"R2P at 10 Years Plus:

Dead, Alive and Well – Or Somewhere In-Between?"*

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Introduction

The concept of an international "Responsibility to Protect" (R2P), first formally proposed in a Canadian government-sponsored report (ICISS, 2001), was subsequently adopted by the United Nations in a two-phased process in 2005 and 2006 (see Macfarlane et al., 2004; Evans, 2008; Bellamy, 2009; Reinold, 2010; Hehir, 2012). R2P's "reaction" component (most often equated incorrectly with military intervention), was first applied in mid-March 2011 to respond to government repression of a popular rebellion against the 40- plus-year-rule of Libya's Muammar Gaddafi. Whether it was that the UN Security Council-authorized, NATO-led intervention in Libya resulted in an unauthorized (and, as it turned out disastrous) "regime change," or that R2P *was not invoked* in the contemporary and far more deadly humanitarian crisis that was evolving in Syria -- a popular uprising against the rule of Bashar al-Assad (see Briggs, Soderlund and Najem, 2017; Doucet, 2018) -- the net result was that the recently-minted international humanitarian protection principle emerged from these two conflicts with at best a tarnished reputation.

In the early days of the Libyan intervention Nicholas Kristof expressed hope that if successful, the "operation … may help put teeth into the emerging doctrine of the 'responsibility to protect' – a landmark notion to international law that countries must intervene to prevent mass atrocities" (Kristof, 2011, Apr. 3, p. WK 12). However, in the years that followed, expectations for R2P had dampened. Supporters of the concept such as Michael Ignatieff cited the need to return to a focus on humanitarian protection (2013, Sept. 14), Maissaa Almustafa and colleagues concluded that "R2P presently faces the risk of relevance" (2013, Aug. 10), while many predicted its out-and-out demise (see for example Reiff, 2012, Nov. 7; Hehir and Murray, 2015; Gross Stein, 2015; Nuruzzaman 2015).

Tended to be overlooked by its critics was that despite being on its supposed deathbed, R2P continued to provide the basis (at least in part), for three further UN Security Council-authorized, Chapter VII "use of force missions" into what were intra-state conflicts occurring in sub-Saharan Africa serious enough to place large numbers of people at risk: Côte d'Ivoire (also in 2011), Mali (in late 2012) and the Central African Republic (in late 2013). Importantly, we argue, these conflicts were significantly different from the one that unfolded in Libya. The latter three countries differed from Libya on many dimensions– they were extremely poor, largely unknown, and struggling with a host of post-colonial issues, including communal (ethnic/tribal/religious) disputes, regional disparities, immigration/citizenship controversies, inept leadership and ineffective security forces, plus international interference, both regional and global. In short, they were caught up in what close to thirty years ago Edward Azar (1990) identified as "Protracted Social Conflict,"[1] and significantly all three conflicts carried the high risk of what Scott Straus termed "mass categorical violence" (2015, p. 79), if not genocide. And, while the use of R2P to deal with the challenging circumstances unfolding in Libya had clearly failed (Soderlund, Najem and Roberts, 2017), it is our conclusion that when applied to this lower-intensity set of conflicts, R2P did in fact show definite promise (at least in the short term), to actually provide much needed "humanitarian protection" to those caught up in deadly crises in deeply divided societies. Thus, with respect to the title to the paper, we see R2P as presently occupying a space "somewhere in-between life and death" and certainly worth further investment and refinement. The paper will examine the three sub-Saharan interventions identified above in an effort to understand what worked, what didn't and why. Performance on all three components of R2P, "prevention," "reaction" and "rebuilding" will be assessed, along with suggestions for improvements in future applications of R2P.

Background Characteristics Underlying "Protracted Social Conflict" in Côte d'Ivoire, Mali and the Central African Republic (CAR)

Communal Identity Fault Lines (Religious, Regional, Tribal, Ethnic) as factors underlying the crises- *significant in all 3 cases.*
Côte d'Ivoire- *Extraordinarily High*
Mali- *Extraordinarily High*
CAR- *Extraordinarily High*

Percentage of Population living in "Extreme Poverty"- ($1.90 per day) - *significant in all 3 cases.*
Côte d'Ivoire - *29%* **(in 2008)**
Mali– *49.3%* **(in 2009)**
CAR - *66.3%* **(in 2008)**

Ranking of Countries on the "UN Human Development Index"- 2011- (Higher numbers indicate a lower level of development). *Deficiencies in human development (health, education and standard of living) were significant in all 3 cases- countries ranked in the top 20 of least developed states.*
Côte d'Ivoire- *172nd out of 188 countries ranked*
Mali- *179th among 188 countries ranked*
CAR- *187th among 188 countries ranked*

Ranking of Countries on the "Failed States Index" - (2011)- (Lower numbers indicate a higher likelihood of failure). *The likelihood of state failure was significant in 2 of the 3 cases.**
Côte d'Ivoire- *10th among 177 countries ranked*
Mali- *Tied for 76th among 177 countries ranked*
CAR- *8th among 177 countries ranked*
*In addition to ranking among the top ten states likely to fail, the CAR and Côte d'Ivoire appeared on every OECD "Failed States and Economies List" published between 2007 and 2015 (OECD, 2015, June). In spite of impressive statistical analysis, state failure is hard to predict. Countries appear to exist in a condition of technical failure for some time. In addition to the CAR and Côte d'Ivoire, note the case of Zimbabwe under Robert Mugabe and continuing.

