

Norm collisions in UN peace operations: how implementing actors react to conflicting demands

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Abstract

Multilateral peace operations today are confronted with normative demands that might contradict each other. Two core norm conflicts are at the center of this paper, first the collision between the norm “Protection of Civilians” (PoC) and the norms of impartiality and the non-use of force, second the contradictions between the zero-tolerance policy regarding sexual abuse by peacekeepers and the demand to establish a relationship of trust between peacekeepers and local populations. This paper analyzes how norm collisions affect the implementation of peace operations and how individual operations react to these conflicting normative demands. Using the method of multimodal discourse analysis, it investigates which strategies individual operations develop in order cope with norm collisions and what factors influence the choice of particular strategies.

Introduction

Much has been written about how United Nations peace operations have changed over the years. Significant doctrinal changes since the Brahimi report in 2000 have created a new normative framework for peacekeeping mandates. The protection of civilians has since then become a core norm for peace operations. In addition to that, the zero-tolerance policy regarding sexual exploitation and abuse by peacekeepers has recently become a guiding principle for peacekeepers’ behavior. These new norms have been developed in response to serious crises, fueled by situations where peacekeepers failed to act to hinder massacres or by human rights violations committed by peacekeepers themselves through sexual exploitation and abuse or the mistreatment of detainees (Heupel and Zürn 2017). While existing research has sought to describe and explain these normative changes and their institutional implications, this paper focuses on the fact that new norms are not just complementing but

might also collide with existing normative frameworks (Blocq 2007; Lipson 2007; Paddon Rhoads 2016).

The rise of the protection of civilians as a norm for peace operations leads to potential conflicts with core principles of peacekeeping, in particular the principle of impartiality and the non-use of force except for self-defence. As one scholar recently noted, “can UN officials shoot at parties one day and be accepted as impartial brokers of peace the next?” (Paddon Rhoads 2016: 78). When the former president of Côte d’Ivoire, Laurent Gbagbo, for example, refused to accept his defeat in the election outcomes, the UN mission in the country UNOCI launched an air strike and used military force against the government forces in order to protect civilians from attacks (Mehler 2012; Karlsrud 2013). As a consequence, Gbagbo was arrested and is now on trial at the International Criminal Court (ICC). This would probably not have been possible without UNOCI’s involvement, which was justified by reference to UN SC Resolution 1975 and the mission’s mandate to “protect civilians under imminent threat of physical violence”. At the same time, the mission has been strongly criticized for not respecting the norm of impartiality and illegally using force (Karlsrud 2013). This dilemma now affects all peace operations, as the protection of civilians has become a core part of their mandates.

Another norm conflict has risen in the context of the implementation of the zero-tolerance policy regarding sexual exploitation and abuse. This policy was adopted after several scandals which revealed that a number of UN peacekeepers sexually exploited women and girls while being on mission, those they were supposed to protect. The policy is intended to restore the UN’s legitimacy and has only recently been incorporated into peacekeeping mandates (SC res.). In order to implement the policy, peacekeepers are often told to stay away from local populations and avoid any relations (Lutz et al. 2009: 7). At the same time, however, peacekeepers are also expected to establish trustful relationships with the local population in line with the “people-centered peacekeeping” approach. A close engagement with the local population is expected to enhance the mission’s credibility and win support among domestic actors (Gordon and Young 2017).

These diverging normative demands have created challenging dilemmas for the actors who implement a peace operation. This paper analyzes how individual peace operations deal with these norm collisions, what strategies they develop and what factors influence the choice of particular strategies. Based on the existing literature, I identify three potential strategies, namely congruence-building, prioritization and organized hypocrisy. Congruence-building

aims at reconciling the colliding norms through the reconstruction of some of their parts in order to ensure their normative fit (Acharya 2004). Prioritization in turn implies that one norm is accepted as superior whereas the other is contested in some elements in order to justify subordinating one to the other and thus reduce ambiguity (Zimmermann et al. 2013; Deitelhoff and Zimmermann 2013; Wiener 2017). Finally, organized hypocrisy is a strategy that leaves the ambiguity unresolved and allows the actor to demonstrate commitment to both of the colliding norms by responding to one norm rhetorically and complying with the other through actions (Lipson 2007; Hirschmann 2012a).

