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PREVENTING "PROTECTORS TO BECOME PREDATORS": CAN THE UNITED NATIONS STOP SEXUAL ABUSE AND EXPLOITATION BY UN PEACEKEEPERS?

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ABSTRACT: The article, using as theoretical framework Lauren Wilcox's view of bodies in International Relations as well as discussions from postcolonial and feminist perspectives, examines how sexual exploitation and abuse (SEA) occurs in the United Nations (UN) peacekeeping operations and how the organization has dealt with this issue. These practices are documented since the 1990s and affect mainly women and children in areas where UN peacekeeping missions are on the ground. The article concludes that the causes of this phenomenon are three: the context of vulnerability, the image that UN peacekeepers have of themselves and of the local population and the impunity enjoyed by them. Moreover, the answers given by the UN were reactive and not proactive. They depend on the goodwill of states and offer little support for survivors. We conclude that the UN and its peacekeeping missions are embedded in a Eurocentric and patriarchal logic where the bodies of locals are gendered and racialized. The UN would have the means to ensure that such violations do not occur if it had adopted tougher responses earlier such as an effective responsibilizing system and the Victims Fund, but changing the way the local population is perceived is necessary to avoid further SEA.

KEYWORDS: bodies; sexual abuse and exploitation; UN peacekeeping operations

EVITANDO QUE "PROTETORES SE TORNEM PREDADORES": A ONU PODE IMPEDIR A PRÁTICA DE ABUSO E EXPLORAÇÃO SEXUAL POR MEMBROS DE MISSÕES DE PAZ DAS NAÇÕES UNIDAS?

RESUMO: O artigo, utilizando como referencial teórico a visão de Lauren Wilcox sobre o significado dos corpos nas Relações Internacionais e discussões feministas e pós-coloniais, analisa como ocorrem abusos e exploração sexual em missões de paz das Nações Unidas e como a organização tem lidado com esse tema. Essa prática está documentada desde os anos 1990 e afeta principalmente mulheres em crianças em locais com presença de operações de paz da ONU. O artigo conclui que as causas desse fenômeno são três: o contexto local de vulnerabilidade, a forma como os participantes de operações de paz se veem e percebem a comunidade local e a impunidade desfrutada por eles. Concluímos também que a ONU e as missões de paz estão inseridas em uma lógica patriarcal e eurocêntrica na qual os corpos da comunidade local são sexualizados e racializados. Ademais as respostas dadas pela ONU foram reativas e não proativas, dependendo ainda muito da boa vontade dos Estados e oferecendo pouco apoio para os sobreviventes. Conclui-se que a ONU e suas missões de paz estão inseridas em lógicas patriarcais e eurocêntricas onde os corpos dos habitantes locais são racializados e generalizados. No entanto, a Organização teria meios para garantir que essas violações não ocorressem como respostas mais duras como um sistema efetivo de responsabilização e o

Fundo para Vítimas, porém mudar o modo como a população local é percebida é necessário para evitar novos casos de abuso e exploração sexual.

PALAVRAS-CHAVE: corpos; abuso e exploração sexual; operações de paz das Nações Unidas

INTRODUCTION

The main purpose of the United Nations (UN) is to ensure international peace and security. Its Charter defines even special means to enforce peace under the prospect of Chapter 7 including the use of the force. The UN is important because it is composed by practically all countries in the world and it counts on the participation of civil society organizations in some activities such as reporting. In theory, it represents the concept of international community. However, its values and manners to understand the globe are embedded in a patriarchal and Eurocentric view. A classical issue in which we can see this is in the peacekeeping missions. Peacekeeping operations can be described in Spivak's (1988) words as "white men saving brown women from brown men" (p.292). Even though the majority of troops comes from Third World countries[1], the decision making of mandates, strategies and operations come from First World Countries, mostly from three permanent members of the UN Security Council: the United Kingdom (UK), the United States (US) and France. This whole framework is directly connected with the growing number of denounces against human rights violations, especially sexual abuses committed by UN peacekeepers since the 1990's. In this sense, we face a great paradox: how does the way the UN define protection and perceive local population contributes to the continuation of these violations, and how can the organization guarantee that officials responsible for protecting people will not create a new problem to them?

According to Human Rights Watch (2016), sexual abuse has been documented in peacekeeping missions in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Cambodia, the Democratic Republic of Congo, East Timor, Haiti, Liberia, Sierra Leone, Central African Republic and South Sudan, among others. As we can see, these

[1] In 2015, for example, about one-fifth of all UN peacekeepers came from China, and India provided even more troops (STUENKEL, 2016, p.20)

are all Third World countries. Troops from Pakistan, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, Uganda, Burundi, the Republic of Congo, the Democratic Republic of Congo have been among those implicated in the abuses, although some of those cases concerned peacekeeping forces led by the African Union. Even if these troops are from non-Western countries, they act under the framework of an organization that helps to create and specific perspectives about the other and what is considered protection. Just Between January 16th and 30th, 2016, non-governmental organizations (NGOs) alone have documented 8 cases of sexual abuse and exploitation by UN peacekeepers in Bambari, Central African Republic. Only one of the survivors[2] received medical or psychosocial assistance, available at the local hospital and NGOs (HRW, 2016).

Women and girls started being an issue in UN's agenda with the adoption of the resolution 1325 (Women, Peace and Security) by the Security Council in 2000. This document recognizes that civilians, especially women and children, are the main victims of war. It highlights the important role of women in the prevention and resolution of conflicts and in peacebuilding processes. It also recalls the need to guarantee equal participation of women and to insert a gender perspective in peacekeeping operations including the deployment of gender components on the field. It also defends special training on protection and women's and children's rights for all members of missions and the need to gather better data on the impact of armed conflicts upon women and children. There is a need to improve women's representation in all decision-making spheres in all levels (local, regional, national, and international) and in mechanisms of conflict prevention, management and peace processes. It calls attention to "Measures that support local women's peace initiatives and indigenous processes for conflict resolution, and that involve women in all of the implementation mechanisms of the peace agreements". It "Calls on all parties to armed conflict to take special measures to protect women and girls from gender-based violence" with an emphasis on the states' responsibility to end impunity and prosecute those accountable for it (S/RES/1325, 2000). The resolution refers to a specific

[2] The word victim is used in UN reports. We prefer the word survivor to recognize the active role these people have in their processes of healing and recovery.

category of women that does not properly incorporate the demands of working class women and women of color, this document was fundamental for the insertion of gender discussions in the UN vocabulary and for the adoption of an agenda to call attention to gender issues and women's participation.

On October 9th, 2003, the UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan presented his Bulletin on Special Measures for Protection From Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (ST/SGB/2003/13) which defined sexual exploitation as any "actual or attempted abuse of a position of vulnerability, differential power, or trust, for sexual purposes, including, but not limited to, profiting monetarily, socially or politically from the sexual exploitation of another" and sexual abuse as any "actual or threatened physical intrusion of a sexual nature, whether by force or under unequal or coercive conditions". These definitions are used in all UN documents related to Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (SEA) since then. That is why we use these concepts in this article. One of the main criticisms regarding the way the UN has been dealing with SEA is that the organization adopted a discourse – in theory – of "zero tolerance" regarding these crimes by peacekeepers but it has not been effective in practice. In other words, we continue to testify cases of SEA despite a clearly discursive condemnation and the creation of an institutional framework by high authorities to avoid this. However, the way the UN understands bodies, protection and peacekeeping missions contribute to more situations like these to continue to happen.

