

GENOCIDE PREVENTION IN THE 21<sup>ST</sup> CENTURY:  
THE CENTRAL AFRICAN REPUBLIC

by

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The purpose of this research is to explore how genocide prevention has progressed in the 21<sup>st</sup> century with an in-depth examination of the crisis in the Central African Republic (CAR). The goal is to show that tools created to prompt prevention and reaction to genocide have been effective in particular in the CAR but that the frameworks through which the international community addresses genocide must be enlarged for true effectiveness in the long run. This has been done by examining the different international and African legal and institutional structures to handle situations devolving into genocide. The first phase of the project involves an analysis of the mechanisms to prevent genocide and how these played out in the CAR. Upon examination of the current situation, it becomes clear that contemporary instruments to prevent genocide have truly progressed but that they are somewhat inadequate for long term visions of peace, stability and security. The final phase involves the search for different ways of framing genocide prevention. Through showing that genocide prevention in the CAR has been effective, this research highlights the importance of continuously adapting our methods of prevention to create durable visions of peace.

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## Acronyms and Abbreviations

APB	Atrocity Prevention Board
APRD	People's Army for the Restoration of Democracy
ASF	African Standby Force
AU	African Union
CAR	Central African Republic
CSDP	Common Security and Defense Policy
CEWS	Continental Early Warning System
CPJP	Convention of Patriots for Justice and Peace
DDR	Demobilization and reintegration programs
ECOWAS	Economic Community of West African States
EU	European Union
EUFOR RCA	European operational force in the CAR
EEAS	European External Action Service
FOMAC	La Force Multinationale de l'Afrique Centrale
<i>Genocide Convention</i>	Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of Genocide
ICC	International Criminal court
INGO	International Non-Governmental organization
MISCA	African-led International Support Mission to the Central African Republic
MINUSCA	Multidimensional Integrated UN mission for the stability in the CAR
MSF	Doctors Without Borders
OAU	Organization of African Unity
PanWise	Panel of the Wise
PKO	Peacekeeping operation
PSC	African Union Peace and Security Council
REC	Regional Economic Communities
R2P	Responsibility to Protect Doctrine
UDFU	Union of Democratic Forces for Unity
UN	United Nations
<i>UN Charter</i>	Charter of the United Nations
UNSC	United Nations Security Council

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## **Introduction**

The Central African Republic (CAR) crisis in 2014 was labeled by Global Humanitarian Assistance as the “worst crisis you’ve never heard of”. In early 2013, the peace deals of the Bush War in the CAR collapsed and with it, the whole country. Muslim rebel groups united under the Séléka fought viciously against the established government in order to take power. The Séléka adopted a strategy of extreme violence against civilians and, in response, the predominantly Christian group of self-organized Central Africans formed the Anti-Balaka. The latter retaliated with just as much violence and brutality. In a matter of months, the already weak and impoverished CAR disintegrated into chaos and anarchy. Political structures dissolved. The economy broke down. Civil services were no longer available. Millions were displaced and thousands were barbarically massacred in just a matter of months. All the conditions and factors that could cause genocide were met. However, full-scale genocide did not happen or has yet to take place in the CAR. Why? Is it possible that a series of intentional and regular interventions can effectively thwart modern day genocide?

The 20th century is remembered as a period of incredible violence in particular because of the Holocaust and the coining of the term “genocide” which aims to reflect the most extreme type of violence. Raphael Lemkin dedicated his life to define this concept and have it recognized by the international system. The international community adopted the word and established structures, laws and tribunals that would carry out the international community’s commitment to never allow “the worst of the worst” to happen again. These efforts exemplified the global willingness to change the approach human society has towards extreme atrocities. Despite these admirable efforts,

genocide is still a reality of the 21st century. The need to discuss failures in preventing genocide is crucial in order to avoid the morbid mistakes of the past. Yet it is necessary also to analyze small victories and successes to replicate the techniques that have saved human lives and the integrity of humanity. The tools created and implemented by the international community have significant weaknesses but their powers and achievements often go unrecognized. Optimistic progress has been made in the domain of genocide prevention in particular during this past decade. Efforts to curtail genocide in the CAR deserve greater attention and recognition in the literature of genocide prevention.

This study on genocide prevention in the Central African Republic (CAR) was undertaken to explore the advances of atrocity prevention in the 21st century and frame the analysis of genocide prevention in an active and positive manner. It will show how existent tools to prevent genocide can be effective, how the implementation of those tools is possible for constructive change and how a shift of framework in the 21st century can prevent genocide in the long-run. The management of the crisis in the CAR demonstrated the outstanding potential of existent legislation and systems to appropriately avert genocide. The story of the CAR may be considered a relative success. However, conflict is rarely resolved and more often transformed. Consequently, a part of this research project will also examine how innovation and a shift in conflict analysis framework can affect sustainable genocide prevention in the Central African region in the future. The goal of this thesis project is to demonstrate that tools created to trigger prevention and reaction to genocide have been effective in

particular in the CAR but that the frameworks through which the international community addresses genocide must be enlarged for the sustainability of the intervention.

Existent literature critiques past situations of genocide using an ethical framework based on the model of the international state system. Francis Deng's piece, *Sovereignty As Responsibility*, is a major contribution in this outlook on genocide prevention. Leo Kuper and Raphael Lemkin are other key figures that framed genocide in terms of ethics and human security in an international state system. Research evaluates tools of genocide prevention and highlights situations of failure such as the Holocaust, Rwanda, Cambodia and ex-Yugoslavia in hopes of ameliorating future interventions. However, academic writing reflecting on somewhat successful interventions in Africa such as the one in Burundi, Monrovia and even Kenya are rare (Lyman). Those who study these cases are often academics in the field of African studies and hardly ever those who are in genocide studies. Interdisciplinary analysis of genocide is relatively uncommon particularly in the field of history (Schaller). For this reason, this thesis project will take an interdisciplinary approach to the subject of genocide prevention.

This thesis project aims to adopt a different outlook while analyzing the issues at hand in a more proactive and holistic way. The situation in the CAR must be considered in a regional context. Categorization however should go beyond that of states. The different demographic, social, political, economic and geographical layers are fundamental in this interdisciplinary research. The crisis is affected by regional and



even international political and institutional networks so it can be evaluated through this lens as well.

The debate of whether or not the conflict in the CAR was on the verge of genocide will not be the focus of this research. It will be taken as a given but I will explain why it is considered so using Gregory Stanton's "Ten Stages of Genocide" and the United Nations Framework of Analysis for Atrocity Prevention . My intent is to link different understandings of genocide prevention rather than discussing the semantics of concept of "genocide". In addition to this, the project will exclude a discussion on justice and punishment as a means of prevention even though some may argue that criminal courts and international law play significant roles in doing so. The Rome Statue establishing the International Criminal Courts in 1998 will not be considered but may be referred to. According to Samantha Power in *A Problem From Hell: America and The Age of Genocide*, reconciliation, truth-telling and responding to a certain due are foundations for genocide prevention in the long run. I do recognize the ICC's importance in preventing genocide by: incapacitating perpetrators, deterring future génocidaires, establishing historical records of the events and pinpointing individual responsibility (Power 481-491). However, it is not included in the scope of this study due to time constraints. This may be an aspect to be further developed in the future. Furthermore, this project will not delve into domestic politics and dynamics. In other words, for example, the immense work of the Atrocity Prevention Board (APB) in unlocking millions to fund and support the international initiative in the CAR will also be left out of this study. I fully recognize the power and importance of domestic

mechanisms that allow international intervention in the first place but, again, due to time constraints and the limited scope of this study, I will be leaving out this analysis.

The essential limitation of this project remains the fact that conflict and instability are still ongoing in the CAR. Data collection on the ground and evaluation of the complexity of the conflict are not updated continuously and consistently. Access to specific information remains limited to foreign press and non-governmental organization reports which can only provide a partial understanding of the situation in the field. Quantitative data is very difficult to come by and varies significantly because of circumstances on the ground and poor governmental records. It is important to keep in mind that this thesis project will be attempting to somehow demonstrate a negative: non-intervention or ineffective intervention would have allowed the crisis in the CAR to worsen. The last limitation of this project is that Africa is not the focus of my studies and so my knowledge of the different moving parts that come into play in terms of politics, economics, history and geography of the CAR is finite and narrow.

Having considered these limitations, the project will be divided into three parts: a historical background to genocide prevention, an examination of the effectiveness of international intervention in preventing further developments of genocide in the CAR and, finally, a reflection on different ways of framing genocide prevention in the 21st century. The first part will deconstruct the concept of genocide in the current system. It will look at how the term came about and what types of legislations and structures were created to handle the worst actions of humanity. This part of the project will also highlight the implications of legal, political and military structures in terms of how they may be powerful tools to resolve conflict or not. The second part will provide a

thorough understanding of the crisis in the CAR. It underlines the causes and proceedings of the genocide and highlight the intervention's victories and its key players.

In the final part of this study, the long term consequences these prevention operations will be extrapolated and put into a different perspective. Here, the impact of genocide prevention will be enlarged and linked to the life of the Central Africans beyond the end of mass atrocities. Through showing that genocide prevention in the CAR has been effective, this research highlights the importance of continuously adapting our methods of prevention to create durable visions of peace. Genocide prevention must go beyond a framework based on ethics and the international state system. Understanding genocide prevention from a historical, political and cultural lens is crucial for the long-run.

## Facing Genocide

### The word: genocide

After 1945, there seemed to be no easy way for the world to deal with the trauma of the Holocaust. The horrors were indigestible and so exorbitantly terrible that people simply could not comprehend or effectively respond to it. Raphael Lemkin, a Polish Jew lawyer who had been severely affected by the events of not only the Holocaust but also in general the extermination of people and culture in history, took it upon himself to rectify the system that allowed such atrocities to happen. He saw a severe inadequacy in the international system concerning the management of this magnitude of crisis. He decided that it was crucial to codify and officially institutionalize a way to combat incomprehensible extreme violence and crime. The “rules of war” such as *The Hague Conventions* (1899, 1907) and *The Geneva Conventions* (1949) were unsatisfactory and could not cover a significant legal gap because of their exclusivity to official periods of war. Even during times of war, these treaties did not seem sufficient to prevent barbarity relative to the Nazi extermination of Jews (Power 21). Lemkin found it senseless that certain Nazi crimes committed before the declaration of war, such as the events in Poland, would never be accounted for. He wrote in *Axis Rule in Occupied Europe: Law of Occupation*, that it was necessary to touch on the preservation and the integrity of people not just human lives killed and lost; he refers to something physical *and* cultural about human existence that must be safeguarded (Lemkin 90). “Because groups are social constructions, they can neither be constituted nor destroyed simply through the bodies of their individual members.

Destroying groups must involve a lot more than simply killing, although killing and other physical harm are rightly considered important to it” (Shaw, “Sociology and Genocide,” 161). As a young lawyer, he concluded that only the creation of a new legal instrument, a sort of universal jurisdiction, would be able to fill the gap of this absurdity that seemed to continuously grow with the advent of modern machinery and weapons. Law was the only means to fight back for the weaponless and voiceless victims of such atrocities. In order to do so, he felt the need to invent a word that would embody the weight of horrors such as the Holocaust not limited to number of deaths: one that would hold accountable perpetrators such as the Nazis for their acts and intents but also bystanders such as the Allies, who knowingly let the process take place.

Lemkin ultimately settled for the word “genocide”, a Greek Latin derivative that means “race killing”. After years of hard work, his persistent lobbying and dedication to the cause finally transformed his post-Nuremberg trial United Nations (UN) resolution into a hefty convention that frames our approach to the worst crime of all (Power 54-60). The *Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide*, also known as the *Genocide Convention*, that was ratified in December 1948 and put in place in January 1951, established that genocide would be a crime in times of war *and* peace. It would transcend time and spatial borders unlike the crimes against humanity equated with genocide during the Nuremberg trials in 1945 and 1946. Genocide as a unique concept would become a universal responsibility and accountability for human beings at their worst. Genocide would come to be defined as:

Any of the following acts committed with intent to destroy, in whole or in part, a national, ethnical, racial or religious group, as such:

- a) Killing members of a group

- b) Causing serious bodily or mental harm to members of the group
- c) Deliberately inflicting on the group conditions of life calculated to bring about its physical destruction in whole or in part
- d) Imposing measure intended to prevent births within the group
- e) Forcibly transferring children of the group to another group

The following acts shall be punishable:

- a) Genocide
- b) Conspiracy to commit genocide
- c) Direct and public incitement to commit genocide
- d) Attempt to commit genocide
- e) Complicity in genocide (UN General Assembly, Genocide Convention)

Lemkin's law was a historical development and a vital advancement in international human rights. This moral code was finally set on paper and sealed by international agreement. Despite the fact that it was not ratified or signed by all member countries of the UN, it is recognized as international customary law (Schabas 131). In other words, it truly is an attempt at universal law, the way Lemkin had hoped it would be. Over 75% of international states member of the UN ratified it and adhere to its principles. The *Genocide Convention* can be taken as an international norm that will be applied universally even though some have not officially signed it as treaty law. The advisory opinion of the International Criminal Court (ICC) on the *Genocide Convention* states that, similarly to the rules on the treatment of prisoners of war or the status of diplomatic immunity, "the first consequence arising from this conception [of genocide] is that the principles underlying the convention as principles [...] are recognized by civilized nations as binding on States, even without any conventional obligation" (Schabas 132). Consequently, even though countries like the CAR are not party to the

Genocide Convention, they are still subject to the conditions of the convention and must abide by those rules as a state and as citizens of the state.

The *Genocide Convention* has many revolutionary aspects that have become for the international community common ground on which to construct a plan of action in preventing genocides such as the ones in the CAR in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. The phrase “intent to destroy in whole or in part” sets a solid and realistic framework for genocide. This part of the definition solved a contentious quantitative disagreement between the states of the General Assembly. There was no consensus on the number of victims which would qualify a certain genocidal situation. With this phrase, the death of a few thousand in the CAR therefore will be valued at the same level as the millions of Jews that died in Europe. The Séléka génocidaires in the CAR targeted the Christian population while they never assumed the elimination of all Christians, they may still be accused, punished and accountable for acts of genocide. Similarly, the Bosnian Serbs never thought to eliminate all Muslims on earth but instead intended to annihilate principally Bosnian Muslim men. The result is that after the war, many Bosnian Muslim women found themselves incapable of having a family. This is what Lemkin would have pointed out as “cultural” genocide: the extermination of a people, its culture and its ability to carry on (Lemkin 79). Despite the fact that the definition does not mention extreme political or cultural violent repression as genocide, the “intent to destroy, in whole or in part” creates an opening framing genocide as political or cultural.

The definition’s emphasis is also on intent: on an active willingness and ultimate aim to commit the crime. Consciousness of the implications and goals of a specific act of genocide is as important as actually committing it. If the international community

had to wait until millions were massacred and stripped of their essential human dignity in order to call the occurrences genocide, there would be no such thing as genocide prevention. France and the African Union would have had to wait until a quarter of the Central African population was chopped into pieces festering in the fields before actually intervening to stop the ravage of the mercenaries. However central it may be to the definition of genocide, “intent” is also a delicate and controversial aspect of the definition. How should one measure or demonstrate intent of an individual or a state? There is no straightforward method of measuring the truthfulness of intent. It is argued that the genocidal intent of Muammar Gaddafi expressed in his murderous words to his brother during the 2011 Libyan crisis were “overvalued” and that foreign intervention to protect civilians only created space for the ongoing civil war rather than preventing genocide (Mbeki). Intent of a person is considered by the definition within a system. In other words, the intent must be part of a plan. Although it cannot be quantified or proven, it is still central to prevention. An individual or a state would be convicted of the crime of genocide through a notion of joint criminal enterprise: they are liable for their conscious decisions and their intended or unintended consequences within the larger targeted strategy of destruction and violence.

The concept of genocide is not only ingenious in its framework but also refined in its content. Genocide affecting members of a “group” refers to the fact that perpetrators define the individual’s victim status (Schabas 133). The “othering” of certain members in society, stages of polarization and dehumanization in Gregory Stanton’s “The Ten Stages of Genocide”, defines genocide and the intent of perpetrators (Stanton, “Ten Stages”). Certain individuals will be treated as members of a group



whether they identify with it or not. Many Jews in Nazi Germany never thought of themselves as Jewish but instead identified maybe as French, German or Polish. This did not change the Jewish identity, status and image that were inflicted upon them. For the Séléka and the Anti-Balaka in the CAR, those who were drawn into the violence often did not identify with one group or another. They were simply qualified as such arbitrarily. Genocide, as defined by the *Genocide Convention*, highlights this particular nuance and also creates a new nominal space in international law that furthermore differentiates it from other crimes such as ethnic cleansing, war crimes and crimes against humanity.

The term genocide aims to exemplify the weight of destruction that no other word could encompass. Crimes against humanity, war crimes and ethnic cleansing that are often crimes categorized with genocide today did not cover the extent that Lemkin wished them to. Lemkin in his own writing envisioned genocide in two phases: “one, destruction of national pattern of the oppressed group; the other, the imposition of the national pattern of the oppressor.” (Lemkin 79) Only one of those aforementioned crimes included crimes committed in times of peace and none of them were inclusive enough to incorporate various methods of perpetrating crimes. Lemkin’s term understood crimes as not only physical but also political, social, cultural, economic, biological, religious and moral (Lemkin 79). The definition provided by the convention carves out a unique space for the concept of genocide in the legal world of human rights. Genocide differs from crimes against humanity, ethnic cleansing and war crimes and can even be considered as an overarching notion. It is a broader than ethnic cleansing since it includes additionally racial, religious and national identification.

