

IV. Sexual exploitation and abuse in peace operations

THERESA HÖGHAMMAR

Sexual exploitation and abuse (SEA) in peace operations once again made headline news in 2015. Allegations of SEA of civilians by United Nations peacekeepers have repeatedly surfaced in the international media since the 1990s.¹ The first cases emerged in the UN mission in Cambodia, and there have been allegations from Bosnia-Herzegovina, the Central African Republic (CAR), the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), Haiti, Kosovo, Liberia, Sierra Leone, Somalia and Timor-Leste.² These allegations include rape, forced prostitution, 'rape disguised as prostitution', sexual abuse of children and paedophilia, trafficking and other forms of sexual violence.³ Allegations of SEA have been made against all types of UN peace operation personnel, both civilian and military.⁴ In spite of the bad publicity and international pressure to resolve the problem, there have been continued, frequent allegations. SEA is not limited to the UN, and personnel in multilateral peace operations deployed by other organizations, alliances and ad hoc coalitions have been similarly accused.⁵ In an attempt to better understand the problem, there have been a small number of theoretical studies on the power and gender implications of peace operations, as well as some larger statistical studies.⁶

¹ The UN defines an allegation as 'an unproven report of alleged misconduct, which may not necessarily lead to an investigation if there is insufficient information to warrant an investigation. Allegations are counted per individual, unless the number and/or identities of individuals have not been confirmed. In that case, allegations would be counted per incident'. United Nations, Conduct and Discipline Unit, 'Statistics: Overview of statistics'.

² Karim, S. and Beardsley, K., 'Explaining sexual exploitation and abuse in peacekeeping missions: The role of female peacekeepers and gender equality in contributing countries', *Journal of Peace Research*, vol. 53, no. 1 (Jan. 2016), p. 101.

³ In a case where rape has been disguised as prostitution, the perpetrator(s) rape the victim then leave money or food as a means of legitimizing the abuse as a consensual transaction.

⁴ Burke, R., 'Shaming the state: Sexual offences by UN military peacekeepers and the rhetoric of zero tolerance', eds G. Heathcote and D. Otto, *Rethinking Peacekeeping: Gender Equality and Collective Security* (Palgrave Macmillan: London, 2014), pp. 70–95.

⁵ Herbert, L., 'Analyzing UN & NATO responses to sexual misconduct in peacekeeping operations', eds A. Kronsell and E. Svedberg, *Making Gender, Making War: Violence, Military and Peacekeeping Practices* (Routledge: Abingdon, 2012), pp. 121–36.

⁶ United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325, 31 Oct. 2000; Nordås, R. and Rustad, S. A., 'Assessing sexual exploitation and abuse by peacekeepers', eds L. Olsson and T. I. Gizelis, *Gender, Peace and Security: Implementing UN Security Council Resolution 1325* (Routledge: 2015); and Olsson, L. and Gizelis-Ismene, T., 'Advancing gender and peacekeeping research', *International Peacekeeping*, vol. 21, no. 4 (Aug. 2014), pp. 3–4.

Allegations against French forces in the Central African Republic

In 2015, reports emerged that French military personnel deployed in the UN Security Council mandated Operation Sangaris had been involved in transactional sex and the rape of children in the CAR.⁷ The manner in which the UN handled the affair put it under further pressure to implement strict measures to mitigate the situation and hold the perpetrators accountable.⁸

French special forces were allegedly involved in the sexual exploitation of young boys at a camp for internally displaced persons. Boys aged 9–15 years were raped and suffered other forms of sexual abuse in exchange for food in the period December 2013 to June 2014.⁹ Although Operation Sangaris was not a UN peace operation, the UN was criticized for not dealing adequately or seriously with the case until the story was leaked to the media by a non-governmental organization (NGO) called AIDS-Free World. The NGO shared documents with the media, describing UN inaction on SEA in the CAR, together with the story of the UN official and ‘whistle-blower’, Anders Kompass, who was suspended after leaking internal reports about the allegations to the French authorities. Kompass was later asked to resign by the High Commissioner for Human Rights, Zeid Ra’ad al-Hussein, but refused. The report describes the sexual abuse of 13 children by 16 peace operation personnel: 11 from France, part of Operation Sangaris; 3 from Chad; and 2 from Equatorial Guinea, part of the African-led International Support Mission in the CAR (MISCA).¹⁰ The French Government initiated an investigation, the results of which are still pending. Kompass was later exonerated of any breach of UN protocol.¹¹

After the story had been leaked, the UN Secretary-General commissioned an external independent review in June 2015 to assess the UN’s management of the allegations. The review detailed in its report that ‘information about the allegations was passed from desk to desk, inbox to inbox, across multiple UN offices, with no one willing to take responsibility to address the

⁷ Transactional sex is defined as a relationship that involves the exchange of money or material goods for sex. It is often differentiated from formal sex work because the individuals engaging in transactional sex do not always view themselves as sex workers.

