How Do International Peacebuilding Organizations Navigate The Sovereignty Of Post War Countries? An Analysis Of The Experiences Of The United Nations Peacebuilding Commission In Burundi.

by

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À toi Fodé, Liam et Keilan: Je vis parce que vous faites partie de moi. Merci infiniment.

To Stephanie: Thank you for your friendship, always.

Ku muryango wanjye: Mbabereyeho. Simbibagirwa na rimwe.

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ABSTRACT

This thesis explores how the United Nations Peacebuilding Commission (PBC), established with the mandate to provide political accompaniment to countries emerging from violent conflicts, approaches the question of sovereignty within these countries. Rooted in the paradoxical approach to sovereignty within the realm of peacebuilding, the thesis argues that fundamental theoretical problems with the nature of peacebuilding lead to certain critical, real world limitations to peacebuilding operations in practice. Through an analysis of the PBC's experiences in Burundi, this thesis argues that a lack of a shared and coherent working definition of peacebuilding between the PBC and the countries on its agenda affect significantly the way PBC presents itself and the promises it holds for a post-conflict country – and perhaps more importantly how much power it is able to exercise and how this power influences the design and implementation of the peace agenda.

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS USED

AMIB	African Union Mission in Burundi
AU	African Union
BNUB	United Nations Office in Burundi
CNDD-FDD	National Council for the Defense of Democracy–Forces for the Defense of Democracy
CSCs	Country Specific Configurations
CNIDH	Independent National Commission on Human Rights in Burundi
CSO	Civil Society Organization
DFID	Department for International Development of the United Kingdom
EAC	East-African Community
ECOSOC	Economic and Social Council
ECOWAS	Economic Community of West African States
GoB	Government of Burundi
IOs	International Organizations
IDPs	Internally Displaced Persons
ILO	International Labour Organization
NGO	Non-governmental Organization
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization
FNL	(PALIPEHUTU-FNL) National Forces of Liberation
PBA	Peacebuilding Architecture
PBC	Peacebuilding Commission
PBF	Peacebuilding Fund
PBSO	Peacebuilding Support Office
OAU	Organization for African Unity
ONUB	United Nations Operation in Burundi
SFPB	Strategic Framework for Peacebuilding in Burundi
UNCT	United Nations Country Team
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNHCR	United Nations High Commission for Refugees
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
UNOMIL	United Nations Observer Mission in Liberia
UNSC	United Nations Security Council
UN WOMEN	United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women
WGLL	Working Group on Lessons Learned

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Chapter One: Introduction

"Peacebuilding depends on the universally shared belief that the State assumes
its functions in full sovereignty, on behalf of all citizens, and in response to their
basic needs. It also requires the State to have the necessary technical, human and
financial resources to manage public business transparently and efficiently"
(PBC/1/BDI/4, 2007, para 19)

I.   Introduction

In 1992, when former UN Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali introduced the
concept of *peacebuilding* in his now famous report "An Agenda for Peace"[1], he defined the term
as the "action to identify and support structures, which will tend to strengthen and solidify peace
in order to avoid a relapse into conflict" (Boutros Boutros-Ghali, 1992, para.21). Under the
umbrella of peacebuilding, Boutros-Ghali's report identified activities such as preventive
diplomacy and peacekeeping; and for the first time strongly advocated for the necessity to include
"post-conflict peacebuilding" within the peacebuilding toolkit. Boutros-Ghali explained it as
"efforts to identify and support structures, which will tend to consolidate peace, advance a sense
of confidence and well-being among people," and which were needed to prevent conflict
recurrence (para.55). Since that time, *An Agenda for Peace* has remained the cornerstone of the
institutionalization of peacebuilding within the organization. However, as King and Matthews
(2012) have astutely demonstrated, the most remarkable and indisputable component of the

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1 For more on *An Agenda for Peace* see Boutros Boutros-Ghali   An Agenda for Peace: Preventive Diplomacy, Peacemaking and Peace-keeping,
1993. King & Matthews (2012) also make an excellent analysis of the 20 years of An Agenda for Peace and argue for a New Agenda for Peace.

