

**Rewarding non armed conflicts**

UN policy exclusively supporting  
non-armed conflicts

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Abstract: This paper argues that the UN might not be the ideal actor to get involved in armed conflicts if its aim is to decrease the occurrence of war. This claim is supported by a negative and a positive dimension. The negative dimension demonstrates that the UN has shown a debatable track record of sustainable results. The positive dimension claims that by providing support only to non-armed conflicts, the UN will create positive incentives for peaceful resolution and sustainably address the structural violence that lies at the root of conflict.

## Introduction

When I was a little girl, my parents did everything in their power to shelter my sisters and I from the bomb shelling, the dangerous security checks on the road, and from having to witness atrocious acts. The most troubling scenes I witnessed were the daily escapes of the ship sailing to Cyprus while bombs tried to sink it down along with the families in it, or the fear in the neighbours' babies when we all had to hide under our stairs because the bombing was passing above our homes. Although it was not aimed towards us, you never knew what could drop by mistake. Although they are very clear in my mind, I still don't believe I fully grasped or understood any of those moments. War was a part of life - it was the reality I was born into. However, what I know has marked me the most was, and still is, the rooted belief in my parents that "the other" was an eternal enemy for whom their hatred will never dissipate. As I grew up, that hatred sunk them deeper into darkness, a place they still have not come out of. Also as I grew up, my generation followed suit and took sides - friends fought about political views they didn't even own. That cycle still goes on. The war has caused structural, institutional, economic, emotional, and psychological damages to an entire population that have not been repai-

red. That was the seed that inspired the idea behind this thesis. Through my experience, I see the effects of war are permanent.

In this thesis paper, I do not argue against the importance of war intervention, the already established expectation of the Responsibility to Protect, or the necessity of investing in postwar statebuilding. What I do argue for, however, is that, if the UN is to achieve its primary goal of *decreasing* the occurrence of war, then the peacebuilding strategy put into action by the UN must be revised, and, the peace results targeted by the UN need to be redefined.

It is therefore of importance to realize that while research has and still is debating between what types of interventions are most effective and which postwar statebuilding strategies are most sustainable, it is not presumed here that I undermine those questions. What I am suggesting is that in order to decrease the likelihood of war, we need to tackle conflict at another stage by recognizing the importance of the conflicts that exist even when war does not, and, by positioning the role of the UN as one of a motivator as opposed to a repairer.

Conflict exists everywhere and all the time. In peace studies, Ralf Dahrendorf argues that we need conflict in order to grow into better societies and describes conflict as characterizing society and being a vehicle of social change.<sup>1</sup> I would add that conflict is also necessary for us to grow into better individuals. It is the shape of the conflict that can change that potential. Political parties conflict in worldviews, academics could conflict in points of views, colleagues in strategies, families in values, parents in childrearing ap-

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<sup>1</sup> Ralf Dahrendorf, *Toward a Theory of Social Conflict* (Hamburg: Sage Publications, 1958), 170-183.

proaches—and all of those can be opportunities for growth. When they become destructive or violent however, conflicts could also result in a greater negative outcome and become then much more challenging to transform.

Armed conflicts have indeed caught the attention of the international community throughout history. Witnessing physical violence is more striking than witnessing structural violence. The resulting automatic suffering marks people instantly, motivates them to work towards eliminating that physically identifiable suffering, towards finding ways to end the visible issue, which is often war, and preventing more of the witnessed atrocities. The League of Nations, followed by the United Nations (UN), were institutions created for those purposes. Their mandates emphasize “prevention”, “peaceful means”, strengthening “universal peace”, and solving “problems of economic, social, cultural, and humanitarian character.”<sup>2</sup> Over time, the UN has however increasingly focused such activities related specifically to *armed* conflicts, through peacebuilding (PB) and peacekeeping (PK) missions. At the end of the Cold War as well as during the increase in intra-state conflicts, the UN even intensified its involvement in robust peace interventions, more frequently attempting to provide enforcement or stabilization in armed conflicts through military missions.<sup>3</sup>

However, one cannot firmly say that the UN founding objectives to maintain world peace and security have been unquestionably achieved. The Brahimi report itself, drafted

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<sup>2</sup> United Nations, “UN Charter,” Un.org, April 18, 2018. <http://www.un.org/en/sections/un-charter/chapter-i/index.html>; United Nations, “The League of Nations,” Un.org, April 20, 2018. [https://www.unog.ch/80256EDD006AC19C/\(httpPages\)/17C8E6BCE10E3F4F80256EF30037D733?OpenDocument](https://www.unog.ch/80256EDD006AC19C/(httpPages)/17C8E6BCE10E3F4F80256EF30037D733?OpenDocument).

<sup>3</sup> Andy W. Knight. *Evaluating Recent Trends in Peacebuilding Research* (Edmonton: Oxford University Press, 2003), 246.

in 2000, concluded that the UN were repeatedly failing to meet its mandate to “save succeeding generations from the scourge of war”.<sup>4</sup> UN peacebuilding and peacekeeping strategies thus far have not significantly reduced the number of international armed conflicts. Yet, the international community deepens its path towards international peace and security with the same methods and vision, albeit renewed, intensified, and adapted over the years.

This thesis will propose that the peacebuilding role of the UN in aiming for a more peaceful world be reframed to focus on conflicts that have not yet broken into armed battle. Such a focus would then turn on prevention of *armed* conflict. As post-armed-conflict has been a focus of UN peacebuilding, this thesis proposes looking instead into shifting those peacebuilding activities to the *pre-armed-conflict* period (or post-identified-non-armed-conflict period) because non-armed conflict can more effectively be transformed and therefore sustainable positive peace be then more realistically built.

Such a shift in strategy would be achieved through positive incentive mechanisms that entice conflicting actors to resist breaking into armed violence. If they do, the UN would provide them the financial and structural aid necessary to address the roots of the conflict, often being structural. Such incentives can only be effective if the UN disengaged from armed conflicts, because UN financial and structural support would not be made available otherwise. All armed conflicts will indeed not all be prevented, but this

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<sup>4</sup> United Nations, “Panel on United Nations Peace Operations to the Secretary-General,” *Report of the Panel on United Nations Peace Operations* (April 18, 2018). [http://www.un.org/en/ga/search/view\\_doc.asp?symbol=A/55/305](http://www.un.org/en/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=A/55/305).

thesis is arguing that such a strategy will diminish the occurrence of armed conflicts on the long-run.

When digging into the roots of conflict, we most often recognize social, political, or economic injustices, as well as communities that are being marginalized or exploited. If the UN does not focus its work on reducing those instances of marginalization and exploitation, violent conflicts (armed or not) will most likely persist. Furthermore, roots of conflict can more realistically be addressed before armed conflict breaks. This is mainly why this paper proposes concentrating on non-armed conflicts.

This proposal will be based on two support pillars. The first will be to show, through incentive theory, that the UN would be providing an incentive to conflicting actors if it were to only aid in the conflicts resisting the use of arms. With structural violence theory it will also be shown that in order to reach closer to the objectives of establishing sustainable peaceful relations and decreased armed conflicts, structural violence will need to be more effectively addressed. This means that the UN would work towards building *positive peace*, and with that objective clearly set, its peacebuilding strategy needs to change.

The second support pillar utilizes the view that current peacebuilding practice has not proven effective thus far, given that the main objective is to diminish armed conflict and build sustainable peaceful relations. This will be argued through several points, including issues of credibility, capacity, unattained positive peace, as well as the involvement in the business of war.

Research on how to improve and polish conflict resolution has been conducted for several decades now. However, there are still possibilities to transform our views on building peace, what that particular objective aims to achieve, to re-examine its ultimate purpose, and to especially experiment the effectiveness of conflict transformation in reducing armed conflicts. How could the UN be a model in building *positive peace*<sup>5</sup>, instilling a new perspective on conflict, through which it can help lead communities into transformation?

Stakeholders that could benefit out of such a lens include the UN's Peacebuilding Commission (PBC), contributing nations, mediating states, general UN membership states, conflicting parties, actors that resist armed conflicts, as well as armed conflict stakeholders that would consider this shift in policy as game changing and would look into applying it if it meant receiving UN financial and institutional support.

What if the UN were to recognize conflicts that exist in fragile communities, before they turned into armed conflicts and transform them into opportunities? If it widened its spectrum of conflict recognition and definition, it might identify many more that deserve the attention of the international community. Moreover, if the UN were to invest its resources into them as much as it currently is investing in armed conflicts, it might be able to find more sustainable results, and, hence, a greater return on investment, leading to more peaceful international, inter-state, and intra-state communities. The objective is to yield to more peaceful settlements of disputes and less occurrences of armed violence. The scope of this paper attempts to cover why it would be worthwhile considering that

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<sup>5</sup> As per Galtung's definition.

the UN ceases being involved in armed conflicts and invests its resources instead in fragile conflicts that have not yet broken into armed violence, through positive incentives and structural transformation.

With the aim of informing debates on how the UN could achieve one of its core mandates to maintain international peace and security, the following question is asked: How can UN peacebuilding strategy entice conflicting actors to settle disputes without armed violence and to transform their conflicts into opportunities for more sustainable positively peaceful societies? This paper attempts to answer that question by showing that the UN not get involved in armed conflicts, but in fragile non-armed conflicts instead, where it can focus on eliminating structural violence, and thus, reducing the long-term number of inter- and intrastate armed conflicts. The paper will be structured with the chapters summarized below.

In Chapters 1 and 2, a methodology and literature review sections will provide us with the basic grounds that the statements of this paper are developed from. In the methodology chapter, we will review how this proposal will be conducted through qualitative research and with which theories. In the literature review, all topics related to the claim of this thesis will be found. A review the debate around the significance of the term “peacebuilding”, a map of the debate around how UN peacekeeping or peacebuilding could be improved, an account of research related to the record of UN PK or PB operations and what types of standards of success are used or argued for, the debate around conflict prevention techniques and their effectiveness, including incentives and peace

conditionalities, and a review of the literature relating armed conflict to structural violence will be summarized are all summarized in relevance to the point of this thesis.

The second part, with chapters 3, 4, and 5, will comprise of the discussion. Chapter 3 will develop on the negative dimension of this thesis' proposal and show how the UN is arguably failing its PB mandate. Chapter 4 discusses how a reward mechanism addressing structural violence will be more effective through a non-armed conflict and prevention approach. This chapter will also address certain obstacles or risks associated to the peacebuilding strategy proposed in this thesis. Finally, chapter 5 discusses current UN work on armed conflict prevention and its effectiveness.

In the conclusion, a few suggestions are made to briefly display how potential and innovative of new peacebuilding projects could look like instead, while proposing which conflicts the UN would likely need to prioritize.

In the end, this paper attempts to show that by not getting involved in armed conflict, the UN will be able to dedicate its efforts in effectively building positive peace by addressing structural deficiencies and inequities, therefore possibly resulting in more solid conflict resolution and institutional building. This, in turn, might allow it to finally be able to decrease the occurrence of armed conflicts, increase the instances of peaceful conflict resolutions, all awhile building a stronger and more influential reputation and credibility among the international community because it would be able to more realistically be successful in its ventures and be transparent in its agenda in achieving them.

# Chapter 1: Methodology

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## Methodology

This is a qualitative research project that uses a prescriptive approach. It is conducted with the objective of bringing to a conclusion how a shift in peacebuilding practice at the UN might be worth considering. One of the aims of this thesis is to inspire a practical debate on how the UN could realistically consider pulling away from intervention in armed conflicts while remaining relevant in peacebuilding. Through the analysis of scholarly literature, UN reports, statements, and objectives, as well as through the use of peace research theories, this thesis portrays the fact that current PB strategy is not allowing the UN to achieve its mandate of reducing the number of armed conflicts and must therefore consider alternative solutions.

Empirical research would have been pertinent to conduct in order to show how cases of armed conflict could be prevented through prevention work addressing “structural violence”. However, such empirical research is beyond the scope of a masters thesis project and cannot be completed as part of it. This is because such a study would have necessitated field research for which the following challenges exist:

- Many armed and non-armed conflicts would need to be evaluated to strengthen the validity of the empirical data;
- The cost of and time needed for doing this field research surpasses the capacity of a master's degree research project;

- The complexity of armed conflicts and postwar periods cannot be funnelled down to a simple empirical conclusion upon which a Master of Arts research project can base its hypothesis—the complexities of war create a social climate where past and current realities have many facets and where the geopolitical environment plays a big role in the armed conflict.
- It could actually be more feasible to conduct empirical research in future pilot projects that would apply the proposition of this thesis in practice. It is recommended that the UN itself give such pilot projects a trial in order to evaluate the results on the long-run and compare them to current practice.

This paper also aims to contribute in shifting the logic underlying peacebuilding strategy and research, towards a structural violence and prevention lens. This is especially significant in contrast to some empirical data that has displayed that more military capacity is required to strengthen the operations of UN PB, on which some military PB interventions have been based.

The biggest challenge in this thesis' approach will be to build a strong enough case to invite curiosity to the hypothesis. Given that what is proposed is theoretical and prescriptive, enough arguments need to be strongly portrayed in order to convince further debate on the topic. The way this project will tackle this challenge is by diversifying the literature as much as possible in order to broaden the range of perspectives that have been taken into account. It will also use examples that are close to portraying the potential of the proposed approach or the failure of the current one.

A transformative lens as well as the theoretical lenses will be approaches also utilized in this project. Although each will only partly fit the role of supporting this project, together, they become a comprehensive mix. For example, although partly transformative, the methods used in this project will not include participants or represent a voice of a social group demanding action for change. However, this thesis does call for a change in political practice and encourages the use of the results to enhance human rights. There also exists a lens drawn from social justice, as it portrays the necessity of the UN to focus its resources in fragile communities, representing a significant change in practice that aims to also raise a political debate. Furthermore, as this paper uses a theoretical lens as a basis, there is a logical sequence in the transformative perspective that it develops into, becoming the shaper of how to address the issue of conflict and how to assert conclusions from the information analyzed. Finally, the analysis will allow the conclusions to take an angle of recommendations to improve society, and in this particular case, the fate of conflicts.

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## Research data

The research material used in this project includes the analysis of UN reports and agendas, speeches, structural violence theory, structural transformation theory, conflict prevention literature, and peacebuilding theory as well as literature. Such documentation will be important to analyze for the following reasons.

UN reports and speeches will be useful in displaying the contradictions in aspirations and practice, as well as to understand why specific PB strategies have been con-

ducted. In order to understand UN peacebuilding strategy, the UN reports that were selected for analysis have marked directions in its peace strategy. The UN PBC has also been chosen as a research item because it will allow for a further understanding of current and future UN peacebuilding strategies.

Peacebuilding literature will be reviewed and analyzed in order to identify the hypotheses that have already been proposed under the same or opposing logic as this project, while displaying the gaps in the research that this paper aims to address.

This thesis follows the assumptions and definitions of positive peace, peace transformation, structural violence theories like those of Galtung, Lederach, Human and Basic Needs theories, Identity Theory, as well as the Feminist Critique, stating that sustainable peace is more than direct violence cessation and systematic structural injustices would need to be addressed in order to decrease the occurrence of war and build positive peace.

Conflict prevention literature, structural violence literature, as well as root causes to conflict literature are also reviewed and analyzed in order to show the relevance of addressing conflicts before arms break out, of addressing structural violence in order to prevent them, and to show how structural violence relates to armed conflicts.

Incentive theory is used in order to portray how the the exclusive involvement in non-armed conflicts could entice actors to resist engaging in arms.

And finally, a literature review of scholarly analysis of UN performance will be made in order to show that its success in reducing the occurrence of war remains debatable.

In searching for theory and research, the keywords “non-intervention,” “reward mechanisms,” “incentives,” “transformative peacebuilding,” “positive peace,” “peacebuilding effectiveness,” “conflict prevention,” “structural violence,” “structural prevention,” “structural transformation,” and “UN peacebuilding strategy” were used in order to find peer-reviewed research.

The challenge in analyzing the above mentioned documents and literature will be that the project will be limited to what is documented and available only. The backdoor considerations and negotiations will therefore not be readily available to influence the data, in addition to the non-armed conflicts that have been resolved prior to armed backlash, since there is less data on them, partly due to the fact that they usually receive less attention than armed ones. The analysis will lack the perspective from the field as well, making it more of a theoretical one that is to be, hopefully, tested in practice. Other limits to this project include the perspective of local actors. How would fragile states or communities react to such a proposal? If they would be willing to explore it, what would they add to it or modify in order to make it more feasible? These are questions that this research will not be able to answer. However, it is the objective of this project to raise interest in these stakeholders in order to consider this strategy further and improve it down the line.

This project also does not discuss the point of view of UN administrators and practitioners. How can the UN effectively retire from armed conflict intervention in administrative and operational terms? How long would that take and how much would it cost (or

save)? Again, it is considered that these aspects would be operational ones that would need to be evaluated at a further step and currently go beyond this project's scope.

## Chapter 2: Literature Review

There are multiple types of debates around the issue of UN peacebuilding strategy. First, I will provide a brief discussion on the term “peacebuilding”, its scope, and its use in this thesis. Second, I will map the debate around how UN peacekeeping or peacebuilding could be improved. Third, I will discuss the debate around conflict prevention techniques and their effectiveness, including incentives and peace conditionalities. Fourth, a review of the literature relating armed conflict to structural violence will be summarized. Finally, I will render an account of research related to the record of UN PK or PB operations and what types of standards of success are used or argued for.

Whether the United Nations should unilaterally disassociate itself from armed conflicts in order to create incentives for conflicting parties to resist violence outbreak has not yet been raised in the literature. Practical policy research on how the United Nations could achieve a reduction of armed conflicts around the world is lacking and this paper calls for more empirical work through pilot projects and case building. .

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### The use of the term “peacebuilding”

According to Galtung, conflict is an opportunity, but mediators often make the mistake of aiming to eliminate conflict as opposed to transforming it.<sup>6</sup> There has been a number of scholars arguing for a peacebuilding approach that entails a greater scope of

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<sup>6</sup> Johan Galtung, *Theories of Conflict: Definitions, Dimensions, Negations, Formations* (New York: Columbia University, 1958), 6.

transformation encompassing both negative and positive peace.<sup>7</sup> Amanda Cahill-Ripley argues that, whereas it has been “overwhelmingly viewed as a post-conflict activity,”<sup>8</sup> peacebuilding should entail all peacemaking and war-ending processes, including efforts ranging from prevention, early warnings, negotiations, settlements, constitutional provisions, transitional justice, and post-conflict efforts. She states that PB serves to prevent, reduce, and transform *all* forms of violence, while empowering individuals to invest in the relationships necessary to create structural justice.<sup>9</sup>

Gareth Evans states that peacebuilding is based on the notion of meeting human needs, including those of security and order, a decent standard of living, and identity and worth recognition.<sup>10</sup> Call and Cook analyze the lack of consistency in definitions quite accurately, concluding that a principal challenge for peacebuilding research is “conceptual precision.”<sup>11</sup> They argue that the multiple interpretations of the term make its use more difficult to identify. They propose a broader but precise definition of peacebuilding that would describe “efforts to transform potentially violent social relations into sustainable peaceful relations and outcomes,” including negative and positive peace mechanisms.<sup>12</sup>

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<sup>7</sup> Galtung’s negative and positive peace concepts differentiate the end of direct violence (negative peace) and that of structural violence (positive peace), where human potential is not taken away. See Galtung’s ABC and Violence triangles to read more on the concepts.