Genocide is also more extensive than crimes against humanity and war crimes because these are only committed in times of war. Moreover, genocide is paradoxically a narrower concept since it is specific to a population or group whereas crimes against humanity and war crimes are indiscriminate. By standardizing genocide, Lemkin was able to cover a legal gap that was so problematic and incapacitating in protecting human lives.

In spite of this success, the term genocide has proven to be a conundrum time and again since its creation. Criticisms are often directed at the inadequacy of the term to actually and concretely represent what it was intended to represent. Political and cultural genocide are omitted in the definition which weakens the power of the term. This is in part due to the reluctance of states to put themselves in a difficult position in domestic politics. If the political aspect of genocide were to be included in its definition, then the US would have had to reevaluate its responsibility to its Native American populations and the USSR would have had to answer to those who died and suffered in the gulags. Additionally, many states simply could not fathom how cultural genocide would have any comparative meaning or consequences. Schabas gives the example where states could not see how the closing of libraries would equate with the extermination of Jews in the concentration camps (Schabas 135). The reality was, however, that the imperial and colonial nations would have had to reconsider the treatment of their colonies and the oppression and suppression of culture there. In addition to this, purposeful population displacement due to conflict was also ignored as an act of genocide. This disqualifies certain severely problematic situations from being called genocide. Most recent examples of this would include demographic changes

resulting from the conflicts in Sudan and South Sudan as well as in the CAR where over a fourth of the population now is unable to go home and must live in dire conditions far from their livelihoods (UNHCR News, “Central African Republic,” 2015).

Displacement as such would be categorized as ethnic cleansing and not genocide. I will argue in this study that the inclusion of a political and cultural understanding of genocide is essential for effective genocide prevention in the long run. This shortfall in the definition is what needs to be overcome in a new approach to genocide prevention for eventual sustainable peace.

What additionally complicates the notion of genocide is the fact that it remains founded in a system of international states. Countries, after agreeing to the *Genocide Convention*, must incorporate it into national laws. Therefore, the concept of genocide is somewhat tainted by the interpretation of the states themselves and remains tailored to each country rather than being an uncontested universal concept. In a world where the highest international authority remains states themselves, the belief that states would hold themselves responsible for crimes committed against their own people is very optimistic. The fragility of this condition makes the implementation of the *Genocide Convention* quite challenging. Although this may have been a naïve and hopeful move on Lemkin’s part, this problem is inherently a shortcoming of the UN in general.

The defining of certain crimes as genocide remains an incredible international and personal feat for Lemkin. This first step forward has expanded the human understanding of violence and has set a higher standard of international ethics and morality. Lemkin created a legal framework so that “genocide is, first and foremost, a legal concept” (Schabas 123). As a result, the international community has been able to

prosecute Bosnian Serb personalities during the Yugoslavia trials and prosecute the state during the Rwandan trials through the International Criminal Tribunal. By doing so, genocide is formalized and the *Genocide Convention* becomes a powerful legal instrument.

## **Triggering Prevention Action: The Responsibility to Protect and the UN Charter**

### **Chapter VII**

Since the end of the Cold War in the 1990s, the UN has expanded its peacekeeping role to adapt to changes in patterns of conflict. There are more intra-state wars and fewer US-USSR proxy wars such as the Korean War and the Vietnam War (“History of Peacekeeping”). With the UN Security Council (SC) unlocked, the UN can more easily engage in military action without a risk of nuclear Armageddon. With many other organizational reforms, the UN has increased the UNSC’s duties and its numbers of missions (“History of Peacekeeping”). The UN’s role now includes now a new function of humanitarianism and interventionism centered of the emerging human rights discourse of the late 20<sup>th</sup> century. This increasing humanitarian interventionism is also possible due to the change in the concept of sovereignty. “Sovereignty” is a basic notion of the international state system that is a legacy of the Treaty of Westphalia in 1648. A sovereign state is one that has the unique authority to manage the liable people in its legitimate territory. Sovereignty implies that others do not have the right, legitimacy nor power to interfere with another’s sphere of influence and impact its territorial integrity. However, the Cambodian, the Rwandan and the Bosnian genocide accentuated the fact that, at times, states themselves are no longer able or willing to protect the citizens who confer sovereignty in the first place. In these cases, because certain human beings no

longer have state protection to guarantee their basic human rights and needs, the international community is the only possible guarantor of these rights. The state itself then is no longer sovereign and cannot protect its people from four main crimes: genocide, war crimes, crimes against humanity and ethnic cleansing. The Responsibility to Protect doctrine (R2P), and *The Charter of the United Nations* (also known as the *UN Charter*) when combined, aim to overcome this problem.

R2P is an innovative tool and norm that reinforces the *UN Charter* in preventing genocide in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Former UN special advisor, Edward Luck, in his video on the emergence of R2P, explains that the Responsibility to Protect was inspired by the change of an African approach to conflict resolution (“Special Adviser Edward Luck on R2P”). The Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) and the African Union (AU) in the early 2000s went from a policy of non-interference in state internal affairs to a policy of non-indifference particularly concerning the development of conflict. This initiative truly embodies values of the new century focused on human security away from national security. International discussions on the prevention of conflict and the fostering of peace incorporate an awareness of gendered violence, a reflection on civilian status in conflict, and a more global approach to upholding human dignity and humanity (“Special Adviser Edward Luck on R2P”). The 2005 World Summit formalized R2P as an international doctrine and norm. This process cemented the idea that sovereign states are responsible towards their populations and the cultivation of peace internationally. The international community has a duty to prevent and stop genocide when states themselves do not do so. Sovereignty consequently “no longer exclusively protects States from foreign interference; it is a charge of

responsibility that holds States accountable for the welfare of their people.” (“Special Adviser Edward Luck on R2P”) Thus, sovereignty is “reconceptualized” (Mephram & Ramsbotham 5) in Article 1 of the *Genocide Convention* which establishes “sovereignty as responsibility”.

R2P is outlined by three pillars and three responsibilities. The first pillar declares that states are responsible for their populations including non-citizens. will address the basic needs and rights of their populations. They will not execute genocide, war crimes, crimes against humanity or ethnic cleansing. The second pillar of R2P affirms that the international community is responsible for state responsibility by providing help in terms of support assistance and capacity building. This pillar focuses on international interconnectivity and interdependence: national security is inseparable from human security. The last pillar explains that in the case where states are no longer responsible, the international community will take over that responsibility in a timely decisive way and use the appropriate means to protect populations (UN General Assembly, “Implementing the Responsibility to Protect”). These pillars take shape in three responsibilities: the responsibility to prevent, to react and to rebuild. Prevention implies that states and the international community that these belong to must actively seek to address the causes of the crimes covered by the doctrine – genocide, war crimes, crimes against humanity and ethnic cleansing. Reaction obliges those affected by aforementioned crimes to respond to the circumstances of atrocities with all adequate means possible whether they are military or not. Reconstruction entails that all must be concerned with not only the prevention of such crimes but also the restoration and long-

term development of peace in afflicted areas. R2P is in principle constructed this way. However, for it to take shape, more concrete steps need to be taken.

In the 2009 Report of the Secretary General on Implementing the Responsibility to Protect, Ban Ki-Moon highlighted other necessary conditions for the success and the effectiveness of this doctrine. States must first of all comply and observe international human rights laws and agreements. Furthermore, R2P can only be effective if it moves beyond politics at the state level. Ban Ki-Moon stressed the importance of incorporating its principles into all cultures and at all different levels. States must also continuously self-reflect and assess their progress in adhering to these international ethical norms. State-to-state learning and region-to-region learning is highly encouraged in conjunction with research and development initiatives directed at sustaining peace.

The application of the doctrine is made feasible by the *UN Charter*. Saving “succeeding generations from the scourge of war” (United Nations) is possible when R2P and Chapters VI and VII of the *UN Charter* are observed together. Chapter VI calls for the peaceful settlement of disputes. When mediation, negotiation and judicial settlements and such are insufficient or ineffective, Chapter VII concerning action with respect to threats to the peace, breaches of peace and acts of aggression is vital for the enactment of R2P. Different articles of the *Charter* create steps to achieve the goals established in R2P that the international community has set for itself. Article 42 of Chapter VII of the UN Charter explicitly states that

Should the Security Council consider that measures provided for in Article 41 [on pacific means to stop threats and breaches of peace] would be inadequate or have proved to be inadequate, it may take such action by air, sea, or land forces as may be necessary to maintain or restore international peace and security. Such action may include

demonstrations, blockade, and other operations by air, sea, or land forces of Members of the United Nations. (United Nations)

Article 44 later on further emphasizes the possibilities of the use of force in order to stop genocide:

When Security Council has decided to use force it shall, before calling upon a Member not represented on it to provide armed forces in fulfillment of the obligations assumed under Article 43, invite that Member, if the Member so desires, to participate in the decisions of the Security Council concerning the employment of contingents of that Member's armed forces. (United Nations)

Supporters of the R2P doctrine hope to eventually incorporate the values of non-indifference in people's individual expectations of the international community. R2P is not a new legal obligation. It only reinforces existing legal obligations of states in accordance with the *UN Charter* and the *Genocide Convention* (UN General Assembly, "Implementing the Responsibility to Protect"). Chapter VII again reminds the world of this changing notion of sovereignty. Human rights violations and breaches of humanitarian international law are substantial threats to international peace. Chapter VII in addition to Chapter VI shows that the UNSC will take matters of peace and security seriously because sovereignty is the responsibility to protect (Hankel 590).

The UNSC is the decision-making power and the ultimate authority on the responsibility to protect. This is problematic. Some argue that decisions may be politically biased. UNSC choices are closely intertwined with the national interests of the permanent five and thus, some seem not based in the need to safeguard universal values of peace and security. The veto power of the permanent members is infamous for its counter productivity at very crucial moments in history. However, without the UNSC, R2P is impotent. The executive power of the UNSC is what makes R2P and



international intervention technically possible. To try and overcome the problem concerning the UNSC's ineffectiveness, an international code of conduct was agreed upon by the United States, France, the United Kingdom, China and Russia:

The most important point in this code of conduct was that none of the permanent members would be allowed to adopt an anti-humanitarian position in a situation that directly involved the self-conception of humanity. [...] the use of the veto should not be admissible in this case. An exception would only be made [...] for cases in which a Permanent Member would see its own vital concerns as coming under threat if it refrained from using the veto (Hankel 594).

Although this code of conduct is not sturdy, it is a clause that may keep the UNSC accountable to its mission and role in crime prevention. Its unique authoritative power executes the ideals of the *UN Charter* and the *Geneva Conventions*.

### **Additional Prevention Tools**

Additional tools have been put in place by the international community at the turn of the century to truly try and avoid the repetition of genocide. In support of R2P and the Genocide Convention, a five point plan enables concrete action of R2P. This plan addresses: preventing armed conflict, protection of civilians in armed conflict, ending impunity, early and clear warning, swift and decisive action. Furthermore, UN research projects launched after R2P have led to annual reports tracking its developments as well as how to better its application (“Tag Archives: UN Peacekeeping”). The creation of a *Framework of Analysis for Atrocity Crimes* is one of the more significant achievements of this continuous research. This framework document indicates tangible tools for prevention by creating a realistic checklist for genocide prevention. These tools will be highlighted later on in this study's analysis of genocide prevention in the CAR. Along with these plans, physical institutions have

been formed to address the plan actions. The establishment of the International Criminal Courts (ICC) through the Rome Statute of 1998 is the most prominent example. The ICC institutionalizes genocide and international crime prevention in the framework of justice. The court supports the process of genocide prevention through the effect of deterrence and by addressing long-run impunity. Although the study of this paper does not delve deeper in the role of the international judicial branch in preventing genocide, it is important to note its abilities but also its limited jurisdiction and the issues surrounding the legality and legitimacy of its rulings or judgments. Institutions are fundamental tools for preventing the worst atrocities. However, the role of personalities must not be underestimated. Coordinating genocide prevention and leading initiatives relies heavily on individual efforts. The Special Advisor to the Prevention on Genocide is in charge of early warning mechanisms and organizing information. This special advisor is the point of referral for the international community. Along with the special advisor, the Commission on Human Rights has created a position for an Independent Expert on Minority Issues.

These tools put in place since the tragedies of the 20th century have outlined the international community's common understanding of ethics and responsibility as well as its commitment to those standards for global peace and security. The dissolution of a bipolar system of power after the Cold War has made it possible for the international community to align its goals and missions. The formation of different plans, legal documents and institutions that embody the new values and norms focused on humanity and its security are indispensable. International agreements through the UN have made conflict prevention and management clearer, legitimate and useful. The international

community has learned from past experiences. Lessons learned were meticulously documented and incorporated into current research and action plans. Controversies and debates are ongoing but are slowly clarified. The role of states in the protection of civilians is defined. Responsibility to protect is formalized. The increasing number of reports and reflections on R2P show that a nuanced approach to international humanitarian intervention is important and inevitable for effective genocide prevention.

### **The limitations of R2P**

Despite its conceptual success, R2P has significant imperfections that should be considered in the framework of this study. The fragility of the doctrine intrinsically lies, similarly to the *Genocide Conventions*, on the fact that all effective action hinges on the willingness of states to meet their responsibilities. There is no supranational authority to impose sanctions or create any kind of incentive for states to act according to their international agreements. States have no obligation to stay accountable or responsible. International intervention and effective genocide prevention is not applied consistently and coherently. “The sombre reality is that there remains a large gap between the principles endorsed by the world’s governments at UN conferences and in UN resolutions and their willingness to take action to uphold these principles in real-life cases” (Mephram & Ramsbotham 8). Sovereignty remains a significant impediment to international collaboration for peace and security.

R2P can also be considered in relation to Saint Augustine’s Just War theory so it has inherently nothing to do with intervention (Hamilton 292). R2P can be considered as realpolitik decorated in the language of human rights. In this sense, it has no ethical basis at all. According to the Just War Theory, war must only be waged in the name and

the goal of peace. Conditions for military intervention according to the ICIS on R2P include: just cause, right intention, proportional means, violence as last resort, reasonable prospects of winning and the right authority (“The Responsibility to Protect”). In light of these criteria, qualifying R2P as an alternative Just War Theory may seem reasonable yet this view disregards R2P as a norm that goes beyond the use of violence and aggressive means. R2P embodies all types of preventive actions including but not limited to negotiations, mediation, institution building and administrative and military training. However weak this argument may be, the issue of military intervention for the responsibility to protect and for a just humanitarian cause is problematic for the effectiveness of R2P.

R2P is risky in the sense that it may lead to unintended harmful consequences in international intervention. Damaging results may be unintentional but they may also be due to irresponsible and careless decision-making. Even though humanitarian missions are based on good intentions and a need to protect populations, intervention can be at times extremely detrimental if they are not well designed. One of the most notorious and painful examples would be the Somalia mission undertaken during the Clinton presidency. More recent examples specific to R2P include: the invasion of Iraq in 2003, the invasion of Georgia in 2008 and intervention during the Libyan crisis of 2011. Some such as Mbeki and Mamdani argue that this system creates possibilities of neo-imperialism. Post-colonial states fear that the core principle of self-determination is undermined by R2P because it is a reformulation of “the right to intervene” and an eerie reminder of the “white man’s burden”: “They worry that a duty to intervene would grant a license for the great powers to interfere in their domestic affairs, undermining

their right to self-government” (Hankel 607). Mwansali, in his work on the African Union and the UN, recalls:

President Robert Mugabe of Zimbabwe, whose views resonated with many members of the Non-Aligned Movement and the Group of 77 plus China, cautioned the 2005 World Summit: Concepts such as 'humanitarian intervention' or 'responsibility to protect' need careful scrutiny in order to test the motives of their proponents. ... We need to avoid situations where [a] few countries, by virtue of their privileged positions, dictate the agenda for everybody else. We have witnessed instances where the sovereignty and territorial integrity of small and weak countries have been violated by the mighty and powerful, in defiance of agreed rules of procedures and the provision of the United Nations Charter (Mwansali 393).

The “right to intervene” is another difficult issue on top of addressing issues on how, when and where to intervene. The pattern of Global North countries intervening in countries of the Global South is understandable but it still highlights an interesting phenomenon of the international system. Israel Daily recently published a satirical article titled “Middle Eastern States Debate Whether to Intervene in Baltimore” (Pumper). The absurdity and the comedic relief of this short article are due to the fact that intervention in Baltimore is unnecessary and inapplicable to the R2P and *UN Charter* framework<sup>1</sup>. Yet this title is still revealing of a certain mindset on intervention and the responsibility to protection. Assuming that a majority of African Americans are denied their fundamental rights and needs as citizens of the US and as a substantial minority subject to genocide, would the Middle Eastern states be liable to call for intervention? Could they point to the responsibility of the US to protect its citizens from police brutality and judicial bias? Realistically, would any action come out of this initiative? This article is a reminder that creating opportunities for co-operation based

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<sup>1</sup> Although I acknowledge that this can be debated at length.

on respect for sovereignty, equality and territorial integrity is crucial for the legitimacy of R2P. This condition is particularly important out of respect for less vocal states that cannot have decision-making power in the UNSC. R2P norms must be carried by collective action in which regional states concerned with the intervention are at the forefront of the decision-making process and throughout the duration of the operations.