Agenda for Peace is that it unequivocally cast peacebuilding as a predominantly international endeavour, to be carried out by the United Nations and the broader international community.

Peacebuilding was thus conceived, and to this day remains, a distinct area of international engagement, and as such, designates "external interventions designed to prevent the eruption or return of armed conflict" (Barnett et al., 2007, p.36).

Concurrently, and in contrast to the focus on the role of the international community in stabilizing countries that have experienced wars, peacebuilding recognizes two intertwined principles: that of consent (i.e., by the government of the country in which peace is being "built") and that of national ownership in peacebuilding. The concept of consent has been the norm within peacekeeping for a long time and has been critical to the determination of deployment or withdrawal of UN forces. Garvey (1970) said that consent is "the central characteristic of UN peacekeeping missions" (p.241). Currently the design and the evolution of the UN peacebuilding architecture[2] were built on the lesson that consent is crucial for peace, and that an effective peace agenda must include both consent and national ownership. In his 2008 report to the Security Council, former Secretary General Kofi Annan admitted that reflecting upon past peacebuilding experiences, the UN recognized the imperative of national ownership for the success of peacebuilding efforts and recommended that said efforts be anchored at the country level. "A basic

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2 The UN Peacebuilding architecture (PBA) is to be understood as the UN's response to a widespread recognition that the world needed new institutions to ensure coherence and strategic frameworks in supporting countries affected by violent conflicts. According to Hearn, Bujones and Kugel (2014), the PBA was intended to build synergies and coherence of the UN's (institutional and member-state) peacebuilding efforts. The authors point out that the PBA was not intended as a new operational arm or set of self-standing entities. It is important to point out, as Hearn et al. say, that many still argue that the PBA, which includes the Peacebuilding Commission, the Peacebuilding Support Office and the Peacebuilding Fund, should simply include the full spectrum of UN institutions, tools and member states. For the purpose of this thesis, we refer to the PBA as composed of the PBC, PBSO and PBF, all tasked with bringing coherence to UN's peacebuilding efforts.

level of political will and commitment on the part of national actors is a precondition for peacebuilding" (A/63/881 – S/2009/304: Para 93).

National consent and national ownership rest on another key concept, that of state sovereignty. By requesting the consent of the local governing authorities of the host state, and by focusing on strengthening the institutions of the local states, international peacebuilding in general and the UN Peacebuilding architecture in particular, recognize the sovereignty of the host state. This principle is paramount, as Latif and Khan (2010) explained, because it also ensures the sovereignty of the state within the broader UN collective system.

Yet, here is the paradox: At the same time as consent is essential and ownership is crucial for successful peacebuilding outcomes, by the nature of their actions, UN and other actors of peacebuilding are intervening in the sovereign affairs of the host country. This raises an important question on how international organizations tasked with peacebuilding navigate the normative crosscurrents that come with it. It is within this paradoxical approach to sovereignty within the realm of peacebuilding that this thesis is rooted. Given that consent and national ownership are core principles of international peacebuilding and rest on the basis of sovereignty, how then do international peacebuilding organizations navigate the normative cross currents that are associated with sovereignty at the field level? And therefore, what consequences, if not contradictions, of the inherent tensions that result from the effort to do so?

