Access Denied:

The Host-Government's Power of Access on Local UN Peacekeeping Operations

Tiril Høye Rahn

University College, University of Oxford

Supervised by

Professor Andrea Ruggeri

Trinity Term 2025

Word Count: 64 295

This thesis is submitted to the Department of Politics and International Relations at the University of Oxford in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

Declaration

I declare that this thesis is entirely my own work,
and except where otherwise stated, describes my own research.

Tiril Høye Rahn
University College, University of Oxford

Dedication

This thesis is dedicated to
all who work for peace in places where it is denied,
and those whose lives are shaped by its absence.
To those I love, and to those from whom I have learned.

Abstract

A peace process is not a dinner party: all parties aim for the largest piece of the cake. The host holds a powerful position for this purpose. UN Peacekeeping Missions are deployed into complex conflicts to protect civilians and restore peace. They must be invited by the host-government, which also retains the sovereign right to terminate the mission. As the provider of consent, the host-government enjoys significant power - more than non-state actors. Balancing host-government consent with impartiality poses one of peacekeeping's core dilemmas, particularly in ensuring impartial access to civilians in need of protection. How do host-government interests shape the local access of UN peacekeepers? This study theorises and tests how host-governments exercise power over access to advance strategic objectives, enabling peacekeeper deployment in rebel-held areas, while restricting access to locations where government forces engage in violence against civilians or rebel groups. First, I conduct a subnational statistical analysis of twelve missions in nine African countries (2000–2012), demonstrating that political–ethnic affiliation shapes peacekeeping presence. Regardless of civilian targeting, peacekeepers are more likely to deploy, stay longer, and arrive in greater numbers in areas aligned with rebel groups than those aligned with the host-government. Second, I introduce a novel subnational, geo-referenced dataset mapping reported movement restrictions in 15 missions across 12 countries (2000–2023), empirically demonstrating the widespread occurrence of access restrictions. Third, I find that access restrictions significantly increase in areas experiencing host-government violence, but are not associated with rebel-perpetrated violence. This research highlights the often-overlooked power of host-governments to shape peacekeeping access in a conflict. Access becomes an instrument of control, allowing host-governments to bypass the commitment problem that peacekeeping is designed to address. Far from passive recipients, host-governments can actively shape the mission's access, undermining impartiality and the equal protection of civilians on the ground.

Keywords – UN Peacekeeping – Access - Restrictions – Host-Government

Acknowledgements

This thesis would not have been possible without the support and guidance of many individuals and institutions.

I am deeply grateful to my supervisor, Professor Andrea Ruggeri, for his encouragement, intellectual guidance, and thoughtful feedback throughout this project. His insight into both the substance of this work and the broader field has been invaluable.

This research was generously funded by the Oxford Radcliffe Scholarship, without which this thesis would not have been possible.

I would like to thank my research assistants – Gianluca Campanide, Arya Kanade, Tsion Gurmu, Zhiyu Luo, and Alicja Borzyszkowska – for their work navigating UN archives, attending training sessions, and compiling primary data with me. Their contributions created a collaborative environment that shaped the empirical foundation of this project.

I am thankful for the valuable feedback I received at the confirmation stage from Professor Inken von Borzyskowski and Professor Katerina Tertytchnaya, as well as from faculty and peers in the DPIR Research Seminar.

I am grateful for the opportunity to present and receive feedback on this research at various stages, including at ACUNS at the U.S. Institute of Peace in Washington, UN Headquarters (DPPA-DPO) in New York, and at PRIO in Oslo on the future of subnational research.

My thinking has been shaped by my time with the Oxford Diplomatic Society, whose members and leadership enriched my understanding of diplomacy and international politics through thoughtful discussions, events, and field visits.

Some individuals have stood by me throughout. I am especially thankful to my partner Victor Duarte for his patience, love, and many journeys to Oxford; to Benjamin Isachsen, a steadfast friend in the writing process; and to Myriam Shafique, for her professional mentorship alongside academic guidance.

I wish to acknowledge my dear friends, for visits, laughter, unwavering support, and for making this long journey joyful.

And finally, to my family, for their constant encouragement and for reminding me of what truly matters. Their support and belief in me gave me the courage to begin this thesis, and the support to finish it.

Table of Contents

Chapter 1: Introduction

How do host-governments use their power over local access to strategically shape peacekeeping deployment after consent? A key principle of United Nations (UN) peacekeeping operations is to deploy with the consent of the host-government and parties to the conflict. Without consent, the UN risks becoming a party to the conflict itself. In practice, the host-government is treated as the sole and authoritative provider of consent, reflecting its sovereign right to determine what takes place within its national territory, a foundational norm of both UN doctrine and the Charter. Historically, peacekeeping missions have only withdrawn when host-government consent is formally revoked, not when non-state actors object.

In practice, however, host-government consent is not a guarantee of cooperation on the ground. Across peacekeeping missions, such as in South Sudan, Sudan, the Central African Republic, Mali, and Eritrea, peacekeepers report facing local restrictions imposed by the host-government. Their movement is restricted, patrols blocked, visas withheld, and operational freedom curtailed. As one peacekeeping official in South Sudan explained, "Every time there is a peak of tensions; when we release a report on human rights the government does not like, or we defend ourselves, supplies stop coming immediately. Visas are not delivered. Access becomes extremely difficult, and the government reduces our ability to monitor and report by reducing the number of staff we have. It lasts for a few months" (Sebastian and Gorur 2018:26).

In turn, peacekeepers have been frequently criticised for failing to prevent or report state violence. In the Democratic Republic of Congo, the mission was said to have "often turned a blind eye" to violations committed by the government (Guéhenno 2015:121). In Sudan, peacekeepers have been accused of 'self-censorship' and non-reporting on human rights abuses (Human Rights Watch 2014; Lynch 2014).

This dissertation argues that these patterns reflect the host-government's strategic use of its power to control peacekeepers' local access and limit their operational reach. For example, in Sudan alone, the government imposed over 4,000 access restrictions on the movement of the peacekeeping mission. In the United Nations Mission in Ethiopia and Eritrea (UNMEE), the government of Eritrea denied the peacekeeping mission access between 10 and 12 times per day (S/2006/1:5). Yet, the mission maintained consent on paper. As UNMEE noted in 2004, "When a guest is no longer welcome in a house, it is the prerogative of the host to decide what to do next" (UN News, May 2004).

The central research question of this dissertation is thus: How do host-governments use their power over local access to strategically shape peacekeeping deployment after consent? I argue that, as the consent-guarantor, the host-government has the power of access to shape where and when peacekeepers go, and where and when they are kept out. While the challenge of navigating the host-government vis-à-vis peacekeepers is not new (Johnstone 2011; Piccolino and Karlsrud 2011; Sebastian and Gorur 2018; Duursma 2021; Villa 2021; Gregory and Sharland 2023; Caplan 2024), the instrument of doing so through access — its scale and its impact across time and space — remains underexplored. While research has argued that movement restrictions on UN peacekeepers are a result of weak, partial, of fluctuating consent by the host-government (Johnstone 2011; Piccolino and Karlsrud 2011; Sebastian and Gorur 2018; Villa 2021; Gregory and Sharland 2023), I argue that access is a strategic mechanism in itself, available to the host-government and motivated by the strategic interest to draw benefits from peacekeeping deployment while avoiding its local costs.

Access is defined here as the operational ability of peacekeepers to move, patrol, and implement their mandate across a host country's territory. Unlike consent, which is granted at the national level, access is bargained at the subnational level and can be selectively restricted without formally revoking consent. This dissertation develops a theory of the power of access, which conceptualises access not as a logistical obstacle or proxy for weak consent, but as a strategic instrument of post-consent bargaining. It posits four theoretical propositions. Once peacekeepers are deployed, host-governments have the capacity to shape where and when missions can operate, allowing them to draw benefits from peacekeeping in areas of interest while restricting deployment in locations that may expose abuse or constrain state violence. In turn, because peacekeepers depend on host-government cooperation, I argue that peacekeepers can anticipate access restrictions and therefore avoid direct confrontations with the host-government. In theorising access as a relational form of power, exercised by a sovereign host-government after deployment, this framework moves beyond existing accounts of consent to explain variation in local presence, effectiveness, and protection outcomes in UN peacekeeping operations.

This dissertation makes four core contributions to the study of UN peacekeeping, with a focus on local access. First, it introduces the theory of the power of access, which explains how host-governments influence peacekeeping operations after deployment by controlling subnational access rather than revoking formal consent. Second, it conducts a geo-referenced subnational data analysis of UN peacekeeping deployment according to host-government incentives across nine missions in Africa (2000-2011). Third, it presents a novel dataset on

reported movement restrictions, systematically coded from UN Secretary-General mission reports across 15 missions in Africa (2000-2023). Fourth, it conducts a geo-referenced subnational analysis across 15 missions in Africa (2000–2023), demonstrating that there is a strong relationship between host-governmental one-sided-violence on civilians and reported access restrictions on UN peacekeepers across time and space. In contrast, rebel perpetrated one-sided-violence does not have an association with restriction of UN peacekeepers' movements.

This research highlights a gap in the literature on UN peacekeeping operations and their effectiveness by accounting for the power of the host-government. Whereas existing work on strategic deployment highlights consent as a form of power – for example, Yuen (2019), who shows how states shape mission design before deployment – this dissertation introduces the power of access as a distinct post-consent instrument through which host-governments shape the subnational implementation of peacekeeping mandates to their own benefit. Rather than focusing on the effectiveness of where missions are present, it highlights where they are allowed to operate, and why. It introduces access not as a logistical variable, but as a relational instrument of power – one that host-governments can use strategically after deployment.

This research contributes to the growing body of subnational peacekeeping analysis by drawing attention to an overlooked issue: where peacekeepers are not allowed to go. While existing studies examine patterns of peacekeeping deployment within countries, most implicitly assume that peacekeepers are able to deploy within a mission's area of responsibility. In practice, however, their presence is related to whether access is granted by actors on the ground. Numerous studies show that peacekeepers are locally effective where they are present, such as reducing violence (Fjelde, Hultman, and Nilsson 2019), improving access to health services (Gizelis and Cao 2020), and lowering battle deaths (Di Salvatore and Ruggeri 2017). Ruggeri, Dorussen, and Gizelis (2017) identify four core mechanisms through which this occurs: by reducing incentives for violence, lowering uncertainty between conflict parties, improving governance, and strengthening community resilience. But these effects depend on local, physical access. If this access is actively restriced, effectiveness can be deliberately circumvented. The absence of peacekeepers is rarely researched, even though it may reflect strategic restrictions rather than logistical limitation or prioisation. Restricted access, therefore, can be a strategic mechanism to shape both the geography and effectiveness of UN peacekeeping. Without accounting for where peacekeepers are kept out, analysis of their impact risk overestimating their reach and effectiveness.

For academic research, this builds on the argument of Piccolino and Karlsrud (2011), who reframe peacekeeping as a bargaining process in which host-governments have incentives to draw benefits while avoiding the costs of peacekeeping presence. In turn, I set out to understand how access is a tool used by the host-government to achieve its strategic interests. The power of access can, in turn, explain variation in peacekeeping efficacy, highlighting where peacekeepers gain access and where that access is denied or constrained.

For practitioners, the findings highlight the operational limits of formal consent. They underscore the need to map access restrictions not only to ensure mandate implementation, but also to anticipate when and where protection, observation, or humanitarian delivery will be obstructed – and, in turn, when and where pressure can be asserted to ensure access is granted. Finally, this research offers a new dataset and conceptual language to support subnational conflict analysis, mission planning, and coordination with humanitarian actors. Where peacekeepers are denied access, so too are likely others, making access a variable for understanding both peacekeeping practice and international presence more broadly. This thesis therefore develops a framework for understanding access as a tool of sovereign leverage, exercised strategically at the subnational level.

Of course, the strategic interests of the host-government are not the only factors shaping peacekeeper access on the ground. Access is logistical, dynamic, relational, and often reactive to events, security developments, and the actions of other actors. This study focuses on one dimension. While necessarily a simplification, this lens offers a useful starting point for theorising and empirically testing for access as a post-consent bargaining tool. Empirically, parts of the analysis draw on reported movement restrictions in the UN Secretary-General mission reports. These records are political in nature, and do not capture the full extent of restrictions, nor do they account for places where peacekeepers may avoid deployment in anticipation of restrictions. Still, they offer a first systematic lens on the occurrence of restrictions across missions, time, and space, and the relationship to host-governments' interests. Lastly for sub-national data analysis, areas with reported restrictions on peacekeepers' access may also be associated with restrictions on other actors – such as media coverage or humanitarian assessments – limiting reliable subnational data and suggesting broader, systematic obstruction of information beyond the UN's own reporting.

1.1 Temporal and Geographical Scope

This study examines United Nations peacekeeping operations in Africa between 2000 and 2023. Africa has hosted the majority of UN peacekeeping missions over the past two decades, making it the most empirically rich and diverse context for analysing variation in access. Although there are enormous differences in the contexts, mandates, and scope of the missions (Piccolino and Karlsrud 2011), there are similarities in the institutional relationships between the host-government and UN peacekeeping mission, making it possible to face similar observations. This focus thus enables comparison across a large number of different missions operating under broadly similar yet diverse UN institutional frameworks, while accounting for variation in mandate design, conflict type, and host-government behaviour.

The temporal scope of this thesis starts in 2000, following the Brahimi Report, which called for more robust peacekeeping responses following failures in Rwanda and Bosnia (UN DPO 2008). The shift towards robust peacekeeping, also known as multidimensional peacekeeping, moved peacekeepers beyond observation to actively engage in a wide array of tasks. It was a move from election monitoring to security sector reform, and from human rights protection to the support of governance structures (Villa 2021). These peacekeeping missions, authorized under Chapter VII of the UN Charter, continue to be deployed with the consent of the host nation but are equipped to use tactical force to fulfil their mandates, marking a significant evolution in UN peacekeeping's capacity to address intrastate conflicts and protect civilians from violence (UN DPO 2008; de Coning, Detzel, and Hojem, 2008) This period from 2000 to the end of 2023 saw the adoption of explicit protection of civilians (PoC) mandates, beginning with the UN Mission in Sierra Leone in 1999, and expanded across operations in the Democratic Republic of Congo, Central African Republic, Mali, and South Sudan until almost all UN peacekeeping missions' today have a mandate to protect civilians (Karlsrud and Costa 2013; Duursma et al. 2023; Gregory and Sharland 2023). These mandates authorised peacekeepers to use force to protect civilians within their areas of deployment and their mandate, bringing peacekeepers into more direct tension with host-government preferences, exposing them to restrictions on the ground (Duursma et al. 2023a; Rhoads 2019).

While the concept of access restrictions is not new — cases such as Bosnia and Rwanda illustrate earlier forms of restrictions — this study is confined to missions from 2000 onwards due to data availability and the relevance of modern robust mandates. The expanded mandate and capabilities of modern peacekeeping missions since the 2000's have introduced complex dynamics regarding the strategic consent of host states, and thus its own strain of literature

compared to the 1990's and earlier. As Kjeksrud (2023) notes, the ambitiously mandated UN missions of today are aiming not only to stabilize post-conflict situations but also to rebuild societies, emphasizing the need for military force in contexts where there is no peace to keep. This evolution marks a departure from earlier, lightly armed missions, and may have intensified the friction between the peacekeeping operations and host-government.

Conceptually, however, this power is not unique to missions in this region or this time: it reflects a structural feature of all peacekeeping operations in which the host-government retains sovereign leverage after deployment (Piccolino and Karlsrud 2011; Johnstone 2011; Sebastian and Gorur 2018; Duursma 2023; Gregory and Sharland 2023). This thesis therefore uses the time frame and peacekeeping missions on the African continent to generate broader theoretical insights into how host-governments shape peacekeeping from within. It assumes some generalizability across time and peacekeeping missions, which are future avenues of research.

1.2 Thesis Roadmap

This thesis proceeds in six chapters. Chapter 1 introduces the core puzzle, situates the research within peacekeeping literature, and presents the argument that host-governments use their power of access to shape where peacekeepers can and cannot operate. Chapter 2 develops the theoretical framework of the power of access, conceptualising access as a form of post-consent control and bargaining power, and drawing on literature on asymmetry and strategic interactions. Chapter 3 tests the hypothesis that host-governments prefer deployment to align with their interests, using geo-referenced data from twelve missions in nine African countries (2000–2011), finding that peacekeepers are deployed more, more often, and in larger size in areas supportive of rebel groups, regardless of violence. Chapter 4 introduces a new dataset on reported movement restrictions across fifteen missions (2000–2023), based on systematic coding of UN Secretary-General mission reports, to map where and when peacekeepers have reported to have their movement, and in turn access, restricted. Chapter 5 analyses whether access restrictions are associated with prior one-sided violence against civilians by governments or rebel groups, finding strong associations with host-government violence, supporting the argument that access can be strategically used to reduce the cost of peacekeepers' presence. Chapter 6 concludes, reflecting on the implications for peacekeeping efficacy, asymmetrical relationships, and future research on access across conflict-affected

domains, including subnational conflict data, humanitarian operations, and international monitoring of human-rights abuses.

1.3 Consent in UN Peacekeeping Missions

Consent has long been recognised as a foundational principle of United Nations peacekeeping (Brahimi Report 2000). It enables deployment, distinguishes peacekeeping from enforcement, and symbolises the host-state's commitment to a political process. Yet, despite its centrality, consent remains conceptually ambiguous (Guzman 2011) and empirically insufficient to explain the spatial and temporal variation in peacekeeping effectiveness. This chapter reviews the existing literature on consent and argues that to understand how peacekeeping functions in practice, one must move beyond formal consent and engage with the politics of local access – the local, strategic power that host-governments exercise over peacekeeper operations on the ground after deployment.

The UN's Capstone Doctrine defines consent as a commitment by conflict parties to a peace process and acceptance of a peacekeeping presence to support that process (UN DPO 2008: 31). The assumption is that consent, once granted, enables operational presence. Yet in practice, the relationship between consent and presence is not linear. Host-governments may grant national-level consent while obstructing peacekeepers on the ground. In South Sudan, Sudan, Mali, and Ethiopia/Eritrea, peacekeepers have been routinely delayed, redirected, or denied local access altogether, which some scholars argue is due to partial and dynamic consent (Johnstone 2011; Sebastián and Gorur 2018; Gregory and Sharland 2023; Duursma et al. 2023). However, consent was not withdrawn; rather, access was strategically managed.

These patterns raise a fundamental puzzle: if host-governments are truly dissatisfied with a mission, why do they not revoke consent entirely? The answer, I argue, lies in the strategic calculus of host-governments, who may wish to retain the benefits of UN presence – such as legitimacy, donor engagement, or surveillance of rivals – while minimising its political or operational costs. As Ruggeri, Dorussen and Gizelis (2018) argue, UN peacekeeping is locally effective: where peacekeepers are present, violence declines, it can increase information flow, and support state capacity. The localised effectiveness of peacekeeping creates strong incentives for host-governments to influence where missions operate. As Piccolino and Karlsrud (2011) note, host-states often seek to maximise the benefits of UN presence while minimising the political risks posed by liberal peacebuilding. While they emphasise the ambiguity and volatility of consent to explain this, I argue that the patterns of local restrictions

observed across missions are not symptoms of ambiguity or volatility. Withdrawal of consent remains a sovereign option at all times, making it volatile, but the strategy is to maintain formal consent while manipulating operational conditions. In this sense, consent is not revoked, but access is instrumentalised – enabling host-governments to shape peacekeeping on the ground without retracting the national agreement to a peacekeeping mission.

Other scholars have also noted variation in the strength or sincerity of consent (Sebastián and Gorur 2018), and legal scholars such as Johnstone (2011) have conceptualised consent as fluid. Yuen (2019) advances this discussion by theorising consent as a bargaining resource used prior to deployment, allowing host-states to shape the mission's scope, mandate, and mobility. But after deployment, most accounts assume that missions either enjoy consent or face the threat of revocation, conflating the intermediate space where consent persists, but access is obstructed.

It is in this space that host-government power on the local level is most visible. Drawing on Howard's (2019) typology of peacekeeping power – persuasion, inducement, and limited coercion – scholars have focused on how peacekeepers influence local actors. Yet peacekeepers themselves are also subject to power. Caplan (2024) identifies political leverage as a core capacity of peacekeeping missions to influence elites. But leverage is not unidirectional. Host-governments, too, have leverage – not through mandate renegotiation, but through sovereign control over the physical and operational environment in which peacekeepers function.

This thesis builds on and extends these insights by proposing a shift in analytical focus: from consent as permission and cooperation, to access as a strategic power. While consent enables peacekeeping presence nationally, access determines its implementation locally. Access then – the ability of peacekeepers to patrol, monitor, and respond – is not guaranteed by consent. It is continuously negotiated, often restricted, and deeply strategic. Understanding how host-governments exercise power over access is thus important to understanding peacekeeping effectiveness.

The literature has not ignored these dynamics, but it has conflated the concept of consent. Frameworks that stretch 'consent' to encompass varying levels of access on the local level risk conflating national consent with local, strategic incentives. Instead, I argue that access should be treated as a distinct analytical instrument, a strategic power controlled by the host-government, used to shape where peacekeepers operate, and how much influence they can exert. This, I argue, is not a matter of consent. It is the exercise of a different kind of power.

In the next chapter, I develop this argument into a theory of the power of access, situating it within broader peacekeeping debates and grounding it in empirical patterns of sub-

national variation. By conceptualising access as a relational, post-deployment form of host-government leverage, I offer a new lens through which to understand the spatial bargains of international intervention.

1.4 Where Do Peacekeepers Go?

Understanding where peacekeepers are deployed is central to assessing the effectiveness of UN peacekeeping operations. The location of deployment determines who is protected, what is monitored, and where mandates are implemented. While existing research offers valuable insight into which countries see UN peacekeeping missions, and where they are likely to go internally, far less is known about where peacekeepers do not go, or struggle to go, within the country – and, critically, how local actors may shape those patterns.

National-Level Deployment: Conflict Severity and Strategic Interests

The literature on national-level peacekeeping deployment is well established. Scholars consistently find that peacekeepers are sent to the most severe and protracted civil wars, the 'hard cases' of international intervention (Gilligan and Stedman 2003; Fortna 2004; Beardsley and Schmidt 2012; Walter, Howard, and Fortna 2021). Deployment decisions at the national level are strongly associated with conflict intensity, duration, and humanitarian need.

Yet peacekeeping deployment is not driven by severity alone. A second body of research has shown that political interests, particularly those of the UN Security Council, significantly influence where peacekeepers go. Gibbs (1997) first argued that veto-holding members shape peacekeeping mandates in line with their foreign policy preferences. More recently, Beardsley and Schmidt (2012) demonstrate that while the severity of conflict is the strongest predictor of deployment, strategic interests of powerful states also play a role. Carnegie and Mikulaschek (2020) find that when a Security Council member holds the rotating presidency, the likelihood of troop increases in conflicts within its sphere of interest is five times higher. These studies underscore that national-level deployments reflect strategic interests, alongside peacebuilding principles. Yet, what role does the recipient country itself play in this decision-making?

Host-governments receive less attention in this literature as actors with agency. Some studies treat host-state consent as a binary precondition or a costly signal of commitment to peace (Fortna 2004; Ari and Gizelis 2020). Governments with weak military capacity may be more likely to receive peacekeepers as a way to solve their commitment problem with rebels

(Gilligan and Stedman 2003). But beyond initial consent, the host-government's ongoing preferences and strategic incentives are rarely incorporated into models of peacekeeping deployment. Yuen (2019) is a notable exception, showing how host-governments shape the mandate and scope of missions during pre-deployment negotiations. Yet once missions are deployed, the host-government's role in shaping where peacekeepers go within their territory is largely overlooked.

To explain peacekeeping deployment fully, it is not enough to understand which governments say yes to peacekeepers. De Waal (2015) has demonstrated that African leaders, like others, are seeking benefits from international interventions. As such, one may ask: once consent is given, where do those governments allow peacekeepers to operate, and why?

Sub-National Deployment: Operational Constraints and Strategic Preferences

A growing literature disaggregates peacekeeping deployment to the sub-national level, offering key insights into where peacekeepers are most likely to operate (Ruggeri et al. 2018; Cil et al. 2020; Villa 2021). Three main factors have emerged as consistent predictors of local deployment: accessibility, population density, and recent violence.

First, logistical constraints shape where peacekeepers go. Missions operate with limited resources and broad mandates, requiring difficult trade-offs. Peacekeepers tend to cluster along road networks and near accessible terrain where transport is easier and rapid deployment feasible (Cil et al. 2020; Ruggeri et al. 2017; Townsen and Reeder 2014). Ruggeri et al. (2017) refer to this as a logic of convenience, where peacekeepers are likely to deploy to areas that are 'more easily accessible'. Accessibility is not only logistical, I argue, but also relational, depending on where access is granted. Chapter 2 thus contends that the logic of convenience extends to relations, where peacekeepers also are likely to deploy to areas where they believe they will get access from the host-government.

Second, population density is associated with peacekeeping presence. Densely populated areas pose greater risks of mass civilian harm and thus attract greater peacekeeping attention (Urdal 2011; Cil et al. 2020). However, in armed conflicts, populations are rarely a neutral category of strategic interest. Instead, I argue, the political affiliation of settlement patterns may influence the strategic interests of the host-government and of local peacekeeping deployment, which Chapters 2 and 3 further analyse.

Third, prior or ongoing violence is a strong predictor of local deployment. Peacekeepers are often positioned near frontlines or in areas where violence has occurred recently, especially when civilians are at risk (Ruggeri et al. 2017; Hegre, Hultman, and Nygård 2018; Hultman,

Kathman, and Shannon 2020; Walter, Howard, and Fortna 2021). In recent studies, Abbs and Duursma (2024) analyse patrols in the case of UNAMID in 2008, and find that peacekeepers also conduct patrols in locations with armed clashes and civilian violence.

These patterns are, however, not unilateral. Studies disaggregating violence by the perpetrator find asymmetries in peacekeeping effectiveness. Fjelde, Hultman, and Nilsson (2019) find that UN peacekeepers are significantly more likely to have a violence-reducing effect on one-sided violence by rebel actors, and have no effect on violence by government forces. This raises critical questions: why are peacekeepers less effective at curbing government violence? Fjelde et al. (2019) suggest that peacekeepers have a smaller effect on the host-government because it is the consent guarantor. However, are peacekeepers present in areas of government-perpetrated violence to begin with?

Despite the UN's formal commitment to impartiality, peacekeepers do not operate in a vacuum. As the primary consent-grantor, the host-government can have substantial influence over where peacekeepers patrol, monitor, and respond. Yet this influence remains under-theorised and rarely measured systematically. A growing body of research documents how peacekeepers face obstruction, through delayed visas, restricted movement, or administrative uncooperation, typically interpreted as symptoms of ambiguous, volatile, or fluctuating consent to the mission (Piccolino and Karlsrud 2011; Johnstone 2011; Sebastián and Gorur 2018; Duursma 2021; Gregory and Sharland 2023). While these accounts highlight how obstruction undermines mandate implementation, they rarely consider its spatial implications. If obstruction occurs selectively – more in some areas than others, at some times more than others – then it may reflect a strategic logic shaping where peacekeepers go, not just whether they operate.

Caplan (2024) introduces the concept of political leverage to describe the influence peacekeeping missions may exert over host-governments, particularly during mandate closure. Turned around, this logic reveals a complementary dynamic: host-governments also have political leverage – over the mission's existence, yes, but also through their power over geographic access. Local restrictions, in this view, are not bureaucratic friction but strategic tools to influence the spatial deployment of peacekeeping. Understanding this form of leverage, that I argue is an instrument of power, is critical to analysing where peacekeepers go, and where they are kept out. In turn, this can be a tool to influence peacekeepers' effectiveness strategically. By investigating sub-national deployment patterns, including areas where access is restricted, this thesis tests whether peacekeepers are indeed deployed impartially, or whether

host-governments shape deployment to limit themselves from oversight and preserve freedom of action. In doing so, it advances the literature on where peacekeepers go locally.

1.5 What do Peacekeepers do?

To understand the effectiveness of peacekeeping operations, it is not enough to ask where peacekeepers go; one must also ask what they do once there, to understand actors' local interests. The empirical literature on peacekeeping effectiveness has grown considerably over the past two decades, offering strong evidence that UN peacekeepers are effective at reducing violence, protecting civilians, and contributing to the durability of peace agreements. However, much of this work examines the effects of peacekeeping once deployed, without interrogating how those effects may, in turn, shape host-government preferences and patterns of local deployment. If the presence of peacekeepers alters conflict dynamics, then both the UN and the host-government have strategic incentives to influence where that presence is concentrated.

The Effects of Local Peacekeeping Deployment

UN peacekeeping mandates are multidimensional. Beyond protection of civilians, missions may support electoral processes, mediate disputes, train police, or oversee disarmament and reintegration efforts. For some of these tasks, physical presence is a prerequisite for implementation (in contrast to, e.g., capacity building with online training, information sharing through radio or social media, or negotiations in New York). Sub-national research confirms that peacekeepers are effective when they are there. Ruggeri, Dorussen, and Gizelis (2018) find that peacekeepers shorten the duration of conflict when deployed to violence-prone areas, operating through deterrence, reassurance, and substitution. In related work, they show that cooperation with peacekeepers is higher when missions are robust and local actors, especially rebels, are relatively weak (Ruggeri, Gizelis, and Dorussen 2012).

The mechanisms through which peacekeepers influence violence are also well established in the literature. Peacekeepers increase the costs of renewed fighting, reduce uncertainty between parties, and deter abuses through visibility and presence (Fortna 2008; Di Salvatore and Ruggeri 2017; Howard 2019). They may patrol volatile areas, create buffer zones, and in some cases intervene directly to prevent or reduce violence. Larger deployments amplify these effects, improving the mission’s ability to respond across wider territory (Hultman, Kathman, and Shannon 2013, 2020). Sub-national analyses show that peacekeepers reduce battlefield deaths, protect civilians, and increase the durability of peace (Doyle and

Sambanis 2000; Maekawa, Ari, and Gizelis 2019; Hegre, Hultman, and Nygård 2019). In turn, a long strand of studies has found that UN peacekeepers have a reducing effect on violence, with different exacerbating factors such as troop size, mandates, and locations (Walter et al. 2020; Costalli 2013; Carnegie and Mikulaschek 2020; Ruggeri and Di Salvatore 2018; Fjelde et al. 2019; Gizelis and Benson 2019; Hultman, Kathman, and Shannon 2013; Kathman and Wood 2011; Bove and Ruggeri 2018; Kirschner and Miller 2019; Melander 2009; Phayal and Prins 2020).

However, recent work suggests these effects are not evenly distributed beyond factors of the peacekeeping mission itself. While peacekeepers reduce rebel-perpetrated violence, there are no associated effects on protecting civilians from government-led attacks. Fjelde, Hultman, and Nilsson (2019) find that peacekeepers reduce rebel violence on civilians, but have no effects on state violence on civilians. Similarly, Nomikos and Villa (2022) demonstrate that peacekeepers significantly reduce rebel violence along the Mali–Burkina Faso border, but have no measurable impact on government abuses. Carnegie and Mikulaschek (2020) show that while peacekeepers increase protection for civilians overall, their effectiveness is constrained in areas of rebel violence. These asymmetries raise questions about the impartiality and reach of peacekeeping operations.

Several explanations have been offered. One is that host-governments are less deterred by peacekeepers, given their status as consent-granting authorities (Fjelde et al. 2019). Another is that the political costs of confronting a host-government are higher than those of confronting rebel groups, leading missions to act more cautiously (Nomikos and Villa 2022). A third, under-theorised explanation is that host-governments strategically shape where peacekeepers go – and where they do not (Sebastián and Gorur 2018; Gregory and Sharland 2023) – as a way of managing the mission's influence. In this account, government violence is not confronted because peacekeepers are not allowed to be present where it occurs.

Local Presence and Effectiveness

This thesis does not reassess the effectiveness of peacekeeping missions. It builds on a robust body of research that demonstrates, among other things, how UN peacekeepers reduce violence, protect civilians, and help sustain post-conflict peace, where they are present. However, a parallel literature offers important notes. Scholars have argued that third-party interveners often lack the capacity to manage complex conflict environments (Beardsley 2008), struggle to build local legitimacy (Lake 2015), and operate with limited contextual knowledge (Autesserre 2015). Moreover, peacekeeping missions may experience a decline in political

leverage over time, particularly in the final phases of a mandate (Caplan 2024). These critiques do not negate peacekeeping's value, but they point to the conditions under which peacekeepers are more or less effective.

This thesis does not seek to explain variation in mandate design, mission performance, or overall peacekeeping success. Nor does it aim to evaluate peacekeeping's broader political or normative consequences. Instead, it focuses on one under-examined dimension of peacekeeping effectiveness: the local bargaining of access, and the conditions under which peacekeepers are permitted to operate. Presence is often treated as an input into peacekeeping outcomes. Yet access is not uniform or guaranteed. It is the product of ongoing negotiations, permissions, and restrictions shaped by the host-government.

Access is frequently discussed as a logistical challenge, but it is also relational. Peacekeepers cannot protect, patrol, or respond where they are denied entry. As Piccolino and Karlsrud (2011) and Villa (2021) argue, host-governments seek to maximise the benefits of peacekeeping while minimising its potential domestic costs. These strategic calculations can translate into patterns of restrictions, whereby access is selectively enabled or denied according to state preferences. In turn, the host-government can attempt to influence where and when UN peacekeepers are effective.

By linking the literature on peacekeeping effectiveness with research on sub-national deployment, this thesis aims to further contribute to a conceptual and empirical gap. While peacekeepers are effective where present, presence itself is relational. The ability of peacekeepers to implement their mandates also depends on whether they are granted operational access – when, where, and for how long. The chapter that follows develops a theory of the power of access, offering a conceptual framework to explain how host-governments exercise control over peacekeeping missions, its incentives and constraints, and the UN's space for bargaining. It empirically analyses where peacekeepers go and introduces new findings on movement restrictions of peacekeepers, and in turn analyses peacekeepers' local access in relation to one-sided violence by the host-government. In short, this thesis aims to contribute to improved empirical research on peacekeepers' effectiveness, and to highlight broader implications for international interventions that depend on host-state consent to operate within conflict settings.

Chapter 2: The Theory of Access on UN Peacekeeping Deployment

This chapter develops a theory of the power of access in United Nations peacekeeping operations, emphasising host-government strategies after deployment. The central argument is that host-governments have the power over peacekeepers to strategically shape their access and operations on the ground. This is not done by revoking national consent, but by controlling access at the local level, breaching the SOFA agreement. This form of post-deployment influence has implications for mandate implementation, the protection of civilians, and the overall effectiveness of peacekeeping operations.

I begin by defining the core concepts that structure the theory. Consent, I argue, refers to the national, sovereign permission granted by a host-government to allow the deployment of a UN peacekeeping operation on its territory, with its terms later codified in a SOFA. This national-level consent is a key principle of peacekeeping operations and is generally assumed to be a binary condition: either present or absent. Access, by contrast, refers to the ability of peacekeepers to move, patrol, monitor, and respond within the country. It is an operational condition, negotiated and contested at the sub-national level, and can vary across space and time. Access restrictions are specific instances where peacekeepers are denied movement, delayed, blocked from particular areas, or otherwise prevented from fulfilling their mandate, while national consent formally remains in place.

This distinction between consent and access is critical. While the peacekeeping literature often treats presence as a given once consent is secured, I argue that access is an independent variable, subject to a logistical and relational component. The relational component is the host-government's power over peacekeeping missions after deployment. The puzzle is thus: why do host-governments consent to peacekeeping missions, yet restrict their operations in the field?

Building on the assumption that UN peacekeeping is effective where it is present (Fortna 2008; Howard 2019; Ruggeri et al. 2017; Fjelde et al. 2019; Duursma et al. 2024), I propose that host-governments can use access as a tool to shape peacekeeping deployment to their strategic advantage. Host-governments may welcome peacekeepers in some areas, where their presence lends legitimacy, monitors rivals, or attracts international resources, while restricting them in others, where they might uncover abuses, interfere with military operations,

or constrain state violence. The structural power asymmetry between the sovereign host-government and the peacekeeping mission is core to this dynamic. Whereas peacekeepers rely on host-government consent to be nationally in the country, the host-government has the power locally to restrict or facilitate access without formally withdrawing national consent, though it breaches SOFA agreements. It is grounded in the assumption that the host-government sees benefits it aims to maximise, while limits its costliness (Piccolino and Karlsrud 2011).

The theory of the power of access builds on and contributes to peacekeeping scholarship. First, it challenges the assumption that consent is related to operational freedom, showing instead that peacekeeper presence is conditioned by sub-national, strategic interests. Second, it shifts focus from peacekeeping as a third-party guarantor of peace (Walter 2002; Fortna 2008) to the strategic behaviour of host-governments who seek to manage the terms of that guarantee (de Waal 2015). Third, it clarifies the conceptual ambiguity in the literature between 'partial consent' and access restrictions, offering a more precise distinction that can be observed, measured, and theorised.

The remainder of the chapter proceeds in six steps. First, I review core theories of peacekeeping and show how they rest on assumptions about presence and access. Second, I examine how the principle of consent operates in practice, and how host-governments influence the operational environment. Third, I introduce the conceptual distinction between consent and access, offering illustrative examples from South Sudan, Mali, and the Central African Republic. Fourth, I develop a theory of access as a sovereign tool of post-deployment bargaining, grounded in the host-government's capacity to obstruct or enable movement. Fifth, I present a formalised framework of theoretical propositions about when and where access restrictions are most likely to occur. Finally, I reflect on limitations, including the role of non-state actors, state capacity, and competing institutional influences.

By treating access as a strategic and relational form of power, this chapter reframes the analysis of peacekeeping effectiveness. It shifts the question from whether peacekeepers are deployed to where they are allowed to operate, and how those patterns are shaped by host-government interests. In doing so, it contributes to a growing research agenda on sub-national variation and contestation in international interventions.

2.1 Access and Peacekeeping Effectiveness

The theory developed in this chapter builds on a core assumption in the peacekeeping literature: that peacekeepers need to be operationally present to be effective. This is well established at

the sub-national level. A body of research highlighted in Chapter 1 has demonstrated that UN peacekeeping missions reduce violence, protect civilians, and improve the durability of peace agreements – but these associations depend on whether missions are able to operate effectively in the locations where threats arise.

Barbara Walter (2002), drawing on Fearon's (1995) model of credible commitment, highlights how third-party guarantors help sustain post-conflict peace by raising the cost of defection. Fortna (2008) extends this logic by identifying key causal pathways through which peacekeeping stabilises post-war environments, including deterring renewed fighting, verifying compliance, and reducing informational uncertainty. Each of these mechanisms assumes, explicitly or implicitly, that peacekeepers are present where they are most needed, and that peacekeeping deployment is exogenous to the conflict.

More recent work has disaggregated these effects at the sub-national level. Ruggeri, Dorussen, and Gizelis (2017) argue that peacekeeping operates locally through deterrence, reassurance, and substitution. Howard (2019) further identifies three non-coercive powers of the mission – persuasion, inducement, and limited coercion – as essential instruments of peacekeepers' influence. Yet these strategies all require access to contested spaces and actors. Without it, missions are limited to symbolic or peripheral roles. Caplan (2024) adds a dimension of political leverage, emphasising the mission's capacity to influence national political elites to adopt specific policies or behaviours. While his focus is on the challenges of securing the adoption of policies, my analysis centres on an operational scope: the host-government's control over physical access, which is a prerequisite and operational dimension for peacekeeper presence in the country, while political processes are related.

Notably, Fjelde et al. (2019) find that peacekeepers reduce rebel-perpetrated violence against civilians but have little effect on state violence. They interpret this gap as a function of limited government consent. I build on this insight by suggesting that access, rather than consent per se, is the critical mechanism. Government actors may formally consent to peacekeeping, while systematically constraining peacekeepers' operational reach. As field-based accounts (e.g., Sebastián and Gorur 2018; Gregory and Sharland 2023) and mandate negotiation studies (Yuen 2019) show, access is often shaped – and restricted – through deliberate, physical strategies.

In sum, if parts of peacekeeping effectiveness depend on access, then understanding the power of access is essential. This chapter reframes access as two-dimensional: one of logistics, and one of a strategic bargaining process shaped by the host-government's preferences. The

next section turns to the concept of consent and its relationship to access in peacekeeping doctrine and practice.

2.2 Consent in Doctrine and Practice

Consent is a core principle for UN peacekeeping deployment, but it does not guarantee effective operation on the ground. Alongside impartiality and the limited use of force, consent distinguishes Chapter VI peacekeeping from Chapter VII enforcement (UN Peacekeeping, n.d.-a), though most missions have Chapter VII mandates to use force to protect civilians and the mandate. The Capstone Doctrine defines consent as "a commitment by the parties to a political process, and their acceptance of a peacekeeping operation mandated to support that process" (2008: 31). Yet, the UN acknowledges that consent "does not necessarily imply or guarantee that there will also be consent at the local level" (UN Peacekeeping, n.d.-c).

Despite consent, host-governments often constrain operations in ways that shape mission effectiveness. The Brahimi Report (UN, 2000: 19) warned that parties may consent "merely to gain time to retool its fighting forces and withdraw consent when the peacekeeping operation no longer serves its interests", or else "seek to limit an operation's freedom of movement, adopt a policy of persistent non-compliance [...] or withdraw its consent altogether". The case of UNMEE illustrates this: Eritrea withheld SOFA signature, restricted movement, and cut fuel supplies, while maintaining formal consent. Similar constraints are visible in missions such as UNMISS, MINUSMA, and UNIFIL, where peacekeepers operated under consented operations but faced systematic restrictions on the ground.

In response, scholars have proposed that consent should be understood not as a static act, but as a dynamic and negotiated practice. Johnstone (2011) conceptualises consent as fluid, while Guzman (2011:772) notes that "there is no simple way to determine when consent is given", let alone when it has been meaningfully withdrawn. Sebastián and Gorur (2018:19) offer a typology distinguishing strong, weak, and compromised consent across dimensions such as presence, mandate, and process. Gregory and Sharland (2023) build on this by identifying strategic, local, and mandate-specific forms of consent, yet emphasise that consent must be granted before SOFA negotiations can even occur.

While these refinements advance the conceptual discussion of consent, they remain insufficient to explain variation across space and time during the mission lifecycle. These frameworks treat different levels of cooperation and access as degrees of consent, rather than as distinct strategic power of the host-government. After all, host-governments often have

national-level consent, while sub-nationally influencing the location of the peacekeeping mission and, in turn, the location of its effectiveness. This reflects a different strategic tool: the use of access to influence peacekeepers' presence without revoking formal consent. As the next section argues, this distinction between consent and access is a conceptual shift that focuses on the host-government's capacity to exert power over UN peacekeepers at the local level.

2.3 The Consent–Access Distinction

The distinction between consent and access is central to understanding host-government strategic influence over peacekeeping implementation. While consent authorises deployment, it is access that enables peacekeepers to monitor, move, and patrol locally. Oxford Dictionaries (2025) define access itself as "the means or opportunity to approach or enter a place", and access is defined here as the spatial and operational conditions required for mandate implementation. Access is two-fold: it is shaped by logistical constraints such as infrastructure, weather conditions, and resources, and relationally shaped through bargaining between actors on the ground.

Conceptually, consent and access operate on different planes of peacekeeping practice. Consent is a formal precondition principle for mission presence; access is the operational requirement on the ground. Efforts to stretch the concept of consent to capture access on the ground – such as Sebastián and Gorur's (2018) typology of consent or Gregory and Sharland's (2023) layered distinctions – offer important descriptive insights but risk conflating distinct processes and mechanisms. Instead, access is not a subset or degree of consent, but a separate analytical capacity once consent is granted. In turn, access is the relational, strategic bargaining at the sub-national level for physical presence.

Yuen (2019) is a bridge in the literature, finding that consent gives host-governments bargaining power before deployment, allowing them to shape the mission's scope, mandate, and composition. Once consent is granted and peacekeepers are deployed, however, I argue that bargaining no longer takes place through the threat of withdrawal per se. If the host-government were fundamentally dissatisfied, it could revoke consent. Instead, it retains the mission but exercises power over it through selective access restrictions – blocking patrols, denying surveillance, or obstructing movement. This suggests a strategic intent: to preserve the benefits of UN presence while limiting its political or operational costs. In this way, access becomes the tool through which host-governments shape peacekeeping after deployment by managing its location of implementation.

This distinction helps clarify empirical findings that otherwise appear puzzling. Fjelde et al. (2019) find that peacekeepers are less effective at curbing state-perpetrated violence than rebel-perpetrated violence. While they suggest this may reflect the lower cost imposed by peacekeeping on host-governments due to its consent, another explanation is that governments strategically obstruct access to areas where their own actions are at stake – avoiding local peacekeeping effectiveness. Similarly, Gregory and Sharland (2023) document sub-national patterns of restriction that do not correspond to shifts in consent but rather to sub-national interests of violence.

In short, while access rests on the precondition of consent, access in itself is a strategic capacity – negotiated, enforced, and contested throughout a mission's lifespan. Recognising this distinction is critical not only for conceptual clarity, but for understanding the constraints under which peacekeeping missions operate, and their available options. The next section develops this argument into a theoretical framework, introducing the power of access as the mechanism through which host-governments can influence the geography, behaviour, and ultimately the effectiveness of UN peacekeeping missions.

2.4 The Power of Access and Access Restrictions

Access refers to the ability of UN peacekeepers to move, patrol, monitor, and respond within the territory of a host state. The power of access, in turn, is the capacity of an actor to shape where, when, and whether the presence of UN peacekeepers occurs. At its core, this is a theory of the power of access because, while both peacekeepers and the host-government have incentives and constraints regarding where they ideally would see local UN peacekeepers, the host-government, I argue, has the strongest influence over peacekeepers' access. This, in turn, shapes the bargaining space of local deployment. Robert Dahl defines power as: "A has power over B to the extent that A can get B to do something that B would not otherwise do" (Dahl 1957:202). Applied to peacekeeping, this relationship unfolds between peacekeepers and the consent guarantor of the mission – the host-government – operating within a complex conflict environment. Here, the host-government can restrict UN peacekeepers from reaching areas they otherwise would have incentives to reach. States seeking to draw benefits from peacekeeping presence while avoiding its costs (de Waal 2015; Piccolino and Karlsrud 2011; Villa 2021) may have incentives to use their power of access to influence which areas see, and do not see, UN peacekeepers.

As Howard (2019) states, in peacekeeping, this is a ‘power over’ relationship. At the same time, she argues it is interdependent, as peacekeepers only exist in relation to the ‘peacekept’. While she has theorised how peacekeepers influence local actors through coercion, inducement, and persuasion, Caplan (2024) highlights that this depends on the capacity for political leverage. Yet, less attention has been given to the power host-governments exercise over peacekeepers after consent is granted. I argue that one such form is the power of access. This is illustrated by mapping the incentives both actors face around a given deployment site. As Howard (2019) and Piccolino and Karlsrud (2011) note, this bargaining space is often net-positive: peacekeepers wish to implement their mandate, and host-governments wish to draw value from its presence. Yet, both actors face constraints, and it is at this interface that power over access is negotiated and exercised. In turn, the host-government has the power over the UN peacekeeping mission to prevent it from reaching locations it otherwise would have deployed to.

Access operates within a structurally asymmetric interdependence. Host-governments hold sovereign authority over territory, while peacekeepers are, in principle and operationally, under consent frameworks (Howard 2019). While initial negotiations pre-deployment constrain future options (Yuen 2019), access remains a temporally dynamic instrument. It is both spatial and temporal, and its bargaining space evolves through interactions over time. In this sense, the power of access does not contradict existing work on strategic consent (Yuen 2019), political leverage (Caplan 2024), or elite instrumentalism (de Waal 2015) but complements it. It also does not contradict the outcomes found in research on weak, fluctuating, or dynamic consent that host-governments obstruct peacekeepers across time and space (Johnstone 2011; Sebastián and Gorur 2018; Duursma 2021; Villa 2021; Gregory and Sharland 2023). Rather, it argues, and later shows, that consent is not the driving instrument, though it shapes the bargaining space. Access brings the lens down to the sub-national, operational sphere as a relational and granular instrument through which host-governments continue to shape peacekeeping effectiveness after deployment.

I do not argue that this power is always intentional. Howard (2019) emphasises that power often emerges from relational dynamics rather than unilateral control. Restrictions of access can also result from bureaucratic fragmentation, logistical breakdown, or decentralised obstruction, rather than a strategic intent. The relational power of access is therefore not necessarily always strategic. Yet, if access is systematically restricted across time and space, in accordance with one actor's interest, there is strong ground to further investigate this power

of influence. To do so, I map the incentives both actors have for a location seeing local peacekeeping deployment and the constraints, which are often interconnected.

2.5 Incentives and Constraints for Local Peacekeeping Deployment

The previous section defined the power of access as the host-government's ability to shape when, where, and how UN peacekeepers operate after deployment. This section introduces the strategic logic behind that power. Rather than withdraw consent, host-governments can recalibrate their engagement with peacekeeping missions by influencing their mobility on the ground.

This control is exercised not through mandates, but through access, influencing the locations of patrols, flight permissions, and logistical cooperation. While peacekeeping is designed to reduce conflict risks by altering incentives and providing security guarantees (Walter 2002; Fortna 2008), these mechanisms depend on operational access. When host-governments selectively restrict that access, they retain the benefits of hosting a mission while limiting its ability to constrain state violence or monitor sensitive areas (Piccolino and Karlsrud 2011; Duursma 2021; Ruggeri et al. 2013).

Access is not only a logistical issue; it is a bargaining process, and it is asymmetrical. In the absence of Chapter VII enforcement, peacekeepers depend on host-government approval for their presence. The power of access creates space for strategic bargaining over deployment geography, allowing governments to influence peacekeeping outcomes without formally challenging the mission itself. The host-government can seek to maximise its benefits while minimising the costs associated with the mission (Piccolino and Karlsrud 2011).

The remainder of this section outlines the incentives and constraints the host-government and the UN peacekeeping mission have over the location of UN peacekeeping deployment. In turn, these incentives and constraints shape a bargaining model of when and where the host-government can restrict or grant the access of UN peacekeepers, and when and where UN peacekeepers try to gain access. I posit that rebel groups do not hold power of access to the same extent as the host-government.

2.5.1 Host-Government Incentives

The host-government has incentives to deploy UN peacekeeping troops to locations where it benefits from the peace process while avoiding deployment to locations where the UN can

impose costs on the host-government. For example, it can circumvent its commitments to the peace process, maintain an upper hand over information in the conflict, and direct UN peacekeepers to areas held by rebel groups. This includes areas where the government benefits from enforcement mechanisms, avoids the costs of UN interference, and maintains civilian support.

Firstly, the host-government has an incentive to deploy UN peacekeepers to locations where it will benefit from enforcement mechanisms – such as UN peacekeepers reporting and interference – and avoid local costs on its own actions. This includes locations where rebel groups commit violence against civilians or have incentives to do so, while avoiding areas where it has incentives to target civilians. The pathway is twofold: the government has an incentive to utilise the UN to gain protection from rebel attacks on its civilian population. Extensive literature finds that rebel groups target civilians for reasons including gaining access to resources, increasing bargaining power, securing civilian cooperation, or fostering ethnic cohesion (see Wood 2016 for an extensive overview).

The support and cooperation of the civilian population are crucial for the success of parties in armed conflict, which is also why civilians are strategic targets in warfare (Valentino, Huth, and Croco 2006). In addition to being a potential pool for military recruitment, civilians can offer logistical support, food, shelter, weapons, as well as income through taxes. Civilians are key informants who can report on developments in the war, such as the movement of troops or equipment (Kalyvas 2006; Wood 2003). Furthermore, the host-government has an ambivalent strategic relationship concerning deployment to areas with natural resources; UN deployment in resource-rich areas is positive if it protects them from rebel groups, but negative if private military contractors (PMCs) are locally present.

The host-government has a strategic advantage if it maintains civilian cooperation and support during civil war. Moreover, in a post-conflict environment, civilian support is key for the host-government to remain in power if elections are introduced. The protection of civilian lives is crucial for obtaining and sustaining civilian cooperation for the government, but it is a costly affair. Research based on UNMISS and MINUSCA shows that the quality of host-state consent can significantly affect UN peacekeepers' ability to protect civilians. The presence of UN peacekeeping troops in government co-ethnic constituencies increases the cost for rebels targeting government co-ethnic civilians, which benefits government support and rule. Empirical evidence shows that the government generates more support among co-ethnic than non-co-ethnic civilians due to common culture, language, and dense social networks with

higher trust and information flows (Beiser-McGrath, Müller-Crepon, and Pengl 2021; Bormann 2019; Adida 2017).

Secondly, the government has an incentive to obstruct the deployment of UN peacekeepers to constituencies where it has incentives to commit deliberate attacks on civilians. Governments also target civilians in civil wars. The reasons include punishing civilian opposition (Valentino et al. 2004), annexing strategic land held by civilians, and gaining valuable resources (Downes 2011), or decreasing the rebels' ability to hide among the civilian population (Azam and Hoeffler 2002). Civilians are targeted to give the party an upper hand in the conflict and regain a monopoly on violence to strengthen the internal sovereignty of the state. However, targeting civilians is also a costly affair for the government with the UN present. The UN can both directly intervene in the violence or report it to UN headquarters, increasing reputational costs and the risk of international retaliation. Criticism from the international community can weaken the external sovereignty of the state (Duursma 2021). The government, therefore, has an incentive to utilise the troops for its supporters' protection and reduce the cost associated with its violence in ethnic constituencies of rebel groups.

The government has an incentive to prefer peacekeeping deployment along ethnic lines according to co-ethnics of the government and co-ethnics of the rebel group (Wucherpfennig et al. 2012; Horowitz 1985). Ethnic groups are formed along individuals with a common language, phenotypes, and cultural traditions (Beiser-McGrath et al. 2021). To determine if civilians are supporters of the government or a rebel group, ethnicity becomes an elevated social network in armed conflict. Several qualitative and single-case studies emphasise the crucial role of ethnicity in accounting for patterns of wartime civilian abuse (see e.g., Horowitz 1985; Posen 1993; Kaldor 2001; Kaufman 2006; Sullivan 2012; Denny and Walter 2014). Popular accounts of civilian atrocities, for example from Darfur and the Nuba Mountains in Sudan or the conflict in Burundi, testify to the salience of ethnic divisions for strategic purposes (see e.g., Human Rights Watch 2003, 2004, 2012). Fjelde and Hultman (2014) find that across civil conflicts in Africa, the government is likely to target civilians in rebel co-ethnic constituencies, and rebel groups are likely to target civilians in government co-ethnic constituencies.

Fjelde and Hultman (2014) argue that the "same mechanisms that facilitate mobilisation within intra-ethnic networks also create strategic incentives for warring actors to engage in collective targeting of the rival's ethnic support base." They map five mechanisms in the literature through which a party can mobilise the civilian population along ethnic lines in a civil war.

2.5.2 Host-Government Constraints

While host-governments may have incentives to shape where UN peacekeepers are granted or denied access, they also face important constraints on their power to do so. These constraints limit the full expression of the power of access. The UN peacekeepers' powers, as laid out by Howard (2019), and their core principle of impartiality, place important limits on host-government discretion, alongside reputational costs, domestic accountability, and internal fragmentation of state authority.

A first key constraint arises from the legal and institutional framework of UN peacekeeping. Although the host-government grants initial consent for deployment, this agreement is formalised in the SOFA with the UN. The SOFA outlines the legal rights of the mission, including the freedom of movement for peacekeepers throughout the country. This agreement is signed not only with the UN Secretariat but, implicitly, with the broader set of Security Council actors. While the host-government may later have incentives to deviate from this agreement, doing so constitutes a breach of its formal commitments. Movement restrictions in the bargaining model, therefore, come with a cost.

Breaching the SOFA can carry both formal and informal costs. Although not always enforced, the UN and its member states retain the authority to respond to such breaches through diplomatic censure, reduction in financial support, or withdrawal of the mission. While the scale and effectiveness of strategic responses to access restrictions are not systematically researched to the knowledge of this author, they remain within the UN's toolbox. In turn, the risks of such breaches might constrain host-government behaviour. Even if formal enforcement is rare, the political costs of violating the SOFA—especially when documented and reported—can include reputational damage, strained relations with key UN member states, or reduced credibility in other international forums. For example, in Sudan, my research documents over 4,000 instances of access restrictions imposed on peacekeepers. As the UN has increasingly mandated missions to track SOFA violations, such breaches may be harder for governments to dismiss or downplay.

Second, these movement constraints can intersect with domestic reputational concerns. Accepting a peacekeeping mission often serves as a credible signal by the host-government of its intent to engage in the peace process. If the government is later seen to be undermining that mission, through obstruction or selective restrictions, it can risk domestic backlash, especially from populations hoping for protection or political reconciliation. The host-government, in this sense, is not only bargaining with the peacekeeping mission but is also responsive to costs in

its domestic constituencies. Restricting access visibly may erode public trust or heighten suspicion that the government is insincere in its peace commitments.

Third, the power of access can be hampered by limited state capacity. In some cases, constraints may arise from state capacity and internal incoherence. The host-government may lack the organisational strength or internal cohesion to enforce the SOFA across its territory. Negotiators based in New York may accept terms that are not easily implemented by regional or local authorities. Military units, provincial governors, or police forces may set up checkpoints or deny UN patrols without coordination or central approval. In such contexts, the host-government's preferences may be fragmented, and its ability to consistently manage access compromised. Here, movement restrictions may reflect not strategic manipulation, but institutional weakness and internal conflict, or otherwise, that access is granted where the host-government would have preferred it not to be.

2.5.3 Rebel Groups

Unlike host-governments, rebel groups do not hold sovereign status in their relationship with the United Nations. In turn, while they are often consulted for UN peacekeeping deployment, they do not nationally grant or revoke consent for the deployment of a peacekeeping mission and are not parties to the Status of Forces Agreement that defines the parameters of UN operations. While rebel groups may be considered in peacekeeping strategy and consulted in peace negotiations, they ultimately lack the authority to invite or dismiss a peacekeeping mission. That prerogative remains with the recognised sovereign state.

This asymmetry places clear limits on the extent to which rebel groups can exercise the power of access. They may influence peacekeeper movement in practice, particularly in territories under their de facto control, but their ability to shape access is informal, contingent, and constrained. In areas under their control, rebels may permit UN patrols as a form of signalling: to demonstrate cooperation with the peace process, to secure protection for civilians, or to gain international legitimacy. In this limited sense, they can enable access, even if they lack the institutional standing to guarantee it.

Rebel groups, however, face a higher threshold for restricting peacekeeper movement. Unlike host-governments, who can invoke sovereignty, rebel-imposed access restrictions are more likely to be interpreted as illegitimate obstruction or outright hostility. Because peacekeeping missions do not depend on rebel consent for their legal presence, retaliation against rebel-imposed restrictions carries a lower political cost for the UN. If rebel groups restrict access or use force against UN personnel, the response—both diplomatically and

operationally—can be more severe than if the same action came from the host-government. In this sense, peacekeepers may enjoy a form of security guarantee from the host-government when responding to rebel group access restrictions.

