

# Effectiveness of U.N. Peacekeeping Operations in **Combating Organized Crime**

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## ABSTRACT

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This article discusses the approaches that peace operations have taken to address organized crime and explores strategies to improve their effectiveness. In the last twenty years, the U.N. has produced relevant threat assessments and conventions, enhanced its use of technology in peacekeeping missions, and increased the authority and number of police deployed. However, significant gaps still remain in the effectiveness of assessments and U.N. doctrine, its police and technical capabilities, intelligence gathering, and coordination with regional organizations. Using relevant case studies, this article demonstrates how improvements in exploitation of available technologies and in preparedness for interactions with criminalized power structures can ensure better outcomes for peacekeeping operations.

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## INTRODUCTION

As United Nations peacekeeping missions have been deployed to host countries engaged in intrastate war and ethnic conflict, the U.N. forces have increasingly encountered organized crime networks on the ground. In the last twenty years, the U.N. has produced threat assessments and conventions, enhanced its use of technology in peacekeeping missions, and increased the authority and number of police deployed. However, significant gaps still remain in the effectiveness of the U.N. doctrine, the use of Organized Crime Threat Assessments (OCTAs),

the role of UN police (UNPOL), the utilization of up-to-date technology, and the understanding of criminalized power structures (CPS). In order to improve its ability to combat organized crime during peace operations, the U.N. should bridge the gap in available technology and improve its understanding of CPS and their long-term effects on peacekeeping missions.

## **ORGANIZED CRIME AND 21ST CENTURY PEACE OPERATIONS**

One of the many complexities peacekeepers face in the “new wars” of the 21st century is organized crime. As opposed to traditional interstate wars, state failures have produced intrastate (internal) wars, which often involve ethnic conflict and obfuscate the separation between public and private combatants.<sup>1</sup> As such, it is much more common today for peacekeepers and organized criminal networks to occupy the same space due to the shifting nature of war.

Academics highlight new difficulties in designing holistic responses during peace operations, resulting from the confluence of organized crime, failing states, and violent conflict. James Cockayne, the Director of the Center for Policy Research, and Daniel Pfister, a U.N. Humanitarian Affairs Officer, defined three types of organized criminal networks in the new war context: predatory, parasitic, and symbiotic groups. Predatory groups are direct adversaries of the authority structure, usually the standing government, and directly compete with it for resources. Parasitic groups are less opposed to the authority structure, and are therefore considered more “sustainable.” These parasitic networks and the authority structure can inhabit the same space, while symbiotic groups work in conjunction with the authority structure to obtain resources.<sup>2</sup> Symbiotic networks and criminalized power structures pose similar obstacles to peace operations since both depend on revenues from organized crime for political survival. Cockayne and Pfister’s typology suggests that there tends to be a correlation between conflict dynamics and organized crime, and that organized criminal groups might respond to peace processes and political settlements involving the authority structure in different ways.

Although the typology is helpful in academic terms, in practice, the U.N. does not train its peacekeepers or police to identify organized criminal groups, assess their perceived political goals, or respond appropriately. In fact, in the last twenty years, peacekeepers have directly and indirectly participated in and facilitated organized crime. This demonstrates their lack of awareness and preparedness when it comes to dealing with organized criminal networks.<sup>3</sup> Although U.N. peacekeepers are trained with a “do no harm” principle in mind, their lack of training to combat organized crime endangers the implementation of that principle.

## **REFORMING U.N. DOCTRINE TO ADDRESS ORGANIZED CRIME**

The U.N. frames organized crime within a transnational context and based on the capacities of member states to prosecute relative crimes. This framework creates unrealistic expectations for weak governments and failed states hosting peace operations, as well as U.N. peacekeepers. The United Nations Convention Against Transnational Organized Crime (UNTOC) defines an “organized criminal group” as a group intending to reap material or financial gains by committing “serious crimes.” Unfortunately, definitions of “serious crime” differ depending on domestic legislation. UNTOC simply defines it as any crime for which the potential punishment is greater than four years.<sup>4</sup> This broad definition assumes that the host government or member state has an operational penal code and a stable government that can enforce the rule of law. In reality, UNTOC’s definition of organized criminal activity is incongruent with the “new war” reality that peacekeepers face in the field. As a result, peacekeepers are increasingly unable to properly respond to situations they encounter in conflict zones.