This is the guiding research question of our thesis. Academic literature abounds with numerous descriptions and analyses on how international organizations in general approach the issue of the sovereignty of recipient countries. The majority of the references have to do with how international financial institutions, for example, have dealt with post-war countries and their

domestic issues. Scholars have also questioned the extent of the authority of institutions such as the United Nations when they intervene in domestic affairs of countries in which they are promoting democratic reforms or human rights (Krasner, 2001). But since the 1990s, as many academics have argued, as wars were multiplying around the world, so were the international interventions designed to keep or build the peace as well as rebuilding the state apparatus of countries emerging from war. What is missing from this extensive literature however, is a focus on the dynamics of the interactions between international peacebuilding organizations, designed primarily to intervene within the internal political affairs of post-war countries, and the countries they work with. How do these dynamics then shape the outcomes of the peacebuilding agenda? This is where this thesis' research question intends to shed some light, by analyzing how the United Nations Peacebuilding Commission, founded with the mandate to provide political accompaniment to countries emerging from violent conflicts, approached the question of sovereignty within these countries. More specifically, it will analyze the key characteristics of its interactions with the Government of Burundi (GoB) and how it navigated the latter's sovereignty, as well as the implications of these interactions on the overall peacebuilding agenda in the country.

II.   Research goals

The fundamental argument of this thesis is underwritten by the view that it is crucial to revisit sovereignty in the new global environment under which peacebuilding actors operate. It is my contention that the normative cross-currents of peacebuilding make it exceptionally challenging, if not impossible, for peacebuilding institutions to be consistently effective in operationalizing their mandate, thus raising important questions about the potential to succeed in building peace.

In September of 2006, the government of Burundi reached a comprehensive ceasefire agreement with the country's major rebel movements[3], allowing the country to emerge from a protracted and violent civil war that had lasted more than a decade, costing the country hundreds of thousands of lives and plundering its already weak economy. A few months later, the road to recovery looked even more promising, as Burundi became one of the first two countries to be put on the agenda of the newly established United Nations Peacebuilding Commission (PBC)[4]. Established in December 2005, the PBC's mandate was to achieve two things: first, to focus on reconstruction and institution building; and second, to develop best peacebuilding strategies and ensure predictable funding. At the same time, and more importantly, the Commission was to liaise with and unite all actors to ensure an integrated international engagement (UN General Assembly, 2005a). In Burundi, the strategies focused on good governance, security sector reform, the rule of law as well as community social recovery (PBC/1/BDI/4). But reviews of the PBC, and the overall UN peacebuilding architecture (in 2010 and 2015) acknowledged that the PBC and its projects in all countries on its agenda were lagging behind in fulfilling its original vision (A/64/868– S/2010/393). In the case of Burundi, despite a successful transition from violent conflict, the country has experienced important democratic setbacks over the last decade and political experts, scholars of the Great Lakes region and international human rights organizations have been consistent in warning the international community on the potential for Burundi to relapse into war.

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3 The assassination of former president-elect Melchior Ndadaye in 1993 and the ensuing discontent from Hutu population prompted the birth and rise of a number of rebel movements in Burundi. The two main ones were the National Council for the Defence of Democracy and the Forces for the Defence of Democracy (CNDD-FDD, by its French acronym) and the Party for the liberation of the Hutu People and National Forces of Liberation (PALIPEHUTU-FNL).

4 There was a consensus among both Security Council and PBC members that the first cases to be taken on should not be highly complex, and that they should have some real prospects of success. This is the framework under which the PBC would considered about two to three cases in its first year. Sierra Leone and Burundi were the first.

Through an analysis of the experiences of PBC in Burundi, this thesis explores the process of obtaining consent and negotiating sovereignty at the local level. With this research question: "How do international peacebuilding organizations navigate the sovereignty of the host country?" I pursue four objectives:

(1) To demonstrate that peacebuilding IOs view post-conflict states as quasi-states. This is important as it allows us to understand how post-wars countries' sovereignty is perceived and approached by the international community at large. The intent here is to demonstrate that peacebuilding IOs' interpretation of the sovereignty of the country in which they intervene affects the overall outcome of the peacebuilding agenda.

(2) To examine the relational nature of quasi-sovereignty within the broader international community.

