“Game of drones?” How the human/non-human assemblage in the United Nations peacekeeping mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo has a governmentality effect

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Game of Drones a nod to the immensely popular television show “Game of Thrones” that is based on the books of George R. R. Martin. In Game of Thrones, a boundless power struggle for the throne takes place between several actors. They do so by coercive and persuasive means, by betrayal, forging alignments and disjoining alignments over time. This thesis describes many similarities to the series and is therefore being referred to as ‘Game of Drones’.

The front page cover visualizes the small ‘technologically smart’ United Nations peacekeeping base in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. It is situated in the middle of the misty, dense jungle, like an isolated island in a sea full of armed groups. It is designed by my friend Koen Klouwen.

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Abstract

In contradiction to the large body of academic work that focusses on the use of armed drones by actors involved in conflict zones, this research seeks to respond to the shortfall on empirical and critical research on drones by humanitarians in conflict situations. It does so by examining how drones in the United Nations peacekeeping mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo became deployed and are used as a governance tool. By answering the main research question "How does the human/non-human assemblage have a governmentality effect in the United Nations Stabilization mission in the Democratic Republic of Congo (MONUSCO) since the deployment of drones in 2013?", this thesis shows that the use of drones as a governance tool was the outcome of a fuzzy process. By using the assemblage approach, it shows how many actors influenced each other, formed and disengaged in alliances, and how power and resistance to such power played an inherent role in this process. It argues that the outcome of this process and power struggle between several actors eventually leads to a robust, coercive governmentality effect in the peacekeeping mission in the DRC, in which technological tools like drones play an increasingly important role. However, examination of the case-study on the DRC has also shown that there are many flaws and inconsistencies in the use of drones as a governance tool used by humanitarian actors. Therefore, it urges drone-critics and civil society organizations to be attentive and be similarly critical to the use of drones by humanitarian actors as they are to the use of drones by actors in a conflict.

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List of Abbreviations

ADF	Allied Democratic Forces
AFDL	Alliance des Forces Démocratiques pour la Liberation du Congo-Zaïre
AFRICOM	US African Command
DPKO	Department of Peacekeeping Operations
DRC	The Democratic Republic of the Congo
EFAD	European Forum on Armed Drones
FARDC	Armed Forces of the Democratic Republic of the Congo
FDLR	Forces Démocratiques de Libération du Rwanda
FIB	Force Intervention Brigade
IDP	Internally Displaced Person
LRA	Lord's Resistance Army
MINUSMA	United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali
MONUC	United Nations Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo
MONUSCO	United Nations Stabilization mission in the Democratic Republic of Congo
NALU	National Army for the Liberation of Uganda
NAM	Non-Aligned Movement
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
SRSG	Special Representative of the United Nations Secretary-General
TCC	Troop-Contributing Country
TechCC	Technology-Contributing Country
UAS	Unmanned Aerial System(s)
UAV	Unmanned Aerial Vehicle
UN	United Nations
US	United States (of America)

1. Introduction

Proliferation of new war technologies, such as Unmanned Aerial Vehicles (UAVs) - alternatively called 'drones'[1] - expands rapidly over time, subsequently sparking an (academic) debate. Proponents of armed drones recurrently argue that drones 'work' and are a more ethical approach to warfare (Schwarz 2016:60) because they have the capacity to reduce casualties and damage on both sides, and can point targets with greater precision. However, many authors (e.g. Chamayou 2015, Cronin 2013 and Schwarz 2016) and several civil society organizations, such as PAX and the European Forum on Armed Drones (EFAD), have raised critical questions about the use of drones. These critical questions include ones such as whether using drones make it too easy to kill and whether drone operators located thousands of miles away from the target can make life or death decisions. Furthermore, they pose concerns about the effectiveness and judicial aspects of killing by drones. One of the 'founders' of this debate is Grégoire Chamayou who, in his philosophical investigation of the drone and its uses, complements these critical considerations further with an assessment of what he calls an "a-symmetrical warfare" (2015:24). He raises questions about the transparency and accountability of drone strikes, and particularly about the shift in warfare towards warfare "without risk" in which the imperative is to minimise risk to one's own combatants. Schwarz (2017:423), who builds on Chamayou, argues that one should not fall in the trap of thinking of drones as a simple extension of conventional airpower - "Instead, we must situate drones within a broader assemblage of technologies, paying particular attention to the sometimes-unintended practices that this 'assemblage' enables", and therefore, consider it within a different ethical framework (Schwarz 2016:60).

A rather new aspect in the discussion about drones is the ethical language with which drones are patently styled as 'virtuous' for humanitarian acts. Kennedy & Rogers (2015), for example, mainly see the benefits of drones, specifically if it is used in the service of the United Nations (UN) for the purpose of peacekeeping. According to them, drones and even armed drones, can be used in a virtuous manner to protect civilians, in line with an UN mandate. They do not see armed drones as innately evil or immoral, and argue that if they are used in a manner that deters and prevents acts of genocide and human rights violations, drones would likely be welcomed by a public siege.

[1] Drones are defined by officially by the U.S army as "a land, sea, or air vehicle that is remotely or automatically controlled" (Chamayou 2015:11). Unmanned Aerial Vehicles (UAV's) in particular are "[p]owered, aerial vehicles that do not carry a human operator, use aerodynamic forces to provide vehicle lift, can fly autonomously or be piloted remotely, can be expendable or recoverable, and can carry a lethal or nonlethal payload" (ARES 2016:12).

Sandvik & Lohne (2014) also write about the use of drones for humanitarian assistance and action[2], and bring up the idea of the *humanitarian drone*. They depict the difficult aspects of these humanitarian drones as a perfect "aid worker" and "eye in the sky" (2014:157) and discuss its political currency as a "humanitarian weapon". According to them, there is a great difference in seeing drones as a tool for human rights advocacy and seeing drones as a tool for humanitarian action. Therefore, they plea that the road ahead involves difficult discussions about *what* humanitarians[3] will be doing and *who* they will become when they deploy drones for crisis mapping, or when they deploy humanitarian (combat) drones (2014:163).

One of the recent users of drones in the humanitarian field is the UN. The first peacekeeping mission where they did so was in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC). This peacekeeping mission, called the United Nations Stabilization mission in the Democratic Republic of Congo (MONUSCO), is the longest and most expensive peacekeeping operation in the organization's history. It took over from the earlier mission, the United Nations Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUC), to present a new phase after the elections. Where in its original mandate priority was placed on the "protection of civilians in addition to stabilization and peace consolidation", the conflict and mandate were elevated to previously unprecedented levels in recent years (Andrews 2017:3). It now has a chapter VII mandate[4], and therewith, it grands MONUSCO possibilities to defend their mandate actively and robustly, even against armed groups. Part of this active and robust[5] defense is the adoption of five unarmed Falco drones in 2013 (Andrews 2017:4), which are employed, amongst others, in combination with the UN's first-ever 'Force Intervention Brigades' (FIB). Combined with this new capability and the robust mandate, drones can therefore be seen as 'force" multipliers'. As Piiparinen (2015:155) argues, drones could, metaphorically, "enable the cat [the UN] chasing the mice [the illegal armed groups operating in the DRC] by helping them in the Brigade's robust, flexible and swift operations within this new approach" (Piiparinen 2015:155). Others, such as Kennedy & Rogers (2015:223), go a step

[2] Humanitarian action is here conceived broadly as material, political and military responses – by the humanitarian arms of the United Nations (UN), international NGOs, and states – to particular invocations of humanitarian suffering (Sandvik & Lohne 2014:148).

[3] Humanitarians or humanitarian actors are in this thesis defined as actors that perform or aspire to perform humanitarian action. Again, humanitarian action is in this thesis conceived broadly as material, political and military responses – by the humanitarian arms of the United Nations (UN), international NGOs, and states – to particular invocations of humanitarian suffering (Sandvik & Lohne 2014:148).

[4] A chapter VII mandate provides the framework within which the Security Council may take enforcement action. It allows the Council to "determine the existence of any threat to the peace, breach of the peace, or act of aggression" and to make recommendations or to resort to non-military and military action to "maintain or restore international peace and security" (UN 2018).

[5] Robustness is defined by the Department of Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO) in 2009 as "a posture by a peacekeeping operation that demonstrates willingness, capacity and capability to deter and confront, including through the use of force when necessary, an obstruction to the implementation of its mandate" (UN 2009:21).

further and argue that armed drones could reduce the need for large numbers of peacekeepers on the ground in high-risk areas, act as a potential deterrent and increase the effectiveness of civilian protection. They even propose to replace vulnerable and ill-equipped, under-trained peacekeepers with armed drones.

At the time of introduction of drones in the DRC, there were warnings for the unforeseen consequences that may stem from this combination of a robust mandate and a newly acquired drone capability. These included concerns regarding the use of direct and indirect force by the UN and the need for research on specific rules of engagement: with increased access to information and knowledge, peacekeepers must use force in a manner that is proportional, taking all due precautions to avoid civilian casualties (Karlsrud & Rosen 2013:5). This concern had not been reflected upon in the debate surrounding drones in the UN at the time (Karlsrud & Rosen 2013:5). Also, there were warnings for the – unrealistically high – demands that will be put on peacekeepers, as they will have less leeway for failing to respond to atrocities if knowledge is available in real time (Karlsrud & Rosen 2013: 5). Furthermore, several Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) feared that drones in the DRC would blur the lines between drones being an instrument for military or for humanitarian purposes. Local communities and armed groups would be unable to tell for which of the two "the loud mosquitoes" - as they were perceived by local communities - would be used (IRIN 2014). Therefore, researching the case of drone use in the MONUSCO responds to Sandvik & Lohne (2014:164), who argue that "sound empirical research is needed to explore not only how humanitarian drone practices are enacted, and by whom, but also how this novel form of humanitarian praxis is experienced and interpreted by those at the receiving end".

This thesis seeks to respond to this shortfall on empirical and critical research on the deployment of drones by humanitarian actors in conflict situations, and specifically in the case of UN peacekeeping. Lastly, it is socially relevant as it highlights the insufficiencies and contradictions within UN peacekeeping operations. As will be shown, the effects of drones in the UN peacekeeping mission and the approach that the UN is taking by adopting these technologies in future peacekeeping missions, can be challenged to some extent. If the conclusions of this thesis are considered in future policies, plans or interventions, it might benefit both the UN and its citizens of countries where peacekeeping missions are deployed.

1.1 Research question and sub-questions

The contribution to the shortfall in research is achieved in particular by delving into the consensus among authors that drones can be seen as a force multiplier and a tool of power and governance (e.g. Piiparinen 2015, Karlsrud & Rosen 2013, Sandvik & Lohne 2014 and Sandvik et. al. 2014). Especially Sandvik et. al. (2014) argue that these drones – and more broadly, surveillance technologies – must be examined for the power they represent. To investigate the role of power, the relatively novel analytical tool of *assemblage* is used. A more detailed description of both assemblage and governmentality is given later on in. For now it is deemed sufficient to say that assemblage is used to understand how different elements in the human/non-human assemblage work together and have a governmentality effect in the peacekeeping mission. Understanding how they work together and in the end have a governmentality effect is the central aim of my research. Accordingly to that aim, the central research puzzle in this thesis is as follows:

"How does the human/non-human assemblage have a governmentality effect in the United Nations Stabilization mission in the Democratic Republic of Congo (MONUSCO) since the deployment of drones in 2013?"

My research method will be explained in chapter two. Chapter three deals with the theoretical framework of governance and governmentality. As governmentality is a rather broad framework, and therefore less suited for spelling out where the concept of power is located when adapted to my case, I will introduce the analytical tool of 'assemblage' in the second part of chapter three. From this analytical tool, the following sub-questions are derived for the case of MONUSCO:

I. What elements are part of the human/non-human assemblage of the peacekeeping mission in the DRC?

II. What knowledge is authorized for the use of drones in the peacekeeping mission?

III. How are problems in the peacekeeping missions rendered technical? In other words: what narratives are used to describe the issue at hand and the technical solution?

IV. What type of actors and institutions are involved in governing in the peacekeeping mission in the DRC, how and/or why do they forge alignments, and what are their interests and stakes?

V. What is the (perceived) effect of the deployment of drones on the ground in the peacekeeping mission in the DRC?

VI. Is there critique on, or debate about the use of drones in peacekeeping missions of the UN?

VII. What practices does this assemblage enable, and are these practices intended?

These sub-questions will be answered in chapter four, five and six, in which the analytical tool of assemblage is applied to the case of MONUSCO. In the conclusion, a relation is sought between the larger theories about governmentality and the specific case of MONUSCO. This combination gives an answer to the main question of the thesis.