The research project is designed as a comparative case study analyzing two UN peace operations that are most likely to experience the strongest effect of diverging demands: the UN mission to the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUC/ MONUSCO) and the UN mission in Sudan/South Sudan (UNMIS/UNMISS). The mandates of both missions have made the protection of civilians a priority for the operation, creating potential collisions with the principles of impartiality and the non-use of force except for self-defense. Both operations are also most closely watched with regard to the implementation of the zero-tolerance policy given the scandals involving the sexual exploitation and abuse by MONUC and UNMIS peacekeepers in the past. In addition to the mission-level, this project will also investigate the strategies of Rwanda as a troop-contributing country when dealing with conflicting normative demands. Rwanda considers itself a role model for troop-contributing countries and has established a specialized training center. Therefore, we can expect the country to have internalized international norms and thus be most likely confronted with dilemmas arising from norm collisions. The empirical analysis thus contains a comparison of mission-level and country-level strategies for how to deal with norm collisions.

This paper is structured as follows. The next section outlines the theoretical framework of the project. Thereafter, I present the research design and the method used for the analysis, followed by a few preliminary insights into the empirical analysis. The conclusion summarizes the current stage of the project, highlights important challenges and outlines the implications for existing research.

Norm collisions: implications for implementing actors

The early literature on norm evolution and diffusion has provided important insights for the role of IOs as norm entrepreneurs and facilitators of diffusion. More recently, however,

scholars have begun to investigate responses to norm diffusion and potential conflicts between diverging norms or institutions, either by focusing on local adaptation of global norms (Acharya 2004), by analyzing dynamics of contestation (Wiener 2017) or by examining the role of “antipreneurs” (Bloomfield and Scott 2017). This article speaks to two important strands of this research on the ambivalence of norms, first the research on norm conflicts in the implementation of peace operations and second the research on normative orders.

Existing research on the implementation of peace operations mostly deals with conflicts that arise from collisions between the mandate of an operation and the practical challenges on the ground, often with a focus on individual operations (e.g. Berdal and Ucko 2015; Campbell 2008a; Holt and Taylor 2009; Peter 2015). In addition to that, researchers investigate the conditions for the effective implementation of particular norms. Particular focus has been put on how institutional characteristics influence the implementation of the “protection of civilians” norm, for example (e.g. Bove and Ruggeri 2016; Hultman 2013). Within this scholarship, the rise of the norm to protect civilians has spurred an intense debate about its compatibility with the norm of impartiality. While some authors come to the conclusion that the PoC norm actually poses a threat to the norm of impartiality and that the two are incompatible (Karlsrud 2015; Levine 2013), others posit that the PoC norm has changed existing notions of impartiality into something called “assertive impartiality” in contrast to “passive impartiality” (Paddon Rhoads 2016). However, only few researchers have investigated how norm collisions impact the implementation of IOs’ policies. As Acharya criticized already years ago, those affected by norms have often been ignored in the literature (Acharya 2004). This paper therefore focuses on implementing actors, i.e. the mission leadership and troop-contributing countries, who are the first to be affected by conflicting normative demands.

The research on normative orders combines perspectives of International Relations and International Law scholarship on the relationship of norms. Most relevant for this project are the studies on how global norms might collide with local normative frameworks (Acharya 2004; Farrell 2001), the research on “norm contestation (Wiener 2017) and the scholarship on “global legal pluralism” as a resolution to norm conflicts between national and global normative orders (Krisch 2010). This literature however focuses on norm conflicts that arise between norms that originated in different levels of politics or legal systems (Zimmermann, et al. 2013). In contrast to that, this paper analyzes the impact of conflicting normative demands

that originate on the same institutional level for the implementation of peace operations.¹ The normative frameworks for peacekeeping, particularly relevant the norms of protection of civilians and impartiality, the zero-tolerance policy and the people-centered approach to peacekeeping, all originated at the global level and were incorporated in peacekeeping mandates by the UN Security Council. The contribution of this paper therefore will focus on the impact of norm collisions between norms originating from the same institutional level.

