



Universidad
Europea VALENCIA

International Relations Global Bachelor's Degree

Bachelor's Thesis

**Sexual Exploitation and Abuse by UN
Peacekeepers: Evaluating the Proportionality
of UN and State-Imposed Sanctions.**

Presented by:
Carla Forés Fernández

Directed by:
Prof. Thomas Kruiper

May 2025

Acknowledgments

This thesis represents the final step in a journey that has been as demanding as it has been rewarding. Along the way, I have been incredibly lucky to be surrounded by people whose support, patience, and curiosity have made all the difference.

First and foremost, I want to thank my family. Without their unwavering support, I would not have had the chance to pursue this degree or grow through it. Mum, dad, you have encouraged me at every step, reminding me why I started and who I am becoming. I only hope to grow into at least half the incredible, hardworking people you are. To my sisters—thank you for always asking what my thesis is about even if it didn't make much sense to you, and for insisting that I explain it anyway. Your interest, even if mostly out of love, has meant more than you think.

I also owe enormous thanks to my thesis supervisor, Dr. Thomas Kruiper. It was through one of his courses that I first encountered the issue of sexual exploitation and abuse in peacekeeping missions—an uncomfortable but essential topic. His ability to foster critical thinking and push students beyond the surface is rare and deeply appreciated. Working on this topic reminded me why the United Nations has always been a dream for me—but also why that dream must come with the responsibility to face its darker sides. This thesis is the result of that wake-up call.

Juli, thank you for keeping me company during the long hours of research. Your admirable nonconformity and commitment to solidarity projects continue to inspire me to pursue a more just and equitable future. I am grateful to walk this path with someone who challenges and motivates me every day.

I am also deeply grateful to all my professors over these years, whose passion and knowledge have helped shape my academic path in Law and International Relations. I could not have chosen a better field of study. I am equally thankful to my fellow students for being part of such an intellectually diverse and engaging environment—from those in Valencia to those I have met during my international experiences in London and Brussels, each of you has contributed in your own way.

A very special thank you to my friend Alice. These five years by your side have helped me grow into the person I aspire to be. I look forward to all that we may continue to achieve together.

Finally, thank you to the members of my thesis panel for taking the time to read and evaluate my work.

Abstract and Keywords

Despite the United Nations' (UN) proclaimed "zero-tolerance" policy, sexual exploitation and abuse (SEA) by UN peacekeepers remains a systemic issue. It is a matter of grave concern that thousands of victims – often women and children – have suffered at the hands of those entrusted with their protection. This exposes significant flaws in the accountability mechanisms put in place to ensure the safety of the populace. The present thesis seeks to examine the question of whether the sanctions imposed by both the UN and troop-contributing countries (TCCs) are proportionate to the severity of the abuses in question. In consideration of the frequently observed immunity that peacekeepers often enjoy, in conjunction with the inconsistent legal responses exhibited by TCCs, this study undertakes an exploratory investigation into the potential contributory effect of these discrepancies to an existing accountability gap. The present study analyses power dynamics, impunity and mission-specific vulnerabilities in order to assess the proportionality of current sanctions. It also proposes reforms to strengthen accountability within UN peacekeeping operations.

Keywords: Sexual Exploitation and Abuse, United Nations Peacekeepers, Accountability, Proportionality of Sanctions, Troop-Contributing Countries, Impunity

Resumen y Palabras clave

A pesar de la proclamada política de “tolerancia cero” de las Naciones Unidas (ONU), la explotación y los abusos sexuales (EAS) por parte de las fuerzas de paz de la ONU siguen siendo un problema sistémico. Resulta especialmente preocupante que miles de víctimas —a menudo mujeres y niños— hayan sufrido a manos de quienes tenían el mandato de protegerlas, lo que evidencia fallos graves en los mecanismos de rendición de cuentas destinados a garantizar su seguridad. Esta tesis examina si las sanciones impuestas tanto por la ONU como por los países que aportan tropas (TCC) son proporcionales a la gravedad de los abusos cometidos. Dada la inmunidad de la que a menudo gozan los cascos azules y la respuesta jurídica desigual por parte de los TCC, el estudio analiza hasta qué punto estas discrepancias contribuyen a una brecha de rendición de cuentas. Asimismo, se abordan las dinámicas de poder, la impunidad y las vulnerabilidades específicas de cada misión, con el objetivo de evaluar la proporcionalidad de las sanciones vigentes y proponer reformas que refuercen la rendición de cuentas en las operaciones de paz de la ONU.

Palabras clave: Explotación y Abuso Sexual, Cascos Azules de las Naciones Unidas, Rendición de Cuentas, Proporcionalidad de las Sanciones, Países que Aportan Tropas, Impunidad

List of Abbreviations

<i>Abbreviations</i>	<i>Meaning</i>
CAR	Central African Republic
CBCMs	Community-Based Complaint Mechanisms
CDU	Conduct and Discipline Unit
DMSPC	United Nations Department for Management, Strategy, Policy and Compliance
DPO	Department of Peace Operations
DRC	Democratic Republic of Congo
MINUSCA	United Nations Stabilization Mission in Central African Republic
MINUSTAH	United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti
MONUSCO	UN Organisation Stabilisation Mission in the DRC
MOU	Memorandum of Understanding
MTS	Misconduct Tracking System
OHCHR	Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights
OIOS	Office of Internal Oversight Services
SDG	Sustainable Development Goal
SEA	Sexual Exploitation and Abuse
SOFAs	Status of Forces Agreements
TCC	Troop-Contributing Country
UN	United Nations
UNAT	United Nations Appeals Tribunal
UNDPKO	United Nations Department of Peacekeeping Operations
UNDT	United Nations Dispute Tribunal
UNMISS	United Nations Mission in South Sudan
VRA	Victims' Rights Advocate

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1. Introduction

Sexual exploitation and abuse (SEA) by UN peacekeepers is a serious problem that has plagued peacekeeping operations for decades. The United Nations (UN) defines sexual exploitation¹ as any actual or attempted abuse of a position of vulnerability, unequal power or trust for sexual purposes, including, but not limited to, profiting monetarily, socially or politically from the sexual exploitation of another person. Sexual abuse is defined as actual or threatened physical intrusion of a sexual nature, whether by force or under unequal or coercive conditions.

Allegations of SEA by UN peacekeepers began to emerge in the early 1990s, a period marked by the post-Cold War surge in peacekeeping operations. The case of the United Nations Transitional Authority in Cambodia 1992-1993 (Olsson 2009) and Somalia in 1992 (Kent 2007), where allegations of sexual exploitation by peacekeepers came to light, was a watershed moment that highlighted the urgent need to address this issue.

Over the years, thousands of allegations of SEA have been recorded in UN peacekeeping missions. According to sources, there have been about 2.000 allegations of SEA by UN personnel since the 1990s. However, it is important to note that the actual number of cases is probably much higher, as many incidents go unreported due to fear of reprisals, embarrassment or lack of confidence in reporting mechanisms.

Analysis of UN data on SEA reporting reveals that certain troop-contributing countries (TCCs) have significantly higher reporting rates than others. This suggests the need for further research on the correlation between perpetrators and reporting, and the role of source countries in preventing and punishing SEA.

1.1. When Protection turns to Exploitation

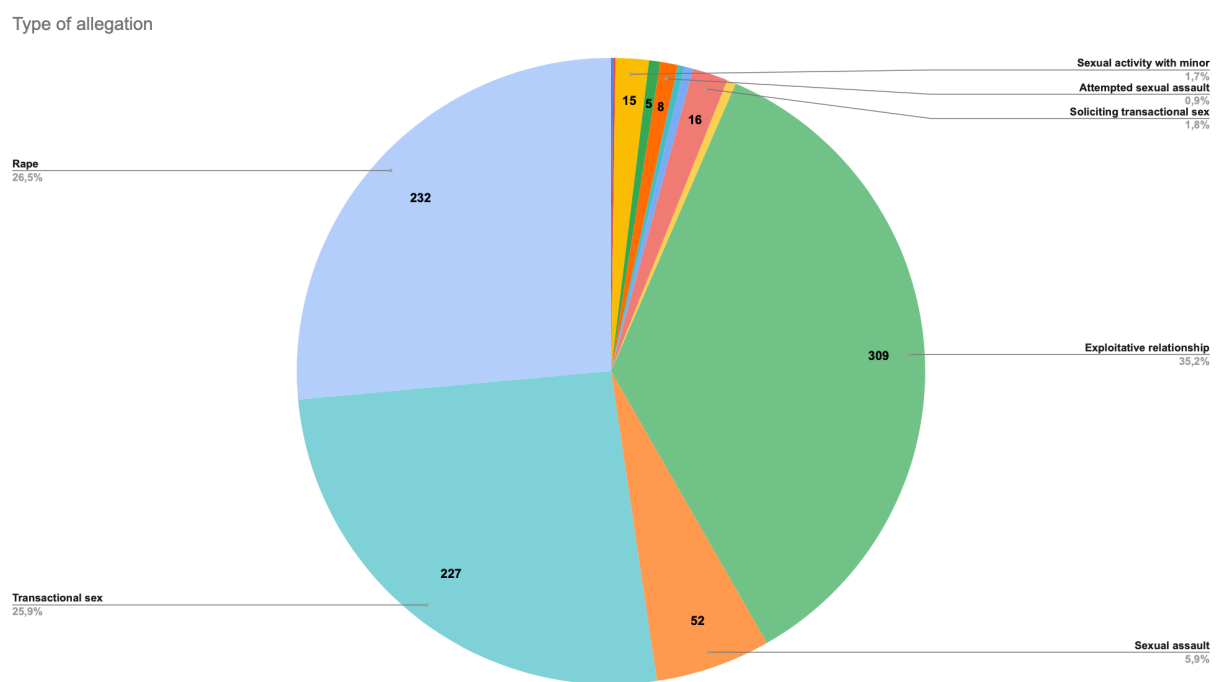
It has been observed that SEA constitutes substantial violations of fundamental rights and breaches of basic dignity. The data presented in Figure 1 shows a broad range of allegations related to SEA, highlighting the different forms such

¹ United Nations protocol on sea allegations involving implementing partners https://www.un.org/preventing-sexual-exploitation-and-abuse/sites/www.un.org/preventing-sexual-exploitation-and-abuse/files/un_protocol_on_sea_allegations_involving_implementing_partners_en.pdf

violations can take. The most commonly reported allegation was *Exploitative relationship* (309 cases), followed by *Rape* (232 cases) and *Transactional sex* (227 cases). Other significant categories include *Sexual assault* (52 cases) and *Soliciting transactional sex* (16 cases), while smaller but notable instances such as *Sexual activity with a minor* (15 cases), *Attempted sexual assault* (8 cases) and *Attempted rape* (4 cases) are also recorded.

The prevalence of exploitative relationships and transactional sex reflects two main SEA patterns: sexual activity in exchange for protection or assistance, and sexual activity in exchange for essential provisions such as food, shelter, or safety. These findings stress the urgency of addressing the systemic conditions that enable such abuses and the need to uphold the dignity and rights of all individuals affected by SEA.²

Figure 1. Abuse Comes in Many Forms



Note: This figure outlines the different types of SEA committed by peacekeepers, including: *Rape*, *Sexual assault*, *Transactional sex*, *Exploitative relationship*, *Sexual activity with minor*, *Attempted rape*, *Attempted sexual assault*, *Attempted transactional sex* and *Soliciting transactional sex*.

Source: Author's own elaboration based on data from the United Nations SEA Allegations Dataset (2015–2025), available at: <https://psdata.un.org/dataset/DMSPC-SEA>

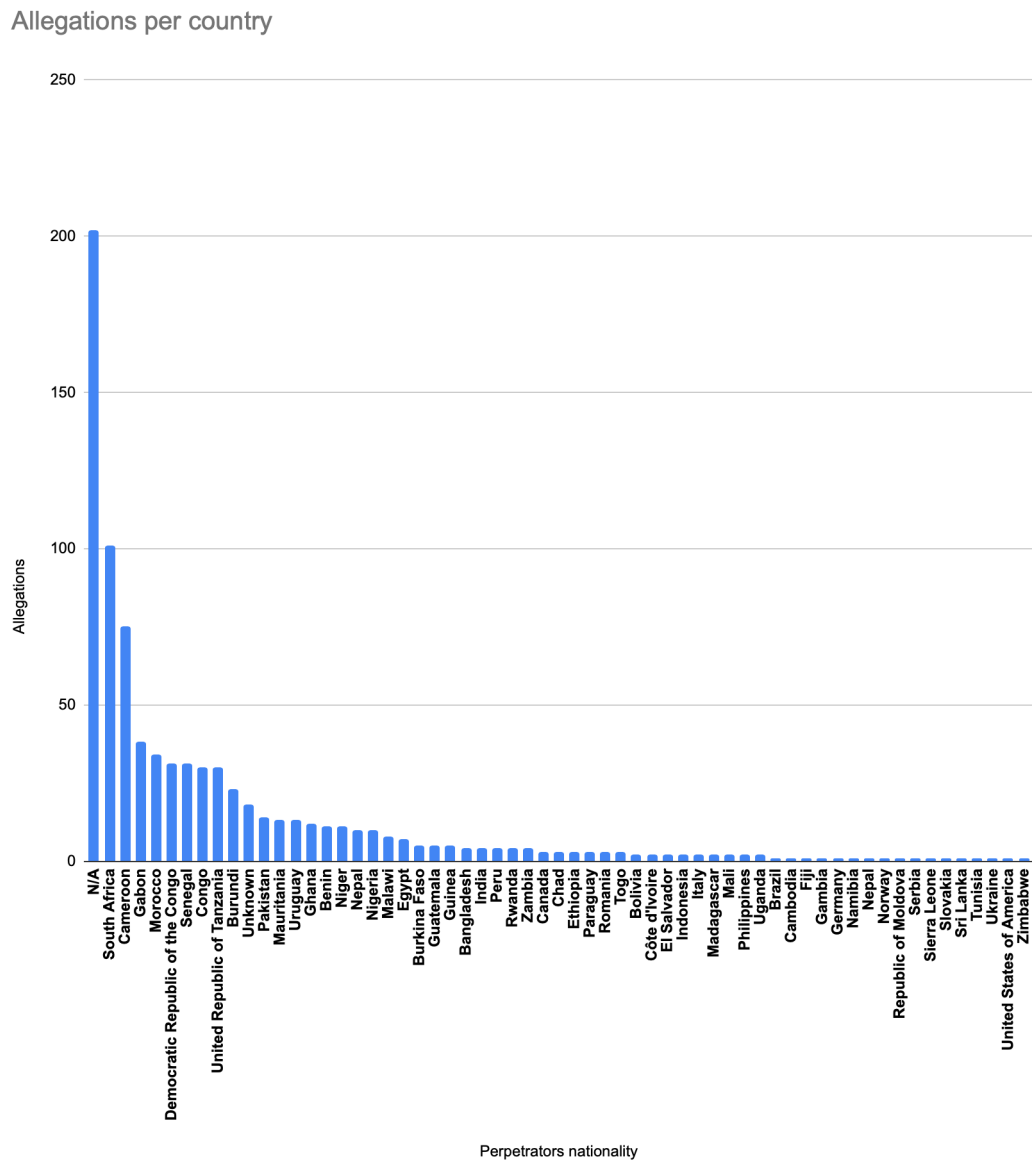
² Peace & Security Data Hub. (s. f.). <https://psdata.un.org/dataset/DMSPC-SEA>

1.2. Immunity and Differences in State Policies

Peacekeepers manage to avoid legal consequences because of numerous judicial weaknesses and insufficient law enforcement activities from troop-sending states. Accused peacekeepers escape prosecution as their mission sends them back to their countries to serve in different United Nations missions with no legal consequences. The absence of uniform legal structures throughout international forces creates more problems because it causes deficient sentencing outcomes and variable sanctioning procedures. When institutions fail to enforce proper justice, victims suffer deeper mental trauma and attempts to prevent future abuse break down (Comstock, 2024).