In order to remedy the lack of U.N. guidance concerning organized crime and peace operations, the Department of Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO) should work in consultation with the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), the United Nations Department of Political Affairs (UNDPA), and regional experts to establish a set of guidelines to approach organized crime in a peacekeeping context. Increased coordination and information exchange with UNODC would allow for a deeper understanding of current organized criminal networks. Ideally, the expansion of coordination beyond DPKO and UNODC to UNDPA and regional experts would address the political economy of organized crime during peace operations more effectively and facilitate the analysis of the interactions between organized crime groups and criminalized host governments. Regional experts can shed light on the context-specific grievances that mobilize locals to participate in illicit activity, as well as the role host governments can play in such activity. They also have a better understanding of the conflict dynamics between organized criminal networks and authority structures, as well as of the possible consequences of peacekeepers’ involvement. In addition, UNDPA’s input would be invaluable to develop a longer-term approach in accordance with the U.N. Security Council’s objectives.

DPKO should also establish guidelines for conducting honest evaluations of peacekeepers’ roles in organized crime networks to ensure accountability. The “do no harm” principle states that the interactions between U.N. peacekeepers and the host country may not “enabl[e] the criminalization” of the conflict.<sup>5</sup> In practice, such an evaluation would not only damage the

U.N.'s credibility in peacekeeping, but also attract negative media attention to one of the most expensive U.N. functions. Furthermore, the unwillingness, and often inability, of U.N. member states and host countries to impose legal consequences for their personnel's crimes impede U.N. efforts. Regardless, a more integrated and coordinated approach across U.N. entities would likely reduce the negative developments in organized crime caused by individual peacekeepers and peacekeeping operations more broadly. Reducing organized crime in peace operations requires both increased cooperation and coordination within the U.N. system, as well as reforms to the U.N. doctrine. This would require significant time and resources from U.N. member states and the Secretariat.

## **SIGNIFICANCE OF ORGANIZED CRIME THREAT ASSESSMENTS**

The lack of relevant Organized Crime Threat Assessments (OCTAs) also undermines the U.N.'s ability to address organized crime in peace operations. The UNODC states that the purpose of the OCTAs is to “enhance the knowledge base available to Member States to develop effective international responses to transnational organized crime threats.”<sup>6</sup> Since 2014, UNODC has only published five OCTAs, three of which relate to Afghan drug trafficking.<sup>7</sup> Instead of publishing multiple OCTAs that concern a single organized crime network, the U.N. should broaden the scope of the OCTAs to cover organized crime in multiple regions, and update the assessments regularly throughout the year. Furthermore, UNODC can incorporate OCTAs into Technical Assessment Missions (TAMs) during the planning stage of peace operations and in their report for the Security Council. DPKO and UNODC would also benefit from publishing OCTAs retroactively for ongoing peace operations in order to inform future decision-making.

Integrating the same kind of analysis used in OCTAs and providing personnel with more complete information during pre-deployment training could better prepare peacekeepers for scenarios they might encounter on the ground. On average, the delay in providing necessary resources to carry out devised strategies can amount to almost five years.<sup>8</sup> If DPKO and Department of Field Support (DFS) incorporate OCTAs as a normalized procedure in the planning stage of operations, they could get a better estimate of the expertise and the number of troops required to carry out the mandate. Improving the accuracy of resource estimates from the beginning of a peace operation would likely make operations shorter, cheaper, and consequently more appealing to the Security Council and member states. Additionally, the implementation and enforcement of a mission mandate with an OCTA analysis could potentially lead to more sustainable peace, as it takes a wider range of mobilizing grievances

into account. The U.S. intelligence community has focused on understanding “who the local power brokers” are, and OCTAs would enable DPKO and the Security Council to do the same.<sup>9</sup>

Given the ever-changing nature of organized crime in peace operations, OCTAs are necessary even if illicit activity is not increasing in a particular region. OCTAs should incorporate conflict and systems analysis in order to highlight the push and pull factors for participating in illicit activity and underline areas at risk of succumbing to organized criminal networks. In addition, in OCTAs, DPKO can provide advice on how to disincentivize participation in organized crime networks in areas where these might be proliferating. OCTAs “should become part of standard operating procedures” for DPKO to design well-informed mandates and help peacekeepers to better navigate illicit activities in accordance with the “do no harm” principle.<sup>10</sup>