Based on the existing literature, I analyze three strategies that implementing actors might choose to respond to norm collisions. All three types might have feedback effects for the institution that initiated the norm diffusion process and eventually might led to changes in the norms. However, this paper will focus on the strategies by implementing actors and will provide some inductive insight on the factors that influence their choice.² The analysis is based on a sociological institutionalist understanding that institutions, therefore also norms, shape individuals' actions and identities (Hall and Taylor 1996: 15; Powell 2008). It is therefore particularly insightful for the scholarship on norms to study the organizational practices in situations where they respond to an institutional environment that provides conflicting normative demands.

The first possible strategy to respond to norm conflicts is the strategy of *congruence-building*. This implies that actors reconstruct parts of a norm in order to make it fit better with the conflicting other norm. Previously, researchers have identified this congruence-building in norm localization processes, where transnational norms collide with individual or local norms (Acharya 2004). In this case, however, the two colliding norms both originate and get diffused from the global level. Nevertheless, congruence-building remains a possible option for actors to react to these norm conflicts. Through congruence-building actors discursively reconstruct the relationship between the two colliding norms in order to be able to act in line with the demands of both norms. According to existing research on norm localization, congruence-building depends on the character of the norms and the norm proponents' credibility (Acharya 2004: 248). Adapting this to the case of conflicts between norms that originate on the same level, we would expect congruence-building to occur more likely if the two norms are equally strong and if their proponents' display a similar degree of credibility.

¹ Potential further collisions are possible, such as the conflict between the demands of the zero-tolerance policy and existing conceptions of masculinity (Duncanson 2009).

² The aspect of potential feedback effects will be analyzed at a later stage of the project.

Another possible strategy to respond to norm conflicts is the strategy of *prioritization*. Hereby, actors establish a hierarchy between the two norms in order to justify why they act according to only one of the two. Hereby, they champion their “favorite” norm when presenting their actions by emphasizing the legitimacy of that particular norm and how it relates to their own mandate. At the same time, they either ignore the other norm completely in their discourse or they actively contest it in terms of its applicability to certain circumstances or by questioning its overall validity. This prioritization allows implementing actors to reduce the ambiguity that is created by the diverging demands of the norms (Zimmermann et al. 2013; Deitelhoff and Zimmermann 2013). The focus hereby lies on the discursive critical engagement in deliberation processes as it is expected to take place within international organizations (Wiener 2017: 4). In contrast to previous assumptions that “there is no room for evoking powers of negotiating” at the level of the implementation of a norm (Wiener 2017: 11), this project will investigate the potential feedback effects that the prioritization of norms by implementing actors can have on the norm-creating institution. Implementing actors might opt for the strategy of prioritization under the condition that their own normative framework resonates better with one of the two colliding norms so that they are inclined to justify their actions in accordance with this one.

The third possible strategy how actors respond to norm conflicts is the strategy of *organized hypocrisy* (Lipson 2007; Brunsson 2006; Hirschmann 2012a). This strategy allows the actors to keep the ambiguity. Rhetorically, they emphasize their commitment to one norm while in their actions they respond to the demands of the other norm. Thereby they are able to demonstrate their commitment to both norms. Implementing actors might need to resort to organized hypocrisy in order to remain legitimate when confronted with conflicting normative demands from their mandate-giver (Karlsrud 2015). Organized hypocrisy is therefore more likely if the mandates for implementation explicitly refer to both norms without allowing the actors the possibility to reinterpret one of the two colliding norms. It is also expected to occur if the implementing actors’ normative framework resonates better with one norm whereby their institutional environment favors the other.

