

The Thin Blue Line

Reasons for the ineffectiveness of the United Nations Peacekeepers

"What it boils down to is that no one wants to die for the U.N."

-Anonymous senior UN official



"the UN is the only fire brigade in the world that must go out and buy a fire engine before it can respond to an emergency"

-Kofi Annan

"Peacekeeping is a job not suited to soldiers, but a job only soldiers can do."

- Dag Hammarskjöld



"None of the political leadership can tell me what they want me to accomplish. That fact, however, does not stop them from continually asking me when I will be done."

-Anonymous U.N. Commander

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*“Peace cannot be kept by force,
it can only be achieved by understanding.”*
-Albert Einstein

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Abstract

For this thesis I studied the reasons for the ineffectiveness of the United Nations Peacekeepers (UNPK). I carried out research into three different decision-making arenas who play a role in influencing the UNPK mission: the United Nations Security Council (UNSC), the domestic states and finally the UNPK commanders and soldiers on the ground. My research question is: 'What factors contribute to the high failure rate of the UNPK in the three different decision-making arenas?' I studied this by looking into three heavily criticised missions of the UNPK where they could not fulfil their mandate: UNPROFOR and Dutchbat in Bosnia, UNAMIR in Rwanda and UNOSOM I & II in Somalia.

My cases showed that all three arenas have a major influence on the UNPK missions. The UNSC is responsible for the fact that most missions are undermanned, ill equipped and have unclear Rules Of Engagement (ROE). The domestic states influence missions by withdrawing their troops and therefore crippling the remaining mission. They can also influence the political process without the knowledge of the UN. The UNPK commanders and troops on the ground also play a major role. Passive and cowardly behaviour and bad cooperation between different troops from different countries are the most common causes for failure that I found.

A strong peacekeeping force (if done correctly) is essential for global peace. My recommendation is that the UNSC should only send peacekeepers if they can ensure enough troops and equipment. The ROE should be clear and supportive of the mandate. Soldiers should be allowed and even encouraged to use force if all other methods fail, in order to fulfil their mandate. The feeling of actively intervening may also help with the passive and cowardly stance. If the troops or equipment cannot be ensured then the UN should press for a multilateral intervention. For better cooperation between different troops from different countries there should be one blueprint on how UNPK operations should be done. There is not much to be done about the state influence. It is common for a political arena that some players have more influence than others. It is not realistic to think that this can change overnight. An independent investigation into state influence in the decision-making process of the UN might make states more cautious to push their own agenda.

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List of Abbreviations

APC: Armoured Personal Carrier

Canbat: Canadian Battalion

Dutchbat: Dutch Battalion

OP: Observation Post

POW: Prisoner Of War

ROE: Rules Of Engagement

RPF: Rwandan Patriotic Front

SNM: Somali National Movement

UN: United Nations

UNAMIR: United Nations Assistance Mission for Rwanda

UNATIF: Unified Task Force

UNCIVIPOL: United Nations Civilian Police

UNOSOM: United Nations Operation in Somalia

UNPK: United Nations Peacekeepers

UNPROFOR: United Nations Protection Force

UNSC: United Nations Security Council

UNSG: United Nations Secretary General

USC: United Somali Congress

1. Introduction

The United Nations Peacekeeping forces (UNPK) were first deployed in 1948 in the role of military observers during the United Nations Truce Supervisor Organisation (UNTSO) to monitor the agreements made between Israel and its neighbours. Since that first mission in 1948 there have been over 70 peacekeeping missions all around the world. They all operate with the same three principles: consent of both parties, impartiality and only using force in self-defence and to defend the mandate. Consent of both parties means that the main conflicted parties must accept the deployment of the UN forces. They have to be invited into the country. Impartiality means that the peacekeeping forces will never choose side between the parties in conflict. The UN emphasize however, that impartiality should not be confused with and inactive or neutral stance. However, they try to use force only as a last resort and do it within the principle of using as little force as necessary.

At this moment there are 14 UN peacekeeping missions deployed on 4 different continents, mainly focussed on protecting vulnerable citizens. In total, there have been more than 1 million men and women serving under the blue UN flag with 3,500 peacekeepers dying while on mission (UNPK¹).

However in reality, an impartial multinational force under the flag of the UN does not always goes according to the mandate. Many missions have been labelled as failed or are heavily criticised. There are multiple examples known where peacekeepers were unable to prevent the violence to continue. In a short preliminary research I found that in places like Rwanda, Srebrenica, Congo and South Sudan the peace could not be kept and death numbers continued to increase heavily while UN peacekeepers were deployed. The UNPK have shown to be ineffective in many large-scale conflicts and do not have the ability to bring peace to the region. An effective peacekeeping force is very important for the broader academic field of peace and conflict. It is also relevant for my Bachelor of International Development. Conflicts have a very obstructive effect on development. It leads to higher infant mortality rates, lower GDP and a significant increase in the general mortality rate due to diseases, poor access to medicines and destroyed medical infrastructure. We also see that countries where conflicts occur are less on track to meet their set Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) (Gates et al., 2015). Solving conflicts is therefore essential for the development of developing regions.

For my bachelor thesis I studied the relatively high failure rate of peacekeeping missions since its establishment in 1948. I investigated why the blue helmets are such an ineffective measure and wrote a recommendation on how they can become more effective in the future. My main research question therefore is: 'What factors contribute to the high failure rate of the UNPK in the three different decision-making arenas?' I did this by looking into three heavily criticised peacekeeping missions where peacekeepers could not fulfil their mandate. I then looked for common denominators in three decision-making arenas. The decision-making areas which I selected are the United Nations Security Council (UNSC), the domestic states and the United Nations Peacekeeping commanders and troops on the ground. The aim of my research is to identify the possibilities of making peacekeeping more effective in the future. I end with a recommendation on how peacekeeping can be more effective in the future. There has been much research done on peacekeeping failure. Most failed UN peacekeeping missions have been discussed in scientific articles. However, as far as I could find on the internet, my research is the first comparative study to what the common denominators are for the high failure rate of the UNPK. I have not found other studies that analysed different deployments and looked for common denominators.

¹ <https://peacekeeping.un.org/en/our-peacekeepers> accessed on 07 December 2018

1.1 Methodology

My research consists of a comparative study of three different cases where the UN peacekeepers intervened and which have later been labelled as failed. The cases which I have selected are UNPROFOR in Bosnia, UNAMIR in Rwanda and UNOSOM I & II in Somalia. The Bosnia case mostly focusses on Dutchbat in Srebrenica. At the time, the United Nations Secretary General (UNSG), Kofi Annan, said the massacre will haunt the UN forever. For every case the same structure will be used. I start with explaining the background of the conflict for an understanding of the situation. Then I discuss the role of the UN and peacekeepers on the ground and what went wrong during the mission. I conclude every case with a conclusion which functions as summary where I list all the reasons for failure in the three different arenas.

I do this for the case of Srebrenica, Rwanda and South-Sudan. I analyse the findings of my cases in a separate chapter and look for common denominators in why they failed.

Different sources will be used for my thesis. For the background information newspapers and news sites like the BBC, de Volkskrant and NRC will be sufficient. For the role of the UN and the peacekeepers I will focus more on books, scientific articles and reports from for instance the Dutch Institution for War Documentation (NIOD), Amnesty International and Human Rights Watch (HRW). In the conclusion I summarize the results which I found in the previous chapter.

2. Conceptual framework

For my conceptual framework I have clarified three different concepts: governance, arena and peacekeeping/peace enforcing. Governance is an important definition when talking about the structure of the UN and the Peacekeepers. It clarifies who is in control and who only seems to be in control. Arena is an important definition when we're looking into the UN peacekeepers. There are different arenas where decision-making takes place and where different forms of authority lie. Peacekeeping vs peace enforcing is also important to discuss. They are two completely different things but should be clarified.

Governance

Governance cannot be simply defined according to the Institute of Governance (IoG). It is a difficult and complex definition but it is clear that whenever a group of people comes together to accomplish a task there is need for governance (IoG, 2018).

The concept governance comes from the Greek philosopher Plato who used the word 'kubernáo' which meant to steer a ship but was metaphorically used in the context for steering men. Over the years, the term has evolved from purely politically to also social, economic and cultural contexts (ICPS, 2018).

The United Nations Development Program (which focusses on governance building) also have a definition for governance: *"the exercise of economic, political and administrative authority to manage a country's affairs at all levels. It comprises the mechanisms, processes and institutions through which citizens and groups articulate their interests, exercise their legal rights, meet their obligations and mediate their differences"* (ICPS, 2018 pg. 1). They also underline the role of legitimacy - the acceptance of authority - as crucial for good governance (Hyman et al., 2010).

According to the Institute of Governance authority, decision-making and accountability together make governance. Governance is more than just who has the power or who is in control. It is also about who makes decisions, who can put things on the agenda, how people make their voice heard and who can be held accountable when things go wrong (IoG, 2018). For my thesis is this is the most wholesome description and the most applicable to the UN peacekeepers.

Arena

I could not find much scientific literature on the concept of arena. The term is used in literature, yet I did not come across any scientific literature where the concept is explained. Otto Hospes, from the Wageningen University and Research, describes it in his lecture series 'Politics of International Arenas for Development' as: *A political and physical space in which a game is played according to formal and informal rules* (Hospes, 2018). A game is hereby defined as *"A continuing, consecutive series of actions between different actors, conducted according to and guided by formal and informal rules and which arises around issues or decisions in which actors have an interest"* (Hospes, 2018).

Within the command chain of the United Nations Peacekeepers there are also different arenas visible. There is a very clear hierarchical structure present within the UNPK. The UN Security Council and the General Assembly determine where and when a mission takes place, the Special Representative of the General-Secretary is the leader of the mission and is responsible for the diplomatic and political part of the mission and the force commander is responsible for the deployed troops. Then there are commanders from troop contributing countries as well as officers who are responsible for platoons or squads on the ground. The 'lowest' arena are the soldiers on the ground. In all different arena's some sort of decision-making takes place. The place in the hierarchal chain where the decision making takes place affects how many people are affected by it. The security

council arena makes decisions that affect everybody in the mission while 'commanders on the ground' arena only directly affect their troops.

That doesn't however mean that these decisions can't be as disastrous as decisions made higher in the chain. Sometime different arenas can also affect or influence each other. Multiple arena's together can also form new arenas. Two governments can for instance discuss something together. In that case, a new arena is being formed connecting different physical spaces together

Peacekeeping and peace enforcing

Last, I want to clarify the difference between peacekeeping and peace enforcing. These do seem much alike, yet there are major differences. Peace keeping missions are also known as 'Chapter VI missions. They're built solely on the invitation of the warring parties of the government of the country. This is the traditional form of peacekeeping. In Chapter VI of the United Nations Charter² called 'peaceful settlements of disputes' the rights and rules of peacekeeping operations are written down. The focus lies mainly on arbitration. States present a dispute to the Security Council and they try to come up with a peaceful solution together (Fortna, 2008). The United Nations Peacekeepers mainly support the ceasefire or peace talks, protects civilians and assist in disarmament, demobilisation and reintegration of ex-combatants. They use force exclusively in self-defence situations, to protect their mandate or to protect civilian lives. They never attack a target and are always in a defensive mode (UNPK).

Chapter VII of the United Nations Charter is where the blue berets come in. There we can notice the shift from non-military arbitration to military intervention. As article 42 states:

Should the Security Council consider that measures provided for in Article 41 (non-military action, note from author) would be inadequate or have proved to be inadequate, it may take such action by air, sea, or land forces as may be necessary to maintain or restore international peace and security. Such action may include demonstrations, blockade, and other operations by air, sea, or land forces of Members of the United Nations (United Nations, Chapter VII, pg. 9).

Peace enforcing also does not need an invitation from the fighting parties or the government of a country. They are also cleared to use force beyond self-defence situations. They can enforce peace, even against the will of the fighting parties.

The UNPK states that the boundaries between peacekeeping and peace enforcing are not that clear in practice (UNPK³).