⁸ In Dec. 2013 the UN Security Council authorized the African-led International Support Mission to the CAR (MISCA) backed by a French peacekeeping force (Operation Sangaris) to halt the spiralling violence that was threatening the country. See Van der Lijn, J., ‘New peace operations’, *SIPRI Yearbook 2015*.

⁹ Cumming-Bruce, N., ‘UN official says French learned early of abuse’, *New York Times*, 14 Oct. 2015; and Laville, S., ‘UN whistleblower who exposed sexual abuse by peacekeepers is exonerated’, *The Guardian*, 18 Jan. 2016.

¹⁰ Laville, S., ‘UN aid worker suspended for leaking report on child abuse by French troops’, *The Guardian*, 29 Apr. 2015; and AIDS Free World, Code Blue Campaign, ‘Statement: The UN’s dirty secret, the untold story of Anders Kompass and peacekeeper sex abuse in the Central African Republic’, 29 May, 2015.

¹¹ Laville (note 10).

serious human rights violations'.¹² The review also concluded that the UN's overall response to the alleged cases of SEA in the CAR had been fragmented and bureaucratic. The UN agencies on the ground, such as the UN Children's Fund (UNICEF), staff from the Office for the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) and the Head of the UN Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in the CAR (MINUSCA), did not act in the victims' interests. According to the report, 'Staff became overly concerned with whether the allegations had been improperly "leaked" to French authorities, and focused on protocols rather than action'.¹³ Just after the report was released, seven new allegations of SEA were reported from the CAR, this time by MINUSCA personnel, creating even more pressure on the UN to address the violations and its inadequate response to them.¹⁴

The relevance of sexual exploitation and abuse today

The allegations in the CAR were widely publicized, but SEA is more frequent than this case alone. According to the UN's Office of Internal Oversight Services (OIOS), allegations of SEA were made against 480 personnel in UN peacekeeping operations and special political missions in 2008–13 (7 regarding special political missions and 473 about UN peacekeeping operations); 173 allegations (36 per cent) involved children, obviously a serious breach of the UN's zero tolerance policy and the rights of children.¹⁵ The largest source of allegations of SEA in 2008–13 was the UN's operations in the DRC (214 allegations, 45 per cent): the UN Stabilization Mission in the DRC (MONUSCO) and its predecessor the UN Organization Mission in the DRC (MONUC). Half the allegations of SEA in 2008–13 involved military personnel. Civilians accounted for 17 per cent of all peacekeeping personnel, but a disproportionate 33 per cent of all SEA allegations in 2008–13. The police accounted for 11 per cent of peacekeeping personnel and 12 per cent of SEA allegations. The remaining 5 per cent involved unknown or unidentified alleged offenders.¹⁶

According to the UN Secretary-General's annual report on 'special measures for protection from sexual exploitation and sexual abuse', the number

¹² Deschamps, M., Jallow, B. H. and Sooka, Y., *Taking Action on Sexual Exploitation and Abuse by Peacekeepers*, Report of an Independent Review on Sexual Exploitation and Abuse by International Peacekeeping Forces in the Central African Republic (United Nations, DPKO: New York, 15 Dec. 2015).

¹³ Deschamps, Jallow and Sooka (note 12), p. 1.

¹⁴ United Nations, 'New allegations of sexual abuse emerge against UN peacekeepers in Central African Republic', Press release, 4 Feb. 2016.

¹⁵ United Nations, Office of Internal Oversight Services, Inspection and Evaluation Division, *Evaluation of the Enforcement and Remedial Assistance Efforts for Sexual Exploitation and Abuse by the United Nations and Related Personnel in Peacekeeping*, 15 May 2015, pp. 4–8.