Peacekeepers serving with the UN gain legal protections which prevent local authorities from seeking justice against them when they carry out their duties in host territories. The authority to take legal measures regarding these crimes belongs entirely to the countries whose troops were deployed. National policies and laws produce enormous variations, which create major dissimilarities in how SEA cases are managed. Many perpetrators of sexual violence are able to avoid justice when they return home since their countries grant legal immunity, which creates an environment tolerant to criminal acts. The UN mission reports the most substantial cases of sexual abuse and exploitation coming from individuals affiliated with the countries that appear below in Figure 2.

Figure 2. Number of Allegations per Country



Note: This chart represents a total of 810 alleged SEA cases, with a disproportionate number attributed to a small group of TCCs.

Source: Author's own elaboration based on data from the United Nations SEA Allegations Dataset (2015–2025), available at: <https://psdata.un.org/dataset/DMSPC-SEA>

As illustrated in Figure 2, the majority of the 810 reported cases are concentrated among a limited number of TCCs. South Africa alone accounts for over 100 allegations, with other high-reporting countries including Cameroon (75 allegations), Gabon (38 allegations) and Morocco (34 allegations). This uneven distribution underscores the urgent need for more consistent and enforceable international accountability standards. The lack of follow-through on legal action in home countries not only enables repeated offenses but also undermines the credibility of peacekeeping missions. Without an effective

international mechanism to ensure justice across borders, SEA allegations will continue to be managed inconsistently, allowing many perpetrators to remain beyond the reach of the law. These data reinforce the importance of harmonizing state policies and eliminating immunity loopholes that shield offenders from prosecution.

This context raises a critical question that frames the core of this research: Are the sanctions imposed by the United Nations and troop-contributing countries proportional to the severity of the sexual exploitation and abuse committed by peacekeepers? Understanding the adequacy of these sanctions is vital to evaluating the effectiveness of current accountability mechanisms and the broader commitment of the international community to justice and human rights.

The question is both timely and pertinent to current global initiatives. The subject under discussion is also directly related to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), with particular reference to SDG 5 (Gender Equality) and SDG 16 (Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions), which emphasize the elimination of violence, exploitation, and abuse. Furthermore, this coincides with the stipulated requirements of the United Nations Department of Peacekeeping Operations (UNDPKO), which is charged with the obligation of ensuring that peacekeepers maintain the highest standards of conduct. Additionally, the text in question establishes a connection to United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 (UNSCR 1325), a document which acknowledges the deleterious effects of war on women and girls, and demands responsibility and enhanced security against gender-based violence in conflict and post-conflict environments.

The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and the Issue of Sexual Exploitation and Abuse by UN Peacekeepers

The United Nations develops the SDGs as an international method to tackle essential social and economic problems along with environmental problems. SEA of UN peacekeepers represents a major hurdle which prevents the successful implementation of these goals, particularly in zones hit by conflict and post-conflict areas. This analysis demonstrates the ways peacekeeping forces commit SEA, which produces detrimental effects on several SDGs.³

Goal 1: No Poverty

SEA hits vulnerable populations most among the disadvantaged groups economically. Peacekeeping zone victims, particularly women and children, encounter additional challenges because they face economic limitations and social prejudice while having to support children from sexual abuse. SEA creates sustained economic uncertainties that prevent victimized individuals from escaping economic destitution.

Goal 3: Good Health and Well-being

SEA victims experience several severe implications, causing both physical and psychological damage to their health because of sexually transmitted infections and unwanted pregnancies, as well as trauma. Survivors who work in peacekeeping missions often fail to receive necessary medical care, along with psychological aid, which worsens their condition. The essential need to address SEA maintains peacekeeping operations from becoming detrimental to both the health and security needs of the local populations.

Goal 5: Gender Equality

The most direct violation of the SDGs through sexual exploitation occurs against Goal 5, which aims to stop violence against women, together with sexual violence and exploitation. People in positions of protection duty who commit SEA act against human rights principles and disrupt international equality initiatives for women. When officers who commit sexual abuse go unpunished, it strengthens existing power disparities and creates barriers to advancing in Goal 5.

Goal 8: Decent Work and Economic Growth

³ SDGs. (s. f.). United Nations : Office On Drugs And Crime. <https://www.unodc.org/unodc/en/human-trafficking/sdgs.html>

Economic exploitation takes place when an individual engages in sexual acts to obtain food, monetary rewards, or suitable job opportunities. Due to this situation, decent work attempts and fair economic opportunities efforts are undermined because power and coercion create unethical labor environments instead of ethical practices.

Goal 10: Reduced Inequalities

Multiple groups who experience marginalization face the greatest risk from SEA. This group includes women and children together with refugees and individuals who have been forced to leave their homes or relocate within their country. The continued existence of these abuses makes victimized communities face increased social discrimination while facing legal challenges to achieve justice and experiencing social exclusion. The lack of responsibility to punish perpetrators boosts existing disparities of power and weakens worldwide efforts to decrease inequalities.

Goal 16: Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions

The misconduct of peacekeepers through SEA greatly reduces the trust people have in international organizations, peacekeeping missions and the laws that govern them. A lack of justice and impunity for the wrongdoers decreases people's trust in the system, which discourages victims from trying to get justice. To achieve Goal 16, the law must be clear and strong. Accountability is important so that wrongdoings are addressed, justice is carried out, and the needs of survivors are always considered.

Goal 17: Partnerships for the Goals

UN entities and contributing Member States must coordinate their efforts to end instances of sexual abuse in peacekeeping tasks. Sustainable development principles can be achieved by peace missions through the establishment of policy coherence and survivor-centered approaches as well as accountability systems. Partnerships focused on peace and development become ineffective and discredited by SEA unless this issue receives proper attention.

These interconnected impacts show that SEA by UN personnel is not just a legal or ethical issue; it undermines global development efforts at their core ([Annex I](#)).

2. Theoretical Framework and Institutional Framework

2.1. Previous Investigations

Several authors have conducted research on SEA in the context of peacekeeping operations, exploring diverse facets of the issue. Nordås and Rustad (2013)⁴ analyzed the variation in SEA allegations in 36 peacekeeping missions, finding that factors such as the level of development of the host country, the intensity of the conflict, and the size of the operation can influence the prevalence of SEA. Conversely, studies have indicated that cultural norms which condone violence against women or perpetuate gender inequality may be associated with an elevated risk of SEA. However, it is crucial to avoid simplistic generalizations and to analyse the specific context of each peace mission.

Other studies that have been conducted examine the limitations of UN policies in addressing this issue. Indeed, Simic (2015)⁵ explores the ineffectiveness of UN policies in addressing the root causes of SEA, arguing that a more holistic approach is required, which takes into account factors such as poverty and gender inequality. In a similar vein, Mudgway (2016)⁶ proposes a hybrid approach to addressing SEA that combines more robust accountability mechanisms at the UN level with preventive measures at the national level.

The effectiveness of the current measures has also been the subject of analysis. Bjørgengen (2022)⁷ analyzes the effectiveness of the UN Voluntary Pact to Prevent and Address SEA, finding that while there has been some progress in terms of punishment at the national level, there has not been a significant reduction in the overall number of allegations. This finding suggests that institutional reforms alone may not be sufficient to eradicate the problem.

⁴ Nordås, Ragnhild and Rustad C.A., Siri (2013). Sexual Exploitation and Abuse by Peacekeepers: Understanding Variation. *International Interactions* 39(4). pp.511-534.
<https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/03050629.2013.805128>

⁵ Olivera Simic Protection-from-Protectors-Sexual-Abuse-in-UN-Peacekeeping-Missions (2019, October, 9) *E-International Relations*
<https://www.e-ir.info/2015/10/09/protection-from-protectors-sexual-abuse-in-un-peacekeeping-missions/>

⁶ Mudgway, C. (2016). *Sexual Exploitation and Abuse by UN Peacekeepers: Towards a Hybrid Solution*. [Doctoral Thesis, University of Canterbury].
<https://ir.canterbury.ac.nz/server/api/core/bitstreams/12ae16e6-d6b4-4d7e-acf1-25a9e2f25026/content>

⁷ Bjørgengen, S. (2023). *Sexual exploitation and abuse by UN peacekeepers: treating the symptoms but not the disease*.
https://titula.universidadeuropea.com/bitstream/handle/20.500.12880/5578/TFG_Siri%20Linn%20Rewentl%20Bjorgengen.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y

From a sociological standpoint, certain authors investigate personal and cultural factors that may elevate the probability of abusive conduct. Agathangelou and Ling (2009)⁸ discuss how militarized masculine identities, which are often characterized by aggressiveness, dominance, and suppression of emotions, may contribute to SEA. Higate (2003)⁹, on the other hand, explores how the loneliness and isolation that peacekeepers may experience, away from their families and communities, may increase the risk of abusive behavior. Last but not least, Trones (2023)¹⁰ research presents an analysis of the role of gender equality in preventing SEA and how the inclusion of more women in peacekeeping forces can contribute to a culture of respect and integrity.

While existing literature has explored the prevalence, causes, and policy responses to SEA, limited attention has been given to evaluating the proportionality of sanctions imposed by the UN and TCCs. This research aims to fill this gap by addressing the question: "To what extent are the sanctions imposed by the UN and TCCs proportionate to the severity of SEA committed by peacekeepers?"

Although the UN reports SEA involve a range of personnel—including agency staff, implementing partners, and non-UN forces authorized by Security Council mandates¹¹—this analysis focuses exclusively on peacekeepers. This focus is due to their unique role within UN peace operations and the heightened legal and public scrutiny surrounding their conduct.

2.2. Institutional Mechanisms within the UN System

In addition to the academic perspectives discussed above, this section analyzes the UN's institutional response to SEA. It considers the core principles underpinning that response—particularly proportionality, accountability, and

⁸ Agathangelou, Anna & Ling, L. (2003). Desire industries: Sex trafficking, un peacekeeping, and the neo-liberal world order. *Brown Journal of World Affairs*. 10. https://www.researchgate.net/publication/237371009_Desire_industries_Sex_trafficking_un_peacekeeping_and_the_neo-liberal_world_order

⁹ Higate, Paul & Henry, Marsha. (2004). Engendering (In)Security in Peace Support Operations. *Security Dialogue*. 35. 10.1177/0967010604049529. https://www.researchgate.net/publication/48910763_Engendering_InSecurity_in_Peace_Support_Operations

¹⁰ Trones, S. (2023). *From Peacekeepers to Perpetrators: Exploring the role of country and gender*. https://titula.universidadeuropea.com/bitstream/handle/20.500.12880/5585/TEG_Silje%20Trones.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y

¹¹ *Data on Allegations: UN System-wide | Preventing Sexual Exploitation and Abuse*. (s. f.-b). <https://www.un.org/preventing-sexual-exploitation-and-abuse/content/data-allegations-un-system-wide>

survivor-centered justice—as well as the key structures, policies, and mechanisms through which they are implemented.

Among these principles, proportionality stands out as a cornerstone of both legal and ethical frameworks. It raises critical questions about whether the sanctions imposed by the United Nations and troop-contributing countries are truly commensurate with the severity of SEA committed by peacekeepers. According to the UN's own standards, proportionality means that “the severity of the disciplinary sanction must match the gravity of the misconduct.” This principle is meant to guarantee fair, non-arbitrary outcomes by taking into account factors such as the seriousness of the offence, the perpetrator's intent and prior record, the harm caused, and any mitigating or aggravating circumstances.