## **POLICING ORGANIZED CRIMINAL ACTIVITY**

The lack of coordination and training from other relevant U.N. agencies leaves U.N. police (UNPOL) poorly trained and ill-equipped to handle organized crime during peace operations. DPKO often places language related to organized crime in policies concerning the functions of UNPOL, but specific guidance pertaining directly to organized crime is virtually non-existent. For instance, DPKO’s 2014 policy paper *United Nations Police in Peacekeeping Operations and Political Missions* mentioned organized crime only once.<sup>11</sup> In 2015, DPKO and the DFS jointly published *Guidelines: Police Operations in United Nations Peacekeeping Operations and Special Political Missions*, charging UNPOL with “target[ing] active and prolific offenders” and disbanding organized criminal networks.<sup>12</sup> Instead of explaining how exactly UNPOL should achieve these goals, DPKO and DFS failed to provide any concrete or practical guidance. The guidelines do not cover how UNPOL should learn to recognize illicit activity, track such activity, or organize an appropriate response without an executive policing mandate. Simply tasking UNPOL with assisting host governments to establish the rule of law, with the aim of reducing organized crime, is insufficient because it does not account for government participation in illicit activity or unintended impacts of the peace operations on organized crime.

The lack of innovation in UNPOL training and mandates weakens peace operations in areas plagued by organized crime. As of 2013, only four mandates explicitly mentioned the presence of organized crime networks in the mission’s region and tasked UNPOL to address them.<sup>13</sup> Illicit activity requires DPKO and DFS to supplement existing guidelines and policies with additional training. UNODC and DPKO should also establish concrete, actionable guidelines for UNPOL to directly address organized criminal networks.

In addition, UNPOL should receive mission-specific guidance before deployment to conflict zones. The lack of an explicit doctrine and executive policing in mission mandates leaves UNPOL ill-prepared and ill-equipped for responding to organized criminal activity.

Despite the aforementioned doctrinal gaps, UNPOL has had some success in reducing organized crime in the short- to medium-term. The U.N. and the NATO-led Kosovo Force (KFOR) attempted to establish a multi-ethnic police force in Kosovo to weaken the violent, separatist organization, Kosovo Liberation Army (KLA), and its organized crime network. The United Nations Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK) created specific units in the Kosovo Police Service (KPS), such as the Central Intelligence Unit, the Trafficking and Prostitution Investigation Unit, the Interim Security Facility (to accommodate victims of human trafficking), and the Directorate for Organized Crime (DOC).<sup>14</sup> UNMIK successfully created units dedicated to addressing ethnic tensions and locals' grievances, whilst effectively implementing its executive policing mandate to crack down on violent organized crime networks.

Although UNMIK and U.S. civilian police forces helped create these moderately successful institutions in Kosovo during the peace operation, they did not foresee the repercussions of integrating a parasitic organized crime group into the peace process. UNMIK integrated the KLA and its representative, Hashim Thaci, into the peace process as they constituted a major party in the conflict. Ultimately, this choice aided Thaci's rise to the position of Prime Minister and, eventually, President. Even though he holds the highest political office in Kosovo, Thaci is still tied to numerous organized crime networks in the Balkans.<sup>15</sup> Had the U.N. trained UNPOL and UNMIK personnel to anticipate the consequences of integrating organized criminal groups into peace processes, they might have been more successful in reducing organized crime, both during the early part of their mission and in the long-term.

In Haiti, the U.N. initially failed to establish police units dedicated to fighting organized criminal activity during the first two years of its stabilization mission (MINUSTAH). However, eventually the U.N. built on the short-term success of the police units formed by UNMIK by deploying a SWAT team and creating a Joint Mission Analysis Centre (JMAC). When the mission was recruiting formed police units (FPU), DPKO did not consider whether the FPUs were qualified to "lead special operations, gather criminal intelligence, or support complex investigations into sexual violence, corruption, kidnapping, homicide, or counter narcotics."<sup>16</sup> Furthermore, MINUSTAH lacked an executive policing function in their mandate.<sup>17</sup> Because of the poorly trained personnel and restrictive mandate, UNPOL's capabilities during the first few years of the mission were extremely limited.

