INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS, FROM STATES TO INDIVIDUALS: A LOOK AT THE UNITED NATIONS AND HUMAN SECURITY IN SOUTH SUDAN

Daniel Mendes Aguiar Santos
Programa de Pós-Graduação em Ciências Militares
Instituto Meira Mattos
Escola de Comando e Estado-Maior do Exército
Rio de Janeiro – Rio de Janeiro – Brasil

Abstract: The objective of this article is to present the International Relations swing towards an ethnocentric vision, under the concept of the Human Security, and to analyze the humanitarian crisis in South Sudan in this light. Methodologically, a qualitative perspective issued, combining the documentary and bibliographical research to delineate the theoretical frame about the protection of civilians. Next, an inductive approach, supported by the case study technique, is applied, examining the humanitarian situation in South Sudan (2011-2017). In this discussion, it was verified that, in the contemporary arena of International Relations, the individual happened to divide the focus with the states, in the light of the concept of Human Security. In the case of South Sudan, there was a scenario outlined by multiple challenges – non-observance of human rights, economic weakness, institutional frailty, and state lapses – where the UN has sought to develop a comprehensive and resilient model for the protection of the south Sudanese population.

Key-words: International Relations. Human Security. South Sudan.

Introduction
With the end of the Cold War, a new world order has arisen, permeated by diffuse threats, which provoked a process that has been fragilising the security of the human being and therefore, leading to the research of new perspectives and models for security (WILLIAMS, 2008). Specifically, in the period from 1989 to 2014, the African Continent ranked first as the most violent region in the world, marked by political and humanitarian disasters in: Somalia (1992), Rwanda (1994) and Sierra Leone (1998). In such occasions, the failure of the United Nations (UN) in provide the
protection of civilians have intensified the debate on humanitarian intervention, highlighting the polemic about the principle of nonintervention and the limits of national sovereignty (CHAZAN et al., 1999).

Following this discussion, in 1998, the issue took shape in the UN Secretary-General's report “The causes of conflict and the promotion of durable peace and sustainable development in Africa”, in which Kofi Atta Annan (who served as Secretary-General of the United Nations from January 1997 to December 2006) stressed the protection of civilians (PoC) as an imperative humanitarian assistance in the scope of actions to mitigate conflicts. Already in 2001, with the terrorist attacks of September 11th, the topic about when and how the international community should intervene to protect civilians gained strength (MACDERMOTT & HANSSEN, 2010).

Under the light of this scenario, with more than two million deaths and thousands of internally displaced persons, after a conflict that lasted more than five decades, South Sudan gained independence on July 9th, 2011 (MARU, 2014). In this context, the UN Mission in Sudan (UNMIS), established in 2005, paved the way to the holding of a referendum, in January 2011, when the inhabitants of the South decided to separate, legitimizing the birth of the Republic of South Sudan. It was the climax of an UN-brokered process of negotiations between the Sudanese Government and the South People Liberation Movement/Army (SPLM/A), which captained the aspirations of the people of the southern part of the Sudan (OLOWU, 2011).

Thus, this article has the aim to present the International Relations swing towards an ethnocentric vision, under the concept of the Human Security, and to analyze the humanitarian crisis in South Sudan in this light. For this, the research has five sections: Introduction; The International Relations and the Human Security; The current demands of UN Peacekeeping Missions; The call for the protection of civilians in South Sudan; and Conclusion.

In methodological terms, the perspective used in the study was qualitative. In this context, the collection procedure was based on documental and bibliographical research techniques to obtain the necessary impressions, in order to construct the discussion of the Human Security and the Protection of Civilians. In addition, an inductive approach supported the case study technique, with the focus in South Sudan, from 2011 to 2017.