The most relevant criticism of R2P is that operational capacity is a prerequisite for its implementation. The lack of financial, institutional and or military support for operational capacity makes peacebuilding and peacekeeping operations ineffective and sometimes detrimental. Even if operational capacities were available, these are limited by a complete reliance on the UNSC as the only authority able to deliver command of humanitarian intervention (Hamilton 293). This considerable limit of R2P's capacity can be illustrated by the current lack of response in Darfur. The international community has been unable to handle this tragedy because of numerous reasons including the lack of operational capacity. A somewhat successful illustration of R2P would be its implicit use the case of the CAR. Rebecca Hamilton summarizes the main problems of R2P: lack of political will, lack of operational capacity, lack of authorization (Hamilton 296). R2P needs to be thought about in the larger context of UN bureaucratic reforms including the use and reach of the UNSC.

More specifically, R2P also has some problems respective to intervention on the African continent. R2P in Africa is somewhat constrained because of the lack of resources, the lack of experience and the differences in historical cultural organization. R2P presupposes an established international framework that is not always applicable on the African continent (as well as in many non-Western countries). Due to the fact

that “in the case of many African states, without effective control over the entirety of their territories and with their legitimacy challenged among significant elements of their populations, sovereignty is more legal fiction than practical reality” (Puley 3). The expectation that states are responsible in this context is rather difficult. Even supposing that states are sovereign and responsible, the lack of well-established institutions and the lack of resources make it troublesome for African states to implement change throughout their countries homogeneously. The financial deficiency and the little expertise only reinforce how problematic R2P can be in practice. Military intervention and regional action are tedious and strenuous. The result is that “when they have occurred, interventions for human protection purposes in Africa have also been plagued by a series of more practical problems. The time-consuming complexities of mandating and organizing a complex mission have often meant that help has arrived too late” (Puley 3). Because the continent has little independent means, the African Union (AU) must hold initiatives and duties on its own which is an unrealistic expectation (Powell & Barany). When the UN cannot act and or cannot act fast enough, the AU is expected to take the lead as the regional operating authority even though it is not prepared to do so. For example, the Darfur crisis was relegated to the AU despite the fact that it did not have the means to uphold any sort of substantial mission in Sudan. This problem again points to the fact that the current model of fostering peace and resolving conflict rarely takes into account different structures and cultures that outside the framework of nation states and a hierarchical order of power. The AU has taken significant steps to overcome these difficulties. The African Peace Fund and the African Standby Force

(ASF) are examples of some attempts to remediate these problems but they are only in their initial phase and are still too weak to demonstrate effective influence.

Despite the numerous critiques of R2P, its impact has been significant. “Many scholars view the R2P framework as the most comprehensive approach to humanitarian intervention ever proposed” (Hamilton 292). Investment in R2P and its development is admirable and historical. It is fundamental in creating an adequate guide to humanitarian intervention and genocide prevention.

### **New Africa peace and security structures**

Specific structures for genocide prevention have also been set up on the African continent. Close to 50% of intra war conflict in world today is in Africa. These conflicts have created approximately 3 million refugees and 20 million displaced. There have been 186 coups since decolonization; 50% of which happened in the 80s and 90s (Puley 2). Africa of the 21st century has chosen to adopt a new strategy of peace and security in order to mark a significant break with its past overwhelmed by conflict and genocide. Without peace, prospects of development and global integration of the continent is impossible. In line with this goal, the AU has set up numerous norms and principles that match the R2P UN doctrine.

The AU’s Constitutive Act of 2000 demonstrates the transition from the Organization of African Unity (OAU) by creating a strong foundation for African continental cooperation for stability, peace and development. This desire for “non-indifference” stemmed from the failure of the OAU to be proactive during the many massacres of the 20th century that devastated the continent:



The decision by the Assembly of Heads of State and Government of the OAU who adopted the Constitutive Act of the African Union to incorporate the right of intervention in that Act stemmed from concern about the OAU's failure to intervene in order to stop the gross and massive human rights violations witnessed in Africa in the past, such as the excesses of Idi Amin in Uganda and Bokassa in the Central African Republic in the 1970s and the genocide in Rwanda in 1994 (Kioko 182).

In the Constitutive Act, different articles such as Article 4 reiterate the dedication to upholding human life and the principles of democracy, human rights and the rule of law. The AU Constitutive Act “converged to create a new consensus in Africa and elsewhere. The treaties, norms, and principles entered into at the international level now often found real substance in the legal and constitutional norms and judicial practices enacted at the national level” (Mwansali 391). The Constitutive Act also goes so far as to legitimize intervention in member states for “grave circumstances” (Aning & Atuobi 91). If peaceful means of resolving conflict and or preventing genocide are inefficient, the AU members agree to the principle in Article 4 (h) of the AU Constitutive Act: “The right of the Union to intervene in a Member State pursuant to a decision of the Assembly in respect of grave circumstances, namely: war crimes, genocide and crimes against humanity.” Responsibility to care for neighboring states in danger becomes solidified in the AU Constitutive Act signed by 54 states before it even is established by the UN. This radical take on peace and security characterizes Mwansali calls a “normative revolution” (Mwansali 390). The AU takes a definitive stance at the turn of the century. In order to ensure the functioning and the possibility of R2P and Article 4 (h) of the Constitutive Act, collaboration between the UN at the international level, the AU at the continental level and the Regional Economic Communities (RECs) at the regional level are indispensable. The AU has invested a significant amount of effort and

time into creating and strengthening institutions and structures for the well-being of the continent. These mechanisms enable the African continent to proactively handle crisis situations and reinforce their duty to the principles of R2P (Aning & Atuobi 92). The Ezulwini Consensus of March 2005, officially known as the Common African Position on UN reform, is a reiteration of African leaders to adhere to the obligation of states to protect their citizens and prevent any of crimes such as genocide, war crimes, ethnic cleansing and crimes against humanity. The AU has committed and dedicated itself to norms and principles of R2P – responsibility and accountability - not only on paper with the creation of such a broad legal framework but also technically with the formation of active branches for peace and security systems on the African continent.

Article 4 (h) has led to the design of substantial new African institutions to face crippling issues on the continent. The production of these building blocks for regional peace include some significant changes such as the Peace and Security Council (PSC), the Panel of the Wise (PanWise), the Continental Early Warning System (CEWS) and the African Standby Force (ASF) (Mephram & Ramsbotham 7). The PSC is the decision-making body of the AU and plays a similar role to that of the UNSC on the continental level. The main mission of PSC is to ensure peace and stability on the continent. This includes anticipation and prevention of conflicts, the organization of peacebuilding and peacekeeping initiatives if necessary and the reconstruction of an environment suitable for development. Coordination and harmonization of continental efforts are crucial to its mission in reducing violence and conflict. Its fifteen members are elected based on geographical representation. However, in contrast to the UNSC, members of the PSC have no veto power and none are permanent members (“Peace and

Security Council”). PSC is one of the main guarantors of the principles set in the AU Constitutive Act and is truly revolutionary in its role on the continent. Decisions concerning the continent thus can be taken in a more timely and effective manner.

The Panel of the Wise (PanWise) formed in 2008 is similar to an advisory board for the PSC in conflict management and peace mediation. PanWise is composed of five members of different regions who are “highly respected African personalities from various segments of society who have made outstanding contributions to the cause of peace, security and development on the continent.” (“Panel of the Wise”) PanWise provides the expertise and knowledge for PSC and the Commission to take decisive action. The panel acts as advisor on conflict prevention but also as a mediator between warring parties or states. It has a unique structure that makes up for the gap in the institutional lack of historical knowledge and precedence concerning peacebuilding and peacekeeping as mandated by the international system. The role of personalities and leadership should not be underestimated in a situation where novice institutions struggle for legitimacy and cannot outweigh the influence of leaders.

The Continental Early Warning System (CEWS) is responsible for data collection and coordination with outside organizations for information management. CEWS advises the PSC on its decisions and provides the capital knowledge needed for adequate action. This AU branch works hand in hand with RECs and the AU. As opposed to a national intelligence agency, CEWS works more like a think tank and uses open source material for transparency and accountability. Its mission focuses explicitly on human security on the continent rather than national security (Cilliers 1). This again is an institutional innovation similar to PanWise and the PSC. CEWS strengthens the

capacity of PSC and PanWise to effectively analyze conflict risks and counter them effectively with less national bias than a centralized intelligence agency would (Cilliers 2). Some points of focus on data collection are political instability due to abuse of power, ethnic politics or exclusionary politics, human rights violations and bad governance (Cilliers 3).

The African Standby Force (ASF) is composed of five regional brigades and acts out the recommendations of the PSC. ASF is the rapid military deployment force of the PSC when in need of timely intervention. The multidimensional capabilities – military, policy and civilian on standby – are in charge of certain assignments such as: observation and monitoring, peace support operations, intervention, preventive deployment, humanitarian assistance and peacebuilding including disarmament and demobilization (“The African Standby Force”). ASF is vital since it has the ability to act without waiting for international UN consensus which at times is simply too slow to be effective particularly when preventing genocide. Kioko believes that “It would appear that the UN Security Council has never complained about its powers being usurped because the interventions were in support of popular causes and were carried out partly because the UN Security Council had not taken action or was unlikely to do so at that time” (Kioko 821). The Ezulwini Consensus addresses this difficult issue in coordinating AU interventions and UNSC authorization. The Consensus highlights that the UN does not need to give away its authority but can approve of certain urgent actions after the matter (Mwansali 404). There is no fundamental discrepancy in AU initiative and the possibility of UN authority. Any action undertaken outside of the Article 4 (h) framework by any African state still remains illegal. This underscores

again the need of having African institutions that can act faster than the UNSC would be capable of.

The AU's relationship with the UN is complex and indispensable. It is complicated to divide the "type, nature and division of responsibilities" (Aning & Atuobi 105) between the different players. The UN may not always agree with actions taken by the PSC such as AMISOM mission in Somalia but the AU believes that it cannot always wait for UN approval to prevent, react and rebuild in an appropriate manner. Kioko highlights in his writing this tense and intricate relationship:

In deciding on intervention, the African Union will have to consider whether it will seek the authorization of the UN Security Council as it is required to do under Article 53 of the UN Charter. When questions were raised as to whether the Union could possibly have an inherent right to intervene other than through the Security Council, they were dismissed out of hand. This decision reflected a sense of frustration with the slow pace of reform of the international order, and with instances in which the international community tended to focus attention on other parts of the world at the expense of more pressing problems in Africa (Kioko 821).

The international community expects the AU to take care of its own affairs when the UN cannot but the expectation is somewhat unrealistic because of the African context. The lack of resources is the main problem in the AU's effectiveness in creating peace and preventing conflict. The continent needs more financial resources and knowledge. The primary concern is financial. The cost of interventions is high and the AU cannot afford the expenses because it is poorly endowed. In 2009, only 30 out of 54 states paid their dues to the Peace Fund for peace initiatives on the African continent (Kioko 821). Payments are unreliable and some states simply cannot contribute because of domestic troubles or priorities such as ongoing conflict, bureaucratic disorganization, administrative corruption, hefty development loans and other issues. The gap between

what was spent by the AU in 2009 and how much funds it received is drastic. The difference was covered by European Union (EU) funding and aid. However, this funding is somewhat uncomfortable because it has intentional and unintentional political implications. This “dependency” on foreign funds for African missions makes it difficult for the AU to operate without Western influence (Omorogbe 43).

Furthermore, this lack of financial independence exacerbates a certain paradox in which the UN expects the AU to independently resolve its own problems according to dominant Western standards yet at the same time does not give it the means to do so. There is “an enormous financial burden attendant on any decision taken to intervene, which possibly will compel the African Union to call upon the United Nations to carry out its responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security.” (Kioko 822)

At the time of AU reforms in the early 2000s, the Union developed its peace and security structures to contribute to the UN mandate under Chapter VIII of the UN Charter. As a result, the AU also expected support for its actions that went beyond verbal encouragements but this was not always the case and the expectations were not always so clear (Aning & Atuobi 104). The AU, because of its inexperience, needs the UN to assist it throughout its trials. African leaders have taken great steps to achieve and strive for the ideals expressed in the Genocide Convention and R2P. In turn, the UN must show its commitment in helping them concretely. Omorogbe in his analysis of the AU-UN relationship comes to the conclusion that the UN is key to the AU’s success in fostering peace and security on the continent (Omorogbe 53). The AU will inevitably struggle with the myriad of problems plaguing the continent. The UN’s responsibility is

to support the Union fully in its learning process. Helping the AU articulate clear and feasible mandates, assessing resources, providing financial aid and expertise are crucial for the success of African missions. Without the backing and support of the UN, the AU is frail and cannot demonstrate credibility and reliability in its missions: it is nothing but a paper tiger. It would be unrealistic to think that the AU is strong enough simply because of the creation of new branches such as the PSC, PanWise and ASF.

Rethinking and reaffirming the meaning of partnership between the AU and the UN is crucial. Collaboration on missions will prevent the backfiring and the undermining of the AU that has struggled to reform and adopt a new identity. The creation of an AU-UN 10 year capacity building programme initiated in 2012 highlights the need for UN-AU hybrid missions and enhances cooperation between the two organizations. This enterprise underlines the UN's commitment and necessity to provide advice and support to the AU and its peacebuilding institutions (Omorogbe 42). The international community is responsible for the success of AU responsibility.

Despite the fact that the African continent struggles with the lack of financial resources and institutional experience, the AU's reforms and efforts in preventing conflict and genocide are impressive. The systems put in place are innovative and dynamic and match the reality and the needs of the 21st century. These tools that have been established are a fundamental for development in the long-run and are first steps towards the institutionalization of values and principles of human rights, human security, peace and stability. The initiatives taken by the African continent are significant in their meaning but also in their effects. These systems may be new and somewhat confused but missions such as the ones in Burundi, Somalia and Darfur have

shown the AU's commitment to the values it has set itself (Omorogbe 62) in accordance with those of the UN agreements. With time and sufficient support, it is possible for the AU to establish its legitimacy and effectiveness. The coordination of different branches of the AU cooperatively with the UN offers numerous possibilities for all to stay accountable to R2P.

All the tools for genocide prevention in Africa exist. The international community has no excuse to avoid the implementation of the international norms and principles for peace. The key is to wield these tools adroitly, carefully and tactfully. The tools are not perfect but by recognizing the difficulties and their potential, it is possible to move beyond the limits of what has been done in the past. The exploit of creating a universal understanding of ethics concerning the worst crimes of all has been done. The feat of establishing instruments to carry out these goals has also been accomplished. The next step is the implementation of these standards. The crisis in the Central African Republic is a test trial for effective genocide prevention in the 21st century.



## **Crisis in the Central African Republic**

### **Historical Background**

The Central African Republic (CAR) is the obscure and forgotten heart of Africa. The life expectancy at birth of 50 old and a total literacy rate is 37% is quite alarming (CIA World Factbook; Olugboji). Statistics on the disastrous conditions of life there are endless and one cannot help but wonder how this situation is possible and acceptable in the 2015. The reality is that the CAR has been Joseph Conrad's "heart of darkness" for over centuries. The central African region has a most severe history of blood, violence, exploitation and pain yet it goes unnoticed.

Long before European imperialism, the Egyptians and Sudanese merchants raided Northern parts of what is the CAR today for valuable resources such as ivory and for slaves to trade in wealthier northern and eastern regions of the African continent where commerce was flourishing ("The State of the World's Refugees"). In the late 1800s, the French colonized the Ubangi-Shari region which is where the CAR is located. Inspired by King Leopold II's management of the Congo Free State, the French set out to rule Ubangi-Shari similarly with extreme violence. From the very beginning of "globalization", central Africa has been established as a place where anarchy and lawlessness were acceptable and even desirable if only it benefitted the rest of the world. Atrocity crimes were prevalent in this region and it was considered normal to treat the indigenous and native people as inhuman creatures. Centuries of ignoring and accepting violent treatment of Central Africans only reinforced the idea that part of the

world does not matter as long as the rest can live at peace while profiting from their misery.