The mission finally received a total of eight FPUs and an experienced 40-person SWAT team capable of preserving the ongoing peace process in 2006.<sup>18</sup> The FPUs and the SWAT unit were operationally successful. They worked with the Haitian National Police (HNP) to arrest and neutralize gang members and control riots. In addition, the creation of the Joint Mission Analysis Centre (JMAC) enabled the mission to integrate “military, police, security, political affairs, and other units contributing information, personnel, and expertise.”<sup>19</sup> The integration of FPU, SWAT unit, and JMAC operations, in partnership with the local police force, enabled the mission to neutralize violent gang activity in Cite Soleil and other hotspots. Like the U.N. Mission in Kosovo, MINUSTAH was successful through the use of force, but it was unable to anticipate and comprehend how political elites would exploit organized criminal networks for their own survival.<sup>20</sup> The country’s repeated descent into gang violence after the devastating 2010 earthquake demonstrates the consequences of MINUSTAH’s lack of understanding.

The creation of the JMAC, the SWAT unit recruitment, and UNMIK’s establishment of well-prepared special police units successfully combated organized crime in the short-term. However, both MINUSTAH and UNMIK failed to rid their respective regions of organized crime in the long-term. U.N. peacekeeping operations lack the knowledge and capabilities to understand why and how such illicit activities are conducted by locals and the different ways in which criminal networks are used for political purposes. In order to sustain a campaign against organized crime, the U.N. must transform its use of UNPOL and provide clearer guidance and objectives with regards to their interactions with organized criminal groups, as these will continue to affect future political arrangements. DPKO and other relevant U.N. agencies can work together to draft specific guidelines for UNPOL that target organized crime, including typologies of organized crime similar to those established by Cockayne and Pfister, and that dictate the responsibilities and qualifications needed from the FPUs.

## **THE USE OF TECHNOLOGY IN COMBATING ORGANIZED CRIME**

Despite its efforts to incorporate technology into peace operations, the U.N. needs to update its intelligence collection and communication infrastructure in order to more effectively address organized crime. Technologies such as license plate recognition systems, encryption technology, and unmanned aerial vehicles typically target different threats, but imagery technology renders them useful for combating organized criminal activity. Similarly, the gathering and analysis of police-related intelligence, as it pertains to organized crime, remains lacking in peace operations. Yet, its enhancement could drastically improve

peacekeeper responses to illicit activity.

The U.N. has repeatedly made resourceful use of outdated technology to target organized crime during the United Nations Transitional Authority in Cambodia (UNTAC), the United Nations Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK), and the United Nations Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUC). In Cambodia, UNTAC personnel used photocopy machines in the backs of trucks to collect evidence of assassination attempts and planned violations of the peace agreement.<sup>21</sup> Despite the logistical difficulties, UNTAC was able to use technology to design and execute a strategy to collect intelligence and subsequently preempt assassination attempts by spoiler groups. The U.N. also installed fixed cameras in the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe's Mission in Kosovo (OMIK) and the United Nations Monitoring, Verification and Inspection Commission (UNMOVIC) in Iraq.<sup>22</sup> These cameras were important for OMIK to monitor areas where ethnic violence often took place and for UNMOVIC to track the production of weapons of mass destruction.<sup>23</sup> However, in both missions, captured footage failed to provide timely and actionable intelligence for NATO or coalition forces to prevent further violence or destroy alleged weapons of mass destruction. UNTAC, OMIK, and UNMOVIC exhibited resourcefulness with the tools available to them, but they could have accomplished significantly more had they had access to updated real-time surveillance technology.

License plate recognition (LPR) systems could also be improved to help UNPOL assess whether vehicles approaching checkpoints or "hotspots" pose a threat.<sup>24</sup> LPR systems could also be useful for tracking black market deals, kidnappings, and human trafficking. Furthermore, LPR used in conjunction with encryption technology in vehicles would enable peacekeepers to track illicit activity and communicate freely to coordinate their response. After learning that the Serbian government was able to intercept U.N. communications in the 1990s, the U.N. installed encrypted radios in their vehicles.<sup>25</sup>

The U.N. could also expand its use of aerial reconnaissance. MONUC did in fact incorporate unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs) into its mission. It enhanced the U.N.'s use of UAVs to combat election violence, identify illegal arms trafficking and collect imagery.<sup>26</sup> In 2015, Hervé Ladsous, the former Under-Secretary General for Peacekeeping Operations, praised the use of UAVs in DRC, Mali and the Central African Republic as integral to protecting civilians and gathering the intelligence necessary to enforce robust mandates.<sup>27</sup> Today, reconnaissance capabilities should be updated with satellite technology, to allow peacekeeping operations to legally monitor designated conflict zones without permission from the host country.<sup>28</sup> The implementation of satellite reconnaissance would allow U.N. peace operations to avoid dangerous confrontations with organized criminal networks (particularly those connected to the host government), circumvent disputes concerning consent

from the host government, and monitor illicit activity conducted by the host government itself.