² <http://www.un.org/en/charter-united-nations/> accessed on 10 December 2018

³ <https://peacekeeping.un.org/en/terminology> accessed on 10 December 2018

3. United Nations Protection Force & Dutchbat

3.1 Background

After the Second World War, the Balkan countries Slovenia, Croatia, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Serbia and Montenegro became part of the Federal People's Republic of Yugoslavia under the rule of Josip Broz Tito. Tito ruled with an iron fist to make sure that all different ethnic groups could live in peace and harmony together. Every form of nationalism coming from Croats, Slovenes, Serbs, Muslims or Macedonians was illegal and labelled as dangerous for the state. Tito called this policy 'Brotherhood and Unity'. After Tito's death in 1980 his heirs were able to stop any ethnic hate from erupting and they kept the brotherhood and unity policy alive. This became harder and harder and ethnic conflict eventually became inevitable (BBC, 1995). The first place where it went wrong was Kosovo, a former province of Serbia that had gained autonomy in 1974. In 1987, 7 years after Tito's death, the tensions between the Serbs and the Albanians in Kosovo rose and soon the Serb government accused the Albanians of ethnic cleansing. After Slobodan Milošević gained power by setting aside his political mentor and president of Serbia, Ivan Stambolić, he reinstated Serbian domination over Kosovo and encouraged Serbs living in other parts of the Republic to start a national revolution and create a unified Serbia. The problem with Yugoslavia was that many different ethnic groups lived all over the republic, without paying attention to state borders. There were no distinct ethnic borders present in Yugoslavia. And yet all ethnic groups felt threatened by other ethnic groups. This created a feeling of fear and suspicion (Pescic, 1995).

The Serbs were a good example of an ethnic group living all over the republic, as they lived in 3 of the 5 states that formed Yugoslavia. This was not a problem in the past since Tito crushed every form of nationalism but now Milošević encouraged Serbian nationalism for all the Croat-Serbs and the Bosnian-Serbs. This resulted in a growing Croat nationalist movement. Serbia and Croatia were the two largest states within Yugoslavia and had the largest populations. They lived scattered over Yugoslavia and their borders overlapped and clashed (Pescic, 1995).

Bosnia-Herzegovina was right in the middle. Next to the Croats (17%) and the Serbs (31%) the largest portion of the population were the Bosnian Muslims (44%). They declared the independence in 1992 which resulted in the Serbian-Bosnian leader Radovan Karadzic setting up his own Serbian National Assembly. They did not want an independent Bosnian state but wanted to be part of the bigger Serbian state called "Greater Serbia". This resulted in a bloody war between the Bosnian-Serbs, the Bosnian-Croats and the Bosnian Muslims. In the war approximately 100,000 people lost their lives, mainly Bosnian-Croat and Bosnian-Muslim civilians (History, 2009).



Figure 1: map of different ethnic groups living in Yugoslavia

3.2 Role of the United Nations Peacekeepers

3.2.1 UNPROFOR

Resolution 743 marked the start of the United Nations Protection Force (UNPROFOR) on the 21st of February 1992. Until their replacement by the Implantation Force (IFOR) by NATO troops, UNPROFOR was responsible for enforcing the ceasefire in Croatia and encouraging the demilitarisation. In Bosnia they were responsible for bringing humanitarian aid and providing safe havens. According to Cohen and Moens (2014) the United Nations Peacekeepers found themselves in a situation which challenged the strategy of the peacekeepers after previous deployment experiences. They had to be impartial, neutral, had minimum self-defence and were invited by the fighting parties. The principles of a typical peacekeeping mission.

Francis Briquemont, Commander of UNPROFOR said about this: *'I was told it was a peacekeeping mission. That's stupid. It's not possible to peace-keep in a country at war'* (Cohen and Moens, 2014 pg. 2). Antonio Pedauye, the last civilian head of UNPROFOR said in 1996: *'It was very wrong to call UNPROFOR a peace-keeping operation; there was no peace to keep'* (Cohen and Moens, 2014 pg. 3). Apart from that there were difficulties with authority in the field, as there were too many conflicts between the UN and countries that supplied the peacekeepers. Especially France and Great-Britain were responsible for the course the UN would take. Boutros Ghali (General-Secretary of the UN) said in 1995: *'My hands are tied, the commanders in the field only take orders from Paris and London'* (Westerman, 2015 pg. 157). It also became clear that the UN could not protect their troops in the field. For protection, the troop supplying countries had to come up with their own extraction plans. The French and the Brits had done so but the Dutch had too few supplies on the ground. They feared a revolt from the refugees when the Dutch would leave overnight. It was clear that in May 1995 the UN had lost all control of what was happening on the ground. This also resulted sometimes in unclear orders for the peacekeepers. When Srebrenica was taken, the Dutch government instructed the Dutchbatters not to help the Bosnian-Serbs to separate the men and children. However, The UN headquarter instructed them they had to assist because helping with ethnic cleansing is always better than to be a witness of ethnic murder and do nothing (Westerman, 2015).

Different nations also had a different interpretation of the Rules Of Engagement (ROE)⁴. Paris had granted its soldiers a much wider ROE while the British one was much stricter. In July 1993 the ROE was extended to: *'The UNPROFOR troops may use their weapons to resist attempts by forceful means to prevent the Force from discharging its duties'* (Blom et al., 2002 pg. 742). Most countries were not happy with the new ROE because it was not specific enough. It basically came down to self-defence turning the UN Protection Force into a UN Self-Protection Force according to some critics. Soldiers had the problem of translating the ROE to situation on the ground. They were sometimes too vague or too broad interpretable to use in practice. This also led to frustration from the troops who felt like their hands were tied.

3.2.2 Dutchbat I, II & III

The Dutch government pleaded before the UN for peacekeepers in Bosnia-Herzegovina in the weekend of 9 and 10 February 1992. The government offered to send a signal corps of 300 men, 5 military observers and 8 military police officers.

On the 3rd of March 1992 ministers Van der Broek (Foreign Relations 1982-1993) and ter Beek (Defence 1989-1994) wrote to the Tweede Kamer (Dutch House of Representatives) that the risk would be 'responsible and acceptable' to send Dutch peacekeepers to Bosnia-Herzegovina.

With the word risk Van der Broek and ter Beek meant political risk in the first place, not physical risk for the troops on the ground. The political and societal support had to be large enough to remain

⁴ Rules of engagement = The internal rules that clearly define under what conditions and in what degree the use of force is permitted.

high enough even if Dutch soldiers would be killed on the ground. The utility of the operation determines how many soldiers could be killed before the support would be lost. Acceptable risk was therefore purely a political term.

The House still was not sure in what form the mission would be peacekeeping or peace enforcing. According to van der Broek the situation in Bosnia-Herzegovina seemed quite manageable so there would be absolutely no need for peace enforcing. The use of violence would be restricted to self-defence and protection of civilians.

In 1993 it was becoming clear that only a signal corps would not be enough and political parties in the Netherlands insisted that the government would send armed ground troops. The initial plan would be to send the Royal Dutch Marine Corps to Bosnia but since they were in large numbers deployed in Cambodia they were not an option. Then the government's eye fell on the newly formed 11th Air Assault Brigade. The choice fell on them since they were not as heavily armed as a panzer division of the army. The Panzer division had armoured tanks, heavy mortars and anti-tank weapons which could be seen as provoking. In the rest of Europe, the cry for military intervention was not as high as in the Netherlands. In the UK only 30% of the people wanted to send the military. (Blom et al., 2002)

The deployment of peacekeepers would be only for humanitarian reasons. The peacekeepers would be lightly armed and there would be no air support. They were not allowed to intervene when human rights would be violated. Their mandate was kept modest on purpose so that the humanitarian mission by neutral peacekeepers would not be compromised (Blom et al., 2002).

Dutchbat I (abbreviation for Dutch Battalion, not to be confused with Dutchbatt who served in Lebanon from 1979-1983) were deployed to Bosnia-Herzegovina in February 1994. They were ordered to relieve a company of Canadian soldiers (Canbat) in the 'safe haven' Srebrenica and Zepa. Bosnia Herzegovina knew six of these safe havens: Sarajevo, Tuzla, Bihac, Srebrenica, Gorazde and Zepa. In reality, these safe havens were much less safe than the name suggests. In Srebrenica, the most eastern safe haven of all and close to the Serbian border, the Dutch peacekeepers endured constant mortar fire coming from the surrounding Bosnian-Serb forces. At this point the population of Srebrenica had swollen from 10,000 to 40,000 internally displaced Muslims who fled for the Bosnian-Serb forces and sought protection of the UN (Tanner, 1993). Dutchbat had three main objectives:

1. To give military assistance to UNHCR and other humanitarian aid organisations.
2. To protect civilian lives, enhance living conditions and end hostilities.
3. Enforcement of the demilitarised zones of Srebrenica and Zepa.

(Blom et al., 2002)

Dutchbat I and II encountered some small problems which were mainly the result of roadblocks caused by the Bosnian-Serbian army. They seemed to randomly allow some provisions and materials into the enclave. The Bosnian army also caused problems. They launched an attack from within the safe haven on the Bosnian-Serbian army and demanded Dutchbat to react when the Bosnian-Serbs fired back. The American president Bill Clinton already called Srebrenica the most vulnerable enclave a year after Dutchbat's deployment in February 1995 (Blom et al., 2002).

During the stay of Dutchbat III (18 January 1995 – 21 July 1995) the tensions rose between the Dutch peacekeepers and the Bosnians and the Bosnian-Serbs. A brief hostage situation where 99 peacekeepers were kept hostage by the Bosnian forces destroyed the last goodwill they had. The Dutch peacekeepers now felt even more threatened by the Bosnian-Muslims inside the enclave than by the Bosnia-Serbs on the edges. Soon Dutchbat III noticed more activity from the Bosnian-Serbian forces outside the safe area. They had even seen tanks. These reports concerned the Dutch commander Lieutenant-Colonel Tom Karremans. During Dutchbat I and II they only occasionally saw movement of forces outside the safe area and almost never heard shots. For Dutchbat III it became

clear that something was at hand, yet they could not act because of their ROE of only fire when being fired upon. During the minister council on the 29th of May 1995, Minister of Defence Verhoeve warned the rest of his cabinet that the Dutch troops on the ground were becoming increasingly vulnerable for hostage situations. The United Nations and UNPROFOR had lost control in Bosnia and it had become clear that the Bosnian-Serb forces were trying to kick the UN forces out of Bosnia. The UN was vulnerable, the enclaves not defensible and the UN did not have the resources to act as a war making party to ensure the safety of the peacekeepers in Bosnia. The last resort the UN had, Airstrikes by NATO, resulted in the Bosnian-Serbs taking peacekeepers hostage and tying them to strategic places like bridges and buildings. Using airstrikes also felt too much as peace enforcing, while the current mandate on the ground was peacekeeping. It became increasingly more dangerous to use aircrafts during the Bosnian war since the Bosnian-Serbs used SA-6 anti-aircraft guns which they used to shoot down an American F-16 in June 1995 (Blom et al., 2002).

The situation inside the enclave of Srebrenica became increasingly worse during the first half of 1995. People were not allowed to leave or enter the enclave and mail, fuel or fresh food could not pass the Bosnian-Serb roadblocks. There was no more toilet paper, only limited electricity which meant only cold water for showers and outbreaks of fleas and diarrhoea. This all had a dramatic effect on the morale of Dutchbat III. The emotional and physical effect this all had on the peacekeepers was enormous. According to Westerman (2015), at the same time a feeling of being forgotten crept into the minds of the Dutchbatters. On the 3rd of June two Dutch peacekeepers were badly injured when their Armoured Personal Carrier (APC) got hit by an anti-tank missile fired by the Bosnian-Serb forces. This increased the feeling of vulnerability inside the enclave. When tensions rose Karremans made new rules for the OP's (Observation Posts) guarding the edges of the safe area. They had to be ready to leave and fall back within an hour if necessary.