<sup>8</sup> Amanda Cahill-Ripley, *Reclaiming the Peacebuilding Agenda: Economic and Social Rights as a Legal Framework for Building Positive Peace - A Human Security Plus Approach to Peacebuilding* (Lancaster: Oxford University Press, 2016), 223-246.

<sup>9</sup> Ibid.

<sup>10</sup> Gareth Evans, *Cooperating for Peace: The Global Agenda for the 1990s and Beyond* (Sydney: Allen and Unwin, 1993), 39.

<sup>11</sup> Charles Call and Susan Cook, *On Democratization and Peacebuilding* (Leiden: Brill, 2003), 240.

<sup>12</sup> Ibid.

They call for such a definition to bring about empirically observable efforts that would prevent armed conflicts in “self-sustaining” ways.<sup>13</sup> They even go as far as stipulating that peacebuilding not be defined as peace maintaining or cessation of armed conflict.<sup>14</sup>

Lederach calls the post-conflict description of peacebuilding a “misnamed notion” and argues that peacebuilding should take place as much before as during and after the occurrence of armed violence.<sup>15</sup> Lederach specifically adds that peacebuilding is an important factor in the prevention of armed violence, requiring strategizing and continuous involvement.<sup>16</sup> Knight identifies three peacebuilding research trends, one of which involves the “broadening of vision, scope, and scale of peacebuilding,” which in his view reflects the complexities in the practice of building peace.<sup>17</sup> In his evaluation, he identifies the origins of writings on peace research by Galtung and the Bouldings, with Galtung being the first to label the term “peacebuilding” in the 1970s, specifically envisioning it as a method to *prevent* armed conflicts “by addressing root causes of poverty, political repression, and uneven distribution of resources,” defining this approach as building “positive peace.”<sup>18</sup> This thesis will apply that view of building “positive peace”.

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<sup>13</sup> Ibid.

<sup>14</sup> Ibid.

<sup>15</sup> John Paul Lederach, *Origins and Evolution of Infrastructure of Peace* (Notre-Dame: Taylor & Francis, 2012), 9.

<sup>16</sup> Ibid.

<sup>17</sup> Knight, 245 and 250.

<sup>18</sup> Knight, 247.

By increasing attention on the prevention end of the continuum, and eventually ensuring that the UN diverts its peacebuilding investments on prevention of armed violence in fragile conflicts, it could prove more feasible to dedicate efforts on structural justice, institutional strengthening, and local non-armed conflict management capacities. Given that no direct violence will need to be managed, the UN might have higher chances of removing the threats to security and peace, along with better opportunities for doing so through positive peace mechanisms that could lead more efficiently towards structural justice, possibly at a lower cost.

In June of 1992, the UN Secretary-General's Agenda for Peace added the concept of *peacebuilding* for the UN to equally consider, specifically distinguishing it from preventative diplomacy, peacemaking, and peacekeeping. The concept was described by the Secretary-General as a post-conflict action directed at strengthening structures to solidify peace and avoid conflict reoccurrence.<sup>19</sup> Since then however, different UN agencies seem to be defining peacebuilding in different ways, rendering its post-conflict application more and more inconsistent.

In 2007, the Policy Committee of the UN's Secretary-General claimed that the following PB concept would be the basis of UN practice: "Peacebuilding involves a range of measures targeted to reduce the risk of lapsing or relapsing into conflict by strengthening

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<sup>19</sup> United Nations Secretary-General, *An Agenda for Peace - Preventative Diplomacy, Peacemaking, and Peace-keeping*, A/47/277 (June 17, 1992).

national capacities at all levels for conflict management, and to lay the foundations for sustainable peace and development [...].”<sup>20</sup> [emphasis added]

There seems to therefore be, among United Nations agencies, a lack of consistency in how the UN defines peacebuilding activities, which stage of conflict they apply to, the objectives that peacebuilding targets and hence how it evaluates the results of those objectives. Despite those inconsistencies, the general impression of what the UN focuses its peacebuilding work on is post-armed-conflict building of peace, institutions, and nations. Contrary to that general point of view, this paper will not narrow the concept of peacebuilding to post-armed-conflict work only.

In 2017, at Guterres’ first Security Council meeting, the current UN Secretary-General clearly stated his position on how the UN needed to redirect its approach. He claimed that the international community spent “far more time and resources responding to crises rather than preventing them,” specifying that there was a need for “a whole new approach.”<sup>21</sup> Guterres specified that while the UN’s approach was dominated by responding to armed conflicts for decades, it needed to “do far more to prevent war and sustain peace”<sup>22</sup> in the future. He spoke of peace as something to “prize and nurture,” where prevention is not only a priority, “but *the* priority,”<sup>23</sup> Guterres also added that, on the opera-

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<sup>20</sup> United Nations Peacebuilding Fund, “What Is Peacebuilding?” Unbpf.org. <http://www.unbpf.org/application-guidelines/what-is-peacebuilding/>.

<sup>21</sup> United Nations Security Council, “7857th meeting on Tuesday, 10 January 2017, 10 a.m., New York,” Un.org (January 10, 2017). [http://www.un.org/en/ga/search/view\\_doc.asp?symbol=S/PV.7857](http://www.un.org/en/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=S/PV.7857).

<sup>22</sup> Ibid.

<sup>23</sup> Ibid.

tional front, he had appointed a senior policy advisor who had the mandate to identify current UN prevention capacities and develop a system-wide early detection platform.<sup>24</sup> This could be interpreted as UN leadership currently prioritizing prevention work that could lead it into shifting its practice and considering focusing more heavily on conflicts before they break into armed violence, thus making the present thesis more timely and appropriate for stakeholder capacity to envision it, pilot it, and test its efficacy.

In 2016, the UN Assistant Secretary-General Fernandez-Taranco also stated that the concept of peacebuilding had been “redefined much more as a preventive action” specifying that prevention were being undertaken by the entire UN system and that it was “at the core of what the UN was established to do.”<sup>25</sup> This peacebuilding point of view is therefore gaining momentum and could eventually build more popularity with the years. On the practical front, such a momentum is important in order to render new policy effective.

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## Scholarly positions on UN PK and PB practices

The table below maps the debate around the question of UN involvement in armed conflict. The empty column to the left was added to indicate the gap in current peacebuilding theory. This spectrum on the very left represents an area of PB strategies that would require the UN to not at all get involved in armed conflict, which would be an op-

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<sup>24</sup> Ibid.

<sup>25</sup> Oscar Fernandez-Toranco, “What Is UN Peacebuilding and Its Role in Preventing Conflicts?” UN News Centre (July 27, 2016). <https://news.un.org/en/story/2016/07/535562-feature-series-what-un-peacebuilding-and-its-role-preventing-conflicts>.

posite position to strategies proposing to enforce robust interventions, situated to the far right.

The majority of the cited researchers can be found towards the right side of the spectrum, where improvement of current PB strategies are called for, without questioning if an entirely different perspective and UN strategy on building peace would be worth considering.

*Table 1: Scholarly positions on UN peacekeeping and peacebuilding direction*

<b>Disassociate from violent conflicts —————&gt; Strengthening robust intervention</b>				
<b>No work in armed conflicts</b>	<b>Transformative Peacebuilding</b>	<b>Positive incentives or Non-intervention</b>	<b>Improve traditional PK or PB</b>	<b>More robust work</b>
	Galtung Burton Fetherston Nursey-Bray Ayuntz, Zolya, Zakaryan Newman Denskus Reychler	Amley Stedman Weinstein	Bowen Farrall Lambourne, Herro Karlsrud Helal Hunt Weiss Diehl, Druckman Peter Doyle, Sambanis	UN PBC Boutellis Liégois

Scholars like Peter, Hunt, Karlsrud, and Helal argue that robust peacebuilding presents significant principled and practical challenges, and could have ramifications for

the future reputation and viability of UN PK.<sup>26</sup> However, they do not extend this view to UN interventions in armed conflicts in general. If armed intervention is a strategy that the UN applies, and they do so under the permission of the Security Council, then the question is how the reputation and viability of the UN could be sustained in the first place. Hunt suggests that political solutions are the answer to sustainable peace in modern PK missions, but he does not propose that the UN step away from armed conflicts altogether.<sup>27</sup> Bowen states that UN peacekeeping was not originally designed to “be an end in itself” and argues that although important improvement ought be made in UN peace operations, they are essential for international security.<sup>28</sup> Bowen also calls for a more reliable funding system with a higher number of contributors, in addition to more diverse representation on the Security Council.<sup>29</sup> Doyle and Sambanis have even presented a quantitative analysis of the effectiveness of peacebuilding in ending armed violence.<sup>30</sup> They attempt to show that UN PK positively impacts the resolution of civil wars and has, according to the authors, proven to be correlated to democratization.<sup>31</sup> They

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<sup>26</sup> Mateja Peter, “Between Doctrine and Practice: The UN Peacekeeping Dilemma,” *Global Governance* 21, no. 3 (2015): 351-370; Charles Hunt, “All Necessary Means to What Ends? The Unintended Consequences of the ‘Robust Turn’ in UN Peace Operations,” *International Peacekeeping Journal* 24 (2017): 108-131; John Karlsrud, “The UN at War: Examining the Consequences of Peace-Enforcement Mandates for the UN Peacekeeping Operations in the CAR, the DRC and Mali,” *Third World Quarterly* 36, no. 1 (2015): 40-54; Mohamed S. Helal, “Justifying War and the Limits of Humanitarianism,” *Fordham International Law Journal* 37, no. 3 (2014): 551-642.

<sup>27</sup> Hunt, “All Necessary Means to What Ends?”

<sup>28</sup> Norman Bowen, “The Future of United Nations Peacekeeping,” *International Journal on World Peace* 14, no. 2 (1997): 28.

<sup>29</sup> Bowen, 27.

<sup>30</sup> Michael W. Doyle and Nicholas Sambanis, “International Peacebuilding: A Theoretical and Quantitative Analysis,” *The American Political Science Review* 94, no. 4 (2000): 779.

<sup>31</sup> *Ibid.*

also propose a design for “appropriate peacebuilding” based on a “mix of hostility, local capacities, and international capacities.”<sup>32</sup> Although their findings show that there is a correlation between UN PK and cessation of armed violence, there is no mention of living standards post-armed-conflict, or the characteristics of what would constitute a positive peace.

In the very last column to the right, Boutellis argues that the UN has no choice but to use robust interventions in certain circumstances and suggests reforming them into lighter and more capable missions, in partnerships with non UN fighting forces in the mission.<sup>33</sup> Liégeois also presents a “no-choice” case, with a logic of dependability. According to Liégeois, the increasing number of UN peace operations and the amount of human or material resources behind them are a factor weighing in their necessity to remain.<sup>34</sup> He also calls for more support and investment in current UN peace operations, criticizing the Security Council for not reaching the end of their decisions and plans put forth.<sup>35</sup> For Liégeois, operations should become more heavily robust in order to realistically face their missions and cannot be eliminated because, in his view, peace maintenance does not exist under any other official organization.<sup>36</sup> Viewed under the perspective of this thesis paper, these three positions would be supporting a UN that creates indirect

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<sup>32</sup> Ibid.

<sup>33</sup> Arthur Boutellis, “Can the UN Stabilize Mali? Towards a UN Stabilization Doctrine?” *Stability: International Journal of Security and Development* 4, no. 1 (2015): 1-16.

<sup>34</sup> Michel Liégeois, “Quel avenir pour les casques bleus et le maintien de la paix?,” *Politique étrangère* 3 (2013): 66.

<sup>35</sup> Liégeois, 77.

<sup>36</sup> Ibid.

incentives for armed conflicts to occur solely based on the fact that it would be providing resources to contexts of armed violence, contributing to the economies of war, and arguably, not meeting its mandate to prevent armed conflict and effectively promote peaceful dispute resolutions.

Whereas positive incentives or the concepts of “rewarding” conflict resolution have been explored, none propose questioning the idea of the UN completely disengaging from armed conflict. Scholars like Amley and Stedman placed in the middle column, have proposed mixing both positive and negative inducements in order to achieve most effectiveness, but do not push as far as proposing that the UN completely stop intervening in armed conflicts in order to “reward” parties in conflict that resist the use of arms.<sup>37</sup> On the contrary, Amley suggests that, in addition to using positive inducements to incite disputants to resolve their conflict, an independent UN military structure of domestic forces be put into place for when force is needed. The idea therefore of eliminating the use of militarization in any shape or form under the UN mandate, due to its contribution to the cycle of armed violence and the business of war, are absent so far in this part of the research map.

Weinstein's justification for not intervening in violent conflicts does not present such an idea either.<sup>38</sup> Instead, he justifies this argument with the proposal that war will

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<sup>37</sup> Edward A. Amley Jr., “Peace by Other Means: Using Rewards in UN Efforts to End Conflicts,” *Journal of International Law and Policy* 26, no. 2 (1998): 235-297; Stephen J. Stedman, “UN Intervention in Civil Wars: Imperatives of Choice and Strategy,” in *Beyond Traditional Peacekeeping*, eds. Donald C. F. Daniel and Bradd C. Hayes (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 1995), 44, 55.

<sup>38</sup> Jeremy Weinstein, *Autonomous Recovery and International Intervention in Comparative Perspective*, Center for Global Development, Working Paper 57 (2005).

eventually bring peace, especially when there is a legitimate military force that could arrive to unquestionable victory. He even raises the need to sometimes support the potentially victorious side in order to bring an end to the conflict, and then restrain the victor to responsible governance.<sup>39</sup> In accordance with this logic, we should also consider the question of whether intervening in violent conflict is contributing to the resurgence of other violent conflicts. War also ultimately produces poverty, infrastructure destruction, longer-term segregation, and widens the poverty gap. These are all factors feeding into eventual conflicts. The credibility and legitimacy of the UN are influenced when it partakes in armed conflict, especially when choosing to support one of the disputants.

The UN have yet to consider peacebuilding strategies through an audacious vision that would lead the international community to rethink conflict. The closest column to the empty one, categorized under “Transformative Peacebuilding,” represents scholars suggesting peacebuilding strategies through transformative objectives or lenses. While Fetherston, for example, proposes critically reviewing peacebuilding strategy through social theory and emancipatory transformation, rather than reforming active strategies, she does not propose practical tactics for the UN to consider.<sup>40</sup> She specifies that the UN can find potential for conflict resolution theory and practice in the concept of positive peace and ensure a first step towards emancipatory transformation by confining the discourse of violence and militarization. However, she limits her contribution to a discursive analysis of peacebuilding theory without suggesting what such transformation could translate

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<sup>39</sup> Ibid.

<sup>40</sup> A. B. Fetherston, “Peacekeeping, Conflict Resolution and Peacebuilding: A Reconsideration of Theoretical Frameworks,” *Journal of International Peacekeeping* 7, no. 1 (2007): 190-218.

into.<sup>41</sup> Maybe we could direct the discourse towards the necessity of reducing social and economic inequalities in fragile states and in the global context. If so, we would also need to consider what capacity and resources the UN currently holds in order to contribute in such a way.

Rather than investing in maintaining peace in armed conflict, the UN could consider leveraging the existence of non-armed conflicts by using them to improve the social and economic conditions of those communities. Burton, also listed under the “transformative PB” category, specifically speaks of his concept of “provention,” which he defines as the anticipation and avoidance, as opposed to suppression of conflict.<sup>42</sup> With the use of the Needs Theory, Burton suggests that the future of problem solving in conflict resolution lies in establishing an alternative to the adversarial legal and political procedures and argues that conflict resolution theory could contribute to improved decision making through the prevention of conflict.<sup>43</sup> However, what if human nature needs to be adversarial and that adversity brings benefits? Adversity could keep the ‘other’, or the party in power, in check. Parties in conflict could hold each other accountable and require rigorous policy proposals with reasonable justifications. Adversity can therefore be a strength as well. How is the UN however building on that strength?

It is to this conversation that Nursey-Bray contributes her work of the transformative potential to conflict. She argues that conflicts can be transformed into opportunities

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<sup>41</sup> Ibid.

<sup>42</sup> John W. Burton, “Conflict Prevention as a Political System,” *International Journal of Peace Studies* 6, no. 1 (2001).

<sup>43</sup> Ibid.

for growth and improvement.<sup>44</sup> Although her work is specific to climate governance and climate-related conflict, her hypothesis could be transferred to any type of conflict resolution theory. Nursery-Bray suggests that conflict needs to be “reconceptualised as a process” by harnessing its energy and allowing it to be a contributing force to imaginative and enduring adaptive governance.<sup>45</sup> By re-focusing the discourses on conflict that would embrace its capacity to transform, Nursery-Bray suggests that conflict could help build new and stronger institutions.<sup>46</sup> Similarly, to what Galtung and Lederach have shown, this could mean embracing conflict as a potential for improved systems and governance, a concept which would support the need for the UN to focus on fragile states in conflict, who would be resisting the use of armed violence, since the potential to transform their non-armed conflict into a positive development could be captured and proven to be more realistically possible.

Although Newman’s position can also fall under the same category as the last authors mentioned, his argument revolves more generally around the lack of efficacy in current PB practice due to the lack of investments in positive peace mechanisms and the liberal top-down approach that is centred around the donors’ perspective of building peace.<sup>47</sup> Similarly, Denskus, also found in the last category, criticizes the “buzzword” concept of

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<sup>44</sup> Melissa Nursery-Bray, “Towards Socially Just Adaptive Climate Governance: The Transformative Potential Conflict,” *Local Environment Journal* 22, no. 2 (2017): 156-171.

<sup>45</sup> Ibid.

<sup>46</sup> Ibid.

<sup>47</sup> Edward Newman, “Human Security Peacebuilding Agenda,” *Third World Quarterly* 32, no. 10 (2011): 1736-1753.

peacebuilding and claims that it is simply not working. Denskus calls for more qualitative perspectives of the social dynamics of armed conflict and the peace to be built, and has warned of the danger of the peacebuilding concept “becoming meaningless.”<sup>48</sup> He claims that current peacebuilding results-based tools to measure its effectiveness do not address the essence of the roots of the conflicts and, instead, answer the need of donors and development aid that believe that peace can be built without addressing the clashes in differing economic, social, and governance worldviews.<sup>49</sup> Denskus argues that peacebuilding has lost sense of context and the people within it.

In conclusion, there is also ample literature critically analyzing current UN intervention strategy and peacebuilding philosophy. However, none have proposed that the UN could consider completely disengaging from armed conflict in order to create incentive, enhance its credibility, and to focus on war prevention by dedicating its aid to resolving structural violence.

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## Conflict prevention: techniques, issues, and effectiveness

Proactive, preventative policies are more effective than reactive ones that need to manage the escalation of the conflict.<sup>50</sup>

Ackermann surveys conflict prevention themes in academic literature and concludes that there remains a concern on how to move away from the rhetoric towards

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<sup>48</sup> Tobias Denskus, “Peacebuilding Does Not Build Peace,” *Development in Practice* 17, no. 4-5 (2007): 656-662.

<sup>49</sup> Ibid.