Violence-prone neighbourhoods- *directly implicated in all 3 cases.**
Côte d'Ivoire was impacted by the brutal civil wars in Liberia and Sierra Leone beginning in the early 1990s; problems along the border with Liberia continued to remain a concern in 2010-2011.
In Mali, "spill-over" from the Libyan intervention led directly to the successful 2012 Tuareg separatist revolt. Also, prior to 2012, Islamist extremist groups had been pushed out of Algeria into the northern desert region of Mali, and following the successful Tuareg revolt, declared an Islamic state in the northern region.

The CAR (as well as Sudan, South Sudan, Chad and the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) are located in the heart of Africa's "Arc of Conflict," with the CAR having been drawn into three of Africa's most deadly crises-- the Congo Wars, the Sudanese Civil Wars, plus Darfur.
*Both the UN and France have recognized that a single nation focus is inadequate to deal with conflicts in West and Central Africa and have adopted regional strategies (On France's *Operation Barkhane,* see Larivé, 2016).

We believe it is no anomaly that all three post-Libya UN R2P-type interventions were authorized to deal with conflicts in countries that were ranked among the poorest and least developed in the world. The linkages between all-encompassing debilitating poverty, on-going societal violence and fragile/failed state status have long been recognized and appear remarkably clear. Moreover, two of the three humanitarian crises occurred with what we may describe as more than reasonable warning – both Côte d'Ivoire and the CAR ranked among the "top 10" countries on the 2011 "Failed States Index," had required previous UN military interventions, and were home to long-serving regional and international peace-building missions. If we consider Mali as well, all three countries ranked among the "bottom 20" countries on the UN's "Human Development Index."

From the time of their independence in 1960, Côte d'Ivoire, Mali and the CAR all recorded histories of extensive social conflict and political instability. Their stories are remarkably similar: Major regional divides characterized by immigrants vs. indigenous and/or major cultural or religious differences, multi-ethnicity (tribalism), plus local issues dealing with land ownership and resource allocation, as well of course, incursions and projections of cross-border conflicts. Significantly, beginning in 2010-2011, in both Côte d'Ivoire and Mali the potential for genocide or "mass categorical violence" was recognized (Straus, 2015, Chapters 5 and 6), while in the 2013-2014 crisis in the CAR, mass violence involving Muslim and Christian communities was on-going.

Consider the following description of conditions in the CAR offered by Tatiana Carayannis and Louisa Lombard in their concluding remarks to *Making Sense of the Central African Republic:*

Life before the onset of violence in 2013 was one of permanent insecurity, internal displacement, and absent state services. In this forgotten country, state institutions have been dysfunctional at best, and non-existent at worse, for nearly two decades. Civilians live in a chronic crisis marked by periods of low intensity violence that are punctuated by periodic spikes in violence (Carayannis and Lombard, 2015b, pp. 325-326).

It is all too apparent that the type of conflict described in Edward Azar's Theory of "Protracted Social Conflict" lives on and flourishes nearly 30 years after it was first identified and analyzed. The question is: *When such crises impact the safety of large numbers of people, does an R2P intervention provide significant help in bringing them under control*? We argue that the answer is *yes*.

Type of Crisis- *Varied.* There were remarkably few similarities among the actual set of circumstances that had led to the outbreaks of violence.
Côte d'Ivoire - *A disputed presidential election led to violence and the anticipated resumption of an earlier civil war between the same factions that had contested that war.*

Mali- *A successful separatist Tuareg insurrection resulting from a "spill-over" of the conflict in Libya, then hijacked by Islamist extremists, appeared to pose a threat to the entire country and eventually the wider Sahel region.*

CAR- *An out-of-control violent sectarian conflict pitted Muslim and Christian militias against each other throughout the country. By 2014, the situation had deteriorated to the point where some believed that the very future of the CAR as a state was in jeopardy.*

In truth, the term "Domestic Conflict" does not tell us very much about what is actually taking place on the ground as a consequence of Protracted Social Conflict. There was almost no similarity among the specific set of circumstances that had led to the outbreaks of domestic violence to which the international community was called upon to respond. However, as one might expect, as the conflicts became more complex and disorganized, short-term intervention outcomes tended to worsen.