To substantiate the study, primary sources came in the form of UN documents (Security Council Resolutions, Secretary General Reports etc.). To do so, the documents were collected at the following websites: Security Council Report (SC, 2017); United Nations Documents (UNITED NATIONS, 2017); United Nations Development Program (UNDP, 2017); Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Assistance (OCHA); and United Nations Mission in the Republic of South Sudan (UNMISS). In the same way, a simultaneous search by secondary sources was carried
out, gathering a pool of periodicals and articles indexed in the following databases: SAGE Journals, Scielo and Providing for Peacekeeping (PROVINDINGFOR PEACEKEEPING.ORG).

The search strategy employed the descriptors: International Relations; Human Security; United Nations; South Sudan; and Protection of Civilians. Afterwards, a review of the documents and articles was made, making possible the decision about their absorption to the scope of this research, in the light of Human Security Perspective. As inclusion criteria, studies published in English, Spanish and Portuguese, from 1994 to the present, were chosen, considering that 1994 was the year of the official recognition of the concept of Human Security by the United Nations.

1. The International Relations and the Human Security
Since the end of WW II, debates about international security have instigated the expansion of the International Security Studies (ISS), subfield of International Relations. Its historical genesis was in the debates about how to protect the State from internal and external threats, differentiating itself from the Studies of War and Military History by connecting several branches of research that came to influence the dynamics of security (BAYLIS & WIRTZ, 2012).

In the 1990s, the end of bipolar friction gave way to a scenario where conflicts began to transcend geographical space and began to be triggered by virtual, cybernetic and social frontiers (KISSINGER, 2015). Thus, in the face of such complexity, Realism and Liberalism have come under criticism because of their overreaching focus on material issues and failure to pay due attention to human, psychological and subjective issues (TSAI, 2009).

In this context, the German author Alexander Wendt published the article “Anarchy is what States make of it: the social construction of Power Politics” (1992), laying the foundations of Constructivism. Wendt proposed that social coexistence would change the “agents” (States), which cannot be considered as absolute truths. Thus, “ideas” and “norms” would play a fundamental role in shaping the reality of the “agents” and, consequently, in defining their identities and interests.

Constructivism, unlike Liberalism and Realism, is not a political theory in itself. The constructivist vision seeks to create a bridge between the philosophies of social science positivist/materialist and idealist/interpretivist, adopting a mediational position. Thus, its objective is to provide theoretical and empirical explanations about social institutions and social change, observing the combined effect of agents and social structures, in order to promote a sociological approach to international relations (ADLER, 1999).

According to Wendt (1992), power is mainly constituted by cultural ideas and contexts, whereas the threats would be constructed rather than natural. Such view is made explicit in the title of his article: “Anarchy is what States make of it”, characterizing that the concept is socially constructed. In this understanding, the States could meet at the same time: personal identity; the
corporate identity (of social bias); functional identity (relative to others); and collective identity (combining corporate and functional identity). In sum, the way States define their interests depends on how they define themselves in relation to others.

Adler (1999) identifies four groups of constructivists, demarcated by the distinction of their methodological approaches. First, the "modernists", who believe that once avoiding ontological extremism, one should not exclude the use of standardised methods alongside interpretive ones. In this group, two vectors are distinguished: state-centric modernists, which includes Wendt (1992); and those that identify key actors in international relations, such as nations and ethnic groups, as emerging categories rather than rectified categories. Second, the group that uses the insights of law and international jurisprudence to show the impact of international relations on reasoning and persuasion models and rule-driven behavior. The third group emphasizes narrative knowledge, in particular, gender-based perspectives, the actions of specific agents (such as social movements) and the development of security interests. Finally, the fourth group embraces the techniques developed by the post moderns, using Foucault's Genealogical Method or discussing the relativization of sovereignty instigated by the de-legitimization of non-western polities by western states.

In particular, Wendt (1992) considers the States as the main unit in international politics, even in the face of the rise of non-state actors, since changes in the system would only be established by States. However, it perceives the State as a “historical truth”, which may not be truer in the future. Thus, the author proposes the occurrence of anarchy under three visions: Hobbesian, Lockean and Kantian, implying in the respective perceptions of: enemy, rival and friend. Consequently, the international norms would be delineated from these identities, leading to a process of acceptance and later legitimation of the rules, in accordance with the main trend and perceptions.