<sup>50</sup> Ho-Won Jeong, *Peace and Conflict Studies* (New York: Routledge, 2000), 21 and 378.

common practice.<sup>51</sup> She also claims that although skeptics of prevention effectiveness exist, important steps have taken place increasingly allowing the implementation and acceptance of preventive action.<sup>52</sup>

Carment and Fischer grouped operational conflict prevention into four action methods: 1) “political measures”, like mediation or institutional mechanisms; 2) “economic measures” like sanctions; 3) “military measures” like peace operations; 4) “civil society-led initiatives” like dialogue forums.<sup>53</sup>

Wallensteen and Möller describe conflict prevention under two categories: the first category would include “direct preventive actions” that would take place in a period facing dangerous military escalation. The second category is defined as “structural prevention”, where action includes the creation of conditions that would avoid armed conflicts or escalating disputes.<sup>54</sup> Ackermann describes it as more long term, involving “measures that facilitate governance, adherence to human rights, and economic, political, and societal stability, as well as civil society building.”<sup>55</sup> It is to that structural prevention that this thesis is referring to when discussing “conflict prevention.”

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<sup>51</sup> Alice Ackermann, “The Idea and Practice of Conflict Prevention,” *Journal of Peace Research* 40, no. 3 (2003): 339-347.

<sup>52</sup> Ibid.

<sup>53</sup> David Carment, Martin Fischer, Joe Landry, and Sean Winchester, “Conflict Prevention,” in *The Routledge Handbook of Ethnic Conflict*, eds. Karl Cordell and Stefan Wolff (Abingdon: Routledge, 2016), 175.

<sup>54</sup> Peter Wallensteen and Frida Möller, *Conflict Prevention: Methodology for Knowing the Unknown* (Department of Peace and Conflict Research: Uppsala University, 2003), 6.

<sup>55</sup> Ackermann, 341.

Wallensteen and Möller review conflict prevention literature that positions the definition of prevention and how to evaluate its success. They conclude that, according to the literature, prevention must be seen as a series of different levels of success, covering medium to long-term ranges, not necessarily meaning solving the conflict.<sup>56</sup> Single event successes do not represent prevention and would instead be conflict management or avoidance.<sup>57</sup> And the UN would mostly be doing that by getting involved in armed conflict.

Some research on preventative diplomacy has shown that intervening before war breaks out is better than trying to end it, rendering conflict prevention an important strategy to consider.<sup>58</sup> The Carnegie Commission estimated that preventative approaches in the 1990's in Bosnia, Somalia, Rwanda, Haiti, the Persian Gulf, Cambodia and El Salvador could have saved approximately \$130 billion, considering that the estimated cost of managing those conflicts totalled approximately \$200 billion.<sup>59</sup>

Stuart has shown that, when group exclusions are real or perceived and related to extreme horizontal inequalities, the latter can become sources of conflict.<sup>60</sup> She states that “poverty and political, social, and economic inequalities between groups” are conflict influencers and that policies tackling “poverty and environmental degradation” would re-

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<sup>56</sup> Wallensteen and Möller, 10.

<sup>57</sup> Ibid.

<sup>58</sup> Hugh Miall, *The Peacemakers: Peaceful Settlement of Disputes since 1945* (New York: St Martin's Press, 1992), 126.

<sup>59</sup> Karl R. DeRouen and Shaun Goldfinch. “Putting the Numbers to Work: Implications for Violence Prevention,” *Journal of Peace Research* 42, no. 1 (2005): 27.

<sup>60</sup> Frances Stewart. “Horizontal Inequalities as a Source of Conflict,” in *From Reaction to Prevention*, eds. F. Hampson and D. Malone (London: Lynne Rienner, 2001), 105-136.

duce the occurrence of war.<sup>61</sup> Boutros-Ghali, Annan, and Laplante have argued similar findings.<sup>62</sup>

Ballentine and Nitzschke argue that policy needs to address structural conflict prevention, including equitable and accountable resource management, economic diversification, and poverty reduction.<sup>63</sup>

Ackermann summarizes several problems identified with the success of preventing conflict, such as the issue of the multitude of factors related to the structural roots of conflict, their interdependence, and, the level of difficulty of finding and using precise data and information.<sup>64</sup> Jeong also concludes that fundamental questions remain to be answered for determining effective prevention, such as “types of actions, an appropriate time of intervention, rationale behind intervention, the role of the intervener, and the degree of responsibility and implementation strategies.” He states though that with the right resources, achievable goals, or early timing, parties could be persuaded to resist breaking into war.<sup>65</sup>

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<sup>61</sup> Frances Stewart, "Root Causes of Violent Conflict in Developing Countries," *BMJ* (2002), <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC1122271/>

<sup>62</sup> Ackermann, 340; Lisa J. Laplante, “Transitional Justice and Peace Building: Diagnosing and Addressing the Socioeconomic Roots of Violence through a Human Rights Framework,” *International Journal of Transitional Justice* 2, no. 3, (2008): 336.

<sup>63</sup> Karen Ballentine and Heiko Nitzschke, “Beyond Greed and Grievance: Policy Lessons from Studies in the Political Economy of Armed Conflict,” *International Peace Academy - Economic Agendas in Civil Wars* (2003), 2.

<sup>64</sup> Ackermann, 342.

<sup>65</sup> Jeong, 198.

Michael Lund has claimed that attitude barriers also exist, because it is generally assumed that operational prevention represents an idealist approach that cannot realistically succeed due to reactive pre-conceived notions of conflict management.<sup>66</sup> He does show however that interest in preventing conflict has been nevertheless growing, as per the increased investments in maintenance of peace in post-conflict missions.<sup>67</sup>

In complement, Carment and Fischer have argued that a growing willingness to invest in prevention, through the interrelation between development and armed conflict, has been observed throughout the international community given the initiatives and funds launched for that purpose by the World Bank, the Development Aid Committee of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), the United Kingdom's DfID, and Canada's former CIDA. They warned however that bureaucratic barriers still remained.<sup>68</sup>

Alice Ackermann reports on which type of prevention methods have been achieving effective results and describes what has been identified as conditions for that success. Those conditions include timeliness, multilateral action, varied preventative instruments, involvement of a lead or international major actor, presence of domestic support, capacity for regulation, consideration of domestic capacities for long-term prevention and the local

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<sup>66</sup> Michael S. Lund, *Preventing Violent Conflict* (Washington, DC: US Institute of Peace, 1996), 3-30; Michael S. Lund, "Greed and Grievance Diverted: How Macedonia Avoided Civil War," in *Understanding Civil War*, Volume 2 (New Haven: Yale University/World Bank, 1996), 231-258.

<sup>67</sup> Ibid.

<sup>68</sup> Carment and Fischer, 174-175

structures making the community prone to conflict, adequate dedicated resources and time engagement, and a clear and predictable mandate.<sup>69</sup>

Ackermann also identifies issues with the prediction of conflict and therefore the capacity to prevent it. Such problems include the multitude of factors influencing the structural causes of conflict and their complex interrelation, the level of difficulty in obtaining accurate data, and the validity of the models as conflicts transform from emergence to imminence.<sup>70</sup>

Specifically related to the early-warning model, Ackermann lists the lack of response to warnings as well as the ad hoc non-systematic fashion of the model are currently hindering the prevention of conflict within that technique.<sup>71</sup> Methodological questions of who does the warning, who should be taking in those warnings, and what types of warnings show most reliability remain unanswered.<sup>72</sup>

An additional prevention challenge identified by Alexander George is the one that he describes as a “post-Cold War era” challenge, where preventative strategies that were used as deterrence or coercive preventative diplomacy had now become irrelevant and

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<sup>69</sup> Ackermann, 343.

<sup>70</sup> Ibid., 342.

<sup>71</sup> Ibid.

<sup>72</sup> Ibid.

difficult to implement in intrastate conflicts.<sup>73</sup> The examples of Bosnians' and Somalians' resistance to Western coercive preventative diplomacy were used here as an example.<sup>74</sup>

Another challenge presented by George is related specifically to economic sanctions. George argues that more research needs to be made on the effectiveness of economic sanctions and describes how studies have shown that economic sanctions can provoke opposite reactions, can hurt people on the ground rather than the governments they aim, or can cause collateral damage to other states that will suffer losses from the sanctions taking place.<sup>75</sup>

One of the gaps in the literature that was identified by the Carnegie commission was on the use of positive incentives in conflict prevention.<sup>76</sup> George explains that a quick consideration of successful preventative diplomacy cases shows that positive incentives have played a role in those successes, but that there is no systematic data or analysis of how they contributed to prevention.<sup>77</sup>

This is why David Cortright conducted a study evaluating such cases. He concluded that positive incentives, whether economic, political, or security related, have strong influence on behaviour during conflict.<sup>78</sup> Cortright has found that when coercive

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<sup>73</sup> Alexander L. George. "Strategies for Preventive Diplomacy and Conflict Resolution: Scholarship for Policymaking," *PS – Political Science & Politics* 33, no. 1 (2000): 15-19.

<sup>74</sup> Ibid.

<sup>75</sup> Ibid., 17.

<sup>76</sup> Ibid.

<sup>77</sup> Ibid.

<sup>78</sup> Ibid.

diplomacy when applied and succeeded, positive incentives were often present in the same time.<sup>79</sup>

In order to address which types of power-sharing mechanisms have been shown to be most successful and under which conditions, Sisk analyzed the debate in literature and concluded that when managing and ethnic conflict, power-sharing mechanisms work when 1) they are accepted by the main, “moderate”, leaders who really represent each of their groups; 2) the mechanisms are malleable and equitably distribute resources; 3) they are a result of locally-made decisions; 4) they allow the evolvement of an integrative shape of democracy.<sup>80</sup> He calls for more analysis to be made in order to show when power-sharing is proving most successful.<sup>81</sup>

Sisk adds that the international community has used other other successful power-sharing incentives to prevent the escalation or outburst of armed violence, such as the inclusion in global security, trade, or international organizations.<sup>82</sup>

He describes several issues with power-sharing incentive mechanisms. One is about recognizing the right moment in the conflict. When power-sharing is used too early or too late, conflicting actors are either showing not enough interest in the incentive since they still have more compelling alternatives, or, too hostile towards each other to perceive

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<sup>79</sup> Ibid.

<sup>80</sup> Timothy Sisk, *Power Sharing and International Mediation in Ethnic Conflicts* (United States Institute of Peace and the Carnegie Commission on Preventing Deadly Conflict, 1996), Executive Summary. [https://www.carnegie.org/media/filer\\_public/07/2f/072fbef7-bb76-41e3-80a5-7e4f8ba50f06/ccny\\_-\\_book\\_1996\\_powersharing.pdf](https://www.carnegie.org/media/filer_public/07/2f/072fbef7-bb76-41e3-80a5-7e4f8ba50f06/ccny_-_book_1996_powersharing.pdf).

<sup>81</sup> Ibid.

<sup>82</sup> Ibid.

any mutual benefits to sharing power.<sup>83</sup> When implemented at the wrong time, power-sharing also risks involving the perception of the intervener to have chosen one side over the other.<sup>84</sup>

Another challenge identified by Sisk is that of the difficulty of assessing actors' intentions. Power-sharing can invoke new grievances and understanding how actors will utilize them will determine that outcome.<sup>85</sup> This is especially sensitive when perceptions may be that "rebels" have been rewarded or that actors are still suspicious of the other's desire to cause harm.

In summary, there remains gaps in this part of the literature, namely in empirical data showing the effectiveness of the sole use of positive incentives, without military presence, and, how to identify and scale communities at risk of armed conflict. According to the literature above, the communities that could be a priority target to the UN are the ones that display:

- group exclusions,
- ethnic segregation, or
- horizontal inequalities.

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<sup>83</sup> Ibid.

<sup>84</sup> Ibid.

<sup>85</sup> Ibid.

## *Incentives*

According to Nikolas G. Emmanuel, incentives are strategies or policies used by third-parties to encourage conflicting actors to settle peacefully.<sup>86</sup> Emmanuel argues that noncoercive incentives have greater potential than coercive strategies because they are more favourably viewed by conflicting actors and do not come accompanied with the resentment or even resistance that coercive measures might bring, especially that positive incentives are seen as rewards.<sup>87</sup> He suggests that “noncoercive incentive strategies have an underestimated potential to result in peace when compared with coercion and force.”<sup>88</sup>

Emmanuel adds that noncoercive incentive strategies reduce uncertainty over the process of peaceful resolution and give it more credibility.<sup>89</sup> Both him and Donald Rothchild conclude that noncoercive incentives have higher potential to conclude in sustainable peace.<sup>90</sup> According to Roger Fisher, a rewarding incentive mechanism is an important method in influencing conflicting actors.<sup>91</sup> David Cortright argues that the positive use of power to influence behaviour has been shown to be beneficial when consistently used to promote “equitable development, democratic development, and peaceful

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<sup>86</sup> Nikolas G. Emmanuel, “Third-Party Incentive Strategies and Conflict Management in Africa,” *ASPJ Africa & Francophonie* 7, no. 1 (2016): 15.

<sup>87</sup> *Ibid.*, 15-16.

<sup>88</sup> *Ibid.*, 15.

<sup>89</sup> *Ibid.*, 17.

<sup>90</sup> *Ibid.*, 19.

<sup>91</sup> Roger Fisher, *International Conflict for Beginners* (New York: Harper & Row, 1969).

relations.”<sup>92</sup> Griffiths and Barnes argue that cases have shown how sanctions, on the other hand, do not necessarily succeed at changing behaviours and sometimes even worsen conflicting dynamics.<sup>93</sup>

Griffiths and Barnes explain that “peace conditionalities” are used when conditional use of aid in peacebuilding is utilized as an incentive measure.<sup>94</sup> Whether used for prevention or during postwar periods, they suggest that such incentives can be perceived as a “peace dividend,” meaning that the resulting peace or stability would contribute to economic benefits.<sup>95</sup> If stakeholders would gain the advantage of receiving UN aid and support when resisting armed violence, they could foresee increased benefits for their decision to settle disputes peacefully, and might want to ensure that the UN does not exclude them from such assistance. Nikolas Emmanuel argues that development support is especially impactful in the beginning stages of conflict, before armed violence breaks, as the funds can be devoted to reconstructing the economy and the distribution of economic growth that could have led to direct violence if not addressed.<sup>96</sup> He also suggests that aid represents a “peace dividend” that influences parties to agree on a settlement approach.<sup>97</sup>

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<sup>92</sup> David Cortright, *The Price of Peace: Incentives and International Conflict Prevention* (New York: Rowman and Littlefield, 1997), 270.

<sup>93</sup> Aaron Griffiths and Catherine Barnes, “Incentives and Sanctions in Peace Processes,” *Conciliation Resources* 19 (2008): 11.

<sup>94</sup> Griffiths and Barnes, 12.

<sup>95</sup> Ibid.

<sup>96</sup> Emmanuel, 22-23.

<sup>97</sup> Ibid.

It would be important to note here, that the same has not proven to consistently be so following coercive measures. There is also doubt as to whether the benefits would be as clear, were positive incentives to be implemented once armed violence has broken out.

David Cortright discusses the model of cooperative democratic development and argues that the most effective incentive for peaceful relations is an access to the international system of political and economic cooperation that includes the major political players.<sup>98</sup> He suggests that preventing conflict by offering conditional access to this cooperative system represents the most powerful mechanism.<sup>99</sup>

Paul W. Schroeder suggests that developing peaceful relations depends on the rewarding mechanisms that allow access to economic and political association, while excluding those who do not resolve through peaceful behaviours.<sup>100</sup>

Jonathan Goodhand suggests that buying peace after war seldom results in desired behaviour because of the more complex “political economy of war.”<sup>101</sup> In other words, the benefits are not as evidently seeking the interests of the conflicting actors. Griffiths and Barnes add that reconstruction and development aid could rarely overthrow the political objectives of the conflicting parties in war.<sup>102</sup> They also advise that it is especially difficult to apply cost and benefit rationality to armed conflicts. Due to ideological or

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<sup>98</sup> Cortright, 269.

<sup>99</sup> Ibid.

<sup>100</sup> Paul W. Schroeder, *The New World Order: A Historical Perspective* (Champaign: University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, 1994), 15-19.

<sup>101</sup> Ibid.

<sup>102</sup> Griffiths and Barnes, 9.

value-based motivations as well as the concept of entrapment<sup>103</sup>, barriers to accepting incentives for cessation of armed violence are higher.<sup>104</sup> This possibly explains why the UN will often utilize both positive and military measures together when looking for resolutions in an armed conflict. This thesis however is arguing that a reward mechanism be used in the contexts of non-armed conflicts only.

In summary, the literature reviewed above concludes that the most successful types of incentives in the context proposed herein would be:

- noncoercive,
- promoting equitable and democratic development,
- serving to influence peaceful relations, and
- development support when offered and applied before war breaks out.

Several diagrams have been developed to portray the range of incentives available to third-party actors, many of which have been used bilaterally or by the UN. The following, in the table below, bring together many of the incentives that are currently used by the UN and aim to clearly portray the numerous strategies currently available, from positive incentives to coercive ones.

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<sup>103</sup> The concept of entrapment refers to the situation when conflicting parties do not abandon failing strategies because of the resources and commitment that have already been invested.

<sup>104</sup> Griffiths and Barnes, 9.

## A SPECTRUM OF INCENTIVE STRATEGIES AND INSTRUMENTS USED BY THE UNITED NATIONS

	<b>Sought-out outcome</b>	<b>Types</b>	<b>Examples</b>
<b>Least coercive incentives</b>	Enable change by facilitating the process	Facilitation of dialogue	Mediation, workshops, proposing ideas to settle or reframe issues, capacity building
	Shift of behaviour through short-term reward	Purchase	Short-term fiscal rewards or side payments
	Encouraged change or collaboration through varied bilateral support	Assurances and guarantees	Political, institutional, or security guarantees; assistance in demilitarization or denuclearization
	Encouraged change through resources, material, and events	Resources for enabling dialogue	Hosting confidence-building, negotiation, or settlement conferences; technical assistance in land or armed forces reform
	Rewarded desired change or progress	Engagement/ Recognition/ Legitimization	Providing access to international organizations and trade; receiving official representatives
	Materially rewarded desired change	Economic/ Institutional support	Development aid, institutional building, debt relief, favourable trade, election support, human rights monitoring
	Pressure change or collaboration	Political, diplomatic and economic pressures	Suspending diplomatic relationships, cultural or sports boycotts, condemning behaviour, referral to war crime investigations
	Punitive strategy to alter behaviour or policy	Formal sanctions	Asset freezes, economic sanctions, arms embargoes, blacklisting
<b>Most coercive incentives</b>	Forcefully alter change or the balance of power	Military intervention	Nonconsensual deployment of PK forces; military intervention by intl organizations

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## Structural violence and its relation to armed conflict

It might first be pertinent to discuss what is considered structural violence. According to an empirical study on structural violence conducted by Kohler and Alcock, we speak of structural violence occurring whenever individuals are “harmed, maimed, or killed by poverty and unjust social, political, and economic institutions, systems, or structures.”<sup>105</sup> Kohler and Alcock concluded that structural violence in the time of the study tended to be twice as present in magnitude than behavioural violence.<sup>106</sup> They recommend that peace research studies international, civil as well as structural violence because they are each “intolerably high”.<sup>107</sup> Jeong summarizes structural violence as having an “indirect and insidious” nature, slowly destroying human values and life longevity. He describes how “poverty, hunger, repression and social alienation” cause human misery and inequitable access to education, free speech, and freedom to associate reduce the quality of life. When these are part of a community's structure and institutions, they represent structural violence. He adds that we have seen structural violence throughout our history in “social systems maintained by exploitative means”, such as slavery.<sup>108</sup>

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<sup>105</sup> Ibid Gernot Kohler and Norman Alcock, “An Empirical Table of Structural Violence,” *Journal of Peace Research* 13, no. 4 (1976): 343.