2. Methodology

The specific case of MONUSCO is chosen because this UN peacekeeping mission is the first mission where drones became deployed. The run-up process towards adopting such a technology expectedly caused more frictions and contradictions then implementations in other, later missions. For example, in the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali (MINUSMA), the use of drones was not as big news and did not spark as much debate as in the case of MONUSCO. As my research aims to understand the processes and power struggles for the first-ever implementation of drones (as explained more in-depth later on), the case of MONUSCO can be seen as a 'critical case'. This is a case that has strategic importance in relation to the general 'problem' (Flyvbjerg 2006:229). Otherwise said, it is a case where I could learn the most about my topic and make the best connection between the topic and my broader framework. Furthermore, since the use of drones is manifested in MONUSCO for a longer period, I expected this case to be a one where I can learn most about my topic, as advised by Boeije (2010:35).

2.1 Research strategy

As I will show later on, I used assemblage as an analytical frame in this thesis. Assembling as a method means pulling disparate parties (at different 'levels', with different motivations, interests and identities) and elements (discourses, doctrines, laws and resources) together (Li 2007 in Gould & Demmers 2018:6). This is in line with the ontological and epistemological nature of my 'assemblage', as it somewhat 'transcends' the ontological debate of structure versus agency. It moves away from 'reified', abstract concept such as the 'state', 'society' and 'capitalism'. These categories are "too blunt to offer fine-grained analysis of concrete historical processes and entities that assemblage thinking forces us to focus on" (Acuto & Curtis 2004:7). As follows, it does not explain the social world in terms of causal explanations based on the workings of these systems, structures, or some larger whole. Rather, assemblage invites to "*understand* the ways complex social and material formations that consist of heterogeneous elements still hold together and exercise power" (Demmers 2017:4). It does so by looking at all the elements in the assemblage: things, socially situated actors, objectives, and an array of knowledges, discourses, institutions, laws and (scientific) knowledge (Li 2007:266). Therefore, I argue that I take an interpretative approach in which I try to understand how these different elements in the assemblage work together, and how they have a governance effect in the DRC. I look, amongst others, at drones (the things), actors (the socially situated objects), the underlying motivations (the objectives), and the

larger peacekeeping 'narrative' depicted in peacekeeping reports (the discourses). In line with this interpretative approach, my research strategy is a qualitative analysis. This research strategy is most appropriate since my research focusses on how particular actors interpret and produce narratives, discourses and mandates. In order to research those practices, socially oriented research is needed that can delve into the meanings, considerations and motivations that underly these practices. Thus, the focus is not to find large amounts of data and generalizable findings, which a quantitative approach would aim for.

2.2 Sampling method

In line with my qualitative research strategy, I have drawn upon extensive document study and discourse analysis and in-depth interviews as a main research method. Since there are several types of elements within the human, non-human assemblage, I had several units of analysis. These included an organization (the UN), individuals (key individuals in process within the UN), and events (such as the use of drones in MONUSCO). In consonance with my interpretative perspective and qualitative research design, I have not aimed at a statistically representative sampling method, but purposefully selected my samples. Selection of these samples included a broad range of sources, amongst which are all Security Council notes, UN press releases (both in video- and text), resolutions, mandates, speeches, procurement documents, statements, letters and reports of Group of Exports, all of which were related to MONUSCO. Besides the UN, I have made use of the small body of academic work on MONUSCO and the large body of academic work on UN peacekeeping in general. Furthermore, I selected articles of key journalists in the area, NGO briefings, online videos, military magazines, documentaries, news websites, online blogs, articles and reports from think-tanks. The selection of the timeframe has been from 2010 until 2018, and is based on the aim to have a full overview of possible changes or shifts in the practices of assemblage (amongst others in alliances, the authorized knowledge, discourses and effects of governmentality, as explained in chapter three) over time. I purposefully selected many different sources, as these provided different perspectives on the use of drones and other technology in the peacekeeping missions, and could therefore lay bare the frictions and contradictions within this assemblage. To get a more comprehensive and nuanced approach, aside from the document analysis, I have conducted interviews with several experts. These included experts in the field of UN peacekeeping, UN (remote) technology and the DRC. They have been purposively selected on having different professional backgrounds and expertise and therefore a different vision on the elements in the assemblage.

2.3 Data collection process

Data analysis was conducted mainly in June and July 2018. The stages within which the data was gathered can be summarized broadly in three phases. In the first phase, I considered how the technological tool of drones entered the UN peacekeeping (policy) models. As Li (2007) points out, the work of "problematization" is an important element in the assemblage, and analysis was put in this phase on "how problems become to be defined… in relation to particular schemes of thought, diagnosis of deficiency and promises of improvement" (De Goede & Simon, 2013:318). This requires "considerable cultural and discursive work across policy documents, news media and expert literatures" (De Goede & Simon 2013:318). Aside from going through the mentioned Security Council documents and reports in which drones were posed as a required instrument, I conducted interviews with UN officials that had been in the process of acquiring of these drones, and with authors that had contributed to the reports upon which the decision to deploy armed drones was partly based. Both provided me knowledge about the run-up process towards adding these technologies, the underlying threat perception in the process, how this threat was thought to be governable, and how alliances between actors played a role in this. In the second phase, I analyzed whether this 'authorized knowledge' was in line with the reality, particularly on the ground, and how critique was contained. I looked into sources (such as journalistic articles, NGO- and think tank reports) and sought contact with academics that had a more critical stance towards these technologies. Also, I conducted interviews with experts that could tell me more about the reality on the ground, to include a local perspective. The third phase centered on analyzing these findings and whether they gave support to the broader theoretical framework of governance. By these means, I sought the dialogue between theory and evidence. In the abundance of information that my document study and in-depth interviews had provided me, I tried to locate the concepts that existed in my theoretical framework. I considered how the elements of the human/non-human assemblage worked together and therefore result in a certain form of governing. In this way, I connected my empirical data to theory. By taking the elements together, I could answer my research puzzle.

"...it's my hypothesis that the individual is not a pre-given entity which is seized on by the exercise of power. The individual, with his identity and characteristics, is the product of a relation of power exercised over bodies, multiplicities, movements, desires, forces."

— Michel Foucault[6]

3. Theoretical context and the analytic framework

This chapter demonstrates the theoretical context of governmentality and how the concept of power is an inherent element of this framework. It will furthermore explain the analytical frame of assemblage. Moreover, it will elaborate on how the analytical frame serves as an instrument for the dialogue between the empirical data (my evidence) and the broader theory about governmentality, and how it forms the basis of my sub-questions that will be dealt with in the next chapter.

3.1 The concept of power in governmentality

It is chosen to take a governance-perspective to look at the introduction and use of drones, or more broadly said, surveillance technology, as this perspective draws attention to the diffusion of power and ruling (Bevir 2011:458). Therefore, this perspective allows examination of drones as a 'tool of power', on which numerous scholars have reached consensus (e.g. Piiparinen 2015, Karlsrud & Rosen 2013, Sandvik & Lohne 2014 and Sandvik et. al. 2014). However, studies on governance can be criticized on several accounts. Mckee (2013:469) argues that governance is "a shorthand label" used to describe a particular set of changes in the way a society is governed; it departures from traditional forms of hierarchical state control. Power, in this conception, is only understood as causal and mechanistic, or otherwise called 'repressive'. Sending & Neumann (2006:656) also argue that studies of governance fail to explore both the power at work in the actual practices through which governance takes place, and the specific relations between state and non-state actors (Sending & Neumann 2006:656). According to Barnett (2013), when the study of governance is used in the humanitarian field, they likewise lack attention to the exploration of power in practices. He argues that scholars should be aware of the power that

[6] Foucault in Crampton & Elden (2007:180).

people working in the humanitarian field inhibit, even though they are in denial about it (Barnett 2013:382).

Due to this criticism, an often proposed 'alternative' within the governance approach is governmentality, which I therefore will draw upon in this thesis. In this way, I will be attentive to the way power is at work in practices of humanitarians in the DRC. According to Sending & Neumann, 'governmentality' is a better analytical concept aimed at grasping government as a form of power. Originally stemming from Michel Foucault, in the concept of governmentality, government is the "conduct of conduct" and thus a term that ranges from "governing the self" to the "governing of others" (Lemke 2002:51). It involves a range of techniques and practices, performed by different actors, aimed to shape, guide, and direct individuals' and groups' behavior and actions in particular directions (Sending & Neumann 2006:656). Governmentality aims to focus on practices (what actors 'do') instead of institutions (what actors 'are'), how certain identities and action-orientations are defined as appropriate and normal (the 'mentality'), and how relations of power are implicated in these processes (Sending & Neumann 2006:656). It is a mode of analysis that lends itself to any context involving the deliberate regulation of human conduct towards particular ends, which is the aim of the UN in the DRC. It stands thus in contrast to governance in the sense that it conceives power to be more about the management of possibilities and the ability to "structure the (possible) action of others" than the recourse to violence or coercion (Mckee 2013:471). Governing people, in this way, is not a way to force people to do what the governor wants, but it is about the interaction between the techniques of domination and techniques of the self (Foucault 1993, 203-4 in Lemke 2001:52). This theoretical stance allows therefore a more complex analysis of government. It looks not only at direct intervention and domination, but also at indirect techniques for leading and controlling individuals (Lemke 2001:59). One such an indirect technique is, for example, surveillance. In the book Discipline and Punish, in which Foucault (1975:187) introduces the famous panopticon prison, Foucault manifests what is meant with such (indirect) power:

> Traditionally, power was what was seen, what was shown, and what was manifested… Disciplinary power, on the other hand, is exercised through its invisibility; at the same time it imposes on those whom it subjects a principle of compulsory visibility. (…) It is this fact of being constantly seen, of being able always to be seen, that maintains the disciplined individual in his subjection.

In the case of the DRC, drones could be used as an indirect technique by the UN to lead and control behavior of armed (rebel) groups and militias, by letting them know that they are being watched. However, drones can also be used for more direct, dominating, coercive and compulsory power, for example because they are used in combination with Force Intervention Brigades, which are designed to fight and regulate conduct by more coercive means. By examining in which instances and in which ways drones in the DRC are used, this research will provide more insight in how drones are a tool of power. By analyzing its role, an empirical example on how drones contribute to the manner in which conduct is conducted in the UN peacekeeping mission in the DRC, is given. By providing more insight about their use, it will be possible to tell whether they are mainly part of governance techniques "of the self" or governance techniques "of others".

3.2 Assemblage as an analytical tool

An analytical tool that can be used to research the focuses of governmentality (a focus on practices instead of institutions, how identities and action-orientations are defined as appropriate and normal, and how relations of power are implicated in these processes) is assemblage.

Assemblage is increasingly being used in a wide range of scholarships; especially in geography, but more and more also in social sciences and humanities. Contributors use it in several ways, and therefore there is no "single, correct way" of using the term (Anderson & McFarlane 2011:124). According to Demmers (2017:4), similar to Anderson & McFarlane, assemblage is a term to 'understand the ways complex social and material formations that consist of heterogeneous elements still hold together and exercise power' (Demmers 2017:4). According to Anderson & McFarlane (2011:124), assemblage is "part of a more general reconstitution of the social that seeks to blur divisions of social-material, near-far and structure-agency", and appears to be increasingly used for four interrelated processes: (a) to emphasize gathering, coherence and dispersion or otherwise said assembling and disassembling of elements, (b) to connote groups, collectives and distributive agencies, (c) to connote emergence rather than resultant formation and therefore connote plurality instead of equally, distributed, governing power and (d) to emphasize fragility and provisionality. These processes reflect the commonalities within the uses of assemblage, despite its different uses. Assemblage thought thus moves away from 'reified', abstract concepts such as 'state', 'society' and 'capitalism'. These categories are "too blunt for offering fine-grained analysis of concrete historical processes and entities that assemblage thinking forces to focus on" (Acuto & Curtis 2004:7). Assembling as a method means pulling disparate parties (at different 'levels', with different motivations, interests and identities) and elements (discourses, doctrines, laws and resources) together (Murray Li 2007 in Gould & Demmers 2018:6). What these elements

have in common is their “attempt to direct conduct and intervene in social processes to produce desired outcomes and avert undesired ones”. (Murray Li 2007:264).