Intervention Outcomes- *Mixed. 1 "Success; 2 "Somewhat helpful, but insufficient."**

Côte d'Ivoire- "*Success.*" **Conditions improved to the point where in July 2017, UNOCI, (the UN peace-building mission, which had been in the country since 2004), was withdrawn and replaced by a UN Country Team.**

Mali- "*Somewhat helpful, but insufficient.*" **Insurgent forces were defeated and nominal Malian governmental control of the North was restored within six months. However, the intervention was insufficient as violence continues to be directed against UN peacekeeping operations not only in the North, but five years after major military operations ended, has spread to central Mali.**

CAR- *At best* "*Somewhat helpful, but insufficient.*" **The more horrific aspects of sectarian violence were checked by mid-September 2014, albeit slowly over a 10-month period. However, the situations with respect to pervasive poverty and the resumption of sectarian violence involving Christian and Muslim communities and other rogue forces remain grave concerns. In 2018 the FAO reported levels of violence comparable to those seen in 2013-2014 (2018, Feb. 8), with an estimated 80% of the CAR's territory outside government control (Losh, 2018, Mar. 26).**

* For Mali and the CAR, the key question is whether in the short run, conditions would have gotten better or worse had the interventions not occurred. Our judgment is that they most likely would have become worse (in the CAR far worse) had not the international community intervened when it did.

Intervention Time Lines

Côte d'Ivoire

Date of the start of the crisis– *December 2, 2010. (The announcement of Gbagbo's electoral "victory").*

Date of the first formal UN Security Council Resolution- *December 20, 2010- (Time elapsed- 18 days).**

Date of the major events triggering the intervention- *Mid-March, 2011- (No specific event - Increasing fears of a bloody battle to defeat Gbagbo's forces in Abidjan).*

Date of the UN Security Council authorization of a "use of force" mission- *March 30, 2011- (Time elapsed – about four months from start of the crisis).*

Date military operations began- *April 6, 2011- (Time elapsed- one week).*

Date major military objectives were achieved- *April 17, 2011- (Time elapsed-about two weeks).*

Date the military intervention formally ended- *Unclear-* **There was a seamless transition from "reaction" to "rebuilding" as the UN Operation in Côte d'Ivoire (UNOCI) and the French *Force Licorne,* which removed Gbagbo from the presidency, remained in the country.**

Status of UN presence- *UNOCI's mandate was terminated on June 30, 2017. First deployed in 2004, UNOCI was replaced by a UN Country Team. (Time elapsed- about 7and 1/2 years from the start of the crisis and 13 years from the time of first deployment).*

*In addition to the resolution passed on December 20, the Security Council had passed multiple Resolutions in 2010 in anticipation of problems stemming from the election.

Mali

Date of the start of the crisis– *Mid-January 2012 (The Tuareg defeat of the Malian army in the North, leading to a successful military coup on March 22nd).*

Date of the major event triggering the intervention- *April 6, 2012. (The proclamation of an independent Islamic State of Azawad).*

Date of the first formal UN Security Council Resolution- *July 5, 2012- (Time elapsed- about six months from the start of the crisis and three months from the triggering event .*

Date of UN Security Council authorization of a "use of force" mission- *December 20, 2012- (Time elapsed – Eleven months from the start of the crisis and about eight and one-half months from the triggering event).*

Date military operations began- *January 11, 2013- (Time elapsed- about three weeks).**

Date major military objectives were achieved- *Summer of 2013- (Time elapsed- roughly six months).*

Date the military intervention formally ended- *July 1, 2013- (Time elapsed- about six months). On July 1, 2013, the African-led International Support Mission (AFISMA) was replaced by the UN Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali (MINUSMA). France terminated Operation Serval a year later on July 31, 2014 and replacing it with Operation Barkhane.*

Status of UN presence- on-going. *MINUSMA's mandate has been extended to June 30, 2019.*

*While in late December 2012 an African-led peacekeeping force (AFISMA) had been authorized to use "all necessary measures," in January 2013 a French military intervention (*Operation Serval,*) was requested by the interim Malian government under Article 51 of the UN Charter to respond to an imminent threat to the capital..

Central African Republic

Date of the start of the crisis- *March, 24, 2013- (The Seleka overthrow of President Bozizé).*

Date of the first formal UN Security Council Resolution- *October 10, 2013- (Time*

elapsed- six and one-half months).*

Date of the major events triggering the intervention- *(A significant increase in the level of sectarian violence in early December 2013).*

Date of UN Security Council authorization of a "use of force" mission- *December 5, 2013 (Time elapsed- eight and one-half months from the start of the crisis and almost immediately following the triggering event).*

Date the military operations began- *December 5, 2013 (Time elapsed- none). A regional African peacebuilding mission (MICOPAX), superseded by the AU-led International Support Mission in the Central African Republic (MISCA), and **a** French force (Operation Boali), augmented to become Operation Sangaris, were already deployed in the country.*

Date major military objectives were achieved- *September 15, 2014- (Time elapsed- approximately ten months to what was described as "full deployment" across the county). In September 2014, the AU-led International Support Mission in the Central African Republic (MISCA) was replaced by the UN Multidimensional Integrated Support Mission in the Central African Republic (MINUSCA). Operation Sangaris was terminated in October 2016.*

Status of UN presence- on-going. *MINUSCA's mandate has been extended to August 31, 2019.*

*The Security Council had passed a Resolution on January 24, 2013, extending BINUCA's mandate.