We have seen more than 15 years of sexual exploitation and abuse against the most vulnerable people in humanitarian emergencies. The answers adopted by the UN have been clearly insufficient to guarantee the end of this practice. Many reports from civil society organizations show that the military who commit these crimes are not punished and the survivors do not receive any support from the UN.

Media has also contributed to disclosure cases of sexual abuse and violations committed by UN peacekeepers in different peacekeeping missions, all of them with the explicit mandate to protect civilians such as, for example, the

Mandate[3] of the United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUSCO). In this sense, the UN had to take some measures to address this situation including the adoption of a special resolution by the United Nations Security Council as well as a special report by the UN Secretary-General with a naming and shaming strategy. Also, ensuring the enforcement of the duty to investigate, prosecute and punish perpetrators by Member States, and create a trust fund to support survivors.

One the one hand, these denounces may cast doubts on the UN legitimacy to defend its main pillars, *i.e.*, the human rights' protection and the model of peacekeeping missions to protect civilians. On the other hand, this thematic has received little attention from the epistemic community in Brazil. This is why this article researches about SEA in UN peacekeeping operations and seeks to understand how the UN has dealt with the thematic of sexual abuse and exploitation by UN peacekeepers in order to guarantee that peacekeeping missions will not commit this kind of hideous crimes that the organization itself condemns.

With a qualitative study of different cases of SEA in UN peacekeeping missions and the analyses of UN documents regarding this thematic, we aim to understand how the UN has dealt with this practice and the role of the patriarchal and Eurocentric structures behind. The methodology prevents us from giving voice to the survivors of SEA but this is necessary to fulfill our objective to discuss how UN faces it. The use of UN documents may create a UN-centric view; however it is necessary if we want to understand the gendered and racialized logic that permeates peacekeeping operations[4].

[3] UNSC. Resolution 1925 (2010). Adopted by the Security Council at its 6324th meeting, on 28 May 2010. Available at: http://www.un.org/en/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=S/RES/1925(2010). Accessed in July 31th, 2016.

[4] The epistemological and methodological choices we made prevented us of giving voice to SEA's survivors (those are objects of our analyses) and it makes us to subjectify UN. These limitations in our study does not disqualify our findings. We hope to foster other researches involving Sexual Exploitation and Abuse in peacekeeping operations and International relations.

1. BODIES IN INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS AND INTERNATIONAL LAW

Gender is a social construction. It is neither natural nor biological. The way we study international relations is embedded in gender conceptions and structures, which contribute to the manner bodies are constructed by social and political relations. SEA is directly connected to the way bodies of the local population (especially women) are constructed in international discourses of security, and how peacekeepers see these bodies

Wilcox (2015) analyzes the significances of bodies in International Relations. Using four cases studies, the author argues that the structures of international relations delineate the framings through which we see them. She also stresses (2011a) that international security and the way we study it is gendered and portrays some conceptions regarding bodies as if they were natural. In fact, there is a lack of non-western theorizing of the body in security studies which contributes to the culture/nature dichotomy that paints women and feminine to the body and passivity (WILCOX, 2011a, p.597). The author also argues that bodies are public because they can be seen, touched, and injured. They are also vulnerable because “they are the part of the subject exposed to the other” (WILCOX, 2011a, p.598) and then subject to suffering from all kinds of violence. At the same time, bodies are precarious because they depend on their environment defined by physical and social political terms (p.599). When studying the drone warfare, she concludes that the process of becoming a body “involves the experience of being affected by other bodies” (2015, p.128). The drone warfare produces and destroys killable bodies with the use of technology.

The act of constructing bodies relates to power relations. By examining the practice of forced feeding of prisoners accused of terrorism in prison at Guantánamo, Wilcox (2011b) shows how the body of these so-called "terrorists" are constructed as “useful bodies” for the provision of information through torture and as "dependent bodies" that should not perish and therefore receive care from their torturers. The author presents the discussion of state sovereignty as one who has the power to kill and let live and at the same time has the power to give life or let die. In this sense, whenever the Security Council approves a peace

mission, it also exercises to some extent this function of letting live and letting die by justifying the need to protect people through vocabularies such as protection of civilians and responsibility to protect, for example. In this logic, the international community, through the UN, would have the prerogative of not letting (some) people die and be affected by serious human rights violations.

The UN Security Council is the responsible institution for authorizing peacekeeping operations. It means that any of the five permanent members (Russia, China, UK, US and France) can veto a mission. In this regard, there are situations in which the UN chooses to actively intervene and others, such as the war in Syria, in which people's lives and protection is not considered that urgent. Here there is a first critic regarding peacekeeping operations as they depend on the interests of the great powers that create and fund them. This depends also on how lives are valued and which lives should be protected through the UN framework. Butler (2015) argues that there is an unequal distribution of the public mourning. That if some lives are not valued as lives, these lives will never be lived nor lost in the full sense of these words (p.13). In that matter, it means that there are some lost lives that will not be grieved because in a distorted rational logic of death, some populations need to die to protect the lives of those considered as "the living" (p.53). War splits people between those that will receive grief and those that will not.

The way the UN and peacekeepers perceive the bodies of the local community where they are deployed will permeate the way they will relate to this population. Wilcox (2015) discusses that the techno-political processes to produce the body of enemies are implemented in a "gendered and racialized assumptions about who is a threat" (p.129). Women and children are constructed as victims that have to be protected in different UN vocabularies, such as protection of civilians and responsibility to protect. Simultaneously, there is a growing number of robust UN peacekeeping missions in which use force and hostilities have not ceased prior to the deployment of UN troops. It means that blue helmets will often have to use force against armed groups composed by locals. Butler (2015) notes that, as a result, whenever a population is perceived as a direct threat to one's life, all their members are not considered as lives, but as threats to life (a representation of life that represents a threat to life) (p.69).

This contributes to foreign civilians and soldiers to construct two visions of the local population either as victims in need of protection or as enemies, because they are the same kind of some armed people that are attacking us. In both ways, the local population is seen in a patriarchal way as individuals in need to be saved whose bodies are disposable and not as equals and agents of their processes.

Wilcox (2014) argues that sovereignty and the state are conceived as a male body understood as a protection racket. Thus, women's bodies function as objects that must be protected by men. On the other hand, the territory of the state is conceived as a vulnerable female body that can be raped and attacked, as such, it needs to be protected and avenged by its men (p.71).

> The constitution of women's bodies as 'other' compared to men's is central to the constitution of the modern state, as it allowed for the demarcation of public/private spheres of activity and the exclusion of women from public life on account of their association with the body and its deficiencies, compared to the affiliation of men with the mind and rationality, subjects supposedly free from the volatility of bodies (PATERMAN, 1988; YOUNG, 1990; PETERSON, 1992; GATENS, 1996 apud WILCOX, 2014, p.70).