That is not to say that rebel groups are passive actors. They have strategic interests regarding UN deployment, which may include using peacekeepers as buffers against government forces, securing protection for their civilian base, or leveraging international visibility. However, the reputational risks of obstructing UN operations, particularly if linked to human rights abuses, are disproportionately high. In turn, I assume the host-government possesses greater power over UN peacekeepers' access than rebel groups. I further elaborate on the incentives and constraints of the rebel groups in Appendix 2.

2.5.4 UN Peacekeeper's Incentives

UN peacekeepers have incentives to deploy to areas where they are most able to implement their mandate—particularly where civilians are at risk, violence is likely or ongoing, and operations can be carried out effectively within logistical, political, and security constraints.

Although missions are mandated from New York, the actual deployment of UN peacekeepers is negotiated on the ground and shaped by the conditions of access. Peacekeepers often operate under tight deadlines, with limited budgets and newly integrated teams (Passmore et al. 2023; Duursma et al. 2023). As such, local deployment decisions are influenced not only by mandates to increase information flow and address commitment problems (Fortna 2008) but also by practical incentives tied to risk, opportunity, and access.

One of the UN's core mandates is the protection of civilians from targeted violence by all parties to conflict. The UN Handbook on the Protection of Civilians in Peacekeeping (United Nations Department of Peace Operations 2020:4) outlines four operational phases that shape peacekeeper incentives and their preferences for access: prevention, pre-emption, response, and consolidation.

Prevention: First, peacekeepers aim to prevent violence by establishing a visible deterrent presence in areas of elevated risk – particularly where state forces are absent. This includes reassurance to the population, community engagement, and early warning mechanisms (United Nations Department of Peace Operations 2020:139; in Nomikos and Villa 2022). To deter violence effectively, peacekeepers prefer access to densely populated areas at risk of escalation. Research shows that violent conflict is more likely to occur in proportion to population size and where clusters form locally (Raleigh and Hegre 2009). Populated areas are therefore both higher risk and more strategically important for UN presence (Urdal 2011).

Pre-emption: Second, when threats of violence are detected, peacekeepers are mandated to pre-empt escalation. This may involve coordinated operations with domestic authorities or the direct implementation of credible deterrence strategies, including limited offensive actions to protect civilians (UDPO 2020:141; in Nomikos and Villa 2022). Accordingly, the UN is incentivised to secure access to areas where threats of violence are imminent.

Response: Third, peacekeepers are mandated to respond to active violence. This includes the use of force under the military Rules of Engagement (ROE) and police Directives on Use of Force (DUF), including the temporary detention of hostile actors and cooperation with national authorities (UDPO 2020:141; in Nomikos and Villa 2022). In such moments, the UN requires rapid access to sites of ongoing conflict in order to contain violence and protect civilians.

Stabilise: Fourth, during the consolidation phase, peacekeepers aim to stabilise post-violence environments in cooperation with local authorities. Maintaining access during this period is essential for follow-up protection measures, long-term deterrence, and the credibility of the peacekeeping mission overall.

Substitution: In addition to civilian protection, peacekeepers are frequently asked to support or substitute for basic state functions (Ruggeri, Gizelis, and Dorussen 2013). Many missions operate in contexts of weak state capacity, where governments are unable to provide public goods, enforce law, or deliver security (Ruggeri et al. 2017). In such environments, the UN has a strong incentive to operate in areas where the state is absent or ineffective, but where UN access is still viable.

Finally, UN missions are constrained by limited resources and must assess where they can deploy most cost- and risk-efficiently. Because budgets are fixed at mission launch, peacekeeping operations engage in ongoing cost-benefit assessments. Accessible areas – those with roads, communication networks, and operational infrastructure – enable more effective coverage, faster patrols, and clearer exit strategies (Cil et al. 2020). These areas also tend to overlap with high-density populations, where the risk of violence is high and the potential for peacekeeper impact is greatest.

In sum, while UN peacekeepers must negotiate access with host-governments and local actors, they are incentivised to operate in areas that combine high risk to civilians with high feasibility of operational success. Their preferences for access reflect both normative

commitments and logistical realities – and remain essential to understanding where peacekeepers are strategically motivated to be, even if restricted to be there.

2.5.5 UN Peacekeepers Constraints

While UN peacekeeping missions are often tasked with expansive and ambitious mandates, the ability of peacekeepers to access specific local areas remains heavily constrained. These constraints are not merely operational choices; they reflect structural and political limitations on the UN's power of access. Despite the wide range of locations the UN Peacekeeping Mission might prefer to reach to implement its mandates, peacekeeping missions face multiple barriers: logistical, bureaucratic, and political.

Operational and Resource-Based Constraints: The first constraint is operational and resource-based. The UN must prioritise among an overwhelming number of needs with finite resources. For instance, MONUSCO deploys over 17,000 troops across the Democratic Republic of Congo, a country with a population of more than 82 million people and an area exceeding 2.3 million square kilometres (UN 2022). This disparity forces the UN to triage its responses — to focus deployments where it believes peacekeepers can meaningfully reduce violence. The issue is not preference but capacity.

Institutional and Logistical Constraints: Second, peacekeeping missions operate under risk-averse institutional incentives. The need for exit strategies, pressure from troop-contributing countries, and UN system bureaucracy often constrain decisions about where and when to deploy (Bove and Ruggeri 2015; Ruggeri et al. 2018). Moving sizable numbers of troops into high-risk or remote regions presents significant logistical challenges (Haass and Ansborg 2018). When infrastructure is lacking — such as functioning roads or railways — deployment requires expensive and limited air assets such as planes and helicopters, which the UN frequently does not have (Ruggeri et al. 2018). Despite urgent needs in many conflict zones, the Office of Military Affairs has repeatedly documented the UN's inability to secure the mobility assets required to respond to such emergencies (DPO 2021).

Moreover, deployment decisions are routed through multiple internal departments — DPKO, DFS, and DSS — introducing further bureaucratic delays and institutional caution (Ruggeri et al. 2018). As such, local deployment is often the outcome of a cost-benefit analysis under severe constraint, not an unrestricted strategic choice.

Political Constraints and Host-Government Relations: The third constraint is political because access requires navigating complex local stakeholder landscapes, among them the host-government. Formally, the UN must maintain host-government consent to

operate in-country. Without it, a mission risks expulsion or becoming a third party to the conflict. Yet the challenge of maintaining local access goes beyond formal consent. The UN must also manage relationships with both sides of an armed conflict to avoid being politically targeted.

At the same time, peacekeepers are mandated to uphold impartiality in the face of violence. UN doctrine warns that appearing partial can undermine legitimacy and jeopardise operations, potentially leading to the withdrawal of consent (UN Peacekeeping 2022). Further, over time, as the state grows stronger, the peacekeeping mission can lose political leverage over the host-government (Caplan 2024).

This asymmetry creates a structural constraint on local access: while the UN may be mandated to respond impartially to all acts of violence, it must also anticipate possible host-government responses. Responding assertively to state-perpetrated violence may lead to deteriorated cooperation or access denial by the host-government (Sebastian and Gorur 2018). As such, even when other actors contribute to insecurity, the UN may avoid local engagement in areas where such actions could jeopardise government support. In this way, access is politically negotiated and continuously vulnerable to withdrawal.

External Actors and Non-State Threats: Beyond the host-government, other actors can also restrict peacekeeping access. Paramilitary groups such as the Wagner Group, often aligned with host-government interests, can directly threaten peacekeeper presence and movement (Druet 2023). Rebel groups likewise increase the security risk of deployment, limiting where peacekeepers risk operating (Bromley 2022). Meanwhile, regional and international stakeholders, such as the European Union, ECOWAS, the G5 Sahel in Mali, or ECCAS in the Central African Republic, require coordination and may shape the UN's presence on the ground (Bara and Schumann 2023).

While these actors complicate the UN's local navigation, only the host-government holds the legal and political authority to terminate a mission's presence. This monopoly on formal consent grants the host-government disproportionate influence over the mission's local access.

As such, the UN's local deployment decisions are shaped by constraints that are both logistical, institutional, and political. While the UN may wish to deploy to all sites of civilian need and areas it can implement its mandates, its ability to do so is ultimately contingent on the resources it possesses, the risks it is willing and able to take, and the access it is granted.

2.6 The Bargaining Game

Having outlined the incentives and constraints that shape local UN peacekeeping deployment, I now turn to the strategic interaction over access. The relational dimension of access for UN peacekeepers, I argue, is best presented as two bargaining games between the host-government and the UN peacekeeping mission. This framing captures the dynamic and strategic choices made by each actor in response to the incentives, constraints, and the relational power asymmetries.

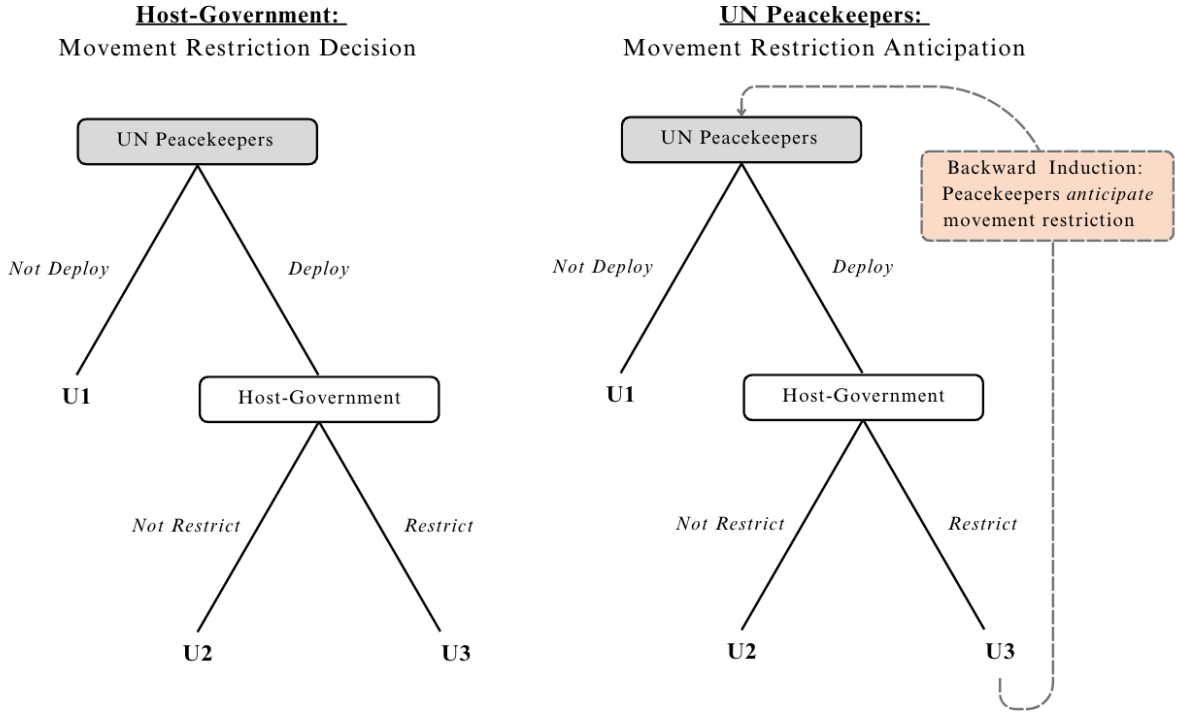


Figure 2.1: Two bargaining games of local access in peacekeeping deployment, the first game illustrates the direct power of the host-government to restrict access, and the second game illustrates the indirect power of the anticipation of restriction by the host-government, in turn influencing UN peacekeepers' decisions.

In the first game, once UN peacekeepers seek to deploy to a specific area, the host-government decides whether to permit or restrict their access, depending on whether it has incentives or constraints in seeing the peacekeepers' presence. In the second game, UN peacekeepers consider their deployment by anticipating the likelihood of restrictions by the host-government and can therefore adjust their deployment strategies. Peacekeepers may choose to avoid deploying to locations where restrictions are expected to be high, or they may seek to deploy strategically where access is more likely to be granted.

This dynamic is not a one-off interaction but an ongoing bargaining process, where each actor's decision shapes the other's future expectations and strategies. The host-government can exercise direct influence through access restrictions: physical or administrative barriers such as roadblocks, permit denials, or withheld cooperation. The UN, for its part, can engage in anticipatory decision-making, seeking to maximise mandate implementation while avoiding costly deployments where access would likely be denied and cooperation with the host-government would be weakened.

The interaction can thus be modelled as two interconnected decision trees, illustrated in Figure 2.1. The first tree represents the host-government's decisions following a sub-national peacekeeping deployment: whether to permit access or to impose movement restrictions based on its perceived costs and benefits. The second tree represents the UN peacekeepers' strategic calculus: whether to deploy to a location or not, to avoid anticipated restrictions, and instead prioritise other areas where access is more likely. By modelling access as a dynamic bargaining game, two distinct effects of host-government strategy are evident:

1. **Direct Influence:** Host-governments can directly influence peacekeeper deployment by physically restricting movement.
2. **Indirect Influence:** Host-governments can indirectly influence UN deployments by shaping the peacekeepers' anticipations; peacekeepers may choose not to deploy to certain areas precisely because they expect restrictions to occur.

In short, host-governments may have the power of access not only directly, by imposing physical barriers, but also indirectly, by influencing the strategic anticipation of peacekeeping missions over time and space. Together, these dynamics can explain parts of how access is negotiated and contested at the sub-national level, and why peacekeeping deployment can be asymmetrical and strategic, at times in conflict with its principle of impartiality.

Again, rebel groups are not included in the core game model, as they do not possess sovereign authority over the peacekeeping mission. However, their indirect influence on access dynamics is discussed further in Appendix 2.

The next section further disentangles the mechanisms behind host-government access and access restrictions, and UN peacekeeping deployment strategies, mapping the specific mechanisms each actor employs to influence peacekeepers' access on the ground.

2.7 Mechanisms of Access and Access Restrictions

In the following section, I map the mechanisms that are operational manifestations of the theory of access. Access, I argue, is not automatically granted to UN peacekeepers but continuously bargained for in the field. Both the host-government and the UN peacekeeping mission possess mechanisms through which they seek to assert influence over access. Understanding these mechanisms is crucial to explaining how the power of access operates in practice, beyond formal consent. In what follows, I systematically outline the key operational mechanisms, drawing on mission reports, scholarly research (Sebastián and Gorur 2018; Duursma 2021; Gregory and Sharland 2023), and UN doctrine. I first examine the host-government's mechanisms to restrict or shape access, before turning to the UN's strategic responses.

2.7.1 Host-Government Mechanisms

The mechanisms available to the host-government can reflect a trade-off between cooperation with the UN and deterrence of its influence. Host-governments often benefit from peacekeeping missions, particularly when missions bolster regime legitimacy, deter rebel advances, provide security, or deliver public goods. However, cooperation entails costs: the presence of peacekeepers — being with reporting, monitoring, or protection mandates — can constrain military options, expose human rights violations, and trigger international scrutiny. In situations where the state is engaged in politically sensitive or violent practices, the reputational and operational costs of cooperation may outweigh the benefits. In such cases, governments are incentivised to shift its levels of cooperation and instead diminish collaboration or restrict peacekeepers' access. These actions are not necessarily expressions of rejection, but of strategic bargaining — mechanisms to condition the missions' effectiveness. Ultimately, if dissatisfied, the host-government can withdraw its consent to the peacekeeping mission all together. The following mechanisms illustrate how host-governments influence the location of UN peacekeeping troops when the political or strategic costs of cooperation outweigh its perceived benefits.

Diminishing Collaboration

Diminishing collaboration represents an initial, low-cost mechanism to pressure peacekeepers without risking immediate reputational fallout. The host-government can have an incentive to signal dissatisfaction with the UN peacekeeping mission when penalised in a location it has given access to – such as when the UN reports on human rights abuses by the government or

when the UN deploys to areas where the host-government has strategic interests to use violence against belligerent parties. Because the UN greatly relies on collaboration and access granted by the host-government to execute its mandate, diminished collaboration can significantly undermine the effectiveness of UN peacekeeping troops in the field.

A deterioration of host-government access can manifest as political disruptions, where the host-government "seeks to undercut the mission's diplomatic space to the point of rendering the mission irrelevant" (Sebastián and Gorur 2018:23). When there are few entry points to collaborate with the host-government, the mission struggles to implement its mandates. These actions include restricting information to the UN, such as not including the peacekeeping mission in governmental processes or meetings, or imposing bureaucratic obstacles – such as requiring the UN to report to the government every time it wishes to move troops.

This was evident, for example, in South Sudan after the civil war broke out in December 2013. The UN Security Council bolstered a mandate for the peacekeeping mission to respond to violence, but the host-government was not collaborating with the mission. The mission played no role in the new political process; instead, its role centred around human rights reporting, monitoring, and the protection of civilians. This new mandate further alienated collaborations between the South Sudanese government and the UN Mission, which found itself unable to execute any of its military and security-related mandates successfully (Sebastián and Gorur 2018).

The diminishing collaboration by the host-government can thus influence local UN peacekeeping deployment. The UN is incentivised to move peacekeeping troops to maintain the goodwill of the host-government and to deploy to areas where it can be effective in implementing its mandates.

Actively Restricting the Movements of the UN Peacekeeping Mission

Actively restricting the movement of peacekeepers is a costlier but highly effective mechanism to physically influence peacekeeping presence, even at the price of SOFA violations. Actively limiting movement against the UN peacekeeping mission is the most common way a host-government influences peacekeeping operations locally (Gregory and Sharland 2023). Increased restrictions by the host-government are reported to become widespread when there is an increase in violence and human rights abuses by the host-government (CIVIC 2016). This is precisely when the peacekeeping mission most needs to be able to respond quickly to events. In South Sudan, for example, the mission reported 450 violations of the SOFA agreement in a nine-month period from March to November 2015, which included limited freedom of

movement, obstruction of supplies, and visa delays for new peacekeeping troops and observers (CIVIC 2016).

To influence UN peacekeeping deployment according to its preferences, the host-government can actively undermine the peacekeeping mission by physically preventing peacekeepers' access to areas of interest and blocking supplies from reaching peacekeepers. In other words, the host-government affects peacekeeping deployment by limiting freedom of movement and actively making it harder for the peacekeeping mission to implement its mandates. By restricting access to an area, the mission loses situational awareness in the field and the ability to protect civilians under attack or at risk of violence.

Limiting the UN's freedom of movement or blocking supplies are direct breaches of the SOFA agreement, which the host-government agreed upon when consenting to peacekeeping deployment. Sebastián and Gorur (2018) map the most common violations implemented to influence peacekeeping operations. Firstly, the host-government can actively restrict freedom of movement by land, air, and water to prevent the peacekeeping mission's response to violence on the ground. For example, in Darfur, the mission reported that any action taken against the government consistently resulted in retaliation against the UN peacekeeping mission.

Further, in Ivory Coast, the election of December 2010 saw disagreements over the results, which impacted relationships between the peacekeeping mission and the host-government under President Gbagbo (Coulibaly 2010). President Gbagbo was leaving office but attempted to reverse the election result while still controlling the Constitutional Council. The UN peacekeeping mission, which was also mandated to certify the election process, rejected Gbagbo's claim and announced Ouattara as the new president (Sebastián and Gorur 2018). This disagreement led to a spiral of violent clashes between supporters of the two presidents (Salazar-Winspear 2010). The violence further fuelled confrontations between the challenged host-government and the UN peacekeeping mission.

As a result, the government under Gbagbo actively worked to restrict movements by the peacekeeping mission to areas witnessing violence between the two parties and blocked the provision of goods to the peacekeeping mission (Lynch 2011). Eventually, the Gbagbo government withdrew its consent for the peacekeeping mission – an action that in this case was not seen as legitimate, as the international community recognised Ouattara as the legitimate head of state after the election. If not for pressure from the international stage, the UN peacekeeping mission would have had to withdraw (Ibid).

The host-government can explicitly influence local peacekeeping deployment by preventing the UN's access to areas of interest through military blockades and checkpoints. This mechanism is effective for preventing peacekeeping deployment but is less effective for positively influencing deployment to areas of interest. Instead, this mechanism is a costly affair for the host-government since it comes with high reputational costs on the international and local stage. However, it remains an effective way to explicitly influence local peacekeeping deployment, as UN missions often do not have the resources or the political interest to break through a government military blockade unless enforcement mandates are invoked.

Retract Consent to UN Peacekeeping Mission

Threatening to withdraw consent escalates bargaining into a high-stakes game, leveraging the host-government's sovereign authority to condition peacekeeper presence on political alignment. The host-government can ultimately threaten to withdraw consent for the UN peacekeeping mission if it is dissatisfied with the UN's actions, forcing the mission to leave the country if it does not secure further enforcement mandates. The host-government is the actor of sovereignty on the global stage, ruling over its territory. This is crucial. In Chapter 1, Article 2 of the United Nations Charter, it is stated that "the Organization is based on the principle of the sovereign equality of all its Members." Since the host-government is the ultimate grantor of consent, it can also threaten to withdraw consent if it is displeased with UN operations. Whether a host-government collaborates with or threatens to withdraw consent from a UN peacekeeping mission depends on how "the mission's activities align with or undermine the government's interests" (Sebastián and Gorur 2018:23).

Government consent to host a peacekeeping mission can be retracted at any point, and as such, the peacekeeping mission must balance fulfilling its mandate while locally negotiating with the government. The UN's ability to fulfil its mandate is affected by state authority and how its interests, goals, perceptions, and expectations towards the peacekeeping mission are positioned. If the mission fails to accommodate government interests or protect its civilians, the government may request its withdrawal.

For example, MINURCAT in Chad was deployed in late 2005 as a response to cross-border militia attacks on Chadian civilians and ethnic tensions between local groups. In Chad, the host-government regarded the peacekeeping mission as a buffer zone between the government and rebel groups in border areas (Sebastián and Gorur 2018:27). This was a mismatch of expectations between the host-government and MINURCAT from the outset because the mission was also mandated to report and monitor violence by the government.

When MINURCAT failed to respond to rebel attacks in N'Djamena in both the summer of 2008 and the autumn of 2009, host-government consent deteriorated in an already tense relationship (Karlsrud and de Costa 2013).

In 2010, the government of Chad chose not to renew the MINURCAT mandate, citing the UN's insufficiencies in protecting its civilians from rebel groups and fulfilling its mandate with too few UN troops on the ground (Weir 2010). The government of Chad expressed its belief that it would be able to do a better job (Karlsrud and de Costa 2013). Yet, reports revealed that specialised Chadian police, who had undergone training by the UN, were involved in serious misconduct. The misconduct included "the murder of a civilian in Farchana in March 2009, the gross misuse of firearms, and the striking of a refugee in Oure Cassoni" (Weir 2010:2). The UN's report on the Chadian police arguably did not improve the deteriorating relationship with the host-government. The government's dissatisfaction with UN protection of its civilians, combined with the increased costs imposed by the UN on violence experienced by the Chadian government, led to the mission's termination.

A different use of the consent mechanism was attempted by the government in Ivory Coast after the 2010 election, where Ouattara won the presidency. The UN Mission, mandated to verify the election, did not recognise the lame-duck President Gbagbo as head of state after constitutional changes to remain in power. With violent clashes breaking out over the result, Gbagbo withdrew consent for UNOCI to operate. However, due to international pressure recognising Ouattara as the legitimate president and government, the UN peacekeeping mission could remain in the country. Without international pressure providing political leverage, the UN mission would have been forced to withdraw. This case demonstrates how explicitly a host-government can influence UN peacekeeping deployment within its territory.

Together, these mechanisms illustrate how the host-government exercises the power of access through a powerful toolkit, escalating from diplomatic marginalisation to physical obstruction and, ultimately, threats to the mission's overall presence.

2.7.2 UN Peacekeeping Mechanisms

Having established that access is not automatically guaranteed after deployment but is continuously bargained between UN missions and host-governments, I turn to how peacekeeping missions can strategically respond to access restrictions in practice. These responses are best understood as mechanisms within the broader framework of the power of access: tools used by peacekeepers to preserve operational presence, navigate commitment problems on the ground, and shape the local distribution of costs and benefits (Piccolino and

Karlsrud 2011; Howard 2019; Walter 2002; Ruggeri et al. 2018; Fjelde et al. 2019; Duursma et al. 2021).

Facing severe structural constraints – including host-government sovereignty, limited international enforcement, and internal resource limitations – peacekeepers balance mandate implementation with political and operational realities. As a result, UN missions in practice are observed responding through three main types of mechanisms: operational adjustment, strategic self-censorship, and diplomatic contestation. A fourth response, theoretically possible but rare in practice, involves attempted escalation under Chapter VII. These mechanisms reflect the complex bargaining environment in which UN peacekeepers operate relationally to sustain access on the ground, mirroring the asymmetrical bargaining environment.

Operational Adjustment: Tactical Limitations

When confronted with explicit host-government restrictions on their freedom of movement, UN peacekeeping missions can engage in operational adjustment (Guéhenno 2015), accepting tactical limitations in the short term to preserve broader mission survival and avoid escalations.

The host-government can exert an explicit effect on peacekeeping deployment by physically preventing UN peacekeepers' access to specific territories, for instance, through roadblocks, permit denials, or administrative obstacles. In response, UN missions often adjust their operations rather than confront the restrictions head-on, for example, when faced with an armed checkpoint. This serves two functions: first, it avoids armed escalations with government actors; second, it creates space for diplomatic efforts to clear misunderstandings with political leadership.

Although the SOFA formally guarantees freedom of movement, the risks associated with escalating tensions — for both civilian populations and mission viability — limit the option of enforcing SOFA rights at the tactical level. Through interviews with UN representatives, Sebastián and Gorur (2018: 29) note that peacekeepers can push through an armed checkpoint but “then you have another checkpoint and civilians back in the campsite. You need to think about those civilians. Logistically, it is not realistic to push through.” They note that even when faced with minor opposition to enter through checkpoints, the leadership of the UN peacekeeping mission accepted the restriction and adjusted the operation “for the sake of the smooth functioning of the mission,” though it hampers mandate implementation and credibility in the field.

A striking example of this logic was reported in the UN Mission Reports of UNAMID in September 2009, where the Government of Sudan systematically blocked UNAMID's access

to Korma and surrounding areas for eleven consecutive days, preventing the mission from verifying reports of fighting, civilian casualties, and humanitarian needs (S/2009/592: 4). While this was included in the report to the Security Council in November — which is a mechanism I will discuss later — it still highlights the power of the host-government's ability to directly block peacekeepers' access.

Further, operational adjustment is not always in line with the directives of the peacekeeping mission, pointing to further risk-averseness in the strategy. For instance, in 2015, UNMISS issued a directive instructing all patrols to remain at checkpoints for up to 48 hours if blocked, while reporting back to headquarters and negotiating for continued movement. However, UNMISS military officials noted that "such persistent negotiation has rarely happened in practice, with patrols typically giving up upon the slightest resistance" (CIVIC 2016: 32).

Such incidents demonstrate that operational adjustment can be a chosen mechanism, where the power of access retained by host-governments influences the local geography of peacekeepers' access. While adjustment can preserve the mission's presence in contested environments, it simultaneously undermines the full implementation of mandates designed to overcome commitment problems between warring parties (Walter 2002). Thus, even tactical decisions at checkpoints reflect broader bargaining asymmetries inherent in the power of access.

Strategic Self-Censorship: Anticipating Host-Government Retaliation

A second mechanism available to UN peacekeeping missions in the bargain over access is strategic self-censorship. Unlike operational adjustment, which responds to explicit restrictions already imposed, strategic self-censorship anticipates potential retaliation before obstruction occurs, seeking to avoid escalation through proactive recalibration of mission activities.

Facing the structural asymmetry of the bargaining environment — including host-government sovereignty and limited international enforcement tools — peacekeeping missions can influence their access by constraining their own actions in certain areas. As rational actors, UN missions engage in backward inductive calculations (Bas et al. 2007), anticipating the likely responses of host-governments to different locations and times of deployment. Rather than risk new restrictions or the ultimate withdrawal of consent, peacekeepers can adjust deployments pre-emptively, internalising host-government preferences into their operational calculus.

While this is not often reported in mission reports, memoirs and empirical analyses highlight that “self-censorship” and “self-imposed” movement limitations are UN responses to implicit host-government pressure (Guéhenno 2015; CIVIC 2016; Sebastián and Gorur 2018). While this preserves the minimum conditions for mission survival, it carries significant costs for mandate implementation, particularly in relation to the protection of civilians.

The case of the July 2016 violence in Juba, South Sudan, illustrates this dynamic. Investigations found that “the longstanding unwillingness or inability of the UN Security Council and UNMISS to enforce its Status of Forces Agreement with the government meant that, when fighting erupted in July, UNMISS was once again obstructed from moving outside its bases,” with an officer noting that once the report of violence arrived, “we immediately went to lockdown” (CIVIC 2016: 31). Despite being physically present, UNMISS was unable to fulfil its core protection tasks when they were most needed, cited as a consequence of the self-imposed operational constraints designed to preserve host-government cooperation.

Strategic self-censorship reflects a calculated trade-off: fulfilling part of the mandate imperfectly or impartially is judged preferable to risking full mission collapse through host-government expulsion. Continued presence, even under deteriorating conditions, enables missions to monitor developments, maintain dialogue with belligerents and civil society, and retain some capacity for influence — objectives that would be lost if operational confrontation led to violent escalation and/or consent withdrawal.

Diplomatic Contestation and Reporting

In addition to tactical adjustment and strategic self-censorship, UN missions can seek to bargain for their access through diplomatic contestation. This involves raising the reputational and political costs of restricting peacekeeping operations, aiming to limit violations without escalating tensions to open confrontation.

Diplomatic contestation can thus take two main forms. First, missions can pursue quiet diplomacy, working discreetly through backchannels to negotiate the lifting of access restrictions. This approach recognises that public confrontation may harden host-government positions, risking further deterioration of cooperation. As one UNMISS representative emphasised, “the moment you go through the press and point fingers, it is always going to worsen the situation and put people on the defensive” (Sebastián and Gorur 2018). Quiet diplomacy may involve bargaining over a short timeframe — a "window" of negotiation at the local level — where missions seek to resolve the obstruction before escalating the issue to international forums. For example, the establishment of a 48-hour period at a checkpoint to

attempt local bargaining for access while contacting mission headquarters (CIVIC 2016: 32) may ensure access without causing reputational damage for the host-government.

Second, when quiet efforts fail or when restrictions persistently impair mandate implementation, missions can escalate through formal reporting and reputational pressure. This includes systematically documenting SOFA violations and reporting them to the UN Secretariat, the Security Council, and key external actors such as donors and troop-contributing countries. Several contemporary peacekeeping mandates now explicitly request the tracking and reporting of SOFA violations (Gregory and Sharland 2023). Public reporting, sometimes combined with targeted diplomatic pressure by key states, can be aimed at raising the reputational costs for the host-government, leveraging international scrutiny to incentivise compliance.

However, both forms of diplomatic contestation can face structural limitations. Quiet diplomacy depends on the willingness of host-government actors to negotiate in good faith and on the peacekeepers' full understanding of the SOFAs, as well as language expertise while on patrol. Missions may have little leverage beyond appeals to shared interests or external diplomatic coordination. Public reporting, while potentially powerful, risks worsening relations on the ground and provoking retaliation, particularly in contexts where host-governments frame peacekeeping as a sovereignty intrusion (Guéhenno 2015). Higher-level diplomacy requires coordination in the Security Council, which can fall short of an agreed response.

Thus, while diplomatic contestation remains an important and at times powerful mechanism within the broader framework of the power of access, it often operates under tight constraints, with missions carefully weighing the risks and benefits of each strategy in a highly asymmetrical bargaining environment.

Escalation

When diplomatic efforts, operational adjustments, and reporting fail to restore access, peacekeeping missions retain two final theoretical mechanisms: enforcement under Chapter VII or strategic withdrawal. Recent proposals argue that threatening withdrawal could strengthen the UN's bargaining position with host-governments by increasing reputational costs or exposing vulnerabilities (Gregory and Sharland 2023). However, peacekeepers struggle to leverage these options effectively since both escalation and withdrawal depend on Security Council authorisation and continued operational access—both of which can be systematically obstructed by a hostile host-government.

Escalation - Enforcement: In principle, UN peacekeeping missions, many of which are authorised under Chapter VII, possess the legal right to use force to ensure freedom of movement, protect civilians, and implement their mandates even against host-government opposition. Yet enforcement against host-state access restrictions is rarely attempted. As Jean-Marie Guéhenno, former Under-Secretary-General for UN Peacekeeping Operations, warns, unless peacekeepers are "prepared to go to war with the country in which they [are] deployed, which nobody suggests," they "ha[ve] to work with the government for practical reasons," and invoking Chapter VII ultimately "make[s] little difference" to the operational realities on the ground (Guéhenno 2015: 107). Even where mandates explicitly permit the use of force to uphold the mandate, they are typically exercised against non-state spoilers rather than against sovereign host-government forces, reflecting the asymmetry in bargaining power between peacekeeping missions and host-states and the impartiality of the mandate implementation.

Escalation: Withdrawal: A second form of escalation, strategic withdrawal, has been proposed as a more viable response when host-government obstruction becomes systemic. Gregory and Sharland (2023: 44) argue that where the UN risks becoming a bystander to atrocities, or when peacekeepers' safety can no longer be guaranteed, withdrawal may constitute the "least worst option." In theory, withdrawal can impose political pressure on host-governments, reinforcing the UN's impartiality and preserving its credibility. In practice, however, executing a withdrawal without host-government cooperation remains difficult. Withdrawal requires not only Security Council authorisation but also sufficient operational access to relocate personnel and equipment – conditions that obstructive host-governments may deliberately deny.

The case of UNMEE illustrates these constraints clearly. Following systematic restrictions by Eritrean authorities – including roadblocks, fuel cutoffs, staff intimidation at gunpoint, imprisonment, and the confiscation of UN equipment – UNMEE judged that operational conditions had become "untenable" and requested Security Council support for emergency relocation (S/2008/145), ultimately asking for the withdrawal of the mission. Yet, in doing so, UNMEE encountered systematic obstruction by the Eritrean authorities, who blocked convoys, confiscated equipment, blocked passage across borders, and effectively trapped peacekeepers and matériel within Eritrea (paras. 13–25). Ultimately, UNMEE was forced into a partial regrouping in Asmara and Assab under substandard conditions, while critical military and logistical equipment remained stranded, vulnerable to seizure and destruction (paras. 17–23). As the Secretary-General concluded, "the restrictions imposed by

the Eritrean authorities on UNMEE are unacceptable and in breach of the fundamental principles of peacekeeping" (para. 31).

The case of UNOCI in Ivory Coast illustrates the challenges of withdrawal overall with consent. Caplan (2024) illustrates how the mission's political leverage declined as the Ivorian government grew stronger and more assertive towards the end of the mission. Withdrawal, far from imposing pressure, aligned with the host-government's desire to end international oversight and consolidate sovereignty. With support for withdrawal by the P5, UNOCI was unable to secure a follow-on mission or an independent human rights presence (Caplan 2024), highlighting an important constraint: even when peacekeeping missions pursue withdrawal with consent, they may have even less influence over the host-government, especially where withdrawal aligns with the host-state's political interests. Here, the prospect of no peacekeeping mission did not generate leverage but rather accelerated the loss of influence that the mission already faced.

2.8 Theoretical Propositions

Having established the theoretical framework for the power of access and the bargaining mechanisms available to peacekeepers, I present four propositions that specify how the interaction between host-governments and UN peacekeepers shapes the access of peacekeepers. Of course, the power of access is not the only factor that influences the location of peacekeeping deployment, but it explains a key relational dynamic.

The power of access explains who holds the ability to influence peacekeeping deployment, how that power is exercised, and why particularly the host-government is able to constrain or influence the access of peacekeepers. In turn, the power over relationship shapes the bargaining environment by defining the strategic range of each actor.

As such, the bargaining games aim to explain how UN peacekeepers may respond within that power structure. They highlight the mechanisms, such as operational adjustment, strategic self-censorship, diplomatic contestation, and escalation, through which peacekeepers negotiate access and navigate the constraints imposed by the host-government. In this sense, bargaining occurs within, and is bounded by, the asymmetrical distribution of power.

I argue that among all actors, the host-government retains the strongest 'power over' relationship with regard to access and, in turn, to influence the locations of UN peacekeeping troops to its own strategic benefit. Below, I lay out the theoretical propositions for the access of peacekeepers, focusing on the relational aspect between UN peacekeepers and the host-

government that specifies the expected dynamics of access and restriction. These propositions aim to clarify the logic of the power relationship outlined in the previous sections and provide the foundation for empirical testing in the following chapters.

Here, the theoretical propositions are limited to the bargaining of access given the power relationship between peacekeepers and the host-government. They do not aim to clarify the logistical aspects that may impact access (e.g., resources, weather, security), nor the complex dynamics that can occur with additional actors. Further, they do not account for rebel groups, as it is assumed that rebels do not hold the sovereign power of the host-government.

First Proposition - ***Access is Granted*****:** Peacekeepers are more likely to be granted access to areas deemed strategically beneficial to the host-government.

Second Proposition - ***Access is Restricted:*** Peacekeepers are more likely to be restricted in accessing areas that are strategically averse to the host-government.

Third Proposition - ***Access is not Anticipated:*** Peacekeepers do not attempt to access an area because they do not anticipate the possibility of gaining access.

Fourth Proposition - ***Access is Deprioritised:*** Peacekeepers deprioritise access in favour of other areas considered of higher strategic relevance, and thus no attempt is made to gain access.

The four theoretical propositions establish distinct outcomes that can be used to conceptualise and assess the power of access. In this thesis, I empirically test the first and second propositions, which concern where host-governments are strategically incentivised to grant or restrict access to UN peacekeepers. These propositions are particularly well-suited to quantitative research designs, as they align with observable and documentable behaviour—namely, instances of granted or denied access as reported in official mission records. Through sub-national, geo-referenced, and time-sensitive analysis, this research contributes to theoretical and empirical insights on peacekeeping deployment, the challenges of effectiveness, and the local political dynamics that shape UN presence. Focusing on these propositions advances a growing research agenda on host-government influence over peacekeeping operations (Fjelde et al. 2019; Sebastián and Gorur 2018; Gregory and Sharland 2023) by offering sub-national, time-sensitive analysis and data on access restrictions.

The third and fourth propositions, by contrast, are more difficult to examine empirically. Proposition three concerns cases where UN peacekeepers do not attempt to access certain areas, potentially due to an expectation of denial. Proposition four considers strategic deprioritisation — where peacekeepers choose not to pursue deployemnt because other areas are deemed of greater importance. In turn, these propositions address not only where peacekeepers are present or absent, but also where they *considered going but did not*. To be empirically tested, these propositions require data on intentions, deliberations, and plans that were *not* acted upon — information that is currently unavailable in systematic form. Future research may explore these dynamics through qualitative methods, including interviews with mission personnel and case-based process tracing, to investigate how peacekeepers anticipate host-government reactions or make prioritisation decisions. Understanding these unobservable choices is key to advance knowledge about peacekeeping strategy, self-deterrence, and operational trade-offs in the face of constrained access.

2.9 Limitations and Alternative Explanations

While this theory offers a foundational framework, it is not without its limitations. The framework does not adequately incorporate the roles of other significant actors, such as nation-states, various non-state entities, other multilateral organisations, and NGOs. Although their influence on the localised deployment of UN peacekeeping troops is perceived through the strategic lens of the host-government and rebel groups, these entities might have distinct roles, influences, and objectives that independently impact peacekeeping dynamics.

Moreover, by placing emphasis on systemic factors, there is a risk of neglecting straightforward obstacles, such as communication challenges or operational hurdles. These may include the absence of reliable communication tools (phones, connectivity, etc.) or widespread illiteracy. Such factors, leading to operational misunderstandings, can play a role in restricting peacekeeping deployment on the ground. Further, the assumption does not rely on individual actors or local interests, who may have an influential role. It also does not account for ideological factors, such as anti-imperialist and anti-colonial sentiments, and instead focuses on strategic interests in the conflict.

Lastly, the theoretical framework categorises rebel groups based on the argument that they do not hold sovereign decision-making power regarding UN peacekeeping deployment. Yet, it is crucial to recognise that rebel groups are not monolithic entities. Their objectives, capacities, relationships with the host-government, and interactions with the UN can vary

considerably across space and time. As such, this underscores the limitation in detail and context specificity.

State Fragility

Access restrictions, rather than demonstrating the power of the host-government, could alternatively reflect features of failed states, such as structural weaknesses and fragmented authority. For example, Sudan was ranked as the second most fragile state in the world in 2024 (FSI 2024). Multidimensional peacekeeping missions are often mandated to provide basic state functions where the state itself cannot do so (Ruggeri et al. 2017). Previous research also finds that states with strong militaries are less likely to see peacekeeping deployment (Gilligan and Stedman 2003). As such, access restrictions might be a function of state fragility, reflecting dispersed power and limited government reach.

In this case, one would expect to see access restrictions in areas where the government is likely to have limited control, such as regions dominated by rebel groups. Furthermore, one would expect movement restrictions to be localised, dispersed, and resolved over time if the host-government regained control and legitimacy. However, de Waal (2015) highlights that fragile states prioritise controlling limited resources as a survival strategy, retaining selective coercive capabilities – particularly those relevant to regime/elite survival, such as military and intelligence capacities – and suggests that accepting international actors is a transactional analysis.

Access restrictions can be low-cost mechanisms in fragile states: setting up checkpoints, denying permits, or refusing fuel. Moreover, national fly permits, imports, or visas are not localised but highly nationalised features. This highlights that the host-government is capable of – and can have an interest in – influencing the peacekeeping mission's local access.

Misunderstandings and Communication Gaps

One may also argue that access restrictions are the product of misunderstandings and lack of communication, where the mandate and SOFA are not well understood on the ground by local stakeholders and the peacekeepers themselves. Case studies have highlighted that this is sometimes the case (Sebastián and Gorur, 2018; CIVIC, 2016), where peacekeepers do not know the procedures, struggle to engage with locals (Kotajoki, 2025), or, for example, soldiers at checkpoints lack communication tools or are illiterate.

In the DRC, MONUC highlighted that improved communication with both the host-government and the local population was essential for stable and accepted operations, leading

to the creation of joint communication strategies with Congolese authorities on the radio to facilitate coordination, reduce misunderstandings, and maintain public trust (S/2010/164).

While communication is indeed critical to the peacekeeping process, if this were the primary dynamic of access, one would expect access restrictions to occur rather uniformly across the theatre of operations, un-associated with the government's strategic interests. However, UN Mission Reports and case studies indicate that restrictions intensify precisely in locations and periods where the host-government has incentives to avoid peacekeepers' interference, such as sites of civilian targeting. While misunderstandings can explain parts of limited access, and communication strategies can improve them, the power of access highlights the strategic relationship where peacekeepers are deliberately not given access or choose not to deploy.

Powerful Member States and Strategic Influence

Another possible explanation is that limited UN access and enforcement capacity may reflect not only the interests of the host-government but also those of powerful UN member states. For instance, Russia's reported ties to Wagner forces in the Central African Republic (Spearin 2025) and China's investments in Sudan (Ayabei 2017) could incentivise restraint in UN oversight. However, if P5 members sought systematically to limit peacekeeper action, they would likely do so more effectively by shaping or vetoing mandates at the outset or during mandate renewals (Bellamy and Williams 2015).

Further, as Hellmüller and Salaymeh (2025) argue, powerful states increasingly prefer to bypass multilateral frameworks altogether in conflict-affected countries, opting for bilateral deals with conflict parties rather than investing in UN-led peace operations.[1]

Troop-Contributing Countries and Peacekeeper Agency

While I outlined the incentives and constraints of both the host-government and UN peacekeepers for access, this does not claim to be an exhaustive account of all the factors that may influence access in the field. For example, the agency of troop-contributing countries may explain variation in the power of access. Variations in access restrictions might reflect troop-

[1] The growing preference for bilateral interventions suggests that UN peacekeeping, despite its limitations, imposes some cost on host-governments through impartial monitoring. Bilateral agreements allow governments to avoid these costs by tightening control over access and making external influence increasingly dependent on consent. With few alternatives beyond coercion, such relationships become more transactional, further shifting power toward host-governments (de Waal 2015; Hellmüller and Salaymeh 2025).

contributing countries' differing national risk tolerances, operational capabilities, and understandings of the mandate and the SOFA agreement (Bove, Ruffa, and Ruggeri, 2020).

Moreover, individual peacekeepers exercise interpretive agency when translating rules into practice, meaning that variation in local access may also arise from peacekeepers' tacit knowledge, prior experiences, and the practical or reflective adjustments they make in the field (Laurence, 2025). At the individual level, variation in peacekeeper access may also reflect the agency of mission leaders, shaped by their personal identities and the structural conditions of the mission environment (Buitelaar, 2025). Yet, while missions are important for access, this does not fully account for the restrictions faced in the field.

Chapter 3: Influencing Where UN Peacekeepers Go

UN peacekeepers are found to provide security, deter violence, and protect civilian populations where they are physically present. Empirical evidence underscores these claims (Ruggeri Dorussen and Gizelis 2017; Ruggeri Dorussen and Gizelis 2018; Gizelis and Benson 2019; Cil et al. 2020; Nomikos Sener and Williams 2021). For instance, Abbs and Duursma (2024) illustrate how the rapid deployment of MONUSCO in Djugu, Ituri Province (DRC), mitigated violence and contributed to local stability through strategic patrols and positioning. According to local accounts, MONUSCO's presence was instrumental in "stemming violence and promoting stability" while facilitating "a return to security" in the region (Spink in Abbs and Duursma 2024:47). Despite acknowledged limitations (e.g. Autesserre 2014), there are tangible benefits from UN peacekeeping missions where they are sizable, present, and operational.

Yet, the effectiveness of UN peacekeepers is not evenly distributed. Criticisms of peacekeeping missions often centre on their inability to report and act impartially on human rights violations. In the DRC, for example, peacekeepers have been accused of "turning a blind eye" to violations committed by the host-government (Guéhenno 2015:121), while in Sudan, UN forces have faced allegations of "self-censorship" and "non-reporting" of abuses perpetrated by government forces (Human Rights Watch 2014; Lynch 2014). These criticisms are not only anecdotal; they underscore a deeper puzzle of strategic deployment and access constraints that may, in part, be influenced by host-government preferences.

Understanding the determinants of peacekeeping deployment is therefore crucial to evaluating its effectiveness. Existing scholarship attributes deployment patterns to conflict intensity and logistical feasibility, such as road access and terrain navigability (Ruggeri et al. 2017; Ruggeri et al. 2018; Gizelis and Benson 2019; Cil et al. 2020). These factors, while significant, only partially explain where peacekeepers go. As Sebastián and Gorur (2018) and Gregory and Sharland (2023) show, host-governments can use a range of mechanisms to influence UN peacekeeping missions sub-nationally, which may ultimately shape the local geography of peacekeeping operations. Peacekeepers, while in principle impartial, must operate with the consent of host-governments, who, in turn, can exercise considerable influence over where access is granted or denied.

Chapter 2 developed the theoretical framework of The Power of Access, distinguishing between national-level consent and sub-national operational access. The core argument is that host-governments can use access as a strategic instrument to selectively grant or restrict peacekeeper access to advance their own political interests.

This chapter empirically investigates that claim, systematically analysing the determinants of local UN peacekeeping deployment, with particular emphasis on one host-government preference: ethnic-political alignments with either rebel groups or the host-government. While many strategic interests are likely to shape peacekeeping deployments, this chapter contributes to the literature by highlighting the centrality of political-ethnic relationships, arguing that impartiality – the equal treatment of all conflict parties – requires peacekeeping presence across rival areas to effectively monitor, report, and intervene impartially. In conflicts marked by ethnic divides, host-governments may strategically influence peacekeeping access to maximise oversight of rebel-supportive ethnic groups while minimising exposure in government-represented ethnic areas, leveraging ethnic geographies to solidify power and limit international oversight (Denny and Walter 2014; de Waal 2015; Piccolino and Karlsrud 2011).

In turn, I test two hypotheses regarding the access of peacekeeping troops with respect to politically relevant ethnic settlement patterns. First, whether UN peacekeeping troops are more likely to deploy in areas associated with rebel-supportive ethnic groups than in areas associated with government-represented ethnic groups. Second, recognising the complexity of peacekeeping deployments, I also consider the alternative hypothesis that host-governments may leverage peacekeeping presence within their own areas to reinforce local authority while limiting external scrutiny (Piccolino and Karlsrud 2011; Howard 2019; Sebastián and Gorur 2018). This posits that, under specific conditions, UN peacekeepers may indeed be deployed in government-represented ethnic areas.

To test the hypotheses, the analysis draws on a geo-referenced, sub-national dataset spanning twelve missions across nine African countries from 2000 to 2011. Because a core component of this chapter focuses on violence on civilians, it includes missions with an explicit mandate to protect civilians. The unit of analysis is monthly PRIO grids. It examines the spatial distribution of peacekeepers in relation to politically relevant ethnic settlement patterns, finding that peacekeepers are consistently more present in rebel-supportive ethnic areas, irrespective of previous one-sided-violence, while their presence is limited in government-represented territories. While this chapter does not claim causality, I argue that this asymmetry is likely not incidental; it may reflect a pattern of alignment with host-government preferences, shaping

deployment in ways that consolidate state power yet prevent international oversight of the host-government's actions in its territories. By mapping the spatial and temporal patterns of UN deployment in relation to a strategic interest, the analysis indicates how host-government preferences may influence peacekeeping presence.

These hypotheses are further empirically tested with data that control for one-sided-violence against civilians, battle deaths, population density, and logistical feasibility. The findings add to previous research which have found that peacekeeping deployment is predominantly driven by conflict dynamics and logistical capacity. Rather, it also underscores the strategic interests of host-governments in shaping where peacekeepers are permitted to operate. This aligns with the arguments put forth by de Waal (2015) and Piccolino and Karlsrud (2011), who identify the host-government as a strategic actor with interests in international interventions. It further supports findings by Yuen (2019) regarding host-government pre-deployment negotiations over peacekeeper presence in rebel-supportive areas. As such, this chapter raises questions about the impartiality and effectiveness of UN peacekeeping, highlighting how alignment with host-government preferences may inadvertently undermine the capacity of peacekeepers to monitor and address state-led human rights abuses or breaches of agreements such as ceasefires.

In turn, this chapter advances the literature by firstly adding a relational dimension to the determinants of UN peacekeeping deployments, and second by offering an alternative explanation for why UN peacekeepers are often perceived as more effective against rebel violence than government violence. Fjelde et al. (2019) find that peacekeeping presence enhances protection against rebel violence but struggles to address violence perpetrated by state actors. This chapter shows that this is not only a function of peacekeeping capacity, resources, or mandate but may be linked to strategic deployment preferences of host-governments. By permitting access in rebel-supportive areas, host-governments can, to some extent, influence the effectiveness of peacekeepers on rebel groups through exposing them to external monitoring, while Chapters 3 and 4 will illustrate how the host-government in turn can shield itself from international oversight.

As a contextual example, I illustrate two spatial examples of UN peacekeeping deployment, alongside instances of one-sided-violence and the settlement patterns of politically relevant ethnic groups in Ivory Coast for 2010–2011 and South Sudan for 2014. These maps show where UN peacekeepers (marked as crosses) were stationed in relation to government-represented ethnic groups (blue), rebel-supportive ethnic groups (red), and

politically irrelevant ethnic groups (grey), alongside instances of one-sided-violence marked by triangles with at least five civilian deaths (UCDP data)

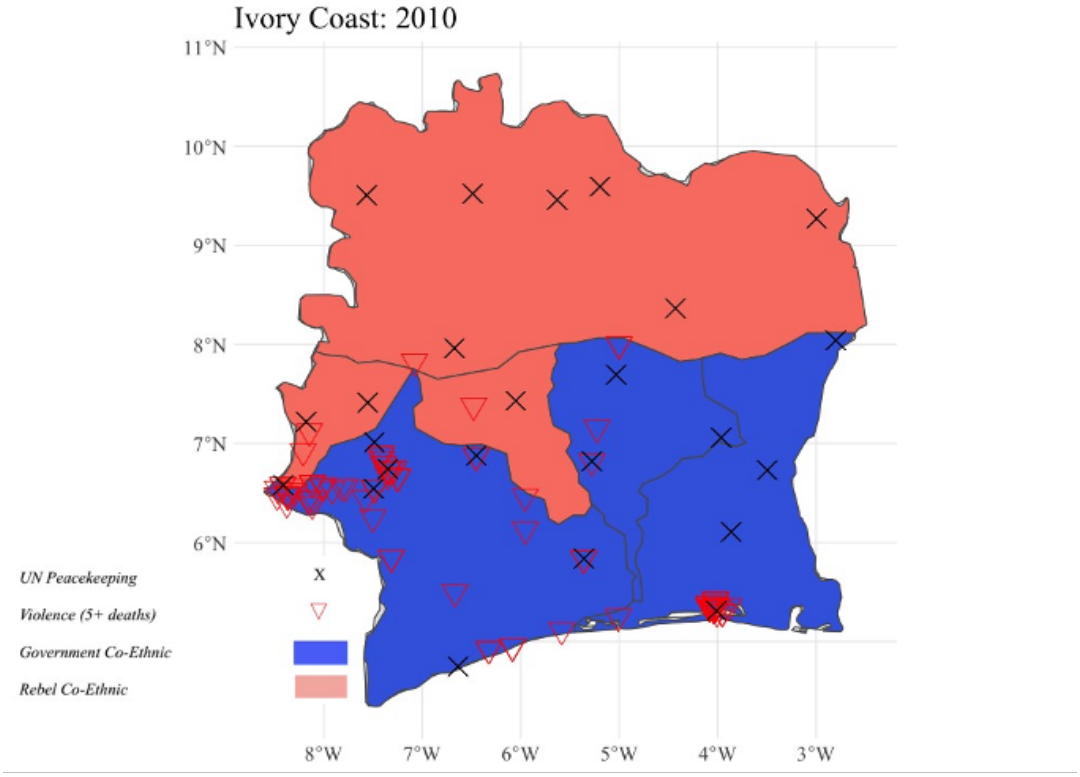


Figure 3.1: UN peacekeeping deployment and violence in Ivory Coast from December 2010 to May 2011 along ethnic settlement patterns of rebel-supportive and government-represented ethnic groups after the December 2010 Election.

In Ivory Coast (Figure 3.1), the map depicts the post-election crisis following the contested 2010 presidential elections, in which Laurent Gbagbo's forces (government-represented ethnic groups) and Alassane Ouattara's supporters (rebel-supportive ethnic groups) engaged in widespread violence. Notably, the UN was repeatedly denied access to certain regions, particularly those controlled by the Gbagbo government. This raises the question: to what extent did host-government restrictions shape UN deployment, rather than logistical or operational constraints? The figure suggests that peacekeepers were more present in Ouattara-aligned areas, where they may have faced fewer access constraints, while some government-represented areas with documented violence saw little to no UN presence.

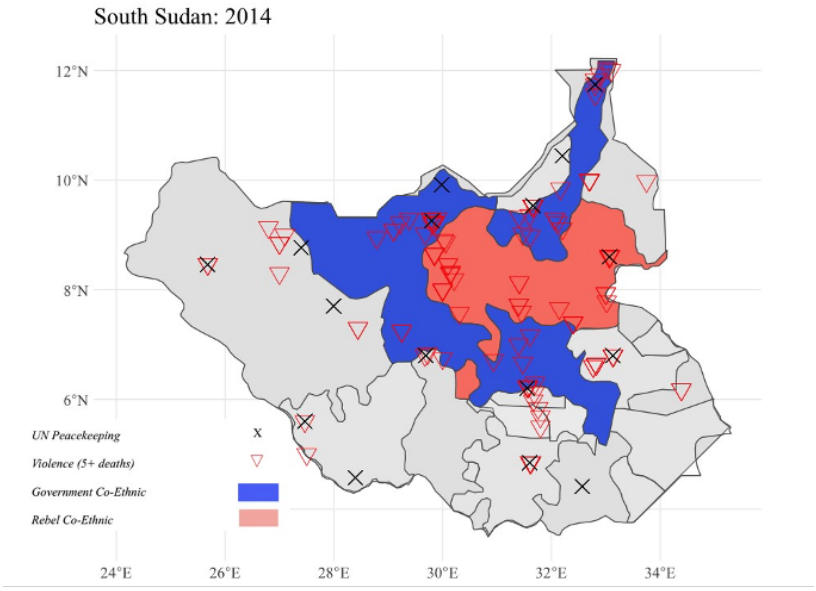


Figure 3.2: UN peacekeeping deployment and violence in South Sudan in 2014 across government-represented and rebel-supportive ethnic areas. The map illustrates how the UN was not deployed at several locations with one-sided-violence. Grey areas are settled by politically irrelevant ethnic groups.

In South Sudan (Figure 3.2), the map presents peacekeeping deployment patterns in 2014 during the civil war between President Salva Kiir's government forces (Dinka—government-represented ethnic group) and Riek Machar's rebels (Nuer—rebel-supportive ethnic group). The map shows that UN peacekeepers were present in some violent areas but absent in others, despite ongoing civilian targeting. Given that UNMISS had a strong protection-of-civilians mandate, this raises critical questions about the constraints that shaped deployment. Was the UN's absence in certain high-violence locations a result of logistical challenges, host-government restrictions, or strategic decision-making?

While this research does not expect the UN to respond to every instance of violence given both logistical and resource constraints, understanding the factors that may impact UN peacekeeping deployment away from its ideal locations is crucial. These figures contextualise the broader quantitative findings, reinforcing the need to assess whether UN troop stationing is primarily driven by operational constraints, host-government influence, or strategic interests. This has direct implications for understanding peacekeeping impartiality, effectiveness, and the broader political economy of intervention.

This chapter outlines the theoretical framework and hypotheses, details the research design, presents the results, and concludes with a discussion and summary of findings.

3.1 Theoretical Arguments and Empirical Hypotheses

Understanding the factors that influence the geographical deployment of UN peacekeepers is crucial to assessing their effectiveness in the field. UN peacekeeping operations operate under diverse mandates and must navigate both geographic and political constraints in high-risk conflict environments. Both the UN and the host-government are strategic actors. As such, their decisions are shaped by backward induction, anticipating how their actions will influence outcomes in an interactive conflict setting (Bas et al. 2007). UN peacekeepers aim to deploy where they can maximise impact while minimising operational costs, while host-governments balance the need for civilian protection against the risks of international scrutiny and the reinforcement of adversarial forces, to maximise their benefits while limiting their costs (Piccolino and Karlsrud 2011; de Waal 2015). In Chapter 2, I outlined where the host-government may have incentives to support local UN peacekeeping deployment in relation to the settlement patterns of rebel-supportive and government-represented ethnic groups. Here, I extend that logic into testable hypotheses, before the research design and empirical tests.

Grounded in Chapter 2, one strategic interest of the host-government may be to ensure international monitoring over rebel groups while limiting oversight of its own actions. To do so, the host-government can grant and assist peacekeepers' access in areas populated by rebel-supportive ethnic groups. A plausible expectation is thus that UN peacekeeping forces will concentrate in rebel-supportive areas rather than government-represented ones, aligning with the strategic preferences of the host-government. Several mechanisms support this hypothesis.

First, host-governments may prioritise the presence of peacekeepers in rebel-supportive territories to serve as monitors, deter renewed fighting, and stabilise contested regions. Given that peacekeeping missions often operate in fragile states with weak institutional capacity (Gilligan and Stedman 2003), governments may have an interest in delegating the provision of security and public goods to the UN in areas they struggle to control. Local UN peacekeeping deployment can assist the host-government in mitigating grievances, preventing insurgent recruitment, and signalling commitment to peace processes (Ruggeri et al. 2017), while avoiding direct responsibility for resource-intensive governance in unstable regions.