<sup>106</sup> Ibid., 350

<sup>107</sup> Ibid., 355.

<sup>108</sup> Jeong, 20.

According to Galtung, structural analysis is a necessary tool when looking to resolve a conflict and no solution can be foreseen without structural changes.<sup>109</sup> He specifies that resolving political conflict requires looking into power formations and especially into the built-in structures that form a society and the human relations within it.<sup>110</sup> This reasoning could be used to argue that, in order to prevent armed conflict, we need to seize the opportunities that arise in fragile conflicts, where armed violence has not occurred, in order to transform the conflict into a chance to reshape the dialogue and the structure holding this fragility. By doing so, not only would we have better chances at eliminating the roots of the conflict, but we would also be providing the tools and possibly building the structure that would allow for peaceful resolution in future disputes and inequities in the system. This is what, at the end, the UN could contribute in order to arrive at greater global peace.

To go even further, Galtung suggests that if the basic concern of peace research was centred on the deprivation of life, then we would be able to identify other ways in which human lives are taken or oppressed, and widen our view on conflict, so that we could work on finding ways to reduce both structural violence and underlying factors of direct violence.<sup>111</sup> He argues that addressing education, togetherness, wider political problems, as well as needs for work, freedom, and political access, all categorized under self-realization or personal growth, ought to be included in peace research in order to lead to solu-

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<sup>109</sup> Ibid., 164.

<sup>110</sup> Ibid., 165.

<sup>111</sup> Ibid., 164.

tions for positive peace.<sup>112</sup> He goes on to question why non-satisfaction issues exist and “in what direction would solutions to the problems be located.”<sup>113</sup> This, in his view, will allow peace research to come out of the “confines of negative peace.”<sup>114</sup>

If peace research were to focus more on structural violence, and advocate for more work to be done at that level in order to build sustainable peace, then the international community would become more educated on the topic, its direct relation to armed conflict, eventually building a stronger case for the UN to become a driver for such a change in international philosophical views and practice on peace. In short, if the UN were to disengage from armed conflicts and focus on positive peace work in unarmed conflicts, it will have an enhanced ability to address structural violence, and therefore the roots of the conflicts that could eventually become armed ones. By investing into conflicts that are not yet armed, and who have been provided the incentive to resist it, the UN will be able to support the conflicting actors in their peaceful, thoughtful resolution, which can only take place if the conflicting actors remain unarmed. By remaining unarmed, the actors will be able to work on sustainable *structural* work instead, and the UN would be present to support them financially and institutionally.

Basic needs theories reject the notion that violence comes from human nature.<sup>115</sup>

They argue that in order to eliminate barriers to satisfying basic needs, poverty and social

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<sup>112</sup> Galtung, 164.

<sup>113</sup> Ibid., 165.

<sup>114</sup> Ibid., 164.

<sup>115</sup> Jeong, 70.

injustice would need to be reduced.<sup>116</sup> Insurgents in numerous conflicts, such as in El Salvador, Guatemala, Mexico, or Peru, were motivated by the unavailability of opportunities for growth, and more specifically, for a dignified economic, social, or political life.<sup>117</sup> Jeong concludes that “causes of many other violent conflicts in the 20th century can also be found in the suppression of human needs.”<sup>118</sup>

In identity theory, it is also argued that religious or cultural differences as such are not causes of conflict, but that group identity becomes divisive when inequalities in economic or political access are present between the groups.<sup>119</sup>

The feminist perspective of the World Order argues that the current order is a patriarchal system that allows for oppression and exploitation and that peace would not be possible in a system that sustains such instances of structural violence.<sup>120</sup>

In sum, critical approaches show that structural transformation would be necessary to arrive at effective and sustainable positive peace.

### *Relation to armed conflict*

In a flagship study conducted for the UN and the World Bank, Han Giessmann concludes that conflict prevention activities at the national scale have only shown to be

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<sup>116</sup> Ibid.

<sup>117</sup> Ibid., 71.

<sup>118</sup> Ibid.

<sup>119</sup> Ibid., 72.

<sup>120</sup> Ibid., 81.

effective when they also address the root causes of the armed conflict. His cases showed that conflict is intensified by its drivers, which have proven to be “poor performance of state institutions, economic disparities, social injustice, human rights abuses, deficient rule of law and oppression of minorities.”<sup>121</sup> Most of these drivers represent structural violence.

Giessmann also suggests that if responses to armed violence focus only on triggers without addressing the root causes of the political and social conflicts, concerned actors will eventually stop using the institutions or mechanisms put in place, rendering them unsustainable.<sup>122</sup> He therefore concludes that in order for conflict prevention to work, affected actors must be able to address the roots of the conflict they are confronted with and experience the benefits of cooperative resolution. He also recommends paying particular attention to minority groups and marginalized groups.<sup>123</sup>

Duncan Pedersen has analyzed the impact of contemporary wars on health and wellbeing. He suggests that one of the most important factors behind the escalation of contemporary armed conflicts is the persistence of inequalities in access to resources.<sup>124</sup> He concludes that contemporary wars in Africa, Eastern Europe, Asia, and Latin America all have deeply rooted structural causes.<sup>125</sup>

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<sup>121</sup> Hans J. Giessmann, *Curbing Violence - Development, Application, and the Sustaining of National Capacities for Conflict Prevention*, Flagship Study (United Nations/World Bank, 2017), 41.

<sup>122</sup> *Ibid.*, 42.

<sup>123</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>124</sup> Duncan Pedersen, “Political Violence, Ethnic Conflict, and Contemporary Wars: Broad Implications for Health and Social Well-being,” *Social Science & Medicine* 55 (2002): 175-190.

<sup>125</sup> *Ibid.*, 177.

According to the Human Needs theory, the analysis of peace and conflict begins with the individual (as opposed to the state), and structural violence occurs when people are deprived of “need satisfiers”.<sup>126</sup> This translates into the presence of systematic inequalities in economic and political distribution.<sup>127</sup> Once those needs are identified, various ways of preventing direct or structural violence become possible.<sup>128</sup> Daniel J. Christie suggests that in the goal of prevention, we must consider the “233 minority groups that are in conflict with dominant groups around the world,” and identify which of the many ones are systematically being marginalized and excluded from need satisfiers that allow for growth and fulfilling human potential.<sup>129</sup> He concludes that just and sustainable peace requires at least an “equitable satisfaction of human needs for security, identity, well-being, and self-determination.”<sup>130</sup> One can argue that the lack of those satisfiers is linked to the presence of structural violence.

In a review on effective approaches to preventing violent extremism, Anita Ernstorfer lists contextual patterns that research has identified. Findings from the Royal United Services Institute identify structural motivators as being the first of the main 3 patterns, with individual incentives and enabling factors being the two others.<sup>131</sup> Structur-

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<sup>126</sup> Daniel J. Christie, “Reducing Direct and Structural Violence: The Human Needs Theory,” *Peace and Conflict: Journal of Peace Psychology* 3, no. 4 (2009): 316-318.

<sup>127</sup> *Ibid.*, 323.

<sup>128</sup> *Ibid.*, 317.

<sup>129</sup> *Ibid.*, 321.

<sup>130</sup> *Ibid.*, 329.

<sup>131</sup> Anita Ernstorfer, *Effective Approaches to Preventing Violent Extremism - A Peacebuilding Systems Perspective* (Berlin: Berghof Foundation, 2018), 52.

al motivators may include “repression, corruption, unemployment, inequality, discrimination,” among others.<sup>132</sup> These also represent structural violence.

Ernstorfer does warn against the tendency to focus conflict analyses on only one of the three patterns and overlook the two others, concluding that the relation between all three patterns is important to delve into.<sup>133</sup> Through a map of the influencing drivers around the Syrian conflict, she displays how extremist behaviour is influenced, for instance, “by the instrumentalisation of religious, sectoral and ethnic identities, structural violence, the absence of governance institutions and rule of law, access to economic development opportunities, or the influence of foreign powers.”<sup>134</sup> She therefore warns that approaches limited to military strategies targeting insurgents only rather than addressing the structural drivers as well can undermine important causes to these extremist behaviours and that peacebuilding must understand these key drivers to the conflict and ensure that activities correspond with these identified drivers in order to lead to positive results.<sup>135</sup>

In Jeong’s book on peace and conflict studies, he summarizes many of the concepts and findings in the field. In his review, he concludes that the concept of structural violence allows us to identify deep causes behind conflicts, which are rooted in political

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<sup>132</sup> Ibid.

<sup>133</sup> Ibid., 52.

<sup>134</sup> Ibid., 55.

<sup>135</sup> Ibid., 55-56.

and economic inequalities.<sup>136</sup> He concludes that conflict management contains wars but sustainable solutions could not be achieved without addressing the social factors at the root of the conflict.<sup>137</sup> He suggests that many contemporary long-term wars are found to be rooted in structural injustice, where systemic social and economic inequities reflect exploitation and coercion, and adds that creating a world without violence would necessitate the elimination of injustices at the social, economic, and ecological levels.<sup>138</sup>

Boutros-Ghali and Annan advise that armed conflict should be addressed through economic and social development.<sup>139</sup> Lisa Laplante has largely expanded on this topic, through a transitional justice lens.<sup>140</sup> Her research shows numerous cases portraying a clear relation between poverty, social exclusion, and political violence, through reports of Truth and Reconciliation from several wars, including and not limited to the Peruvian TRC, the Guatemalan TC, and the East Timorese TRC.<sup>141</sup> Ballentine and Nitzschke found that poor economic governance and stake weakness are essential influencing factors to armed conflict in an environment of resource abundance.<sup>142</sup>

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<sup>136</sup> Jeong, 21 and 378.

<sup>137</sup> *Ibid.*, 31.

<sup>138</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>139</sup> Ackermann, 340.

<sup>140</sup> Laplante, 336.

<sup>141</sup> *Ibid.*, 336-352.

<sup>142</sup> Ballentine and Nitzschke, 2.

Suzan Woodward has argued that tackling what she names “the roots of conflict” can be counterproductive during or after war breaks out.<sup>143</sup> Although she does specifically mention, rather quickly, that literature has shown how tackling the root causes of conflict is counterproductive also during prevention, she does not display any evidence or references to support that prevention-related claim in the passing. In her text, she focuses her argument on war or post-war periods. She claims that tackling the roots of conflict does not necessarily lead to “greater success in ending civil wars.”<sup>144</sup> She bases the definition of ‘root causes’ to the 3 types she described as being used in the literature (cultural, economic, and political-regime). As she criticized those 3 types of roots of conflict, she describes structural violence as being a more probable cause of conflict instead. For example, she claims that “the issue at stake in ending a civil war and its violence” is to find what mechanisms would reduce power uncertainty and provide enough legitimacy to provide an alternative to violence.<sup>145</sup> She also criticizes current PB policy as not being based on affirmative research, that intentions behind interveners are not purist, and argues that policy lacks recognition of the non-domestic influence of wars. She criticizes the success of interventions, claiming that the outcomes of intervention have not yet been shown to be as successful as the movement of R2P has.<sup>146</sup> She states that a “large number of interventions were failures”, new missions have had to be redeployed for what were

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<sup>143</sup> Susan L. Woodward “Do the Root Causes of Civil War Matter? On Using Knowledge to Improve Peacebuilding Interventions,” *Journal of Intervention and Statebuilding* 1, no. 2 (2007): 143-170.

<sup>144</sup> *Ibid.*, 153.

<sup>145</sup> *Ibid.*, 158.

<sup>146</sup> *Ibid.*, 163.

previously interpreted as resolved conflicts, missions have had to be prolonged longer than initially planned due to the fear of conflict re-emergence, or missions have “stopped the killing” but did not improve the life of the communities in conflict.<sup>147</sup> In her earlier work, Woodward describes the ultimate goal of peace as achieving conditions for positive human development with institutional transformation.<sup>148</sup>

In her critique, the most interesting point she makes in relation to this thesis is the fact that there is not enough research being made to analyze which political mechanisms can most effectively bring restabilization after war.<sup>149</sup> This is indeed a gap in the research that would need to be filled in order to better address sustainable peacebuilding *after armed conflicts*.

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## Effectiveness of PK operations and success indicators

There are camps of scholars that attempt to show that UN peacekeeping operations, on the whole, do not deliver successful results, whereas there are those who will argue that PK operations play an important role in creating the peace. The initial question should therefore be around the definition of success in peacekeeping and peacebuilding. What types of success indicators should we be considering?

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<sup>147</sup> Ibid.

<sup>148</sup> Beverly Woodward, “The Abolition of War,” *Crosscurrents* 33, no. 3 (1983): 271.

<sup>149</sup> Ibid., 158.

## *Success indicators*

How to define success of peacebuilding has been analyzed by many and criticism of current PB evaluations is found within that literature. Carment and Fischer argue that if indeed large-scale violence has decreased, whereas horizontal inequalities are increasing, then a better analysis of these changes is needed.<sup>150</sup> They argue that there is not enough linkage being made between development at the community level integrating conflict sensitivity and overall conflict analysis.<sup>151</sup> Suzanna Campbell argues that local accountability needs to be developed beyond host governments and take into account local needs, local capacity, and the goal preferences of the actual institutions we are looking to transform.<sup>152</sup> Similarly, Diehl and Druckman ask whom we are evaluating success for and argue that UN analysis undermines the perspective of the interests of local populations.<sup>153</sup> When UN peace building is therefore deemed successful, is that in relation to objectives disassociated to local needs?

Laplante has dedicated her research on portraying the importance of incorporating structural violence in peacebuilding and transitional justice strategies. She states that security has been redefined to mean more than uniquely protecting against armed conflict. She specifies that security now includes safety from social, structural violence as well,

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<sup>150</sup> Carment and Fischer, 172

<sup>151</sup> Ibid.

<sup>152</sup> Suzanna P. Campbell, *Global Governance and Local Peace: Accountability and Performance in International Peacebuilding* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2018), 229.

<sup>153</sup> Paul F. Diehl and Daniel Druckman, "Evaluating Peace Operations," in *The Oxford Handbook of United Nations Peacekeeping Operations*, eds. Joachim Koops et al. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015), 3.

such as chronic threats of hunger, disease, repression, and, from sudden “hurtful disruptions in the patterns of daily lives.”<sup>154</sup> This is in accordance to Kofi Annan’s view on development, as stated in his Larger Than Freedom Report, portraying the connectivity and interdependence of security, development, and human rights.<sup>155</sup> Laplante emphasizes how this view on peacebuilding and development is based on the objective for citizens to be free to choose the type of life they desire, to have access to the resources that would make those choices meaningful, and to be secure enough to enjoy those choices in peace.<sup>156</sup> Were those indicators therefore included in the evaluation of PB success, results might tell a different story.

Di Salvatore and Ruggeri have argued that the traditional success indicators like the presence of armed violence and the resolution outcome of the conflict are debatable.<sup>157</sup> They argue that “spillover effects”, such as refugee waves or external terrorist acts, broader peacebuilding functions, such as statebuilding, reconstruction, or election processes, and long-term versus short-term impacts on social, economic and political developments (such as inequality, infant mortality, or crime rates) should be taken equally into consideration when evaluating the quality of PB missions.<sup>158</sup>

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<sup>154</sup> Laplante, 345.

<sup>155</sup> Ibid.

<sup>156</sup> Ibid.

<sup>157</sup> Jessica Di Salvatore and Andrea Ruggeri, “Effectiveness of Peacekeeping Operations,” *Oxford Research Encyclopedia of Politics* (February 16, 2019). <http://oxfordre.com/politics/view/10.1093/acrefore/9780190228637.001.0001/acrefore-9780190228637-e-586>.

<sup>158</sup> Ibid.

Fetherston's lens attempts to show that if social structures favouring a dominant group are causing or allowing conflict, then conflict cannot be removed unless we change those structures.<sup>159</sup> She criticizes current complex statistical analyses for their failure to represent the influence of discourses, cultures of militarization, and social space.<sup>160</sup>

Denskus argues that as the international community defines it, peacebuilding cannot be transformative and has become a “non-space, part of the supermodern aid industry,”<sup>161</sup> where the focus of measuring effectiveness is depoliticizing armed conflicts and their causes.<sup>162</sup> Denskus calls for qualitative perspectives of the social dynamics of the peace to be built, arguing that current “results-based” tools that are being used to measure how effective operations are do not address the very roots of the conflict.<sup>163</sup>

Within the results-based, effectiveness-driven analyzers, some propose new methodologies. For example, Sarah-Myriam Martin-Brûlé recently published the results of research she conducted throughout 11 peace missions, out of which she developed a new theoretical model. She proposes that the success of a peace operation be based on the capacity to re-establish order and accomplish the mandate of the operation itself.<sup>164</sup> According to Martin-Brûlé, an operation can deem effective if strategy (deterrence vs self-

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<sup>159</sup> A. B. Fetherston, *From Conflict Resolution to Transformative Peacebuilding: Reflections from Croatia*. CCR Working Papers: no. 4 (Bradford: Centre for Conflict Resolution, Department of Peace Studies, University of Bradford, 2000), 196.

<sup>160</sup> Fetherston, *From Conflict Resolution to Transformative Peacebuilding*, 194.

<sup>161</sup> Denskus, 240.

<sup>162</sup> *Ibid.*, 237.

<sup>163</sup> *Ibid.*, 235-253.

<sup>164</sup> Sarah-Myriam Martin-Brûlé, *Evaluating Peacekeeping Missions: A Typology of Success and Failure in International Interventions* (London: New York, Routledge, 2017), 2.

defense) and type of intervener are well combined, and, if it is well backed up financially and in number of personnel on the ground.<sup>165</sup> Another example is Paffenholz who states that peacebuilding evaluation guidelines over-emphasize the use of theories of change, especially that most cases do not have a clear baseline to work from.<sup>166</sup> She proposes an evidence-based approach focused on civil society functions, such as advocacy for peace and human rights, socialisation for democratic and peace values, and bringing people together from adversary groups, in addition to protection from harm, monitoring, and facilitation.<sup>167</sup> Were PB missions being evaluated on indicators of social, economic, and political impacts, our strategies and objectives would change accordingly. It is those achievements that this thesis is arguing are not successful in current peacebuilding.

### *Effectiveness of UN PK Operations*

In addition to determining which criteria should be used to evaluate the success of UN PK, literature on effectiveness also revolves around selection bias of cases to study and the period over which the effectiveness of the mission is being analyzed.

Sandler summarized PK effectiveness literature and found that most studies investigated the likelihood of war reoccurrence following specifically intrastate war settlements.<sup>168</sup> Diehl and Druckman have shown that over 80% of the UN PK missions they studied have only reached two out of the eleven identified goals, raising the issue of

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<sup>165</sup> Ibid.

<sup>166</sup> T. Paffenholz, "Methodologies in Peacebuilding Evaluations: Challenges and Testing New Approaches," *Evaluation Connections* (August 2016): 8.

<sup>167</sup> Ibid.