(3) To demonstrate that "negotiated sovereignty" is a constant in the practice of peacebuilding in post-conflict settings. The very nature of international peacebuilding is that it is a constant interaction between international peacebuilders (in this case the PBC) and the local state. Peacebuilders seek to promote an agenda that conveys different governance norms, ultimately altering the local (and international) political dynamics of the post-war country. It is within this interaction that sovereignty is negotiated and this negotiation is indeed a constant in the practice of peacebuilding.

(4) To demonstrate how the negotiation of sovereignty affects and changes the nature and the political terms of engagement in peacebuilding.

In summary, this research is centered on a theoretical analysis of the normative cross currents that are embedded within peacebuilding; its intent is not to answer questions regarding the

effectiveness of the peacebuilding architecture, nor the assumed failures or successes of the Peacebuilding Commission, but rather to offer a picture that accounts for some of the conditions under which peacebuilding happens.

III. Scope of the research

This thesis emphasizes how international organizations active in peacebuilding operationalize their mandate in the context of sovereignty. In approaching the issue of international organizations tasked with peacebuilding and how they operate in relation to the host state, one is confronted with a lack of literature.

There is a clear need for better theories and more research to allow for a better theoretical understanding of the dynamics between peacebuilding organizations and host states. As Sending (2011) has argued, in focusing on external actors, students of peacebuilding cannot truly provide evidence of whether or not external actors are causally significant in shaping peacebuilding outcomes in a particular country (p.59). Even more importantly, in the context of African post-conflict countries, Séverine Autesserre (2010) has noted the same tendency to overlook the agency, power and interests of key local actors. In light of these observations, as well as the objectives outlined above, the overall goal of this research is to contribute to theories of peacebuilding which take into account the nature and the dynamics of the encounters between peacebuilders and governments of host countries, as well as theories that recognize the changing nature of the environment in which African politics occur.

There are two main reasons behind my choice of Burundi as case study of the PBC's activities and interactions with a country of focus in post conflict settings: first, by being one of

the first two cases on the PBC's agenda, Burundi offers a longer timescale through which to judge the trajectory of the peace engagement. Second, as Curtis (2013) and others have argued, Burundi is often presented as a success story resulting from the UN's international peacebuilding efforts. My analyses present a different view of the key characteristics of the PBC's engagement in Burundi and the challenges of evaluating peacebuilding there, especially in light of recent bouts of politically motivated violence.

IV.   Theoretical approaches and Methods

This research focuses primarily on the interactions between two main actors: the UN Peacebuilding Commission and the government of Burundi. In that sense, the analyses presented in this thesis required understanding both the dynamics of UN agencies, particularly the Peacebuilding Commission on the one hand, and African local politics – in this instance Burundian politics – on the other. The analysis in this thesis is informed and guided by theories developed by Robert Jackson on 'Quasi-states' theorization of Third World states, as well as David A. Lake's concepts of delegating and pooling sovereignty within the context of international organizations. Both theories are helpful in establishing two key messages: Jackson's "Quasi-states" theories allow us to draw comparisons with the "nature of the state" in post-conflict settings and understand how African states are viewed and defined in international politics, while David. Lake's concepts show us that sovereignty is malleable, and that despite being thought of as binary (that it is there or it isn't), sovereignty is negotiable and international organizations play a key role in this ongoing process of negotiation. Given the highly complex normative environment in which peacebuilding occurs, it is necessary to approach it in a way that takes into account the key fact about peacebuilding: a constant interaction between different actors, designed to alter the way the state

carries out its affairs and responsibilities. The theories of Jackson and Lake illustrate that sovereignty is a malleable concept, that it is negotiated at different points of the interaction between host countries and international organizations, and that in the end, the nature of this negotiation affects the overall peacebuilding outcome in the country.