As the years passed under the French abusive colonial rule, missionaries established themselves to “save” the Africans. By initiating them to Christianity, there was hope that one day they would come out of their “wretchedness” and understand why God placed them in such an environment. The French companies and administrative military organizers chiseled artificial borders and power structures into the flesh of the land. “French authorities gave preference in education to ethnic groups near Bangui, the capital. This created an elite among the Southern Riverine peoples – including the Ngbaka, Yakoma and Ubang. This elite dominated ruling positions in the CAR until 1996 even though northern and central ethnic groups are more populous, creating resentment among northern and central groups” (Nawoyski). The missionaries reinforced this carving of the land by distinguishing between different ethnic groups according to how fast native Africans<sup>2</sup> could assimilate the religion. By doing so, missionaries enhanced the existent hierarchy created by the politicians and furthermore emphasized privilege based on ethnic identity. The educated central African elite emerged and organized itself accordingly to the system created by the French. They were able to enjoy the new power structures that allowed them to exploit those who had not adjusted or accommodated the foreign system rapidly enough. The elite exchanged their own people for weapons with foreign companies that came to extract resources from the heart of Africa (“The State of the World’s Refugees”). Gold, timber, ivory, diamonds and human beings were ruthlessly sucked from of the land. Central Africans

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<sup>2</sup> I want to note how imprecise this word is here. “African” was not an established identity at the time. This anachronism is here to help simplify matters and provide a general understanding of the situation.

were pitted against each other for survival. This was beneficial for the French. As long as things were kept in the darkness, the rest of society could live on unperturbed. This cycle of physical, mental and emotional violence continued until the advent of World War II where again, central Africans were used to protect the lives of those who seemed to matter more.

In 1960, under the pressure of the wave of independence rebellions, the French decided to give Ubangi-Shari more autonomy: the CAR “gained” independence. Like many others, the new CAR was a country with rule of law, democracy, an elected government and all the other foreign things that come with it. David Dacko, once the moment had come, was “elected”, seized power, suppressed the opposition and ruled as a tyrant. This was the way things had been run for centuries because it worked for those in power. Meanwhile, the powerless could not make change to the system so life, time and history continued on without significant improvement. The French persisted in their role of puppet masters of the African elite. Here and there they inconspicuously supported a few coups d’états. Chad, Libya, Sudan and numerous other countries all had a role to play in the thirty years of political turbulence and military governments following the 1960 independence. This unstoppable cycle of violence is an underlying cause of the recent conflicts on the verge of genocide.

The CAR, like many African states that were delineated in rather incoherent ways for the convenience of colonial powers, is home to many different ethnic, tribal and religious groups. There are eight main different ethnic groups in the CAR. Baya and Banda, the two largest ethnic groups represent about 30% of the population each. 50% to 70% of Central Africans identify as Christian, 15% as Muslim and the rest adhere to

indigenous beliefs (CIA Factbook). Both dominant religions incorporate strong animistic rituals and practices. Muslims, Christians and many others in rural and urban areas still believe in witchcraft and sorcery which are among the most commonly reported crimes in the CAR (CIA World Factbook ; Lombard & Batianga-Kinzi 13). Religious divisions become particularly salient when power and privilege overlap them. The American CAR expert, Louisa Lombard in the New York Times article “Making War Not Peace”, argues that the roots of the conflict go back to the mid-90s, when the rivalry between General Patassé and Francois Bozizé tore the country along sectarian lines. Patassé favored the northern Central Africans who were disenfranchised under the previous leadership. “Politicization of the North-South ethnic divide began under Kolingba continued under the Patassé government, as he moved to appoint northerners to positions of patronage in place of southerners.” (The State of the World’s Refugees”) In 2003, with the help of predominantly Muslim Chadian mercenaries, Bozizé instigated a successful coup. Unfortunately, he proved himself to be just as incompetent as Patassé when it came to the administration of the country.

His main focus, like all the leaders that came before him, was on the capital of the CAR, Bangui, and the management of resources extracted from the rest of the country. People in the rural areas and peripheries of the country struggled to survive. Rather than addressing the people’s needs and grievances, Bozizé attacked organized communities of opposition in order to pre-empt insurrections (Lombard, “Making War Not Peace”). To stay in power, he manipulated funding and sponsorship from international institutions by pretending to appease his military and political opponents through insincere democratic dialogue. Generals Patassé and Bozizé put the country

through about ten years of intense struggle for power in the early 2000s. The CAR “Bush War” between armed groups supporting Patassé and Bozizé finally ended with peace agreements led by Gabon and the international community in 2008. A consensus government including rebel leaders was formed in 2010 but it was badly implemented since none of the armed groups supporting different representatives in the government were disarmed. Clashes between Bozizé’s troops and rebel groups continued and human rights violations were prevalent throughout the country. Kidnappings, rape, torture, exploitation, looting, pillages were daily occurrences. The supposed free and fair elections that Bozizé held in 2011 failed to reflect any democratic initiative. Lombard re-emphasizes how disconnected Central African leaders were from their people:

From the colonial era to today, for example, the government of the C.A.R. has lived off kickbacks while leaving rural authorities mostly to their own devices. National politicians make promises to international actors but pursue their own ends. And factionalism flourishes because heading up a rebel group is a good way to be taken seriously (Lombard, “Making War Not Peace”).

Too many voices were suppressed. As a last resort, the voiceless picked up arms to make their voices heard. Bozizé’s opponents gained momentum with the general rising anger. They organized rural communities on the outskirts of cities into rebel groups. It was relatively easy for rebels to advance towards the capital in the Southwest of the country since the government was so out of touch with its rural towns and villages. Governmental forces such as policemen and military often fled when seeing the arrival of the rebels who were better armed and prepared than they were. In order to slow down the bubbling and advancing organized rebellion and on the demand of the Chadian president, Idris Deby, Bozizé negotiated conditions of peace in which fighters were promised the spoils of any leftovers from international programs.

The international community did not idly sit and watch as conflict simmered. The UN led the MINURCAT peacekeeping operation on the Northern border. From 2007 to 2010, MINURCAT had the mandate of protecting civilians. Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration programs (DDR) were widespread but “by 2011, after two years and more than 50 meetings during which no important political issue was addressed, the millions allocated to the program had more or less run out. Nothing had been done for former combatants. But the members of the committee [Bozizé and his cronies], as well as foreign staffers, had pocketed comfortable salaries.” (Lombard, “Making War Not Peace”) Valuable resources were wasted and again, the voiceless in society, who had their weapons confiscated, were once again reduced to silence. By disarming the rebels, the international community had taken away the vector for the voice of the most disenfranchised in society while the leaders continued to thrive under international support. The power structures of the Bush War were not eliminated but in fact were furthermore enhanced. The international community created a time bomb for itself.

Meanwhile, conflict from neighboring countries spilled over into the CAR. In the North, the humanitarian situation was delicate because of troubles in Chad and Sudan. The Lord’s Resistance Army led by Joseph Kony launched insurgencies in the south and south east corner of the country bringing with it instability and violence from Uganda. Hundreds of thousands of refugees from the Democratic Republic of Congo stream in by from the south looking for a safe haven that did not exist in the CAR.

The UN’s Framework Analysis of Atrocity Crimes provides a list of risk factors for genocide. Many can be identified in the CAR. A situation of instability, violations of

international human rights and humanitarian law in addition to weak state structures and institutions since the 90s created favorable conditions for genocide. Because the state apparatus was so corrupt and mismanaged and because previous international initiatives for conflict prevention were inadequate, there was a major absence of mitigating factors in case of the outbreak of widespread violence. The creation of many rebel groups and local self-defense groups of militias or mercenaries is indicative of the general discontent with the government. The lack of outlets to express grievances and the fact that no one in the administration was able or willing to address the population's complaints without the use of violence was morbidly foreboding. Motives and incentive for the use of violence as a means to express anger, frustration and dissatisfaction were ample and sufficient. Furthermore, Central Africans have the capacity to commit atrocity crimes. After all, no official structures were stopping them and light and small arms were streaming into the country from abroad. The Framework's last significant risk is a trigger factor or pivotal action: the Séléka's alliance in December 2012.

### **Genocide in the Making**

The dysfunctional overlapping layers of power structures assembled over centuries could no longer hold together. The fragility of this system was revealed in the implosion of the CAR in the past three years which led to the acts of genocide from 2012-2014. This study looks at the process of genocide using Stanton's "The Ten Stages of Genocide".

*Classification, Discrimination Polarization: Decanting society's different components*

For the most part, Muslims and Christians in the CAR lived together peacefully. Muslim children went to schools set up by catholic missionaries and vice versa. Different communities lived together in more or less of a healthy manner (Bouckaert, "Escaping From a Nightmare; Phelps Photo Essay; Lombard, "Religious Rhetoric As Cover"). The nominal identifications of "Christian" and "Muslim" were not particularly important seeing as many of them shared animistic rituals, superstitions and habits having lived next to one another in neighboring villages for decades. However, "it is not the mere existence or diversity of ethnic groups that is a defining characteristic of the region. Rather, it is the degree to which myths and narratives about certain ethnic groups have become entrenched in societies and are utilized in wars and genocides that is important" (McDoom 563). Power dynamics separated the two groups and fostered an environment of mistrust and animosity. The difference in between the two groups was the subtle distribution of power and status within society. This power division created jealousies that ultimately led to dangerous rivalries.

Historically, the CAR's Muslim community controlled economic power and conducted commerce, business and trade. Muslim communities lived mostly in Bangui, in the South West or in the North and Northwest regions of the CAR close to Chad and Sudan. Diamonds and other natural resources were mainly managed by Muslim groups who lived in areas where the resources happened to be in abundance (Hilgert). International social and religious networks that reached into neighboring countries gave the Muslim community opportunities to accumulate wealth in ways that other groups such as the Christians farmers could not. The fact that the minority group of Muslims



were better off than the majority group of Christians in the CAR was considered suspicious. Similarly to the Jews during the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, many apprehended Muslims because “wealth without visible function is much more intolerable because nobody can understand why it should be tolerated.” (Arendt 4) Furthermore, Bozizé’s doubtful dealings with Chad increased reservations against Muslims who were associated with Chadian and Sudanese foreigners. Many of the Northern Muslims spoke Arabic and not Sango or French. Mistrust of the Muslim community was prevalent in other social groups (Lombard, “Religious Rhetoric as Cover”) and this would be a problem throughout the course of the conflict since Muslim Central Africans are not always fully considered citizens. At certain roadblocks for example, Muslims tend to have to pay a higher fee in order to pass through since they are not recognized as citizens even though they may have spent their whole entire life in the CAR (Lombard). It is often harder for them to get paperwork done for identification cards so it is a common phenomenon that Muslims adopt a Christian name as well (Bloggheads TV Golberg & Lombard). Under Bozizé’s control, the Central African statehouse was lenient with the Chadian mercenaries all over the country that allowed him to stay in power. This impunity of foreigners angered and threatened the Christian majority. Christians historically controlled political power and have demographic advantage. They occupied territory and represented the political majority which often did not take into account the desires and the needs of different communities. Many of them can be considered farmers or peasants (for lack of a better word in English) who own land and live off of very basic agriculture.

Differences between Christians and Muslims are not clear. These do not exactly match historical injustices that stem mainly from poor governance. These differences do not match the numerous ethnic tribal differences either: neighboring villages may have distinct religions and even families within the same village may adhere to different faiths. Louisa Lombard argues in “Religious Rhetoric as Cover” that the rhetoric of religion or identification based on religion is used as a cover for Central African disputes that are mainly due to socio-economic lags and inequalities created by flawed power structures in society. She explains that national wars are excuses for more localized score settling. “Delving into “other aspects of the targets’ identities besides their religion [...] reveals a mosaic of jealousy and mistrust and a range of festering, localized conflicts in a context of socio-economic duress.” (Lombard, “Religion Rhetoric as Cover”). These involve the dynamics between foreigners including refugees, Sudanese, Chadians, Ugandans and nationals, farmers and herders, nomads and land owners, merchants and politicians. Layers of localized conflict led to dissatisfaction with the system in place which took an extreme turn of events in 2012 with the alliance of Northern rebel groups.

The Séléka emerged in this very specific context. “Séléka” in Sango means union. This rebel coalition formed in the North of the CAR was a response to Bozizé’s failure to comply with peace treaties of the Bush War and his agreements with rebel leaders of the pre-dominantly Muslim communities. In other words, the Séléka formed because Bozizé did not disarm his militias and did not live up to the duties of his presidency. The Séléka alliance was supported by Chadian mercenaries and was funded by the diamond trade. They took control of the Northern and Central parts of the

country and marched towards Bangui in the south looting, raping, kidnapping, pillaging and burning villages to the ground on their way.

In January 2013, peace talks took place between the Séléka and Bozizé. They were to establish a coalition government where both parties would be included in the decision-making process of shaping a new vision for the future of the CAR. Agreements were made on amnesty, the use of arms, DDR programs, human rights violations and new parliamentary elections. Change was happening at the political level but the people themselves felt just as insecure as before. Many Christians fled their homes having sensed the imminent implosion of the failing state. Thousands amassed in refugee camps near the airport. In March 2013, the coalition broke apart. Both sides accused each other of not respecting the previously established agreement. The Séléka settled in Bangui and Bozizé fled the country. Michel Djotodia, who at that time headed the Séléka, took power. He established a transitional government because of pressures from the international community and the African Union. It was obvious however that Djotodia had no control over the Séléka rebels who brutalized the population in the capital. The Séléka refused to disband, not wanting to be tricked by another politician again.

As a response, pre-dominantly Christian communities for self-defense loosely banded together under the Anti-Balaka - “anti-machete” in Sango. The Anti-Balaka fought back with just as much vehemence trying to establish their presence and, above all, protect their homes. Violence started spiraling out of control as the Séléka and Anti-Balaka perpetuated atrocity crimes against their respective communities. Towns and villages were annihilated. Livelihoods were obliterated. Many fled the capital.

Classification and discrimination were obvious even before the official start of the conflict but these only enhanced the polarization of society once the fighting broke out throughout the country. Different groups have different statuses in the Central African social context. Each group has an advantage over the other yet each group thinks of itself as a victim. Those who would not take sides, either that of the Anti-Balaka or of the Séléka would be subject to the worst possible treatment before dying frightfully. Neutrality was an automatic death sentence. Many might not have felt a particular allegiance to one group or another but would associate themselves with one out of necessity for defense and protection. Colonial power structures that were left to fester in the CAR finally broke apart after decades into bloodbath and anarchy.

*Symbolization and Organization- Visible separation*

The Séléka and the Anti-Balaka were both quite disorganized and had a weak chain of command. Most of them organically sprouted from different older rebel movements such as the People's Army for the Restoration of Democracy (APRD) and Convention of Patriots for Justice and Peace (CPJP) or simply formed out of practicality in certain villages and towns. The Séléka with sufficient funding and organization adopted somewhat of a common uniform and used small and light machine guns and other weapons. Their chain of command was much clearer than that of the Anti-Balaka. The Anti-Balaka grew out of anger and had no strict political agenda except revenge against injustice inflicted upon them by the Séléka and Northern invaders. The Anti-Balaka could be identified by the gris-gris amulets that they carried around their necks. These were said to replace bullet proof vests (Olugboji). They armed themselves with machetes, bows and arrows, spears and homemade guns. Although these might seem

less harmful than actual guns, the sheer number of Anti-Balaka across the country makes them extremely dangerous.

Each group organized itself differently and took over villages in order to establish their territories. Frightened civilians fled as soon as news of their arrival was delivered. Muslims fled north and into Cameroon or Chad. The CAR was very roughly divided into two parts (see Figure 3). The North and the North East as well as the numerous mines in the center of the country were under the influence of the Séléka. The East, the South and the South West were occupied by the Anti-Balaka. Bangui had a particular situation of its own and after foreign intervention, it needed to be secured as neutral.

This type of organization on the part of the different warring parties often precedes genocide. Conflict in the CAR was not an insurgency, a temporary rebellion or a capricious violent tantrum. Conflict in the CAR was (and is) a type of war against a specific group. The groups initially formed to defend certain rights, power and ideals but as the conflict carried on and as different individuals joined, violence started carrying a specific tinge of indiscriminate hatred and vengeance. The interesting and terrifying aspect of the conflict in the CAR was that “genocide” was committed on both sides.

#### *Genocide: Preparation, dehumanization, persecution and extermination*

Chaos, fear and anger without restraint created an overpowering mob effect in the CAR. The Séléka and the Anti-Balaka could not see how they could coexist together. Looting, raping, shootings and drug dealings became daily routines.

Disagreements ended in automatic executions. A questionable look could end in a death

sentence. The goal for both sides was to see how long it would take to strangle the other side. By terrorizing the population, the Séléka and the Anti-Balaka attempted to cut the other group's support base. "Anti-Balaka, framed their grievances using the idioms of religion and foreignness: they sought, they said, to rid the country of troublesome Muslim-foreigners, particularly those coming from the AR/Chad/South Darfur borderlands. In reality, they cast a far wider net, and all Muslims in CAR were subject to persecution" (Lombard & Batianga-Kinzi 3). Writings on the wall such as: "We do not want any more Muslims in our country. We will finish them all off, this country belongs to the Christians!" (Olugboji) are common. Some of the most atrocious crimes seemed to come straight out of Rwanda's genocide. Cannibalism, dismembering of body parts, public decapitations are just some examples of occurrences in the CAR in 2013. Burned bodies pile up in the streets of Bangui. Thousands of deaths could be counted on both sides. Numbers vary between 2,500 and 6,000 according to Reuters and Associated Press in 2014<sup>3</sup>. No one is spared the violence; aid workers, journalists, doctors, imams, priests have all fallen victim to the violence.

