

https://dspace.org/

The MONUSCO Peacekeeping Mission in the DRC (2010–2024)

Eunice, Marema

2025
University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg
https://hdl.handle.net/10539/50195
Eunice, Marem. (2025). The MONUSCO Peacekeeping Mission in the DRC (2010–2024) [Master's dissertation, University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg]. WIReDSpace. https://hdl.handle.net/10539/50195

Downloaded from a DSpace repository. https://dspace.org/

WITS SCHOOL OF GOVERNANCE
UNIVERSITY OF THE WITWATERSRAND, JOHANNESBURG

THE MONUSCO PEACEKEEPING MISSION IN THE DRC (2010-2024)

MASTER OF MANAGEMENT: GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT RESEARCH REPORT

EUNICE MAREMA

STUDENT NUMBER: 2201079

SUPERVISOR: DR AYABULELA DLAKAVU

MODULE: PADM7213A

ABSTRACT

Background: The Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) has gone through armed conflicts for decades, which have led to humanitarian catastrophes, political instability, and extensive violence. In reaction, the UN in 2010 replaced the earlier mandates with the United Nations Organisation Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUSCO). The study critically evaluated the MONUSCO mandate in the DRC from 2010 to 2024.

Aim: This research study evaluated the effectiveness, challenges, and impact of MONUSCO's peacekeeping mission in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) from 2010 to 2024.

Methodology: A content analysis was performed on the documents. The NVivo software tool was used to analyse the qualitative data. The data analysis process was conducted in 7 steps: gathering and arranging data, getting familiar with it, creating initial codes, looking for themes, going over themes, naming and defining themes, and writing up the findings. Data analysis themes were framed from the conflict resolution theory.

Results: MONUSCO's presence has been significant but limited. It has facilitated short-term stability and conflict resolution, yet achieving lasting peace and development remains challenging without stronger local governance and economic growth. Ongoing surveillance, flexible peacebuilding structures, and improved accountability are necessary to sustain the mission's legacy.

Conclusion: The results highlight the necessity for ongoing surveillance, adaptable peacebuilding structures, and improved accountability systems to maintain the mission's legacy during this transition.

ACRONYMS

CoDeCo	Cooperative for the Development of Congo
DDR	Disarmament, Demobilisation, and Reintegration
DRC	Democratic Republic of the Congo
EUSEC RD CONGO	EU Security Sector Reform Advisory and Assistance Mission in the Democratic Republic of Congo
EU	European Union
FARDC	Forces Armées de la République Démocratique du Congo (Armed Forces of the DRC)
M23	March 23 Movement (Congolese Revolutionary Army)
MONUC	United Nations Organisation Mission
MONUSCO	Nations Organisation Stabilisation Mission in the Democratic of Congo
OHCHR	Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights
UN	United Nations
UNMIL	United Nations Mission in Liberia
UNSC	United Nations Security Council
URDPC	Union of Revolutionaries for the Defense of the Congolese People

Table of Contents

ABSTRACT II

ACRONYMS III

LIST OF FIGURES VII

LIST OF TABLES VII

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY 1

1.1 INTRODUCTION 1

1.2 BACKGROUND 2

1.3 PROBLEM STATEMENT 4

1.4 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY 5

1.5 AIM OF THE STUDY 6

1.8 PROPOSED CHAPTERS CONSTITUTING THE DISSERTATION 7

1.9 CHAPTER SUMMARY 8

CHAPTER 2: METHODOLOGY 8

RESEARCH PARADIGM 8

RESEARCH APPROACH 9

RESEARCH DESIGN 10

2.5 SAMPLING METHODS AND PROCEDURES 10

DATA COLLECTION METHODS 11

DATA SOURCES 12

DATA ANALYSIS AND PROCEDURES 12

LIMITATIONS, FEASIBILITY AND POSITIONALITY 13

2.9.1 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS 14

2.9.2 CHAPTER SUMMARY 14

CHAPTER 3: LITERATURE REVIEW AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK 15

3.1 INTRODUCTION **15**
3.2. MONUSCO'S PEACEKEEPING MISSION IN DRC **15**
3.3. THE DIFFERENT ROLES OF PEACEKEEPING MISSIONS CARRIED OUT IN THE DRC **16**
3.4. THE CHALLENGES ENCOUNTERED BY MONUSCO'S PEACEKEEPING MISSIONS IN THE DRC **18**
3.5. THE FAILURES ASSOCIATED WITH PEACEKEEPING MISSIONS IN THE DRC **19**
3.6. THE ACHIEVED OBJECTIVES OF PEACEKEEPING MISSIONS IN DRC **21**
3.7. A COMPARISON OF THE UNITED NATIONS MISSION IN LLIBERIA (UNMIL) AND MONUSCO IN DRC **22**
3.8 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK **23**
3.9 THE CONSTRUCTS OF CONFLICT RESOLUTION THEORY AND THEIR APPLICATION TO MONUSCO **26**
3.9.1 STRUCTURAL VIOLENCE AND PEACEBUILDING 26
3.9.2 HUMAN NEEDS THEORY 26
3.9.3 PROTRACTED SOCIAL CONFLICT 26
3.9.4 NEGOTIATION AND MEDIATION 26
3.10 CHAPTER SUMMARY **27**

CHAPTER 4 ANALYSIS OF THE EFFECTIVENESS OF MONUSCO PEACEKEEPING IN THE DRC (2010-2025) **28**

4.1 INTRODUCTION **28**

4.2 OVERARCHING THEME 1: EFFECTIVENESS OF MONUSCO PEACEKEEPING MISSION IN REDUCING VIOLENCE **32**
4.2.1 EFFECTIVENESS OF MONUSCO PEACEKEEPING MISSION IN REDUCING VIOLENCE AND MAINTAINING SECURITY IN CONFLICT ZONES 32
4.2.2 A COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF UNSC RESOLUTIONS 2717 (2023) AND 2765 (2024) ON MONUSCO 35
4.3 OVERARCHING THEME 2: PROTECTION OF CIVILIAN POPULATION FROM HUMANITARIAN ABUSE ... **39**
4.3.1 THEME 1: PROTECTION OF CIVILIANS 42
4.3.2 THEME 2: CONFLICT RESOLUTION 48
4.3.3 THEME 3: GBV AND ABUSE OF WOMEN AND CHILDREN 51
4.4 OVERARCHING THEME 3: BEHAVIOUR OF ARMED GROUPS IN THE DRC **54**
4.4.1 THEME 1: ARMED GROUPS 57
4.4.3 THEME 3: DISENGAGEMENT PLANS AND IMPLEMENTATION 66
4.5 CHAPTER SUMMARY **68**

CHAPTER 5: DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS ON MONUSCO PEACEKEEPING EFFECTIVENESS 69

5.1 INTRODUCTION AND DISCUSSION OF THEMATIC FINDINGS 69
5.2 CHAPTER SUMMARY 73

CHAPTER 6: CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS 75

6.1 INTRODUCTION 75
6.2 STUDY CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS 76
6.3 AREAS OF FUTURE STUDY 77

REFERENCES 78

APPENDIX 1 85

APPENDIX 2 86

APPENDIX 2 86

LIST OF FIGURES

List of figures……P.

Figure 4.1 Word Cloud of the 1000 words used in the analysis…… 36

Figure 4.2 Units of analysis Items clustered by word similarity…… 38

Figure 4.3 Hierarchy chart of the effectiveness of MONUSCO in reducing violence (n=40)……39

Figure 4.4 Hierarchy chart of Protection of Civilians from Humanitarian Abuse (n=40)……47

Figure 4.5 Overarching theme 2: Protection of civilian population from humanitarian abuse……49

Figure 4.6 Hierarchy chart of Behaviour of Armed Groups in the DRC(n=41)……63

Figure 4.7 The Overarching theme 3: Behaviour of Armed Groups in the DRC…….64

LIST OF TABLES

Table…… P.

Table 4.1 Joint display of Resolution 2717 (2023) and Resolution 2765 (2024)……43

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

1.1 INTRODUCTION

The UN's Peacekeeping Mission in the DRC (MONUSCO) is one of the biggest peacekeeping contingents in the history of the UN (Affonso Leal, 2024). MONUSCO stands for United Nations Organisation Stabilisation Mission. Since its inception in 2010, MONUSCO has been mandated to support the government of the DRC in maintaining peace and stability in the country by protecting civilians and taking a lead in the disarmament of armed rebels (Affonso Leal, 2024). However, the stipulated time between 2010 and 2024 has been marked by different critical developments that have significantly shaped the mission's mandate, notable effectiveness, and future (Affonso Leal, 2024). The Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) has long been one of the most war-torn countries on the continent of Africa. With several years of political instability, armed rebel violence, and humanitarian deterioration due to conflicts, the country has drawn the attention of the international community, especially the United Nations (UN). Conflict is commonly defined as a situation in which two or more parties perceive their interests, values, or goals as incompatible, resulting in tension, contestation, or open confrontation. A recent review describes conflict as "a perceived divergence of interests, beliefs or goals between parties, leading to antagonistic interaction." (Global Rights Monitor, 2022). In addition to defining the term, it is important to highlight the varied forms of conflict affecting the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC). The DRC has long grappled with a complex landscape of conflict, driven by historical, socio-economic, political, and regional dynamics. These conflicts are multidimensional and often overlap, requiring the researcher to differentiate among them to enhance analytical depth and contextual relevance.

First, the country continues to experience armed conflict, particularly in the eastern provinces, where armed groups compete for territorial control, mineral resources, and political leverage (International (United Nations Security Council, 2024). Second, ethnic conflict remains a significant challenge, with various communities engaging in disputes over land, identity, and local governance structures (Global Rights Monitor, 2022). Third, resource-based conflict is especially prevalent due to the DRC's vast deposits of coltan, gold, diamonds, and other minerals, which have historically fueled both domestic and cross-border violence (Congo Mineral Watch, 2023). Fourth, political conflict persists in the form of contested elections, weak governance institutions, and struggles for political power at national and provincial levels (Democratic Governance Review, 2024). Finally, social conflict, often arising from poverty, displacement, and lack of public services, exacerbates societal tensions and interacts with broader structural drivers of instability (World Bank, 2022; Humanitarian

Response Forum, 2024). This study sought to evaluate MONUSCO's peacekeeping mandate and the challenges being encountered during the 2010–2024 period, a time characterized by renewed factionalism in the eastern provinces, leading to public dissatisfaction with MONUSCO forces and growing pressure for the mission to be pulled out of the country (Shıkwambane 2022). By analysing the successes, limitations, and strategic shifts in MONUSCO's mission, this research aims to give a comprehensive understanding of the impact and the likelihood for sustainable peace and stability in the DRC.

1.2 BACKGROUND

Peacekeeping missions have played a crucial role in global efforts to maintain stability and security in areas affected by conflict since the 1950s (Gaibulloev, George, Sandler, & Shimizu, 2015). At first, these missions aimed to help combat conflicts and to support the rollout of peace deals. Over time, their scope and complexity have grown (Di Salvatore & Ruggeri, 2017). Despite their well-intentioned goals, many peacekeeping missions have faced big hurdles. This has led people to question how effectively they can keep the peace (Myers & Dorn 2022). The proposed study aims to assess the effectiveness of peacekeeping missions in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), with MONUSCO being the main case study compared to other peace missions in the DRC since the late 1990s. To accomplish the analysis, the peacekeeping mission deployed in the DRC was evaluated based on whether they managed to accomplish their assigned mandates. This involved an investigation and description of conflict-affected areas before, during, and after the deployment of the missions.

The missions that successfully achieved their assigned mandates were considered effective, while those that failed were considered ineffective. Contributing factors that led to the success or failures of the missions were elucidated. Nonetheless, to better understand, analyse, and make meaning of data, the study was grounded in the Conflict Resolution Theory. The framework served as a way of analysing the role, approaches, and efficacy of the missions in DRC. Moreover, the approach was used to explain the reason behind the successes and failures of the missions. The UN started the first of these MONUC (1999–2010) to keep an eye on the peace process after the Second Congo War and to protect civilians (Adolphe 2023). As one of the UN's biggest peacekeeping efforts, MONUC had a broad mandate. Its job included disarming, demobilising, and reintegrating fighters, assisting with aid, and backing the government's efforts to extend its reach in areas hit by conflict (Adolphe 2023).

The Peacekeeping mission Operation Artemis implemented in 2003, deployed by the European Union (EU), was primarily mandated to bring stability and peace in Bunia, a town that was plagued with widespread ethnic violence (Poopuu & Poopuu 2020). Operation Artemis was the first peacekeeping mission that aimed on bringing peace on a nation outside the EU. The EU then launched EUSEC RD Congo (2005-2016), its Security Sector Reform Mission in the DRC (Davis, 2015). Davis (2015) points out that this mission aimed to guide and support the DRC government to reform its security sector. This involved reshaping the Congolese armed forces and boosting governance and accountability within the security sector. The last of the missions considered, MONUSCO, which succeeded MONUC, had an even tougher mandate, which revolved around backing the government in DRC towards bringing peace and stabilizing the country (Mkeremy & Lisakafu, 2023).

The objectives of MONUSCO were mainly to disarm rebellious groups, protect civilians, and facilitate the expansion of the authority of the state (Kuele & Cepik, 2017). By evaluating the MONUSCO peacekeeping mission implemented in the DRC, the study also seeks to provide a comparison of the effectiveness of the other peacekeeping missions that have been deployed to the DRC as well as one in Liberia. This was done to identify common approaches that lead to successful peacekeeping missions and approaches that lead to failure. Conducting the evaluation study in the DRC is of significance since the country is one of the major recipients of peacekeeping missions in the word. To Hoefsloot and Anderson (2016) and Tamm (2022), note that the DRC previous wars comprise of the First Congo War (1996-1997) and the Second Congo War (1998-2003). During the Second Congo War, there was a loss of approximately 5.4 million lives, along with widespread hunger and disease (Ogunnoiki, 2019).

In response to the war, the United Nations Organisation Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUC) was established in 1999 to facilitate ceasefires and promote peace efforts (Ogunnoiki, 2019). MONUC's role grew over time to include protecting civilians, disarming militias, and helping with aid delivery (Affonso Leal 2024). Yet, as Shıkwambane (2022) points out, fighting in the DRC didn't stop in the east, where the fight for natural resources kept fuelling violence. In 2010, MONUC changed its name to the United Nations Organisation Stabilisation Mission in the Democratic Republic of Congo (MONUSCO), putting more focus on making things stable and keeping people safe (Affonso Leal, 2024). MONUSCO is recognized as one of the biggest UN peacekeeping missions, however, the mission came under fire regarding its efficacy (Ogunnoiki 2019). MONUSCO was not created in a vacuum; rather, it inherited its mandate, operational environment, and institutional constraints from MONUC. MONUSCO was introduced in order to

address the shortcomings of MONUC. (Karlsrud, 2019). MONUC struggled with mandate ambiguity, inadequate troop strength, and limited host-state cooperation (Durch & Berkman, 2006). These issues had a direct bearing on MONUSCO, which continued to face obstacles in civilian protection, political stabilization, and dealing with armed groups despite its expanded mandate and increased resources (Karlsrud, 2019). Similarly, MONUC's difficulties in navigating complex local political dynamics and community mistrust were challenges that MONUSCO inherited and has grappled with throughout its deployment (Karlsrud, 2019).

On one side, the mission gets commended for its remarkable successes in backing elections, protecting civilians, and Disarming, Demobilization, and Reintegration (DDR) efforts (Affonso Leal 2024). On the other hand, it has been called out for not stopping ongoing conflicts, claims of peacekeepers misbehaving, and seeming to fall short in making the overall security situation in the DRC better (Shıkwambane 2022). Nonetheless, Al Jazeera (2024) reported that all UN peacekeepers plan to leave the DRC by the end of 2024. This coming exit makes one wonder if these missions have done well or not in keeping peace. Thus, by looking at these four big peacekeeping missions, this study attempts to give a full picture of what these missions do, what problems they face, and what they have achieved in the ongoing conflict in the DRC. The aim is to highlight the performance of MONUSCO vis-à-vis peacekeeping in the DRC, while contextually comparing it (MONUSCO) to its peer peacekeeping missions in the same jurisdiction.

1.3 PROBLEM STATEMENT

The Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) has been the centre of attention of numerous global peacekeeping missions aimed at bringing peace and stability to the country amid never-ending conflict (Karlsrud, 2015). Despite MONUSCO's enormous resources and international assistance, the DRC continues to face widespread violence, instability, and humanitarian disasters. There have been concerns regarding the success of the mission's initiatives, its capacity to address core causes of violence, and its collaboration with local stakeholders. The lack of research about how peacekeeping missions may create long-term peace highlights the importance of an in-depth evaluation of MONUSCO's operations, which is the research problem addressed by this study. The peacekeeping missions comprise of MONUC, Operation Artemis, EUSEC RD Congo, and MONUSCO (Doudou 2015; Aguilar 2019; Hanses & Spence 2015; Kuele & Cepik 2017). According to Shıkwambane (2022) and Affonso Leal (2024), each mission was deployed in different regions of the country with specific mandates, mainly aimed at enforcing peace. Even with the implementation of peacekeeping missions in the DRC, Russo (2021) notes that violent conflicts continue to overwhelm the country,

particularly in the eastern regions of the country. The conflicts, according to Kuele and Cepik (2017), are prominent in the DRC due to the abundance of resources, which is constantly sought and fought for by various armed groups. To Shıkwambane (2022), note that ethnic conflicts are also among the main reasons behind the ongoing conflicts in the DRC.

Nonetheless, rebel groups and the armed militants constantly fight against each other and also with governmental forces, which results in a widespread abuse of human rights, comprising forced displacement, mass murders, and sexual violence (Spijkers, 2015). In light of the ongoing conflicts, peacekeeping missions including MONUC, Operation Artemis, EUSEC RD Congo, and MONUSCO were implemented to protect civilians, disarm rebel groups, and assist the DRC government in bringing about order, peace, and stability (Doudou 2015; Aguilar 2019; Hanses & Spence 2015; Kuele & Cepik 2017).

However, given the never-ending conflict in the DRC regardless of the operation of peacekeeping missions, the effectiveness of the missions is contested, such as in studies by Karlsrud (2015), Tull (2018), and Russo (2021). This brings into question the effectiveness of the peacekeeping missions in the DRC. Previous studies by Martin-Brûlé (2016) and Tull (2016) have analysed the successes of peacekeeping missions in the DRC, and other studies such as Rogier (2016), Tull (2018) and Shıkwambane (2022) have assessed the failures of peacekeeping missions. Few studies have focused on assessing the effectiveness of the four major peacekeeping missions in the DRC post-1999 and analysing them in association with each other to get a broad assessment of the effectiveness of the missions. This lack of studies highlights a notable gap in the literature on the effectiveness of peacekeeping missions in the DRC. The study seeks to fill this gap by comparatively analysing the performance of four peacekeeping missions in the DRC, with a view to providing lessons learnt and recommendations for the ongoing MONUSCO mission.

The analysis of peacekeeping missions was driven by the need for a comprehensive evaluation of the nature of conflicts and peacekeeping in the DRC, to inform peacekeeping planning, coordination and implementation with MONUSCO and any future like-minded interventions in DRC and similar contexts.

1.4 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

This study provided a critical evaluation of the MONUSCO peacekeeping presence in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) from 2010 to 2024. Conducting the proposed study holds significance

because it can assist the significant gap in literature relating to the effectiveness of peacekeeping missions in the DRC, a country that has been plagued with conflict and is a colossal recipient of peacekeeping missions. By considering the MONUSCO peacekeeping mission (and comparing it to its contemporary and predecessor missions), the study can provide a comprehensive analysis of the mission relating methods that worked and those that did not. Nonetheless, this finding can be a critical insight about the best practices and lessons for policymakers, international organisations, and peacekeeping agencies. The research findings can assist in the design and implementation of future peacekeeping missions in areas with similar contexts. Nonetheless, the study aims to inform the broader discourse on peacekeeping and conflict resolution by providing a comprehensive evaluation of peacekeeping missions.

1.5 AIM OF THE STUDY

The main aim is to conduct an evaluation of the effectiveness, challenges, and impact of the MONUSCO peacekeeping mission in the DRC from 2010 to 2024. The dissertation also conducts a cross-comparison of MONUSCO with its predecessor DRC peace missions between 1999 and 2009. This analysis will focus on how the mission has promoted peace, stability, and the protection of civilians.

1.6 Research Objectives

- Give a historical analysis of MONUSCO's predecessor peace missions: MONUC, Operation Artemis, EUSEC RD Congo, highlighting key successes and failures of these pre-MONUSCO DRC missions vis-à-vis their mandates.
- To assess the effectiveness of the MONUSCO peacekeeping mission in reducing violence and maintaining security in conflict zones within the DRC.
- To analyse the success of the MONUSCO peacekeeping mission in the DRC in protecting civilian populations from human rights abuses during the ongoing conflict.
- To examine the influence of MONUSCO peacekeeping forces on the behaviour of armed groups in the DRC, focusing on ceasefires, disarmament, and peace negotiations.
- Using lessons from the other 3 DRC peacekeeping missions and the Liberia mission, explore key lessons and recommendations for MONUSCO and similar peace missions in other contexts to enhance peacekeeping effectiveness in restoring and maintaining peace in the DRC

1.7 Research Questions

1. What have been the comparative successes and failures recorded by pre-MONUSCO peacekeeping missions in the DRC vis-à-vis their mandates?

2. How effective has the MONUSCO peacekeeping mission been in reducing violence and maintaining security in conflict zones within the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC)?

3. To what extent has the MONUSCO peacekeeping mission succeeded in protecting civilian populations from human rights abuses during the ongoing conflict in the DRC?

4. How has the presence of MONUSCO peacekeeping forces influenced the behaviour of armed groups in the DRC, particularly regarding ceasefires, disarmament, and peace negotiations?

5. What lessons can be learnt from MONUSCO and other peace missions in order to improve mission effectiveness in restoring peace and security in DRC and other conflict/post-conflict contexts?

1.8 PROPOSED CHAPTERS CONSTITUTING THE DISSERTATION

The following chapters constitute this Dissertation:

Chapter 1: Introduction and Background to the Study. This introduction explored key concepts such background of the study about MONUSCO, the problem of the study, the main aim, research questions, research objectives, and significance of the study.

Chapter 2: Methodology. This chapter describes the research methodology, research design, research paradigm, sampling methods and procedures, and research approach that were implemented in this study.

Chapter 3: Literature Review and Theoretical Framework: This chapter presents a literature review, Conflict Resolution Theory, Human Needs Theory, and their Application to MONUSCO and protracted Social Conflict.

Chapter 4: Comparative Analysis of Four Peacekeeping missions in the DRC (1999-2025)

Chapter 5: Lessons and recommendations from the comparative analysis of MONUSCO relative to three other DRC peace missions

Chapter 6: Conclusions

1.9 CHAPTER SUMMARY

This introduction explored key concepts such as the background of the study about MONUSCO, the problem of the study, the main aim, research questions, research objectives, and the significance of the study. The next chapter will present the research methodology, design, research paradigm, and research approach, including the context of this study is expounded upon.