Second, stationing peacekeepers in rebel-supportive areas provides the host-government with strategic advantages in conflict monitoring. UN peacekeepers serve as neutral observers, documenting ceasefire violations and troop movements, which can be leveraged by the government to assess the strength and positioning of its adversaries (Hultman et al. 2013).

This information asymmetry benefits the government, particularly in cases where external intervention alters the balance of power in ongoing conflicts.

Third, peacekeeping forces are often positioned in contested peripheries or border regions, where sovereignty is most fragile and territorial control is in flux (Ruggeri et al. 2017). The presence of international forces in these areas helps governments consolidate claims over disputed territories, reinforce borders, and prevent spillover conflicts. Additionally, governments may welcome peacekeepers in rebel-supportive zones to reduce external pressure for military offensives while signalling commitment to peace agreements (Villa 2021).

From the UN's perspective, deployment in rebel-supportive territories may be operationally advantageous. Rebel-controlled regions, particularly those where humanitarian needs are high, may be prioritised due to the UN's mandate to protect civilians, monitor, and assist in the delivery of aid in conflict-affected zones (Hultman et al. 2013). In addition to aligning with the interests of the host-government, peacekeepers may face guided access, improving their capacity to document human rights abuses and deliver on their mandate while maintaining cooperation with the host-government.

The strategic logic behind host-government preferences for peacekeeping deployment can be further understood through the lens of ethnic-political alignments. While this thesis does not aim to address the vast ethnic conflict literature (see Tang 2017), it builds on the assumption that conflicts and wars often occur along ethnic lines (Fearon 2006; Sambanis 2001). Drawing from Denny and Walter's (2014) framework, three primary mechanisms explain why host-governments may seek to concentrate peacekeepers in rebel-supportive ethnic areas while limiting their presence in government-represented ethnic areas.

First, when political power is divided along ethnic lines, ruling elites often favour their own ethnic group while marginalising others (Ibid). This serves to consolidate political power and suppress potential rivals (Cederman Wimmer and Min 2010).

Second, ethnic groups tend to live in geographically concentrated areas, sharing language, customs, and kinship ties that facilitate mobilisation and collective action (Denny and Walter 2014; Wimmer Cederman and Min 2009). This spatial pattern enables the host-government to delineate the zones of the 'opposition', making it easier to direct peacekeeping missions towards rebel-supportive ethnic areas while maintaining state dominance over government-represented ethnic areas. The host-government's strategic interest in directing peacekeepers to rebel-supportive areas, as opposed to government-represented ones, is further supported by Roessler's (2016) argument that African leaders often manipulate ethnic coalitions to manage risks of rebellion or coups. By inviting international peacekeepers into

rebel-supportive areas, host-governments effectively outsource monitoring and stabilisation to the UN while maintaining state resources and political control in government-represented ethnic areas.

Lastly, because ethnic identity is less elastic compared to other social identities, ethnic-based political allegiances are both persistent and predictable during conflicts (Denny and Walter 2014). This predictability incentivises host-governments to anticipate resistance and loyalty along ethnic lines, influencing their strategic decisions for peacekeeping access. This aligns with de Waal's (2015) analysis of political marketplace theory, where government actors balance violence and international legitimacy to maintain political power.

The host-government's incentive to influence peacekeeping deployments along politically relevant ethnic groups thus posits the following hypothesis. This is not to suggest that this is the only interest of the host-government, but it is one that warrants further analysis to understand its influence over where peacekeepers go and peacekeepers' ability to practice impartiality on the ground. As such, I hypothesise that:

H1: UN peacekeeping troops are more likely to deploy in areas associated with rebel-supportive ethnic groups than in areas associated with government-represented ethnic groups.

However, an alternative hypothesis posits that UN peacekeeping forces are more likely to be deployed in areas with government-represented ethnic groups. Similar to the mechanism in H1, host-governments often influence UN deployment within their sovereign territory (Beardsley and Gleditsch 2015). While peacekeeping missions are mandated to remain impartial, they frequently require host-government consent, leading to an inherent bias towards deployment in areas where the government perceives peacekeepers as least disruptive. Host-governments may prefer UN troops in their own territories, where they can reap the local benefits of UN peacekeeping forces while also monitoring, coordinating, and controlling interactions with international actors—minimising scrutiny over their military actions in rebel-supportive areas (Piccolino and Karlsrud 2011; Denny and Walter 2014). As peacekeeping missions can also shape the external affairs of the host-government (Caplan, Gledhill, and Meiske 2024), the host-government might seek to keep UN peacekeeping missions in government-represented areas where they can benefit from these engagements and assert influence over external relations.

Second, UN peacekeeping missions may face practical and political incentives to align their deployment with host-government priorities. Missions rely on logistical support, security

cooperation, and diplomatic engagement with host-government institutions. Deploying in government-represented ethnic areas facilitates coordination with national authorities, ensuring greater access and operational stability (Fortna 2008). Moreover, peacekeeping missions often reinforce state legitimacy, assisting in institution-building, security sector reform, and post-conflict reconstruction—objectives more readily achieved in areas under government control (Howard 2019).

Third, government-represented ethnic areas may experience greater deployment due to the peacekeepers' mandate to protect civilians. While rebel-supportive territories often face higher direct violence, host-governments may leverage peacekeeping missions to reinforce their authority in regions where they maintain ethnic political support. This is particularly relevant in ethnically polarised conflicts, where governments prioritise security provision for their constituencies while containing or isolating rebel strongholds (Hultman et al. 2013). Since the presence of peacekeepers in both government-represented and rebel-supportive areas alters the cost-benefit assessment of using either a violent or more cooperative approach to achieve political aims (Ruggeri, Gizelis, and Dorussen 2013), the host-government may have an incentive to use UN peacekeepers to protect its civilians from rebel group violence within its territories. This leads to the following hypothesis:

H2: UN peacekeeping troops are more likely to deploy in areas associated with government-represented ethnic groups than in areas associated with rebel-supportive ethnic groups.

Alternative Explanations

While this chapter only aims to test one strategic incentive of the host-government, there may be alternative explanations for the observed patterns of UN peacekeeping deployment along ethnic lines.

First, it is possible that the politically relevant ethnicities of belligerent parties have no effect on peacekeeping deployment. Instead, the local deployment of UN peacekeeping troops might be influenced by other factors previously identified in the literature or not accounted for in this analysis. In this scenario, I would expect to observe the null hypothesis for the two scenarios presented above: the concentration of peacekeeping forces does not significantly vary across areas populated by politically relevant ethnic groups.

In Chapter 2, I discussed the limitations of the theoretical framework, particularly concerning the host-government's influence over UN peacekeeping deployments. An

alternative explanation posits that external actors – both state and non-state – play a role in determining where UN peacekeepers are stationed, particularly in ways that may indirectly favour one ethnic group over another. UN peacekeeping troops may be positioned according to external diplomatic, military, or economic interests rather than local power dynamics.

Certain ethnic groups may be more likely to receive peacekeeping deployments not solely because of host-government influence, but due to the role of external state actors who hold strategic stakes in the conflict. Rising regional powers such as Saudi Arabia, the UAE, Turkey, or Russia provide military or financial assistance to governments and rebel factions, thereby shaping conflict dynamics and influencing UN operations (Duursma et al. 2024; Fawcett 2025). These external actors may exert pressure on the UN through the host-government to deploy peacekeepers in alignment with their political objectives rather than local conflict resolution needs, and this can occur along ethnic lines.

For example, in Sudan, Saudi and UAE interests have led to targeted security assistance to the Rapid Support Forces (RSF), reinforcing territorial control along ethnic and political lines (Duursma et al. 2024; Fawcett 2025). Similarly, in the Central African Republic (CAR) and Mali, the presence of the Russian Wagner Group has restricted UN access to specific ethnic areas, exacerbating pre-existing communal tensions and preventing UN investigations into civilian abuses (Duursma et al. 2024; Karlsrud 2023). If such external actors can shape peacekeeping deployments through diplomatic pressure or strategic veto power, peacekeepers may end up disproportionately stationed in ethnic areas favoured by these actors, rather than solely reflecting host-government preferences.

Yet, for this study, external actors' influence, like that of UN peacekeeping itself, must also navigate the interests of the host-government. Future research has an avenue for disentangling the extent to which external actors influence the location of UN peacekeeping deployments beyond the strategic interests of the host-government. While this chapter empirically analyses deployments from 2000 to 2011, future studies – particularly in light of the growing influence of external actors – can further unravel how these actors shape where UN peacekeepers go.

Beyond external states, UN bureaucratic dynamics can also influence deployment patterns in ways that systematically benefit certain ethnic areas over others. Deployments can follow institutional inertia, donor preferences, and feasibility constraints (Howard 2019). In conflicts where ethnic areas are aligned with politically powerful international actors, UN peacekeeping deployments may reflect where operations are easier to sustain logistically and politically, rather than where the host-government has a preference. This can result in

unintentional biases in deployment patterns, not driven by host-government consent but by peacekeeping feasibility.

Another alternative explanation suggests that UN deployments follow containment strategies rather than directly addressing conflict resolution. If peacekeeping forces are primarily deployed to prevent regional spillover or reduce external intervention costs (Beardsley and Gleditsch 2015), then the distribution of peacekeepers may align with ethnic group settlements that serve this strategic function. For example, UN peacekeeping troops may be stationed in areas where ethnic groups are perceived as key actors in preventing conflict diffusion across borders, rather than where the host-government has a vested interest. This means peacekeeping troops may cluster in areas where the presence of an ethnic group overlaps with international security concerns (e.g. border zones with refugee flows, areas hosting transnational militias), rather than responding directly to host-government incentives.

3.2 Research Design

I test my theory using a large, sub-national geo-references time-series dataset on local peacekeeping deployment and the settlement patterns of government-represented and rebel-supportive ethnic groups in nine African countries from 2000 to 2011. My level of analysis is monthly grid-cells. While I expect my theory of host-government influence on local peacekeeping to remain relevant in other countries experiencing UN peacekeeping deployments, I establish clear scope conditions. Specifically, I do not expect my hypotheses on peacekeeping deployment along politically relevant ethnic areas to be applicable outside multi-ethnic countries.

My models estimate the effect of ethnic areas associated with rebel-supportive and government-represented groups on local UN peacekeeping onset, presence, and the number of peacekeeping troops. I employ logistic and linear models to enable a fixed-effects strategy that controls for spatial and temporal differences. Since previous research has established a relationship between peacekeeping deployment and one-sided-violence (Hultman et al. 2013; Fjelde et al. 2019), I run models that control for prior violence by both rebel groups and the host-government.

3.2.1 Data

To analyse where peacekeepers are deployed, I conduct disaggregated statistical analysis at the sub-national level across nine African countries. Following Fjelde et al. (2019), I focus on contexts where the UN deployed robust peacekeeping missions with an explicit mandate to

protect civilians. This scope thus excludes missions focused solely on political mediation, observation, or electoral support, as these follow fundamentally different deployment logics. By restricting the sample to missions authorised under Chapter VII or with similarly strong mandates, the analysis holds constant the expectation that peacekeepers are deployed, at least in part, to deter violence and protect civilians. The selected countries — Burundi (ONUB), Central African Republic (MINURCAT), Chad (MINURCAT), Democratic Republic of Congo (MONUC, MONUSCO), Ivory Coast (UNOCI), Liberia (UNMIL), Sierra Leone (UNAMSIL), South Sudan (UNMISS), and Sudan (UNMIS, UNAMID, UNISFA) — reflect diverse conflict settings but share a common operational framework. This enables a systematic examination of subnational deployment patterns while ensuring comparability across cases.

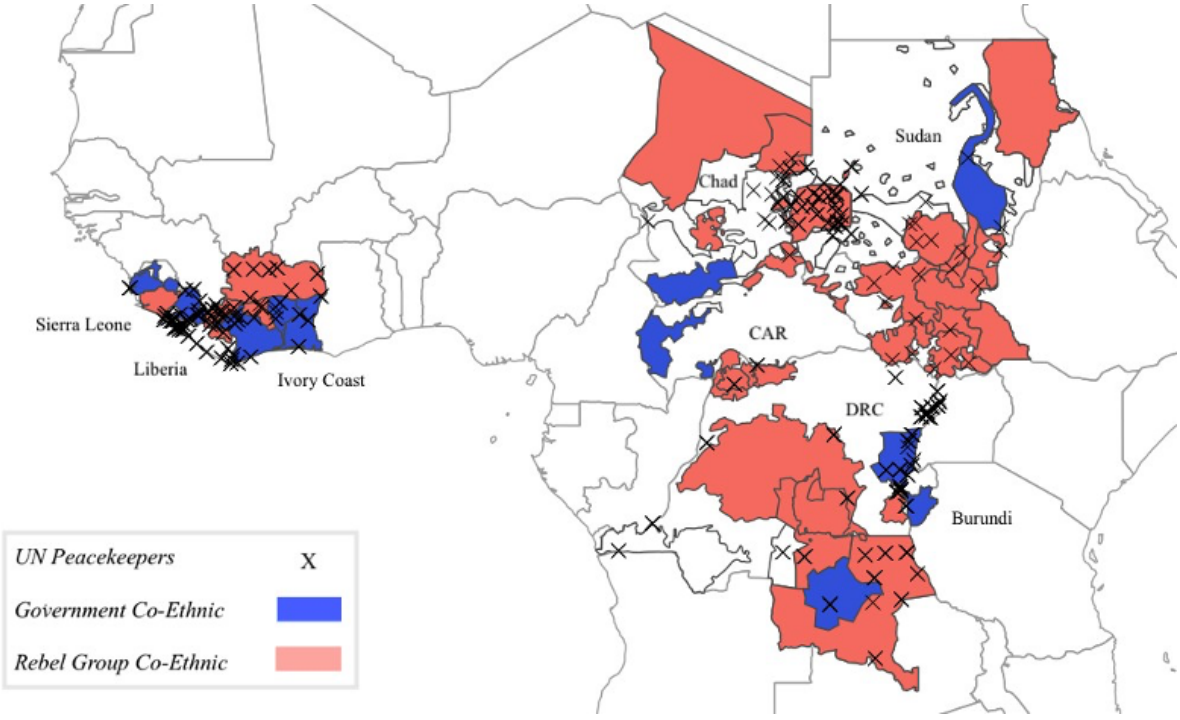


Figure 3.3: UN Peacekeeping deployment aggregated for 2008 across ethnic areas of government-represented and rebel-supportive groups. White areas indicate the absence of politically relevant ethnic groups.

The research is limited to the period starting in 2000 because, in 1999, the mandates for peacekeeping missions changed significantly. The UN Security Council passed Resolution 1265 (S/RES/1265, 1999), which, for the first time, mandated peacekeepers to take necessary action to protect civilians under imminent threat of physical violence. Since 2000, Lloyd (2021) finds that all missions in Africa have had robust mandates, distinctly impacting the outcomes of peacekeeping missions in contrast to earlier operations.

For my unit of analysis, I rely on the spatial PRIO-grid structure, which divides countries into cells that are 0.5 × 0.5 degrees in latitude/longitude, corresponding to

approximately 55 × 55 km at the equator (Tollefsen 2012). This spatial unit allows for sub-national analysis of UN peacekeeping deployment in government-represented and rebel-supportive territories. Unlike units such as ethnic settlement polygons or administrative divisions, the grid structure provides a unit that is not endogenous to the settlement itself. Furthermore, the grid structure allows for standardised conversion of data with different units of analysis, enhancing reliability and replicability across studies.

One limitation of using the grid structure is that it may capture several distinct settlement patterns within one cell, which can be geographically separated by natural dividers such as rivers and mountains. Additionally, it does not capture fine-grained spatial variation, such as ethnic power relations across neighbourhoods or villages. Nevertheless, this unit allows me to capture broader trends in peacekeeping deployment and prevents overestimating local effects.

To account for the temporal dynamics of peacekeeping deployment, I use monthly observations at the grid-cell level as my unit of analysis. I include all grid cells in a country that saw a UN mission and observe all locations with government-represented and rebel-supportive ethnic groups with the potential for peacekeeping deployment. Countries are included from the month the mission was established until its end. As a result, the dataset comprises a total of 217,823 observations across 2,387 grid cells in the nine countries.

3.2.2. Dependent Variable

To operationalise access of peacekeeping missions, the dependent variable is UN Peacekeeping Troop deployment for a given cell for a given month. The data on UN peacekeeping troop deployments are from the Geocoded Peacekeeping Operations (Geo-PKO) Dataset 2.1 (Cil et al. 2020). The data is based on UN deployment maps of peacekeeping missions and contains information about the location, type, and number of deployments. I operationalise peacekeeping deployment in three ways for robustness: peacekeeping onset, peacekeeping presence, and number of peacekeeping troops.

For peacekeeping onset, from 2000 to 2011, my data records a total of 291 unique peacekeeping deployments to locations that had not seen peacekeeping troops the previous month. For peacekeeping presence, my data contains 10,407 cells with peacekeeping presence over time. This is laid out in Table 3.1. In contrast to onset, peacekeeping presence accounts for the duration peacekeeping troops are present in a location. I also account for the sum variable for the number of peacekeeping troops in a cell, measured in hundreds. The median troop deployment is 150 troops, while the largest deployment is 5,500 troops. While

deployment is the key interest of this study, previous research has found that the number of peacekeepers also impacts successful mandate implementation (Carnegie and Mikulaschek 2020).

	mean	sd	min	max	obs>0	N
Dependent Variables						
Peacekeeping Onset	0.0013	0.0365	0	1	291	217823
Peacekeeping Presence	0.0478	0.2132	0	1	10407	217823
# of Peacekeepers $_{in100}$	0.2492	1.8289	0	55	10407	217823
Independent Variables						
Status						217823
Government Ethnic Group					36080	(16.5%)
Rebel Ethnic Group					118651	(54.5%)
Irrelevant Ethnic Group					63092	(29.0%)
Population $_{log}$	10.3075	1.3586	4.744	14.52	217823	217823
Mountainous Terrain	0.0858	0.1956	0.00	1.00	74579	217823
Travel Time to City $_{log}$	6.1229	0.6199	4.075	8.665	217823	217823

Table 3.1: Summary statistics of variables, 2000-2011

3.2.3 Independent Variable

To statistically analyse the association of rebel-supportive ethnic groups and government-represented ethnic groups on peacekeeping deployment, I rely on the settlement patterns of politically relevant ethnic groups from the Ethnic Power Relations Core dataset (EPR) (Vogt et al. 2015). I code whether an ethnic group with a specific settlement pattern sees representation in government, supports a rebel group, or is politically irrelevant.

To be associated with the host-government, I determine whether the ethnic group is represented in the current government. The EPR dataset maps all politically relevant ethnic groups across time and codes the degree to which a group's representatives held executive-level state power - from total control of the government to political discrimination within a cell. I define an ethnic group as being represented in the host-government if the group is coded as holding monopoly, being dominant, or seeing senior power or junior power in the government. Across the nine countries, it should be noted that none sees an ethnic group occupying a monopoly on state power. Further, only two countries observe a group becoming dominant: the Shaygiyya in Sudan until 2006 and the Mende in Sierra Leone from 2003 to 2006. Instead, all of the countries see senior or junior power-sharing systems in the government, with changes

in status over time dependent on elections or events. Of the 217,823 monthly grids, 36,080 see government-represented ethnic groups.

To determine if an ethnic group is associated with a rebel group, I draw on the ACD2EPR datasets (Wucherpfennig 2012). The dataset links ethnic groups from the EPR dataset directly to UCDP conflict actors. Inspecting the data, some measures of rebel group affiliation to the ethnic group are more loosely defined. I hence apply a strict definition of an ethnic group's rebel association: whether more than 50% of an ethnic group supports a rebel group. Across the nine countries, out of 217,823 monthly grids, 118,651 sees ethnic groups supporting a rebel group.

To map the location of the ethnic settlement patterns for government-represented ethnic groups and rebel-supportive ethnic groups, I use the geo-referenced ethnic settlement data from the GeoEPR Dataset. The dataset provides multi-polygons for the EPR dataset, which allows me to map the settlement patterns onto the grid cells (Wucherpfennig et al. 2011).

Ethnic groups overlapping in settlement patterns represent a challenge when I operationalise rebel and government areas with the GeoEPR dataset on the grid-level. Several ethnic groups overlap in geographical settlement patterns. Moreover, the grid cell of 50 x 50 km can capture several groups in a cell. A total of 45,914 cells sees both rebel-supportive ethnic groups and government-represented ethnic groups. Following my theorising, however - that a host-government changes incentives for peacekeeping deployment depending on the presence of a rebel group - I code all cells seeing both government and rebel groups as rebel-supportive ethnic group locations. In Appendix 3, I run robustness checks on my results by coding the mixed cells as government cells. The results remain negative for peacekeeping onset, presence, and size of troops in government-represented ethnic group locations.

There are cases where an ethnic group is represented in the government and is associated with a rebel group, which also requires consideration. I code cases which see an ethnic group associated with both the government and a rebel group as ethnic areas of the rebel-supportive ethnic group. For example, in Ivory Coast, the rebel-held north during the first and second civil wars is associated with the Kru ethnicity. At the same time, the Kru were represented as a junior partner and then senior partner in the government from 2000 to 2011. In South Sudan, the Nuer ethnicity is associated with both a rebel group and the government as junior partners. In cases where an ethnic group is co-ethnic of a rebel group and represented in government as a junior partner during the same year, I code it as rebel-supportive. I make this decision because the EPR dataset codes a group's access to power from the 1st of January and thus does not capture loss or gains of power in government during the year.

Further, it is well known that the representation of the Kru and Nuer in government is fundamental to the violent conflicts in Ivory Coast and South Sudan. These groups represent a conflict of interests within the government and are not assumed to have the same influence as other actors in the government. Thus, ethnic groups in this category are categorised as rebel-supportive ethnic groups.

Lastly, I create a category called 'irrelevant' if the group is neither represented in government nor supports a rebel group. This allows me to distinguish the effects of government-represented ethnic groups and rebel-supportive ethnic groups on peacekeeping presence. The irrelevant groups account for 63,092 observations across space and time. In my models, rebel-supportive ethnic groups are the comparison group and thus the intercept. As such, all effects are analysed as a significant change in comparison to rebel-supportive ethnic groups.

3.2.4. Control Variables

I control for potentially confounding variables. Both geographical peacekeeping deployment and geographical ethnic settlement patterns along political lines may be influenced by population density, terrain type, and accessibility. To account for these dynamics, I include several control variables at the cell level: the log of population, mean mountainous terrain, and the log of the cell's travel time to a city. The data on population is sourced from the Gridded Population of the World v4 by SEDAC, the data on mountainous terrain is obtained from UNDP's Mountains of the World by UNEP-WCMC, and the data on travel time to the nearest city is taken from PRIO-grid 2.0.

Extensive research has demonstrated a strong relationship between local UN peacekeeping deployment and violence. Thus, in the second half of the empirical analysis, I control for one-sided-violence (OSV) by rebel groups or the host-government using the UCDP Geo-referenced Event Data v.21.1. The dataset indicates which actor committed the one-sided-violence. While death does not capture all the violence civilians experience during conflict (such as injuries, assaults, robbery, or disappearances), it reflects significant levels of violence in society. I further conduct robustness tests on battle deaths in Appendix 3.

While my controls align with the quantitative literature on UN peacekeeping deployment, I acknowledge that this study is not causally identified. Rather, it provides strong associations grounded in theorisation and controls for confounders where data availability permits.

There are several major confounding variables that I am unable to account for due to the lack of monthly, sub-national data. One such confounding variable is mass migration during conflict. Unfortunately, there is still no sub-national, monthly data on forced displacements. It can be assumed that the UN is more likely to deploy to newly established refugee camps and locations with at-risk populations. Internally displaced people also change the settlement patterns of politically relevant ethnic groups. This limitation is significant.

Another important factor is the time-variant and space-variant changes in support for rebel groups, which may change during the conflict. Further, an ethnic group being represented in the government does not account for its approval across time, space, and intersectionalities. Shifts in political support can affect both the percentage of ethnic group support and levels of violence, which in turn may influence the deployment of peacekeeping troops.

A further limitation is the lack of local, time-series data on the presence of external actors in the field. At the time of writing, sufficient data on the locations of actors such as the Wagner Group or support from actors like the UAE is unavailable. I am also unable to control the presence of other armed forces, such as those from the African Union, France, or other military interventions. This remains a notable limitation in the analysis.

Nevertheless, I argue that this research brings attention to an under-researched factor associated with UN peacekeeping access, which, in turn, can enhance our understanding of the efficacy of UN peacekeeping troops in the field.

3.3 Results: Determinants of Peacekeeping Deployment

To analyse whether the settlement pattern of politically relevant ethnic groups is associated with local peacekeeping deployment, I run statistical regressions on peacekeeping presence across nine African countries from 2000 to 2011. This analysis focuses on three operationalisations of peacekeeping deployment: 1) peacekeeping onset (whether peacekeepers were newly deployed), 2) peacekeeping presence (whether peacekeepers were stationed in a given grid cell), and 3) the troop size of the mission. To assess the determinants of peacekeeping deployment, I examine whether a given grid cell is associated with government-represented ethnic groups, rebel-supportive ethnic groups, or politically irrelevant ethnic groups.

Before presenting the statistical models, it is useful to first examine general patterns in the distribution of peacekeepers. While all grid cells in the dataset are settled by ethnic groups, 10,407 grid cells experienced peacekeeping deployment, with 291 recorded onsets of new

deployments. As shown in Table 3.2, 57 of the peacekeeping onsets occurred in government-represented ethnic group areas, 173 in rebel-supportive ethnic group areas, and 61 in politically irrelevant areas. This indicates that areas with rebel-supportive ethnic groups saw nearly three times the number of peacekeeping onsets compared to areas with government-represented ethnic groups. However, despite a greater number of onsets in rebel-supportive areas, government-represented ethnic group areas hosted, on average, larger troop deployments per grid cell.

	Obs	PK Troops Onset	PK Troops Presence	PK Troops Median	PK Troops Mean
Government	36080	57	1909	300	680
Rebel Group	118651	173	6582	150	444
Irrelevant Group	63092	61	1916	450	629

Table 3.2: Peacekeeping Troop Deployment across areas associated with politically relevant ethnic groups

The variation in troop size further underscores this pattern. On average, government-represented ethnic group areas hosted 680 peacekeeping troops per deployed grid cell (median: 300), whereas rebel-supportive ethnic group areas had a lower mean of 444 troops per grid (median: 150). This suggests that while peacekeeping onsets are more frequent in rebel-supported areas, deployments in government-represented areas tend to be larger and more concentrated. Interestingly, politically irrelevant areas also received substantial peacekeeping presence, with a median of 450 troops per grid.

These patterns align with previous research indicating that peacekeeping missions often reinforce existing state structures rather than fully engaging in neutral intervention (Beardsley and Gleditsch 2015; Fortna 2008). UN peacekeepers may be more heavily deployed in government-represented ethnic group areas for logistical hubs and security (Karlsrud 2019), while more instances of peacekeepers in rebel-supportive ethnic group areas reflect efforts to reinforce sovereignty and territorial control (Nomikos and Villa 2022). Yet, empirical studies suggest that larger peacekeeping forces are more effective at deterring violence (Fjelde et al.

2019), while simultaneously finding that UN peacekeeping troops have limited effect on curbing host-government violence against civilians.

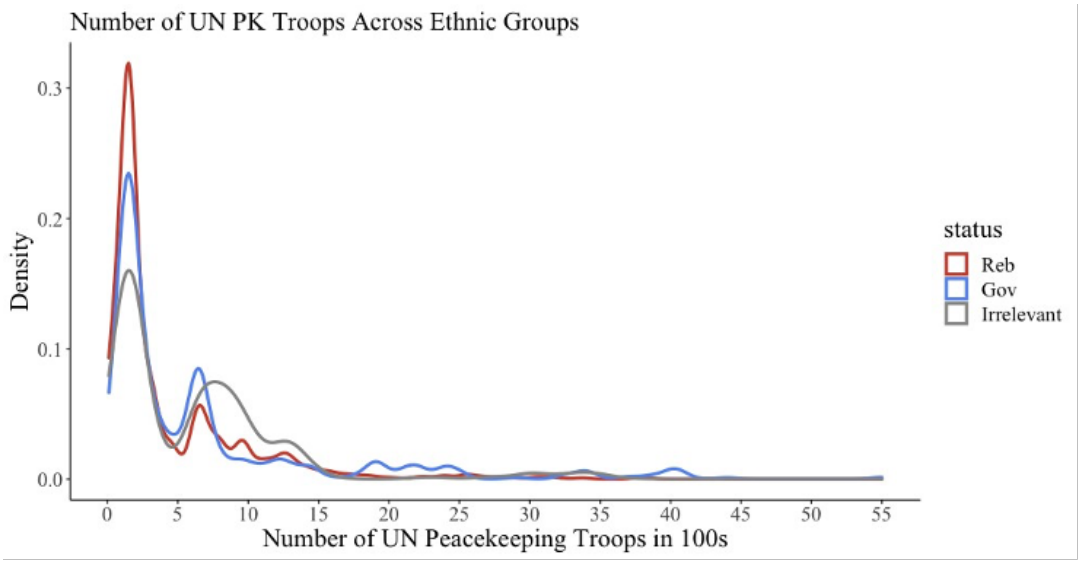


Figure 3.4: Number of Peacekeeping Troops in 100s distributed across areas associated with politically relevant ethnic groups.

Figure 3.4 further illustrates these trends. The distribution of troop sizes shows that most deployments cluster around 150 troops, a typical size for patrolling new areas. However, larger deployments – ranging from 2,000 to 4,000 troops – are more frequently concentrated in government-represented ethnic group areas than in rebel-supportive ethnic group territories. This suggests a pattern where peacekeepers are widely dispersed in rebel-supported areas but heavily concentrated where government-represented ethnic groups reside. To determine whether these observed patterns hold more broadly across cases and are not driven by confounding factors, I turn to the statistical analysis in the next section.

Regression Analysis

To systematically examine the local deployment patterns of UN peacekeeping troops, I estimate logistic regression models for peacekeeping onsets and peacekeeping presence, as well as a linear regression model for the log-transformed size of deployed peacekeeping troops. The key independent variable is the political ethnic status of the grid cell, categorised into government-represented, rebel-supportive, and politically irrelevant ethnic groups. Rebel-supportive ethnic groups serve as the reference category, allowing for direct comparison with government-represented and politically irrelevant areas. I also control for population density,

terrain ruggedness, and accessibility, as these factors may influence both peacekeeping deployment and ethnic settlement patterns.

The results in Table 3.3 indicate a systematic pattern in peacekeeping deployment. In Model 1, which estimates the likelihood of peacekeeping onset using a binary logistic regression, the coefficient for government-represented ethnic areas is -0.317 and statistically significant at the 95 percent level. Similarly, politically irrelevant ethnic areas show a negative coefficient of -0.359, also statistically significant. These coefficients indicate that peacekeeping onsets are significantly less likely to occur in government-represented ethnic areas and politically irrelevant ethnic areas than in rebel-supportive ethnic group territories. Translating these results into absolute terms, government-represented ethnic group areas are 42.0 percentage points less likely to experience a peacekeeping onset than rebel-supportive ethnic group areas. This suggests that UN peacekeepers are disproportionately deployed to rebel-supportive ethnic group areas, where conflict intensity and the need for ceasefire monitoring are likely to be higher.

In Model 2, which estimates peacekeeping presence over time, the results reinforce this pattern. The coefficients for government-represented ethnic areas (-0.673, $p < 0.01$) and politically irrelevant ethnic areas (-0.723, $p < 0.01$) indicate a continued negative relationship with peacekeeping presence, suggesting that peacekeeping missions remain stationed for longer periods in rebel-supportive ethnic group areas compared to government-represented or politically irrelevant areas. In absolute terms, government-represented ethnic group areas are 29.0 percentage points less likely to maintain peacekeeping presence than rebel-supportive ethnic group areas. These findings align with previous research suggesting that peacekeepers are more likely to be stationed in rebel-supportive ethnic group areas to enforce ceasefires, prevent insurgent mobilisation, and monitor violence rather than serve as an instrument of host-government control (Hultman et al. 2013; Fortna 2008).

	Dependent variable:		
	PK Onset	PK Presence	Number of PK_{log+1}
	logistic	*logistic*	*normal*
	(1)	(2)	(3)
Government Co-ethnic	−0.317**	−0.673***	−0.032***
	(0.160)	(0.030)	(0.003)
Irrelevant Co-ethnic	−0.359**	−0.723***	−0.041***
	(0.150)	(0.028)	(0.003)
$Population_{log}$	0.257***	0.547***	0.041***
	(0.060)	(0.012)	(0.001)
Mountainous Terrain	0.892***	0.620***	0.126***
	(0.228)	(0.044)	(0.006)
Travel Time to $City_{log}$	−1.375***	−1.571***	−0.152***
	(0.130)	(0.025)	(0.002)
Constant	−1.364	0.328	0.630***
	(1.243)	(0.234)	(0.022)
Observations	217,823	217,823	217,823
Akaike Inf. Crit.	4,119.085	66,694.030	328,704.500
Note:			*p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01

Table 3.3: Determinants of Peacekeeping Deployment, 2000-2011 without fixed effects, *Generalized Linear Regression Results*

Turning to the size of peacekeeping deployments, Model 3 estimates the number of peacekeeping troops using a linear regression model with a log-transformed dependent variable. The results indicate that government-represented ethnic group areas receive 44.4% fewer peacekeeping troops than rebel-supportive ethnic group areas, while politically irrelevant areas see a similar reduction. The preliminary statistical analysis demonstrates that across all operationalisations – onset, presence, and troop size – UN peacekeeping troops are consistently more likely to deploy in grid cells associated with rebel-supportive ethnic groups than in grid cells associated with government-represented ethnic groups.

These findings appear to diverge from the descriptive statistics, where the mean and median troop sizes suggest that government-represented ethnic group areas host more peacekeepers per deployment. This discrepancy is explained by selection bias and the difference between absolute distribution and conditional effects. The regression models correct for this bias, finding that, on average, government-represented ethnic group areas

systematically receive fewer peacekeepers per grid cell than rebel-supportive ethnic group areas when controlling for confounding factors. Furthermore, since the log-transformation reduces the effect of extreme values, it prevents large but rare deployments in government-represented ethnic group areas from skewing the statistical findings.

The control variables remain highly significant across all models, reinforcing established findings in the peacekeeping literature. Population density is positively associated with peacekeeping onset, presence, and troop size, suggesting that peacekeepers prioritise densely populated areas where civilian protection needs are highest. Mountainous terrain has a strong positive effect, consistent with the idea that difficult-to-access regions often serve as rebel strongholds or contested spaces. Travel time to the nearest city is negatively correlated with peacekeeping presence, confirming that remote areas with limited accessibility are less likely to host peacekeeping deployments.

I run diagnostic tests to further test the robustness of these relationships. In Appendix Chapter 3, I conduct a series of diagnostic tests to confirm that the logistic regression assumptions hold. I verify the linearity assumption using scatter plots between continuous predictors and the logit transformation of the dependent variables. I also check for outliers and influential data points using Cook's distance and standardised residual analysis, which indicate that no extreme values significantly alter the model's results. Lastly, I test for multicollinearity, measuring the variance inflation factor (VIF) for each predictor. All variables exhibit VIF values well below the conservative threshold, confirming that collinearity is not a concern.

To strengthen these findings, the next section includes robustness tests, incorporating fixed-effects models to control for country-level differences, interaction effects to assess whether peacekeeping responses vary based on conflict intensity, and alternative operationalisations of political alignment to test the consistency of results. These steps are intended to provide a more comprehensive and reliable analysis of UN peacekeeping deployment patterns.

3.4 Robustness Checks

It is crucial for robustness to understand if these relationships hold consistently across countries or are driven by specific cases. Table 3.4 displays how politically relevant ethnic groups are distributed across the monthly grid cells of each country. Notably, Burundi does not observe variation in its 352 cells. My unit of analysis – the grid cells of 55x55 km – does not capture the variation in settlement patterns between Hutus and Tutsis.

	Year of PKO Missions	Irrelevant	Rebel	Government
Burundi	2004-2007	0	352	0
CAR	2007-2011	5167	258	2857
Chad	2007-2011	4003	10004	2024
Ivory Coast	2004-2011	1555	6696	2258
DRC	2000-2011	26157	68211	14741
Liberia	2003-2011	1079	1100	1521
Sierra Leone	2000-2006	219	1314	657
South Sudan	2011	540	300	390
Sudan	2005-2011	24372	30416	11632

Table 3.4: Politically Relevant Ethnic Groups Distributed Across Countries

Given my operationalisation of rebel-supportive ethnic groups, this results in Burundi being coded entirely as a rebel-held territory, despite clear variations in control at a more localised level. Since Burundi's peacekeeping mission was relatively short-lived and my 55x55 km grid structure does not capture finer spatial patterns, Burundi is excluded from the following robustness tests to prevent misleading statistical relationships

Further, it is crucial to also test for year fixed effects as the status of groups can change over time, for example, before or after an election or in the aftermath of a major event. Across all eight countries, there are groups that gain or lose access to the government, which can influence the locations of local peacekeeping deployments. In the DRC, four ethnic groups gained government status from 2004 to 2006. However, in 2007, these four groups lost government status and became powerless. In Sudan, the Dinka group gained government power from 2006 to 2010, while in Chad, the Toubous in the North became powerless from 2007 onwards. I therefore include fixed effects for year and country, and run the models without Burundi for peacekeeping onset, peacekeeping presence, and the number of peacekeeping troops. In the following models, standard errors are clustered at the grid level.

	Peacekeeping Onset:		
	(1) Logit	(2) Logit	(3) Logit
Variables			
(Intercept)	-0.9178		
	(1.736)		
Government Co-ethnic	-0.2878	-0.2436	-0.5067***
	(0.1851)	(0.1812)	(0.1656)
Irrelevant Co-ethnic	-0.3277*	-0.3071*	-0.4441**
	(0.1741)	(0.1722)	(0.1782)
Population_{log}	0.2234***	0.1898**	0.2769***
	(0.0855)	(0.0866)	(0.0849)
Mountainous Terrain	0.7157***	0.6852**	1.675***
	(0.2628)	(0.2667)	(0.2853)
Travel Time to City $_{log}$	-1.389***	-1.410***	-1.016***
	(0.1629)	(0.1649)	(0.1670)
Fixed-effects			
Year		Yes	Yes
Country			Yes
Fit statistics			
Observations	217,471	217,471	217,471
Squared Correlation	0.00124	0.00257	0.01023
Pseudo R^2	0.06690	0.09482	0.16722

Clustered (priogrid) standard-errors in parentheses
*Signif. Codes: ***: 0.01, **: 0.05, *: 0.1*

Table 3.5: Determinants of Peacekeeping Onset, 2000-2011, *Fixed Effects Generalized Linear Regression Results, excluded Burundi*

In Table 3.5, I examine the determinants of peacekeeping onset based on the ethnic political status of a grid, with fixed effects for year in Model 2, and fixed effects for both year and country in Model 3. The intercept represents rebel-supportive ethnic groups. Across all three models, the relationship of areas with government-represented ethnic groups with peacekeeping onset is negative. Areas with government-represented ethnic groups do not have a substantial relationship without accounting for fixed effects. However, when country fixed effects are included, the relationship of government-represented ethnic groups compared to rebel-supportive ethnic groups becomes statistically significant at the 99 percent level. This indicates that, within countries and within a given year, government-represented ethnic group areas, on average, experience significantly fewer peacekeeping onsets than rebel-supportive ethnic group areas.

	Peacekeeping Presence:		
	(1) Logit	(2) Logit	(3) Logit
Variables			
(Intercept)	0.3744		
	(2.419)		
Government Co-ethnic	-0.6702**	-0.7179***	-1.120***
	(0.2648)	(0.2714)	(0.2508)
Irrelevant Co-ethnic	-0.7199***	-0.7603***	-0.7941***
	(0.2198)	(0.2214)	(0.2499)
Population_{log}	0.5434***	0.5590***	0.4635***
	(0.1228)	(0.1222)	(0.1172)
Mountainous Terrain	0.5911*	0.6995**	1.816***
	(0.3071)	(0.3158)	(0.3764)
$\text{Travel Time to City}_{log}$	-1.571***	-1.554***	-1.506***
	(0.2320)	(0.2330)	(0.2225)
Fixed-effects			
Year		Yes	Yes
Country			Yes
Fit statistics			
Observations	217,471	217,471	217,471
Squared Correlation	0.10734	0.11215	0.25958
Pseudo R^2	0.19660	0.20933	0.35655

Clustered (priogrid) standard-errors in parentheses
*Signif. Codes: ***: 0.01, **: 0.05, *: 0.1*

Table 3.6: Determinants of Peacekeeping Presence, 2000-2011, Fixed Effects Generalized Linear Regression Results, excluded Burundi

In Table 3.6, I examine whether peacekeepers' presence remains affected by the political status of groups, including fixed effects for year and country, while excluding Burundi. In a similar vein to the findings on peacekeeping onset, peacekeeping presence is negatively associated with government-represented ethnic group areas across the three models. When controlling for country and year fixed effects, government-represented ethnic group areas show a negative association with peacekeeping presence, which is statistically significant at the 99 percent level. Specifically, government-represented ethnic group areas change the log odds of peacekeeping presence by -1.12. This confirms that peacekeepers are less likely to remain stationed in government-associated areas over time.

	Number of Peacekeeping Troops$_{log10+1}$*:*		
	(1) normal	(2) normal	(3) normal
Variables			
(Intercept)	0.6460***		
	(0.2101)		
Government Co-ethnic	-0.0296	-0.0345	-0.0802***
	(0.0273)	(0.0273)	(0.0228)
Irrelevant Co-ethnic	-0.0406**	-0.0458**	-0.0445**
	(0.0195)	(0.0194)	(0.0187)
Population$_{log}$	0.0391***	0.0433***	0.0367***
	(0.0099)	(0.0101)	(0.0098)
Mountainous Terrain	0.1008*	0.1062*	0.1695***
	(0.0560)	(0.0560)	(0.0549)
Travel Time to City $_{log}$	-0.1511***	-0.1488***	-0.1044***
	(0.0227)	(0.0228)	(0.0208)
Fixed-effects			
Year		Yes	Yes
Country			Yes
Fit statistics			
Observations	217,471	217,471	217,471
Squared Correlation	0.06673	0.07162	0.21817
Pseudo R^2	0.04417	0.04753	0.15740

Clustered (priogrid) standard-errors in parentheses
*Signif. Codes: ***: 0.01, **: 0.05, *: 0.1*

Table 3.7: Determinants of Numbers of Peacekeeping Troops, 2000-2011, *Fixed Effects Generalized Linear Regression Results, excluded Burundi*

I turn to robustness checks of the effect of political status on the number of peacekeeping troops in Table 3.7. Here, I run a linear regression on the common log of the number of peacekeeping troops, including fixed effects for year and country. Across the three models, the effect of government-represented ethnic group grid cells on the number of peacekeeping troops compared to rebel-supportive ethnic group areas is negative, but only statistically significant at the 99 percent level when accounting for fixed effects for country and year.

Re-coding Ethnic Rebel Group Grid Cells

Lastly, it is possible that my operationalisation of political groups is driving the strong results for peacekeeping deployment to rebel-supportive ethnic group areas compared to government-represented ethnic group areas. Recall that the EPR dataset contains several settlement patterns of politically relevant ethnic groups that overlap both in the original dataset and when aggregated to the grid cell level. I operationalised overlapping cells as rebel-supportive ethnic group areas based on the theoretical argument that such overlap incentivises the host-

government to target rebel co-ethnics and avoid the increased costs associated with UN peacekeeping deployments.

However, it can also be the case that the government seeks protection with UN peacekeeping forces. As a robustness check, I hence re-code the cells which see overlaps to be coded as government-represented grids. I re-run the model for peacekeeping onset, presence, and number of peacekeepers with fixed effects for year and country in Table 3.8. The results remain robust: grid cells with ethnic government groups have a negative association with peacekeeping onset, presence, and number of peacekeeping troops deployed in comparison to grid cells with ethnic rebel groups, statistically significant at the 99 percent level.

Dependent Var:	PK Onset	PK Presence	# PK Troops $_{log}$
Model:	(1)	(2)	(3)
	Logit	Logit	Normal
Variables			
Government + (Mixed)	-0.4824***	-0.7909***	-0.0538***
	(0.1400)	(0.1960)	(0.0189)
Irrelevant Co-Ethnics	-0.5329***	-0.8772***	-0.0525**
	(0.1772)	(0.2483)	(0.0206)
Population$_{log}$	0.2832***	0.4632***	0.0372***
	(0.0854)	(0.1143)	(0.0098)
Mountainous Terrain	1.686***	1.920***	0.1773***
	(0.2788)	(0.3757)	(0.0559)
Travel Time to City $_{log}$	-0.9518***	-1.380***	-0.0988***
	(0.1652)	(0.2158)	(0.0205)
Fixed-effects			
Country	Yes	Yes	Yes
Year	Yes	Yes	Yes
Fit statistics			
Observations	217,823	217,823	217,823
Squared Correlation	0.01347	0.26553	0.22252
Pseudo R^2	0.17720	0.35644	0.15912

Clustered (priogrid) standard-errors in parentheses
*Signif. Codes: ***: 0.01, **: 0.05, *: 0.1*

Table 3.8: Fixed Effect Generalized Linear Regression Results - Robustness test: cells seeing both rebel and government re-coded as 'government'

Taken together, these robustness tests demonstrate that the observed patterns are not driven by a single country, year-specific effects, or operationalisation choice. Rather, the findings consistently hold across multiple specifications, reinforcing the conclusion that UN peacekeepers are significantly more likely to deploy in rebel-supportive ethnic group areas than in government-represented ethnic group areas. The next section further examines the

implications of these findings and explores potential explanations for the UN's observed deployment patterns.

Violence and Peacekeeping Deployment

Previous research has found that UN peacekeepers do deploy to areas experiencing one-sided-violence against civilians (Fjelde et al. 2019). To assess whether peacekeeping deployment is driven primarily by prior conflict intensity rather than ethnic-political alignment, I control for one-sided-violence (OSV) committed by both rebel groups and the host-government. Using UCDP Geo-referenced Event Data v.21.1, I incorporate measures of OSV occurring two years and three months prior to peacekeeping deployment. One-sided-violence is an important control, as it captures deliberate, strategic violence against civilians—a core factor in peacekeeping mandates. While OSV does not account for all forms of civilian victimisation (e.g., displacement, economic targeting, sexual violence), it serves as a proxy for high-intensity conflict and potential UN intervention triggers.

Table 3.9 presents the results of fixed effects regression models estimating the determinants of UN peacekeeping deployment at the grid-cell level. The dependent variables measure peacekeeping onset (Model 1), peacekeeping presence (Model 2), and the logged number of peacekeeping troops deployed (Model 3). The key independent variables are ethnic-political alignment (rebel-supportive ethnic groups or government-represented ethnic groups) and prior OSV committed by both the host-government and rebel groups.

Across all three models, the coefficient for government-represented ethnic group areas is negative and statistically significant at the 99% confidence level ($p < 0.01$). This suggests that peacekeepers are significantly less likely to deploy in areas associated with government-represented ethnic groups compared to rebel-supportive ethnic groups, even when accounting for prior violence.

In Model 1 (Peacekeeping Onset), the coefficient for government-represented ethnic group areas (-0.4281, $p < 0.05$) indicates that these areas have a significantly lower likelihood of experiencing initial peacekeeping deployment compared to rebel-supportive ethnic group areas. In Model 2 (Peacekeeping Presence), the coefficient for government-represented ethnic group areas is even larger in magnitude (-1.040, $p < 0.01$), reinforcing the association of peacekeepers being less likely to remain in government-represented ethnic group areas over time. In Model 3 (Peacekeeping Troop Numbers), the coefficient remains negative (-0.0761, $p < 0.01$), suggesting that when peacekeepers are deployed in government-represented ethnic

group areas, they receive smaller troop contingents on average compared to rebel-supportive ethnic group territories.

Similarly, politically irrelevant ethnic grids also show a negative relationship with peacekeeping deployment across all models. The coefficients are statistically significant, suggesting that peacekeepers are least likely to be deployed in territories with politically irrelevant ethnic groups compared to territories associated with rebel-supportive ethnic groups.

Table 3.9: Fixed effects models for peacekeeping deployment dependent on ethnic areas of rebel-supportive and

Dependent Variable :	PK Onset	PK Presence	# PK Troops
Model:	(1)	(2)	(3)
	Logit	Logit	Normal
Variables			
Government Co-Ethnic	-0.4281**	-1.040***	-0.0761***
	(0.1694)	(0.2478)	(0.0222)
Irrelevant Co-Ethnic	-0.3913**	-0.7282***	-0.0388**
	(0.1774)	(0.2515)	(0.0186)
OSV Reb, 2 Year $_{log}$	-0.1768	-0.4813	-0.0574***
	(0.3013)	(0.3738)	(0.0178)
OSV Reb, 3 Months $_{log}$	0.7282**	0.9572***	0.3107***
	(0.3143)	(0.2281)	(0.0785)
OSV Gov, 3 Months $_{log}$	0.6299*	1.077***	0.5496***
	(0.3288)	(0.2142)	(0.1178)
OSV Gov, 2 Year $_{log}$	0.3605***	0.5435***	0.1023***
	(0.1162)	(0.1486)	(0.0365)
Population $_{log}$	0.2377***	0.4009***	0.0312***
	(0.0821)	(0.1143)	(0.0095)
Mountainous Terrain	1.563***	1.706***	0.1496***
	(0.2979)	(0.3948)	(0.0509)
Travel Time to City $_{log}$	-0.9789***	-1.509***	-0.1031***
	(0.1652)	(0.2210)	(0.0208)
Fixed-effects			
Country	Yes	Yes	Yes
Year	Yes	Yes	Yes
Month	Yes	Yes	Yes
Fit statistics			
Observations	217,823	217,823	217,823
Squared Correlation	0.01457	0.28013	0.23652
Pseudo R^2	0.19749	0.37289	0.17061

Clustered (priogrid) standard-errors in parentheses
*Signif. Codes: ***: 0.01, **: 0.05, *: 0.1*

government-represented groups, controlling for previous one-sided-violence (two years and three months) by rebel groups and the host-government.

The results across the three models suggest that prior one-sided-violence by both the host-government and rebel groups influences peacekeeping deployment, though with notable differences in magnitude and significance. Recent rebel-perpetrated violence (three months prior) is strongly associated with UN peacekeeping onset, presence, and troop size. Similarly, government-perpetrated violence also has a strong and significant effect on onset, presence, and the number of peacekeepers deployed. Long-term government-perpetrated OSV (two years prior) is positively associated with peacekeeping presence and troop numbers, while rebel OSV from the same period is associated with a negative deployment pattern.

These findings suggest that UN peacekeeping deployment follows a pattern that prioritises recent high-intensity violence, particularly in rebel-supportive ethnic group areas, while avoiding government-represented ethnic group areas. I also test with an interaction term in Appendix Chapter 3, which produces consistent results. This raises critical questions about whether host-government influence, operational constraints, or strategic concerns shape peacekeeping deployment decisions in ways that may undermine the principle of impartiality.

The Relationship Between OSV and Politically Relevant Ethnicities

This chapter and its hypothesis build on the theoretical assumptions and statistical analysis of Fjelde and Hultman (2014), who argue that belligerent groups have a strategic interest in attacking civilians in each other's territories, thereby incentivising shifts in the costs associated with such attacks under the presence of UN peacekeepers. Fjelde and Hultman tested this theoretical assumption across Africa between 1989 and 2009. The UCDP dataset identifies the actor of one-sided-violence as either the host-government or a rebel group, and Fjelde and Hultman operationalise the victims based on the political status of the ethnic group as recorded in the EPR dataset.

One significant limitation in their study is the operationalisation of government co-ethnics as groups that possess 'monopoly' or 'dominance' over state power. In highly ethnically fragmented countries, however, no single ethnic group maintains such power arrangements. In my dataset of nine countries with ongoing UN peacekeeping missions, not a single case aligns with this operationalisation. Rather, the typical political status of ethnic groups in government is either as a senior partner or junior partner. This raises the question of whether the findings of Fjelde and Hultman (2014) hold in contexts where no ethnic group sees monopoly or dominance in government.

In this chapter, I rely on the assumption that groups deliberately target civilians in each other's territories more than in their own, shaping my hypothesis on the host-government's strategic deployment interests along ethnic lines. One-sided-violence and the political status of ethnic groups are thus assumed to be interlinked. To avoid multicollinearity in my main models, I excluded one-sided-violence as it is correlated with the political status of the territory. The following analysis aims to test this assumption using my dataset.

Table 3.10 presents results consistent with previous studies, showing that two years prior to a peacekeeping mission, the host-government is more likely to commit one-sided-violence in rebel-supportive ethnic group territories. Similarly, rebel groups are more likely to target civilians in government-represented ethnic group areas. This relationship is statistically significant at the 90% and 95% confidence levels, respectively. The effect of government-represented ethnic group areas on one-sided-violence by rebel groups remains positive and statistically significant at the 95% level three months before peacekeeping deployment.

However, the effect of government one-sided-violence in government-represented ethnic group areas also becomes positive three months before peacekeeping deployment – though not at statistically significant levels. This suggests that the UN may influence actors' strategic targeting of civilians; actors appear to adjust where they target civilians in the period leading up to peacekeeping deployment.

One-Sided-Violence$_{10log}$:	Gov 2 years	Gov 3 months	Reb 2 years	Reb 3 months
Model:	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
Variables				
Government Co-Ethnic	-0.0456*	0.0007	0.0522**	0.0044**
	(0.0240)	(0.0011)	(0.0257)	(0.0021)
Irrelevant Co-Ethnic	-0.0698***	0.0004	0.0172	0.0041***
	(0.0165)	(0.0008)	(0.0190)	(0.0016)
Population$_{log}$	0.0309***	0.0026***	-0.0042	0.0018**
	(0.0085)	(0.0006)	(0.0065)	(0.0007)
Mountainous Terrain	0.0344	0.0186***	0.0390	0.0442***
	(0.0437)	(0.0046)	(0.0452)	(0.0093)
Travel Time to City$_{log}$	-0.0318*	-0.0009	-0.0238*	-0.0033***
	(0.0189)	(0.0006)	(0.0143)	(0.0011)
(Intercept)	0.2652	-0.0075	0.2712*	0.0022
	(0.1612)	(0.0072)	(0.1472)	(0.0126)
Fixed-effects				
Country	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Fit statistics				
Observations	217,823	217,823	217,823	217,823
Squared Correlation	0.04256	0.00972	0.00432	0.01219
Pseudo R^2	0.05917	-0.00346	0.00517	-0.00614

Clustered (priogrid) standard-errors in parentheses
*Signif. Codes: ***: 0.01, **: 0.05, *: 0.1*

Table 3.10: Fixed Effect Models for One-Sided-Violence (two years and three months) Across Ethnic Areas of Rebel-Supportive and Government-Represented Groups

Contrary to previous empirical findings, this indicates that UN peacekeepers may have a deterrent association on host-government violence in rebel-supportive ethnic group territories when present. However, my findings also provide insight into why the UN may be less effective at reducing violence by the host-government. Further, in Appendix Chapter 3, I illustrate that there is a statistically significant interaction effect between one-sided-violence by the government in government-represented ethnic group areas, which is associated with a negative onset of peacekeeping forces and a reduction in the number of peacekeeping troops. While I have found that the UN is less likely to frequently deploy to government-represented ethnic group areas, the appendix indicates that UN peacekeepers are particularly unlikely to deploy to such territories where the host-government has committed one-sided-violence. This finding underscores a crucial obstacle for UN peacekeeping in fulfilling its second key principle of impartiality.

While the efficacy of peacekeeping troops is beyond the scope of this chapter and thesis, it can be inferred that the UN has a deterrent association on host-government violence in rebel-supportive ethnic group areas but not in government-represented ethnic group areas, largely

because the UN is less present in the latter. Future research on the effectiveness of peacekeeping forces could benefit from accounting for the deployment of peacekeeping troops along politically relevant ethnic lines. While the UN reduces the rate and intensity of violence, there are patterns regarding where it is able to do so, corresponding to the timing and location of its deployment.

3.5 What Does This Tell Us About Peacekeeping Deployment?

What do these asymmetrical trends reveal about the determinants of local UN peacekeeping deployment? This chapter has systematically examined one strategic incentive of host-governments in shaping local deployment patterns of UN peacekeeping forces. The central argument is that host-governments, acting as rational actors, have both the capacity and incentives to influence peacekeeping deployment in ways that align with their strategic interests. Specifically, the expectation was that peacekeeping missions would be disproportionately deployed in areas where the host-government stands to benefit—by stabilising contested regions, monitoring rebel activities, and shifting the burden of civilian protection. In line with this expectation, the empirical findings indicate a strong and consistent pattern: peacekeepers are more likely to be deployed to rebel-supportive ethnic constituencies rather than government-represented constituencies.

Across three operationalisations – peacekeeping onset, presence, and troop size – the trends reveal that peacekeeping deployments are systematically lower in government-represented areas, even when controlling for levels of one-sided violence against civilians. These findings support the first hypothesis (H1), which posited that peacekeepers are more likely to be deployed to areas with rebel-supportive ethnic groups. The evidence indicates that peacekeepers are deployed more frequently, in larger numbers, and with greater visibility in these territories, even when accounting for other determinants. This strategic placement of peacekeepers serves host-government interests, imposing costs on rebel groups through increased monitoring and international oversight.

In contrast, the second hypothesis (H2), which anticipated that peacekeepers would also be deployed in government-represented areas to protect civilians from rebel group violence, finds little empirical support. Despite instances of one-sided violence against civilians in these regions, peacekeeper presence remains limited. This suggests that areas with government-represented ethnic groups are notably less monitored and experience less international

interference. Consequently, UN peacekeepers are less able to monitor, report, and interfere with local host-government actions within these territories.

These findings have implications for the peacekeeping literature on deployment and efficacy. First, they build on existing scholarship on local peacekeeping deployment (Ruggeri et al. 2018; Gizelis and Benson 2019; Fjelde et al. 2019; Cil et al. 2020; Villa 2021) by demonstrating a relational determinant of peacekeepers' local deployment. Second, the asymmetrical deployment of peacekeepers across politically relevant ethnic geographies provides crucial context for broader literature on peacekeeping efficacy. Existing research posits that UN peacekeeping is effective where it is present (Fortna 2008; Howard 2019; Ruggeri et al. 2017; Fjelde et al. 2019; Duursma et al. 2024). However, the findings presented here reveal a spatial asymmetry in local deployment, which influences where mandates requiring local access can be effectively implemented. This asymmetry suggests that government-represented areas are not only less monitored but also experience significantly less international oversight compared to areas with rebel-supportive ethnic groups. Conversely, rebel-supportive areas, where peacekeepers are more heavily concentrated, are subject to increased monitoring, enhanced information flow, and heightened visibility of abuses (Fortna 2008; Di Salvatore and Ruggeri 2017; Howard 2019; Phayal and Prins 2020; Duursma et al. 2024). This spatial asymmetry may influence local conflict dynamics, as government forces face less scrutiny while rebels are systematically monitored and constrained.