August 2013 marked the complete breakdown of the state apparatus. Civil services were no longer provided. Water, electricity, health facilities and educational institutions were no longer functional in the capital so even less so in the rest of the country. The price of basic goods such as milk, water and salt have rose to absurd amounts. Looting

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<sup>3</sup> Numbers vary greatly because of the lack of information on the ground. Peacekeepers cannot keep track of the number in addition to their numerous responsibilities. The state cannot afford to count. Fatalities linked with the conflict are limited to a few thousand and even then, this number only includes those who died from wounds in hospitals or those who were buried. If the numbers are to include secondary deaths due to the conflict, they would soar up to hundreds of thousands since many were and are dying of hunger, disease and many other factors due to displacement. Furthermore, time of the conflict is a significant player too. Different NGOs record deaths at different times and it is hard to find a specific number at the "peak" of the conflict.

and pillaging was the only way for many to survive. Millions of people fled the country and their “non-attributed” zones. The country slowly split in half as Muslims headed up North. Partition of the country was considered but ultimately rejected by the African Union and the international community. Coexistence would be the only option for peace.

The UNSC observed a complete collapse of law and order. The meltdown in the CAR was a serious threat to regional stability. In the fall of 2013, after dismembering the Séléka, Djotodia followed Bozizé into exile in Benin. Catherine Samba- Panza, major of Bangui, was elected as interim president by the Central African elite in the capital. She received wide support from the international community. In a conciliatory gesture to the Séléka groups, she appointed a Muslim as prime minister: Mahamat Kamoun (Eckel & Bagassi). Despite Samba-Panza’s efforts to rebuild the state, the CAR was clearly disintegrating faster than she could put it back together.

At the end of the year, the UNSC and the French government warned of impending genocide. An urgent red flag was raised for the international community. France qualified the situation in the CAR as “on the verge of genocide” (Irish). Widespread violence continued unabated and violence on Muslims increased exponentially as the Anti-Balaka gained ground in the capital and the Séléka were pushed back into the North. Clashes between the two groups intensified. Humanitarian catastrophes were extensive and pervasive. International non-governmental organizations (INGOs) on the ground could not possibly handle the situation on their own. In the best documented Christian refugee camp in the Bangui Airport, Doctors Without Borders (MSF) was the only organization present helping and supporting the displaced. MSF indicated that they

only had four doctors cater the 100,000 displaced civilians (“République Centrafricaine”). Whether the international community wanted to call the situation genocide or not, the situation was unbearable.

### **Importance of stability in the CAR**

The international community watched in horror as the #CARcrisis photos that streamed in from the CAR on social media seemed to resemble more and more traumatic memories of the Rwandan genocide that had taken place only 20 years earlier. It was impossible for the international community to ignore the tragedy for ethical and moral reasons but political, cultural and economic factors contributed to rapid intervention as well. These further emphasized why it was crucial for the world to react and prevent the imminent large scale genocide that was about to take place. If the heart of Africa was to give away, the whole world would collapse with it.

The abundance of natural resources in the CAR is unique. The CAR is the world’s 5th larger exporter of diamonds and diamonds are the lead export product in the CAR (CIA Factbook). These are the official statistics. Diamonds are easily sold elsewhere in different manners so profit made from diamond trade must be higher and more significant than many could imagine (Eckel & Bagassi). The CAR has a huge amount of untapped resources that are currently waiting to be extracted. Timber, diamonds, gold, uranium, other minerals and an incredible diversity of flora and fauna are located in the heart of Africa. This inconspicuous country holds a significant amount of valuable treasures that need to be preserved. Deforestation is enhanced by the conflict since rebel groups hide in the jungle and many flee there for protection as well. For many, the forest is the last resource sustaining life since they can no longer farm,



herd, trade or work. Elephant poaching is a thriving business in the CAR and with the breakdown of the state, there is even less supervision than before. There is such a wealth of unexploited riches that the international community could not let the country disintegrate (“La Centrafrique Dans Le Chaos”).

In addition to this environmental and economic imperative of stability in the CAR, there is also a regional imperative. The CAR is a landlocked country surrounded by “bad” neighbors. If it were to break apart, it would bring down all those around. The power vacuum would create a hole of anarchy in the continent and a perfect environment for the growth of terrorist groups. The presence of Boko Haram in Northern Cameroon does not bode well especially when Muslims are actively being persecuted and discriminated against in the CAR (McNeish). Chadian and Sudanese mercenaries already profit significantly from the lax business regulations by stealing resources from the CAR. Without a stable CAR capable of development and global integration, within a few years, it will become a regional dump for weapons, toxic junk and criminals. Indeed, if the CAR were to disintegrate into anarchy, the country could become a safe haven for certain criminals seeking refuge outside of their own countries. Borders are porous in this area of the world as shown by the presence of Joseph Kony and the LRA. In fact, Kony himself called the CAR a safe haven. Complete anarchy in the CAR would allow similar militias and traffickers from neighboring countries to hide within the country itself. The possibility of justice, rule of law, order and democracy in the entire region would be impossible since all hope would flow out of the CAR like water in a strainer. Regional terrorism would be unstoppable and prospects of regional peace would be futile.

The last factor contributing to international reaction was the fact that the international community had invested too much in the rebuilding of this region with previous operations such as MINURCAT and BINURCA that abandoning it would doom not only the CAR to failure but also the international community itself. Sunk costs do not exist in humanitarian aid and peacekeeping. Humiliation from impotence in Rwanda seemed particularly fresh with the 20 year commemoration of the tragedy in April 2014. The CAR was in a dire situation to say the least but all the tools to prevent the spiraling of violence into full scale genocide were available. The international community took upon themselves the responsibility to protect.

## **Genocide Prevention: Application of Existent Tools**

### **2013 AU and ECCAS: MISCA**

With the impending warning of genocide, the African Union (AU) and the Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS) immediately took action by initiating peace talks in January 2013 in Libreville, Gabon. Despite the numerous criticism of the effectiveness of these peace talks, it should be recognized that the PSC acted swiftly by imposing travel bans and an asset freeze on the Séléka leadership (Dersso). Furthermore, the AU's PSC reinforced previous missions such as BINUCA that had been formerly established as a peace monitoring force in the region. La Force Multinationale de l'Afrique Centrale (FOMAC) was adapted to fit the specific mission and became the African-led International Support Mission to the Central African Republic (MISCA). MISCA was launched by the AU after the UNSC resolution 2127 to stabilize the country after the 2013 coup d'état by the Séléka. With the authorization of PSC, African troops were pulled from all over the continent including Gabon, Chad, Congo-Brazzaville, Burundi, Rwanda and Cameroon within a week to protect civilians. Because of a significant lack of funds and resources and the urgency of the situation, France guaranteed its support to stabilize the region. It was agreed that the AU, the European Union (EU) and the French would ensure the beginning of the operations (R2P's Prevention and Reaction pillars) and that the UN would eventually take over in terms of reconstruction and support to the transitional government through the MINUSCA peacekeeping operations (R2P's Rebuilding pillar).

Its initial mandate was to: protect civilians, humanitarian aid workers and INGOs on the ground and freeze rebel group capabilities of enacting violence. Occupying space and establishing a presence to indicate the international community's condemnation of the situation was crucial in order to decrease the violence. After the Peace and Security Summit in Paris in December 2013, due to the dramatic evolving circumstances in the CAR, the French government agreed to the deployment of thousands of troops overnight in order to support the AU initiative. Thus the MISCA mission arrived at about 3000 troops within a week in early December. The EU agreed to provide equipment and other material aid in support of the AU mission as well.

This formidable action taken within a week of the UNSC announcement of acts of genocide in the CAR is significant. Rapid and effective action can take place with the willingness of just a few states. If major powers such as France, the United Kingdom and Chad on the UNSC may rally aid so fast, than it is possible for effective change to take place. International presence on the ground states clearly that such atrocity crimes will not be tolerated by the international community. This stance is essential in genocide prevention in particular when thinking about the rapid developments of the genocide in Rwanda in 1994. UN peacekeepers stood passively when hundreds were massacred which confirmed the Hutu suspicion that no international action would be taken. The Hutu génocidaires tested the extent to which the international community cared about this issue and the meekness of the UN peacekeepers indicated to them that all hell could break loose and no one would do anything about it. In the CAR, with the sudden increase of troops on the ground, data collection, information sharing and the

cooperation of different international forces was possible. Understanding the situation on the ground was the first vital step for the eventual design of an adequate peacekeeping operation in the long-run (PKO).

### **2014 France and the EU: Opération Sangaris and EUFOR RCA**

Opération Sangaris Soon after the deployment of MISCA, France initiated its 7<sup>th</sup> intervention in the CAR since the country's independence (France Inter). Following Ban Ki-Moon's six point recommendation, the French initiated a rapid reinforcement of the AU and its forces. The initial mandate of Opération Sangaris was to support MISCA. 2,000 French troops thus accompanied MISCA and supported their mission ("Opération Sangaris"). France made it clear that support did not mean buying new material for African troops but rather to help them in their mission by increasing their ability to manage the the organization of their operations ("Les Objectifs de la Nouvelle Opération"). Upon their arrival, their mandate needed to be enlarged and adapt to the circumstances on the ground. Thus, the French adopted the new mission of demilitarizing and securing certain zones in the capital and its periphery for civilian populations. Furthermore, the French troops would be opening access to more isolated and remote towns and villages in order to provide access for humanitarian aid ("Opération Sangaris"). Ultimately, their goal was to secure an environment for a normal political process to take place. Opération Sangaris mobilized French troops from all over the Central African region. They allowed MISCA to operate beyond Bangui and secure a larger portion of the country including its major cities such as Bouar in the Northwest (ethnic cleansing committed by the Anti-Balaka against the Muslim communities), Bambari in the South (Christians and Muslims displaced) and Bangassou

in the South East (persecution of Muslims and Christians). François Hollande made it clear that Opération Sangaris was to be short, rapid and efficient. He hoped that it would embody the new French military doctrine in Africa: help African missions transition, help relieve AU PKOs (“Centrafrique: Les Français Prêts”). Hollande no longer wanted France to be the “policeman” of Africa and in its former colonies. France could not be responsible for failures in Africa but it would do its best to help African states live up to their responsibilities towards their own populations.

When seeing French and AU troops, civilians of Bouar were overjoyed at the prospects of better living conditions and security (“Vaste Opération à Bangui”). Without the French troops at the airport, Christian refugees would not be able to find any peace in the capital. Joint operations with MISCA ran smoothly and in particular the demilitarization of the Anti-Balaka stronghold in Boy-Rab in February 2014. There, Patrice Edouard Ngaissona and other leaders of the Anti-Balaka were arrested. Furthermore, they effectively destroyed munitions in Sakpanboro and secured the market place of Bambari in April 2015 (“Sangaris: Sécurisation”).

MISCA and Opération Sangaris were essential to saving the lives of civilians and preventing the worsening of the dramatic situation in the CAR. Massacres have halted and that is a very first step to reorganizing the CAR. Over 5,000 deaths were recorded in 2014; 100 were recorded in 2015 so far. Many criticize the French and African operations because they were not effective at creating peace or complete stability in the region. However, their core mission was not to establish peace. The French mission was to support AU forces in securing the capital and opening up access for humanitarian aid. This has been achieved successfully and underlines the ability of

the French troops to set realistic and feasible goals in coordination with the AU. Although the crisis on the ground exceeded the capabilities of the two forces and the number of troops deployed as seen by the continuation of human rights violations on the ground, changes were visible (UN MINUSCA). French leaders, however, were not trying to delude themselves that the mission was complete and finished. They are aware that in order for things to return to normal, the Muslim communities of Bangui that have fled north should have the possibility of returning home. The main mission of a rapid, effective supportive force for the AU has been accomplished successfully. As of now, the French have decreased the number of troops on the ground while waiting for the progressive arrival of over 12,000 UN peacekeepers. It will be helping MISCA transfer to MINUSCA. Again, the French troops reinforce the idea that the international community will not let genocide take place and that civilian lives do matter in the larger international prospect of things. Despite its simultaneous commitment in Mali, France was able to step up and provide assistance in times of need. Intervention in Mali against terrorism is just as important as the responsibility to protect. This shows that the international community truly has gone a long way from the past and that they are willing to support the new developments of the AU peacekeeping forces.

### *EUFOR RCA*

After the EU Foreign Ministers approved the creation of EUFOR RCA and the UN Security Council adopted the UNSC Resolution 2134 in January 2014, the EU was able to deploy its (mainly French) troops. Under the UN Chapter VII charter, EUFOR RCA would use “all necessary means” to implement its mandate and protect civilians (Tardy) so as to facilitate the takeover by MINUSCA eventually at the end of 2014. The

goal was to be in the CAR by March and reach full operational capacity of 1,000 troops by May. Unfortunately, the mission was delayed due to insufficient commitments. General Philippe Ponties only had 750 troops deployed by June 2014 and France irritably had to fill the gaps to end the force generation process. Full operational capacity was reached and the disarmament of the Séléka took place in the EU controlled areas of the capital. EUFOR RCA and CAR forces patrolled the city. Disarmament was not easy because the Séléka stopped wearing their uniforms and took on the role of civilians. Despite this fact, violence decreased considerably in the capital.

EUFOR RCA hinged on security and humanitarian purposes for both the Central African region and for the European Union. EUFOR RCA was in line with R2P and a response to the French and UN warning of a genocide emergency in the CAR in December 2013. EUFOR RCA is the 9th EU operation using military means with reference to humanitarian concerns (Bak 7). The EU itself stems from an ideal of peace and security on the European continent. In this line of thought, the EU felt obliged to adhere to the French initiative to intervene in the CAR although this was done not without great reticence and lack of support from the strongest members of the Union such as the United Kingdom (UK), Germany and Italy. The concern for the potential of a large scale humanitarian conflict in the Central African region and its effects on an already highly volatile Sahel region worried the EU who felt uncomfortable about the prospect of an unstable and violent African continent (EEAS March 2014). The humanitarian undertones of EUFOR RCA to secure Central Africa were the official justifications for intervention. However, these were maybe not the main force behind the mission. “The EU aligned itself with the idea of justifying military interventions



with reference to humanitarian concerns” (Bak 13) but did so perhaps more for its own political and economic security.

The EU and its member states ideally would like to be seen as a security provider on the global political terrain and would also like to secure their economic assets and interests abroad. EUFOR RCA stemmed from the framework of the Common Security and Defense Policy (CSDP) where the EU in 2001 dedicated itself to “project stability also beyond its own borders.” (Bak 15). Intervention in the CAR was a humanitarian imperative for global security but also a chance for the EU to establish a common defense strategy – or at least attempt to do so. EUFOR RCA initiated and led by the French, furthermore, had implicit economic drives. The CAR may be the poorest nation according to the World Bank but it remains a country full of potential in terms of its availability in natural resources such as timber, diamonds and uranium. National interests form the EU interests. “The underlying truth should be clear: France deployed troops to protect the uranium operations conducted by Areva since France’s main source of electricity generation is nuclear power” (Hermann). Uranium deposits are thus important for national energy security back on the old continent. If the mines were to fall into the hands of the rebels then it would be more complicated to access those cheap resources. Additionally, maybe this initiative is also linked with some sort of French paternalism for its former colonies. Unlike the British Empire, the French one always had a certain neo-colonialist approach to fostering its ideals of human rights. The overwhelming French presence in the central African region implies more than just altruistic humanitarian intentions (Abderramahne). For the smaller countries involved in EUFOR RCA such as the Estonians, the Finns, the Luxemburgers, the Poles and the

Romanians, this was also their opportunity be more involved in community action. For the Georgians troops, this is a way of showing their committed intentions of joining the Union and the strength that they can bring to it. These are not established reasons for intervention but possible ones.

EUFOR RCA intervention was precise in its framework and aimed at a few objectives to be completed within six months after deployment. First of all, EUFOR RCA was to provide military relief and support to the MISCA and Opération Sangaris stabilization mission by occupying Bangui (EEAS Mission Description). Specifically, EUFOR RCA would run in parallel with those aforementioned operations that were having difficulties curbing the conflict by protecting the Bangui M'Poko Airport and securing PK3 and PK5 districts. Hundreds of thousands of Christian refugees set up camp near the airport and the military base there in order to stay away from the violence inflicted on their community by the Séléka and access humanitarian aid offered by Doctors Without Borders. PK3 and PK5 were the primarily Muslim areas of the capital victim to the violence of the Anti-Balaka. By alleviating the duty of MISCA and the French in Bangui, EU forces allowed the French troops to move into Western parts of the country where discriminate acts of violence were ripping the population apart. EUFOR RCA's second goal was to create a secure space for the transitional administration of Catherine Samba-Panza to re-establish a functional state capable of delivering services to the population (EEAS April 2014). They needed to demilitarize the capital and in particular the Séléka militias, train the CAR police force and the armed forces, patrol at all hours of the day and open up humanitarian access to the population in need (Tardy). The ultimate aim of the EU mission was to act as a

transitional force and hand over the situation to the United Nations peacekeeping mission MINUSCA (EEAS April 2014). The EU established that EUFOR RCA is part of the EU's comprehensive approach to the many challenges of the Central African Republic "as a bridging operation facilitating the smooth build-up of MINUSCA. [It] contributes to helping ensure a secure environment in the CAR." (Africa Defense Web)

EUFOR RCA would have a limited mandate in time and space: six months in Bangui, its airport and the Muslim district. Its rules of engagement would be as large as possible as underlined by the UN Resolution 2134. It would secure the population by creating space for freedom of movement and engender the renewal of economic and social activities. A funding and exit strategy was clear in order to encompass all that was hoped for by initiating this intervention in the first place (Bruxelles 2).