CHAPTER 2: METHODOLOGY

2.1 Introduction

The main purpose of this study is to give an effective analysis of the MONUSCO peacekeeping mission in the DRC. This chapter discusses the methodology of the study. It also describes the research paradigm used in conducting the research, the research approach, research design, data collection, data analysis, and ethical considerations. Research methodology, according to Snyder (2019), refers to the structural framework that provides a guideline on how the entire research process should be conducted. According to Snyder (2019), the methodology provides an outline of the techniques, tools, and processes that are going to be employed when collecting and interpreting data that is relevant to the research objectives or problem. Davidavičienė (2018) adds on to this by suggesting that a research methodology is an inevitable part of conducting research as it ensures that the study will be valid, reliable, and capable of employing proper methods to address the research objectives.

RESEARCH PARADIGM

A research paradigm is a fundamental part of conducting research that pertains to the set of values, beliefs, and assumptions that guide how the research project was conducted (Rehman & Alharthi, 2016). According to Davies & Fisher (2018), research paradigms offer a framework for comprehending the nature of reality, the procedures of obtaining information, and the methods that was used to collect and analyse data. By definition, the interpretivist's paradigm is a philosophical approach to conducting research that places emphasis on the comprehension of subjective experiences and meanings of individuals within their social context (Thanh & Thanh, 2015).

The interpretivist paradigm is rooted in beliefs suggesting that reality is socially constructed and, moreover, that information is derived from individual perceptions and interpretations involved in the study (Thanh & Thanh, 2015). Positivism, which aims on uncovering objective truths via qualitative information (Alharahsheh & Pius, 2020), is different from the interpretivist paradigm, which aims on

comprehending nuanced human behaviours and ways in which individuals make sense of their world (Thanh & Thanh, 2015). Having said that, the proposed study will adopt the interpretivist paradigm, for it is in line with the objectives of the study, which include understanding the nuanced realities within the context of peacekeeping missions in the DRC. Additionally, the paradigm is selected for its stance on reality not being a single objective entity but instead being a construct by individuals based on their experiences and interactions (Ryan, 2018).

In the context of peacekeeping missions, various studies such as those by Karlsru (2015), Tull (2018), and Ruso (2021) have presented divergent perspectives, with some perceiving these missions as effective while others view them as less successful. The interpretivist paradigm allows for the in-depth understanding of the differences in findings because of its emphasis on qualitative information, which provides a nuanced understanding of phenomena as compared to quantitative methods. This dissertation adopts the interpretivist paradigm as it enables the study to achieve its research aims.

RESEARCH APPROACH

A research approach refers to a systematic strategy and plan of conducting research that outlines how the research ought to go about addressing the research questions (Opie, 2019; Sign, 2015). A research approach determines the type of data that will be collected and the type of data analysis method (Teherani et al., 2015). Given that the research approach provides a structured framework that describes that research process, it ensures that the research will be conducted in a systematic manner with study findings that are reliable. The proposed study makes use of the qualitative research approach. Qualitative research examines human life experiences, perspectives, and social context, often uses non-numerical data. It uses focus groups, interviews, and observations (Creswell et al.,2018).

The use of the qualitative research approach is influenced by the study's aim of gathering in-depth data and interpretations from studies regarding the operations of peacekeeping missions in the DRC, which is something qualitative methods tend to fall short of. Nonetheless, the qualitative research approach allows the study to adhere to the interpretivist paradigm in the study, suggesting multiple context realities that exist with regards to peacekeeping missions. Additionally, qualitative methods are selected because they offer a true systematic review of complex conditions, such as a country's development woes or the effectiveness of programs, which can be complex and misleading to comprehend when using quantitative data.

RESEARCH DESIGN

The research design refers to the general strategy selected to incorporate all the study elements in a comprehensible and logical way, thus ensuring that it will efficiently address the research problem (Creswell, 2022). It establishes the guidelines for data gathering, measurement, and analysis (Creswell, 2022). Document analysis and secondary data analysis is a qualitative research method used by researchers. The process entails reviewing electronic and physical documents to interpret them, obtain an understanding of their significance, and build on the information they give. The proposed study will adopt the document analysis and secondary data analysis research design that will serve as the study's blueprint for how the research will be conducted. The design allows for the researcher to determine if the intervention (peacekeeping missions) has been successful in meeting their objectives, to what extent, how, why, and what potential improvement areas. The study will accomplish the document analysis research design by adopting a critical literature review of secondary data for data concerning the effectiveness of the MONUSCO peacekeeping mission in the DRC.

2.5 SAMPLING METHODS AND PROCEDURES

The study employed a purposive sampling, also referred to as judgemental sampling, a non-probability sampling technique whereby the researcher selects purposefully chosen cases or sources that are deemed most pertinent to the objectives of the research (Rai & Thapa, 2015). Purposive sampling was adopted in this study, for it allowed for the selection of only secondary data sources that are relevant to the research objectives in a systematic manner. The sampling procedure begins by identifying the key peacekeeping mission, MONUSCO, and the secondary comparative cases of pre-2010 DRC peace missions. The study then proceeded to the purposeful selection of secondary data sources that have studied these peace missions.

The secondary data selected included not only academic literature but also reports from media outlets, United Nations and European Union reports, scholarly books, case studies, and reports from governments and non-governmental organizations. The gathering of data from multiple sources of secondary data was done to acquire a thorough review of available literature to get an unbiased and comprehensive systematic review. Additionally, the data collection process involved a systematic review of literature, aiming to acquire unpartisan information from secondary sources that address the research objectives. The systematic review process comprised collecting data from secondary data sources relating to information that (a) assesses the roles of the different peacekeeping missions

in DRC, (b) challenges that are encountered by peacekeeping missions in DRC, (c) the failures associated with peacekeeping missions in DRC, (d) the achieved objectives of peacekeeping missions in DRC, and (e) the outcomes of the peacekeeping missions in DRC.

Inclusion and exclusion criteria

Inclusion criteria

- Reports, studies, and data on MONUSCO published between 2010 and 2024.
- Documentation covering peacekeeping missions in DRC between 1999 and 2009 (MONUC, Operation Artemis, EUSEC).
- Documentation covering peacekeeping missions in conflict-affected regions similar to the DRC (i.e., Liberia).
- Analysis focusing on socio-political, economic, and security dimensions of MONUSCO's operations.

Exclusion criteria

- Studies published in French related to MONUSCO or peacekeeping in the DRC.
- Materials that lack credible data or are not peer-reviewed.

DATA COLLECTION METHODS

For data collection, this study used a critical literature review of secondary data sources to assess the effectiveness of peacekeeping missions in the DRC. Chen (2017) defines a systematic review as a structured and rigorous approach to reviewing existing research on a certain research topic or question. Essentially, a critical literature review involves identifying, selecting, and critically assessing all studies that are relevant to the aim of the study, along with synthesising the study findings in an unpartisan and comprehensive manner (Chen, 2017). The study adopts a systematic review with the aim of providing a clear and concise summary of evidence that relates to the objectives of the study. The data collection procedure stuck to a set plan, making sure everyone to see what was happening and repeated it if needed. Following a set of rules ahead of time also cut down on bias and makes the study's findings more trustworthy. To start collecting data, the researcher picked out useful sources.

These included academic articles that experts have checked, reports from big groups like the United Nations and European Union, papers from governments and non-profits, books by scholar's studies of specific cases, and news articles from reliable sources. These sources of data was selected for their formal legitimacy and acceptance in the academic space, along with the potential to carry important data. The systematic review will then proceed to examine each of the selected sources thoroughly to select the ones required in the study. Studies that are required will be those that address the research objectives. Data from studies that relate to the research objectives was collected and then sorted in theme-based groups that match the research objectives. Similarities and repetitions of information among the studies was considered true and thus was included in the review. Thereafter, the information was added to the review based on the review topic being addressed.

DATA SOURCES

Data sources refer to the origins of information or the location of which information to conduct a study is gathered (Penberthy, Rivera, Lund, Bruno & Meyer, 2022). There are two sources of data in research: comprising documents and secondary data sources. There are primarily two sources: one documents data source and two secondary data sources (Penberthy et al., 2022). Secondary data sources refer to information collected for research purposes that has already been collected, analysed, processed, and published by other researchers, scholars, institutions, organisations, or even individuals for certain purposes besides the research at hand. According to Ajayi (2017), these sources of data comprise not only academic articles but also books, government reports, organisational documents, media articles, statistical data, and research papers.

Secondary data is often considered more accessible than primary data as it is readily available and accessible to the populace through online databases, archives, libraries, and other repositories (Ajayi, 2017). For conducting the study, secondary data sources are preferred over primary data sources for mainly two reasons. The first being the abundance of secondary data that relates to peacekeeping missions in the DRC. The second reason being that secondary data sources are preferred for their cost-effectiveness as the researcher does not reside in DRC. Nonetheless, the secondary data sources that was used in the study comprise, but are not limited to, academic articles and official reports. This is done to appeal to a wide range of information from different sources.

DATA ANALYSIS AND PROCEDURES

The study will adopt thematic analysis as an approach to analysing the qualitative data collected from secondary sources of data. This method is selected for its suitability when it comes to the assessment

of qualitative data sources. Clarke and Braun (2017) define thematic analysis as a method that is used in qualitative research to identify, analyse, and interpret patterns or themes within the collected data. According to Clarke and Braun (2017), this method of analysis involves systematically coding collected data and organising the codes into different themes that capture only the significant and necessary to include aspects of a study. Nvivo software is the tool that was used to analyse the qualitative data. The data analysis process was conducted in 7 steps: gathering and arranging data, getting familiar with it, creating initial codes, looking for themes, going over themes, naming and defining themes, and writing up the findings. Data analysis themes was framed from the conflict resolution theory. The coding themes were comprehensive peacekeeping for assessing the effectiveness of UN peacekeeping missions in reducing violence and maintaining security in conflict zones within the DRC. The second theme was (protecting civilians) coding for evaluating the success of peacekeeping missions in the DRC in protecting civilian populations from human rights abuses during the ongoing conflict. The third coding was (negotiating peace) for examining the influence of peacekeeping forces on the behaviour of armed groups in the DRC, focusing on ceasefires, disarmament, and peace negotiations.

The data analysis process started with the collection and arrangement of data. The sources were selected for their relevance in addressing the research objectives. Thereafter, the familiarisation of data commenced, as the collected data was re-read and reviewed to provide an understanding of the content and context of data. The third step of generating priori-codes follows, where data was coded by critically identifying and labelling patterns and themes related to the research objectives. The step of searching for themes included priori-coding or deductive codes into border themes that reflect significant patterns in the data. Themes was then reviewed by refining the identified themes alongside the data to ensure the proper representation of data. Themes were then be defined and named by explaining what each theme represents and then assigning each theme a clear descriptive name. Finally, the themes were presented in structured writing, with explanations supported by data. The analytical framework directs the selection of indicators and questions, which shaped the creation of the assessment technique and data analysis strategy.

LIMITATIONS, FEASIBILITY AND POSITIONALITY

The study acknowledges the plausibility of numerous limitations inherent in the research design and process of collecting data. One of the major limitations of the study is the reliance on secondary data sources, which can obstruct the scope of analysing the different perspectives derived first from people. Another limitation to the study with relation to the data collection method is that no new

information can be gathered since there are no participants. Another limitation is potential bias or gap in the secondary data, as not all information published is completely factual or nonpartisan. To address the aforementioned limitations, the study will adopt a systematic review to ensure that the study makes use of a wide range of credible sources. Nonetheless, any gaps that were identified were acknowledged in the final analysis.

To further address limitations, only studies that are from reliable sources of data such as Google Scholar considered in the study. The study's feasibility lies in its secondary data collection method, allowing ease of access and availability of data. Considering the widespread documentation and academic research available concerning peacekeeping missions in the DRC, the study is deemed to be feasible and within the proposed timeframe and budget. The study's reliance on accessible secondary data sources such as academic articles, books, and credible media publications further rationalizes its feasibility. As no researcher is value neutral, the author is a Military Officer who is highly opinionated, mostly about African developmental woes. Personal views and ideas about peacekeeping must not impact how data is gathered, analysed, and interpreted. To remain unbiased, the research used strict data collection methods like systematic reviews and followed ethical guidelines to ensure a fair approach.

2.9.1 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

The researcher applied for an ethics waiver because the research study is not conducting research with human participants. The study ensured the responsible use of document analysis and secondary data by making use of only formally accepted data sources and warranting proper citation. Though using secondary data sources, the study seeks to comply with the ethic of avoiding harm by ensuring that the study findings and interpretations do not exacerbate existing tensions in DRC. Additionally, it is ensured that the study findings were not changed but were reported accordingly. The study adhered to the ethic of cultural sensitivity, conducting the research concerning the social and cultural contexts of DRC. Finally, the ethical reporting and dissemination of the studies' findings is crucial to ensure that the study findings contribute positively to the academic space to be used constructively, respecting the rights and dignity of those affected by conflict in DRC.

2.9.2 CHAPTER SUMMARY

This chapter critically discusses the methodology. research paradigm, the research approach, research design, data collection, data analysis, and ethical considerations, ethical considerations used in

conducting the research. The next chapter is going to present a literature review, Conflict Resolution Theory, Human Needs Theory, Protracted Social Conflict and their application to MONUSCO.

CHAPTER 3: LITERATURE REVIEW AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

3.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter provided a comprehensive review of the existing literature concerning the effectiveness of peacekeeping missions in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC). It analyzed key factors that influenced the success of these missions, including their roles, challenges, failures, objectives achieved, and overall outcomes. The review primarily focused on the MONUSCO and other peacekeeping missions in the DRC. It also examined relevant theories, such as Conflict Resolution Theory, Human Needs Theory, and Protracted Social Conflict, and their application to the MONUSCO operations.

3.2. MONUSCO'S PEACEKEEPING MISSION IN DRC

MONUSCO was founded in 2010 as the successor of the United Nations Organisation Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUC) to solve one of the world's most complicated conflicts. The mission's mandate emphasised civilian protection, stabilisation, and support for the Congolese government in dealing with armed groups. Despite large financial and human commitments, MONUSCO has been chastised for its low success in combating violence and its apparent involvement in political difficulties (Karlsrud, 2015). Researchers ascribe these challenges to variables such as the DRC's enormous area, poor state institutions, and the presence of several non-state armed players (Autesserre, 2014).

MONUSCO's challenges demonstrate the difficulties of carrying out peacekeeping deployments in circumstances of continuous, high-intensity violence. Critics believe that the mission has struggled to strike a balance between peace enforcement and peacebuilding, resulting in a loss of confidence among local people (Stearns, 2016). Proponents, on the other hand, point to accomplishments in disarmament, demobilisation, and reintegration (DDR) initiatives as well as regional humanitarian coordination. Peace enforcement entails the use of military force by international bodies, like the UN, to restore peace and stability in conflict zones. It involves disarmament and civilian protection. Peacebuilding focuses on long-term conflict resolution and preventing violence through post-conflict

reconstruction, security sector reform, rule of law, reconciliation, and developing governance and institutions

3.3. THE DIFFERENT ROLES OF PEACEKEEPING MISSIONS CARRIED OUT IN THE DRC

The DRC has been plagued by conflicts since the 20th century; remarkably, peacekeeping missions have been an essential strategy of combating the conflict and bringing about peace in the country (Shikwambane, 2022; Berdal, 2018). The missions, executed at different periods, had different objectives meant to address specific challenges related to peacekeeping. Established in 1999, the United Nations Organisation Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUC) was tasked with one of the most important mandates at the time (Spijkers, 2015). Mueller et al. (2021) note that the principal objective of MONUC (1999–2010) was to administer the withdrawal of hostile foreign troops from the DRC. Foreign forces were deployed in the DRC mainly as a result of the First Congo War (1996-1997) and the Second Congo War (1998-2003), which involved several neighbouring nations, especially Rwanda, Uganda, and Angola. These countries acted to either help rebel groups, protect their national interests, or counter perceived threats from insurgent forces operating within the DRC (UNSC,2023). However, as time went by, the overall mandate of MONUC expanded beyond ceasefires to include the protection of civilians, resettlement, demobilisation, and assisting in the organisation of the elections (Mueller et al., 2021). Moreover, MONUC played an important role in assisting peace processes and the transitional administration, which was fundamental for stabilising the nation (Chongwa, 2024). Another mission implemented under UN mandate in 2003, the European Union sponsored Operation Artemis (János, 2015). According to János (2015), Operation Artemis was a military operation that was initiated to address the humanitarian crisis in the DRC's Ituri province. Poopuu and Poopuu (2020) note that Operation Artemis was the first independent EU military operation conducted outside Europe, aimed at providing peace and stability in the region of Bunia, which was overwhelmed by steadily increasing ethnic violence.

The Hema and Lendu groups region of northeastern DRC were fighting for land, economic resources, and political power. The tensions started after the withdrawal of Ugandan troops in 2003, creating a power vacuum that was quickly taken over by the militias (HRW, 2003). The numerous crimes were committed, including sexual abuse, mass executions, and the training of child soldiers, the death of thousands, and many more displacements (UNHCR, 2023). The Forces Armées de la République Démocratique du Congo (FARDC) were taking part in the conflict, as were rebel groups including

the Union of Congolese Patriots (UPC, primarily Hema-aligned) and the Front for Patriotic Resistance in Ituri (FRPI, largely Lendu-aligned) (UN Security Council, 2022).

Peters and Diallo (2015) state that the main goal of Operation Artemis was to safeguard humanitarian efforts, ensure the area remains stable, and provide protection to the people of Bunia until MONUC forces could be sent in. While Operation Artemis was of a short duration, it played an important role in preventing future crimes and establishing a safe environment for the deployment of later UN forces (Poopuu & Poopuu, 2020). The Hema and Lendu rebel groups committed crimes against humanity, including sexual abuse, mass executions, the recruitment of child soldiers, the killing of thousands, and many more displacements. (HRW, 2003). The third mission, designed to support the Congolese government in reforming its security sector, especially the military, the European Union Security Sector Reform Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (EUSEC RD Congo), was founded in 2005 (Hanses & Spence, 2015). Advising and assisting the Congolese authorities in matters including financial accountability, human resource management, and military planning was the primary responsibility of the mission (Davis, 2015).

Additionally, through implementing wage payment reforms and increasing the transparency of the military's budgeting procedures, EUSEC RD Congo aimed to enhance living conditions for the Congolese Armed Forces (FARDC) (Davis, 2015). Through the Modernization of Administration and Human Resources Systems, they introduced the biometric counting of people, which they managed to reduce the expected number of soldiers from 343,000 to 145,000 by 2015 (Davis, 2015). This program helped reduce "ghost soldiers" and enabled compensation increases without increasing the military budget. EUSEC also built SINGAMILI, an IT infrastructure for managing personnel data. Additionally, 800 computers were placed throughout military districts, and around 600 personnel received IT training. According to UK Parliament (2014), EUPOL assisted in designing the Organic Law for the Police and introduced a Five-Year Police Reform Plan, providing a legal framework for police operations in the DRC (Read.Be.Read, 2017). The final phase was the Post-Mission Continuation between 2015 and 2021, when they assisted the Ministry of Defence in planning the budget and making major reforms (Davis, 2015).

The goal of the operation, according to Arnould and Vlassenroot (2018), was to bolster the FARDC's capability and professionalism to support the DRC's long-term security and stability. In 2010, the MONUC was succeeded by the United Nations Organisation Stabilisation Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUSCO), which was given a broader mandate to safeguard people and

stabilise the nation (Kuele & Cepik, 2017). The mandate of MONUSCO is to assist the government of the DRC in stabilising the country through efforts such as consolidating peace and expanding state authority along with DDR efforts (Spijkers, 2015). Nonetheless, Romansky (2020) stated that MONUSCO played a significant role in the DRC through the facilitation of the electoral process and protecting the people from mass killings. Affonso Leal (2024) states that one of the most important achievements of MONUSCO was participating in efforts that aimed at addressing human rights abuses, improving the security sector in the country through reforms, and advancing the rule of law.

3.4. THE CHALLENGES ENCOUNTERED BY MONUSCO'S PEACEKEEPING MISSIONS IN THE DRC

Peacekeeping missions in the DRC encountered a number of challenges since their inception, highlighting the intricate nature of conflict and peacekeeping in the country (Shikwambane, 2022). Each of the missions, including MONUC, Operation Artemis, EUSEC RD Congo, and MONUSCO, faced a plethora of challenges, which in turn limited their ability to successfully achieve their assigned mandates (Doudou, 2015; Aguilar, 2019; Hanses & Spence, 2015; Kuele & Cepik, 2017). The first of the peacekeeping missions, MONUC, since its inception has been overwhelmed with a number of challenges (Mueller, Diehl, & Druckman, 2021). One of the main obstacles, as noted by Mueller et al. (2021), was the Democratic Republic of Congo's enormous size and inaccessibility, which resulted in difficulties for peacekeepers in monitoring ceasefires, protecting civilians, and offering support across large, isolated regions.

Furthermore, Doudou (2015) notes that the peacekeeping mission MONUC had difficulties in achieving its mandate due to the lack of resources and troops. Moreover, the frequent antagonistic and uncooperativeness of the DRC government and other armed groups made coordination between the peacekeepers and the government even more challenging (Chongwa, 2024). According to Doudou (2015), one of the biggest challenges that threatened peacekeeping efforts was the complex nature of conflict in the DRC, characterised by numerous parties occasionally changing allegiances. While being relatively short, Operation Artemis implemented in the Ituri region was also not without significant challenges (Aguilar, 2019). One of the primary obstacles was the environment in Bunia, characterised by unstable security with the horrific ethnic conflict between the Lendu and the Hema groups that had been escalation out of control at precarious proportions (János, 2015).

This ethnic conflict meant that the Operation Artemis mission had to navigate volatile environments while staying clear of the larger dispute. Nonetheless, the mission's short duration and scope hampered its ability to achieve long-term stabilisation (Poopuu & Poopuu, 2020). Regardless of Operation Artemis successfully achieving its immediate objectives, the missions faced criticism for failing to address the root causes of the conflicts, which resulted in the re-emergence of the underlying conflicts soon after the mission was concluded (Aguilar, 2019). Like the aforementioned peacekeeping missions, the European Union Security Sector Reform Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (EUSEC RD Congo) encountered a number of challenges throughout its operation (Arnould and Vlassenroot, 2016). One of the most notable challenges that was encountered is the persistent corruption, transparency, and accountability by the Congolese Armed Forces' (FARDC), which hindered initiatives towards reforms (More & Price, 2022). Another obstacle, which Doudou (2015) states was the primary cause behind the mission's failure to maintain long-term reforms, is the limited or insufficient funding that was directed to the mission.

Opposition to change was a considerable challenge for the EUSEC RD Congo mission since the mission threatened the interests of certain military officials, which in turn led to a slow rate of institutional transformation (Arnould & Vlassenroot, 2016). Moreover, with the ongoing instability in DRC, the ability of the mission to accomplish its mandate of professionalising the military and improving the military's operational efficacy became challenging (Arnould & Vlassenroot, 2016). MONUSCO, the successor of MONUC, also faced a number of challenges in accomplishing its mandate (Kuele & Cepik, 2017). Disarmament, Demobilisation, and Reintegration (DDR) objectives were challenging to accomplish because of the presence of various armed organisations, some of which were well armed and well established in the local establishments, making it challenging for peacekeepers to provide protection to civilians (Affonso Leal, 2024). MONUSCO has often been criticised for being overly ambitious considering the limited amount of resources available to the mission, which has led to the mission falling short of its mandates (Adolphe, 2023). Moreover, MONUSCO was distrusted by the local populace, with some refusing to cooperate, which resulted in the mission being perceived as incompetent or, even worse, involved in the violent (Shikwambane, 2022). The lack of coordination with the DRC government was a huge obstacle, which resulted in delays, overlaps, and inefficiencies in carrying out the mission's objectives (Mumanya, 2018).