Under this view, is possible to exemplify the legitimation of certain instruments: The International Tribunal for the Law of the Sea (1996); the International Criminal Court (2002); and the ad hoc International Tribunals established by the UN Security Council for deliberations on crimes committed in Rwanda and in the former Yugoslavia (ACCIOLY; SILVA; CASELLA, 2012).

Advancing in the light of International Relations, the Copenhagen School (i.e., an academic school of thought originated, in 1983, by Barry Buzan’s book “People, States and Fear: The National Security problem in International Relations”, emphasizing the social aspects of security) has perceived security as an act of positioning, highlighting the tension between: the objective conception of security (based on the absence or presence of concrete threats) and in its subjective conception (characterized by the sensation of feeling threatened or not). Deepening this discussion, Buzan & Hansen (2009) identify five forces that, currently, have interfered in the thematic of the
security: the great powers; the events of great historical/world range; the technology; the institutionalization; and the dynamics of academic debate. By turn, a State, seeking to maintain the status of security, in the face of an emergency, would seek the right to use any means to neutralize a certain threat.

In particular, Jackson-Preece (2011) observes three approaches to security (Figure 1). First, the proponents of the “National Security” paradigm, more closely linked to the realists, assuming that they live in a world in which States are both sources of security and the main threats to security. Second, the proponents of the paradigm of “International Security”, more related to rationalists, perceiving a world characterised by the mixture of conflict and cooperation. Finally, the proponents of the paradigm of “Human Security”, linked to evolutionists, considering the security of the individual as a central issue in international relations and not as a merely domestic issue.

Figure 1

Model of Security Paradigms

Source: the author, based on the information quoted in this article.

By turn, Herz (2010) argues that National Security is still a benchmark, once it is at the heart of the debate in which the military capability would be the guarantor of security in an anarchic system. On the other hand, the discussion about International Security has widened during the last fifteen years, bringing the perception of new threats such as international organized crime, catastrophic terrorism, environmental crimes, crises of human migration, intrastate conflicts, etc. Thus, such issues, which inevitably spill over the borders, have the potential to weaken the States, but especially their individuals, who are integrated into a globalised world (DAHL-ERIKSEN, 2007).

Under the light of this scenario, the concept of Human Security was introduced in 1994, by the UN Global Development Report, highlighting two premises: “freedom from fear” and “freedom from want”, as evidenced in the preamble of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948). In
this sense, the concept was designed in the light of seven dimensions of security: physical, community, economical, food, sanitary, environmental and political (PARIS, 2001).

Therefore, the Human Security is a comprehensive approach “beyond territorial defense, national interests and universal nuclear deterrence to include concerns and the prevention of conflicts [...] crucially global cooperative effort to eradicate poverty and underdevelopment” (UNITED NATIONS, 1994, p.22). The concept goes beyond the security against violence, demanding answers: people-centered; integrated; specific to the treated dimension; and prevention-oriented (Figure 2).

**Figure 2**

**Threats to the Human Security**

![Figure 2]


In short, Human Security has shifted the focus from the State to the individual, bringing economic, social, ecological and cultural issues to be perceived as sources capable of producing threats. As a result, there was an enlargement of security awareness, becoming understood as “the alleviation of threats to cherished values; especially those which, if left unchecked, threaten the survival of the particular referent object in the near future” (WILLIAMS, 2008, p. 05).

2. **The current demands of UN Peace-Keeping Missions**

2.1 **The Protection of Civilians (PoC) as a comprehensive approach**

The traditional idea of protection of civilians was born in the scope of the horrors occurred in wars in the 19th and 20th Centuries, being understood as the principle that non-combatants should be preserved from the violence of war. This concept, also called “Narrow PoC”, can be found in
International Humanitarian Law (IHL), in particular in the Geneva Conventions (1949) and its additional protocols (1977) (BREAKEY et al., 2012).