To uphold this principle and promote accountability, the UN has developed a range of institutional tools and procedures. Although these mechanisms are still evolving—and frequently constrained by jurisdictional and enforcement challenges—they constitute the foundation of the UN's strategy to prevent SEA, respond to allegations, and support survivors. At the institutional level, several key bodies play central roles. The Conduct and Discipline Unit (CDU), under the Department of Management Strategy, Policy and Compliance (DMSPC), is responsible for implementing SEA-related policies, providing training, and ensuring compliance across peacekeeping missions. The Office of Internal Oversight Services (OIOS) serves as an independent investigative arm, tasked with examining serious allegations, compiling evidence, and recommending disciplinary actions. The Department of Peace Operations (DPO) integrates conduct standards into mission planning and coordinates with Member States to enforce accountability. To promote a unified response, the UN also appointed a Special Coordinator on Improving UN Response to SEA, who leads cross-agency reforms and efforts to strengthen institutional safeguards. In parallel, the Victims' Rights Advocate (VRA) ensures that survivors' needs are prioritized, advocating for access to support services and justice mechanisms in the field.

The UN also employs a range of tools and mechanisms to address SEA more directly. One foundational policy is the Secretary-General's Bulletin (ST/SGB/2003/13), which establishes a zero-tolerance stance on SEA and outlines prohibited conduct. Furthermore, Secretary-General's reports such as

A/79/789 provide annual updates on the implementation of this policy and related measures. To track and manage allegations, the Misconduct Tracking System (MTS) serves as a centralized database of reported incidents, investigations, and outcomes. Locally, Community-Based Complaint Mechanisms (CBCMs) enable civilians in host communities to report misconduct safely and confidentially. These tools are supported by Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) signed with TCCs, which clarify the roles and legal responsibilities of each party, including the fact that legal jurisdiction over peacekeepers remains with their home country.

In terms of enforcement, the UN has the authority to repatriate individuals or entire military contingents in cases of serious misconduct and can suspend contributions from countries that fail to cooperate with investigations. The organization also employs a form of public accountability through the Secretary-General's annual reports, which identify the nationalities of alleged perpetrators and encourage greater transparency. Finally, to support survivors, the UN has established a Trust Fund in Support of Victims of SEA in 2016¹², which provides access to medical care, psychosocial support, legal aid, and vocational training. This victim-centered approach reflects the growing emphasis on dignity and long-term recovery. Together, these institutions and mechanisms represent the UN's comprehensive—though still evolving—strategy for addressing SEA within peacekeeping operations.

¹² Department of Management Strategy, Policy and Compliance United Nations Secretariat, New York. (2024). *Annual Report of the Trust Fund in support of Victims of Sexual Exploitation and Abuse*. United Nations.
https://www.un.org/preventing-sexual-exploitation-and-abuse/sites/www.un.org.preventing-sexual-exploitation-and-abuse/files/trust_fund_ar_2024_v1.0.pdf

3. Methodology

To address the research question—*Are the sanctions imposed by the United Nations and troop-contributing countries proportional to the severity of the sexual exploitation and abuse committed by peacekeepers?*—this thesis adopts a qualitative-quantitative mixed methods approach, combining descriptive statistical analysis of SEA cases with a normative evaluation of accountability mechanisms and sanction proportionality.

3.1. Primary Source of Data

The primary dataset used in this study is the “Sexual Exploitation and Abuse Data” maintained by the United Nations’ DMSPC. This dataset is publicly available through the UN’s open data platform and contains allegation-level information on SEA incidents across UN Peace Operations and Special Political Missions. Each row in the dataset corresponds to a single allegation, detailing the mission in which the allegation occurred, the category of personnel involved, the nationality of the alleged perpetrator, the status of the case and the actions taken.

The dataset spans from January 1, 2015—the official start date—until the most recent update available at the time of analysis, which was May 12, 2025. While the UN began tracking misconduct in 2006, only SEA—specific data from 2015 onward are publicly accessible in this format.

3.2. Case Selection

In light of the heterogeneity that characterises UN peace operations, this thesis focuses on a carefully curated set of case studies. The selection of missions and TCCs has been informed by a multifaceted set of criteria, encompassing the number of reported SEA allegations, their salience within public discourse and extant research, and the geographic and operational diversity of the missions involved.

Accordingly, the present study focuses on four United Nations peacekeeping missions selected for their pertinence and the severity of the reported cases of SEA. The inclusion of MONUSCO is attributable to two key factors: firstly, the consistently high number of SEA allegations lodged against the organisation;

and secondly, its protracted presence in the DRC. MINUSCA has been confronted with grave scandals involving minors, and has confronted considerable challenges in ensuring local accountability. Despite its current inactivity, MINUSTAH continues to be a prominent topic in public discourse on peacekeeper abuses, particularly with regard to cases of paternal abandonment. Finally, UNMISS has been selected for its strategic importance and the occurrence of SEA within Protection of Civilians sites, which gives rise to critical questions about the safety and integrity of these supposedly secure environments.

The TCCs selected comprise countries that have been identified in the UN dataset, with particular reference to outcomes relating to criminal prosecution, or the absence thereof. Indeed, there are countries with multiple substantiated allegations that lack contrasting levels of transparency or response in handling SEA cases. Consequently, the present study will concentrate on Pakistan, Cameroon and South Africa.

The objective of these choices is twofold: firstly, to assess the frequency of SEA; and secondly, to evaluate the responses enacted by both the UN and member states. This is particularly pertinent in light of the *zero-tolerance policy*.

3.3. Analytical Framework

The dataset will be processed to identify: (1) the number and outcome of allegations per mission and per TCC; (2) the categories of personnel most frequently involved; and (3) the types and severity of sanctions imposed.

This empirical data will be cross-referenced with official UN statements, conduct and academic and journalistic sources. The objective is to evaluate whether the disciplinary or criminal measures imposed are proportionate to the alleged or substantiated misconduct.

3.4. Limitations

Notwithstanding the robust foundation provided by the United Nations' dataset and the comparative case study design, several limitations constrain the scope and depth of this research.

3.4.1. Restricted Access to National Judicial Outcomes

A significant challenge arises in the assessment of the proportionality of sanctions imposed by TCCs. While the UN dataset may indicate whether a member state has taken action, such as repatriation or disciplinary measures, it rarely provides detailed outcomes of national judicial processes, such as criminal convictions or the length of sentences. A significant number of TCCs do not disclose their legal proceedings in a public manner, particularly in military or disciplinary courts. This has the effect of making it difficult to evaluate whether sanctions were effectively applied or proportional to the offence. This limitation has ramifications for the comparative assessment of accountability mechanisms across countries.

3.4.2. Inclusion of Qualitative Testimonies

While qualitative testimonies from UN personnel are generally difficult to obtain due to confidentiality requirements and the sensitive nature of the topic, a valuable first-hand contribution was secured from Anders Kompass, former Director of Field Operations at the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR). Mr. Kompass is widely recognised for exposing sexual abuse committed by French peacekeepers in the Central African Republic (CAR) in 2014, a decision which resulted in personal and professional repercussions.

He generously responded to a set of questions specifically designed for this research, offering insights into the structural, political and ethical challenges that hinder accountability within the UN system. His written responses are referenced throughout the analysis (particularly in Chapter 5) and are included in full in ([Annex III](#)).

Although attempts were made to contact additional peacekeeping personnel, no further testimonies could be obtained. This reflects the broader difficulty of accessing insider perspectives in such a sensitive and tightly controlled institutional environment. As a result, Mr. Kompass' testimony stands as a singular but highly valuable qualitative contribution to this study.

3.4.3. Data Incompleteness

While the dataset from 2015 onwards is the most comprehensive publicly available source, it should be noted that not all cases are fully documented. It is acknowledged that in some cases, information regarding the outcomes of investigations, the measures that have been implemented, and even details pertaining to the nationality of the perpetrator, may be absent.

Research findings

4. The Offence: Patterns, Norms, and Impunity

4.1. The International Legal Framework for UN Peacekeepers

In order to facilitate comprehension of the established protocol, reference has been made to the official UN infographic on the management of allegations of SEA in peace operations (Management of Reports and Allegations Involving UN Personnel, UN, 2017, [Annex II](#)). This instrument delineates the flow of responsibility between the UN and Member States, establishing optimal temporal parameters (e.g., a six-month timeframe for internal investigations or a ten-day window for States to communicate their intent to initiate an investigation). Furthermore, it delineates the range of provisional measures (including the suspension of payments) that may be implemented, along with the potential outcomes of such measures, ranging from the repatriation of funds to referral to the state's criminal justice system.

4.2. Impunity and Inconsistent Accountability

A persistent culture of impunity continues to obstruct the effective eradication of SEA by UN peacekeepers. Functional immunity, granted to UN personnel while on mission, shields them from prosecution for acts committed in their official capacity. According to Article V, section 18 (b) of the Convention on the Privileges and Immunities of the United Nations (1946), UN officials are immune from legal process “in respect of words spoken or written and all acts performed by them in their official capacity.” Although this immunity has theoretical limits, in practice it is often interpreted more broadly (Jennings, 2017). Perpetrators are frequently repatriated or redeployed before the conclusion of any investigation, making it difficult to hold them accountable or ensure that victims are properly heard or supported (Wagner, 2022).

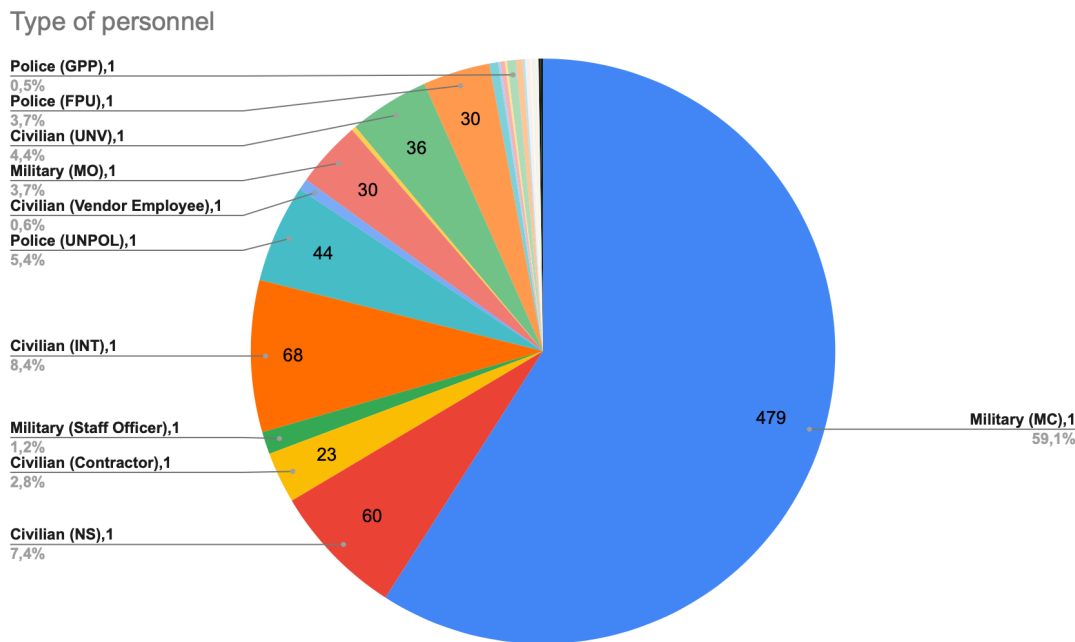
This is a particularly salient issue in the case of military personnel, who constitute the majority of both peacekeepers and those implicated in SEA allegations (Figure 3).¹³ Recent data confirms that the majority of SEA

¹³ Peace & Security Data Hub. (s. f.). <https://psdata.un.org/dataset/DMSPC-SEA>

accusations involve individuals assigned to peacekeeping and humanitarian tasks. As demonstrated in Figure 3, of the alleged perpetrators, 479 are from the military contingent, 68 are international civilian staff, and 60 are national civilian staff. This distribution underscores the disproportionate role of military personnel in these cases and reinforces concerns about the efficacy of current accountability mechanisms, which vary significantly depending on the status of the accused.

Status of Forces Agreements (SOFAs) and Memoranda of Understanding (MOUs) ensure that only the TCCs have jurisdiction over their soldiers. However, criminal prosecution at the national level remains rare, and punishments are often limited to administrative measures (Jennings, 2017; Comstock, 2022). The UN's dependence on TCCs—some of which may lack political will or institutional capacity—leads to highly inconsistent enforcement, undermining the principle of proportionality.

Figure 3. *From Peacekeepers to Perpetrators*

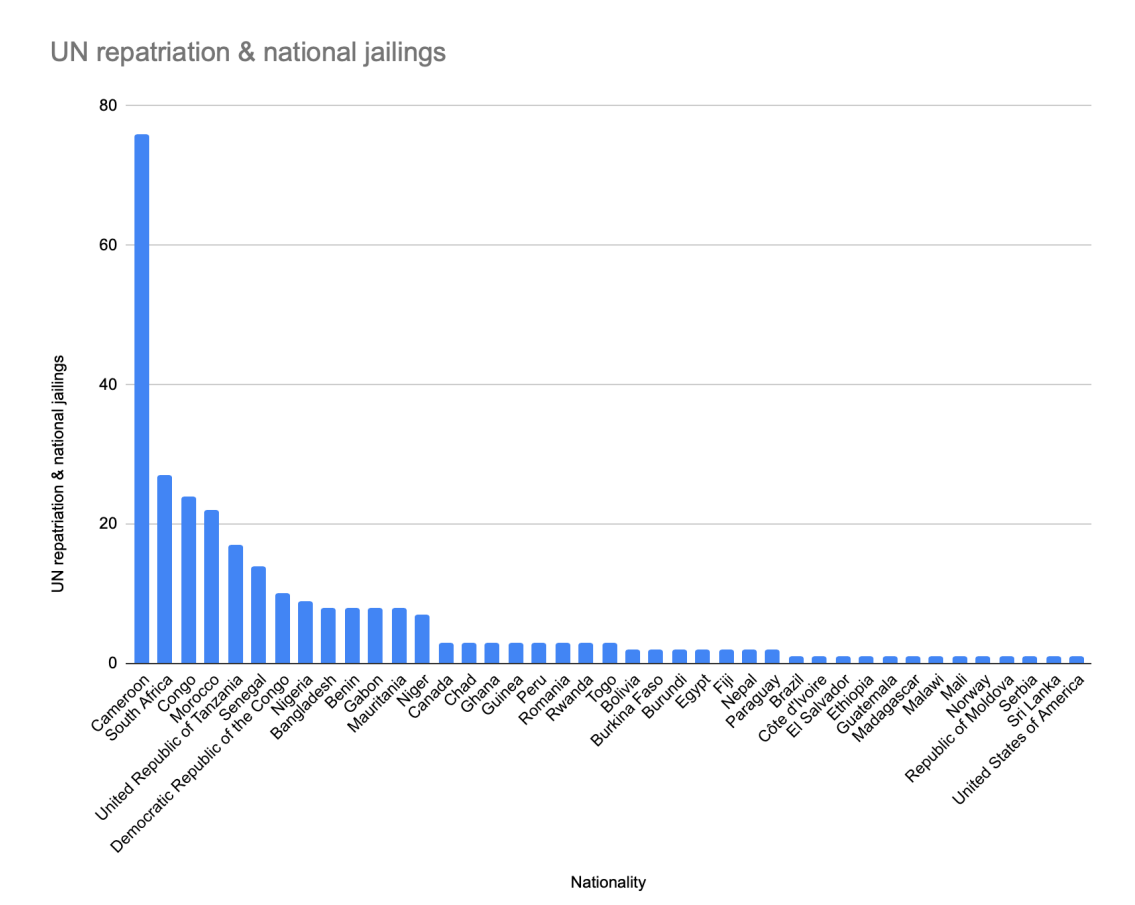


Note: This figure traces the trajectory of individuals deployed as peacekeepers who were later accused of SEA, highlighting the erosion of their protective role.