As the peacekeeping mission in the DRC involves many actors and elements in which power is implicated at several levels, assemblage is an perfect tool to lay bare frictions and dynamics in its complexity. Especially interesting in this case are the non-human elements in the assemblage. According to Williams (2011), who came up with the idea of the human-machine assemblage in her article about arising complexities when pilots are distanced from their military aircraft, “the line between the machine, body and object has never been so vague as it is in contemporary man-machine weapon systems” (Williams 2011:384). Therefore, the complexity of the situation she analyzed could only be uncovered by considering the military aircraft as an assemblage that blended human and machine elements to produce one combat entity. Although the UN is not using the non-human element (the drone) as a weapon system like the use in the article of Williams, it is interesting look at its role in the assemblage.

3.3 Practices of assemblage

In this thesis, a similar approach to the one of Voelkner (2011) and Demmers & Gould (2018) is used on the peacekeeping mission in the DRC, whose analyses also show how power is implicated in these practices and processes of governmentality. They all made use of the framework of Murray Li (2007), who essentially set up a framework for assemblage, particularly by examining practices of assemblage, and how these hold the assemblage together. These practices include *forging alignments, rendering technical, authorizing knowledge, managing failures and contradictions, anti-politics* and *reassembling* for every assemblage, and can help examining “what holds an assemblage together” and how the parties of an assemblage are made *to cohere* and *act* (Gould & Demmers 2018:7). Examining all these practices in the assemblage thus shows *how* a governmentality effect is formed. Gould & Demmers (2018:8) used the assemblage approach to analyse ‘liquid warfare’ and see assemblage as a tool to study power in complexity. As Gould & Demmers (2018:5) point out, assemblage accommodates a multiplicity of bodies that “team up”, under the cloak of a common “threat representation”, to achieve their objectives and have a governance effect. In their article, the productive (re)assembling of certain actors and threat perceptions, metaphors and knowledge practices led to a justification of military intervention of the US African Command (AFRICOM). Voelkner (2011), similar to Gould & Demmers (2018) in her article about human security and the health assemblage in Thailand, used assemblage as a conceptual lens, and focused on the interplay between human and non-human elements, and what the role of these elements is in giving concrete form to human security strategies and effects.

In his case, migrant health was reframed in terms of the problem of human security: improving health of migrants was needed to maintain health security of the Thai people, according to this frame. Several of the practices that Murray Li (2007) mentions, such as the *forging of alignment* (e.g. between the Thai Health Department and the government of Burma), the *rendering technical* of a health problem (e.g. by development of migrant health systems by World Health Organizations) and *the authorized knowledge* (e.g. by scientific experts) helped to bring forth this migrant health assemblage.

In a similar way to both the approaches of Gould & Demmers (2018) and Voelkner (2011), I will look at what elements[7] hold the assemblage together, how they form a whole and how they connect. Thereby, the analytical tool will serve as an instrument for the dialogue between the empirical data (my evidence) and the broader theory about governance. By taking the elements in the assemblage, it will allow to give answer to my main research question that seeks to find out its eventual effect. The assemblage practices have been helpful to operationalize the research puzzle "How does the human/non-human assemblage have a governmentality effect in the United Nations Stabilization mission in the Democratic Republic of Congo (MONUSCO) since the deployment of drones in 2013?", and to break them down into constituent parts. As a result, each practice of assemblage led to a related question and served as a sensitizing concept in this way: What discourse was set up to authorize the use of drones? What kind of shared threat was represented for which drones were needed? How were technical descriptions used to overcome complex problems? How did actors in the assemblage make alliances, and what were their motivations? How was critique managed? And what is the effect of drones eventually? By answering these questions, it becomes to light how power is implicated in this assemblage of governing in the peacekeeping mission in the DRC. In the end, this will allow an analysis of the governmentality effect of the assemblage.

[7] As described in my research strategy, I look amongst others at drones (the things), actors (the socially situated objects), the underlying motivations (the objectives), and the larger peacekeeping 'narrative' depicted in peacekeeping reports (the discourses). These form the elements of my assemblage.

"In fact power produces; it produces reality; it produces domains of objects and rituals of truth. The individual and the knowledge that may be gained of him belong to this production."

- Michel Foucault (1975:194)[8]

4. Practices of authorizing knowledge and rendering technical

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In this and the following two chapters, assemblage will be used for the case study of MONUSCO. Every chapter corresponds with one or two of the practices of assemblage. Every chapter starts with a short explanation of the practice, after which it will be discussed and applied to the case of the DRC. This particular chapter will look at what discourse was set up that justified the use of drones, and what expert knowledge was adopted for this discourse. In other words, this chapter will give insight in the practice of authorizing knowledge. According to Li (2007:265), this means "specifying the requisite body of knowledge; confirming enabling assumptions; containing critiques." The authorizing of knowledge is closely related to the practice of rendering technical, which is "extracting from the messiness of the social world, with all the processes that run though it, a set of relations that can be formulated as a diagram in which problem (a) plus intervention (b) will produce (c), a beneficial result." This means that the often complex and difficult reality that does not have a straightforward solution, is simplified, and therefore is in need of a simplified solution. Thus, examination of both practices allows to identify a certain shared threat perception of the actors within the assemblage, and how a solution is posed to that threat. Therewith, it reflects on how this threat was thought to be governed.

4.1 The DRC's complex reality

The reality in which MONUSCO had to operate is an extremely complex one that goes back ages. According to Autesserre (2010:76), "Extreme violence has certainly been part of Congolese life for most of the country's recent history. At least since the arrival of the white traders – and probably since the beginning of the Arab slave trade – violence was part of the daily life." From 1908 the DRC was a Belgian colony, which became independent in the 1960s under the name of Congo-Kinshasa. After this independence, violence continued at a high level. In 1965, Joseph Mobutu

[8] This quote depicts Foucault's use of the term 'power/knowledge'. He uses the term to signify that power is constituted through accepted forms of knowledge, scientific understanding and 'truth' (Gaventa, 2003).

came to power, who ruled the country in a corrupt and autocratic way and made use of the existing tensions between community groups (Directie Consulaire zaken en Migratiebeleid 2010:10). Not surprisingly, processes of democratization, often under pressure of the international community, did not work out successfully. Following the genocide in Rwanda in 1994, Joseph Mobutu was ousted by a Tutsi-group led by Laurent Kabila, called the *Alliance des Forces Démocratiques pour la Liberation du Congo-Zaïre* (AFDL), that formed an alliance with other dissident groups (Directie Consulaire zaken en Migratiebeleid 2010:10). This destabilized the country significantly. The civil war that broke out involved support from several African countries and was often referred to as 'Africa's First World War'. According to Clark (2011:368), the civil war could be viewed as a fundamental legacy of the 1994 Rwandan genocide. Therefore, he argues, it was essential that the UN stepped in, in order to prevent a second genocide with a scale such as the one in Rwanda from happening.

In 1999, a cease-fire agreement was signed in the capital of Zambia. This cease-fire called on the UN to deploy a Chapter VII peacekeeping force to help implement the ceasefire, to oversee the withdrawal of foreign armies and disarm Congolese and foreign rebels (Tull 2009:216). This resulted in the establishment of MONUC (UN 1999). Initially, the mandate of the peacekeeping mission was thus rather narrow. After Laurent Kabila was murdered in 2001, his son, Joseph Kabila, succeeded him. In contradiction to his father, he sought international communities' rapprochement and started an inter-Congolese Dialogue that eventually led to a national transitional government, after which the civil war ended formally on June 30th, 2003 (Algemeen Ambtsbericht DRC 2010:11). But even after this government was formed and the civil was war officially over, the eastern part of the country remained "heavily militarized and occupied by a multitude of Congolese army units, rebel forces and militia, and Rwandan and Ugandan armed groups" (Onana and Taylor 2008:503 in Clark 2011:369). These forces include the *Forces Démocratiques de Libération du Rwanda* (FDLR), which is partly derived from former genocide-perpetrators in Rwanda that left Rwanda after 1994, the *Allied Democratic Forces* (ADF) and the *National Army for the Liberation of Uganda* (NALU). The Ugandese political-religious armed movement *Lord's Resistance Army* (LRA) has also been active in some provinces since 2005. Over time, the groups have many times refrained and regained strength, regrouped and reorganized, and some are still active as of today[9].

[9] The FDLR, for example, has caused large displacement last year (Al Jazeera 2017). The MONUSCO website currently indicates that the FDLR, ADF, LRA and a Burundian rebel group are active (UN 2018a).

4.2 From MONUC to MONUSCO: a continuously changing approach

From the start of the MONUC mission, it was clear that the DRC would require more than simply 'traditional peacekeeping' from the UN, as it had to deal with a multi-layered conflict involving many different forces and factions (Clark 2011:368). The mission started initially with a Chapter VI mandate to "protect civilians under imminent threat of physical violence", but faced serious protection crises in 2003 and 2004 and later on in 2010. This has led to the mission being criticized for falling short to protection of civilians (Reynaert 2011:14). Its mandate was frequently altered, expanded, broadened and eventually upgraded to a Chapter VII mandate. This means that the operation became more robust over time, which included proactive and offensive actions by the UN (Reynaert 2011:14). Successful institutional reforming processes took place, and MONUC supported the transitional government towards the 2006 presidential elections that were organized, supported and conducted by the UN (Reynaert 2011:12). MONUC's role became more supportive to this government that, from then on, geared the primary responsibility for civilian protection. Soon after the elections, the government of the DRC requested MONUC to work towards an exit strategy and leave the country by June 2010 (Koko 2011:30). Reasons for this call were not entirely clear at the time, but are likely to have to do with that fact that the presence of a large peacekeeping operation made president Kabila look weak (Neethling 2011:27). As a compromise between the DRC's government's request for MONUC to leave and the UN's eagerness to continue peace consolidation, MONUC was transformed in MONUSCO (Koko 2011:37). As a result of the compromise, in the mandate of MONUSCO, there has been a clear emphasis on the primacy of the Congolese government in shouldering the responsibility for the peace building process in the country from the start, despite the lack of willingness on the part of the DRC government for a prolonged stay of the mission in the country (Koko 2011:38,39). In the mandate of MONUSCO, this is clearly visible in the emphasis on the role of the UN to "support," act "upon explicit request from," and "assist" the Congolese government on fronts ranging from training its army, to helping return internally displaced persons (IDPs) (UN 2010). Furthermore, the compromise included withdrawal of military personnel "from areas where the situation permits" (UN 2010:3).

Both MONUC and MONUSCO have been criticized on many accounts. One of the critiques is directed to the above-mentioned top-down focus of the mission in which MONUSCO supports the Congolese government. According to Autesserre (2010), the peacekeeping strategy should rather focus on the causes for conflict and violence at the local level. Violence at this local level is now often – and incorrectly – regarded as "barbaric" and linked to absence of the state (2010:83). Furthermore, Autesserre (2010) criticizes the peacekeeping mission for labelling the Congo as a

post-conflict situation, leading to mistaken conclusions about the right strategy of intervention. The top-down and post-conflict strategy of MONUSCO is reflected in the particular importance that is put on working in a partnership with the Congolese government to deal with the challenges it faces - including support of military action by the Congolese nation's armed forces, the Armed Forces of the Democratic Republic of the Congo (FARDC). The FARDC has extremely poor human rights records, and has furthermore led to important questions about neutrality of the mission - as the UN is effectively taking sides in the conflict (Clark 2011:374).

New steps in the levels of use of force and robustness have not only been to support offensive operations of the FARDC, but also to undertake offensive operations by the UN itself. Violence and security had never ended in eastern Congo, but the situations especially deteriorated in May 2012. At that time, MONUSCO was at the nadir of its popularity: anti-MONUSCO protests had been occurrent and civilians did not feel protected by the mission. As a Congo-expert explained[10], the Congolese population saw blue helmets, from which they knew were part of the largest and most expensive peacekeeping operation in the world, "just sitting in their camps". They found that the impact of the mission was not in proportion to the investments that were made in the mission. Then, in May 2012, a new powerful rebel group, the 23 March Movement (M23) arose. This group was backed by Rwanda with weapons and logistics (Tull 2017:173). Although this rebel movement was relatively small and actually part of a local conflict – at its peak, the group had enrolled only 3,000 to 4,000 combatants – its impact was significant. As Berwouts, DRC expert, described, "nevertheless, what nobody saw coming, still happened: they took over the city of Goma. (…) The impact of this event was immense."[11] As a response to this disaster and in an attempt to restore MONUSCO's credibility, new steps to strengthen MONUSCO's mandate were taken. For the specific threat of M23 rebels, the UN adopted a resolution that included the creation of a "Force Intervention Brigade" - which was tasked with carrying out "targeted offensive operations" in a "robust, highly mobile and versatile manner" to neutralize armed groups with the intent of preventing violence against civilians and protecting civilians under imminent threat (UN 2013:7). Although militias and armed groups, such as the M23, had arisen out of the deeply complex and political problems that the DRC faced for ages, a relatively simplified solution was posed that would create a beneficial result. Thereby, the problem of the M23 was *rendered technica*l. This

[10] Interview with Kris Berwouts, Congo-expert, Utrecht, 22/06/2018.