The OP's had to deal with more and more forms of intimidation from the Bosnian-Serb forces. In the last days of May and the first days of June it became clear that something was at hand and more and more worrying stories reached Karremans. On June the 3rd OP Echo was surrounded by Bosnian-Serb forces and the peacekeepers were given 10 minutes to get their gear and leave the observation post. During their retreat they were for first time directly fired upon by Bosnian-Serb forces. In the following days the fighting mainly continued between the Bosnian and the Bosnian-Serb forces. When fighting emerged around OP-Foxtrot between Bosnian and Bosnian-Serb forces on the 8th of July the Dutchbatters quickly requested their superiors whether they could leave the OP and fall back. When the answer was negative they waited out the attack. After a tank shot a breach in the wall of the OP the Bosnian Serbs came knocking on their door. They were thanked for their efforts and could leave now. During their retreat they encountered a Bosnian Muslim father and son who knew what would happen if the Dutchbatters gave up their OP's. They tried to stop their retreat by emptying their magazines at them and by throwing a hand grenade. Soldier Raviv van Renssen was fatally hit and died later that evening. After OP-Foxtrot surrendered, more OP's followed. Sierra, Uniform and Kilo also surrendered, and the peacekeepers looked happy that it was over (Westerman, 2015). Some even gave the Bosnian-Serbs driving lessons in their APC's. Back at the UN headquarters the officers were wondering what was going at Srebrenica. They wondered whether all the Dutchbatters were pacifists. The Dutchbatters from OP-Kilo could choose but would rather be taken Prisoner of War (POW) than to go back to Srebrenica. The Serbs would later use the POW's to make sure that there would not be any new airstrikes. They threatened to kill the POW's if they would be bombed again. The blue helmets and blue flak jackets the Dutchbatters handed in would later be used in the ethnic cleansing. The Serbs noticed that people did not run away and even let them in their houses when they were wearing the blue equipment (Westerman, 2015).

In the following days the Bosnian-Serb forces close in on Srebrenica. On day 4 of the attack, the 9th of July, United Nations Military Observers (UNMO) reported that Srebrenica was close to breaching. The United Nations send a letter to the Bosnian Serb forces warning them that air support would be called in if they advance further in to the safe area of Srebrenica. The Dutchbatters were ordered to form a line with 6 APC's and around 50 soldiers to draw Bosnian-Serbian fire. If the Serbs would engage the peacekeepers, the UN could use close air support as self-defence. The next day they are being fired upon and retreat to the marketplace. But no F-16's appear in the sky, it turned out to be an empty threat. The Dutchbatters on the marketplace get clear instructions to first fire over the heads of the Bosnian-Serbs so when they come climbing down the gunners first fire around 500 rounds at an angle of 45 degrees (Westerman, 2015). That night the UN headquarters give the Bosnian Serb forces an ultimatum. If they have not left the enclave at 06:00 the following day (11 July) they would be heavily bombed. The 11th of July start misty. The APC's of the Dutchbatters are marked with orange canvas so the pilots would recognize them. The next morning nothing happens at 06:00. Wondering whether the Bosnian Serbs left the enclave the peacekeepers sent out scouts. They soon encounter heavy fire coming from the Bosnian-Serbs which proofed that they did not listen to the ultimatum but F-16s are nowhere to be seen. Just when the peacekeepers think that they're forgotten two Dutch F-16s appear in the sky. Dutchbatters guide them towards a tank just outside the town. For the first time in its history, the Royal Netherlands Air Force throws a bomb unto a war situation. They miss. The second bomb slightly damages a Serbian Tank. This was all the air support they would receive because Bosnian-Serbian forces threatened to execute the Dutch hostages (Westerman, 2015).

At this time there was not much left of the safe haven Srebrenica. It had shrunk form 12km x 15km to 800m x 200m, the Dutchbat compound. They let 5,000 refugees onto the compound. Around 22,000 refugees had to camp outside. General Mladic, the commander of the Bosnian-Serbian forces summons Karremans to a hotel in Bratunac to discuss his surrender. Karremans had received instructions from the UN headquarters to take all reasonable measures to ensure the safety of the refugees and the civilians. Mladic however states that he has no intention of harming the Dutch peacekeepers or the refugees. He promises to evacuate the refugees from the compound to safe area of Tuzla. The men had to be separated from the women and children for interrogation. Mladic ensures Karremans that after their interrogation they will also be put on busses to Tuzla.

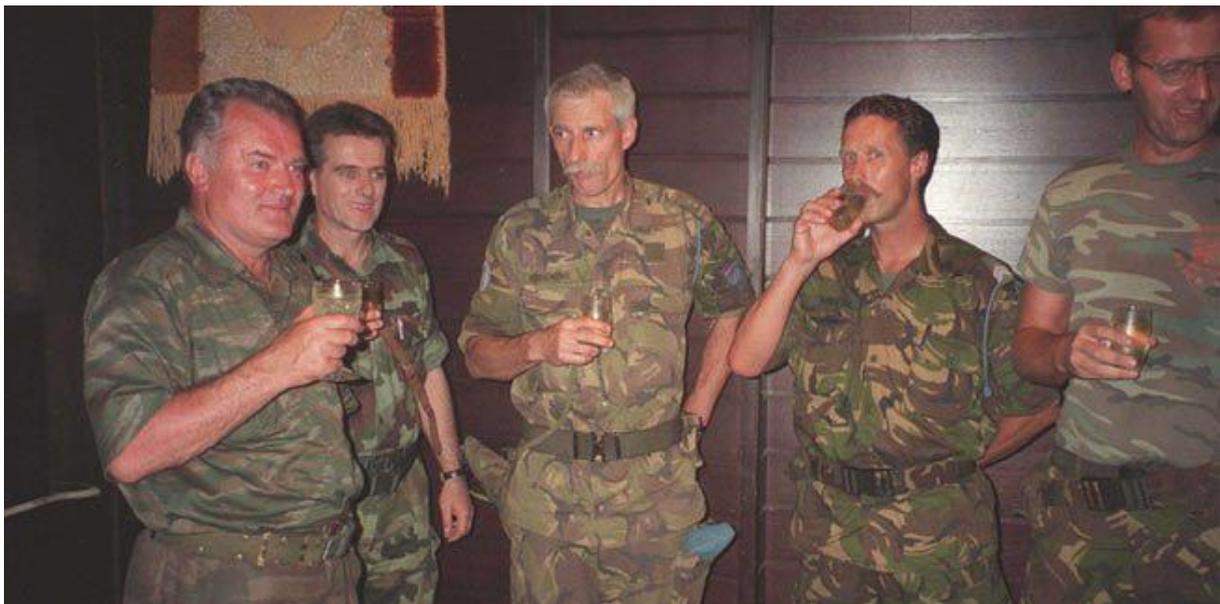


Figure 2: Lieutenant Colonel Karremans (middle) toasting with General Mladic (left)

Karremans agrees and even tells his peacekeepers to assist in the separation of men and women and children. Their stance would later be described as 'no resistance, no provocation'. Bosnian-Serb forces wear stolen blue helmet and shirts with 'Royal Dutch Army' and lure girls into the woods. Those who do not follow are taken by force. There are multiple reports by Dutch peacekeepers that the Bosnian Serb forces are extremely rough and dead refugee bodies turn up on multiple places. Karremans does not dare to report it because he fears his radio is being tapped by the Bosnian-Serb forces and does not want to do anything that could harm the 55 Dutch peacekeepers that had been taken hostage. One of the eyewitnesses would later during a lawsuit against the Dutch government report about the horrific things that she had seen:

At one time, I saw how a young boy of about ten was killed by Serbs in Dutch uniform. This happened in front of my own eyes. The mother sat on the ground and her young son sat beside her. The young boy was placed on his mother's lap. The young boy was killed. His head was cut off. The body remained on the lap of the mother. The Serbian soldier placed the head of the young boy on his knife and showed it to everyone. There were at that moment Dutch soldiers in the vicinity. They stood by and did nothing. They appeared to be entirely indifferent. The woman was hysterical and began to call out for help. A Dutch soldier who was standing there said only, "No, no, no." I think that it was a Dutch soldier. The Serbs forced the mother to drink the blood of her child. Chaos broke out among the refugees.

-Plaintiff Gurdić, eyewitness (Van Diepen, Van der Kroef, 2007 pg. 101)

Blue helmets are allowed to escort the busses that evacuate the refugees but those who escort the busses with men in them are stopped after 100 meters and had their jeeps confiscated. They can walk back to the compound.

The next day they are starting to notice a shortage in the refugees that should have been arriving. They miss 4000 men of draft age and about 250 young women. Dutchbat is allowed to leave on the 21st of July 1995 at 12:00.

On Dutch television Karremans would later praise the 'correct' Bosnian Serb military operation and talked in admiration about Mladic. He stated that there were no good guys or bad guys in this war. The Bosnians had burned down 192 Serb villages, so he thought of them all the same. Minister Voorhoeve would praise the Dutchbatters a day later as 'brave men' (Westerman, 2015).

Both the UN and Dutchbat must be blamed for the fall of Srebrenica. Many Dutchbatters showed no courage whatsoever. They also acted extremely panicked during the few firefights they had. Whether this had to do with the exhaustion, low morale, fear for the enemy or simply out of fear of dying is unknown but there has been records of them shooting at everything that moves including Muslim civilians in blind panic. During their retreat back to the compound they even run over some of the refugees (Westerman, 2015 Blom et al., 2002). At the Observation Posts the atmosphere was very different. They surrendered without any hesitation. Even happy sometimes because now it was 'finally over' (Westerman, 2015). Not a single shot was fired in defending the OP's. There was even one case where a single translator was enough to make the peacekeepers surrender their OP. They would rather be hostages of the Serbs than fight or go back to the compound (Westerman, 2015). With that being said, they were also undermanned and too lightly armed for the task. The 200 battle ready soldiers would not have had a chance against the Bosnian-Serb forces without air support or serious reinforcements (Blom et al, 2002). Next to that the Dutchbatters were emotional and physical wrecks after spending half a year in the Srebrenica. The Bosnian-Serb forces had cut off almost all provisions going in the camp so there was a shortage on about everything. The result was that the morale in the camp was extremely low. Next to that many Dutch soldiers felt that they were fighting a war they should not be in in the first place. They felt a similar hate for both the Bosnian Muslims as for the Bosnian-Serbs. They felt threatened by both parties and all they wanted was to go home (Westerman, 2015).

The UN also has to be blamed for the fall of Srebrenica. It became clear in later years that Srebrenica was destined to fall. With all the blue helmets gone there would be no obstruction to large scale bombardments on the Bosnian-Serb forces. On May 26 of 1993, 350 blue helmets were taken hostage and tied to strategic places in response to NATO airstrikes. The UN feared that new air strikes would lead to other hostage situations. As long as there were troops on the ground the NATO could not make a fist.

On May 26, 1995, a new hostage situation takes place where next to UN personnel also French Legionnaires and British 'Welsh guards' were taken hostage. This was done as revenge after an air strike on a Serb munition depot. The commander of UNPROFOR, Bernard Janvier, decided to take another route and promised to solely focus on peacekeeping from now on. Thus successfully stripping the peacekeepers in the field of their rights to use force to accomplish their tasks. This led to suspicion within the UN. The idea sprouts that the Serbs have received a guarantee that no more air strikes will take place. After an investigation it turns out that the French president Chirac promised the Serbs that no more air strikes will be carried out without the permission of the French. Kofi Anan, second in power in the UN suspects that US president Clinton then also had to be aware of this deal, but he also knew that Washington and Paris are much stronger than the UN.

German and American intelligence services also tap conversations between Mladic and Milosevic in the second half of June 1995. In the conversations it becomes clear that the Serbs wanted to take the safe haven of Srebrenica. They decide not to share this information because Milošević is important for the peace talks.

They also knew that the fall of Srebrenica would clear the way for large scale bombardments. With all the peacekeepers out of the area there would be no danger for new hostage situations. (Westerman, 2015). The fall of the safe haven of Srebrenica would eventually cost the lives of around 8,000 civilians, the worst act of genocide on European soil since World War II (Blom et al, 2002).