3.5. THE FAILURES ASSOCIATED WITH PEACEKEEPING MISSIONS IN THE DRC

Peacekeeping missions in the DRC were faced with challenges, some of which were solved and some contributing to failure (Doudou, 2015; Aguilar, 2019; Hanses & Spence, 2015; Kuele & Cepik, 2017).

MONUC, for one, has had its failures relating to providing full protection to civilians against the widespread violence targeting civilians, especially in the eastern DRC (Murithi, 2016). One of the infamous failures of MONUC was its failure to prevent major crimes such as sexual misconduct, population displacement, and mass killings caused by armed groups (Doudou, 2015). Moreover, the mission's failure to successfully disarm and demobilise combatants contributed to the prolonged armed conflict in numerous areas (Doudou, 2015). The violent outbreaks that transpired during the operation MONUC underscore the mission's inability to comprehensively promote a peace settlement (Murithi, 2016).

One of the biggest failures of MONUC was its accusations of sexual exploitation and corruption by some of its own troops, which tarnished the reputation of the mission and strained some connections with surrounding countries (Kovatch, 2016). Operation Artemis, although accomplishing its short term objectives also had its failures one being its inability to have lasting impacts on the stability of the Ituri region, of which the failure was attributed to its limited scope and brief duration (János, 2015). Conversely, Aguilar (2019) ascribes the temporary success of Operation Artemis to the mission's inability to address the root causes of ethnic conflict between the Hema and Lendu groups. This inability to address the root causes of conflict resulted in the re-emergence of violence and instability soon after the withdrawal of EU forces, serving as a substantial demonstration of the mission's failure to bring about long-lasting peace (Loeser, 2016).

Nonetheless, Operation Artemis came under fire for its narrow focus in the Ituri province, as the mission was primarily focused on Bunia, leaving the other parts of the province open to war (János, 2015). The selective engagement by the peacekeeping mission Operation Artemis led to questions about the level of neutrality of global peacekeeping missions (János, 2015). Another peacekeeping mission in the DRC that had its failures included EUSEC RD Congo, which was mandated to reform the Congolese Armed Forces (FARDC) (Vlassenroot & Arnould, 2016). Perhaps one of EUSEC RD Congo's biggest failures was its inability to eradicate the prevalent corruption and inefficiency within the Congolese Armed Forces (FARDC) (Vlassenroot & Arnould, 2016). Even with the plans to implement reforms, including introducing salary payment reforms and financial management oversight mechanisms, EUSEC RD Congo did not achieve meaningful change within the military operational accountability and efficacy as mandated (Vlassenroot & Arnould, 2016).

A part of the mission's objectives towards the Congolese Armed Forces (FARDC) were not achieved and undermined because of FARDC's corruption and poor management practices, which prevented the planned improvements in security and governance from manifesting (Doudou, 2015). Moreover,

the mission's limited professionalisation of the Congolese Armed Forces (FARDC) left the security sector open to greater abuse and inefficiency (Vircoulon & Lagrange, 2016). The United Nations Organisation Stabilisation Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, MONUSCO, is not insusceptible to failures, as it once came under fire for its inability to completely stabilise the nation and protect civilians from constant bloodshed (Shikwambane, 2022). Despite extended authority and large disposal of resources towards MUNOSCO, provinces in the eastern parts of the DRC have faced great returns of armed violence, leading to fatalities (Adolphe, 2023).

Nonetheless, the mission was heavily criticised for delaying responding to crises, which often led to the fatalities of civilians and resulted in more population displacement (Shikwambane, 2022). The peacekeeping mission, MONUSCO, and the government of the Democratic Republic of the Congo had challenges cooperating and collaborating with one another, which contributed to challenges for the mission accomplishing its objectives (Affonso Leal, 2024). According to Russo (2021), MUNOSCO faced challenges in gaining the trust and cooperation of the local people due to the widespread perception that the mission was inefficient and even worse, partly participating in the conflict. Kovatch (2016) states that the mission's legitimacy and reputation were further tarnished by the accusations of wrongdoing by the staff of MONUSCO. Just like its predecessor MONUC, the accused wrongdoings of MONUSCO comprised sexual assault and abuse (Kovatch, 2016).

3.6. THE ACHIEVED OBJECTIVES OF PEACEKEEPING MISSIONS IN DRC

Despite the aforementioned challenges and failures regarding peacekeeping missions in the DRC, the missions have successfully accomplished some of their assigned mandates (Doudou, 2015; Aguilar, 2019; Hanses & Spence, 2015; Kuele & Cepik, 2017). For one, MONUC, which was in operation for 11 years (1999–2010), played an important role in facilitating ceasefire accords in the DRC (Spijkers, 2015). Another significant accomplishment of MONUC is facilitating the removal of foreign forces and disengagement of aggressive groups in the region, which aided the reduction of the large-scale violence (Mueller et al., 2021). Additionally, Mueller et al. (2021) contend that MONUC played a crucial role in the arrangement of the historic 2006 elections in the DRC by providing substantial support to the transitional government, which was a major step forward towards political stabilization. Doudou (2015) notes that the peacekeeping mission MONUC also played an essential role in protecting the civilians from conflict-affected areas like the eastern parts of the country.

Implemented in 2003, Operation Artemis, although faced with challenges, has had some objectives achieved, particularly in the Ituri region (János, 2015). The swift deployment of Operation Artemis

in Bunia was an important tactic in successfully maintaining peace in the regions amid the rising ethnic conflict between the Lendu and Hema groups (János, 2015). Additionally, Poopuu and Poopuu (2020) state that Operation Artemis contributed significantly to the stoppage of massacres through re-establishing order and streamlining the delivery of humanitarian aid. Operation Artemis, according to Mandrup (2018), also significantly prepared the ground for the later international peacekeeping missions in the DRC. EUSEC RD Congo attempted to make some achievements in reforming and professionalising the Congolese Armed Forces (FARDC) (Vlassenroot & Arnould, 2016).

The EUSEC RD Congo, according to Baaz and Stern (2017), introduced pay and financial reforms that attempted to enhance openness and decrease corruption in the military. Consequently, these improvements in financial reforms led to developments in the living conditions of the soldiers and promoted discipline within FARDC ranks. Furthermore, Plauchut (2016) notes that the mission EUSEC RD Congo gradually improved the efficiency of the Congolese Armed Forces (FARDC) through the introduction of training and advisory support aimed at enhancing the military's capabilities in logistics, military planning, and human resources. MONUSCO, as one of the most recent popular peacekeeping mission highlights the significance of peacekeeping in conflict affected areas. The mission had the mandate of protecting civilians especially in the eastern parts of the DRC (Affonso Leal, 2024). The vital protection provided by MONUSCO prevented large-scale massacres and led to the facilitation of the safe return of displaced individuals. Titeca and Fahey (2016) add that MONUSCO aided that restoration of governmental rule and control through efforts that aimed at extending state authority in efforts that were recently in the control of rebels. Moreover, MUNOSCO is commended for playing an important role in the DRC of monitoring human rights crimes Shikwambane, 2022). So, MONUSCO has played a crucial role in the Democratic Republic of the Congo's (DRC) electoral processes, including the 2018 and 2023 general elections. The elections were later postponed to 2024 due to post-electoral processes. MONUSCO helped to create a reasonably calm electoral atmosphere and transition. However, due to restricted access and influence, it cannot be completely credited for the success or blamed for the failures of the 2018 elections (International Crisis Group, 2019).

3.7. A COMPARISON OF THE UNITED NATIONS MISSION IN LLIBERIA (UNMIL) AND MONUSCO IN DRC

In contrast, United Nations Mission in Liberia.(UNMIL), which was deployed from 2003 to 2018, operated in a post-conflict context following the Second Liberian Civil War (1999–2003). UNMIL's principal duty was to disarm combatants, facilitate the building of democratic institutions, and

provide security for national reconstruction activities (Olukoshi, 2015). Unlike MONUSCO, UNMIL benefited from substantial international support and coordination with the Liberian government, allowing for a more efficient operation (McGovern, 2017). UNMIL's efforts have received widespread recognition. The mission effectively disarmed over 100,000 fighters, assisted in the organisation of several democratic elections, and helped to reconstruct state institutions (Nielsen, 2016). Scholars have remarked that Liberia's modest territorial size and solid national identity allowed for more mission effect than the DRC's fractured and wide environment (Williams, 2013).

The difference between MONUSCO and UNMIL demonstrates how context-specific elements like as conflict severity, state capability, and international collaboration influence peacekeeping outcomes. MONUSCO's limited performance exemplifies the difficulties of functioning in a fragmented, resource-rich country plagued by political instability and cross-border tensions. In contrast, UNMIL illustrates how peacekeeping operations may succeed in post-conflict situations with a definite cessation of hostilities and a supportive national government.

Both deployments demonstrate the development of peacekeeping mandates. MONUSCO's dual focus on stabilization and peace enforcement differs from UNMIL's concentration on peacebuilding and institutional development. These distinctions reflect the UN's flexibility in changing conflict dynamics, but they also highlight the importance of specific policies that are appropriate for local situations.

3.8 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Conflict Resolution Theory

Globally, Conflict Resolution Theory focuses on how conflicts, particularly international and transnational ones, may be handled and resolved amicably (Galtung, 2023). It focuses on understanding conflict origins, identifying stakeholders or political parties involved, and devising methods for achieving long-term peace through negotiation, mediation, and diplomacy. The theory draws on multidisciplinary approaches from international politics, psychology, and peace studies to investigate how power dynamics, identities, resource distribution, and historical grievances create conflict (Galtung, 2023).

Global wars are usually driven by a struggle for resources, geopolitical power, and ideological disputes. Global conflict resolution theory tries to identify the underlying causes and triggers of conflicts, which might include territorial disputes, ethnic tensions, economic disparities, and environmental constraints (Galtung, 2023). The conflicts usually involve both state and non-state

players, including governments, international organizations (such as the United Nations), non-governmental organizations (NGOs), and civil society groups. Understanding the responsibilities and interests of each participant is crucial when developing a resolution framework to end the conflicts. The approach emphasizes the role of mediation and negotiations in conflict resolution. These approaches rely on third-party engagement, in which impartial bodies help warring parties reach a common ground. The effectiveness of these tactics is dependent on the parties' desire to collaborate and the legitimacy of the mediators (Zartman, 2022).

The proposed study aims to analyse the effectiveness of the peacekeeping mission in the DRC. To accomplish this, the study's objectives focus on the Analytical Framework of Conflict Resolution Theory defined in this study. The study adopts Conflict Resolution Theory to better understand, analyse, and make meaning of data. The framework will serve as a lens that informs the effectiveness of peacekeeping missions. Following the introductory passage, the section provided a conceptualisation of the conflict resolution theory. Thereafter, the rationalisation of how the framework applied as a structured approach. The Conflict Resolution Theory is considered by scholars such as Väyrynen (2019) to be a framework that has no single foundation. According to Väyrynen (2019), the theory developed with time with the contributions of prominent figures such as John Burton, Kenneth Boulding, and Johan Galtung (Kelman, 2015; Boulding, 2018; Dodi, 2019). The Conflict Resolution Theory aims on providing means of addressing conflicts through suggesting addressing the root causes of conflicts and providing approaches to solving conflict. (Kelman, 2015; Boulding, 2018; Dodi, 2019). The Conflict Resolution Theory framework consists of various aspects, namely, the nature of conflict, conflict resolution approaches, conflict transformation, peacemaking and peacebuilding, and the role of third parties.

The framework identifies conflict as an unavoidable and natural part of society and human interaction (Pathak, 2016; Väyrynen, 2019). According to Firdaus, Agniawati, and Solahudin (2021), the framework points to conflict being caused by differences in values, beliefs, and needs among individuals of the same or different groups. The theory outlines three types of conflicts, comprising conflict between individuals (interpersonal), between groups (intergroup), and conflict between nations (international), which can vary from small disagreements to violent clashes (Firdaus et al., 2021). Wallensteen (2018) notes that conflict resolution approaches include negotiations, mediations, arbitrations, and dialogue and communication. Negotiation is when individuals conflicting with each other directly communicate with each other in an attempt to achieve an agreement that is mutually acceptable. Mediation refers to the participation of a third party, which oversees the discourse

between conflicting parties attempting to reach a mutually acceptable agreement (Wallensteen, 2018).

Arbitration, similar to mediation, is a more formal approach with the participation of a non-aligned third party that considers both sides' perspectives and makes a requisite verdict to address the conflict (Lan, 2015). Wallensteen (2018) notes that the last approach to conflict resolutions, dialogue and communication, acknowledges communication to stimulate the building of understanding and trust between groups or individuals that are in conflict with one another, with the main goal of achieving reconciliation, thus preventing the re-emergence of conflicts after the agreements have been reached (Wallensteen, 2018). The frameworks also seek to address conflicts that result from structural aspects of society, such as inequality and injustice (Pathak, 2016). Thus, the transformational approach does not only focus on addressing immediate conflicts but aims to address the underlying circumstances, whether political, social, or economic, that lead to conflict. Pathak (2016) notes that peace-making and peacebuilding efforts are the most central aspects of resolving conflicts. Wallensteen (2018) proposes that the framework advocate for conflicting parties engaging in negotiations to reach a mutually acceptable agreement, which often involves peace treaties and ceasefires. Nonetheless, addressing the root cause of the problem to avoid the re-emergence of conflicts is advocated. Additionally, the role of third parties is recognised to be of great significance. Third parties can include mediators and peacekeepers, non-governmental organisations (NGOs), and international organisations that aim on bringing peace to conflict-affected areas (Wallensteen, 2018).

The proposed study adopted the Conflict Resolution Theory as a lens for understanding the effectiveness of peacekeeping missions in the DRC. The study adopts the framework position that conflict is an inescapable part of human interaction and, in the case of DRC, results from the differences in values and needs among different groups. The application of Conflict Resolution Theory allows for the evaluation of the conflict resolution approaches that have been adopted in DRC. The conflict resolution approaches may include negotiations and the involvement of 3rd parties, such as external organisations like peacekeepers. This allows for the assessment of the peacekeeping operations and the methods that were used in an attempt to reach mutually acceptable agreements. The conflict transformation aspect of Conflict Resolution Theory allows for the evaluation of the root causes of conflicts. This allowed one to assess if the peacekeeping missions address the root causes of conflicts, such as inequalities and injustices, or merely the manifestations of the conflicts.

3.9 THE CONSTRUCTS OF CONFLICT RESOLUTION THEORY AND THEIR APPLICATION TO MONUSCO

3.9.1 Structural Violence and Peacebuilding

The idea of structural violence, in which societal systems harm ordinary people by preventing them from achieving their fundamental needs, is consistent with the situation in the DRC. MONUSCO's initiatives to alleviate poverty, inequality, and governance gaps are a response to address systemic violence. MONUSCO efforts to improve state institutions and promote human rights, for example, seek to eliminate conflict-reinforcing mechanisms. However, the challenges being encountered are corruption and a lack of political will in the DRC hinder efforts to eliminate structural violence (Galtung, 2023).

3.9.2 Human Needs Theory

MONUSCO has attempted to secure civilian security through armed protection, disarmament of the rebel groupst, and reintegration measures aimed at rebel groups. Programs such as community dialogues strive to restore marginalized communities' feelings of identity and inclusion. MONUSCO's limited capability has resulted in inconsistent security in rural areas, causing ongoing instability in the country (Burton, 1990).

3.9.3 Protracted Social Conflict

This theory highlights that prolonged conflicts arise from identity-driven divisions, state incapacity, and external interference in DRC. MONUSCO's stabilization operations are aimed at resolving underlying ethnic identity disputes, as seen by measures fostering inter-communal dialogue and justice for war crimes. It also focuses on preventing external involvement by monitoring borders and combating arms trafficking in DRC (Azar, 1990).

3.9.4 Negotiation and Mediation

This approach emphasizes the need for inclusive negotiating procedures including all stakeholders to create long-term peace in DRC. MONUSCO mediated peace talks or it was instrumental between the Congolese government and rebel parties. These programs are intended to reintegrate former fighters into civilian life and reform security forces. However, lack of enforcement mechanisms, mistrust among parties, and return of armed organizations are common reasons for failed accords in DRC (Wallensteen,2018)

External parties, like as regional states and global enterprises, exploit DRC resources, complicating MONUSCO's position. The mission's restricted scope to address these wider geopolitical forces undermines its efficacy. Adopting the framework will allow the assessment of peacekeeping missions from broad perspectives, such as the underlying political, economic, and social issues that give rise to the conflicts. Moreover, understanding whether peacekeeping missions address the manifestations of the conflicts or the root causes of the conflicts will provide an effective reason for understanding their effectiveness and why conflicts continue soon after the missions withdraw and during their operation. Understanding the role of third parties will be another crucial approach to understanding the effectiveness of peacekeeping missions, as different stakeholders can impact the outcome of missions.

3.10 CHAPTER SUMMARY

Chapter three gave a thorough analysis of the effectiveness of peacekeeping missions in the DRC, with a particular emphasis on MONUSCO. It explored the multifaceted roles, achievements, and shortcomings of these missions, highlighting the complex challenges they faced. By integrating theoretical frameworks such as Conflict Resolution Theory, Human Needs Theory, and Protracted Social Conflict, the review provided deeper insight into the dynamics of peacekeeping in the DRC. Overall, the section laid a strong foundation for understanding the factors shaping the outcomes of MONUSCO's operations. The next chapter is going to give a comparative analysis of documents and peer-reviewed articles on the MONUSCO Peacekeeping Mission in the DRC. The Conflict Resolution Framework was utilised to guide the analysis.

CHAPTER 4 ANALYSIS OF THE EFFECTIVENESS OF MONUSCO PEACEKEEPING IN THE DRC (2010-2024)

4.1 Introduction

This chapter presents an analysis of documents and peer-reviewed articles on the MONUSCO Peacekeeping Mission in the DRC. The Conflict Resolution Framework was utilised to guide the analysis. This chapter presents the findings from 12 resolution documents; 17 human rights reports and peer reviewed articles published in academic journals focused on an analysis of the MONUSCO Peacekeeping Mission in the DRC. Content Analysis was conducted on the documents. The various literature material considered for this desktop or secondary research include publications such as monthly magazines, research papers, official pamphlets, reports of the Secretary General of the United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUSCO), Resolutions of the UN Security Council, General Assembly Resolutions of the United Nations, General Assembly Human Rights Council Reports of the Secretary-General, and the UN Security Council Statement by the President of the Security Council. These materials include six published manuscripts.

The iterative content analysis was utilised to answer three questions that made up the purpose of the study with one aim and three objectives as shown in chapter 1.

The study aimed to comparatively evaluate the MONUSCO peacekeeping mission in the DRC. To achieve this aim, the following are the objectives of the study:

- To assess the effectiveness of the MONUSCO peacekeeping mission in reducing violence and maintaining security in conflict zones within the DRC. (The researcher also utilised the comparative analysis approach focused on two disengagement resolutions)
- To analyse the success of the MONUSCO peacekeeping mission in the DRC in protecting civilian populations from human rights abuses during the ongoing conflict. (The use of an iterative coding process to develop themes, subthemes and overarching themes was undertaken).
- To examine the influence of MONUSCO peacekeeping forces on the behaviour of armed groups in the DRC, focusing on ceasefires, disarmament, and peace negotiations. (The insurgence and resurgence of violence was closely assessed using manifest and latent codes during an iterative coding process).

The appendix has the word frequency analysis with the red coloured words being most frequently used i.e. rights, human, 2020, international, OHCHR (i.e. Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights) and security (see appendix 1). Also the cluster analysis on word similarities for the analysed sources is presented in figure 4.2 these shows how strongly the sources utilised are with regards to content using the Pearson's correlation coefficient ranging from zero percent similarity to almost 100 percent. In this study, the highest correlation coefficient was at 0.968645 and the lowest was 0.074107 (see appendix 2).

Herewith in figure 4.1 is a word cloud of the 1000 frequently used words that made up the themes and overarching themes of this study.



Figure 4.1 Word Cloud of the 1000 words used in the analysis.

The one thousand most frequently utilised words in this study were determined quantitatively using Nvivo qualitative data analysis software (QDAS) (see Appendix 1). Figure 4.1 above succinctly present a word cloud portraying words used in an iterative process of content analysis to develop codes, condensed meaning units and categorizing of data to form themes, subthemes and overarching

themes. A comparative analysis of the UNSC Resolutions i.e. Resolution 2712 of 2023 and Resolution 2765 of 2024 on MONUSCO disengagement focused on various key aspects is presented using table 4.1 below.

The UNSC has cogently undertaken the task to address the ongoing violence and complex humanitarian situation in the DRC through the United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of Congo (MONUSCO). The comparative analysis contributes to a better understanding of the international community's role in the DRC's conflict resolution and stabilization process.

The figure below shows the analysed sources clustered by word similarity.

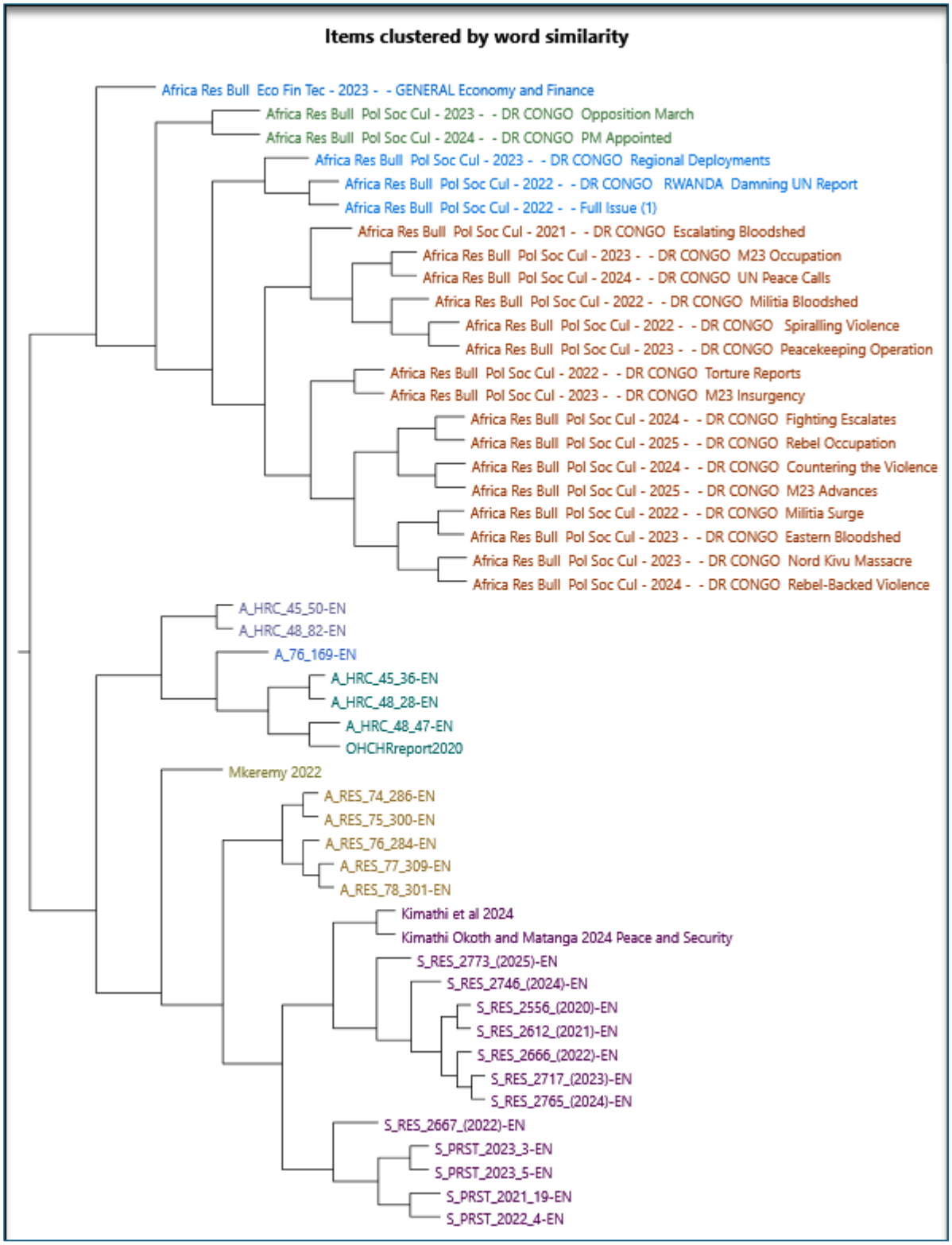

Figure 4.2 Units of analysis Items clustered by word similarity (Source: compiled by author using Nvivo QDAS).

