

Committee: Disarmament and International Security Committee (GA1)

Issue: Foreign military intervention in intrastate conflicts

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INTRODUCTION

The history of humanity has been stigmatized by various conflicts and wars throughout the years with the 2 World Wars being among its deadliest conflicts. Since the Cold War era came to an end, the type of the conflicts started to shift from conflicts among different states to conflicts within a single state. In other words, as the number of interstate conflicts lessened, intrastate conflicts have increased. Power struggles within newly formed states, conflicts for independence and persecutions of minorities have been common events during the last decades.

As all sort of conflicts need some sort of force to come to an end, military interventions have started to become a question as an alternative to diplomatic talks. However, the intentions of the third-party states (interfering states) have started to be questioned by observer nations. More specifically, powerful nations such as the United States or Russia have been accused of intervening smaller countries to increase their control over specific nations and regions and to serve their own interests than to preserve international human rights and values. Whether the accusations were correct or the intervening states did seek sustainability within that country in order to promote peace and prevent further deaths remains an unclarified question.

The United Nations Security Council having the preservation of peace and security as its main objective has been one of the most involved international organ in the issue of interventions. As such and taking previous events into consideration, one can easily divide foreign military interventions into two sub-categories; namely UN-approved or evoked interventions and military interventions without the approval of the UNSC.

DEFINITION OF KEY TERMS

Intrastate conflict

An intrastate armed conflict, a civil conflict, is a conflict between a government and a non-state group present within the relevant country.

Interstate conflicts

“Interstate violence is a conflict between two or more states (both members of the international system), who use their respective national forces in the conflict.”¹

Extrastate conflict

“Extrastate conflict is between a state (member of the international system) and a political entity which does not come in the form of a recognized state. This type of conflict can take place outside the boundaries of the state recognized by the international community.”²

Military intervention

The academic resource known as Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy defines military/humanitarian intervention as: “Humanitarian intervention is a use of military force to address extraordinary suffering of people, such as genocide or similar, large-scale violation of basic of human rights, where people’s suffering results from their own government’s actions or failures to act. These interventions are also called “armed interventions,” or “armed humanitarian interventions,” or “humanitarian wars. They are interventions to protect, defend, or rescue other people from gross abuse attributable to their own government. The armed intervention is conducted without the consent of the offending nation. Those intervening militarily are one or more states, or international organizations.”³

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

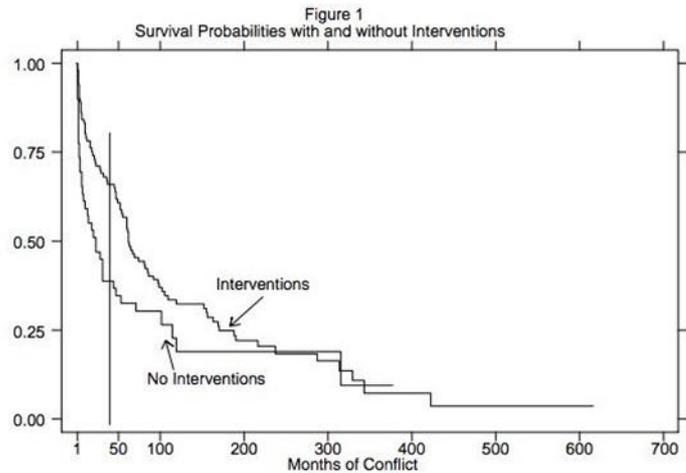
Necessity of a third-party involvement

¹ Missworldsecurity. “Definitions: What’s the Difference between Intrastate, Interstate & Extrastate???” Miss World Security, 29 Oct. 2014, missworldsecurity.com/2012/09/26/definitions-whats-the-difference-between-intrastate-interstate-extrastate/.

² Missworldsecurity. “Definitions: What’s the Difference between Intrastate, Interstate & Extrastate???” Miss World Security, 29 Oct. 2014, missworldsecurity.com/2012/09/26/definitions-whats-the-difference-between-intrastate-interstate-extrastate/.

³ <http://www.iep.utm.edu/hum-mili/>

Since World War II, it is known that more than 130 intrastate conflicts have occurred all around the world and two thirds of those required foreign military intervention. In the graph, we can observe that the time of the conflict increases if an intervention is decided upon in the area. In other words, if the intentions of the invader are self-seeking the chance of survival for the citizens decrease and the conflict is prolonged.