In the 1990s, the atrocities occurred in Rwanda (1994) and Srebrenica (1995) instigated the rapid development of the former regime called Protection of Civilians in Armed Conflict. Consequently, in 1999, Canada raised the issue of PoC on the UN Security Council, fostering the discussion about a new approach to the protection of civilians. In this sense, the two-stressed genocide were crucial for the two PoC landmarks: the “Secretary-General's first report to the Security Council on the protection of civilians in armed Conflict” (1999) and the “Report of the Panel on UN Peace Operations - Brahim Report” (2000) (BREAKEY et al., 2012).

Thus, in 1999, the UN Mission in Sierra Leone was mandated to protect civilians from the imminent threat of physical violence. Since then, the mandates of peacekeeping operations have received the inclusion of directives about PoC, which have been increasingly prioritized. Thus, the Security Council has invoked the Chapter VII of the UN Charter, entitled “Action with respect to threats to the peace, breaches of the peace, and acts of aggression”, to leverage the development of mandates that include the protection of civilians (BADESCU & BERGHOLM, 2009).

Furthermore, in addition to the military component, different actors started to deliver actions in support of PoC, as the case of the humanitarian agencies which operated in Bosnia (1995), in response to the food shortages and infrastructure rupture. This new perspective on the protection of civilians was titled “Broad PoC” and coincided with the reform of the UN humanitarian system, prompting the formation of mechanisms to ensure the PoC as a key aspect of the humanitarian response. Thus, in 2005, the Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC), forum of the UN humanitarian partners and other agencies, established an interagency model called “Cluster Approach” (Figure 3). In this model, responsibilities should be assigned to the lead agencies for an effective response to humanitarian emergencies (FRANCIS; POPOVSKI; SAMPFORD, 2012).

Figure 3 - Interagency Model for Cluster Approach
Moreover, the Global Protection Cluster was set up, chaired by the UN High Commissioner for Refugees, considering that the influx of refugees, the occurrence of IDPs and humanitarian crises can occur in complex emergencies, in which the State is unable or is not willing to protect civilians. In such situations, the response must integrate national, regional and international efforts. To this end, the IASC has an instrumental role in defining civil-military collaboration in favor of PoC.

By turn, the UN Department of Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO) and Department of Field Support (DFS) launched in 2008, the document entitled “UN DPKO and DFS Principles and Guidelines”. The document identified the PoC as the central task to sustain the peace, requiring coordination between: the peacekeeping mission components (civil, military and police); UN humanitarian agencies; and NGOs. In 2009, through a study commissioned by the DPKO and the OCHA, the Report of Secretary General about PoC was consolidated. The document underlined five challenges to be addressed: to ensure compliance with obligations under international law (especially regarding the conduct of hostilities); to reinforce compliance with these obligations by non-state armed groups; to strengthen the role of peacekeeping missions; to improve humanitarian access; and to increase accountability for humanitarian violations (WILLIAMS, 2013).

In 2010, advancing the operational guidance for the implementation of protection of civilians’ mandates, the DPKO/DFS launched the “PoC Operational Concept”, establishing the model called “Three-Tier Approach”. According to this model, the peacekeeping operations should structure their strategies, synergistically, in three tiers: protection through dialogue/political engagement; physical protection; and protection by establishing a stable environment. Under this view, of all the UN peacekeeping missions in operation in 2012, eight held the mandate for PoC against imminent threat of physical violence, including the mission in South Sudan (LILLY, 2012).
Finally, in 2015, it was issued the “DPKO/DFS Policy on the Protection of Civilians in UN Peacekeeping Missions”, calling for the various ongoing UN operations to customize their PoC strategies. Thus, the missions’ strategies should be collimated to “PoC Operational Concept”, applying the “Three-Tier Approach”, observing the necessary adjustments to each conflictive spectrum aspects and caveats - political, social, economic and cultural.