In sum, we can formulate the three following hypotheses on how implementing actors react to norm conflicts:

- Hypothesis 1: When confronted with colliding norms, implementing actors engage in congruence-building.
- Hypothesis 2: When confronted with colliding norms, implementing actors prioritize one norm and contest the other.
- Hypothesis 3: When confronted with colliding norms, implementing actors respond by organized hypocrisy.

Research design

The analysis is designed as a comparative case study that studies the reactions to norm collisions in two UN peace operations that are most prominently confronted with diverging normative demands, i.e. the UN missions to the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUC/ MONUSCO) and the UN missions in Sudan/South Sudan (UNMIS/UNMISS). Both operations have been equipped with mandates that prioritized the protection of civilians and at the same time have been accused of their lack of impartiality when using force. Both missions have also been confronted with demands to strictly implement the zero-tolerance policy on sexual exploitation and abuse, being among the first operations to introduce conduct and discipline teams. The time frame for the analysis will be from 2005-2017 for MONUC/MONUSCO and from 2007-2017 for UNMIS/UNMISS, which will allow taking into consideration potential changes in the implementing actors' reactions to the norm conflicts.

The implementing actors at the center of this analysis are the mission leadership, who are in charge of implementing UN norms and policies on the ground. Significant level of discretion however is granted also to individual troop contributing countries and their contingent leaders. Therefore, this project will also engage in analyzing the responses of one particular troop-contributor to colliding normative demands. For this, the country of Rwanda has been selected as the object of study. Over the last 15 years, Rwanda has emerged as an important contributor to UN missions and considers itself to be morally obliged to comply with international norms. Its engagement in UN peace operations has become part of the country's "post-genocide national identity" and its ambition to become an important reliable partner for the implementation of UN missions in Africa (de Coning, et al. 2017). It has established a

specialized training center for peacekeepers, the Rwandan Peace Academy, which provides pre-deployment and post-deployment trainings for peacekeepers not only from Rwanda but also from other countries and UN staff.³ Due to its commitment, Rwanda is therefore expected to be most likely confronted with dilemmas that result from norm conflicts. The comparison of Rwandan peacekeeping contingents’ reactions to norm conflicts will therefore provide a second layer of comparison in addition to mission-level strategies for how do deal with norm collisions.⁴ The following table summarizes the comparison:

UNMIS/UNMISS	MONUC/MONUSCO	Norm conflicts
- Mission-level strategies	- Mission-level strategies	- PoC vs. impartiality - Zero-tolerance vs. trust
- TCC strategies (Rwanda)	- TCC strategies (Rwanda)	- PoC vs. impartiality - Zero-tolerance vs. trust

For the empirical analysis, this study relies on the method of a multimodal discourse analysis (Meier 2011; Rose 2012), which will be combined with semi-standardized interviews when investigating the . Peace operations present their strategies not only in written documents and reports, but more importantly communicate their strategies to the (sometimes illiterate) public through images, website presentations and videos.⁵ In order to unravel the strategies of the mission leadership, the analysis will therefore focus on the visual responses to the norm conflicts and put their meaning into context of the missions’ overall discourses that can be found in press releases and other documents. This method is based on the assumption that we need to understand “how images make meanings” (Rose 2012: 105). It is thus part of a constructivist methodology and critical discourse analysis, which looks both at verbal and non-verbal communication, combining text and visual analysis together with sound in videos. The visual analysis will therefore focus on four categories of “signs” according to which an image is “taken apart” analytically (Rose 2012: 115):

- Representations of bodies
- Representations of manner

³ The Rwandan Peace Academy, see <http://www.rpa.ac.rw/home/>, last access 21 September 2017.

⁴ The project also cooperations with Louisa Lombard, a cultural anthropologist from Yale University, who will analyze individual peacekeepers’ reactions to conflicting normative demands in peace operations, therefore adding the individual’s perspective to the analysis.