De Jesus (2014) remembers that masculinities in international security are connected to strength, toughness, and aggressive heterosexuality (p.310). Masculinity involves determination and capacity of domination. That is why wars create a division between "men" and "boys", which reflects the natural aggression of man and the need to protect his state and women (p.342). Male bodies who defend the nation, freedom and honor incorporate the fundamental male virtues of courage, discipline, competitivity, dignity and strength. Such a trained, powerful, and invulnerable body evokes the idea of sacrifice (p.350). The male body is conceived as "dry", "clean", "erect", and "hard" opposing to the contamination of "dirty", "open", "savage", "promiscuous" and provocative desire of a female body (p.343-344).

In this sense, masculinities are produced inside the institutional life of the state, the market, and the family, despite being dynamic and contradictory (DE JESUS, 2014, p.314). The author classifies hegemonic masculinity as a well-succeeded strategy to guarantee the female subordination and a pattern of practices which permits the male domination to continue (p.320). In this vision,

the relation between the male and female gender is always oppressive, because the female body exists as a potential sexual objective to the male and male individuals are denied as sexual objectives to the same sex (p.321). The hegemonic masculinity excludes some other masculinities based on race, class, ethnicity, and sexual orientation. It creates and legitimates expressions, senses, ideas, fantasies, and desires related to the female sex (p.323).

> The modern, self-contained, bounded body that is seen as the normative body is culturally associated with white, heterosexual, able-bodied men rather than women, racial 'others', sexual minorities or disabled persons. Women's bodies have not so much been constructed as absence, or lack, but as leaking or fluid, through a mode of seepage or liquidity (Grosz 1994: 203; Shildrick 1997). As such, women's bodies have been figured as abject in their instability and refusal to obey borders. These non-normative bodies are seen as particularly vulnerable and as such, not suitable for full status as sovereign subjects. (WILCOX, 2014, p.70-71).

Moore (2000) recalls that a hegemonic form of racism follows the hegemonic form of masculinity. In this sense, imperialism does not just dominate people and territories, it also femininizes and pacifies the dominated with the establishment of a hierarchical relation of domination that seems so natural as gender differences. These hegemonic forms of masculinity and racism are western and they relate to the West's economic and political power rise and its discourse about the other (p.34). However, these hegemonic forms are now global because they have found support in many local or native masculinities.

"Racism, sexism and class exploitation act as agents to suppress and silence" all over the world (Hooks, 1986, p.127). Providing different women with a voice is necessary to change the way there are viewed as abjects/objects into subjects. Lugones (2015) argues that the dichotomic and hierarchical logic is necessary to the colonial and capitalist thought on race, gender, and sexuality (p.935). The intersection among gender/class/race is central to the worldwide capitalist power (p.939). The UN is inserted in this logic. The protection logic of the UN sees people in a colonial and patriarchal manner. Lugones (2015) states that people tend to be classified according to the coloniality of power and gender. This process actively reduces and dehumanizes the colonized in such a way that they become less than a human being (p.939). This is what Spivak (1988, p.283) means when she states that: "If in the context of colonial production, the subaltern

has no history and cannot speak, the subaltern as female is even more deeply in shadow". Peacekeeping operations happen, most of times, in countries that have faced colonialism. In this regard, their population and especially their women are constructed as "third-world woman" (idem, p.92) and peacekeeping operations are designed to save these women because, "Imperialism's images as the establisher of the good society is marked by the espousal of the woman as object of protection from her own kind" (SPIVAK, 1988, p.294).

Hooks (1986) points out that social and institutional structures perpetuate sexism both by those in control and by the survivors who are socialized to maintain the status quo. The ideology of male supremacy encourages women to feel that they have no value and that to attain some value they must engage with men (p.127). The author claims that we cannot talk about "women" and to expect to embrace the different categories involving women of color, the poor and the working class under this label. So, one of the problems of feminism is that it is dominated by white women who do not include in the agenda themes that are necessary for women who do not have privileges of race and class.

Hooks (1986) believes that other women feel invited by the white, the first world, and the elite ones who feel as they would have the right to lead the feminist movement. Thus, we are not saying that political rights and women's participation are guidelines that should not be defended, but it is important to include in the feminist agenda issues that are of concern to women in a global sense, including the fight against racism and advocacy for issues such as access to food, housing, minimum social and civil rights for all social classes, especially those not privileged by capitalism. One should think about who are the women to whom the UN speeches refer to. First, because those in countries where there are peace missions of the organization are in the category of non-white women, Third World countries and social classes not affluent by capitalism. Thus, although the pattern of greater participation of women in peacekeeping operations is very important, little of this kind of decision will change in the lives of these women. An analysis of the resolution 1325 shows that a broad feminist agenda as defined by Hooks (1986) is not presented. It continues to keep women as victims and does not care about how the gender/race/class intersection affects women differently throughout the world. Women have to be understood as agents of their lives to

combat SEA, because many of them will adopt strategies to survive in a context of arrival of thousands of foreigners with money in their countries. These strategies may involve sexual exploitation but also activities related to gendered roles such as cleanliness and care, which portrays Hooks (1986)' discussion of women exploiting women. In these functions, women tend to face violence and sexual abuse and exploitation.

Violence in both the national and international levels are strongly sexualized and the difference between perpetrator and victims is represented as a difference marked by gender. That is why gender represents very real differences of power among groups of people and among individuals. The vocabularies of race and gender are used to ordinate differences of power and/or prestige because power is also represented in a sexualized and racialized manner (MOORE, 2000, p.34). Sexuality is deeply connected with power as power and strength are sexualized, which means they are inserted in differences and hierarchies of gender and race (p.35).

The insecurity of male individual's with their masculinities may produce abusive behavior toward the female sex (DE JESUS, 2014, p.316). Besides that, physical violence against women has become a fundamental part of the hegemonic model of masculinity in the military area (p.343). Rape is not a question of sex, but of power. In war, rape is used to show male potency and domination of female individuals and male people related to them (p.340). Besides that, in all contexts, rigid and unattainable gender norms of what is "to be a man" generates conflicts and the dissemination of "Hypermasculines" rules and behaviors like the use of sexual violence and domination of women(p.338).

For a long time, sexual violence was considered a common feature of armed conflicts in which women and children were considered vulnerable victims due to the break-up of the protective structures from the family and the state. It was only after 1992, in the context of atrocities committed in the process of disintegration of former Yugoslavia that the UN started to pay attention to this important thematic. Denov (2015) argues that women's and girls' bodies arouse as sites of combat during armed conflicts because of ethnicity, gender, and power relations. Rape was, and still is, used as a weapon of war to terrorize population, intimidate the enemy, change the ethnic composition of a population (by ethnic

cleansing and genocide), and send a message to men of a specific society or community that they were not able to protect their families or even their women.

According to Grady (2010), there is an intrinsic vision of the women's body, sexuality and reproductive role as the guardians of the community's honor. That is why SEA is used to harm the enemy's honor and masculinity by shedding some light in his inability to protect his family. Bodies are political, particularly during armed conflicts. In these situations, bodies become a valuable resource in human trafficking market by slavery (forced labor in mining, agricultural, among others), and sexual slavery (especially women's); children are recruited as combatants due to their bodies and images as they cause physical and psychological harm; women and children are forced to trade their bodies for sex to survive in destroyed economies.