2.2 The Responsibility to Protect (R2P) as a political option

The debate about the Responsibility to Protect (R2P) was also promoted, in 1999, to clarify the controversy over so-called humanitarian intervention. Kofi Annan claimed on the General Assembly to prevent a disaster such as the Rwandan genocide (1994) from occurring and, thus, to move for a consensus on the issue of humanitarian intervention. In response, the Canadian Government led an independent action called the International Commission on Intervention and State Sovereignty (ICISS) and, in 2001, issued the report “The Responsibility to Protect”. The document explored the gap between the practice of international behavior, on the need to respect the State sovereignty, versus the State practice during the 1990s, stressing the limits of State sovereignty in the light of the necessity to protect the Human Rights (BADESCU & BERGHOLM, 2009).

The report proposed a new insight, shifting the focus from State law (right to intervene versus right to territorial integrity) to the focus on: the rights of individuals, the responsibility of States and, ultimately, the responsibility of international community to protect. Therefore, R2P’s central proposition is that State sovereignty demands responsibility and therefore each state has a responsibility to protect its citizens from mass murder and other serious violations. In this context, if a State is unable or unwilling to fulfill this function, it has its sovereignty revoked and, consequently, R2P falls on international actors, who will have to consider a range of options to act: prevention, support and the responsibility to intervene (FRANCIS; POPOVSKI; SAMPFORD, 2012).

Already in 2005, at the UN World Summit, an initial consensus was achieved - R2P would emphasize the primary responsibility of each State to provide protection. Therefore, only when national authorities fail to protect their citizens, does the responsibility of international protection apply. On this point, the “World Summit Outcome Document (WSOD)” points out that, for the activation of international R2P, a collective action will be taken through the Security Council, in light of the UN Charter, including Chapter VII, case by case and, still with the cooperation of regional organizations (BADESCU & BERGHOLM, 2009).
Finally, in 2009, consolidating the issue, the General Assembly issued the Resolution 63/108, stating that the R2P applies to four specific atrocities: genocide, ethnic cleansing, crimes against humanity and war crimes (UNITED NATIONS, 2009 b).

Figure 4
Perception of the spectrum of the PoC and R2P

At this point, it is necessary to make clear the distinction between PoC and R2P (Figure 4). The PoC agenda is broader than R2P's framework, as it involves measures to protect the dignity and security of individuals under threat of violence, while R2P refers to the need to protect in the face of specific mass atrocities. On the other hand, the spectrum of application of PoC becomes more restrictive than that of R2P, since it is delimited by situations of armed conflict, whereas R2P focuses on the prevention of mass atrocities, regardless of the occurrence of armed conflict. Thus, “Broad PoC” has the broadest spectrum and is applicable to all situations of mass violence, including both armed conflicts and crimes of atrocities. By turn, “Narrow PoC” has a limited spectrum since it operates under the International Humanitarian Law, only to cases of armed conflict. Finally, R2P has a reduced spectrum, since it only applies in cases of atrocity crimes (both in armed conflicts and in peacetime) (BREAKEY et al., 2012).

3. The call for the protection of civilians in South Sudan

3.1 The post-independence scenario: skirmishes and threats

In July 9th 2011, with the independence of South Sudan, UNMIS demobilized its headquarters in Khartoum (Capital of Sudan) and the SPLM/A has become the basis of the young government in the South. Since then, the youngest UN member covers an area of 658,000 square kilometers, bringing together a population of about 12 million, organized in 10 states, with its capital established in the City of Juba, in the Central Equatoria State (Figure 5). However, the young
government has encountered numerous challenges to consolidate its legitimacy and thus provide security and development to the south sudanese citizens (MARU, 2014).

**Figure 5**
South Sudan Map

![South Sudan Map](image)

Source: University of Texas Library, South Sudan Maps (2016).