[11] Original transcription: "Op het moment dat Goma viel, had iedereen het gevoel dat we plots voor een situatie stonden waarbij eigenlijk een heel lokaal conflict (M23 had helemaal niet de vlucht genomen die vorige Tutsi rebellieën hadden genomen), en wat niemand geloofde gebeurde toch: ze namen zomaar Goma in. En toen had je toch een nationaal probleem, en de kans op grensoverschrijdend geweld was ineens ok een stuk groter. Dat had de inslag van een meteoriet, zeg maar."

military solution included the use of robust force, or more frankly put, 'waging war' with those parties, in order to neutralize and eliminate them. The examination of this assemblage practice thus shows how the specific threat of the M23 was thought to be governable by coercive governance practices.

4.3 The broader prevailing discourse on 'how to do peacekeeping'

How the specific threat of M23 rebels was thought to be governable, was furthermore highly dependent on a broader prevailing discourse on 'how to do peacekeeping' at the time. The prevailing discourse on 'how to do peacekeeping' had changed over the years. Peacekeeping focussed on keeping the peace or a ceasefire between two parties in the first place. Gradually, from the 1990s onwards, peacekeeping operations became more complex. In these situations, it is often unknown what the parties to the conflict are, and not all parties have given expressive consent for the UN to deploy the mission. Furthermore, in these missions, UN mission personnel is often under attack, as has been the case in the DRC. As an important report within the UN describes, "a number of operations today are deployed in an environment where there is little or no peace to keep" (UN 2015:7). However, the UN did not did not change their way of approaching these altered situations. As a result, Western countries started to operate more in NAVO and NATO alignments, for example in Afghanistan, and lost significant amounts of institutional capacity for engaging with and deploying to UN peacekeeping operations (Karlsrud & Smith 2015:6). Non-Western countries, such as India and Bangladesh, filled the 'gap' that these Western countries left. According to an expert[12], within these alignments,

> revolutions in Western countries took place, but those never reached the UN. (…) The approach European countries take in peacekeeping missions is fundamentally different from Asian and African countries. For us, information is everything. In other countries, they observe and subsequently act to that. Western countries *anticipate* more. United Nations Peacekeeping missions suffer from a lack of information. (…) You need to know what is going on, and bring the scarce resources to the places that need it most. And what lacks within the UN? Helicopters and intelligence (Emphasis added).[13]

[12] Interview with Kolonel Rob de Rave, Military Advisor, Permanent Mission of the Netherlands to the United Nations, Utrecht, 14/06/2018..

[13] Original transcription: "De revolutie van vredesmissie heeft plaatsgevonden in Europa, en niet zozeer in Azië en Afrika, maar die revolutie heeft de VN nooit bereikt. Je ziet dat in Europa de manier van vredesmissies echt anders is: informatie is voor ons alles. In die andere landen, die opereren meer op basis van waarnemen en reageren. Westerse landen zijn steeds meer bezig met anticiperen. Je ziet dat VN vredesoperaties eigenlijk gebukt gingen onder het gebrek aan informatie. Dat is m.n. voor vredesmissies zo belangrijk.. (…) Je moet weten wat er speelt, en middelen om ze zo snel mogelijk daar naartoe te brengen. En waar is nou een gebrek aan in de VN? Aan inlichtingen en helicopters."

As pointed out in the quote of Colonel de Rave, who served as a Dutch military advisor to the UN, one of the solutions for overcoming the ineffectiveness of peacekeeping operations was sought in technological advancements and information-gathering capacities. However, this has long been seen as an inherent limitation of the UN, as the organization is bound to its core principles of impartiality, consent of all parties and non-use of force. As the Force Commander in the Congo in 1962 pointed out already: "We [the UN] are fully aware of your long-standing limitations in gathering information. The limitations are inherent in the very nature of the United Nations and therefore of any operation conducted by it." (UN Secretary-General to a Force Commander in Congo, 1962, in Dorn 2011:119). Nevertheless, the UN had experienced the added value of advanced technology in the DRC in 2003, when the UN sought help from the European Union. In Operation Artemis, a French-led force forced fighters in Bunia to leave, which had calmed the region as a whole. According to Walter Dorn (operator professor at the United Nations and co-writer of UN reports) "This tough action showed both the United Nations and the world that force combined with intelligence could play an effective role in peacekeeping in such volatile regions. Robust peacekeeping could work" (Dorn 2011:122). Furthermore, in 2006, the Belgians deployed drones as part of a European Union Force in 2006, which produced useful intelligence and for example had helped in defending the President's residence in Kinshasa. This kind of model was seen as a helpful asset, and therefore wanted by the UN[14], despite the contradictions to the core principles of the UN.

The introduction of modern technology UN peacekeeping operations started with the report "Performance Peacekeeping", published in December 2014. This report acknowledged that the UN lagged behind in the use and application of technology, and that this gap was so big that some of the most capable countries (in terms of having technology) were reluctant to participate in peacekeeping operations. In the report, several so-called 'myths' are taken away. These include, amongst others, the fear that technology replaces human resources or personnel, that technology is a euphemism used to operate drones in mission areas for political purposes and that use of technology violates the basic principles of the UN and that technology is too sophisticated for the UN. It argues, for example, that technology only enhances peacekeepers and leads to more efficiency and effectivity, that Unmanned Aerial Systems (UAS) are simply too useful to not use, and is actually obliged to use advanced technology. Therefore, the report recommends using modern surveillance and reconnaissance "without exception or delay", as they are a "powerful

[14] Interview with Walter Dorn, operator professor at the United Nations and co-writer of UN reports, Utrecht, 19/06/2018.

force protection and intelligence tool" (UN 2014:69). It presents the so-called digital peacekeeper, equipped with advanced technology, enabled with real-time situational awareness and early warning information, as presented in figure 4.1[15]. In the report, it is depicted how this digital peacekeeper should ideally be placed within a 'smart' area, as presented in figure 4.2. This 'smart peacekeeping area' was expected to secure peacekeepers better. A Special Committee of the UN therefore recommended that "any technology that helps to improve the safety and security of uniformed and civilian peacekeepers deserved to be explored for United Nations peace operations" (UN 2014a:22).

Figure 4.1: The 'digital peacekeepers' as envisaged in the UN's 'Smart Peacekeeping' report (UN 2014:94).

[15] Both images are derived from pdf files, and could therefore not be attained in high quality. Hence, I have not attached them in a larger size in the appendix.

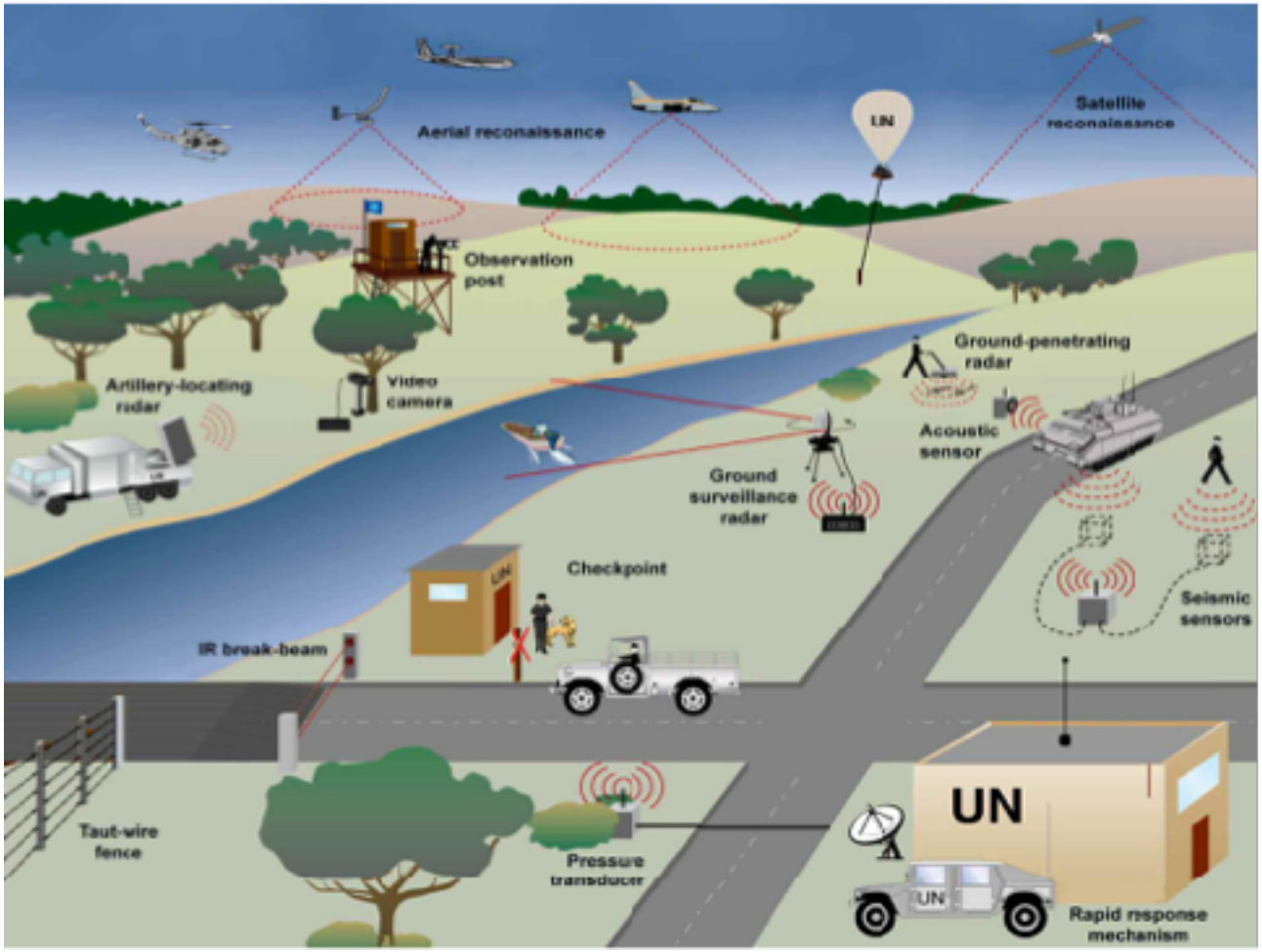

Figure 4.2: The 'smart peacekeeping environment' as envisaged in the 'Smart Peacekeeping' report (Dorn 2016:6).

Based on the important reports, such as the 'Performance Peacekeeping' and 'Smart Peacekeeping' reports, a new, more technological paradigm for peacekeeping was promoted. The body of expert knowledge that was requisite needed to be mainly technology positive. Therefore the created discourse depicted technology as a crucial element to make peacekeeping operations successful in its newly, complex and dangerous environments, which was seen as a threat. An important advancement within this technological discourse was the need for information and information-gathering capabilities, such as drones. In the proposed approach for peacekeeping, the human elements in the assemblage (peacekeepers) are blended with non-human elements (their 'smart environment'), including drones. These drones were expected to give great tactical advantages, especially in night combat, thus providing them with tools for the new approaches of coercive forms of security governance. In other words, these technologies were used to force the armed groups and militias into conduct that the governor (the UN) desired. Also, they would be used for monitoring arms embargoes, the monitoring of camps of IDPS and for serving as a 'powerful

deterrent'. This implicates that the UN also aimed to enlarge their disciplinary power, by letting the armed groups know that they would constantly be seen.