The UN calculates that more than 60,000 women were raped during the civil war in Sierra Leone (1991-2002), around 100,000 to 250,000 during the three months Rwandan genocide (1994), over 40,000 in Liberia (1989-2003) and 60,000 in the former Yugoslavia (1992-1995), and at least 200,000 in the Democratic Republic of the Congo since 1998 (UN, 2016). These numbers may be even higher considering that many survivors of sexual violence have shame and fear of stigmatization that prevents them from denouncing the perpetrators.

In International Law, the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia (ICTY, 1993) was the first international court whose statute considers rape as a crime against humanity. It has also expanded the definition of slavery as a crime against humanity to include sexual slavery. In 2001, the ICTY convicted Dragoljub Kunarac, Zoran Vuković and Radomir Kovač for rape as a crime against humanity. Before that, the case of Duško Tadić was the first international war crime trial involving charges of sexual violence[5]. Following the lead of the ICTY, the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda (ICTR, 1994) considered rape as a war crime and a crime against humanity. In 1998, the ICTR

[5] More information available at ICTY. Landmark Cases, 2016. http://www.icty.org/en/in-focus/crimes-sexual-violence/landmark-cases. Accessed in July 31th, 2016.

accused the first person guilty of rape as a crime of genocide (used to perpetrate genocide) in the case of the Prosecutor vs. Jean Paul Akayesu[6].

According to the Rome Statute in force since July 2002, which created the International Criminal Court (ICC), rape, sexual slavery, enforced prostitution, forced pregnancy, enforced sterilization, or "any other form of sexual violence of comparable gravity" are considered crimes against humanity when perpetrated in a widespread or systematic way.

Hooks (2003) draws attention to the power of the look. Making visible how certain structures which permeate the UN peace missions contribute to the construction of women as foreign bodies of the Other, less valuable than male bodies and dependent on men. Besides that, rape and sex are based on asymmetric relations of power between the I/Other, subject/object and as a way of controlling populations understood both in the logics of threat and protection. Rape and sex are part of a SEA culture in UN peacekeeping missions that must be finished.

We may infer that the way UN and peacekeepers understand bodies in situations of humanitarian emergencies contributes to the perpetration of atrocities and SEA. That is why it is so difficult to address the thematic of sexual abuse and exploitation in the international arena because it is inserted in the logic of the bodies of “others”: women and girls that no one cares about so their rights could be violated. This understanding does not justify the position of impunity faced by UN peacekeepers, but instead, it helps us to analyze why we still witness sexual abuses and exploitation committed by these troops. Therefore, it is important to reveal the main logics behind impunity to address and, most importantly, put an end to this reiterated practice.

[6] More information available at: ICTR. AKAYESU, Jean Paul (ICTR-96-4), 2016. http://unictr.unmict.org/en/cases/ictr-96-4. Accessed in July 31th, 2016.

2. THE EFFECT OF SEXUAL ABUSE AND EXPLOITATION IN UN PEACEKEEPING MISSIONS

It is important to note that SEA damages the UN's image, credibility and reputation with the host state government, local populations, and international community (STERN, 2015). It also impugns the mission's legitimacy and credibility and it can undermine the mission's success because it is a clear failure of the UN in providing protection to people (GUNNARSSON, 2015); it also violates one of the main UN principles, *i.e.* the protection of human rights. Besides that, the UN stays in a hypocritical position when advising foreign governments to respect international law and human rights while its own peacekeepers are violating human rights by committing sexual abuse and exploitation against local populations (NOTAR, 2006; STERN, 2015, p.8). Gunnarsson (2015) also shows that failing to punish peacekeepers for crimes they have committed may affect the way UN treats punishments of sexual violence as a war crime. That is, parties involved in armed conflicts who engage in sexual violence will be punished in the last instance in the ICC and the UN peacekeepers who engage in SEA will be immune. In this sense, the UN also fails to protect women who live in the shadow of sexual violence (p.212). Dyan Mazurana (2005, p.34-35) explains that,

> by taking part in the sex trade, peacekeepers and humanitarian aid workers support economies that maintain instability in the region, perpetuate abuses of women's, girls' and boys' human rights, further entrench systems of inequality and exploitation, and, thus, thwart a return to real peace and human security.

Grady (2010) argues that it is important to deconstruct the view that sexual violence is "natural" and "inevitable" during armed conflicts. SEA is a "political act deeply rooted in the political economy of war" (p.216). SEA, for instance, is used to supply resources for parties in conflict who engage in human trafficking. That is why when peacekeepers engage in sexual trade with local people they are being partial as they are contributing financially to armed groups and to the continuation of hostilities. Besides, parties that stand against any peace negotiation or international intervention use SEA as propaganda. For those "whose political aim is the continuation of the conflict or to try to secure peace on

more favorable terms […], SEA provides a useful propaganda tool and is thus a political issue" (GRADY, 2010, p.220). SEA makes peacekeepers partial because they also fail to respect the UN Charter and other human rights values.

Karim and Beardsley (2016) show that SEA undermines the promotion of gender equality locally, especially if it is in the mission mandate. After the UNSC Resolution 1325 on Women, Gender and Security, gender mainstreaming and gender equality, participation and empowerment of women in decision-making, peace negotiations and peacebuilding activities are fundamental in multidimensional peacekeeping operations' mandates. However, Gunnarsson (2015), when arguing that the UN is a racially hierarchical, heteronormative and patriarchal organization (p.213), stresses that UN negotiators often ignore female peacekeepers' opinion and the local population (p.214). Besides that, UN peacekeepers have little contact with local communities and women's local organizations to figure out what are the unmet needs of this population.

2.1 How does sexual abuse and exploitation happen in UN peacekeeping operations?

After a quantitative study involving peacekeeping operations from UN, North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) and other organization, Nordås and Rustad (2013) concluded that in situations with lower levels of battle-related deaths, in larger and more recent operations, in conflicts with higher levels of sexual abuse and in the less developed countries, SEA is more reported. Among the causes that explain SEA committed by peacekeepers are the contexts of vulnerability, the image that peacekeepers made of themselves (as "better" than the locals) and of local's bodies and the widespread impunity faced by perpetrators.

It is important to consider that peacekeeping missions are political in nature. First of all, they are created by UNSC resolutions that determine their mandates with some main objectives and the number of people to compose the mission including military officers, police personnel and civilians. After that, there is a negotiation with the UN Member States to finance the mission and with the troop contributing countries (TCC) and police contributing countries to send their

military officers and policemen to compose the mission. The UN has no permanent army, so it depends on the goodwill of its Member States. In most part, developed states contribute with resources and developing ones with troops, especially Pakistan, China, India, Bangladesh and Nigeria. That is why it is often hard for the UN to exercise authority over these governments, because the UN depends on them to deploy its peacekeeping operations. In the last years, there were a growing number of conflicts and humanitarian emergencies that demanded UN support. Besides that, the missions' mandates are becoming more complex and robust, including the possibility of use of force to protect civilians and peacebuilding activities that should be developed in coordination with other UN agencies and NGOs on the ground.