The time elapsed between the widely recognized starts of the three crises and UN Security Council authorizations for interventions ranged from four to nine months. The four month period for Côte d'Ivoire appears about right -- by the end of March 2011 it was clear that the defeated President was not about to leave office willingly and that increased societal violence centered in Abidjan was likely. For Mali and the CAR, the Security Council did not rush to address deteriorating conditions and the close to nine-month time periods for authorizations of a military reaction appear to have been too long -- the situations in both countries did in fact grow worse as time passed.

The time periods over which active military operations were conducted varied from about two weeks in Côte d'Ivoire, to about six months in Mali, to 9 and 1/2 months in the CAR. Significantly, in only one case (Côte d'Ivoire), have conditions improved to the point where a UN peacekeeping force has been able to be withdrawn – that occurring seven years following the end of military operations and some thirteen years following its initial deployment to the country. This clearly indicates (1) that a successful military response is but a necessary first step in a process leading to an overall satisfactory intervention outcome, and (2) that there should be expectations on the part of intervening powers for a long period of post-intervention recovery.

Efficacy of "Responsibility to Prevent" Measures to Deal with the Crisis- *Ineffective.*
Prevention measures that were applied proved to be ineffective in all 3 cases.

Côte d'Ivoire* - *Over a period of four months, extensive attempts were made to persuade President Gbagbo to relinquish power, but these ultimately failed.*

Mali- *The international community was presented with a quick and successful separatist insurrection that within a month as consolidated into a radical Islamic state. As a result, there were few preventive options open.*

CAR*- *In spite of a long-term UN and French military presence, beginning in*

> *late 2012, continuing through most of 2013 (as well as more than half of 2014), the country was beset with out of control sectarian violence.*
> *In Côte d'Ivoire and the CAR it is hard to separate "rebuilding" efforts mounted to deal with prior conflicts from "preventive" measures to deal with renewed violence that broke out in 2010 and 2013 respectively; *importantly, neither worked.*

Consistent with "Protracted Social Conflict," both Côte d'Ivoire and the CAR had experienced prior "spikes" in societal violence, serious enough to have necessitated international military interventions, that were followed by long-serving UN peacekeeping/peace-building missions (with, of course, ever-present contingents of French troops) to implement various rebuilding programs. At some point prior to their respective crises and interventions in 2010-2011 and 2013-2014, these efforts to *rebuild* morphed into short-term measures to *prevent* further worsening of the situations. Thus, the problems in those two countries should have been (and in fact were) expected. On this point it is important to note that both UN and other international post-conflict rebuilding efforts (especially in the CAR), have been criticized for favouring "quick-fix" solutions, as well as being plagued by chronic underfunding (See Carajannis and Lombard, 2015a, esp. Chapters 9 and 10).

In Côte d'Ivoire, in spite of extensive efforts on the part both of regional organizations and the UN, Laurent Gbagbo refused to relinquish the presidency following his electoral loss, opting instead for what was widely seen as a renewal of the earlier civil war. It is unclear as to why attempts to find a home in exile for Gbagbo were not successful (Cline, 2014). Assuming good faith bargaining on the part of international negotiators, it appears that "rational decision-making" among challenged dictators is in short supply and that self-delusion among them tends to run high.

In light of the long history of Tuareg revolts in Mali, going back as far as the period of French colonial rule (see Adeyemi and Musa, 2014), the continued marginalization of a desert people constituting of about five percent of the population, suggests that further insurrections might have been expected. As it turned out, it was the unanticipated "spill-over" (in the form of the return of trained military leaders with modern weaponry) following the NATO-facilitated fall of Libya's Muammar Gaddafi, that made the outcome of the 2012 Tuareg revolt different from preceding ones. Thus in Mali, the international community was faced with an unexpected and swift *fait accompli,* which left little or no room for the application of "preventive measures," leaving a military response about the only option available to undo what was seen as an unacceptable new status quo. Rebel forces in Mali not only refused to comply with Security Council demands to cease hostilities and respect Malian sovereignty, but were in the process of extending their military reach into the South, which, as it turned out, provided the catalyst for the French intervention that led to their quick military defeat.

As in Côte d'Ivoire, both the newly-created MISCA and France had military and civilian assets in the CAR prior to the onset of the crisis, but these were overwhelmed by its territorial reach and magnitude. Thus, for close to ten months these forces (now with a UN Chapter VII mandate to intervene) were unable to contain societal violence much beyond securing the capital city. It should be noted that prior to the March 2013 Seleka take-over of the government, France appeared fed up with President Bozizé and refused to support him militarily in December 2012, when he was first seriously challenged by the Seleka militia.

All three cases demonstrated that once violence had broken out, conventional diplomatic attempts at "negotiating resolutions" to the conflicts were ineffective. These strategies included

targeted sanctions, travel bans, arms embargos and asset freezes (enacted by various regional organizations, in addition to those implemented by the UN). In two cases (Mali and the CAR) these preventive efforts continued over considerable periods of time, during which conditions continued to worsen.