Source: Author's own elaboration based on data from the United Nations SEA Allegations Dataset (2015–2025), available at: <https://psdata.un.org/dataset/DMSPC-SEA>

Between 2015 and 2025, the UN recorded 810 cases involving 1,514 perpetrators, against whom there were 1,559 allegations.¹⁴ Of those perpetrators, only 128 received jail sentences—just 8,46%—while the majority of cases ended in dismissals or remain pending. (Figure 4 & Figure 9). These figures become even more concerning when considering the likely high number of unreported cases. The outcome is clear: for many peacekeepers, there are few meaningful consequences, and this lack of deterrence contributes to ongoing abuse (Björgengen, 2022).

Figure 4. Repatriated or Jailed Perpetrators by Country



Note: This figure lists the number of SEA allegations that resulted in either repatriation or imprisonment, categorized by the country of origin of the accused. It offers a snapshot of legal accountability across troop-contributing countries. Out of a total of 1,559 allegations, 91 resulted in imprisonment and 199 in UN repatriation.

Source: Author’s own elaboration based on data from the United Nations SEA Allegations Dataset (2015–2025), available at: <https://psdata.un.org/dataset/DMSPC-SEA>

¹⁴ There is a discrepancy between the numbers, because some cases include more than one allegation against more than one (alleged) perpetrator.

4.3. Discrepancies Between Norms and Practice

Notwithstanding the provisions set out in the relevant UN documentation, including the corporate infographic of 2017, the data demonstrate a disconcerting incongruity between the theoretical standard and the actual situation. The infographic presents a proactive collaboration between Member States, yet data from 810 cases reviewed indicates a prevalent practice of repatriations without legal consequences, inconclusive investigations, or, in some cases, no response at all. In this sense, it can be affirmed that the current system functions more as a formal architecture than as an effective guarantee of justice and reparation.

4.4. The Role of Naming and Shaming

In order to address this gap in accountability, Anderlini (2017) posits that the practice of "naming and shaming" could be a powerful supplementary tool. The reputational consequences of being publicly identified as a perpetrator – especially if this includes informing the relevant families or communities – could act as a deterrent to misconduct where traditional legal avenues fail to achieve the desired outcome. Measures such as termination without remuneration, a prohibition on future UN deployments, and the public disclosure of the countries of origin of perpetrators may increase pressure on both individuals and TCCs. Despite the UN's establishment of a vetting process that prohibits redeployment only in instances where allegations are substantiated (United Nations, 2019), the efficacy of this system is hindered by the protracted and frequently incomplete nature of the investigative process. The practice of naming and shaming should not be confined to individuals. Simic (2009) contends that Member States should be held to account in a public manner. Notwithstanding this reality, no government is willing to be associated with sexual violence committed by its soldiers while on a peacekeeping mission. Since 2015, the United Nations has initiated the practice of including the nationality of alleged perpetrators in its SEA database, along with information on whether their respective home countries have taken action (United Nations, 2023a; A/69/779). This enhanced transparency enables civil society and the international community to meticulously scrutinise which Member States are adhering to their obligations and which are not. In circumstances where proportional criminal sanctions are absent and personnel are able to continue

their careers despite credible accusations, the practice of naming and shaming emerges as a necessary, albeit imperfect, means of restoring a measure of accountability.

4.5. Paternity Claims and the Failures of Victim Support

In 2025, UN Secretary-General António Guterres unveiled a series of initiatives aimed at addressing the issue of misconduct among peacekeepers. These measures included the establishment of a unified data portal to facilitate the tracking of abuse cases across the aid sector, the refinement of a comprehensive accountability framework for leadership, the enhancement of training protocols, the integration of risk assessments into planning processes, and the provision of enhanced support for victims, encompassing mechanisms for paternity and child support claims (A/79/789).¹⁵ In spite of those assertions, there was a disconcertingly familiar resemblance to a report commissioned by the UN more than a decade earlier, which also promised many of the same reforms—the majority of which never materialised. This cyclical pattern of ambitious declarations followed by institutional inertia has enabled systemic flaws to persist, with grave consequences for victims.

One of the most salient examples of this phenomenon is evident in the context of paternity claims. In the context of SEA, these are not merely matters of individual accountability; they reveal the long-term structural harm caused by sexual abuse in peacekeeping operations. Of the 810 SEA cases documented in UN data between 2015 and 2025, 404 women attempted to claim recognition and support for children born as a result of exploitative relationships with UN personnel (Figure 5)¹⁶. However, the majority of these claims remain unresolved, not only due to bureaucratic inefficiency or a lack of cooperation from TCCs to facilitate DNA testing, but also due to active interference with investigative processes.

Fortunately, a landmark 2021 ruling by a Haitian court ordered a former Uruguayan UN peacekeeper to pay child support for a child he fathered and subsequently abandoned in 2011. This case represents one of the first judicial

¹⁵ United Nations. (2025). *Sexual exploitation and abuse: implementing a zero-tolerance policy; Administrative and budgetary aspects of the financing of the United Nations peacekeeping operations; Special measures for protection from sexual exploitation and abuse: Report of the Secretary-General* (A/79/789). General Assembly. https://conduct.unmissions.org/sites/default/files/report_of_the_secretary-general_on_special_measures_for_protection_from_sexual_exploitation_and_abuse_a79789.pdf

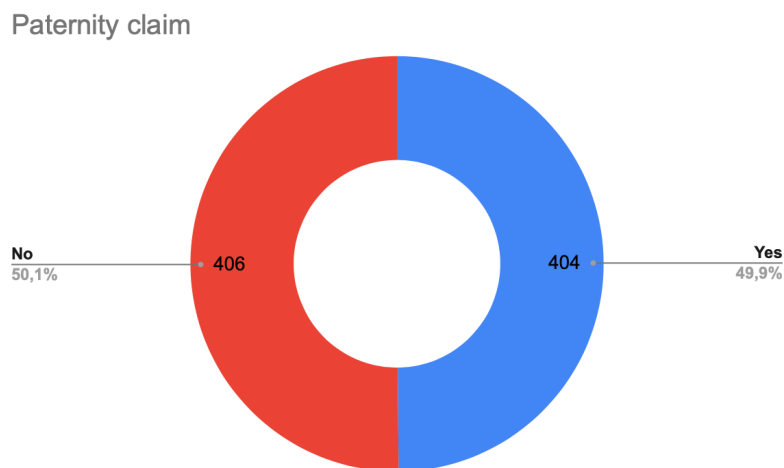
¹⁶ Peace & Security Data Hub. (s. f.). <https://psdata.un.org/dataset/DMSPC-SEA>

decisions worldwide holding peacekeepers accountable for paternity claims and marks a significant advancement in securing justice for women and children affected by sexual exploitation during UN missions, notably MINUSTAH in Haiti (BAI, 2017¹⁷). Nevertheless, effective enforcement remains uncertain, necessitating coordinated action between the Haitian government, the peacekeeper's home state, and the UN (Wisner, 2021).

The gravity of these cases is further compounded when viewed through the voices of the victims. One Haitian woman, whose case was documented by the Bureau des Avocats Internationaux (BAI), recounted: *“He promised her food and safety if she complied. When she became pregnant, he disappeared. Neither justice nor acknowledgement followed.”*

This testimony encapsulates the coercive dynamics in play and the profound personal consequences of SEA, particularly in contexts of extreme poverty and dependence. Moreover, it elucidates the systemic barriers to accountability, including corruption, functional immunity claims by the UN that obstruct legal proceedings, and structural protections that shield perpetrators (Wisner, 2021).

Figure 5. Paternity Percentages



Note: This figure shows the proportion of SEA-related paternity claims recorded in peacekeeping missions, indicating how often sexual exploitation leads to parenthood responsibilities.

Source: Author's own elaboration based on data from the United Nations SEA Allegations Dataset (2015–2025), available at: <https://psdata.un.org/dataset/DMSPC-SEA>

¹⁷ The Bureau des Avocats Internationaux (BAI) is a Haitian legal organization that has represented several women in cases against UN peacekeepers, advocating for justice and support for victims of sexual exploitation and abuse during UN missions.

In order to enhance accountability and provide meaningful support for affected families, it is recommended that the successful model established through the partnership between the Republic of South Africa and the United Nations be expanded and adapted across all peacekeeping missions. This model involves the collection of DNA samples from mothers and children in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) to process paternity and child support claims against peacekeepers. The implementation of such measures on a universal scale has the potential to enhance the enforcement of paternity claims and to fortify protections against abuse.¹⁸

4.6. Corruption and Structural Shielding of Perpetrators

Corruption is a critical factor at multiple stages of the peacekeeping accountability chain. Perpetrators of such crimes have been known to use informal payments to silence their victims or their families, thereby preventing the filing of formal complaints from the outset. In spite of the progression of cases, there remains a possibility of evidence being tampered with. This can be exemplified by the bribery of medical professionals conducting paternity tests or by mission supervisors being pressured to shield the accused. In countries where the judicial system is considered ineffective, it is well-documented that instances of interference often persist even after the repatriation of the individual in question, thereby significantly reducing the likelihood of criminal prosecution. As Wagner (2022) illustrates, such manipulation is not exceptional but is enabled by structural vulnerabilities within both the UN framework and the legal systems of certain TCCs.

This dynamic undermines any meaningful application of the principle of proportionality in disciplinary action, particularly when perpetrators not only evade legal consequences but also avoid even basic responsibilities such as acknowledging or supporting children born as a result of abuse. In this context, the pervasive failure to address paternity claims can be regarded as indicative of a more extensive institutional inability to deliver justice and reparation to victims.

It is important to note that interference in SEA-related accountability does not always manifest in the form of direct corruption; it may also be embedded in symbolic gestures that substitute opaque financial settlements for due process.

¹⁸ United Nations. (2021, 23 December). *Collection of DNA samples in the DRC to process paternity and child support claims* | United Nations [Video]. YouTube. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pfZM21dH1Bg>

A notable example is the 2016 "ex gratia" payment made by the Government of Sri Lanka to a victim of SEA and her child. The initiative was publicly commended by then Assistant Secretary-General for Mission Support, Atul Khare, who characterised it as a step forward in the fight against impunity (Gamini, 2016). However, the absence of accompanying criminal or disciplinary sanctions against the perpetrator suggests that the response was prioritised towards reputational management over authentic accountability. Whilst such practices are to be favoured over total inaction, there is a risk that they will reinforce covert forms of corruption and shield perpetrators from proportionate consequences.

This challenge is further compounded by structural issues within UN peacekeeping operations, such as the rotation system of troops, which often occurs every six to twelve months, and which has further complicated efforts to ensure SEA accountability. As was noted during investigations in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, some alleged perpetrators were already in the process of returning home when identification procedures were still underway. This necessitated the physical removal of the perpetrators from departing flights so that victims could attempt to recognise them. This reactive approach reveals the systemic fragility of enforcement mechanisms and raises serious concerns about the preservation of evidence, victim protection, and the deterrent effect of disciplinary processes. The practice of rotating troops without ensuring the resolution of ongoing investigations is problematic for two reasons. Firstly, it facilitates impunity. Secondly, it has been argued that the current approach undermines the access to justice of the victims.¹⁹

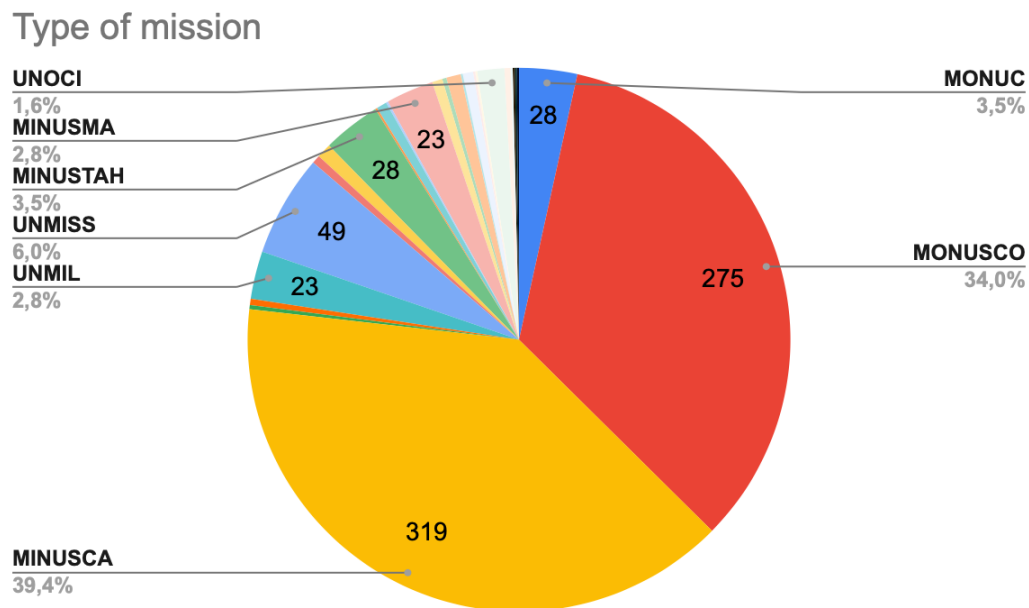
It is noteworthy that SEA allegations are most prevalent in only two UN peacekeeping operations.²⁰ A minimum of 64.4% of the documented incidents, amounting to 319 cases, are associated with MINUSCA in CAR and MONUSCO in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, which recorded 275 cases (34%), thus occupying the second position. The analysis of these two missions indicates that nearly three-quarters of all reported allegations occur in contexts of fragility, where the affected communities are particularly vulnerable. The remaining missions, such as UNMISS in South Sudan and MINUSTAH in Haiti, have a low share of children involved (6.0% and 3.5% respectively) and several others are below 3% (Figure 6). This pattern underscores the

¹⁹ *Peacekeepers' sexual abuse of local girls continuing in DR of Congo, UN finds.* (2025b, marzo 11). UN News. <https://news.un.org/en/story/2005/01/125352>

²⁰ *For information about the missions, please consult the UN peacekeeping website:* <https://peacekeeping.un.org>

occurrence of localized misconduct and calls into question the efficacy of established controls within the most severely affected peace missions.²¹

Figure 6. Hotspots of Harm



Note: This figure identifies the missions and locations with the highest reported SEA cases, underscoring geographic concentrations of abuse.

