equipped mission will have a negligible effect on violence against civilians (Tardy, 2011, p. 165; Uppsala Conflict Data Program, 2016c). However, with the resolution in April 2014 sanctioning the deployment of a possibly better equipped, and more robust mission led by the UN, the theory proposed would expect a reaction from rebel groups that might entail a sudden rise in violence against civilians in order to secure a favourable bargaining position in fear of the possibility of incoming settlement talks.

Looking at raw numbers. In 2013 there was as previously mentioned, 1214 reports of fatalities due to rebel violence against civilians recorded by the UCDP (Uppsala Conflict Data Program, 2016c). The same number for the year 2014, which is when we are suspecting to see a change in rebel behaviour, is 1966 (Uppsala Conflict Data Program, 2016c). This shows a big increase in Rebel violence against civilians in 2014. Now, looking back at the theoretical story proposed this would presumably be because the rebel groups operating in the country would expect the strong peacekeeping forces deploying to hinder their ability to make any significant territorial gains once fully deployed. Additionally, they might expect settlement negotiations to be initiated in the future because of the same reason. Thus, the rebel groups will rush to make territorial gains and improve their bargaining position in preparation for such negotiations, which will lead to an increase of strategical violence against civilians.

When looking at the amount of civilian fatalities caused by the individual rebel groups, the results further strengthen the support for the hypothesis of the study. Data shows that the two largest rebel groups, the “anti-Balaka”, who go from 685 Civilians killed to 1004. And the “FPRC” who killed 457 civilians in 2013 and 669 in 2014, we can see that in both cases there is a substantial increase after the Security Council resolution for MINUSCA was passed (Uppsala Conflict Data Program, 2016e, 2016f).

In terms of looking at the possible presence of mechanisms proposed, the main revealing factors we are looking for, are that the rebel violence against civilians should be clearly organised, geographically targeted and possibly be of an exceptionally violent nature. The UCDP offers some insight on this. It is mentioned that in the later part of 2014, there was intense fighting over specific towns and geographical areas, leading to the systematic killing of certain groups of civilians. Especially when looking at the activity of the two aforementioned rebel groups which had the greatest increase in violence from 2013 to 2014 we can observe patterns of big, and thus, most likely well-coordinated attacks on the civilian population. (Uppsala Conflict Data Program, 2016d, 2016e, 2016f). The Human Rights Watch World
Report 2015: Central African Republic (2015) claims a decline in attacks against civilians from 2013, but this is likely because of the near total secession of government violence against civilians (Uppsala Conflict Data Program, 2016c). The Human Rights Watch reports a spread of rebel violence against civilians to broader areas of the country and describes the attacks to be of a highly organized nature. For example, there are reports of Seleka rebels destroying villages and attacking civilians in the vicinity of roads claimed to be of strategical importance to the group. Which certainly points towards attacks being highly geographically coordinated. The Violence conducted by the Anti-Balaka also seems to be of a very strategical and coordinated nature with multiple large and geographically precise attacks on the Muslim civilian population that mainly supports the Seleka rebels (Human Rights Watch, 2015). It is also worth mentioning that Amnesty International (2014) confirms all of these findings in a report released in late 2014 (Amnesty International, 2014, pp. 3–9). Regarding the nature of the violence committed, there are some very notable things to be observed. The Human Rights Watch (2015) reports widespread use of rape during attacks on civilians by the Seleka rebels. These reports are once again confirmed by Amnesty International who also report killings of children in front of their parents and torture being the norm during these attacks committed by both the Seleka and the Anti-balaka (Amnesty International, 2014, pp. 19–24). These findings show that while there was certainly some degree of uncoordinated and sporadic violence against civilians in the Central African Republic in 2014, most of the violence against civilians by rebel groups was structured, strategically coordinated with plenty of examples of exceptionally violent behaviour exerted by both sides.