EUFOR RCA can be considered a successful operation, not in terms of achieving all its initial objectives but definitely in increasing security for the capital and balancing military and humanitarian values through its respect of human rights and impartial representation. Concretely, violence decreased and absolute social and political breakdown was avoided. The airport and the assigned districts were kept secure. The number of weapons and deaths diminished significantly. EcoBank in PK5 and the police station reopened. National armed forces were trained and somewhat brought up to speed to prepare for the arrival of MINUSCA. EUFOR RCA troops earned the trust and appreciation of locals on both the Christian and Muslim side and were surprisingly popular for an international military presence. They were accountable and reliable as opposed to the French and African Union troops who were at times accused of stealing diamonds, dubious sexual enterprises and making profit by selling

bottled water (Libération). Coordination between the various European troops was smooth. EUFOR RCA stayed impartial in protecting civilians of both sides and faithful to the transitional administration. For the amount of resources available and scope of this mission, EUFOR RCA was relatively successful.

EUFOR RCA was overall a well-designed mission with approachable and feasible objectives that were well-coordinated with the CAR government and other peacekeeping forces in the field. It balanced coherently the humanitarian and security components of its mission and even managed to establish a positive reputation for itself in the eyes of the capital's inhabitants. The international authority granted to EUFOR RCA was wielded adroitly and President Samba-Panza was grateful for the support of the small European presence.

## **2015 UN: MINUSCA**

In September 2014, MINUSCA, the Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in the Central African Republic, arrived in the CAR to relay MISCA. Under Chapter VII of the UN Charter, MINUSCA was in the CAR to fulfill the main mission of supporting the transitional government in rebuilding infrastructure. The specific MINUSCA mandate (UN MINUSCA) was to:

- Protect civilians and UN personnel
- Install equipment and security for the freedom of movement of UN and associated personnel
- Support the political process and restoration of the State authority and its extension throughout the territory
- Create secure conditions for assistance and the return of IDPs and refugees
- Promote and protect of human rights

- Promote of dialogue, mediation and reconciliation at all levels
- Support DDR

Approximately 12,500 troops were authorized by the UNSC in March 2015. As of now, only about 10,000 troops are on the ground. The mission is fresh and on-going so evaluation of its effects might not be very pertinent and relevant.

Despite this lack of information, MINUSCA still reveals a significant amount on the effectiveness of genocide prevention mechanisms. The PKO itself demonstrates that systems created to prevent genocide can be effective and timely. Transition of MISCA to MINUSCA was smooth and successful according to the UN observers and envoys to the CAR. Babacar Gaye, head of the new UN mission, and Herve Ladsous, Under Secretary General for the UN PKO, expressed appreciation for the “exemplary collaboration between the UN and the AU that enabled a seamless transfer of authority, including the re-hatting of as many MISCA contingents as possible, in accordance with UN standards.” (UN News Center “Central African Republic: Ban Welcomes” 2014). MINUSCA has tremendous potential for success because of its large capacity. It has previous successful cases such as UNAMSIL in Sierra Leone to learn from and it should not be encountering any significant obstacles in order to achieve its goals (Hinson). Depending on how the situation plays out in the coming year with elections in August 2015 and the end of the MINUSCA mission in April 2016, a better evaluation of MINUSCA should be done with this research project.

### **Shortcomings of these missions**

Many strong and unfortunately accurate criticisms have been made about the effectiveness of MISCA, EUFOR RCA, Opération Sangaris and MINUSCA. Goals

have not been achieved 100%. There is no peace and there is no security if the evaluative criterion for this is the return of Muslim internally displaced peoples (IDPs) to Bangui. One fourth of the population in the CAR remains displaced (UNHCR). Civil services have not been completely restored. Peace is fragile since people are still dying and there are still instances of mass violence. Disorganization, miscommunication, waste of resources, lack of resources, bad coordination and lack of transparency are some of the many harsh feedbacks provided by ICRtoP in their April 2015 report. On top of this, recent accusations and allegations of sexual assault and child molestation in the past month directed at AU and French peacekeeping forces are extremely problematic and detrimental to the integrity of the mission and the institutions that supported them. This report seriously questions the accountability of troops in the field who may be retraumatizing victims. All the problems of these PKOs must be carefully documented in retrospect and justice must be applied to peacekeepers as they are applied in the country in which they are intervening.

Criticisms undermining the effectiveness of PKOs will be made and will always be relevant and important. These will become even more visible as time goes by. Foreign humanitarian intervention will have unintended and unexpected consequences that the international community cannot account for. However, the scope of this study will not focus on the failures but rather point out again the few aspects in which genocide prevention mechanisms can and have bettered the situation in the CAR.

## **Success in the short run: elements that can be replicated for future prevention initiatives**

Experts tracking the conflict in the CAR have confirmed that peacekeeping forces have played an important role in reversing the cycle of violence in the CAR. Peter Bouckaert, a CAR expert for Human Rights Watch responded to Amanpour of CNN by highlighting the effectiveness of genocide prevention there:

With the country in disrepair, Amanpour asked Peter Bouckaert would it have been any worse without the peacekeepers' deployment several months go. 'Absolutely,' he told the program. 'I think we need to understand that a Rwanda was averted in the Central African Republic, the kind of massacres we witnessed 20 years ago because of the presence of these peacekeepers.' (Hullah)

Peter Bouckaert's response is echoed by the Global Centre for the Responsibility to Protect. The Global Center for R2P's evaluation of the CAR crisis which is the most current, has lowered the CAR from the status of current crisis to imminent crisis; the conflict is moving in the opposite direction and the potential for genocide has decreased.

Potential for genocide in the CAR was identified and addressed by key international players rather than ignored or debated. Atrocity crimes were clearly defined and recognized. Samantha Power's visit to Bangui in March 2013 indicated that the responsibility to protect the citizens of the CAR whether they be Muslim, Christian, farmers or nomads, would be of central importance to the international community. Ban Ki-Moon's presence following Power's reinforced this idea that the international community cared. International and universal responsibility for human life was one of Lemkin's fundamental goals. Many will debate whether or not "genocide" was happening in the CAR and experts like, Louisa Lombard in Bloggingheads TV, said

that the use of the term “genocide” for the CAR was “irresponsible” (Bloggingheads TV Goldberg and Lombard). The reality is that the international community cannot wait until genocide takes place in order to intervene. The word “genocide” was conceptualized by Lemkin so that a reaction would be triggered in face of atrocity crimes. In a place like the CAR where the state is literally non-existent and completely impotent, the international community is responsible to stop and prevent genocide and the implosion of the country. The use of the word “genocide” triggered an accurate reaction from the international community.

“Genocide” engendered reaction and more importantly, it led to prevention and the appeal to R2P through Chapter VII of the UN Charter. The UNSC Resolution 2127 allowing French and MISCA operations and UNSC Resolution 2149 authorizing MINUSCA are direct results of R2P and the UN Charter. Collaboration between different international players is highlighted and even encouraged by Resolution 2127. The resolution carefully articulated a comprehensive peacekeeping operation involving the AU, the EU and the UN. Despite criticism, this turned out to be relatively successful as mentioned in previous parts of this study. The design of the missions were based on the reforms taking place on all different continents and in the UN, as mentioned in the AU-UN’s 10 Year Capacity-Building Programme. Communication between the different players was never broken throughout the interventions since BINUCA relays information between the UN and the AU before the creation of MINUSCA. Furthermore, the PSC’s role was acknowledged and the responsibility of protection was framed in such a way that highlighted an African political solution to the conflict rather than a military one. The first few pages of Resolution 2127 focus on the Transitional



Authorities and their obligations to restore political stability. French and African troops are only mentioned in terms of support for DDR Programs and security. They do not bear the responsibility to protect but rather assist the transitional Central African government in doing so (S/RES/2127 6). Funding for MISCA will not be done through the UN but the African Peace Fund, which again, highlights the international community's intention to allocate responsibility differently from the past (S/RES/2127 7).

The early warning response capability of the international community through European and African structures proved to be very effective. Capacity building essentially happened overnight. The international community elaborated a strategic policy formulation and delivery plan. The necessary security support to Central African nationals, humanitarian aid workers, government representatives and foreign nationals was guaranteed legally and concretely. Legal response mechanisms were also useful in supporting the transitional government that is destitute of any judicial system. The ICC opened investigation regarding crimes allegedly committed on CAR territory since August 2012. Recommendations of the UNSC resolution were clearly translated into concrete actions.

In that same line of thought, Samantha Power, in her tool kit for genocide prevention, mentions the importance of immediate sanctions (Power 514). The international community was effective at implementing those that were necessary. The African Union froze Séléka assets abroad and the PSC instigated travel bans for Séléka leaders. The Kimberley Process on the ethics of the diamond market suspended the CAR (S/RES/2127) to limit growth of black markets that could rapidly degenerate in

this situation of anarchy. Power also emphasizes the need to provide robust and immediate technical, military and financial support for those who would be securing space and addressing basic needs of affected civilian populations. The international community promised immediate support in different ways: equipment (EU), troops (Africa and Europe), funding (United States), logistics (other players in the UN). The partnership between the EU, France and the AU MISCA exemplifies this. With the exception of MINUSCA that was enacted later on in fall 2014, all steps to prevent genocide were taken within a week to a month of the resolution passed in December 2013. The transitional government of Catherine Samba-Panza was established by January 2014 only a month after the passing of Resolution 2127. The timeliness and promptness of genocide prevention in the CAR was adequate and played a significant role in actually curtailing the violence, the death and the breakdown of the country. This success matches the general trend of successful genocide prevention since end of the Cold War (Pinker 338).

Other smaller but still significant successes of the international community also show how genocide prevention techniques and strategies have improved over time in terms of reinforcing democracy and rule of law for stability and peace in the long-run. The choice of backing Catherine Samba-Panza as leader of the transitional government in the CAR was an astute one. A female leader alters and nuances positions of power within the traditional male dominated establishments. The powers that be that placed her as a favored candidate in the parliamentary elections hoped that a woman's leadership in the CAR would mirror the story of Liberia (Westwood). In an interview for Voice of America for Anne Look, the Executive Director for the NGO Women

Africa Solidarity, Oley Dibba-Wadda said: "There's a joke I read the other day - when everything gets messed up, the women are asked to come in and clean up." Fred Swaniker in his TED talk said that "Africa would rise or fall because of the quality of our leaders" because the power of leaders matter in places with weak judicial institutions and a weak civil society. The support for Samba-Panza represents this productive and encouraging change.

As the mayor of Bangui and the founder of an active and efficient female lawyer association in the CAR, Samba-Panza had a good grasp of the failures in the state and knew it well enough to navigate it adroitly. Furthermore, her cosmopolitan background (Chadian, Cameroonian, Central African) and her diverse professional experiences (lawyer, business woman, mayor) granted her the ability to act as a mediator between various groups in society. She could hear and see what others could not because of her gendered outlook on society. Other candidates might have been more flexible to the demand of certain foreign powers but they all carried with them some sort of connection with the history of violence and impunity that Samba-Panza did not have (Vircoulon, "The Third Government"). In her inauguration speech, she was proactive in reaching for peace as she demanded that the Séléka and Anti-Balaka put down their arms. She promised to not run for upcoming presidential elections and would only be there to help with the transition. Furthermore, her cabinet respects parity and more women have been included in her government.

Catherine Samba-Panza is not perfect. The point of this argument is not to put her on a pedestal but rather to emphasize how the international community is actively trying to pursue new values by including gender equality into consideration.

Acknowledging gender equality for better democracy was also taken into account in working groups of the AU and the UN:

“On the situation of women in the CAR, Mlambo-Ngcuka will update members on her 24-26 May joint mission to the CAR with AU Special Envoy for Women, Peace and Security Bineta Diop. Mlambo-Ngcuka and Diop met with transitional President Catherine Samba-Panza, Prime Minister Andre Nzapayeke, Special Representative Gaye, religious leaders and members of civil society, including the High-Level Women’s Advisory Group [...] She is expected to convey recommendations for a gender architecture for MINUSCA which would cover the function, placement and reporting lines of women protection advisers and gender advisers within the mission.” (What’s In Blue, “Dispatches from the Field,” 2015).

Council members who visited Bria in early 2015 were also very impressed by the work of youth and women NGO representatives for the Committee for Awareness Raising who bring together Muslim and Christian communities to talk about tensions. The process of genocide prevention in the CAR tried to engage the silent majority, shifted power dynamics through a strong grounding in rule of law. Genocide prevention in the CAR demonstrates that measures for prevention are changing and will change to include a larger scope of understanding peace and stability.

### **Why was success possible?**

Successful genocide prevention in the CAR was possible because the international community reacted in a timely manner but also because certain inherent and specificities of the particular Central African situation made it possible for the PKOs to be effective. Within weeks of the official declaration of genocide in the CAR at the UNSC, the AU and the French were active in the field. This was in part possible because the French have three military bases in the region which makes movement much easier than it would or may in another region of the world (in the Middle East for

example). This significantly improved the international community's capacity to actually enforce their promises.

The CAR also has a specific environment that made it possible for intervention and prevention to be effective in the short run. First of all, there was no actual resistance to foreign intervention because there was no sovereign state to be threatened in the first place. All leaders preceding Samba-Panza had taken power illegally and without official popular support. Unlike many other places where PKOs have taken place, the international community did not have the "sovereignty" obstacle presented to them. The absence of a security apparatus and the non-existent state facilitated genocide prevention at least at the strategic level. The international community essentially had *carte blanche* for intervention and few could argue against it. There was no resistance at the national level but there was no resistance from the international level either.

France and Chad who were on the UNSC backed an initiative for genocide prevention and no permanent member showed any thorough resistance to the referral to R2P and the use of Chapter VII. Political implications of intervention seemed harmless. No state would be significantly upset by foreign presence in the CAR. In fact, foreign presence was more than welcome by neighboring countries and regional powers. The risk of conflict spillover and the consequences of the power vacuum left by Djotodia's absence were more dangerous and threatening than a breach of sovereignty at this point. The economic implications of the collapse of the CAR were also quite terrifying. The consequences of non-intervention largely outweighed potential unintended consequences of intervention. This seemed obvious to everyone and in particular to the CAR's neighboring country, Chad, that has had to deal with instability in the CAR

many times. The influence of the UNSC cannot be underestimated. For example, their position towards intervention in Mali that was happening at the same time was much more reticent than it was for the CAR. This reticence highlights many underlying causes of why genocide prevention was possible in the CAR.

The international community for the crisis of the CAR also had comparative advantage. Gaye explained in his interview with the UN Radio that:

We are going to have on the ground all the comparative advantages of a UN peacekeeping mission,” said Mr. Gaye, noting specifically predictable and sustainable financial resources for the Mission, years of experience in the field of peacekeeping, and the comprehensive approach that the United Nations has been implementing, which is now recognized as an area where it is ahead of regional organizations.” (“Central African Republic: Ban Welcomes”)

Gaye underlines a final and important point: in 2015, the UN and the international community have had multiple experiences with genocide prevention and they have created all the necessary tools to actually prevent it. Lessons have been learned from past instances. They cannot allow themselves further mistakes since they no longer have the excuse of uncertainty or inexperience. The CAR is essentially a blank slate for the international community to actually do well and it has proved that it really can be effective in implementing and using all the tools necessary for genocide prevention. Effective genocide prevention is possible if the international community works together coherently. However, this does not mean that genocide prevention is sufficient where it is at right now in the CAR. Many improvements can still be made but it is less by creating new tools than by shifting the way we understand, analyze and frame conflict.

## **Enlarging Genocide Prevention: the political and the cultural**

Eight months after deployment of MINUSCA troops, the UNSC reflects on the fact that progress has been limited and the situation on the ground remains volatile (What's in Blue, "Renewal of CAR Mission Mandate," 2015; Nawoyski; UNSC Resolution 2217). Physical violence may have subsided significantly but humanitarian conditions are calamitous and worsen day by day. Open air conflict is no longer the main issue but crime, vandalism, banditry, terrorism, hunger and disease are. Many Muslim IDPs cannot return to their homes and many are still confined to enclaves throughout the country. A quarter of the country is displaced. Hundreds and thousands have fled to Cameroon and Chad (HRW "Unseen War" 2014) The economy is dilapidated and without jobs, the prospects of Central Africans returning to a normal life seem discouraging. The challenge at hand to prevent genocide in the long run is the reconstruction and rebuilding of the country. The hope of the international community is that stability will hold at least longer than it did the last time in 2010. A similar example that the Central Africans should avoid would be Burundi. Burundi today is a bleak example of why it is necessary to think of genocide prevention as a long-term project from the start of intervention. In order to achieve this, structural, institutional, political and cultural impediments to peace must be addressed effectively.