The above clustered analysis shows the 22 sources from the African Research Bulletin clustered together, followed by A_HRC documents, the A_RES documents and finally the S_PRST documents

as utilised. This is a copious amount of data analysed with the aid of QDAS known as Nvivo version 14. The MONUSCO resolution 2765 of 2024 and resolution 2717 of 2023 share a 96.86% similarity as measured by the Pearson's correlation coefficient (see appendix 2). A comparative content analysis of the two documents is herewith presented to address the purpose of the study and particularly the first objective i.e. To assess the effectiveness of MONUSCO peacekeeping mission in reducing violence and maintaining security in conflict zones within the DRC. The one overarching theme, themes, subthemes and categories of subthemes emerged.

4.2 OVERARCHING THEME 1: EFFECTIVENESS OF MONUSCO PEACEKEEPING MISSION IN REDUCING VIOLENCE

4.2.1 Effectiveness of MONUSCO peacekeeping mission in reducing violence and maintaining security in conflict zones

To address the first objective that focused on the effectiveness of MONUNSCO peacekeeping mission in reducing violence and maintain security in conflict zones within the DRC, four themes emerged to form the overarching theme above.

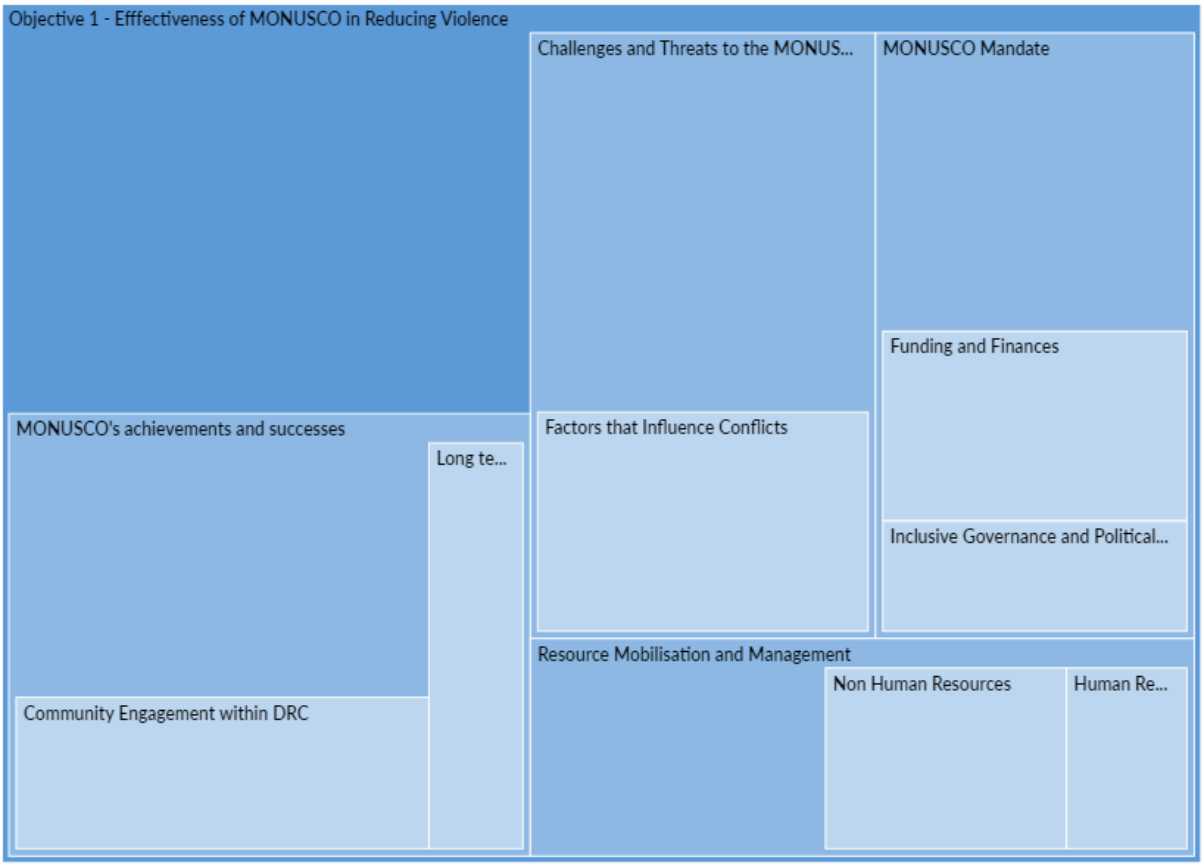

Figure 4.3 Hierarchy chart of the effectiveness of MONUSCO in reducing violence (n=40)

Figure 4.3 above illustrates the overarching theme Effectiveness of MONUSCO in reducing violence that emerged from a total of 221 direct and 665 coding references from 40 direct and aggregated coded items. This overarching theme developed from the merging of four themes and seven subthemes. The four themes and their subthemes are as follows:

4.1 MONUSCO Mandate developed by 95 direct and 172 aggregated coding references from 18 coded items. This theme had two subthemes i.e. 4.1.1 Funding and Finances from 60 direct and aggregated coding references from 12 direct and aggregated coded items; 4.1.2 Inclusive Governance and Political Stability from 17 direct and aggregated coding references from seven direct and aggregated coded items.

4.2 MONUSCO's Achievements and Successes developed by 81 direct and 137 aggregated coding references from 22 direct and 23 aggregated coded items. This theme had two subthemes i.e. 4.2.1 Community Engagement within DRC from 39 direct and aggregated coding references emanating from 13 direct and aggregated coded items; 4.2.2 Long term Stability from 17 direct and aggregated coding references from nine direct and aggregated coded items.

4.3 Challenges and Threats to the MONUSCO Exit Strategy developed by 57 direct and 88 aggregated coding references from 24 direct and aggregated coded items. This theme had only one subtheme i.e. 4.3.1 Factors that Influence Conflicts developed by 31 direct and aggregated coding references emanating from 15 direct and aggregated coded items.

4.4 Resource Mobilization and Management developed by 21 direct and 47 coding references from 12 direct and aggregated coded items. This had two subthemes i.e. 4.4.1 Non-Human Resources developed by 17 direct and aggregated coding references from ten direct and aggregated coded items, and 4.4.2 Human Resources Management from nine direct and aggregated coding references from five direct and aggregated coded items.

The first overarching theme addressed the first objective and focused on the effectiveness of MONUSCO in reducing violence. It emerged from heterogeneous documentation that met the strict eligibility criteria. The following verbatim quotations asserts the first overarching theme:

"Monusco has had a positive impact on security in Kasai region, he said. There have also been social interventions, such as road rehabilitation, construction of schools, and so on." (African Research Bulletin Political Social and Cultural Series 23092, 2021)

"The Cooperative for the Development of Congo (CoDeCo) / Union of Revolutionaries for the Defence of the Congolese People (URDPC) signed a unilateral commitment to cease hostilities on June 4th in Rethy, Djugu territory, Ituri province. This commitment came after four days of talks with the leaders of the militia, and those of the Bhale community, under the facilitation of Monusco, reported Radio Okapi (5/6)." (African Research Bulletin Political Social and Cultural Series 23633, 2022).

"MONUSCO has the opportunity to engage with local communities and empower them to take ownership of peace and security processes. By involving communities in decision-making and conflict resolution, MONUSCO can build trust and legitimacy (Dobbins, 2018). This will promote inclusive peacebuilding processes, empower marginalized groups, and address the root causes of conflict." (Kimathi et al, 2024)

"Socioeconomically, the situation in the Kasai region has hardly improved at all. Poverty is still pervasive and the cost of living has worsened as a result of the depreciation of the Congolese franc against the United States dollar, which has led to an increase in the price of basic foodstuffs." (A/HRC/45/50, 2020)

What this overarching theme portrays is the security and social contribution of MONUSCO in the DRC that had successes. Conflict resolution by signing unilateral commitments, creating opportunities for effective community engagement for peacebuilding, peacekeeping and trust building are some of the contributions. Pervasive poverty and high cost of living makes life difficult for citizens in most regions with ever increasing price of basic foodstuffs. Moreover, the subtheme Inclusive Governance and Political Stability has highlighted the impact of poor and absent governance systems on progress and the nation's development as follows:

"Weak governance structures and institutional capacity in the DRC undermine the government's ability to exert control over its territory and provide basic services to its citizens. This lack of state authority hampers MONUSCO's efforts to support state-building initiatives, security sector reform, and the rule of law. Moreover, political instability and corruption further exacerbate these challenges." (Kimathi et al, 2024)

There is no doubt that the presence and effectiveness of MONUSCO in the DRC portrayed a positive impact as the evidence points. However, the cost of running and maintaining this mission is also a point of concern as it presents other challenges. Among other challenges, the funding and financing

of this mission is challenging to the international community. Theme 1.4 Resource Mobilization and Management with focus on Non-Human resources shows how costly this mission actually is as shown by the verbatim code on budget estimates for the period from 1 July 2020 to 30 June 2021:

"Decides to appropriate to the special account the amount of 1,154,140,500 dollars for the period from 1 July 2020 to 30 June 2021, inclusive of 1,075,338,600 dollars for the maintenance of the Mission, 61,467,500 dollars for the support account for peacekeeping operations, 10,361,300 dollars for the United Nations Logistics Base at Brindisi, Italy, and 6,973,100 dollars for the Regional Service Centre in Entebbe, Uganda" (A/RES/74/286, 2020).

Other costs such as the extensive human and non-human resources required for peacebuilding and peacekeeping consistent with the Conflict Resolution Theory needs cogent consideration. There are factors that led to the MONUSCO drawdown and resolutions for disengagements of MONUSCO. The planned disengagement that will be gradual, responsible and presenting a sustainable withdrawal of MONUSCO requires further analysis as it also addresses the first objective of this study. Thus, a further comparative content analysis of two critical resolutions was undertaken below.

4.2.2 A Comparative Analysis of UNSC Resolutions 2717 (2023) and 2765 (2024) on MONUSCO

The key aspects such as mandate priorities, strategic objectives, disengagement timeline, and overall shifts in the Council's approach are presented as underpinned by the Conflict Resolution Theory. The analysis will highlight both the continuities and the evolving priorities within the evolving context of the DRC, ultimately contributing to a better understanding of the international community's role in the DRC's stabilization.

MONUSCO's mandate has been adapted over time, reflecting the changing dynamics within the DRC. From an initial peacekeeping operation focused on maintaining stability and protecting civilians threatened by armed groups, the mission has increasingly emphasized supporting the DRC government in its efforts to consolidate peace, professionalize its security forces, and address the root causes of conflict. Both resolutions 2717 and 2765 are crucial in understanding the progressive adjustment of MONUSCO's approach and the Council's increasing emphasis on the DRC's national ownership of its security and development.

Comparative Analysis:

Table 4.1 below summarizes the key differences and similarities between Resolution 2717 (2023) and Resolution 2765 (2024).

Table 4.1 Joint display of Resolution 2717 (2023) and Resolution 2765 (2024)

Feature	Resolution 2717 (2023)	Resolution 2765 (2024)	Comparison
Overall Objective	Outlined a phased, responsible, and sustainable exit of MONUSCO, prioritizing security, protection of civilians, and government capacity building in targeted areas.	Further defines and implements the phased, responsible, and sustainable exit of MONUSCO, explicitly focusing on the completion of the first phase of the disengagement.	Both resolutions share the ultimate goal of MONUSCO's withdrawal. 2765 emphasizes the immediate execution of the plan set out in 2717, signifying a progression from strategy to implementation.
Disengagement plan (Gradual, responsible and sustainable withdrawal)	Specified a three-phase disengagement plan starting in South Kivu, with the aim of full withdrawal by December 2024.	Reinforces the disengagement schedule and emphasizes its timely implementation, calling for the swift completion of the first phase, including the withdrawal from South Kivu, as per the Joint Strategy. Extended until 20 December 2025	Both resolutions address the disengagement timeline, but 2765 provides a tighter focus on the initial phase, underscoring the commitment to adhering to the established plan and addressing any obstacles to its execution.
Mandate Priorities	Protection of civilians (POC), support for preparation for the disarmament, demobilization, community recovery and stabilization programme (P-DDRC), security sector reform (SSR), elections, and addressing the root causes of conflict.	POC remained paramount, alongside support for the DRC government's stabilization efforts, SSR, and the fight against armed groups, particularly the M23. The focus on DDRCS (Disarmament, Demobilization, Community Reintegration, and Stabilization) is strengthened.	Both resolutions prioritize POC, but 2765 places a stronger emphasis on supporting the DRC government in its stabilization efforts, particularly in the context of ongoing conflict with armed groups like the M23. The importance of DDRCS is also magnified.

Feature	Resolution 2717 (2023)	Resolution 2765 (2024)	Comparison
Strategic Objectives	Support the DRC government in consolidating peace and stability, and gradually transferring responsibilities to DRC national authorities.	Emphasizes the need for a seamless transition of responsibilities to the Congolese Government, reinforcing national ownership and supporting the Congolese authorities in maintaining stability and security after MONUSCO's departure.	Both focus on supporting the DRC government. 2765 places heavier emphasis on a *seamless transition* and the government's ability to maintain security *after* MONUSCO's departure, highlighting a long-term perspective.
Cooperation with DRC Government	Underlines the importance of cooperation and coordination with the DRC government throughout the disengagement process.	Reiterates the absolute necessity of full cooperation with the DRC government, emphasizing the necessity of close cooperation with provincial authorities and civil society and emphasizing the importance of transparency.	Both emphasize cooperation. 2765 expands on this by specifically mentioning cooperation with provincial authorities and civil society, and emphasizing transparency, reflecting a broadening of the partnership to ensure inclusivity and accountability.
Security Challenges	Recognized the persistent threat posed by armed groups (M23, CODECO, ADF, FDLR, FPAC, the RED-Tabara, Mai Mai groups, Twirwaneho and others) and the need for a comprehensive approach to address the underlying causes of conflict.	Explicitly addresses the ongoing threat posed by armed groups, particularly the M23, and calls for efforts to address the root causes of conflict, including through regional cooperation.	Both acknowledge the security challenges. Resolution 2765 directly names the M23, demonstrating a heightened awareness of the specific threats and the need for regional solutions.
Human Rights	Underscores the importance of respecting human	Reiterates the importance of respecting human rights	Both underscore the importance of human rights, but 2765 includes a reinforced

Feature	Resolution 2717 (2023)	Resolution 2765 (2024)	Comparison
	rights and international humanitarian law.	and international humanitarian law, with a stronger emphasis on accountability for violations.	emphasis on accountability for violations, signaling a greater concern for justice and reconciliation in the context of ongoing conflict.

Key Observations and Conclusions on the Comparative analysis:

- **Progressive Disengagement:** Both resolutions are intrinsically linked to the gradual disengagement also known as the drawdown of MONUSCO. Resolution 2717 laid the groundwork for the withdrawal strategy, while Resolution 2765 focuses on its practical implementation. The latter reflects a shift from planning to execution, with increased monitoring and assessment mechanisms that may be applied in place.
- **Emphasis on DRC National Ownership:** The shift in emphasis from Resolution 2717 to Resolution 2765 reflects a growing emphasis on the DRC government's capacity to take over responsibility for security and governance. This is evident in the strengthened language around ensuring a seamless transition and supporting the government in maintaining stability post-MONUSCO.
- **Specificity and Urgency:** Resolution 2765 displays a greater sense of urgency and specificity compared to its predecessor. The specific mention of the M23, the stronger focus on DDRCS, and the explicit focus on accountability for human rights violations highlight a more targeted approach to addressing the immediate challenges facing the DRC.
- **Enhanced Cooperation and Transparency:** The emphasis on transparency and collaboration with all levels of the DRC government (national, provincial) and civil society in Resolution 2765 signifies a move towards a more inclusive and participatory approach to the disengagement process. This acknowledges that successful stabilization requires not only government capacity but also broad societal support.
- **Addressing Root Causes and Regional Dimensions:** Both resolutions acknowledge the importance of addressing the root causes of conflict. However, Resolution 2765 demonstrates a more acute awareness of the regional dynamics that contribute to instability, particularly through the M23 crisis, and stresses the need for regional cooperation to address these challenges.

In conclusion, the copious data from the legible sources portrayed the successes and challenges of MONUSCO mission with regards to its effectiveness in reducing violence and maintaining peace in conflict zones within the DRC. However, the continued cycles of unrest, complexity of armed groups, lack of governance and upholding of the rule of law prevalent in DRC including accusations of some of the MONUSCO personnel on contributing to humanitarian abuse led to the need for MONUSCO to withdraw from the DRC. Furthermore, UNSC Resolutions 2717 (2023) and 2765 (2024) represent a continuous effort by the Security Council to adapt MONUSCO's mandate to the evolving situation in the DRC. While both resolutions share the overarching goals of peace consolidation and the eventual withdrawal of MONUSCO, Resolution 2765 signifies a significant shift towards a more focused, urgent, and nationally-owned approach. The Council's increased emphasis on supporting the DRC government in its stabilization efforts, addressing specific security threats, ensuring accountability for human rights violations, and fostering greater transparency and cooperation reflects a nuanced understanding of the complexities of the DRC's transition and the need for a tailored and collaborative approach to achieve lasting peace and stability. The success of MONUSCO's withdrawal and the long-term stability of the DRC will ultimately depend on sustained and effective support to the Congolese government, as well as a commitment to addressing the underlying causes of conflict and fostering inclusive governance. Thus, it is clear from the two most similar resolutions that MONUSCO has not been very successful in reducing violence and maintaining security in conflict zones within the DRC despite the funds and resources lavished on the mission. Below the second objective is addressed.

4.3 OVERARCHING THEME 2: PROTECTION OF CIVILIAN POPULATION FROM HUMANITARIAN ABUSE

To address the second objective to analyze the success of MONUSCO peacekeeping mission in the DRC in protecting civilian populations from human rights abuses during the ongoing conflict, the second overarching theme Protection of the Civilian Population form Humanitarian Abuse emerged. This overarching theme is consistent with the Conflict Resolution Theory, and the three themes and 11 subthemes and one category of subtheme present evidence from legible documents that were studied. The overarching theme Protection of Civilians from Humanitarian Abuse is presented below.

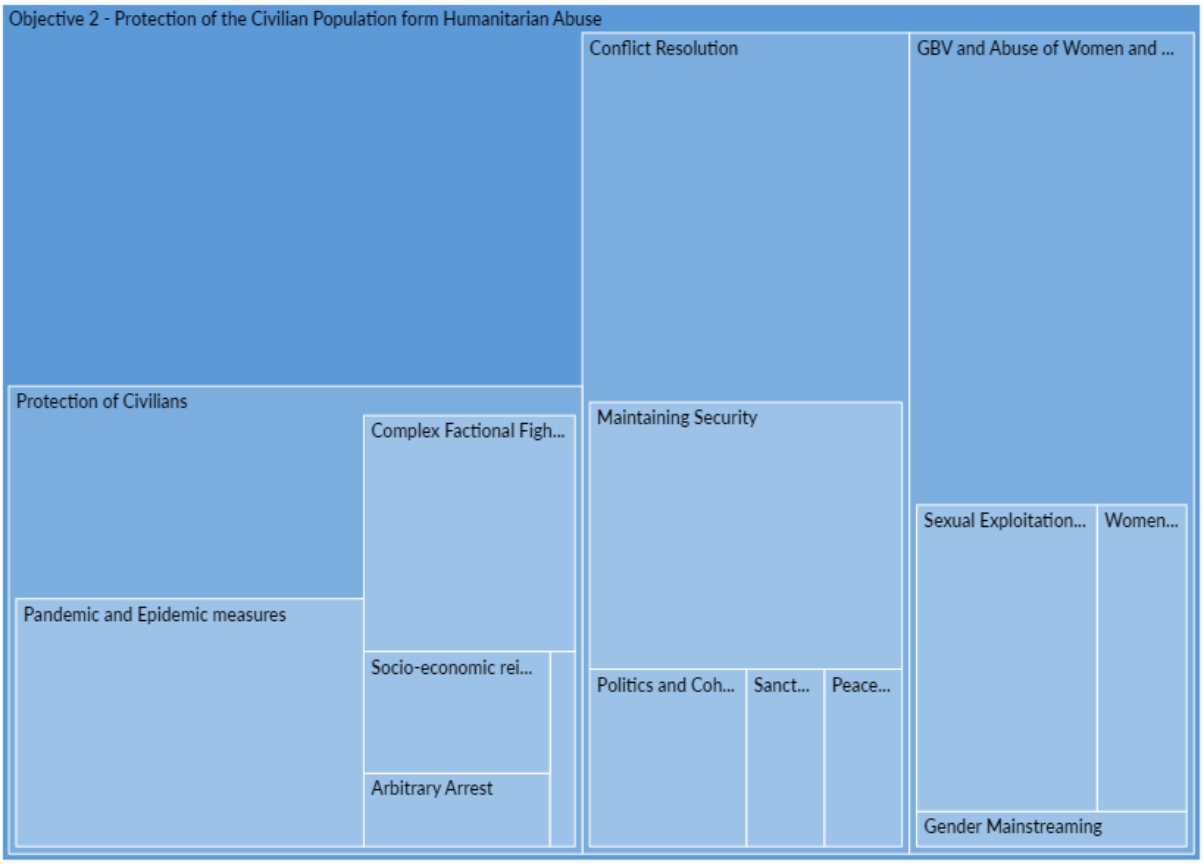

Figure 4.4 Hierarchy chart of Protection of Civilians from Humanitarian Abuse (n=40)

Figure 4.4 above illustrates the overarching theme Protection of Civilians form Humanitarian Abuse that emerged from a total of 231 direct and 651 aggregated coding references generated from 40 direct and aggregated coded items. This overarching theme developed from the merging of three themes, 12 subthemes and one category of subtheme. The three themes and their subthemes are as follows:

4.3.1 Protection of Civilians as a first theme was developed by 54 direct and 158 aggregated coding references from 14 direct and 27 aggregated coded items. This theme had five subthemes which are:

4.3.1.1 Complex Factional Fights from 5 direct and aggregated coding references emanating from 11 direct and aggregated coded items. This subtheme had a category of subtheme 4.3.1.1.1 Human Shields that had one coding reference from one coded item.