⁵ Although this would require yet another method of analysis, it is worth mentioning that MONUC even founded a radio station, Radio Okapi, which became an important channel to inform the public about the mission’s activities (Betz 2004), see <http://www.hirondelle.org/images/pdf/Etudes/RadioOkapiasapeacebuilder.pdf>, last access 21 September 2017.

- Representation of activity
- Setting

These signs can for example be the visual presentation of peacekeepers' interactions with local populations with regard to their type of activities, the closeness in their positions, their gestures and facial expressions or their equipment (heavily armed vs. civilian look).

The following two examples illustrate the diverging visual communications of MONUSCO with regard to the norm of civilian protection. The left picture is the front cover of MONUSCO's handbook on "Protection of Civilians in Practice" and shows the mission heavily armed, but individual peacekeepers barely recognizable who are positioned on a tank behind Congolese women going after their daily work, who turn their back to the peacekeepers while carrying heavy and with serious face expressions. The picture to the right is from MONUSCO's "Outreach" communication in the section on "rétablir la confiance entre la population, la MONUSCO et les forces de l'ordre". This picture shows the UN's special adviser on genocide in civilian appearance in the midst of a group of Congolese, from children of both sexes to elderly men, with serious faces but turned towards each other in dialogue and discussion.



The analysis of signs will then be related to the indicators that characterize the different strategies of response to norm conflict. The strategy of congruence-building is indicated by a discursive reinterpretation of the two norms. Individual elements of one or both norms are thus adjusted in order to ensure a better fit. The discursive framing hereby explicitly engages with both of the norms simultaneously by highlighting the harmonious aspects while downplaying the conflicting elements. The strategy of prioritization in contrast is indicated by

the discursive legitimation of one of the two norms while ignoring or contesting the other. This implies that the communication is biased towards the positive presentation of one particular norm either in number (e.g. a majority of tweets and pictures relating to that norm) or in character (e.g. by presenting the satisfaction of local populations or the international community with the mission's actions). It can also imply that elements of the contested norm are presented less positively, as expressed for example by the facial expressions of the people presented in pictures. Organized hypocrisy in turn is indicated if the mission's actions are framed rhetorically in line with one particular norm, while the mission's actions (as reported in regular communications to the UN Security Council and the UN Secretary-General) comply with the other. By organized hypocrisy, the organization arranges itself with the discrepancy arising from the norm conflict while prioritization aims at convincing the audience of the validity of one particular norm.

The documents relevant for the analysis of MONUC/MONUSCO are the mission's core outreach publication "ECHO de la MONUSCO", in particular the issues on civilian protection and the special issue on sexual exploitation and abuse, the pictures presented in the "MONUSCO photo calendar 2016" and the mission's handbook on the protection of civilians. With regard to UNMIS/UNMISS, the elements for analysis will be drawn from the picture gallery on the SRSG's visits to sites of protection of civilians, the videos on civilian protection and the mission leadership's press releases.

Preliminary insights from empirical analysis

In 2000, the Security Council adopted Resolution 1296 of 2000 on protection of civilians in armed conflict. Since then, the protection of civilians has become the core of peacekeeping mandates. At the same time, peacekeeping continues to rest on its original principles, i.e. the principles of impartiality and the non-use of force except for self-defense. Impartiality is hereby considered to be "integral to the identity of peacekeepers" (Paddon Rhoads 2016: 25). This has created a dilemma as peacekeepers increasingly face situations where these norms seem incompatible (Sheeran and Case 2014). How can the UN "shoot one day and be accepted as impartial brokers the other" (Paddon Rhoads 2016: 78)?

The Capstone Doctrine, one of the core recent documents of the UN Department of Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO) and the Department of Field Support (DFS), openly acknowledges this tension: UN peacekeeping operations "should be impartial in their dealings

with the parties to the conflict” (UN DPKO and DFS 2008: 31) and “implement their mandate without favour or prejudice to any party” (p. 31). At the same time, however, the “need for evenhandedness towards the parties should not become an excuse for inaction in the face of behavior that clearly works against the peace process” (p. 33). This balancing act at the headquarters level has been characterized as “assertive impartiality”, a “new understanding of impartiality” (Paddon Rhoads 2016: 64).