Source: Author's own elaboration based on data from the United Nations SEA Allegations Dataset (2015–2025), available at: <https://psdata.un.org/dataset/DMSPC-SEA>

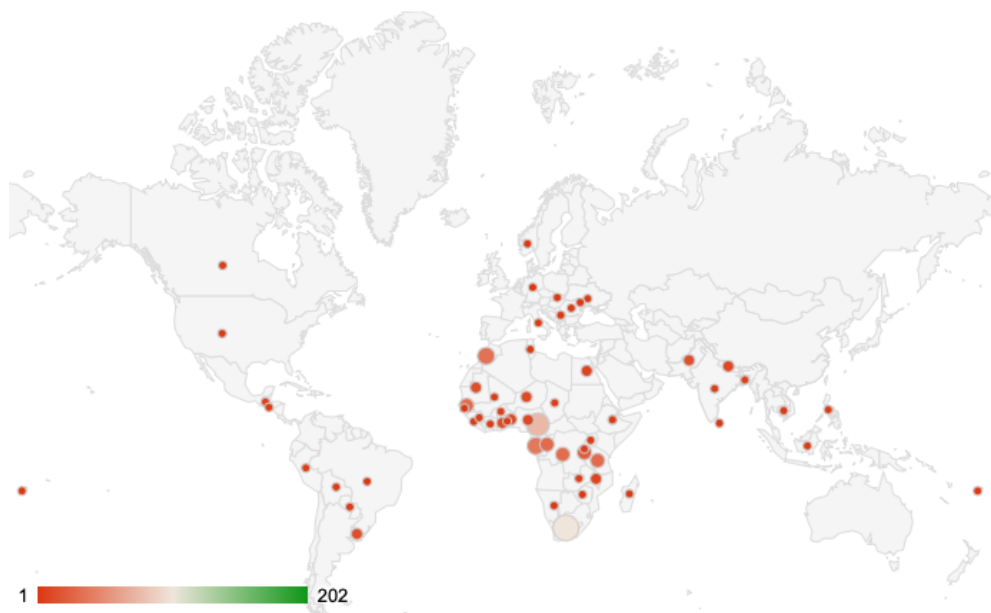
The pervasive nature of impunity is not limited to uniformed perpetrators in the field. As Anders Kompass, former Director of Field Operations at the OHCHR, observed, even senior UN officials “found to have abused authority” may avoid sanction and instead be rewarded with promotions (Kompass, personal communication, 2025). This statement is exemplified by the case of the Chief of the Human Rights Division involved in the mishandling of the CAR abuse reports. Despite serious findings against him by an External Review Panel, he was promoted twice in the years following the scandal—a fact reported by *PassBlue* in 2024 (Lynch, 2024). This case illustrates not only the lack of individual accountability but also the systemic reluctance within the UN to treat SEA-related misconduct as a matter of institutional responsibility. Indeed, it further supports the argument that shielding perpetrators is not a rare occurrence, but a reflection of deeper structural failures.

²¹ *Peace & Security Data Hub. (s. f.).* <https://psdata.un.org/dataset/DMSPC-SEA>

4.7. Geographic and Operational Hotspots

Notwithstanding the plethora of substantiated cases pertaining to sexual exploitation and abuse by UN peacekeeping personnel, disciplinary and criminal measures are seldom implemented with consistency or rigour. The majority of actions taken do not involve the imposition of significant sanctions, and troop-contributing states rarely refer cases for criminal prosecution. Furthermore, the significant number of cases involving allegations of paternity suggests the presence of a systemic element to the abuse, which extends beyond the confines of mere discipline. A total of 59 countries have reported at least one case, thus indicating a widespread presence of the virus. The data indicates that the majority of cases originate from African and Latin American countries, which contribute a substantial share of UN peacekeeping troops (Figure 7).

Figure 7. SEA Across Borders



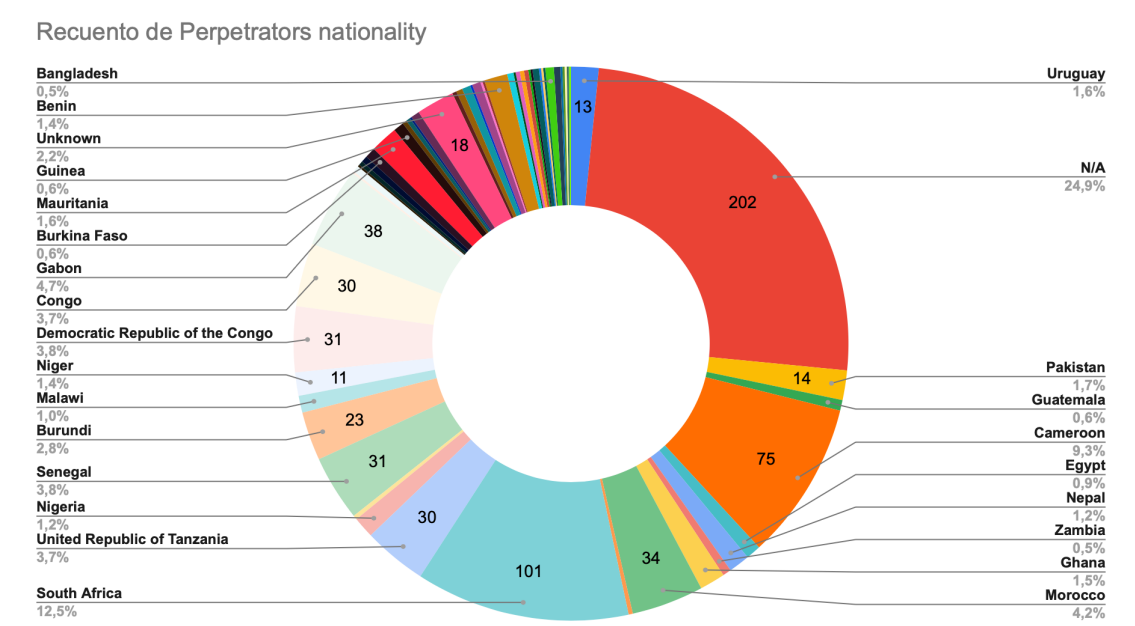
Note: The map is showing the 59 TCCs implicated in SEA Allegations

Source: Author's own elaboration based on data from the United Nations SEA Allegations Dataset (2015–2025), available at: <https://psdata.un.org/dataset/DMSPC-SEA>

The majority of victims of SEA are female, typically women and girls, residing in countries that play host to peacekeeping missions. Such countries often include the DRC, the CAR, and South Sudan. In contrast, perpetrators are known to hail from a variety of nations that contribute personnel to UN operations. It is noteworthy that South Africa has 101 allegations, Cameroon has 75, and

Gabon has 38 (Figure 8). Nevertheless, the fact that they serve under the UN flag implies a shared responsibility on the part of the organisation.²²

Figure 8. *Flags Behind the Crimes*



Note: This figure displays the countries of origin of peacekeepers implicated in SEA allegations, offering insight into patterns among TCCs.

Source: Author’s own elaboration based on data from the United Nations SEA Allegations Dataset (2015–2025), available at: <https://psdata.un.org/dataset/DMSPC-SEA>

The objective of this discourse is to elucidate the incongruity between the principle of accountability and the legal praxis of certain states. In this regard, the cases that were dismissed on the grounds of inadequate evidence will be examined. It is important to note that these dismissals do not necessarily imply innocence; rather, they are indicative of structural limitations in the capacity to investigate and prove the facts. Such limitations are especially evident in contexts such as war, extreme poverty, or the absence of functional judicial systems.

Conversely, the number of cases that result in actual imprisonment or conviction is negligible. This discrepancy can be attributed to the divergent judicial systems employed by the TCCs. Some countries, including South Africa and Cameroon, have demonstrated a willingness to impose criminal sanctions, while others have opted for the repatriation of individuals without undergoing trial or receiving punishment. Moreover, the UN lacks the authority to impose criminal

²² *Peace & Security Data Hub. (s. f.).* <https://psdata.un.org/dataset/DMSPC-SEA>

sanctions independently, resulting in a significant reliance on Member States to guarantee justice, often resulting in impunity.

With regard to geographical distribution, the missions with the most cases, such as MONUSCO, MINUSCA and MINUSTAH, share common characteristics: contexts of extreme vulnerability, prolonged troop presence, and weak accountability structures. In all cases, the victims are primarily women and girls from the host countries, who are frequently unable to access effective complaint or redress mechanisms.

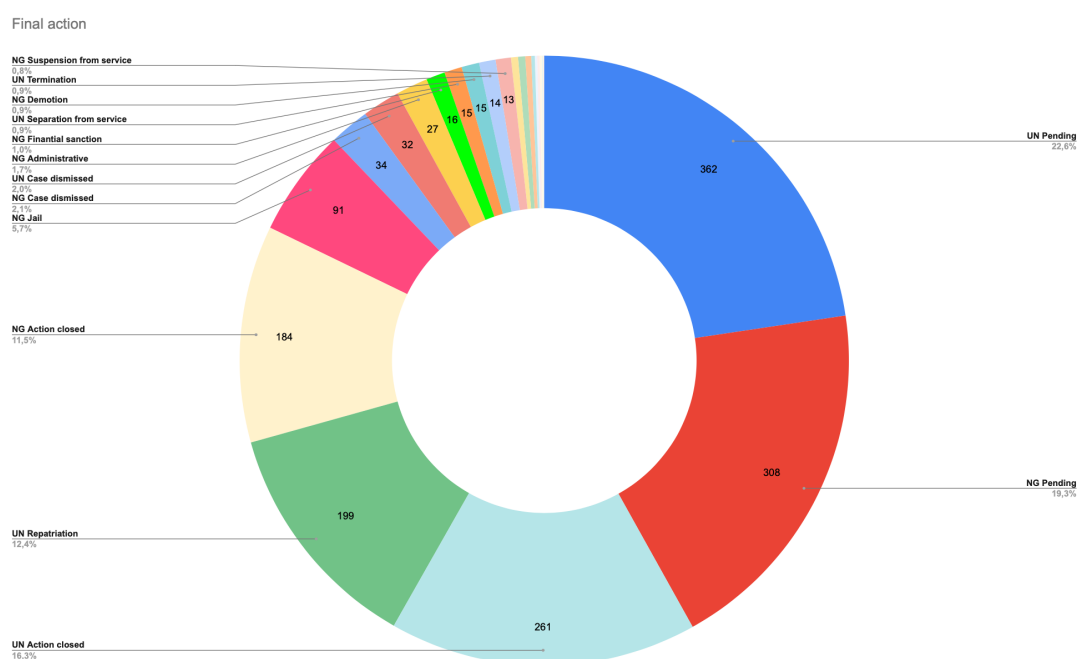
The findings of this study serve to validate the central hypothesis proposed in this paper, which posits that the sanctions imposed by the United Nations and individual states frequently fail to align with the severity of the abuses committed, thereby highlighting a significant deficit in the international justice system.

5. The Response: Sanctions, State Action and Structural Failures

5.1. Accountability Gaps and the Principle of Proportionality

Evidently, a significant challenge persists in ensuring effective accountability for individuals and groups involved in these incidents. As illustrated in Figure 9, of the 1,559 allegations reported between January 1, 2015, and May 12, 2025, a substantial number remain unresolved: 362 cases are still pending with the UN, and 308 are pending with national authority entities (NG). While there have been some actions taken, such as 91 NG jail sentences and 199 UN repatriation, the overall picture suggests limited enforcement. The low number of criminal convictions or prison sentences, relative to the total number of allegations, highlights a critical accountability gap. For instance, a total of 445 closed cases (261 by the UN and 184 by NG authorities) indicates that too many cases are not being properly addressed. Therefore, although there are signs of progress in managing immunity, the majority of cases either remain open or result in administrative or non-punitive outcomes. This fragmented and inconsistent approach across jurisdictions continues to erode the credibility of UN peacekeeping missions and undermines justice for victims.

Figure 9. Final Action... or Final Inaction?