¹⁶ United Nations (note 15), pp. 9–10.

of allegations of SEA against all categories of personnel increased from 52 in 2014 to 69 in 2015. Of the allegations reported in 2015, 38 (55 per cent) originated from MINUSCA and MONUSCO. The remaining allegations came from eight different peacekeeping missions.¹⁷

Apart from the fact that SEA is illegal and immoral, and that such incidents have a severely negative effect on the victims, the issue also has wider implications for peace operations and the UN as a whole. It affects the trust between the peace operation and the civilian population. Contemporary international peace operations are multidimensional, have mandates that go beyond purely military goals, encompass civilian and military personnel, and bring personnel closer to the local population, including women and children.¹⁸ In many current conflicts, sexual violence, rape, sexual slavery of women, girls and boys and the forced recruitment of child soldiers are part of the tactics of modern war.¹⁹ Recent studies indicate that there is a higher risk of allegations of SEA by peace operation personnel if the mission is placed in a hostile environment where sexual violence has been widespread during the conflict.²⁰ The protection of civilians is a core obligation of the UN and such misconduct discredits the peace operation and the troop contributors, and ultimately undermines the UN's credibility as a guarantor of international peace and security. It also violates international humanitarian law (IHL) and international human rights law (IHRL), as well as undermining the promotion of gender equality and human rights at the international and local levels—values that the UN endorses.²¹

UN action on sexual exploitation and abuse

As the UN has been the focus of much of the criticism in recent years, it has undertaken a number of reform processes and actions to prevent and mitigate SEA.²² In 2000, UN Security Council Resolution 1325 focused serious attention on the issue in policy circles for the first time.²³ The resolution paved the way for a gender perspective to be incorporated into all UN peace

¹⁷ United Nations, General Assembly, Report of the Secretary-General, Special measures for protection from sexual exploitation and sexual abuse, A/70/729, 16 Feb. 2016.

¹⁸ Karim and Beardsley (note 2), p. 101; and United Nations, Report of the Secretary-General, A comprehensive strategy to eliminate future sexual exploitation and abuse in United Nations peacekeeping operations, A/59/710, 24 Mar. 2015, para. 3.

¹⁹ United Nations, General Assembly, Report of the High-level Independent Panel on Peace Operations on uniting our strengths for peace: politics, partnership and people, A/70/95 S/2015/446, 16 June 2015, paras 7–11.

²⁰ Nordås and Rustad (note 6), p. 139.

²¹ Burke, R., *Sexual Exploitation and Abuse by UN Military Contingents: Moving Beyond the Current Status Quo and Responsibility Under International Law* (Brill/Martinus Nijhoff: Leiden, 2014), p. 1.

²² For examples of the reforms see United Nations, Conduct and Discipline Unit, Evolution of initiatives to address sexual exploitation and abuse, [n.d.].

²³ United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325, 31 Oct. 2000; Nordås and Rustad (note 6), p. 141; and Olsson and Gizelis-Ismene, 2014 (note 6), pp. 3–4.

operations and for evaluation mechanisms to be put in place, bringing gender into the mainstream debate not only in peace operations but also in the broader peace, security and peacebuilding discourse. Continued allegations of SEA, however, gravely undermined the implementation of the resolution and the UN's work in this field.²⁴

The UN first addressed SEA as a separate issue in 2003, when the then UN Secretary-General, Kofi Annan, announced a policy of 'zero tolerance' of sexual exploitation in a bulletin outlining special measures for protecting against sexual exploitation and abuse.²⁵ This zero-tolerance policy prohibits all forms of sexual activity and transactional sex with children, identified as persons under the age of 18. Furthermore, it strongly discourages, but does not prohibit, sexual relationships between UN staff and the host population, 'since they are based on inherently unequal power dynamics, [that] undermine the credibility and integrity of the work of the United Nations'.²⁶

In 2004 Annan appointed the Permanent Representative of Jordan, Zeid Ra'ad al-Hussain, a former civilian peacekeeper who would later become High Commissioner for Human Rights (see above), to work on a report on how the UN should address and prevent SEA in UN peacekeeping operations. The so-called Zeid Report, published in 2005, was a significant step for the UN in acknowledging accusations against peacekeepers of sexual violence against civilians.²⁷ It recommended the establishment and implementation of a comprehensive strategy to mitigate SEA by UN peacekeeping personnel, divided into three areas: prevention, enforcement and remedial action. It also highlighted the under-representation of women in peacekeeping.²⁸

In a major development, the Department for Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO) established a Conduct and Discipline Team to train peacekeepers on the new strategy and implementing it in the field, and on how to investigate allegations of SEA. The team later became the Conduct and Discipline Unit, which in 2006 started to collect data on SEA allegations and investigations—an important signal that the UN was taking the problem seriously. The Secretary-General started to report the data annually, and share information on the measures being taken to strengthen the organization's response.²⁹

²⁴ Karim and Beardsley (note 2), p. 101.