But has the UN really arrived at a reinterpretation of its peacekeeping norms? My first preliminary results indicate that individual missions continue to struggle with the demands resulting from these norm conflicts. Nevertheless, MONUC/MONUSCO and UNMIS/UNMISS differ regarding their strategies of how to respond to conflicting normative demands. In general, MONUSCO website contains many more visual outreach elements than UNMISS, which is mostly based on text, in particular when referring to the issue of conduct and discipline, the second norm conflict treated in this study.

The civilian protection-impartiality norm conflict: from organized hypocrisy to prioritization in MONUSCO and from congruence-building to organized hypocrisy in UNMISS

Between 2008 and 2014, the reactions of MONUC/MONUSCO indicate organized hypocrisy. Since 2008, protection of civilians was made a priority after the crisis and massacres in Goma and Kiwanja, among others (Holt and Taylor 2009: 247). The Security Council in its resolution 1856 of 2008 explicitly stated that protection of civilians “must be given priority in decisions about the available capacity and resources over any other tasks” (para. 6). At the same time, there were intense deliberations going on about how to realize the demand for protection: “MONUC was the scene of the most active debate and innovative thinking on PoC” (Holt and Taylor 2009: 184). In its communication, MONUC “explicitly promised protection” in the Bukavu crisis, the North Kivu crisis in 2008 and during the 2012 rise of M23 rebels in 2012 (Paddon Rhoads 2016: 174). At the same time, however, the missions force commanders were told to refrain from the use of force, leading to huge failures in protecting civilians from attacks, for example in Goma in 2012 and during the massacre in Mutarule in 2014. The mission therefore has been accused of not protecting civilians sufficiently from attacks by warring parties and at the same time has been criticized for its lack of impartiality when using force against certain warring parties (e.g. Karlsrud 2015).

Over time, however, it seems like the response to the norm conflict has shifted from organized hypocrisy towards a prioritization of the protection of civilians at the expense of the mission's impartiality. With the change in its name, which added the component of "stabilization", the organization demonstrated its commitment to "use force more proactively to protect civilians" (Karlsrud 2015: 44). The mission's decision to cooperate with individual rebel groups raised concerns about the loss of the mission's impartiality (Holt and Taylor 2009: 168).⁶ The handbook on protection of civilians includes the problematic aspects of the mission's cooperation with the former militias from the FARDC and develops guidelines if members of the FARDC are found to violate human rights. As a key principle, impartiality is only mentioned twice very briefly in the document (with 10 pages of text in total).

In contrast to MONUSCO, the reactions of UNMIS/UNMISS seem to have moved from a more congruence-building approach to organized hypocrisy. The mission leader in 2014 described the operation's protection activities by referring the elements of the protection norm that do not imply the use of force.⁷ This description therefore focused on UNMISS role for providing shelter for civilians, in particular women and children. In 2014, the mission's mandate shifted from state-building activities to protection as a priority. Despite severe attacks and massacres where civilians remained unprotected, the mission leadership continually denied that its civilian protection activities had failed.⁸ The visual elements on the website dealing with protection mostly display patrols and visits of high-ranking UN officials to protection sites instead of visually presenting actual protection activities. This indicates that the mission intends to demonstrate its strong rhetorical commitment to the protection of civilians. The failures to act however unravel the discrepancy between rhetoric and action, until the UNMISS peacekeeping commander got fired in November 2016 after the mission's severe failure to protect civilians from attacks and sexual violence.⁹ The visual display of the recent arrival of Rwandan peacekeeping forces might indicate a new shift to prioritization: the 40 pictures display the military strength of the force (with a focus on the mission's tanks and weapons) whereas no civilians are displayed. This might be related to Rwanda becoming an

⁶ In particular, Rwanda showed its concern about the UN's support to the FLDR, a Hutu militia in the Eastern Congo involved in the Rwandan genocide: <http://www.reuters.com/article/us-congo-democratic-un-rwanda/rwanda-complains-to-u-n-about-new-congo-brigade-idUSBRE96E0PG20130715>, last access 21 September 2017.