Even after independence, the challenges to stabilization and development of the region multiplied, both linked to the skirmishes with the Sudan, and from new domestic conflict dynamics. In this sense, initially, the Government of Khartoum made relations with the Government of Juba. However, an agenda filled with points of friction, such as – border demarcation; use of hydrographic networks; commercialization of oil; and external debt – eroded the initial understanding and led the two countries to recurrent frictions. Thus, in order to support the flowering of South Sudan, especially with regard to security conditions, a new UN Mission was activated, the United Nations Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS) (UNITED NATIONS, 2011b).

On this view, it should be recalled that “the link between the protection of civilians and peacekeeping mandates is central [...] the protection of civilians is a critical component of sustainable political peace” (HOLT; TAYLOR; KELLY, 2009, p. 2). Thus, UNMISS established a multidimensional structure, based on the integration of civil, military and police components. The, Chapter VII of the UN Charter equipped the mandate, establishing the possibility of using force to enable the PoC under threat of physical violence, particularly when the Government of South Sudan was not providing such security (UNITED NATIONS, 1945, 2011b; 2013a; 2014; 2016).

In order to operationalize these objectives, the PoC Strategy was implemented, based on the unification of efforts, both in the training, planning and in the interagency actions of UNMISS components. Moreover, the strategy streamlined the actors from the Protection Cluster deployed in
the country: United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), World Food Program (WFP), World Health Organization (WHO), International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) and other agencies.

At the same time, in the post-independence, there were clashes initiated by the Government of Khartoum, on the northern border of South Sudan, near the Abyei region (Figure 5), which delimitation remains pending in the face of disputes over the oil reserves on the site. The disagreement is fraught with controversy, as the referendum did not occur in Abyei. It should be noted that the region is inhabited, seasonally, by nomadic tribes sympathetic to the Sudan, fact that has being one of the impasses about the acceptability of their vote in the referendum.

Under this deadlock, the Sudanese Armed Forces occupied Abyei Province and clashed with the SPLA units that were stationed in the region, immediately affecting in the influx of thousands of inhabitants of this area into South Sudan (FREITAS, 2013). Consequently, in the face of a new breach to peace, in June 2011, the UN Security Council, via Resolution 1990, established a security force dedicated for Abyei, the United Nations Interim Security Forces for Abyei (UNISFA), with an initial deployment forecast for six months. However, until this moment, UNISFA has remained active and the conditions for the referendum in Abyei are not yet a consensus (UNITED NATIONS, 2011a).

In the economic area, South Sudan has faced a unique challenge, linked to the commercialization of oil and gas in its territory. With the independence, the country inherited 70% of its oil reserves from the former Sudan territory. However, the pipelines responsible for draining the extracted oil are Sudanese and cut through the Sudan until reaching the ports in the Red Sea. As a result, the two parties have been trying to negotiate a deal on trade conditions to enable South Sudanese oil to be continuously disposed via Sudanese pipelines (OLOWU, 2011).

Notwithstanding, political and military aspects arising from the lack of consensus in the demarcation of the border and from the skirmishes between both military forces have created obstacles for a solution to the oil issue. Among the main obstacles are the numerous losses suffered by Sudan in view of the retaliation undertaken by the SPLA against the several sudanese refineries, for the attacks launched by the Sudanese Armed Forces in Abyei. Moreover, the rates proposed by Sudan to enable the commercial oil’s flow have been consecutively discussed by South Sudan. Therefore, a sustainable deal seems to be far from being reached, weakening the youngest African Nation in the scope of its revenues and, consequently, creating a frustration in its population.

In addition to the previous aspects, the psychosocial perspective leads to the fact that Sudan was culturally consolidated under the influence of a Sunni Arab majority. Differently, South Sudan joined a population of hundreds of ethnic groups, with their own dialects and traditions (HOLT,
In this context, the Dinka ethnic group is the majority in South Sudan, in particular, in the Jonglei region (served with extensive reserves of water and land). This largest ethnic group, constituting about 20% of the population is mainly agro-pastoral, practicing cattle grazing in riparian field, during the dry season, and planting millet and other grains in fixed camps, during the rainy season. On the other hand, some cattle-raising tribes, of nomadic customs (searching for the best pasture for the animals), have come into conflict with the Dinka for the natural resources. This recurrence of this situation, after the independence, has also intensified the influx of internally displaced people (FREITAS, 2013).