Second, peacekeeping missions are deployed in places devastated by armed conflicts or with prevalent violence, lack of the rule of law and weak state capacity to provide public goods such as education and security. In these realities, people are left in situations with an economic breakdown and the absence of formal employment opportunities and many of them had to leave their habitual places of living to become internally displaced people (IDPs). These are the social and economic conditions where thousands of foreign people (military, policemen and civilians) with salaries paid in dollars are deployed to enforce the UNSC mandate of a certain mission.

In order to survive and help their families, many people, especially women and children in the most vulnerable situations, may use their bodies in exchange for food, medicine and/or money. There is a direct connection between UN peacekeeping missions and the increase of people who engage in survival sex in host countries (DONOVAN, 2015). A Save the Children UK study conducted by Csáky in 2008 with 341 people (129 girls and 121 boys between 10 and 17 years-old and 36 men and 54 women from 38 focus group in Sudan, Côte d'Ivoire and Haiti) demonstrated that children as young as 6 years-old engaged in transactional sex seeking for food, soap, medicine, small amounts of money and luxury items such as mobile phones. However, this type of transactional or survival sex should not be seen as a complete form of agency because people are forced to enter in unequal power relations and it does not necessarily

represent their real choices in times of peace and full guarantee of their rights (SPENCER, 2005).

According to Smith and Smith (2010), an increase in the number of military personnel will lead to an increase in the demand for prostitution and in human trafficking rings. UN interventions takes place in contexts of economies affected by conflict and violence. The deployment of a UN peacekeeping operation will increase the market of prostitution and facilitate access to the market of human trafficking. There is a consolidated literature that shows how the creation of US bases and security operations and the deployment of peacekeeping missions increased prostitution and sexual misconduct in those areas (ENLOE, 1990). Gunnarsson (2015) calls attention to the political act of using SEA as "a quicker way to earn money than that of the state-based post-war economy" (p.209). That is why SEA is one of the last human rights violations to cease at the end of conflicts. Jennings (2008) also shows that the "economic logic" developed around peacekeeping missions stimulate the occurrence of SEA in host states and in neighboring countries.

In order to avoid SEA by UN peacekeepers, the Organization has created a zero-tolerance policy in 2003 that prohibits any sexual activity with children (people under 18 years-old) independently of the consent-age in host countries and any involvement of peacekeepers with prostitution. Even though consent relationships with local adults from host community are not prohibited, they are "strongly discouraged" because of the different power positions between peacekeeping soldiers and the local population. Besides that, the UN should create programs to empower local inhabitants giving special attention to women and children to avoid that they will be forced to enter in transactional sex to survive.

More than 150 million girls and 73 million boys experience sexual violence in conflict affected places, according to the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) (2014 *apud* DENOV, 2015, p.62). Csàky (2008) has concluded that children survivors of SEA where the most vulnerable children, that means, among others, orphans and separated boys and girls that had no familiar structure to protect and support them. Most of them lived and worked in the streets and they were not registered for humanitarian assistance and/or other basic services.

Perpetrators used to take advantages of these vulnerable populations (poor and discriminated children; children forced displaced and those from families that are dependent on humanitarian assistance) because they were less prone to report. The context of vulnerability is an important factor to consider in order to avoid SEA in peacekeeping operations. Nordås and Rustad (2013) concluded that SEA may arise from a form of opportunism, because the variation in the vulnerability of the local population to these crimes is correlated to SEA in peacekeeping operations.

A second important factor is the image that peacekeepers make of themselves and of the local population. Most of the personnel are military officers or policemen. These are professions extremely embedded in gender relations and traditional conceptions of social and economic roles of women and men. War is traditionally a masculine activity. That is why men compose the most part of peacekeeping missions, coming from Global South countries. Most do not receive specialized training in gender equality, women's, and children's rights, even though UN is trying to change this reality and to train all peacekeepers in this thematic which is mandatory in the resolution 1325. Most of these men come from patriarchal societies without gender equality and they are deployed in contexts after conflicts and violence where women and children do not have their rights guaranteed.

De Jesus (2014) argues that soldiers in peacekeeping missions feel a tension between the desire to be effective to do what they have learned to conquer the peace and the exigency to be masculine. This happens because peacekeeping and peacebuilding missions are not seen as real wars to protect their states and women. They are considered inferior, frustrating, and less masculine than conflicts (p.345). In these operations, the soldier's masculinity is based on the opposition of the femininity and other racialized masculinities (p.346). The figure of the peacekeeper tends to be constructed as controlled and disciplined, that is, the ideal form of man and soldier. It is also connected with values such as democracy, humanitarianism, conquer of peace that sustains an imperialist logic in which local communities are understood as primitive, irrational, and dependent to legitimate foreign interventions (p.367). By the other hand, peacekeeping operations can be a way to challenge traditional constructions of

gender by considering peace negotiation and institution-building as “male” and not just the fight (p.346-347).

There is a vicious cycle that reinforces images of masculinity from the part of the soldiers that contributes to women and girls to be seen as bodies to be used to reinforce masculine activities and visions. Gunnarsson (2015) concludes that “social normalization of sexual violence causes women to become humiliated, victimized, and degraded, and precludes their participation from public life, enforcing a belief both conceptually and practically of women being held as subordinate” (p.212). Besides that, UN’s structure contributes to peacekeepers to see themselves as the protectors of fragile women and children that need to be protected by those that are stronger and can see the bigger picture. Higate (2007, p.101) explains that

> The concept of military masculinities would appear to offer a useful analytical point of departure in explaining the dynamics of these gendered power relations, since the overwhelming majority of peacekeepers are combat trained military men (Fetherston 1998). In these terms, we might expect their social practices toward local women and girls to flow from military-masculine identities constructed around the notion of the inferior feminine “other” (ARKIN; DOBROFSKY, 1978; BARRETT, 1996; MORGAN, 1987, 1994).

Studies made with peacekeepers reinforce this conception. The research of Lutz, Gutmann and Brown (2009), with approximately 75 interviews in Haiti (MINUSTAH), 36 interviews in Kosovo (UNIMIK), and 56 interviews in Lebanon (UNIFIL) most of them provided by military, police, and civilian peacekeeping personnel, show the perspective of this group regarding gender and racism. Racial assumptions about local population make SEA more likely when people in the mission area are dehumanized in the peacekeepers’ discourses. Besides that, most part of the peacekeepers did not consider having sex with local women outside the mission area as a violation of the UN Code of Conduct. UN contingents are permeated by the culture of masculine privilege (or “boys will be boys”) that endorses a vision that men must dominate women the way they want.

Host societies also reinforce this vision that women and children are inferior and should be protected by men. In this sense, there is also the widespread idea of the “unchangeable male human nature” according to which

men cannot and should not sexually control themselves. Peacekeepers then understand SEA as “simple sexual desire” and not as a crime, a human rights violation and a function of power, domination, and gender inequality (LUTZ; GUTMANN; BROWN, 2009, p.7). This type of culture can be seen in peacekeepers discourses that justify their sexual behavior stating that local women were “all over them” that means they are approached by the girls and it was “too easy” to have sex with them. That is why non-go areas, curfews and shorter tours have been adopted by commanders as devices to prevent SEA. Besides that, there is the centrality of notions of sovereignty in UN institutional culture and the loyalty of military officers to their home countries. That can be seen in the culture of silence where military officials are loyal to each other and do not report SEA committed by their national fellows (LUTZ; GUTMANN; BROWN, 2009, p.9).