3.3 Conclusion

For the conclusion I will discuss what contributed to the failure at the 3 different decision making arenas regarding the United Nations peacekeeping operations. First, I will discuss the UN headquarters and the Security Council (UNSC), then the domestic states and finally the United Nations Peacekeepers commanders and the troops on the ground.

3.3.1 The Security Council

The Security council was responsible for the mandate, the number of troops and the Rules Of Engagement (ROE) of UNPROFOR. the number of troops were not nearly enough to cover the mandate. Dutchbat III for instance had 200 battle ready soldiers to defend 40.000 civilians. Their mandate, to establish safe havens and protect the local population was not executable since they were only allowed to shoot when being shot upon and even if it would be widened they still would lack the troops and the equipment. The soldiers complained about their hands being tied. There were also a lot of complaints about the ROE.

They were too vague or not translatable to situations that happened in the field. Critics also said that the ROE were mainly focussed on protecting the UNPROFOR troops and not about protecting the Bosnian people.

3.3.2 Domestic States

Especially the United States and France had a lot of influence regarding Srebrenica. Paris made agreements without the UN's knowledge to put a stop to the airstrikes. This played a big role in the fall of Srebrenica. Heavily undermanned and without the right equipment Dutchbat's only hope would be the airstrikes. Even though they were promised multiple times only one Dutch F-16 showed up which was not enough to make a difference.

New York wanted to put an end to the peacekeeping mission, so the way would be clear for airstrikes. With peacekeepers in the field they would too be vulnerable for hostage situations. The Americans also knew from Mladic his plan to take Srebrenica but decided not to share this with the UN or the Dutch government because they did not want to endanger the peace talks.

The UN general secretary also complained that troops in the field only listened to their own government. The governments had their own interpretation of the ROE and sometimes gave conflicting orders to their troops. The Dutch government for instance instructed Dutchbat to not help the Serbs in their ethnic cleansing while the UN instructed them to help, since helping in ethnic cleansing was better than to stand by ethnic murder and do nothing.

3.3.3 UN peacekeepers commanders and troops

Bernard Janvier, commander of UNPROFOR decided to focus solely on peacekeeping after blue helmets were taken hostage on the 26th of May 1995. Any form of enforcing was now strictly forbidden and it stripped UNPROFOR of their right to use force to achieve their goal.

The Dutchbatters who were responsible to protect the civilians in Srebrenica took no risk to do that. No shots were fired to protect the OP's outside Srebrenica and most soldiers who could choose between becoming a prisoner of war (POW) or returning to Srebrenica chose to become a POW.

Then they would at least not have to fight anymore. The UNPK headquarters in Sarajevo even wondered if all the Dutch soldiers were pacifists. The POW's would later be used to stop any future airstrikes by threatening to execute them. The blue helmets and flak jackets were later used by Serbian soldiers in the ethnic cleansing. The soldiers who did engage the Serbian forces acted extremely panicked. They were also instructed to shoot in a 45-degree angle over the heads of the Serbs to try to scare them away. No risk was taken to defend the safe haven and there are records of Dutchbatters driving over refugees in the hastily retreat.

After the enclave fell Dutchbat did the bare minimum to ensure safety for the 22,000 refugees that fled to the compound. Their stance was no resistance and no provocation. Hardly any action would be taken to stop the violence against civilians or intimidation from the Serbs.

4 United Nations Assistance Mission for Rwanda

4.1 Background

Rwanda is a small country situated in central Africa. It is one of the more fertile areas in Africa due to its many lakes, rivers and swamps. Originally, there lived 3 different tribes: the Tutsi's (14% before the genocide), the Hutu's (85%) and the Twa's (1%). The Tutsi's made a living as cattle farmers, the Hutu's were crop cultivators and the Twa's lived as hunter-gatherers isolated from the Hutu's and the Tutsi's in the mountains. Both the Hutu's and the Tutsi's had hierarchal societies. More cattle meant more respect for the Tutsi's. In the 19th century power relations became more important. Tutsi's were seen as superior than the Hutu's because they had cattle. The Hutu's became known as the masses while the Tutsi's were special. If a Hutu would obtain cattle he could be 'promoted' to a Tutsi and if a Tutsi lost its cattle he could be 'demoted' to a Hutu. During the German occupation of Rwanda after the Berlin Colonial Conference (1884-1885), the Germans did not exercise any direct form of power but tried to outsource it to local leaders. The king (Mwami) was instructed to centralize his authority. The ideas of the Germans also draw heavily on racist beliefs. They believed that the Tutsi's were descendants from the 'Hamites', the white people who had once brought civilization to the African continent. Therefore they received a better treatment than the Hutu's and were put on better posts (van Haperen et al, 2012).

Congolese Professor George Izangola stated that the only difference between the Hutu's and the Tutsi's was economical. He said:

In Rwanda, the Tutsi and the Hutu are the same people. They are all people—large grouping or communities which go from seven regions of Cameroon to Uganda—all the way to South Africa, in the same culture," Izangola said. "People used to be Tutsi or Hutu, depending on the proximity to the king. If you were close to the king, you owned wealth, you owned a lot of cattle, you are a Tutsi. If you are far away from the king, you are a cultivator, you don't own much cattle, you are a Hutu (PBS, 1999 pg. 1).

After the first World War, the Germans lost all their colonies. Rwanda was given to Belgium. They also strengthened the predominant position of Tutsi's over Hutu's. The only problem they had was the lack of a clear definition of a Hutu and Tutsi. They were unable to keep them apart. But since the Belgians wanted a method to keep them apart, they decided that the amount of livestock would be the margin. More than ten cows would mean someone is a Tutsi, less than 10 would mean someone is a Hutu and no cows would mean someone is a Twa (Mckenzie, 2015). The whole society was now drenched in a separation between the different tribes. the Tutsi's received all the good jobs from the Belgians. They were the mayors and the officials and only they had access to decent education. According to the Belgians the Hutu's did not need educations because they were born to do physical labour (van Haperen et al, 2012). The Hutu's remained poor because of this and the frustration against the Tutsi's grew slowly over the years. The term Tutsi became a synonym for suppressor. When the old Tutsi king died in 1959 the years of frustration expressed itself in a wave of violence against the Tutsi's and thousands of Tutsi's were murdered. Not only the frustration led to the mass murder but also the strong belief that if the Tutsi's originated from white people they would not belong in Rwanda. The Tutsi's fought back in 1963 and tried to overthrow the new Hutu president. The president used the fear of the people and described the Tutsi's as cockroaches who needed to be exterminated. Over 300,000 Tutsi's fled to Rwanda after these words and tens of thousands Tutsi's were killed, and their possessions confiscated by the Hutu's (van Haperen et al, 2012).

In 1973 Juvénal Habyarimana rose to power after a successful coup d'état. Like the presidents and rulers before him, his politics were based on ethnic suppression. He reinstated the ethnic identity cards the Belgians had introduced but now in favour of the Hutu population. However, the Tutsi population was relatively safe compared to the years before. There were still ethnically motivated killings and relocations but not as much as in the years before. When the stable economy went in a free-fall during the 80's, the political situation in the country worsened.

Under pressure of the French, Habyarimana introduced a new multi-party system which led to more extremist Hutu parties taking place in parliament. As a consequence, Habyarimana felt the pressure to become more anti Tutsi as well (van Haperen et al, 2012). In 1952 Tutsi's made up about 17.5% of the population, yet after years of violence against them this percentage dropped to 8.4% in 1991 (Shaw, 2012)

From within the 1 million Tutsi's living in exile, a military organisation formed the Rwandan Patriotic Front (RPF). From 1990 their goal became overthrowing the Hutu government and creating a country once again dominated by the Tutsi's. In October of that year they started blending in with the Tutsi population in Rwanda and in 1992 they occupied a couple of northern provinces. This scared both the Hutu's and the Tutsi's who feared retaliation from each other's army. The Hutu regime now started using tactics that had been used by Hitler and Lenin before. They actively used the media to criminalise Tutsi's and tried to turn all Hutu's against the Tutsi's. They erected the 10 commandments as a set of rules that all Hutu's should obey. Examples of those commandments are that Hutu's were not allowed to marry, befriend or hire a Tutsi woman, the military should only consist of Hutu's and that Tutsi's were not allowed to feel sorry or show empathy for Tutsi's. Tutsi's were actively dehumanised, criminalised and eventually exterminated (van Haperen et al, 2012).

On April 6th, 1994 the plane of president Habyarimana was shot down, killing him and everybody on board, and so the already fragile situation explodes. The Hutu's blamed the Tutsi's and 48 minutes after the crash the Presidential Guard and the Interahamwe (Hutu militia, literal translation 'those who attack together') erect roadblocks all over the capital city of Kigali and started murdering Tutsi elites, moderate Hutu politicians and eventually also Tutsi civilians. The massacres soon spread across the country and in the next 100 days killing between the 500,000 and 1,000,000 Tutsi's and moderate Hutu's. The genocide eventually came to a stop when the RPF had almost seized all of Rwanda on 18 July 1994 (Mckenzie, 2015).

4.2 Role of the United Nations Peacekeepers

In August 1992 the Arusha accord was signed between the Hutu's and the Tutsi's. In the accord it was agreed that there would be a ceasefire between the RPF and the Hutu army and that a broad-based transitional government would be formed. Habyarimana would remain president but would be stripped of a lot of power which would be handed over to a council of ministers. The Accord would never really be put into practice but nonetheless the United Nations send an assistance mission to help implement a transitional government formed by the moderate Hutu Prime Minister Agathe Uwilingiyimana. The mission under the name of UNAMIR (United Nations Assistance Mission for Rwanda) had as mandate to have an active role in peacekeeping, disarmament, supervising the ceasefire and report any incidents that might occur. The mandate had a clear humanitarian focus, intervening in conflicts was excluded in the mandate on purpose. The commander in Rwanda of UNAMIR was the Canadian General Roméo Dallaire. He commanded 2,548 soldiers from 26 different nationalities. Belgium also had a battalion of 450 soldiers and paramilitary commando's in the field even though this was clearly against UN policy. It was clear that UNAMIR had a low status and the equipment they had to work with was inadequate.

General Dellaire found the Rules Of Engagement (ROE) too light. He asked for assistance of UNCIVPOL, the civilian police unit of the UN. He sent the following plead to the UN headquarters and the government of the troop supplying countries:

There may be ethnically or politically motivated criminal acts committed during the mandate which will normally and legally require UNAMIR to use all available means to halt them. Examples are executions, attacks on displaced persons or refugees, ethnic riots, attacks on demobilized soldiers, etc. During such occasions UNAMIR military personnel will follow the ROE outlined in this directive in support of UNCIVPOL and local authorities or in their absence, UNAMIR will take the necessary action to prevent any crime against humanity (Shaw, 2012 pg.30).

Almost all parties ignored his message, only Belgium and Canada replied. Belgium did not want their forces to be used for crowd control and Canada believed that it was too broad to use deadly force for the protection of UN property. The UN headquarters never responded (Shaw, 2012). Even though the UNAMIR mandate allowed the troops on the ground in paragraph 17 to use deadly force if other lives would be endangered, a situation arose on the ground where troops felt like there was no justifiable reason at all to fire their weapon. General Dellaire constantly ordered his troops to keep on negotiating and to not use any form of violence. The head of the Kigali command had reinforced these orders on January 6th, 1995 after an incident where two UNAMIR soldiers fired their weapons unauthorised. For the soldiers in the field this led to the idea that there were virtually no justifiable reasons to use deadly force. This same knowledge reached the Rwandan army who now knew that UNAMIR would not take any deterrent action and felt like they had free reign. Even if they had strictly followed paragraph 17, there were not enough supplies or experienced troops to last long enough to make a difference. There was a critical shortage of food, fuel, ammunition, medical supplies and water. There was basically a shortage on everything a military operation needs to run smoothly (HRW, 1999).