<sup>168</sup> Todd Sandler, "International Peacekeeping Operations: Burden Sharing and Effectiveness," *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 61, no. 9 (October 2017): 1875-1897.

evaluating the success of UN missions based on a single success criterion.<sup>169</sup> They argue that missions must be evaluated on multiple dimensions including the absence of armed conflict, instilled human rights, reintegration of non-governmental parties, disarmament, sustainable humanitarian conditions, functional governments, or rule of law.<sup>170</sup>

Among the uni or dual dimensional studies conducted, Regan has concluded that, unless supporting one side of the conflict, interventions from third parties were observed to extend the length of intrastate wars, questioning the effectiveness of UN interventions.<sup>171</sup>

Studies that were evaluating maintained peace on the long term concluded that UN intervention did not have an impact on preventing other military crises within 10 years of the peace settlement.<sup>172</sup> Contrarily, some of the studies evaluating the effect of interventions over relatively short term periods result in more optimistic conclusions, namely that lengthy low-intensity civil wars have shown to maintain peace for five years after peace settlement, especially when territorial settlements and neutral third-party interventions take place.<sup>173</sup> Doyle and Sambanis studied intrastate wars over 2 and 5-year

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<sup>169</sup> Paul F. Diehl and Daniel Druckman, "Peace Operation Success: The Evaluation Framework," in *Peace Operation Success: A Comparative Analysis*, eds. Daniel Druckman and Paul F. Diehl (Leiden, NL: Martinus Nijhoff, 2013), 11-27; Paul F. Diehl and Daniel Druckman, *Evaluating Peace Operations* (Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner, 2010).

<sup>170</sup> Ibid.

<sup>171</sup> Patrick M. Regan, "Third-party Interventions and the Duration of Intrastate Conflicts," *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 46, no. 1 (2002): 55-73.

<sup>172</sup> Paul F. Diehl, Jennifer Reifschneider, and Paul R. Hensel, "United Nations Intervention and Recurring Conflict," *International Organization* 50, no. 4 (1996): 683-700.

<sup>173</sup> Caroline Hartzell, Matthew Hoddie, and Donald Rothchild, "Stabilizing the Peace after Civil War: An Investigation of Some Key Variables," *International Organization* 55, no. 1 (2001): 183-208.

periods, and found that UN PK interventions were most effective when a peace settlement was already in place, and that larger or multidimensional missions were showing to be more effective, with the latter showing most effectiveness because of its presumed capacity to address deeper sources of the conflict as well as to involve local communities in the process.<sup>174</sup>

Gilligan and Sergenti controlled selection bias by taking into account the factors incentivizing deployment of missions and by then matching conflicts with and without UN intervention. When comparing matching conflicts, they found that effectiveness was high when a peace settlement was already in place before the deployment because they limited the recurring of armed conflict by over 85%.<sup>175</sup> They also found that UN PK missions had no notable effect when they took place in conflicts still in war.<sup>176</sup> Also while taking into account selection bias, Fortna's studies showed that peace maintaining missions taking place after peace settlement reduced the risk or recurrence by over 80%, with peacebuilding missions being more effective in maintaining the peace than unidimensional peacekeeping missions.<sup>177</sup>

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<sup>174</sup> Michael W. Doyle and Nicholas Sambanis, "International Peacebuilding: A Theoretical and Quantitative Analysis," *American Political Science Review* 94, no. 4 (2000): 779-801.

<sup>175</sup> Michael J. Gilligan and Ernest J. Sergenti, "Do UN Interventions Cause Peace? Using Matching to Improve Causal Inference," *Quarterly Journal of Political Science* 3, no. 2 (2008): 89-122.

<sup>176</sup> Ibid.

<sup>177</sup> Virginia P. Fortna, "Does Peacekeeping Keep Peace? International Intervention and the Duration of Peace after Civil War," *International Studies Quarterly* 48, no. 2 (2004): 269-292.

Also, studies specifically evaluating the impact of UN PK on reducing war casualties show that UN peacekeepers significantly reduced them and more so when missions are bigger in size.<sup>178</sup>

In summary, when missions are evaluated on a 10-yr term, peace seems to be questionable, emphasizing the need to address structural causes of the conflict. Another common conclusion among studies is that multidimensional missions and evaluations are showing more comprehensive results.

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<sup>178</sup> Lisa Hultman, Jacob Kathman, and Megan Shannon, "Beyond Keeping Peace: United Nations Effectiveness in the Midst of Fighting," *American Political Science Review* 108, no. 4 (2014): 737-753; Lisa Hultman, Jacob Kathman, and Megan Shannon, "United Nations Peacekeeping and Civilian Protection in Civil War," *American Journal of Political Science* 57, no. 4 (2013): 875-891.

## **Chapter 3: Discussion part I - Current UN Peacebuilding practice is not resulting in positive peace**

This thesis bases its proposal on the fact that current PB strategy is not resulting in successful results as per its primary objective of removing threats to peace. It is also argued that UN legitimacy is compromised due to the fact that peacebuilding missions are decided upon only by the P5. And this, in turn, hinders the efficacy of its missions. The following chapter describes these weaknesses in more length and how the proposed new strategy could resolve them.

The United Nations Charter stipulates that its number one purpose is to maintain international peace and security and that in order to reach that goal, it serves to take “effective collective measures for the prevention and removal of threats to the peace.”<sup>179</sup> Other purposes stipulated in its Charter are the commitments to “take appropriate measures to strengthen universal peace [... and to solve] international problems of an economic, social, cultural, or humanitarian character.”<sup>180</sup>

As mentioned earlier in the thesis, UN reports conclude that the UN has not yet been able to achieve its core mandate and scholars have shown that success indicators of UN missions ought to be revised. Given that Article 1 of the Charter stipulates the objectives cited above, it is suggested here that current practice has therefore not shown to be effective and that it deems important to keep those objectives in mind when considering what tactics in building peace the UN ought to invest in.

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<sup>179</sup> United Nations, “Chapter 1, Article 1,” Charter of the United Nations. <http://www.un.org/en/sections/un-charter/chapter-i/index.html>.

<sup>180</sup> Ibid.

When choosing which strategies or positions to dedicate its limited resources to, the UN's *long-term* goal of "removal of threats to the peace"<sup>181</sup> could be considered as the target result, and one of the practices that might reach that target could be that of solving "international problems of an economic [...] and] social [...] character."<sup>182</sup> This paper argues that such a focus, which would address structural violence issues, is what could result in increased positive peace.

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*Objectives are therefore not being achieved*

As previously mentioned, one of the most essential questions to answer when evaluating the success of peace operations is: Who are we evaluating success for?<sup>183</sup> In this case, are we looking at the results sought after by the P5 or are we looking for results that are beneficial to the peace of the local and global communities? Here, it is argued that the UN should in practice ensure that it is applying tactics that work towards successful results for the latter.

The interests of the local population are essential to consider when evaluating peace operations, and this perspective is undermined in current UN analysis.<sup>184</sup> This means that, as the UN develops, implements, and evaluates its peacekeeping, peacebuilding, and postwar operations, it is missing out on ensuring that the original grievances of the local people are at the top of its agenda, which could lead to missed opportunities in identify-

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<sup>181</sup> Ibid.

<sup>182</sup> Ibid.

<sup>183</sup> Diehl and Druckman, "Evaluating Peace Operations," 3.

<sup>184</sup> Ibid., 4.

ing and eliminating the presence of structural violence. As current UN PB missions will mostly focus on physical security and cessation of war, they cannot realistically address the social and structural needs of locals, which have been shown to be an undeniable dimension to include in PB practice.

As previously mentioned, this paper therefore proposes evaluating success using the long-term decrease of armed conflict as a key performance indicator, while measuring the decrease in structural instances of violence, meaning an increased presence of *positive peace*. This *positive peace* has arguably rarely been attained through UN *peacebuilding* practice. Similarly to what has been argued by Cahill, current UN peacebuilding missions deal with armed conflict and cannot therefore effectively address structural violence, or economic, social, and cultural rights violations, therefore failing to deal with the root causes and drivers of conflict, rendering positive peace difficult to sustain.<sup>185</sup>

Although certain UN missions have been able to facilitate transitions from armed conflict to cessation and state building, it has indeed been previously shown that sustainable long-term peace has not been achieved.<sup>186</sup> International intervention is regularly assumed to bring about positive outcomes, without serious consideration of the potential negative results involved in the process. Violent crimes, inequity, totalitarian regimes, and marginalization are realities facing post-conflict communities, not allowing the local

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<sup>185</sup> Cahill-Ripley, 228.

<sup>186</sup> Charles Call and Susan Cook, "On Democratization and Peacebuilding," *Global Governance* 9 (2003): 238-242; Andy Knight, "Evaluating Recent Trends in Peacebuilding Research," *International Relations of the Asia-Pacific* 3 (2003): 254; Roland Paris and Timothy D. Sisk, eds., *The Dilemmas of Statebuilding: Confronting the Contradictions of Postwar Peace Operations*, (London: Routledge, 2009); Jarat Chopra, *Peace-Maintenance: The Evolution of International Political Authority* (London: Routledge, 1999): 8.

populations to see the fruits of peace.<sup>187</sup> Since *positive* peace is not the objective set in PB missions, real transformation is not occurring and structural violence either remains or worsens.

Cessation does not necessarily signify that security has been restored. The example of El Salvador has been illustrated to show that post-armed-conflict societies are frequently still facing a variety of insecurity issues, and often face an increase in violent crimes than during the armed conflict.<sup>188</sup> Socio-economic inequalities have been shown to still exist in some of the most successful cases reported in peacebuilding, like in Central America or Timor Leste and question the sustainability of current peacebuilding or state building outcomes.<sup>189</sup> In other words, while armed conflicts are being mediated, observed, or even ended, positive peace is not being achieved because structural violence is not being transformed.

With the direction of more robust peacekeeping that the UN has undertaken, it can also be argued that the UN cannot possibly be equipped with enough material or enforcement in order to effectively carry out such operations. Traditional peacekeeping is not effectively applicable to the current international security conditions and UN robust missions cannot have the required capacity to result into sustainable peacebuilding.<sup>190</sup> The issue of funding alone hinders such an objective, since current UN peacekeeping and

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<sup>187</sup> Call and Cook, "On Democratization and Peacebuilding", 238-242.

<sup>188</sup> Knight, "Evaluating Recent Trends in Peacebuilding Research," 254.

<sup>189</sup> Paris and Sisk, *The Dilemmas of Statebuilding*.

<sup>190</sup> Chopra, 8.

peacebuilding missions are too costly and investments are not satisfying the needs of the task involved.<sup>191</sup> This, in turn, also directly contributes to the weakening of the credibility of UN missions (an element elaborated on further below) and hence its rate of success.

This project argues that since current UN intervention is not addressing the root cause of armed conflicts, it cannot expect to achieve more peace if it continues to focus on such interventions.

Attempting to build peace after armed violence has occurred might also be an unrealistic path to invest in. Current peacebuilding practice, which is mostly dedicated to armed conflicts, seems to resemble a mishmash of different lessons, objectives, and strategies that have been initiated over the last several decades, without clear indication as to how they should relate in chronology or in context. This might be partly due to the sense of urgency during war or postwar instances, where the luxury of time is not available. As a result, this practice is not creating an effectively sustainable peaceful environment with functional peaceful states. Furthermore, in postwar, people's pressing needs are mainly for physical, food, and economic security, as well as for ensuring the education of their children. The energy and time it takes to deal with holding governments accountable, or with the social aspect of armed conflict and the reconciliation associated to it, might simply not be possible for most people during postwar.

Postwar peacebuilding is difficult to achieve, since it happens in a complex period of time in the conflict that requires multiple transitions simultaneously, such as social,

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<sup>191</sup> Knight, "Evaluating Recent Trends in Peacebuilding Research," 254; Liégeois, 66.

political, and economic transitions, each presenting serious challenges.<sup>192</sup> Current peacebuilding processes are reduced to interventions that are funded and carried out by international actors, compressed to short-term projects, isolating the conflict to a project's targeted action and functions, seldom structured as long-term support mechanisms that would be necessary for the facilitation of the structural changes needed.<sup>193</sup> Social and political transformations in conflicting societies cannot be treated as single-event occurrences.<sup>194</sup>

Rushing into democratization in postwar has not proven to be sustainable either.<sup>195</sup> This could be partly due to the fact that the structural injustices that existed before the war were not addressed. Therefore, the trust was not achieved and the intentions of the 'other' are not believable. Several countries have fallen back into violence during the democratization process, such as Angola in 1992, Burundi in the first half of the 1990s, Bosnia in the 1990s, and Côte d'Ivoire in 2010.<sup>196</sup> Some have even argued that the liberalization of postwar political systems acts as a catalyst to armed conflict.<sup>197</sup> Current peacebuilding practice has not been able to resolve the underlying issues of justice in armed conflicts, because it fails to address core division in these societies, leaving unjust

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<sup>192</sup> Paris and Sisk, *The Dilemmas of Statebuilding*.

<sup>193</sup> John-Paul Lederach, "The Origins and Evolution of Infrastructures for Peace: A Personal Reflection," *Journal of Peacebuilding & Development* 7, no. 3 (2012): 9-10.

<sup>194</sup> Ibid.

<sup>195</sup> Call and Cook, "On Democratization and Peacebuilding"; Paris and Sisk, *The Dilemmas of Statebuilding*; Newman, "Human Security Peacebuilding Agenda."

<sup>196</sup> Ibid., 1744.

<sup>197</sup> Ibid.

structures and practices present or worsened.<sup>198</sup> In other words, current PB practice is not aiming for *positive* peace. The underfunding of structural transformation has therefore undermined the objective of peacebuilding. Whereas the goal is to build societies where peaceful conflict resolution is possible, the basic social structure of equal rights, consideration, and opportunity are not at the forefront of that peace agenda. Therefore, the structural inequalities that are part of the roots of conflict will still exist and old violent patterns creep back in, threatening the sustainability of the efforts that the UN had already heavily invested in.

As Lederach's conflict transformation theory suggests, vertical integration is essential in order to ensure sustained engagement in peacebuilding.<sup>199</sup> Achieving social and political transformation in conflicting societies requires working on constructive peace and linking interdependent structural changes.<sup>200</sup> Such transformations are not realistically achievable when peacebuilding focuses on armed conflicts. Instead, by dedicating efforts to unarmed conflicts, the structural changes needed can be addressed more effectively and transformation can be attained more easily. When conflicts become armed, the economic, political, and emotional complexities attached to it become more difficult to untangle.

Following the Brahimi report in the year 2000, the UN intensified the militarization of its peacekeeping operations, under the presumption that projecting more "credible

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<sup>198</sup> Ronnie D. Lipschutz, "Beyond the Neoliberal Peace: From Conflict Resolution to Social Reconciliation," *Social Justice* 25, no. 4 (1998): 5-19.

<sup>199</sup> John Paul Lederach, *The Little Book of Conflict Transformation: Clear Articulation of the Guiding Principles by a Pioneer in the Field* (Intercourse, PA: Good Books, 2003), 9.

<sup>200</sup> Ibid.

force” was necessary in order to bring better peacekeeping and peacebuilding results.<sup>201</sup> Although the Brahimi panel had reported that UN peacebuilding strategies had proven to be deficient thus far, rather than proposing a shift in UN peacebuilding focus and narrowing their resources down to what measures had proven to be successful, the panel recommended strengthening UN military capacity by developing bigger and better equipped forces.<sup>202</sup> Interestingly, the Brahimi panel had also recommended more effective long-term and short-term strategies for conflict prevention.<sup>203</sup> While such strategies could allow the UN to identify fragile states before they break into armed conflict and offer the possibility of supporting them were they to choose settling in peace or to leverage their conflict in order to transform their society, UN peacebuilding and peacekeeping resources were not shifted towards such a strategic direction despite the recommendations in the Brahimi report in 2000.

Nine years later, in 2009, still ploughing further into the same direction, the New Partnership Agenda reaffirmed the need for a higher degree of military mobility and specialization, as well as an expansion of burden-sharing through an increased number of countries providing military and police personnel.<sup>204</sup> While the Agenda confirmed that the UN remained to be called upon to provide civilian protection and stability, as well as

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<sup>201</sup> United Nations, Panel on United Nations Peace Operations to the Secretary-General, *Report of the Panel on United Nations Peace Operations*, A/55/305–S/2000/809 (August 21, 2000). [http://www.un.org/en/ga/search/view\\_doc.asp?symbol=A/55/305](http://www.un.org/en/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=A/55/305).

<sup>202</sup> Ibid.

<sup>203</sup> Ibid.

<sup>204</sup> Department of Peacekeeping Operations and Department of Field Support, *A New Partnership Agenda: Charting a New Horizon for UN Peacekeeping* (New York: 2009). <http://www.un.org/en/peacekeeping/documents/newhorizon.pdf>.

affirmed that peacekeeping needed a global system in order to match the “global enterprise” it had grown to become, it did not question why that was still the case.<sup>205</sup> If the proposed missions were, as reported, becoming increasingly in demand, then the mandate of the UN to maintain peace and security was not being met. Dare we ask if these missions are actually indirectly promoting conflict? UN missions might be feeding this global enterprise and creating a demand for it by accepting to provide support to actors in armed conflict. This therefore signifies that current missions are failing the ultimate purpose of decreasing the number of armed conflicts and promoting peaceful resolution.

In his conflict negation theory, Galtung explains that the conflict system is defined by four components: actors, goals, incompatibility, and pursuits or defence.<sup>206</sup> He suggests that for a conflict to be *negated*, one or more of the four components will have to be modified.<sup>207</sup> Following this logic, he distinguishes between two types of negations: the incompatibility modification, which he interprets as conflict resolution, and the pursuit/defence modification, which he perceives as conflict repression.<sup>208</sup> While in both cases, the conflict has been negated, the incompatibility modification would represent a strong negation, since it touches the core of the conflict, being the incompatibility, whereas the pursuit/defence modification would represent a weak negation, since modifying the pur-

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<sup>205</sup> Ibid.

<sup>206</sup> Galtung, 108.

<sup>207</sup> Ibid.

<sup>208</sup> Ibid.

suit of the goals and leaving the fundamental incompatibility unchanged does not touch the core of the conflict.<sup>209</sup>

This is what current UN peacebuilding seems to be investing most of its efforts into: weak conflict negation. By focusing most of its investments and people hours in the cessation of armed violence, keeping the peace, and reconstructing in postwar, it is not allowing itself to put stark efforts into modifying the social conflict at its core and in the structural system that has allowed marginalization, deprivation, and injustice to exist. Current UN peacebuilding is not resulting in sustainable results of reduced armed violence and increased peaceful resolutions because it is not allowing itself to address conflict at its core, nor providing the incentive for conflicting parties to do so.

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## Weakened effectiveness due to damaged credibility

When representatives from 50 different states took part in the talks in San Francisco in April 1945, many of the nations were aspiring for more than collective security under the new international organization's concerns. This diverse presence is what actually allowed the inclusion of Chapters 9, 10, and 11 in the UN Charter, in addition to the mention of universal human rights, social, and economic justice.<sup>210</sup>

Interestingly, it is not surprising to see that today's dynamic still reflects the intentions of the original creators of the Charter. While the Powerful Three (that is, the United

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<sup>209</sup> Ibid.

<sup>210</sup> Mary Ann Glendon, *A World Made New: Eleanor Roosevelt and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights* (New York: Random House Publishing, 2001), 10.

States, the United Kingdom, and the Soviet Union) were concerned with international economic security and levelling political power between the three of them, the rest of the world, which was composed of most of the states experiencing physical and political insecurity, colonialism, and human rights abuses, was advocating for economic, social, and political equality: Still today, the Security Council (SC) made up of the Powerful Five (P5), that is the U.S., Russia, France, UK, and China, is known to have its own political agenda, therefore influencing all decisions related to UN peacebuilding missions and having an impact on their legitimacy. This has a great impact on the reputation of the UN in the communities it implements its missions in, therefore rendering its objective less efficient. If locals do not trust the end goal, then real change is not possible.