The findings also underscore the importance of peacekeeping deployment as an independent variable in understanding conflict dynamics. If UN forces are systematically deployed in rebel-supportive areas, this has significant implications for both conflict duration and rebel-government bargaining dynamics. The capacity of peacekeepers to mediate, enforce ceasefires, or prevent escalation is contingent upon where they are deployed. If peacekeeping forces are absent from key government-represented areas, this could shape military strategies, affect rebel incentives to engage in peace processes, and influence government calculations regarding violence against civilians.

The generalisability of this study, as outlined in the research design, is limited to conflicts with distinct ethnic settlement patterns, captured within a grid-cell framework. This means that the study does not account for conflicts where ethnic groups are spatially overlapping, such as in Burundi, nor does it capture the impact of internal displacement or shifting favourability towards rebel groups over time. Furthermore, the analysis focuses exclusively on peacekeeping missions with mandates to protect civilians, which may not reflect broader trends in political peacekeeping or observer missions. While this study reveals a

determinant of peacekeeping deployment, it does not attempt to analyse the mechanism through which this occurs. This is the focus of Chapters 4 and 5. Future research would benefit from addressing these limitations by incorporating more granular data on population movements and accounting for the strategic interests of host-governments in shaping local peacekeeping deployment.

3.6 Conclusion

This chapter has aimed to answer a critical yet understudied question in peacekeeping research: Where do peacekeepers deploy at the sub-national level in conflicts marked by ethnic divides and mandates to protect civilians? Drawing on the theoretical propositions regarding host-government incentives to grant peacekeepers access, the analysis focused on the role of politically relevant ethnic settlement patterns as a strategic determinant of local UN peacekeeping deployment. The findings reveal a distinct asymmetry: UN peacekeepers are more frequently, for longer periods, and in greater numbers, present in areas with rebel-supportive ethnic groups than in those with government-represented ethnic groups, regardless of the level of one-sided violence against civilians. This pattern holds consistently across multiple robustness checks, alternative model specifications, and varying operationalisations of political status.

The implications of this asymmetry are significant. If peacekeepers are concentrated in rebel-supportive areas, their capacity to monitor, report, and intervene in violence in government-represented regions is limited, affecting both the visibility and accountability of host-government actions. This deployment pattern challenges the assumption of impartiality in peacekeeping mandates, suggesting that strategic political considerations of host-governments, in addition to logistical and mandate constraints, shape where peacekeepers are locally present. While this chapter has documented one strategic interest of the host-government, it does not claim to be exhaustive; rather, it lays the groundwork for future research to explore strategic and relational determinants of local peacekeeping deployment.

The chapter's findings prompt broader questions: To what extent do these sub-national deployment patterns affect peacekeeping effectiveness in protecting civilians and enforcing mandates? If government-represented areas are less monitored, how does this influence local conflict dynamics and accountability for human rights abuses? Moreover, while this chapter has captured observable patterns, the mechanisms through which host-governments exert influence over local deployment remain opaque. Addressing this gap would provide further

insights into the factors that grant or restrict peacekeepers' local access. Future research would benefit from incorporating dynamic measures of territorial control, population movements, and more granular data on governmental and non-governmental restrictions on UN operations.

From a policy perspective, these findings underscore the need to reconsider how access agreements are negotiated and enforced. If peacekeeping operations systematically avoid government-represented territories or are subject to restricted access, this raises questions about the principle of impartiality and the effective implementation of protection mandates. Going forward, the design and implementation of peacekeeping mandates should explicitly consider host-government incentives and barriers to local access.

Ultimately, this chapter contributes to a deeper understanding of local peacekeeping as a bargaining process, shaped by host-government strategies alongside considerations of peacekeeping missions in effective mandate implementation. While UN peacekeepers are mandated to protect civilians impartially, their ability to do so hinges upon local access—an access that is demonstrably not uniformly granted. This strategic dimension of local peacekeeping deployment is not merely an operational challenge; it is a reflection of deeper contestations over power in conflict-affected states, where host-governments seek to maximise benefits and minimise costs associated with UN peacekeeper presence. In turn, the next chapters aim to map how host-governments influence local UN peacekeeping deployment in alignment with their strategic incentives.

Chapter 4: The Geo-MRP Dataset

In this chapter, I introduce the Geocoded Movement Restrictions of Peacekeepers (Geo-MRP) dataset, which presents new data on sub-national movement restrictions of 15 UN peacekeeping missions in 12 countries in Africa between 2000 and 2023. The Geo-MRP dataset is the first of its kind, mapping and geo-referencing the time and location where UN peacekeepers reported physical restrictions on their movement by actors in the field. It enables scholars to pose new questions about UN peacekeeping missions and third-party interventions, particularly regarding actors' strategies in relation to the UN in the field, the UN's accessibility, its effectiveness, temporal and spatial variations, and broader questions within peace and conflict at the sub-national level. The dataset provides information on when the reported movement restriction occurred, its duration, the specific areas where peacekeepers' movement was restricted, and whether the restriction was imposed by the host-government or another party.

Focusing on the reported movement restrictions faced by UN peacekeepers, this chapter highlights both temporal and spatial dimensions. From 2000 to 2023, UN peacekeeping troops, on average, reported experiencing movement restrictions in 23.2% of the months during their missions, with a median frequency of 20.2%. The chapter further explores variations in these restrictions: UNMIL in Liberia recorded the lowest incidence, with movement restricted in only 0.02% of the months from 2003 to 2018, while MINURSO in Western Sahara experienced the highest frequency, with restrictions in 82.5% of the months from 2000 to 2023. Additionally, the dataset provides spatial insights, revealing that in 9 out of 12 countries with UN peacekeeping missions, movement was reported as restricted nationally at some point between 2000 and 2023 (Burundi, CAR, Côte d'Ivoire, DRC, Ethiopia, Mali, South Sudan, Sudan, and Western Sahara). By offering the first granular data on the locations and timing of UN peacekeepers' reported movement restrictions, the Geo-MRP dataset advances our understanding of third-party interventions and deepens the research agenda on peacekeeping.

4.1 Introduction

In armed conflicts, the ability of UN peacekeepers to move freely is fundamental to fulfilling their mandates – from protecting civilians to reporting war crimes and delivering aid. However, peacekeepers frequently face restrictions on their movements, imposed by host-governments

and other actors, which can severely hinder their effectiveness. Limited operational access may prevent peacekeepers from monitoring human rights abuses, restrict humanitarian aid delivery, and obstruct timely interventions to protect civilians from violence. Moreover, strategic control over peacekeepers' movement can shape broader conflict dynamics by influencing narratives, aid distribution, illicit activities, and military operations.

A clear example of the impact of movement restrictions is the United Nations Mission in Ethiopia and Eritrea (UNMEE) from 2000 to 2008. Despite the initial agreement to ensure peacekeeper access, Eritrea never signed a Status of Forces Agreement (SOFA), leading to immediate and long-term access restrictions. Within seven months of deployment in 2000, UNMEE recorded 113 movement restrictions by Eritrea and 30 by Ethiopia, including roadblocks, denied flight permissions, and constraints on border monitoring. Over time, these restrictions escalated, severely hindering UNMEE's operations and culminating in its forced withdrawal in 2008. This case underscores the need for a systematic dataset to track movement restrictions as a strategic tool influencing peacekeeping effectiveness.

Despite these critical implications, systematic empirical research on movement restrictions in UN peacekeeping remains scarce. While reports acknowledge that movement restrictions are a common challenge (Sebastián and Gorur 2018; Gregory and Sharland 2023), no dataset systematically tracks their prevalence, duration, or geographic scope. The absence of such data limits our understanding of how host-governments and armed actors strategically use access constraints to shape peacekeeping effectiveness. This study addresses this gap by introducing the Geo-MRP Dataset, the first systematic, cross-mission dataset capturing reported movement restrictions of UN peacekeepers in the field. By isolating movement restrictions as a deliberate strategy to control local access, this dataset enables new insights into how host-governments and conflict actors influence peacekeeping operations.

Peacekeeping Research and the Need for Systematic Data on Movement Restrictions

The effectiveness of UN peacekeeping is fundamentally tied to its physical presence in conflict zones, enabling peacekeepers to monitor, report, and intervene (Fortna 2004; Ruggeri, Gizelis and Dorussen 2013; Ruggeri, Dorussen and Gizelis 2017). The ability to operate freely determines where peacekeepers can have an impact. Peacekeeping missions have evolved from ceasefire monitoring to complex operations that include protecting civilians, supporting state institutions, and facilitating humanitarian access. However, peacekeepers are frequently restricted in their access – not only due to security concerns but also as a strategic tool by host-governments and conflict actors.

While sub-national peacekeeping data has advanced significantly in recent years, existing datasets focus primarily on where peacekeepers are deployed, not where they are denied access. The Geo-PKO dataset (Cil et al. 2020) provides systematic data on all sub-national peacekeeping deployments for UN missions, supporting previous findings that deployment decisions are shaped by infrastructure, population density, and conflict intensity (Cil et al. 2020; Ruggeri et al. 2017; Urdal 2011). Building on research into UN peacekeeping deployment, Abbs and Duursma (2024) examine whether peacekeepers patrol in areas with armed clashes and civilian violence, focusing on UNAMID patrols across Darfur between January 2008 and April 2009. Their findings confirm that UN peacekeepers tend to patrol where violence occurs. However, this data does not capture instances where peacekeepers did not go – where their access was restricted. Peacekeepers must maintain host-government consent (Duursma 2019), meaning they may be inclined to avoid requesting access to strategically important locations to prevent operational and diplomatic friction with the host-government. As a result, peacekeeping presence alone cannot fully capture the constraints peacekeepers face, reflecting the limitations highlighted in Chapter 3.

By failing to account for movement restrictions, existing datasets provide an incomplete picture of peacekeeping effectiveness. Host-governments and armed actors can strategically limit peacekeeper access to conceal military operations, block investigations into human rights violations, or prevent engagement with opposition-held areas (Piccolino and Karlsrud; Gregory and Sharland 2023; Sebastián and Gorur 2018; Duursma et al. 2024). Understanding peacekeeping effectiveness requires not only knowing where peacekeepers are present but also where they are prevented from going.

Previous Research on Movement Restrictions and Related Concepts

Attempts to analyse movement restrictions systematically have primarily emerged from humanitarian research. The United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) defines access constraints as “anything that impedes your movement” (OCHA 2022). However, OCHA's framework encompasses a broad spectrum of factors, including security risks, logistical obstacles, and even climate change, making it challenging to isolate strategic movement restrictions from other access challenges. The Norwegian Refugee Council's Humanitarian Access Working Groups (HAWGs) have sought to refine these concepts, yet significant barriers persist: inconsistent definitions, irregular reporting, and confidentiality concerns (ibid).

In military doctrine, the concept of Anti-Access and Area-Denial (A2/AD) describes strategies aimed at preventing an adversary's access to critical zones (US DoD 2012). While A2/AD primarily focuses on military capabilities, it provides a useful parallel for understanding peacekeeping restrictions. Unlike military actors, peacekeepers depend on national consent, allowing host-governments to deny access without direct confrontation. Integrating insights from A2/AD with peacekeeping research highlights how movement restrictions serve as instruments of power for political and military control, rather than merely logistical or security challenges.

A related concept in peacekeeping research is "pinioning," introduced by Duursma (2021). Building on Johnstone (2011) and Duursma's earlier work (2019b), pinioning describes how peacekeepers are immobilised by armed actors, preventing them from fulfilling their mandates. Duursma likens this to “clipping a bird's wings,” where peacekeepers are restricted through bureaucratic barriers, selective violence, or threats of escalation (Duursma 2021:672). While pinioning captures the political dimension of movement restrictions, it lacks systematic data to measure where, when, and how peacekeepers are blocked.

In the policy realm, drawing from Security Council mission reports and interviews, Sebastián and Gorur (2018) first explored the idea that host-governments can obstruct UN peacekeeping missions. While not explicitly defining obstruction, Sebastián and Gorur (2018:5) found that “host-state governments can prevent peacekeepers from implementing their mandates by obstructing their movements or activities.” Gregory and Sharland (2023:21) further elaborated on "obstructions" by host-governments and parties to the conflict in their extensive policy analysis, identifying seven sub-categories of obstruction that UN peacekeepers face in conflict zones. These include restricted movement on the ground, restricted movement by air, harm to the UN, delays in approving visas, limited communication, and bureaucratic regulations. They note that “restricted freedom of movement remains the most cited obstruction (and SOFA/SOMA violation)” across peacekeeping missions (Gregory and Sharland 2023:21).

A crucial contribution of Gregory and Sharland’s work is the recognition that actors in conflict can employ strategies beyond mere movement restrictions to influence the effectiveness of UN peacekeeping missions. This opens a range of further research questions on the relationship between UN peacekeeping efficacy and conflict actors on the ground. However, with movement restrictions emerging as the most prevalent obstacle to UN peacekeeping deployment, it becomes imperative for the research field to establish conceptual

clarity and develop sub-national data to capture the strategic role of host-governments in shaping UN peacekeeping effectiveness.

Contributions of the Geo-MRP Dataset

To address the conceptual and empirical gaps in the literature, this chapter introduces the first systematic dataset of reported movement restrictions imposed on UN peacekeepers. While previous research has acknowledged host-government restrictions (Piccolino and Karlsrud 2011; Duursma et al. 2024; Gregory and Sharland 2023; Fjelde 2019; Sebastián and Gorur 2018), prior studies have largely relied on case studies, anecdotal evidence, or lacked methodological transparency. This dataset provides the first cross-national, sub-national analysis of where and when UN peacekeepers report movement restrictions, allowing for:

1) **Temporal and Spatial Mapping:** Documenting movement restrictions over time and across missions.
2) **Comparisons Across Missions:** Evaluating variation in restrictions across different UN missions.
3) **Patterns of Host-Government Strategy:** Investigating when and where host-governments restrict peacekeepers and how these restrictions align with broader conflict strategies.

This chapter provides a detailed overview of the dataset, its data collection process, and the methodological choices that ensure validity and replicability. It discusses the limitations and biases inherent in UN mission reporting and how country-fixed effects and time-fixed effects help control for inconsistencies in reporting frequencies. The dataset contributes to a growing research agenda on peacekeeping effectiveness, conflict dynamics, and host-government strategies in war.

Furthermore, this chapter is grounded in the theory of the power of access presented in Chapter 2, systematically documenting and defining a mechanism by which host-governments influence peacekeepers' local access. In doing so, it also advances the findings in Chapter 3, which examined the determinants of UN peacekeeping deployment.

Defining and Conceptualising Movement Restrictions

A critical step in understanding movement restrictions in UN peacekeeping is distinguishing between the concept itself and the methods used to measure it. In doing so, I argue that movement restrictions are systematically distinguishable from related - but different phenomena. The measurement of movement restrictions, which operationalise the concept into observable and quantifiable indicators, follows in the data section. Given the conceptual challenges outlined in the sections above, this study defines movement restrictions as: *"Deliberate, human-made obstructions to an actor's operational access, imposed by stakeholders in the field".*

Movement restrictions are distinct from broader access constraints, such as security risks, natural disasters, or logistical limitations, which may also limit movement but are not physically imposed by a strategic actor. Recall from Chapter Two that access overall, in contrast, is defined as the spatial and operational conditions required for mandate implementation. Access is twofold: it is shaped by logistical constraints such as infrastructure, weather conditions, and resources, and relationally shaped through bargaining between actors on the ground.

This conceptual distinction is crucial for peacekeeping research. First, it isolates movement restrictions as a strategic, physical tool used by actors in conflict zones. Second, it ensures analytical clarity by excluding other forms of limited access that are indirect or beyond human control. Third, it provides a basis for systematically studying how movement restrictions shape access and, in turn, effectiveness in the field. Thus, in the case of UN peacekeeping missions, movement restrictions are best understood as physical actions taken by an identifiable actor to deliberately limit UN peacekeeping access to certain areas.

The Three Core Elements of Movement Restrictions

To ensure a robust conceptual framework, movement restrictions must contain three essential elements: 1) an agent, 2) a target, and 3) the nature of the restriction itself.

1) **The Agent (Doer) of Restriction:** To account for movement restrictions, there must be a doer of the action. This allows for the separation of movement restrictions from naturally occurring events, anticipations, or accidents that hamper access. The party imposing the restriction can thus either be associated with the host-government (such as government forces or entities) or comprise other groups like rebel factions,

opposition forces, or civilians. It is crucial to note that the restrictions are exclusively human-made and deliberate actions by these parties, distinguishing them from natural or environmental limitations.

2) **The Target of Restriction:** For there to be a movement restriction, it must be enforced on a target, such as the UN. This excludes limitations placed indiscriminately within the country arising from broader security situations related to the conflict, such as increased fighting or general violence in the area, that might deter the UN from responding due to the high risks associated, but are not aimed at the UN itself.
3) **The Nature of Restriction:** The actions that constitute movement restrictions are those that physically impede access, such as the establishment of roadblocks, checkpoints, or barricades. They also include administrative barriers that physically prevent movement, such as the denial of necessary permits (e.g., flight, road, or drone safety assurances) or withholding essential operational resources like fuel and transportation. These measures are designed to limit the UN's ability to move and operate within a conflict zone. For instance, in South Sudan (UNMISS S/2021/172 [86]), despite the UN's assertion that information sharing was solely for coordination and not for seeking approvals, security personnel frequently denied access to UNMISS patrols.

These three core elements of movement restrictions separate the concept from other happenings that might lead to less access in the field but are not a movement restriction per se. The seven sub-categories introduced by Gregory and Sharland (2023) fall short of separating obstruction from movement restrictions. These components can still make access difficult or obstructed. Yet, a clear definition of movement restrictions makes it possible to clearly lay out what is not a movement restriction.

Conceptual Boundaries: What is *not* Movement Restrictions? To maintain conceptual clarity, it is equally important to identify what does not qualify as a movement restriction under this framework:

- **Natural Occurrences:** Limitations due to weather patterns or seasons (e.g., drought, heavy rains, mountainous terrain, jungle terrain).
- **Security Threats:** Access challenges arising from increased security threats, including active fighting, shootings between parties, or general violence as a product of warfare.
- **Internal Constraints of the Actor:** Such as in the case of UN missions, a lack of transport resources, funding, or staff (e.g., lack of helicopters, personnel, or vehicles).

- **Standard Bureaucratic Procedures:** Immigration controls, taxation on imports, or general bureaucratic procedures applied uniformly.

This conceptual framework provides a structured way to analyse movement restrictions as a political and strategic phenomenon rather than as incidental barriers to access. By distinguishing intentional, actor-imposed restrictions from broader access constraints, this definition allows researchers to better investigate the strategic use of movement restrictions by host-governments and conflict actors. It also allows researchers to analyse the impact of movement restrictions on an actor's effectiveness, such as UN peacekeeping effectiveness in civilian protection or mandate implementation. A clearer concept can also provide empirical clarity for studying access restrictions in peacekeeping missions across time and space.

This conceptual foundation sets the stage for the next section, Presenting the Data, where the operationalisation of movement restrictions – how they are measured, coded, and analysed – will be systematically laid out.

4.2 Presenting the Data

This section outlines the scope and coverage of the dataset, detailing the geographical and temporal parameters, the unit of analysis, and the rationale for selecting the included missions. It also introduces the approach used to classify movement restrictions, explaining how the dataset structures these incidents for systematic analysis.

4.2.1 Geographical Scope

The Geo-MRP Dataset covers 15 UN peacekeeping missions across 12 African countries between 2000 and 2023. The regional focus on Africa reflects two key considerations. First, Africa has hosted the largest number of UN peacekeeping operations during this period, making it a critical region to study diverse missions across various contexts. Second, this dataset builds on the Geo-PKO dataset by Cil et al. (2020) of geo-coded peacekeeping deployments worldwide, which was pioneered on cases in Africa at the time of this study. By aligning with Geo-PKO's geographical coverage, the Geo-MRP Dataset facilitates direct comparisons between where peacekeepers were deployed and where they were denied access, allowing researchers to explore the relationship between peacekeeping presence and host-government restrictions. Map 4.1 provides an aggregated overview of the countries included in the dataset, and Table 4.1 provides a detailed overview of the UN peacekeeping missions included.

4.2.2 Temporal Scope

The dataset covers movement restrictions from 2000 to 2023. The starting point of 2000 is chosen for two reasons. First, this period marks a key shift in UN peacekeeping doctrine, following the Brahimi Report (2000) and the introduction of mandates to protect civilians (Fortna 2008). The expansion of peacekeeping mandates increased the likelihood of host-governments viewing UN missions as intrusive actors, potentially leading to greater strategic movement restrictions. Second, this period saw the rise of systematic reporting on peacekeeping operations through UN Security Council mission progress reports, which form the basis for this dataset's coding process. The dataset extends to December 2023, capturing the most recent movement restrictions recorded at the time of this research project. This 23-year period allows for the examination of long-term trends in movement restrictions, variation across missions, and shifts in actors' strategies over time.

4.2.3 Unit of Analysis

The unit of analysis is monthly at the sub-national level. Specifically, each entry is recorded monthly at the admin2 level (equivalent to the municipality level). Each movement restriction is geo-referenced using administrative boundaries and is also cross-referenced with the PRIO-GRID system to allow for integration with other geo-spatial datasets. As such, each observation in the dataset corresponds to a specific location (admin2 unit) within a given month. Note that with a monthly-admin2 level analysis, the data does not capture daily variation or village-level variation but is aggregated for the month and for the municipality level. I will further elaborate on the variables after introducing the data sources, their utilities, and their limitations.

4.2.4 Data Sources

The Geo-MRP Dataset is extracted from the UN Secretary-General's mission progress reports to the UN Security Council, which provide periodic updates on the security, political, and humanitarian situation in host countries, as well as the operational challenges faced by UN peacekeeping missions. These reports detail key developments in mandate implementation, including instances where peacekeepers encounter restrictions on their movement.

The reporting frequency of these documents varies by mission, with intervals of three, four, or six months, as determined by Security Council resolutions at the mission's establishment. Over time, mandate renewals or shifting international priorities may modify the content and level of detail provided in these reports. Despite variations in frequency and scope,

these reports remain the most systematic and authoritative sources for tracking movement restrictions at a comparative, cross-mission level.

While these reports offer an official and structured account of peacekeeping operations, they are not exhaustive in capturing all movement restrictions. Underreporting may occur due to political sensitivities, field-level discretion, or inconsistent mission reporting practices. Recognising these limitations, the UN Secretariat has initiated efforts—such as the SAGE platform for tracking SOFA/SOMA violations—to improve the systematic documentation of operational obstructions (Gregory and Sharland 2023). However, these initiatives remain in development, are not declassified, and are not yet integrated into mission reporting for the period covered by this dataset.

As such, the data resource is very likely to suffer from underreporting. This study thus proceeds with the caution that it maps and analyses reported movement restrictions. These limitations will be further discussed at the end of this chapter.

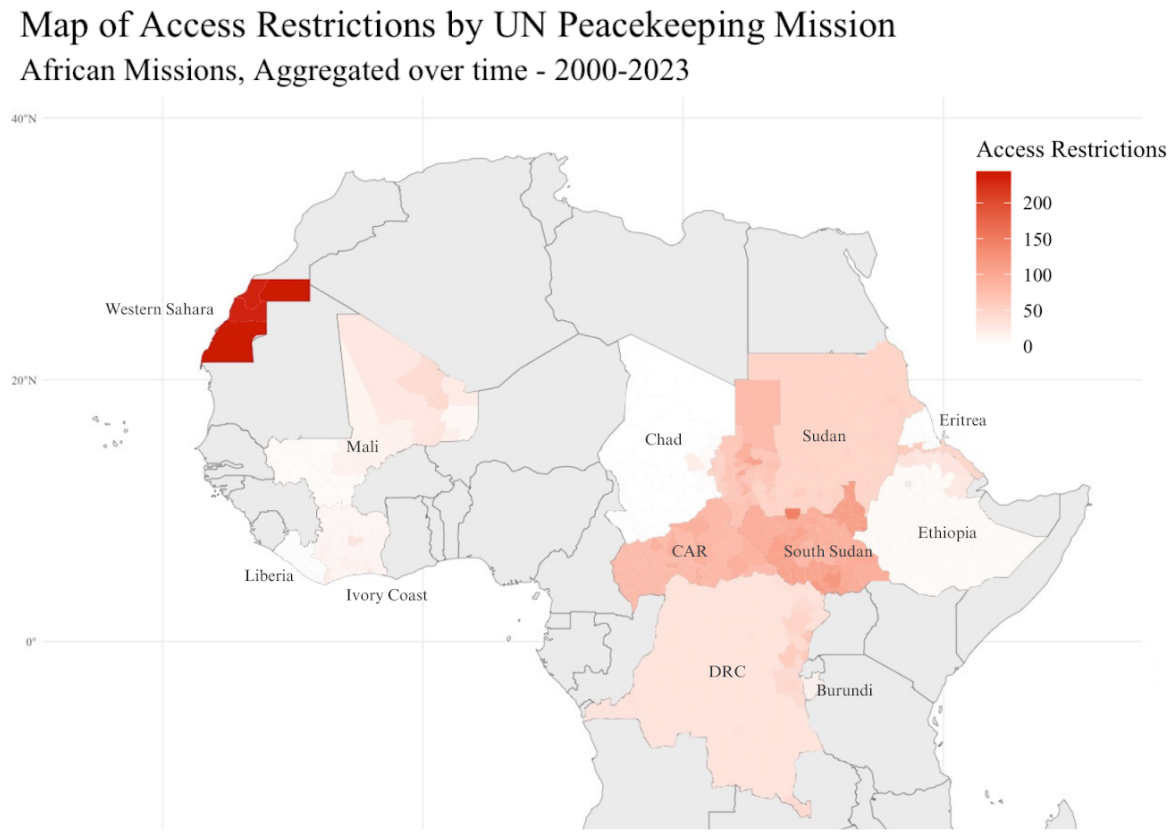
Country	Mission	Mission Starts	Mission End	Number of units (LAU 2)	Number of months	Number of observations
Burundi	*ONUB*	Mar 2004	Dec 2006	119	34	4,046
CAR	*MINUSCA*	Apr 2014	Dec 2023	72	157	11,304
	MINURCAT	Sep 2007	Dec 2010			
Chad	*MINURCAT*	Sep 2007	Dec 2010	70	40	2,800
Côte d'Ivoire	*UNOCI*	Apr 2004	Jun 2017	108	159	17,172
DRC	*MONUC*	Jan 2000	Mar 2010	189	288	54,432
	MONUSCO	Mar 2010	Dec 2023			
Ethiopia	*UNMEE*	Jun 2000	Jul 2008	58	98	9,016
Eritrea	*UNMEE*	Jun 2000	Jul 2008	92	98	5,684
Liberia	*UNMIL*	Sep 2003	Apr 2018	136	176	23,936
Mali	*MINUSMA*	Jul 2013	Jun 2023	53	120	6,360
South Sudan / Abyei	*UNMISS*	Jul 2011	Dec 2023	79	226	17,854
	UNISFA	Jul 2011	Dec 2023			
Sudan	*UNMIS*	Mar 2005	Jul 2011	189	226	42,714
	UNAMID	Jul 2007	Dec 2020			
	UNITAMS	Jun 2020	Dec 2023			
Western Sahara	*MINURSO*	Jan 2000	Dec 2023	4	288	1,152

Table 4.1: *A summary of the UN Peacekeeping missions included in the Geo-MRP dataset.*
For each country, the table specifies the date range covered, the number of units corresponding to municipality-level divisions within each country, the total months of mission duration, and the total number of observations recorded for each country throughout the mission period.

4.2.5 Operationalising a Movement Restriction Event

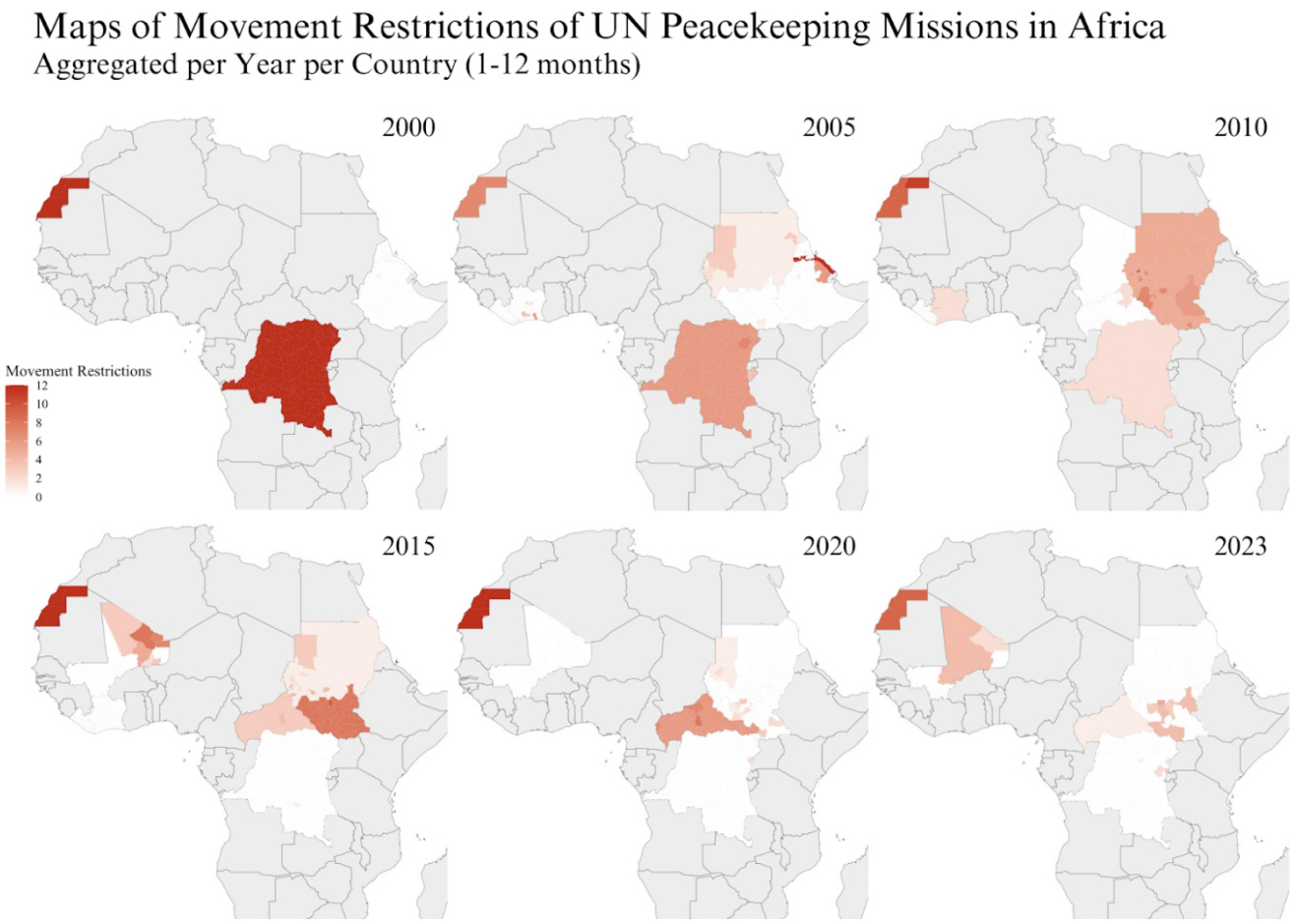
The Geo-MRP Dataset systematically records instances of reported movement restrictions, capturing the geographic location, time period, and the actor responsible for imposing the restriction. A movement restriction is operationalised as an obstruction to UN peacekeeping operations that is deliberately imposed by host-governments, rebel groups, or other strategic actors. These events are documented in official UN Security Council mission progress reports, which serve as the primary data source for this dataset. To ensure comparability across missions and time periods, movement restrictions are recorded using the following standardised approach:

- If a movement restriction is explicitly mentioned in a UN mission report, the event is coded as 1 for the affected location and the reporting period. If no restriction is reported, the event is coded as 0.
- Each movement restriction is geo-referenced at the administrative unit 2 (admin2) level and recorded for the month in which it was reported.
- If the restriction persists across multiple reports, it is recorded separately for each reporting period to reflect its continued presence.
- If a specific start date is provided, the restriction is noted from the start of the reporting period until the end. If no exact date is given, it is assumed to be in place for the entire reporting period (typically three, four, or six months, depending on the mission).



Map 4.1:12 Countries with 17 UN Peacekeeping Missions and Incidents of Movement Restrictions, Aggregated for 2000–2023 Note: The colour gradient captures both movement restrictions and longer-running peacekeeping missions.

This approach ensures that the dataset captures the presence of movement restrictions without over-interpreting the available information. While UN reports often describe restrictions in general terms, they do not systematically document the precise number of days a restriction was in effect or the number of times peacekeepers attempted to enter a location. Consequently, the dataset records whether a location was subject to movement restrictions within a given reporting period, rather than attempting to infer the duration or intensity of these restrictions. A more detailed explanation of coding rules, inclusion criteria, and variable definitions is provided in Appendix 4: Codebook.



Map 4.2: Movement restrictions over time, aggregated for the calendar year.

The dataset systematically records reported movement restrictions, including whether the actor responsible for the restriction was a government actor or not, and the geographic and temporal scope of restrictions (recorded at the admin2 level and aggregated monthly). In turn, the dataset does not include the severity or duration of movement restrictions beyond their presence within a given reporting period. It also does not capture the number of times peacekeepers attempted to enter a restricted area or locations where peacekeepers sought access but refrained from requesting permission due to anticipated denial.

The dataset covers UN peacekeepers only and does not track movement restrictions affecting other actors such as humanitarian organisations, except in cases where UN peacekeepers themselves are directly impeded.

4.2.6 Data Collection

The data collection process relies on a dual hand-coded text-to-data process. The data is extracted from information on reported events of movement restrictions from the mission

progress reports. To collect the source data, a team comprising the author and five researchers undertook the data collection. The data collection methodology was designed following two key principles: firstly, a standardised procedure where all researchers were trained using a predefined codebook; and secondly, a multi-level verification process where each data point undergoes cross-checking, including two rounds of peer review.

First, each mission is collected by one person. Then second, each report and entry are checked by a second person, and a third and final step involves one person conducting random draws of the data entries to verify the data collection according to this codebook. Below, I lay out the three-step data-collection process in detail.

1) *Hand-Coding Process:* The data collection begins with a detailed hand-coding stage. Analysts conducted a thorough review of mission reports, focusing on key terms indicative of movement restrictions. These terms included: Movement, Access, Restrict, Deploy, Reach, Violation, Permission, SOFA, Status of Force, Denied, Prevent, Obstructed, Freedom, Movement, Fire, Vehicle, Flight, Helicopter, and Fuel. These keywords were selected after a randomised sampling of two reports from each of the 15 peacekeeping missions to identify the language used concerning peacekeepers' movement restrictions. While analysts read the reports for contextual understanding, this keyword-driven approach facilitated efficient identification of relevant sections for deeper analysis.

2) *Contextual Analysis and Criteria-Based Coding:* Upon identifying the relevant sections, the analysts undertook a contextual analysis. This involved reading the selected text in its entirety to comprehend the context of the incidents – focusing on the involved parties, locations, timings, and the nature of the movement restrictions. Each incident was then hand-coded according to pre-established criteria, ensuring that data categorisation was both consistent and accurate.

3) *Third and Fourth Round Verification:* Following the initial hand-coding, a second analyst reviewed each entry, controlling for the presence of the research terms to ensure no entries were systematically overlooked. Finally, to ensure the consistency of this manual process, a fourth analyst performed a quality check by randomly selecting 20

reports from each mission. This step aimed to confirm that the coding was uniformly applied across all missions, serving as a measure of intercoder reliability.[2]

Reliability and Validity

Ensuring the reliability and validity of the Geo-MRP dataset presents both strengths and challenges. The data collection process was designed to ensure consistency through multi-coder verification. The hand-coding process followed strict guidelines, reinforced by inter-coder verification. However, while these measures enhance reliability, they do not eliminate all sources of potential coding variance.

The dataset also presents validity challenges as the first dataset on movement restrictions. Anecdotal validation suggests that the dataset captures the same trends as previous qualitative assessments (e.g., Sebastián and Gorur 2018; Gregory and Sharland 2023) regarding time. Anecdotes from Gregory and Sharland present snapshots of reported SOFA violations, such as UNMISS from February 2020 to May 2023, at the national level in three-month intervals. They draw on UN peacekeeping missions where they report the overall number of SOFA violations. However, it remains an imprecise measure. These numbers do not specify 1) what type of SOFA violation was reported, 2) how many times peacekeepers attempted entry, 3) which actors imposed restrictions, or 4) where on a local level the violations occurred. These limitations prevent direct comparability. As such, it is a count every three months at the national level. However, it allows me to look at the time variable – and the Geo-MRP dataset captures an incident of movement restrictions every time SOFA violations were reported, while providing further granular insight at the monthly and local level. Thus, the dataset holds validity with previous research that also draws on UN peacekeeping mission reports, but it would benefit from future research that deploys different data resources or methods.

Ultimately, this dataset represents a first step in systematically measuring peacekeeping movement restrictions. While it is not yet possible to fully verify variance or severity within the months, the dataset establishes a foundation for future research to do so. As UN reporting improves – particularly with the development of the SAGE platform—more granular and standardised data may become available, allowing researchers to refine movement restriction metrics further. If available, future studies could integrate peacekeeper patrol data,

[2] The Geo-MRP dataset saw a multi-stage verification process. While these procedures enhanced the reliability of the dataset, a synthetic intercoder reliability index, such as Krippendorff's Alpha or Cohen's Kappa, was not systematically calculated during the data collection phase. A reliability measure would have quantitatively assessed coding consistency across researchers. Future iterations of the Geo-MRP dataset will incorporate a synthetic index to strengthen coding transparency and replicability.

humanitarian access records, or operational planning documents to develop a more comprehensive measurement of movement constraints.

For now, this dataset provides the most structured and consistent measure of movement restrictions currently available, offering a crucial empirical basis for further inquiry into how peacekeeping effectiveness is shaped by strategic access constraints.

4.2.7 Key Dimensions of Movement Restrictions of UN Peacekeepers

The dataset offers a detailed examination of four dimensions concerning the movement restrictions faced by UN peacekeepers. Table 4.2 provides an overview of key insights. Initially, it includes a dummy variable indicating the occurrence of movement restrictions. When such restrictions are reported, the dataset provides the date, and the smallest geographical unit involved in the incident.

Further, the data identifies whether the restrictions were enforced by the host-government or another actor, acknowledging that both may impose restrictions within the same month. The term host-government encompasses various state entities such as ministries, the national military, and the police active during the reported period. The category of others includes rebel groups, as well as other groups and civilians who have imposed restrictions on UN peacekeeping forces.

Moreover, the dataset captures the extent of the reported movement restrictions by incorporating a count of the total number of restrictions reported within each location for the month. Unlike the binary variable that records the occurrence of restrictions, this count variable provides a quantitative measure but is reported less consistently. Consequently, while it comprehensively includes all reported instances of movement restrictions in a given month and location, its reporting across different missions is not uniform.

Country	Mission	Incidents of Movement Restrictions	Number of Movement Restriction	Movement Restrictions by Government Actors	Movement Restrictions by Other Actors
Burundi	*ONUB*	1,359	2,718	100 %	2 %
CAR	*MINUSCA* *MINURCAT*	4,669	110,919	75.6 %	43.5 %
Chad	*MINURCAT*	25	51	84 %	16 %
Côte d'Ivoire	*UNOCI*	1,873	3,880	43.7 %	57.8 %
DRC	*MONUC* *MONUSCO*	12,394	27,962	30.53 %	86.25 %
Ethiopia	*UNMEE*	582	9,196	100 %	-
Eritrea	*UNMEE*	1,003	119,840	100 %	-
Liberia	*UNMIL*	4	14	-	100 %
Mali	*MINUSMA*	503	7,782	81.7 %	30.2 %
South Sudan / Abyei	*UNMISS* *UNISFA*	5,524	25,7189	93.2 %	28.7 %
Sudan	*UNMIS* *UNAMID* *UNITAMS*	10,092	1,255,740	99.22 %	28.66 %
Western Sahara	*MINURSO*	950	171,095	42.1 %	93.1 %

Table 4.2: The table lays out the key dimensions of movement restrictions captured by the data.

In addition, the Geo-MRP provides spatial and temporal insights into movement restrictions throughout the lifespan of the peacekeeping mission. Table 4.3 presents an overview of the proportion of mission time during which movement restrictions occurred, as well as the areas affected during the mission's duration or up until the end of 2023. From 2000 to 2023, UN peacekeeping troops, on average, experienced movement restrictions in 23.21% of the months during their missions, with a median frequency of 20.20%. However, there is considerable variation. UNMIL in Liberia recorded the lowest frequency of incidence, with movement restricted in only 0.02% of the months from 2003 to 2018, while MINURSO in Western Sahara experienced the highest frequency, with restrictions in 82.5% of the months from 2000 to 2023. Over time, 9 out of 15 peacekeeping missions experienced movement restrictions across 100% of the country at some point between 2000 and 2023.

Country	Mission	Percentage of Restricted Months	Extent of Area with Restrictions
Burundi	*ONUB*	33.6%	100%
CAR	*MINUSCA* *MINURCAT*	41.3%	100%
Chad	*MINURCAT*	0.89%	7.1%
Côte d'Ivoire	*UNOCI*	10.9%	100%
DRC	*MONUC* *MONUSCO*	22.8%	100%
Ethiopia	*UNMEE*	6.5%	100%
Eritrea	*UNMEE*	17.6%	32.8%
Liberia	*UNMIL*	0.02%	0.74%
Mali	*MINUSMA*	7.9%	100%
South Sudan / Abyei	*UNMISS* *UNISFA*	30.9%	100%
Sudan	*UNMIS* *UNAMID* *UNITAMS*	23.6%	100%
Western Sahara	*MINURSO*	82.5%	100%

Table 4.3: The temporal and spatial occurrence of movement restriction of UN peacekeeping troops between 2000 and 2023 for countries hosting UN peacekeeping missions.

Some cases, such as MINURSO in Western Sahara, exhibit extremely high restriction frequencies. This is largely due to the administrative structure of reporting—Western Sahara has only four administrative units, meaning that even a single restriction can appear disproportionately high when aggregated. Furthermore, as the reporting takes place every six months, a movement restriction is reported as being in place for a long duration. This issue persists even when using PRIO-grid cells, as UN reports consistently reference the same administrative units.

4.2.8 Comparison Across Countries

Since the countries vary in both their number of units and the duration of UN peacekeeping missions, I create three variables to allow for comparisons across countries, presenting the data

in a comparative format: incidents per unit (IPU), incidents per month (IPM), and incidents per month per unit—the Composite Metric (CM)—to enable comparison of movement restrictions across countries with peacekeeping missions. This is illustrated in Graph 4.1 below.

Incidents per Unit (IPU): The IPU is calculated as the total number of incidents divided by the total number of administrative units in the country. This metric helps to normalise the data based on the geographic scope of the country.

Incidents per Month (IPM): The IPM measures the rate of incidents over time and is calculated by dividing the total number of incidents by the total duration of the mission in months. This accounts for the temporal aspect of the mission's presence.

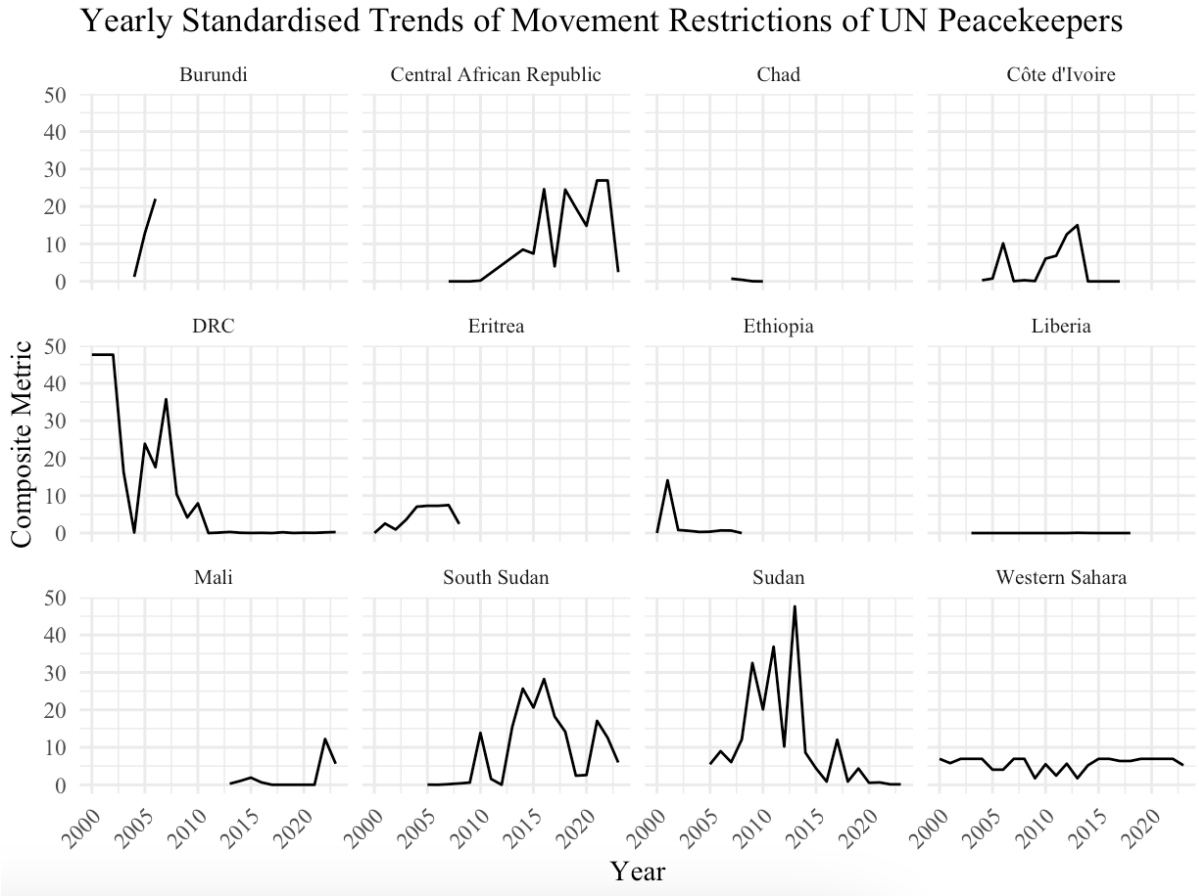
Composite Metric (CM): The CM is the mean of the IPU and IPM. This accounts for both the temporal and spatial differentiations across the missions. The CM thus represents a single figure for each country that reflects both the intensity of movement restrictions per administrative unit and per month.

There is significant variability in movement restrictions among countries. For instance, the Central African Republic and South Sudan have high values in both total movement restrictions and the composite metric, indicating severe and widespread enforcement of movement restrictions. Furthermore, the Composite Metric reveals countries where movement restrictions are both frequent and widespread across administrative units. Western Sahara, despite its lower number of administrative units, shows a high composite metric due to intense restrictions per unit. Conversely, some countries like Liberia and Chad report very low numbers in all categories of movement restrictions, suggesting either effective peacekeeping, stable conditions, or potentially underreporting of movement restrictions. Year-over-year analysis (as visualised above) shows fluctuating levels of movement restrictions, reflecting the dynamic nature of political and military situations in these regions.

The data highlights the challenging environments in which UN peacekeepers operate. High restriction levels in countries like the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Sudan are closely interlinked with ongoing conflicts and complex humanitarian crises. In contrast, lower levels of movement restrictions in places like Liberia, following peace agreements, indicate a possible return to stability. The disparity in incidents per unit and per month across countries underscores the varied strategies and operational challenges faced by peacekeepers.
Regions with high incidents per unit but lower incidents per month suggest sporadic but intense periods of restriction, possibly aligned with specific military or political events.

In some cases, restricted movement may result in mission inefficiencies rather than alternative deployments. Interviews suggest that peacekeepers do not always reallocate efforts

to equally important locations after being denied access (Sebastián and Gorur 2018). Instead, they often remain in areas with limited mobility – for example, in Eritrea, where night patrols, highway use, and direct flights were prohibited. This significantly increased operational costs while reducing mission effectiveness.



Graph 4.1: The distribution of movement restrictions across time from 2000 to 2024 across all 12 countries. The graph represents the composite metric of movement restriction incidents – the geometric mean of incidents per unit and incidents per month – to allow for standardisation across countries.

In Appendix 4, I also normalise the start year of the peacekeeping mission, from year 1 to year 23, to control for and inspect time trends in movement restrictions of UN peacekeeping missions. It is possible that the presence of movement restrictions is time-sensitive: over time, the United Nations may report an increase in movement restrictions, or the relationship between the host state and the UN may deteriorate.

Yet, I find that time is not related to reported movement restrictions. Furthermore, I find no pattern between time and movement restrictions across countries. Instead, the reporting of movement restrictions both drops and peaks over time across different countries. This indicates that the data on movement restrictions is not a direct product of reporting trends, nor

does time alone lead to increased movement restrictions. Other factors thus determine the increase of local movement restrictions for UN peacekeepers within a country.

4.3 Data Limitations

This dataset represents the first systematic effort to track reported movement restrictions in UN peacekeeping missions. As such, it should be seen as an initial attempt to conceptualise, operationalise, and measure a relevant political phenomenon in conflict resolution processes. However, as this is the first attempt, several limitations affect the data's coverage, accuracy, and interpretability. These limitations stem primarily from underreporting and selection bias, data granularity and standardisation issues, political and temporal distortions, and restricted access to classified UN records. While these constraints must be acknowledged, and the data must be interpreted as an under-representation of the true scale, appropriate methodological adjustments can mitigate their effects. Nevertheless, the dataset remains a valuable contribution to understanding peacekeeping access restrictions.

Underreporting and Selection Bias: The dataset is collected from text in the UN mission reports to the UN Security Council, which, by nature, is not a neutral reporting mechanism. These reports are political and sensitive to changes and dynamics on the ground. As a result, they are unlikely to systematically record all movement restrictions that peacekeepers encounter. Reporting can be shaped by political considerations, negotiation dynamics, and self-censorship. Some missions may underreport restrictions due to host-government pressure, while others may document them more comprehensively. Further, there is a potential for omitted variable bias: if UN peacekeepers are aware that their movement is likely to be restricted in a specific location, they might not attempt to deploy there. This behaviour leads to an omission that does not capture the true extent of host-government obstruction. Consequently, the dataset may introduce selection bias, as it excludes informal or unrecorded restrictions, potentially underestimating the actual impact.

Data Granularity: The level of detail in UN reports varies across missions and over time, creating inconsistencies in spatial and temporal coverage. Some reports provide precise geographic coordinates, detailed timeframes, and descriptive accounts, while others offer only broad summaries. Additionally, reporting styles may shift with changes in mission leadership, affecting the consistency of recorded restrictions. These discrepancies limit the dataset's ability

to systematically map movement restrictions with uniform precision, making direct cross-mission comparisons less reliable. Furthermore, the data is limited in its granularity and scale: a movement restriction lasting for one day in a month and one lasting for thirty days are recorded identically. Similarly, movement restrictions affecting a specific point and those impacting an entire town are documented in the same way. There is therefore scope for future research to disentangle the different time frames and geographical scales to provide a more nuanced understanding of movement restrictions.

Restricted Data: The UN maintains an internal, classified database on Status of Forces Agreement (SOFA) violations, which includes detailed records of movement restrictions. However, these records remain inaccessible due to political sensitivities and confidentiality concerns. This limitation means that the dataset reflects only publicly reported restrictions and excludes a potentially significant body of data on unreported or politically sensitive access constraints. Without access to these classified materials, the dataset cannot fully capture the scope of peacekeeping access restrictions. It is therefore certain to represent an under-reported and less granular version of the events occurring on the ground.

Usage of the Data - Mitigation Strategies and Awareness

The dataset offers new and valuable insights into intentional movement restrictions faced by UN peacekeeping missions. Users are advised to carefully read the codebook prior to usage to familiarise themselves with the data, found in Appendix 4. Furthermore, users must approach the data with an understanding of its limitations and biases. This dataset should be viewed as a starting point for broader investigation and analysis, rather than as a comprehensive account of all movement restrictions faced by UN peacekeepers. There is a high assumption that this data captures an under-reported tendency; hence, there is a need to implement systematic measures of movement restrictions and for practitioners to agree on a common definition of movement restrictions. If not, the concept becomes vague and loses its meaning. Despite these constraints, this dataset represents a key step in the future study of peacekeeping movement restrictions.

Unlike previous qualitative assessments of peacekeeping effectiveness, this dataset allows for comparative, data-driven analysis of restricted movement across missions and time periods. While it does not capture all cases of movement restrictions on the ground, it highlights reported obstacles, making it an essential foundation for further research. By incorporating dummy variables to indicate when access challenges are acknowledged in official reports, the

dataset offers a consistent measure of movement restrictions—one that, with future data declassification, can be expanded and refined.

This dataset does not claim to provide a complete record of all peacekeeping access restrictions. Rather, it presents the first systematic, replicable, and structured dataset that advances the study of peacekeeping constraints. Its value lies in enabling researchers to identify patterns, assess the political drivers of movement restrictions, and explore how these constraints shape peacekeeping operations. Future research can build upon this work by integrating alternative data sources and more refined methodologies, ensuring that the study of peacekeeping access continues to evolve.

By encompassing all UN Peacekeeping Missions in Africa with varied mandates, sizes, and scopes, the dataset captures a range of operational dynamics, offering potential insights into trends that recur across different contexts. The dataset benefits from structural similarities across cases (e.g., the presence of UN peacekeepers, host-state consent, and regular reporting), allowing for some cross-mission comparisons, though with attention and awareness of possible measurement biases indicated above. The data reveals that issues like movement restrictions are not unique to a single mission but occur across multiple missions. Additionally, the diversity of mission sizes and mandates allows for some between-mission analysis to explore factors that may enhance or hinder mission effectiveness. However, due to differences in operational environments and reporting standards, these insights should be considered cautiously and within the appropriate context. Within-country analysis, or at least fixed effects, should be considered for further controls.

While limitations such as underreporting and selection bias constrain certain analytical applications, several methodological adjustments can help address them. Implementing fixed effects for both country and time can mitigate inconsistencies in reporting, ensuring that trends are analysed within missions rather than across different reporting styles. This controls for variations in how different peacekeeping operations document movement restrictions. An emphasis on dummy variables instead of the total count of movement restriction events can handle uncertainty. Given the ambiguity surrounding the precise scale of movement restrictions, the dataset focuses on binary indicators (occurrence vs. non-occurrence) rather than absolute counts. This approach avoids misleading inferences based on incomplete quantitative data. Recognising that some restrictions may be politically sensitive and underreported, findings should be interpreted alongside considerations of mission dynamics and host-state relations.

4.4. Data Implication and Future Research

The Geo-MRP dataset represents a significant advancement in peacekeeping research by systematically documenting movement restrictions across UN missions. Understanding access constraints is critical for policymakers and researchers, as it provides insight into the operational limitations of peacekeepers and the strategic behaviour of host-governments. Existing scholarship has established that peacekeeping deployments are not random (Hultman, Kathman and Shannon 2013; Ruggeri, Dorussen and Gizelis 2018), yet most studies focus on where peacekeepers are deployed rather than where they are prevented from going. The Geo-MRP dataset addresses this gap, offering a systematic approach to evaluating how movement restrictions shape mission effectiveness, peacekeeper mobility, and civilian protection.

Systematic tracking of access restrictions improves policy responses and resource allocation. Identifying geographic hotspots of movement restrictions allows for more targeted diplomatic engagement and operational planning. Additionally, by integrating this dataset into forecasting models (Hultman, Leis and Nilsson 2022), researchers can enhance predictions of violence and humanitarian need. The dataset also provides empirical support for past qualitative studies (Sebastián and Gorur 2018; Gregory and Sharland 2023), demonstrating the value of structured reporting in countering retrospective biases in UN mission assessments.

A key example is the case of UNMEE in Ethiopia and Eritrea, where the systematic data expose inconsistencies in official reporting. In his final progress report, Azouz Ennifar, the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, stated that Eritrea imposed movement restrictions "since early 2004." However, a detailed review of mission reports shows that restrictions began as early as 2001, within seven months of deployment. Eritrea never signed a Status of Forces Agreement (SOFA), despite Ethiopia doing so in 2001 (S/2001/202). The first restrictions included roadblocks, denial of low-altitude flights, restricted border crossings, and local staff recruitment bans—a pattern that escalated into severe operational constraints over time (S/2001/608). By 2008, movement restrictions had rendered UNMEE unable to function (S/2008/145). Eritrea strategically denied access to key military zones, particularly Sector Centre and Sector West, where reports suggested Eritrean troop redeployments. Despite multiple warnings from UN officials, the Security Council failed to act decisively until 2008, when Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon formally acknowledged that the mission's mandate had been undermined (S/2008/368). Only then did the Council authorise UNMEE's termination through Resolution S/RES/1827. Earlier systematic reporting of movement restrictions could have informed diplomatic responses and potentially altered the mission's trajectory.

The broader research implications of this dataset extend beyond UNMEE. It enables scholars to investigate the strategic logic of access restrictions—when and why host-governments impose them, how they correlate with key factors such as civilian targeting, and whether they are influenced by conflict intensity, resource distribution, or the presence of foreign military actors. Additionally, it allows researchers to further explore the claims of self-censorship in peacekeeping deployment, where missions avoid deploying to areas they anticipate being denied. While previous research has highlighted the political constraints of host-government consent (Piccolino and Karlsrud 2011; Sebastian and Gorur 2018; Duursma 2019; Fjelde et al. 2019; Villa 2021; Gregory and Sharland 2023;), the Geo-MRP dataset provides the first systematic, cross-mission empirical basis for studying these dynamics at scale.

This dataset also informs the ongoing debate on peacekeeping effectiveness. Studies show that peacekeepers reduce civilian casualties when they are present and mobile (Hultman et al. 2019; Abbi and Duursma 2024), yet mobility is precisely what is restricted in many cases. By documenting where peacekeepers were denied freedom of movement, future research can refine assessments of when and where peacekeeping is operationally effective. Moreover, Gregory and Sharland (2023) argue that movement restrictions should be analysed as part of a broader framework of "peacekeeping obstructions" – including bureaucratic barriers and logistical delays. The Geo-MRP dataset facilitates new inquiries into whether movement restrictions alone, or in conjunction with other forms of obstruction, most significantly impact peacekeeping outcomes.

Future research could integrate alternative data sources, such as geospatial monitoring, diplomatic cables, or peacekeeper interviews, to cross-validate reported restrictions. Additionally, increased transparency within UN reporting mechanisms could improve systematic data collection. Despite these constraints, with appropriate methodological measures, this dataset represents a strong contribution to the study of peacekeeping movement restrictions. It is the first effort to systematically document and analyse where and when peacekeepers face access constraints, providing new empirical insights into the strategic use of movement restrictions by host-governments.

In sum, the Geo-MRP dataset provides an empirical foundation for understanding additional constraints faced by UN peacekeeping missions. By systematically documenting movement restrictions over space and time, it enables more accurate evaluations of mission effectiveness, host-government strategies, and policy responses. The findings underscore the importance of systematic data collection from the outset of a mission, rather than relying on

retrospective reporting, which may misrepresent the severity and duration of access restrictions. Future research should continue refining methodologies for tracking movement restrictions, expanding coverage beyond Africa, and integrating movement data into broader analyses of peacekeeping effectiveness. Ultimately, this dataset advances both academic debates and policy discussions on the future of UN peacekeeping in complex conflict environments.