4.4 Getting rid of the anti-drone discourse

The introduction of such a powerful tools of governance, including drones, was not easy. According to de Rave, Under-Secretary-General Hervé Ladsous devoted "90 per cent of his time to creating acceptance", not only within the Security Council, but also within the Special Committee of Peacekeeping Operations[16]. As already noted in the introduction, especially drones were widely seen as a controversial instrument - mainly because of its use in debatable and possibly unlawful operations by the United States (US), which had led to a widespread resistance against targeted killings (Karlsrud & Rosen 2013:3). Furthermore, the idea was common that drones were tools of remoteness and distance, built to execute actions of aggression by remote control (Karlsrud & Rosen 2013:3).

Actors that were in favor of the introduction of drones in peacekeeping missions, had to desert from this discourse in which drones had the connotation of potentially risky or aggressive tools of governance. Power struggles within the assemblage are visible here, as power is implemented in the creation of the counter-discourse, as the quote of Foucault at the start of this article depicts. In order to refrain from the negative image and to take away concerns among actors in the assemblage, drones were presented as tools for 'supermarket surveillance', that were basically 'flying camera's' (Lynch 2013). An UN official (that even wanted to remain anonymous because of the sensitivity of the topic) said they were used like "CCTV in a supermarket" which would send a message of presence and call for surrender without "touching anything" or "going anywhere near them" (Pilgrim, 2013). The UN refrained from the use of the term 'drone', but used the word 'UAV' consistently instead. Ladsous stated, besides saying that could act as a "deterrent for those who move around with bad intentions" (UN 2013a) at the same press conference:

> Let me say first that maybe the word should not be "drones" because these days you know people associate drones with the image of missiles being launched. No, no, no. This clearly is UAVs for surveillance purposes only, basically a flying camera. And that of course will be, the information gathered, will be fed first and foremost to the force commander as a tool for situational awareness. (…) Of course there are a number of other operations where this

[16] Interview with Kolonel Rob de Rave, Military Advisor, Permanent Mission of the Netherlands to the United Nations, Utrecht, 14/06/2018.

> could be considered as a useful tool, but I think we have first and foremost to see how it works on the ground and if it does indeed help MONUSCO to be in your words more proactive and do the job better.

At a different press conference after the announcement of the drones, critical questions about the use of drones in combination with the robust FIB were ignored, as well as questions about the political situation. When Martin Kobler, the Special Representative of the United Nations Secretary-General (SRSG), was asked to be more specific about the role and performances of drones in the operation, he stated, similarly to Ladsous, that they are "unarmed*",* will be used as a "mission asset, not for military purposes only" but also for "civilian purposes" (UN 2013b). He furthermore stipulated that "primarily, we [the UN] do not want to fight". However, for the trial and beginning phase, drones would be used militarily "to identify targets, to have reconnaissance and to improve our information for intelligence" (UN 2013b). Furthermore, he noted that drones would improve the intelligence capacity for the FIB, reduce the risk that was posed to UN personnel and would help the UN if they should enter into fight. In conclusion, although the created counter-discourse carefully sought to refrain from drones as being coercive tools of governance and presented drones instead mainly as disciplinary tools of governance, the answers to critical questions show that drones would also be used for more coercive forms of governance.

"Where there is power, there is resistance."

— Michel Foucault[17]

5. The practice of forging alignments

After having looked at the threat perception in the assemblage and their proposed solution to the problem, this chapter will look at the alliances that were forged. According to Murray Li (2007:265), the practice of forging alliances is "the work of linking together the objectives of various parties to the assemblage, both those who aspire to govern conduct and those whose conduct is to be conducted." In the human/non-human assemblage of MONUSCO, many parties were involved, each having different motivations and interests. This chapter will provide insight in how parties got other parties on board and how some parties resisted getting on board of these alliances, and what this says about the concept of power.

As laid out earlier, under the cloak of a common threat perception – being involved in complex missions with asymmetric threats, and therefore needing advanced technology – a push for technological advancements and robust force took place. This push was mainly led by the US, European countries, and the CANZ-group[18] (Canada, Australia and New-Zealand) (Dorn 2016:24). Particularly the US has a strong role in this push. Obama, for example, declared that the US would help to identify "state-of-the-art-technology" for the UN, and would "seek to become a leading TCC to UN operations" (Smart Peacekeeping 2016:5). Furthermore, as laid out in chapter four, there were great differences between the UN and Western alliances' NATO-approach of standards, requirements, command arrangements, communication lines, mindsets and planning processed and products (Karlsrud & Smith 2015:5). The Western alliance thus wanted to adopt this more anticipating, reactive approach. Nevertheless, the alliance first needed to get other actors in the assemblage on board. These actors were the nonaligned movement (NAM)[19] and certain countries (e.g. Russia), that often pushed for, amongst others, restrictions and conditions on the use of

[17] Foucault (1978:95).

[18] Hereafter, I call this alliance the 'Western alliance'.

[19] The Non-Aligned Movement is an international organization dedicated to representing the interests and aspirations of developing countries (Munro 2018). It counts over 120 members and 17 observer states. According to the Nuclear Threat Initiative (2018), "The NAM has sought to 'create an independent path in world politics that would not result in member States becoming pawns in the struggles between the major powers.' It identifies the right of independent judgment, the struggle against imperialism and neo-colonialism, and the use of moderation in relations with all big powers as the three basic elements that have influenced its approach. At present, an addition goal is facilitating a restructuring of the international economic order."

advanced technology in UN peacekeeping operations (Dorn 2016:24). Convincing these actors to join the Western alliance was mainly done by creating the tech-positive discourse which articulated the effectiveness and added value of these approaches and instruments, as laid out in the former chapter. However, leading this push and influencing other countries towards this discourse was not easy, as many frictions and resistance of actors within the assemblage were present. Besides the prevailing anti-drone discourse that had to be liquidated, the push for advanced technologies like drones were complicated by the interests of several countries.

5.1 Underlying interests of countries

Actors within the NAM were the countries that stepped in after the Western countries 'left' UN peacekeeping in general. In the case of the DRC, these Troop-contributing countries (TCCs) were, amongst others, Bangladesh, Pakistan, and India. As de Rave explained, the UN payment per soldier is approximately 1400 US$ per month, but since the soldiers receive only a small amount of this total, it becomes a "business model" for those TCCs, in which every weapon, helicopter and cook is a source of income[20]. The peacekeeping budget is approximately 8 billion US$, to which the US contributes 25-28% per cent and the EU 40%. De Rave argued that adding surveillance technology such as drones was not in favor of TCCs countries, as they saw that the introduction of such technology could possibly lead to reduction of ground forces. Apart from diminishing the income that was derived from their 'business model', this would also have consequences for their status and rights within the UN. However, these arguments "were never shared like this in the diplomatic world." In contrast, according to de Rave, many improper arguments were posed by TCCs that had *actually* to do with the threat of affecting their 'business model'. Indeed, many arguments were brought up by UN member states, amongst others that the use of drones would be a risk to infantry soldiers and that the UN lacked legal regulations. Furthermore, drones were questioned for their appropriateness[21] and feared for being used for spying on neighboring countries, which was brought up by Mali's neighboring country, Chad[22] (Lynch 2013).

There were more reasons for TCCs to be less interested in the new approach of peacekeeping. As

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[20] Interview with Kolonel Rob de Rave, Military Advisor, Permanent Mission of the Netherlands to the United Nations, Utrecht, 14/06/2018..
Original transcript: "De Global North, er is een verplicht betalingssysteem per jaar. Dat gaat om een bedrag van rond de 8 miljard per jaar. Amerika betaalt ongeveer 25-28% per jaar, zo'n 2 miljard dollar. De EU betaalt 40%, NL individueel 1,654%, zo'n 150 miljoen dollar wat wij betalen. De Global South voeren de missies uit. Voor elke soldaat die je inzet in zo'n missie krijg je een bedrag uitbetaald, ter compensatie van de betaalde kosten. Voor elk geweer en helicopter, keuken, etc, krijg je betaald. Die zien een soort businessmodel ontstaan."

[21] One of the countries that brought up this argument was Pakistan.

[22] Interview with Kolonel Rob de Rave, Military Advisor, Permanent Mission of the Netherlands to the United Nations, Utrecht, 14/06/2018..

Walter Dorn points out, TCCs had gotten into a state where they were not pro-active[23][24] but had gotten involved in the UN's static approach (Karlsrud & Smith 2015:1). Especially drones could provide imagery that would make it hard for peacekeeper to deny that they had to act upon the gathered information. Furthermore, drones could trigger obligations towards their peacekeepers, as de Rave[25][26] laid out,

> If you have a sound situational awareness [due to drones] you can deploy your troops where its necessary. This would actually mean that TCCs would have to start fighting, which had not been their intention. 'Then we have to start fighting and act robustly, that was not our intention', the TCC would think, also because their soldiers would be at risk, and bluntly said, they would think 'it was supposed to be a vacation, right?' Yes, this is said in a blunt way, but it was the background of the discussion[27].

Nevertheless, as Judith Verweijen, Postdoctoral Research Fellow Conflict Research Group on Ghent University, noticed, the TCCs would probably reverse this argument. As she argued,

> It are mainly the TCCs, like India and Pakistan, that do not support the idea of peace enforcement and that do not want to participate in combat activities in the DRC. Their problem is that the countries that push the 'MONUSCO has to be more pro-active and participate in combat discourse' are all countries that do not want to contribute troops to the UN theirselves[28].

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[23] Ibid.

[24] Interview with Walter Dorn, operator professor at the United Nations and co-writer of UN reports, Utrecht, 19/06/2018.

[25] Interview with Kolonel Rob de Rave, Military Advisor, Permanent Mission of the Netherlands to the United Nations, Utrecht, 14/06/2018..

[26] Also acknowledged in an interview with Walter Dorn, operator professor at the United Nations and co-writer of UN reports, Utrecht, 19/06/2018

[27] Original transcript: "En het tweede is, als je er goede situational awareness hebt, dan kan je je troepen daar brengen waar het moet. Dat is op 2 manieren weer en bedreiging, want dan denken de 2e en 3e wereldlanden: 'Ja, dan moeten we nog gaan vechten ook, en dat was eigenlijk niet te bedoeling.' Dan moeten we nog robuust gaan optreden ook, en dat is niet de bedoeling, want dan lopen onze mensen risico. Het was toch een vakantie? Heel bot, maar dat is de achtergrond van al die discussies."

[28] Interview with Judith Verweijen, Postdoctoral Research Fellow Conflict Research Group, Ghent University, Utrecht, 26/06/2018. Original transcript: "Het zijn de TCCs zoals India en Pakistan, die eigenlijk niet aan peace enforcement.. Of eigenlijk actief willen gaan vechten, mee willen doen daar. Dus hun probleem is van: de landen die het hardste roepen van 'MONUSCO en andere missies moeten veel pro-actiever zich opstellen en eigenlijk actief gaan vechten' dat zijn allemaal landen die geen troepen willen leveren aan de VN."

The argument made by Verweijen shows again that the Western alliance had to pull on TCCs to join their alliance, so they could continue their role as being TechCCs, without having to become more risk-full TCCs. Nevertheless, TCCs showed resistance in joining their alliance.

Resistance against the introduction of drones and the technological push not only came from countries that saw their business model threatened or were reluctant to act pro-actively. Other countries that lacked these motives, like Russia and China, also had to be persuaded, as they are generally verging more towards non-interventions. They showed concerns about the introduction of drones, amongst others about possible backlash effects, hinderance of trust between countries and its relation with the peacekeeping basic principles[29]. Also approximately a year after its introduction, Russia warned that although peacekeeping operations must keep pace with the time, technology like drones were not an end in itself (UN 2014b). At the same Security Council meeting, China asked for an in-depth study of the drones, including its legal implications, after it had articulated several times in Security Council meetings that peacekeeping operations should fully respect the sovereignty of the host countries. These concerns needed to be taken away in order to join the Western alliance. Nevertheless, both countries have high-motivations for preserving unity in decision making of the Security Council, and for increasing its status on the world-stage (Hirono and Lanteigne 2013:247). This might be a motivation for not abstaining these technological assets largely.