Efficacy of "Responsibility of React" Measures to deal with the Crisis- *Mixed.* **Military operations were successful in 2 out of 3 cases (Côte d'Ivoire and Mali); not so in the CAR where at best some mitigation of the violence was achieved. Importantly, in Mali overall mission "success"- (defined as a "reasonably satisfactory outcome without continued UN troops on the ground") -- has not yet occurred, demonstrating that** *what follows a military reaction is at least as important to an ultimately successful outcome as the initial military operation.*
Military phases of the interventions were most successful in Côte d'Ivoire and Mali, where the circumstances leading to the outbreaks of violence were relatively clear and opposition forces were organized and recognizable. This allowed the international military campaigns mounted to defeat them to be focused, effective and relatively short-lived. Unfortunately, the situation in the CAR closely resembled the one that UN had been dealing with in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), virtually non-stop since the coming of independence in 1960 without achieving any great measure of success (see Soderlund et al., 2012).

Predominance of "Humanitarian Protection" vs. "Threat to International Peace and Security" issues in justifying the interventions- *"Mixed."* **As had been the case two weeks earlier for Libya, the intervention in Côte d'Ivoire was justified by the Security Council on the ground of R2P. However, for Mali and the CAR, justifications were based primarily on "threats to international peace and security." For Mali, this justification appears appropriate; for the CAR, where the minority Muslim population was under severe threat, less so.**
Côte d'Ivoire - *Humanitarian Protection*
Mali- *Threats to International (Regional) Peace and Security*
CAR- *Threats to International (Regional) Peace and Security*
All three interventions were justified either by "R2P" or "threats to international peace and security," and in the cases of the latter two, while "threats to international peace and security" was the primary justification offered, humanitarian protection was also cited prominently as a motivating factor (see UN 2012, Dec. 20; and UN 2013, Dec. 5). In fact, the UN had been intervening in domestic conflicts long before R2P's arrival on the scene, and following the 2011 interventions in Libya and Côte d'Ivoire, for whatever reason, the Security Council returned to the pre-R2P "threats to international peace and security" for principal justification. In any case, the primary justification cited in authorizing resolutions for any of the interventions did not appear consequential in determining either military strategies used or intervention outcomes.

Clarity and Adequacy of the Intervention Mandate to deal with the crisis- *Disappointing.* **In only 1 out of 3 cases was the language used in the authorizing resolution both clear and adequate.***
Côte d'Ivoire- *Clear and Adequate.* **In spite of this there still was**

controversy regarding how much and what type of force (helicopter strikes) had been used to provide humanitarian protection to the citizens of Abidjan.

Mali- *Clear but Inadequate.* **The resolution relied on a new African peacekeeping force (AFISMA) that it recognized would not be ready to respond to rapidly unfolding events occurring less than a month following its passage.**

CAR- *Unclear and Inadequate.* **The initial authorizing resolution had correctly identified a deteriorating situation, but underestimated its severity. Thus, its recommendations did not result in conditions where the intervening forces (the AU-led MISCA and the French *Operation Sangaris*), beyond securing the capital, were able to carry out what was expected of them. This shortfall in military capability necessitated further Security Council resolutions authorizing the deployment of additional forces.**

*It is of course hard to tell what language was "politically possible" to include in the various authorizing resolutions.

The mandate for Mali was clear with respect to intent, but the force authorized was recognized as unready to deploy in the short run. In the CAR, there was a significant gap between the objectives cited and what was actually possible to achieve with the force levels authorized. Only in the case of Côte d'Ivoire was both the mandate clear and force level adequate to accomplish the required tasks.

Adequacy of the Military Intervention Force – *Disappointing.* **In only 1 out of 3 cases was the military force authorized adequate to accomplish the tasks that were called for.**[2]

Côte d'Ivoire- *Adequate.* **Gbagbo's heavy weapons were neutralized quickly and effectively by French and UN forces. The former president was subsequently arrested and sent to The Hague to stand trial for war crimes.***

Mali- *Inadequate, but as it turned out, inconsequential.* **AFISMA was not ready to deploy to meet a perceived rebel threat to the South, thus requiring a French intervention to protect the capital. This accomplished, France moved to restore Malian control of the North more quickly than had been anticipated.**

CAR- *Inadequate and consequential.* **AU and French troops already on the ground were low in numbers and due to the severity of the crisis were slow react country-wide. As it turned out, given the fragmented character of the violence, the number of troops originally authorized had to be increased to deal with the scope of the violence.**

*In mid-January 2019, Gbagbo was acquitted on charges involving crimes against humanity. An ICC appeal is pending and Gbagbo has been released on conditions that he remains in Belgium pending the outcome of the appeal.