As the Security Council (SC) holds primary responsibility to mandate peace operations, it is difficult to separate UN peacebuilding activity from the political agenda of the P5, thereby reducing the legitimacy of UN decisions in host countries. By choosing not to partake in any armed conflicts in any way, the UN would be less reproachable in regards to the SC's political agenda behind the missions and to its own institutional objectivity. This would be more so if structural work in non-armed conflicts does not fall under SC decision-making. Take for example the UN Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS), which has been continuously accused by both conflicting parties to have favoured one party over the other with secret supplies, sheltering of fighters, or providing greater protection to civilians of the other party.<sup>211</sup> Another example could be that of the bombing of UN

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<sup>211</sup> Aditi Gorur, "In South Sudan, UN Peacekeepers' Biggest Challenge: Staying Neutral," *World Politics Review*, November 25, 2014. <https://www.worldpoliticsreview.com/articles/14525/in-south-sudan-u-n-peacekeepers-biggest-challenge-staying-neutral>.

headquarters in Baghdad in August of 2003. After that event, the head of the UN Development Program (UNDP) called himself on the UN to regain a position of neutrality through “inaction”.<sup>212</sup>

Nothing in the current “Responsibility to Protect” principle requires international intervention to prevent or stop mass atrocities.<sup>213</sup> It seemingly all depends on the will of the Security Council. When mandates given for UN operations are the results of political negotiations and compromise, the result is that they are imprecise, underfunded, and not communicated with transparency. The fact that more precise mandates could not be approved signifies that there is disagreement over what the operations are to achieve.<sup>214</sup> This thesis argues that all of these factors, in turn, diminish the effectiveness of the work as well as the legitimacy of UN operations, rendering them less credible and successful.

The other aspect of the legitimacy issue of the UN due to its current peacebuilding approach is that it has often been associated to Western political agendas, with references to a colonial top-down spirit of imposing a specific type of peace that does not necessarily address the structural problems that are root causes to the conflicts.<sup>215</sup> In addition, the counter-terrorism security standpoint that has been dominant in international security dur-

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<sup>212</sup> Michael Soussan and International Herald Tribune, “The Myth of Neutrality: To Do Its Job, the UN Needs to Take Sides,” *New York Times*, August 27, 2004. <https://www.nytimes.com/2004/08/27/opinion/the-myth-of-neutrality-to-do-its-job-the-un-needs-to-take-sides.html>.

<sup>213</sup> Helal, “Justifying War and the Limits of Humanitarianism”; Karlsrud, “The UN at War: Examining the Consequences of Peace-Enforcement Mandates for the UN Peacekeeping Operations in the CAR, the DRC and Mali”; Thomas G. Weiss, “Peace Operations and Humanitarian Interventions” in *The Oxford Handbook of United Nations Peacekeeping Operations*, eds. Joachim Koops et al. (New York: Oxford University Press, 2015).

<sup>214</sup> Ibid.

<sup>215</sup> Newman, 1744.

ing the past fifteen years as opposed to generally promoting peaceful conflict resolution has also tarnished the credibility of UN peacebuilding operations. Being involved in armed or postwar operations has raised questions as to whether the decisions in choosing to provide support in some conflicts rather than others involves this most recent international security agenda pertaining to domestic objectives and international economic interests that members of the Security Council might have.

As suggested by McCann, the philosophical debates introduced after 9/11 and the 2002 Iraqi crisis brought forward the environment that inspired the creation of the PBC.<sup>216</sup> The concerns of a lack of sustainability in post-armed-conflict states and of a powerful Security Council brought forward the proposal of a small PBC, the inclusion of non-Security Council members to the PBC, and its reporting to the Economic and Social Council as opposed to the Security Council. Member states did not want the Secretary-General as the driver of the peacebuilding agenda and demanded a consensus requirement.<sup>217</sup> Those dynamics show the lack of credibility and the suspicion in SC decision-making in the eyes of many other member states, especially those that are in fact fragile or in armed conflict.

As some propose establishing accountability mechanisms against the misuse of SC powers,<sup>218</sup> it is argued here that the reality of such powers is actually one of the factors

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<sup>216</sup> Lisa McCann, "A Discursive Institutional Analysis of Global Policy Ideas in the Creation of the United Nations Peacebuilding Commission," *Policy Studies* 35, no. 5 (2014).

<sup>217</sup> Ibid.

<sup>218</sup> Lauri Malksoo, "Great Powers Then and Now: Security Council Reform and Responses to Threats to Peace and Security," in *United Nations Reform and the New Collective Security*, eds. Peter Danchin and Horst Fischer (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 100.

supporting a call for change in UN involvement in armed conflicts, since political influence is unavoidable, and therefore would always associate the UN to a lack of genuine dedication to its founding objectives.

Overall, it would be quite difficult to portray objectivity in an armed conflict, since there will always be suspicion in regards to the incentives of the UN operation and the decision makers behind it. Furthermore, this thesis argues that the UN should, by principle, simply not be viewed as a player in armed conflict, since its purpose in being involved is actually to indirectly protest armed conflict, thus contradicting its own stance as a result of it.

The presence of armed UN personnel also tarnishes the perception of neutrality and that impact extends to the credibility of humanitarian organizations present on the ground that are being escorted by UN armed agents.<sup>219</sup> The lack of transparency in operations also results in a problem of credibility for local actors, not allowing people or other organizations in host countries to believe in UN neutrality.<sup>220</sup>

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*Supporting the business of war and feeding the cycle of armed violence*

By aiding during or intervening in armed conflicts, the UN would be contributing to the cycle that allows economic benefits to emerge out of war, and, indirectly, to the cycle that sustains armed violence. In every conflict, micro and macro economies are created - referred to herein as the “business of war” - and generate income to many players.

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<sup>219</sup> Knight, “Evaluating Recent Trends in Peacebuilding Research,” 252-253.

<sup>220</sup> Ibid.

Whether it is corruption, NGO business development, or the simple trade of weapons, war becomes business. There is then an incentive to sustain it and the UN feeds that desire even by participating in its cessation or peacekeeping. Instead, the UN could choose to act by principle and refuse to collaborate with any system that sustains or promotes armed violence - a type of boycotting of armed conflict.

A UN special envoy to the conflict in Burundi in the 1990s suggested that humanitarian aid results in unintended negative outcomes, such as the humanitarian aid system being used to indefinitely extend an armed conflict.<sup>221</sup> Other observed factors were, although responding to needs on the ground, weakening the state's economy due to the taking away of the state's responsibility to service delivery in health and food security, and giving the business to non-governmental organizations (NGOs).<sup>222</sup> Another perverse consequence resulting from NGO or UN involvement during war is the agencies' continuous need to attract and maintain financing in order to ensure their survival and that of their personnel's careers.<sup>223</sup>

Similarly, private security companies also have bureaucratic interests in armed conflicts and are competing for funds (or business) in the armed violence market,<sup>224</sup> making them a valid stakeholder in the business of war. If war is their income generator, why

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<sup>221</sup> Knight, "Evaluating Recent Trends in Peacebuilding Research," 249; Ahmedou Ould-Abdallah, *Burundi on the Brink, 1993-95: A UN Special Envoy Reflects on Preventive Diplomacy (Perspectives Series)* (Washington, DC: United States Institute of Peace, 2000), 128.

<sup>222</sup> Knight, "Evaluating Recent Trends in Peacebuilding Research," 255; Ould-Abdallah, 126-129.

<sup>223</sup> Tore Rose, "Reflections on Peacebuilding and the United Nations Development Assistance Framework," *Journal of Peacebuilding & Development* 2, no. 3 (2006): 66.

<sup>224</sup> Diehl and Druckman, "Evaluating Peace Operations," 4; Nikolaos Tzifakis and Asteris Huliaras, "The Perils of Outsourcing Post-Conflict Reconstruction: Donor Countries, International NGOs and Private Military and Security Companies," *Conflict, Security & Development* 15, no. 1 (2015): 54.

would they ensure its elimination? The intentions behind resolving to peace become suspicious when one's business model depends on war.

Current robust peacebuilding practice is digging deeper into the cycle of armed violence because it is demanding deeper and longer involvement in war, as UN operations are becoming more complex and transforming into actors within the conflict. One actor or another is making money out of the presence of UN operations during armed conflict, and the need for those actors to maintain their revenue sources creates incentives to sustain the armed conflict. Furthermore and more notably, such involvement creates incentives for other conflicts, in turn, to resolve to arms as well.

As briefly portrayed previously, micro economies emerge and sub-systems develop during armed conflict, which can also serve to respond to the needs of the population to survive the crisis. New sources of food supply, necessities, or transport mechanisms develop in order to meet the needs of the situation. The players benefiting out of those new markets are therefore profiting from the armed conflict. Employment within international NGOs, humanitarian donations, and international contributions also create dependencies. Through those sub-systems, in addition to the revenue generated by multiple levels of stakeholders in the arms trade (a large aspect of the economy of war that is outside the scope of this paper), a certain security is provided because of the situation, to which some actors will want to remain attached.

It has also been shown that the involvement of the international community in postwar state building has helped stabilize elite structures that are part of the roots of the

conflicts, since they mostly promote economic liberalization, but do not ensure inclusive distribution of the resources, therefore empowering certain actors and not others.<sup>225</sup>

What this paper argues is that, in those instances of deepened dependencies and systems of micro (or macro) economies, the UN would therefore be indirectly promoting the continuity of armed conflict, contributing to its existence, and partaking in the success of the business (or economies) of war by being involved in armed conflicts. Such a contradictory position, in turn, also tarnishes its credibility, which, as portrayed previously, will render its objective less successful.

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<sup>225</sup> Tobias Denskus, "Peacebuilding Does Not Build Peace," *Development in Practice* 17, no. 4-5 (2007): 656-662.

## **Chapter 4: Discussion Part II - Rewarding non-armed conflicts and addressing structural violence more effectively**

### *Addressing structural violence more effectively*

So, far, we have shown that in order to attempt reaching greater sustainable success in efforts to build peace, focus needs to be on removing the threats to security and peace before armed violence breaks through positive peace mechanisms. Positive peace mechanisms could entail supporting work in economic, social, and political inclusion, access to basic human needs, and opportunities to fulfilling one's human potential. Such instances are more realistic to achieve in non-armed contexts, where the pressing need is not focused on cessation of violence, peacekeeping, or extensive reconstruction. In addition, by focusing on economic, social, and political structural peace, the UN would be investing its resources into projects that have more potential for success in comparison to armed intervention in armed conflicts.

Inequality and alienation are root causes of direct violence and can be defined as objects of indirect violence. In his article, "Human Security Peace-building Agenda," Newman argues that deprivation and exclusion, which lead to human insecurity, threaten peacebuilding objectives and provoke conflict.<sup>226</sup> Amanda Cahill-Ripley also argues that it is difficult to eliminate unrest and promote reconciliation when the underlying root causes of conflict, such as economic, social, and cultural rights deprivations are not fully

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<sup>226</sup> Newman, 1740.

dealt with.<sup>227</sup> By addressing these aspects of indirect violence, we could potentially prevent direct violence and even entice other actors to do the same.

Such activities, as currently carried out in postwar contexts, could include: addressing food insecurity and critical health concerns; strengthening institutions of justice, legislation, and law and order as well as public service delivery; facilitating inclusive democratic processes; promoting human rights; implementing reconciliation mechanisms; resolving land reform claims; and drafting or amending constitutions.<sup>228</sup> If those resources were to be implemented before a conflict broke into armed violence, the results could lead to much more successful and sustainable outcomes because they would allow the state to address the structural aspect of the societal reality. This means that the “return on investments” could prove to be higher, making the UN more successful in its ventures, eventually increasing its credibility, enhancing its reputation and influence in the international community. This will, in turn, increase its effectiveness and ability to transform more fragile conflicts into opportunities for growth and positive peace.

As shown earlier, focusing peacebuilding resources on armed violence cessation or postwar statebuilding is not proving effective in delivering positive peace, and is possibly coming in too late in the process. If an international institution such as the UN aims to be a centrepiece for global peace, then it needs to focus all of its resources on preventing armed violence, identifying fragile states or communities, and assisting them in address-

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<sup>227</sup> Cahill-Ripley, “Reclaiming the Peacebuilding Agenda.”

<sup>228</sup> Newman, 1740.

ing *structural violence*. That is where resources might prove to bring sustainable results in achieving greater global peace.

### ***Using incentives to better prevent conflict***

The literature summarized in the beginning of the thesis has indicated that positive incentives have shown greater potential in concluding to sustainable peace, especially when applied before war breaks out, whereas coercive or positive measures applied after war breaks out have not shown as clear success.<sup>229</sup> Literature also indicates that positive incentives have been beneficial when consistently promoting democratic or equitable development, and, when they provide actors national or international political and economic access.<sup>230</sup>

It might therefore be more effective if the UN were to implement a rewards-incentive peacebuilding strategy, as opposed to a coercive one, since it might influence more effectively and sustainably the behaviour of actors in fragile non-armed conflicts. Such a positive-incentive strategy could deem more efficient if applied to conflicts that have not yet broken into armed violence, since there would have been less damage created, fewer military efforts invested by each party, and therefore less of a sense of loss in resolving the conflict, and less resentment to settle peacefully. The positive incentives offered to conflicting actors would be those of UN financial, institutional, and structural support needed in order to address instances of structural violence. Within this strategy, such sup-

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<sup>229</sup> Paul W. Schroeder, *The New World Order: A Historical Perspective* (Champaign: University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, 1994), 15-19; Fisher, *International Conflict for Beginners*.

<sup>230</sup> Cortright, 269-270; Schroeder, *The New World Order: A Historical Perspective*, 15-19.

port would not be provided by the UN if armed conflict has broken out. The positive incentives would therefore be perceived as “peace conditionalities”, as described by Griffiths and Barnes, and would bring benefits to the resistance of armed violence.<sup>231</sup>

There is doubt as to whether the benefits would be as clear, were positive incentives to be implemented once armed violence has broken out. Due to the concepts of entrapment or of the political economies of war, the benefits of UN aid are not as seen as equally beneficial when war has broken out and actors are less inclined to accept it.<sup>232</sup> In other words, the benefits are not so clearly seeking the interests of the conflicting actors. Currently, the UN provides such aid during armed conflicts or postwar. It also combines reward mechanisms with robust military presence, using both positive and coercive measures together. The UN also utilizes sanctions as means of political or economic pressure in order to influence actors. From the table shown previously on what incentives the UN currently utilizes, there would therefore be the two last entire categories of incentives that would be eliminated, in addition to a few instruments throughout the table that would involve armed conflicts, as portrayed below.

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<sup>231</sup> Griffiths and Barnes, 12.

<sup>232</sup> David Cortright and George Lopez, “Bombs, Carrots and Sticks: The Use of Incentives and Sanctions,” *Global Policy Forum* (March 2005).

<b>INCENTIVE STRATEGIES THAT WOULD BE USED BY THE UNITED NATIONS IF DISENGAGING FROM ARMED CONFLICTS</b>			
	<b>Sought-out outcome</b>	<b>Types</b>	<b>Examples</b>
<b>Least coercive incentives</b>	Enable change by facilitating the process	Facilitation of dialogue	Mediation, workshops, proposing ideas to settle or reframe issues, capacity building
	Shift of behaviour through short-term reward	Purchase	Short-term fiscal rewards or side payments
	Encouraged change or collaboration through varied bilateral support	Assurances and guarantees	Political, institutional guarantees; assistance in denuclearization
	Encouraged change through resources, material, and events	Resources for enabling dialogue	Hosting confidence-building, negotiation, or settlement conferences; technical assistance in land or armed forces reform - <b>only in non armed conflicts</b>
	Rewarded desired change or progress	Engagement/ Recognition/ Legitimization	Providing access to international organizations and trade; receiving official representatives
	Materially rewarded desired change	Economic/ Institutional support	Development aid, institutional building, debt relief, favourable trade, election support, human rights monitoring - <b>only in non armed conflicts</b>
<b>Most coercive incentives</b>	Pressure change or collaboration	Political, diplomatic and economic pressures	Suspending diplomatic relationships, cultural or sports boycotts, condemning behaviour, referral to war crime investigations

I am therefore arguing here that utilizing the financial resources and expertise of the UN for rewarding the resistance to armed violence, while refusing to provide those financial resources to armed conflicts, might bring about a greater desire from parties to settle

conflicts peacefully, thus potentially resulting in decreased armed conflicts, increased structural justice, and more sustainable positive peace on the long-run.

A successful indirect example that could be used to portray the usefulness of positive incentives and its possible effectiveness, in non-armed conflicts, would be the one of denuclearization in the Ukraine in 1993. As it is more difficult to retrieve information on non-armed conflicts than armed ones, and media will usually give more attention to armed conflicts, this famous nonproliferation example could be used here simply to show the effectiveness of positive incentives in non-armed disputes, when applied fully. In this context, the Ukraine was newly independent and had in its possession close to 2,000 Soviet warheads,<sup>233</sup> part of which were nuclear. In order to create an incentive for the Ukraine to give up its warheads, the US and Russia offered them security assurances as well as an economic aid package in exchange for nuclear dismantlement. Nuclear weapons were transferred to Russia, who agreed to convert the enriched uranium into reactor fuel for nuclear energy to be used in the Ukraine, while the US assisted in the dismantling of the nuclear warheads as well as provided significant economic assistance. Once the Ukraine ratified the nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty, France, the UK, and China followed suit by providing official security guarantees to the Ukraine as well.<sup>234</sup> This example shows the direct relation between the use of positive incentives (such as structural development and international political support) and the arrival to the desired outcome.

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<sup>233</sup> Warheads are the front parts of missiles, or bombs, containing explosives, and could be either nuclear or conventional.

<sup>234</sup> Cortright and Lopez, "Bombs, Carrots and Sticks."

## ***Obstacles***

Obstacles to such a change in PB strategy would involve several facets. First, there would be the one of public awareness and credibility. The UN would have to carefully strategically plan how it will communicate the change in its positioning as well as its benefits. Great policy can fail due to mismanaged communication plans. Therefore, a clear and engaged communications plan would be necessary to explain the change and its benefits. In this instance, a weak communications plan risks missing the opportunity to portray how the new peacebuilding strategy applied can strengthen the impact of the UN and promote peaceful conflict resolution.

A second obstacle would include the influence of states or actors that are benefiting from armed conflicts. Such actors would want the armed conflicts to sustain and could work on ensuring their survival, no matter what incentives the UN is providing the conflicting actors. There are several perspectives to consider on such an obstacle. The intentions behind wanting armed conflicts could be varied and might be satisfied in other alternative ways. The UN would therefore need to analyze them case by case and see how else it could incentivize the actors wanting to provoke the armed conflict, and deal with them diplomatically or through other incentivization mechanisms as well. This would indeed be a complex political task that would require multilateral action. However, one could also hypothesize that removing UN involvement from these armed conflicts would take away from their centralized international attention, and could therefore become less attractive or useful for spoiler states or stakeholders to leverage on. For e.g. were the Palestinian and Israeli conflict to have less media attention, would it still remain such a use-

ful political tool? There is, of course, a fine line to be cognizant of, between neglecting the existence of a conflict and removing from it the attention that transforms it into a political playground. Syria would be another one of those conflicts today.