All these underlying motivations show that between parties in the assemblage, several tensions were created by the push for more pro-active and more technologically advanced forms of peacekeeping that would include drones. Introduction of such technology would not only threaten the peacekeeping 'business-model', but would also trigger obligations for intervention. Furthermore, countries that opposed large-scale intervention in peacekeeping in general were more reluctant to get on board of the alliance. Although these tensions were more about the introduction of these forms of peacekeeping in general, there were also tensions in the alliances of peacekeeping in the DRC and in MONUSCO specifically. Rwanda, the neighboring country of the DRC, for example, was very suspicious about the entrance of drones in the DRC. A Rwandan diplomat to the UN argued that "Africa must not become a laboratory for intelligence devices overseas" (Charbonneau 2013). Although Rwanda denied being involved in these practices, the UN had substantial evidence that Rwanda had violated arms embargoes by "by providing direct military support to the M23 rebels, facilitating recruitment, encouraging and facilitating

[29] The main peacekeeping principles are the consent of the local parties, impartiality and the use of force only in self-defence. These principles are "the bedrock principles of peacekeeping" (UN 2000:10).

desertions from the armed forces of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, and providing arms, ammunition, intelligence and political advice" (UN 2012:3). As Walter Dorn argues, comprehensive monitoring systems and verification technology, such as drones, could detect these violations and manipulations (Dorn 2011:182). It could thus be argued that Rwanda may not have wished the UN to deploy these systems and therefore posed critical questions in order to delegitimize the use of drones. For example, Rwanda posed critical questions in the Security Council, especially about the handling of information provided by the UN, particularly when the operators would be non-UN personnel (UN 2013c:16).

To overcome some of the tensions between actors in the assemblage and to get them 'on board', a rather surprising solution was adopted. Normally, for the provision of material for UN peacekeeping, the DPKO asks countries to contribute to a peacekeeping mission, according to the mandate. However, as a result of all the suspicion and concerns of actors within the assemblage, especially with regard to data use and storage, the UN chose to acquire the drones via a commercial party. Information about this procurement process, surprisingly, is not made public, raising questions about the bidding processes and the motives to choose one bidder over the other. When a critical journalist[30] asked questions about this secrecy around the bidding process and the lack of open access to this information, an UN's spokesperson at the time answered that 25 companies from 11 countries visited the DRC and that a number had submitted proposals. Furthermore, the contractor would run the drone (Inner City Press, n.d.). Reasons for this non-transparency of the processes perhaps have to do with its political sensitivity; as Walter Dorn argued, who was involved in the bidding process, the UN initially planned to have an Israeli drone, but due to the political problems and the practical issues this could lead to, they eventually chose the Italian company Seles ES, initially for a 3-year contract (Matthew Russell Lee, n.d.)[31]. Apart from the non-transparent bidding process, this solution is remarkable, as outsourcing of sensitive data collection still raises questions about transparency and accountability, as well as questions about ownership of the data (Karlsrud & Rosen 2013:6). It can therefore be argued that it was rather a practice of exclusion of critical parties that had concerns over the introduction of drones by the Western alliance that pursued its implementation. This exclusion could then be made possible due to the productive power that those countries performed over these countries to accept its introduction, by means of an ambiguous compromise such as outsourcing its

[30] This critical journalist is Matthew Russell Lee, an controversial critic that has been denied access to UN due to rude behaviour. His questions about this matter and the response of the UN official, however, has been helpful and therefore added, despite his incredibility as a journalist.

[31] Interview with Walter Dorn, operator professor at the United Nations and co-writer of UN reports, Utrecht, 19/06/2018.

introduction to a commercial party. In this way, the advance towards a peacekeeping paradigm in which conduct was governed by technical means, including drones, could continue.

5.2 Alliance making in other fields of the assemblage

The power of exclusion of certain parties is not only visible with regard to technology, but was present earlier on with regard to the use of robust force. An example is the run-up towards the creation of the FIB – which was deemed necessary by African countries after Goma fell in the hands of M23 rebels in November 2012. According to Berwouts[32], its formulation was more importantly, also a call for African ownership: South-Africa, Tanzania and Malawi took the leading role in the process (UN 2015a:17). The US, however, opposed having a new international actor that acted independently from MONUSCO. As a result and outcome of weeks of discussion, the FIB was created as "a compromise"[33] - containing soldiers from mainly African countries, such as Tanzania, South-Afrika and Malawi, but still as being part of the MONUSCO mission. Again, as Rwanda supported the M23 indirectly, the country responded with an aggressive discourse. They did so for example by reporting in newspapers that "bodybags would return" if a FIB would be deployed, and by making attempts in the Security Council to block the entrance of the FIB[34][35]. Despite Rwanda's preventive measures, the FIB became deployed in March 2013. Here, not only strong exclusion practices of Rwanda are visible, but also powerful practices of the US of getting involved in the mainly African-led development of a Neutral Intervention Force.

Another actor in the assemblage, the DRC, had interest in the robust force of the FIB, because the UN teamed up with the Congolese forces (the FARDC) for fighting rebel groups and militias. Especially for the ousting of M23 rebels, this alliance between the FIB and the FARDC worked out well. Although the FIB and FARDC were successful in defeating the M23 – which was widely celebrated within the Security Council – the collaboration between the FIB and the FARDC deteriorated within a year. According to Verweijen, they could align closely on defeating the M23, as the M23 was a serious threat to the DRC government, and therefore needed the UN to defeat the group. However, exclusionary practices on the side of the DRC came in place when the UN wanted

[32] Interview with Kris Berwouts, Congo-expert, Utrecht, 22/06/2018.

[33] Ibid.

[34] Interview with Kris Berwouts, Congo-expert, Utrecht, 22/06/2018.

[35] For example, during the Security Council, Rwanda rejected a Neutral Intervention Force (UN 2012).

to neutralize *all* rebel groups after the success of the M23[36]. For defeating the FDLR and smaller groups, the DRC and MONUSCO could align less, since these groups were no big threat to the DRC government[37]. Some argue that instead, the DRC government profits from some of the unrest regions, and even deliberately makes use of the existing tensions between particular groups (Zierse 2018). As a result, the FIB and FARDC started neutralizing mainly the ADF and NALU, which was quite remarkable, since they were far from the most violent groups present in the DRC[38]. The FIB-FARDC alliance eroded further after the appointment of controversial military leaders that were on the human rights due diligence policy of the UN[39] (Verweijen 2017:12, UN 2015b:9). This even led to a standstill in joint military operations for months (UN 2015c). The UN repeatedly called for resumed cooperation between the FARDC and MONUSCO forces (UN 2015d: 4), and a few months later, the joint military operations gradually resumed. When the FARDC needed support, for example, to oust rebels in the large city of Uvira in 2017, they aligned again with MONUSCO in military actions. According to Verweijen, "MONUSCO gave crucial support to the Congolese army to prevent a take-over from the city. So you can see that indeed, the UN peacekeeping mission is sometimes needed for the Congolese government, although they would not admit that"[40].

The DRC and MONUSCO furthermore aligned most closely in its military matters, but diverged heavily on the political process (Congo Research Group 2015). Here, strong exclusion practices within the assemblage are again observable. As soon as political transformation processes are pressured by MONUSCO, the DRC pushes MONUSCO back. They do so under the argumentation of MONUSCO being a form of paternalism or neocolonialism, as MONUSCO makes the space for

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[36] Having no interest in fighting the FDLR had to to with geopolitical interests. As Kris Berwouts stated, "the DRC had no motive for neutralizing the FDLR. This unwillingness comes from ties between governmental and the army, as well as business interests. This mainly has to do with natural resources." (Original transcription: "Voor Congo was het een onwil die voortkomt uit banden tussen verschillende mensen in het leger, en ook zakelijke belangen. (…) Je kan de kaart leggen op de kaart van de grondstoffenroof, en je kan zeggen dat alle schakeltjes te maken hebben met grondstoffenroof" (Interview with Kris Berwouts, Congo-expert, Utrecht, 22/06/2018).

[37] Interview with Kris Berwouts, Congo-expert, Utrecht, 22/06/2018 and Interview with Judith Verweijen, Postdoctoral Research Fellow Conflict Research Group, Ghent University, Utrecht, 26/06/2018.

[38] Interview with Kris Berwouts, Congo-expert, Utrecht, 22/06/2018.

[39] The Human Rights Due Diligence Policy (HRDDP), adopted in July 2011, requires all United Nations entities to be diligent in ensuring that support to non-UN security forces is provided in a manner that is in compliant with, and promotes respect for, international human rights and humanitarian laws (UN 2018b).

[40] Interview with Judith Verweijen, Postdoctoral Research Fellow Conflict Research Group, Ghent University, Utrecht, 26/06/2018. Original transcription: "De M23 was een serieuze bedreiging voor Kinshasa, daarom had de regering de VN nodig om de M23 te verslaan. Maar heel veel van die kleinere rebellengroepen zijn maar een beperkte dreiging voor Kinshasa. Alhoewel, vorig jaar november, dreigden rebellen een stad Uvira in te nemen, en dat is een hele grote stad in Zuid-Kivu, en toen heeft MONUSCO ook cruciale steun verleend aan het Congolese leger om te voorkomen dat de Congolese stad ingenomen werd. Dus je ziet inderdaad dat de VN missie af en toe uiteindelijk nodig is voor de Congolese regering, alhoewel ze dat zelf niet willen toegeven."

manipulation in the elections smaller[41]. This is not only visible in the repeated calls of the DRC for MONUSCO to leave the DRC, but also clearly in the repeated delays of elections by the DRC government. Since 2015, calls for the need to work towards elections by MONUSCO have been articulated almost every Security Council meeting. The elections were planned in November 2016, but elections were postponed by the DRC government until April 2018 and still get postponed as of today[42]. President Kabila remained president after he was supposed to step down already in 2016, and protests against the electoral delays have been repressed - sometimes with force (van Laer 2018). Critics argue that they Kabila uses the delay to extent his 15 year long rule or to create favorable conditions for his successor (Al Jazeera 2016, van Laer 2018).

The above described exclusionary and inclusionary practices of the DRC show that the alliances in the assemblage were fluid: they altered several times during the period, depending on the interest of the actors. The government of the DRC seems to have indirect power to exclude the UN on certain military and the political processes, and on the other hand to include them on certain military areas. This 'dependency' of the UN on the host government causes difficult dilemmas for the UN, certainly on the political processes. Van Laer (2018) reflects this dilemma, as according to him, the UN has to has to stay on speaking terms with the host government of their mission, but at the same time, has to push fair and inclusive elections. Although this dilemma does not directly relate to the use of drones in the DRC, it does show how the UN is dependent on other parties within the assemblage for their governance strategies. This chapter has thereby shown that alliance making and resistance to the forging of these alliances has been present at several stages in the human/non-human assemblage in the DRC. Not only for the use of advanced technology and drones, but also for the creation of the FIB and in the political and military cooperation between MONUSCO and the DRC, exclusion and inclusion of parties played an important role. By examining the underlying interest of countries in the assemblage, it has become clear what drives this exclusion and inclusion.

[41] Interview with Judith Verweijen, Postdoctoral Research Fellow Conflict Research Group, Ghent University, Utrecht, 26/06/2018.

[42] The elections are currently planned to be held in December 2018.

"A critique is not a matter of saying that things are not right as they are. It is a matter of pointing out on what kinds of assumptions, what kinds of familiar, unchallenged, unconsidered modes of thought the practices that we accept rest."

— Michel Foucault[43]

6: Critique, effect and the practice of managing failure

As Gould & Demmers (2018:17) point out, the assemblage approach allows investigation of how parties to an assemblage cohere and act, but also how they have an effect. After having looked at the assemblage practices of authorizing knowledge and the forging of alliances, there will now be looked at the effect of the technological discourse and the use of drones in the DRC. This effect is closely related to the assemblage practice of managing failure and contradictions, in which, according to Murray Li (2007:265), failure is presented as the outcome of rectifiable deficiencies, where contradictions are smoothened out so that they do not seem fundamental, and where compromises are devised. This chapter will thus provide more insight in the effects of the assemblage and in how possible failure was managed.

6.1 The 'success' of drones and the technological paradigm in MONUSCO

In one of the scarce evaluations of the use of drones to the Security Council, drones are depicted as useful tools that, amongst others, have served as powerful deterrents, have led to more frequent and more safe patrols, and have overall 'resulted in a positive experience' (UN 2014a:38). Although the Security Council has reported that they have been effective, it is apparent that there are very few instances where the UN explained what the drones were actually used for, and in which specific situations they were actually helpful. Only one 'succes story' about the use of drones in MONUSCO is widely spread, which is a rescue of fourteen people on lake Kivu. In this occasion, a drone was used to confirm the signals of passengers that were in difficulty on a ferry boat. An Uruguayan naval patrol picked up the first signals, and after the confirmation of the drone, speedboats and helicopters were sent (UN 2014c). According to Walter Dorn, this success story slipped into people's mind, and gave people less ground to argue that technology was useless[44].