Bearing in mind that R2P "reactions" need not necessarily be military, when force is required by imminent threats to civilian populations, armed responses worked best where there

was an organized military force to engage and defeat, as was the case in Côte d'Ivoire and Mali. Such was definitely not the case in the CAR, where violence was uncoordinated and fragmented, thus calling for a more policing-type, stabilization mission, requiring a different strategy and more personnel. In any case, as Libya so compellingly demonstrated, a "military victory" is but a necessary first step leading to a positive intervention outcome (see Kuperman, 2015); Mali also appears to be pointing toward the same conclusion (see Ahmad, 2018, May 23; Muggah, 2018, Aug. 25).

Understanding what it takes to actually "protect" a civilian population at risk in any given crisis arguably stands out as the major deficiency in operationalizing the R2P concept. On this issue two different *force ratios* come into play. One is focused on the *strength of enemy forces* that needs to be defeated in battle; the other on the *total size of the population* that needs to be protected from violence. Regardless of which ratio applies, we argue that *having an adequate number of trained and dependable troops on the ground appears to be essential for a mission that actually protect civilians*.

What do we know regarding what constitutes adequate numbers? For conventional military tactics against an organized opposition force, it is the *force to force ratio* that needs to be considered. While figures cited in the literature are based on comparable levels of training and armament between combatants (a situation clearly not faced in any of the three interventions studied), favourable *force to force ratios* of 3 to 1 or greater are suggested for positive outcomes (Total War Center, 2017, Table 2).[3]

For long-term *stabilization* or *counterinsurgency* type missions (such as was deployed in the CAR and that now characterize operations in post-intervention Mali), it is the *force to population ratio* that is seen by most analysts to be critical. Force Requirements in such missions are dependent on many factors, making it almost impossible to calculate an ideal troop to population ratio. That said, the literature suggests a *force to population ratio* of somewhere between 10 and 25 troops for every 1,000 inhabitants (Goode, 2009; see also, Kozelka, 2008; McGrath, 2006; Quinlivan 1995).

With these figures in mind, bear in mind that in the CAR, with violence occurring over a territory larger than France, Belgium, the Netherlands and Luxembourg combined, with limited roads, a population of somewhere 5 and 6 million and an ineffective police/army, in 2014 the *force to population ratio* for the French force *Operation Sangaris* varied between "1.1 and 2.2 peacekeepers per 1,000 population" (Hémez, 2016, p. 73). By way of contrast, in Malaya, between 1948 and 1960, the British maintained a force ration of 12.3, per thousand; in its 1965 intervention in the Dominican Republic, the U.S. had a force ratio of 6.6 per thousand; and for over 30 years in Northern Ireland, the UK maintained a force ration of around 20 per 1,000. [4]

The largest UN peacekeeping forces among those we have examined (MINUSMA in Mali and MINUSCA in the CAR), had a maximum strengths in the neighbourhood of 15,000 troops, including French forces. Compare this with the somewhere between 16,000 to 20,000 police that reportedly were present in the city of Hamburg, Germany to deal with protests at the July 2017 G-20 meeting.[5] Prominent military analyst James Quinlivan has pointed out that "no one has discovered stabilization strategies that avoid large troop commitments while trying to bring order to large populations" (as quoted in Kozelka, 2008, p. 8). Unfortunately, for military operations intended to protect such populations (combat or stabilization), "making do with less" seldom leads to success.

Adequacy of Post-intervention "Responsibility to Rebuild" Efforts- *Disappointing.*
Rebuilding efforts were inadequate in 2 out of 3 cases.
Côte d'Ivoire- *Adequate-* **Conditions improved to the point where in 2017 the UN peacekeeping force was able to be withdrawn.**
Mali- *Inadequate-* **Conditions appear to be deteriorating, with violence no longer confined to the North.**
CAR- *Inadequate* – **At best violence has been kept at a low boil; at worse violence has returned to levels seen at the time of the 2013-2014 crisis, with up to 80% of the country outside of government control.**

Was a post-conflict Peacekeeping/Peace-building force deployed? *Yes. UN peacekeeping forces were deployed in all 3 cases.*

How strong? *Force levels were significant (11,000 to 15,000) in all cases, but the UN's key rebuilding strategy of Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration (DDR), does not appear to have been effective.*

Côte d'Ivoire- **UNOCI (10,000);** *Force Licorne* **(900).**
Mali- **MINUSMA (12,600);** *Operation Barkhane* **(3,000); EUTM (500).**
CAR- **MINUSCA (11,800);** *Operation Sangaris* **(2,000) terminated in 2016.**

Over the past two decades, the post-conflict rebuilding strategy of DDR "has played a central role … in the mandates of peacekeeping operations" (UN, 2010, p. 3). The *disarmament* phase of DDR involves "the collection, documentation, control and disposal of small arms, ammunition, explosives and light and heavy weapons" held by combatants as well as civilians; *demobilization* consists of "the formal and controlled discharge of active combatants from armed forces or other armed groups;" while *reintegration* involves both short and long-term programs aimed at assisting ex-combatants to establish themselves as productive members of society by "gain[ing] suitable employment and income" (UN, 2010. p. 4).