In later weeks Dellaire called multiple times for an increase in troops since he was extremely undermanned. This time he received a 'no' from the headquarters. There was no support to act against the genocide and there were too many concerns like protection of the troops and endangering the peace talks. The current troops were given order not to help the civilians even if they were in life threatening situations (Adelman, 2009). When Dellaire called the United Nations headquarters the night Habyarimana's plane was shot down and asked for more troops, the headquarters answered that nobody in New York was interested in that (HRW, 1999). Another person related with UNAMIR said: *"If you wanted to do some good, you just had to do it and not ask New York"* (HRW, 1999).

When the killing started, Dellaire ordered his troops to protect important government leaders in Kigali. His force there consisted of around 440 Belgian soldiers, 200 Ghanaian soldiers and around 900 Bangladeshi soldiers. Dellaire did not trust that last group to follow orders when the shooting would commence. The Belgian officers ordered their men to be extra careful and restrict the patrols to a minimum after the Hutu radio station RTLM held the Belgians responsible for shooting down the plane of president Habyarimana. Some peacekeepers assigned with the task to protect government officials fled almost immediately when a crowd of Rwandans with weapons showed up. Some stayed and tried to negotiate with the crowd. Three Belgians with the task of protecting PSD leader Félicien Ngango and his family tried to negotiate with their assailants. They contacted the Bangladeshi peacekeepers for help, yet they did not respond. Four other Belgian peacekeepers came to their aid and negotiated with the mob outside. They arranged that the three Belgian soldiers inside could leave which basically meant signing the death warrant of the people they were ordered to protect.

The Belgians left and not long after the mob attacked the house and slaughter the family. This also shows the poor cooperation between the troops from different countries. The Bangladeshi forces did not respond to the distress calls coming from the Belgians and when Belgian soldiers were assaulted by a mob the Ghanaian forces refused to let them inside the stadium where they had set up camp. They eventually had to shoot at the mob and climb the fences in order to get to safety. It also shows clearly that no risk was taken by UNAMIR to protect those who they were ordered to protect (HRW,1999).

As the forces came under fire, they changed tactics and moved in a defensive survival modus where protecting themselves and other UN personnel became the first priority. After the death of 10 Belgian para commandos who were ordered to protect prime minister Uwilingiyimana, Delleire received orders to not take any risk for the UNIMAR soldiers or take any action that could lead to reprisals.

Delleire later commented on this order: *“An operation should begin with the objective and then consider how best to achieve it with minimal risk. Instead, our operations began with an evaluation of risk and if there was risk, the objective was forgotten. You can’t begin by asking if there is a risk. If there is no risk, they could have sent Boy Scouts, not soldiers”* (HRW,1999).

The decision making of UNAMIR was heavily influenced by three major players: Belgium, France and the United States.

After Habyarimana’s planes was downed Delleire quickly sent 10 extra Belgian Para commandos and 5 Ghanaian blue helmets to protect prime minister Uwilingiyimana. She had tried to get rid of the ethnic quota in the education system and thus turning the extremist Hutu’s against her. The Rwandan army came to her house with superior numbers and unarmed the UNAMIR soldiers. The 10 Belgian commandos were shot after the radio station held Belgian partly responsible for downing Habyarimana’s plane. The 5 Ghanaian peacekeepers were retained shortly and then released. The Belgian government decided after this dramatic event (under pressure of the public) to redraw their 500 soldiers from Rwanda and to stop supplying to UNAMIR. The soldiers themselves were extremely unhappy about their withdrawal. They knew that the 2,000 civilians living under their protection would almost certainly meet their death without the blue helmets. They were also highly unhappy about their restricted ROE making them less credible against the Rwandan Army (Adelman, 2009).

France started military supporting the Habyarimana government from October 1990. Not only during the RPF invasions they assisted but also in advising the president, protecting important places, interrogating prisoners, training new recruits etc. The France forces started their withdrawal on March 21, 1993 and completed it when UNAMIR was deployed on 11 December. They were flown back into the country when Habyarimana plane was shot down on April 6 but only to evacuate European nationals.



Figure 3: execution site of the 10 Belgian soldiers

During the genocide they were pleading for a reinforcement of UNAMIR and eventually decided to deploy France soldiers in the UN backed plan from June 22 till August 22 of 1994. The main focus of the operation was strictly humanitarian and aimed to protect the population. However, there was no cooperation with the UNAMIR forces in the country (Adelman 2009).

Another major player, the United States of America, had learned its lesson from intervening in conflicts a year before the genocide when 19 U.S. Army Rangers were killed and dragged half-naked through the streets of Mogadishu, Somalia. It resulted in the withdrawn of all US forces in Somalia and under pressure of congress president Clinton had to set a list of conditions for involvement in future UN peacekeeping missions.

Because of this list of conditions intervening in a rapid response unit was impossible. They would only intervene if there was a clear threat to the international peace, clear objectives and an identifiable end point. This resulted in the most powerful nation and one of the leading engines behind military intervention abroad to show no interest in Rwanda. Because the United States were also largely responsible for the budget, no interest meant also no budget. This meant that UNAMIR could not be equipped with helicopters or Armoured Personal Carriers (APC's) (Adelman, 2009). It was not until May the 25th that the United Nations Security Council realised that UNAMIR lacked a mandate to stop the killing. It decided to authorize UNAMIR II and their mandate changed from peacekeeping to peace enforcing. They also called for an additional force of 5,500 soldiers. This could not be realised. On June the 19th UNAMIR should have had 4,600 battle ready troops, it had only 503. According to the Secretary General it would take at least 3 months before UNAMIR II could be fully operational. The killing eventually came to a stop when the RPF had gained control over Rwanda on the 18th of July 1995.



Figure 4: An Australian soldier carrying an injured child after an attack on a refugee camp by the RPF

4.3 Conclusion

Many things went wrong during the United Nations Assistance Mission in Rwanda, which would eventually result in a failure to stop the massacre of around 800,000 Tutsi's and moderate Hutu's. I'll briefly go over what went wrong in the three decision making arena's: the UN headquarters and the Security Council, Other big states who had influence and the UNPK commanders and soldiers on the ground.

4.3.1 Security Council

One of the most remarkable facts was the lack of interest of the headquarters of the United Nations in New York in what was happening in Rwanda. This was partly due to the United States and Belgium actively lobbying for a withdrawal of all UNAMIR forces in Rwanda.

They deployed too few soldiers who turned out to be too ill equipped to do the job. Their Rules Of Engagement (ROE) was also not sufficient according to Delleire to stop the genocide. He had to focus too much on making sure the peacekeepers would stay out of danger. Delleire had also said from day one that UNAMIR was undermanned, not well enough equipped and too strict ROE to make a difference. Headquarters in New York refused to do anything about it and slowly decreased the number of troops present in Rwanda.

4.3.2 Domestic states

It became clear how much power states with own agendas have. The lack of interest from the United States determined largely the budget for UNAMIR. Frances determination however lead to an own French intervention.

The United States had learned its lesson from intervening in Somalia a year before and had erected a set of almost unmeetable conditions before they would intervene again. Since they were also responsible for a large part of the budget, not intervening also meant not enough money for helicopters, APC's and other gear that was necessary to exercise the mandate. Belgium on the other hand was heavily involved in the conflict until 10 Belgian soldiers were killed. Angered about the strict ROE they decided to withdraw all their 450 soldiers and changed their politics regarding Rwanda and actively lobbying to pull out all forces. The withdrawal of the Belgians meant a large blow for General Delleire who said that the Belgian soldiers were the only well-trained reliable soldiers he had.

4.3.3 United Nations Peacekeepers commanders and soldiers

The soldiers on the ground did not collaborate with each other at all. There were multiple cases where Bangladeshi and Ghanaian soldiers did not respond to the distress calls coming from the Belgians. UNAMIR clearly operated as different national armies then as one United Nations army. The soldiers also refused to take any risk. There have been many cases where soldiers immediately gave up the people they protected. This was also a problem from higher in the chain of command. Both the commanders as the soldiers were too afraid to take any risk and loose soldiers.

This resulted in UNAMIR entering a state of paralysis (a so called 'defensive survival modus') where their own safety was the first priority.

5. United Nations Operation for Somalia

5.1 Background

In 1960 Somalia became independent after a merge of Italian Somaliland and British Somaliland. The two colonies merged into one country, the United Republic of Somalia. Nine years later the elected president is being assassinated and Mohamed Siad Barre takes power with a military coup. He turns Somalia in a socialist Islamic state (BBC, 2018). Industries were nationalized and Barre gave away high positions within the government to friends and family of his own Marehan clan. During his regime he played different clans off against each other and became more and more a dictator. Especially when people questioned his capability to govern after a car accident from which he never fully recovered. He tightened his grip on the country and became increasingly totalitarian. This resulted in friction between the centralized power of Barre and the many different clans that live in Somalia. The first who came openly in rebellion against Barre was the Somali National Movement (SNM) in 1982. They received support from the Isaaq clan. The rebellion escalated into a civil war in 1988 when the SNM started attacking government troops. Barre reacted with fierce bombings of the Isaaq clan killing 50,000 and forcing 650,000 to fly to neighbouring countries. In 1990 the government started losing control. The end of the cold war also marked the end of the Western interest in Somalia. Barre now lost its resources to control the army. In January 1991, he was forced to flee from his last stronghold, the capital city of Mogadishu, when rebels form the United Somali Congress (USC) supported by the Hawiye clan took control of the city (Haley & Bradbury, 2010).

In the period from December 1991 and March 1992 an estimated 25,000 people lost their lives and 1,5 million people fled away due to the clan-based warfare for the control of the country. The war and the massive drought both contributed to a collapse of all social and economic infrastructure the country had. That in combination with the disturbance of food supplies resulted in a massive famine that took around 250.000 lives. Two generals from the USC fought each other over the capital city of Mogadishu and in May 1991 the SNM declared the northern part of Somalia as independent. It became clear that none of the fighting parties was strong enough to defeat all the others. Somali fell in a state of anarchy where food and food aid was used to as currency. Fighting parties also actively blocked food support for civilians who they saw as not important or who were not supporting them (Ludwig, 2015).

At first the international community barely reacted because they were at that time too busy with the gulf war in Kuwait and the war at the Balkans. The UN interference only began in early 1992 after the two fighting USC generals in Mogadishu had signed a ceasefire (Haley & Bradbury, 2010).

5.2 Role of the United Nations Peacekeepers

5.2.1 UNOSOM I (April 1992 – December 1992)

Some humanitarian organisations dared to go into the region to distribute aid, but armed groups stole a lot of their aid provisions or actively prevented it from being distributed to those in need. The United Nations General-Secretary (UNSG) at the time, Boutros Boutros Gali, accused the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) of racism for intervening in Bosnia but not in Somalia (Ludwig, 2015). The UNSC eventually responded in January 1992 with an arms embargo, promoting a ceasefire and the protection of aid distribution. That ceasefire came in March that year, but it did not stop the violence and the humanitarian situation worsened. The UNSG pressured the UNSC to explore different options for improving the lives of the millions of people living in Somalia.

In April 1992 it became clear that non-military actions did not lead to any results the UNSC passed resolution 751 based on Chapter VII, article 42 of the charter of the United Nations. With this resolution passed, the road to deploy armed forces was clear in Somalia. The mission was known as the United Nations Operation in Somalia I (UNOSOM I). Their mandate was to provide security and protect the aid supplies. The de facto government at the time had agreed to the coming of the peacekeepers in August but it took the United Nations Peacekeepers (UNPK) until mid-September to become operational and of the approved 3500 blue helmets only 500 Pakistani blue helmets arrived (Ludwig, 2015). The mission was a classic chapter VI peacekeeping mission and was based on the idea that the fighting parties would want to end the war (HRW, 1995). However, the security situation got increasingly worse for the 500 peacekeepers. Food and other aid supplies rarely reached those who needed it. In November a ship loaded with food had to withdraw under heavy fire from the harbour of Mogadishu (Hendrickson, 1995). The Secretary general kept pushing for more and more blue helmets. He hammered on the importance of a strong and robust mission but because the UNSC had just finished the blueprints for the enormous mission in Cambodia and a war was raging in former Yugoslavia UNOSOM I became more an idea than an actual operation (Eknes et al, 1995)

The arriving of the UNPK had been made possible by the Special Envoy of the Secretary General Mohamed Sahnoun. He arrived in May 1992 and pursued the clan leaders to accept the aid deliveries and made efforts to reduce the fighting. His successes were partly due to his excellent understanding of Somali culture. He also knew that the clan culture was essential for a long-lasting peace in Somalia and understood that an effective dialogue between clan leaders was the only way to ensure that. Sahnoun hammered on a decentralized way of deploying the peacekeepers to take away some of the power of the warlords in Mogadishu. The UNSC decided to ignore this recommendation. In the end of August they signed in a new resolution announcing to send another 3,500 troops to the country without the consent of the clan leaders. This undermined all the work Sahnoun had done and lead to suspicion and hostility from the clan leaders. Because of this Sahnoun eventually resigned from the job (Ludwig, 2015).