Any attempt to understand peacebuilding in particular and how the UN and its numerous agencies operate in general cannot ignore the significant body of literature that calls for general UN reforms. The sheer amount of documents about the processes of reform and how much they influenced the creation of the PBC (Murthy, 2007) is a challenge even to the most seasoned researcher. But because this research is preliminary to a larger future academic project, the scope of this research was limited to analyzing data from a variety of secondary and primary sources pertaining to the last 10 years of the PBC's presence in Burundi. I analyzed the content of existing studies done on the activities of the PBC in Burundi, internal and external reviews of the UN Peacebuilding Architecture, UN reports, books, websites, journals, historical material, and other materials pertaining to the PBC as well as the national and international politics of Burundi.

In collecting, mapping and analyzing these material, I applied qualitative methods, in the sense that Ponterotto (2005, citing Denzin & Lincoln, 2000b) define them: a broad class of data collection and analysis procedures designed to describe and interpret the experiences of research participants in a context-specific setting. Content and discourse analysis are the principal tools in this thesis, most of the content on Burundi being descriptive in nature. These methods are appropriate because, as Krippendorff (1980) says, content analysis allows one to make "an inquiry into symbolic meaning of messages" (p.22) and, he adds, "it is by this process that data become recognized as symbolic or are rendered informative about something of interest" (p.27).

V.   Thesis outline

In this thesis, I am interested in analyzing how peacebuilding IOs navigate through different normative currents and cross currents that are part of the politically charged environment in which they operate. One of the important findings by scholars who have examined challenges of peacebuilding in post war countries in recent years is that despite the fact that international organizations tasked with peacebuilding are important players that have significant agenda-setting and socializing influences to world politics, little is known about how they interact with the sovereign states in which they operate, particularly countries undergoing the transition from violent conflicts. In the chapters following this introduction, I argue that this is a debate social scientists ought to be having; it is important to explore the nature and form of these particular interactions as a springboard to understanding how they contribute and define the results of the peacebuilding agenda.

In chapter 2, I start by situating the research question as well as the concepts that define it, within the global knowledge on peacebuilding. I then explain the theoretical framework that guided the overall analysis presented in this thesis. The theoretical framework chapter is one of the two core analysis chapters and is where I integrate the concept of negotiated sovereignty into the theorization of peacebuilding. This thesis is centered on a theory-driven narrative; chapter 4 is primarily descriptive of the PBC, its origins and modus operandi, as well as conceptual and operational issues associated with its presence in Burundi while chapter 5 places the Burundian conflict in its political-historical context. The final chapter of this thesis, and the second core analytical chapter, presents a summary of the findings of the research by relating the empirical analysis back to the theoretical and conceptual issues proposed at the beginning of the thesis.

Chapter Two: Conceptual Mapping: Peacebuilding discourses

I. Introduction

It is a challenging task to attempt to unpack the conundrum posed by the paradox of sovereignty and peacebuilding, given the highly complex environment under which international organizations tasked with peacebuilding operate. Hence, to approach this issue, I first explore and confront the main discourses of peacebuilding within the existing, vast and complex body of literature on this concept and practice. I also establish not only that international organizations active in peacebuilding conceive of peacebuilding differently, but that their strategies also differ. As a result, IOs operate in a highly ambiguous environment in which the concept of peacebuilding remains contentious and in which they continue to fail to recognize and strengthen state institutions. In addition to operating in an inherently ambiguous environment, peacebuilding institutions play a role in disseminating international norms. In short, peacebuilding is a conceptual minefield, in which different concepts constantly collide and interact with each other.