MONUC has also started obtaining more timely intelligence by establishing communication infrastructure and mapping systems. The mission constructed a community alert network by giving locals cell phones to report dangerous situations to mission personnel in real-time.<sup>29</sup> This initiative encouraged locals to become stakeholders in MONUC's fight against organized crime, whilst also providing actionable intelligence to peacekeepers. MONUC also utilized the U.N.'s geographic information systems (GIS) technology to map organized crime networks and activity across entire regions.<sup>30</sup>

Despite MONUC's technological advancements, DPKO will have to reexamine how it can effectively use and obtain technology. As technological advancements occur, the U.N. and member states have the opportunity, and arguably the responsibility, to utilize them to promote international peace and security. For example, infrared technology can mitigate the dangers that accompany night patrol. "Breaking the night barrier" enables personnel to monitor organized criminal groups at night, when they are most likely to plan attacks or conduct illicit activities.<sup>31</sup> Access to infrared technology might prevent troop-contributing countries from resorting to caveats and allow their personnel and formed police units (FPUs) to patrol more effectively at night, thus increasing the probability of peacekeepers preventing illicit activities.

Peacekeeping expert Walter Dorn and former Canadian Foreign Minister Lloyd Axworthy have introduced the concepts of the "digital peacekeeper," the "technology contributing country (TechCC)," and "precision peacekeeping" as potential goals for future peacekeeping. Implementing these concepts in U.N. peacekeeping operations might help reduce the risk of bodily harm for those confronting organized crime networks. Dorn and Axworthy describe "precision peacekeeping" as being led by the "digital peacekeeper," who can be "safer and more effective" with collected intelligence and more complete information from their technological equipment.<sup>32</sup> Dorn defines "precision peacekeeping" as a mission's ability to "send the right peacekeepers to the right place to do the right things."<sup>33</sup> Dorn and Axworthy also argue that the U.N. should encourage the participation of technology contributing countries (TechCCs). These countries would provide technology and expertise where others provide troops and police forces.<sup>34</sup> This principle has gained some traction, and the United States even confirmed in a 2015 White House memorandum that it "will seek to become a leading 'technology contributing country' to U.N. peacekeeping operations."<sup>35</sup> The United States and countries in the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) often contribute very few troops and FPUs. Therefore, leading up to the yearly Peacekeeping Defence Ministerial Conferences, the U.N. should encourage TechCCs to not only contribute technology, but also proper guidance on how

to use the equipment in order to avoid interoperability issues and confusion amongst different FPUs.

The use of technology in peace operations is improving, but this is only one aspect of tackling organized crime. Although technological advancements would enable missions to send peacekeepers to hotspots with more adequate equipment, they do not inform what constitute the “right things” that Dorn and Axworthy believe peacekeepers should do. For instance, even if UNPOL improved its intelligence collection processes, it would still lack guidelines on how to best utilize the gathered information. Moreover, technological advancements will not suffice to protect peacekeepers from organized crime networks. In terms of fostering “precision peacekeeping,” the U.N. must take into account many other socio-political factors to improve its understanding of organized crime and to help peacekeepers “do the right things.”

## **THE POLITICAL CONSTRAINTS ON THE SECURITY COUNCIL AND PEACEKEEPING MANDATES**

Security Council-approved mission mandates direct peace operations’ goals and authorities. Mission mandates also reflect that the five permanent members of the U.N. Security Council and Germany (P5+1) prioritize their own national security concerns over most peace operation objectives. As such, the Security Council still constrains the reach of mission mandates and the extent to which measures addressing organized crime are integrated into peace operations. Even though several countries and peace operations have already faced the issue of organized criminal networks, the Security Council did not address organized crime until it was linked to terrorism in the early 2000s.<sup>36</sup> Organized crime received more attention as it pertained more directly to the permanent members’ primary security concerns. Yet, few peacekeeping missions directly affect the P5+1’s more immediate security concerns. Moreover, the Afghan drug trade has occupied many of the OCTAs in recent years despite the fact that U.N. member states already have separate unilateral and multilateral structures that are monitoring the situation.