4.3.1.2 Pandemic and Epidemic measures from 14 direct and 29 aggregated coding references emanating from ten direct and aggregated coded items; this subtheme had a category of subtheme 2.1.2.1 Health of the DRC Nation that had 15 coding references from 9 coded items;

4.3.1.3 Socio-economic reintegration from ten direct and aggregated coding references emanating from five direct and aggregated coded items;

4.3.1.4 Arbitrary Arrests from nine direct and aggregated coding references from three coded items. The second theme is Conflict resolution.

4.3.2 Conflict Resolution as a second theme was developed by 70 direct and 129 aggregated coding references emanating from 23 direct and 29 aggregated coded items. This theme had four subthemes which are:

4.3.2.1 Maintaining Security from 39 direct and aggregated coding references emanating from 18 direct and aggregated coded items.

4.3.2.2 Politics and Cohesive Developments from 14 direct and aggregated coding items emanating from six direct and aggregated coded items.

4.3.2.3 Peaceful Settlement of the Conflict from three direct and aggregated coding references from three direct and aggregated coded items.

4.3.2.4 Sanctions as a Conflict Resolution Strategy from three direct and aggregated coding references from three direct and aggregated coded items. The third and last theme is Gender Based-Violence (GBV) and Abuse of Women and Children.

4.3.3 GBV and Abuse of Women and Children as a third theme was developed by 87 direct and 133 aggregated coding references emanating from 26 direct and aggregated coded items. This theme had three subthemes which are:

4.3.3.1 Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (SEA) from 30 direct and aggregated coding references from 12 direct and aggregated coded items.

4.3.3.2 Women in Leadership from 13 direct and aggregated coding references from six direct and aggregated coded items.

4.3.3.3 Gender Mainstreaming from three direct and aggregated coding references from two direct and aggregated coded items.

This important overarching theme could be best represented graphically as map which is a virtual representation of the concepts and connections in the project portrayed by figure 4.5 below.

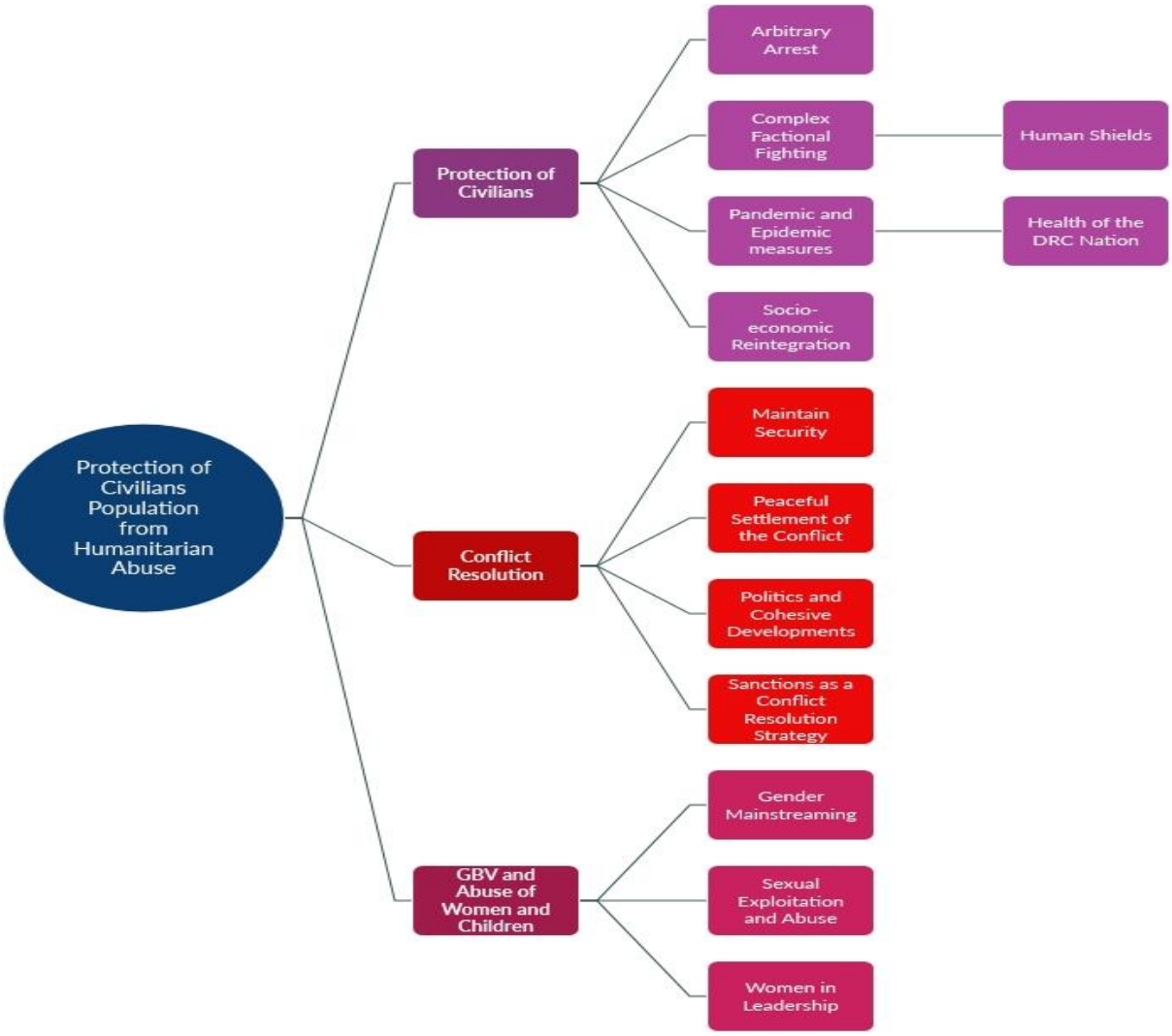

Figure 4.5 Overarching theme 2: Protection of civilian population from humanitarian abuse

The above map illustrates how the two categories of subthemes, nine subthemes and three themes merged to form the overarching theme. The three themes and their two categories of subthemes which constituted the overarching theme are discussed below.

4.3.1 Theme 1: Protection of Civilians

This theme comprised of 54 direct and 158 aggregated coding references from 14 direct and 27 aggregated coded items. The theme was comprised of four subthemes and two categories of subthemes: arbitrary arrest, complex factional fighting with one category of subtheme human shields, pandemic and epidemic measures with one category of subtheme health of the DRC nation, and socio-economic reintegration. The protection of civilians is important for the government of the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) and is of greater interest to the international and regional structures and

countries that uphold human rights laws. Protection of civilians (POC) has to do with fundamental human rights protection that everyone should enjoy as enshrined in the constitution of the DRC under title two i.e. Human rights, fundamental freedoms and of the duties of the citizen and of the state. Herewith, are several verbatim quotations

4.3.1.1 Subtheme 1: Arbitrary Arrest:

The arbitrary arrests or unlawful detentions are well documented violations of human rights. This is repression and unjustified human rights violation is one aspect form which civilians should be protected. In the case of the violence torn DRC, civilians should be protected from such unjust actions. The verbatim quotation clearly shows ongoing arbitrary arrests of innocent men including women and children:

"The Joint Office continued to document arrests and convictions in connection with the exercise of fundamental freedoms. At least 433 persons, including 26 women and 1 child, were subjected to arbitrary arrest or unlawful and arbitrary detention following their exercise of their right to freedom of opinion and expression, peaceful assembly or association. This did, however, represent a decrease from the 687 victims (including at least 28 women and 31 children) recorded in the preceding reporting period. Numerous cases of threats, intimidation and attacks targeting human rights defenders, members of civil society and journalists in the course of their legitimate activities have also been documented. For example, two journalists were threatened with arrest by members of the Armed Forces of the Democratic Republic of the Congo and the National Intelligence Agency in North Kivu for broadcasting a statement by a human rights defender calling for an investigation by the Military Prosecutor's Office into the alleged existence of a clandestine isolation cell on the grounds of a military camp of the Armed Forces." (A/HRC/48/47, 2021)

"The United Nations Joint Human Rights Office in the Democratic Republic of the Congo documented five incidents of death threats, kidnapping and arbitrary arrest for cooperation with the MONUSCO in the conflict-affected eastern provinces. The incidents concerned 53 individuals, including 32 women, 48 of whom were victims and 5 were human rights defenders. Names and additional details are withheld for fear of further reprisals" (A/HRC/48/28, 2021)

Clearly portrayed is the evidence of civilians and activists whose rights are violated through unlawful detentions and other possible reprisals.

4.3.1.2 Subtheme 2: Complex Factional Fighting

The complex cycles of violence in the DRC do not only involve the military operations or battles, but illegitimately operating militia, mercenaries, include intercommunal, ethnic violence or tribal battles, religious or Islamists and other related war crimes prevalent in the DRC. This subtheme also emerged due to evidence pointing out challenges that the DRC has with Rwanda, Burundian rebel group, and to some extent Uganda. Herewith are some verbatim quotations:

"In Kwamouth territory of western Mai Ndombe province, ethnic violence continued between the Yaka and Teke communities, with several attacks reported by Mbondo militiamen who represent the Yaka in five provinces according to Actualite.cd (7/2). Actualite reported that the group killed at least 13 civilians in a village incursion on January 28th and decapitated three people on February 5th and 6th. Radio Okapi reported that the DR Congo army (FARDC) had killed at least 11 militia fighters during the clashes. (BBC Monitoring 28/1; 5-10/2)" (African Research Bulletin Political Social and Cultural Series 24770, 2025)

"A majority, 171 (55.2%) of respondents, agreed that the presence of multiple armed groups is indeed a significant challenge facing MONUSCO. This viewpoint reflected the complex security environment in the DRC, where various armed factions operate independently or in collaboration, posing threats to civilian safety, stability, and the implementation of peace agreements. The sheer number and diversity of armed groups complicate efforts to achieve lasting peace and security, requiring robust and adaptable strategies from MONUSCO." (Kimathi et al, 2024)

"DRC continues to suffer from recurring and evolving cycles of conflict and persistent violence by foreign and domestic armed groups, including the Mouvement du 23 Mars (M23), the Coopérative pour le développement du Congo (CODECO), the Allied Democratic Forces (ADF), the Forces démocratiques de libération du Rwanda (FDLR), the Zaïre/FPAC, the Résistance pour un Etat de droit (RED-Tabara), Mai-Mai groups, Twirwaneho, and several other domestic and foreign armed groups, and their violations of international humanitarian law as well as other applicable

international law, and abuses of human rights, which exacerbate a deeply concerning security, human rights and humanitarian crisis, as well as inter-communal and militia violence in areas of the DRC" (S/RES/2717, 2023)

The complexity of these factional cycles of violence escalated to a point of gross human rights violation. One of the challenges is shown by the category of subtheme shown below.

4.3.1.2.1 Category of Subtheme 2: Human Shields

This is one of the oldest and most deplorable practices in volatile war torn or violence riddled societies. This concept of using humans and human shields is not new, however presents with great challenges where the POC is concerned. The one verbatim quotation below shows this category of subtheme:

"MONUSCO said on January 22nd that M23 rebels had prevented locals from fleeing to safer areas and were effectively using them as "human shields" against military attack on the town of Mweso, Masisi territory. A civil society source told AFP that three artillery shells had fallen on Mweso, some 60km north of Goma, killing and wounding civilians including a child." (African Research Bulletin Political Social and Cultural Series 24316, 2024)

The efforts of MONUSCO and other regional forces to protect civilians in the DRC require all stakeholders to come together in order to resolve it. This may also require human rights organizations to intervene.

4.3.1.3 Subtheme 3: Pandemic and Epidemic Measures

The period under study from 2020 to date had been complicated by COVID-19 which hit many countries in the 2020 moving forward through different strains and waves. Moreover, other health ills such as measles, ebola, mpox and anthrax are known epidemics that may are may be fatal, and further complicating the violence situation in DRC. The evidence from the verbatim quotations below shows the facts:

"The security situation has worsened in Nord Kivu province where a Rwanda-backed rebel group M23 has seized swathes of territory over the last two years. The World Health Organisation (WHO) also sounded the alarm in March over the country's worsening health situation, where cholera,

measles, mpox, anthrax and plague are wreaking havoc." (African Research Bulletin Political Social and Cultural Series 24411, 2024)

"The lightning offensive triggered a spiralling humanitarian crisis, with the UN warning of hundreds of thousands forced from their homes, serious food shortages, looted aid, overwhelmed hospitals and the potential spread of disease. The International Committee of the Red Cross warned there could be "unimaginable consequences" if samples of Ebola and other pathogens held at a local laboratory in Goma were allowed to spread amid the fighting." ." (African Research Bulletin Political Social and Cultural Series 24767, 2025)

"On the health front, the measures taken by the Congolese authorities to prevent the spread of COVID-19 from Kinshasa or the eastern provinces into the country's interior have met with some success, and no cases had been reported in the Kasai region through the end of July 2020, when emergency measures were lifted in the country. At the time of writing, there were two confirmed cases of COVID-19 in Kasai Province, one in Tshikapa and one confirmed case in Kasai Central Province." (A/HRC/45/50, 2020)

The pandemic and epidemics that hit the DRC had made the lives of civilians more difficult. Moreover, the issue of the overall health of ordinary citizens is made affected by violence that indiscriminately affect schools and hospitals among other institutions. The category of subtheme entitled Health of the DRC nation is presented below.

4.3.1.3.1 Category of Subtheme 3: Health of the DRC Nation

This category of subtheme is comprised of 15 coding references from 9 coded items. The 25 provinces of the DRC should have equitable access to quality, accessible and affordable healthcare. This constitutional right is unfortunately negatively impacted by complex factional fighting. These further humpers the POC within the DRC. Some quotations portraying evidence are presented below:

"The health crisis is being exacerbated by violence, climate shocks, displacement, poverty and malnutrition, the WHO said, as it called for an urgent funding surge." (African Research Bulletin Political Social and Cultural Series 24411-24412, 2024)

"Demanding that all parties respect and protect all humanitarian personnel, including national and locally recruited personnel, and medical personnel, their means of transport and equipment, as well

as hospitals and other medical facilities, in accordance with their obligations under international law." (S/RES/2765, 2024)

"Medical teams from the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) treated more than 70 wounded people at the hospital in Goma on January 23rd. Miriam Faviere, head of the ICRC's subdelegation in Goma, said that the CBCA Ndosho hospital was overwhelmed with over 240 patients and only 146 beds. In a statement on January 25th Human Rights Watch (HRW) warned of looming "catastrophic consequences" for people in the region. "The horrific abuses by the M23, Wazalendo [pro-Kinshasa militia] and the Rwandan and Congolese armies should serve as a stark warning to concerned governments that they need to press the warring parties to protect civilians," said Clementine de Montjoye, HRW's senior Africa researcher. Around 30 to 40%ofinjuredpeople seeking medical care in Goma were civilians,"onehumanitarian source told HRW." (African Research Bulletin Political Social and Cultural Series 24732, 2025)

4.3.1.4 Subtheme 4: Socio-economic Reintegration

The DRC is a natural resource rich country characterized by generally poor communities. The issues surrounding socio-economic emancipation may lead to unrest and violence. The quotations below present the documented evidence:

"The Security Council underlines the importance of socioeconomic development for sustaining peace in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and reiterates its continued commitment, in collaboration with regional actors and international partners, to the promotion of peace, stability and development in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and the region." (S/PRST/2022/4, 2022)

Condemns the continued illegal exploitation and trafficking of natural resources, particularly so-called "conflict minerals" like tin, tantalum, tungsten, gold, diamonds, cobalt, and coltan, as well as cocoa, charcoal, timber, and wildlife, by armed groups and criminal networks supporting them, the negative impact of armed conflict on protected natural areas, which undermines lasting peace and development for the DRC, condemns the presence and destructive activities of armed groups in the protected natural areas in the DRC which undermine efforts to ensure the protection of forests, the biosphere and the environment as a whole and encourages the Government of the DRC to strengthen efforts to safeguard those areas, calls on member States of the International Conference on the Great Lakes Region (ICGLR) and regional economic communities to jointly fight illegal exploitation and

trade of natural resources by improving and reinforcing the security around mining regions, seeking rapprochement between mining communities, local authorities and security actors to resolve conflicts and promote the rights of person belonging to communities around mining regions, and encourages them to promote the transparent and lawful management of natural resources, including the adoption of government revenue targets to finance development, sustainable regulatory and customs frameworks, and responsible mineral sourcing supply chain due diligence, and recalls in this regard its resolutions 2457 (2019) and 2389 (2017) as well at its presidential statement S/PRST/2021/19." (S/RES/2717, 2023)

4.3.2 Theme 2: Conflict Resolution

This theme that is underpinned by the Conflict Resolution theory during the cycles of coding emerged from a total of 77 direct and 136 aggregated coding references from 27 direct and 30 aggregated coded items. It is comprised of four subthemes i.e. Maintaining Security, Politics and Cohesive Developments, Sanctions as a Conflict Resolution Strategy, and Peaceful Settlement of the Conflict.

The resolution of conflict involving state and non-state players, including various domestic and foreign armed forces operating in the DRC presented a mixture of some success and threats of violence resurgence. This was portrayed by verbatim quotations of evidence from the developed theme:

"Talks between the two countries in the Angolan capital Luanda unlocked a truce agreement on November 23rd (p.23798A). The ceasefire was scheduled to take effect on November 25th. It should also have been followed by a pullout by the M23 two days later from territory it had seized, but this did not happen." (African Research Bulletin Political Social and Cultural Series 23844, 2023)

"Today's conflicts in the country are, to a large extent, a reincarnation of those of the past, ideological antagonism, constitutional orientation crisis, dispute control of natural resources and ethnic dimensions of the conflict. This indicates that the structural causes of the conflicts have not been adequately addressed. The DRC is the third largest country in Africa, with vast natural resources around 1,100 minerals and precious metals with an estimate of 77 million inhabitants, less than 40% live in urban areas (Institute of Economics and Peace, 2022). According to Gebrekidan, DRC is an example of how colonial experience had a great negative impact (Tim, 2005). Even after independence in 1960, positive peace and prosperity was elusive due to internal divisions (Tim, 2005). Despite a number of interventions including MONUSCO, the conflict in DRC, being the most violent after WWII, has caused loss of millions of lives and is among those conflicts that are in serious

need to get resolved. Since mainstream mechanisms to conflict resolution have been unsuccessful so far in finding a lasting solution to the DRC problem, there is need to find some alternative mechanisms and regionalism that can serve as a good solution to the problem. Although few studies have been found to recommend this approach for establishment of peace in Africa, a thorough analysis of a potential regional mechanism in case of African conflicts has not been conducted so far." (Kimathi et al, 2024)

This theme emerged from the analysis in the quest to identify the root cause of conflict that may be addressed in order to resolve conflict in the DRC, and maintain peace. The subthemes herewith are also important achieving this goal as portrayed below.

4.3.2.1 Subtheme 1: Maintain Security

This theme is comprised of 39 direct and aggregated coding references from 18 direct and aggregated coded items. Maintaining Security is critical aspect of ensuring peace and stabilizing a violence torn country. MONUSCO has a Security Sector Reform (SSR) unit that has formulated national and international partnerships young women poised and determined to ensure the DRC brokers peace. Herewith are some verbatim quotations on maintaining security within the DRC:

"Provide good offices and technical support, in coordination with regional and international partners, with a view to furthering reconciliation, democratisation and inclusion, addressing the root causes of conflict and promoting intercommunal and gender-responsive reconciliation, including through political support and engagement with interlocutors across the political spectrum, including the Government, opposition parties, local authorities, women and civil society" (S/RES/2556, 2020)

"Accelerate national ownership of SSR which delivers security and justice to all through independent, accountable and functioning justice and security institutions which take into account women's full, equal, effective and meaningful participation and safety" (S/RES/2717, 2023)

4.3.2.2 Subtheme 2: Politics and Cohesive Developments

Politics and Cohesive Development subtheme is comprised of 39 direct and aggregated coding references from 6 direct and aggregated coded items. Political stability within a multi-party government is very important for peace, economic stability and development of the country.

"President Tshisekedi's appointment of Judith Tuluka Suminwa as the DRC's first female prime minister is a pivotal moment that reflects the country's progress towards greater gender equality in

the political sphere. Her vast experience, at both national and international level, and her commitment to the sustainable development of the DRC make her a key figure in leading the government towards new horizons," L'Interview news website (1/4) commented." (African Research Bulletin Political Social and Cultural Series 24412, 2024)

"Requests the Secretary-General and calls upon regional organisations to provide political support to the strengthening of State institutions in the DRC and the restoration of trust among the different parties, including through their good offices, in order to consolidate peace and security, tackle the root causes of conflict in priority areas, as well as foster a broad national consensus around key governance and security reforms, the fight against illegal exploitations of natural resources, and support to current reform and other electoral processes, in line with the government of DRC's national priorities"(S/RES/2717, 2023)

4.3.2.3 Subtheme 3: Sanctions as a Conflict Resolution Strategy

The use of sanctions as a conflict resolution strategy has been used from time immemorial. This was done to ensure that countries and organization or parties and their members that are viewed as terrorists, obscene and violating human rights are punished. Below are some verbatim quotations that portray sanctions as a conflict resolution strategy:

"French Foreign Minister Jean-Noel Barrot arrived in Rwanda on January 30th to meet President Kagame after holding talks with Tshisekedi in Kinshasa earlier in the day. Belgium on January 30th asked the EU to consider sanctions against Rwanda, suggesting the bloc could use as leverage its agreement with Kigali over key mineral resources. Britain threatened to reexamine its aid to Rwanda, in a statement from its Foreign Ministry." (African Research Bulletin Political Social and Cultural Series 24768, 2025)

*"**Sanctions regime** 43. Requests MONUSCO to monitor the implementation of the arms embargo as described in paragraphs 1 to 3 of resolution 2688 (2023), in cooperation with the Group of Experts established by resolution 1533 (2004), and in particular observe and report on flows of military personnel, arms or related materiel across the eastern border of the DRC, including by using, as specified in the letter of the Council dated 22 January 2013 (S/2013/44), surveillance capabilities*

provided by unmanned aerial systems, seize, collect, record and dispose of arms or related materiel brought into the DRC in violation of the measures imposed by paragraphs 1 to 3 of resolution 2688 (2023), and to assist and exchange relevant information with the Group of Experts" (S/RES/2717, 2023)

4.3.2.4 Subtheme 4: Peaceful Settlement of the Conflict

The peaceful settlement of the conflict is an important aspect of Conflict Resolution theory also consistent with humanitarian efforts to protect civilians. Below are some verbatim quotations portraying this important endeavour:

"Despite international pressure to end the crisis, Tshisekedi declined to attend crisis talks with his Rwandan counterpart Kagame on January 29th. Following the virtual summit, the regional East African Community (EAC) bloc "called for peaceful settlement of the conflicts", urging the DRC to "directly engage with all stakeholders, including the M23". Angola, which mediated the failed talks in December, had also called for the Congolese and Rwandan leaders to meet urgently in Luanda, and said on January 29th that Tshisekedi had arrived in the city." (African Research Bulletin Political Social and Cultural Series 24768, 2025)

4.3.3 Theme 3: GBV and Abuse of Women and Children

This theme comprised of 88 direct and 134 aggregated coding references from 27 direct and aggregated coded items. The theme was comprised of three subthemes: Gender Mainstreaming, Sexual Exploitation and Abuse, and Women in Leadership. The Gender-based violence and abuse of women and children are international topical issues that require cogent intervention from the DRC government and non-profit or non-government organizations including international organizations. The verbatim quotations from the evidence show this critical issue are provided below.