According to Eknes et al. the overall flaw of UNOSOM I was that the peacekeeping model was not the right instrument for the situation and the time. They behaved as if there was a sovereign government present in Somalia. The UN bureaucracy demanded some sort of leader or authority figure to communicate with. The warlords were the people who came closest to that vision. But the UN behaved if they were dealing with a functional government and they thought that a ceasefire would solve the problem. The problem was that there were no functioning government bodies left so when the large parties stopped fighting the streets turned into a lawless anarchy. Banditry and looting were a common sight in the streets and the warlords allowed it because they had no means to stop it and neither had the UN. The 500 Pakistani peacekeepers decided to stay near the airport. They had insufficient numbers to make a difference. Even though there 3,500 more troops were authorised to be deployed, nobody came (Eknes et al, 1995).

5.2.2 UNITAF (December 1992 – May 1993)

In November 1992 the United States informed the UNSC that they were ready to step in. It had become clear that the situation in Somalia had become untenable. The 500 peacekeepers had secured the airport of Mogadishu but had come under heavy fire. UNOSOM observers had been hijacked and captured and relief organisations had to pay a lot of money and bribes to make sure their people would be safe. A country wide enforcement operation would be necessary to prevent the intervention from becoming a total failure. The United States offered to lead such an enforcement operation. The Security council, who knew it could not command a force of that size, accepted the offer from the United States (Eknes et al., 1995).

On 3 December 1992 the United Nations Security Council signed resolution 794 which authorized the United States and all the peacekeepers involved *“to use all necessary means to establish as soon as possible a secure environment for humanitarian relief operations in Somalia”* (UNSCR, 1992). One day later, president Bush ordered Operation Restore Hope. This meant the creation of UNITAF (Unified Task Force). 28,000 US soldiers would serve under UNITAF next to 10,000 soldiers from 28 other countries. One of the problems Sahnoun had foreseen occurred when the troops landed in Mogadishu and the violence spread to the countryside. Now the conflict that had mainly stayed within Mogadishu spread all over the region (Eknes et al,1995). UNITAF would eventually be fairly successful in his short deployment. It did have a positive effect on logistics and security. It is still debated whether it had an effect on the mortality rate in the country. According to the experts the mortality rate had already gone down due to the ceasefire in October 1992 and because the famine had already killed the weakest part of the population. It did have a positive impact on improving the lives of many Somali people. More aid could come through and the Mogadishu port and airport were now fully accessible again. The port had changed from only being used 10% before the coming of UNITAF to the busiest port in Africa in the end of December 1992 (Ludwig,2015).

5.2.3 UNOSOM II (May 1993- June 1995)

On the 26th of March 1993 the United Nations Security Council signed resolution 814 which authorized the transferring of the leadership of UNITAF back to the UN. This meant replacing the whole leadership in the field with new UN officers. These officers were undoubtedly less unified than the American ones. They all had their own traditions, way of handling things and bureaucratic systems. The mandate of UNOSOM II was also a lot more aggressive than of its predecessor, UNOSOM I, but was heavily undermanned and to ill equipped compared to UNITAF. The Rules Of Engagement (ROE) initially remained unchanged but were soon labelled as too vague and multi interpretable. Troops for instance were allowed to take all necessary action to confiscate weapons from technicals (trucks modified with machineguns). But what did ‘all necessary action’ mean? Did it mean shoot on sight? The UN soon changed this to ‘they may be engaged without any provocation’ suggesting that shooting on sight was allowed. Yet, when a U.S. Marine sniper took out a machine gunner on a bus in January 1994 the ROE were changed again to exclude all targets where collateral damage could not be overseen and controlled. This made engaging an enemy a lot more difficult (INSS, 2002)

UNOSOM II was a classic chapter VII intervention where it was authorized to use force against threats for the international peace (HRW, 1995). It also differed from UNITAF in the way that UNITAF had been a humanitarian mission while UNOSOM II was mainly a state building mission. A month after its deployment in June, UNOSOM was at war with the Somali factions.

Mohamed Farrah Aidid, one of the most powerful warlords saw the coming of UNOSOM II as a direct threat to his power and fought fiercely against the peacekeepers. In June 1993 he ambushed Pakistani blue helmets killing 25 and wounding 54. A day later the UNSC issued a warrant for Aidids arrest and authorized all measures to capture him. This turned the state building mission into a manhunting mission. The violence now escalated. UN personnel were ambushed by militia’s and peacekeepers did violent raids on hideouts (Ludwig, 2015). Somalian civilians suffered much during the violence. Its estimated that between the 625 and 1,500 Somalian civilians died, mostly women and children, and between a 1,000 and 8,000 got wounded (Seybolt, 2008). Seybolt even states that according to some figures, UNOSOM II killed as many people as the aid organisations managed to save. This made people question whether the mission was really a humanitarian one.

The different troops from different countries did not always cooperate well enough. There are multiple incidents where human lives could have been saved if they had worked together better. For instance, there is a case where Pakistani blue helmets were lured into an ambush. The Americans had attack helicopters nearby, but the Pakistani could not speak English and the Americans had no Pakistani translators. It led to multiple dead, captured and executed or wounded peacekeepers (Buer, 2001).

UNOSOM II it's other task was to protect aid convoys like UNITAF had done before. The problem was that they were, as said before, too lightly armed and heavily undermanned. They also operated very cautious and from a defensive position and communication with aid organisations decreased to a minimum. It soon became clear that goals like disarming the fighting parties, state building and ending the famine could never be met this way. The American failed attempt to arrest Aidid on 3 October 1993 marked the beginning of the end. It resulted in a 36-hour firefight and led to the death of 500 Somali's and 19 American Army Rangers. In March 1994 the Americans decided to withdraw all their troops from Somalia.

Half a year later, in November, the UNSC decided to withdraw all peacekeepers from Somalia. They concluded that their peace and state building efforts had failed and in June 1995 the last troops were flown out of Somalia (Ludwig, 2015).

The UN mission in Somalia would eventually lead to the death of thousands of Somalian civilians and 160 United Nations Peacekeepers, putting it on a shared 11th place of deadliest UNPK missions in history. (UNPK). The costs were around 2 million dollars per day (Hendrickson, 1995). The withdrawal of the Blue Helmets did not lead to a revival of the civil war. However, Somalia is still being viewed today as a failed state without a functioning legitimate government.

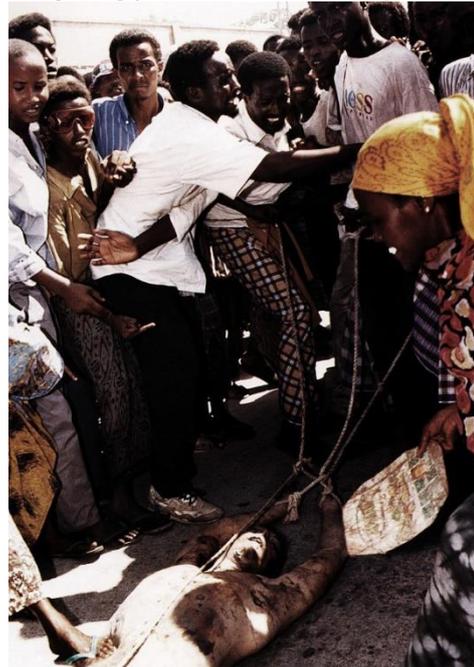


Figure 5: The body of Staff Sgt. William David Cleveland is being dragged through the streets of Mogadishu after the failed attempt to arrest Aidid

5.3 Conclusion

For the conclusion I will discuss what contributed to the failure at the 3 different decision making arenas regarding the United Nations peacekeeping operations. First, I will discuss the UN headquarter and the Security Council (UNSC), then the domestic states, then the United Nations Peacekeepers command the troops on the ground.

5.3.1 UN headquarter and the Security Council

A major reason for the failure of UNOSOM I was the choice of the Security Council (UNSC) to ignore all the recommendations done by the special envoy Mohamed Sahnoun. Sahnoun knew how to communicate with the clan leaders and war lords and had extensive knowledge of the Somali culture. The UNSC decided to ignore the work Sahnoun had put into it and acted on its own. If they would have cooperated with Sahnoun there might have been a very different outcome with less bloodshed. There also appeared to be a difference between the number of troops that were authorized and the amount that were actually deployed. The UNSC authorized the deployment of 3,500 troops, although in reality only 500 Pakistani peacekeepers showed up.

Those 500 were barely enough to hold the airport of Mogadishu, let alone bring peace to an entire country. They were not only outmanned but also ill equipped. Especially UNOSOM II who had basically the same mandate as UNITAF. According to my research, the questions rises whether peacekeeping was indeed the right instrument for Somalia. According to Eknes et al. they acted like there was some sort of acting government present in Somalia while in practice there was not. Only lawless anarchy in the streets. The UNSC should have used this knowledge in creating the mandate. Aside from the mandate, the UNSC was responsible for a clear set of ROE, as these were too vague during UNOSOM and constantly changed or tightened.

5.3.2 Domestic states

the influence the United States had is clearly visible. It goes so far that they eventually completely took over the mission with UNITAF during operation restore hope. Their withdrawal eventually marked the end of UNOSOM II since it was clear that without American support the UN could not continue.

5.3.3 UNPK command and troops on the ground

When the UNPK commanders had to take over after UNITAF it became clear that they were a far from as unified than their UNITAF predecessors. Since they came from different countries, they all had their own bureaucratic systems and ways of dealing with things. They also acted from a very defensive position during the second part of UNOSOM II. The communication with aid organisation also got worse. It was one of their primal tasks to escort aid organisations. You cannot do that from a defensive position and without communicating.

Next to that, the cooperation between different troops from different countries was not perfect either. I have shown an example where Pakistani blue helmets who were ambushed and could not communicate with the Americans who had attack helicopters nearby. I could not find much literature on the troops on the ground. What I can say is that they clashed many times with Somalian militias and that 160 peacekeepers lost their lives.

6. Analysis

In this chapter I will analyse the 3 cases I have studied and compare them, in order to find common denominators. I will analyse the three cases in the same way I concluded the individual cases: by looking at three arenas: The United Nations Security Council, the influence from other states and the peacekeeping commanders and troops in the field. For all three arenas I will discuss what contributed to the ineffectiveness of the peacekeepers and support it with examples from my cases.

6.1 The United Nations Security Council

The role of the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) is a critical one when it comes to peacekeeping missions. They decide how many troops (and with what equipment) are being sent and with what mandate and Rules Of Engagement (ROE). All three decisions put a big stamp on the course of the mission.