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[43] In: Foucault (1998:154). *Politics, philosophy, culture*. New York: Routledge.

[44] Interview with Walter Dorn, operator professor at the United Nations and co-writer of UN reports, Utrecht, 19/06/2018.

In contradiction, it seems that the local effectiveness of drones, has been limited. Apart from the success story on the rescue of lake Kivu, success stories are hard to find, and not without reason. “One of the reasons that you can find very little information about how it [a drone] is used, is because the UN would be a little bit embarrassed by how the contract didn’t live up to the expectations”, according to Walter Dorn[45]. Walter Dorn called it a “mixed success”[46]. The UN’s evaluation of the drones notes that there have been two drone accidents, which have been investigated by the UN (UN 2014a:37). One of these accidents was in October 2014, when a drone crashed and burned a farmland. A journalist reported that the debris of the drone remained untouched for months, while the civilians could not farm in the destroyed crops. Eventually, they did receive a compensation payment (O’Grady 2015). Aside from the crashing problem that was barely mentioned in the internal reports, there were other major technical issues, including problems with data sharing and more basic problems of data storage[47]. Furthermore, it remains questionable how large the added value of drones actually was. Quality of the imagery of the drone was very limited, especially in a country that is mainly covered with rainforest, and where the camera could not see under the forest cover[48]. As Verweijen[49] noted, imagery could show how many villages and houses got burned and could show indications of where rebel camps might be started. However, further analysis of the provided information remains a large shortcoming. As Verweijen[50] notes,

> Drones can be useful to document some large-scale incidents, but still, you don’t have analysis. You don’t have any indication of its root causes, for example why a village got burned down or who did it, and to track down this information, you will still have to trust other sources of intelligence. So yes, it can be supportive instrument, but in the end you need a complement of high-quality information of other sources and analysis, something you cannot gather with drones.

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[45] Interview with Walter Dorn, operator professor at the United Nations and co-writer of UN reports, Utrecht, 19/06/2018.

[46] Ibid.

[47] Ibid.

[48] Interview with Judith Verweijen, Postdoctoral Research Fellow Conflict Research Group, Ghent University, Utrecht, 26/06/2018.

[49] Ibid.

[50] Ibid. Original transcription: "Ja, ik zou zeggen dat het een bepaalde ondersteuning kan bieden.. Het kan als er actieve oorlogvoering plaatsvind, zeer goed laten zien hoeveel dorpen er zijn platgebrand, en hoeveel huizen er zijn platgebrand. En in die zin kan dat nuttig zijn om bepaalde grootscheepse incidenten beter te documenteren. Maar dan heb je alsnog geen analyse. Je hebt geen indicaties van wat zijn nou de oorzaken ervan? Van oké, we kunnen vaststellen dat dit dorp is platgebrand, maar om vast te stellen wie dat dorp heeft platgebrand en waarom zul je alsnog op andere vormen van intelligence moeten vertrouwen. Dus ja, het kan zeker een ondersteuning bieden, maar uiteindelijk heb je dus een complement nodig aan hoge kwaliteit van andere soorten informatie en analyse die je met drones niet kunt vergaren.”

This high-quality information or intelligence can only be gathered from the ground, which is a second point of critique. To gather this 'human intelligence' from civilians, UN peacekeepers have to travel to sites on the ground, have to be pro-active and have to engage with the civilians in the area. However, it has been reported often that MONUSCO peacekeepers only patrol on main road axes that are accessible by car, have a limited radius of action and are clustered around their bases (Verweijen 2017:13). FARDC officers therefore regard MONUSCO as a force that has no impact on the ground, does not intervene where the enemy is present or where there is insecurity, despite their "sophisticated and modern equipment" (Verweijen 2017:13). This is also one of the explanations for the negative local perception on MONUSCO, which is clearly depicted by a local who said "we are dying, and they are taking pictures", after soldiers allegedly kept a distance of about hundred meters when a village was attacked (Kakaes: 93). Some critics even argued that drones would only be useful if troops had the capability and will to act upon the gathered information, and that it risked creating new, false expectations. Blyth (2013), for example, argues that the UN already *had* extensive evidence of, for example, illicit trade, facilitators and operations, and that drones would not dramatically renew that information. Thus, according to Kakaes, drones risk to become a sort of 'technological apotheosis of the UN observer—capable of seeing great horrors more systematically than ever before, but unable to do anything about them' (Kakaes 2015:92).

This not only accounts for drones, but also for broader technology. Even if the UN fully implements its ideas about 'the digital peacekeeper' in the 'smart peacekeeping environment', as envisaged in figures in chapter four, related non-technological problems remain, such as language skills and difficulties for the Congolese citizens to trust MONUSCO peacekeepers. According to Verweijen, especially when combined with a focus on a military solution with robust action, adopting "high-technology reforms on to a low-technology society can even be dangerous", as technology often leads to "quick fixes"[51]. "Especially in communities where everything is based on trust and personal ties, high-technology solutions will not work (…) and they might even lead to a larger discrepancy"[52]. Instead, in order to gather useful intelligence, she recommends to increase

[51] Interview with Judith Verweijen, Postdoctoral Research Fellow Conflict Research Group, Ghent University, Utrecht, 26/06/2018. Original transcription: "Juist in dit soort samenlevingen gaat alles nog heel erg op personal trust, personal ties, het bellen van mensen met technologie op afstand, dat gaat nooit zo actief zijn" (…) Ik denk dat het juist een beetje gevaarlijk is, want we hebben het hier over low-tech societies. Dus je kan wel enorme high-tech middelen gaan inzetten, maar dat kan ook alleen maar meer discrepantie leveren in gebieden waar weinig telefoonnetwerken zijn. Dus, ik ben daar nog niet zo van overtuigd. Ik denk dat je een aantal andere structurele problemen in de VN missies beter kan oplossen voordat je er hele dure technologie tegenaan gaat gooien."

[52] Interview with Judith Verweijen, Postdoctoral Research Fellow Conflict Research Group, Ghent University, Utrecht, 26/06/2018.

the civilian component, decentralize the mission, increase the civilian presence, also in more remote areas, and to at least ask peacekeepers to enter terrains by foot instead of by car.

6.2 Contradictions in the assemblage

In the effect of the assemblage of MONUSCO, several contradictions are visible, especially when looking at the critique of the mission and the approach the UN takes.

A first contradiction can be found in the internal reports of the UN. These show that, in contrast to the presentation of drones by the UN as 'flying camera's', drones have been used repeatedly in robust operations that the FIB performed in combination with the FARDC. For example, soon after its deployment, a report of the UN announced that, thanks to intelligence that was gathered from different sources (including drones) "ongoing sweeping operations have become better targeted against the FDLR" (UN 2014d:3). Another example is when MONUSCO supported the FARDC in operations against the ADF, amongst others intelligence gathered by aerial reconnaissance and by providing fire support (UN 2015e:11). The use of robust force was widely celebrated as a succes in Security Council documents, particularly for ousting M23 rebels (e.g. during UN 2015f:18). Martin Kobler (the SRSG), argued that residual incidents in which the UN could not protect civilians brought to light "the need for a paradigm shift in thought and action on the part of the United Nations forces - from reaction to prevention, from static to mobile and from a mindset of protection-by-presence to one of protection-by-action" (UN 2014e:3).

There are more contradictions. As explained earlier, deeply complex political problems were rendered technical by posing a military, technical solution. In the case of the M23 this was successful, but military action in combination with the FARDC has been limited afterwards. The relation between the FARDC and MONUSCO deteriorated rapidly, after which the FIB fell into isolement[53]. Nevertheless, the military approach seems to continue: not only in MONUSCO, but also in new peacekeeping reports, harsh intervention is put forward as a solution (Blyth, 2013). In the most recent report, which is amongst others written by the Cruz[54], the faith in military power and force is even taken a step further. New goals include maximizing succes, even in high-risk environments, further avoidance of peacekeeper casualties, and maximizing efficiency (Williams, 2018). The report argues that "overwhelming force is necessary" to defeat and gain the respect of hostile actors (UN 2017:10)". In contrast, scholars have pointed out that peacekeepers achieve a

[53] Interview with Kris Berwouts, Congo-expert, Utrecht, 22/06/2018.

[54] Lieutenant General Carlos Alberto dos Santos Cruz was lieutenant-general and force commander of several peacekeeping missions, amongst others, of MONUSCO from 2013 until 2015.

lot, but not by using force. Solhjell & Rosland (2017) and Hoffmann et al (2018:11), even argue that military approaches have contributed to an increase, rather than a decrease in violence and conflict, especially in the DRC. Some scholars argue that UN peacekeeping has an excellent track record at achieving strategic goals without resorting to violence, but rather by using persuasive power instead of coercive power (Howard 2018). Coercive forms of military intervention and military solutions, "such as the intervention brigade, or ever-stronger protection mandates, are politically expedient. They give the appearance of doing something, even as more intractable issues are shelved. Increased military protection in the DRC is at best a temporary solution, one that, in MONUSCO's case, has not only been largely ineffective but has also undermined its legitimacy," according to Rift Valley Institute (2013:4).

A last contradiction in the assemblage relates to the focus of the UN on the avoidance of peacekeeper casualties and increasing peacekeepers' safety. Especially in 'the Cruz report', this focus is outstanding; the report states that there is a significant peak in peacekeepers' deaths (UN 2017:9). In contrast, there is credible research that points out that in fact, UN fatalities have decreased since 1998 (Karlsrud 2018:1). The increase of fatalities that the 'the Cruz report' depicts is mainly driven by fatalities in MINUSMA, which is considered as an outlier in the history of UN peacekeeping (Karlsrud 2018:2) - whereas Lijn and Smit (2015:6) have pointed out that particularly in MONUSCO, the position of casualties has been rather low.

6.3 The new peacekeeping approach in the DRC and its contradictions

Although in the DRC there cannot (yet) be spoken of 'overwhelming force', the UN aims to progress into a governance strategy of rapidly deployable battalions that are supported by enhanced technology and surveillance capabilities, including drones. This new approach is aiming for 'protection by projection' (UN 2017a) instead of 'protection by presence'. In the case of MONUSCO, an UN report from March 2017 pointed out that "options are explored for deployment of additional specialized capabilities, including specialized infantry and intelligence assets, which would be accomplished by reducing other MONUSCO troops, resulting in no increase in the number of troops on the ground". This would "require commensurate efforts to remove any caveats limiting the use of force in different areas" (UN 2017b:14).

Here again, contradictions are visible. The tactic of 'protection by projection' by means of rapidly deployable battalions and advanced technology is not a cheaper option then having 'normal'

peacekeepers on the ground, as de Rave explained[55]. Helicopters and drones are extremely expensive technologies[56]. Nevertheless, this approach was promoted during a time of increased budget cuts, and in which the US, the main funder for peacekeeping[57], calls for reduction of troops on the ground. A US press release states that the cut will force the UN to work 'smarter and more sufficiently' (US to the UN press release 2017). This cut has also meant a cut in the expensive technology, which was promoted as part of the 'protection by projection' paradigm. In the DRC this has meant not only reduction of troops on the ground, but also of individual police officers, civilians staff, cuts to air support and national security forces (UN 2017c:11). Whether these cuts in air support have also included drones, is not specified, but in January 2018, they were still deployed in military operations with the FARDC (UN 2018a:9). This, again, lays bare a contradiction, as cutting air (and other) assets diminishes the mobility and effectivity of the – supposed to be – effective and mobile forces. As one MONUSCO official stated, "If you do protection [through] projection but without the means to make it work, you are setting yourself up for failure" (Civilians in Conflict 2017:13). As part of the new approach, bases are removed, and so is the Congolese civilian staff that provided 'human intelligence' to MONUSCO soldiers. MONUSCO will have to rely remotely on local intelligence (e.g. by phone), which has been problematic in a low-tech society where everything is based on trust, as Verweijen pointed out[58], thereby showing another contradiction in the new approach.

This transformation towards less, but robust, boots on the ground has happened against a backdrop in the security situation in many areas in the DRC (UN 2017c:16), which is clearly visible in civilian life (UN 2017a:4). The backdrop in the security situation in combination with the reduction of UN troops can lead to power vacuums that the Congolese government cannot or does not want to fill (Civilians in Conflict, 2017:4). According to Berwouts, the DRC will only further destabilize in the coming months, due to the fragmenting political landscape[59]. Nevertheless, MONUSCO is under increasing pressure of the DRC government and some in the international community to develop an exit strategy that will allow it to withdraw from the country (Stimson 2016:11).