II. Conceptualizing peacebuilding

a. Origins and definitions

Any attempt to situate the concept of peacebuilding within broader theories of international relations is quickly met by the realization that despite the vast literature on the concept, there is no such a thing as a theory of peacebuilding. The literature points instead to the absence of a clear, concise and agreed-upon definition of what peacebuilding entails (Greig & Diehl, 2005). It was in 1976 that the term "peacebuilding" was first used, coined by Johan Galtung in his famous essay on "Three Approaches to Peace: Peacekeeping, Peacemaking, and Peacebuilding" (Galtung, 1976), in which Galtung analysed violence and established the

conceptual differences between negative and positive peace. His work remains the foundational core of peace research. However, the real rebirth and popularization of the concept of peacebuilding happened two decades later, in 1992, when then Secretary-General of the United Nations (UN), Boutros-Boutros Ghali, published *An Agenda for Peace*. In the report, Boutros Ghali defined the term as "action to identify and support structures, which will tend to strengthen and solidify peace in order to avoid a relapse into conflict" (UNSC 1992: para 21). Boutros Ghali's initial conceptualization of peacebuilding was in relation to a "conflict continuum that passed from pre-conflict prevention through peace-making and peacekeeping" (Call & Cousens, 2008, p. 2).

According to King and Matthews (2012), Boutros Ghali's vision included a broad range of activities aimed at fostering positive peace, from disarming warring parties to restoring order to monitoring elections to providing assistance in building democratic institutions. In contemporary peacebuilding literature, King and Matthews explained, these various activities can be divided into five key challenges faced by states emerging from conflict: security, legitimate political institutions, economic progress, justice, and reconciliation (King&Matthews, 2012, p. 3).

As Paffenholz (2014) has argued, it is important to analyze and understand *An Agenda for Peace* in light of the historical political context of the time. After the rather positive resolutions of some long-term conflicts in countries like Namibia, Mozambique and El Salvador, there was hope that the world was moving towards a more peaceful order, the perception being that most conflicts had been proxy to the Cold War. Paffenholz says that it was the Rwandan genocide and the Somali War of the mid 1990s that put an end to the illusion (Paffenholz, 2009, p. 4). This, according to Call and Cousens (2008), made "the concept of peacebuilding more expansive – arguably, to the point of incoherence". (p. 3). The authors explained that this trend occurred because of a growing

sense that post-conflict transitions were complex and the needs of post-conflict societies even more complicated. The authors also observed that as more and more international organizations (within or outside the UN system) were increasingly incorporating 'peacebuilding' in their own mandates, this added to the incoherence and ambitiousness of the concept itself.

Nonetheless, *An Agenda for Peace* has remained the cornerstone of the institutionalization of peacebuilding within the UN and other international organizations, and peacebuilding remains a distinct area of international engagement. Within the UN system, the most important institutional change that has happened over the 22 years since *An Agenda for Peace,* as King and Matthews (2012) have observed, is the creation in 2005 of the "UN peacebuilding architecture": the peacebuilding commission, the peacebuilding fund, and the peacebuilding support office. The authors view this architecture as the closest possible response to Boutros Ghali's wish of an adequate mechanism in the United Nations for peaceful conflict resolution, as well as the best structure to respond to the critical issues of coordination among the diverse actors engaged in attempts to rebuild durable peace. And as more and more actors and institutions of peacebuilding proliferated beyond the state and the international system, it became harder and harder to assess the conceptual depth of peacebuilding as well as its implications.

So as the question of how to deal with countries in the wake of violent conflicts remains as pervasive as ever, the debates surrounding the institutionalization of peacebuilding have given way to an international peacebuilding industry backed by a rich body of scholarly literature (Curtis, 2013, p. 73). Nowadays, the concept of peacebuilding is generically referred to as "external interventions designed to prevent the eruption or return of armed conflict" (Barnett et al., 2007, p. 36), where the idea is to prevent countries from relapsing into violence, while establishing an

infrastructure for lasting peace (Jenkins, 2013). Jenkins, in his analysis of the evolution of peacebuilding within the UN system, explains that this objective must be understood in the context of efforts to move beyond immediate technical problems to a "more compassionate, partly political approach that engages all primary actors involved in conflict and addresses its root causes" (Jenkins, 2013, p.3). It is this ambitious and very political task that has been undertaken and promoted by the United Nations. As Paris and Sisk (2009) have explained, the UN has undertaken more than twenty complex 'peace operations' since the end of the Cold War, with a threefold goal: a social transition from fighting to peace; a political transition from wartime government (or the complete absence of government) to postwar government; and an economic transition from partisan accumulation and distribution of wealth to equitable, transparent postwar development (p.1).

