

# State-building: Peace versus Democracy

A comparative case study of the peacebuilding missions in  
Sierra Leone and in the Central African Republic

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# Abstract

In 2014, the peacebuilding missions in Sierra Leone and in the Central African Republic (CAR) were ended. While the former was described as being a success story, the latter failed to construct stable and lasting peace in CAR since a war broke out in December 2012 and is still ongoing in 2016. This study proposes an analysis of these two peacebuilding missions, using Roland Paris' theory Institutionalization Before Liberalization, which stresses the importance of strengthening local institutions and making them able to manage the destabilizing effects of liberalization. By examining whether the UNIPSIL and the BINUCA waited until conditions were ripe for elections, designed electoral rules that diminished reward ethnic inclusiveness and promoted good civil society, the authors came to the conclusion that the variables ripe conditions for elections and good civil society seem to be essential for a peacebuilding mission to be successful.

*Key words:* Sierra Leone, Central African Republic, Liberal Peacebuilding, State-building, IBL

*Words:* 7537

# Table of Contents

<b>1</b>	<b>Introduction.....</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>2</b>	<b>Theoretical framework.....</b>	<b>6</b>
2.1	Background to the theoretical discussion.....	6
2.2	Institutionalization before Liberalization.....	6
<b>3</b>	<b>Method and research design.....</b>	<b>8</b>
3.1	Method used.....	8
3.2	Case-selection.....	8
3.3	Variables.....	8
3.4	Operationalization.....	9
3.5	Material.....	10
3.6	Limitations of the study.....	10
<b>4</b>	<b>Cases.....</b>	<b>11</b>
4.1	Background of the peacebuilding missions.....	11
4.1.1	Sierra Leone.....	11
4.1.2	CAR.....	11
4.2	Elections.....	12
4.2.1	Sierra Leone.....	12
4.2.2	CAR.....	13
4.3	Ethnic Entrepreneurs.....	14
4.3.1	Sierra Leone.....	14
4.3.2	CAR.....	15
4.4	Civil Society.....	17
4.4.1	Sierra Leone.....	17
4.4.2	CAR.....	18
<b>5</b>	<b>Between-case Analysis.....</b>	<b>19</b>
4.1	Wait until Conditions are Ripe for Elections.....	19
4.2	Ethnic Entrepreneurs.....	20
4.3	Bad Civil Society.....	21
<b>6</b>	<b>Conclusions.....</b>	<b>24</b>
<b>7</b>	<b>References.....</b>	<b>25</b>

# 1 Introduction

In 2014, two peacebuilding missions were ended in Western and Central Africa: the United Nations Integrated Peacebuilding Office in Sierra Leone (UNIPSIL) established on October 1, 2008 and the United Nations Peacebuilding Office in the Central African Republic (BINUCA) established on April 7, 2009. However, they had different results. The UN described UNIPSIL as a success story for post-conflict recovery (UN 1). Nevertheless, many scholars have criticized this statement, pointing out the many challenges that the country is still facing after the deployment of UNIPSIL (Akanji 2013; Neethling 2010; Africa Research Institute 2011). On the other hand, the peacebuilding mission in Central African Republic (CAR) was a failure. Since December 10, 2012, the country is torn by a civil war. Consequently, on April 10, 2014, BINUCA was subsumed in the newly established peacekeeping operation - the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in the Central African Republic (MINUSCA) (UN 2). Several scholars have pointed out that the international peacebuilding efforts in CAR all fail because the international community has a “bad image” of the country and sees it as an “abandoned state with little interest” (Akasaki et al. 2015; Lombard 2012).

Since the end of the Cold War, the number of peacebuilding missions have dramatically increased. Roland Paris highlighted that fourteen major peacebuilding missions were conducted between 1989 and 1999, whereas only two missions of this kind were launched during the Cold War era (Paris 2004:14). While in 1960 Dag Hammarskjöld argued that the UN was ideologically impartial (Ibid:16), nowadays, scholars of peace studies agree to say that the UN’s peacebuilding strategy can be qualified of ‘liberal’ (Autesserre 2014; Jarstad and Sisk 2008; Paris 2004). In *At War’s End*, through his analysis of the peacebuilding missions that the UN conducted in the 1990s, Paris concluded that the latter were all guided by the assumption that liberalization would create the conditions needed for a stable and lasting peace (Paris 2004:5).

Although being an advocate of liberal peacebuilding, Paris points out that a quick liberalization can generate tumultuous conditions that are counterproductive in the quest of stable and lasting peace and democracy (Ibid:7). Therefore, he recommends to combine liberalization with the immediate building of governmental institutions, that are capable of handling the

changes brought by liberalization. He calls this strategy Institutionalization Before Liberalization (IBL) (Ibid:7).

Our aim is to apply IBL on the peacebuilding missions in Sierra Leone and CAR in order to investigate whether this theory is suitable for explaining the latter's differing results. Additionally, this research paper aims at contributing to the debate that touches on the order in which security and democracy should be implemented. Our objective is to determine what, between state-building and democracy should come first when pursuing stable and lasting peace in fragile states. This research paper is also an elongation of Paris' analysis of the UN peacebuilding missions, by adding two peacebuilding missions from the early twenty-first century to the compilation of his case studies. By using Paris' theory of IBL, we will answer the following question:

*Why has the peacebuilding mission in CAR failed, while the one in Sierra Leone has succeeded?*

The study starts by presenting the research context of the study, namely the theoretical debate on the order in which liberal democracy and state-building should be implemented. Thereafter, the theory which we will use to explain the differing results of the peacebuilding missions in Sierra Leone and CAR, i.e. IBL, will be presented. We will then describe how we conducted this research paper in our methodology part. Then, we will give an empirical analysis of how the two peacebuilding missions were conducted. Finally, we will compare the two cases and propose an analysis of the reasons why the UN's peacebuilding efforts gave differing results in the two countries.