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[55] Interview with Kolonel Rob de Rave, Military Advisor, Permanent Mission of the Netherlands to the United Nations, Utrecht, 14/06/2018.

[56] Interview with Judith Verweijen, Postdoctoral Research Fellow Conflict Research Group, Ghent University, Utrecht, 26/06/2018.

[57] The US currently contributes almost 28,5% of UN peacekeeping costs (Global Observatory, 2017).

[58] Interview with Judith Verweijen, Postdoctoral Research Fellow Conflict Research Group, Ghent University, Utrecht, 26/06/2018.

[59] Interview with Kris Berwouts, Congo-expert, Utrecht, 22/06/2018.

All these contradictions in the assemblage show that in fact, many elements in the assemblage failed in achieving its intended results. Especially the element of drones was promoted as effective and efficient instrument, in reality, its performance has been rather limited. It seems, however, that the UN has not assessed this failure: rather, their internal reports still consider drones as a successful asset. Examination of other elements in the assemblage, such as the highly military and technical discourse in which the use of drones is also promoted, also shows that there are many flaws and inconsistencies. Seemingly, these flaws and inconsistencies are to some extent addressed within the UN: in 2017, many countries of the Non-Aligned Movement expressed their mixed feelings about the use of drones and 'smart technology', warned that these new peacekeeping operations were no substitute for addressing root causes of conflict and cautioned "against excessively robust mandates" (UN 2017d). Nevertheless, the most recent Security Council documents show that the reconcentration of forces is completed, that the neutralization of armed forces together with the FARDC continues, that new efforts to increase the safety of UN personnel are made, and that drones are still used (UN 2018c, 2018d). It could thus be argued that the failures and inconsistencies in the assemblage seem to be smoothened out and maintained, and even though many of them are fundamental. In this way, the threat perceptions remains legitimized, thereby maintaining governance of the DRC by means of robust force and technical means.

7. Conclusion

The use of drones by humanitarian actors in conflict settings with robust mandates, such as the UN in the DRC, is a recent phenomenon. Previous research has called for empirical examination on the use of these technological practices, since the combination of, and interaction between humans with non-humans has implications for the forms of governance. In this qualitative, interpretative casestudy of MONUSCO, the governmentality effect of the human/non-human element has been examined by making use of the idea of assemblage. The main question "How does the human/non-human assemblage have a governmentality effect?" does not have a simple answer. Based on the examination of the elements in several assemblage practices, my research findings have shown that the introduction of drones in the peacekeeping mission in the DRC was not just a single event that had simply 'occurred'. Rather, it was the outcome of a fuzzy process, where many social and material elements influenced each other and exercised power.

The peacekeeping mission in the DRC was developed to protect civilians in a country with an violent history that goes back for ages. Overtime, the UN increasingly became part of such complex and dangerous peacekeeping situations where there is 'no peace to keep'. My research findings show that a discourse was created in which technical solutions are posed for these complex social problems, thereby rendering the problem technical and rendering it in need of technical solutions. These solutions include the use of 'smart technology', such as drones, within a 'smart peacekeeping environment'. To implement this solution, a 'pro-technology' and especially a 'pro-drone discourse' was created, in which drones were legitimized as a non-coercive tool. These technical solutions furthermore include the use of robust force - leading to the creation of the UN's first-ever "military force", being the FIB. However, the creation and implementation of this technological and robust discourse – of which the introduction of drones was an important part – was not an easy process. Rather, the actors that pursued this new approach (European countries, the US and the CANZ-group, who together formed a 'Western alliance') faced resistance from many actors in the assemblage, who all tried to securitize, modify and translate their goals and interests (Allen 2011:155). The resistance was grounded in several interests and fears, such as the fear that drones would trigger obligations of TCCs, would threaten certain 'business models' of peacekeeping or would reveal certain involvement in the continuation of the DRC conflict. To overcome the power struggles between the actors in the assemblage, ambiguous compromises were made, such as the introduction of commercial drone. Likewise, the implementation of a

coercive, robust governance strategy faced resistance among actors: the FIB is in a similar way a compromise that resulted out of power struggles between several African countries and (mainly) the US.

The outcome of these power struggles is a certain local effect. My research has shown that the effect of both the technological and the robust governance strategy that is pursued, had a limited and possibly unintended effect on the ground. Drones have not proved to be largely effective; e.g. the imagery it provided had limited quality, analysis of the information by drones is lacking and they create obligations that the UN is not able or willing to act upon. Also other high-tech solutions are considered not to work on a low-tech society, where trust in communities are conditions for receiving important human intelligence. The robust governance strategy furthermore can be criticized for being politically expedient, based on wrong assumptions, and is considered by several scholars as a factor that actually exacerbates the conflict. These contradictions and failures of the assemblage are nevertheless smoothened out, and the peacekeeping practices maintained: despite its failure, the use of drones is sustained and is even regarded as having led to a 'positive experience'. Moreover, the use of robust force is further promoted in new UN peacekeeping documents.

The casestudy on MONUSCO has shown that power is an inherent element in many of the practices in the assemblage, being the practices of rendering technical, authorizing knowledge, forging alliances, and managing failures and contradictions. It lies in the production of the discourse that promotes technical and robust solutions and in the exclusion to delegitimize and exclude anti-drone discourses. Likewise, actors need power to exclude and include certain actors in their alliance to pursue this discourse, and to get their ambiguous solutions implemented. Furthermore, power lies in the possibility to smoothen out the contradictions in the assemblage in order to continue the implementation of certain practices, such as the use of drones in peacekeeping missions. It is thus in all these processes where I see productive power at work: it has shown that power is not solely a hierarchical form of (state) control, but is rather productive: it lies in the ability to 'structure the (possible) action of others.' This thesis thus confirms the critiques that have been given on the theoretical approaches of governance, such as Sending & Neumann (2006), thereby strengthening the calls for modes of research with a governmentality approach. Moreover, it has contributed to the small but growing amount of scholarly work that uses the analytical tool of assemblage to research governmentality and to put more focus on the 'how', by providing an empirical example of the processes and practices of *how* complex and heterogeneous elements work together, and in the end have a governance effect. By putting

emphasis on the role of the non-humans in the assemblage, namely the drones, I have furthermore responded to the call of Williams (2011), which stated that the role of a machine (a drone) cannot be uncovered without bringing to light the complexity of the situation. Making use of the assemblage approach has thus shown that, indeed, the non-human element cannot be separated from the produced discourse and power struggles of which it is part. Together with these other elements of the assemblage, it has a governmentality effect. Thereby, my case study endorses the value of assemblage as an analytical tool to understand complex (governance) structures.

In this casestudy, all the mentioned forms of productive power allowed for direct and coercive forms of power and governance strategies. The non-human elements, such as drones and smart technology, play a role in the robust peacekeeping operations against armed groups like M23 rebels, the ADF and to a certain extent the FDLR. The influence of these non-human elements, and therewith the power that they inherit, will likely enlarge, as they play an increasingly important role in the robust actions and peace enforcement operations that progressively take place. The recent report from the Cruz and the outspoken ambition of countries like the US to be the leading TechCC to the UN, paint a new picture of UN peacekeeping, especially when it is taken into account that budgets for UN peacekeeping only decrease. Although technology like drones is only meant to 'enhance the peacekeepers, rather then to replace them', the repatriation of most of the troops in the DRC shows that the reality might turn out otherwise. Rather, these developments paint a picture on the horizon of a new form of governance in which UN forces are being dropped at places where it needs to intervene to fight rebel groups. As soon as the fighting has been done, they 'pop up' to the next place where fighting is taking place, without having a base near the community or having a larger peace building strategy in which the local community is involved. Although is is enacted within a UN peacekeeping mission and carried out by a peacekeeping force, it thereby can be related to the concept of liquid warfare: a way of "military interventionism that shuns direct control of territory and its cumbersome order-building and order-maintaining responsibilities" that is instead replaced by a focus on "the destruction of the enemy-as-prey by means of hit-and-run attacks, man hunts, remote technology and a reliance on pop-up military bases and flexible operations" (Gould & Demmers 2018:3). My research on the DRC has shown, for example, that aims for local peace building, speaking the language of the Congolese to communicate with communities and build local-resistance strategies to solve political problems that underly the establishment of military movements, are replaced by strategies directed at ousting the M23, the ADF and ADF-NALU in an efficient and robust way, with a main role for

technology. However, to cite Verweijen once more, "technology often leads to quick fixes"[60], and therefore has in it the danger to become a solution to a problem without leading to a longer-standing, more thorough form for stabilization. These, and other contradictions and inconsistencies that I identified in the assemblage spark therefore important questions: if peacekeeper fatalities are not on the rise, the use of force has even proved to be ineffective, and the use of technology brings along many flaws, why *then* is the UN pursuing such an approach? And why is this approach pursued by mainly Western countries? What are the underlying motivations of these countries to pursue such a technological and robust revolution? These questions are worth future and more in-depth research. Although the new 'protection-by-projection' approach within the UN is only in its first footsteps, it is hard to draw conclusions about it. Still, these new forms of governance should be closely monitored and are interesting topics that demand further research.

For the academic debate on the use of drones, this thesis has contributed to the limited amount of scholarly work that focuses on the use of the 'humanitarian drone', specifically by delving into the use of 'humanitarian drones' in robust peacekeeping practices where a humanitarian actor is engaged in combat. It has shown how not only human, but also non-human elements such as drones, are part of an approach of robust actions and robust force. Therefore, I argue that drones should not be regarded as 'just a helpful tool' but rather as an instrument that is also used in coercive practices. Whereas many civil society organizations focus on the use of *armed* drones by parties that are engaged in a conflict, I suggest that the use of the *unarmed* drones in humanitarian settings also deserves more attention. Many of the concerns that relate to the use of armed drones raised by those civil society organizations could also be related to humanitarian conflict cases. For example, the "call to action" of the EFAD that urges to articulate clear policies, prevent complicity, ensure transparency and establish accountability equally account for the use of unarmed drones in those robust settings (EFAD 2018). The outsourcing of drones and to commercial parties still raise important questions and concerns about data ownership, mechanisms that are in place to prevent misuse and about what happens with the data. Therefore, I recommend that civil society organizations monitor these development of drones in humanitarian settings closely, as the framing of drones as 'humanitarian' may take away its coercive stigma, but not necessarily its coercive effects and use. I think it is therefore also an important aspect of the academic 'drone debate' that deserves more research and attention in the future.

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[60] Interview with Judith Verweijen, Postdoctoral Research Fellow Conflict Research Group, Ghent University, Utrecht, 26/06/2018. Original transcription: "Technologie leidt vaak tot quick fixes".

Finally, I would like to articulate shortly that the ineffectiveness of the UN the achieve a sustainable peaceful situation in the DRC, despite its lack of robust force, cannot be ascribed completely to the flaws of the approach of peacekeeping itself. In my opinion it also has to be ascribed to a certain level of impossibility of making peace in difficult situations, and the inherent limitations of the UN as an organization that includes almost all countries in the world. As explained in this thesis, the violence in the country goes back ages - thereby making the ultimate achievement of peace extremely difficult. No easy solution fits those situations. Furthermore, the solutions of the UN are immersed by contradictory motives and interests of a diverse range of countries - that all try to securitize, modify and translate their goals and interests (Allen 2011:155). Compromises deriving from this struggle will always hinder durable outcomes. In the case of the DRC, some of the experts have hinted that several forms of peacekeeping have been tried at the cost of personnel and billions of peacekeeping budget. Therefore, there may be a sense amongst Security Council members that troops and budget for the mission should be taken back[61]. Yet, the question always remains what would have happened in the DRC if the UN had *not* tried to bring peace at the cost of all this personnel and billions of peacekeeping budget. As the Economist (2016) righteously argues, MONUSCO is a never-ending, long and costly mission that can do little to bring peace - but cannot end either. Nevertheless, this thesis has shown that the UN should be aware of the flaws of technology and robust force, that may seem to be a solution, but is immersed in “ifs” and “buts”. Therefore, I recommend the UN to remain critical about the approaches they are taking to bring peace in this country where violence is so deeply rooted, and the implications that those approaches have. Hopefully this will result in durable outcomes of peacekeeping in the future.

[61] Interview with Kolonel Rob de Rave, Military Advisor, Permanent Mission of the Netherlands to the United Nations, Utrecht, 14/06/2018.

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