Note: This graph summarizes the status of 1.559 allegations reported between January 2015 and May 2025 related to accountability in UN peacekeeping operations. It highlights a significant gap between reported cases and those resulting in criminal convictions or effective sanctions, reflecting ongoing challenges in achieving proportional and consistent accountability across different jurisdictions.

Source: Author's own elaboration based on data from the United Nations SEA Allegations Dataset (2015–2025), available at: <https://psdata.un.org/dataset/DMSPC-SEA>

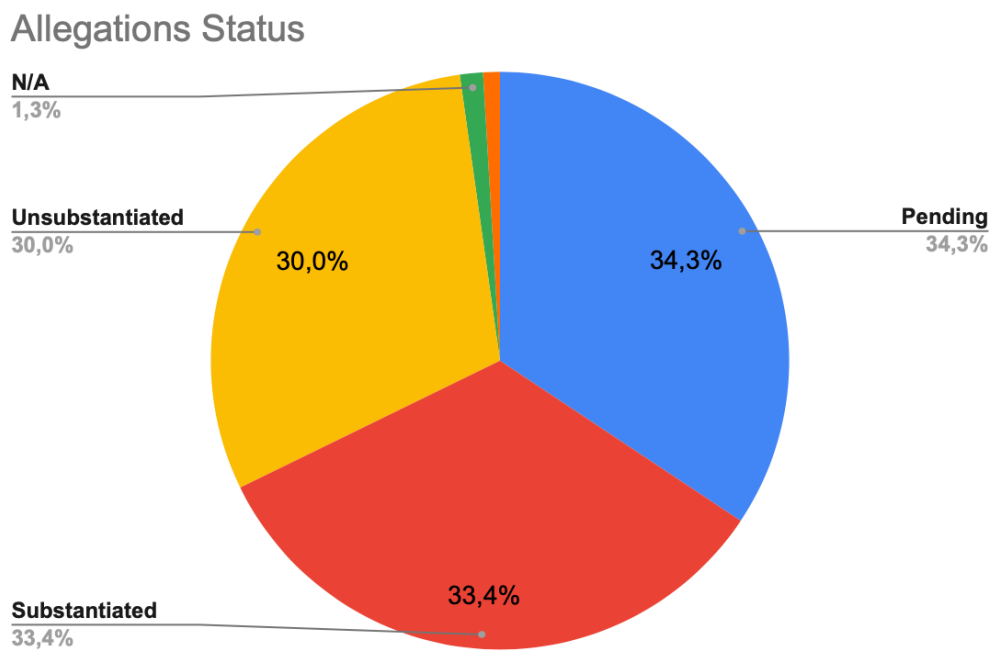
This situation demonstrates both the advancement in maintaining accountability for perpetrators and the persistent deficiencies in police enforcement practices. The degree of commitment exhibited by peacekeeping forces from disparate nations in the pursuit of prosecuting sex offenders is subject to variation, with a concomitant diversity of approaches to the management of sexual exploitation cases within their military units. This disparate response is at odds with the fundamental principle of proportionality, as it results in significantly disparate outcomes depending solely on the nationality of the perpetrator. Furthermore, this raises concerns regarding the UN's reliance on TCCs to enforce accountability, particularly in instances where domestic legal systems are found to be deficient in terms of independence, capacity, or political will to effectively prosecute such crimes.

This institutional inertia is not merely a matter of technical or legal deficiency but has profound political underpinnings. As Anders Kompass, explained in a personal communication ([Annex III](#)), the UN's structural failure to address SEA is largely political. According to him, "the main argument inside the UN for not dealing with perpetrators is mostly of a political nature: there is a widespread fear that... governments will reduce their support to missions." This fear leads to inaction, and worse, "those who promote [silence] are valued and protected, while whistle-blowers are hunted down and forced out." This culture of silence reinforces the accountability gap and perpetuates impunity, especially in politically sensitive missions.

Of the 1.559 allegations identified as alleged perpetrators of SEA in UN peacekeeping contexts between 2015 and 2025, only 33,4% were part of cases that were officially substantiated. Conversely, 34,3% of claims are still pending, and 30% were deemed unsubstantiated (Figure 10). These figures are particularly alarming in light of the already low rate of prosecution and demonstrate that the majority of perpetrators remain in a state of legal and disciplinary limbo, with neither accountability nor formal exoneration. The disproportionate number of unresolved cases indicates severe delays in

investigations and a lack of institutional capacity or political will to pursue justice systematically.

Figure 10. Allegations Status



Note: This figure categorizes the administrative or legal status of individuals accused of SEA, showing how many remained in service, were repatriated, or faced sanctions. The percentage is based on the total of 1.559 allegations between 2015 to 2025.

Source: Author’s own elaboration based on data from the United Nations SEA Allegations Dataset (2015–2025), available at: <https://psdata.un.org/dataset/DMSPC-SEA>

This principle of proportionality is recognized in *Staff Rule 10.2* and United Nations Appeal Tribunal (UNAT) jurisprudence, and was explicitly discussed in paragraphs [64–69] of the judgment of *Hassan Makeen v. Secretary-General* (2024-UNAT-1461).²³ This case offers a concrete application of the principle of proportionality within UN disciplinary action. Mr. Makeen, a civilian United Nations staff member deployed to UNMISS, was found to have engaged in sexual relations with a young, economically vulnerable local woman, in circumstances that amount to sexual exploitation. The initial Dispute Tribunal (UNDT) considered the relationship to be part of his private life and thus not qualifying as misconduct; however, the UNAT reversed this finding. The court reaffirmed that sexual exploitation constitutes grave misconduct, irrespective of

²³ United Nations Appeals Tribunal (UNAT). (2024, June 28). *Hassan Makeen v. Secretary-General of the United Nations*, Judgment No. 2024-UNAT-1461. <https://www.un.org/internaljustice/oaj/sites/default/files/2024-08/2024-unat-1461.pdf>

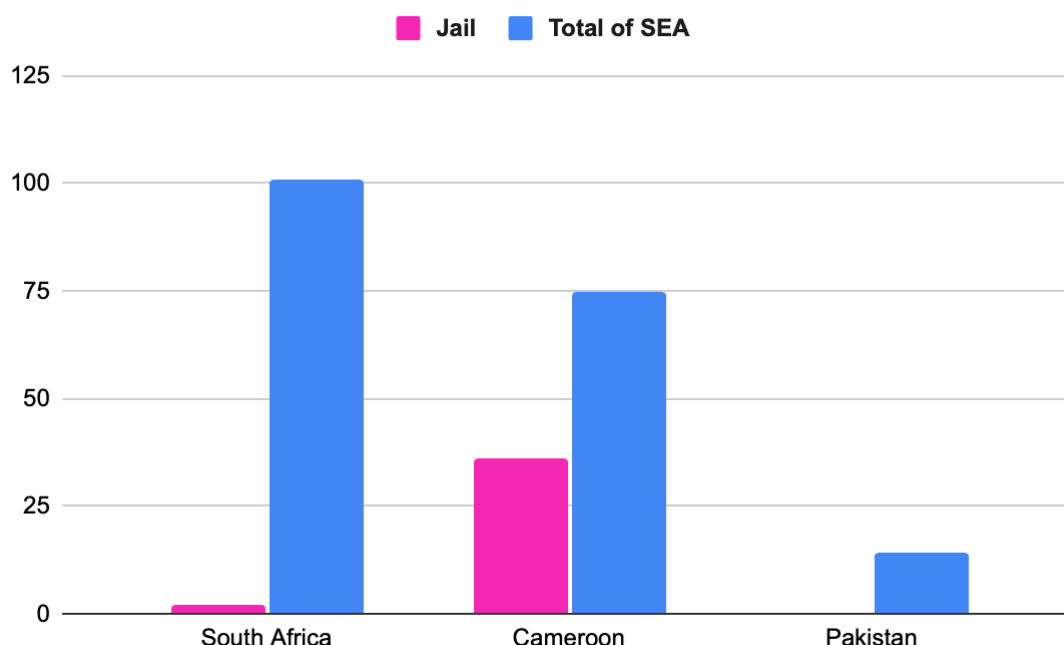
whether it occurs on or off duty, and determined that the disciplinary measure of separation from service was proportionate. This case exemplifies the UN's methodology for evaluating proportionality, which involves a multifaceted analysis encompassing the gravity of the offence, the context of vulnerability and power imbalance, and the presence of aggravating factors such as the concealment of evidence. This case sets a compelling precedent, as it reinforces the notion that even non-criminal disciplinary measures should reflect the seriousness of sexual misconduct in peacekeeping contexts.

5.2. Comparative Accountability in Practice: Cameroon, South Africa and Pakistan

Figure 11 provides a visual representation of the disparity in criminal accountability among South Africa, Cameroon, and Pakistan. South Africa reports the highest number of SEA allegations—exceeding 100—yet fewer than 5 individuals have been jailed in relation to these cases. Conversely, Cameroon has around 75 allegations, of which 36 resulted in imprisonment. This suggests a significantly higher rate of legal follow-through, making Cameroon the country with the most proportionate response to SEA among the three. Pakistan, on the other hand, shows the lowest number of recorded allegations—fewer than 20—and no documented cases of imprisonment, further reinforcing concerns about impunity.

These figures highlight important differences in the willingness or ability of each state to prosecute peacekeepers accused of SEA. While all three countries are bound by the same UN protocols for managing such allegations, the degree to which they implement criminal sanctions varies drastically. Cameroon, though not free from criticism, appears to take a comparatively stronger stance by pursuing criminal accountability. South Africa's limited legal action, despite a high number of allegations, points to serious enforcement gaps. Pakistan's complete lack of prosecutions—despite 14 confirmed allegations between 2015 and 2025—suggests that repatriation without trial has become the default approach.

Figure 11. From Allegation to Jail— South Africa, Cameroon and Pakistan



Note: This figure compares the number of SEA allegations involving peacekeepers from South Africa, Cameroon and Pakistan with the number of perpetrators who ultimately faced imprisonment. It highlights the gap between reported misconduct and legal accountability.

Source: Author's own elaboration based on data from the United Nations SEA Allegations Dataset (2015–2025), available at: <https://psdata.un.org/dataset/DMSPC-SEA>

It is evident that these operations share common characteristics in contexts characterized by high vulnerability, prolonged troop presence, and difficulties of oversight. Moreover, research has demonstrated that the socioeconomic conditions of the host country have been demonstrated to influence the incidence of SEA. Despite the fact that both South Africa and Pakistan have initiated legal proceedings in select cases of SEA perpetrated by their peacekeepers, the criminal response remains selective and inadequate in both contexts.

In spite of the implementation of a clearly defined procedure for the management of SEA complaints by the UN, a marked discrepancy remains between the normative framework and actual practice. According to the official UN infographic (2017), the protocol encompasses the receipt of complaints, the conducting of internal investigations, the implementation of interim measures (such as the suspension of payments), the communication with the state of origin, and the making of a final decision that could result in repatriation, dismissal, or referral to the criminal justice system of the relevant country. However, an in-depth empirical analysis of 810 documented cases between

2015 and 2025 reveals an alarming discrepancy: deadlines are often not met, investigations are not initiated, and the results of those that are are not communicated to the victims or missions involved.

The Office of Internal Oversight's (OIOS, 2015) report had already cautioned against significant structural deficiencies, including investigations that had been delayed by up to 16 months, substantial variations in the sanctions imposed by different states, and systematic repatriation without repercussions. It was also observed that victims receive minimal to no institutional assistance, thereby undermining the reparation approach and eroding confidence in the system.

A significant impediment to effective accountability is the legal immunity accorded to the UN's personnel. For instance, Pakistan incorporated the 1948 UN Privileges and Immunities Act into domestic law, basing this incorporation on the 1946 Convention.²⁴ The legislation provides a safeguard for United Nations officials, exempting them from legal proceedings in the host states, unless explicit consent is provided to waive their immunity. However, it should be noted that this protection does not prevent the officials' home country from prosecuting them for crimes committed abroad. Despite this, in practice many states opt to repatriate those involved without prosecuting them, which reinforces impunity.

The OIOS report documents cases in which countries – likely including Pakistan – have repatriated personnel accused of rape without trial or monitoring, in spite of the severity of the allegations. As illustrated previously (Figure 11), with zero convictions recorded in fourteen confirmed cases between 2015 and 2025, Pakistan demonstrates an inadequate criminal response. This pattern is replicated in numerous other TCCs, where the standard sanction is repatriation or dismissal without criminal prosecution.

Furthermore, the interim and final actions undertaken during the investigative process serve to further demonstrate this absence of proportionality. In the majority of cases, no interim measures are applied. In a smaller number of cases, salaries are suspended or unpaid leave is granted. Upon completion of the investigative process, the predominant outcome is the closure of the case without further elaboration, subsequently followed by repatriation or, albeit less frequently, dismissal (Figure 9). Criminal referrals and prison sentences remain exceptional measures. This pattern reveals a systematic mismatch between the gravity of the offences and the consequences imposed, ultimately undermining

²⁴ *United Nations (Privileges and Immunities) Act, 1948.* (s. f.).
<https://pakistancode.gov.pk/english/UY2FqaJw1-apaUY2Fqa-ap%2BUaA%3D%3D-sg-iiiii>

the principle of justice. Although Cameroon demonstrates comparatively stronger follow-through, as noted earlier in Figure 11, a significant number of allegations still fail to lead to imprisonment; underscoring the persistence of impunity even in contexts where accountability mechanisms appear more active. It is also noteworthy that the majority of these allegations in Cameroon are associated with the MINUSCA mission ([Annex IV](#)).

In light of these deficiencies, Anders Kompass, has criticized the current reliance on TCCs to investigate and prosecute SEA. In his testimony, he argues that “the responsibility for dealing with these issues should be removed from the UN.” He supports the Code Blue Campaign’s proposal to establish an “impartial court mechanism” to handle such cases independently. This position underscores the insufficiency of current enforcement mechanisms and the need for structural innovation beyond state cooperation.