4.5 Conclusions

This chapter introduced the Geocoded Movement Restrictions of Peacekeepers (Geo-MRP) dataset, which provides new data on sub-national movement restrictions of 15 UN missions in 12 African countries between 2000 and 2023. As the first dataset to map and geo-reference the time and place of movement restrictions experienced by UN peacekeepers, it enables scholars to pose new questions about the dynamics of UN peacekeeping missions and third-party interventions. The dataset offers information on the occurrence and duration of movement restrictions faced by UN peacekeepers in the field and distinguishes whether restrictions were imposed by government entities or other actors. This differentiation is critical, as it allows for a nuanced analysis of interactions between UN peacekeepers and various local actors, contributing to a deeper understanding of the operational challenges faced in the field.

The analysis reveals significant variance in the frequency and scope of movement restrictions, with some missions, such as UNMIL in Liberia, experiencing restrictions in only 0.02% of the months from 2003 to 2018, while others, like MINURSO in Western Sahara, encountered restrictions in 82.5% of the months between 2000 and 2023. Furthermore, the data indicate that in nine of the seventeen missions, movement restrictions encompassed the entire country at some point, highlighting the extensive barriers peacekeepers can face.

The implications of these findings are substantial for policy-making and operational strategies in peacekeeping. With a clearer picture of where, when, and how movement restrictions occur, policymakers and practitioners can better allocate resources and design interventions that enhance the accessibility and effectiveness of peacekeeping operations. This dataset, therefore, serves as a valuable tool for improving the strategic deployment of peacekeeping forces and adapting their approaches to meet the complex demands of different conflict environments. It acknowledges local actors not merely as recipients of intervention but as strategic actors capable of influencing the location of UN peacekeepers on the ground.

Looking forward, the Geo-MRP dataset lays the groundwork for further research into the factors driving movement restrictions and their impact on the success of peacekeeping missions. Future studies could investigate the specific conditions under which movement restrictions are more likely to occur and examine the strategies that different actors employ to impose or counteract these restrictions. Such research would not only enrich our understanding of the tactical aspects of peacekeeping but also contribute to broader discussions on conflict resolution and international relations.

By providing a systematic way to quantify and analyse movement restrictions, this dataset can enhance academic discourse on peacekeeping and offer practical insights that could inform more effective peacekeeping practices and its relations with host-governments. It underscores the importance of access for missions and sets the stage for continued research into how movement restrictions at the sub-national level affect the overall outcomes of peacekeeping efforts.

Chapter 5 - Preventing UN's Access After Violence on Civilians

In March 2022, over 500 people were killed in the village of Moura in central Mali by the Malian Armed Forces, foreign military personnel, and Russian mercenaries (OHCHR 2023). At the time, Mali was hosting a UN peacekeeping mission – the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali (MINUSMA). The mission was mandated to protect civilians from violence and to "monitor, help investigate, and report to the Council on any abuses or violations of human rights" (S/RES/2039:8). Yet, when attempting to access Moura, the Malian government refused to grant access before, during, or after the attack (S/2023/402; UK FCDO 2023; OHCHR 2023). Analysts have argued that this restriction was part of a broader strategy by the Malian government to limit MINUSMA's freedom of movement, including targeting UN peacekeepers with Malian Armed helicopters and breaching the Status of Forces Agreement (SOFA) (UK FCDO 2023).

A year later, the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) released a report detailing systematic human rights abuses committed by the Malian Armed Forces, noting that the government continued to block investigators' access to Moura (OHCHR 2023). In response, the Malian government accused the UN of espionage and, on 16 June 2023, withdrew its consent for MINUSMA, demanding the mission's immediate departure (S/PV.9350; OHCHR 2023). This sequence of events reinforced the prevailing narrative that MINUSMA ultimately lost host-government consent due to its exposure of human rights violations (Brooke-Holland 2023; Sauter 2024). Despite restricting the UN's local access, the Malian government did thus not evade the costs of peacekeepers' presence; instead, it replaced MINUSMA with the Russian private military group Wagner, albeit not as an initial intention (Giustozzi 2024).

This raises a crucial question: how do host-governments strategically restrict UN peacekeeping access, particularly after committing one-sided violence against civilians? In Chapter 2, I introduced the theory of access, outlining the interests and power of the host-government in influencing the physical access of UN peacekeepers on the ground. I argue that host-governments have greater power over peacekeeping access and in turn operations than previously acknowledged, particularly at the sub-national level.

In this chapter, I operationalise the theoretical propositions of where UN peacekeepers are likely to experience access restrictions – specifically, where their presence imposes a negative cost on the host-government. I test a key hypothesis of host-government strategic incentives: to prevent peacekeepers' access in areas where it has committed one-sided violence against civilians. For this analysis, I adopt the Uppsala Conflict Data Program's (UCDP 2024:3) definition of civilians as "unarmed people who are not active members of the security forces of the state, or members of an organised armed militia or opposition group."

My findings demonstrate a strong association between movement restrictions imposed on UN peacekeepers and prior one-sided violence against civilians in the same geographic areas. Disaggregating the analysis by perpetrator shows that movement restrictions are closely associated with host-government violence, while rebel-perpetrated violence shows little to no such association. Across 12 countries over a 23-year period, a clear pattern emerges: after host-governments target civilians, they are significantly more likely to restrict peacekeeper access to those areas. Controlling for battle deaths, the study also finds that movement restrictions increase following rebel battle deaths, but not following government battle deaths. This supports the broader claim that host-governments maintain significant power over the access of peacekeeping operations and may strategically restrict access when international oversight threatens their interests.

These findings build on existing scholarship underscoring the importance of host-government cooperation in successful peacekeeping (e.g., Fortna 2008; Sebastian and Gorur 2018; Hultman et al. 2019; Gregory and Sharland 2023; Duursma et al. 2024; Sauter 2024). However, it also indicates that new institutional mechanisms are required to maintain operational access when the peace process challenges state interests. In particular, the findings underscore the need for a deeper understanding of how host-governments can undermine UN mandates through access restrictions, especially when they hold strategic incentives to continue violence.

While this chapter focuses on one key factor – prior one-sided violence against civilians – it represents only part of the broader picture. Other dynamics may influence whether the UN gains access or not. Future research should explore additional forms of violence, other strategic interests of host-governments, patterns of civilian displacement, and temporal variations in movement restrictions. A deeper understanding of these mechanisms would enhance the field's comprehension of how peacekeeper mobility is shaped on the ground and, in turn, how mandates are implemented.

The findings of this chapter have implications. They suggest that the host-government possesses substantial power over peacekeepers' access, using it as a strategic instrument to restrict international monitoring, reporting, and interference of its host-government-atrocities. Recognising this dynamic calls for new and enhanced tools to monitor, anticipate, and respond to movement restrictions, particularly following government-perpetrated violence. This includes remote monitoring capabilities, systematic documentation of movement restrictions, and diplomatic mechanisms to protect peacekeepers' access during sensitive phases of the peace process. Ultimately, understanding where and how host-governments exercise their power of access to shape the effectiveness of peacekeeping is essential for designing more resilient and responsive missions.

5.1 Observable Hypotheses

In this chapter, I lay out and test the hypothesis of a relationship between prior one-sided violence against civilians and movement restrictions imposed on United Nations peacekeeping operations. I build on the theory developed in Chapter 2, which posits that host-governments can strategically restrict peacekeeper access when their interests diverge from the principles of the UN mission. Specifically, I examine whether movement restrictions are associated with one-sided violence against civilians committed by different actors -. government forces or rebel groups. I further control for confounding factors and run robustness checks, extending Chapter 3 by accounting for the settlement patterns of politically relevant ethnic groups.

While prior work has examined how peacekeepers respond to violence (Ruggeri et al. 2017; Fjelde et al. 2019; Abbs and Duursma 2024), less is known about whether and how host-governments strategically and systematically use their power of access to manipulate peacekeepers' reach to areas with violence. This chapter addresses that gap.

Recall that UN peacekeeping operates on three foundational principles: impartiality, host-government consent, and the limited use of force. In situations where the host-government itself is the perpetrator of violence, these principles can come into direct conflict with the mission. The mission is mandated to protect civilians and report on violations, yet its ability to function depends on the host-government's ongoing consent. I argue, in line with previous research, that host-governments may respond to this dilemma by restricting peacekeeper access to specific areas, particularly when peacekeeper presence threatens to expose or interfere with their actions (Sebastian and Gorur 2018; Yuen 2019; Duursma 2021; Gregory and Sharland 2023; Duursma et al. 2024). These restrictions may include blocked checkpoints, denied travel

clearances, or logistical delays, all of which undermine the peacekeeping mandate at the local level. In turn, I introduce four hypotheses and a null hypothesis.

This chapter does not seek to explain why parties to civil war engage in violence against civilians – a question addressed extensively in the literature on wartime strategies and group survival (Downes 2008; Kalyvas 2006; Balcells and Kalyvas 2014; Shesterinina 2022). Rather, it builds on the assumption that one-sided violence against civilians is a prevalent strategy employed by both state and non-state actors to extract resources, signal strength, secure territory, and maintain political control (Hultman et al. 2013; Dorff, Gallop, and Minhas 2023; Arjona 2017). What follows is the proposition that restricting or enabling access to third-party actors—such as UN peacekeepers—may form part of the strategic calculus of host-governments. Movement restrictions offer the opportunity to limit operational activity from international scrutiny, manage public perception, and assert sovereignty (Autesserre 2010; Piccolino and Karlsrud 2011; Guéhenno 2015; Sebastian and Gorur 2018; Gregory and Sharland 2023).

In ethnically polarised conflicts, where ethnic constituencies form the basis of political power and legitimacy (Wimmer, Cederman, and Min 2009), the host-government has particular incentives to protect co-ethnics from rebel violence or, conversely, to carry out reprisals in rebel-dominated areas without UN interference. Strategic manipulation of peacekeepers' access may reflect broader wartime logics of civilian victimisation and control. When governments anticipate civilian victimisation or plan to conduct such operations themselves, limiting the access of peacekeepers may reduce reputational costs or legal consequences. These logics are especially prevalent in ethnically defined spaces, where the identity of victims and perpetrators can carry direct implications for regime legitimacy and international image (Cederman, Gleditsch, and Buhaug 2013).

Governments often target civilians to suppress opposition (Valentino, Huth, and Croco 2006), seize territory and resources (Downes 2011), or separate rebels from their support base (Azam and Hoeffler 2002). These actions, when exposed, carry reputational and legal costs (Piccolino and Karlsrud 2011; de Waal 2015). The presence of peacekeepers is designed to amplify these risks by introducing international monitoring and potential accountability mechanisms (Fortna 2008; Ruggeri et al. 2017).

Host-governments may respond to international mandates with selective access. As the sovereign consent-giver, the host-government has both the authority and capability to obstruct peacekeeper movement. By denying access to areas where government forces have engaged in one-sided violence against civilians, the host-government can seek to avoid scrutiny, reduce

external interference, and maintain strategic flexibility. This leads to the expectation that government violence is associated with limited access at the local level through movement restrictions.

Regarding timing, there is an expectation that the host-government restricts peacekeepers' access before, during, and after one-sided violence against civilians to limit scrutiny, cover up evidence, and prevent interference. Accordingly, I hypothesise that:

> **H1***: Government-perpetrated one-sided violence against civilians is associated with increased movement restrictions of UN peacekeepers in the affected areas.*

In contrast, rebel groups do not possess national consent over peacekeeping presence in the country, nor do they have bargaining power over UN missions and their access. When rebel groups engage in violence against civilians, particularly in contested or government-aligned areas, the host-government may find strategic value in facilitating UN deployments. Doing so can highlight rebel atrocities, restore order, and signal state responsiveness in cooperation with the international community.

Rebel groups may use violence against civilians to extract resources, disrupt rival support, or strengthen ethnic cohesion (Wood 2016). In response, the host-government may welcome and even assist the access of peacekeepers to stabilise affected areas, reinforce ceasefire lines, or reassert state authority - particularly in contexts marked by weak state capacity (Gilligan and Stedman 2003). Peacekeepers may also help provide security and public goods in rebel-held areas (Ruggeri, Dorussen, and Gizelis 2017). Given this, I expect that rebel-perpetrated one-sided violence (OSV) is generally followed by reduced movement restrictions on peacekeepers. Since I anticipate access to be facilitated, I expect it to be granted prior, during, and after OSV. In other words, UN peacekeepers should have more access to areas where rebel groups perpetrate OSV. This leads to the following hypothesis:

> **H2**: *Rebel-perpetrated one-sided violence against civilians is associated with reduced movement restrictions of UN peacekeepers to the affected areas.*

Is the effect of rebel-perpetrated one-sided violence on peacekeeper access likely to be uniform across space? I expect access to areas with host-government-perpetrated one-sided violence to be restricted regardless of where it is committed. However, there are reasons to believe this may not hold for rebel-perpetrated violence. In particular, the political relevance of the area

where the civilian group is targeted - and the host-government's relationship to that group—may condition the strategic incentive for allowing or restricting peacekeeper access.

This builds on the findings of Chapter 3, where I demonstrated that peacekeepers are deployed more frequently, for longer periods, and in greater numbers in areas with rebel-supportive ethnic groups. In conflicts with an ethnic component, civilians are often targeted or protected based on their affiliation to the belligerent parties (Wimmer, Cederman, and Min 2009; Cederman, Gleditsch, and Buhaug 2013). Rebel OSV against civilians in government-aligned areas may provoke different strategic calculations regarding peacekeeper access compared to violence in rebel-supportive regions. Accordingly, I disaggregate H2 into two competing hypotheses, based on whether rebel-perpetrated violence occurs in politically relevant ethnic areas.

When rebel groups attack civilians in areas associated with ethnic groups represented in the government, the host-government may facilitate local UN peacekeeping presence. Civilian support is vital in civil wars, not only for logistical and intelligence purposes (Kalyvas 2006; Wood 2003) but also for regime legitimacy and long-term political survival. In such contexts, rapid UN deployment can signal state strength, humanitarian commitment, and partnership with the international community.

Facilitating peacekeeper access allows the host-government to externalise blame, enhance its international standing, and stabilise its support base (Fortna 2008). For these reasons, I expect that rebel-perpetrated one-sided violence in government-represented ethnic areas is associated with reduced movement restrictions on UN peacekeepers.

> **H2a:** *Rebel-perpetrated one-sided violence in areas with civilians associated with the host-government sees reduced movement restrictions of UN peacekeepers.*

Alternatively, the host-government may restrict peacekeeper access in areas with rebel-perpetrated OSV and government-represented ethnic groups, reflecting findings from Chapter 3. While this may appear contradictory, it can allow the host-government to maintain full control over its military and political response without international oversight. Rebel violence in government-aligned areas can trigger retaliation, particularly in the form of counterinsurgency or counterterrorism operations (Kalyvas 2006; Lyall and Wilson 2009; Autesserre 2010).

If the host-government anticipates international scrutiny, it may deny access to peacekeepers to conduct operations without external monitoring in its constituencies. Rebel

OSV in an area with government-represented ethnic groups may also prompt narratives that the UN was ineffective at protecting civilians in the first place. Movement restrictions, in this sense, can serve both tactical and symbolic purposes—shielding controversial actions while reinforcing narratives of sovereignty and strength to its co-ethnics. In highly nationalist or postcolonial settings, where UN peacekeeping may be viewed with suspicion (Autesserre 2010), the government may prefer to demonstrate autonomy and sovereignty rather than cooperation (Guéhenno 2015; Sebastian and Gorur 2018).

Thus, I hypothesise that rebel OSV in government-aligned areas can, as an alternative, be associated with increased movement restrictions for strategic concealment of retaliation and the reinforcement of sovereign control, and hypothesise the following:

> **H2b:** *Rebel-perpetrated one-sided violence in areas with civilians associated with the host-government sees increased movement restrictions of UN peacekeepers.*

If no relationship is observed between OSV and movement restrictions, it may suggest that movement restrictions are shaped by other factors. These may be structural, institutional, or logistical factors that have stronger explanatory power than recent violence against civilians. For example, weak coordination, deteriorating UN–host-government relations over time, or entrenched patterns of bureaucratic obstruction may explain variations in access (Sebastian and Gorur 2018). Further, additional explanatory factors suitable for future research may include natural resources, border areas, population displacement, conflict intensity, or industrial sites.

This reinforces the understanding that the null hypothesis is not merely a default or throwaway but a meaningful baseline. Understanding whether movement restrictions are a response to one-sided violence against civilians, or shaped by broader institutional dynamics or other factors, is central to evaluating the strategic power over access in UN peacekeeping missions, its impact on UN effectiveness, and its policy responses.

H0: *Movement restrictions of UN peacekeepers are not related to one-sided-violence.*

5.2 Research Design

5.2.1 Data

To analyse the occurrence of movement restrictions on peacekeepers following one-sided violence against civilians, I conduct a sub-national statistical analysis across 12 African

countries and 15 UN peacekeeping missions. Unlike Chapter 3, which focuses on deployment patterns of robust missions, this chapter includes all UN peacekeeping missions with a local operational presence, regardless of mandate type. This broader inclusion reflects the shift in analytical focus: from explaining where peacekeepers are deployed, to understanding where access is strategically restricted by host-governments following violence. In such contexts, even observer or political missions may face access restrictions to location of violence to limit peacekeepers observation and reporting of the event.

The research design includes both intrastate and interstate conflicts, as the core mechanism under investigation — strategic access restriction by host-governments — applies across conflict types as the host-governments' power-relation to vis-à-vis the UN remains the theoretical foundation.[3] While the nature of conflict may differ, the political logic behind denying peacekeeper access remains comparable, particularly where international scrutiny or intervention is negatively perceived. Including a wider range of missions and conflict types allows for a comprehensive assessment of access dynamics and host-government behaviour. The 12 countries and 15 corresponding missions in the following analysis thus are: Burundi (ONUB), Central African Republic (MINUSCA, MINURCAT), Chad (MINURCAT), Democratic Republic of Congo (MONUC, MONUSCO), Eritrea (UNMEE), Ethiopia (UNMEE), Ivory Coast (UNOCI), Liberia (UNMIL), Mali (MINUSMA), South Sudan (UNMISS), Sudan (UNMIS, UNAMID, UNISFA), and Western Sahara (MINURSO).

5.2.2 Temporal and Spatial Scope of Research

The study focuses on the period from 2000 to 2023. It is confined to the period post-2000 due to significant changes in the mandates of peacekeepers. In 1999, the UN Security Council adopted Resolution S/RES/1265, which for the first time mandated peacekeepers to take necessary actions to protect civilians under imminent threat of physical violence. Since then, Lloyd (2021) notes that all missions in Africa have been equipped with robust mandates, distinctively impacting the outcomes of peacekeeping missions compared to earlier efforts. As such, this research focuses on the post 2000. However, for third-party interventions like UN peacekeeping missions, there are strong reasons to believe that consent and in turn access has always been used as a tool by host-governments on the local level.

Future research lies in expanding data collection to note whether movement restrictions were strategically used pre-2000. Observations and reporting by UN Peacekeepers do bring a

[3] A core limitation on the data and framework is related to the impact of neighbouring or invested states which are not consent guarantors to the UN Peacekeeping Mission yet restrict UN Peacekeepers' access.

cost to actors with intent to break a peace agreement, for example through re-deployment of forces, targeting of civilians, or annexing resources. For example, UNEF I established in 1956 in Gaza and Egypt following the Suez crisis did not see the consent for freedom of movement by Israel, and further lost freedom of movement followed by the consent of Egypt in 1967 prior to the six-days war.

5.2.3 Unit of Analysis

The unit of analysis for this study is monthly municipality-level units, referred to as administrative level 2 (admin2) in this spatial analysis. This granularity enables a detailed sub-national approach and represents the second-smallest administrative division within a country. These boundaries reflect how movement restrictions are reported and operationalised in practice — through formal requests, permissions, or denials at the district or municipal level. Municipal units also account for geographical features such as mountains and rivers, which often serve as natural administrative dividers (Carter and Goemans 2011).

Using municipal units is also a direct reflection of the structure of the underlying movement restriction dataset, which is collected, reported, and coded at the admin2 level. Adopting a PRIO-GRID approach like in Chapter 3 would require artificially rasterizing these administrative units into uniform spatial cells, potentially misrepresenting the reported location of access restrictions and disconnecting the analysis from the way peacekeeping operations are structured and recorded. Monthly observations are used to capture the temporal dynamics of both violence and peacekeeper access, enabling a time-sensitive analysis of spatial restriction patterns. The dataset includes all administrative units within countries hosting a UN mission, from the mission's inception to its conclusion, covering a total of 196,470 observations across 1,169 administrative units and 1,910 monthly entries.

5.2.4 Dependent Variable

The dependent variable in this study is the reported movement restrictions of UN Peacekeepers, analysed as an event within administrative units over individual months. This information is derived from the Geo-MRP dataset, introduced in Chapter 4. The dataset compiles all declassified peacekeeping mission reports submitted by the UN Secretary-General to the UN Security Council. It documents each instance of reported movement restriction faced by UN Peacekeepers in the field, based on the text in these reports, mapping the location, date, and actor of movement restriction.

The dependent variable of movement restrictions is operationalised as binary, indicating whether or not a location experienced restrictions on UN peacekeepers' movement within a particular month. A value of 1 indicates one or more reported incidents of movement restrictions to or within a given area during a given time. As illustrated in Figure 5.1, out of 196,470 total observations, there are 38,978 instances, or about 19.8%, where administrative units experienced restricted movement of UN peacekeepers over time. As such, the median for the dummy variable is 0, while the mean is 0.2 and the standard deviation is approximately 0.4.

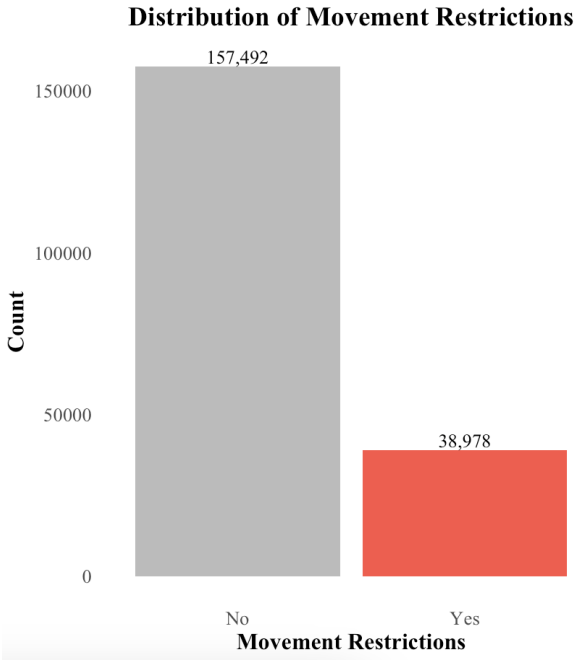


Figure 5.1: Overview of distribution of units of analysis with movement restrictions across the dataset, 12 countries from 2000 to 2024 with 196,470 osb. About 19.8% of the units report movement restrictions (red).

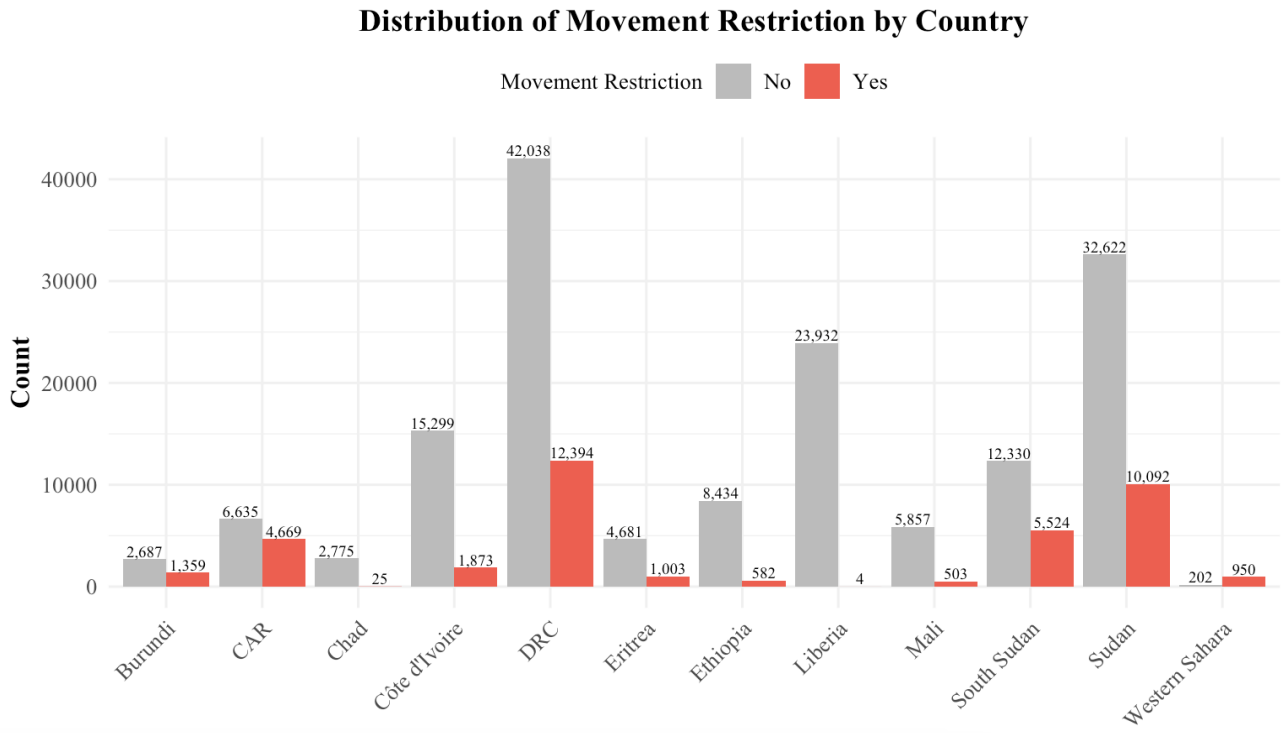
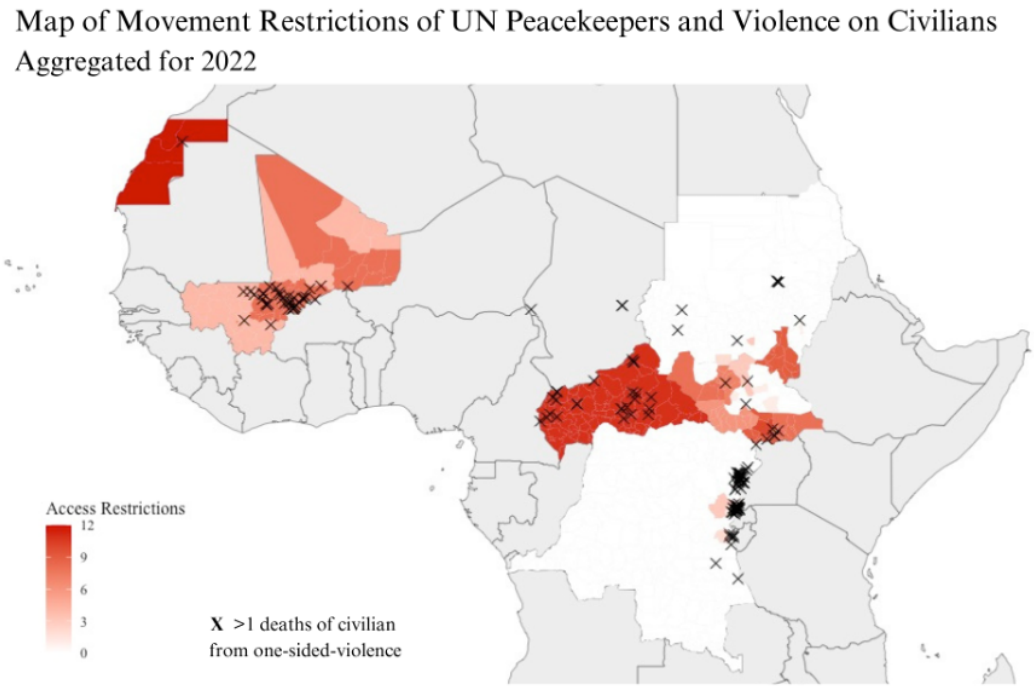


Figure 5.2: The table lays out the distribution of movement restrictions across countries hosting UN Peacekeeping missions from 2000 to 2023. Note that this captures both the duration of the peacekeeping missions, and the spatial scope of the country.

Further, the dependent variable is distributed differently across the 12 countries hosting a UN peacekeeping mission, as illustrated in Figure 5.2. The distribution reflects not only the occurrence of movement restrictions but also the length of the peacekeeping mission and the administrative arrangement of the country at the administrative level. To account for this variability, the analysis includes both spatial fixed effects and temporal fixed effects. Additionally, the appendix provides robustness checks for these controls.

5.2.5 Independent Variables

The independent variable of this analysis is one-sided violence, specifically one-sided violence against civilians. To statistically analyse the relationship between civilian-targeted violence and movement restrictions, I utilise data from the UCDP Georeferenced Event Dataset (GED) Global version 23.1 (Davies et al. 2023; Sundberg and Melander 2013). One-sided violence (OSV) is defined as "the use of armed force by the government of a state or by a formally organised group against civilians, resulting in at least 25 deaths per year per actor" (Högbladh 2023). Civilians are described as "unarmed people who are not active members of state security forces or members of an organised armed militia or opposition group" (Högbladh 2023).



Map 5.1: Aggregated reported movement restriction in 2022, and incidents of one-sided-violence on civilians with more than one death from the UCDP dataset.

The independent variable is operationalised in three ways. First, I analyse one-sided violence by all actors as a dummy of more than one death, capturing the aggregate effect of OSV against civilians, irrespective of the perpetrator. Second, I disaggregate the data by actors operationalised as a dummy of more than one death, distinguishing between one-sided violence conducted by the host-government and violence by rebel group actors. Third, I analyse the count of OSV by each actor.

The variables are operationalised as binary, assigned a value of 1 for one or more reported deaths and 0 in cases with no reported civilian casualties in the given month and

location. To satisfy temporal precedence, I lag the independent variable by three months, ensuring that reported violence precedes observed movement restrictions. This choice is grounded in both data structure and theoretical reasoning. First, the primary data source—the UN Secretary-General's Mission Reports – is published on a minimum three-month cycle. Aligning the measurement of violence and movement restrictions to this interval ensures that any restriction recorded is plausibly a response to prior violence, not a concurrent or preceding event. In turn, Map 5.1 illustrates OSV events in relations to reported movement restrictions.

Second, while it is theoretically plausible that movement restrictions could occur before, during, or after episodes of violence, measurement constraints limit the ability to capture such distinctions with precision, as the movement restrictions do not have as precise time stamps as the OSV data. Further, while there may be locations where UN peacekeepers are *de facto* restricted in their access, they are only able to report these restrictions once they attempt to reach the location – an action likely taken after OSV against civilians has occurred.

Nevertheless, I further examine this inverse relationship in Appendix 5 to assess whether movement restrictions may occur prior to violence. However, post-violence restrictions are the most reliably observable, as they reflect both immediate and reactive constraints. The three-month lag, therefore, provides a conservative and theoretically grounded approach to capturing the relationship between civilian targeting and peacekeepers' access.

5.3 Determinants of Movement Restrictions

To analyse how one-sided violence against civilians affects movement restrictions on UN peacekeeping troops, I run statistical regressions on UN peacekeepers' movement restrictions across twelve African countries from 2000 to 2023. This analysis focuses on movement restrictions of UN peacekeepers as a binary dependent variable and one-sided violence against civilians three months prior as the main independent variable. To understand the determinants of peacekeepers' access, I analyse whether the municipality experiences an actor targeting civilians through one-sided violence.

Before presenting the models, I provide an overview of the distribution of movement restrictions of UN peacekeepers and incidents of one-sided violence against civilians. Recall from Figure 5.1 that the dataset includes 196,470 observations at the monthly admin2 level, of which 38,978 (19.8%) report restrictions on the movement of UN peacekeepers. In contrast, incidents of one-sided violence are comparatively rare, occurring in 11,338 cases (5.8%) of the

sample. Below, in Table 5.2, I present how the relationship between one-sided violence and movement restrictions is distributed across the dataset.

	No Movement Restrictions of Peacekeepers	**Movement Restrictions of Peacekeepers**
No Violence on Civilians t-3	75.98% (149,226)	18.27% (35,906)
Violence on Civilians t-3	4.21% (8,266)	1.56% (3,072)

Table 5.2: Shares of all monthly-admin2 observations. Values in parentheses indicate the number of observations. Violence refers to OSV by either government or rebel actors in the past three months.

However, while the overall overlap between one-sided violence (OSV) and movement restrictions is small when considering the entire dataset (1.56%), violence against civilians plays a notable role in explaining movement restrictions where it does occur. On average, one in four of the 11,338 observed cases of OSV is followed by reported restrictions on UN peacekeepers' movement three months later.

Figure 5.3 illustrates the full distribution of OSV incidents in the dataset, disaggregated by perpetrator and whether peacekeeper movement restrictions were subsequently reported. Notably, 38% (1,933) of all cases of government-perpetrated OSV were followed by restrictions on UN peacekeepers' movement. In contrast, while rebel-perpetrated violence was more frequent overall, peacekeeper access was restricted in only 18% (1,139) of these cases.

This descriptive pattern suggests that when UN peacekeepers face movement restrictions following civilian victimisation, it is proportionally more likely to occur in response to violence by the host-government rather than by rebel groups, in line with the expectations set out in Hypotheses 1 and 2. However, these descriptive associations require further analysis to establish whether these patterns hold when controlling for confounding factors.

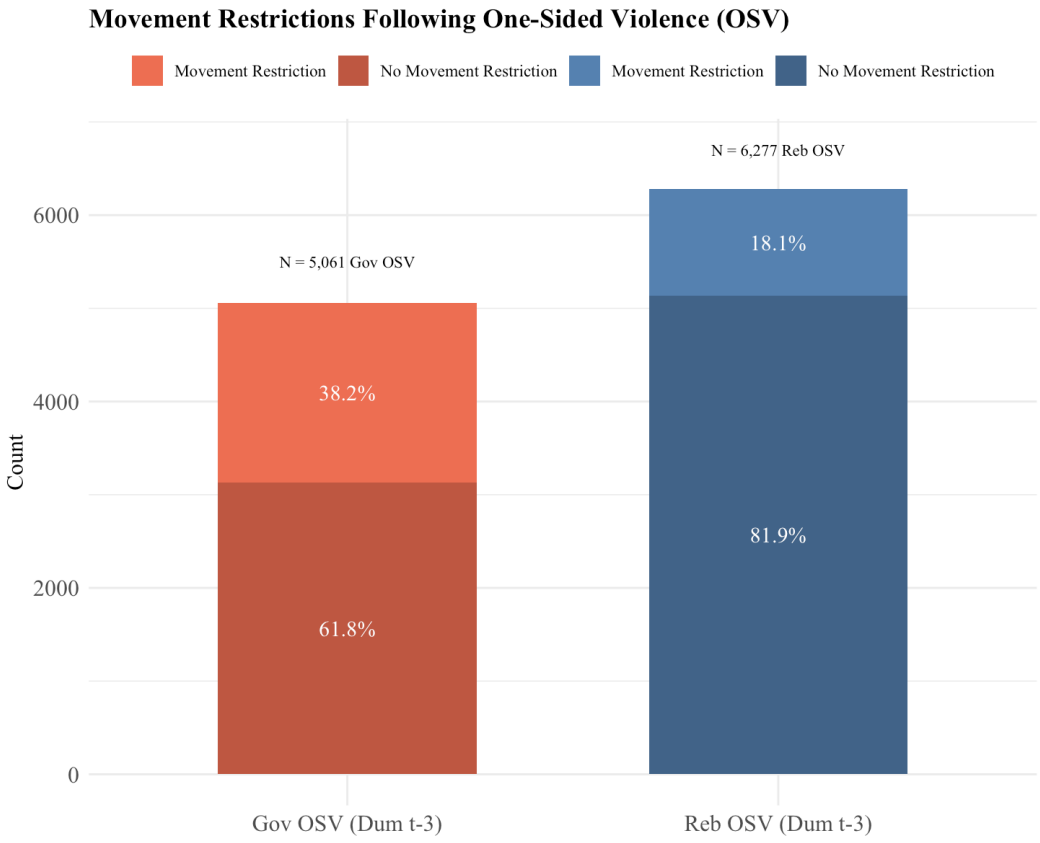


Figure 5.3: Count of all instances of one-sided-violence on civilians in the dataset, and whether movement restrictions of PKOs were reported in the month-admin unit three months later. Access was reported restricted in 1933 cases of gov-osv (38%) and 1139 of rebel-osv (18%).

5.3.1 Baseline Model

To test Hypotheses 1 and 2 for the relationship between movement restrictions of UN peacekeepers and prior violence by rebel groups or the government, I begin by estimating two logistic regression models as a baseline. In these models, the dependent variable is the binary indicator of local movement restrictions on UN peacekeepers. The key independent variable is OSV on civilians three months prior, analysed both aggregates and by government or rebel groups. Standard errors are clustered at the admin2 level, equivalent to the municipal level, to account for potential correlation of errors within units over time.

Table 5.4: Baseline Model - Baseline analysis examining the effect of one-sided violence against civilians on the odds likelihood of movement restrictions. Model 1 captures OSV by all actors, while Model 2

	Dependent variable:	
	Movement Restrictions of UN PKOs	
	(1)	(2)
OSV, *Dum t-3*	0.435***	
	(0.038)	
Gov OSV, *Dum t-3*		0.816***
		(0.044)
Rebel OSV, *Dum t-3*		−0.151**
		(0.072)
Constant	−1.425***	−1.421***
	(0.026)	(0.026)
Observations	196,470	196,470
Log Likelihood	−97,689.600	−97,500.400
Akaike Inf. Crit.	195,403.600	195,037.400
Adj. Pseudo R^2	0.0019	0.0038
Note:	Standard errors clustered at the municipal level	
	*p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01	

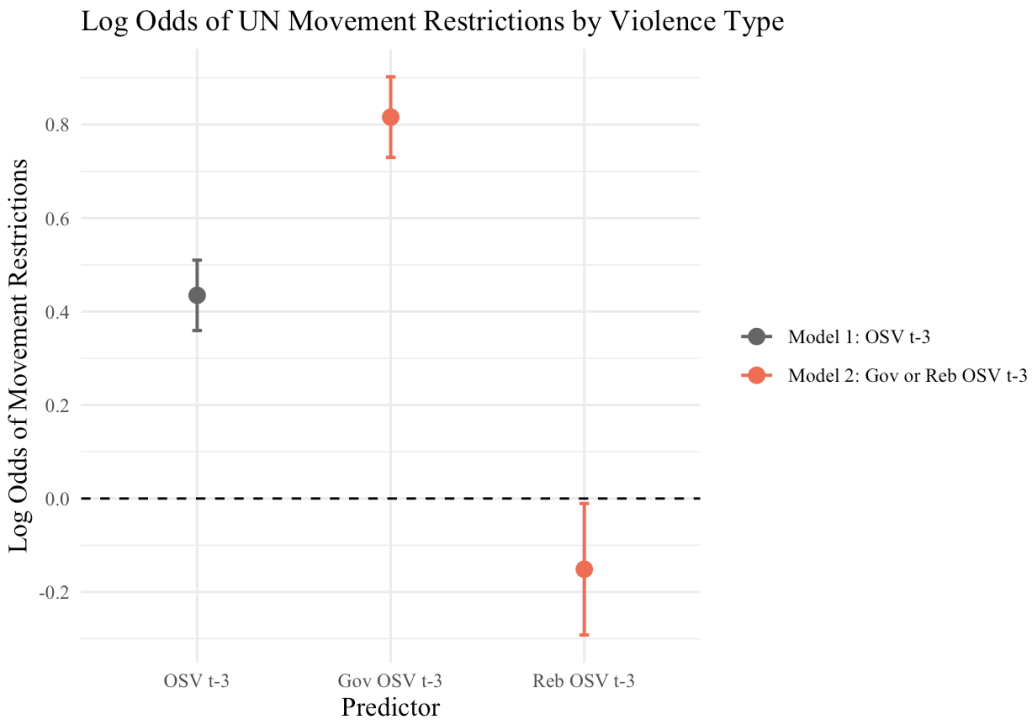
disaggregates OSV based on whether OSV was committed by the host-government or rebel groups three months prior to reported movement restrictions.

Model 1 examines whether any reported OSV, whether perpetrated by government or rebel actors, is associated with movement restrictions. The coefficient of 0.435 ($p < 0.01$) corresponds to a 54% increase in the odds of movement restrictions. Statistically significant when clustered at the municipal level (admin2), the effect suggests that UN operations are more likely to be constrained in contexts where civilians were targeted three months earlier.

Model 2 disaggregates OSV by actor. Government-perpetrated OSV shows a strong and significant effect (coefficient = 0.816, $p < 0.001$), with an odds ratio of 2.26, indicating a 126% increase in the likelihood of movement restrictions. By contrast, prior rebel-perpetrated OSV is associated with a 14% decrease in the odds of movement restrictions on UN peacekeepers (OR = 0.86, $p < 0.05$), indicating a statistically significant negative relationship. These findings support the expectation that host-governments, rather than rebel groups, are more capable of restricting UN access as part of a strategic response to civilian targeting.

Figure 5.4: Point Estimates from Baseline Models 1 and 2

The grey point shows the coefficient from Model 1 in Table 5.4, indicating a positive and statistically significant



association between one-sided violence and movement restrictions across UN peacekeeping missions. The red points represent coefficients from Model 2, disaggregating violence by actor. The results show a stronger effect following government-perpetrated violence, while rebel violence has no significant impact.

Figure 5.4 visualises the log odds from the baseline models in Table 5.4, illustrating the effect of OSV three months prior on movement restrictions of UN peacekeepers. The graph plots the coefficients from both Model 1 and Model 2, reflecting the trends observed in the regression output.

While these baseline models offer initial insight into the relationship between OSV and UN movement constraints (with clustered standard errors at the municipal level /admin2) – they omit important contextual factors. This can be seen from the low Pseudo R^2 scores in Table 5.4, which are 0.0019 for Model 1 and 0.0038 for Model 2. The inclusion of control variables in the following models allows for a more nuanced understanding of the strategic conditions under which host-states restrict peacekeeping operations. Additionally, the models that include fixed effects provide a more robust specification.

5.3.2 Control Variables

I control for several potential confounders to movement restrictions and OSV. Both movement restrictions of UN peacekeeping troops and OSV can be influenced by population density, accessibility, type of terrain, development, and local support for the conflict. These

considerations follow the theorisation by Cil et al. (2020) and further allow for replication. To account for these dynamics, I include six control variables at the admin2 level, drawing on data provided in the codebook of the PRIO-GRID v.2.0: the log of population, the log of the admin2's mean travel time to a city, the mean mountainous terrain, the calibrated mean of night lights density, and the log of the mean infant mortality rate.

Variable	*Mean*	*SD*	*Min*	*Max*	*Obs>0*	*N*
Dependent Variable						
Movement Restriction (MR), *Dum*	0.1984	0.3988	0	1	38,978	196,470
Movement Restriction (MR) #	10.0086	79.7365	0	2433	38,978	196,470
Government MR, *Dum*	0.1378	0.3447	0	1	27,068	196,470
Others MR, *Dum*	0.0968	0.2957	0	1	19,018	196,470
Independent Variable						
One-Sided-Violence (OSV), *Dum t-3*	0.0577	0.2332	0	1	11,338	196,470
Government OSV, *Dum t-3*	0.0288	0.1674	0	1	5,667	196,470
Rebel Group OSV, *Dum t-3*	0.0322	0.1766	0	1	6,331	196,470
Government OSV, *t-3*	0.1598	5.0761	0	1350	6,331	196,470
Rebel Group OSV, *t-3*	0.0520	2.0239	0	537	5,667	196,470
Control Variables						
Political Ethnicity					196,470	196,470
Government					39,763	(20.24%)
Rebel Group					120,357	(61.26%)
Irrelevant					36,350	(18.50%)
Population Density, *Log of Sum*	13.0197	1.0129	9.558	15.758	196,470	196,470
Infant Mortality Rate, *Log of Mean*	6.9675	0.3284	5.966	7.370	196,470	196,470
Mountainous Terrain, *Mean*	0.1431	0.2448	0	0.995	128,200	196,470
Travel Time to City, *Log of Mean*	5.8883	0.5451	4.519	7.873	196,470	196,470
Night Lights, *Calibrated Mean*	0.0547	0.0155	0.021	0.178	196,470	196,470

Table 5.1 : Summary Statistics, 2000-2023

The data on population is from the Gridded Population of the World v4 by SEDAC, where population estimates are available for 2000, 2005, 2010, and 2015. The data on average travel time is from Uchida (2009) and measures the travel time to the nearest city with 50,000 people, drawing on data collected for the EU between 1990 and 2005. The data on mountainous terrain is from UNDP's Mountains of the World by UNEP-WCMC. The data on the calibrated mean of night light density, used as a proxy for development, measures average nighttime light emission from the DMSP-OLS Nighttime Lights Time Series Version 4 (Average Visible, Stable Lights, and Cloud Free Coverages), calibrated to account for intersatellite differences and interannual sensor decay using calibration values from Elvidge et al. (2013), making it more suitable for time-series analysis (Tollefsen et al. 2016). Here, values are standardised to

be between 0 and 1, where 1 represents the highest observed value in the time series and 0 represents the lowest. I draw on the available time series from 2000 to 2012. The data on the infant mortality rate is from raster data from the SEDAC Global Poverty Mapping project from 2000. The original value is the number of children per 10,000 live births who die before reaching their first birthday. The infant mortality rate for South Sudan is extracted from the World Health Organisation at the regional level (admin1) for 2010, under the Global Health Observatory data repository.

Further, I include the settlement of politically relevant ethnic constituencies to account for possible civilian support in the armed conflict. As outlined in Chapter 3, there is a pattern of UN peacekeepers deploying along politically relevant lines. To map the location of politically-relevant-ethnic groups associated with rebel groups and the government, I use the geo-referenced ethnic settlement data from the GeoEPR Dataset. This dataset provides multipolygons corresponding to the EPR dataset, allowing me to map settlement patterns onto administrative units (Wucherpfennig et al. 2011). Overlapping ethnic groups in these patterns pose challenges in operationalising rebel and government constituencies. A note on the GeoEPR data is that while it has yearly variance, it does not capture the movement of people in conflict or internally displaced populations. As such, its interpretive value is based on settlement patterns, often reflecting the situation at the beginning of the conflict. I further elaborate on the coding in Appendix 5.

Following my theoretical framework, - that a host government's incentives for peacekeeping deployment change with the presence of rebel groups - I code all admin2 units with both government-represented ethnic groups and rebel-supportive ethnic groups as rebel supportive ethnic groups. In the appendix of Chapter 3, I conducted robustness checks by coding these mixed cells as government cells. The results consistently indicated negative outcomes for peacekeeping onset, presence, and troop size in government co-ethnic constituencies.

There are also cases where a politically relevant ethnic group is represented in both the government and a rebel group, requiring careful consideration. As detailed in Appendix 5 for South Sudan and Ivory Coast, groups like the Kru and Nuer are treated as rebel-aligned in this analysis due to their fluctuating status over time. Here, I also elaborate on the argument for using ethnic settlement patterns to associate with government and rebel groups.

Lastly, I create a category called irrelevant for groups that are neither represented in the government nor have a majority support of a rebel group according to the EPR. Areas without reported political ethnic settlement are also classified as irrelevant. This classification helps to

disentangle the effects of areas with government-represented groups from those areas with groups supportive of rebel groups. In my models, the settlement patterns of irrelevant groups serve as the comparison group and thus the intercept. Consequently, all significant changes are analysed in relation to politically irrelevant ethnic groups once this variable is introduced.

Notes on Controls

While the controls are in line with the quantitative literature on UN peacekeeping deployment, I am cautious to note that I cannot present a causal inference of movement restrictions of UN troops, but instead provide associations consistent with theorisation and controlling for confounders where data availability permits. There are several major confounding variables that I am unable to account for due to data limitations at the monthly, sub-national level.

Two major confounding variables that may impact both the restriction of UN movement and the targeting of civilians are mass migration and destruction during conflict. Data on population and proxies of development change significantly during the course of conflicts. For example, the numerous artillery shellings in Sudan destroyed not only infrastructure but also key points such as a UN logistics base in 2013 (BBC June 2013). Moreover, the movement of people can alter the settlement patterns of politically relevant ethnic groups, subsequently influencing the locations of potential sites of violence against civilians. Other factors that I am unable to fully control for include time-variant and space-variant changes in the strength and support for both rebel groups and the host-government over time. These shifts likely influence the actors' capacity and strategy to employ movement restrictions on UN peacekeepers as well as their decisions to target civilians.

Despite these limitations, I argue that this research spotlights an under-researched factor associated with UN peacekeeping deployment, which can, in turn, illuminate the efficacy of UN peacekeeping troops in the field: the strategic use of movement restrictions on UN peacekeepers to areas of prior atrocities against civilians.

Models with Controls

	Dependent variable:	
	Movement Restrictions of UN PKOs	
	(1)	(2)
OSV, *t-3*	0.530***	
	(0.045)	
Gov OSV, *t-3*		0.840***
		(0.049)
Rebel OSV, *t-3*		0.010
		(0.077)
Pop (log of sum)	−0.020	−0.021
	(0.027)	(0.027)
IMR (log of mean)	−1.013***	−0.999***
	(0.094)	(0.095)
Mountains (mean)	−0.711***	−0.706***
	(0.135)	(0.135)
Travel Time (log of mean)	0.110**	0.111**
	(0.052)	(0.052)
Night Lights (log of cal. mean)	−1.569***	−1.562***
	(0.129)	(0.129)
Constant	0.641	0.575
	(0.707)	(0.711)
Observations	196,470	196,470
Log Likelihood	−93,414.3	−93,294.3
Akaike Inf. Crit.	186,913.8	186,686.2
Adj. Pseudo R^2	0.046	0.047
Note:	Standard errors clustered at the municipal level	
	*p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01	

Table 5.5: Multivariate regression model of logs odds ratio of movement restrictions, Model 1 focusing on OSV t-3, and Model 2 focusing on one-sided violence and rebel groups one-sided-violence on civilians.

The results presented in Table 5.5 strengthen the intuition that the strategic interests of host-governments can shape the access of UN peacekeepers in the field. The results are clustered at the admin2 level, equivalent to the municipal level. In Model (1), prior OSV against civilians as a dummy variable is associated with a statistically significant increase in the odds of movement restrictions, controlling for demographic and infrastructural variables. The coefficient of 0.530 implies that when any actor engages in OSV, the odds of movement restrictions increase by approximately 70% (OR = 1.70). This suggests that the presence of civilian targeting is associated with movement restrictions.

More critically, Model (2) disaggregates this effect by perpetrator type and reveals the asymmetry observed in the previous baseline model. Prior government-perpetrated OSV as a dummy variable is associated with a coefficient of 0.84, translating to an OR of 2.32. This implies a 132% increase in the odds of movement restrictions being imposed three months after host-government violence against civilians. The magnitude and significance of this result ($p < 0.001$) underscore the strategic logic of state-imposed movement restrictions: when states are themselves the perpetrators of civilian harm, they are significantly more likely to obstruct UN mobility, presumably to evade external monitoring, delay reporting, or reduce exposure to reputational costs.

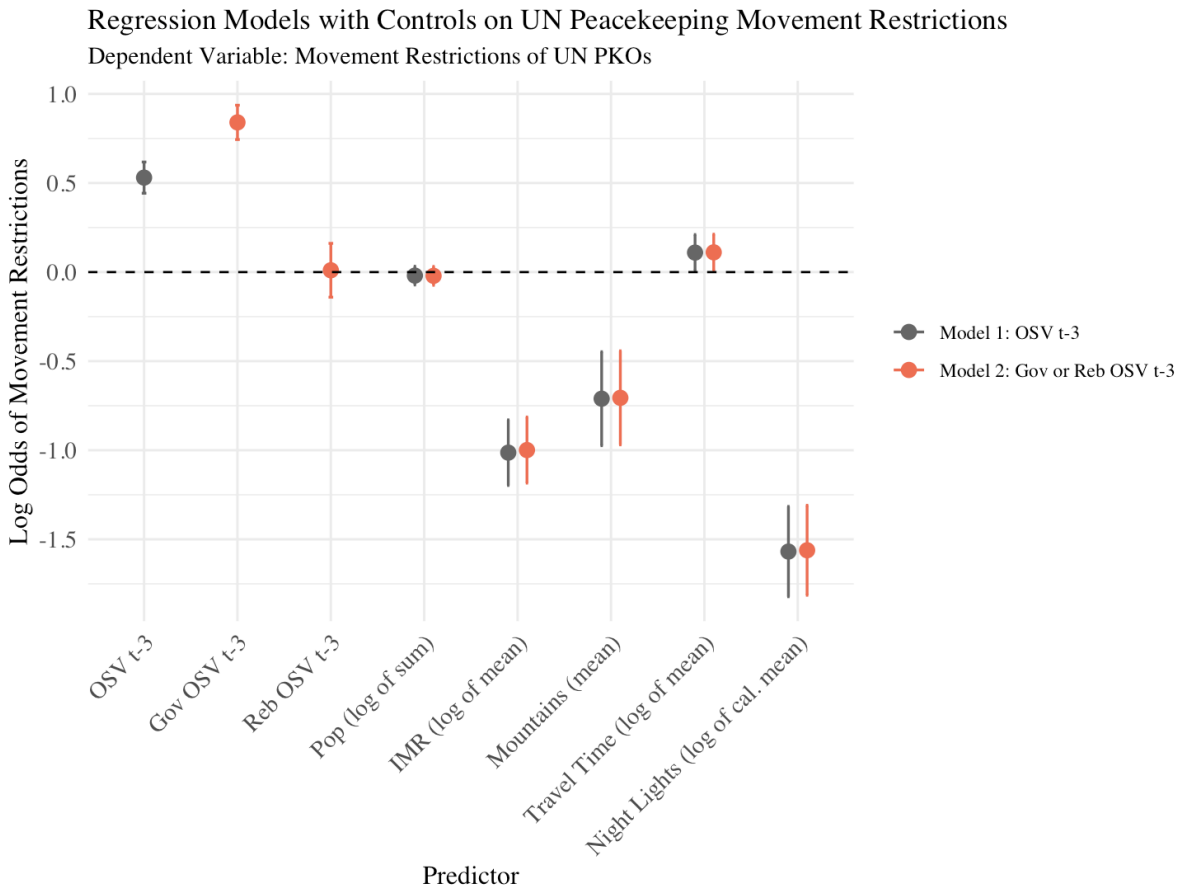


Figure 5.5 Multivariate Regressions in Models 1 and 2 with Controls: The grey point displays the coefficient from Model 1. The red points represent Model 2, which disaggregates by perpetrator. The confidence intervals are clustered on the municipal level.

In contrast to the baseline model, prior rebel-perpetrated OSV as a dummy variable has no statistically significant effect on peacekeeper access (coefficient = 0.01, p = 0.89), and the

odds ratio (OR = 1.01) suggests a negligible 1% increase in movement restrictions, which is not meaningfully different from zero. With controls, this indicates a central point: the identity of the perpetrator matters. Whereas rebel violence may draw UN attention, it does not trigger systemic, reported restrictions on peacekeeper mobility. This may reflect the limited capacity of rebels to impose formal movement restrictions and the lower political costs to host-governments of allowing access in the wake of insurgent violence. It may also indicate systematic measurement bias, where the Mission Report is used to highlight host-government non-cooperation more than rebel actions. Nevertheless, the first explanation aligns more closely with previous findings – that UN peacekeepers are effective at curbing rebel group violence but have limited influence on government violence.

The control variables show that high infant mortality and mountainous terrain are associated with lower log odds of movement restrictions, areas where UN peacekeeping troop deployment is often limited due to operational difficulties (Fjelde 2020). Furthermore, municipalities with higher calibrated night-time lights, which can reflect better infrastructure, are associated with fewer access restrictions. The adjusted Pseudo R^2 rises to 0.047 in Model (2), indicating improved model fit and adding credence to the explanatory value of disaggregating violence by actor.

The coefficients of the two models in Table 5.5 are further illustrated in the coefficient plot in Figure 5.5, where the red points for Model (2) illustrate that prior OSV by the host-government has the strongest positive association with reported movement restrictions of UN peacekeepers in the field.

These findings reveal a pattern in which OSV against civilians is followed by measurable and significant obstructions to UN local access, whereas rebel violence is not. The implication is not only that violence precedes access restrictions but that states can selectively limit access when they themselves are the perpetrators, suggesting a strategic logic behind peacekeeping movement restrictions.

5.3.3 Robustness Test

Violence in Areas of Political Ethnic Groups and Movement Restrictions

Next, I test whether movement restrictions of UN peacekeepers are conditional on where violence against civilians takes place, specifically with regard to the settlement patterns of politically relevant ethnic groups. I find that government-perpetrated OSV consistently triggers

movement restrictions across all areas, while rebel violence only increases restrictions when targeting civilians in government-represented ethnic territories.

Recall that in my hypotheses H2a and H2b, I theorise that UN access to rebel-perpetrated violence can be conditional on where it is committed with regard to the political ethnic identity of the groups. The findings from Chapter 3 highlight that UN peacekeepers are stationed more frequently, for longer periods, and in greater numbers in territories with rebel-supportive ethnic groups than in territories settled by government-represented ethnic groups. This, however, carries a limitation in generalisability to conflicts involving multiple politically relevant ethnicities. In contrast, H1 implies that access to host-government violence will be restricted regardless of its location.

To test these hypotheses, the results presented in Table 5.6 examine how government and rebel-perpetrated OSV influence the likelihood of movement restrictions on UN peacekeeping troops, taking into account the settlement patterns of politically relevant ethnic groups. In turn, I classify settlement patterns into three categories: Gov Ethnic, Reb Ethnic, and Irrelevant Ethnic. These categories are derived from the EPR dataset, where ethnic groups are classified by their representation in government. Furthermore, with data from ACD2EPR, drawing on conflict party information from UCDP, I identify whether a rebel group is aligned with an ethnic group. If a group is neither represented in the host-government nor aligned with a rebel group, I classify it as irrelevant. This does not imply that the group is insignificant but rather that it is not politically claimed by either the government or rebel groups. Instead, areas settled by irrelevant groups may serve as recruitment bases for both parties or act as spheres of influence and control. The following models are clustered at the admin2 level, equivalent to the municipal level, to capture local variation.

Controlling for the settlement patterns of politically relevant ethnic groups and their interaction with violence, I find that prior government-perpetrated OSV consistently increases the likelihood of movement restrictions across all areas, with odds increasing between 118% and 179%. In contrast, rebel-perpetrated OSV shows no robust effect on movement restrictions overall, except in municipalities settled by government-represented ethnic groups, where prior rebel violence is associated with a 79% increase in the odds of UN movement restrictions.