## 2 Theoretical framework

### 2.1 Background to the theoretical discussion

As Paris demonstrated in *At War's end*, international peacebuilders have prioritized fast liberalization when intervening in fragile states (Paris 2004). This practice was forged by the belief in the “Liberal Peace Theory” which supposes that market democracies rarely go to war against each other and what Paris calls the 'Wilsonian thinking' which consists in the belief that rapid liberalization would create conditions for stable and lasting peace in countries emerging from civil wars (Ibid:42) However, several scholars including Paris, highlighted that the implementation of liberal democracy can work at cross-purposes with the quest of peace (Fukuyama 2004; Belloni 2008). He believes that liberalization does sometimes leave weak states in worse conditions than they were before because the former does not focus on state-building, i.e. institution-building (Fukuyama 2004). Fukuyama thus claims that state-building - especially in ethnically divided societies - always goes through a phase of violence, which is incompatible with democracy and liberalization (Ibid). There is therefore a theoretical debate between the advocates of Wilsonianism and the proponents of Institutionalization before Liberalization.

### 2.2 Institutionalization before Liberalization

Roland Paris developed IBL to modify the aspects that he found were the deficient ones in traditional liberal peacebuilding (Paris 2004:179). Liberalization in the political sense implies:

*democratization, or the promotion of periodic and genuine elections, constitutional limitations on the exercise of governmental power, and respect for basic civil liberties, including freedom of speech, assembly, and conscience*  
(Paris 2004:185).

Being a proponent of Liberal Peace theory, Paris does not criticize the ultimate goal of the UN, namely to turn war-shattered state into market-democracies. He rather believes that the problem lies in the methods use to achieve this goal (Ibid:185). He argues that fast liberalization and “shock therapy” can be destabilizing for already fragile states (Ibid:7). Paris detected several “weak

spots” of liberalization that occur when putting fragile states through the liberalization process, the so-called “Pathologies of Liberalization”: Elections as Focal Points for Harmful Competition, Ethnic Entrepreneurs, Bad Civil Society, Saboteurs and Failed Transition and the Dangers of Economic Liberalization (Ibid:160).

Per definition, periodic and genuine elections are a key prerequisite for liberal democracy. However according to Paris, democratic elections can polarize, exacerbate existing societal conflicts and lead to large-scale violence (Ibid:163). Indeed, competition is inherent to elections as it implies multiparty rivalry. This competition is believed to be particularly harmful in weak states that have recently or are still experiencing war, where institutions are not able to resolve disputes arising from the elections’ results (Ibid:159). Furthermore, in divided societies, opportunistic leaders can exploit intercommunal hatred and distrust in order to gain votes and consolidate a political following which can increase the dangers of ethnic violence and failed democratization (Ibid:162). Then, as we have seen in the definition of political liberalism, freedom of speech and assembly are two key values of democracy. Indeed, democracy requires an active civil society, that can help to create peaceful compromises between people, create cross-cutting social groups, thereby working against social cleavages (Ibid:160). However, some organizations are built on the rejection of tolerance and therefore impede on the process of reconciliation (Ibid).

Paris argues that the pathologies of liberalization are eager to occur in states that lack effective governmental institutions (Ibid:168). Indeed, fragile states are more likely to be destabilized by the effects of liberalization because they have not developed the institutional capacity to manage instabilities. Paris therefore promotes a liberalized approach to peacebuilding in war-shattered states but underlines the necessity of constructing and consolidating stable political institutions (Ibid:187). Paris designed a framework for peacebuilders to avoid the negative effects of liberalization consisting in six points, which are:

1. Wait until conditions are ripe for elections
2. Design electoral systems that reward moderation
3. Promote good civil society
4. Control Hate Speech
5. Adapt Conflict-Reducing Economic Policies
6. The Common Denominator: Rebuild Effective State Institutions

## 3 Method and research design

### 3.1 Method used

This research is a type of comparative case study where two countries will be studied in depth: the CAR and Sierra Leone. We will use Paris' theory on IBL to assess whether the peacebuilding mission in Sierra Leone was successful because it respected Paris' aforementioned recommendations and whether, on the other hand, the peacebuilding mission in CAR failed because it focused on liberalization before institutionalization. It is a *disciplined-configurative* study since it uses an established theory to explain two cases (George & Bennett 2005:213).

### 3.2 Selection of cases

Since this is a case study, the choice of cases is important. Teorell and Svensson have outlined four important principles for choosing cases: to choose relevant, generalizable, variable cases, and to aim at complementing extensive results (Teorell & Svensson 2007:222). We used the “most similar systems” method for selecting our cases (Ibid:154), which means that we chose two similar cases, that maximized the probability for obtaining the same results. Indeed, the peacebuilding missions in Sierra Leone and in CAR are somewhat similar: UNIPSIL and BINUCA were conducted between 2008 and 2014, in Western and Central Africa, in ethnically divided societies and fragile states.

### 3.3 Variables

We will use the first three points of IBL as variables which are *ripe conditions for elections*, *electoral systems that reward moderation* and *promotion of good civil society*. The choice of variables is determined by our belief that the three first-mentioned points are the most relevant when analysing the chosen peacebuilding missions.

The *Ripe Conditions for Elections* are gathered when elections can be “conducted in a free and fair manner but also furthers the development of stable democracy and diminishes the risk of renewed violence” (Paris 2004:189). Paris judges whether such conditions exist by assessing the political parties that are likely to contest the election and the institutional setting in which



the election will take place. *Electoral systems that reward moderation* is defined by Paris as systems that “encourage moderate, centrist forms of political competition, rather than the polarizing extremes and centrifugal patterns that characterize so many divided societies” (Paris 2004:191). *The Promotion of Good Civil Society* implies that peacebuilders should promote civil society organizations (CSO) that support democracy and cross-factional compromise (Ibid:195). Furthermore, Paris argues that peacebuilders must also “be prepared to shut down organizations that openly and repeatedly advocate violence against other groups in the society when such behavior poses a threat to the consolidation of peace and democracy” (Ibid.).