⁷ See http://www.huffingtonpost.com/hilde-johnson/the-un-in-south-sudan-imp_b_4920176.html, last access 21 September 2017.

⁸ See <http://www.sudantribune.com/spip.php?article60447>, last access 21 September 2017.

⁹ See <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/2016/11/02/un-chief-sacks-commander-of-peacekeeping-force-in-south-sudan-ov/>, last access 21 September 2017.

important leading troop contributor within UNMISS and its efforts to reconcile elements of impartiality with a more robust approach to peacekeeping.

The zero-tolerance vs. trustful engagement norm conflict: congruence-building as a common strategy

In response to the norm conflict between the zero-tolerance policy on sexual exploitation and abuse (SEA) and the normative demand to establish a close and trustful relationship with the local population, both missions seem to have opted for congruence-building as a strategy by highlighting the necessity to realign the individual elements of the norms. MONUSCO has issued a special issue on SEA, which explicitly discusses the relation between the colliding normative demands under the heading of “Faut-il créer une séparation nette entre populations et personnel de l’ONU pour arriver à zéro cas?” (p. 19). At the same time, however, only 6 out of 30 pictures display UN staff members engaging with Congolese people, and only one of them with physical contact (handshake) and amiable facial expressions (smiling). Instead, most of the pictures present UN personnel in trainings or portraits of senior staff members, with a high number of female UN staff members. These pictures aim at conveying the impression of professionalism of the mission and the UN as a whole when dealing with sexual exploitation and abuse.

In contrast to MONUSCO, UNMISS presents the zero-tolerance policy in written form only, by referencing the relevant headquarter documents.¹⁰ While other activity areas are visually supported by pictures and videos (e.g. the section on child protection), the section on conduct and discipline summarizes the definition of misconduct, the appropriate behavior expected from peacekeepers and a the number of a hotline where to report allegations to the mission’s conduct and discipline team.

Summary and (preliminary) conclusions

This paper analyzed the reactions to norm collisions by implementing actors. It investigates norm collisions in peace operations that arise from conflicting normative demands created through decisions at the UN headquarters level. The analysis focuses on two particular norm conflicts, namely the conflict between the norm to protect civilians and the norm to remain

¹⁰ See <https://unmiss.unmissions.org/conduct-and-discipline>, last access 21 September 2017.

impartial, and the conflicting demands resulting from the zero-tolerance policy on sexual exploitation and abuse and the demand to establish a close and trustful relationship with the local population. Three potential strategies have been identified on the basis of existing research: congruence-building as a strategy to reconcile individual elements of the colliding norms, prioritization as a means to establish a hierarchy between the two norms and organized hypocrisy as a strategy to demonstrate rhetorical commitment to one while responding in action to the other norm.

The empirical analysis of a comparative case study on the UN operations in the DRC (MONUC/MONUSCO) and South Sudan (UNMIS/UNMISS) indicates that the mission's strategies changed over time. The analysis uses the method of multimodal discourse analysis in order to reveal the discursive communication of the mission leadership to the external public in settings where the share of illiterate people is high among the population and where images thus become an extremely important way of communication.

The study indicates that there are several important implications for future research. With regard to potential factors influencing the choice of strategy, three factors seem possible: the type and relative strength of the colliding norms, the role of leadership¹¹ and organizational learning (Campbell 2008b; Hirschmann 2012b) as a means to reconsider strategies on the basis of new knowledge. Finally, it will also be necessary to investigate the potential feedback effects that these strategies dealing with norm collisions at the level of individual operations have on norm development at the global level.

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¹¹ See Karlsrud 2013 for the role of the UN Special Representative of the Secretary General as an arbitrator between conflicting norms.

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