The Security Council has the authority to send out Expert Panels, which has enhanced its efforts to address organized crime in peacekeeping missions. Stabilization expert Michael Dziedzic suggests that the Security Council send Expert Panels to “monitor compliance with its targeted sanctions,” thus reducing revenue flows to the criminalized power structures (CPS).<sup>37</sup> The Security Council did in fact use an Expert Panel to monitor the implementation of sanctions on the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), and to produce “Due Diligence Guidelines.” The Council decided that “sanctions could be imposed against any entity...that failed to exercise due diligence in accordance with those Guidelines.”<sup>38</sup> As a result, the Security Council now

targets not only governments that benefit from organized criminal activity, but businesses too.

The Security Council's most challenging constraint is the perennial principle of sovereignty that complicates many of the U.N.'s functions. A U.N. peacekeeping mission requires the consent of the host government, and antagonizing a state with a perceived violation of its sovereignty would almost guarantee an ousting of the mission. For this reason, the Security Council must tread lightly when governments receive revenue from organized crime networks. While the conflict in eastern DRC demonstrates progress in the U.N.'s understanding of CPS, there are still flaws in MONUSCO. The Security Council is cognizant of the agreement made between Laurent Kabila of the DRC, Paul Kagame of Rwanda, and Yoweri Museveni of Uganda to aid Kabila with his plan to overthrow DRC President Mobutu Sese Seko and reward Kagame and Museveni with access to the eastern DRC's resources.<sup>39</sup> While the mission's mandate does acknowledge the "illicit exploitation of natural resources as a cause of the conflict," it only allows for MONUSCO to monitor the situation.<sup>40</sup> As violence in eastern DRC persists, the Security Council is still responsible for maintaining peace and security in the region. Even though it can allocate more resources to designing alternative approaches to addressing organized crime, sovereignty will still be an obstacle that the Council cannot circumvent.

Political will within the Security Council also determines how the Council addresses organized crime in specific peace operations. The United Nations Integrated Office in Guinea-Bissau (UNIOGBIS) exemplifies a peace operation that has actually benefited from not being "very high on anyone's policy agenda."<sup>41</sup> Guinea-Bissau did not pose any threat to the P5+1's security interests, thus making it a less controversial region to address. In addition, Guinea-Bissau's weak government and political institutions worked in favor of the Security Council, as it faces "less resistance to tackling criminal activity where sovereignty is weakest."<sup>42</sup> As a result, the Council has made more progress in Guinea-Bissau, since sovereignty did not impede its actions. It should be noted that the Council's treatment of organized crime in Guinea-Bissau is not the norm. The "Security Council is a political body, not a forum for justice" and, as a result, will treat some countries as partners and others as targets of law enforcement.<sup>43</sup> Such an inconsistency allows for the Security Council to choose between peace operations that warrant a strong response to organized crime and those that are too politically sensitive to warrant any Security Council intervention. Since P5+1 members seek to preserve their national security priorities, most peace operations fall in the latter category.

The Security Council also has the ability to deepen the cooperation between the U.N. and regional organizations to reduce organized crime.

ECOWAS has established the West African Coast Initiative (WACI), but this organization is understaffed and incapable of operating in Guinea-Bissau due to fear of retaliation and insufficient funding.<sup>44</sup> Even though WACI personnel are committed to combating organized crime and reducing drug trafficking, they have expressed the futility of their efforts when they lack protection.<sup>45</sup> Nonetheless, WACI is still considered a step in the right direction. Peace operations expert William Durch states that WACI “needs to be replicated in every sub-region in which U.N. missions operate.”<sup>46</sup> Providing more direct support to regional offices that enables them to mitigate their own security concerns will help the Security Council build trust with local entities combating organized crime.

## **CRIMINALIZED POWER STRUCTURES PERPETUATING ORGANIZED CRIME**

The frequency of and ways in which peace operations interact with criminalized power structures (CPS) will determine how well the operations can combat organized criminal activity in the long-term. Dziedzic defines CPS as illicit networks that “[enrich] themselves from transactions in gray and black markets, criminaliz[e] state institutions, and perpetuat[e] a culture of impunity.”<sup>47</sup> As the state collects dues from organized crime networks, it ensures its own security and survival.<sup>48</sup> All of the aforementioned topics are affected by the rising phenomenon of CPS. Dziedzic concludes that “the most prominent spoilers of peace processes have been criminalized power structures.”<sup>49</sup> Peace processes and the impending settlement of a conflict do not benefit host governments that have overlapping interests and membership with the organized crime networks. The incentives and grievances that might have once driven state participation in illicit activities are diminished during peace processes, thus encouraging CPS to extend the conflict and preserve their political survival. Dziedzic measures the successful mitigation of organized crime based on whether the “CPS ceased use of violence, opposition to the peace process, or exploitation of illicit revenue to obtain or maintain power.”<sup>50</sup> None of the case studies in this article meets Dziedzic’s criteria. As a result, the U.N. needs to reframe its responses to organized crime in peace operations with CPS in mind.