Unclear Rules Of Engagement

The ROE are there to support the mandate. They are not purely guidelines on how to act in life or death situations but are in fact crucial for the effectiveness of a mission. In many cases it became clear that the ROE does not support the mandate. This had a major influence in all 3 cases I examined. In the case of UNAMIR (Rwanda) general Dellaire complained multiple times on the strict ROE. Belgium even withdraw their soldiers, angered about the restricted ROE. They said it made them less credible against the Rwandan army who knew that they would not engage them. This had a major influence on the course of UNAMIR since the Belgian soldiers were the only troops general Dellaire trusted. For the troops in the field the idea arose that firing your weapon was not allowed at all. That same problem we saw during UNOSOM (Somalia). The ROE were constantly changed or tightened which made it very difficult for the troops to know when to fire which led to a cautious approach in the field. There were also unclaritys regarding the ROE during UNPROFOR (Bosnia). Troops had problems translating the ROE to situations on the ground and felt that their hands were tied and were too restricted to actually make a difference. According to some critics the ROE were too much focussed on self-defence instead of defending those they were assigned to protect. Unclear or untranslatable ROE leads to confusion and restraint in the field and leads to less effective operating peacekeepers. In all three cases the ROE made it impossible for the peacekeepers to carry out their mandate.

Undermanned and too ill-equipped

One of the constantly recurring problems is that United Nations Peacekeeping (UNPK) missions were heavily undermanned and too ill-equipped to exercise their mandate.

In Srebrenica, 200 soldiers were responsible for the protection of 40,000 Bosnian civilians. They lacked heavy weapons, tanks and air support to properly fight back against the Serbs. For UNAMIR there was not enough money for APC's or helicopters. UNAMIR only had 1,540 troops in the capital of Kigali from which general Dellaire only trusted the 440 Belgian soldiers. They were the only ones who were trained adequately. During the first months of UNOSOM I the UNSC had authorized the deployment of 3,500 soldiers. Only 500 Pakistani troops showed up. This number was barely enough to control the airport of Mogadishu, let alone the entire country. They also lacked equipment to make a fist against the Somali militias.

The lack of troops and the lack of proper equipment greatly declined the effectiveness of the peacekeepers. In all three cases the lack of soldiers and equipment made it impossible for the peacekeepers to carry out their mandate.

Peacekeeping is not the right tool

The literature I found (Cohen and Moens, 2014 for UNPROFOR and Eknes et al. 1995 for UNOSOM) questioned whether peacekeeping was the right tool for the two cases. They argued that other tools had to be used instead of peacekeeping or that peacekeeping on itself is an unrealistic concept. The last head of UNPROFOR said that it was impossible to keep the peace in a country at war. The military commander of UNPROFOR said the same thing. He stated that there was no peace to keep. Eknes et al. said about UNOSOM that peacekeeping was not the right tool. The UN acted like Somalia had a sovereign government while in fact there was no such thing present in Somalia, only pure anarchy. Yet the UN bureaucracy needed some sort of authority figure to communicate with. They thought that a cease fire would solve the problem but without a functioning government the streets turned into a lawless anarchy. Although the same argument of 'peacekeeping in a country at war does not work' can be given for Rwanda, none of the literature I found questioned whether peacekeeping was the right tool.

According to two sources I found, for both UNPROFOR and UNOSOM can be said that peacekeeping was not the right tool.

6.2 Domestic states

The arena of domestic states plays a key role in United Nations Peacekeeping missions. They do not only form the multinational force but can also play a key role in discretely influencing the mission and pushing their own agendas. This arena usually occurs in backrooms outside the view of the public.

Important countries withdrawing

In two of my cases a key country dropped out of the mission. In both cases the course of the mission changed dramatically. Withdrawing troops is a way of avoiding accountability. All the responsibility lies with the UN. When the mission is not going according to plan countries just pull out their soldiers and leave it for the UN to clean up the mess.

In Rwanda the Belgian soldiers were the only troops Delleire trusted to stand their ground when fighting would commence. He trusted the Ghanaian and Bangladeshi troops much less. When they were withdrawn because of Belgium's frustration about the ROE and the death of 10 para commando's, Delleire lost the core of its force. During UNOSOM II, the US withdrew its troops in March 1994 after a failed attempt to arrest general Aidid. It had cost the lives 19 US soldiers and effectively marked the beginning of the end since more countries followed the Americans in withdrawing their troops. Within half a year after the American withdrawal, the Security Council decided to withdraw all the peacekeepers.

It becomes clear that Important countries withdrawing had a major effect on UNOSOM and UNMIR.

States pursuing their own agendas

It becomes clear that in 2 cases domestic states had their own agendas.

France tops this list in its meddling in Bosnia. He promised the Serb president to veto against the use of airstrikes against the Serbian forces. The lack of air support played a large role in the fall of Srebrenica. The Americans also played a big role in Bosnia. They were already aware of the plans of Mladic to attack Srebrenica but decided not to share this information because they wanted the peacekeepers out so the road would be clear for full scale bombing of the Serbs. During UNAMIR the US showed no interest in Rwanda which resulted in a lack of budget for proper equipment. Belgium, first in favour of intervening, later started a strong lobby to withdraw all forces. I could not find prove of states pursuing their own agendas during UNOSOM.

Countries like the United States, France and Belgium play a big role in pursuing their own agendas which undermines the UN and decreases its effectiveness.

6.3 UN peacekeeper commanders and troops on the ground

The commanders and troops of the United Nations Peacekeeping force carry out the mandate set by the UNSC. But during the implementation of the mandate there are also a lot of factors contributing to the ineffectiveness of the peacekeepers.

Poor collaboration between troops from different nations

UN missions are always a multinational operation. This means that troops from different countries are supposed to work together under the blue flag of the United Nations. In practice this doesn't always work well.

During UNAMIR there was very little cooperation between the troops. Distressed calls from Belgian peacekeepers for reinforcement were ignored by the Ghanaian troops. Even Belgian troops being attacked by a mob outside the gate of a football stadium where the Ghanaians had their base were not let in. They had to climb the fences. During UNOSOM the same bad cooperation took place. Forces were unable to communicate with each other. When Pakistani soldiers were ambushed, they were unable to call in American attack helicopters who were standing ready nearby because nobody could speak English.

The poor cooperation between different troops from different countries led to unnecessary deaths and a less effective force.

Troops prioritizing their own safety

There are also numerous examples of UN peacekeeping troops showing risk-averse behaviour, even to the extent where they did not engage the enemy at all. Especially within the public opinion this can be seen as cowardice behaviour. Dutchbat surrendered all their Observation Posts (OP's) without firing a single shot. Some Dutchbatters would rather be a Prisoner Of War (POW) than fall back to Srebrenica. The Serbs would later take advantage of this by threatening to kill the POW's if the airstrikes would continue. They also used their blue helmets and flak jackets for the ethnic cleansing. Belgian soldiers who were responsible to protect important Tutsi's surrendered without a shot fired when armed Hutu's showed up. They bargained their way out but left the protected person behind. They would all be killed as soon as the Belgians left. UNAMIR also decided to a defensive survival modus where they prioritized on their own safety instead of the genocide happening around them. The same thing happened during UNOSOM II. When the fighting got more intense, they started operating from a defensive position. Instead of actively keeping the peace and helping the population they were now primarily focussed on self-defence.

The prioritizing of their own safety and the defensive stance from the peacekeepers led to many deaths. It had a very negative impact on the effectiveness of the missions.

7. Discussion

The blue helmets of the United Nations Peacekeepers (UNPK) form a thin blue line. A line that has the job of separating fighting parties and protecting civilians from aggressors. The reality is that this line is not strong, it is rather weak. It serves mostly as a mean to scare off any aggressors but when the line is being put to the test it will break. The blue helmets and white vehicles form a strange contrast compared to the camouflage colours soldiers usually work with. It shows perfectly the deterrent task peacekeepers have and the gamble they take by wearing it since these colours are highly unpractical when it comes to actual combat. The UN therefore hopes that it works deterrent enough. You could even say that it is nothing more than a bluff, and when their bluff is being called, it ends in many deaths.

For this thesis I have studied the ineffectiveness of the UNPK. The goal was to find out why the peacekeepers could be so ineffective and write a recommendation on how they can improve. It is clear that a lot happens between the setting of the mandate by the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) and what actually happens on the ground by peacekeeping forces that influences the outcome of the mission. Some visible for the public eye, some not. I have put three heavily criticised missions next to each other and compared the reasons for failure. I have done extensive research into UNPROFOR and Dutchbat in Bosnia, UMAMIR in Rwanda and UNOSOM I & II in Somalia. I then looked for common denominators in the analysis. I grouped them in the three different arenas: UNSC, the domestic states and the UNPK commanders and soldiers on the ground. I discussed the reasons for ineffectiveness that occurred in at least two of the three cases.

My first point is the difficulties the UNPK commanders and troops have with the Rules Of Engagement (ROE). It turns out that the ROE does not support the mandate. Blue helmets felt like their hands were tied because they felt that there was no justifiable reason to fire their weapons. Now the question arises whether armed enforcing of the peace should be a part of peacekeeping. Should peacekeeping in practice be peace enforcing? This happened during UNOSOM II where a peace enforcing mission with a stronger mandate was deployed. During the two years of deployment 143 peacekeepers lost their lives without any real improvements being made to the situation in Somalia (DKPO, 1997). UNITAF, the predecessor of UNOSOM II, did a far better job with the same mandate. The biggest problem with UNOSOM II was its lack of troops. They were - just like in the other two cases I studied - heavily undermanned and too ill equipped. UNOSOM was supposed to have the same aggressive stance against the Somali militias but had far less troops. It also arises the question whether a collective should be changed in the future into a coalition. A collective is a mission of peacekeepers under the command of the UNSC while a coalition is a multilateral intervention of states that want to intervene. This was also the difference between UNITAF and UNOSOM II. UNITAF was a coalition of the willing, under command of the United States instead a collective, serving the United Nations. In Bosnia we also saw a coalition led intervention that was much more successful than the UN led intervention. Airstrikes forced the Serbs eventually into peace talks after operation deliberate force.

The advantage of a coalition is that they do not have to answer to the international community. Eknes et al. (1995) describe the difference between a coalition and a collective in their article 'fighting for hope in Somalia' as:

A UN operation is "collectively" mandated and controlled. This means that although it has been mandated by and is responsible to only 15 nations on the Security Council, because of the position of the Council in the UN system, the implication is that the operation is an instrument authorized by and in the service of the interests of the international community as a whole.

In other words, it represents something more than the sum of the nation's participating in the operation in the field or in the decision-making process. "Collective", therefore, refers to a position in law. "Coalition", by contrast, merely refers to cooperation and a venture in which more than one nation is participating; it is an operational characteristic. A coalition is not something more than the sum of its parts. It was developed both for practicality, to divide the cost of resources amongst a number of nations, and also for legitimacy to ensure widespread support politically for a venture – which needs to be maintained even if it might contravene law (Eknes et al. 1995 pg. 82).

In other words: there is a clear distinction between a collective and a coalition. A coalition does not need to serve the whole international community and can therefore operate more freely. The United States Institute for Peace (1995) also discussed the possibilities of a multilateral intervention instead of a UN led intervention in their special report 'restoring hope: the real lessons of Somalia for the future of intervention'.

They write that Mohamed Sahnoun (Special envoy of the Secretary General in Somalia) already stated that a UN intervention would inevitably be delayed because of the dreadful bureaucracy of such a massive institution and encouraged a multilateral intervention. He also states that better results can be made when the conflict is being settled by an institute closer by than New York. He therefore suggests focussing more on regional intervention by for instance the African Union. This discussion fits seamlessly into the discussion whether peacekeeping is the right tool. The military commander of UNPROFOR already said that peacekeeping is 'a stupid concept' and that there was no peace to keep in a country at war. Especially when you sent too few men, too ill equipped, with insufficient ROE you cannot expect them to yield any results.

My second point is the influence that domestic states have on peacekeeping operations. Especially the United States plays a major role in the backroom politics when it comes to UNPK missions. Usually they form the core of a UN intervention and when they withdraw the whole mission collapses. Next to that they can put a lot of pressure on the UNSC or even pushing their own agendas outside the eye of the public. Sadly enough, these backroom politics are part of the United Nations but it can have a real undermining effect on the UNPK. If France decides to go behind the back of the UN and negotiates a deal with the Serbs to suspend the airstrikes, the peacekeepers on the ground are affected by this a great deal. The problem is that the accountability of a failed mission is usually being borne by United Nations, and seldom for troop contributing countries. And here we notice a discrepancy. As stated in the conceptual framework, governance is the combination of authority, decision making and accountability. For an effective mission, these three things should all be done by the UN. They are supposed to give orders and make the decisions, and if something backfires, they take full accountability.