Genocide prevention is more than "saving lives". If prevention was only to save lives, then troops and advisors in the CAR could return home now. The genocide prevention equation needs incorporate more factors than ones of morality, ethics and justice which are all often debatable. Politics, economics, sociology, geography all need to be taken into consideration. Efforts to save lives today would be meaningless if those

same lives were to be lost to dire humanitarian circumstances later. The framework through which we understand genocide prevention needs to be enlarged to a wider context and include more components in order to be sustainably effective. In the CAR today, grenades are cheaper than cans of coke (Harding). Diamond trade and poaching continue to fuel rebel groups. Farmlands on which many Central Africans depend have not been restored, the central urban hubs of the CAR are stabilized but the peripheries are still dying due to direct violence itself but also due to the secondary effects on conflict on society. Deforestation has pushed the pygmy nomads into unlivable circumstances and this will have undeniable complicated consequences on Central African demographics and social organizations in the future.

R2P, the UN Charter, the *Genocide Convention* and all other existent tools aforementioned can prevent genocide in the sense that these measures can halt and stop the progress of atrocity crimes temporarily. However, these international instruments do not effectively prevent genocide in the long-run. The fundamental issue is that despite the usefulness of these implicit and explicit agreements, there is no global consensus on a systematic understanding of peace. There is somewhat of a common understanding in the international community of what “genocide” looks like thanks to Lemkin’s work on the *Genocide Convention* but no similar concept or direction on the notion of “peace”.

The peace, for which the UN stood, was, therefore, primarily a negative peace, characterized by the absence of war. The additional task of establishing a positive peace, understood as the establishment of the preconditions that would make outbreak of wars less likely due to their ethical unacceptability or unreasonableness, came second and by some distance (McDoom 583).

There is no common vision of peace within the international community. What peace truly means or embodies is unknown and undefined apart from the fact that it is a



negative or an opposition to war and genocide. In December 2014, the 15 members of the UNSC easily unanimously agreed to the resolutions 2127 and 2149 preventing genocide in the CAR through the deployment of AU, EU, French and UN troops. For resolution 2217 of April 2015 on the renewed role of UN peacekeeping in the extended MINUSCA operations in the CAR, it was more difficult to gain the same overall approval<sup>4</sup>. The brief of What's in Blue on the renewal of the CAR MINUSCA mission gives insight on why there difficulty stemmed from:

“China, with the support of Russia, wanted to limit the proposed language on the role of MINUSCA with respect to forcefully seizing and destroying weapons and ammunitions. In their view, the mission’s mandate is to support the management and security of the CAR’s disarmament efforts once a strategy is put in place. France, with the support of the US and the UK, favoured explicit language for MINUSCA to forcefully disarm armed groups as part of its protection of civilians mandate. Several countries, while agreeing on the need to seize and destroy illegal stockpiles of munitions as an urgent priority of the mission, found the P3 proposal too robust. The compromise text suggested calls on MINUSCA to actively seize and destroy weapons of armed elements, without a specific reference to the use of force.”

What does a “too robust” of a proposal mean? Why is it less contentious to call for a robust proposal to save lives than to destroy the weapons that kill the lives in the first place? The two questions are inseparable for effective genocide prevention. Although the negotiations were not highly contentious, the disagreements still highlight the fact that the path to peace is ambiguous for the international community. Peace does not have to be defined the way genocide is. If it were, the world would be reverted back to a 1984 Orwellian situation. Peace is a cultural, political, social vision and ideal that evolves with time and with human beings. Louisa Lombard recounts part of her trip to the CAR in her article:

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<sup>4</sup> UNSC Resolution 2217 passed only a few weeks ago and I could not find the voting details for this.

“I often think of a rebel officer and children’s rights advocate known as Colonel Tarzan whom I met in Tiringoulou in 2009. ‘Sometimes I ask myself why I was born here,’ he once said. ‘The C.A.R. sure is a bizarre place.’ It is that bizarreness, not idealized templates, that peace-building must take as its starting point.” (Lombard, “Making War Not Peace,” 2014)

In order to prevent genocide effectively, tools for genocide prevention must address this ambiguity: this “bizarreness”.

### **Genocide prevention based on ethical and moral premises**

In *A Problem From Hell*, Samantha Power argues that the main reason why the United States (and the international community) *should* intervene to stop genocide is a moral one (Power 512) yet this specific argument is not an effective argument for prevention. In fact, it may be the least effective one and sometimes even counterproductive. Power writes about John Fox desperately trying to stir action in the State department to prevent genocide in Bosnia. The response that others gave him was: “[This moral argument] is an argument you almost never make in government if you know what you are doing. It virtually guarantees that you don’t get invited to the next meeting and that you gain a reputation for moralism.” (Power 267). On the political level, the argument of doing what is right in the face of genocide is weak. It has no political grip. The moral argument does not trigger government action essentially because political institutions are not moral beings the way human beings are themselves. The state does not do things because they are right; they do them for the good of the greatest majority of their constituencies. “When multiple objectives are under consideration, highly regarded humanitarian values essentially collapse in the competition with national security and economic security objectives.” (Slovic, Gregory,

Frank and Vastfjall) States make decisions based on an objective; the morality of the action will be ethically considered in light of that objective. Ideally, what states do and what they should do match. However, the reality is that states rarely do what they *should* do<sup>5</sup>. Those who research behavior and psychology in relation to genocide show that choice of action are rarely consistent with expressed values. There is a “prominence effect” where decisions at the governmental level are focused on the most “prominent” issue at hand: national security and national interests. People and states seek to satisfy their need for safety and security first which often then devalues efforts to intervene in massive humanitarian crises (Slovic, Gregory, Frank and Vastfjall 2014). A similar idea is advanced in economics: rational agents behave according to self-interest. The state is a rational agent and thus its actions follow the economic law. Core national security, despite what President Obama may say, does not always go hand in hand with core moral responsibility. Politics and economics take precedence over the moral argument and blurs the sense of what should be done. There can be no moral judgment on this fact because, in part, we all find it quite normal and necessary that, if given the choice to choose, the state is more concerned with our well-being than that of unknown people in faraway lands who have nothing to do with us. Consequently, the framework with which the international community approaches genocide prevention cannot be limited to the moral argument. Doing what is right *should* be the reason for which prevention takes place but the reality is that it needs to encompass much more than that because it is oftentimes more nuanced than simple altruism.

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<sup>5</sup> What exactly the term “should” means can again be debatable at length.

On the individual level too, the moral argument for genocide prevention is less effective than it would seem to be. Individuals struggle to understand the scope and implications of genocide. It is not that people refuse to react and to do the right thing; they psychologically cannot compute the meaning of genocide. “The more the victims, the less compassion.” (Kristof, “Save the Darfur Puppy,” 2007) People struggle to appreciate the value of lives lost. Slovic and Västfjäll’s study on psychic numbing disproves the assumption that people can understand implications of numbers and act on them accordingly. The underlying issue is that feelings are pitted against logic. The rational answer to genocide is to prevent it. Acting morally to atrocity crimes is the logical response but that is not the “natural” response. The automatic response to genocide concerns affects and feelings. This is due to a biological instinct and intuition of survival. “Compared to analysis, reliance on feelings tends to be a quicker, easier, and more efficient way to navigate in a complex, uncertain, and dangerous world. Hence, it is essential to rational behavior. Yet it sometimes misleads us.” (Slovic & Västfjäll) Numbers and statistics on certain human tragedies like genocide lack any affect or feeling so “as a result, they fail to convey the true meaning of such calamities and they fail to motivate proper action to prevent them.” (Slovic & Västfjäll) Current models of decision-making like R2P fail to take this into account. The responsibility to protect in the context of genocide is not a natural international instinct. What is intuitive, however, is to react to “puppies”: emotional stimulation and the power of a single story because these touch on feelings. “Feelings necessary for motivating lifesaving actions are not congruent with the normative/rational models [...] Our capacity to feel is limited.” (Slovic & Västfjäll) Darfur is the example used nowadays

to highlight the failure to prevent genocide despite the massive advertisement campaigns led to raise awareness on the issue. The CAR on the other hand had relatively low media coverage yet intervention took place swiftly to address the spiraling of violence there. This contrast between Darfur and the CAR shows that the moral argument is not applicable in all circumstances. In both cases, atrocity crimes are committed yet they are not addressed the same way. Many different factors play a role in this decision-making in addition to the psychological one. Rational genocide prevention may be less based on morals than it is on something else. This “bizarreness” and this disconnect must be considered in genocide prevention. Slovic proposes that when “our moral intuitions fail us [...] one way of addressing that is to change the way we frame information.” (Slovic, “Why People Do Not React to Genocide,’ 2014) Fast-thinking connected with feelings is the way we respond to genocide yet it is important to take slow-thinking, a mode of thinking that is more logical and more holistic, when addressing genocide so that we may have a more adequate response to it. We can frame information through innovative and dynamic education. We can also do that by approaching genocide prevention in a non-moral way.

### **An amoral or non-moral genocide prevention framework**

The moral framework of genocide prevention is fundamental in provoking action and foreign intervention to stop atrocity crimes but it is weak in terms of sustaining the genocide prevention initiatives. This issue leads to a larger conversation on how genocide prevention may be more effective in a durable manner by not only saving lives but by sustaining them. “Properly used, force can offer physical protection to populations in immediate danger. But it cannot compel the parties to build

sustainable peace; rebuild shattered governments, economies, and societies; protect populations in the long term; or provide comprehensive security” (Bellamy 598). So what is the next step after genocide has been averted like in the CAR? The situation is still fragile and volatile, so how can the international community actually and actively prevent genocide? Mepham and Ramsbotham frame this issue in a succinct way: “The central challenge today in respect of the responsibility to protect in Africa (and in other parts of the world) is not normative but operational: how to actually protect civilians from mass killing, war crimes and genocide” (Mepham & Ramsbotham 9). In order to address this operational challenge, the international community must incorporate a more pragmatic approach to genocide prevention.

Today, the rebuilding of the CAR goes off the premise of how politics, again, *should* work rather than how they actually work (Lombard, “Making War Not Peace”). The French ambassador to the UN, Gerard Arnaud, said that we needed to restore law and order (Farry) but the reality was that there was no law and order to begin with. There have been numerous peace-building initiatives in the CAR but these may fail once again if the international community does not adopt a larger framework of analysis when undertaking genocide prevention. Larger issues underling the conflict need to be dealt with not because they should be dealt with for moral purposes but because they need to be for pragmatic reasons. A non-moral framework for genocide prevention is not forcibly condemnable since it may lead to a better grasp on the problems at hand and may even lead to beneficial results. “Actions that produce humanitarian good should not be condemned because they are not inspired by humanitarian motives. The key test should be that the means chosen by the intervener must not undermine the

positive humanitarian outcome” (Bellamy 609). By focusing on the moral argument against genocide, the international community releases itself from the responsibilities of actually dealing with the root causes of genocide and provides itself with an excuse to again intervene abroad in the future. “By insisting that interveners be guided by purely humanitarian motives, the bar is placed so high that no military measures will remedy human suffering” (Bellamy 608). Violence repeats itself in cycles and is never transformed into a positive energy. The French have intervened in the CAR multiple times yet not significant development change has taken place. The task at hand of fostering peace after averting genocide seems so overwhelming yet the rebuilding of peace is an extension of genocide prevention. In fact, it is an inherent part of it. Mark Levene when looking at the future of genocide prevention in the 21<sup>st</sup> century explains that: “to speak of an event as genocide is almost ipso facto to repudiate the possibility that it might have been shaped or determined by factors or circumstances associated with politics, economics, or social or cultural behavior of dominant international society” (Levene 639) so it is important for the international community to include all those components when attempting to prevent genocide.

### **Genocide as a form of war: degenerate war**

As shown before, because human minds have a hard time conceptualizing the meaning of genocide and its impact on humanity, it is important to start from the basis that genocide is not something exceptional in itself. The outcomes of genocide are aberrant and extra-ordinary but the phenomenon itself should be considered as conflict like any other. Prolonged discussions on the semantics of the word “genocide” veer the conversation away from what is actually happening on the ground. Conceptual and

abstract conversations on the meaning of the word “genocide” undermine effective genocide prevention. To coherently prevent genocide and the re-eruption of violent conflict in the CAR, one must consider genocide as a process of war. War is a period of violence fighting between groups. It does not imply that the two sides are equal in power or status nor that they are both willing to fight. In this sense, genocide fits the category of war. Martin Shaw argues that genocide is a form of degenerate war.

Destruction of the enemy implies “destroying the social power of a particular group – in economic and cultural as well as political senses – usually to eliminate or drastically reduce its presence in a particular territory. Destroying the target group’s power also involves destroying its ability to resist.” (Shaw, “Genocide as a Form of War,” 86)

Some may consider genocide the “worst” of wars or conflict but the fact remains that genocide is not an inexplicable act of barbarity and bestiality (Straus, “Political Science and Genocide,” 177). There are certain aspects of the Central African culture that may seem archaic and ignorant but the violent tearing apart of the CAR in 2012 was predictable (Lombard, “Making War Not Peace,”; Lombard & Batianga-Kinzi 20).

There is logic behind all conflicts. Genocide does not appear out of nowhere and simply because mass media has not publicized it does not mean that conflict never existed before. “The study of war on the continent should take the everyday uses and meanings of violence as a starting point, rather than assuming that the period prior to the outbreak of war was free of violence.” (Lombard & Batianga-Kinzi 20) There have been 7 French interventions in the CAR: conflict resolution simply is not working. Previous attempts to prevent conflict in the CAR have been effective in the short run but clearly inadequate from the results today. For Lombard and Batianga-Kinzi who



have studied the CAR extensively, “war is a social project and must be understood in that broader social context, which in the CAR includes pervasive violent popular punishment. [,,]War does not erase the social and cultural patterns existing in the places where it occurs, but rather transforms and adapts them” (Lombard & Batianga-Kinzi 2-3) Layers of history, politics and economic dysfunction built up to the crisis today. Conflict is rarely resolved but rather, it is transformed. Martin Shaw discusses genocide not as a social action committed by perpetrators but as “a structure of conflict between actors” (Shaw, “Sociology and Genocide,” 159). Extreme violence is not singular, it is a product and a step of a larger social problem that is not being addressed. War may not be avoided but “we may still hope to be able to reduce the danger of war for long stretches of time, to avoid particular wars, to pursue policies that make a satisfactory peace more likely and more lasting.” (Kagan 566) In order to prevent war, the international community must take into account the context of the conflict and the root causes of the potential of genocide. If this is ignored then any prospect for stability, peace and security will be founded on a weak, empty and corrupt rotting base.

### **Economic dimension: scarce resources and decision-making**

Genocide prevention should be an imperative but often times there is little incentive to stop conflict for those who profit from it. Conflict fuels life. How can the situation be stable enough if everyone has easy access to weapons, if weapons are cheaper than food and if there is nothing easier than to kill with no repercussions whatsoever? Lombard in her trips to the CAR in 2009 and 2010 interviewed a few of the young Séléka:

I spoke with fighters in Tiringoulou and Kaga Bandoro, remote towns now claimed by Séléka, about why they'd taken up arms. Their responses fell into three categories: government forces had attacked their people; the government had failed to provide roads, schools and health clinics; they were poor, and if they became rebels they might obtain something from disarmament programs, maybe even government jobs. They fought the government less to overturn it than to get something for themselves (Lombard, "Making War Not Peace").

The current framework for genocide prevention addresses the first reason why the Séléka took up arms. It undertakes one out of the three main issues of the spiraling violence but the volatility of the situation in the CAR today demonstrates that focusing on the first point is simply not enough. Although economics are rarely addressed in conflict resolution, economic relationships are crucial to enacting genocide prevention in the long run. Economic and development initiatives are often put aside for development agencies and international monetary institutions after stabilization of the crisis but this is problematic since poverty, development and conflict are inherently linked. The international community may save lives but if those lives cannot survive on their own than the whole enterprise is incomplete and insufficient. Without jobs, without the means to sustain their own lives, many will resort to violence since there is nothing to lose and nothing to save. In the Western world, education programs keep children off the streets. Social activities and community support systems keep youth away from joining gangs as a way of living. The international community is able to provide opportunities and incentives in a similar way. Incentives, and in particular economic ones, drive states and individuals to prevent genocide as opposed to moral arguments. Similarly, incentives must be provided to stop Central Africans from taking up arms.

Failure to address economic players in genocide prevention really undermines the objective itself. Elephant poaching in the CAR creates conflicts of its own which only enhance the already existent divide between the communities in the CAR. Violence related to poaching activities is intertwined with the grievances of the Séléka and the Anti-Balaka. As disconnected as it may seem, human beings die by hundreds because of the poaching (Lombard, “Dying for Ivory”).

Since the 1980s, under the mantle of conservation efforts and with funding from the European Union, governments, NGOs and private associations, African park guards have fought a rarely discussed low-level war against poachers. The conflict is becoming increasingly militarized, with both poachers and anti-poachers each justifying their belligerence as a response to the others. (Lombard, “Dying for Ivory”).

There is little incentive for poachers and anti-poachers to do things differently since they profit from this conflict. Ivory is sold no matter what the political situation is. Neighboring countries also profit from conflict in the CAR because the abundance of natural resources are liberated. Diamond exports account for 51% of the CAR’s export earnings according to the Minister of Ecology and with the country in shambles, anyone and everyone can come into the country and take advantage of abandoned resources.