"MONUSCO on December 2nd condemned "these horrifying acts" and said the UN Joint Human Rights Office (UNJHRO) was standing by to help any probe. Denis Mukwege, the Congolese doctor who won the 2018 Nobel Peace Prize for helping rape victims in the strife-torn region, also expressed his horror at reports of "mass slaughter, missing people and forced recruitment of children" into conflict. Representatives for the United States and European Union said the killings were potential war crimes, while Human Rights Watch (HRW) said UN troops should be deployed to protect survivors." (African Research Bulletin Political Social and Cultural Series 23844, 2023)

"MONUSCO and the UNJHRO carried out investigations of the events and reported on December 7th that 131 civilians had died, killed "as part of reprisals against the civilian population." The victims, 102 men, 17 women and 12 children, were "arbitrarily executed" by bullets or knives; at least 22 women and five girls were raped, the groups said. However they warned that the death toll could change since they were unable to go into the immediate area for security reasons and had only managed to interview victims, witnesses and other sources in the town of Rwindi, 20km away." (African Research Bulletin Political Social and Cultural Series 23844, 2023)

"In November 2019, a group of these women was able to escape. According to their

accounts, many others are still being held as sex slaves. The team of international experts regrets that the judicial authorities and security forces did not take this opportunity to find the hostage-takers and free the women still held in captivity." (A/HRC/45/50, 2020)

"The team of international experts was informed of the investigative measures taken by the military justice system in the cases of the women enslaved by Bana Mura militiamen and welcomes the fact that some of the women have been freed. The team urges the Government to redouble efforts to secure the release of the other women and to arrest all their alleged enslavers." (A/HRC/48/82, 2021)

4.3.3.1 Subtheme 1: Gender Mainstreaming

This subtheme is topical and extremely important in an egalitarian society that believes in upholding human rights and promoting gender equity. Below are some verbatim quotations that address gender mainstreaming:

"One-way MONUSCO can promote gender mainstreaming is by incorporating gender considerations into its policies, programs, and activities. This includes conducting gender analyses to understand the specific needs, priorities, and experiences of women and men in conflict-affected communities (Bastos, 2020). By integrating gender considerations into its planning and implementation processes, MONUSCO can ensure that its interventions are responsive to the diverse needs of women, men, girls, and boys." (Kimathi et al, 2024)

"Welcoming the efforts of MONUSCO and international partners in delivering training in human rights, international humanitarian law, gender mainstreaming, child protection and protection from sexual and gender-based violence to Congolese security institutions and underlining their importance" (S/RES/2556, 2020)

4.3.3.2 Subtheme 2: Sexual Exploitation and Abuse

This subtheme is comprised of 30 direct and aggregated coding references from 12 direct and aggregated coded items. Sexual exploitation and abuse are deplorable vices that are illegal and unjust requiring concomitant interventions. Below are some verbatim quotations on this important subtheme that require undivided attention form national and international organisations:

"The majority of the human rights violations and abuses were committed in North Kivu Province (3,505 violations); 68 per cent of those violations were committed by combatants of armed groups, including factions of the Nyatura, Forces démocratiques alliées, Forces démocratiques de libération du Rwanda and Nduma défense du Congo rénové. During the reporting period, the Allied Democratic Forces continued to carry out particularly deadly attacks, leaving a toll of 937 casualties (702 men, 210 women and 25 children); 738 of those victims were in North Kivu. Members of the defence and security forces were also responsible for serious human rights violations in North Kivu, including extrajudicial executions of 160 civilians (116 men, 26 women and 18 children), sexual violence against 76 women and children, other violations of the right to physical integrity of 507 civilians and the arbitrary arrest and illegal detention of at least 808 other civilians." (A/HRC/48/47, 2021)

"Expresses concern over the allegations of sexual exploitation and abuse reported in peacekeeping missions, and requests the Secretary-General to continue to implement his zero-tolerance policy on sexual exploitation and abuse with regard to all civilian, military and police personnel, and to report thereon in the context of his next report on cross-cutting issues" (A/RES/74/286, 2020)

4.3.3.3 Subtheme 3: Women in Leadership

This subtheme is comprised of 13 direct and aggregated coding references from six direct and aggregated coded items. The importance of this subtheme may never be overemphasised in any country where women are oppressed, abused and their rights violated. Below, the verbatim quotations highlights this vital subtheme:

"The Democratic Republic of Congo's planning minister Judith Suminwa Tuluka became the African nation's first woman prime minister on April 1st, state television announced. An economist, she takes over as prime minister from Jean-Michel Sama Lukonde, following President Felix Tshisekedi's sweeping re-election on December 20th. (African Research Bulletin Political Social and Cultural Series 24411, 2024)

…President Tshisekedi's appointment of Judith Tuluka Suminwa as the DRC's first female prime minister is a pivotal moment that reflects the country's progress towards greater gender equality in the political sphere. Her vast experience, at both national and international level, and her commitment to the sustainable development of the DRC make her a key figure in leading the government towards new horizons," L'Interview news website (1/4) commented." (African Research Bulletin Political Social and Cultural Series 24412, 2024)

"Consider the possibility of recruiting female staff to work for the military justice authorities in Kasai, and overcome the shortage of staff by making greater use of the civil justice system and the pool of talent offered by the bar association" (A/HRC/45/50, 2020)

"Recruit women judges and station them in the military courts of the Kasai region to better address the numerous cases of rape and sexual violence against women and the specific situation of displaced women and girls" (A/HRC/45/50, 2020)

4.4 OVERARCHING THEME 3: BEHAVIOUR OF ARMED GROUPS IN THE DRC

This overarching theme comprised of 240 direct and 782 aggregated coding references from 41 direct and aggregated coded items. The overarching theme was comprised of three themes (i.e. Armed Groups, Complex Cycles of Violence, and Disengagement Plans and Implementation); 16 subthemes, and three categories of subthemes. The Complex Cycles of Violence theme had 13 of the 16 subthemes, portraying how truly complex violence in the DRC has become. This overarching theme grotesquely portrays the depth and far reaching damage ongoing violence in the DRC is crippling the country and perpetuating poverty. This further exacerbates the need of humanitarian aid in a natural resources rich country that could more than care for its own citizens.

The behaviour of armed groups in the DRC is characterised by mistrust, misinformation, volatility, ambiguity and complexity fuelled by various factors. Some of these factors include the presence of natural resources of the endowed DRC country. Herewith are some of the verbatim quotations on the behaviour of armed groups in the DRC:

"Despite an agreement signed in Luanda, Angola on November 24th (See p.23799A), which included a ceasefire to come into effect on November 25th, M23 rebels were reportedly still fighting after the deadline near Bwiza, about 40km north of Goma. Fighting also took place on November 25th in Bambo, 70km from Goma, between the M23 and the Democratic Forces for the Liberation Rwanda (FDLR), a Hutu faction present in the DRC since the 1994 genocide of Tutsis in Rwanda. The rebels

had said on November 24th that the ceasefire "doesn't really concern us" and called for "direct dialogue" with the government. On November 28th, however, AFP reported that the ceasefire had held on the frontlines for three days in a row, although both sides were holding their positions, with "no sign of a rebel pullout". (African Research Bulletin Political Social and Cultural Series 23813, 2022)

"Nangaa, who was president of the electoral commission for DR Congo's 2018 polls, called for "the union of all political, social and military forces" to "rebuild the state" and "restore peace" in the impoverished, conflict-torn central African nation. He said at least nine armed groups, including the M23, had already joined him in his Congo River Alliance project for "national unity and stability". He justified its creation as a response to the "weakness" of the Congolese state over three decades and its "inability to restore authority... throughout the country"." (African Research Bulletin Political Social and Cultural Series 24280, 2023)

"The kulunas are accused of violent attacks, cutting off the limbs of victims with machetes as well as killing and stealing. In March, the government lifted a death penalty moratorium in force since 2003. It said that move was aimed at punishing soldiers accused of treason over an armed rebellion in the east of the country, as well as urban bandits. (© AFP 8/1 2025)" (African Research Bulletin Political Social and Cultural Series 24733, 2025)

The evidence shows that the different armed groups do not adhere to ceasefire agreements, and that they are able to come together for political expediency and self-preservation. The call by the DRC Electoral Commissioner for rebel groups to rebuild the state shows political instability and unwillingness to end violence amicably and peacefully. The behaviour of armed groups is thus complex and selfish in that innocent civilians are not considered in these cycles of violence. Below the themes are presented.

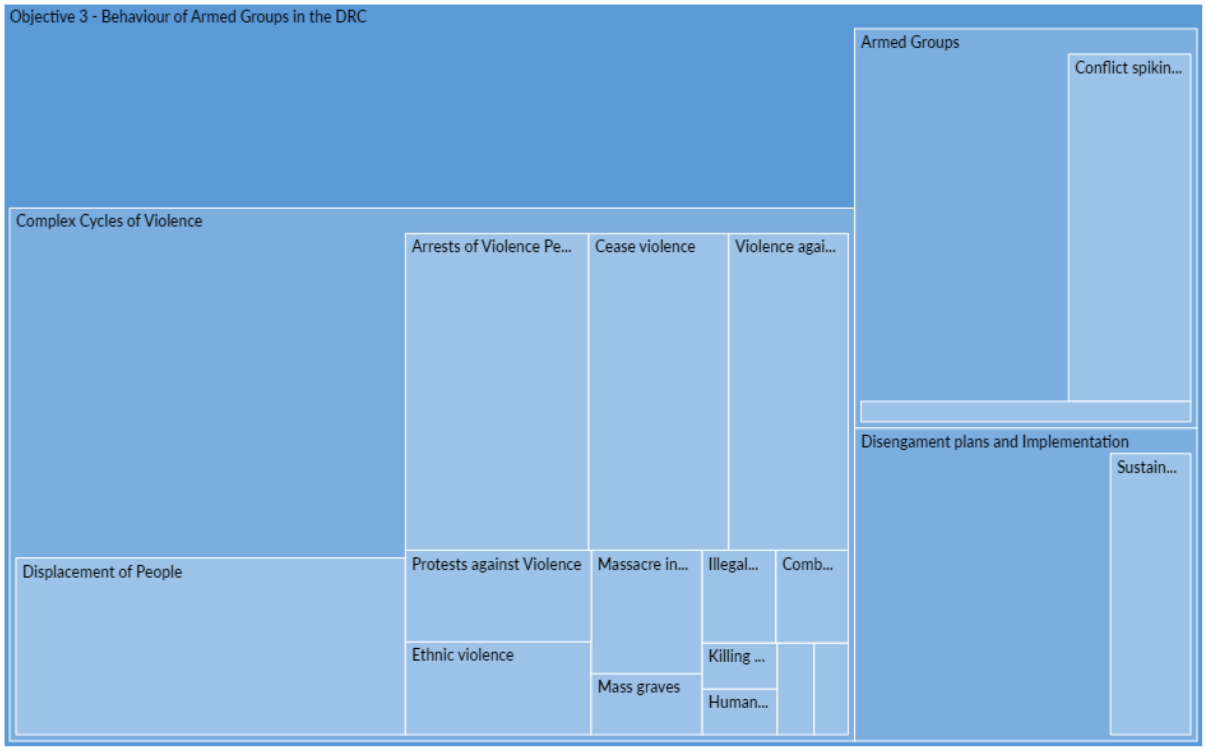

Figure 4.6 Hierarchy chart of Behaviour of Armed Groups in the DRC(n=41)

The Behaviour of Armed Groups in the DRC overarching theme that also graphically represent the third objective of the study could be succinctly represented by a mind map below as portrayed by figure 4.7.

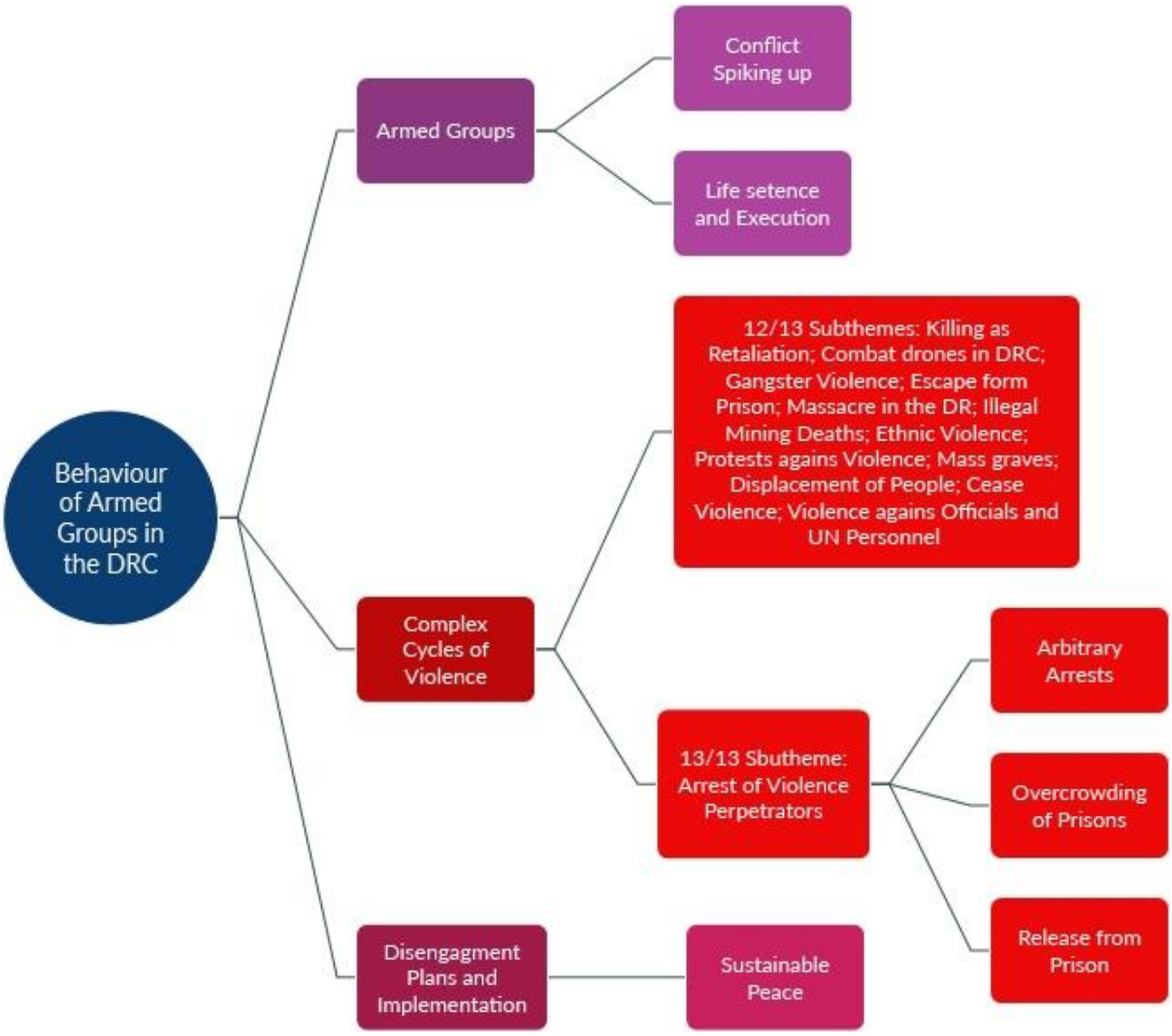

Figure 4.7 The Overarching theme 3: Behaviour of Armed Groups in the DRC

4.4.1 Theme 1: Armed Groups

This theme is comprised of 67 direct and 97 aggregated coding referencing from 22 direct and 25 aggregated coded items. The number of armed groups presented by the evidence is astounding when considering the number of various militia, ethnic groups, Islamist

"The main perpetrators of the violence against civilians are the predominantly Tutsi March 23 Movement (M23), which has seized swathes of Nord Kivu province including in Rutshuru territory since 2022, with help from neighbouring Rwanda; the Islamist Allied Democratic Forces (ADF), which pledged allegiance to Islamic State (IS) as part of its so-called Central Africa Province (ISCAP), and operates in Nord Kivu and Ituri provinces in areas near the Ugandan border; and the

Cooperative for the Development of Congo (CODECO) which has the declared aim of protecting the Lendu ethnic group from rivals among the Hema, primarily in Ituri province" (African Research Bulletin Political Social and Cultural Series 24422, 2024)

"Strongly condemns all armed groups operating in the DRC, including the M23, the CODECO, the ADF, the FDLR, the Zaïre/FPAC, the RED-Tabara, Mai-Mai groups, the Twirwaneho and several other domestic and foreign armed groups, and their violations of international humanitarian law as well as other applicable international law, and abuses of human rights, reiterates its condemnation of attacks on the civilian population and infrastructures, United Nations and associated personnel and humanitarian actors, as well as medical personnel and facilities, summary executions and maiming, sexual and gender-based violence and recruitment and use of children, abductions of children and humanitarian personnel, attacks on schools and civilians connected with schools, including children and teachers, and hospitals in violation of applicable international law by armed groups and mil itias, the use of civilians as human shields, the forced displacement of significant numbers of civilians, extrajudicial executions and arbitrary arrests, the indiscriminate use of improvised explosive devices (IEDs) and further reiterates that those responsible must be held accountable" (S/RES/2717, 2023)

4.4.1.1 Life Sentence and Executions in the DRC

This category of subtheme comprised of 16 coding references from 15 coded items. The aspect of life sentence or death sentence in the DRC has been associated with summary executions, extrajudicial executions and arbitrary executions. These are gross human rights violations that are unjust and need intervention from all stakeholders. Below are some verbatim quotations showing evidence of this unjust practice:

"The response by the authorities has been a rapid rise in the number of death sentences being passed, according to a report by Amnesty International published on January 8th. Amnesty appealed to President Tshisekedi to halt the executions, saying that around 170 were planned." (African Research Bulletin Political Social and Cultural Series 24733, 2025)

"On June 9th the UN Joint Human Rights Office (UNJHRO) in DR Congo reported that a total of 230 people, including 144 men, 62 women and 24 children, had been summarily executed in conflict-affected provinces in April, the privately-owned Actualite.cd reported (10/6). The report said that, although the numbers remain impressive, the new figures showed a decrease compared to March (353). During the same month, the UNJHRO documented a total of 359 human rights violations and

abuses throughout DR Congo, a decrease of over 27% compared to March (495 violations and abuses). (BBC Monitoring 10/6)" (African Research Bulletin Political Social and Cultural Series 24047, 2023)

"MONUSCO and the UNJHRO carried out investigations of the events and reported on December 7th that 131 civilians had died, killed "as part of reprisals against the civilian population." The victims, 102 men, 17 women and 12 children, were "arbitrarily executed" by bullets or knives; at least 22 women and five girls were raped, the groups said. However they warned that the death toll could change since they were unable to go into the immediate area for security reasons and had only managed to interview victims, witnesses and other sources in the town of Rwindi, 20km away." (African Research Bulletin Political Social and Cultural Series 23844, 2023)

4.4.1.2 Conflict Spiking up

The spiking up of conflict is a category of subtheme Armed Groups comprised of 28 coding references from 13 coded items. This concerning development is ongoing despite the MONUSCO peacekeeping mission and other domestic and regional peacebuilding efforts. Given the planned drawdown and phased withdrawal of MONUSCO, it is clear that more efforts needs to be made to ensure peace and protection of civilians is a reality. Below are some verbatim quotations showing conflict spiking up in the DRC:

"Expressing concern about the escalation of violence in the eastern DRC, further exacerbating the current humanitarian situation and protection concerns, and the sustained tension between Rwanda and the DRC, and noting that the DRC continues to suffer from recurring and evolving cycles of conflict and persistent violence by foreign and domestic armed groups, condemning all armed groups operating in the DRC" (S/RES/2746, 2024)

"Meanwhile, a vicious, though barely reported inter-ethnic struggle is being fought between the Teke and the Yaka, which is advancing ever closer to the capital. The fighting began in Kwamouth territory, Mai-Ndombe province, but has since spread to three other provinces, Kwilu, Kwango, and Kinshasa. Despite a heavy deployment and apparently bloody tactics, the FARDC has been unable thus far to contain the conflict. (Africa Confidential 18/1)" (African Research Bulletin Political Social and Cultural Series 24316, 2024)

4.4.2 Theme 2: Complex Cycles of Violence

This theme is comprised of 169 direct and 350 aggregated coding references from 37 direct and aggregated coded items. What makes this complex is the many groups involved in violence across the DRC, the various ways in which people are killed, and the reasons why the violence is perpetuated. The theme is comprised of 13 subthemes i.e. Killing as Retaliation, Illegal Mining Deaths, Ganster Violence, Combat drones in the DRC, Massacre in the DRC, Ethnic violence or Intercommunal violence (based on ethnicity or religion), Protests against Violence (which in turn become violent protests), Displacement of People (this is a sequela of violence and unrest), Mass Graves, Escape of Prisoners, and Arrest of Violence Perpetrators (this subtheme has two categories of subtheme). A succinct presentation of the above subthemes portrays the comprehensive but abridged presentation of evidence from the verbatim quotations below:

"According to the United Nations Stabilisation Mission in the DR Congo (Monusco) head of office, Marc Karna Soro, more than 900 people were killed in armed conflicts fuelled by illegal mining. He urged all the stakeholders to continue the efforts by Monusco, even after it leaves the DR Congo," (African Research Bulletin Political Social and Cultural Series 24392, 2023)

"Ethnic Violence: The final toll of fighting on May 8th at the Camp Blanquette mining site, 7km from the town of Mungwalu, Djugu territory, Ituri province, was put at 115 dead, according to a local civil society organisation, speaking on Virunga Business Radio. The army did not disclose an official death toll, but their spokesman Lt Jules Ngongo explained that clashes had erupted between CoDeCo militiamen, along with their allies the Patriotic and Integrationist Force of Congo (FPIC), and those of the FPAC-Zaire self-defence group, fighting for control of the site, resulting in the deaths. Many of the dead were civilians, including informal miners, who were caught in the crossfire, he said." (African Research Bulletin Political Social and Cultural Series 23580, 2022)

"The UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) said it is alarmed by a surge of deadly intercommunal violence which has displaced thousands since July in the western locality of Kwamouth. The UNHCR Representative in the DRC, Angele Dikongue-Atangana, told a news conference in Geneva on October 11th that clashes reportedly started over customary taxes on agricultural land use between the Teke and Yaka communities. More than 142 people have been killed, including some who were beheaded." (African Research Bulletin Political Social and Cultural Series 23775, 2022)

"Gangster Violence: A journalist and director of Pamoja Canal television Patrick Adonis Numbi Banze was killed by machete-wielding "gangsters" on his way home from work on the night of January 7th amid growing insecurity in Lubumbashi, Haut-Katanga province, in the south-east of the country, Actualite.cd reported (8/1). The website said the incident echoed the murder of another journalist, Jemimah Mogwo Mambasa, a reporter for national television (RTNC), who was also killed under similar circumstances on November 24th. Actualite.cd highlighted the increase in violence carried out by socalled "kulunas" or urban bandits." (African Research Bulletin Political Social and Cultural Series 24732, 2025)

"The UN's Radio Okapi provided further details of those attacks. Its April 15th report said that 65 people, including 14 CODECO fighters, had been killed in attacks against 10 villages in Banyali Kilo area of Djugu territory, where CODECO has frequently laid siege. Sources told the radio that the attack was in retaliation against the loss of 40 rebel fighters during clashes with the Zaire militia. Radio Okapi (18/4) also reported that the president of the Banyali Kilo community, Vital Tungulo, had said that CODECO was now in control of 13 of the 15 groups of villages in Djugu territory, and were managing and exploiting more than 150 goldmining areas. Rivalry with the Zaire militia was frequently for control of mining concessions, the report said." (African Research Bulletin Political Social and Cultural Series 23993, 2025)