Based on a research conducted about UN peacekeeping mission in Liberia in 2006, 2012 and 2013, Henry (2015) has made interesting researches on the way peacekeepers think about themselves and the local population. The author stresses that there is a rapid and gradual turnover of personnel that tends to rotate every 6-12 months (military), 3 months (policemen) and undefined time (civilians). This contributes to the idea that their work cannot change the reality in host countries and that they cannot really help local communities. Higate (2007) conducted an exploratory research in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) and Sierra Leone in early 2003 and detected that peacekeepers held a fatalistic attitude and there was the manifestation of “the superiority of many peacekeepers toward Congolese citizens” (p.105). They understood that the situation in DRC was so grave that “sexually exploitative activities were unlikely to exacerbate the already parlous state of the country and its peoples” (HIGATE, 2007, p.108). They had a weak “sense of responsibility, while reframing the exchange of goods and services for sex as a positive, nearly altruistic intervention” (HIGATE, 2007, p.108). It means they really believed that engaging in sexual activities with local population was a manner to help them.

Henry (2015) comments that many of the peacekeepers from the Global South and the Eastern Bloc were there to make money and to create a better life for their own families at home. This is interesting to think that they are not binding

to the cause of protecting people in need. The main objective is still the local reality in their homelands, meaning they will have less empathy for local populations as well as less tendency to put themselves at risk for them. The military officers are bound to their national states and populations and this contributes for them to see locals in an inferior way. Henry (2015) concluded that peacekeepers consider themselves coming from superior lands and cultures. By the other hand, this "dependency" of peacekeepers and TCCs on the peacekeeping money could be used by UN (as it was done in 2016) to force TCCs to investigate, prosecute and punish SEA's perpetrators. UN peacekeepers construct and reproduce signs and symbols of militarism and nationalism to situate themselves in the narrative of professional and patriotic peacekeeper. Henry (2015) concluded that many peacekeepers engage in local relationships and even transactional sex with locals. To justify these acts, they emphasize their loneliness and their need of intimacy, however they would not engage openly in activities that could jeopardize their jobs.

Besides, military officers are trained in the logic to combat an enemy. In peacekeeping missions, they are put on the ground to deal with a situation in which there is no clear enemy. The tendency is that officers will be asked to do even more activities normally done by civilians with the evolution of more complex and multidimensional peacekeeping mandates (STERN, 2015), especially with the adoption of protection of civilians as an explicit goal of the missions. In this regard, the local population cannot be seen as faceless bodies that can be used as translators, drivers, cleaning ladies, cooks and prostitutes.

Karim e Beardsley (2016) concluded, after an analysis of mission-level information from 2009 to 2013, that "higher proportions of both female peacekeepers and personnel from countries with better records of gender equality is associated with lower levels of SEA allegations reported against military contingents" (p.100). The participation of women in peacekeeping operations is still small. Even though there is a search of UN to raise the number of women involved in peacekeeping operations especially after the adoption of the resolution 1325, the armed forces are still a much-masculinized institution with little space for women. Karim e Beardsley (2016) discuss that female personnel can also be victims of SEA and that in looking for "acceptance" they

may develop a culture of silence being more loyal to their male national colleagues than to local women that have been survivors of SEA (JENNINGS, 2008). This enters in Hooks (1986) discussion of the lack of solidarity among women from different races.

A better way to address SEA is to change the way peacekeepers see themselves related to the local population. One way to achieve it is through the cultivation of a value for egalitarianism with peacekeepers and the promotion of training in gender mainstreaming and gender balance inequality. Promoting local population participation as a collaboration system and not in a dependent and patriarchal relation with UN peacekeeping missions is another way to change how bodies and images of the local population are constructed and how local population see the missions' members. Creating empathy and bonding may be fruitful in these situations.

The third factor that contributes to widespread acts of SEA in UN peacekeeping is the impunity faced by perpetrators. The Convention on the Privileges and Immunities of the United Nations adopted by the General Assembly of the United Nations on 13 February 1946 guarantees immunity to any non-military peacekeepers classified as Officials or Experts on Mission (internationally recruited staff, locally recruited staff paid by salary, military observers, civilian police, and any other individuals designated as Experts on Mission by the UN). The UN Secretary General can waive immunity in some circumstances when the person has committed crimes against humanity, for example. The military officers also have immunity when performing their activities during peacekeeping missions. This immunity is guaranteed in the agreements made between UN, the host country and the troop contributing country. According to the Memorandum of Understanding and the SOFA (Status of Force Agreement), the troop contributing countries have the right and duty to prosecute their personnel who has committed crimes under UN mandates.

The problem surrounding UN peacekeepers and SEA is that the host country will have no right to prosecute people that have engaged in SEA. In the case of officers, the TCC may not be able or willing to prosecute their soldiers. Even if they are willing to investigate and to prosecute suspects, the investigations can be extended in time and the survivors and proofs are located

in the host countries. This makes it difficult to guarantee the due process and the survivors' access to justice and remedies. When dealing with non-military personnel, the UN depends on host countries to accept extrajudicial ruling to punish crimes committed outside its territory. UN has no tribunal to prosecute peacekeepers involved in SEA. Besides that, different criminal systems may understand sexual exploitation and abuse in diverse forms. In many TCCs, prostitution is not a crime, for example.

The peacekeepers' immunities prevent them from being prosecuted and punished by these crimes. There is an impunity environment in peacekeeping operations as their personnel knows that the maximum that can happen with them is being sent back home. In other words, peacekeepers commit SEA because they know that will be no adequate punishment (NDULO, 2009). At the same time, many SEA survivors do not denunciate these crimes once they know they will receive no justice, medical, psychological, or financial support.

SEA in UN peacekeeping missions is an underreported crime. To illustrate this fact, Grady (2010) argues that 45 per cent of Dutch personnel participating in the UN Transitional Authority in Cambodia had some sexual contact with sex workers or other members of the local population (including consent sex) during a five months' tour of duty. If these statistics were replicated in all UN missions in the field, the real numbers of SEA would achieve thousands of cases. Spencer (2005) argues that the UN reporting mechanism in the field is complicated and unclear to local communities. People do not report because they 1) do not want to lose the much needed-material assistance, 2) fear stigmatization of being considered by their host communities as "used" and without value and honor 3) have been sexually assaulted, 4) do not know how to report, 5) fear threat or retaliation from perpetrators (that many times carry guns), 6) feel powerless and useless to report and because there is a lack of effective legal services and support for them (CSÁKY 2008; STERN, 2015).

Boom (2015) suggests some solutions to avoid impunity by perpetrators including curbing immunity, permitting complementary jurisdictional capacity by host countries, and perhaps creating a UN military peacekeeper court. It is hard for troop contributing countries (TCC) to have criminal authority over their nationals because it is deeply connected with their sovereignty (DU PLESSIS;

PETE, 2004). And the other problem is that the host countries often do not have the capacity or juridical effective structures to prosecute and punish perpetrators. Some authors such as O'Brien (2011) and Boom (2015) have considered the possibility of the International Criminal Court to prosecute peacekeepers who committed sexual exploitation and abuse crimes. The main problem with this approach is that it is difficult to classify these crimes in the scope of crimes presented in Rome Statute. It means SEA in peacekeeping operations is not a crime against humanity, a crime of war, genocide, or a crime of aggression. Even though SEA committed by peacekeepers, especially against children, are egregious acts, they are not widespread activities committed against the local population and they cannot be considered inside the ICC's scope. Besides that, many TCC have not accepted the ICC's jurisdiction.