However, we will leave out point four and five of our analysis and use the sixth point as our conclusion. Indeed, the fourth point - *controlling hate speech* - is overlapping our third point on civil society since hate speeches were used by bad civil society organizations. The fifth point - *adapting conflict-reducing economic policies* - is not suitable for our paper, since we are only focusing on liberalization in the political sense, leaving out the economic dimension. Lastly, the sixth point, i.e. *rebuilding effective state institutions* is the common denominator to the previous variables and will therefore serve as our conclusion.

### 3.4 Operationalization

The three independent variables need to be deconstructed or operationalized in order to conduct our research. In order to investigate whether the peacebuilding missions waited until conditions were ripe for elections, we will answer the following question:

- *Did the UN peacebuilding missions postpone elections until conditions permitting free and fair elections were created? Were the countries' governmental institutions capable of resolving disputes arising from the election and of enforcing compliance with the election's outcome?*

We modified the second variable, as we will examine whether the peacebuilding missions designed electoral rules that diminished ethnic cleavages instead of extremism. Indeed, it is more suitable to our cases since Sierra Leone and CAR are cases of ethnically divided societies. In order to determine whether the peacebuilding missions designed electoral systems that reward ethnic inclusiveness, we will ask ourselves:

- *Did the UN peacebuilding missions design electoral rules that diminishes ethnic cleavages?*

Finally, when studying whether UNIPSIL and BINUCA promoted good civil society, we will answer the question:

- *Did the UN peacebuilding missions encourage the development of civil-society organizations that cut across lines of societal conflict and proscribe those that advocate violence?*

### 3.5 Material

Discussing the peacebuilding missions in Sierra Leone and CAR, we will use their mandates established by the UN Security Council. However, as Autesserre notes, mandates provide the broad guidelines for a given mission, but offer little detail (Autesserre 2014:25). It is the local leaders of peacebuilding missions who must translate mandates into concrete tasks, adapted to specific situations, particular to each country (Ibid.). Furthermore, for our empirical research on how UNIPSIL and BINUCA were conducted, we needed independent data that we have found in scientific articles, as well as in NGO and research institute reports. Therefore, we used the mandates as a basis but mainly used the aforementioned second-hand sources to build our conclusions on.

### 3.6 Limitations of the study

This study will propose an analysis of the peacebuilding missions in Sierra Leone and CAR's differing results by focusing on the latter's involvement in the strengthening of institutions. We will not discuss whether the peacebuilding mission in Sierra Leone can be defined as a success. We assume that since it has been defined as such by the UN and that Sierra Leone is not at war, the peacebuilding mission has at succeeded in building what Galtung calls a negative peace, i.e. the absence of direct violence (Galtung 1967). Moreover, this study does not aim at criticizing liberal peacebuilding *per se* and we therefore do not discuss whether liberalism should be implemented to fragile states by international peacebuilders. Furthermore, we do not analyze to what extent the processes of peacebuilding were owned by the locals, though 'local ownership', as highlighted by Autesserre, has a strong explanatory craft in the success or failure of peacebuilding missions (Autesserre 2014). However, we chose to analyze state-building and institution-building efforts because we believe that they are a key-priority in peacebuilding missions.

## 4 Cases

### 4.1 Backgrounds of the peacebuilding missions

#### 4.1.1 Sierra Leone

The civil war in Sierra Leone (1991-2002) started when the paramilitary group Revolutionary United Front (RUF) launched an attack from the Liberian border to overthrow the government. Sierra Leone's army first responded to the attacks, but later turned against the government and overthrew it (UN 3). The situation was first monitored by the Economic Community of West African States Monitoring Group (ECOMOG). Elections were held in February 1996, but RUF did not participate in the elections, neither did they recognize the results, which resulted in continued violence (Ibid.).

The conflict, being perceived as one of the most brutal of the end of the century, pushed the international community to intervene (Neethling 2010:82). The involvement of the UN was initiated in 1998, with Security Council Resolution 1181, that established the Observer Mission UNOMSIL. Its main task was to “disarm combatants [and] document on-going atrocities” (UN 4). UNOMSIL was replaced in 1999 by the peacekeeping mission UNAMSIL after a decision from the Security Council. By year 2002, the war was declared to be over and the UN claimed to have disarmed and demobilized more than 75,000 ex-fighters (Ibid.). UNAMSIL's mandate ended in 2005 and was followed by the United Nations Integrated Peacebuilding Office in Sierra Leone (UNIPSIL) that was operational from October 1, 2008 to March 31, 2014 (Ibid.).

Several scholars agree to say that peace would not have been possible to achieve without the intervention of the UN peacebuilders and peacekeepers (Neethling 2010:81). Following the civil war, Sierra Leone's institutions were severely weakened and even though the peacekeeping mission achieved several crucial accomplishments, the secretary stated in 2005 the importance of replacing the peacekeeping troop with peacebuilders to consolidate the institutions (Ibid:89).

#### 4.1.2 CAR

In 2007, when the newly established UN Peacebuilding Commission searched for pilot sites, CAR was judged as being an easy task (Lombard 2012:193). A former UN coordinator in CAR assured that “CAR is a country we should be able to fix” (Lombard 2011:2). However, after a coup d'Etat led by the predominantly Muslim *Séléka* rebel alliance originating from the North of the country, in March 2013, overthrowing President François Bozizé, the country is witnessing an ongoing civil war (Cinq Mars 2015:5). On their route to the

capital, the Séléka-rebels looted and committed atrocities mainly on the Christian population. The latter responded by forming local self-defence groups, the *anti-balaka* (“anti-machete”) and took revenge on the Muslim population (Ibid.).

CAR is often described as being a “phantom state” because of its undeveloped infrastructures, which makes it one of the weakest states in Africa (Bøås 2014:2). Self-proclaimed Emperor Jean-Bedel Bokassa’s and his successors’ profligacy impeded on the undertaking of grand state-building projects (Lombard 2011:2). Indeed, the government has never had much of a control outside of Bangui. Locals use to say that « the state stops at PK12 », i.e. the State stops at twelve kilometers from the center of Bangui (Lombard 2012:190).