Picture 1: A graph taken from the archives of the Binghamton University that shows the length of the conflict both in the case of an intervention or not.

On the other hand, this statistic does not necessarily prove that interventions prolong

conflicts as other factors e.g. the complexity of the situation or the number of parties involved can have an impact on the conflict ending.

Justification of the interventions

According to the sixth chapter of the UN Charter (Articles 39- 40- 41- 42- 43- 44- 45- 46- 47- 48- 49- 50-51) any conflict threatening international peace and security must be intervened under determined circumstances. However, there are some factors that need to be certain (acknowledged by all) for the intervention to be justified. To exemplify:

1. There has to be a threat to the national security
2. It has to be humanitarian need based
3. All sorts of atrocities etc. must be determined and highlighted by the concerning state

However, despite the fact that the requirements are obvious many past and ongoing interventions are still questioned ethically especially when they are operated by P5 interventions.

Humanitarian Interventions and Responsibility to Protect

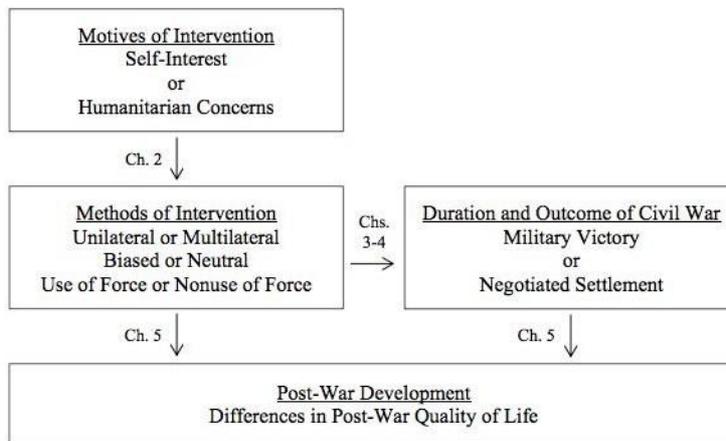
The idea of a humanitarian intervention by the UN appeared in 1990s as a result of the Genocide in Rwanda as well as the war in Yugoslavia. The international community was discussing about the extent of the sovereignty of states and the potential intervention when human rights violations occur. This discussion led to the expression of the term

“responsibility to protect”. In its report called “The Responsibility to protect” in 2001 the UN found that apart from its sovereignty rights the state must also protect its citizens. Should that not happen, it is the international community’s responsibility to protect them.

Frameworks of the interventions

Every foreign intervention is complex both for the intervener and the country that will be invaded. Therefore, there has to be an elaborated framework created. Below, is a chart that reflects the methods, motives and most importantly the consequences of a possible intervention in a general manner.

Figure 1.2 A Conceptual Framework: the Motives, Methods, and Consequences of Intervention



As stated in the chart the motive behind a military intervention vary. It is common that third-parties to a conflict may intervene aiming at increasing their influence over a specific region or country. On the other hand they can be driven by the concern of the increasing role of an opponent. This was the case during the Afghan civil war in 1979, when the soviet forces invaded Aghanistan to support a pro-Soviet government. Following their withdrwal and the rise of Taliban to power in various regions the US invaded Afghanistan to eliminate them. On the other hand, humanitarian concerns may also lead a state or group of states to intervene in a conflict. The extreme living conditions during the Somalian conflict made the US under UN authorization to intervene and provide humanitarian support and fight the warlors, who were violating human rights.

According to chart methods can also vary as history has shown that an intervention can be operated e.g. France in Mali with Operation Serval or by intergovernmental organizations such as the NATO bombings in Libya against the Qaddafi armies. Apart from this, an intervention is usually one where troops are to use force. However, a peacekeeping operation serves as an example where troops are allowed to use force when in danger and aim only at providing humanitarian aid and protecting civilians.

Last, but not least, the outcome of the conflict plays an immense role in evaluating the importance and success of it. The establishment of a stable and powerful government ending the period of conflict should be the main aim since this outcome can allow the country to flourish economically. However, this is not always the case. Intervening parties have previously tried to establish governments favourable to them without having the public support, which has led to the prolongment of the conflict. Furthermore, the US intervention in Afghanistan can also be an example of an operation that has not managed to stabilize the region despite the long period the troops remained in the area. Therefore, the international community has to decide on the duration of a mission, the goals of it as well as the necessary post-conflict measures to ensure stability in the intervened state.