Model 1 in Table 5.6 introduces the main effect of the settlement patterns of politically relevant ethnic groups. The coefficient for government-perpetrated OSV is positive and highly significant (0.817, $p < 0.001$), indicating that prior host-government violence remains associated with the likelihood of movement restrictions. This corresponds to an OR of approximately 2.26, or a 126% increase in the odds of movement restrictions in areas following

government-perpetrated OSV. In contrast, rebel-perpetrated OSV has no meaningful effect, suggesting no consistent relationship between rebel violence and UN movement restrictions in this model.

	Dependent variable:	
	Movement Restrictions of UN PKOs	
	(1)	(2)
Gov OSV, *Dum t-3*	0.817***	1.025***
	(0.048)	(0.125)
Rebel OSV, *Dum t-3*	0.006	0.017
	(0.079)	(0.148)
Gov Ethnic	−0.186*	−0.197*
	(0.112)	(0.114)
Rebel Ethnic	0.069	0.083
	(0.070)	(0.071)
Pop (log of sum)	−0.025	−0.026
	(0.027)	(0.027)
IMR (log of mean)	−1.047***	−1.051***
	(0.096)	(0.096)
Mountains (mean)	−0.680***	−0.672***
	(0.130)	(0.130)
Travel Time (log of mean)	0.070	0.070
	(0.056)	(0.056)
Night Lights (log of cal. mean)	−1.542***	−1.544***
	(0.129)	(0.129)
Gov OSV × Gov Ethnic		−0.230
		(0.167)
Gov OSV × Rebel Ethnic		−0.244*
		(0.136)
Rebel OSV × Gov Ethnic		0.530**
		(0.237)
Rebel OSV × Rebel Ethnic		−0.193
		(0.170)
Constant	1.241*	1.270*
	(0.682)	(0.678)
Observations	196,470	196,470
Log Likelihood	−93,169.4	−93,128.6
Akaike Inf. Crit.	186,460.8	186,427.8
Adj. Pseudo R^2	0.048	0.048
Note:	Standard errors clustered at the municipal level	
	*p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01	

Table 5.6 Interaction terms for the settlement patterns of politically relevant ethnic groups. The baseline is irrelevant ethnic groups, and SE is clustered at the municipal level (admin2).

Examining the settlement patterns of politically relevant ethnic groups, areas settled by ethnic groups represented in the host-government (Gov Ethnic) are associated with a 17% decrease in the odds of movement restrictions, statistically significant at the 0.1 level, in contrast to Irrelevant Ethnic groups. By contrast, places with Reb-Ethnic show no significant

difference in movement restrictions compared to irrelevant groups, with a constant of 1.241 ($p < 0.1$).

Model 2 in Table 5.6 introduces interaction terms to account for how political settlement of the territory can moderate the relationship between violence on civilians and movement restrictions. The baseline group in the model is also the group irrelevant. I calculate the interaction terms, and graph them in Figure 5.6 for clearer visualisation.

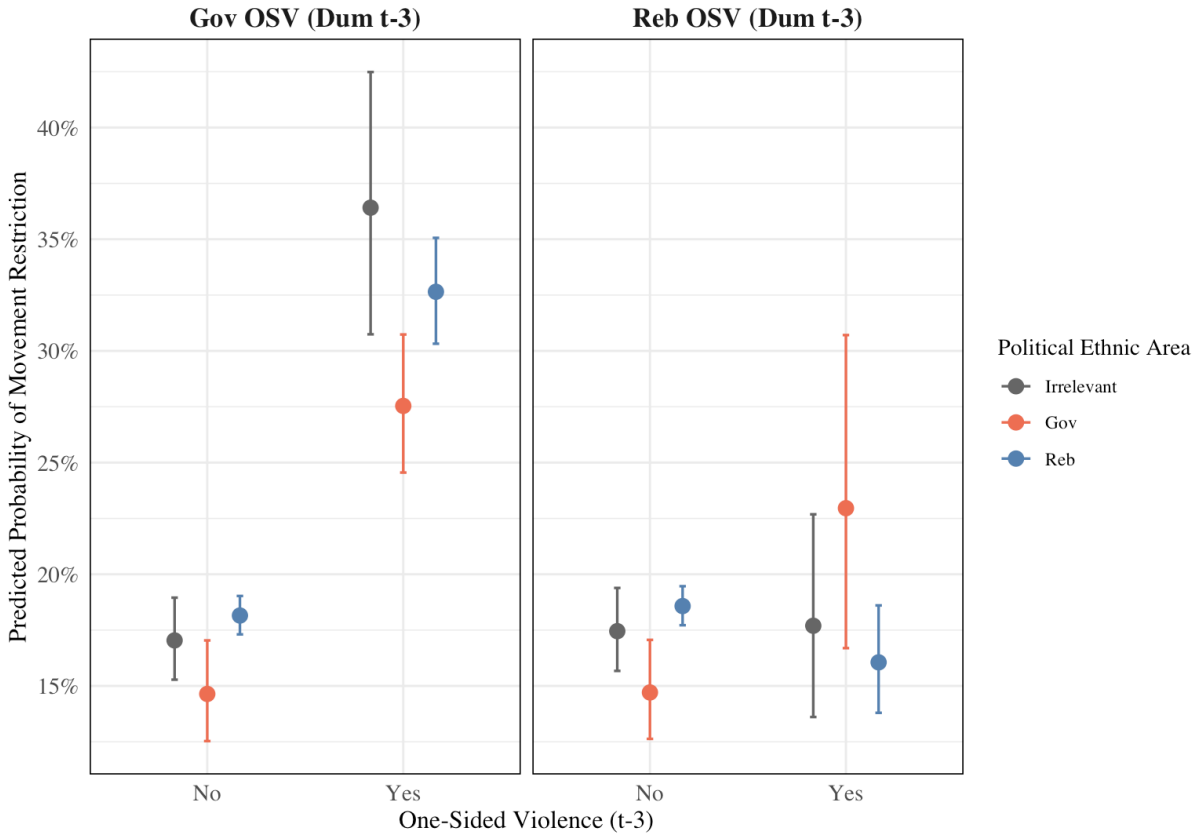


Figure 5. 6 - Predicted probability of interaction terms: The relationship between OSV by the host government, or OSV by rebel groups, and the predicted likelihood of movement restrictions across areas inhabited by politically relevant ethnic groups associated with the host-government, or rebel groups. Irrelevant ethnic groups do not have a politically relevant ethnic association.

In Model 2, government-perpetrated one-sided violence is consistently associated with increased movement restrictions, regardless of the settlement of politically associated ethnic groups in the area. The effect is strongest and highly statistically significant in territories inhabited by irrelevant ethnic groups (OR = 2.79, $p < 0.001$). In government-aligned areas, the effect remains positive (OR = 2.21), and the reduction compared to irrelevant areas is not statistically significant ($p = 0.168$), indicating no reliable difference. In rebel-aligned areas, the interaction term is marginally significant ($p = 0.073$), and the odds ratio is slightly lower (OR

= 2.18), suggesting a possible, though not conclusive, decrease in movement restrictions compared to irrelevant territories. Substantively, this corresponds to a 179% increase in the odds of movement restrictions in irrelevant areas, with no significant difference in co-gov ethnic areas, and a 118% increase in co-rebel ethnic areas. Taken together, although the magnitude of the effect varies slightly by ethnic alignment, these differences are not statistically robust. The overall pattern indicates a consistently elevated likelihood of movement restrictions following government violence against civilians across all settlement patterns of ethnic groups of about 179% odds likelihood.

In contrast to the consistent effects observed for government violence, the impact of rebel-perpetrated OSV on movement restrictions varies substantially across ethnic settlement patterns and is less robust overall. In territories inhabited by Irrelevant Ethnic groups (the baseline category), the effect is near zero and not statistically significant (OR = 1.02, p = 0.91), indicating no relationship between rebel violence and the likelihood of movement restrictions. For rebel OSV in government-represented ethnic areas, the interaction term is statistically significant at the 5% level (p = 0.025). Combined, this corresponds to a 71% increase in the odds of movement restrictions following rebel violence in government-represented ethnic areas, suggesting a meaningful escalation in UN-reported movement restrictions after rebels target civilians in territories aligned with the host-government.

In rebel-supportive areas, however, the effect is slightly negative (OR = 0.84), implying a 15.8% decrease in the odds of restrictions compared to Irrelevant Ethnic groups, though this result is not statistically significant (p = 0.26). These findings suggest that movement restrictions are most likely to be imposed on the UN after rebel violence against civilians occurs in government-represented ethnic territories. This may reflect a strategic reaction by the host-government to protect its own constituencies or to prepare for retaliatory operations.

Overall, prior host-government-perpetrated OSV against civilians shows a consistently strong and statistically significant association with movement restrictions, regardless of the political-ethnic status of the area. In contrast, the effects of prior rebel-perpetrated OSV against civilians appear more context-dependent, emerging primarily in government-represented ethnic areas, and are statistically weaker overall.

Models with Fixed Effects

The positive effect of government-perpetrated violence on UN movement restrictions holds consistently across all fixed effects specifications, reinforcing the robustness and generalisability of the main findings.

To further assess the robustness of my findings, I run my models with fixed effects to account for unobserved heterogeneity across contexts and over time. Given that my unit of analysis is admin2-month, and the data spans 12 countries with 15 missions from 2000 to 2023, I introduce country fixed effects and country-year fixed effects as theoretically grounded specifications.

Country fixed effects control for time-invariant national characteristics, while country-year fixed effects provide a stringent control for time-varying national-level shocks — including election years and potential electoral violence. This ensures that the estimated relationship between government violence and movement restrictions is not confounded by politically sensitive periods, such as election cycles. In the Appendix, I also include robustness checks with admin2 (municipal-level) fixed effects to account for persistent local conditions.

Across all specifications, the effect of prior government-perpetrated OSV on movement restrictions remains consistently positive and statistically significant, suggesting a strong and stable relationship. This indicates that the pattern is not driven by country-specific or year-specific confounding factors. The robustness of fixed effects strengthens the credibility of the main pattern: that areas with prior government violence against civilians are systematically associated with increased reported movement restrictions of UN peacekeepers.

Country Fixed Effects (FE):

Including country fixed effects controls for all time-invariant differences across countries, such as historical conflict legacies, baseline levels of state capacity, or differing mandates and doctrines of peacekeeping missions that might systematically influence both violence against civilians and the reporting of UN movement restrictions. This ensures that identification comes only from variation within countries over time and captures structural country-level differences that are otherwise hard to measure.

Country-Year Fixed Effects (FE):

In addition, I include country-year fixed effects to account for time-varying country-specific shocks, such as election cycles, changes in political leadership, or shifts in UN leadership, donor support, or reporting patterns. This specification enables comparison only within each country-year, isolating variation across administrative regions (admin2) in a given country and year. This represents a stringent and conservative robustness test that reduces the risk of bias from confounders that evolve within countries over time.

Clustering at the Admin2 Level:

Standard errors are clustered at the admin2 level for all models, consistent with the spatial unit of analysis and the likely presence of serial correlation in conflict events and restrictions within geographic units over time. Clustering at this level also aligns with my theoretical interest in sub-national variation in access restrictions and violence, as the UN peacekeeping mission operates locally. Here, the fixed effects (at country/year levels) absorb variation at higher levels of aggregation, while clustering ensures stronger inference at the level where treatment varies.

Fixed-Effects Model Results:

Table 5.4 presents the results from the robustness tests introducing country and country-year fixed effects. The table confirms the stability of the core findings across different model specifications. Across all four models, the effect of prior government-perpetrated OSV on reported movement restrictions of UN peacekeepers remains large, positive, and highly statistically significant. Government violence against civilians increases the odds of UN peacekeepers facing movement restrictions by 125% to 154%, depending on the model, even after controlling for unobserved differences across countries (Models 1 and 3) and time-varying dynamics within each country (Models 2 and 4).

In contrast, rebel-perpetrated OSV is associated with a decrease in the likelihood of movement restrictions on UN peacekeepers. This negative effect remains statistically significant in all specifications, and its magnitude increases once controlling for country-year fixed effects, ranging from -17.0% with country FE to -27.7% with country-year FE ($p < 0.01$).

Including interaction terms (Models 3 and 4) shows that the effect of government-perpetrated violence remains consistent across different types of areas, while some additional heterogeneity appears for rebel violence in government-represented ethnic areas. In both models, government-perpetrated OSV significantly increases the likelihood of movement restrictions. In the baseline category (Irrelevant Ethnic areas), it more than doubles the odds, with a 136% increase in Model 3 and a 154% increase in Model 4 ($p < 0.01$). The effect is somewhat weaker in government-represented ethnic areas but remains large and statistically significant (OR ≈ 2.1 in Model 4).

Rebel-perpetrated OSV is associated with fewer restrictions in Irrelevant Ethnic areas, reducing the odds by 38% in Model 3 and 28% in Model 4 ($p < 0.01$). However, in government-represented ethnic areas, this effect reverses: movement restrictions become more likely following rebel violence, increasing by 9% (OR = 1.17, $p < 0.01$). No significant difference appears in rebel-supportive ethnic areas.

Importantly, the pseudo-R^2 increases substantially when moving from country to country-year fixed effects (from approximately 0.15 to 0.26), indicating that much of the variation in peacekeeping access is shaped by highly context-specific and time-sensitive dynamics. However, the substantive effect of OSV, especially by governments, remains robust to these stricter controls.

	DV: Movement Restrictions of UN PKOs			
	FE Country	FE Country-Yr	FE Country	FE Country-Yr
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
Gov OSV, *Dum t-3*	0.808***	0.799***	0.856***	0.931***
	(0.040)	(0.059)	(0.079)	(0.094)
Rebel OSV, *Dum t-3*	-0.379***	-0.186***	-0.474***	-0.325***
	(0.064)	(0.055)	(0.114)	(0.111)
Pop (log of sum)	0.019	-0.009	0.024	0.002
	(0.017)	(0.018)	(0.017)	(0.018)
IMR (log of mean)	0.309**	0.416***	0.284***	0.346***
	(0.099)	(0.111)	(0.091)	(0.101)
Mountains (mean)	-0.004	0.048	0.001	0.046
	(0.078)	(0.107)	(0.078)	(0.105)
Travel Time (log of mean)	-0.137***	-0.025	-0.143***	-0.051*
	(0.027)	(0.028)	(0.029)	(0.031)
Night Lights (log of cal. mean)	-2.087***	-0.268**	-2.086***	-0.134
	(0.144)	(0.130)	(0.144)	(0.131)
Gov Ethnic			-0.118*	-0.248***
			(0.063)	(0.063)
Rebel Ethnic			-0.042	-0.035
			(0.034)	(0.036)
Gov OSV × Gov Ethnic			0.006	-0.195*
			(0.130)	(0.117)
Gov OSV × Rebel Ethnic			-0.069	-0.148
			(0.090)	(0.095)
Rebel OSV × Gov Ethnic			0.354*	0.481***
			(0.188)	(0.161)
Rebel OSV × Rebel Ethnic			0.036	0.069
			(0.134)	(0.123)
Constant				
Fixed-effects:	Country	Country-Year	Country	Country-Year
Observations	196,470	196,470	196,470	196,470
Log Likelihood	-82,603	-72,043	-82,586	-71,982
Akaike Inf. Crit.	165,438	144,598	165,476	144,549
Adj. Pseudo R^2	0.156	0.264	0.156	0.264
Note:			Standard errors clustered at the municipal level	
			*p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01	

Table 5.7: Fixed effects models with OSV t-3 and Reported Movement Restrictions of UN PKOs

Overall, these robustness tests align with the core findings of this chapter: prior government violence against civilians is consistently associated with UN peacekeeper movement restrictions, even when accounting for ethnic geography and fixed effects. In contrast, rebel violence is generally associated with reduced access restrictions, except when it occurs in

government-represented ethnic areas, where it is linked to a 9% increase in movement restrictions. This suggests that, in some cases, rebel violence in these areas can provoke a government response in the form of peacekeeper restrictions.

Models with Battle Deaths

To further test the argument that host-governments strategically restrict UN access not only in response to violence against civilians but also following battlefield victories over rebel groups, I conduct a robustness test using battle deaths from both sides of the conflict. In Appendix 5, I present a robustness test with battle deaths from the UCDP dataset, which previous research has included in similar models (see, for example, Ruggeri et al. 2017; Ruggeri et al. 2019; Cil et al. 2020). The model includes fixed effects for country and country-year, clustered at the admin2 level. I find that the odds of movement restrictions increase significantly by 0.77% with each reported battle death of rebel groups caused by government actors. In contrast, there is no statistically significant relationship between government battle deaths inflicted by rebel groups and movement restrictions.

Importantly, the main finding of the relationship between government-perpetrated OSV and movement restrictions remains highly robust across model specifications. When controlling for battle deaths on both sides, the odds of movement restrictions following government OSV increase by approximately 118% to 150%. In contrast, rebel violence remains associated with reduced movement restrictions, with a decrease in odds ranging between 19% and 33% across models. These findings support the hypothesis that host-government interests can shape UN peacekeepers' access in the field.

Models of Number of Deaths

As a further robustness test, I replace the binary measures of one-sided violence with the absolute number of reported deaths. This provides a more stringent test of the argument: if movement restrictions were solely about overall conflict intensity, one would expect both battle deaths and rebel-perpetrated violence to have similar effects. The results, presented in Appendix A5.3, further reinforce the main findings. The number of civilians killed by government forces remains consistently and strongly associated with increased movement restrictions, with each additional death raising the odds by approximately 1.6% to 1.8%. In contrast, rebel-perpetrated violence shows no systematic effect overall—except in government-represented ethnic areas, where each rebel-inflicted death increases the odds of restrictions by 0.13%.

Similarly, only rebel battle deaths, not government losses, are associated with increased restrictions, though the effect size is smaller at around 0.57% per death. These results further support the thesis of this dissertation: movement restrictions are not merely a reflection of violence or conflict intensity but are more likely to follow government-perpetrated violence against civilians or rebel losses.

Temporal Sequence of Movement Restrictions and OSV

Reported movement restrictions experienced by UN peacekeepers are overwhelmingly imposed after – not before – OSV on civilians, suggesting they are a reactive strategy by host-governments rather than a pre-emptive measure or a reflection of measurement bias. In the case of Moura in Mali, described in the introduction, UN peacekeepers faced access restrictions before, during, and after the host-government's attack on civilians. This raises a broader question about the temporal sequence of these restrictions: when do they occur in relation to violence? In Appendix 5, I test for movement restrictions three months prior to incidents of OSV and battle deaths to examine whether the relationship is reversed. Again, this three-month lag reflects the minimum temporal resolution of the dataset, as movement restriction data are based on reports submitted at least every three months.

The analysis finds no significant suggestion of increased movement restrictions in the three months leading up to OSV or battle deaths. On the contrary, access appears to have been greater during this period, with the odds ratio of movement restrictions reduced at statistically significant levels. These results reinforce the main argument that movement restrictions are a response to peacekeeper activity rather than a pre-emptive action – or at least as experienced and reported by the UN.

There are several possible explanations for this. First, peacekeepers may not have attempted to access the area prior to the violence, perhaps due to limited intelligence, restricted resources for prevention, or the inherent difficulty in anticipating attacks. Second, the absence of reported restrictions could reflect a measurement bias in the dataset: peacekeepers may have faced constraints but did not record them in the mission report because no violent event had yet occurred, making it seem less urgent to report. Third, the host-government may simply not restrict access far in advance of attacks. Instead, such restrictions might occur closer to the events – on the scale of hours or days rather than months.

Development of Movement Restrictions and OSV Trends Over Time

Controlling for time trends, I find that reported movement restrictions on UN peacekeepers increase over the lifespan of a mission, particularly as missions approach closure. However, this temporal dynamic does not alter the core finding that host-government violence remains the strongest predictor of restricted access.

Movement restrictions may be influenced by time. As UN peacekeeping missions mature, reporting practices may improve, relations with conflict actors may shift, and host-governments might increasingly seek to assert control over peacekeeper mobility. Moreover, no major new UN peacekeeping missions have been deployed since 2014, reflecting a broader shift in the nature of UN peace operations over time. While the models in Table 5.7 already include year fixed effects to account for temporal variation, I further test this directly in Appendix 5 by including two temporal measures: the number of months since a mission began and the number of months until its closure.

The results show that both time-related factors are positively and significantly associated with movement restrictions. Each additional month since the mission's start increases the odds of restrictions by 2.4%, and each month closer to mission end increases the odds by 6.4%. This suggests that access restrictions are not solely a function of violence but also reflect the political life cycle of peacekeeping missions themselves.

Crucially, however, these temporal dynamics do not alter the core findings of this dissertation: host-government-perpetrated OSV remains strongly associated with increased movement restrictions, with a 155% increase in the odds ($p < 0.01$). In contrast, rebel-perpetrated violence continues to be associated with a reduction in movement restrictions (-29%, $p < 0.01$), despite competing insights from other models on rebel OSV. This reinforces the argument that UN peacekeepers systematically face restricted access, particularly following host-government violence.

5.4 What Does this Tell us about Peacekeepers' Access?

This chapter set out to examine whether UN peacekeepers' see movement restrictions in areas which have seen previous one-sided violence against civilians. Using a sub-national dataset on reported movement restrictions across 15 UN peacekeeping missions in 12 African countries from 2000 to 2023, the analysis identifies clear patterns suggesting that host-governments limit peacekeeper access in the aftermath of government-led one-sided violence. These findings strongly suggest that host-governments use movement restrictions as a tool to manage

international oversight and shield politically sensitive locations from peacekeepers' monitoring, reporting, and interference.

The findings are consistent with Hypothesis 1 (H1), which states that government-perpetrated OSV would be associated with movement restrictions of UN peacekeepers. The analysis shows that the odds of movement restrictions increase by 130–179% in the three months following government-OSV. This relationship holds consistently across model specifications, including controls for fixed effects, battle deaths, political-ethnic geographies, and logistical variables. Further, each reported civilian death is associated with a 1.77% increase in the odds of restrictions. These results suggest that host-governments strategically limit peacekeeper access to areas it conducts violence on civilians, and in turn restricts the UN missions from monitoring and reporting on its atrocities, and may restrict the protection of civilians. Importantly, the robustness test found that this pattern is not statistically significant inverse: peacekeepers are not restricted access prior to government-OSV, but following government-OSV.

The findings also indicates that movement restrictions increase over time, with the odds differing based on the mission's timeline. During the main deployment phase, movement restrictions are associated with 2.4% odds increase per month, and during the closure, with 6.4% odds increase per month as missions near closure. This may reflect a growing host-government power over UN peacekeepers towards the end of missions, supporting the findings of Caplan (2024) on UNOCI in Cote d'Ivoire, where peacekeepers were found to lose political leverage over the government as their mandate approached its conclusion. The findings here extend Caplan's observation to physical access in the field and across peacekeeping missions.

The analysis further supports Hypothesis 2 (H2), which posited that rebel-perpetrated OSV would be associated with reduced movement restrictions. However, the findings reveal a conditional relationship. Rebel-perpetrated violence is generally not associated with movement restrictions, except when it targets municipalities with government-represented ethnic groups. In such contexts, the odds of movement restrictions increase by nearly 50%. This provides insight to findings from Chapter 3, where peacekeepers were less likely to be deployed in grids with government represented ethnic groups despite OSV. In turn, this may support previous findings that posits that the host-government is sensitive to international monitoring in areas where it wishes to posit strength and sovereignty (Ghuenno 2015; Sebastian and Gorur 2018). In contrast, rebel OSV in rebel-supportive or politically neutral groups does not trigger restrictions.

The analysis also incorporates battle deaths of the different belligerent groups. It finds that movement restrictions increase following rebel battle deaths, but not following government battle deaths. Each additional rebel battle death inflicted by government forces is associated with a 0.48 – 0.6% increase in the odds of restrictions, while government battle deaths do not produce significant effects. This selective restriction suggests that host-governments may shield their military operations from external monitoring and reporting, particularly following confrontations with rebels that could draw international attention. Robustness checks confirm that these patterns are consistent across different model specifications.

The findings contribute to a deeper understanding of how host-governments can strategically manage international oversight through the power of access. This analysis empirically supports existing scholarship, such as Piccolino and Karlsrud (2011), who argue that African leaders may seek to maximise the benefits of UN missions while minimising threats to their sovereignty. However, while their work attributes this incentive to limited consent, the findings here demonstrate that host-governments maintain consent to the peacekeeping mission, and instead aim to influence where peacekeepers' get access sub-nationally. These findings further complement Sebastián and Gorur (2018) and Gregory and Sharland (2023) work, who document obstruction of peacekeeping missions. This chapter does not argue that access is the only obstruction of a peacekeeping mission. Instead, the analysis brings insight into the spatial and temporal scope of movement restrictions as one obstruction - this does not account for other components, such as dialogues or political leverage. By exercising the power of access, host-governments may effectively manage when, where, and how international actors can observe conflict dynamics, and aim to shape both the conflict narrative and the international response. For peacekeeping operations, this underscores the need to interpret movement restrictions as political signals, not only logistical barriers. Integrating movement restriction data into early warning systems would allow peacekeeping missions to detect politically sensitive zones where access denials likely signal state-led violence or strategic concealment.

Despite the robustness trends, several limitations must be acknowledged. First, the analysis relies on UN Secretary-General mission reports as the primary data source for movement restrictions. These reports are politically sensitive, and movement restrictions may be underreported or strategically omitted (Sebastián and Gorur, 2018). To address this, future research should integrate satellite imagery, remote sensing technologies, and community-based reporting to independently verify access denials.

Second, the study is limited by data quality in restricted areas. If movement restrictions are used to reduce international monitoring, the data on OSV in these zones may be incomplete or systematically biased in the data sources of dataset such as the UCDP or ACLED. Future research would benefit from analysing whether restricted zones are associated with factors that may indicate systematic under-reporting - such as un-named mass graves, missing persons, or other forms of violence. Satellite-based verification could provide further validation of violence in areas previously marked as restricted.

Third, as theorised in Chapter 2, anticipation of restrictions – where the UN anticipates movement restrictions and refrains from deploying – are not captured in the dataset. There may be politically sensitive areas that are effectively denied access without documentation. Further analysis can test for strategic interests beyond OSV, such as locations with natural resources or illicit economic hubs, or the local presence of third-party actors such as foreign para-military groups.

Finally, the analysis does not account for temporal political shocks, such as elections, peace negotiations, or political transitions, which may influence host-government strategies towards peacekeeper access. Future studies should employ event-based analysis to capture how these political events intersect with movement restrictions.

5.5 Conclusion

This chapter found that UN Peacekeepers' report their access being restricted in areas following government-perpetrated OSV and rebel battle deaths, but has limited association with rebel group violence. By restricting access, the host-government can strategically limit its acts of violence on both civilians and rebel groups from being monitored, reported, and interfered with. These findings challenge traditional notions of consent and illustrate that access itself is a powerful instrument during the life of the mission to draw benefits from peacekeepers' presence, while limiting its interference with host-government-violence. For peacekeeping missions, this insight suggests that denied locations seeing movement restrictions are likely politically constructed barriers that limit international visibility of state-led violence. Future research should advance detection methods, integrate independent verification, and explore invisible restrictions to further understand how host-governments manipulate access to shape conflict narratives. Missions should systematically document all movement restrictions and escalate them within early warning systems. Where restrictions persist, the UN may need to

consider alternative strategies, such as remote monitoring, diplomatic pressure, or, in some cases, strategic withdrawal.

Chapter 6: Conclusion

6.1 Overview of the Argument and Findings

How do host-governments use their power over local access to strategically shape peacekeeping deployment after consent? This thesis argues that host-governments hold significant power over where UN peacekeepers go once deployed. The host-government has both the incentive and the ability to shape peacekeepers' sub-national presence by granting or restricting their operational access on the ground. I refer to this dynamic as the power of access – a form of ongoing, post-consent bargaining that allows host-governments to influence peacekeeping deployments in ways that serve their own strategic interests.

Although UN peacekeeping is guided by the principles of consent, impartiality, and limited use of force, these principles do not always hold in practice. Host-governments may welcome peacekeepers in areas where their presence strengthens state authority or deters rebel activity, while restricting access at times and locations where peacekeepers might monitor, report, or interfere with state activities, such as state-perpetrated violence against civilians. This creates a tension: governments can benefit from the legitimacy and resources that peacekeeping brings, while limiting international oversight in politically sensitive areas.

The empirical analysis in this dissertation supports this argument across three chapters. First, in Chapter 3 I show that peacekeepers are deployed more often, over a longer period of time, and in larger size to areas where ethnic groups are supportive of rebel movements. This pattern holds regardless of whether one-sided violence has occurred, suggesting that deployments follow a political logic, in addition to the logics of logistical convenience and mandate implementation. The pattern is consistent across model specifications and robustness checks. Second, using the newly introduced Geo-MRP dataset, I show in Chapter 4 that reported movement restrictions are widespread across a range of peacekeeping missions, geographies, and time periods. These restrictions are not exceptional incidents, but appear as part of the structural relationship between peacekeeping missions and host-governments. Third, in Chapter 5, I find that reported movement restrictions are more likely to occur in locations where the host-government has previously committed violence against civilians and where government forces have inflicted battle deaths on rebel groups. There is no robust association with rebel-perpetrated violence, and a decreased likelihood of movement restrictions where

government forces suffer losses. This suggests that restrictions on peacekeeper access are not random, but reflect a logic of strategic denial and political control.

Taken together, these findings show that host-governments do not simply permit or deny peacekeeping missions at the national level; they also shape where peacekeepers go within the country during the life of the mission. This has direct implications for how we understand peacekeeping deployment and effectiveness. Peacekeepers are effective where they are present – and their presence depends on access. Access is multifaceted. It includes the ability to physically move from point A to B: resources (e.g., vehicles, fuel), infrastructure (e.g., roads, droughts), and strategic considerations (e.g., population, mandate priorities, security). But even when these conditions are met, access still depends on relationships. This relational dimension of access is political. It can be granted or restricted by the host-government. Where access is denied, the ability of peacekeepers to monitor violence, respond to threats, or protect civilians is likely to be compromised.

6.2 Access and International Relations

This thesis contributes to a growing body of literature that emphasises the role of host-governments as active participants in shaping the effectiveness of international interventions. While peacekeeping is typically framed as an impartial mechanism to support peace through consent, impartiality, and limited use of force (Walter 2002; Rhoads 2016), this study demonstrates that the principle of consent – central to the peacekeeping mandate - forms the basis of the power of access as an instrument that host-governments can strategically use during the lifespan of a mission.

A number of scholars have highlighted that host-government consent is dynamic, not static, changing over time and in response to shifting political conditions (Johnstone 2011; Piccolino and Karlsrud 2011; Sebastian and Gorur 2018; Duursma 2021; Gregory and Sharland 2023). However, much of this work remains focused on levels of consent or withdrawal threats. What this thesis adds is a theory of sub-national control – the power of access – to explain how host-governments shape peacekeeping implementation even when missions remain formally accepted.

This argument builds on and extends key theoretical contributions in the literature. Howard (2019) identifies three forms of power that peacekeepers have: coercion, inducement, and persuasion. These are the mechanisms through which peacekeepers can influence actors on the ground. Building on this, Caplan (2024) discusses political leverage as the peacekeeping

mission's capacity to influence host-state elites. While Howard and Caplan focus on the power and capacity held by peacekeepers, this dissertation builds on their insights by focusing on a specific power – exercised by host-governments – namely, their power over access and their capacity to influence where peacekeepers can deploy, operate, and implement their mandate at the local level. While misunderstandings can and do occur in the field, the empirical trends in this thesis show that access is not withheld at random, but follows patterns: peacekeepers are most likely to face movement restrictions in areas where the host-government has previously committed violence against civilians, and are more freely deployed in locations aligned with rebel groups. This demonstrates a form of sub-national political control – a power exercised by host-governments over the mission's operational footprint.

These findings have direct implications for how we understand local peacekeeping deployment and effectiveness. Research consistently shows that peacekeepers are effective where they are present (Fortna 2008; Ruggeri et al. 2017; Gizelis and Benson 2019). Studies also find that peacekeepers are more likely to be deployed in areas that are easier to reach, more densely populated, and recently affected by violence (Ruggeri et al. 2018; Cil et al. 2020; Villa 2021; Hultman et al. 2020; Abbs and Duursma 2024). Yet presence is not just about logistics or operational needs. This thesis shows that even when those conditions are met, peacekeepers may face movement restrictions in specific areas. Fjelde, Hultman, and Nilsson (2019) find that peacekeepers have no impact on reducing government-led violence against civilians. This thesis offers empirical support for that pattern: peacekeepers are more likely to be restricted from accessing areas where the host-government has recently targeted civilians. These findings suggest that peacekeeping deployment is shaped not only by where violence occurs, but also by whether host-governments permit access to the areas where peacekeepers could monitor, report on, or interfere with state-led actions.

Finally, the power of access raises fundamental questions about the politics of international cooperation and impartiality. It echoes findings by de Waal (2015), Piccolino and Karlsrud (2011), Duursma (2021), and Villa (2021) that actors may seek to maximise their benefits from international actors, challenging the principle of impartiality on the basis of sovereignty. It further extends and strengthens the trends from interviews by Sebastian and Gorur (2018) and the national analysis by Gregory and Sharland (2023), by providing a theoretical lens and a sub-national dataset systematically analysing reported movement restrictions. By offering a conceptual lens to analyse these dynamics, this thesis provides a framework that can travel across domains of intervention where access is required, host-state cooperation is conditional, and credible enforcement is lacking.

6.3 Key Contributions

This dissertation makes three core contributions to the study of access, international interventions, and UN peacekeeping. First, it develops a new theoretical framework—the power of access—to explain how host-governments shape peacekeeping deployments after national consent has been granted. Building on, but moving beyond, existing work on consent, this thesis demonstrates that access is not static or technical, but a political instrument that host-governments use to influence the locations of local implementation of peacekeeping mandates. Instead of dismissing missions outright, governments can selectively restrict access to limit politically sensitive areas, and thus limit the monitoring, reporting, and interference with their actions.

Second, the thesis introduces the Geo-MRP dataset, a novel sub-national dataset capturing reported movement restrictions across 15 peacekeeping missions in 12 African countries from 2000 to 2023. This is the first systematic effort to trace where, when, and how peacekeepers are denied access through restrictions on their mobility. The findings show that reported restrictions are most common in areas where the government has recently committed violence against civilians – supporting the logic that host-governments have both the incentive and the capacity to strategically manage local peacekeeper access. This builds directly on concerns raised by practitioners and scholars regarding access as a key barrier to peacekeeping effectiveness.

Third, the logic of the power of access may extend beyond peacekeeping. It applies to other forms of international intervention where external actors depend on host-government consent and require physical presence to operate effectively – including humanitarian operations, election monitoring, development assistance, and nuclear inspections. In these contexts, access can become a site of political negotiation. By theorising access as a form of host-government power, this research contributes to broader debates on sovereignty, cooperation, and the politics of international engagement. However, the power dynamics in these domains may differ significantly and require tailored study to understand how access is negotiated or denied across different institutional and operational contexts.

6.4 Policy Implications

The findings of this thesis carry several policy implications. First, there is a clear need for the systematic collection of access restriction data across peacekeeping missions. Currently, movement restrictions are inconsistently reported and coded, limiting institutional memory and

accountability. Standardised definitions and centralised reporting mechanisms should be integrated into mission reporting protocols – not only for operational planning, but for Security Council oversight and future evaluations.

Second, this information should be made accessible to researchers, including geo-referenced data on movement restrictions and access barriers. Improved transparency would support a stronger evidence base for understanding peacekeeping effectiveness, deployment patterns, and mission design.

Third, policymakers and diplomats at the UN Security Council must consider access restrictions as a predictable and systemic challenge across mission types. Whether mandates involve unarmed observers or complex multidimensional forces, access restrictions are likely to occur and should not be mistaken for temporary operational delays. Access should be treated as an indicator of host-government strategic interest, not assumed as a given. It should also be treated as an early-warning sign – possibly of human rights violations and limited commitment to the peace process.

Finally, the findings raise questions about the limits of consent and the consequences of its breach. When a host-government repeatedly denies access to areas vital for mandate implementation, at what point does this constitute an existential violation of the agreement under which peacekeepers operate? Some locations – such as airports or supply corridors – should be effectively non-negotiable, as they are essential both for mandate implementation and for the safe exit and withdrawal of peacekeepers. Yet current mandates rarely specify what the response should be if access is withheld. Clarifying these thresholds will be essential for future mission planning and accountability frameworks.

6.5 Next Steps

The findings and contributions of this dissertation open several avenues for future research. First, the third and fourth theoretical propositions developed in Chapter 2 — concerning peacekeeper anticipation and strategic prioritisation — remain difficult to test empirically due to the absence of systematic data on where peacekeepers consider deploying but do not attempt to go. Future research could address these gaps through in-depth case studies, interviews with mission planners and personnel, or access to internal UN operational records. These approaches would help unpack how peacekeepers anticipate host-government behaviour and weigh the strategic costs of requesting or attempting access in politically sensitive areas.

Second, for greater robustness and refinement of the findings presented here, future studies could disaggregate results across different types of peacekeeping mandates and conflict contexts. While this thesis controls for mission and country-level variation, further analysis could examine how access dynamics differ in multidimensional versus observer missions, or in intrastate versus interstate or post-conflict settings. Understanding how variation in mission design, mandate strength, or conflict type shapes bargaining over access would further illuminate the institutional and political conditions under which peacekeepers are most constrained or empowered.

Third, a particularly striking finding of this dissertation is that movement restrictions are not confined to high-capacity states. On the contrary, some of the most persistent and extensive access restrictions occur in fragile settings such as South Sudan, the Central African Republic, or the Democratic Republic of Congo. This challenges assumptions that restricting peacekeeping access requires significant state infrastructure or coercive control. Instead, access restrictions appear to function as political instruments, enacted selectively by governments regardless of overall institutional capacity. Future research could investigate whether subnational variation in state presence — such as road networks, administrative coverage, security sector footprint, or distance from capitals — is associated with access restrictions of peacekeepers. Such work would help clarify whether restrictions reflect strategic intent, logistical limitations, or a combination of both, and how sovereignty is performed or contested through control of international actors' movement.

Fourth, further research should explore how different mission configurations affect a host-government's ability to restrict access. For example, how do static bases compare to mobile patrols in terms of vulnerability to obstruction? Do missions with a heavier police presence experience different patterns of access restriction than those with military contingents? Similarly, variations in mission size, resources, or enforcement authority may shape both the likelihood and the consequences of denial. Future studies should ask: What strategies enable peacekeepers to gain or maintain access in restrictive environments? Under what conditions can access restrictions be pre-empted or reversed?

Fifth, the anticipatory behaviour of international actors warrants closer examination. Peacekeepers and other missions often operate with limited resources and uncertain political backing. If they expect access to be denied or delayed, they may choose not to deploy to the very areas most in need. Understanding how such anticipation shapes presence and absence on the ground would help explain not just when access is denied, but when it is never even requested.

Sixth, the politics of access likely extend well beyond peacekeeping. Humanitarian organisations, election monitors, verification missions, and development agencies often face similar constraints: they require physical presence, rely on host-government cooperation, and operate with limited enforcement capacity. In each of these domains, access can be used as a tool of political leverage—granting entry where activities serve state interests and restricting it where they do not. Future research could apply the power of access framework developed in this dissertation to these parallel fields, helping to map when and how access is politically negotiated, enabled, or denied.

Finally, future research should consider the implications of access restrictions for sub-national data production itself. Conflict datasets such as UCDP and ACLED depend in part on the presence of international observers. If access is systematically denied in politically sensitive areas, the result may be persistent underreporting of violence in precisely the locations where repression is most severe. This introduces a potential spatial bias in how conflict is observed, coded, and analysed. Future work could develop new methods for detecting or correcting such gaps in reporting, improving the accuracy and reliability of conflict data used across the field.

In sum, this dissertation offers a new framework for understanding the politics and power of access in international interventions. By theorising access as a form of strategic control and documenting its subnational variation through original data on peacekeeping movement restrictions, it contributes to core debates about the effectiveness, accountability, and limitations of international missions. It also lays the groundwork for new empirical research, policy reform, and theoretical development across a range of international engagements in conflict-affected settings. Understanding the politics of access is essential for designing international interventions that are not only present, but positioned to act where they are needed most.

Appendix

A1. Appendix Chapter 1

A1. 1 Frequence of Mandates Across Missions

List of top 10 most frequent mandates of UN Peacekeeping missions from 2000 to 2017 across years and missions. Di Salvatore et.al (2022) dataset on UN peacekeeping mandates. The table shows that the most common UN peacekeeping mission mandates are multifaceted, often involving assistance in police reform, civilian protection, the reintegration of combatants, the promotion of children's and human rights, as well as support in military and justice reforms, and electoral processes.

Mandate	Count
policereform_assist	91
civprotect_security	69
reintegration_assist	68
childrights_assist	68
humanrights_assist	63
militaryreform_assist	63
justicereform_assist	61
electassist_assist	61
disarmdemob_assist	58
sgbviolence_assist	58

A2. Appendix Chapter 2

A2. 1 Rebel Group Incentives for Peacekeeping Deployment

One of the primary reasons a rebel group can favour the presence of UN peacekeepers in areas of strategic importance is to gain political legitimacy and leverage, both nationally and in the peace process. The presence of international forces can foster legitimacy, especially if the rebel group is seen as cooperating with the UN in its peace and humanitarian efforts. As such, rebel groups have an incentive to see deployment to rebel group-controlled territories. This can bolster their standing in peace negotiations (Krasner, 2004). For example, the SPLM/A in South Sudan initially favoured the presence of UN peacekeepers, hoping that their cooperation

would give them leverage in negotiations leading up to the Comprehensive Peace Agreement in 2005 (Johnson, 2011).

Rebel groups can have strategic interests both for, and against, seeing UN peacekeepers in areas where they have access to valuable resources, such as minerals or strategic trading routes. The presence of UN forces can deter rival factions or government forces from attempting to seize control of these resources. Conversely, rebel groups might oppose deployment in these areas if they see that it would limit their own extraction activities or their ability to profit from illegal trade (Ross, 2004). This ambivalent relationship can for example be seen in the DRC, where various rebel factions have had shifting strategic interests towards MONUSCO deployments near mineral-rich areas, depending on their control and interests in the regions (Autesserre, 2010).

A rebel group's credibility and support can be enhanced if it's perceived as protecting civilians. As such, rebel groups can favour peacekeeper deployment in civilian areas if they believe it will lead to reduced violence against their civilian supporters. Alternatively, if they use civilian shields or aim to commit human rights abuses for their strategic benefit, rebel groups will not prefer the presence of peacekeepers due to the protection of civilians, and the monitoring and reporting of human rights abuses (Weinstein, 2007). The ambivalent relationship can be seen in the south of Lebanon between UNIFIL and Hezbollah who holds significant power. On one hand, Hezbollah might see a benefit in UNIFIL's presence as it can serve as a buffer between them and Israel, potentially deterring immediate large-scale hostilities. UNIFIL's mandate includes ensuring that the area between the Litani River and the Blue Line (the Israel-Lebanon border) is free of any armed personnel, assets, and weapons other than those of the Government of Lebanon and UNIFIL (UNIFIL 2024)[4]. This can be advantageous for Hezbollah, as it can give the impression that they respect international peacekeeping efforts and might indirectly protect supporters from potential Israeli attacks.

On the other hand, Hezbollah has viewed UNIFIL with suspicion, and has been directly targeted such as by the terrorist attack in 2007 (Gregory and Sharland 2023). The monitoring and reporting of any armed group activities in the region can be perceived as an infringement on their autonomy and a potential threat. Hezbollah, like many other armed groups, might be concerned about peacekeepers reporting back on their activities, locations, and strategies (Norton 2007)[5]. Any monitoring of arms smuggling or buildup, for instance, would be

[4] https://unifil.unmissions.org/unifil-mandate

[5] Norton, A. R. (2007). Hezbollah: A short history. Princeton University Press.

detrimental to Hezbollah's strategic interests. This is to illustrate that, just as in many other rebel contexts, the relationship between UN peacekeepers and non-state armed groups like Hezbollah is intricate, but limited in its influence over UN peacekeeping deployment per se.

A2. 2 Rebel Groups Constraints for Peacekeeping Deployment

Rebel groups face diverse, dynamic factors that impact their strategic interests and mechanisms for influencing locations seeing UN Peacekeeping troops. It is key to account for these static factors to understand how these again impact rebel's strategic relations with the host-government and the UN. Terrain, resources, roads, weather patterns, access to borders, and internal unity can impact rebel group's ability to influence the locations seeing UN peacekeeping deployment in line with its strategic interests.

The rebel group can have incentives to maintain relations with the international society to maintain legitimacy and avoid military retaliation on the ground. The monitoring and reporting of rebel groups human rights abuses by UN peacekeepers arguably have a higher cost for rebel groups than the host-government due to the rebel group not holding the sovereign right. By losing national legitimacy, the rebel group can lose international support and a legitimate seat by the negotiation table. For example, Fjeldet et. al (2019) argue that rebels are more sensitive to the local threat of military costs and thus less able to shape the patterns of local peacekeeping deployment. A response to rebel-groups' attempts at influencing peacekeeping deployment, through checkpoints, attack on peacekeeping troops, or threat of violence, can be detrimental if foreign powers or the host-government combine forces to fight the group. As such, rebel groups are constrained by their strategic interests in peacekeeping deployment and strategic interests in avoiding a crack-down on their activities.

The physical landscape can both help and hinder rebel groups. While rugged terrain like mountains or dense forests can provide hideouts, they can also restrict rebel movement and scope. For instance, the vast rainforests in the DRC can make rapid movement difficult for rebels, which in turn can limit their ability to draw peacekeepers into certain locations. In this way, rebel groups are often constrained in their influence of peacekeeping deployment to the proximate areas of where the rebel group operates. This limitation is exacerbated by limited road access. Limited infrastructure can restrict rebel movement, making it difficult for them to quickly shift locations or influence where peacekeepers deploy. Particularly since rebel groups often have limited air capacity. For example, in South Sudan, the lack of extensive road networks in certain areas limits the movement of both rebel groups and peacekeepers. The movement can be further exacerbated by climate change. Adverse conditions such as extreme

drought, flooding, or rain seasons can restrict rebel movements. As with the UN and the host-government, the rainy season in regions like Sudan can make vast areas inaccessible, which might limit the rebels' ability to enact their strategic interests.

Internal unity within rebel groups, or the absence of it, has profound implications for their strategic interest to influence the deployment of UN peacekeeping troops. A major challenge arises from factions within a rebel group pursuing divergent strategies, with some aspiring for peaceful negotiations and others leaning on violent tactics. Such internal dynamics complicate the effort in influencing and cooperating with the UN in effectively deploying peacekeepers, as mixed signals from the rebel group can complicate the strategic planning and responses due to security concerns (Staniland, 2012). Specifically, the varied strategies can challenge objectives of establishing safe zones, facilitating peace talks, or receiving humanitarian assistance. The Polisario Front in Western Sahara is an example of this dynamic. Over its history, the Polisario has utilized a mix of guerrilla warfare, diplomatic channels, and at times, tactics akin to terrorism in their struggle for Sahrawi independence (Zunes and Mundy 2010). Such varied approaches, along with internal group tensions, present challenges for missions like MINURSO (the UN Mission for the Referendum in Western Sahara) to navigate a complex operational landscape. Similarly, the Sudan People's Liberation Movement/Army (SPLM/A) during the Second Sudanese Civil War saw internal fractures leading to inter-factional conflicts, further muddying the waters for international observers and peacekeeping presence (Arnold and Alden 2007). The diversity of rebel group dynamics underscore how external and internal factors can hinder peacekeeping deployment.

A key limitation in a rebel group's capacity to influence UN peacekeeping troop deployment lies in its dynamics with the host-government. By nature, rebel groups are frequently in direct armed opposition to the host-government, often rooted in divergent objectives, ideological differences, or disputes over resources and power. This discord fundamentally impacts the way UN peacekeeping operations are strategized and executed. This key dynamic is at the heart of the conflict, and naturally, the conflict itself is a key constraint of the rebel group’s influence.

The host-government can work to limit the rebel group’s influence over UN peacekeeping missions by working to categorise a rebel group as ‘terrorist organisations’ or 'radical factions’ as a response to the rebel groups’ tactics. This categorization can empower the host-government to leverage international sentiment. The host-government can use its power to rally further international support to counter the rebel group. Moreover, the host-government, if it deems fit, can seek international legitimization for deploying force against

the rebel group, especially if it can portray the group as a threat not just domestically but regionally or globally. The narrative of combating 'global terror', for instance, has been a recurrent motif in international relations post-9/11, and has been employed by various governments to justify interventions (Kreps 2010). When the host-government is seen as legitimate[6], its role and access on the international stage can shape the narrative of the conflict and in turn peacekeeping deployment. Nations with strong diplomatic ties and favourable international alliances can effectively channel these relationships to advocate for a particular mode or location of UN peacekeeping deployment. A recent example is seen in the UN's peacekeeping mission in Lebanon, UNIFIL, where the Lebanese government's pleas, in collaboration with its international partners, have sometimes influenced the patterns of troop deployments in areas contested by various factions (Nichols, 2018).[7]

In their strategic interests, rebel groups ultimately try to influence UN peacekeeping operations to get leverage in the peace process. However, they must continuously consider their relationship and relative gains/losses vis a-vis the host-government. A miscalculation or overt act of aggression might not just derail their goals with respect to UN deployment but could also catalyse broader national and international backlash. As such, their relationship with the host-government isn't just a constraint; it's a defining parameter of their operational landscape.

[6] De-legitimate host-governments do not carry the same power. For example in Ivory Coast, the election of December 2010 saw disagreements over the end results which impacted relationships between the peacekeeping mission and the host-government under President Gbagbo (Coulibaly, 2010). President Gbagbo was leaving office but tried to reverse the election result while he still controlled the Constitutional Council. The UN peacekeeping mission, which was also mandated to certify the election process, rejected Gbagbo's claim, and announced Ouattara as the new president (Sebastian and Gorur, 2018).

[7] It remains to see what role Israel will have over UNIFIL given the most recent outbreaks in Gaza in Oct 2023.

A3. Appendix Chapter 3

A3. 1 Logit Model Assumptions

The logistic model assumption assumes that the outcome variable is binary, that there is a linear relationship between the logit outcome and each predictor, that there are no outliers, and that there is no multicollinearity. The outcome PK Onset and PK presence meet the first assumptions of binary outcomes by being coded as '1' if seeing onset/presence or '0' otherwise. In the following section I test the assumptions of linearity, outliers, and multicollinearity. I follow the robustness checks presented by Kassambara (2021) in "Logistic Regression Assumptions and Diagnostics'.

A3. 2 Linearity Assumption

For my model, I first check the linear relationship between my continuous control variables and the logit of PK Onset and PK Presence. I do this visually by inspecting the scatter plot between each predictor and the logit values in A3.1. The smooth scatter plots illustrate that - in order - the variables 'Mountainous Terrain', 'Population - Log', and 'Travel Time to City - log' are linearly associated with peacekeeping onset in logit scale. Mountainous Terrain is less linear in the relationship, but country-fixed effects can control for the different levels of mountains in different countries.

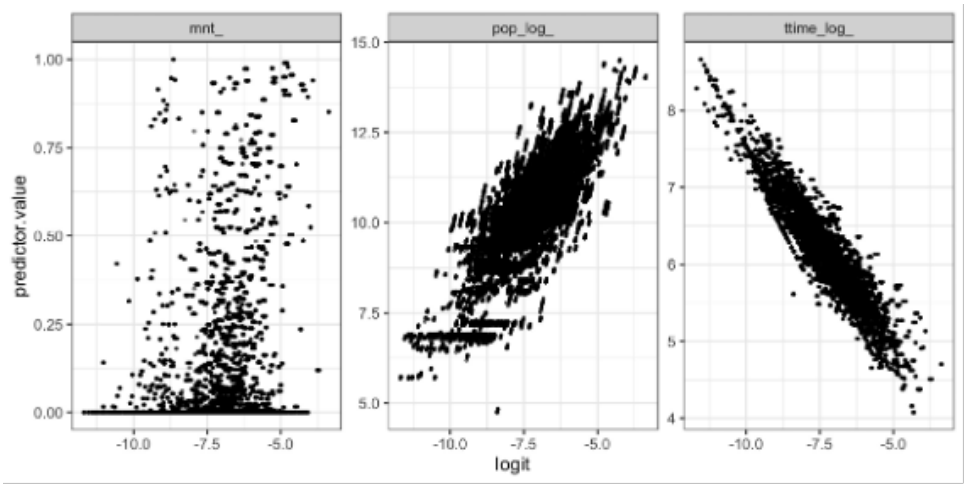


Figure A3.1: Linear Assumption for Logistic Regression. Note:'mnt' stands for mountainous terrain, 'pop_log' stands for logged population, and 'ttime_log_' stands for logged travel time to nearest city

A3. 3 Outliers

For my models, I test for extreme individual data points which can alter the quality of my logistics regression models. First, I examine any extreme values by visualising the Cook's distance values. I label the five largest values.

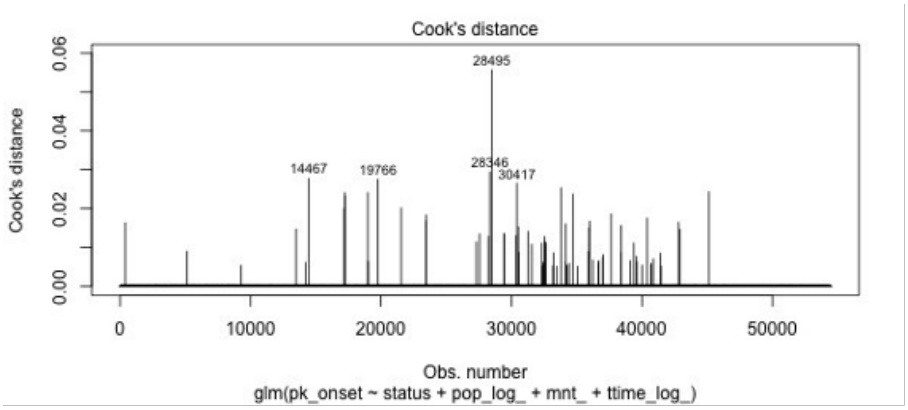
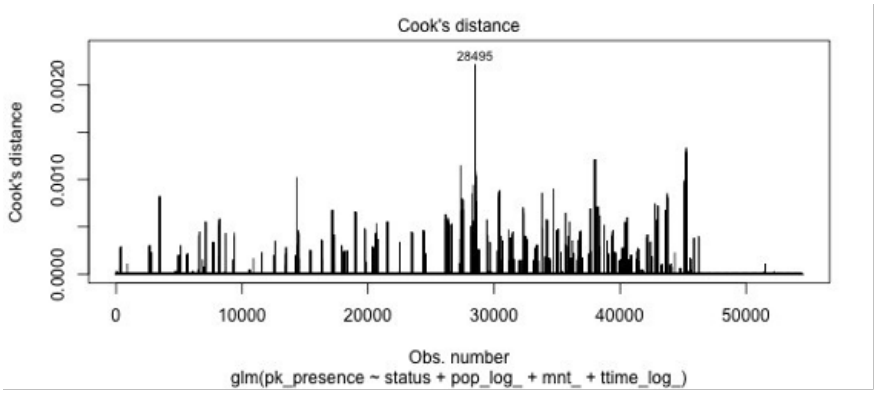


Figure A3.2: Outliers for PK Onset

In PK onset the outliers are distributed across several observations, while in PK Presence the outliers are all mapped on top of each other. Though there are outliers, not all necessary influence observations. I thus check whether my data has influential outliers by inspecting the standardized residual (SR) errors. If the SR are above 3, they can be possible outliers and



deserve closer attention. I plot the standardized residuals in A3.4. It can be observed that very few outliers have SR above 3, so their effect is negligible.

Figure A3.3: Outliers for PK Presence

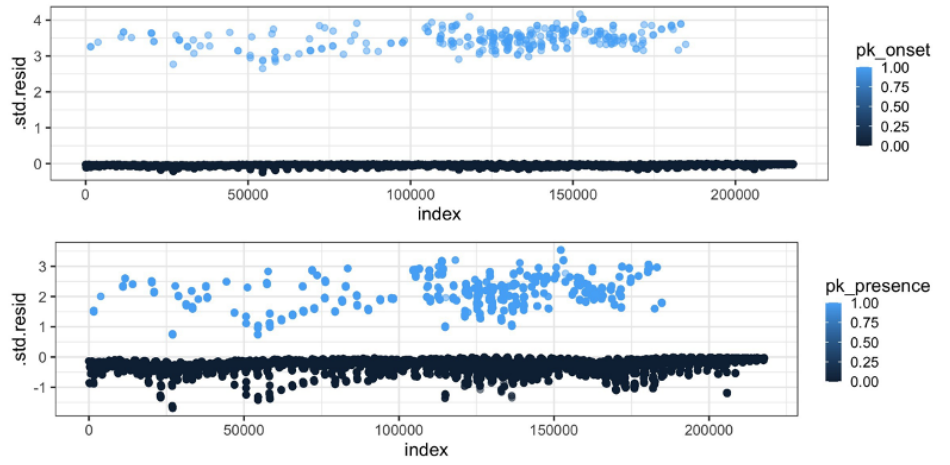


Figure A.4: Standardized Residuals for PK Onset and Presence

A3. 4 Multicollinearity

Lastly, I test the assumption that there is no significant multicollinearity between my independent variables in the two models. I measure the variance inflation factor (VIF), which measures the multicollinearity among my regression variables. Some authors suggest a VIF above 10 is of concern, while others suggest a conservative level of 2.5. Across my variables in the two models, the VIFs are between 1.1 and 1.6. The highest is 1.6 for population data. However, this is still far below the conservative level of a VIF score. I can thus assume that there is no multicollinearity between my variables.

A3. 5 Violence and Ethnic Groups

This thesis and hypothesis build on the theoretical assumption and statistical analysis of Fjelde and Hultman (2014); that belligerent groups have a strategic interest in attacking civilians in each other's territories. Fjelde and Hultman test this theoretical assumption looking at all of Africa between 1989 and 2009. The UCDP dataset notes the actors of one-sided-violence as either government or rebel groups, and Fjelde and Hultman operationalise the victims based on the political status of the ethnic group from the EPR dataset.

One major limitation in their study is that they operationalise 'government' co-ethnics as groups which see 'monopoly' or 'dominance' on state power. In highly ethnic fragmented countries, no ethnic group sees this power arrangement. In fact, in my data on 9 countries seeing a UN peacekeeping mission - not a single country saw this operationalisation of the government. Rather, the most common status is either senior partner or junior partner. The

question is hence if the findings by Fjelde and Hultman (2014) hold in the context of countries without an ethnic group seeing monopoly or dominance in government.

In this thesis I am reliant on the assumption that groups deliberately target civilians in each other's territories more than in their own territory. One-sided-violence and the status of a group is hence assumed to have a relationship. To avoid multicollinearity in my models, I cannot include one-sided-violence as this is correlated with the status of the territory. In the following table, I attempt to test this assumption within my dataset.

One major limitation when I test this assumption on my data is that I do it on data which is seeing peacekeeping troops. As such, the results are driven by the effect of peacekeeping missions and are suffering from omitted variable bias. As such, the results might be driven by peacekeeping troops. Yet, it is sufficient to illustrate the connection between status of ethnic groups and one-sided-violence. The assumption is still that groups should attempt to conduct deliberate attacks on civilians in belligerent territories.