Frustration because of unpaid wages was growing among civil servants and pushed soldiers to stage a series of mutinies in Bangui in 1996 (Akasaki et al. 2015:7). This violent event marked the start of repeated international multilateral peacekeeping, peacebuilding and humanitarian interventions. Indeed, CAR was since then cadenced by coups d’Etat, bad governance, rebellions and civil wars (Kinsagani 2015:33). The BINUCA was established by a statement of the President of the Security Council on April 7, 2009 (UN 5:83). It became operational on January 1, 2010 replacing the United Nations Peacebuilding Support Office in the Central African Republic (BONUCA) (UN 6:879-881). Under the period of the mission, changes occurred in the mandate of the BINUCA in accordance with the political realities in CAR (Annex 2)

## 4.2 Elections

### 4.2.1 Sierra Leone

Since the civil war, elections have been held in 2002, and 2007, after the departure of the UN peacekeepers. Both were considered to be free and fair, despite rivalry between the parties (African Research Institute 2011). In the upcoming of the 2012 presidential and parliamentary elections, Freedom House documented increased political tension (Freedom House 2013). Smaller chieftaincy and local by-elections, held between 2009 and 2011, were characterized by a stressed political environment several clashes were registered, mainly between supporters of the All People’s Congress (APC) and Sierra Leone People’s Party (SLPP) (Ibid.). UN General Secretary Ban-Ki-Moon stressed the importance of keeping a peaceful atmosphere in the executing of the presidential elections (UN 2012). Thus, in May 2012, UNIPSIL organized a national congress attended by all ten political parties that were to run for the 2012 elections. The congress ended in the signing of an agreement known as the *Declaration on the 2012 elections*, which bound the parties to adhere to the conduction of free and fair elections (UN 7).

Elections were successfully held on November 17 2012, and Ernest Bai

Koroma won a second consecutive mandate (Akanji 2012:23). Koroma received 58.7 per cent of the votes and a second run-off presidential election was therefore unnecessary to organize (Ibid). Consolidating and assisting democratic institutions such as National electoral Commission, and the Party Commission were part of the UNIPSIL's Peacebuilding Priority Plans and for the first time in the Sierra Leonean history, democratic elections were primarily organized and held by governmental institutions, i.e. the National Electoral Commission and the Political Party Registration Commission (UN 8). In addition, it was the first year that the biometric system had been introduced to replace the traditional manual vote counting system, with the argument from the Chief Electoral Commissioner for the National Electoral Commission that "credible elections start with credible voter registration" (Africa Research Institute 2012). The strengthening of these institutions have been pointed out as a reason for the success (Akanji 2012:20). The 2012 elections are judged to have been conducted fairly and peacefully by many scholars, the UN and the people of Sierra Leone (UN 7; Akanji 2012; Africa Research Institute 2011). Even though the SLPP contested the results, UNIPSIL helped mediating between the APC and SLPP and finally agreed on the elections' results (Freedom House 2013).

#### 4.2.2 CAR

Legislative and presidential elections were to be held in early 2010. However, they were postponed indefinitely. As it can be seen in Annex 2, "electoral assistance" is a task that was mandated in the first BINUCA mandate of 2009. In the April 7, 2009 statement of the President of the Security Council, the latter mandated the BINUCA to "assist national and local efforts in implementing the dialogue outcomes, in particular through the [...] electoral processes" (UN 9). From October 29 to November 12, 2009, a UN assessment mission visited Bangui at the government's request and concluded that elections could take place in April and May 2010 (ICG 2010:10). The International Crisis Group qualified this project as being a "challenge" (Ibid).

Several factors challenged the holding of presidential and legislative elections in the first quarter of 2010: the lack of necessary office space, computers and cars delayed the possibilities of organizing free and fair elections (Ibid:9). Donors waited to provide the money and training needed to start working. In late 2009, an electoral timetable was drawn up, but voter lists still needed to be updated and voter cards distributed (Ibid.)

In addition, the question of the thousands of internally displaced persons and refugees located in neighbouring countries challenged the project of organizing free and fair elections since these citizens were most likely to be left out the process (Ibid.). In December 2009, the UN High Commissioner for Refugees reported 138,164 Central African refugees in neighbouring countries and more than 162,000 internally displaced people. Moreover, since these refugees had to flee to a large extent because of violence caused by Bozizé's rebellion in 2002 and 2003, their inability to vote was likely to have favoured Bozizé in the elections (Ibid.).

The Independent Electoral Commission (CEI) which was established in August 2009 to oversee the elections was composed of thirty members, fifteen of whom were members from the political opposition and rebel groups (IOL 2010). However, in January 2010, the latter walked out the CEI and asked for the resignation of the head of the commission, Joseph Binguimale. Former rebel group leader Démafouth accused him of openly displaying allegiance to Bozizé (Ibid.). Nevertheless, Binguimale did not resign and the CEI was thus only composed of Bozizé partisans. Legislative and presidential elections were finally held in January and March 2011. Bozizé was reelected president. However, the elections were qualified as having presented irregularities and fraud by the UN itself (UN 13).

## 4.3 Ethnic entrepreneurs

### 4.3.1 Sierra Leone

Sierra Leone is a multi-ethnic state, with a population of 5,9 millions. The two biggest ethnic groups are the Mendes and the Temnes, representing respectively 35 and 31 per cent of the population (CIA 2015). Politics in Sierra Leone is based on ethnic and regional lines and both the 2007 presidential elections and the 2010 by-elections confirmed this division in the political sphere (Kandeh 1992; Batty 2015; Africa Research Institution 2011). SLPP finds support primarily among the Mendes and other southern groups while the APC gathers votes from northern and western parts of the country that are primarily dominated by Temnes (Kandeh 1992:82; Africa Research Institute 2011).