3. IS UN ACTING? AVOIDING PROTECTORS TO BECOME PREDATORS

Although cases of sexual exploitation and abuse were documented in UN peacekeeping operations since the 1990s, UN has been always giving reactive answers to the complaints that were not effective to eliminate this atrocity. In 2003, the UN Secretary General has adopted the Bulletin, "Special measures for protection from sexual exploitation and sexual abuse" (ST/SGB/2003/13) that has defined the practice and adopted a zero-tolerance policy toward SEA. In the following year, allegations of sexual exploitation and abuse in the Democratic Republic of Congo have made UN review its approach to SEA. The Secretary General has also asked for the Prince Zeid al-Hussein of Jordan to issue a report on the thematic. His report, named "A Comprehensive Strategy to Eliminate Future Sexual Exploitation and Abuse in United Nations Peacekeeping Operations" (2005) provided recommendations in areas of renewed standards of conduct, new investigative procedures, and new forms of organizational responsibility and accountability for perpetrators. UN has revised its Model of Memorandum of Understanding with Contributing Countries (MoU) of 2006 to put the obligation of Troop Contributing Countries to exercise criminal jurisdiction on SEA perpetrators and to inform the UN about the procedures taken.

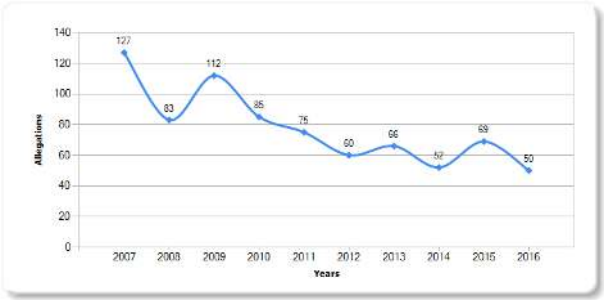
The UN has also established the Conduct and Discipline Unit (CDU) at UN Headquarters in 2005 to enforce the Secretary General's Bulletin and the UN Code of Conduct by providing oversight on conduct and discipline issues in peacekeeping operations and special political missions. They are also responsible to pursue the UN strategy of prevention, enforcement, and remedial actions to eliminate SEA. The CDU provides training for peacekeepers and it works with Conduct and Discipline Teams (CDT) on the ground in larger peacekeeping operations and Conduct and Discipline Focal Points in smaller ones and special political missions. These Conduct and Discipline people receive allegations of SEA from locals and implement the mission strategy on training, prevention, advising, enforcement, remedial action, and inform the Heads of Mission about them.

CDTs do not conduct investigations but examine allegations to make recommendations as to whether an investigation is necessary. If the CDT receives a report of SEA, the allegation is referred to the UN Office of Internal Oversight Services (OIOS). OIOS is responsible for investigating all allegations of SEA by civilian personnel. When allegations are substantiated, the UN may repatriate the individual and ban him or her from participating in future operations. Investigating SEA is a difficult task in peacekeeping operations, because, as we said early, it is hard to find evidence when survivors and witnesses are reluctant to provide testimony, and when UN lacks criminal jurisdiction.

The General Assembly has asked the Secretary General to document SEA allegations in annual reports on sexual exploitation and abuse. An analysis of these reports (that started to gather data on SEA in 2005) can shed some light on the way UN understands SEA. First, the number of allegations does not provide the exact number of survivors and perpetrators; in other words, the numbers may be underestimated. The reports until 2015 do not mention the national origin of the suspects of the allegations. Many of them are not substantiated due to the lack of evidence or because the time for investigating was too long and survivors gave up. Some civilians from UN agencies have cases dismissed because they came back to their countries. This is not enough to provide survivors with justice. UN has just administrative measures to deal with SEA that involves the repatriation of perpetrators and their banishment for future

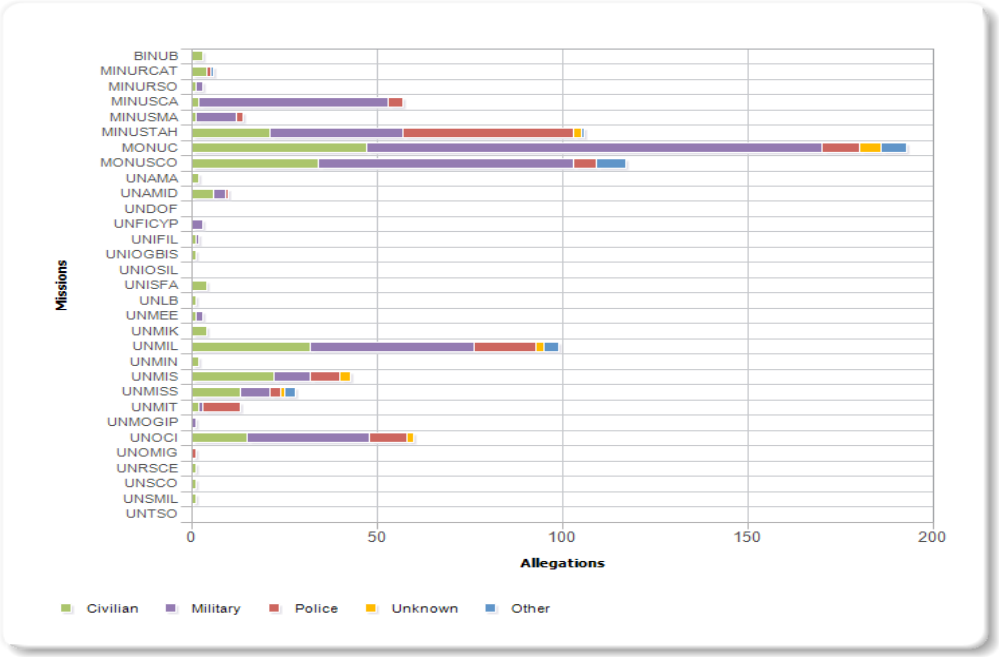
missions. There is also no mention of the support that survivors have received in host countries. Graphic 1 shows the number of allegations by year and graphic 2 by Mission:

Graphic 1. Allegations for All Categories of Peacekeeping Personnel Per Year (SEA)



Source: Office of Internal Oversight Services (OIOS)[7], 2016

Graphic 2. Allegations by Category of Personnel Per Mission (SEA)



Source: Office of Internal Oversight Services (OIOS)[8], 2016.

[7] Available at: https://cdu.unlb.org/Statistics/AllegationsbyCategoryofPersonnelSexualExploitationandAbuse/AllegationsforAllCategoriesofPersonnelPerYearSexualExploitationandAbuse.aspx. The data reflects OIOS reports dated up until April 30, 2016.