Burundi

I will now analyse the results in the second case chosen. The United Nations Operation in Burundi, or ONUB was deployed in 2005 to help and help Burundians restore lasting peace in the country (United Nations, 2006). The purpose of selecting this case on a negative value of the independent variable is to hopefully provide a negative case in the case comparison. The case was selected because when the peacekeeping mission was deployed there was only sporadic fighting remaining, and its primary mission was just to provide additional stability to the situation in the country (United Nations, 2006). Thus, the deployment of this mission should not lead to the activation of either of the proposed theoretical mechanisms. And therefore, there shouldn’t be a surge in rebel violence against civilians in the year after the start of deployment.
The numbers reveal interesting results. As previously discussed, the recorded rebel violence against civilians in the year before the deployment of the peacekeeping mission was 210 fatalities. In the following year, the year when the peacekeeping mission was deployed, there are only 66 recorded fatalities caused by rebel violence against civilians (Uppsala Conflict Data Program, 2016d). These observations certainly add to the credibility of our hypothesis in that it seems like the deployment of the peacekeeping mission in the country did not spur any additional violence against civilians.

When controlling for the presence of the proposed causal mechanisms, there are no big surprises. The Human Rights Watch World Report 2006 on Burundi, confirms the decline in rebel violence against civilians in 2005. And while the report confirms that there was still quite a lot of rebel violence against civilians in 2005, it states the nature of this violence to be sporadic killings since the number of fatalities is not high enough to suggest anything else. The accords of one-sided violence by rebel groups recorded by the UCDP are also very geographically spread out and thus, no real pattern of geographical coordination by rebel groups can be observed. Considering a considerable number of the civilian fatalities recorded were also collateral damage caused by clashes between the military and rebels. It seems that these reports can be trusted (Human Rights Watch, 2005; Uppsala Conflict Data Program, 2016d). Amnesty International’s annual report on the year 2005 in Burundi also adds to these findings by confirming that much of the violence against civilians was also conducted by the country’s armed forces and stressing that much of the violence is highly sporadic (Amnesty International, 2006). When looking at the nature of the violence against civilians by rebel groups, there are reports of executions, rape and abductions. This type of violence would certainly be of interest to the theoretical story of this thesis, had the attacks been more coordinated and bigger. But while these kinds of acts can be very effective at scaring the civilian population and thus, widely used strategically. This is also precise the kind of violence that are common in indiscriminate and spontaneous violence against civilians (Amnesty International, 2006; Human Rights Watch, 2005).

The implications of this when viewed in respect to the theory of this study are that the results can be viewed as providing a case where the independent variable is not present, that is, there is no ongoing conflict where the peacekeeping mission is deployed. Thus, the dependent variable is not present. In this case, there is no increase of rebel violence against civilians during and after the deployment of the peacekeeping mission in question.
4.2. Discussion and Conclusion

4.2.1. Discussion of the Results

With the analysis concluded and the results on hand, there certainly a possibility to draw some conclusions about the proposed hypothesis in the thesis. The hypothesis was that: *The deployment of a peacekeeping force to a still ongoing conflict will cause a rise in rebel violence in during and in the year after the deployment.* This hypothesis was tested by selecting and two cases, with the help of Mills method of difference, and four carefully thought out control variables to ensure the comparability of the two cases (Powner, 2014, pp. 124–125). Then the cases were analysed. The analysis used statistical data collected by the Uppsala Conflict Data Program (2016a), only to reveal a variation in the dependent variable that corresponds with the proposed theoretical explanation. Thus, reaffirming the results found by Hultman´s(2010) quantitative study (Hultman, 2010). The observations of the indicators used to try and provide support for the proposed causal mechanism mainly composed out of material from the UCDP, the Human Rights Watch and Amnesty International, also gave some very interesting results.