Dziedzic devises his own toolkit for addressing CPS in peacekeeping operations. While conflict resolution experts Walter Kemp, Mark Shaw, and Arthur Boutellis call for “creative and assertive mandates,” Dziedzic also suggests the implementation of mandates that adequately identify the spoilers specific to the peace process.<sup>51</sup> U.N. member states often keep the language in mission mandates very vague and broad. Adding executive policing components and other more aggressive authorities would allow missions to

address organized criminal networks directly with more resources. In order to draft more assertive mandates, the Security Council has to directly address CPS, and in turn map out how peace operations will interact with these structures.

NGOs also play a significant role, both in advocating reforms and providing analysis concerning interactions with CPS. As NGOs often build relations and maintain direct contact with locals, they can obtain information regarding illicit activity that otherwise may not be disclosed to U.N. forces.<sup>52</sup> Others have also called for clandestine intelligence to inform peace operations. NGO's open-source intelligence might often be considered inferior to clandestine intelligence, but is nonetheless valuable. Open-source intelligence can also diminish host governments' fears of potential U.N. surveillance. Additionally, the Civil Society Triangle of NGOs, research institutes, and think tanks promotes "accountability, democratization, anti-corruption, and free and fair elections."<sup>53</sup> It follows that DPKO should foster deeper integration of the "third U.N.," which is comprised of NGOs and civil society partners, in the planning stage of peace operations and as a stakeholder in the operation itself.<sup>54</sup> By increasing cooperation with civil society organizations, DPKO insures its endeavors with stakeholders that share the long-term objectives stated in peace operation mandates.

However, Dziedzic's recommendations for halting the flow of revenue between organized crime networks and governments rely not only on changes to peacekeeping operations, but also on other international actors. He cites the enforcement of Section 11 of the USA PATRIOT Act that allows the United States to punish banks that "launder illicit CPS proceeds from the U.S. banking system."<sup>55</sup> This recommendation aligns with the UNTOC in that it relies on domestic legislation to target organized crime. However, American legislation is only one example of law enforcement criminalizing the flow of money from CPS into domestic banking institutions, and as such should not be overestimated. Instead, UNODC and DPKO should use comparative studies of domestic legislations like the USA PATRIOT Act as they plan their own responses and peace operations, and make recommendations to member states.

## **CONCLUSION**

This analysis of gaps in U.N. peacekeeping approaches to combating organized crime in peace operations suggests that the U.N. is very capable of bridging the technological gap. Therefore, it must focus on understanding criminalized power structures to design appropriate responses. Encouraging TechCCs, and especially OECD countries that would rather provide technology than troops or police, is the most achievable goal for the U.N. In the lead-up to the annual Peacekeeping Defence Ministerial Conferences, member states should be encouraged to provide new technology, such as infrared and satellite

technology, or the associated technical training to utilize them. However, simply updating technology will not be sufficient to counter organized crime. Creating networks of information and imagery collected by updated capabilities will be integral to tracking illicit activities and organized crime networks. Future peacekeeping operations should also establish JMACs as a repository for information pertaining to all components of the mission.

Finally, the U.N.'s superficial understanding of criminalized power structures requires immediate and comprehensive review, as it is by far the most significant obstacle to combating organized crime during peace operations. Vague mandates fail to prescribe a concrete and effective method of cooperation with host governments whilst addressing organized crime and criminalized power structures. Since peace operations are not usually a primary security concern for the Security Council, it is unlikely that the Security Council will lead the campaign against organized crime alone. UNDPA should be more involved in mediation efforts with governments with criminalized power structures or susceptible thereto. As the future of peacekeeping operations unfold, DPKO and UNODC will need to coordinate their efforts in order to design a more holistic approach to organized crime. To be successful, this approach will have to include and address the impact of criminalized power structures on promoting international peace and security.

#### ENDNOTES

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