For Séléka militias, control of diamond production was a key grievance against Bozize, who in 2008 sought to create a monopoly over the domestic market for his relatives and members of his ethnic group, according to the International Crisis Group, a Belgian-based think-tank. In May 2013, as the Séléka took control of Bangui, Kimberley Process regulators banned CAR diamonds from world markets, an attempt to keep the gems from fueling further violence. But illegal export networks proliferated, as many of the Muslim buyers fled to neighboring countries such as Cameroon and continued overseeing export routes (Eckel & Bagassi).

The illegal commerce of diamonds creates a whole other black market for more toxic and dangerous commodities such as light arms (pouring in from Sudan and the DRC).

With little to no supervision of business dealings in the CAR, the country becomes an ideal economic haven for illegal traffickers of anything and everything.

The argument here is not to make genocide prevention into development aid programs but rather to highlight the interconnectedness of genocide prevention and economics that is often left out of the conversation and the framework of analysis for conflict management. Development aid needs to become part of genocide prevention initiatives. Organizations leave the country in crisis when they are the most needed. International Crisis Group which has carefully documented the evolution of economic breakdown into the outbreak of war states:

The economy fell apart even before the state; yet the current international intervention spearheaded by the G5 (African Union, UN, European Union, the U.S. and France) focuses for the most part on security. Troops are being mobilised, but if a principal cause of the conflict – entrenched predation – is left unaddressed, the international community will repeat the failures of its past interventions. Protecting citizens is important; but so too is rekindling economic activity and improving financial public management to help build an effective public governance system delivering services for all CAR citizens, both Muslim and Christian (“The Central African Crisis”).

Economics must be taken into consideration when thinking of genocide otherwise the international community finds itself in a situation. The UN Office of the Special Adviser on the Prevention of Genocide is currently coordinating the possibility of future initiatives with international financial institutions like the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund. The future of genocide prevention may look very different if joint programs can be developed. It would also be beneficial to reach out to corporations and companies who can also leverage economic incentives to stop war and genocide. Furthermore, if these initiatives were to take place, the international

community would have to keep excellent track of its money how it is used in order to avoid enhancing the conflict.

### **Culture and history**

Lemkin himself understood genocide to be inseparable from culture. Although culture is not included in the definition of genocide as established by the *Genocide Convention*, it should still be included in genocide prevention framework because it is the basic building block of dismantling structures of violence in the CAR. Lemkin said: “Genocide has two phases: one the destruction of the national pattern of the oppressed group, the other, the imposition of the national pattern of the oppressor.” (Lemkin 79) In colonizing the CAR and by imposing their way of life, the French annihilated the traditional cultures and structures of justice in Central African society. Similar to the Holocaust, the sort of epitome of genocide, the crisis in the CAR has its roots in imperialism, capitalism, bureaucracy and nationalism (Lemkin; Arendt)

To overcome the Africans’ reluctance and to integrate them into a ‘modern’ European economic system, the imperial conquerors embarked on the strategy of eliminating the indigenous populations’ economic independence. This objective effectively required the destruction of traditional cultures and ways of life (Schaller 361).

The legacy of colonialism shapes the way violence is perceived and the role it plays in organizing power in the CAR. Colonialism established violence as the normal and acceptable means to gain power, to express dissatisfaction and to restore justice.

Violence over time becomes a norm of education and punishment. It was popularized by leaders like King Leopold II. The French ruled Ubangi-Shari ruthlessly with total disregard for the life of Central Africans. The violence with which they enslaved the whole region lingered in the Central African history. For centuries, there was no system

of justice in the CAR – at least not one that worked the Western way. Extra-judicial recourse to violence was the form of popular justice that made up for the lack of institutionalized justice. Lombard and Batianga-Kinzi write a very insightful paper on how

“the deliquescence of the CAR state over the past several decades was accompanied by the popularization of punishment and the entrenchment of vengeance as a tool for the management of threats. [...] popular punishment on levels from the family to those of the crowd and neighbourhood, and argue that a climate of widely participatory violent vigilantism existed before the war.” (Lombard & Batianga-Kinzi 2)

Because Central Africans could not count on the state to be representative of a social contract and agreement on justice, they took matters in their own hands using what history indicated was right: violence. Consequently, extreme violence as a form of justice was integrated into Central African culture.

After independence, nothing fundamentally changed since there was “minimal post-colonial” reform as Mamdani would say. The French simply left leaving no guidance or base to build on for village chiefs except the memories of how things were and how they seemed to work. State norms in the CAR had and still have no legitimacy and credibility. “Extra-judicial or privatized means for resolving disputes remained prevalent. Heads of state, uncertain of whom they could trust, used extra-judicial execution to deal with the threats they perceived themselves as facing.” (Lombard & Batianga-Kinzi 8) Economic, political, legal and religious treatment of Central Africans combined to influence future patterns of mass intergroup violence in the CAR (Schaller 363). De Waal explains that by seeking to radically transform their states through revolution, some African states may end up “replicating and intensifying the patterns of violence they inherited.” (De Waal 529). Extreme violence and genocide in the CAR

inherited from French colonialists are entrenched in the local Central African system of justice.

The international community in genocide prevention limited violence by disarming rebel groups and constricting access to weapons but this technique only disenfranchises the most disadvantaged in society and essentially grazes the issue of violence embedded in the Central African culture. Looking at genocide prevention with a historical understanding of violence and its cultural intricacies would allow the international community to be more effective and discerning in its strategies to address it. This does not mean that the UNSC must find ways to recreate a norm of justice but it implies that for sustainable peace and security in the CAR, violence needs to be considered not only in physical terms but also culturally and historically.

### **Democracy and Human Rights**

Genocide prevention today is a package that includes different sanctions, democracy and elections, human rights, humanitarian aid and, if necessary, military intervention. This is effective as demonstrated in the slight political readjustment of the Central African transitional government but this is not sustainable because it is removed from the reality of the average Central African. Human rights, democracy, peace and justice are empty concepts for Central Africans who feel completely powerless in shaping their own lives. People do not have ownership of those concepts and thus cannot comprehend what they actually mean or represent. “The importance of human rights for democratic politics, is that rights cannot be dissociated from the awareness of rights” (Branch 241). The name of Séléka militias highlights this problem. The Popular Army for the Restoration of Democracy (APRD), the Convention of Patriots for Justice

and Peace (CPJP) and the Union of Democratic Forces for Unity (UDFU) were the three major rebel groups under the Séléka alliance. Their names embody these foreign concepts but the rebels know that there is a certain power to those words. Despite these denominations, all of these rebel groups are known for their use of child soldiers, their resort to rape and murder as a strategy of war and their brutalization of civilian populations. The average citizen struggles to understand how groups that defend peace, justice and democracy commit atrocity crimes. Under the assumption that even if these groups do uphold these notions, it is difficult for the Central Africans to reconcile the drastic incoherence between the actions of the rebel groups and the discourse of the international community.

Democracy and human rights thus are somewhat meaningless. Central Africans need to frame their own understanding of rights and democracy: “rights as being fulfilled through an external agency, not through the organization and action of the rights-holders themselves” (Branch 7). The current model of genocide prevention provides the package but does not teach those affected by these notions what they actually mean and how they can use it to gain control of certain social power. Genocide prevention needs to acknowledge the distortion of the notion of human rights and democracy; otherwise it is completely ineffective in its objectives of fostering a more stable future in the CAR.

Not only is this discourse ineffective but the discourse of human rights and democracy can even be harmful to those who must be protected. Hannah Arendt, most famous for her work on “the banality of evil” in the 20<sup>th</sup> century and the rise of totalitarianism in Europe, discusses the problem of using “human rights” in terms of



genocide prevention and advocacy. Human rights are considered elementary and basic rights of human beings yet having to resort to these inalienable rights actually highlights and enhances the status of victimhood in a situation of genocide (Arendt 292). She explains that “[the Jews] were and appeared to be nothing but human beings whose very innocence – was their greatest misfortune. Innocence, in the sense of complete lack of responsibility, was the mark of their rightlessness as it was the seal of their loss of political status.” (Arendt 295). The fundamental violence in the violation of human rights is not that you take freedom away from certain individuals but that you take away *the possibility* of fighting for freedom (Arendt 297). Central Africans, Muslims and Christians, peasant and businessmen, farmers and nomads were denied their human rights throughout the conflict as they saw the things and people they cherished the most broken and burned to ashes with no way of fighting back. When foreigners come with the good intention of preventing genocide and saving their lives by imposing the rule of law, democracy and the use of human rights, Central Africans are again “re-traumatized” and deprived of their rights and ability to determine their political future in the way they see fit.

Despite the fact that they now have a stable government and that the rebel leaders have decided to drop their weapons, Central Africans are still deprived of their agency because democracy, human rights and rule of law do not empower them the way the international community would hope they would. Branch explains that “by demanding their rights, people are not only demanding the space in which they will be able to enjoy these freedoms, but, in the very act of making those demands, they are

*doing* what is to be guaranteed by the right itself.” (Arendt 242) This process was not guaranteed for Central Africans.

The international community through the admirable efforts of R2P cannot guarantee their essential human rights as citizens of the CAR despite all their efforts. The problem is that “this new situation in which ‘humanity’ has in effect assumed the role formerly ascribed to nature or history, would mean in this context that the right to have rights, or of every individual to belong to humanity, should be guaranteed by humanity itself. It is by no means certain whether this is possible.” (Arendt 298) Victims of genocide are deprived of human rights but also reduced to that “nakedness of being human” when they are not citizens or cannot fulfil their duties as citizens. The international community put Bangui back on its feet but through a top down approach rather than giving voice and power to those who would be subject to its authority.

Arendt’s understanding of the detrimental effect of human rights is particularly applicable in Africa. Adam Branch who has worked in Uganda explains that:

The West’s dominant image of Africa, despite its pretense of equality, entails a basic inequality: whereas African are mere humans and unable to raise themselves out of that denuded state, we in the West give ourselves the privileged position of both being able to identify with suffering Africans on the basis of a common humanity while also being able to go beyond mere human and re-assume our political, social, and economic personalities as globally powerful, responsible redeemers (Branch 5).

Genocide intervention based on this dual moral claim to protect humanity itself while also protecting the actual African victim (Branch 6) can be compared to a sort of recolonization of Europe through moral premises. This evidently is not the goal of the international community in particular in the case of the CAR. Without foreign support to the African Union mission, any hope of life in the CAR would have been impossible

for many. However, in all interventions, there are unintended consequences and it would be important for future missions to take this into account.

Lemkin's law, R2P, the new peace and security structures of the African Union, the European Common Security and Defense Policy demonstrate the huge progress that has been achieved in preventing genocide. The collaboration of the international community in creating mechanisms to overcome the natural instinct of not reacting to genocide would have been unthinkable only 50 years ago. Levene agrees but emphasizes however that "by contrast, we have posed that without firm grip on the understanding of the driving forces which determine the wider formation and organization of our present international system, implementation of the convention will not only remain piecemeal and inadequate but will be rapidly overtaken by forces which render its fragile efficacy null and void." (Levene 658). Without taking away what we have already built in just the past two decades, this study suggests that we continue to enlarge the framework through which we understand genocide prevention and create a more holistic and nuanced approach in the interventions that we undertake while trying to do what we *should* do.

## **Conclusion**

The handling of the CAR crisis by the international community proves that genocide prevention today is realistic because the tools created during the 20<sup>th</sup> century and early 2000s have made it possible for the international community to take concrete initiative in a rapid and timely manner. All the existent legal, political, economic and social mechanisms and systems are functional and can be applied effectively as seen in the Central African Republic. R2P was not explicitly invoked for intervention in the CAR but implicitly implemented at least at the level of the two first pillars (react and prevent). This demonstrates how well it may have integrated international thinking and the duty to protect civilians. The wide acceptance of R2P may provide the plausible explanation as to why the “forgotten” country of the CAR might have received help. Without foreign intervention, the CAR would not be where it is today; deaths would have continued to increase whether they be direct or indirect consequences of conflict, refugees would not have had access to humanitarian aid, many would not be able to leave or return to their homes and documentation of the conflict and development in the area would have been close to impossible.

Genocide was averted in the CAR but only for the short run. The crisis in the CAR is no longer a violent conflict crisis but has become a large scale humanitarian one. Many more factors need to be taken into consideration in the genocide prevention framework in order to shape durable visions of peace. This study does not advocate for more measure stop genocide but highlights the possibilities of enlarging the genocide prevention framework but reinforcing the third and last pillar of R2P: rebuild. The international community has proved itself to be capable of reacting fast and stabilizing

conflict but it is still responsible for the last step of fostering peace and security. The key is to look at genocide from a different angle and to implement measures with more awareness to the culture and economics surrounding violence.

## **Recommendations: Shifting to a larger framework of genocide prevention using innovation and investment**

Genocide prevention tools have progressed significantly since the coining of the term “genocide” and in particular after the genocides of the 90s. The intervention in the CAR proves that the effective implementation of these tools is possible and provides hope for the future. However, as the conflict is ongoing, the situation reveals the weakness of genocide prevention today.

Genocide prevention frameworks need to actively be mindful of the economic, historical, cultural and political layers of conflict in order to effectively put to use the mechanisms and tools created in the past. One way of doing so is by enlarging the pool of decision-makers in genocide prevention. This study has used the term “international community” while referring to the international state system. The reality is that we should be talking about an international community where civil society organizations (CSOs), development aid programs, international financial institutions, environmental movements, researchers and engineers work together. Special adviser Edward Luck in his video on the Responsibility to Protect stated that R2P ultimately “[relies] on civil society that internalize these values [of responsibility to protect] which ultimately will make the most difference.” All individuals must have a stake in it not because it is a moral human obligation but because in genocide, humanity is put to question.

Genocide is total: it permeates all aspects of society beyond that of politics. Genocide is creative: it eludes the rational understanding of the use of force and the scope of violence. Prevention of genocide should work in similar ways. Genocide prevention should be total and it should be creative. If the framework of genocide

prevention were limited to the scope provided explicitly in legal and academic documents then we would find ourselves perpetually encountering genocide and perpetually needing to prevent it without addressing the dynamics inherent to the conflict. In Ban Ki-Moon's "Implementing the Responsibility to Protect" report, he writes that "one of the keys to preventing small crimes from becoming large ones, as well as to ending such affronts to human dignity altogether, is to foster individual responsibility. Even in the worst genocide, there are ordinary people who refuse to be complicit in the collective evil, who display the values, the independence and the will to say no to those who would plunge their societies into cauldrons of cruelty, injustice, hatred and violence." (UN, "Implementing the Responsibility to Protect," 2009) The international community needs to create those opportunities for individuals to be responsible in genocide prevention.

It is important to find leaders to make change and "own" the reconstruction of society after genocide. Patrick Awuah in his Ted talk explains that it is important to educate leaders but that it is even more important to train the elite in general: the doctors, lawyers, engineers and journalists. Good leadership matters in a place where institutions are weak. By investing in leaders, the international community can foster a sense of responsibility rather than a sense of entitlement and it can overcome the difficulties that were pointed out earlier on in this study concerning the abstraction of cultural and economic implications of genocide.

The world is changing rapidly and genocide prevention as a process should adapt to this momentum. Investment and innovation are key for the future of genocide prevention. The use of technology, social media, news reporting and easy

communication will revolutionize the distribution of power as well as the nature of conflict. In the CAR, the international community could implement better communication systems but bettering roads and investing in infrastructure, agriculture and the responsible and ethical manufacturing of natural resources. The international community must implement systems thinking in which processes of genocide are analyzed rather than events or acts of genocide. As the world becomes increasingly interconnected, we should keep in mind the words of Patrick Awuah: “the state of the world depends on what is happening to Africa.” (Awuah)



## Further Research

In this line with thought, further research in genocide studies needs to be interdisciplinary in order to approach prevention in a more holistic way. In political science, research needs to explore how genocide articulates within the larger context of war. Anthropological studies can be made on how genocide creates national identities and cultural boundaries. How does a Central African identify? Certainly not according to their national identity. What is the determinant then? Historians have often overlooked the history of genocide (Schaller) but more academics should highlight the linked between violence, colonialism and genocide on the African continent. The connection between environmental degradation and resource conflicts will become more and more relevant in genocide studies in the coming years. How does this phenomenon interact with changing demographics and identities?

One particular aspect and field of study that is completely omitted in the literature of genocide studies is economics. As an economics major myself, I cannot emphasize how important economics is in understanding conflict management. Economics is the underlying machinery of life today. This science is concerned with the process of system by which goods and services are produced, sold and bought. I understand economics as the science of decision-making with scarce resources. Acemoglu and Robinson in *Why Nations Fail* use economics to reveal the relationship between poverty, history, development and politics. Jared Diamond in *Collapse* explains why societies collapse despite the fact that they seem to be developing exponentially. Economics explores strange questions in all different fields without a specific goal or direction: why do rational beings do what they do and act the way they

do because of the limited means that they have? Economics is an amoral tool and framework for genocide studies that has great potential for genocide studies and the field of conflict resolution in general.

It is important to think differently and apply the skills from various fields to paint a more holistic portrait of genocide and its implications. Understanding genocide in the larger scope of things can help us make sense of this enormity and absurdity.

## List of Figures



Figure 1: Continental map for the Central African Republic



Figure 2: Regional map for the Central African Republic

**CURRENT POLITICAL SITUATION**



Figure 3: Conflict division and space distribution in 2014

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