But as Call and Cousens (2008) observed, while the UN carried on with the operationalization of peacebuilding, a number of scholars introduced, promoted and maintained greater rigor in debates and scholarship on peacebuilding. Paris (2002) introduced the controversial notion of liberal peacebuilding, arguing that by setting out to reconstruct war-torn nations, international peacebuilders seek to transmit Western-liberal principles and market-oriented democracy, comparing the mission to the colonial-era belief in the *mission civilisatrice.* Richmond (2006) identified four major strands of thought within the liberal peace framework: 'victor's peace' – peace that rests on a military victory, the 'institutional peace' – where states agree on how to behave, the 'constitutional peace' – where peace rests upon values inspired by the notion that individuals are ends in themselves, rather than means to an end, and the 'civil peace' – where peace is a result of citizen's direct action (p. 5). All these aspects of liberal peace, according to Richmond,

explain the 'peacebuilding consensus', where "like-minded liberal states coexist in a western-oriented international society and states are characterised by democracy, human rights, free markets, development, a vibrant civil society and multilateralism" (p. 9). But such a peacebuilding consensus - both in discourse and in practice - remains a heavily contested concept. According to the author, this is mostly because each of the different aspects of the liberal peace are complex and come with intellectual and empirical baggage that is hard to unpack. In this debate, I side with Richmond in saying that the fundamental problem of peacebuilding doesn't lie within the concept itself but rather within the conceptualization of peace, the nature of peace, how to achieve it and how to make it sustainable.

In this connection, it's worth noting Richmond's thought-provoking statement regarding on the conceptualization of peace: "The fact that peace is so rarely openly conceptualized and explicitly defined in much international discourse other than in negative terms is, in the light of the above, the problem of peace" (p.10). Under the circumstances, it is not surprising then that the liberal peace model continues to stir up controversy among scholars of peace and conflict. In fact, according to Heathershaw (2013), these scholars have never ceased to question the naming of their work and aims, but more importantly the generalizations of the liberal framework.

b. Liberal Peacebuilding: Dominant discourses.

Peacebuilding literature is vast, scattered and complex, but in almost its entirety, it seeks to provide "a solution" to both the legitimacy of peacebuilding and the correlation between international peacebuilding and positive peace outcomes. It is worth remembering here that the question of international interventions has been approached before peacebuilding was a popular concept among academics. Jackson (1990) was one of the first to warn against international

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interventions. "Ramshackle states today are not open invitations for unsolicited external intervention. They are not allowed to disappear juridically — even if for all intents and purposes they have already fallen or been pulled down in fact" (p.23).

On the one hand of these contemporary debates, there are authors like Eizenstat et al., (2005) who dismissed the idea that countries cannot recover from conflict without outside intervention, and who have argued in favor of an autonomous recovery. Coyne (2006), advised that since policy makers cannot always avoid intervening in weak and failed states, the alternative should be limited to humanitarian aid and preventing genocide. Krasner (2004) suggested the option of shared sovereignty and some form of trusteeship (p.87).

As far as peacebuilding is concerned, there are on the other hand scholars who claim that there is a strong correlation between peace activities and a lowering of violence and conflict and who focus on explaining the limited success of peacebuilding. Doyle and Sambanis (2000) were the first to assert that international peacebuilding improves the prospects of peace. They argued for a "peacebuilding triangle" whereby international commitment to peace would interact with local capacities and factional hostilities to create a strategy that supports peace. "…the probability of successful peacebuilding is a function of a country's capacities, the available international assistance, and the depth of war-related hostility" (p. 4). In their interactive model, the authors put greater emphasis on international capacities, failing however to provide a clear definition of what the success of peacebuilding really is. In 2006, the same authors conducted a comparative study of countries in which the UN had conducted peace operations and concluded once again that multilateral enforcement operations are successful at putting an end to violence.