5.3. Barriers to Justice

The systemic challenges in enforcing accountability for SEA within UN peacekeeping missions are longstanding and deeply embedded. As early as 2015, the OIOS warned of a fragmented enforcement structure marked by delays, jurisdictional ambiguities, and a lack of coherence between the UN and TCCs. Table 4 of the report highlighted the complex procedural requirements placed on both actors and revealed that only a minority of TCCs met even the basic obligation of responding within ten days to notification of an allegation (see Table 1 here). In many cases, TCCs failed to respond altogether or provided incomplete information, further complicating efforts to uphold accountability.

Table 1. *Selected procedural requirements of the UN and TCCs*

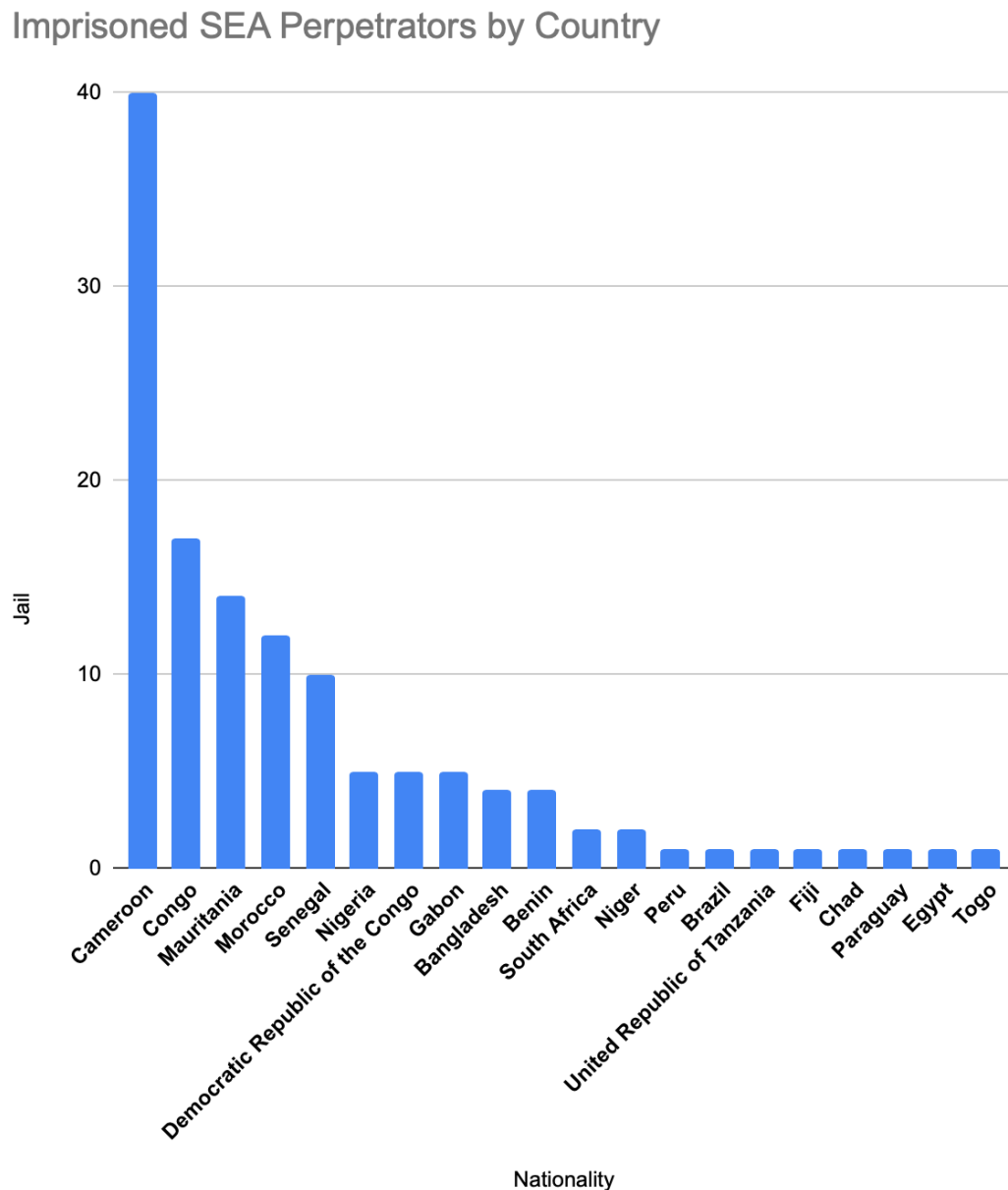
Event	UN obligation	TCC obligation
The United Nations has prima facie grounds indicating SEA may have been committed by military personnel	Inform the TCC ‘without delay’	Notify United Nations within 10 working days if it will conduct its own investigation
TCC decides to investigate		‘Immediately inform’ the United Nations of the identity of its national investigation

		officer(s)
Investigation is being conducted by TCC		Notify United Nations of progress 'on a regular basis.'
Investigation is concluded by TCC		Notify United Nations of the findings and outcome of investigation subject to its national laws and regulations

Source: OIOS-IED analysis

Reiterating a critical point mentioned earlier: with only 128 convictions out of 1.514 perpetrators, the global conviction rate stands at just 8.46%, exemplifying the deep gap between the scale of abuse and the actual enforcement of accountability (Figure 12). This striking disparity underscores the central claim of this thesis: that the sanctions imposed by the UN and its Member States often fall short of the proportionality required to deliver justice to victims and to serve as an effective deterrent.

Figure 12. Accountability Gaps—Imprisoned SEA Perpetrators by Country



Note: This figure shows the number of SEA perpetrators who were imprisoned—128 out of a total of 1,514 allegations—categorized by their country of origin, offering a snapshot of legal accountability across nations.

Source: Author's own elaboration based on data from the United Nations SEA Allegations Dataset (2015–2025), available at: <https://psdata.un.org/dataset/DMSPC-SEA>

Despite the UN reiteration of its commitment to a zero-tolerance policy since the early 2000s, the institutional architecture has proven resistant to substantive reform. The 2015 OIOS report²⁵ had already recommended revising the Memoranda of Understanding with TCCs to include binding investigative

²⁵ *Evaluation of the enforcement and remedial assistance efforts for sexual exploitation and abuse by the United Nations and related personnel in peacekeeping operations.* (2015). OIOS - EVALUATION REPORT. https://www.un.org/en/ga/sixth/70/docs/oios_report.pdf

standards, enforceable deadlines, and clearer transparency obligations. The text also emphasised the significance of empowering mission leadership, harmonising disciplinary measures, and establishing a sufficiently funded, victim-focused assistance system. Nevertheless, a decade later, many of these recommendations remain either partially implemented or entirely neglected. Despite the advancement observed in domains such as DNA testing, inter-agency data sharing, and public accountability messaging, these developments have proven insufficient to surmount the systemic inertia that persists in characterising SEA enforcement. The gradual and inconsistent implementation of reforms is indicative of a more profound political and institutional aversion, which ultimately undermines the credibility of the UN's response and reinforces the necessity for structural, binding measures to address the impunity gap.

These structural inefficiencies are compounded by the lack of institutional protection for individuals who attempt to expose misconduct from within. Whistle-blowers, who could serve as crucial catalysts for internal accountability, often face retaliation, marginalization, or reputational harm. Anders Kompass, the former UN staff member who reported the sexual abuse of children by peacekeepers in the CAR, was suspended and later resigned after a protracted battle with the institution. Kompass has since argued for the creation of an independent investigative mechanism free from political interference, as well as an externally managed support fund to protect whistle-blowers from smear campaigns and unfounded accusations. The absence of such protective structures not only dissuades potential whistle-blowers from coming forward, but also illustrates the deeper institutional reluctance to confront its own failures—thereby perpetuating a cycle of impunity.

The institutional retaliation faced by whistle-blowers like Anders Kompass is not an isolated flaw but part of a broader failure to uphold accountability within peacekeeping operations. This failure becomes especially clear when measured against the principle of proportionality. Although the UN maintains that disciplinary and criminal sanctions should reflect the severity of the offense, the evidence examined in this study reveals a consistent pattern of minimal consequences for grave abuses. The widespread reliance on administrative responses—such as repatriation or dismissal without trial—stands in stark contrast to the magnitude of harm caused by SEA. In this light, the core question posed by this thesis must be answered plainly: the sanctions currently

imposed by the UN and troop-contributing countries are not proportionate to the crimes committed, and this systemic leniency severely undermines both justice and deterrence.

6. Conclusion and Policy Recommendations

The United Nations has thus far been unsuccessful in its mission to protect the very individuals it was established to defend. The data examined in this study highlight significant inconsistencies in the application of sanctions. While some TCCs appear to impose more disciplinary measures than others, the overall number of effective convictions or deprivations of liberty remains alarmingly low. This striking disparity serves as compelling evidence that the sanctions applied are not proportionate to the gravity of the crimes. The gap between established norms and actual practices, between formal and effective accountability mechanisms, undermines the credibility of the international justice system and perpetuates a pervasive pattern of structural impunity within peace operations. This erosion of victims' trust in the system ultimately jeopardises the legitimacy of peacekeeping mandates themselves.

Beyond the institutional dimension, these failures leave survivors without justice, often trapped in cycles of trauma, social stigma, and marginalisation. The sexual exploitation and abuse perpetrated by peacekeepers constitutes a direct violation of the rights and dignity of victims—most of whom are women and girls—thus impeding the realisation of Sustainable Development Goal 5 (Gender Equality). At the same time, the lack of transparency, accountability, and effective judicial response weakens institutional trust and obstructs progress towards Goal 16 (Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions).

To address these persistent challenges, this study proposes a series of structural and feasible reforms. First, oversight mechanisms must be significantly strengthened to ensure timely responses and follow-up. Second, troop-contributing countries must be placed under binding obligations to prosecute peacekeepers credibly under their domestic law. Third, victim-centred reparations and support systems need to be institutionalised and properly funded. Furthermore, the UN should revise its Memoranda of Understanding with TCCs to include enforceable sanctions for non-compliance with investigative and accountability obligations. DNA testing should be expanded and standardised, particularly to support paternity claims and build stronger evidentiary records in abuse cases.

Finally, transparency must be enhanced through the publication of the names and sentences of confirmed perpetrators on official data platforms. These

reforms are not only ethically urgent but strategically necessary. As public and institutional scrutiny grows, the long-term legitimacy of peacekeeping missions—and the UN itself—depends on its willingness to close the accountability gap.

As this study has shown, closing the accountability gap is not solely a matter of institutional reform—it is a question of leadership and values. In the words of Anders Kompass, a former UN official who risked his career to expose sexual abuse by peacekeepers: *“If there is one thing that I am sure of and that I have seen happening over and over throughout the world, it is that one leader can make an amazing difference... What makes the difference? Values. And more particularly one value: altruism – based on the conviction of universal equality.”*

The failures documented in this thesis are not only systemic—they reflect a crisis of courage within the international community. It is only through the revival of value-based leadership that justice for victims, institutional credibility, and the true spirit of peacekeeping can be restored.

Future researchers are encouraged to explore the long-term impacts of SEA on host communities, with particular attention to the intergenerational consequences of impunity and the effectiveness of recently introduced reform mechanisms.

Table 2. Policy Proposals

Recommendation	Responsible Actor(s)	Expected Outcome / Purpose
Binding clauses in MoUs with TCCs	UN / TCCs	Legal obligation to prosecute SEA cases
National laws enabling extraterritorial prosecution	TCC governments	Close legal loopholes and eliminate impunity
On-site investigation units	UN	Prevent evidence loss and premature repatriations
Institutional sanctions for TCC non-cooperation	UN	Pressure TCCs to comply with accountability protocols
Mandatory victim compensation system	UN + TCCs	Provide material and symbolic justice to survivors
Field-based victim support centers	UN agencies (UNFPA)	Improve survivor assistance and reduce re-victimization
Public SEA offender database	UN	Increase transparency and deterrence

Source: Author’s own elaboration based on the analysis presented in Sections 4 and 5.

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8. Annexes

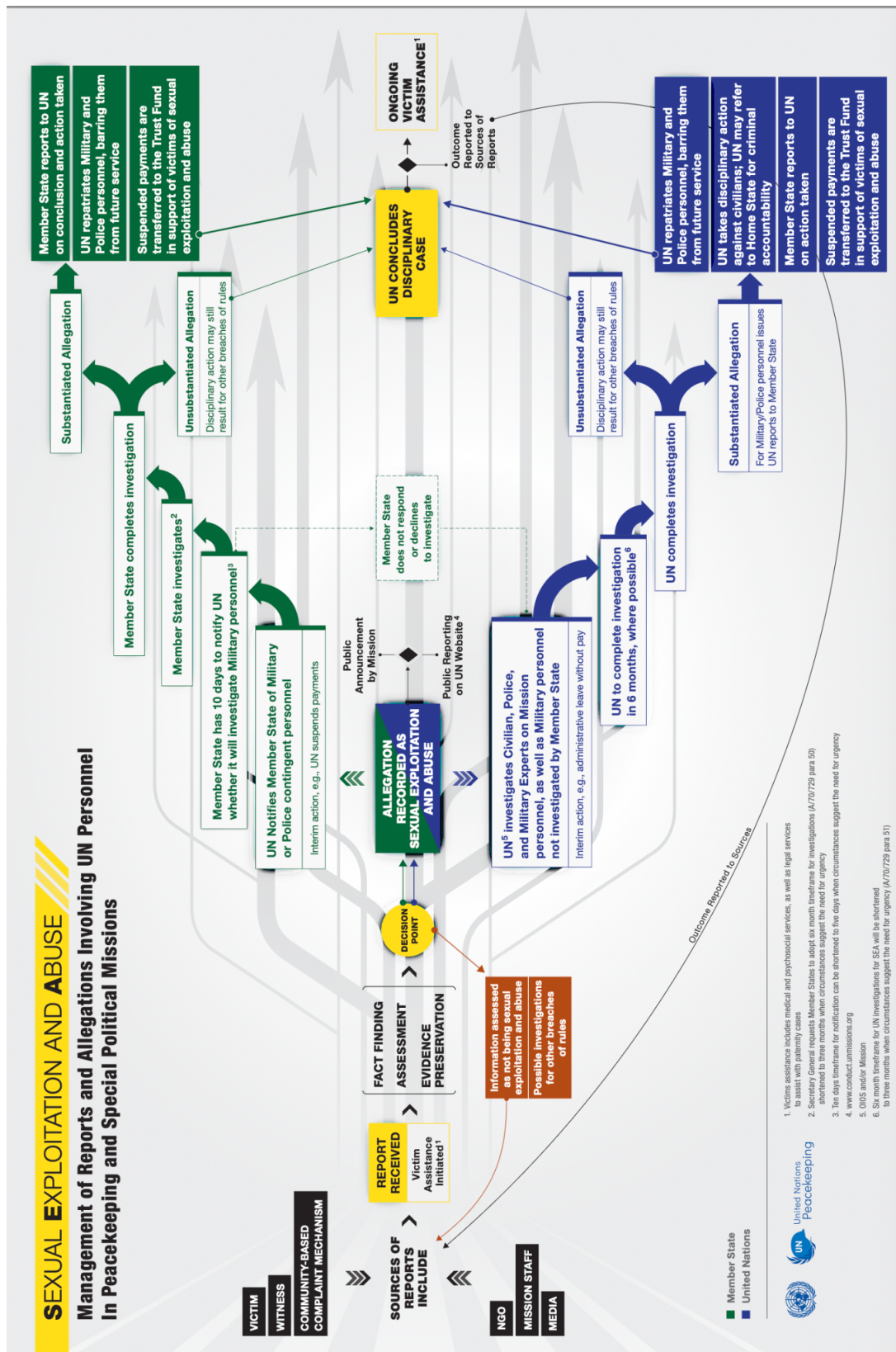
Annex I. SDGs referenced across analytical sections.