When it comes to arms trade, incentivization could indeed be more complex. The use of lobby and political collaboration might be useful here. Arms traders or arms manufacturing states could be offered access to other markets that could bring them more sustainable or consistent benefits. One must also consider the fact that there are other powerful actors that would benefit from decreased armed conflicts, who would favour a strategy that implies less armed conflict and intervention. The financial, consumer good, and agricultural sectors are all examples of strong lobby groups that could serve as influence in ensuring that external spoilers, whether state or private, are counterbalanced by equally powerful actors.

A third obstacle would be the long-term involvement in such a strategy, rendering results more indirect for the decision makers and the actors involved. Arriving at a more equitable land or resource distribution structure would take longer to achieve and would be less tangible to relate to the work supported by the UN. Stopping an armed attack on a town or deploying thousands of troops in a conflict is more visible and direct than reorganizing political or economic systems. Such a lack of directness might make the benefits less obvious to impacted actors and could initially seem less attractive as incentives. However, by only providing such incentives to unarmed conflicts, these benefits will become easier to identify, especially when the UN is not deploying troops or intervening in

armed conflicts any longer. The comparison would therefore not be equally important anymore.

A fourth obstacle would be the one of political actors looking for immediate results. The downside to democratic systems is that they are greatly influenced by the need to show results before the next election. This would influence the implementation of policies that would bring quicker and easily relatable results, rendering longer-term UN aid support less politically rewarding. However, when communicated well and “sold” according to concrete benefits that impact the voters, political actors can leverage electoral benefits to securing such UN aid.

### ***Why would it work?***

In addition to addressing obstacles, it is important to show why this incentivization strategy would work. When actors in conflict have not resolved to arms, it means that the hindering factors to a workable solution are less. This is one of the main reasons why such an incentivization strategy would work - it is aiming the conflicts that would show most efficient impact if invested in. As described earlier, when conflicts are armed, the complexities of the conflict multiply and social erosion deepens, making the conflict much less unidimensional.

When UN involvement becomes synonymous to rewarding the resistance to arms and distances itself from armed conflicts that polarize political views, the positive association to its work would strengthen. This would in turn improve its influence since more actors would seek its assistance and trust its neutrality.

Another reason why such an incentivization strategy would work is because knowing that armed violence would exclude UN assistance, actors would then take that factor into consideration when deciding whether to resolve into arms. The presence and support of the UN would become an influencing factor to take into account, additional to the other influencing ones like regional politics, local political pressures, or narrower economic benefits.

### ***Is it possible to addressing structural violence?***

Scholars like Woodward have opened the way to skepticism towards the school of thought addressing the importance of roots of conflict. Her concerns however are consistent with this thesis. Woodward addresses the fact that tackling the roots of conflict does not necessarily lead to “greater success in ending civil wars.” Indeed, this thesis argues that doing so would be virtually impossible during or after war, which is why it is proposed to tackle these issues before war breaks out.

One problem with Woodward’s argument though is that she bases the definition of ‘root causes’ to the 3 types she described as being used in the literature, which is a narrow outlook on what literature shows root causes to be. By criticizing those 3 definitions, however, she ends up proposing structural violence as the most probable cause of conflict.<sup>235</sup> Furthermore, another issue is that Woodward argues that the nature of a civil war lies in the fact that parties do not agree on the root causes of the war, without providing any substantial evidence or examples to support that claim. The main issue in relation to

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<sup>235</sup> Susan L. Woodward, “Do the Root Causes of Civil War Matter? On Using Knowledge to Improve Peacebuilding Interventions,” *Journal of Intervention and Statebuilding* 1, no. 2 (2007): 158.

this thesis is that Woodward does not necessarily discuss through a lens of war prevention, which is the basis of the claim herein.<sup>236</sup> Although attempting to argue against the ‘roots of conflict’, Woodward is actually demonstrating the importance of addressing structural transformation, thus recognizing that, in fact, structural violence is at the so-called ‘root’ of the problem. She, reversely, portrays how current PB strategies are failing to address the main causes, due to the diverse interests and contradictory interpretations that intervening parties might have of the conflicts, and, to the fact that war’s consequences need to be addressed more eminently than the factors having caused it.<sup>237</sup> None of her arguments displayed a reason to diminish interest in address structural violence, especially before war breaks out.

How can addressing structural violence then be feasible within the UN’s scope of work? The first recognition that would need to be made would be the fact that structural violence could possibly be fully addressed. The world’s most developed countries still face some deeply problematic structural violence issues that are complex to untangle. The issue with addressing structural violence is that it is not easy to pinpoint its origin in order to arrive at a clear solution. Furthermore, it challenges positions of privilege that might not be convinced of the need for a transformation. We cannot therefore expect the UN to eliminate all structural violence problems. We can however work towards eliminating the most eminent structural issues, which is already consistent with the work the UN currently undertakes.

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<sup>236</sup> Ibid., 160.

<sup>237</sup> Ibid.

It is therefore realistic to expect the UN to continue doing such work - it is already a specialist at getting it done and recognizing its inefficacies. The only difference would be that the UN commits this work to a specific context: in non-armed conflicts only.

Current structural violence projects undertaken by the UN are vast and include post-conflict statebuilding work, institutional building, transitional justice projects, the first 10 Sustainable Development Goals, or all work by the UNDP that is related to structural transformation. So what work on structural violence would be enough? Any elimination of structural violence is a significant accomplishment. However, if our objective is to prevent an armed conflict from occurring, then we need to ensure to address the most sensitive weaknesses within the structure, which are prone to intensifying the social dynamic. The answer to this question would therefore vary per conflict. If a justice system had two classes of laws depending on your racial origin and was causing riots, or, if a high proportion of kids in rural areas was not attending school due to the lack of local infrastructure and that was causing higher rates of gang crimes, then the problem to address in each of those situations would differ. This is where current UN expertise would come into play, and where valuable analysis could be done according to experience and on the filed perspective. When the research is aimed at identifying which structural transformation work deemed effective at preventing conflict escalation, in which context, and with which resources, the UN is best seated to conduct that analysis and identify potential pilot projects.

## *Costs and benefits of ending the UN's military role*

One must of course address what the downside to such a new UN strategy would be. In other words, what does the proposed approach risk losing? The very first identifiable point is the risk of not being credible enough once the UN gets rid of its robust dimension. Will states or actors take it seriously enough were it not to have a military power to impose its principles? This is a valid point, especially in relation to armed conflicts. However, if the UN were to disengage from armed conflicts, and conduct structural prevention work with actors that have called for its support, then some of the highest levels of credibility and legitimacy of its history might be reached. Its lack of robustness would increase the perception of its willingness to achieve development results of structural transformation. Furthermore, the UN's biggest asset would become its financial, structural, and know-how support. Knowing that valuable UN support would not be granted were the conflict to break into war, that support would gain value: UN support becomes a reward and would be sought after even more.

Another risk would involve the abandonment of armed conflicts. Who will ensure the security of endangered civilians, the protection against mass human rights violations during war, or keeping the peace in newly resolved conflicts? Whereas those responsibilities were part of what the UN was undertaking, it was not doing so consistently. There are unfortunately too many examples of non-action by the UN, where such events were and still are taking place. Currently, although not exclusively, Syria, Myanmar, and Palestine/Israel would be evident examples. Previously, Rwanda, Kosovo, Lebanon, or Darfur

would be another few. The identified risk therefore already exists, even when the UN holds the capacity to intervene. However, as previously mentioned, the failure to do so, in addition to the ambiguity between agenda and action on the ground, are hindering its credibility and legitimacy. So, will there still be a risk of civilians in danger? Yes. Would the risk be greater than now? That is not an evident question to answer. Whereas there would not be one international organization mandated to do so any longer, there could be the delegation to the international community as a whole to take on that responsibility. The work of media and electoral powers could contribute to creating pressures on the international community to intervene in armed conflicts. As much as this is possible in today's world, I do recognize that it is still considered an assumption, and the only way to ensure that this risk is properly dealt with would be for the UN to table a resolution, to be debated and discussed among all of its members, as to how armed conflicts should be dealt with without UN involvement, once the UN implements a change in its peacebuilding work. Such a strategy would legitimize future interventions and could clarify roles and responsibilities beyond the UN's, as well as how to hold actors accountable.

The responsibility of the international community has repeatedly been argued for and deemed essential. After the events in Rwanda and Kosovo, the UN and global citizens called for more interventions. How this responsibility should be taken over indeed deserves very careful attention. The work we have achieved so far with setting the principle of R2P should not be destroyed or regressed.

This paper does not argue for abdication of the R2P principle or make the case that we should leave people to be massacred or violated against via armed violence. It does,

however, argue that the UN will not realistically reach its founding goals if it continues investing its resources in armed conflicts. International conventions or UN resolutions could be put into place in order to ensure that no populations get left behind when atrocities are in the making or armed conflicts are breaking out, through pre-determined strategies debated and voted upon by all UN members in the preparations of the UN's changed strategy. Such a debate might even lead to recommendations of new methods of intervention in armed conflict, whether robust or not. Such a pre-determined and voted approach might actually lead to a greater number of interventions in comparison to what the UN is currently able to take on. The international community could potentially agree, just as an example, through these resolutions or other legal mechanisms, to divide the responsibility to protect regionally, where diverse states could be grouped as responsible for each other during armed conflicts or against atrocities. Such groups could be equally balanced in military, economic, and international influential capacities, all while each is formed by a set of states that are diverse in political and economic influence. Such an approach might even prove more sustainable since actors would be less enticed to cause instability in a state of their own group for which they will have to be responsible for in the event of an armed conflict. Several solutions could come out of an open debate for an alternative method of intervention in armed conflicts. The Security Council however cannot be kept responsible in deciding on future interventions by the international community, since this would go against the basis of this thesis arguing that such decisions are currently harming the credibility of the UN.

Whatever strategy gets agreed upon by the members however, it will be of importance to ensure that the UN secures itself a role of oversight and arbiter of last resort. This could allow it to remain disengaged from armed conflicts and decisions to intervene in them, but to provide a safeguard to vulnerable states against regional hegemony or ill-pursued interests. Such oversight could be applied through a pre-determined mechanism allowing actors or states to raise concerns or file complaints through the UN platform, when it is believed that disputable armed intervention is taking place.

Therefore, in proposing a new PB approach, a very crucial aspect indeed would be to ensure that the UN comes up with an agreed upon method to address these issues, in order to ensure that all perspectives and risks are taken into consideration.

Nothing currently requires the UN to intervene, so this proposed strategy is unlikely to result in taking concrete future responsibilities away from the UN. Furthermore, as it has been reported, there was little armed force to protect human beings since Kosovo in 1999 or the UN's engagement in the RtoP principle.<sup>238</sup> The current conflict in Syria is one clear example. No substantial effort by the international community has taken place since Kosovo, except the 2011 authorization of a no-fly zone to protect civilians in Libya.<sup>239</sup>

This paper's proposed approach could allow the UN to continue to lobby for action from its members in zones where people are being threatened with direct violence, and remove its responsibility from these mandates, which would allow it to focus its efforts on building positive peace and eliminating structural violence with more effective-

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<sup>238</sup> Weiss, "Peace Operations and Humanitarian Interventions," 12.

<sup>239</sup> Ibid.

ness.<sup>240</sup> The UN could also utilize its diplomatic strengths as well as its on-the-field know-how and presence to keep advocating for the interventions needed and expected from the international community, singling early warning signals, always in the goal of increasing peaceful settlements and decreasing the number of armed conflicts around the world.

I would add that if the UN were to propose a new PB strategy and ask for a debate to determine how armed conflicts could be dealt with going forward, it could be an opportunity to open up a grander debate on the efficacy of robust intervention and alternative methods. It could be an opportunity to consider how we want our actions today to influence future generations' perspectives, emotions, and re-actions to our decisions. It might force us to question the deeper origins of armed violence and how they relate to our own individual and collective actions or inactions. If our world can lead to events like war, then maybe we could address what fundamental structures are causing or allowing them to occur. These are all factors that could become significant and valuable points of debate were the topic to be addressed.

Would the UN be marginalizing itself? In one way, it would be marginalizing itself from armed conflict, which is the very purpose of this strategy. Disassociating itself from armed conflicts would be the objective behind such a shift, allowing the UN to gain more credibility and legitimacy as a neutral player, to be perceived as a true anti-war ambassador, and, to focus its resources on one of its main strengths: structural development - all aimed at the main objective of preventing armed conflict and reducing the occurrence of

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<sup>240</sup> Ibid., 15.

war. In another way, the UN would actually be deeming itself *more* relevant. It could leverage the opportunity of becoming a concrete change agent, through its specific structural transformation work, by renewing its role in the changing global context. Here could be opportunities for the UN to become increasingly central and influential in setting norms and applying pressures on industry and businesses in order to have quicker and greater impact on global structural transformation as well as positive peace. Through its field team, the UN could also become a strong and reliable reporting organization that would identify and report instances of social, economic, political, or even armed unrests. Through those reports, it could attract the public attention necessary, and therefore the political pressures that go with it, for the areas needing intervention. As a promoter of positive peace and non-armed resolution of disputes, the UN can remain an advocate for the implementation of social, economic, and political rights, all awhile lobbying for the protection of civilians at risk of being violated against. Fragile states would look for its support even further, and powerful states would look to become more involved in its success. In *Would the World Be Better Without the UN?*, Thomas Weiss states the important impact the UN has had on increasing economic synergies around the world, democratic systems, global norms, as well as research in conflict management.<sup>241</sup> The UN can increase its relevancy in that direction even more by applying a “no-armed-conflict” policy.

Would the elimination of UN robust intervention in armed conflicts be realistic?

This entire paper positions itself in defence of this claim. As argued previously, UN mili-

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<sup>241</sup> Thomas G. Weiss. “Would the World Be Better Without the UN?” *Polity* (2018), 139.

tary intervention has not necessarily clearly proven effective and has been deemed underfunded and ill equipped. Furthermore, military intervention represented by the UN is harming the credibility of the international institution - due to both the aspect of involvement in the war and its lack of effectiveness - therefore rendering the role of the UN in such instances disadvantageous. Also, by intervening in armed conflicts, the UN is not able to focus on the roots of the conflict, making its work unsustainable since the structural issues are more difficult to address in or post armed conflict. By becoming a key player in addressing structural violence instead, it could become a more successful agent in promoting peaceful relations and resolution.

This said, many other difficulties will be faced in a change of UN PB strategy. The questions of how to end or transition current missions or how to evaluate the results of the new strategy are complex, will need thorough analysis, must be agreed upon by members, and will need to be very clearly communicated.

### ***Winning over the support of Security Council and member states***

Another challenge to this proposal would be that of the will of UN and Security Council member states to allow such a shift in direction. Indeed, that will not be an obvious task. As in all political activity, consultations and bilateral discussions will need to be completed and secured in order to socialize the idea.

The majority of states will need to be convinced that such a direction will not become a disadvantage for them. Furthermore, state leaders might not support such an idea

because it might reduce their local power, give more voice to local opposition, and allow the UN to get involved in national structure. On this front, as all sovereignty claims have been responded to, the UN would only get involved in cases where the conflicting parties would call on it for help.

On the matter of convincing member states that such a new direction will not be a disadvantage for them, there could be several methods of dealing with such an issue. First, Security Council members could foresee the potential of decreased cost, and might be attracted to the idea of less military equipment and personnel contributions provided for UN peacekeeping and peacebuilding operations. Second, Security Council members might see such a new direction as an opportunity to increased sharing of the responsibility of military interventions, since the new responsibility will be revised and revisited. Third, member states might see such a new direction as an opportunity to simplify and lighten the structure and scope of the mandate of the institution, allowing it to become more realistically effective and efficient.

One could argue that the main global powers will not want the UN to address structural transformation, however, the set of powerful actors is a complex mix, which comprises several players that would benefit out of a more stabilized and developed global community because it would be beneficial for business. The UN will need to identify which UN structures already advocate for structural work, which industry sectors would support such work, and leverage those allies in order to build the support needed.

There will undoubtedly be resistance and it will prove to be difficult to make such a strategic shift within the UN. However, with the right leadership, political operations, and

timely opportunity, it could deem more realistic than otherwise. A momentum would need to be seized and built upon, and this could be done with the collaboration and participation of global citizens, therefore creating a new political pressure on states to act as their citizens (or voters) call on them to.

Finally, I would say that one way to counter resistance would be for the UN to start with incremental pilot projects that will allow it to extrapolate results on the new positioning proposed herein. When it will have several successful cases to show, it will become easier to get member states and local population buy-in. With pilot projects, it could make decisions with a lighter bureaucratic structure and incrementally build an evidence-based case. With data, local support, and a proven record in hand, especially when made public and promoted, it could become more realistic for member states to envision a clear shift.

## **Chapter 5: Discussion Part III - Examples and current prevention work**

As previously displayed in the incentive strategies, the UN currently applies multiple methods of prevention of armed conflict. The prevention methods in this incentives table include diplomatic negotiations, mediation support, sanctions, and rewards. Most of the incentives listed, whether diplomatic or coercive, represent short to mid-term actions that would deal with potential or occurring armed conflicts that are, if not already taking place, largely flirting with the outbreak of armed violence. In addition to these incentive strategies, the UN also invests in an early warning strategy, where it attempts to identify the potential of armed outbreak. This early warning strategy also represents a short to mid-term plan of action.

This paper is rather proposing focusing on the long-term indicators of instability, that can build enough tensions throughout the years or generations, allowing the motivation for armed action to take place down the line. Working on structural violence and social justice represents a long-term view of armed conflict prevention. While the UN does have development programs and provides humanitarian aid, it is not using this resource in order to entice actors to resist armed violence, or creating such a clear incentive by refusing to provide humanitarian or institutional aid in contexts of armed conflicts.

It is therefore difficult to provide examples that perfectly represent what this paper is proposing especially that the UN currently does get involved in armed conflict. This makes it difficult to use cases that support the full claim of this paper.

However, some examples of UN or non-UN work on prevention are described below, in order to display how the application of this paper's propositions could potentially lead to successful results - one, though, would need to extrapolate the full possibility. Clearly, such a display of cases cannot take into consideration the influence of geo-politics on the armed conflict, however those realities and influences are part of the reasons why, as argued before, the UN should not at all partake in armed conflicts and should, instead, work on long-term prevention work that involves non-armed conflicts, where geo-politics would not have such an immediate impact on the turn of armed events.

In Yemen in 2011, the UN had led a mediation that was successful at first. However, it did not act upon the early warning signs of the Huthis' growing power and armed organization. As opposed to dealing with the structural problems, even though late in the process, the UN short-sightedly protected the centre in order to prevent war and left the social issues of marginalized players (such as the Huthis) unaddressed.<sup>242</sup> Although in this case, mediation for a political solution was already taking place, were the UN to provide the financial support necessary to address the social structures that motivated the Huthis to organize with arms, the group might have had more opportunities to take part in the vision of what 'peace' or social justice could look like. Ultimately, the Huthis used their arms, and the Saudis robustly intervened, leading to a costly and arguably ineffective peace strategy. As long as the structural inequities still existed, the Huthis still had a motivation to act with arms.

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<sup>242</sup> International Crisis Group, *Seizing the Moment - From Early Warning to Early Action*, Special Report no. 2 (2016), 8.