On paper, these appear to be sensible suggestions, and no doubt there have been some DDR successes. However, in the two of our cases where DDR programs had been implemented to deal with previous violence (Côte d'Ivoire and the CAR), the programs were beset with problems. The DDR program in Côte d'Ivoire began in 2005 following the negotiated end to a civil war. According to a UN official connected with the program, after what was described as a "good start … [the program] … very soon became hostage to *the lack of confidence between the concerned parties.* … This *lack of trust* in the peace process constitutes a major challenge to the implementation of an effective disarmament process and the reunification of Côte d'Ivoire" (Dohotié Coulilbaly as quoted in UN, 2010, p. 6, italics added; see also Boutellis, 2011).

Nathaniel Olin, (2015); Enrica Picco, (2015); Tatiana Carayannis and Louisa Lombard (2015b) offered multiple criticisms of DDR as it was applied in the CAR in the years between the violence experienced in 2002 and the 2013 Seleka crisis. In addition, Jairo Munive and Finn Stepputat pointed out that "the permanent DDR programs [in the CAR] have been described as utterly out of sync with reality, with militias being remobilized years after they effectively faded away because their members suddenly are entitled to benefits from the bureaucratic DDR program." More generally they add, that "despite the abundant literature on lessons to be learned from previous DDR processes, there is little evidence the DDR programs actually produce all the

desired outcomes … [and that] … the widespread assumption that DDR is causally related to violence reduction and the prevention of the resurgence of war, seems to be 'empirically unfounded'" (Munive and Stepputat, 2015).

Robert Muggah describes the reasons for a failed DDR program in the post-2013 rebuilding process in Mali:

> In war-ravaged countries, armed groups are treating DDR as a business opportunity, franchising their operations *to take advantage of the cash benefits on offer*. In Mali, the UN has already built eight cantonment sites to received eligible fighters from both the CMA and Platforme. So far they are empty. Few former combatants have shown up because the government and various rebel factions are wrangling over who is eligible or not (Muggah, 2018, Aug. 25, p. O8, italics added).

Muggah suggests fewer "top down peace deals" and more "community-driven interventions that reduce violence by empowering communities from below" and on this we agree with Muggah, as well as Séverine Autesserre who argued with respect to peacekeeping/rebuilding failures in the DRC, that international rebuilding efforts were too "top down" and insufficiently focused on problems at the "grass roots" level (2008, *passim*). Our judgment is that, at least when applied to deeply divided tribal societies in the grip of Protracted Social Conflict, DDR is a fundamentally flawed concept. Aside from evidence that militias are adept at "scamming" DDR programs, what appears to be missing is the critical ingredient of *trust* in the government and its army and security services, not to mention *trust* in the motives of other tribal/ethnic/religious groups with which relations have been conflictual.

Conclusion

R2P clearly failed in its first application to Libya – it was obviously not ready for the complicated set of circumstances (for which it was only partially intended) and that played out in prime time in major capitals of Europe and North America. As well, evidence presented in this paper confirms that *neither is R2P a cure-all for dealing with lower-intensity crises arising out of "Protracted Social Conflict."* This said, it is our opinion that if R2P didn't exist, it would have to be invented. The international community simply cannot allow a blood-letting of the magnitude seen in the Rwandan genocide happen again-- and the three interventions studied demonstrate *that R2P can be effective in short-term conflict mitigation.* The critical question remains: *What can be done to make R2P more effective in protecting lives in interventions responding to long-simmering post-colonial conflicts?*

Prevention- There is a profound need to identify both the domestic and regional dynamics that are driving and sustaining Protracted Social Conflict, and from that understanding decide on what might work best to bring such conflicts to some sort of resolution or at least to some measure of control. As far as possible, a guiding principle should be that military intervention be undertaken only as a last resort – on this we agree with the authors of the ICISS Report. If, for example, the issue driving conflict is a problematic ruler, in spite of serious moral objections, he or she should be encouraged to leave voluntarily, with incentives if necessary. However, neither can the prevention process be allowed to continue indefinitely. If unattended, violent situations tend to worsen and, as Rwanda demonstrated, their intensity can escalate very quickly.

Reaction- *If deemed necessary*, military responses should not only be timely, they need to be provided with adequate *force to force* or *force to population ratios* to do what is asked of them. Importantly, UN-authorized military interventions did protect populations at risk in Côte

d'Ivoire and Mali relatively quickly; albeit, in Mali it was not the UN-authorized African force that responded. Moreover, if we interpret the evidence correctly*, it is not possible to protect populations with an "air only" strategy* (see on Libya, Greenleaf, 2013; and on Mali, Spet, 2015 -- both authors were military officers who took part in the respective air operations associated with those interventions). There is no question that "air only" strategies are appealing to intervening powers in terms of limiting casualties, and beyond that, control of the air is enormously helpful to the success of military operations on the ground. At the same time, somebody's "dependable boots on the ground" are needed to exploit the benefits of air power and to actually *provide effective protection* to civilians caught up in hostile environments – something that cannot be done from 5,000 to 15,000 feet. Importantly, fragmented violence, such as confronted the AU/French forces in the CAR, requires far more troops on the ground than thus far the UN has been able to commit.