The table below summarizes how the main SDGs referenced in this thesis are reflected across its different analytical sections.

SDG	Thesis Section	Explanation
SDG 1 – No Poverty	4.5 and 5.1	Highlights how SEA victims (especially women and children) face economic hardship and abandonment, reinforcing cycles of poverty.
SDG 3 – Good Health and Well-being	4.5 and 5.1	Discusses physical and psychological harm, lack of medical and mental health support, and long-term trauma experienced by survivors.
SDG 5 – Gender Equality	4.2, 4.5 and 5.2	Central throughout the thesis; addresses sexual violence, gendered power imbalances, and institutional failure to protect women and girls.
SDG 8 – Decent Work and Economic Growth	4.5 and 5.2	References cases of sexual exchange for food, safety, or employment; exposes coercive and unethical conditions under peacekeeper authority.
SDG 10 – Reduced Inequalities	4.3, 4.4 and 5.3	Describes how SEA disproportionately affects marginalized groups and exposes disparity in access to justice and protection.
SDG 16 – Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions	4.1, 4.2, 4.3, 4.4, 5.1 and 5.3	The backbone of the thesis: explores gaps in justice, impunity, institutional weaknesses, and failure to implement accountability mechanisms.
SDG 17 – Partnerships for the Goals	5.1 and 5.3	Highlights lack of coordination between the UN and TCCs, and calls for stronger, survivor-centered, cooperative accountability frameworks.

Annex II. UN Handling of Allegations in Peacekeeping and Political Missions.

Management of reports and allegations involving UN personnel in peacekeeping and special political missions. (For a comprehensive view, refer to the link provided)



Annex III. Interview with Anders Kompass.

The following is a transcript of written answers provided via email, in June 2025, by Mr. Anders Kompass, who was the Director of Field Operations, OHCHR, between 2006 to 2016. Whose experience and ethical stance in the UN have played a key role in international awareness of peacekeeper-perpetrated SEA.

1. In your experience, what do you see as the primary institutional barrier within the United Nations (UN) system to holding peacekeepers accountable for Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (SEA)?

The main argument inside the UN for not dealing with perpetrators is mostly of a political nature: there is a widespread fear that, because the authors of such acts are nationals of Member States, their governments will react negatively to the exposure of misconduct on the part of their citizens. To penalize the UN, these governments will reduce their support to missions. UN management worries that this penalty will jeopardize the real impact the UN has on the maintenance of peace.

I doubt the validity of this argument: Armed Forces are composed, in their absolute majority, of law-abiding men and women who are proud of what they do and what they stand for; they would gladly be rid of the criminals in their midst. This is, by the way, the message that a number of French officers passed on to me after the sexual abuse scandal broke in the Central African Republic and sullied the reputation of the French Sangaris forces there.

The second group of internal UN 'defenders' argues that the Organization's reputation is better protected by hiding or ignoring its 'shortcomings' from the scrutiny of external actors than by openly and transparently recognizing and dealing with them.

The truly demoralizing corollary of this second argument is that those who promote it are valued and protected as loyal employees, and those who do not – including whistle-blowers – are hunted down and forced out. This code of silence is clearly understood by all those who work in the United Nations. A BBC follow-up to the CAR scandal shows that 16 months after the findings of the External Review Panel were made public (15.12.2015), the Chief of the Human Rights Division at the time, who was found to have abused his authority, was promoted to another Division in the same mission (Minusca). Last year he was further promoted to Chief of Staff.^[1]

The result of both arguments is a UN that is structurally unable to solve the problem of sexual abuse and exploitation, as well as the more general problem of a lack of accountability.

2. Do you believe the current practice of relying on troop-contributing countries for criminal prosecution is fundamentally flawed, or could it be improved with stronger oversight?

I believe the responsibility for dealing with these issues should be removed from the UN. For some time now, the Code Blue Campaign (a global movement to end impunity for sexual exploitation and abuse by UN peacekeeping personnel) has been proposing the creation of an impartial court mechanism' to deal with cases of sexual exploitation and abuse.

3. If I am not mistaken you said that “fear and a feeling of worthlessness” prevent UN staff from reporting abuses. In your view, what kind of structural changes could genuinely protect whistleblowers within the UN?

I would propose a truly independent, external mechanism also be created to address allegations of unethical behavior and conduct investigations within the UN. An independent authority must replace the politically captured internal structures and processes. Individuals with internationally recognized reputations for standing up to power and abuse should be put in charge of it.

At the same time, an externally managed whistleblower support fund should be established to ensure those who denounce unethical behavior within the UN have the resources to defend themselves legally, if/when they are routinely subjected to retaliation. Whistle-blowers are an important element of accountability, but because of the institutional reprisals directed at them, they need resources to defend themselves from bogus accusations and from smear campaigns. Such campaigns have been conducted through UN-loyal media and orchestrated by individuals who are protected by their immunity. Whistle-blowers seek to redeem their reputations and salvage their careers; they need financial resources to support themselves and their families.

4. Do you believe the UN leadership fosters a culture that discourages ethical stances when they conflict with political convenience? If so, how might this culture be reversed?

The new whistle-blower protection policy, signed by the Secretary-General, does not establish the above safeguards. On the contrary, it cobbled together yet another arcane 'alternate review' and adds it to the already protracted, circuitous and ineffective process through which whistle-blowers must seek relief from reprisal.

5. From what you witnessed, are the sanctions imposed—both disciplinary and legal—proportionate to the harm caused by SEA?

No

6. In your opinion, what would a truly “proportionate” response from the UN look like, in both individual cases and system-wide reform?

7. Looking back on your decision to report the Central African Republic abuses despite the consequences, what would you say to a young person today who aspires to work in international institutions while staying true to their ethical values?

I share the attached speech I gave to a young audience (in Stockholm).

Your Majesty, Compass Rose Fellows, Participants and Leaders in Value-Based Leadership,

Dear guests:

Thank you for giving me the opportunity of being here today to share with you some examples of value-based leadership from my past life.

If there is one thing that I am sure of and that I have seen happening over and over throughout the world is that one leader can make an amazing difference in a situation, in a village, in a country, in an office. One person can provoke unimaginable levels of change. Unfortunately, these can just as well be negative as positive changes. What makes the difference? Values. And more particularly one value: altruism - based on the conviction of universal equality.

Selfish leaders will provoke or prevent change to benefit themselves; or those who are like them, those they like or those who belong to the same group – ethnic, religious, national, gender or sexual orientation. And their actions will result in corruption, discrimination, inequality, and finally widespread suffering.

Altruistic leaders will not choose the path that leads to their self-satisfaction – more power, more wealth for themselves or those they like. They will consider how their actions impact on others independently from their belonging and will act consequently, even if there may be a price for them to pay personally.

So, what does it mean showing value-based leadership in a crisis, in a conflict?

I would like to take you with me on a trip in time and in space. We are going back twenty years, to Colombia of 2002. The country is in the grip of a vicious internal armed conflict with two main actors vying for victory: the Government, supported by a strong paramilitary movement, and the FARC guerrilla. Initially ideologically based, after thirty years of senseless violence the conflict has become much more about power and survival than anything else and attempts at peace keep failing.

Since my arrival in the country in early 1999 as Representative of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, the situation has further deteriorated. The latest, fragile peace negotiation breaks down in February 2002 when an airplane is hijacked by the guerrilla and a senator kidnapped; and finally shatters beyond hope when a presidential candidate, Ingrid Betancourt, is also kidnapped and battles start raging again throughout the country. (Even silence has an end. My six years of captivity in the Colombian jungle” (2010))

The paramilitary, operating with ferocious violence, are aiming at ejecting the guerrilla from the territory it occupies, relying on the military turning a blind eye and allowing them passage through checkpoints. This is how the little village of Bojayá, in the middle of the rainforest covering each side of the Government-patrolled River Atrato, finds itself on the morning of 2 May occupied by the paramilitary, who have pushed the guerrilla out but are now surrounded by them. As fighting rages, the population looks for protection in the only construction of the village with concrete walls: the Parish Church. But the paramilitary squads surround the building and to hit them the guerrilla decides to shoot home-made explosives contained in a gas cylinder. It is almost midday when one of those cylinders' flies through the metal roof of the church and lands on the altar, exploding.

Ninety people, many of them children, are killed immediately. As the dust raises in the sudden ear-splitting silence after the explosion, one man covered in dust, blood gushing from a cut on his forehead, stands tall. He is the twenty-three years old priest of the community, Padre Antún.

Now he has a choice.

He can save himself walking away, knowing that the fighters will recognise his cassock and spare his life. Or he can fulfil his role as a community leader and try to save those who have survived.

But he is trained to be a shepherd: he has already made that choice, years ago, adopting the values of his church.

And so, he grabs a white cloth, gathers the survivors and marches ahead of them chanting "We are civilians, we want peace."

Young Padre Antún saved tens of people, that day – by being a value-based leader.

I met him when I reached the village a week later, heading a United Nations investigation requested by the President of Colombia in reaction to world-wide pressure. Being there meant a lot of hard choices for me personally too.

I could have refused letting my Office do the investigation – it represented a huge risk for all those on it, six hours on a boat just to get to the village, paramilitaries on one bank of the river, guerrilla on the other and the Colombian Air Force above us, each with a good reason to stop us. But I weighed in the balance the possibility of bringing some form of justice to the victims, and I accepted.

I could have sent someone else – few Heads of Office expose themselves to life-threatening missions such as that one was. But I told myself that if I did not have the courage of going myself, how could I ask my colleagues to go? So, I went.

Once the investigation was over, I could have stayed silent and hand the results confidentially to the Government. But would people have ever known the truth if I had? So, I stood up in front of the journalists and publicly declared what we had seen, and I was declared 'enemy number one' of the Armed Forces of Colombia, forced to move in an armoured car with a five-people escort wherever I went until I left the country.

Did I regret it?

Not a single second.

Because of the positive change the investigation represented for the victims and their families, the value of the advocacy we conducted and that years later led to justice. But also because of what that meant for me personally: I could still look at myself in a mirror and tell myself 'You did right.'

There will be a lot of moments in your life when your values will be tested – God knows I faced several of them. When you will find a fork in the road and know that one path is right and one is wrong but the one that is right means taking a risk, subordinating your own safety, profit or career to truth, decency, or other people's needs and lives.

Cultivate clarity of mind – because that is what will allow you to separate right from wrong in all your decisions.

Cultivate your courage - because that is what will get you through when half of the world seems to be against you.

And cultivate your friends - because they are the ones who, whatever the world thinks, will stand beside you and behind you, and help you advance, help you survive.

In Bojayá, I fell in love with the woman who for seventeen years is my wife. There is a prize for value-based leadership after all.

Thank you.

Anders Kompass

Royal Palace, Bernadotte Library, May 4 th, 2022

8. Do you still believe the UN can reform itself from within—or is external pressure (media, civil society, international courts) the only effective way to ensure accountability?^[2]

Honestly, I don't know. I share for your information an article reflecting on the current situation.

Annex IV. Missions with the highest number of SEA Allegations by Country.

The table is showing the missions where there are the most accusations per country. (For a comprehensive view, refer to the link provided)

DMSPC_SEA_From 1/01/2015 to 12/05/2025_Forés_Fernández_Carla_UEV Bachelor Thesis : Mission & Nationality									
Mission	Nationality								
MINUSTAH	Bangladesh								
MINUSTAH	Bangladesh								
MONUSCO	Bangladesh								
MINUSCA	Bangladesh								
MONUSCO	Benin								
MONUSCO	Benin								
MINUSCA	Benin								
MONUSCO	Benin								
MINUSCA	Benin								
MINUSTAH	Benin								
MINUSTAH	Benin								
MINUSMA	Benin								
MINUSTAH	Benin								
MONUSCO	Benin								
MONUSCO	Benin								
MONUSCO	Bolivia								
UNVMC	Bolivia								
UNIFIL	Brazil								
MONUSCO	Burkina Faso								
MONUSCO	Burkina Faso								
MONUSCO	Burkina Faso								
MINUSTAH	Burkina Faso								
MINUSMA	Burkina Faso								
MINUSCA	Burundi								

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