²⁵ United Nations, Special measures for protection from sexual exploitation and sexual abuse, Secretary-General's Bulletin, ST/SGB/2003/13, 9 Oct. 2003.

²⁶ United Nations (note 25), section 3.2 (d).

²⁷ Harrington, C., *Politicization of Sexual Violence: From Abolitionism to Peacekeeping* (MPG Books Group: 2010), p. 163.

²⁸ United Nations (note 18). For more information, see Stern, J., 'Reducing sexual exploitation and abuse in UN peacekeeping: Ten years after the Zeid Report', *Civilians in Conflict Policy Brief no.1* (Feb. 2015), p. 5.

²⁹ Karim and Beardsley (note 2), p. 101. For the Secretary-General's reports see United Nations, Conduct and Discipline Unit, Resources, 'Documents', [n.d.].

In 2007 the UN General Assembly adopted a resolution to ‘ensure that victims of sexual exploitation and abuse by United Nations staff and related personnel receive appropriate assistance and support in a timely manner’.³⁰ In 2008 a revised Model Memorandum of Understanding was negotiated between the UN and troop contributing countries, which included specific provisions on SEA for the first time.³¹

Sexual exploitation and abuse and the UN’s 2015 reviews

Sexual exploitation and abuse in peace operations was an important topic in two of the major UN reviews published in 2015: the High-level Independent Panel on Peace Operations (HIPPO) report and the Global Study on the Implementation of UN Security Council Resolution 1325. Both reports contain recommendations on how to tackle the problem of SEA in peacekeeping operations.

The HIPPO report and sexual exploitation and abuse

In spite of the efforts described above, the HIPPO report concluded that there is a ‘culture of enforcement avoidance’ within peacekeeping operations with regard to ‘addressing abuse and enhancing accountability’. In addition, HIPPO emphasized that local communities are unaware of how to report incidents of misconduct by UN personnel or how any preventive work on sexual exploitation and abuse is being handled by missions. The report argued that the current system, where the UN Secretariat follows up allegations with member states regarding disciplinary and jurisdiction issues as well as prosecution of the alleged perpetrators, is weak. Questions to member states in cases of alleged SEA generally go unanswered.³² Responsibility for both prevention and enforcement is at the mission level and with UN Headquarters. All matters regarding allegations against military and police personnel are handled by national capitals, which makes a comprehensive overview of criminal cases difficult to achieve. Furthermore, there is no adequately resourced programme to provide assistance to individual victims or for a child that is born as a result of SEA.³³

To address some of the problems, HIPPO made a number of recommendations, including (a) establishing immediate response teams to ‘gather and preserve evidence of sexual exploitation and abuse for use in investigations’;

³⁰ United Nations, General Assembly Resolution, A/RES/62/214, 21 Dec. 2007.

³¹ United Nations, General Assembly, ‘Letter dated 25 February 2011 from the Chair of the 2011 Working Group on Contingent Owned Equipment to the Chair of the Fifth Committee’, A/c.5/66/84, p. 182.

³² United Nations (note 19), para. 281.

³³ United Nations, General Assembly and Security Council, ‘Identical letters dated 17 June 2015 from the Secretary-General addressed to the President of the General Assembly and the President of the Security Council’, A/70/95-S/2015/446, 17 June 2015, p. 281.

(b) a six-month deadline for completing SEA investigations; (c) new enforcement sanctions, such as dismissal and repatriation of personnel without the possibility of further service within the UN system; (d) new reporting obligations on member states about the status of investigations of allegations of SEA; and (e) standard approaches for dealing with troop and police personnel contributions from countries with poor human rights records—and where forces are listed in the Secretary-General’s reports on violations against children and on conflict-related sexual violence, these governments should be barred from contributing troops to UN missions until they are delisted.³⁴

The HIPPO recommendations focused primarily on enforcement and remedial action. There were no preventive measures to mitigate SEA, even though this is part of the UN strategy to eliminate SEA.

The Global Study and sexual exploitation and abuse

Just after the HIPPO report was launched, a review of the implementation of the women, peace and security agenda was published, written by an independent UN panel of experts.³⁵ In the Global Study on the Implementation of UN Security Council Resolution 1325, a section on ‘Sexual exploitation and abuse by peacekeeping personnel’ reiterated and built on the HIPPO recommendations.