The recent case of Burundi also portrays how early work on structural violence could have prevented reoccurring armed violence. As President Nkurunziza centralized power, transformed governance into an authoritarian regime, and marginalized opposing parties, the UN decreased its political involvement and the EU increased financial aid.<sup>243</sup> This example could be used to show how this paper's proposed incentives could have helped the prevention of armed violence. With the EU aiding a political centre that was worsening the violent social structure, the motivation to eliminate such injustices could not have taken place. Here, the UN could have lobbied for conditional aid, where President Nkurunziza's party would have had to work on resolving the structural injustices in order to receive aid, with the warning that if armed violence were to break, the aid would be retrieved. Therefore, as opposed to decreasing its political involvement, as it did, the UN should have played on influencing the EU and President Nkurunziza even further, using financial aid as a positive incentive to transform the structural violence and discourage continued centralization and marginalization. It may be argued that military intervention could have also contributed to ensuring peace. However, thus far, this paper has been attempting to show that such military intervention is neither a long-term solution or one that would bring sustainable *positive* peace.

The UN also currently works on building relationships with political and civil actors that work towards non-armed solutions. This method also represents a short to medium-term strategy, but could portray how, when used as an incentive, it could entice other actors to follow suit. The peace process in Colombia could be used here as a base example

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<sup>243</sup> Ibid.

we can extrapolate to a prevention context. The work of the international community, such as Cuba or Venezuela, to create support and dialogue with Colombian actors that were proponents to peace could represent a mix of diplomacy and incentive strategies that could be models for armed conflict prevention.<sup>244</sup> In order to arrive to the Colombian peace accord, it was resolved that, in order to reverse the effects of the armed conflict, transformations needed to be achieved to change the conditions that led to armed violence and to help eliminate causes of the conflict, including issues of land ownership, “exclusion of the rural population, and the underdevelopment of rural communities, which especially affect women, girls and boys.”<sup>245</sup>

The Colombian peace accord example actually clearly portrays how armed conflict derives from the existence of structural violence. The fact that the elimination of that structural inequity is at the core of the accord, we can identify the potential of preventing higher numbers of armed conflicts when that reality is addressed in form of prevention.

Some of the incentives that were used in order to arrive to a peace agreement with the FARC-EP are below and, again, show how effective it would be to build peace through the elimination of structural violence:

1. Greater territorial integration and social inclusion of the underdeveloped communities;
2. Resolution of social conflicts through institutional channels;

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<sup>244</sup> Ibid., 28.

<sup>245</sup> Government of Colombia, *Final Agreement to End the Armed Conflict and Build a Stable and Lasting Peace* (November 24, 2016). <http://especiales.presidencia.gov.co/Documents/20170620-dejacion-armas/acuerdos/acuerdo-final-ingles.pdf>.

3. “Recognition and consideration of the economic, cultural and social needs, characteristics and peculiarities of Colombia’s territories and communities, thereby guaranteeing socio-environmental sustainability”;

4. Meeting of all political and social movements to set out the institutional modifications and reforms needed to implement a new framework for political and social coexistence;

5. A “Comprehensive Rural Reform” (Reforma Rural Integral) aimed at encouraging “structural change in the countryside, closing up the differential that exists between rural and urban areas and creating conditions of well-being and quality of life for the rural population.” This reform must “contribute to the eradication of poverty, promote equality, and ensure full enjoyment of the rights of citizenship.”

6. Inclusive “Political Participation” that ensures “the representation of society’s diverse visions and interests;”

7. The guarantee of “Implementation and verification mechanisms” through the creation of a monitoring commission that includes representatives from both the government and the FARC-EP.<sup>246</sup>

Although some violent events have occurred since this accord was put into place, this example represents a case where years of war took place before the peace agreement, and therefore arms violence will inevitably remain a risk, as previously portrayed in this thesis. However, it could still show how relationship building with peace actors and the creation of incentives for resisting armed violence could prove even more sus-

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<sup>246</sup> Ibid.

tainable, especially when these strategies are applied long in advance, during the stages of structural violence rather than armed. In this case, by allowing actors open to peaceful resolution to build a relationship with the interveners, and by addressing the issues of structural violence at the heart of conflict, these actors actively participated to the resolution of the conflict and compromised their power of independence because they were able to address the structural changes needed to secure better opportunities and human potential for their communities.

Another method that the UN is currently applying in order to prevent armed conflict includes the focus of UN regional offices on prevention. Such a strategy has been reported to be effective and has successfully addressed or identified potential armed conflict.<sup>247</sup> Such regional political offices include the UN Office for West African States (UNOWAS), the UN Regional Centre for Preventive Diplomacy for Central Asia (UNRCCA), or the UN Regional Office for Central Africa (UNOCA). The UN claims that these offices have influenced and helped realize mediation during crises in Kyrgyzstan (2010), Guinea (2013), and Burkina Faso (2014).<sup>248</sup> Although the work is aimed rather at short-term prevention, the role of prevention that the UN can play is still significant and ought to be leveraged even further in order to become a priority in longer-term peacebuilding strategy.

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<sup>247</sup> Security Council Report, *Can the Security Council Prevent Conflict?* Research Report, No. 1 (2017), 14.

<sup>248</sup> *Ibid.*

If such work is invested into further, where prevention measures become more empowered and applied with a longer-term vision, an increase in war prevention could take place and the UN could succeed further at preventing armed conflicts.

Non-UN examples that could be used here to extrapolate potential UN work on structural violence include initiatives like the Dialogue Between Youth Organizations and State Institutions From the Sahel Region. This initiative allows youth to partake in the social and economic policy design in their respective countries, allowing them to address the structural issues their generation faces and which are leading to direct violence and emigration.<sup>249</sup> The creation of platforms that allow such dialogues to take place, where structural violence is identified and addressed, could work in favour of armed conflict prevention because they allow local actors to address the structural limitations that create marginalization and injustice. By identifying those indicators, the UN could provide the financial and institutional support in addressing them, with the condition of retrieving its aid were armed conflict to take place, therefore leading to increased probability of successful prevention. The UN could encourage and support the opportunities for such dialogues to take place in fragile communities, whether with youth or ethnically diverse actors. By providing the incentive of financial and institutional aid to bring the resolutions into reality, fragile states or communities will have reasons to look forward to such dialogues and to the choice of resisting armed violence.

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<sup>249</sup> Centre for Humanitarian Dialogue, *Dialogue Between Youth Organizations from the Sahel Region*. (23 June 2016). <https://www.hdcentre.org/activities/dialogue-between-youth-organisations-and-state-institutions-from-the-sahel-region/>.

None of the above examples perfectly apply the proposition put forth in this paper. However, they do portray numerous aspects of it and show the possible outcome were the UN to focus the core of its work on long-term prevention mixed with an incentive strategy that would involve its complete disengagement in armed conflict. The Iranian nuclear deal, or the current refusal of the Western block to provide reconstruction funding to Syria without a peace accord, display the capacity and potential of the international community to work with incentives to prevent armed conflict with potentially successful results. With a clearer strategy, a clearly communicated UN position on armed conflict, and a plan on how the international community could otherwise address armed conflicts without the UN, such efforts could have the chance to bring even greater, more long-term, and sustainable results.

Beardsley and Cunningham have examined whether Security Council resolutions on prevention have indeed avoided armed conflict. They analyzed all intra-state disputes from 1960 to 2005 that relate to self-determination and found that UN Security Council resolutions of prevention indeed significantly prevented war from occurring by engaging directly with conflicting actors or shaping their incentives.<sup>250</sup> Preventative work should therefore be deemed significant. Preventative work should therefore represent a much bigger portion of UN activity. Furthermore, successful results could significantly increase in number and sustainability if the UN were to specifically make prevention based on positive incentives, its core focus.

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<sup>250</sup> Kyle Beardsley, David E. Cunningham, and Peter B. White, "How the UN Contributes to Conflict Prevention," *Political Violence @ a Glance* (September 11, 2015), 2. <http://politicalviolenceataglance.org/2015/09/11/how-the-un-contributes-to-conflict-prevention/>

As it applies pilot projects and invests deeper into prevention, the UN could conduct empirical research that would support Beardsley and Cunningham's results even further, building a stronger case for the importance of prevention work and its effectiveness.

## Conclusion

Galtung's potential reality theory stipulates that between two claims that seem to be contradictory, there is a *potential* reality, P.<sup>251</sup> He explains that although it is not yet reality, "P" is possible, and the only way it can be is not by referring to data but by "bringing that reality into being," even if there are decisional problems in practice.<sup>252</sup> What this thesis is putting forward is an idea that could only prove effective if put into practice. Indeed, there needs to be more empirical data that would serve to set such a project for success, such as looking into the cost difference between UN work on structural development and UN peace operations in armed conflicts. This could help identify how much actual investment could go into positive peace mechanisms that the UN could partake instead of its operations in armed conflicts. Such numbers could allow a realistic view of UN operational capacity, were it to adopt the strategy proposed herein.

Other data that could also be worth retrieving would be the average rate of return on investments in armed conflicts in order to be able to compare it to investments that would be made in pre-armed conflicts. Some researchers have studied the cost effectiveness of prevention. Chalmers, for example, studied six cases that showed how targeted prevention would cost the UN much less than intervention after armed violence outbreak.<sup>253</sup> Operationally, the UN would also need to develop exit strategies for its current ground operations, and accordingly restructure at the organizational level. The path towards "P" is

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<sup>251</sup> Galtung, *Theories of Conflict*.

<sup>252</sup> Ibid.

<sup>253</sup> Malcolm Chalmers, "Spending to Save? The Cost-Effectiveness of Conflict Prevention," *Defence and Peace Economics* 18, no. 1 (2007): 1-23.

therefore complex, but so is the current path that we willingly walked into. Researchers and practitioners in peacebuilding are not ones to expect easy solutions.

As shown in more detail in the main body of this paper, structural violence has repeatedly been identified as an underlying factor behind direct violence, and, until it has been addressed, positive peace cannot be achieved and direct violence can always come out of it. This thesis, therefore, proposes that the UN invest in conflicts that have higher chances of transforming into positive peace, which are identified here as non-armed conflicts. With the practical, social, and economic complexities of postwar contexts, deep and effective work on eliminating structural violence cannot be as realistically achieved in the context of armed conflict. As such, the UN ought to invest its limited resources in building lasting positive peace in fragile conflicts where armed violence has not yet had the chance to have an impact on the egos of conflicting parties and infrastructures of the landscape.

This thesis also suggests that another reason why the UN ought to consider such a shift in strategy is that current UN peacebuilding practice is not clearly allowing it to realize its main objectives of building peaceful international relations and avoiding future armed conflicts.

Fundamentally, if we do not address significant economic and structural gaps in the world, positive peace cannot possibly begin to see the light. Since each problem needs to be tackled one step at a time in an efficient and thoughtful way, the UN ought to begin by focusing all of its efforts on transforming unarmed conflicts into opportunities for addressing structural violence. It is our work towards social justice and the elimination of

exploitation, extreme poverty, and unjust mechanisms that could contribute to building positive peace. Until the UN recognizes the fundamental necessity of that task, as well as how being involved in armed conflict hinders it, it cannot realistically aim to achieve its founding objectives.

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*Suggestions of what the UN could focus its PB resources on instead*

### ***Which structural projects should the UN aim for?***

Based on current literature, the conflicts that could be deemed of highest priority for such a potential UN strategy would be those where communities would have the riskiest factors for armed conflict. Therefore, the UN could begin considering non-armed conflicts where there is group exclusions, ethnic segregation, in addition to horizontal inequalities.

However, the UN is likely to have its own risk indicators and tracked record of indices to look out for when looking for fragile communities.

The UN currently undertakes fact-finding and confidence-building missions in order to partake in armed conflict prevention within fragile regions.<sup>254</sup> In partnership with regional partners, it also develops regional prevention strategies and a network of key

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<sup>254</sup> United Nations Secretary-General, *Prevention of Armed Conflict Report*, A/55/985-S/2001/574 (June 7, 2001). <http://unpan1.un.org/intradoc/groups/public/documents/un/unpan005902.pdf>.

people within their conflict prevention system in order to implement diplomatic prevention interventions.<sup>255</sup>

However, a peacebuilding strategy that focuses on prevention could also mainly involve all approaches that would contribute to reducing structural violence. In addition to many current statebuilding activities that could be applied during prevention instead, the brief suggestions below could be worth looking into. Although the development of such suggestions is beyond the scope of this thesis, a non exhaustive list is briefly developed below in order to direct thoughts towards the possible projects and developments the UN could invest itself into or more heavily if already doing so.

### *Reducing unjust class structures*

Countries with demographic instabilities or in economic crisis are fragile and could become vulnerable to armed conflict.<sup>256</sup> Class segregation still exists in numerous countries, which could be a cause of community tensions that fuel conflict. With class segregation, a specific part of the population is limited in its capacity to grow and its human potential is therefore restricted. Although there are numerous developing countries that could be used as examples here, let's take the UAE as an example since it is not an evident one and has not been involved in armed conflict before. Working classes in the UAE are classified by the person's country of origin. A person's rights would vary de-

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<sup>255</sup> Ibid.

<sup>256</sup> Demographic pressures, group grievance, and factionalized elites are among the indicators forming the Fragile State Index (FSI). The FSI assesses which nations are susceptible to instability based on twelve social, economic and political indicators, adapted from the CAST conflict assessment framework. This framework analyses over 50 million quantitative and qualitative data points. More details can be found at: <http://fundforpeace.org/fsi/>.

pending on their job type and country of origin. Construction workers, salespeople, professionals, and local nationals all have different levels of rights, and their incomes vary depending on their country of origin as well. As a result, although they are all people who live in the UAE and work as well as contribute to the economy, they are being treated differently and this difference is visual and in everyday reality of life in the UAE. This has resulted in tensions and resentment as well as a lack of trust and respect between the classes. If desired, organized, and led to do so, the classes with the fewest rights could easily find the motivation to spark direct violent conflict. Therefore, identifying those unjust mechanisms and working on adjusting them could prevent direct violence from emerging, even in a country that is considered to be developed.

### *Other systematic focal points*

Other possibilities include increasing community empowerment through decentralization of public services, where marginalization and discrimination could likely be more difficult to sustain. With such decentralization, communities can adapt the access and the shape of those services in order to better fit the needs of their geographic and demographic reality. Empowering people to determine the way their own services will be managed allows them to also live more responsibly and be better in tuned to holding accountable those managing the services, especially that those managers will be more accessible and tangible. It is easier to suggest an idea or complain about an unjust situation in your own local community than to a national institution that seems far away and intangible on the human and practical sense.

On the social aspect, the UN could also work on projects that assist communities in developing their own ways of redefining themselves and “the other.” It has been shown that public art can convey desirable values and attitudes, and be meaningfully linked to educational campaigns and other public policy goals.<sup>257</sup> Researchers like Sabine Marschall, Benedict Anderson, and Nick Shepherd have done studies that support the idea that arts projects that are developed, constructed, and implemented locally could succeed in promoting identity reframing. Such projects could allow the building of cultures of peace and acceptance of others. Such work could cross generations and impact social behaviour in a meaningful and sustainable fashion.

Some argue that modern technologies offer the UN a way to stay connected to local communities, understand what fuels conflict, and develop more effective strategies to prevent them.<sup>258</sup> In order to take advantage of current technologies as well as global citizens’ participation and geographical scope, the UN could even look into collaborative projects with Google, for example, that would allow citizens from around the world to identify needs in specific areas and ways to contribute to them, like schools to build, maternity centres, healthcare professionals, community cleanups, or farming projects, to which people can directly donate through a developed site or app, that would vet projects in a manner that allows donors to trust that the money will indeed contribute to the cho-

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<sup>257</sup> Sabine Marschall, “Articulating Cultural Pluralism through Public Art as Heritage in South Africa,” *Visual Anthropology* 23, no. 2 (2010): 77-97; Nick Shepherd, *New South African Keywords* (Athens: Ohio University Press, 2008), 116-128; Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (London: Verso, 1983).

<sup>258</sup> Joëlle Jenny and Adam Day, “Can the UN Restore International Peace? Maybe, but Only from the Ground Up,” World Economic Forum (February 23, 2017). <https://www.weforum.org/agenda/2017/02/the-united-nations-can-restore-international-peace-but-first-it-must-reform/>.

sen project. One way of providing that assurance would be to provide development information on the projects and include information and photos of the locals involved in it. This would be information provided by the people, projects pitched by local communities, and funded directly by other people (as opposed to states) from all over the planet. In addition to making a direct human connection between global citizens and putting the responsibility directly and tangibly at each person's fingertips, it could decrease UN funding dependence on states, allowing world citizens to have direct impact and influence on UN activity.

There are many other possible alternative approaches to promoting positive peace. One could re-imagine the UN's mandate to promote peace under a new umbrella. The UN could invest in having its own "secret agents of peace," who would be trained civil agents deployed in the states where this would be possible. The mandate of these agents would be to influence the risk of conflicts through information services and diplomatic work, with the objective of directly reducing the potential of violent outbreaks. Current UN regional offices work towards such a goal, and this could become a more established, direct, and clearly communicated role of the UN.

An obvious other proposal would be for the UN to invest in prevention research and advocacy. By upholding the "non-armed conflicts" principle, it could propose non-armed methods of intervention to the international community and use its diplomatic and field resources to advocate for the cause and its effectiveness.

As McCann mentions in her discursive institutionalism analysis, Radaelli and Schmidt have shown that an element that could bring a transformation of discourse and

lead to policy change is the “introduction of new evidence, even if that evidence does not happen to be true.”<sup>259</sup> This paper, in a way, is attempting to portray such new evidence, although with the conviction that it could prove to be true.

Cho suggests that developmental psychology’s identity theory provides an interesting perspective on the institutional development of an international organization.<sup>260</sup> He suggests that an international organization evolves and interacts with its environment and repeatedly redefines its essence, leading it to frequently finding itself as an old institutional structure unable to address its environment’s new challenges.<sup>261</sup> Cho argues that in order to confront such a reality, international organizations ought to restructure and adjust their purpose in order to continue being relevant and develop a true institutional identity.<sup>262</sup> This thesis is proposing one such new identity. By becoming an agent for positive peace by principle and practice, the UN could redefine all of its activities in order to support that role.

The UN General Assembly officially claimed the first decade of the third millennium as the “International Decade for the Promotion of a Culture of Peace and Non-Violence for the Children of the World” (Resolution 53-25). The year 2000 was also declared as the International Year for the Culture of Peace (Resolution 52-15). Some believe that

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<sup>259</sup> McCann, “A Discursive Institutional Analysis”; Claudio M. Radaelli and Vivien A. Schmidt, “Policy Change and Discourse in Europe: Conceptual and Methodological Issues,” *West European Politics* 27, no. 2 (2004): 364-379.

<sup>260</sup> Sungioon Cho, *Toward an Identity Theory of International Organizations* (Chicago: Chicago-Kent College of Law, 2007), 157.

<sup>261</sup> Ibid.

<sup>262</sup> Ibid.

we are coming out of an era that saw armed violence as an inevitable step towards achieving peace and that we are heading into a new age of where peace is an intrinsic value. Maybe we could soon be ready to speak of adding a human right to peace. Whether we are heading towards such an age or not, at this point, the UN's involvement in armed conflicts has not proven to build sustainable positive peace. Indeed, it is still the duty of each of our states and of their respective citizens, to ensure that no people are abandoned when their rights are violated. Only we can forge the path for progress towards sustainable positive peace.

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