Year 2007 marked the end of the Proportional Representative System (RP) which was replaced with the Majority Principle (MP) (Lavali et al. 2011:2). The RP system means that the number of parliamentary seats of a political party are reflected by the overall number of votes that are gained, while the MP implies that the candidate who gets the most votes gets elected (Ibid.). This RP system is commonly advised for countries with identity-based cleavages, especially those divided along ethnic and religious lines (Ibid.). Many scholars have criticized the reintroduction of the MP, stating that “defeat at the ballot box will entail exclusion and disadvantage for an electoral term” (African Research Institute 2011).

Nevertheless, it has been noted that today’s electoral loyalties do not depend so much on “long-standing ethnic enmity” anymore (Ibid.). Political affiliation is rather due to patronage networks and corruption. President Bai Koroma promised to defeat corruption prior to the 2012 election, but reports have shown that several governmental institutions are still deeply plagued by corruption and bribery (Freedom House 2013; Chêne 2010). Even when efforts were made by the government to improve the situation, they were countered by a lack of cooperation and coordination between ministries, low qualifications of politicians and corruption (BTI 2014:25). Moreover, reports show that despite

Bai Koroma's vocal support for ethnic inclusiveness, he exacerbated ethnic and regional divides by replacing ministerial posts with politicians from the same ethnic group (Ibid; International Crisis Group 2008:1). These ethnic divisions in the political sphere have also resulted in conflictual and competing interests affecting the bureaucracy (BTI 2014:25). However, the 2012 election results revealed that the two major parties - especially APC - had gained votes outside of their traditional electoral strongholds (African Research Institute 2013).

#### 4.3.2 CAR

CAR has a population of 4.4 million and is ethnically diverse (Kisangani 2015:36). The Banda people is the largest ethnic group, representing 31 percent of the population and the Gbaya accounts for 29 per cent (Ibid.). Christians represent 50 per cent of the population and Muslims 12 per cent and are mainly located in the northern part of the country (Ibid).

As it can be seen in Table 1, Bozizé ruled on an ethnic basis much more than what his predecessors did. Indeed, 29% of the members of government and army were from his ethnic group, namely the Gbaya. Bozizé marginalized people from the northern and eastern part of the country (Cinq Mars 2015:6). Furthermore, the former President politicized religion more than any other previous ruler in CAR did. Indeed, he proliferated his personal brand of evangelical Christian churches all over the country (Cinq Mars 2015:6). Before Bozizé, religious and sectarian differences never really constituted an important political cleavage in the country (Bøås 2014:2).

The Union of Democratic Forces for Unity (UFDR), one of the three rebel groups which gathered to form the Séléka, was founded in 2006 and led by Michel Djotodia, who, as aforementioned, became the leader of the Séléka and the first Muslim to head CAR. The UFDR rebels claimed that they had taken up arms to protest against Bozizé's exclusionist mode of governance (Kisangani 2015:55). Djotodia stated that "many people from other ethnic groups and different political parties are ostracised and banned from participating in the management of the country" (Mehler 2011:130).

**Table 1**

Ethnic composition of the government and the army in CAR

<i>President</i>	<i>Ethnicity</i>	<i>Dominance of</i>	<i>President's</i>	<i>Ethnic group</i>
	<i>President</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>Government</i>	<i>Army</i>
Dacko (1960-1966;1979-1981)	Mbaka	6.5	None	Little
Bokassa (1966-1979)	Mbaka	6.5	Little	Moderate
Kolingba (1981-1993)	Yakoma	4.0	Dominant	Dominant
Patassé (1993-2003)	Kaba	3.0	Dominant	Dominant
Bozizé (2003-2013)	Gbaya	29.0	Dominant	Moderate

*Source: Kisangani 2015, p.55*

In June 2008, the so-called *Libreville Peace Agreement* was signed and aimed at bringing an end to conflicts between the three rebel groups and the government (Ibid:128). An ‘inclusive national dialogue’ followed the signature of the peace agreement, where the participants and most importantly Bozizé agreed among other things, to form an inclusive consensus government (Ibid:130). A follow-up committee for the implementation of the Libreville agreement was created. Nevertheless, there were no seats for the civilian or the armed opposition (Ibid.)

After the 2011 elections, rebel groups accused the government of not honoring the peace accords which, as aforementioned, required an inclusive government (Kisangani 2015:46). Djotodia accused Bozizé’s regime of still being corrupt and of excluding Muslims. Thus, rebel groups have fought against what they judged was bad governance and marginalization by the central government. As noted by Kisangani,

*the emergence of the new line of social cleavage along religious line only reflects the same manifestation of political recycling of the elite which has characterized the CAR’s unending political instability” (Kisangani 2015:56).*



## 4.4 Civil Society

### 4.4.1 Sierra Leone

Although the civil war weakened Sierra Leone's civil society, the size and number of CSOs increased remarkably after the end of the war in 2002, more than at any other time in the country's history (Datzberger 2014:1597). However, they are challenged by a societal top-down mentality, embraced by the governmental institutions. This troubles the CSOs' possibilities to challenge the government and therefore, their possibility to "offer a meaningful channel for the voices of the poor and excluded" (Kaldor & Vincent 2006, Lawrence 2014). These weaknesses are also to be blamed on the government's incomplete and rudimentary regulatory framework for civil society's engagement (Poskitt & Dufranc 2011; World Bank 2007). Furthermore, these weaknesses have made it possible for political elites to take advantage and consolidate patriotism (Datzberger 2014:1597). Another main issue is the marginalization of the young population: 70% are unemployed and nearly half of them are unskilled (Lawrence 2014:8). Many of the established youth representatives and organisations have suffered from a lack of resources and skills. Moreover, they have not been taken into account during political dialogues (Ibid.). The reason for leaving them out is their participation in the civil war, making them "volatile, untrustworthy, and prone to idleness" (Bedson & Sulaiman 2013).