The use of drones in combat has also been reported:

"AFP (17/1) reported that two M23 commanders were killed in fighting with army troops on January 16th in the town of Kitshanga, Masisi territory. The report also said that the government had contracted two private military companies in the fighting and that the army and its allies had begun using Chinese-made combat drones against rebel positions. …

Citing several sources, Goma-based Virunga Business Radio (20/1) reported that ten people were killed in the fighting, the result of a drone strike carried out by the army "on an enemy position", including the two M23 commanders. The radio also said that the strikes against M23 were supported by fighter jets and heavy artillery as part of the joint military operations with SADC troops." (African Research Bulletin Political Social and Cultural Series 24316, 2024)

Violence also led to prison escapes as shown by the verbatim quotation below:

"Hundreds of prisoners from the Mulunge central prison in Uvira, escaped amid the deteriorating security, Actualite.cd news website reported on February 19th. Local sources confirmed that over 500 prisoners, including military and civilian detainees, escaped after prison doors were broken down by fleeing soldiers. The jailbreak came amid a chaotic situation in Uvira which saw DR Congo troops clash with its Wazalendo allies, resulting in 17 deaths. The report added that the mass escape followed similar incidents in Goma and Bukavu." (African Research Bulletin Political Social and Cultural Series 24769, 2025)

Regarding the Displacement of People, this ongoing deplorable humanitarian onslaught has lead to displacement of multitudes as shown below:

"In mid-April, UN human rights chief Volker Türk met survivors of massacres in those eastern provinces who told him they were desperate for peace. The huge central African nation has seen years of violence in the restive but resources-rich east, which have uprooted millions of people – some 2.7m in Nord Kivu alone and more than 7m nationally, a UN statement said." (African Research Bulletin Political Social and Cultural Series 24422, 2024)

"Fighting in the eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) have now uprooted 5.7m people across Nord Kivu, Sud Kivu and Ituri provinces. In an alert on March 26th, the United Nations refugee agency, UNHCR, said that the violence had reached a devastating new level, with people forced to flee indiscriminate bombing and abuse. As part of the humanitarian response, UNHCR and partners have provided emergency shelters to more than 40,000 of the most vulnerable people arriving in Goma, the capital of Nord Kivu." (African Research Bulletin Political Social and Cultural Series 24422, 2024)

"The Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement, which restate and clarify the international legal obligations relevant to internally displaced persons based on international human rights law and international humanitarian law, explicitly state the existence of the right not to be arbitrarily displaced, which was considered to be implicit under international law.10 The right not to be arbitrarily displaced entails: (a) the prohibition of arbitrary displacement; and (b) the obligation of authorities to prevent arbitrary displacement." (A/76/169, 2021)

The Violence against Officials and UN personnel subtheme shows that no one is safe in the DRC, peacekeeping forces are also attacked as shown below:

"A total of 17 peacekeepers from a southern African (SADC) regional force and MONUSCO had been killed in the fighting by January 28th, including 13 from South Africa, 3 from Malawi and 1 from Uruguay. The Tanzanian army said on February 1st that it had also lost two soldiers in the fighting in Sake and Goma." (African Research Bulletin Political Social and Cultural Series 24768, 2025)

"Condemning in the strongest terms any and all attacks against MONUSCO peacekeepers, personnel, installations, material, units or vehicles, which may constitute war crimes, as well as the use and placement of heavy weapons in the vicinity of United Nations peacekeepers' bases, emphasizing that those responsible for such attacks must be held accountable" (S/RES/2746, 2024)

The subtheme Protest against Violence has also

"At least 15 civilians were massacred on March 15th in Bulongo, Beni territory, Nord Kivu. "The ADF are suspects," the Kivu Security Tracker (KST) group posted on Twitter. Local sources separately confirmed the attack and also blamed the ADF. In nearby Butembo, a city of one million people, economic activity came to a standstill due to demonstrations called to protest against the violence in Bulongo. Another 17 people were killed in separate ADF attacks in the villages of Samboko, Tchani-Tchani and Kapoka in Beni territory, Donat Kibwana, the local territorial administrator, said on March 24th. (African Research Bulletin Political Social and Cultural Series 23090, 2021)

"Protests spread throughout the country. Several hundred women on February 14th marched in the capital Kinshasa to call for an end to the war, and on February 15th, significant demonstrations took place in Bukavu the capital of Sud Kivu province, and in Kisangani in Tshopo province. …

In Goma on February 19th, anti-Rwanda demonstrators burned Western countries' flags, accusing them of supporting Kigali through the M23 rebels, AFP reported. Several dozen demonstrators, some draped in the DRC flag with red bands around their heads, trampled on the flags of the United States, the European Union, France and Poland. They carried placards, reading: "Stop the massacres in

the DRC", "France = M23/Rwanda", "To be silent is to be an accomplice". (© AFP 12, 15, 19/2 2024)" (African Research Bulletin Political Social and Cultural Series 24352, 2024)

The subtheme: Arrest of Violence Perpetrators comprised of three categories of subtheme and the need to portray it on its own may not be overemphasized.

4.4.2.1 Arrest of Violence Perpetrators

This subtheme that made up the Complexity of Violence, is comprised of 42 direct and 55 aggregated coding references from 12 direct and aggregated coded items. As highlighted above, this subtheme is made up of three categories of the subtheme i.e. Arbitrary Arrests, Release from Prison, and Overcrowding of Prisons as portrayed below starting with the arrest of violence perpetrators.

"Armed men claiming to be Congolese patriots attacked M23 positions near Kibumba, about 20km north of Goma, according to an army official who requested anonymity. M23 fighters repulsed the attack and the army later arrested the assailants, the army official added. Lieutenant-Colonel Guillaume Ndjike, spokesman for the military governor of North Kivu province, said the army had arrested 59 armed men, known locally as "wazalendo", before parading them in front of the media." (African Research Bulletin Political Social and Cultural Series 23991, 2023)

"A court in Bukavu on February 14th sentenced 212 soldiers to death on charges of murder and desertion during the M23 advances, Actualite.cd reported. It added that 70 others were acquitted and released and that those convicted were ordered to pay over $200,000 to all victims." (African Research Bulletin Political Social and Cultural Series 24769, 2025)

Below, the categories of subthemes are presented to highlight what happened to some detainees regarded arrest of violence perpetrators.

4.4.2.1.1 Arbitrary Arrests

This category of subtheme address a human rights violation that may be fatal to civilians that require protection.

"The United Nations Joint Human Rights Office in the Democratic Republic of the Congo documented five incidents of death threats, kidnapping and arbitrary arrest for cooperation with the MONUSCO in the conflict-affected eastern provinces. The incidents concerned 53 individuals,

including 32 women, 48 of whom were victims and 5 were human rights defenders. Names and additional details are withheld for fear of further reprisals" (A/HRC/48/28, 2021)

"The Joint Office continued to document arrests and convictions in connection with the exercise of fundamental freedoms. At least 433 persons, including 26 women and 1 child, were subjected to arbitrary arrest or unlawful and arbitrary detention following their exercise of their right to freedom of opinion and expression, peaceful assembly or association. This did, however, represent a decrease from the 687 victims (including at least 28 women and 31 children) recorded in the preceding reporting period. Numerous cases of threats, intimidation and attacks targeting human rights defenders, members of civil society and journalists in the course of their legitimate activities have also been documented. For example, two journalists were threatened with arrest by members of the Armed Forces of the Democratic Republic of the Congo and the National Intelligence Agency in North Kivu for broadcasting a statement by a human rights defender calling for an investigation by the Military Prosecutor's Office into the alleged existence of a clandestine isolation cell on the grounds of a military camp of the Armed Forces" (A/HRC/48/47, 2021)

4.4.2.1.2 Overcrowding of Prisons

The issue of arbitrary arrests is a humanitarian problem due to the deplorable nature of some of the DRC prisons. One of the big problems is the poor prison infrastructure and the issue of overcrowding of prisons. The verbatim quotations below show the evidence:

"The Congolese courts continue to experience difficulties, including shortages of human and financial resources, which hinder them from functioning properly. In addition, the excessive use of pretrial detention exacerbates prison overcrowding and puts more pressure on the under-resourced prison system. For example, as of 27 March 2020, the overcrowding rate at the Kinshasa Penitentiary and Re-education Centre was 461 per cent and the rate at Munzenze Prison in Goma was 653 per cent. This situation increases the many difficulties associated with the care of prisoners, including a lack of medical care and a lack of adequate nutrition, which caused at least 246 deaths during the period under review." (A/HRC/48/47, 2021)

"Justice of Kasai Central Province, the Minister presented all the challenges facing the justice system in general, and the military and civilian justice systems in particular. Specifically cited were the challenges they faced owing to the poor functioning of the courts in the territories of the province other than Kananga, where the Minister claimed that the courts were operational. The Minister also referred to obstacles related to the lack of judges and the high cost of travel to process certain cases

in the territories, as well as the problems of prison overcrowding, the lack of prison facilities and the dilapidated state of existing prisons, which led to numerous escapes." (A/HRC/45/50, 2020)

4.4.2.1.3 Release from Prison

The efforts to address overcrowding of prisons are welcomed humanitarian efforts. There is a great need to also reengineer the justice system and the correctional system to ensure sustainable development and protection of civilians. Below is the evidence of the release of prisoners who may be victims of arbitrary detention.

"In an effort to reduce prison overcrowding, the Joint Office is providing support to the Ministry of Human Rights and the General Inspectorate of Judicial and Penitentiary Services for prison inspections and the checking of prison records to verify the legality of detentions and to release persons who have been arbitrarily detained. As a result, 224 detainees, including 27 women, have been released since January 2021, thanks to the advocacy of the Joint Office." (A/HRC/48/47, 2021)

"Finally, the UNJHRO held monthly meetings with representatives of the Ministry of Justice and the Kinshasa Prosecutors' Office to follow up on cases of impunity and measures taken to reduce overcrowding in prisons, including in the context of the pandemic. Positive outcomes included the establishment of the Technical Group on Penitentiary Issues (Sub-group 2 on legislation), which is responsible for drafting texts on reform of the prison system and for ensuring the release of at least 3,288 prisoners from several prisons in the DRC." (UN Human Rights Report, 2020)

4.4.3 Theme 3: Disengagement Plans and Implementation

This theme is comprised of 75 direct and 94 aggregated coding references from 22 direct and 24 aggregated coded items. The disengagement plans by MONUSCO have been highlighted in 4.2.1 and 4.2.2 above. However, in this overarching theme the focus is on how these plans and their implementation may affect the behaviour of armed groups and the potential threats it would pose on the protection of civilians (POC). The verbatim quotations below portrays a picture that requires caution.

"DR CONGO Peacekeeping Operation A top UN official urges a "responsible" exit, despite continuously escalating violence. The UN under-secretary-general for peacekeeping operations, Jean-Pierre Lacroix, during a visit to DR Congo on June 7th said that peacekeepers should withdraw

from the conflict-torn central African country "as quickly as possible" yet responsibly. Addressing reporters in the capital Kinshasa, Lacroix also warned that the Congolese state had to step up its own response to armed groups to avoid creating a "security void that would be fatal". (African Research Bulletin Political Social and Cultural Series 24047, 2023)

"As MONUSCO withdraws from Nord Kivu there are fears that the M23 would more easily occupy positions in the area. According to a MONUSCO note about the withdrawal of the Indian contingent seen by AFP (7/4), M23 forces have occupied at least three positions around Sake "since their abandonment by INDRDB," referring to the Indian contingent. The 15,000 UN troops deployed in DR Congo started to leave in February (p.24351C) at the request of the Kinshasa government which considers them ineffective. The withdrawal is due to be completed by the end of 2024." (African Research Bulletin Political Social and Cultural Series 24423, 2024)

"Taking note of statements delivered by the Government of the DRC in the Security Council Briefings of 30 September 2024 and 9 December 2024, and of the note verbale of the Government of the DRC to the Security Council dated 11 December 2024, supporting a more flexible and gradual approach to MONUSCO's withdrawal informed by local security conditions" (S/RES/2765, 2024)

The Disengagement Plans and Implementation theme clearly portrays the importance of sustainable peace and security in the DRC. The theme has one subtheme i.e. Sustainable Peace that will be presented below.

4.4.3.1 Sustainable Peace

The subtheme sustainable peace is comprised of 19 direct and aggregated coding references from seven direct and aggregated coded items.

"DR Congo's top diplomat on February 5th blasted international efforts as all talk and no action. "We see a lot of declarations but we don't see actions," Foreign Minister Therese Kayikwamba Wagner told journalists in Brussels. Rwandan President Kagame said on February 5th he had discussed the situation in eastern DRC with European Council chief Antonio Costa and they "agreed on the need for effective deescalation and a resolution to the conflict that... ensures lasting peace"." (African Research Bulletin Political Social and Cultural Series 24768, 2024)

"On the contrary, 89 (28.7%) disagreed with the assertion that mistrust and dearth of cooperation among political actors are major challenges. Their perspective emphasizes other factors such as

economic instability, ethnic tensions, or external influences as primary obstacles to MONUSCO's mandate fulfillment. They argued that while political cooperation is important, addressing broader structural issues and engaging with grassroots communities are equally or more crucial in achieving sustainable peace." (Kimathi et al, 2024)

"Support to stabilisation and the strengthening of State institutions in the DRC, and key governance and security reforms, in order to establish functional, professional, and accountable state institutions, including security and judicial institutions ...Provide coordination between the Government of the DRC, international partners and United Nations agencies in a targeted, sequenced and coordinated approach to stabilisation informed by up to date conflict analysis, through the implementation of the International Security and Stabilisation Support Strategy (ISSSS) and adoption of a conflict-sensitive approach across the Mission" (S/RES/2556, 2020)

4.5 CHAPTER SUMMARY

In summary presented are results that cover all the objectives of this study, conducted from desktop research. The need for primary research may not be overemphasized, however, the key sources utilized portrayed a balanced picture of key role players and stakeholders. The MONUSCO mission is both effective and yet criticized as not doing enough to stop the ongoing violence in the DRC. Regional forces working together with the DRC government and international organizations to ensure peacebuilding and peacekeeping cannot be stressed enough. This study shows how complex the issues in the DRC are regarding violence and the need for conflict resolution. The next chapter is going to give a comparative analysis of findings regarding the effectiveness of MONUSCO Peacekeeping Mission in the DRC on various peacekeeping indicators (themes) identified in this chapter. The Conflict Resolution Framework was utilised to guide the analysis.

CHAPTER 5: DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS ON MONUSCO PEACEKEEPING EFFECTIVENESS

5.1 INTRODUCTION AND DISCUSSION OF THEMATIC FINDINGS

This study sought to evaluate the MONUSCO peacekeeping mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), focusing on its effectiveness in reducing violence, protecting civilians, and influencing the behaviour of armed groups. The study's main conclusions were derived via document analysis, peer-reviewed papers, comparative analysis, and an iterative coding technique.

This objective was to determine if the MONUSCO peacekeeping deployment was successful in decreasing violence and preserving security in conflict zones in the DRC. To fulfil the first objective, which focused on the success of the MONUNSCO peacekeeping mission in decreasing violence and sustaining security in conflict zones in the DRC, four themes emerged as overarching themes. This overarching topic resulted from the combination of four themes and seven sub-themes. The four themes and their subthemes are listed below:

4.1. The MONUSCO mandate was generated using 95 direct and 172 aggregated coding references from 18 coded elements. This subject was divided into two subthemes: 4.1.1 Funding and Finances, which had 60 direct and aggregated coding references from 12 coded items, and 4.1.2 Inclusive Governance and Political Stability, which included 17 direct and aggregated coding references from seven coded items.

4.2. MONUSCO's Achievements and successes were constructed using 81 direct and 137 aggregated coding references derived from 22 direct and 23 aggregate coded elements. This subject contained two subthemes, i.e. 4.2.1 Community Engagement within DRC from 39 direct and aggregated coding references originating from 13 direct and aggregated coded elements. 4.2.2 Long-term stability based on 17 direct and aggregated coding references for nine coded elements.

4.3. Challenges and Threats to the MONUSCO Exit Strategy was generated using 57 direct and 88 aggregated coding references from 24 direct and aggregated coded elements. This subject contained only one subtheme, 4.3.1 Factors Influencing Conflicts, which was produced using 31 direct and aggregated coding references derived from 15 direct and aggregated coded elements.

4.4. Resource Mobilisation and Management was built using 21 direct and 47 coding references from 12 direct and aggregated coded components. This was divided into two subthemes: 4.4.1 Non-Human Resources, which had 17 direct and aggregated coding references from ten direct and aggregated

coded items, and 4.4.2 Human Resources Management, which had nine direct and aggregated coding references from five direct and aggregated coded items.

The findings showed that MONUSCO significantly improved security in specific regions through a variety of initiatives, including road rehabilitation, school construction, and facilitating peace talks between conflicting parties (African Research Bulletin Political Social and Cultural Series 23092, 2021; African Research Bulletin Political Social and Cultural Series 23633, 2022). Kimathi et al. (2024) emphasised MONUSCO's interaction with local communities, emphasising its critical role in promoting inclusive peacebuilding and strengthening marginalised groups, which fosters trust and legitimacy at the grassroots level.

Despite these developments, several difficulties persisted. Socioeconomic issues persisted, with widespread poverty and growing living costs fuelling public unhappiness (A/HRC/45/50, 2020). Furthermore, weak governance frameworks and political instability jeopardised MONUSCO's overall objectives of state-building and long-term peace (Kimathi et al., 2024). These systemic obstacles hampered the mission's capacity to effect long-term change, implying that security advances were both restricted and insufficient for ensuring overall stability.

Resource mobilisation has become a significant issue. MONUSCO's enormous financial expenditure, which exceeds $1.15 billion for the 2020-2021 term, highlights the major international investment required to continue operations (A/RES/74/286, 2020). This price, while necessary for maintaining operational capabilities, raised concerns about the long-term viability and usefulness of multinational peacekeeping initiatives, particularly in circumstances where the root causes of conflict had not been handled. The comparative analysis of UNSC Resolutions 2717 (2023) and 2765 (2024) revealed MONUSCO's shifting function and efficacy. Resolution 2717 laid the strategic basis for a gradual and responsible withdrawal, while Resolution 2765 emphasised the importance of implementing disengagement methods quickly and efficiently (UNSC, 2023; UNSC, 2024). Both resolutions emphasised the importance of Congolese national ownership in security and governance, indicating a strategy shift from peacekeeping to supporting state-led stabilisation operations.

Nonetheless, the continuous threat presented by armed organisations like as the M23 and numerous militias demonstrates that, despite MONUSCO's efforts, violence and instability remain deeply entrenched (UNSC, 2024). The increased emphasis in Resolution 2765 on disarmament, reintegration, and responsibility for human rights violators reflects a recognition of these persisting challenges, as well as a necessity to alter international measures accordingly. While MONUSCO

successfully conducted localised peace talks and reduced violence in particular districts, it had difficulty in attaining long-term statewide security improvements. This conclusion emphasises the limitations of foreign interventions in the face of continuous

The second objective assessed the performance of the MONUSCO peacekeeping mission in safeguarding civilian populations from human rights violations during the ongoing conflict in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC). The major purpose is to safeguard people from humanitarian abuse, which is supported by three main themes, eleven subthemes, and another set of subthemes. This concept is based on Conflict Resolution Theory, which emphasises the value of peacekeeping, conflict resolution, and humanitarian assistance.nment failures, regional geopolitical crises, and rooted citizen dissatisfaction.

The key issue of civilian protection emphasises that civilian safety is a top concern for both the DRC government and the international community. MONUSCO's operations are consistent with key human rights concepts established in Title Two of the DRC Constitution, which addresses "Human Rights, Fundamental Freedoms, and Duties of the Citizen and the State." This topic addresses issues such as arbitrary incarceration, complicated factional wars (including the use of human shields), pandemic procedures, and socioeconomic reintegration. Despite MONUSCO's efforts, considerable obstacles remain. According to reports, both armed groups and government troops have perpetrated significant human rights violations, including extrajudicial murders, sexual assaults, and arbitrary detentions (A/HRC/48/47, 2021).

The second subject, Conflict Settlement, is on the complex dynamics of violence in the DRC, highlighting the significance of comprehensive solutions for long-term conflict resolution. Despite cease-fire agreements, like as the one agreed in Luanda in November 2023, violence frequently extended past the timeframes, indicating the fragility of peace efforts (African Research Bulletin, 2023). The DRC's conflict is strongly entrenched in colonial history, resource issues, ideological disagreements, and ethnic strife (Tim, 2005; Institute of Economics and Peace, 2022). MONUSCO's efforts to preserve security through Security Sector Reform (SSR), foster political unity, apply sanctions, and promote peaceful settlements show a comprehensive conflict resolution strategy (S/RES/2556, 2020; S/RES/2717, 2023).

Efforts to strengthen state institutions and promote inclusive administration, as demonstrated by the appointment of Judith Tuluka Suminwa as the Democratic Republic of Congo's first female Prime Minister, are important political achievements. Nonetheless, the persistent violence highlights the

limitations of traditional conflict resolution approaches and the need for alternative, maybe regional, peacebuilding tactics (Kimathi et al., 2024).

The third theme, Gender-Based Violence (GBV) and the Abuse of Women and Children, demonstrates that sexual violence remains a substantial and persistent issue. MONUSCO and the UN Joint Human Rights Office (UNJHRO) have condemned serious abuses, including as widespread sexual assaults and extrajudicial murders (African Research Bulletin, 2023). Investigations revealed 131 deaths and several cases of sexual assault against women and girls (African Research Bulletin, 2023). Despite ongoing measures, such as the establishment of a zero-tolerance policy on sexual exploitation by UN personnel (A/RES/74/286, 2020), widespread abuse underscores civilians' vulnerability, particularly women and children, amid conflict.

The most pressing issue concerning the conduct of armed groups in the DRC is that these factions typically operate independently of ceasefire agreements, driven by self-interest rather than collaborative peacebuilding efforts. Despite the existence of formal ceasefire agreements, organisations such as M23 and the Democratic Forces for the Liberation of Rwanda (FDLR) continue to engage in hostilities. Furthermore, people such as Nangaa creating alliances like the Congo River Alliance demonstrate political instability and opportunistic behaviour among armed factions (African Research Bulletin, 2023). The government's abolition of the death penalty moratorium in response to armed insurgency and urban unrest highlights the growing difficulty in restoring order (African Research Bulletin, 2025).

The crimes of armed factions in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) demonstrate a profound complexity marked by rising violence, human rights abuses, and persistent instability. The major theme demonstrates both the gravity of battle and its devastating consequences for governance, humanitarian crises, and civilian safety. Despite long-standing peacekeeping efforts, including the deployment of MONUSCO, armed factions continue to escalate the violence. Conflicts flare up in regions like eastern DRC, where armed organisations such as the M23 rebels and many local militias continue to operate. The UN Security Council expressed "concern regarding the escalation of violence," highlighting the recurring cycles of conflict and persistent violence perpetrated by both foreign and domestic groups (S/RES/2746, 2024). Furthermore, inter-ethnic tensions have risen, notably between the Teke and Yaka tribes, threatening stability near the capital, Kinshasa (African Research Bulletin 24316, 2024).