In the case of the Central African Republic, all the indicators showed clear evidence towards highly accelerated, strategical, geographically planned and very violent attacks. Something that clearly indicates that the proposed mechanisms and causal story are a very plausible explanation for the sudden surge in rebel violence against civilians that could be observed. In the Case of Burundi on the other hand, where peacekeepers were deployed to a conflict with only minor fighting still ongoing, the results point to the contrary. The statistical data collected from the UCDP shows no surge in violence against civilians in the year during and after peacekeeping deployment. On the contrary, it showed a steep decline (Uppsala Conflict Data Program, 2016a). The observations of the indicators of the proposed causal mechanism shows findings very much in line with what was expected. The small amount of rebel violence against civilians was highly sporadic and seems very random. Drawing conclusions from these quantitative and qualitative findings, we can see clear support of the proposed hypothesis that the deployment of a peacekeeping force to a still ongoing conflict might very well increase the chances of a rise in rebel violence against civilians while the mission is deployed and up to a year after that. However, that does not necessarily guarantee the variation in the independent variable being the cause of the variation in the dependent variable. Nonetheless, this study has strived to provide a compelling theoretical argument as to why this might just be the case.
4.2.2. Acknowledgements and Shortcomings

No matter the results, every study has its faults and challenges, and so does this one. And although most of the caveats of this study have already been mentioned, it is important to compile and clarify these problems. Firstly, the research design is inherently flawed in a variety of ways. The arguably most important of these flaws is the introduction of selection bias, and thus, the cases selected and studies might not be representative of the larger population (Powner, 2014, pp. 125–126). This problem is however somewhat alleviated by the fact that in this study, we already had statistical indication of the possible covariation of the selected variables in the form of the results presented in Lisa Hultman’s article (2010, pp. 42–43). However, we can still not be sure that the cases chosen, and therefore the results, are fully representative. Also, there is the issue of controlling for possible alternative explanations. No matter how much time is spent coming up with control variables, there is always the possibility that the variation in the dependent variable may be explained by a factor that has not even been thought of (Powner, 2014, p. 127). Also, having too many control variables could lead to making case-selection impossible, as perfect cases are very seldom created by nature. This can be seen in this study in the case of Burundi, where the ideal case wouldn’t have included mountainous terrain. But there are only so many cases of a modern time (needed for data availability), semi-traditional peacekeeping mission. But luckily, as explained earlier, the size of the mission and the relatively small area of the country is likely to mitigate the effect of this.

Another issue is the relatively narrow scope of the study. Excluding all cases where there are rebel groups highly dependent on resources for example, is very limiting. But nonetheless necessary for this study in order to have a chance of observing any clear patterns in the rebel violence against civilians.

There are also some potential non-design related problems that need to be acknowledged. First there is the previously mentioned fact, that the theory of the study relies quite heavily on the presumption that rebel groups make use of strategic, one-sided violence. And connected to that, but maybe even more important, the notion that rebel groups are unitary actors, something that has been criticised (Kalyvas, 2000, p. 7). But I have to agree with Lisa Hultman (2008, p. 32) on that viewing them as such, is imperative for the ability to conduct research on interaction between warring parties, while still acknowledging that there is guaranteed to be variation between groups.
4.2.3. Conclusions & Possible Future Research

While I am hesitant to declare the hypothesis fully supported, at least in the cases selected and studied in this thesis, it seems to find very strong support. And it is therefore worth acknowledging that the study has at least provided further reasons to continue the study of any possible hidden side-effects of the deployment of a peacekeeping force to a conflict where there is active fighting going on. Because even if bringing peace to conflicts is sometimes imperative, it is no stretch to imagine the unintended effects of a deployment of such a peacekeeping force could make matters worse for civilians, by spurring violence against civilians in conflict where such was largely non-existent before.

Concrete future research ideas could be to investigate a proposed case where the independent and dependent variables given in this study show covariation, and conduct a study with a deep process-tracing approach in order to try to find and define an actual causal chain between the variables (Powner, 2014, p. 104). Additionally, it could be argued that conducting a similar study but increasing the number of cases would help remove some of the risk of a selection bias. This study might also benefit from taking an in-depth look at battle-dynamics and trying to identify more parts of the proposed causal mechanism.

Finally, expanding the definition and operationalisation of the concept of violence against civilians to include e.g. rape and serious injuries. But this is very much dependent on the availability of such data of course.
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