In reality, domestic states play a large role in the giving of orders and the making of decisions. In the field they have a big influence on what their soldiers do. During UNPROFOR the Secretary General (UNSG) even said that the peacekeepers commanders in the field only took orders from London or Paris so that his hands were tied, although when it comes to accountability, domestic states are usually nowhere to be seen. Apart from apologies for some of the relatives from 3 Muslim men who were sent of the compound into the hands of the Serbs (after a successful lawsuit from the relatives) the Netherlands has never apologised for the death of the 8,000 Bosnian civilians, despite numerous lawsuits of relatives. They even tried suing the United Nations, but a Dutch court ruled that "*the U.N. has the most far-reaching form of immunity and cannot be prosecuted by any national court*" (van de Bildt, 2015 pg. 141). Even though they cannot be sued, they are being held responsible by the public for the failed missions, even if interreference from domestic states have co-contributed to the failure of the mission.

My third point is the role of the UNPK's neutrality on its effectiveness. Should the peacekeepers make a clearer distinction between victims and aggressors? An investigation done by Lakhdar Brahimi (2000) into the weaknesses of the UNPK led to the conclusion that this specific issue had led to a great loss in credibility. Peacekeepers cannot form the barbed wire between two fighting parties and expect them to stop their hostilities. Perhaps they should stop being neutral and point out who are the aggressors in the conflict and neutralize them. If it had been done in the case of UNPROFOR than Dutchbat could have set up a joint defence with the Bosnian Muslims and had they perhaps been able to defend the enclave together against the Serbs. In the case of UNAMIR identifying the Hutu's as aggressors and act for instance against the Interahamwe and the anti-Tutsi radio broadcasting station RTLM might have stopped or decreased the killings.

My analysis shed light on other matters happening on the ground, which contributed to the ineffectiveness of the UNPK. The cooperation between different troop contributing countries was usually not so good. Instead of forming one army operating under the command of the United Nations they were all separate troops with their own bureaucracy, traditions and values. During UNAMIR, troops from Ghana ignored distressed calls for aid from Belgian soldiers and during UNOSOM II Pakistani soldiers who were ambushed could not reach the Americans because no one spoke English.

Another matter which stands out is the risk averse behaviour of troops and the fact that they prioritized their own safety. We saw this most clearly during UNAMIR and UNPROFOR. Dutchbat took no risk and surrendered the observation posts without even firing their weapons stating that it would be suicide to engage the enemy. During the siege of the Grebbeberg and Rotterdam, Dutch soldiers showed remarkable courage. Undermanned and ill-equipped they fought for days. A peacekeeping mission is of course something entirely different than fighting for your own country and your own people. Especially when the soldiers are not too fond of the people they are protecting either. One Dutchbatter got killed by a grenade from a Bosnian fighter. They also felt like they were fighting a war they should not be in in the first place. Most soldiers just wanted to go home. This all must have contributed to the almost pacifist stance of the Dutchbatters (Westerman, 2015). The same thing could be seen during UNAMIR. No responsibility was taken by soldiers for the safety of those they were assigned to protect. And perhaps that is the key issue here. Nobody felt any sense of responsibility for the safety of the civilians. At least not enough to take any risks that might end in injury or death. And maybe this sense of no responsibility also comes forth out of the restricted ROE. Especially during UNAMIR and UNPROFOR the peacekeepers felt like they were never allowed to use their firearms. This might have led to a feeling of impotence where they felt like there were only there for show and could not intervene even if they wanted to. Perhaps even a feeling of fundamental powerlessness.

In the conceptual framework I highlighted three definitions: governance, arenas and peacekeeping and peace enforcing. The definition arena formed the common thread throughout my thesis since I actively looked into three decision making arenas that influence UNPK missions. I showed in my analysis that all three arenas have a big influence on the outcome of the mission. Governance was more subtle on the background. As explained earlier in this chapter it links to the influence that domestic states have over the UN and the UNPK missions. As I said before governance should always be the combination of authority, decision making and accountability. Being part of for instance the decision-making process but not being accountable might lead to reckless behaviour. We saw that clearly taking place when the French president made a deal to stop any airstrikes done by NATO in Bosnia. That decision played a big role in the fall of Srebrenica but France is never held accountable. Both the terms peacekeeping and peace enforcing came back numerous times. The Somalia case was an interesting one since UNOSOM I was a clear peacekeeping mission but UNOSOM II was a clear peace enforcing mission.

UNOSOM I was not able to accomplish anything and UNOSOM II escalated into a full out war which resulted in many deaths, including many civilian lives lost. The lesson we can learn from UNOSOM II is that going from peacekeeping to peace enforcing is also not the answer for a more effective mission.

7.1 Strengthening the blue line

Based on the analysis of the three cases, I would like to make the following recommendations with the view to make the UNPK missions more effective in the future and increase the chance of fulfilling their mandate. First of all, they need to stop prioritizing impartiality. Stopping the hostilities should be their priority. They can do that by threatening or if that does not work actively take out any aggressors. If that means fighting an active war against one party, then so be it. To do that the peacekeepers need to have a strong force, with sufficient equipment and clear Rules Of Engagement (ROE). These ROE do not only need to be clear but must also remain unchanged and translatable to situations that take place on the ground. Most importantly, the ROE should support the mandate. If the mandate is to protect the civilians then the ROE should allow and even encourage to use force to protect the civilians if everything else failed. It is also important for the credibility of the forces to be able to engage an enemy. There is a preventive side to this as well since aggressors now know that hostilities will lead to a conflict with the peacekeepers. Having the peacekeepers actively engage in ending hostilities will also take the feelings of impotence away.

This does not mean that peacekeeping should necessarily become peace enforcing. What it does mean is that the peacekeepers have the means to act when the mandate is under threat. We have seen with UNOSOM what happens when they are not invited. A humanitarian mission then turns into a full-scale war with many deaths, including many civilians.

If a strong force with proper equipment cannot be deployed then the UN should try to organise a multilateral force under command of one of the major military powers. It does seem important to me that a collective intervention done under the flag of the UN is always better than a coalition of the willing purely from the point of view of legitimacy since the UN represents all the nation states. During a deployment more could be done to try to motivate countries surrounding the conflict to send troops. This will take away any neo colonial arguments and leads to a better cultural understanding from the troops. Mohamed Sahnoun's efforts before UNOSOM showed that cultural understanding is essential. It also showed that diplomacy is still a stronger method than an armed intervention so that part should not be forgotten. But when it fails a strong intervention force should be quickly deployed.

It does not seem realistic that much can be done about the role of domestic states. Their role should be decreased as much as possible, although in reality this will be an almost impossible job. What might help is an investigation done by the UN into the influence of domestic states. Pulling it out of the backrooms and into the lights might will make states more cautious to influence future missions. What is certain is that more can be done about the cooperation between troop contributing countries. There should be one UNPK blueprint on how peacekeeping operations are structured and how the bureaucracy should be handled. Differences between troops should be minimized for maximum efficiency and cooperation.

A strong blue line, separating the good from the bad, the prey from the predator, the aggressors from the civilians is something the world needs and will need more in the future. The results of the current global politics, climate change and rising tensions cannot be predicted but it is vital to have a strong force standing ready to fight for peace.

8. Conclusion

My main research question for this thesis was: 'What factors contribute to the high failure rate of the UNPK in the three different decision-making arenas? I have investigated this by looking closer into heavily criticised UNPK missions and selected three missions where the mandate was not achieved. The first mission I analysed was that of UNPROFOR in Bosnia. I zoomed in on the role that Dutchbat played in what later would be known as the worst post world war II massacre on European soil. Their failure in protecting the Bosnian civilians in Srebrenica led to the death of 8000 Bosnian men and boys. The second mission I studied was UNAMIR in Rwanda. The UN could not stop the Hutu's from killing around 800,000 Tutsi's and moderate Hutu's. The final mission I analysed was UNOSOM I & II in Somalia. The passive stance during UNOSOM I and the aggressive stance during UNOSOM II both did not help in solving the conflict.

It is clear that the UNSC sets a mandate, but after the forming of the mandate all kinds of things happen in different arena's that eventually leads to the failure of fulfilling that mandate, for all three cases I have looked into what went happened in the three different decision-making arenas that contributed to the peacekeepers not fulfilling their mandate. First, I analysed the United Nations Security Council (UNSC), then I looked into the domestic states and lastly, I analysed what happened on the ground in the domain of the UNPK commanders and soldiers. The results clearly show that in all three decision making arena's things happen that eventually leads to the UNPK troops not being able to fulfil their mandate.

The United Nations Security Council is responsible for the fact that peacekeepers are deployed undermanned, ill-equipped and without clear Rules Of Engagements (ROE). In all the three cases I discussed having not enough troops on the ground was a major problem. Whether it is in the form of 500 Pakistani blue helmets having to intervene in Mogadishu, 200 Dutch blue helmets having to protect 40,000 civilians or 1,540 blue helmets in Kigali having to stop a genocide, it is never anywhere near enough. The lack of proper equipment and unclear ROE also works counterproductive. The ROE was in too many times too unclear or not translatable to situations on the ground. With the number of troops, equipment and ROE, it becomes impossible for the peacekeepers to fulfil their mandate. The question could also be raised for two cases whether peacekeeping was really the right tool. You cannot keep the peace in a country at war is a much-heard complaint of chiefs in command.

Domestic states have a lot of influence over UNPK missions. In my three cases I saw that they can influence a mission in two different ways. A major contributor can withdraw their forces and with that successfully cripple the mission. They can also directly influence the mission by pursuing their own agendas and making deals behind the back of the UN. Both actions have significant consequences for the UNPK missions.

UNPK commanders and troops are the last arena I studied. My cases clearly show that there is a lack of cooperation between different troops from different countries. Both my Somalia as Rwanda cases showed that the cooperation between different troops was very bad. Soldiers ignored reinforcement requests from other soldiers and peacekeepers could not communicate because they could not understand each other.

My cases also showed that UNPK troops show passive and risk averse behaviour in the field. No risk was taken to protect the people the peacekeepers were assigned to protect. Both UNPROFOR as UNAMIR took no risk into protecting the civilians and only cared for their own safety. Their mandate of protecting the civilians suddenly did not seem to matter anymore when they faced danger.

Based on my research I have presented some ideas to strengthen the blue line. The UNSC should only send peacekeepers when they can come up with enough troops, proper equipment and a clear ROE that allows (and even encourages) them to use force to fulfil their mandate when all the other options have failed. Peacekeepers should be impartial but should also actively engage and eliminate aggressors. Having clear ROE and actively eliminating aggressors might help peacekeepers stay away from any passive attitude or feeling of tied hands. It is not realistic to think that much can be done about domestic states influencing the UNPK deployments. In all political domains some have more influence than others and in the UN that is not any different. Troop cooperation on the ground however, is something that can be improved fairly easily. There should be one blueprint for UNPK operations and one bureaucratic system instead of every officer and country having their own way of doing things. Operations done by the United Nations Peacekeepers should always fly the blue United Nations flag, never a combination of the national flags.

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Images

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<https://www.news.com.au/national/northern-territory/australian-troops-remember-kibeho-massacre-in-rwanda/news-story/1c6be840029a30cb1be26b0f3b96242c>

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figures

Figure 1: <http://chnm.gmu.edu/1989/items/show/170>

Figure 2: <https://www.welingelichtekringen.nl/politiek/474620/karremans-ik-eis-excuses-dat-eist-heel-dutchbat.html>

Figure 3: <https://www.flickr.com/photos/dylwalters/1195875675/>

Figure 4: <https://www.awm.gov.au/collection/C1020057>

Figure 5: <http://www.moiralam.co.uk/The-Body-of-an-American>