P5-Power and interventions

The Security Council is the only UN organ who can decide on an international operation such as a peacekeeping mission and other decisions are made regarding humanitarian interventions. However, since the P5 members hold the veto power, it is impossible for the UN to deploy a force and intervene in an intrastate conflict without their approval. Therefore, one can understand that in case the interests of a State are violated by a potential intervention, this can be easily blocked regardless of the support the idea has gained among other nations. This fact has led to numerous interventions by other organizations such as the NATO without the necessary UN permission.

MAJOR COUNTRIES AND ORGANISATIONS INVOLVED

United States of America



Picture 3: U.S. Marines in the Northern part of Kuwait after receiving the orders to cross the Iraqi borders

U.S certainly is the country involved in the most foreign interventions; numerically speaking: more than 100. However, some of these are extremely important both regionally (eg. the course of the conflicts all around Middle East) and nationally eg. (Syria). The intentions of the U.S is a major debate topic all around the world and many articles on international newspapers have been written regarding the question. In order to understand the policy of the nation the upcoming section will briefly explain specific and recent interventions that led all the nations to question motives.

United States invasion of Afghanistan (2001-present)

The US decided to invade Afghanistan with a plan to fight the Taliban threatening the stability in the region and the Afghan government and violating international human rights' legislations. However, the conflict still remains unsolved spreading criticism over the necessity of it and the lives of soldiers lost. An associate professor of history at Stanford named Robert Crews, briefly explained the invasion as, "In Washington, it has become common to view Afghanistan as a country defined by a never-ending struggle among warlords, tribal chiefs, and religious fanatics. This has been particularly attractive as a way of explaining why the American intervention in that country, despite costing more than 2,300 American lives and roughly a trillion dollars, has achieved so few of its goals in over 14 years." This quote leads us to the fact that not only Afghan people lost their lives but it was challenging for U.S soldiers as well, however the complexity of a conflict can

War in Iraq (2003-present)

In short according to CNN news reporting agency, in May 22, 2003 – "The United Nations Security Council approved Resolution number 1483, that intends to lift sanctions against Iraq and reaffirms the "sovereignty and territorial integrity of Iraq." It also acknowledges the US and Great Britain's right to occupy Iraq. The resolution sets up a UN support system to work with the United States and Great Britain to facilitate the transition to a government elected by the people of Iraq."⁴

Russian Federation

The Russian Federation has also been involved in invasions with the most recent one being the one of Crimea and the war in East Ukraine. Russia justified it as an action to protect the Russian minority in the region. The Crimean invasion (2014-present) was described by BBC as "the smoothest invasion of modern times. It was over before the

⁴ <http://edition.cnn.com/2013/10/30/world/meast/operation-iraqi-freedom-and-operation-new-dawn-fast-facts/index.html>

outside world realized it had even started.”, the intervention in Crimea is considered as secretive and rapidly-developing. However, perhaps as fast growing it is, it is also one of the most controversial invasions in United Nations history. Therefore, the case was taken to the ICC (International Criminal Court) and an extensive analysis report has been written. The summary reads as “there exists a sensible or reasonable justification for a belief that a *crime* falling within the jurisdiction of the Court ‘has been or is being committed’” within the Crimean and Donbas territories of Ukraine.”

NATO

NATO intervention in Libya

On March 17, 2011, the United Nations Security Council adopted the Resolution 1973 that authorizes “regional organizations or arrangements...to take all necessary measures...to protect civilians and civilian populated areas under threat of attack” in Libya. This decision led to the NATO intervention and bombing in Libya against the pro-government troops. The votes on this resolution were ten votes for, none against, and five abstentions. However, the result of this action still is an ongoing debate. Some sources say that it was necessary for the well-being of Libyan citizens, while others say it was unnecessary and it had a self-seeking purpose.

France

France has played in the post-colonial era an important role in the stabilization of the African States. France military has been deployed in various Sub-Saharan countries. Its most important operation was the Operation Serval in 2013, when France sent troops to assist the Malian government in the fight against Taliban-supported groups seeking the creation of a new state in Northern Mali and the neighboring countries. France deployed around 3,000 troops currently operating not only in Mali, but also in Chad, Mauritania, Niger and Burkina Faso. France has placed troops also in Senegal, the Central African Republic, Cote D’Ivoire etc. either as support to governments or as part of international peacekeeping operations.