Rebuilding- *Effective post-conflict rebuilding strategies are without question the critical factor in overall successful intervention outcomes.* As Mali is demonstrating, an initial military "victory" is at best an uncertain predictor of a satisfactory intervention outcome, as the benefits of a victory can be lost by inadequate post-intervention rebuilding programs. On this issue, we firmly believe that the Security Sector Reform strategy of DDR is misapplied to tribal societies -- DDR has simply not earned the benefit of the doubt. It is unrealistic to believe that tribal leaders are going to give up their primary basis of power, as well as what may be the only dependable means of territorial or village defense. DDR may be an effective strategy to employ *after* ethnic communities feel secure, but not as a means of achieving that sense of security. Also, whatever rebuilding strategies are employed, intervening powers need to consider a time-frame of at least a decade between the end of military hostilities and the achievement of a relatively safe environment for civilians. For example, we see the end of the 2002-2003 civil war in Côte d'Ivoire as not happening until 2017, with the withdrawal of UNOCI some 13 years following its initial deployment. In short, "quick-fix" strategies will not work and intervening powers need to be patient and commit to engagement over the long haul.

Notes

*The paper is based on research undertaken for our book *International Military Intervention in Domestic Conflicts: Correlates of Success and Failure in the Era of the Responsibility to Protect,* co-authored with Tanja Collet, who we thank for her many contributions to the project.

Our sincere apologies are extended to the many authors and organizations whose work and wisdom is reflected in the paper, but due to space limitations inherent in a conference paper, could not included in the References. All arguments and conclusions contained in the paper are based on what we consider convincing evidence, which is reported and credited in the book.

1. Edward Azar's theory of Protracted Social Conflict explains recurring spikes of violence in societies experiencing political, economic or cultural upheaval. At play are long-standing, deep divides between identity groups (the primary form of societal organization), that are vertically stratified along tribal, ethnic, religious or racial lines. These divides usually result in one group capturing state power and using it to its advantage, while other groups feel aggrieved over the denial of their basic communal needs. The situation is often exacerbated by similar dynamics in neighbouring states,

(which may share porous borders), and by the interference in domestic affairs by other external actors (see Azar, 1990, *passim*).

2. In a report commissioned by the UN Secretary-General, retired Brazilian General Carlos Alberto dos Santos Cruz and colleagues were asked to investigate the problem of increased fatalities in UN Peacekeeping missions (a total of 195, between 2013 and 2017), and to suggest "practical, short and long-term actions to reduce fatalities." The Report's conclusions highlighted the disconnect between "classic" (Chapter VI) peacekeeping operations and the new reality that peacekeeping involves armed conflict in which UN peacekeepers were seen, not as neutral arbiters, but rather as another enemy to be defeated. In such hostile environments "passivity" was seen to be a poor option -- indeed it was cited as a factor contributing to casualities. Based on the assumption that "hostile forces do not understand a language other than force," the Report called for a "changed mindset" on the part of UN leadership in New York, combined with "pro-active strategies," based on better trained, equipped and mobile forces in the field (see dos Santos Cruz et al., 2017, Dec.19).

3. In the interventions studied, the intervening forces enjoyed complete control of the air, giving international ground forces a huge advantage over clearly outclassed opponents. This of course skews conventional *force to force* ratios.

4. A factor complicating an accurate assessment of actual force levels of UN military missions is the practice of countries providing troops to attach "caveats" regarding how these troops can be used. These caveats usually mean that the actual number which can be used in "combat situations" is less than what one might expect from looking at total numbers. The dos Santos Report addressed the question of such caveats, and was firm in its judgment: "Troops **must perform.** The United Nations **should not accept caveats** because they weaken integration and mutual protections within missions. This increases the risk of casualties" (dos Santos Cruz et al., 2017, Dec. 19, bold in the original).

5. "Force levels do matter … [and] … the more intense the insurgency, the more security forces are required to reduce the level of violence" (Goode, 2009, pp. 45, 49). Note that Geoffrey York reported that in 2011, 25 years following the ill-fated international intervention in Somalia, the Commander of the UN force there claimed that even with 12,000 troops (he had asked for 20,000), he could not secure the city of Mogadishu (York, 2011, May 7, p. F9).

   In terms of "force levels," there is an important distinction made between "counter-terrorism" and "counter-insurgency" operations, with the former posing a possible threat almost anywhere in the world and requiring fewer security forces along with a different set of tactics. The latter is characterized by the active involvement of a sizeable group of the population and requires a larger *force to population ratio*. Terrorists are of course interested in creating conditions leading to an insurgency; thus counter-terrorism tactics have to be carefully crafted and applied so as not to contribute to the terrorists' goals. Unfortunately, this appears to part of the current problem in Mali.

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