On ending the culture of impunity, the study stated that immunity from prosecution does not, and was never intended to, apply to UN personnel alleged to have committed SEA. In addition, countries that repeatedly fail to investigate and prosecute their soldiers should not be allowed to contribute troops to peace missions; there should be ‘naming and shaming’ for those states that fail to report, meaning that the UN Secretariat would name in a transparent manner the countries that fail to do so. Furthermore, ‘if the UN has prima facie evidence of misconduct, the home country of the alleged perpetrator should be under an obligation to prosecute. If they do not, they should be obligated to provide a detailed explanation of the reasons why’.

The study also suggested that an independent commission could conduct a broadly based investigation across the system on SEA and the handling of allegations by both member states and the UN. Other options included an international tribunal with jurisdiction to try all UN staff and all categories of peacekeeping personnel; or a hybrid court with jurisdiction shared between the UN, the host country and the troop contributing country.³⁶

³⁴ United Nations (note 33), p. 291.

³⁵ United Nations, ‘Preventing conflict, transforming justice, securing peace: The Global Study on the Implementation of United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325’, UN Women 2015, [n.d.], pp. 148–49.

³⁶ United Nations (note 35).

In contrast to the HIPPO report, the study highlighted the importance of pre-deployment training on sexual violence and abuse in preventing SEA. It also noted that ‘not a single female peacekeeper has ever been accused of sexual exploitation and abuse’.³⁷ A call for the deployment of female peacekeepers has been made in several policy documents as a way of empowering women and implementing gender perspectives in UN peace operations and in the military more generally. It is often argued this would have many positive side effects.³⁸

The UN Secretary-General’s response

The most prominent feature of the UN Secretary-General’s 2015 report on ‘special measures for protection from sexual exploitation and sexual abuse’ is the new naming and shaming policy, which means that the report provides the nationalities of military and police personnel where allegations have been referred for investigation. This increases pressure on member states to hold perpetrators accountable and to conduct proper investigations into allegations of SEA.³⁹ Furthermore, the Secretary-General derived a series of measures from his analysis of the High Level External Independent Review Panel on SEA by International Peacekeeping Forces in the CAR, which was submitted in December 2015.

One of the measures was the appointment of Jane Holl Lute as a special coordinator for improving the UN response to SEA.⁴⁰ Additional measures include (a) the enhancement of pre-deployment education and human rights training; (b) expanding the vetting of all UN peacekeeping personnel to ensure that they do not have a history of sexual misconduct; (c) rapid and effective investigations; (d) boosting assistance to victims; and (e) financial accountability and the withholding of payments to alleged perpetrators. Furthermore, the Secretary-General called on the General Assembly and troop contributing countries to set up courts martial in host countries and to create a DNA register for all peace operation personnel.⁴¹

³⁷ United Nations (note 35).

³⁸ For further information and the debate on female peacekeepers see e.g. Simic, O., ‘Increasing women’s presence in peacekeeping operations: Rationales and realities of “gender balance”’, eds G. Heathcote and D. Otto, *Rethinking Peacekeeping: Gender Equality and Collective Security* (Palgrave Macmillan: New York, 2014), pp. 185–99.

³⁹ United Nations, Report of the Secretary-General, Special measures for protection from sexual exploitation and sexual abuse, A/70/729, 16 Feb. 2016.

⁴⁰ United Nations, ‘Secretary-General appoints Jane Holl Lute of United States as Special Coordinator on Improving United Nations Response to Sexual Exploitation and Abuse’, Press release, 8 Feb. 2016.

⁴¹ United Nations, ‘Secretary-General tells troop contributors no one with past record of abuse can ever serve United Nations, outlining plans for victim trust fund’, Press release, 17 Sep. 2015.

Major obstacles to averting and dealing with sexual exploitation and abuse

In spite of the various reform processes, the UN continues to face a number of obstacles to developing a fully fledged and effective policy for tackling SEA.