According to UN estimates, the violence has displaced more than 7 million people nationally (African Research Bulletin 24422, 2024). Arbitrary relocation exacerbates human suffering and violates international humanitarian norms, such as the Guiding Principles on Internal Relocation (A/76/169, 2021). Despite humanitarian efforts, indiscriminate bombings and attacks on civilians continue, aggravating the displacement crisis (African Research Bulletin 24422, 2024).

Civilians have increasingly participated in large marches, indicating widespread unhappiness and resentments. Protests in Goma, Kinshasa, and Bukavu condemned brutality and claimed foreign participation (African Research Bulletin 24352, 2024). These civic actions demonstrate the public's unhappiness with both armed groups and the international community's ineffectiveness. Security agents have successfully apprehended those responsible for violent acts. For example, 59 armed persons known as Wazalendo were apprehended during skirmishes with M23 positions (African Research Bulletin 23991, 2023). Furthermore, major judicial measures have been taken, including the execution of 212 troops for crimes such as murder and desertion (African Research Bulletin 24769. 2025).

However, these measures have ignited serious human rights concerns, notably over arbitrary detention, which predominantly affects civilians, human rights activists, and journalists (A/HRC/48/28, 2021; A/HRC/48/47, 2021). Overcrowded jail institutions and arbitrary detention expose basic flaws in the system. Although certain humanitarian measures have resulted in the release of convicts, including 224 who were released following prison inspections (A/HRC/48/47, 2021), there is an urgent need for long-term reform of the courts and penal facilities (UN Human Rights Report, 2020).

Despite the commitment of regional and international actors to stabilisation, peace measures are frequently viewed as ineffective or superficial. The DRC Foreign Minister voiced worry about the gap between proclamations and actual measures (African Research Bulletin 24768, 2024). Sustainable peace necessitates comprehensive measures that address structural challenges such as weak state institutions, economic instability, and ethnic conflict (Kimathi et al., 2024; S/RES/2556, 2020).

5.2 CHAPTER SUMMARY

The findings revealed that MONUSCO had a stabilising, but ultimately limited, impact on the dynamic war in the DRC. Achievements in violence reduction, civilian protection, and armed group interaction were typically temporary and geographically uneven. Internal structural impediments

inside the DRC, the complexity of armed group networks, and the limitations of MONUSCO's mandate all reduced the mission's effectiveness over time. A common topic in the articles and peer-reviewed literature was the need for a more unified, multi-sectoral strategy that combines security, political, and developmental methods to achieve long-term peace in the DRC.

CHAPTER 6: CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1 INTRODUCTION

The aim of this chapter is to present the conclusions and recommendations of this study on MONUSCO Peacekeeping Mission in the DRC. The aim of this research was to critically evaluate the effectiveness of the MONUSCO peacekeeping deployment in the DRC, on a number of peacekeeping indicators/themes:

i. Addressing violence and maintaining security in conflict zones within the DRC;

ii. success of the MONUSCO peacekeeping mission in the DRC in protecting civilian populations from human rights abuses during the ongoing conflict; and

iii. the influence of MONUSCO peacekeeping forces on the behaviour of armed groups in the DRC, focusing on ceasefires, disarmament, and peace negotiations.

The dissertation conducted iterative content analysis on resolutions, human rights reports, and pertinent scholarly publications. A comprehensive and rigorous qualitative analysis revealed important themes and subthemes that directly addressed the three study goals.

The central theme was on the success of the MONUSCO peacekeeping presence in decreasing violence. This subject was supported by four basic categories and seven subcategories drawn from both explicit and implicit literature. The findings show that MONUSCO has achieved significant progress, particularly in improving local security, supporting disarmament steps, and encouraging grassroots peacebuilding efforts. MONUSCO's efforts to facilitate ceasefires, notably with the URDPC militia, and its strong community engagement were praised. Furthermore, initiatives such as road maintenance and school construction demonstrate the mission's broad reach, going beyond standard peacekeeping activities.

The investigation revealed several significant challenges to the MONUSCO peacekeeping task. Inadequate governance frameworks, widespread poverty, and low institutional capacity in the DRC continue to impede MONUSCO's long-term efficacy. Prominent topics, such as Inclusive Governance and Political Stability, highlighted how internal political instability and corruption regularly impede MONUSCO's operations. The feasibility of MONUSCO's mission is questioned

due to its considerable cost burden, with annual operational budgets exceeding one billion dollars, as indicated in Resolution A/RES/74/286 (2020).

A comparative analysis of UNSC Resolutions 2717 (2023) and 2765 (2024) revealed MONUSCO's changing strategic priorities. Resolution 2717 outlined a framework for disengagement, whereas Resolution 2765 focused on practical implementation. Both resolutions represent a planned and reasonable disengagement strategy that gradually transfers responsibility to the DRC government. The research demonstrates a shift in international policy, from direct engagement to promoting national ownership and self-sufficiency in peace and governance.

Resolution 2765 emphasises the need of transparency, cooperation with civil society, and accountability for human rights violations. This shift emphasises the importance of long-term peacebuilding. It recognises that peacekeeping alone cannot solve systemic issues; parallel actions are required to strengthen state capacity, protect the rule of law, and address the root causes of conflict.

6.2 STUDY CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The study concluded that MONUSCO's presence has been significant yet constrained. Although it has facilitated short-term stability and conflict resolution, attaining enduring peace and development is difficult without enhanced local government and economic advancement. As indicated in the recent resolutions, the decision to implement a phased withdrawal signifies a pivotal juncture for the mission. The Democratic Republic of the Congo's capacity to sustain peace and security post-MONUSCO will significantly rely on domestic changes, foreign assistance, and regional collaboration. The results highlight the necessity for ongoing surveillance, adaptable peacebuilding structures, and improved accountability systems to maintain the mission's legacy during this transition.

Based on the findings of this essay, several key recommendations emerge for MONUSCO and other peace missions:

I. First, it is essential to strengthen coordination between international and local actors, ensuring that peacekeeping strategies align with ground realities and incorporate meaningful community engagement.
II. Second, missions should prioritize institution-building, particularly in the security and justice sectors, to ensure long-term stability beyond the presence of

peacekeepers. This approach should draw lessons from the partial successes of EUSEC RD Congo and the challenges faced in Liberia.

III. Third, the mandates of peacekeeping operations should be realistic and backed by adequate resources, with increased flexibility to adapt to changing conflict dynamics.

IV. Finally, enhancing accountability and transparency in mission operations will help build trust among local populations and improve mission effectiveness.

6.3 AREAS OF FUTURE STUDY

For future studies, an important area of focus is the long-term impact of security sector reform (SSR) initiatives implemented by missions such as EUSEC RD and MONUC on national army professionalism and civilian-military relations in the DRC. Another promising area for research is a comparative analysis of mission exit strategies, particularly examining why MONUSCO's drawdown has encountered difficulties in contrast to the more structured transition seen in Liberia. Such analyses could provide valuable insights into sustainable peacebuilding following mission withdrawal.

REFERENCES

Adolphe, K.S., 2023. Did the United Nations Organization Stabilization mission in DRC (MONUSCO) increase or decrease security?. KAS African Law Study Library, 10(1), pp.24-37.

Affonso Leal, M.F., 2024. Evaluating the Effectiveness of MONUSCO: Successes and Challenges of United Nations Peacekeeping Operations in the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

Aguilar, S., 2019. European union military operations: The use of force in the Central African Republic, Chad, and the Democratic Republic of the Congo. Guns & Roses: Comparative Civil-Military Relations in the Changing Security Environment, pp.257-276.

Ajayi, V.O., 2017. Primary sources of data and secondary sources of data. Benue State University, 1(1), pp.1-6.

Al Jazeera. (2024). UN says all peacekeepers will leave DRC by end of 2024. [online] 13 January. Available at: https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2024/1/13/un-says-all-peacekeepers-will-leave-dr-congo-by-end-of-2024 [Accessed 22 August 2024].

Alharahsheh, H.H. and Pius, A., 2020. A review of key paradigms: Positivism VS interpretivism. Global Academic Journal of Humanities and Social Sciences, 2(3), pp.39-43.

Alvarez-Espada, J.M., Fuentes-Bargues, J.L. and González-Gaya, C., 2022. Approach and success in the management of peacekeeping operations (PKOs): application to two case studies, the UNMISS and MONUSCO Missions of the UN. Sustainability, 14(10), p.6097.

Arnould, V. and Vlassenroot, K., 2016. EU policies in the Democratic Republic of Congo: Try and fail?. WP, pp.1-22.

Baaz, M.E. and Stern, M., 2017. Being reformed: Subjectification and security sector reform in the Congolese armed forces. Journal of Intervention and Statebuilding, 11(2), pp.207-224.

Berdal, M., 2018. The state of UN peacekeeping: Lessons from Congo. Journal of Strategic Studies, 41(5), pp.721-750.

Boulding, K.E., 2018. Conflict and defense: A general theory. Pickle Partners Publishing.

Chen, C., 2017. Science mapping: a systematic review of the literature. Journal of data and information science, 2(2), pp.1-40.

Chongwa, K.E., 2024. Un Peacekeeping Operations: Assessing the Effect of the Presence of the United Nations Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUC) and The United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUSCO) on the Number of Civilian Fatalities Perpetrated by the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (Master's thesis, Georgetown University).

Clarke, V. and Braun, V., 2017. Thematic analysis. The journal of positive psychology, 12(3), pp.297-298.

Congo Mineral Watch. (2023). The Mineral Conflict Index: DRC Edition. Congo Mineral Watch.

Creswell, J. W., & Creswell, J. D. 2022. Research Design: Qualitative, Quantitative, and Mixed Methods Approaches. SAGE Publications.

Davidavičienė, V., 2018. Research methodology: An introduction. Modernizing the academic teaching and research environment: Methodologies and cases in business research, pp.1-23.

Davies, C. and Fisher, M., 2018. Understanding research paradigms. Journal of the Australasian Rehabilitation Nurses Association, 21(3), pp.21-25

Davis, L., 2015. Civil Society Dialogue Network Discussion Paper No. 9 The EU and peacebuilding in the Democratic Republic of Congo.

Democratic Governance Review. (2024). Governance, Elections and Conflict in the DRC. Democratic Governance Review.

Di Salvatore, J. and Ruggeri, A., 2017. The effectiveness of peace keeping operations.

Dodi, L., 2019. Educational value of Johan Vincent Galtung's conflict resolution in reducing gender issues based violence. Didaktika Religia, 6(2), pp.327-350.

Doudou, K.K., 2015. A Political Analysis of MONUC's Involvement in the Peace and Security Problematique of the Democratic Republic of Congo (Doctoral dissertation, University of South Africa).

Durch, W., & Berkman, T. (2006). Who Should Keep the Peace? Providing Security for Twenty-First-Century Peace Operations. Henry L. Stimson Center.

Firdaus, M.R., Agniawati, N.G. and Solahudin, M., 2021, May. Johan Galtung's Theory of Violence and Conflict: A Study of Pela Gandong's Local Wisdom as a Media for Conflict Resolution in Ambon. In Gunung Djati Conference Series (Vol. 4, pp. 831-848).

Gaibulloev, K., George, J., Sandler, T. and Shimizu, H., 2015. Personnel contributions to UN and non-UN peacekeeping missions: A public goods approach. Journal of Peace Research, 52(6), pp.727-742.

Galtung, J. (2023). Peace by Peaceful Means: Peace and Conflict, Development and Civilization. London: SAGE Publications.

Global Rights Monitor. (2022). Ethnic Conflict and Community Governance in the DRC. Global Rights Monitor Report.

Hanses, B. and Spence, D., 2015. The EEAS and Bilateral Relations: The Case of the EU Delegation in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. The European External Action Service: European Diplomacy Post-Westphalia, pp.306-320.

Hoefsloot, R. and Anderson, K., 2016. Génocidaires,'ordinary'Refugees and the AFDL: A Micro-perspective of the 1994-1996 Refugee Crisis and the First Congo War. Rick Hoefsloot.

Humanitarian Response Forum. (2024). Public Services, Displacement and Social Tensions in Eastern Congo. Humanitarian Response Forum.

International Crisis Group. (2023). Conflict Dynamics in Eastern DRC: 2022 Report. International Crisis Group.

János, T.O.M.O.L.Y.A., 2015. Operation "Artemis": The First Autonomous EU-led Operation. AARMS–Academic and Applied Research in Military and Public Management Science, 14(1), pp.121-132.

Karlsrud, J. (2019). From liberal peacebuilding to stabilization and counterterrorism. International Peacekeeping, 26(1), 1–21.

Karlsrud, J., 2015. The UN at war: examining the consequences of peace-enforcement mandates for the UN peacekeeping operations in the CAR, the DRC and Mali. Third World Quarterly, 36(1), pp.40-54.

Kelman, H.C., 2015. The development of interactive problem solving: In John Burton's footsteps. Political Psychology, 36(2), pp.243-262.

Kimathi, L., Njoroge, P., & Achieng, M. 2024. Peacebuilding and post-conflict governance in Central Africa. Nairobi: Centre for African Studies. (Assumed title and publisher – please update with real details if available)

Kothari, C.R. (2019) Research Methodology: Methods and Techniques. 4th Edition, New Age International Publishers, New Delhi.

Kovatch, B., 2016. Sexual exploitation and abuse in UN peacekeeping missions: A case study of MONUC and MONUSCO. The Journal of the Middle East and Africa, 7(2), pp.157-174.

Krahmann, E. and Leander, A., 2019. Contracting security: markets in the making of MONUSCO peacekeeping. International Peacekeeping, 26(2), pp.165-189.

Kuele, G. and Cepik, M., 2017. Intelligence support to MONUSCO: Challenges to peacekeeping and security. The International Journal of Intelligence, Security, and Public Affairs, 19(1), pp.44-68.

Lan, Z., 2015. A conflict resolution approach to public administration. In Public Administration and Law (pp. 189-204). Routledge.

Leavy, P., 2022. Research design: Quantitative, qualitative, mixed methods, arts-based, and community-based participatory research approaches. Guilford Publications.

Lilly, D., 2016. The United Nations as a party to armed conflict: the Intervention Brigade of MONUSCO in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC). Journal of International Peacekeeping, 20(3-4), pp.313-341.

Loeser, B., 2016. The EU's Peace and Security Strategy in the DRC. In Africa and Fortress Europe (pp. 159-170). Routledge.

Mandrup, T., 2018. Multinational rapid response forces in the Democratic Republic of Congo: Another example of winning battles, but losing the peace?. In Multinational Rapid Response Mechanisms (pp. 92-114). Routledge.

Martin-Brûlé, S.M., 2016. Evaluating peacekeeping missions: A typology of success and failure in international interventions. Routledge.

McGovern, M. (2017). Making war in Côte d'Ivoire. University of Chicago Press.

Mkeremy, M.N. and Lisakafu, J., 2023. Human Needs and Civilian Violence in United Nations Peace Keeping Operations: A Case of MONUSCO in the Democratic Republic of Congo. Journal of African Politics, 3(2), pp.1-15.

Mkhize, M.C., 2016. Peacebuilding in the Democratic Republic of Congo. In African Frontiers (pp. 167-178). Routledge.

More, S. and Price, M., 2022. EU's Support to Security System Reform in the Democratic Republic of Congo: Perceptions from the Field in Spring 2010. Clingendael Institute..

Mueller, G., Diehl, P.F. and Druckman, D., 2021. Juggling several balls at once: Multiple missions in MONUC. Global Governance: A Review of Multilateralism and International Organizations, 27(4), pp.493-516.

Mumanya, R.N., 2018. The Effect of immunity on the accountability of UN peacekeeping military personnel: a case study of MONUSCO and MINUSCA (Doctoral dissertation, Strathmore University).

Murithi, T., 2016. The Eastern DRC conflict and the UN-mandated Force Intervention Brigade: Insights for Africa's framework for responding to crisis. A Comprehensive Review of African Conflicts and Regional Interventions, pp.155-168.

Myers, Z. and Dorn, W., 2022. UN Peacekeeping Missions in the Middle East: A Twenty-First Century Review. International Peacekeeping, 29(3), pp.413-435.

Nielsen, R. A. (2016). How peacekeeping ends wars. Journal of Conflict Resolution, 60(6), 1115-1140.

Olukoshi, A. O. (2015). Governance trends in West Africa 2015: A synthesis report. United Nations Office for West Africa.

Opie, C., 2019. Research approaches. Getting started in your educational research: Design, data production and analysis, 137.

Pathak, B., 2016. Johan Galtung's conflict transformation theory for peaceful world: top and ceiling of traditional peacemaking. Originally published in https://www. transcend. org/tms/2016/08/johan-galtungs-conflict-transformation-theoryfor-peaceful-world-top-and-ceiling-of-traditional-peacemaking/on August, 29, p.2016.

Penberthy, L.T., Rivera, D.R., Lund, J.L., Bruno, M.A. and Meyer, A.M., 2022. An overview of real-world data sources for oncology and considerations for research. CA: A Cancer Journal for Clinicians, 72(3), pp.287-300.

Peters, I. and Diallo, M., 2015. The European Union's, the United Nations' and the United States' missions and operations in the Democratic Republic of Congo in comparative perspective. In The European Union's Foreign Policy in Comparative Perspective (pp. 242-273). Routledge.

Plauchut, A., 2016. A Timely Diplomatic Ballet: How Strategic is the Relationship between the Democratic Republic of the Congo and the European Union?. The Democratic Republic of the Congo. Problems, progress and prospects= La République Démocratique du Congo: problèmes, progrès et perspectives. Berlin: LIT, pp.243-256.

Poopuu, B. and Poopuu, B., 2020. Artemis in the Democratic Republic of the Congo: A Necessary "Success Story". The European Union's Brand of Peacebuilding: Acting is Everything, pp.71-107.

Rai, N. and Thapa, B., 2015. A study on purposive sampling method in research. Kathmandu: Kathmandu School of Law, 5(1), pp.8-15.

Rehman, A.A. and Alharthi, K., 2016. An introduction to research paradigms. International journal of educational investigations, 3(8), pp.51-59.

Rogier, E., 2016. Democratic Republic of Congo: problems of the peacekeeping process. In Ending Africa's wars (pp. 99-114). Routledge.

Romansky, S., 2020. How MONUSCO Contributed to Constructing the DRC as the 'Dark Heart'of Africa. E-International Relations.

Russo, J., 2021. Militarised peacekeeping: lessons from the Democratic Republic of the Congo. Third World Quarterly, 42(12), pp.3070-3086.

Ryan, G., 2018. Introduction to positivism, interpretivism and critical theory. Nurse researcher, 25(4), pp.41-49.

Shıkwambane, P.T., 2022. Successes and failures of peacekeeping operations: A case study on The United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of Congo (MONUSCO) (Master's thesis, İstanbul Sabahattin Zaim Üniversitesi).

Singh, K.D., 2015. Creating your own qualitative research approach: Selecting, integrating and operationalizing philosophy, methodology and methods. Vision, 19(2), pp.132-146.

Snyder, H., 2019. Literature review as a research methodology: An overview and guidelines. Journal of business research, 104, pp.333-339.

Spijkers, O., 2015. The evolution of United Nations peacekeeping in the Congo: from Onuc, to Monuc, to Monusco and its Force Intervention Brigade. Journal of International Peacekeeping, 19(1-2), pp.88-117.

Stępka, M., 2017. EU-UN coordination in peace operations in Africa: the case of Democratic Republic of Congo.

Tamm, H., 2022. In the balance: External troop support and rebel fragmentation in the Second Congo War. Journal of Strategic Studies, 45(4), pp.637-664.

Teherani, A., Martimianakis, T., Stenfors-Hayes, T., Wadhwa, A. and Varpio, L., 2015. Choosing a qualitative research approach. Journal of graduate medical education, 7(4), pp.669-670.

Thanh, N.C. and Thanh, T.T., 2015. The interconnection between interpretivist paradigm and qualitative methods in education. American journal of educational science, 1(2), pp.24-27.

Titeca, K. and Fahey, D., 2016. The many faces of a rebel group: the Allied Democratic Forces in the Democratic Republic of Congo. International Affairs, 92(5), pp.1189-1206.

Tull, D., 2016. United Nations peacekeeping and the use of force: the Intervention Brigade in Congo is no model for success (No. 20/2016). SWP Comments.

Tull, D.M., 2018. The limits and unintended consequences of UN peace enforcement: the Force Intervention Brigade in the DR Congo. International Peacekeeping, 25(2), pp.167-190.

UN Security Council. (2023). Report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. United Nations. https://www.un.org/securitycouncil/content/reports-secretary-general

UNHCR. (2023). DR Congo emergency. United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees. https://www.unhcr.org/emergencies/dr-congo

United Nations General Assembly. (2020). Resolution adopted by the General Assembly on COVID-19 response (A/RES/74/286). https://undocs.org/A/RES/74/286

United Nations Human Rights Council. (2020). Report of the Special Rapporteur on contemporary forms of slavery, including its causes and consequences, Tomoya Obokata (A/HRC/45/50). Retrieved from https://undocs.org/A/HRC/45/50

United Nations Security Council. (2022). Presidential Statement on Central African Republic (S/PRST/2022/4). https://undocs.org/S/PRST/2022/4

United Nations Security Council. (2023). Resolution 2717 (on the situation in the Central African Republic) (S/RES/2717). https://undocs.org/S/RES/2717(2023)

United Nations Security Council. (2024). Report on the Security Situation in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. UN.

United Nations Security Council. (2024). Resolution 2765 (on the situation in the Central African Republic) (S/RES/2765). https://undocs.org/S/RES/2765(2024)

United Nations. (2020). Human rights situation in the Central African Republic (A/HRC/45/50). https://undocs.org/A/HRC/45/50

United Nations. (2021). Report of the Independent Expert on the situation of human rights in the Central African Republic (A/HRC/48/47). https://undocs.org/A/HRC/48/47

United Nations. (2021). Situation of human rights in the Central African Republic (A/HRC/48/28). https://undocs.org/A/HRC/48/28

Van Dijk, L.A., 2024. The Unintended Consequences of International Engagement in Conflict Areas: A Study on the Effect of the Eu CSDP Missions on the Social Contract in the Democratic Republic of Congo (Master's thesis, The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill).

Väyrynen, R., 2019. From conflict resolution to conflict transformation: a critical review. The new agenda for peace research, pp.135-160.

Vircoulon, t. And lagrange, m.a., 2016. Reflections on 17 years of un presence in the democratic republic of congo.

Vlassenroot, K. and Arnould, V., 2016. EU Policies in the Democratic Republic of Congo: Try and Fail?. Londres: Security in transition, pp.1-22.

Wallensteen, P., 2018. Understanding conflict resolution. Sage.

Williams, P. D. (2013). Fighting for peace in Somalia: AMISOM's role in a complex conflict. Oxford University Press.

World Bank. (2022). Poverty, Displacement and Social Conflict: The DRC Context. World Bank Report.

Zartman, I. W. (2022). Preventive Negotiation: Avoiding Conflict Escalation. New York: Rowman & Littlefield.

Zondi, s., 2022. The role of peace missions in sustaining peace in the democratic republic of the congo.

APPENDIX 1

See attached link for Appendix 1:

https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/12P7KFvuw0f5JbllByPVhb1aEmtCEEwsK/edit?gid=1832870618#gid=1832870618

APPENDIX 2

Link to Appendix 2: https://docs.google.com/document/d/1Nt0Id1WGdGrvZMca1-IVEUQlCL3NHL4_/edit

APPENDIX 2