[8] Available at: https://cdu.unlb.org/Statistics/AllegationsbyCategoryofPersonnelSexualExploitationandAbuse/Al

Many critics can be addressed to the way UN deals with SEA. Csàky (2008) concluded that there is a lack of support for communities, children, and young people. They are not being encouraged to speak out about the abuse against them. There is also a lack of strong leadership and managerial courage in the international community to eliminate SEA and a lack of investment by governments and donors in child protection to prevent the underlying causes of SEA. UN has given much attention to the prevention and training component but there is a clear impunity in SEA committed by peacekeepers. The support for the survivors was also very limited because the strategy was focused in available local services with no specific UN fund dedicated to their psychological, medical, and financial assistance. Spencer (2005) remembers the importance of community participation, empowerment for women, deploying trained and elite military personnel and the necessity to improve reporting and punishing systems. For Taylor (2015), transparency remains the main problem in the way UN deals with SEA. Before 2016, it was difficult to find what allegations were made against each peacekeeper and the follow-up that the troop contributing countries have done to SEA allegations. Taylor (2015) also mentions the problem of the lack of assistance to survivors and the need of a clear leadership in the UN system regarding SEA.

Although UN has adopted a strategy to eliminate these practices, scandals of continuous sexual abuse committed by peacekeepers in Central African Republic have shown that the UN policy was ineffective. The Human Rights Watch and the AIDS-Free World have denounced the case and shown that UN authorities had knowledge of these abuses and they have done nothing. The 2015 report from the OIOS showed that UN strategy should give more attention to survivors' support and enforcement of criminal jurisdiction for perpetrators. In 2016, some important changes were made by UN that started to consider SEA as a sexual crime related to conflict and human rights violation. The Secretary

legationsbyCategoryofPersonnelPerMissionSexualExploitationandAbuse.aspx. Civilian means UN staff members and UN Volunteers; Military includes contingent personnel and military observers; Police refers to UN Police, including Formed Police Units; Unknown refers to unidentified subjects; Other includes consultants and employees of UN contractors. The data reflects OIOS reports dated up until April 30, 2016.

General started to name publicly the origin of the perpetrators of SEA. In 2016, the Secretary General began to vet individuals deployed in peacekeeping missions with prior misconduct record (UN/DFS, 2016). Member states have included national investigation officers in the host countries. The UN requested that investigations of SEA should be completed in six months and in three months in urgent situations (when dealing with children, for example).

UN has also created a Trust Fund to support survivors with medical and psychological care, legal services, and immediate material needs. Member States were invited to contribute voluntarily to this fund – Norway, for instance, has already done a contribution. UN has also adopted the strategy of sending back all troops when serious SEA was taking place. The perpetrators of SEA will have their payments suspended and if UN investigations prove that SEA happened, the TCC of the perpetrator must turn back to UN the salaries that were paid since the SEA had happened. This money will be applied to the Trust Fund. UN has improved its community-based complaint reception mechanism and it has requested TCC to create a DNA bank with DNA samples of all people sent in peacekeeping mission to facilitate verifying paternity claims. Some countries such as Benin, Ecuador, India, and Uruguay have designated paternity focal points to facilitate paternity and child support claims. On March 11, 2016, the UN Security Council adopted its resolution 2272 on sexual abuse and exploitation, designed to prevent sexual violence by UN peacekeepers that give special attention to medical and psychological assistance to survivors.

Nevertheless, it remains the problem that UN has no legal prerogative to prosecute peacekeepers, hence it depends on the goodwill of TCCs to investigate, prosecute, punish violators, and give feedback to the UN. However, naming and shaming mechanisms have shown that UN has other tools such as political pressure and stop contracting troops from countries with grave misconduct records (CARASIK, 2015). Many countries depend on the money of UN peacekeeping operations to sustain their armies. The other alternative that UN could rely on to prevent impunity could be counting on the support of Member States. There is the US experience in March 2005, when the Congress urged UN to suspend payment of peacekeeping suspects and the US withhold military

support to states with evidence of abuse and failure to investigate and punish the suspects (NOTAR, 2006, p.415).

Finally, even with these positive changes, Human Rights Watch (2016) argues "that UN and its member countries should do more to investigate and prosecute peacekeepers who commit sexual exploitation and abuse and to support the survivors[9]". The NGO also mentions the lack of information and transparency in the organization and other political obstacles as the UN dependency on voluntary troop contributions as problems regarding the way UN deals with SEA.

FINAL REMARKS

This article has shown that sexual exploitation and abuse is a serious problem in UN peacekeeping missions with deep roots in gendered and racialized ways that local communities are perceived. Firstly, we must consider that the way we understand bodies in International Relations is a factor that contributes to the increase of SEA. When peacekeepers see women and children of host countries as faceless bodies or "other" bodies there is the dehumanization of them. They become abjects/objects. Military officers are especially bond to their national states and populations so they do not have either the responsibility nor the true will to protect these populations. Payment is often what motivates people's participation in missions and they are aware that will not be punished for the misconduct. Discourses that construct and reinforce masculinities and the excuse "boys will be boys" do not justify sexual abuses and violence in any place and circumstance.

Secondly, the paper has given attention to three main factors that contribute to the perpetuation of sexual exploitation and abuse in UN peacekeeping missions: the context of vulnerability, the way peacekeepers see

[9] This citation is available at the website: HUMAN RIGHTS WATCH. *UN: Stop Sexual Abuse by Peacekeepers*. New Report Reveals Lack of Justice, Protection for Victims, March 4th, 2016. Disponível em: <https://www.hrw.org/news/2016/03/04/un-stop-sexual-abuse-peacekeepers>. Acesso em 15 jul. 2016.

themselves and the local community and the impunity enjoyed by perpetrators. We should also consider these factors when dealing with SEA.

Thirdly, UN's responses have been reactive, instead of proactive, to SEA scandals. During much time, the UN zero-tolerance discourse was ineffective and we continue to see cases of SEA in most of the missions. Little attention was given to survivors. In 2016, the UN Security Council has approved a resolution on sexual exploitation and abuse focusing on support for survivors. Besides that, one of the most important changes was that UN now treats SEA as a conflict-related sexual violence and a human rights violation. Putting survivors in the center can lead to important measures to avoid SEA in places where UN peacekeeping missions occur.

UN's responses have not been enough to deconstruct specific gendered and racialized views of local communities' bodies. UN also has only implemented changes when scandals are covered by international media. Nonetheless, we have not seen effective measures being taken place to address the host countries context of vulnerabilities, the way peacekeepers see themselves and local communities and impunity. As we have stressed UN has alternatives to deal with SEA including effective and systematic accountability mechanisms to punish perpetrators; naming and shaming strategies and avoiding contracting countries that do not follow UN's strategy of prevention, enforcement, and remedial actions. Donors can also exercise some pressure because money is fundamental to some troop contributing countries. Understanding that bodies are political and matter in International Relations is a necessary approach to eliminate SEA. It is imperative to stop protecting perpetrators and to start supporting survivors. We conclude as Henry (2015) "that peacekeepers are continually dependent on militarized (especially embodied) resources (or forms of capital)" (p.374), and that this is both a cause and consequence of the everyday contradictions and paradoxes that contribute to SEA. If UN wanted, the organization would have adopted a stronger answer to eliminate sexual exploitation and abuse in all peacekeeping missions. However, this also depends on changing gendered and racialized constructions of the bodies of those that may become futures survivors of sexual exploitation and abuse.

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