However, the international community was aware of the complexity of the situation. Supporting and strengthening CSOs has been one of UNIPSIL's main goals. In 2010, UNIPSIL funded the Non-State Actors (NSA) project with a budget of 35 million dollars to engage the civil society in working upstream non-violent elections (Ibid:8). The fund was meant to support political parties into engaging in dialogue grounded in social cohesion and creating good offices. Two organizations on track-II level, the All Political Parties Youth Association (APPYA) and the Civil Society Platform (CSP), also benefited from this budget. Moreover, many efforts have been made by UNIPSIL to strengthen youth empowerment, employment and commitment to engage in political dialogues (Ibid.) Furthermore, Sierra Leone received positive feedback from the UN and other organizations regarding its culture of tolerance across ethnic and religious divides (Freedom House 2014). Inter-religious marriage is usual, several Sierra Leoneans practice both Christianity and Islam, and ethnic and religious groups are not deprived of any political rights or electoral opportunities (Ibid).

#### 4.4.2 CAR

The Séléka rebellion which started as a violent response to the non-inclusive Bozizé regime ended in a sectarian conflict between Christians and Muslims. The Séléka began by committing atrocities on non-Muslim populations and even though the alliance was dissolved by Michel Djotodia in September 2013, the violence did not stop. In December 2013, the Christian population who had responded by forming local self-defence groups, the anti-balaka, attacked Muslim neighborhoods in Bangui (Brown & Zahar 2015:15). The attacks of December 5 and 6 2013, during which more than 1,000 were killed, brought in the religious dimension in the conflict and religious identity became the defining identity of the warring parties (Cinq Mars 2015:5).

Brown and Zahar summed up the horizontal inequalities that divide CAR's society thusly:

*non-Muslims who occupy most of the political and bureaucratic domain against Muslims who are the primary commercial actors and have been informally barred from entering the civil service (Brown & Zahar 2015:15).*

As aforementioned, explicit religious tensions have not been part of the country's political history before the clashes of December 2013. However, there exists a long-standing xenophobia towards Chadians, nomadic herders from the border regions and other Muslims. Therefore, according to Cinq Mars, "the historic marginalization of the northeastern region of the country, as well as the politicization of religion by the Bozizé regime, exacerbated tensions between communities" (Cinq Mars 2015:10).

In order to build bridges between the population and replace the social services that should have been provided by the central state, CSOs began to emerge after CAR's independence (Ekomo-Soignet 2015). Today, twenty-five local CSOs in CAR are qualified as being "local peacebuilding organizations" (Peace Direct 1). Among them, several ones aim at reconciling Muslims and non-Muslims, e.g. the Union of Young Muslims of CAR (UJMCA) which "creates opportunities to bridge Muslim and non-Muslim communities, with a specific focus on youth" (Peace Direct 2).

The tensions between the two religious groups were exacerbated in March 2013 when Bozizé began to employ religion as a tool to mobilize opposition to the Séléka (Cinq Mars 2015:11). Consequently, there was an explosion of international initiatives using social cohesion as a guiding concept (Brown & Zahar 2015:17). The two main initiatives were the Interfaith Religious Platform and the IOM Community Stabilization Project (Ibid:18-20).

## 5 Between-case analysis

### 5.1 Wait until conditions are ripe for elections

*Did the UN peacebuilding missions postpone elections until conditions permitting free and fair elections were created? Were the country's governmental institutions capable of resolving disputes arising from the election and of enforcing compliance with the election's outcome?*

Regarding the peacebuilding mission in Sierra Leone, as it can be seen in Annex 1, Resolution 2065 (2012) mandated UNIPSIL to give “electoral assistance” and the Security Council underlined:

*the importance of these elections and the wide acceptance of the results as a key benchmark for consolidation of peace in Sierra Leone [...] (UN 10).*

The electoral assistance granted by UNIPSIL resulted in free and fair elections, despite a tumultuous electoral process. The so-called *Declaration on the 2012 elections* bound the parties to organize tolerant and violence-free elections, and it appeared that this agreement was a quick and flexible way of handling political tension that resulted in the gathering of the needed conditions for a successful election. Furthermore, the assistance gave the possibility to the National Electoral Mission and the Political Party Registration Commission to take a leading role in the administration of the electoral process, thereby strengthening the governmental institutions that would in turn be able to hold future elections in Sierra Leone. Moreover, the biometric method to register votes demonstrates a major effort by the National Electoral Commission to increase the credibility of the elections' results. Thus, UNIPSIL waited until conditions permitting free and fair elections were created.

If the BINUCA was mandated to “assist national and local efforts in implementing the dialogue outcomes, in particular through the [...] electoral processes” in the Presidential Statement of April 7 2009, “electoral assistance” was not reiterated in BINUCA's second mandate of December 10 2010 (Annex 2). Knowing that elections were to be held in January and March 2011, it is surprising that the BINUCA's renewed mandate did not put more attention on the upcoming elections. Indeed, the International Crisis Group stressed the importance of giving priority to the consensual organisation of credible elections over the first months of 2010 (ICG 2010:17). Bozizé was likely to win the elections given his strong position but as the ICG warned, the risk of a rushed and badly organized election is the contesting of the results which could potentially lead to violent reaction causing political instability, which could in turn harm the peace and democratization process (Ibid:9).

As aforementioned, the elections were qualified of unfair by the UN because irregularities, fraud, logistical problems due to the non-updated electoral lists and the large number of refugees and internally displaced people that could not vote (UN 13). Consequently, the elections were contested in CAR and triggered the formation of the Séléka in August 2012 and the war that is still ongoing in 2016. BINUCA has therefore not succeeded in preparing the proper conditions needed for conducting a free and fair election in CAR. The logistical problems related to the electoral lists required more help from the UN to the governmental institutions and the problem of refugees and internally displaced people who could not vote required more discussion and more time.

Furthermore, the lack of neutrality and impartiality of the Independent Electoral Commission (CEI) caused by the lack of inclusiveness of political opposition and rebel groups damaged the election results' credibility (Ahmadou & Handy 2010:58). The BINUCA did not push for the head of the board's resignation, despite the fact that half of the CEI accused him of fraud and of openly displaying allegiance to Bozizé. Thus, the UN did not postpone the elections until the conditions for free and fair elections were created.