The privileges and immunities of peace operation personnel

The first major obstacle is the privileges and immunities given to peace operation personnel. The UN takes disciplinary action against its civilian staff, and substantiated cases of criminal conduct can also be referred for prosecution, or directly prosecuted, by the national authorities of the host country. Troops are under the authority of their home state, however, and are thus subject to its exclusive criminal and disciplinary jurisdiction during the time they are deployed in the peacekeeping operation. The UN Model Status of Forces Agreement (SOFA) stipulates that military personnel are legally immune from prosecution in the host country and, as such, the troop contributing country is responsible for the investigation and prosecution of alleged misconduct. It is therefore difficult for the UN to hold perpetrators accountable.⁴² Impunity for SEA crimes is often the outcome, which creates the perception that SEA is tolerated.⁴³

Organizational inertia

Another obstacle is the seeming organizational inertia of the UN in the face of allegations of SEA. An OIOS evaluation of the UN's enforcement of its SEA policy criticizes the Investigations Division of the OIOS for excessively long delays in completing investigations into allegations of SEA, arguing that they undermine enforcement. It also emphasizes that assistance to victims has been affected by the slow investigation and enforcement process, as well as the lack of dedicated funding.⁴⁴ In the past, efforts have been made by senior officers in UN peace operations, among others, to cover up incidents of SEA, and whistle-blowers have suffered reprisals for reporting cases.⁴⁵ Recent policy developments, in particular a commitment by the Secretary-General to reduce the time taken to investigate allegations, are intended to address these issues.

⁴² Burke (note 21), pp. 70–71; and Stern (note 28), p. 10.

⁴³ Karim and Beardsley (note 2), p. 101; and Burke (note 21), p. 8.

⁴⁴ United Nations, Office of Internal Oversight Services, Inspection and Evaluation Division, Evaluation of the Enforcement and Remedial Assistance Efforts for Sexual Exploitation and Abuse by the United Nations and Related Personnel in Peacekeeping, 15 May 2015.

⁴⁵ Burke (note 21), p. 8.

The underreporting of sexual exploitation and abuse

The sensitive nature of SEA leads to underreporting. Many victims are uncomfortable about reporting sexual abuse, through fear of being stigmatized by their families and communities, or of retribution by the perpetrator. In addition, the post-conflict contexts in which peace operations take place are generally fragile, with weak or corrupt law-enforcement and justice systems. This provides little incentive for victims to come forward.⁴⁶ Moreover, victims are often not in a position to report because of poverty, desperation and/or separation from their families. Vulnerable women and children may have to engage in 'survival sex' in order to obtain services, food, money or goods. In some cases this is their only source of income.⁴⁷

The masculinity of peace operations

A final obstacle is that, like military organizations, peace operations possess an underlying dynamic that appears to stimulate SEA. It has been suggested that attitudes to sex, culture, gender, masculinity and militarism are a contributory factor to SEA. A recent study established a link between the risk of SEA and the level of gender equality in the troop contributing country's forces. It argues that higher levels of gender equality in a society reduce levels of abuse against women and thus a link between gender equality norms and the physical security of women.⁴⁸

Conclusions

All the independent panel reviews published in 2015 agree that the failure of the UN to hold perpetrators of SEA sufficiently accountable sends a signal that it is acceptable to commit such abuse. The legal system surrounding UN peace operations is designed to ensure that individuals deployed on peace operations are immune from prosecution by the host nation's police and courts. These norms and rules on legal immunity for peace operation personnel have exacerbated the problem of lack of accountability for SEA, and the legal framework requires further reform. Suggestions for radical reform of the system, such as an international tribunal for peacekeeping personnel, have been blocked by states that do not want to delegate control of their troops.

The Secretary-General's naming and shaming policy, developed after the scandals in the CAR, is not a direct UN solution but could indirectly act as a catalyst for member states to improve their prosecution and reporting rates. It was also a recommendation in both the HIPPO report and the Global

⁴⁶ Stern (note 28), p. 8.

⁴⁷ Burke (note 21), pp. 4–5.

⁴⁸ Karim and Beardsley (note 2), p. 101.

Study. In addition, courts martial during missions and the creation of a DNA registry for personnel could act as effective deterrents and help to end the culture of impunity. However, they are unlikely to be welcomed by member states, which would lose control over their troops.

Increasing the number of female peacekeepers might have a positive effect, but adding women to insufficiently gender-balanced, gender-equal and gender-sensitive structures would not guarantee that these challenges would be effectively addressed. Therefore, training for peace operation personnel on gender equality, and what a gender perspective in a peace operation really means, needs to be further developed by the UN and troop contributing countries.

Nevertheless, significant policy developments to address sexual violence by peacekeepers were made in 2015, mainly as a result of the scandals in the CAR. These policies now require regular assessment and monitoring to ensure that they are actually achieving their aims—and there is further work to be done.