Finally, in the pool of the psychosocial aspects, it is necessary to consider the corruption as a cross-cutting threat. In this sense, it is identified as the biggest impediment to development, mainly, observing that “over 90% of the population lives on less than a dollar a day, more than 1.5 million people are currently receiving food aid and 97% of the population does not have access adequate sanitation” (GARCÍA, 2010, p.15). Therefore, this spectrum has been posing a challenge to the emergence and solidification of an African State born in the 21st Century.

### 3.2 The spillover of the domestic violence: a new conflict

Even with the window of opportunity gained with the independence, after five decades of civil war against Khartoum, South Sudan was encompassed by domestic tensions that led to a deterioration of its internal security. Such situation was instigated by economic disputes, struggles over government representativeness and political-military frictions. Such internal crisis has been fueled by poverty, lack of basic infrastructure, recurrent intertribal violence and corruption, which since independence has tainted the embryonic institutions of the nation (OLOWU, 2011).

In the field of domestic politics, the independence instigated debate about how the composition of the country's government should be delineated, at the federal level and within the ten states. The issue sparked a discussion about the criteria of representativeness and the electoral system that should be adopted by the nation. In this context, there was a continuing political dispute between the two largest tribes of South Sudan, the Dinka and the Nuer. The escalation of this dispute led to a sequence of frictions between troops loyal to President Salva Kiir (Dinka) and Vice-President Riek Machar (Nuer). At the climax of this dispute, in July 2013, there was a political break between Salva Kiir and Riek Machar, who was removed from office by the President. As a result, by November 2013, the internal violence arisen, and more than 12,000 civilians sought protection (LILLY, 2014).

Consequently, such situation led to the fragmentation of the Armed Forces into two opposing factions, polarized in support of the President and the former Vice-President. From this episode, the conflict between the Dinka and the Nuer escalated, reverberating in the deterioration of the security
and implicating in a huge influx of refugees (Figure 6). Then, in December 2013, the conflict, that started in the capital, was spread to the main cities of the country and spilled over in violent clashes, driving the population to seek protection in the various UN bases (ROLANDSEN et al., 2015).

**Figure 6**

*Refugees and asylum-seekers, post and pre-Dec 2013*

![Refugees and asylum-seekers, post and pre-Dec 2013](source: United Nations (2017c).)

With the sudden deterioration of the security and the chaos established in the country, UNMISS was led to reinforce the strength of the military component. Therefore, in December 2013, Security Council Resolution 2132 approved the temporary addition of 5,500 soldiers, reaching 12,500 troops in the military component (UNITED NATIONS, 2013a).

Advancing, in 2014, the Security Council approved the Resolution 2155, by which ratified the actions under Chapter VII, renewing the mandate for another year. Such resolution acknowledged the tentative negotiations between the Government of South Sudan and the opposition in order to de-escalate the conflict, which resulted in agreements signed in January and May 2014. Moreover, the resolution stressed the need for the immediate implementation of the agreements, expressing the readiness to use all appropriate measures against those that threatened the country's peace, security and stability (UNITED NATIONS, 2014).

Thus, in August 2015, after 20 months of violence, the parties signed a peace agreement, followed by a round of negotiations brokered by the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD), that is, a Trade Bloc of eight countries based in East Africa, headquartered in Djibouti and that emerged in 1986 with the aim of coordinating the efforts of member countries to combat drought and desertification.

At the same time, there was international pressure from the UN Security Council, calling for a definitive solution to the internal conflict. Since then, some violations have occurred, but the
continuous international pressure has enabled both sides to remain vigilant of their commitment for peace (CENTER FOR CIVILIANS IN CONFLICT, 2015).