## 5.2 Design electoral systems that reward ethnic inclusiveness

*Did the UN peacebuilding missions design electoral rules that diminishes ethnic cleavages and reward ethnic inclusiveness?*

Throughout its different mandates, UNIPSIL assisted the political process through tasks including supporting good offices and facilitating political dialogue (UN 11). The National Electoral Commission, the Political Parties National Commission and the Democratic Commissions organized numerous inter-party meetings, putting efforts into creating a common ground between the parties and diminishing the hostilities. Koroma described the APC as “the ordinary man’s party that practices no tribalism or discrimination” (Kabs 2012).

However, politic loyalty along ethnic and regional lines have continued to prevail, as can be seen by Bai Koroma’s favouring of the Mendes and the problematic cross-cleavage cooperation in the government. These ethnic divisions affected the bureaucracy and the very core of the institutions, making them weak and vulnerable to corruption and irregularities. Many scholars believe that the corruption and patronage that characterizes Sierra Leone’s governmental and political system is caused by the “Winner Takes It All” mentality, which originates from the MP electoral system. The transition from the RP to the MP system in 2007 failed since ethnic exclusion is still present in Sierra Leone’s political system. Therefore, the RP system should still have been in place for the 2012 elections because the Sierra Leonean society is still strongly ethnically divided (Africa Research Institute 2011; Akanji 2014). Therefore, due to prevailing ethnic cleavages, patronage and corruption, the UN

has failed to design electoral rules that diminishes ethnic cleavages and reward ethnic inclusiveness.

Regarding the situation in CAR, BINUCA has not succeeded in promoting ethnic inclusiveness after the 2011 elections. The Libreville Agreement of 2008 bound the political system to be inclusive. However, the follow-up committee which was created after the agreement did neither include members from the opposition nor rebel group leaders. Therefore, its credibility was contested. Although the BINUCA was mandated to look after the good application of the agreement through Resolution 2031 (2011) (UN 12), it did not push for the inclusion of rebel groups in the follow-up committee and did not succeed in including the marginalized ethnic groups into the political system. In January 2013, the head of BINUCA warned the UN Security Council that failing to confront the factors that led to the collapse of previous peace agreements “may lead to another meltdown a few years down the line as a result of expectations frustrated and not met” (Cinq Mars 2015:11). In fact, it did not take years but rather a few months. The inclusion of Muslims in the political system was the Séléka’s main demand and Bozizé’s exclusionist regime the major reason why the alliance took up arms in December 2012. Therefore, BINUCA failed to design electoral rules that diminishes ethnic cleavages and reward ethnic inclusiveness, and this failure led to a war that is still ongoing.

### 5.3 Promote good civil society

*Did the UN peacebuilding missions encourage the development of civil-society organizations that cut across lines of societal conflict and proscribing those that advocate violence?*

The number of CSOs in Sierra Leone increased over the past years and UNIPSIL made numerous efforts to build an active and vibrant society. The level of tolerance for different ethnic and religious groups shows that ethnic hatred has diminished and this can be witnessed by the absence of hate-speech against other ethnic groups. In addition, the UNIPSIL’s economic funding of CSOs has led to a remarkable increasing of the quantity of CSOs and an increased political dialogue between them.

The communication between the government and the grass-root CSOs is still to be improved. When creating platforms for political dialogue, the UNIPSIL focused on horizontal dialogues. The top-down mentality of the political elites that created political rivalry between the CSOs weakened the CSOs from within and led to patriotism and elitism to take over and consolidate an ongoing situation that favours ethnic entrepreneurs. Moreover, the marginalization of the youth further reflects the lack of confidence that the government has for the civil society. However, UNIPSIL addressed these problems, created platforms to encourage dialogue and tolerance. As aforementioned, the civil society has been praised for its ethnic tolerance. Therefore, UNIPSIL has succeeded in encouraging the development of CSOs

that cut across horizontal lines, even though further attention is needed to improve the communication between the political elites and the grass-root CSOs, in order to cut across vertical lines.

Regarding the situation in CAR, the numerous CSOs working for a peaceful future were not sufficient to prevent the civil war which broke out in December 2012. Even though the hatred between Muslims and Christians developed at breakneck speed, several warnings were sent regarding the deteriorating relation between the two religious communities. Indeed, on January 3 2013, the French Permanent Representative to the UN made the earliest warning of the attacks that occurred in December 2013, by stating that the crisis was beginning to take on a religious dimension (Cinq Mars 2015:11). In June 2013, International Crisis Group reported that, “the strong anti-Séléka feeling that has taken hold of Bangui residents is taking on anti-Muslim overtones” (Ibid.).

According to a UN official, before the conflict turned into being a religious one, BINUCA officials’ relationship with Bozizé was too close and ultimately limited an objective analysis of the situation (Ibid:12). The BINUCA reports were thus nuanced in order not to negatively impact this relationship. However, as aforementioned, the main propagator of hate speech was Bozizé. Indeed, by frightening the population by claiming that Muslims would ‘come to enforce Islam and change [your] schools into Quranic schools’ and by asking the Christian population to ‘take up [your] knives and axes and machetes” (Brown & Zahar 2015:20), the former president propagated hate within its own country. According to religious leaders, the foundations for a religious conflict were laid by the political elites (Ibid.).

Nevertheless, the regulation of extremist individuals, i.e. those who preach hatred and violence is “one means of placing limits on the conflict-exacerbating effects of political liberalization, while at the same time fostering the development of civil-society associations that support democracy and cross-factional compromise” (Paris 2004:196). However, the BINUCA did not condemn Bozizé for his hate propaganda, even though he was the main preacher of religious hatred.

The BINUCA thus failed to report a quick and objective analysis of the deteriorating relation between the Muslims and the Christians and did not focus on promoting vertical dialogues, as in Sierra Leone. Indeed, the two international social cohesion initiatives focused “primarily on horizontal linkages between religious groups but the relative inattention to vertical linkages is troubling” (Brown & Zahar 2015:20). The support of the BINUCA to the grass-root initiatives shall be noted, but as the vertical linkages are the main channels of religious mobilisation in CAR, BINUCA should have promoted dialogues between the leaders and the population.