To test whether the host-government attacks civilians in rebel territories, and rebel groups in government territories I run logit models on one-sided-violence in Table A.1. The data on one-sided-violence is from the UCDP Geo-referenced event dataset (Sundberg and Melander, 2013). I operationalise one-sided-violence as a dummy variable for monthly grid cells which see five or more killings. I first look at all one-sided-violence, and then separate between violence by the government and by the rebel group. My independent variable is again the status of the co-ethnic groups of the territory - see research design in the main text. For the statistical models, the government is the intercept.

A3. 6 Interaction Effect: Violence and Ethnic Areas

There are reasons to assume an interaction effect between violence and politically ethnic settlement patterns on peacekeeping deployment. Locations of violence can be explained by the ethnic areas of government and rebel groups, and peacekeeping deployment can in turn be explained by peacekeeping deployments. In turn, UN peacekeepers might deploy differently depending on violence committed in ethnic constituencies of the rebel group and of the government. In Figure A3.2 I test the interaction effect. In model 1,3, and 5 I do not identify the actor of the one-sided-violence. The results show that there indeed is a statistically significant interaction effect on peacekeeping presence and the size of peacekeeping troops. When adding up the coefficients, ethnic constituencies of the host-government seeing one-sided-violence are 1.14 log odds less likely to have peacekeepers present than rebel territories. In Model 2, 4, and 6 I account for whether the perpetrator of one-sided-violence is the

government or rebel group. The interaction effect in model 6 on the number of peacekeeping troops is statistically significant: government co-ethnic constituencies which see one-sided-violence by the government receive on average 0.07 log of troops less than ethnic constituencies of rebel groups. Future research should further look into the interaction effect between politically ethnic areas, violence, and peacekeeping presence in host-government incentives for deployment.

A3. 7 Violence and Ethnic Groups

This thesis and hypothesis build on the theoretical assumption and statistical analysis of Fjelde and Hultman (2014); that belligerent groups have a strategic interest in attacking civilians in each other's territories. Fjelde and Hultman test this theoretical assumption looking at all of Africa between 1989 and 2009. The UCDP dataset notes the actor of one-sided-violence as either government or rebel group, and Fjelde and Hultman operationalise the victims based on the political status of the ethnic group from the EPR dataset.

One major limitation in their study is that they operationalise 'government' co-ethnics as groups which see 'monopoly' or 'dominance' on state power. In highly ethnic fragmented countries, no ethnic group sees this power arrangement. In fact, in my data on 9 countries seeing the UN peacekeeping mission - not a single country saw this operationalisation of the government. Rather, the most common status is either senior partner or junior partner. The question is hence if the findings by Fjelde and Hultman (2014) hold in the context of countries without an ethnic group seeing monopoly or dominance in government.

In this thesis I am reliant on the assumption that groups deliberately target civilians in each other's territories more than in their own territory. One-sided-violence and the status of a group is hence assumed to have a relationship. To avoid multicollinearity in my models, I cannot include one-sided-violence as this is correlated with the status of the territory. In the following table, I attempt to test this assumption within my dataset.

One major limitation when I test this assumption on my data is that I do it on data which is seeing peacekeeping troops. As such, the results are driven by the effect of peacekeeping missions and are suffering from omitted variable bias. As such, the results might be driven by peacekeeping troops. Yet, it is sufficient to illustrate the connection between status of ethnic groups and one-sided-violence. The assumption is still that groups should attempt to conduct deliberate attacks on civilians in belligerent territories.

To test whether the host-government attacks civilians in rebel territories, and rebel groups in government territories I run logit models on one-sided-violence in Table A.1. The

data on one-sided-violence is from the UCDP Geo-referenced event dataset (Sundberg and Melander, 2013). I operationalise one-sided-violence as a dummy variable for monthly grid cells which see five or more killings. I first look at all one-sided-violence, and then separate between violence by the government and by the rebel group. My independent variable is again the status of the co-ethnic groups of the territory - see research design in the main text. For the statistical models, the government is the intercept.

Dependent Var:	OSV		OSV Reb		OSV Gov	
Model:	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
	Logit	Logit	Logit	Logit	Logit	Logit
Variables						
(Intercept)	-2.315		-2.635*		-5.753**	
	(1.471)		(1.586)		(2.828)	
Rebel	-0.5965***	-0.5684***	-0.5273**	-0.4040**	-0.4576	-0.4283
	(0.2016)	(0.1858)	(0.2238)	(0.2012)	(0.3454)	(0.3515)
Irrelevant	-0.2313	-0.2346	-0.0912	-0.0647	-0.4193	-0.3240
	(0.2254)	(0.2231)	(0.2335)	(0.2254)	(0.4744)	(0.4366)
Pop_{log}	-0.0212	0.0125	-0.0924	-0.1639**	0.1308	0.3518**
	(0.0762)	(0.0823)	(0.0714)	(0.0781)	(0.1491)	(0.1503)
Mountains	0.9934***	1.063***	1.546***	1.544***	0.4464	1.456***
	(0.3405)	(0.2997)	(0.3062)	(0.2963)	(0.5322)	(0.4116)
Travel $Time_{log}$	-0.7001***	-0.7111***	-0.6320***	-0.9226***	-0.5560**	-0.2285
	(0.1543)	(0.1661)	(0.1774)	(0.1980)	(0.2601)	(0.2477)
Battle $Deaths_{log}$	0.0032	0.0048	-0.0013	-0.0009	0.0043	0.0090***
	(0.0034)	(0.0041)	(0.0036)	(0.0038)	(0.0033)	(0.0025)
Spatial lag osv_{log}	1.356***	1.344***	1.472***	1.369***	0.7238*	0.6224**
	(0.1862)	(0.1722)	(0.2065)	(0.1990)	(0.3734)	(0.2808)
Decay osv Gov	1.539***	1.925***	0.1010	0.2566	3.995***	3.663***
	(0.3916)	(0.3659)	(0.2605)	(0.2849)	(0.4149)	(0.3029)
Decay osv Reb	3.598***	3.523***	4.252***	3.912***	1.289**	2.072***
	(0.2260)	(0.2111)	(0.2321)	(0.2272)	(0.5223)	(0.4366)
Fixed-effects						
Country		Yes		Yes		Yes
Year		Yes		Yes		Yes
Fit statistics						
Observations	217,823	200,562	217,823	200,562	217,823	200,562
Squared Cor.	0.07222	0.08603	0.06464	0.08889	0.02638	0.04366
Pseudo R^2	0.28318	0.29409	0.32125	0.34383	0.22462	0.26796

Clustered (priogrid) standard-errors in parentheses
*Signif. Codes: ***: 0.01, **: 0.05, *: 0.1*

Table A3.1: Fixed Effect for OSV and Ethnic Status, here the dependent variable is OSV

Dependent Var:	PK Onset		PK Presence		# PK Troops$_{10log}$	
Model:	(1) Logit	(2) Logit	(3) Logit	(4) Logit	(5) Normal	(6) Normal
Variables						
Government	-0.5009*	-0.5007*	-1.115***	-1.116***	-0.0792*	-0.0792*
	(0.2821)	(0.2820)	(0.3768)	(0.3775)	(0.0415)	(0.0416)
Irrelevant	-0.4577**	-0.4545**	-0.7910***	-0.7954***	-0.0441*	-0.0445*
	(0.1803)	(0.1811)	(0.1702)	(0.1677)	(0.0203)	(0.0203)
Population	0.2758***	0.2758***	0.4598***	0.4588***	0.0365**	0.0363**
	(0.0954)	(0.0953)	(0.1100)	(0.1096)	(0.0143)	(0.0142)
Mountains	1.653***	1.649***	1.792***	1.793***	0.1670***	0.1672***
	(0.1871)	(0.1895)	(0.1783)	(0.1789)	(0.0224)	(0.0223)
Travel Time	-0.9934***	-0.9943***	-1.505***	-1.505***	-0.1042***	-0.1042***
	(0.2311)	(0.2318)	(0.1835)	(0.1824)	(0.0279)	(0.0280)
OSV	0.0012		0.0147***		0.0072**	
	(0.0077)		(0.0047)		(0.0022)	
OSV × Gov	-0.0021		-0.0141***		-0.0072**	
	(0.0078)		(0.0048)		(0.0024)	
OSV × Irrelevant	0.0037		-0.0112***		-0.0056*	
	(0.0076)		(0.0043)		(0.0025)	
OSV Gov		0.0117**		0.0116		0.0067**
		(0.0047)		(0.0077)		(0.0022)
OSV Reb		-0.0006		0.0163		0.0075
		(0.0080)		(0.0106)		(0.0046)
OSV Gov × Gov		-0.0131**		0.0012		-0.0047*
		(0.0066)		(0.0117)		(0.0024)
OSV Gov × Irrelevant		-0.0338		0.0215		0.0101
		(0.0243)		(0.0209)		(0.0083)
OSV Reb × Gov		9.11×10^{-5}		-0.0186		-0.0078
		(0.0088)		(0.0119)		(0.0046)
OSV Reb × Irrelevant		0.0055		-0.0133		-0.0064
		(0.0079)		(0.0102)		(0.0046)
Fixed-effects						
Country	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Year	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Fit statistics						
Observations	217,823	217,823	217,823	217,823	217,823	217,823
Squared Correlation	0.01312	0.01324	0.26520	0.26559	0.22530	0.22609
Pseudo R^2	0.17750	0.17764	0.36095	0.36120	0.16139	0.16203

Clustered (country) standard-errors in parentheses
*Signif. Codes: ***: 0.01, **: 0.05, *: 0.1*

Table A3.2: Interaction terms for OSV and Ethnic Status

The interaction terms in the fixed-effects model in Table A3.2 provide insight into how past OSV by government and rebel groups influences peacekeeping deployment across different ethnic constituencies. The key takeaway is that peacekeeping deployment patterns vary significantly depending on both the political status of the territory and the perpetrator of prior violence.

The baseline category in this model is rebel-held territories, meaning all coefficients represent deviations from peacekeeping deployment patterns in rebel territories. The coefficient for government-aligned territories is negative (-0.5009), indicating that, overall, government-held areas see fewer peacekeepers compared to rebel territories. Similarly, irrelevant territories also have a negative coefficient (-0.4577), suggesting that peacekeepers are less likely to deploy there as well.

OSV Gov has a small but positive effect (0.0117), meaning that past government-perpetrated violence slightly increases the likelihood of peacekeeping presence in rebel territories. However, when OSV Gov occurs in government-held areas, the interaction term (-0.0131) reduces the overall effect, leading to a net negative effect. This suggests that even when government forces commit violence in their own territories, it does not attract peacekeepers to the same extent as rebel violence does. In contrast, OSV Gov in irrelevant territories has no statistically significant interaction effect, implying a neutral or mixed impact.

OSV Reb does not significantly affect peacekeeping deployment in rebel territories. However, in government-controlled areas, OSV Reb × Gov is close to zero (9.11×10^{-5}), indicating no meaningful effect. This suggests that rebel violence in government territories does not systematically alter peacekeeping presence, potentially because these areas already have limited peacekeeping deployment to begin with.

Total effects computed across categories reveal a strong negative relationship between government-held areas and peacekeeping presence, regardless of past violence. Government territories remain significantly less likely to see peacekeeping deployment, even when adjusting for prior violence. The total effect of government-aligned areas on peacekeeping deployment is approximately -0.502, confirming that peacekeepers are systematically less present in government-controlled areas, even when controlling for past OSV.

A4. Appendix Chapter 4

A4. 1 Example of Movement Restriction Language in Mission Reports[8]

Mali - MINUSMA

> 61. MINUSMA continued to face restrictions on movement and access. It recorded 27 instances of ground restrictions: 16 imposed by the Malian forces, 4 by the gendarmerie, 5 by the local population and 2 by the dozo militia. Most restrictions were imposed in the centre, with 15 cases involving ongoing night-time restrictions along the Mopti-Sévaré axes and in Djenne for all MINUSMA movements and patrols. Five cases were recorded in Gao, three in Bamako and two in Timbuktu.
>
> 62. MINUSMA recorded 24 instances of air restrictions, with a notable shift to sector East, while most of the restrictions recorded during the previous reporting period had occurred in sector Centre. Most related to intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance operations, in particular involving unmanned aircraft, although the restrictions also affected MINUSMA helicopter flights to a lesser extent. For example, on 30 and 31 August, restrictions on helicopter flights in the Ansongo and Ménaka regions were recorded following attacks by Islamic State in the Greater Sahara against positions of the Malian Armed Forces, which led to counter-offensive operations in the area. In addition, restrictions delayed the Mission's response to the early warning alert in Tin Hama, postponing deterrence flights from 26 to 28 August.

Text: Excerpt from Mali - MINUSMA - S/2022/731

Example of text excerpts from the UN Secretary Generals' Report on reported movement restrictions in Mali of MINUSMA. Specifically with 27 ground restrictions nationally, specifically movement restrictions in Gao, Bamako, and Timbuktu. 24 instances of air restrictions nationally, specifically air restrictions in Sector East (Gao), in Ansongo, and Menaka, and in Tin Hama (S/2022/731)

Eritrea and Ethiopia - UNMEE

> 3. Eritrea has further increased its restrictions on UNMEE patrols, especially in Sectors West and Centre, where the Mission is prevented from monitoring the activities of Eritrean armed personnel. Also, between 6 and 8 January, UNMEE vehicles were not allowed to travel between Asmara and Adigrat across a checkpoint located at the Serha post, in Sector Centre. All these restrictions represent a serious violation of the Agreement of 18 June 2000 on Cessation of Hostilities and the Protocol concluded between Eritrea and UNMEE on 17 April 2001.
>
> 8. As I mentioned in paragraph 3, during the reporting period, UNMEE patrols were subjected to additional restrictions on their freedom of movement, as well as denials of access, in many areas of Sectors West and Centre, both inside the Temporary Security Zone and in the adjacent areas, especially after Eritrea's induction of troops in Sector West. In addition, Eritrea has closed the bridge at Humera, which is critical for UNMEE's cross-border movement in Sector West and, in particular, the contacts and logistical support between its personnel deployed at Om Hajer, inside the Zone and Humera, in the adjacent area on the Ethiopian side.
>
> 9. On 16 December, an UNMEE patrol from Adi Quala was stopped at gunpoint, threatened and temporarily detained by Eritrean armed militia inside the Temporary Security Zone in Sector West. UNMEE has strongly protested the incident with the Eritrean authorities, who agreed to look into the matter.

[8] See end of Appendix 4 for notes on the geo-coding of sectors in peacekeeping missions

Text: Excerpts from Eritrea and Ethiopia - UNMEE - S/2007/33

Example of text excerpts from the report of the Secretary-General on Ethiopia and Eritrea on the reported freedom of movement of UNMEE between 15 December 2006 and 22 January 2007. Report of movement restrictions in Sector West (Om Hajer, Lalay Gash, Shambuko, Molqi) and Sector Centre (Maimine, Adi Quala, Tsorona, Senafe), movement restrictions between Asmara and Adigrat 6-8 Aug, Humera Bridge, to Om Hajer and Humera, and from Adi Quala on Dec 16, in S/2007/33.

South Sudan - UNMISS

> 77. UNMISS recorded 24 incidents of movement restrictions impeding the Mission's ability to implement its mandated tasks, which were attributed to the Government. Obstructions of UNMISS movements included access restrictions along the Torit to Pajok axis, as well as in Lokiri, Loronyo and Pachidi in Eastern Equatoria; in the Morsak, Kejiko and Senema areas, approximately 32 km from Yei in Central Equatoria; and along the Wau to Tonj axis, the East Bank of the Jur River, and the Wau to Athiro Boma and the Wau to Kuajena axes, especially around the village of Ukol in Western Bahr el-Ghazal.
>
> 80. Four cases of interference in UNMISS activities by the pro-Machar SPLM/A-IO were recorded in Central Equatoria, with the group disrupting UNMISS patrols on two different occasions. On 8 March, an UNMISS patrol travelling from Yei to Panyume (located about 7 km from Yei) was blocked by pro-Machar SPLM/A-IO members. On 22 March, an UNMISS patrol travelling along the Yei to Morobo axis was also blocked by pro-Machar SPLM/A-IO members. On 2 April, the pro-Machar SPLM/A-IO-appointed Governor of Boma threatened to shoot down UNMISS aircraft overflying areas under his control. Following UNMISS engagement, a declarative statement was subsequently issued, guaranteeing the safety of UNMISS flights throughout the area.

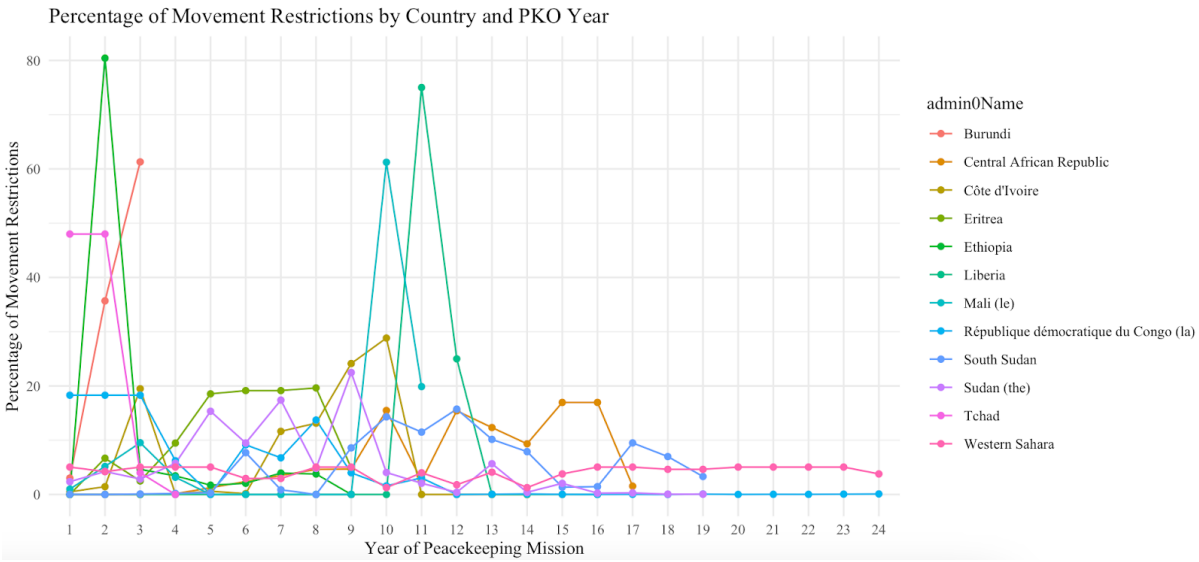
Text: Excerpts from South Sudan - UNMISS - S/2019/491

Report of the Secretary-General on UNMISS in South Sudan between 27 February and 28 May 2019. Reports on 24 incidents of movement restrictions of the mission by the Government, including from Torit to Pajok, in Lokiri, Loronyo, and Pachidi, in Morsak, Kejino, and Senema, near Yei, from Wau to Tonj, at the Jur River, and from Wau to Athiro Boma and Wau to Kuejana, in the village of Ukol. Further, the mission reported on movement restrictions by pro-Machar SPLM/A-IO, with one on March 8th from Yei to Penyume, one on March 22nd from from Yei to Morobo, on 2nd of April with no fly-zone over Boma.

A4. 2 Time-Trend of Movement Restrictions

For the data-collection on movement restrictions of UN peacekeepers in the field, it is key to investigate if there is a time trend bias in the dataset. Does the UN mission systematically start to capture movement restrictions after a certain number of years across peacekeeping missions?

Are movement restrictions a product of time? To further investigate this, I normalise the first year a country sees a UN peacekeeping to year 1.



Graph: Percentage of movement restrictions across countries, normalised by the start-year of each mission

The graph visualises the percentage of movement restrictions faced by UN peacekeepers during their missions, mapped across various countries and normalised by the start year of each mission. Each country's timeline starts with its first year of hosting a UN peacekeeping mission as "Year 1."

The data indicates a lack of a consistent temporal pattern in the reporting of movement restrictions across different peacekeeping missions. Instead of a uniform increase or decrease over time, the graph shows varied peaks and troughs for each country. This suggests that movement restrictions are influenced by factors specific to each mission and its context, rather than merely the duration of the mission itself. These factors could include political dynamics, conflict intensity, or operational changes within the missions, which may account for the observed fluctuations in the data.

Across countries, I find no systematic trend of when the reporting of movement restrictions occurs. Instead, the use of movement restrictions is driven by other factors that can explain peaks and drops in movement restrictions over time.

A4. 3 Geo-MRP Dataset Codebook

(2000-2023)

Welcome to the Codebook for the Analysis of Reported Movement Restrictions in UN Peacekeeping Missions. This document serves as a comprehensive guide for researchers, analysts, and policymakers engaged in the study of movement restrictions impacting UN missions globally. The codebook is designed to facilitate a deeper understanding of the challenges and complexities faced by UN peacekeeping troops in conflict zones, specifically regarding their freedom of movement. Understanding the time, place, and scale of Movement restrictions is operationally key as UN peacekeepers rely on local presence to effectively implement its mandate and provide security to the local populations.

The purpose of this codebook is twofold: firstly, to provide a standardised method for coding and analysing data related to movement restrictions in UN peacekeeping missions; and secondly, to offer a clear, structured framework for researchers to understand, interpret, and draw meaningful insights from this data.

The scope of the dataset encompasses restrictions reported by UN Peacekeeping Missions in the situational reports from the Secretary General, dating from January 2000 to December 2023. The dataset details the reported movement restrictions imposed by a party to the conflict on UN Peacekeeping missions in Africa. The data covers 15 UN Peacekeeping Missions in 12 countries. The data includes:

- Ethiopia/Eritrea (UNMEE)
- Burundi (ONUB)
- Central African Republic / Chad (MINURCAT)
- Central African Republic (MINUSCA)
- Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUC, MONUSCO)
- Ivory Coast (UNOCI)
- Liberia (UNMIL)
- South Sudan (UNMISS)
- Sudan (UNMIS, UNAMID, UNISFA, UNITAMS)
- Mali (MINUSMA)
- Western Sahara /Morocco (MINURSO)

This 23-year span offers a comprehensive view of the UN's peacekeeping efforts in Africa. Each mission, within its geopolitical and historical context, provides valuable insights into the challenges and dynamics of peacekeeping in regions marked by conflict and instability.

This dataset conceptualises movement restrictions by mapping reported restrictions imposed by a party to the conflict. Thus, three key forms of movement restrictions are accounted for: physical barriers, permit-based restrictions, and goods-based limitations of transportation and fuel. By systematically categorising and analysing these incidents, the codebook aims to shed light on patterns, trends, and underlying issues affecting peacekeeping operations. Drawing from over 500 unique mission reports which are political by nature, this dataset does not claim to offer a complete data of peacekeepers' movement restrictions, but emphasises that it is reported movement restrictions. As such, it represents

a systematic collection from political sources into structured observations. This codebook's relevance is rooted in its potential to inform policy decisions, enhance mission strategies, and contribute to the broader discourse on peacekeeping effectiveness in conflict zones.

Key Data Features and Concepts:

Movement Restriction: In this dataset, movement restriction is defined as an action carried out by a party to the conflict that limits the UN mission's ability to move freely to a specified location.

This concept encompasses three key components:

1) **The Agent (Doer) of Restriction:** The party imposing the restriction is either associated with the government (such as government forces or entities) or comprises other groups like rebel factions or opposition forces. It is crucial to note that the restrictions are exclusively human-made and deliberate actions by these parties, distinguishing them from natural or environmental limitations.
2) **The Target of Restriction:** The restrictions are specifically imposed on UN peacekeeping missions. This focus excludes limitations placed on other entities like humanitarian organisations or restrictions arising from broader security situations related to the conflict but not the UN, such as increased fighting or general violence in the area.
3) **The Nature of Restriction:** The actions that constitute movement restrictions are those that physically impede movement, such as the establishment of roadblocks, checkpoints, or barricades. They also include administrative barriers like the denial of necessary permits (e.g., flight, road, or drone safety assurances) or withholding essential operational resources like fuel and transportation. These measures are designed to limit the UN's ability to move and operate within a conflict zone. For instance, in South Sudan (UNMISS S/2021/172 [86]), despite the UN's assertion that information sharing was solely for coordination and not for seeking approvals, security personnel frequently denied movement of UNMISS patrols.

What is *not* Movement Restrictions: Given this definition, there are movement-impeding scenarios that are *not* encompassed by the definition above and thus *not* accounted for in the data. This is because these actions stem from other intentions, other targets, or do not directly hamper UN's movement to a location. The definition of movement restrictions does not include:

- Limitations due to natural occurrences such as weather patterns or seasons (e.g., drought, heavy rains, mountainous terrain, jungle terrain).
- Movement challenges arising from increased security threats, including active fighting, shootings, or general violence as a product of the warfare that are not directed at the UN.
- Internal constraints of the UN missions, like a lack of transport resources, funding, staff (e.g. lack of helicopters, personnel, or cars).
- Standard immigration controls, visa restrictions, or governmental demands for taxes on imports.
- Humanitarian movement restrictions not conducted by a NGO not associated with the UN peacekeeping mission, or not using the UN peacekeeping mission patrolling service.

Based on this definition, it's important to note that the lack of reported UN movement restrictions in certain cases does not necessarily reflect the overall situation of humanitarian access. Often, humanitarian actors reported facing movement restrictions to the UN, even when there were no such reports from the UN Peacekeeping Mission. This discrepancy is largely due to the Peacekeeping Mission not being present in all areas where humanitarian actors operate. However, identifying the

specific organisations that reported their movement challenges to the UN Peacekeeping Mission is unclear. Consequently, mission reports alone were not considered sufficient to comprehensively capture the scope of humanitarian movement restrictions. Furthermore, the factors preventing movement for these different agents (who typically do not carry arms) and their effect locally vary from UN peacekeepers. Thus, independent humanitarian movement restrictions that are not contracted directly by the UN Peacekeeping Mission, or are not relying on UN Peacekeeping Mission transport, are not included in the data.[9]

In summary, movement restrictions in the context of UN peacekeeping missions are deliberate actions by conflict parties that directly limit the missions' operational mobility and movement, distinguished from natural, environmental, or broader security-related limitations. This dataset captures reported movement restrictions by the UN. Because of its political source material, the granularity of the data can vary. The data-structure captures both the level of granularity of the spatial and temporal reporting.

Data and Variables:

Below, an overview of the data structure and its variables with definitions and examples provided. The dataset is presented in a tabular format, with each row representing a location seeing an incident at a given time. As such, if a location is seeing several movement restrictions in a given reporting period, it will be reflected in a count-variable of the number of movement restrictions the UN faced for a given time period. Here's an overview of the data structure in its raw format:

Variables	Data Structure	Definition	Example
Doc (Document Number)	Text/String	The unique identifier or file number of the UN mission report.	S/2018/1103
Country	Text/String	The country where the UN mission is located and the incident occurred.	South Sudan
Mission	Text/String	The specific UN peacekeeping mission involved.	UNMISS (United Nations Mission in South Sudan)
Report_Date	Date	The date when the report was published or submitted.	14 June 2019
Incident_date	Date	The date when the specific movement restriction incident occurred.	10 December 2018
Moverestrict_dum	Binary (0/1)	A binary indicator signifying the presence or absence of a reported movement restriction.	1 (indicating a movement restriction occurred)

[9] In some missions, UN peacekeepers operate alongside other forces—such as EUFOR and MINURCAT in Chad/CAR, French forces in Mali, or African Union contingents. However, these actors do not systematically report movement restrictions. This dataset focuses solely on restrictions reported by UN peacekeeping missions; restrictions affecting other international forces are therefore not captured. Given their distinct mandates and relationships with host-governments, future data collection should aim to include these actors to better map local strategic dynamics.

Moverestrict_number	Numeric	The number of movement restrictions reported in the incident.	3 (indicating three instances of movement restrictions)
Geosplit	Numeric	Indicates the number of different geographical locations involved in the incident.	2 (implying the incident spanned across two different locations)
Location_Level	Categorical	Indicates the lowest administrative level the incident was reported at 0-3: 0 national, 1 state, 2 county, 3 town/city.	3 (implying that the incident took place at town/city level, e.g the city of Wau)
Town	Text/String	The specific town or city where the incident occurred.	Wau (name of smallest reported location)
Town_Lat (Town Latitude)	Latitude	The latitude coordinate of the town where the incident occurred.	7.700228489 (latitude for Wau)
Town_Long (Town Longitude)	Longitude	The longitude coordinate of the town where the incident occurred.	27.98715473 (longitude for Wau)
State_Region	Text/String	The state or region where the town is located.	Western Bahr el-Ghazal (name of state of Wau)
State_Lat (State Latitude)	Latitude	The latitude coordinate of the state or region.	8.6452399 (latitude for Western Bahr el-Ghazal)
State_Long (State Longitude)	Longitude	The longitude coordinate of the state or region.	25.2837585 (longitude for Western Bahr el-Ghazal)
Government_dum	Binary (0/1)	A binary indicator signifying government involvement in the incident.	1 (indicating government involvement)
Other_dum	Binary (0/1)	A binary indicator signifying non-state actors' involvement in the incident.	1 (indicating non-state actors involvement)
Polygons	Geospatial Data/Coordinates	Geographical data representing the area (in polygonal shape) where the incident occurred.	A set of latitude and longitude coordinates forming a polygon around Wau.
Note	Text/String	A description of the reported movement-restriction	Restriction of movement by SPLA soldiers of an UNMISS patrol from Torit to Pajok.

Data Collection Methodology

The data collection methodology for analysing reported movement restrictions in UN peacekeeping missions is designed to be both comprehensive and nuanced. By employing multiple rounds of verifications, it aims to balance manual coding's depth with the consistency and scale. This approach is critical for dealing with the complexity and diversity of reports across various missions, time frames,

and political scenarios. Further, each mission is collected by one person, each report and entry is checked by a second person, and a third person conducts random draws of the data entries to verify the data collection according to this codebook.

Hand-Coding Process:
The process begins with a detailed hand-coding stage. Analysts conduct a thorough review of mission reports, focusing on key terms indicative of movement restrictions. These terms are: Movement, *Access, Restrict, Deploy, Reach, Violation, Permission, SOFA Status of Force, Denied, Prevent, Obstructed, Freedom, Movement, Vehicle, Flight, Helicopter, Fuel.* The keywords were selected after a randomised selection of two reports from each peacekeeping mission to detect language used about peacekeepers movement. While analysts read the report for contextual understanding, this keyword-driven approach aids in efficiently identifying relevant report sections for deeper analysis.

Contextual Analysis and Criteria-Based Coding:
Upon identifying the relevant sections, the analysts undertake a contextual analysis. This involves reading the selected text in its entirety to comprehend the context of the incidents – focusing on the involved parties, locations, timings, and the nature of the movement restrictions. Each incident is then hand-coded according to pre-established criteria, ensuring that data categorization is both consistent and accurate.

Third and Fourth Round Verification
The data analysis process was manually conducted and involved several key steps to ensure accuracy and thoroughness. Initially, an analyst manually coded the data. Following this, another analyst reviewed each entry, controlling for the mention of the research-term detected in the pilot to ensure no entries were overlooked. Lastly, to ensure the consistency of this manual process, a third analyst performed a quality check by randomly selecting 20 reports from each mission, checking that the coding was uniformly accurate across all missions.

Understanding Limitations and Reporting Biases:
A key aspect of this methodology is the acknowledgment of its inherent limitations. The primary limitation arises from the nature of the source material – the UN mission reports themselves. These reports not only reflect the actual movement restrictions encountered, but also how these incidents are documented and reported by the UN. This leads to variability in data granularity, particularly concerning geographical detail, temporal accuracy, and the specific nature of movement restrictions. The reporting style of the UN varies over time and across missions in terms of granularity of information. The dataset is also likely to under-report the true scale of movement restrictions, as many incidents may go unreported or undocumented at the local level.

Usage of the Data:
The dataset offers new and valuable insights into intentional movement restrictions faced by UN peacekeeping missions. Yet, users must approach it with an understanding of its limitations and biases. This dataset should be viewed as a starting point for broader investigation and analysis, rather than as a comprehensive account of all movement restrictions. There is a high assumption that this data captures an under-reported tendency; there is a need to implement systematic measures of movement restrictions, and for practitioners to agree on a common definition of movement restrictions. If not, the concept becomes too vague and loses its meaning. This dataset, by defining movement restrictions as an action carried out by a party to the conflict that limits the UN mission's ability to move freely to a specified location, offers novel insight into where the UN attempts to move - but is directly prevented from

reaching. By doing so, this research highlights the frequency and effect of an isolated cause and does not confound movement restrictions with factors such as climate change (drought), resource limitations (lack of flights, boats etc), or security (the UN deems it too dangerous). In turn, this data with its data collection methodology and an acknowledgment of potential data gaps, provides a thoughtful framework for mapping and understanding the issue of movement restrictions in UN peacekeeping missions.

Notes on the Data-Collection

Ambiguous information is an inevitable part of data collection from diverse sources like UN mission reports. When faced with such scenarios, consistency and clarity is the main priority. For ambiguous cases, we aligned with the most reliable data points available. If the data is conflicting, we document both versions and mark the uncertainty clearly, in a separate remarks column called "noted". For incomplete data entries, these entries are labelled distinctly in terms of location at the largest unit reported. This thus ranges from village level, to county level, to state level, to at the broadest national level.

Geographical Coding:

The primary focus is on the smallest geographical unit mentioned in the reports, typically the Town/County/City, followed by the state level. In situations where movement restrictions are noted between two locations, both the starting and ending points should be recorded as separate data entries. When the report does not mention a specific location for movement restriction, the national level (name of the country) is noted in the name of the state variable. The Geosplit-variable further indicates the number of different geographical locations reported in one incident of movement restrictions, for example between two points. The Location Level variable further indicates the lowest administrative level the movement restriction was reported at, which can be national, on a state-level, country, or a town/city. A further note on sector-specific coding is included at the end of the codebook.

Temporal Coding:

The temporal aspect of the data is primarily based on a standard reporting period of the mission. However, if reports provide an exact date for a specific movement restriction incident, that date is used as the temporal marker for the entry. The movement restriction is assumed to last until the end of the reporting period. This method captures both the general and specific timeframes of the restrictions. A movement restriction mentioned in a report is thus marked as "active" in the whole reporting period if no further details are provided.

Document Number:

All reports reporting to the Security Council giving Mission updates are included in the dataset. When a report does not report on, or mention, movement restrictions, the report is still counted for to account for accessible periods. In this case, the dummy variable for movement restriction is set to 0, and the geographical coding mentions the country-name under the State-variable. The temporal coding is the date of the report.

Movement Restriction Dummy:

The movement restriction dummy captures whether one or more movement restrictions were faced by the UN Peacekeeping Mission on a given place on a given time, where 1 indicates movement restriction(s) and 0 indicates no mention of movement restrictions in any location in the reporting

period[10]. Movement restrictions follow the definition and framework laid out above, where movement restrictions in the context of UN peacekeeping missions are deliberate actions by conflict parties that directly limit the missions' operational mobility and access, distinguished from natural, environmental, or broader security-related limitations.

Government Dummy:
The variable reports 1 if the report mentions that the movement restriction was conducted by the government and its institutions. Here, the government includes the current party in government with its defence forces, security forces, border controls and checkpoints.

Non-Government Dummy:
This variable reports if the movement was restricted by actors not associated with the government in power and its institution. While parties can have claim to government, this only captures actors who the UN do not recognise as sovereign governmental actors / institutions /agencies. Thus, in most cases, the non-government dummy captures movement restrictions by the party to the conflict and its actions. However, this variable also captures movement restrictions imposed by civilians in the conflict such as mobs, protesters, or vandalism of transporting facilities (airport or vehicles).

Mission Specific coding-notes

UNMISS (South Sudan):

- 'SPLM/A-IO Controlled Areas' is coded as 'Upper Nile'
- The 'Unity State' is coded as 'Western Upper Nile' in line with the name-change of the state.
- Para 88 of S/2019/722 notes that Kuajena saw movement restriction from March 2019 to Nov 2019 - the movement restriction is given an entry for each month.
- S/2018/163 notes the restriction of UNMISS foot patrols in Torit since 13 December 2017 - reported for December to the end of the mission report in Feb 2018.

Sector Specific Coding Notes:

In some UN Peacekeeping Missions, there are at times references to sector-specific areas, which are operational geographical units used by the peacekeeping mission. These were inferred to the admin 1 or admin 2 unit captured by such sectors, as the sectors often grouped together units.

UNMIS:
In the mission reports, there are six sectors in UNMISS. In the dataset it is reported as the following locations, if mentioned as the location of a reported movement restriction. The geo-split variable further reflects the number of locations the observation is split between.

- Sector 1: Western Equatoria, Central Equatoria, Eastern Equatoria
- Sector 2: Western Bahrel Ghazal, Northern Bahrel Ghazal, Lakes, Warrap
- Sector 3: Upper Nile, Unity, Ruweng, Jonglei, Pibor Administrative Area
- Sector 4: West Kordofan, South Kordofan
- Sector 5: Blue Nile
- Sector 6: Abyei

[10]Note that the lack of reported UN movement restrictions in certain cases does not reflect the overall situation of humanitarian movement, and should not be conflated with humanitarian movement. Often, humanitarian actors reported facing movement restrictions to the UN, even when there were no such reports from the UN Peacekeeping Mission.

UNMIS Map: Mission Map No.4249, UNMIS December 2005. Sectors boundaries in blue.

UNMEE:

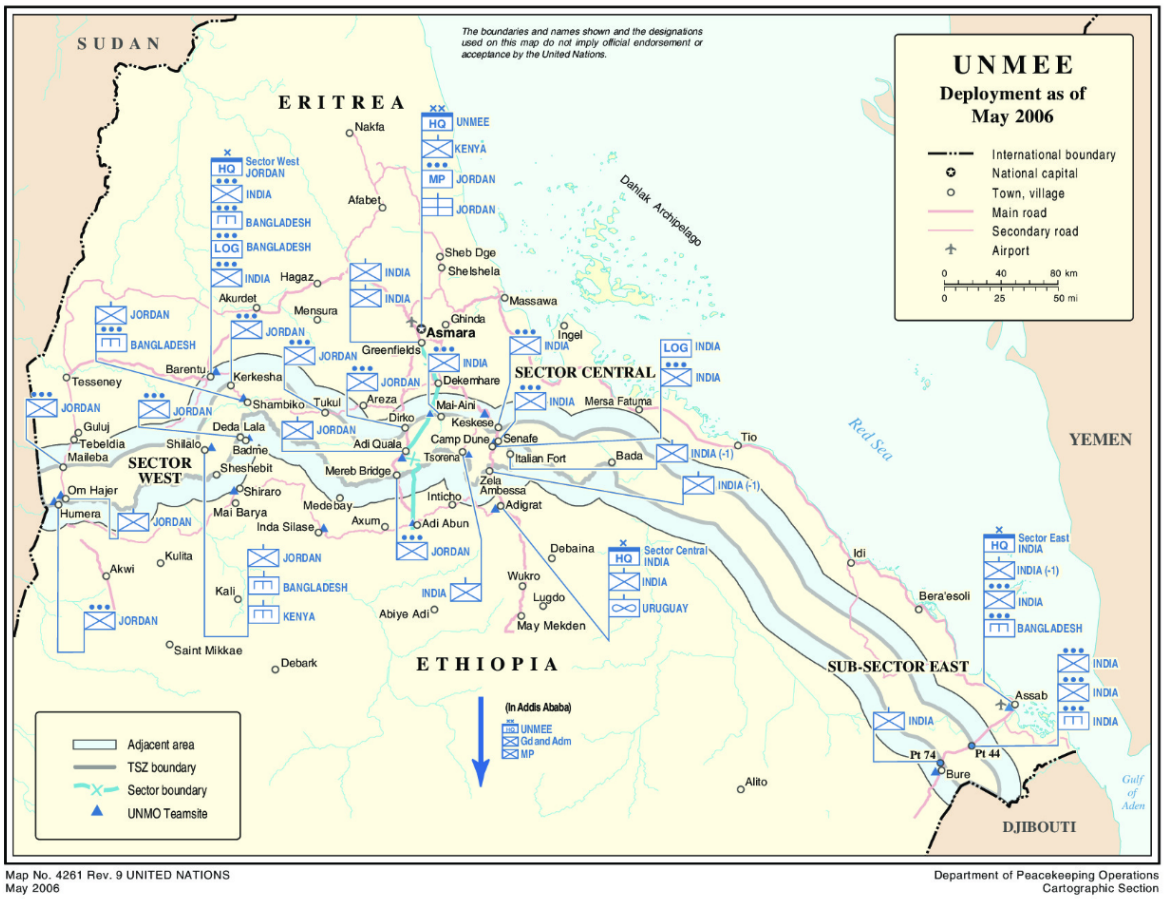
When coding the locations of UNMEE, the locations are drawn from the mission's delineation of a Temporary Security Zone (TSZ), which spanned 25 km along the Ethiopia-Eritrea border. The TSZ was further divided into operational sectors by the peacekeeping mission. In cases where the sectors are referenced as the location of movement restrictions, the contemporary administrative areas which overlapped with the past TSZ were used to geolocate movement restrictions from the mission documents. As such, each sector corresponds to the following administrative units, with reflecting geo-split:

<u>TSZ Eritrea:</u>

- Om Hajer, Lalay Gash, Shambuko, Molqi, Maimine, Adi Quala, Tsorona, Senafe, Ghelaelo, Araeta, Maekel Debub Keih, Beilul, Asseb
    - <u>Sector West, Eritrea:</u> Om Hajer, Lalay Gash, Shambuko, Molqi
    - <u>Sector Central, Eritrea:</u> Maimine, Adi Quala, Tsorona, Senafe
    - <u>Sub-Sector East, Eritrea:</u> Ghelaelo, Araeta, Maekel Debub Keih, Beilul, Asseb

TSZ Ethiopia:

- Western Tigrey, North Western Tigrey, Central Tigrey, Eastern Tigrey, Kilbet Rasu, Awsi Rasu
    - Sector West, Ethiopia: Western Tigrey, North Western Tigrey
    - Sector Central, Ethiopia: Central Tigrey, Eastern Tigrey
    - Sub-Sector East, Ethiopia: Kilbet Rasu, Awsi Rasu

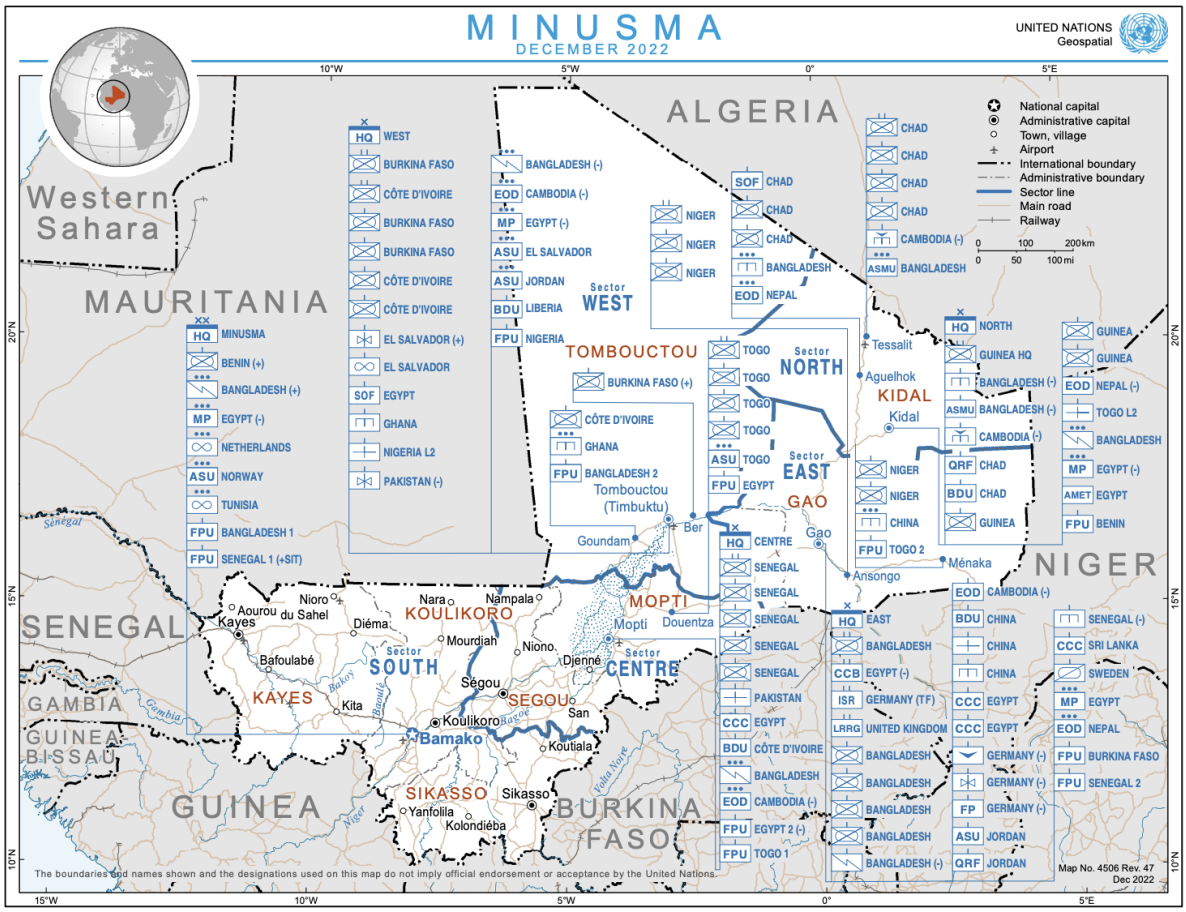


UNMEE Map: Mission Map No.4261, Rev 9, UNMME May 2006. Sectors boundaries in green.

MINUSMA:

In Mali, the peacekeeping mission had five operational sectors for its deployment. Drawing on the official deployment map and supporting mission documentation, the following first-level administrative regions were used to geo-reference the sectors if references as location of movement restrictions, with the geo-split variable updated accordingly:

- Sector West: Timbuktu
- Sector North: Kidal
- Sector East: Gao
- Sector Centre: Mopti, Ségou
- Sector South: Kayes, Sikasso, Koulikoro, Bamako



MINUSMA Map: Mission Map No.4506, Rev 47, MINUSMA December 2022. Sectors boundaries in blue.

A5. Appendix to Chapter 5

A5. 1 Politically Relevant Ethnic Groups Coding:

This thesis relies on the framework provided by the EPR dataset to classify the settlement pattern of politically relevant ethnic groups and their association with the host-government and rebel groups. To assess how political alignment shapes the host-government's response to one-sided violence, I classify each administrative unit according to whether it is associated with ethnic constituencies aligned with the government, rebel groups, or neither. This classification is based on data from the Ethnic Power Relations (EPR) dataset family (Vogt et al., 2015; Wucherpfennig et al., 2012).

It is important to note that the use of politically relevant ethnic settlement patterns as a proxy for geographical government interests or rebel interests comes with key limitations. Populations move during conflict, alliances shift, and rebel recruitment is not exclusively ethnically bounded (Staniland 2014). However, this proxy remains the most systematic and theoretically justified measure available at the sub-national level, especially in the absence of reliable data on real-time control or allegiance

Government-represented ethnic groups are defined as those coded in the EPR dataset (v2021) as either holding monopoly or dominant power, or participating as senior or junior partners in executive decision-making. Rebel-supportive ethnic groups are identified using the ACD2EPR dataset (v2021), which links EPR groups to rebel actors in UCDP conflict dyads. Groups are classified as rebel-supportive if they are directly claimed by a rebel group, if they are a primary recruitment base, or if they have majority support from the ethnic group (Rüegger and Girardin, 2021). Since the unit of analysis is spatially defined, only those groups with regionally based settlement patterns (GeoEPR gcategory = 1) are included in the analysis (Schvitz, 2021). Areas with no politically relevant group presence are classified as "irrelevant," forming the baseline category in the regression models.

As in chapter 3, there are two key ways to operationalise the cases where the rebel groups become the government - either as a government actor, or as a rebel group actor. Overlapping settlement patterns are resolved as I did in chapter 3, where the rebel group settlement holds the prominent value, but is also re-coded for robustness. I thus re-test the assumption to ensure that this coding is not the driving cause of my results.

Further, there are cases where a group becomes a part of the government, such as in Ivory Coast, the Kru ethnicity associated with the rebel-held north during the first and second

civil wars is also represented in the government from 2000 to 2011, initially as a junior and then a senior partner. Similarly, in South Sudan, the Nuer ethnicity is involved both with a rebel group and as junior government partners. In such instances, where an ethnic group is co-ethnic with a rebel group and represented in the government as a junior partner that year, I categorise it as part of a rebel group in my main analysis. This categorization is because the EPR dataset codes a group's access to power as of January 1st and does not account for mid-year changes in government power dynamics.

Furthermore, the representation of the Kru and Nuer in government has been central to the conflicts in Ivory Coast and South Sudan. These groups often represent conflicting interests within the government and are not assumed to wield the same influence as other government actors. Thus, they are categorised as rebel groups.

A5. 2 Model Diagnostics

To ensure the reliability and validity of my regression results, I conducted a series of standard model diagnostics for Model 1 and 2 in Table 5.5 (Models with Controls). The purpose is to assess whether the results are driven by influential outliers, violations of model assumptions, or problematic multicollinearity. In addition, I evaluate model fit and predictive performance. Across all tests, the models perform well: there are no influential outliers, residuals are well-behaved, multicollinearity is low, and the models show reasonable predictive ability given the structure and imbalance of the data. Taken together, these diagnostic checks strengthen confidence in the trends of the main findings.

A5. 3 Outliers

For my models, I test for extreme individual data points which can alter the quality of my logistics regression models. First, I examine any extreme values by visualising the Cook's distance values. I label the four largest values. These results confirm that my models are not being distorted by influential outliers and are robust to the inclusion of all cases.

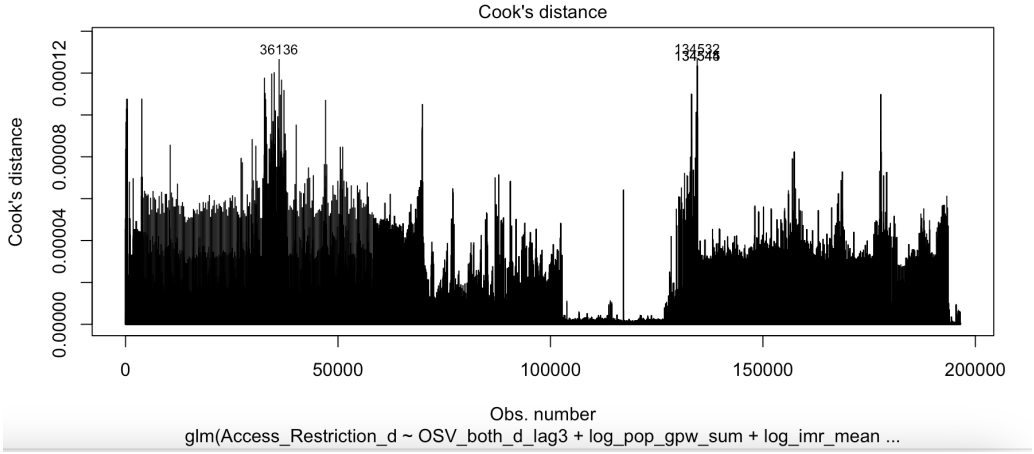


Figure A5.1: Cook's distance for OSV-model with controls shows no influential outliers

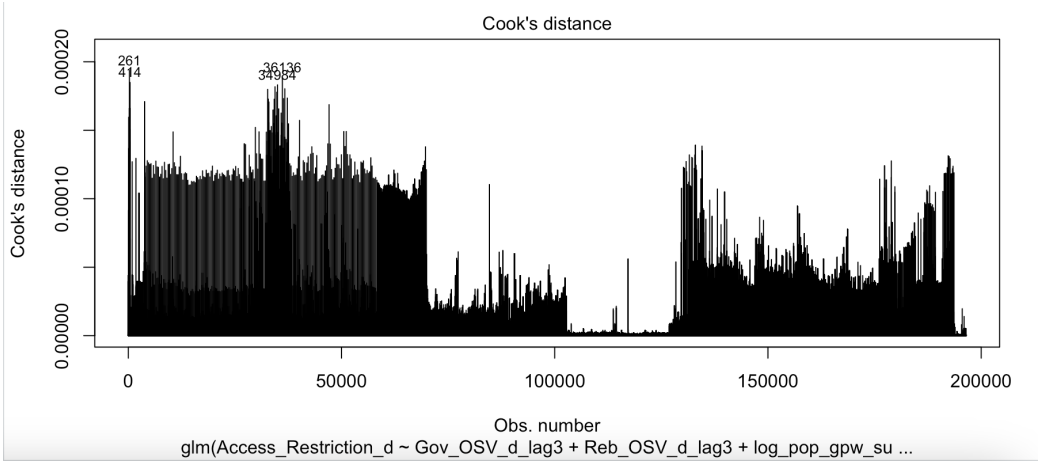


Figure A5.2: Cook's distance for OSV by reb and gov actors with controls shows no influential outliers

As shown in both plots (Fig A5.1 and Fig A5.2), the vast majority of observations have a Cook's distance near zero. No values are approaching the commonly cited threshold of 1, which would indicate an influential outlier. This indicates that no single observation exerts disproportionate influence on my model's coefficients. A small number of points (e.g. observations #261, #36136, #134532) show slightly higher influence, but they remain well below conventional cut-offs and do therefore not warrant exclusion or special treatment.

A5. 4 Standard Residual Diagnostics

Figure A5.3 presents the standardised residuals plotted against the observation index and coloured by the dependent variable (movement restrictions). The distribution of residuals appears symmetrical around 0, and shows no systematic patterns of heteroscedasticity. Observations with high residuals are dispersed and largely within expected bounds, suggesting

no violations of distributional assumptions. These residuals support the fit of the GLM and show no strong evidence of model mis-specification.

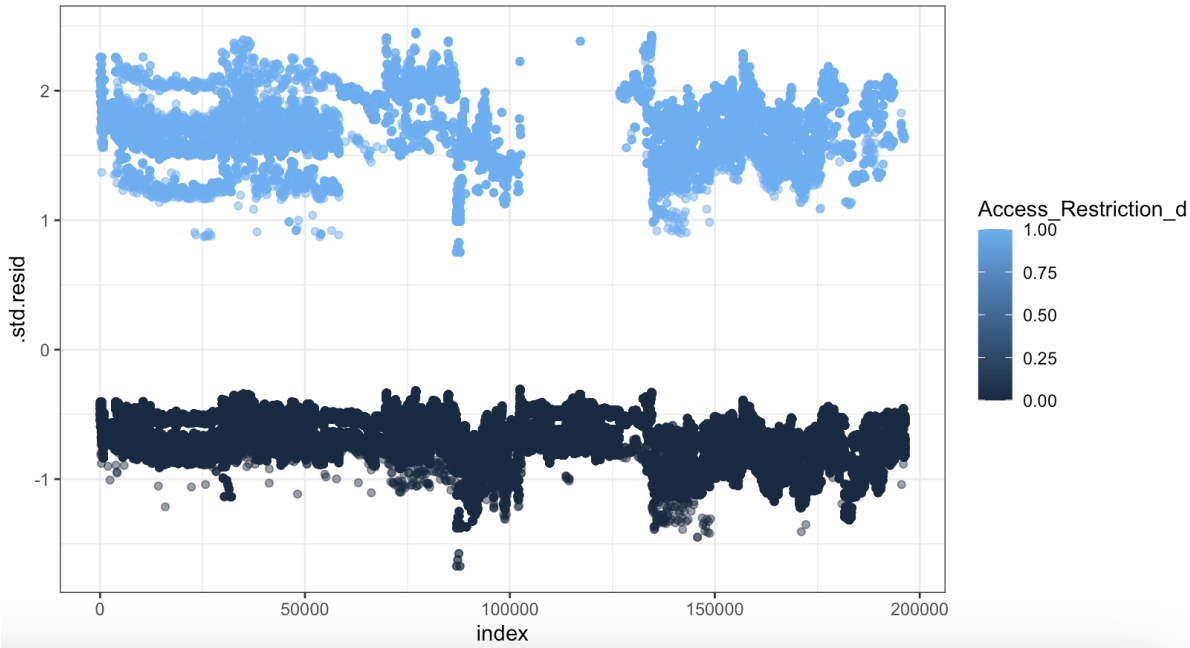


Figure A5.3: standardised residuals plotted - no systematic patterns of heteroscedasticity

Beyond heteroscedasticity, I further check the index for the limited reports of movement restrictions in the index from about 10,000 to 13,000 to check for systematic errors. I find that this is not a systematic error, but captures Liberia. Liberia reports very few or no movement restrictions during the observed period. This results in limited within-country variance in the dependent variable. However, this case likely reflects empirical patterns rather than measurement error, and its inclusion is important to illustrate that movement restrictions are not uniformly practiced/reported across peacekeeping missions. Rather than biasing the results, this case can support the broader claim that host-government obstruction is a strategic rather than universal phenomenon. It could be, however, the case that Liberia reports movement restrictions differently and is an inherent measurement error from the data source, but this thesis has not found interviews, reports, or anecdotal indications which would indicate that to be the case. Nonetheless, Liberia's presence may marginally reduce the sensitivity of models in detecting effects in those contexts, a point addressed through the inclusion of fixed effects and robustness checks.

A5. 5 Multicollinearity

I run diagnostics which confirm that multicollinearity is not a concern, and that the estimated effects can be interpreted reliably. More precisely, I checked for the Variance Inflation Factors (VIF), which I calculated for all explanatory variables in the logistic regression models. Across all model specifications, the VIFs remain well below the standard threshold of concern (VIF < 5), with most values close to 1.

All VIFs are below 1.25 for the model with only OSV and controls, indicating low multicollinearity. Further, for the disaggregated OSV models with controls, the VIF values range from 1.01 to 1.24. Lastly, in the status interaction model, the GVIF-adjusted values remain low (GVIF^(1/(2*Df)) < 1.12 for all variables). In short, multicollinearity does not appear to be a concern in my models.

A5. 5 Model Fit and Predictive Performance

To assess the predictive performance of my main logistic regression model, disaggregated OSV with controls, I evaluated both its discrimination and calibration properties. Taken together, the ROC AUC and Brier Score suggest that the model performs well in capturing statistically meaningful patterns in the relationship between one-sided violence and movement restrictions on UN peacekeepers, while also maintaining acceptable predictive reliability across nearly 200,000 sub-national observations.