Nevertheless, in July 2016, there was an intense wave of clashes in Juba, including attacks against civilians, as well as against UN personnel and material, leading to an investigation implemented by the United Nations Secretary-General. Such situation points out how sensitive is the security environment in South Sudan, weakened by clashes between SPLA factions, implying in all kinds of threats to civilians and, ultimately, undermining the chances of development for the youngest African Nation (UNITED NATIONS, 2016).

As of January 2017, the total number of internal displaced people (IDP) in search of a safe refuge at the UNMISS bases, already totaled more than 224,000 civilians. Thus, taken by this complex scenario, South Sudan has revealed a unique challenge, both for the protection of civilians and for the actions to provide the achievement of the minimum conditions of human security (UNITED NATIONS MISSION IN SOUTH SUDAN, 2017a).

Despite all the threats and skirmishes that were presented, UNMISS, under a comprehensive approach, has been developing the PoC, via the “Three-tier Approach”. It has considered the socio-economic characteristics, as well as the political and cultural peculiarities of South Sudan, to promote the integration of the mission components in order to deliver the most effective response. In this way, the Protection of Civilians Strategy, has sought to integrate: the political approach (through high level dialogue and mediation); the military approach (through kinetic, preventive and reactive actions); and the humanitarian approach (through civilian agencies for basic needs) (COPELAND, 2012).

However, the challenges in South Sudan are tremendous, and UNMISS has to harmonize its resources and possibilities in the light of the continuous call for the protection of civilians. In parallel, it’s necessary that the young government prioritizes the protection of its people, taking in to account all the dimensions of Human Security. Thus, is imperative that the Government of South Sudan shows its commitment, either to share the power in a transparent way and to implement anti-corruption strategies (RIAK, 2013). Otherwise, the effects of corruption may exacerbate instability, violence and national frustration, eroding the credibility of the young institutions (CHAYES, 2015).

Conclusion

After the analysis, it was possible to verify that the debate within the International Relations has instigated a shift from a State centric vision to a shared vision, with the individual been part of the focus. In fact, it culminates in the Human Security approach, which has a broader awareness of the security and presents a potential instrument to cope the effects of the contemporary threats, fostering the agenda of PoC and R2P, leaded by the UN.
In analysing the call for the protection of civilians in South Sudan, it is clear that the whole problem should not be reduced to a perception of dispute for power among the various tribes of South Sudan. The situation is complex and difficult to express by an equation, due to the scope of the challenges to human security in the country, which combines a plethora of social, political and economic threats. Moreover, this African Nation, has been under the effects of disputes between political-military factions, successive wars, and humanitarian crises. Ultimately, the oil resources present in South Sudan combined with its fragility as State creates a unique opportunity to various international, state or non-state, actors to discharge geopolitical strategies on the area.

In this context, although independent, many aspects are needed to stabilize the security spectrum in South Sudan: a continuous agenda to ensure peace; a political-economic balance; a sustainable system to provide health; and a setting of services coherent with the needs of the population. In this way, the non-management of these aspects accentuates the insecurity of the south sudanese citizens and implies a tremendous influx of civilians in search of protection (IDPs and refugees), compromising the human security of the population.

In face of this situation, the PoC Strategy promoted by UN seeks to provide a comprehensive approach, via the integration, either of the components of the mission (civilian, military and police) and the other UN agencies (UN Country Team). In this view, the UNMISS has been striving to streamline all the efforts needed to address the complexity of the threats that make the South Sudanese population fragile and, ultimately, impair the development of the country.

Finally, for the success of South Sudan as a nation in the 21st Century, its population’s security shall be set in the center of its purpose as a State. In this process, the Human Security approach and the operationalisation of PoC are crucial to be addressed: the threats related to physical violence perpetrated by national and international actors; the vulnerabilities arising from non-observance of human rights, economic weakness, institutional frailty and state lapses

References


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