**Table 2: Results of the analysis**

	Wait until conditions are ripe for elections	Design electoral systems that reward ethnic inclusiveness	Promote good civil society
UNIPSIL	Yes	No	Yes
BINUCA	No	No	No

## 6 Conclusions

In this study, we focused on the following question: *why has the peacebuilding mission in CAR failed, while the one in Sierra Leone has succeeded?* By using Paris' so-called 'IBL' theory, we examined whether the peacebuilding missions were mandated and capable of strengthening local institutions in these two countries.

The UNIPSIL's efforts resulted in successful elections, increased political dialogue and a good civil society. However, there are some lessons that still need to be drawn. Failing to address the corruption and patrimonialism can weaken the institutions. Moreover, these challenges are exacerbated by an electoral system that promotes the "winner-takes-it-all" mentality and thereby strengthens ethnic exclusiveness in the political system. Nevertheless, the efforts made by the UNIPSIL to address the aforementioned issues have resulted in an overall successful peacebuilding mission.

On the other hand, the BINUCA failed to promote stable and lasting peace to CAR, since a civil war broke out in December 2012. The conditions for free and fair elections were not gathered in January 2011, neither was an electoral system that rewards ethnic inclusiveness designed, nor did it address the core problem of bad civil society. The international response to the situation in CAR illustrates how the UN assumes that the states where they intervene function as how they should, namely with strong governmental institutions. However, it is exactly what fragile states lack and CAR is the perfect example of a state without functioning institutions. However, the "UN treated CAR as how as a state *ought* to be, and not as it really is" (Lombard 2011:2).

According to our findings, the UNIPSIL successfully supported Sierra Leone's institutions, a task which it was mandated to conduct in five resolutions (Annex 1). However, the lack of attention given to the building of governmental institutions in CAR is visible in the BINUCA's mandates - "support to state institutions" was only mandated once, in 2009 (Annex 2). The result of our analysis is that the variables that seem essential for a peacebuilding to be successful are ripe conditions for fair elections as well as good civil society. Electoral systems that reward ethnic inclusiveness is not a essential variable for explaining the peacebuilding missions' differing results. However, our conclusion is that for a peacebuilding mission to be successful, the strengthening of institutions which are capable of permitting free and fair elections and the ones that cut across lines of societal conflict should be prioritized when implementing liberal democracy.



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# Annex 1

## UNIPSIL: overview of mandate by category

Category and mandated task	Resolution					
	<a href="#">1829 (2008)</a>	<a href="#">1886 (2009)</a>	<a href="#">1941 (2010)</a>	<a href="#">2005 (2011)</a>	<a href="#">2065 (2012)</a>	<a href="#">2097 (2013)</a>
<b>Military and police</b>						
Support to police		X <sup>a</sup>				
<b>Security sector reform</b>						X <sup>a</sup>
<b>Human rights, women and peace and security, and children and armed conflict</b>	X <sup>a</sup>	X <sup>b</sup>	X <sup>b</sup>	X <sup>b</sup>	X <sup>b</sup>	X <sup>b</sup>
<b>Rule of law/Judicial matters</b>	X <sup>a</sup>	X <sup>b</sup>	X <sup>b</sup>	X <sup>c</sup>	X <sup>c</sup>	X <sup>b</sup>
<b>Political process</b>	X <sup>a</sup>	X <sup>c</sup>	X <sup>b</sup>	X <sup>b</sup>	X <sup>c</sup>	X <sup>b</sup>
<b>Electoral assistance</b>		X <sup>a</sup>	X <sup>c</sup>	X <sup>b</sup>	X <sup>b</sup>	
<b>Support to state institutions</b>	X <sup>a</sup>	X <sup>b</sup>	X <sup>b</sup>	X <sup>c</sup>	X <sup>b</sup>	
<b>International cooperation and coordination</b>	X <sup>a</sup>	X <sup>b</sup>	X <sup>c</sup>	X <sup>c</sup>	X <sup>a</sup>	
<b>Public information</b>					X <sup>b</sup>	

<sup>a</sup> New mandated task

<sup>b</sup> Additional element

<sup>c</sup> Reiteration

Source: UN 2012-2013, p.91

## Annex 2

### **BINUCA: overview of mandate by category**

<i>Category and mandated task</i>	<i><a href="#">S/PRST/2009/5</a></i>	<i><a href="#">S/PRST/2010/26</a></i>	<i><a href="#">Resolution 2031 (2011)</a></i>	<i><a href="#">Resolution 2088 (2013)</a></i>	<i><a href="#">Resolution 2121 (2013)</a></i>
<b>Security sector reform</b>	X <sup>a</sup>		X <sup>b</sup>	X <sup>c</sup>	X <sup>a</sup>
<b>Demilitarization and arms management</b>	X <sup>a</sup>	X <sup>b</sup>	X <sup>b</sup>	X <sup>c</sup>	X <sup>a</sup>
<b>Humanitarian support</b>					X <sup>a</sup>
<b>Human rights, women and peace and security, and children and armed conflict</b>	X <sup>a</sup>		X <sup>b</sup>	X <sup>c</sup>	X <sup>a</sup>
<b>Rule of law/Judicial matters</b>	X <sup>a</sup>		X <sup>b</sup>		X <sup>a</sup>
<b>Political process</b>	X <sup>a</sup>		X <sup>b</sup>	X <sup>b</sup>	X <sup>a</sup>
<b>Electoral assistance</b>	X <sup>a</sup>				X <sup>a</sup>
<b>Support to state institutions</b>	X <sup>a</sup>				
<b>International cooperation and coordination</b>	X <sup>a</sup>		X <sup>b</sup>	X <sup>c</sup>	X <sup>a</sup>

<sup>a</sup> New mandated task

<sup>b</sup> Additional element

<sup>c</sup> Reiteration

Source: UN 2012-2013, p.84