TIMELINE OF EVENTS

| Date | Description of Event |
|--------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| December 1979 | The Soviet-Afghan war (a part of the Cold War) started by the invasion of Soviet Union. |
| January 16, 1991 | Then President George H. W. started the Operation Desert Storm that aimed to expel the Iraqi forces in mission in Kuwait. |
| March 17, 2011 | The United Nations Security Council past Resolution 1973 that authorized the intervention in Libya. |
| January 11, 2013 | The French intervention in Mali (also known as Operation Serval) started. |
| September 22, 2014 | The United States, Jordan, Bahrain, Qatar, United Arab Emirates and the Saudi Arabia began to strike targets of the so-called ISIL (Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant) located inside Syria. |
| March 18, 2014 | Russian Federation annexed the Ukrainian Territory of Crimea. |

UN INVOLVEMENT: RELEVANT RESOLUTIONS, TREATIES AND EVENTS

Peacekeeping missions

Since its creation United Nations has been called upon many times in order prevent all sorts of conflicts and establish peace both within nations and between nations. One can say that the solutions of the United Nations are the peacekeeping operations and theoretically UN is a common ground for all the conflicts. Since it has a neutral state and is created just for the sake of the peace and harmony of the world UN is the safest way to involve a third party. Therefore, the further section will include some examples of peacekeeping operations.

El Salvador

United Nations Observer Mission in El Salvador (ONUSAL) (1991-1995): It was created to monitor the ceasefire agreements and negotiations among the government and the Frente Farabundo Marti para la Liberacion Nacional.

Central African Republic

United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in the Central African Republic (MINUSCA) (2014-present)

United Nations Mission in the Central African Republic and Chad (MINURCAT) (2007- 2010)

United Nations Mission in the Central African Republic (MINURCA) (1998-2000)

Sierra Leone

United Nations Observer Mission in Sierra Leone (UNOMSIL) 1998-1999 United Nations Mission in Sierra Leone (UNAMSIL) 1999-2005

Kosovo

United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK) 1999- PRESENT

Democratic Republic of the Congo

United Nations Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUC) (1999-2010)

United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUSCO) (2010- present)

Tajikistan

United Nations Mission of Observers in Tajikistan (UNMOT) (1994-2000)

POSSIBLE SOLUTIONS

Legal framework regarding interventions

First and foremost, the international community needs to decide on a specific framework regarding foreign military interventions and when they are necessary. The improvement of the existing framework and the specification of the preconditions would help make the decision making easier and faster. Furthermore, measures have to be found so as for the various obstacles to be combated e.g. P5 veto. Specific preparations for the troops must also be set in order to improve the effectiveness of missions. Last, the international community needs to decide on the stance of it towards states violating international legislation invading countries without the necessary UN approval.

Reintegration of combatants

In order to resolve an issue completely, one of the most important things to consider is the aftermath of the situation. A conflict is not disentangled unless the citizens feel like they are part of the society again. As war and fighting has the most negative influence on human psychology, it is always a struggle for the fighters to be reintegrated into normal living by the means of occupation, family, social life etc. Therefore, there has to be reintegration programs and special employment conditions for the combatants. These could be created under the related branches of the government or the related commissions of UN.

Re-activation and re-organization of missions

As mentioned above UN intervention with peacekeepers is considered a safe way as no self-seeking actions can occur, since UN is an organization created for the well-being of each nation. However, there are numerous obstacles that surround the peacekeeping operations as well. To begin with, there has been various accusations towards the UN authorities such as sexual assault cases and many more. Therefore, mission specific supervisions are necessary to ensure its well-functioning. Furthermore, some missions have been aborted even though the problem within the country has not come to an end.

Increasing UN reports

United Nations officials are one of the most reliable and unbiased personnel that can be trusted upon to analyze a situation. Also, the International Criminal Court, International Court of Justice, General Assembly Committees, Special Commissions and the Security Council use these reports in order to come up with resolutions or decisions. However, if they are not updated regularly or not written frequently outdated information can be an obstacle to reach the ultimate solution.

International summits and peace talks

Even though these events may result in conflicts within the heads of the nations, they also have a high chance to result in a common-ground among nations. Therefore, talks and discussions are beneficial for the peace building and the decision making.

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