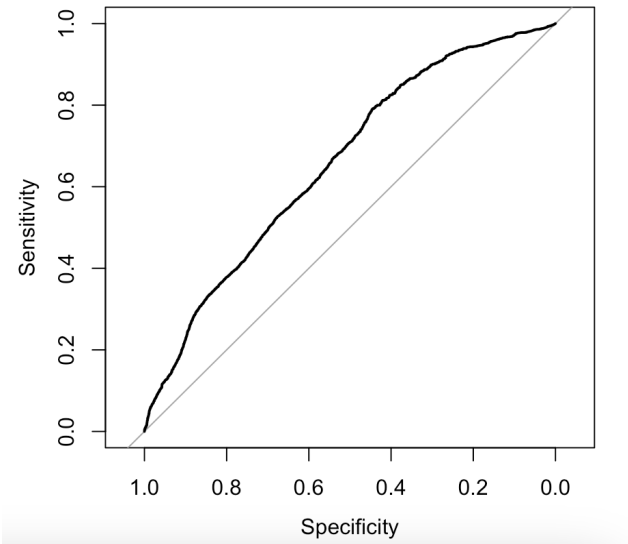


Figure A5.4: Receiver Operating Characteristic (ROC) Curve for models with gov and reb OSV and controls. The curve illustrates the model's ability to distinguish between movement restriction and no restriction

Discrimination (AUC – ROC Curve): The model achieves an Area Under the Curve (AUC) of 0.658. The ROC curve in Figure A5.4 visualises the trade-off between sensitivity (true positive rate) and 1 – specificity (false positive rate) across different thresholds. Here the AUC measures my model's ability to distinguish between observations with and without movement restrictions. A value of 0.5 indicates no discrimination (random chance), while 1.0 shows perfect classification. This is important since only 20% of my observations see a positive value in the dummy variable. The value of 0.658 indicates that the model performs substantially better than chance and can reasonably differentiate between municipalities that do and do not experience movement restrictions.

Calibration (Brier Score): The Brier Score measures the mean squared difference between predicted probabilities and actual binary outcomes. My model has a Brier score of 0.152, indicating relatively good calibration given the size and class imbalance of the dataset. Lower Brier scores indicate better predictive accuracy, with 0 representing a perfect model.

A5. 6 Robustness checks

To assess the robustness of my findings, I conduct a series of additional tests. Across all specifications, the results remain substantively consistent and statistically robust. I test the models using alternative fixed-effects structures (country, country-year, and municipal (admin2) levels) to control for unobserved heterogeneity across geographic units and over time. I further account for overall conflict intensity by including battle deaths of both government and rebel forces as control variables. To ensure that results are not driven by the binary operationalisation of one-sided violence, I also model OSV as a count variable, capturing the number of civilian fatalities. Additionally, I test for potential reverse relationships by examining whether movement restrictions precede violence rather than follow it. Finally, I account for mission-specific temporal dynamics by including controls for the number of months since the mission's start and until its end. Taken together, these robustness checks reinforce the validity of the main argument: that host-governments systematically restrict peacekeeper access in the aftermath of their own violence against civilians or battlefield gains, rather than as a general response to conflict intensity

Differences in the number of observations across some models stem from two primary sources: the inclusion of lagged variables, which require dropping observations without sufficient temporal history; and the use of fixed effects, particularly at the admin2 level, which drops units with no variation in the dependent variable over time (i.e., areas that report only

zeros). This approach ensures identification relies on within-unit variation but results in smaller, more selective samples.

All models cluster standard errors at the admin2 level to account for spatial correlation in unobserved shocks and reporting practices at the municipal level, consistent with the unit of analysis. For robustness, clustering at higher levels (admin1 or admin0) gives substantially similar results.

The choice of a three-month lag reflects both theoretical and empirical considerations. UN Secretary-General reports, from which movement restriction data is derived, are typically submitted quarterly. The three-month lag thus captures the minimum plausible time interval in which violence could influence subsequent reporting and behaviour by UN peacekeepers and host-governments.

Taken together, these robustness checks confirm the main findings of this dissertation, that UN peacekeepers systematically see movement restrictions following host-government civilian victimisation or deaths of rebels. They reflect a consistent and theoretically plausible pattern of strategic obstruction of UN peacekeepers in the field across time and space.

A5. 6.1 Fixed Effects: Robustness Check with Admin2 FE

As an additional robustness test, I run the main interaction models including fixed effects at the admin2 (municipality) level in Table A5.1. This is a stringent test, as it absorbs all time-invariant characteristics of each municipality, including geographic, demographic, institutional, and reporting differences, that might influence both violence and movement restrictions.

	Dependent variable:	
	Movement Restrictions of UN PKOs	
	(1)	(2)
Gov OSV, *Dum t-3*	0.869***	0.648***
	(0.071)	(0.096)
Rebel OSV, *Dum t-3*	-0.434***	-0.270**
	(0.123)	(0.118)
Pop (log of sum)	-6.818***	-35.165***
	(0.326)	(3.774)
Night Lights (log of cal. mean)	-0.415*	3.851**
	(0.172)	(1.439)
Status: Gov	-0.763	-1.801***
	(0.571)	(0.628)
Status: Reb	-2.073***	-2.579***
	(0.486)	(0.551)
Gov OSV × Gov Status	-0.222**	-0.203*
	(0.105)	(0.119)
Gov OSV × Reb Status	-0.088	-0.110
	(0.087)	(0.103)
Reb OSV × Gov Status	0.301	0.297*
	(0.192)	(0.163)
Reb OSV × Reb Status	-0.014	0.026
	(0.141)	(0.131)
Fixed-effects:	Municipal	Municipal-Year
Observations	166,288	166,288
Log Likelihood	-77,962	-65,513
Akaike Inf. Crit.	167,224	142,603
Adj. Pseudo R^2	0.129	0.266
Note:	Standard errors clustered at the municipal level	
	*p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01	

Table A5.1: Robustness test with fixed effects for admin2/municipal level and year.

Drops in observations: This specification results in a substantial drop in the number of observations (from 196,470 to 166,288). This is because feglm() automatically drops admin2 units that have only 0s or only 1s in the dependent variable across the full time period. There are no cases with only 1s/movement restrictions, but there are cases with only 0s - that never saw a reported movement restriction. In other words, since municipalities that never reported any movement restrictions provide no within-unit variation for estimation, they get excluded from the model, and the estimates are driven only by those municipalities that experience variation in movement restrictions over time. The analysis model focuses on "swing" municipalities, which are informative for understanding variation in peacekeeper restrictions, but might not be fully representative of the broader dataset.

Results hold: Despite this specification, the results remain substantially consistent with the country and country-year fixed effects models presented in the main text. Model 2 performs substantially better than Model 1 looking at the Pseudo R^2 value of 0.129 and 0.266, attributed to the year-fixed-effect. The positive and statistically significant relationship between prior government-perpetrated OSV and movement restrictions persists across all areas (OR = 2.38 in Model 3; OR = 1.91 in Model 4).

- In municipalities settled by irrelevant ethnic groups (the baseline category), government OSV is associated with a 138% increase in the odds of movement restrictions ($p < 0.001$).
- In areas with government-represented ethnic groups, the full effect of government OSV (adding the interaction term) remains positive and significant at $p<0.1$, (OR = 1.91, or a 91% increase), but somewhat reduced.
- Rebel OSV, by contrast, continues to be associated with a decrease in movement restrictions overall (OR = 0.65, or a 35% reduction), although this effect flips in government ethnic areas (OR = 1.27, or a 27% increase, $p < 0.1$), similar to earlier models.

The interaction pattern thus holds: government OSV is associated with increased movement restrictions across all ethnic contexts, while rebel OSV only is associated with increased restrictions in areas populated by government-represented ethnic groups, and otherwise is associated with a reduction in movement restrictions.

While the admin2-fixed-effects-models provide additional support for the robustness of the main findings, the models using country-year FE remain preferable for the main analysis. Country-year FE models retain the full sample of observations, account for national-level shocks and changes over time, and preserve key control variables. Nonetheless, the results from the admin2 FE models provide further credibility to the conclusion that prior government-perpetrated OSV is consistently associated with the increased likelihood of peacekeeper movement restrictions, a relationship that is both substantively meaningful and highly robust across model specifications.

A note on the effect of the controls: The effect of the control variables aligns with expectations from the peacekeeping literature. However, there are some changes in size and direction that emerge that are in contrast to my other models when introducing admin2 fixed effects, and year fixed effects.

Population: Most notably, the coefficient for population becomes strongly negative and increases in magnitude when moving from country to admin2 fixed effects. This can be driven

by two factors: first, the underlying population data comes from the Gridded Population of the World dataset (GPWv4), which distributes census-based population counts across small raster cells (1x1 km) using an aerial-weighting approach. Aggregating these raster cells to the admin2 level, particularly in conflict-affected settings with highly uneven population distributions, may introduce measurement error, especially when violence or peacekeeping behaviour can vary systematically between urban and rural areas within admin2 units.

Further, at higher levels of aggregation (country or region), population may vary meaningfully across units and capture much of the variance in movement restrictions through between-unit differences. However, once this fixed effects control for all time-invariant characteristics of each municipality, my model isolates the within-unit, time-varying effect of population changes. In this context, the significant and large negative coefficient indicates that, within the same municipality within the same year, a decrease in population is associated with a higher likelihood of movement restrictions. This may reflect operational constraints, or shifting UN presence in depopulated or depopulating areas. It is also plausible that population drops in response to displacement caused by violence or military operations, events that precede or coincide with movement restrictions. It can also be that movement restrictions make data gathering even harder in these areas, a challenge for all of my data sources coming from areas with movement restrictions. The fixed effects model highlights a local dynamic that is masked in models without unit-level fixed controls.

Night-lights: The coefficient for nightlights changes sign from negative to positive under admin2-year fixed effects. This could reflect the limitations of nightlights data from the DMSP-OLS, including saturation in highly lit urban areas, which become stronger in highly localised models. Additionally, nightlights can serve as proxies for urbanisation or economic development, but do not capture the kind of economic activity: this could highlight increased activity from UN peacekeeping bases, the military, or other war-time economies that comes during the conflict. As the inclusion of admin2 fixed effects captures unobserved heterogeneity within municipalities, it can potentially leave these variables to pick up residual variation in rural or conflict-affected zones.

While these changes are theoretically interpretable and consistent with known features of the data, they highlight the limitations of data-collection and interpretation in areas with movement restrictions for fine-grained conflict research. At the same time, the stability of the main results across specifications suggests that the observed relationships between OSV, political settlement, and peacekeeper movement restrictions are not driven by these control variables.

A5. 6.2 Battle Deaths: Robustness Check with Battle Deaths

In line with the core argument of this dissertation – that host-governments can use access restrictions strategically to serve their own interests, particularly following violence against civilians – I extend the analysis to examine whether conflict intensity itself, measured by battle deaths, is associated with movement restrictions of UN peacekeepers. This represents an important addition, as UN peacekeeping mandates often encompass not only civilian protection but also broader conflict mitigation, monitoring, and reporting functions. While battle deaths are not directly about the protection of civilians, they reflect key moments of violence and escalation, which may plausibly shape host-government behaviour toward UN operations.

Crucially, this test helps to disentangle whether the pattern between government-perpetrated OSV and movement restrictions is only capturing patterns of overall conflict intensity – or whether it reflects a more targeted strategy of limiting access in response to civilian victimization specifically. If restrictions are about conflict hotspots, one would expect battle deaths on both sides to have similar effects. However, if access restrictions serve to limit the government from monitoring and interference, particularly after its own actions against civilians or rebel forces, one may expect a differentiated pattern: namely, that movement restrictions increase following rebel battle deaths, but show little or no effect following government battle deaths.

I use data from the UCDP GED v24.1, which has information on combatants dying on both the government side, and the rebel group side. I lag both government and rebel battle deaths by three months, consistent with the lag applied to the OSV-variables. This results in 3,507 observations being dropped with the lag as it is retrospectively done, but it does not substantially alter my dataset for this robustness test.

The results, displayed in Table A5.2, provide several key insights. First, rebel battle deaths are consistently associated with an increased likelihood of reported movement restrictions of UN Peacekeepers across all specifications. Substantively, each additional rebel-battle death by the government corresponds to a 0.48–0.6% increase in the odds of movement restrictions. While this number may appear small, the effect is cumulative, and in some conflict events can translate into a substantial increase in predicted restrictions. This supports the overarching thesis of this dissertation: host-governments are more likely to restrict peacekeeper access following rebel violence, even when it targets combatants, likely as a strategy to limit investigations, humanitarian access, or broader international scrutiny in areas of rebel activity.

	DV: Movement Restrictions of UN PKOs		
	(1)	(2)	(3)
Gov OSV, *Dum t-3*	0.788***	0.781***	0.916***
	(0.039)	(0.060)	(0.095)
Reb OSV, *Dum t-3*	-0.400***	-0.213***	-0.350***
	(0.064)	(0.054)	(0.110)
Reb Battle Deaths *Dum t-3*	0.0048***	0.0056***	0.006***
	(0.0014)	(0.0016)	(0.0016)
Gov Battle Deaths *Dum t-3*	0.0006	-0.0017	-0.0019
	(0.0019)	(0.0018)	(0.0017)
Pop (log of sum)	0.023	-0.008	0.004
	(0.017)	(0.018)	(0.018)
IMR (log of mean)	0.313**	0.424***	0.353***
	(0.100)	(0.112)	(0.102)
Mountains (mean)	-0.013	0.038	0.036
	(0.081)	(0.109)	(0.107)
Travel Time (log of mean)	-0.140***	-0.026	-0.051*
	(0.027)	(0.029)	(0.031)
Night Lights (log cal. mean)	-2.168***	-0.289*	-0.154
	(0.143)	(0.133)	(0.134)
Gov Ethnic			-0.252***
			(0.063)
Reb Ethnic			-0.037
			(0.036)
Gov OSV × Gov Ethnic			-0.199*
			(0.117)
Gov OSV × Reb Ethnic			-0.152
			(0.096)
Reb OSV × Gov Ethnic			0.475***
			(0.159)
Reb OSV × Reb Ethnic			0.066
			(0.123)
Fixed Effects	Country	Country-Year	Country-Year
Observations	192,963	192,963	192,963
Log Likelihood	-80,952	-70,975	-70,914
AIC	162,160	142,486	142,436
Adj. Pseudo R^2	0.159	0.262	0.263
Note:	Standard errors clustered at the municipal level. *p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01		

Table A5.2: Movement Restrictions and Battle Deaths, fixed effects models, and SE clustered at the municipal level (admin 2).

A5. 6.3 Number of Deaths from One-Sided-Violence

To further test the relationship between conflict intensity and movement restrictions on UN peacekeepers, I replace the binary measures of one-sided violence with the number of reported deaths from one-sided-violence. This approach provides a complementary perspective, as UN mandates often focus not only on civilian protection but also on broader conflict dynamics and scale. With limited resources, it is not expected that peacekeepers can respond equally to all violence.

Table A5.3 presents the results from three models. The first model includes counts of government and rebel-perpetrated OSV. The second model adds the number of battle deaths by both rebel and government forces. The third model further includes an interaction term between rebel OSV and ethnic settlement patterns, as this has been the key relationship.

Across all models, the results reinforce the core argument of this thesis: UN peacekeepers report its access being restricted in areas where government-actors have committed violence, rather than in response to general conflict intensity.

Specifically, government-perpetrated OSV remains consistently associated with higher odds of movement restrictions. In Model 1, every additional reported death from government OSV increases the odds of movement restrictions by approximately 1.77%. This effect remains robust in Model 2 (1.63%) and Model 3 (1.57%). For example, if 20 civilians were killed by the government in an area, this corresponds to a roughly 31% increase in the likelihood of movement restrictions from the baseline value.

For rebel-perpetrated OSV, the effect is negligible in Model 1 and 2, with coefficients effectively zero, indicating no systematic relationship between rebel perpetrated OSV and However, Model 3 shows that this changes once considering local political geography. In government co-ethnic areas, each additional OSV by rebels increases the odds of movement restrictions by 0.13% ($p<0.01$).

Turning to battle deaths, Model 2 and 3 show that every additional rebel battle death is associated with approximately a 0.57% increase in the odds of movement restrictions. Again, if 20 rebel fighters were killed in battle, this corresponds to a roughly 12% higher likelihood of movement restrictions ($1.0057^{20} \approx 1.12$). Government battle deaths, however, are not significantly associated with restrictions.

Taken together, these models provide further robustness that movement restrictions are not necessarily a function of overall conflict intensity or battlefield violence but are more likely to follow government-perpetrated violence against civilians or rebel losses. This finding is consistent with the thesis that host-governments can use restrictions strategically to limit external monitoring, investigation, and potential accountability from UN Peacekeepers in the aftermath of their own violence or battlefield gains.

	DV: Movement Restrictions of UN PKOs		
	(1)	(2)	(3)
Gov OSV, *t-3*	0.018***	0.016***	0.016***
	(0.005)	(0.004)	(0.004)
Reb OSV, *t-3*	0.000	0.000	-0.007*
	(0.001)	(0.001)	(0.004)
Reb Battle Deaths (Lag 3)		0.006***	0.006***
		(0.002)	(0.002)
Gov Battle Deaths (Lag 3)		-0.002	-0.002
		(0.002)	(0.002)
Pop (log sum)	-0.006	-0.005	0.006
	(0.018)	(0.018)	(0.018)
IMR (log mean)	0.399***	0.408***	0.343***
	(0.111)	(0.113)	(0.103)
Mountains (mean)	0.084	0.071	0.066
	(0.108)	(0.110)	(0.109)
Travel Time (log mean)	-0.025	-0.025	-0.054*
	(0.029)	(0.029)	(0.031)
Night Lights (log cal. mean)	-0.266*	-0.286**	-0.165
	(0.133)	(0.137)	(0.138)
Gov Ethnic			-0.242***
			(0.059)
Reb Ethnic			-0.041
			(0.036)
Reb OSV × Gov Ethnic			0.009**
			(0.004)
Reb OSV × Reb Ethnic			0.014***
			(0.005)
Fixed Effects	Country-Year	Country-Year	Country-Year
Observations	196,470	192,963	192,963
Log Likelihood	-72,291	-71,216	-71,159
AIC	145,095	142,967	142,902
Adj. Pseudo R^2	0.261	0.260	0.260
Note:	Standard errors clustered at the municipal level. *p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01		

Table A5.3: Controlling for the count of deaths from OSV, all models with FE at country-year level and SE clustered at municipal level (admin2) for stringent tests.

A5. 6.4 Temporal Test

To assess whether host-governments might pre-emptively restrict the movement of UN peacekeepers in anticipation of violence, I conduct a robustness test using lead variables. Specifically, I lead one-sided violence and battle deaths forward by three months (t+3), testing whether movement restrictions are associated with future rather than past violence. The logic is to examine whether the strategic movement restrictions of UN access happen before violence

occurs, for example, to prevent peacekeepers from monitoring, investigating, or reporting on upcoming attacks.

	DV: Movement Restrictions of UN PKOs	
	(1)	(2)
Gov OSV (Lead 3 months)	-0.438***	-0.435***
	(0.092)	(0.093)
Reb OSV (Lead 3 months)	-0.308***	-0.303***
	(0.052)	(0.053)
Battle Deaths (Gov, Lead 3 months)		0.003
		(0.004)
Battle Deaths (Reb, Lead 3 months)		-0.007*
		(0.004)
Pop (log of sum)	-0.004	-0.004
	(0.018)	(0.018)
IMR (log of mean)	0.389***	0.387***
	(0.113)	(0.113)
Mountains (mean)	0.128	0.138
	(0.112)	(0.114)
Travel Time (log of mean)	-0.023	-0.024
	(0.029)	(0.029)
Night Lights (log cal. mean)	-0.266*	-0.266*
	(0.137)	(0.137)
Fixed Effects	Country-Year	Country-Year
Observations	192,963	192,963
Log Likelihood	-71,610	-71,606
Akaike Inf. Crit.	143,731	143,748
Adj. Pseudo R^2	0.261	0.261
Note:	Standard errors clustered at the municipal level. *p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01	

Table A5.4: Pre-emptive movement restriction of UN peacekeepers three months prior to violence. Country-Year FE, and SE clustered on the municipal level.

While this could be theoretically possible, I consider it unlikely for several reasons, and particularly to be reflected in the data. First, it would require the UN Peacekeeping Mission to possess substantial intelligence about future attacks, particularly on civilians, and to systematically act on that intelligence at a sub-national scale to systematically experience and report that their movement is restricted. Second, UN peacekeepers operate with limited resources and are unlikely to prioritise widespread preventive access without known threats. Third, even if access had been restricted and the peacekeepers encountered them, it is unlikely that the UN would include these instances in mission reports before any violence had occurred, as this would be an opportunity to solve it internally, as such this can be a systematic measurement error of the classified dataset. Finally, attacks on civilians or between belligerent groups often emerge rapidly in fluid conflict environments, making long-term anticipatory

restrictions such as three months in advance less feasible in the 12 countries included in this dataset.

The analysis in Table A5.4 shows no indications that movement restrictions are more likely in the three months leading up to one-sided violence or battle deaths. On the contrary, the coefficients for both government-perpetrated OSV and rebel-perpetrated OSV are negative and statistically significant, indicating that movement restrictions are less likely in areas that will experience future violence. This further supports the indication that actors' restrictions of UN peacekeepers movements predominantly follow, rather than precede, episodes of violence, aligning with the strategic logic of post-atrocity obstruction rather than anticipatory prevention.

A5. 6.5 Time Trends

To further address concerns regarding the temporal scope of UN peacekeeping missions, I include two additional control variables: the number of months since the start of a mission and the number of months until its end in Table A5.5. The logic is that restrictions may structurally build up over time, or intensify as missions approach closure. This can be from change in reporting standards of the UN, souring relationship with the belligerent parties, renewed fighting, or that movement restrictions persist over time. Towards the closure, movement-restrictions might be used as a tool to pressure UN peacekeepers out, while not losing face to its constituencies, thus intensifying movement restrictions.

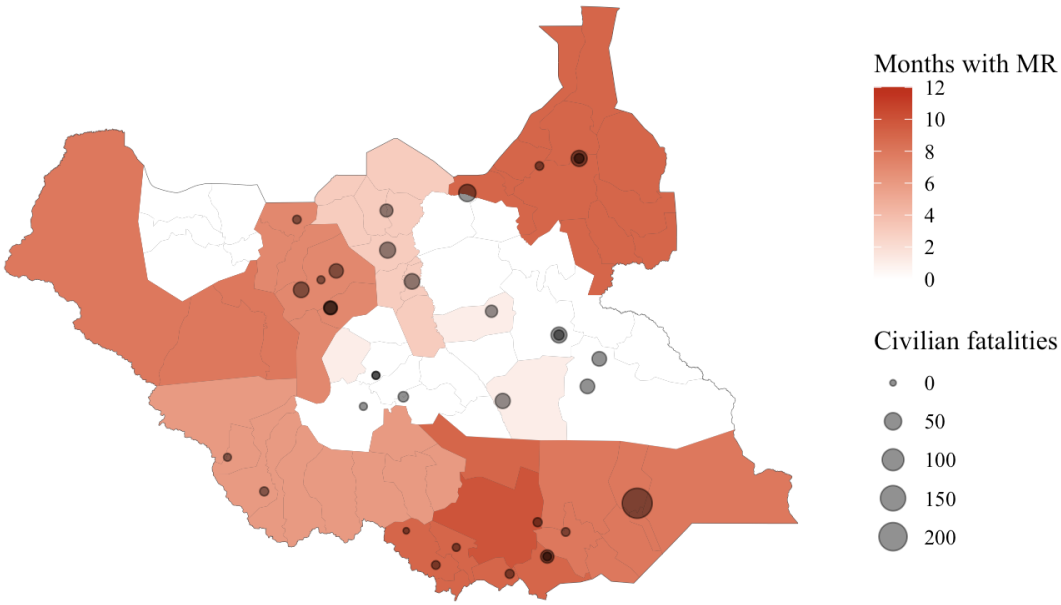
The results show that both time-related variables are positively and significantly associated with increased movement restrictions. Specifically, each additional month since the mission's start increases the odds of restrictions by 2.4% ($p<0.05$), while each month closer to mission end increases them by 6.4% ($p<0.01$). This suggests a dynamic: restrictions are not static but may reflect host-government attempts to regain control over peacekeeper mobility, particularly as missions evolve and conclude.

Importantly, these temporal patterns do not alter the core findings of this dissertation. The effect of host-government one-sided violence remains strongly positive (155% increase in odds), while rebel violence continues to reduce the likelihood of restrictions (-29%), reinforcing the strategic nature of access control by host-governments. Instead, this highlights an important dynamic of actors' relationship to UN peacekeeping missions in the field.

	Dependent variable:
	Movement Restrictions of UN PKOs
	(1)
Gov OSV, *Dum t-3*	0.937***
	(0.061)
Rebel OSV, *Dum t-3*	-0.349***
	(0.055)
Months since PKO start	0.024**
	(0.010)
Months until PKO end	0.062***
	(0.008)
Pop (log of sum)	-0.006
	(0.019)
IMR (log of mean)	0.435***
	(0.115)
Mountainous Terrain (mean)	0.049
	(0.109)
Travel Time (log of mean)	-0.029
	(0.030)
Night Lights (log of cal. mean)	-0.315**
	(0.133)
Fixed-effects:	Country-Year
Observations	196,470
Log Likelihood	-68,615
Akaike Inf. Crit.	137,766
Adj. Pseudo R^2	0.299
Note:	Standard errors clustered at the municipal level
	*p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01

Table A5.5: Time trends of months since mission start, and months since mission ends, with fixed effects for country-year, and SE clustered at municipal level (admin2).

Map of Reported Movement Restrictions (MR) for UN Peacekeepers
UNMISS in South Sudan, aggregated for 2022



Source: Geo-MRP-Dataset, Rahn (2024), UCDP Geo-Events (Sundberg et al., 2023)

Illustration of movement restrictions and OSV on civilians aggregated for 2022 in South Sudan. An example of various maps and utilities of the Geo-MRP dataset, and illustrates the puzzle of Chapter

Bibliography

Abbs, L., and Duursma, A. (2024). Tracing the Footsteps of Peace: Examining the Locations of UN Peacekeeping Patrols. *International Interactions,* 50(6), 975–1004. https://doi.org/10.1080/03050629.2024.2413566

Adida, C. L. (2017). *Immigrant Exclusion and Insecurity in Africa.* Cambridge University Press.

Arnold, M. B., and Alden, C. (2007). 'This gun is our food': Disarming the White Army militias of South Sudan. *Conflict, Security & Development,* 7(3), 361–385. https://doi.org/10.1080/14678800701556529

Aust, A. (2005). *Handbook of international law*. Cambridge University Press. https://doi.org/10.1017/CBO9780511494123

Autesserre, S. (2010). *The Trouble with the Congo: Local Violence and the Failure of International Peacebuilding*. Cambridge University Press. https://doi.org/10.1017/CBO9780511761034

Ayabei, C. (2017). The rise of China and conflicts in Africa: The case of Sudan. African Journal of Political Science and International Relations, 11(2), 29-35 .

Azam, J. P., and Hoeffler, A. (2002). Violence against civilians in civil wars: Looting or terror? *Journal of Peace Research, 39*(4), 461-485. https://doi.org/10.1177/0022343302039004006

Bara, C., and Schumann, M. P. (2023, October 17). Partnership peacekeeping works—What does this mean in a divided world? *IPI Global Observatory*. https://theglobalobservatory.org/2023/10/partnership-peacekeeping-works-what-does-this-mean-in-a-divided-world/

Barceló, J., Kubinec, R., Cheng, C., Rahn, T. H., & Messerschmidt, L. (2022). Windows of repression: Using COVID-19 policies against political dissidents? *Journal of Peace Research*, 59(1), 73-89. https://doi.org/10.1177/00223433211062389

Bas, M. A., Signorino, C. S., and Walker, R. W. (2007). Statistical Backwards Induction: A Simple Method for Estimating Recursive Strategic Models. *Political Analysis*, 16(1), 21–40. doi:10.1093/pan/mpm029

BBC News. (2013, June 15). Shelling of UN base in Sudan kills peacekeeper. Retrieved May 23, 2024, from https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-africa-22916395

Beardsley, K. (2008). Agreement without peace? International mediation and time inconsistency problems. *American Journal of Political Science, 52*(4), 723-740. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1540-5907.2008.00339.x

Beardsley, K., and Gleditsch, K. S. (2015). Peacekeeping as Conflict Containment. *International Studies Review*, *17*(1), 67–89. http://www.jstor.org/stable/24758379

Beardsley, K., and Schmidt, H. (2012). Following the flag or following the Charter? Examining the determinants of UN involvement in international crises, 1945–2002. International Studies Quarterly, 56(1), 33–49. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1468-2478.2011.00696.x

Beiser-McGrath, J., Müller-Crepon, C., and Pengl, Y. I. (2021). Who Benefits? How Local Ethnic Demography Shapes Political Favoritism in Africa. *British Journal of Political Science*, 51(4), 1582–1600. doi:10.1017/S0007123420000241

Bellamy, A. J., and Williams, P. D. (2015). Understanding Peacekeeping (2nd ed.). *Cambridge Polity Press.*

Beber, B., Gilligan, M. J., Guardado, J., and Karim, S. (2019). The promise and peril of peacekeeping economies. *International Studies Quarterly*, 63(2), 364–379. https://doi.org/10.1093/isq/sqz012

Bligh, A. (2014). The United Nations Emergency Force (UNEF), 1956–67: Past experience, current lessons. *Middle Eastern Studies, 50*(5), 796–809. http://www.jstor.org/stable/24585888

Blyth, S., Groombridge, B., Lysenko, I., Miles, L., & Newton, A. (2002). *Mountain watch: Environmental change & sustainable development in mountains*. *UNEP-WCMC Biodiversity Series 12*. UNEP-WCMC. ISBN: 1-899628-20-7.

Bormann, N.-C. (2019). Uncertainty, Cleavages and Ethnic Coalitions. N Bormann. Journal of Politics 81 (2), 471-486, 2019.

Bove, V., Ruffa, C., and Ruggeri, A. (2020). Blue helmets' diversity: Field diversity and peacekeeping. In *Composing Peace: Mission Composition in UN Peacekeeping* (pp. 52-74). Oxford University Press. https://doi.org/10.1093/oso/9780198790655.003.0003

Bromley, S. L. (2022). UN peacekeepers' safety and security: Patterns of attacks and pathways to peacekeeping performance. *Folke Bernadotte Academy*. https://fba.se/om-fba/publikationer/un-peacekeepers-safety-and-securitypatterns-of-attacks-and-pathways-to-peacekeeping-performance/

Brooke-Holland, L. (2023). Wagner Group in Africa. House of Commons Library Research Briefing, CBP-9634. Retrieved from https://researchbriefings.files.parliament.uk/documents/CBP-9634/CBP-9634.pdf

Buitelaar, T. (2024). Leadership Agency in UN Peace Operations. International Peacekeeping, 32(2), 228–256. https://doi-org.ezproxy-prd.bodleian.ox.ac.uk/10.1080/13533312.2024.2400104

Caplan, R. (2024). Political leverage and UN peacekeeping: the case of UNOCI's withdrawal from Côte d'Ivoire. *Conflict, Security & Development,* 24(2), 111–125. https://doi.org/10.1080/14678802.2024.2335733

Caplan, R., Gledhill, J., and Meiske, M. (2024). Exploring the impact of United Nations peacekeeping operations on the external affairs of host states. *European Journal of International Relations*, 30(3), 644-670. https://doi.org/10.1177/13540661241247801

Carnahan, M., Durch, W., and Gilmore, S. (2006). Economic impact of peacekeeping: Final report. Peace Dividend Trust for the UN Department of Peacekeeping Operations, Best Practices Section. https://www.stimson.org/2006/economic-impact-peacekeeping/

Carnegie, A., and Mikulaschek, C. (2020). The promise of peacekeeping: Protecting civilians in civil wars. *International Organization, 74*(4), 810-832. https://doi.org/10.1017/S0020818320000442

Carter, D. B., and Goemans, H. E. (2011). The making of the territorial order: New borders and the emergence of interstate conflict. *International Organization, 65*(2), 275–309. https://doi.org/10.1017/S0020818311000051

Cederman, L.-E., Gleditsch, K. S., and Buhaug, H. (2013). *Inequality, grievances, and civil war.* Cambridge University Press. https://doi.org/10.1017/CBO9781107706963

Cederman, L.-E., Wimmer, A., and Min, B. (2010). Why do ethnic groups rebel? New data and analysis. *World Politics, 62*(1), 87-119. https://doi.org/10.1017/S0043887109990219

CIVIC, Center for Civilians in Conflict. (2016, October 5). *Under fire: The July 2016 violence in Juba and U.N. response.* https://civiliansinconflict.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/09/civic-juba-violence-report-october-2016.pdf

Cil, D., Fjelde, H., Hultman, L., and Nilsson, D. (2020). Mapping blue helmets: Introducing the Geocoded Peacekeeping Operations (Geo-PKO) dataset. *Journal of Peace Research*, 57(2), 360-370. https://doi.org/10.1177/0022343319871978

Clayton, G., and Dorussen, H. (2022). The effectiveness of mediation and peacekeeping for ending conflict. *Journal of Peace Research, 59*(2), 150-165. https://doi.org/10.1177/0022343321990076

Coulibaly, M.I. (2020). Les Nations Unies et les élections en Afrique: Le cas de l'élection présidentielle de 2010 en Côte d'Ivoire. L'Harmattan.

Croicu, M., and Sundberg, R. (2016). *UCDP GED codebook version 5.0*. Department of Peace and Conflict Research, Uppsala University.

Davies, S., Pettersson, T., and Öberg, M. (2023). *Organized violence 1989–2022 and the return of conflicts between states? Journal of Peace Research, 60*(4).

De Coning, C., Detzel, J., and Hojem, P. (2008). *UN peacekeeping operations capstone doctrine*. Norsk Utenrikspolitisk Institutt.

Denny, E. K., and Walter, B. F. (2014). Ethnicity and civil war. *Journal of Peace Research*, 51(2), 199–212.

De Waal, A. (2015). *The real politics of the Horn of Africa : money, war and the business of power.* Cambridge Polity.

Diehl, P. F. (1994). *International Peacekeeping*. Johns Hopkins University Press.

Di Salvatore, J., and Ruggeri, A. (2020). The Withdrawal of UN Peace Operations and State Capacity: Descriptive Trends and Research Challenges. *International Peacekeeping,* 27(1), 12–21. https://doi.org/10.1080/13533312.2019.1710368

Di Salvatore, J., Lundgren, M., Oksamytna, K., and Smidt, H. M. (2022). Introducing the Peacekeeping Mandates (PEMA) Dataset. Journal of Conflict Resolution, 66(4-5), 924-951. https://doi.org/10.1177/00220027211068897

Di Salvatore, J., Polo, S. M. T., and Ruggeri, A. (2022). Do UN peace operations lead to more terrorism? Repertoires of rebel violence and third-party interventions. European Journal of International Relations, 28(2), 361-385. https://doi.org/10.1177/13540661211072714

Downes, A. B. (2011). *Targeting civilians in civil wars*. Cornell University Press

Doyle, M. W., and Sambanis, N. (2000). International peacebuilding: A theoretical and quantitative analysis. *American Political Science Review, 94*(4), 779-801. https://doi.org/10.2307/2586208

Druet, D. (2023, March 20). Wagner Group poses fundamental challenges for the protection of civilians by UN peacekeeping operations. *Global Observatory, International Peace Institute.* https://theglobalobservatory.org/2023/03/wagner-group-protection-of-civilians-un-peacekeeping-operations/

Duursma, A. (2019). Obstruction and intimidation of peacekeepers: How armed actors undermine civilian protection efforts. *Journal of Peace Research, 56*(2), 234–248.

Duursma, A. (2021). Pinioning the peacekeepers: Sovereignty, host-state resistance against peacekeeping missions, and violence against civilians. *International Studies Review, 23*(3), 670–695.

Duursma, A., Bara, C., Wilén, N., Hellmüller, S., Karlsrud, J., Oksamytna, K., Bruker, J., Campbell, S., Cusimano, S., Donati, M., Dorussen, H., Druet, D., Geier, V., Epiney, M., Geier, V., Gelot, L., Gyllensporre, D., Hiensch, A., Hultman, L., Hunt, C. T., Krishnan, R. C., Labuda, P. I., Langenbach, S., Norberg, A. H., Novosseloff, A., Oriesek, D., Paddon Rhoads, E., Re, F., Russo, J., Sauter, M., Smidt, H., Staeger, U., & Wenger, A. (2023). *UN peacekeeping at*

75: Achievements, challenges, and prospects. *International Peacekeeping, 30*(4), 415–476. https://doi.org/10.1080/13533312.2023.2263178

Duursma, A., Bromley, S. L., and Gorur, A. (2023). *The impact of host-state consent on the protection of civilians in UN peacekeeping*. *Civil Wars, 26*(1), 16–40. https://doi.org/10.1080/13698249.2023.2196185

Eifert, B., Miguel, E., and Posner, D. N. (2010). Political competition and ethnic identification in Africa. *American Journal of Political Science, 54*(2), 494-510. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1540-5907.2010.00443.x

Eisenhardt, K. M. (1989). Agency theory: An assessment and review. *The Academy of Management Review, 14*(1), 57-74. https://doi.org/10.5465/amr.1989.4279003

Fawcett, L. (2025). The changing regional faces of peace: Toward a new multilateralism? *Contemporary Security Policy*, 1–30. https://doi.org/10.1080/13523260.2025.2460130

Fearon, J. D. (1995). Rationalist explanations for war. *International Organization, 49*(3), 379-414. https://doi.org/10.1017/S0020818300033324

Fearon, J. D. (2006). Ethnic mobilization and ethnic violence. In B. Weingast & D. Pittman (Eds.), The Oxford handbook of political economy (pp. 852–868). Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Fjelde, H., and Hultman, L. (2014). Weakening the Enemy: A Disaggregated Study of Violence against Civilians in Africa. Journal of Conflict Resolution, 58(7), 1230-1257. https://doi.org/10.1177/0022002713492648

Fjelde, H., Hultman, L., and Nilsson, D. (2019). Protection Through Presence: UN Peacekeeping and the Costs of Targeting Civilians. *International Organization,* 73(1), 103–131. doi:10.1017/S0020818318000346

Fortna, V. P., and Howard, L. M. (2008). Pitfalls and prospects in the peacekeeping-peacebuilding nexus. In *Annual Review* Vol. 11, 283-301. Doi: 10.1146/annurev.polisci.9.041205.103022

Fortna, V. P., and Martin, L. L. (2009). Peacekeepers as signals. In H. V. Milner & A. Moravcsik (Eds.), *Power, interdependence, and nonstate actors in world politics* (pp. 87–107). Princeton University Press.

Fortna, V. P. (2004). Peace Time: Cease-Fire Agreements and the Durability of Peace. *Princeton University Press.*

Fortna, V. P. (2008). *Does Peacekeeping Work? Shaping Belligerents' Choices After Civil War*. Princeton University Press.

Gibbs, D. N. (1997). Is peacekeeping a new form of imperialism? *International Peacekeeping*, 4(1), 122–128. https://doi.org/10.1080/13533319708413655

Gilligan, M. J., and Sergenti, E. J. (2008). Do UN interventions cause peace? Using matching to improve causal inference. *Quarterly Journal of Political Science, 3*(2), 89–122. https://doi.org/10.1561/100.00007051

Gilligan, M., and Stedman, S. J. (2003). Where do the peacekeepers go? *International Studies Review, 5*(4), 37–54. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1079-1760.2003.00504005.x

Giustozzi, A. (2024). *A mixed picture: How Mali views the Wagner Group*. Royal United Services Institute. Retrieved from https://rusi.org/explore-our-research/publications/commentary/mixed-picture-how-mali-views-wagner-group

Gizelis, T.-I., and Benson, M. (2019). Advancing the Frontier of Peacekeeping Research. Journal of Conflict Resolution, 63(7), 1595-1600. https://doi.org/10.1177/0022002718821709

Gizelis, T.-I., and Cao, X. (2021). A security dividend: Peacekeeping and maternal health outcomes and access. Journal of Peace Research, 58(2), 263–278. https://doi.org/10.1177/0022343320917198

Gregory, L., and Sharland, L. (Sept 25 2023). Host-Country Consent in UN Peacekeeping. *Stimson,* https://www.stimson.org/2023/host-country-consent-in-un-peacekeeping/

Guéhenno, J. M. (2015). *The Fog of Peace: A Memoir of International Peacekeeping in the 21st Century*. Brookings Institution Press.

Guzman, A. T. (2012). Against consent. *Virginia Journal of International Law, 52*(4), 747-790. https://doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.1862354

Haass, F., & Ansorg, N. (2018). Better peacekeepers, better protection? Troop quality of United Nations peace operations and violence against civilians. *Journal of Peace Research, 55*(6), 742-758.https://doi.org/10.1177/0022343318785419

Hegre, H., Hultman, L., and Nygård, H. M. (2019). Evaluating the conflict-reducing effect of UN peacekeeping operations. *The Journal of Politics,* 81(1), 215–232. https://doi.org/10.1086/700203

Hellmüller, S., and Salaymeh, B. (2025). Transactional peacemaking: Warmakers as peacemakers in the political marketplace of peace processes. *Contemporary Security Policy,* 46(2), 312–342. https://doi.org/10.1080/13523260.2024.2448908

Högbladh, Stina. 2023. "UCDP GED Codebook Version 23.1." Department of Peace and Conflict Research, Uppsala University.

Horowitz, D. L. (1985). *Ethnic Groups in Conflict*. University of California Press.

Hultman, L., Kathman, J., & Shannon, M. (2020). *Peacekeeping in the Midst of War.* Oxford University Press.

Human Rights Watch. (2014, August 21). *Darfur: U.N. Should End Silence on Rights Abuses*. https://www.hrw.org/news/2014/08/21/darfur-un-should-end-silence-rights-abuses

Humphreys, M., and Weinstein, J. M. (2006). Handling and Manhandling Civilians in Civil War. *American Political Science Review,* 100(3), 429–447. doi:10.1017/S0003055406062289

Jensen, M. C., and Meckling, W. H. (1976). Theory of the firm: Managerial behavior, agency costs and ownership structure. *Journal of Financial Economics, 3*(4), 305-360. https://doi.org/10.1016/0304-405X(76)90026-X

Johnstone, I. (2010). Managing Consent – The New Variable? In C. de Coning, A. Ø. Stensland, & T. Tardy (Eds.), Beyond the 'New Horizon': Proceedings from the UN Peacekeeping Future Challenges Seminar Geneva, 23–24 June 2010 (pp. 25–39). Norwegian Institute of International Affairs (NUPI). http://www.jstor.org/stable/resrep08089.6

Johnstone, I. (2011). Managing Consent in Contemporary Peacekeeping Operations. *International Peacekeeping, 18*(2), 168-182. https://doi.org/10.1080/13533312.2011.546091

Kalyvas, S. N. (2006). *The Logic of Violence in Civil War*. Cambridge University Press.

Kapur, A. (2023, March 30). Wagner Group, protection of civilians, and UN peacekeeping operations. *The Global Observatory.* https://theglobalobservatory.org/2023/03/wagner-group-protection-of-civilians-un-peacekeeping-operations/

Karlsrud, J. (2023). 'Pragmatic Peacekeeping' in Practice: Exit Liberal Peacekeeping, Enter UN Support Missions? *Journal of Intervention and Statebuilding*, 17(3), 258–272. https://doi.org/10.1080/17502977.2023.2198285

Karlsrud, J., & de Costa, O. A. (2013). Invitation withdrawn: humanitarian action, United Nations peacekeeping, and state sovereignty in Chad. *Journal of International Peacekeeping, 17*(2-3), 171-179. https://doi.org/10.1111/disa.12020

Kaufman, S. J. (2006). Escaping the symbolic politics trap: Reconciliation initiatives and conflict resolution in ethnic wars. *Journal of Peace Research, 43*(2), 201-218.

Kjeksrud, S. (2023). Robust peacekeeping in practice: The United Nations and the use of force. *Journal of Strategic Studies, 46*(3), 473-495.

Kotajoki, J. (2025). United Nations Peacekeepers' Perceptions of the 'Local': Evidence from Military Personnel in Mali. *International Peacekeeping,* 1–31. https://doi.org/10.1080/13533312.2025.2451856

Krasner, S. D. (2004). Sharing sovereignty: New institutions for collapsed and failing states. *International Security, 29*(2), 85-120.

Kreps, S. E. (2010). *Coalitions of Convenience: United States Military Interventions after the Cold War*. Oxford University Press.

Labuda, P. (2020). The security-development nexus in UN peacekeeping operations: An institutional analysis. *International Peacekeeping, 27*(2), 207-231.

Lake, D. A. (2015). The statebuilder's dilemma: On the limits of foreign intervention. *International Security, 41*(1), 164-189.

Laurence, M. (2024). Interpretive Agency, Change, and the Role of Individuals in UN Peace Operations. *International Peacekeeping*, 32(2), 204–227. https://doi-org.ezproxy-prd.bodleian.ox.ac.uk/10.1080/13533312.2024.2383589

Lyall, J., & Wilson, I. (2009). Rage against the Machines: Explaining Outcomes in Counterinsurgency Wars. *International Organization*, *63*(1), 67–106. http://www.jstor.org/stable/40071884

Lynch, C. (2011, March 23). "Gbagbo pulls a fast one on UN," *Foreign Policy*. https://foreignpolicy.com/2011/03/23/gbagbo-pulls-a-fast-one-on-un/

Mac, G., Joshi, M., & Lee, Y.-N. (2019). *Peacebuilding in Post-Conflict Societies*. Routledge.

Maekawa, M., Ari, L., & Gizelis, T.-I. (2019). Does Peacekeeping Keep Peace? Using Matching to Improve Causal Inference. *Journal of Conflict Resolution, 63*(5), 1129-1152.

Melander, E. (2009). Assessing the protection of civilians in peacekeeping missions. *Journal of Conflict Resolution, 53*(1), 40-63.

Myanmar Information Management Unit. (2022). *AMRF explanation for partners.* Retrieved June 27, 2024, from https://themimu.info/sites/themimu.info/files/mimu_public/20220221_AMRF_Explanation_for_Partners.pdf

Nichols, M. (2018, September 13). UN peacekeepers in Lebanon boosted with more equipment after US push. *Reuters*. https://www.reuters.com/article/us-lebanon-un-peacekeepers/un-peacekeepers-in-lebanon-boosted-with-more-equipment-after-u-s-push-idUSKCN1LT2ML

Nomikos, W. G., & Villa, D. (2022). Peacekeeping and civilian victimization in civil wars: Micro-level evidence from Mali. *Journal of Conflict Resolution, 66*(2-3), 291-320.

Norton, A. R. (2007). *Hezbollah: A Short History*. Princeton University Press.

Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR). 2023, May 12. "Malian Troops, Foreign Military Personnel Killed over 500 People during Moura Operation." *OHCHR*. https://www.ohchr.org/en/press-releases/2023/05/malian-troops-foreign-military-personnel-killed-over-500-people-during.

Oksamytna, K., Tansey, O., von Billerbeck, S., and Gippert, B. J. (2023). Theorizing decision-making in international bureaucracies: UN peacekeeping operations and responses to norm violations. *International Studies Quarterly, 67*(4).

Oxford University Press. (n.d.). Access, v.², 3. In *the Oxford English dictionary*. Retrieved April 24, 2025, from https://doi.org/10.1093/OED/4872528802

Panel on U.N. Peace Operations. (2000). *Report of the Panel on United Nations Peace Operations* (known as the Brahimi Report), A/55/305, S/2000/809, August 21, 2000, para. 55.

Passmore, T. J., Shannon, M., and Nadeau, M. (2023). Financial contributions to United Nations peacekeeping, 1990–2010: A new dataset. *Conflict Management and Peace Science, 40*(1), 88-107. https://doi.org/10.1177/07388942221081099

Piccolino, G., and Karlsrud, J. (2011). Withering consent, but mutual dependency: UN peace operations and African assertiveness. Conflict, *Security & Development,* 11(4), 447–471. https://doi.org/10.1080/14678802.2011.614128

Posen, B. R. (1993). The security dilemma and ethnic conflict. *Survival, 35*(1), 27-47. https://doi.org/10.1080/00396339308442672

Powell, R. (2006). War as a commitment problem. *International Organization, 60*(1), 169-203. https://doi.org/10.1017/S0020818306060061

Protect Humanitarian Space. (2024). Humanitarian access working group toolkit. Retrieved June 27, 2024, from https://www.protecthumanitarianspace.com/toolkits/humanitarian-access-working-group-toolkit/3-analysing-monitoring-and-reporting

Pushkina, D., Siewert, M. B., & Wolff, S. (2022). Mission (im)possible? UN military peacekeeping operations in civil wars. *European Journal of International Relations, 28*(1), 158-186. https://doi.org/10.1177/13540661211046602

Raleigh, C., and Hegre, H. (2009). Population size, concentration, and civil war. *Journal of Peace Research, 46*(4), 501-518.

ReliefWeb. (n.d.). *Afghanistan humanitarian access snapshot.* Retrieved June 27, 2024, from https://response.reliefweb.int/afghanistan/humanitarian-access-snapshot

Rhoads, E., P. (2016). *Taking Sides in Peacekeeping: Impartiality and the Future of the United Nations*. Oxford University Press.

Rhoads, E., P. (2019). Putting Human Rights up Front: Implications for Impartiality and the Politics of UN Peacekeeping. *International Peacekeeping, 26*(3), 281-301. https://doi.org/10.1080/13533312.2018.1561184

Rhodes, R. A. W., Binder, S. A., & Rockman, B. A. (Eds.). (2024). *The Oxford Handbook of Political Institutions*. Oxford University Press.

Roessler, P. (2016). *Ethnic politics and state power in Africa: The logic of the coup–civil war trap.* Cambridge University Press. https://doi.org/10.1017/CBO9781316412019

Ruggeri, A., Dorussen, H., and Gizelis, T.-I. (2018). On the Frontline Every Day? Subnational Deployment of United Nations Peacekeepers. *British Journal of Political Science*, 48(4), 1005–1025. doi:10.1017/S000712341600017X

Ruggeri, A., Dorussen, H., and Gizelis, T.-I. (2017). Winning the peace locally: UN peacekeeping and local conflict. *International Organization*, 71 (1). pp. 163-185. DOI https://doi.org/10.1017/S0020818316000333

Ruggeri, A., Gizelis, T.-I., and Dorussen, H. (2013). Managing Mistrust: An Analysis of Cooperation with UN Peacekeeping in Africa. *Journal of Conflict Resolution*, 57(3), 387-409. https://doi.org/10.1177/0022002712448906

Salazar-Winspear, O. (2010, December 19). UN cites 'massive' rights violations in post-election violence. *France 24.* https://www.france24.com/en/20101219-un-cites-massive-rights-violations-pillay-abductions-election-violence-gbagbo-ouattara-ivory-coast

Sambanis, N. (2001). Do ethnic and non-ethnic civil wars have the same causes? A theoretical and empirical inquiry. Journal of Conflict Resolution, 45(3), 259–282.

Sauter, M. (2024). Mission Creep: How UN Peacekeepers in Autocracies Contribute to Bargaining Failures. *Working Paper*. University of Oxford.

Sebastian, S., and Gorur, A. (2018). *UN Peacekeeping and Host-State Consent: How Missions Navigate Relationships with Governments*. Stimson Center.

Sheeran, S. P. (2011). UN peacekeeping and the model status-of-forces agreement: A new paradigm for sustainable partnership? *International Review of the Red Cross, 93*(883), 589-622.

Sherman, J., Sarfati, A., & Dahir, I. (2021). *The future of UN peacekeeping and parallel operations.* International Peace Institute. https://www.ipinst.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/Future-of-Peace-Operations-and-Parallel-Forces-js.pdf

Spearin, C. (2025). Russia's Wagner Group and the sustainment of authoritarianism in Africa: Implications for China at home and abroad. *Contemporary Security Policy*, 1–25. https://doi.org/10.1080/13523260.2025.2474763

Spink, P., and Wells, P. (2016). *Juba 2016: The Responsibility to Protect and the Duty to Maintain International Peace and Security*. World Peace Foundation.

Staniland, P. (2012). States, insurgents, and wartime political orders. *Perspectives on Politics, 10*(2), 243-264. https://doi.org/10.1017/S1537592712000655

Sullivan, D. P. (2012). *Blood Diamonds and Ethnic Warfare in Sierra Leone: The Conflict of Collateral Damage*. Rowman & Littlefield.

Sundberg, Ralph, and Erik Melander. 2013. "Introducing the UCDP Georeferenced Event Dataset." *Journal of Peace Research* 50(4).

Townsen, J., and Reeder, M. (2014). UN peacekeeping deployment to Africa: A post-conflict challenge. *Conflict Trends, 4*(2), 37-42.

Uchida, Hirotsugu, and Andrew Nelson. 2009. *Agglomeration Index: Towards a New Measure of Urban Concentration*. Background paper for the World Bank's *World Development Report 2009*.

United Kingdom Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office (UK FCDO). (2023, August 29). Mali: The reports from Moura underline the extent of Russia's malign activity globally: UK at UN Security Council. GOV.UK. Retrieved from https://www.gov.uk/government/speeches/mali-the-reports-from-moura-underline-the-extent-of-russias-malign-activity-globally-uk-at-un-security-council

UN Department of Peacekeeping Operations and U.N. Department of Field Support. (2008). *United Nations peacekeeping operations: Principles and guidelines* (known as the Capstone Doctrine). http://www.un.org/en/peacekeeping/documents/capstone_eng.pdf

United Nations. (1967, May 26). *UNEF I withdrawal*, Report by the Secretary-General, S/7906. https://www.un.org/unispal/document/auto-insert-189106/

United Nations. (2000). *Report of the Panel on United Nations Peace Operations (Brahimi Report)*, A/55/305-S/2000/809. UN General Assembly and Security Council.

United Nations. (2018, March 27). Security Council extends mandate of United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in Democratic Republic of Congo, unanimously adopting Resolution 2409 (2018) (Press Release SC/13265). United Nations Meetings Coverage and Press Releases. https://press.un.org/en/2018/sc13265.doc.htm

United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon. (n.d.). *UNIFIL Mandate*. United Nations. Retrieved September 3, 2024, from https://unifil.unmissions.org/unifil-mandate

United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs. (2012). *OCHA access monitoring and reporting framework.* Retrieved June 27, 2024, from https://rohingyaresponse.org/wp-

content/uploads/2024/02/OCHA_Access_Monitoring_and_Reporting_Framework_OCHA_revised_May2012.pdf

United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs. (n.d.). *Humanitarian access.* Retrieved June 27, 2024, from https://www.unocha.org/humanitarian-access

United Nations Peacekeeping. (n.d.). *MINURCAT United Nations Mission in the Central African Republic and Chad - Background*. Retrieved February 27, 2024, from https://peacekeeping.un.org/en/mission/past/minurcat/background.shtml

United Nations Peacekeeping. (n.d.-a). *What we do*. United Nations. Retrieved April 21, 2025, from https://peacekeeping.un.org/en/what-we-do

United Nations Peacekeeping. (n.d.-b). *What is peacekeeping*. United Nations. Retrieved April 21, 2025, from https://peacekeeping.un.org/en/what-is-peacekeeping

United Nations Security Council. (2008). Special report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Mission in Ethiopia and Eritrea (S/2008/145). https://undocs.org/S/2008/145

United Nations Security Council. (2008). Security Council resolution 1827 (S/RES/1827). https://undocs.org/S/RES/1827(2008)

United Nations Security Council. (2010). Twenty-eighth report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (S/2010/164). https://undocs.org/S/2010/164

United Nations Security Council. (2012). Resolution 2039 (2012) (S/RES/2039). United Nations. Retrieved from https://undocs.org/S/RES/2039

United Nations Security Council. (2016). Security Council resolution 2295 (S/RES/2295). https://undocs.org/S/RES/2295(2016)

United Nations Security Council. (2018, March 27). Resolution 2409 (2018): Adopted by the Security Council at its 8216th meeting (S/RES/2409). United Nations Digital Library. https://digitallibrary.un.org/record/1471611?ln=en

United Nations Security Council. (2023). Report of the Secretary-General on the situation in Mali (S/2023/402). https://undocs.org/S/2023/402

United Nations Security Council. (2023). Provisional Verbatim Record of the 9350th Meeting (S/PV.9350). United Nations. Retrieved from https://undocs.org/S/PV.9350

United Nations Security Council. (2023, January 3). *Report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations operation in Cyprus*, S/2023/3. https://www.securitycouncilreport.org/atf/cf/%7B65BFCF9B-6D27-4E9C-8CD3-CF6E4FF96FF9%7D/S20233.pdf

United Nations Security Council. (2024, January 3). *Report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations operation in Cyprus*, S/2024/12. https://uncyprustalks.unmissions.org/sites/default/files/unficyp-s2024-12.pdf

United States Department of Defense. (2012). *Joint operational access concept (JOAC).* Retrieved June 27, 2024, from https://dod.defense.gov/Portals/1/Documents/pubs/JOAC_Jan%202012_Signed.pdf

UN News, May 2004. "UN mission expresses shock that Eritrea alleges old and new offenses", https://news.un.org/en/story/2004/05/103012. Accessed February 11, 2024.

Uppsala Conflict Data Program (UCDP). (2024). Online Appendix: UCDP Georeferenced Event Dataset (GED) Codebook. Uppsala University. Retrieved from https://ucdp.uu.se/downloads/replication_data/2024_OnlineAppendix.pdf

Valentino, B. A., Huth, P., and Croco, S. E. (2006). Covenants without the sword: International law and the protection of civilians in times of war. *World Politics, 58*(3), 339-377.

Vaubel, R. (2006). Principal-agent problems in international organizations. *The Review of International Organizations, 1*(2), 125-138. https://doi.org/10.1007/s11558-006-8340-z

Villa, D. N. (2021). Externalities of Consent: Host Government Consent and UN Institutional Weakness. *Dissertation Abstract*. James T. Laney School of Graduate Studies of Emory University.

Vogt, M., Bormann, N.-C., Rüegger, S., Cederman, L.-E., Hunziker, P., & Girardin, L. (2015). Integrating data on ethnicity, geography, and conflict: The Ethnic Power Relations dataset family. *Journal of Conflict Resolution,* 59(7), 1327–1342. https://doi.org/10.1177/0022002715591215

Voorn, B., van Genugten, M., and van Thiel, S. (2019). Multiple principals, multiple problems: Implications for effective governance and a research agenda for joint service delivery. *Public Administration, 97*(1), 234-248. https://doi.org/10.1111/padm.12587

Walter, B. F., Howard, L. M., and Fortna, V. P. (2021). The Extraordinary Relationship between Peacekeeping and Peace. *British Journal of Political Science*, 51(4), 1705–1722. doi:10.1017/S000712342000023X

Weinstein, J. M. (2007). *Inside Rebellion: The Politics of Insurgent Violence*. Cambridge University Press.

Weir, E. (2010). *Chad: The Challenges of Peacekeeping in a Complex Conflict Environment*. International Peace Institute.

Williams, P. D. (2023). How peacekeepers fight: Assessing combat effectiveness in United Nations peace operations. *Security Studies, 32*(1), 32-65. https://doi.org/10.1080/09636412.2023.2178965

Wood, E. J. (2003). *Insurgent Collective Action and Civil War in El Salvador*. Cambridge University Press.

Wood, R. M. (2016). Variation in sexual violence during war. *Politics & Society, 44*(4), 513-539.

Wucherpfennig, J., Metternich, N. W., Cederman, L.-E., & Gleditsch, K. S. (2012). Ethnicity, the state, and the duration of civil war. *World Politics, 64*(1), 79-115. https://doi.org/10.1017/S004388711100030X

Yuen, A. (2019). Negotiating peacekeeping consent: Information and peace outcomes. *Journal of Peace Research, 57*(2), 297-311. https://doi.org/10.1177/0022343319861424

Zunes, S., and Mundy, J. (2010). *Western Sahara: War, Nationalism, and Conflict Irresolution*. Syracuse University Press.