In his argument, Dobbins (2005) shows the same optimism vis à vis the United Nation's leadership in what he termed a 'nation building' endeavor. Critical scholars are quick to disagree with the above claims. There are those who take issue with the question of internationalization vs. localization of peacebuilding. For example, Richmond (2006) finds that, by focusing on security and democratic issues, liberal peace centers on states, elites and international actors and fails to engage with everyday life. MacGinty (2011) argues that peace interventions don't pay enough attention to the dynamics in societies undergoing post-conflict transitions. Franks and Richmond (2009) reveal the multiple ways in which liberal peacebuilding is susceptible to local cooption, particularly when one group has strong support and credibility within, and from, the international community. There are also those who, like Pugh et al. (2008), have demonstrated that overlooked issues of political economy in post war countries negatively affect the peacebuilding project. Placing himself in the middle of these debates, Paris (2004) argued for a less drastic approach, one he called "Institutionalization before Liberalization", where he advises that it is important to foster better governance institutions before opening the way for liberal ideas.

c. Peacebuilding and statebuilding

At the core of the arguments by those who, like Paris (2004), are in favor of statebuilding, is the idea that for peacebuilding to be at least a minimally successful functioning state institutions needs to be present. In Call and Cousens (2008)'s words, "the core idea is that a minimal threshold of nationally recognized, sufficiently effective, and broadly legitimate institutions need to be in place for peace to endure" (p. 9). The authors argue that in post-war settings, it is important to establish structures and give them the capacities to prevent and manage disputes between groups. Initially, Paris (2004) argued that the UN's peacebuilding strategy focused more on social

relations or economic variables (*versus* institutions) in determining the prospects for peace. Paris and Sisk (2009) argue that traditionally, the peacebuilding agenda focused on the needs and rights of individuals, on sustainable communities and on the requirements for a self-sustaining polity of equitable representation (p.182). The authors call for more attention to be paid to public institutions.

Paris and Sisk also observed that the UN and other international peace builders have clearly shifted from the more ambitious – and ambiguous – peacebuilding strategy to concentrating on strengthening government institutions in post war countries. According to these authors, the state building agenda is focused on the political, economic and security architecture of postwar countries. Its intended outcomes, they say, were a neoliberal, sovereign and territorial state. It is in this context of increased attention to post war governance that current UN practitioners of peacebuilding as well as other international organizations operate. They are increasingly concerned with issues of state building, local ownership, legitimacy, capacity building as well as exit (Paris & Sisk, 2009, pp.4).

Statebuilding starts with the idea that achieving security and development in post-war societies depends on the existence of capable, autonomous and legitimate governmental institutions (Paris & Sisk, 2009). The same authors define statebuilding as an approach focused on strengthening and constructing legitimate government institutions in countries that are emerging from conflict as a way to build long-term peace (p. 14). The concept, the authors explain, has four main features: It places sovereignty and the institutions of the state at the heart of its application and focuses on equipping the state for better governance (p. 15).

There are still unexplored questions regarding the real contributions of statebuilding to peacebuilding and most importantly what the conceptual separations between the two terms are, if any. Richmond and Franks (2009) who have pointed out that scholarly literature remains inconclusive on the matter, have even wondered if the current tendency to separate the two terms might have undermined the legitimacy of liberal peacebuilding project itself (p.183). Nevertheless, whatever the theoretical underpinnings of both peace and statebuilding, it is my belief that they fail to provide a satisfactory explanation for the failures of peace efforts in some countries, and most importantly, how organizations tasked with peacebuilding are to integrate – and operationalize – the two concepts within their respective mandates. It is worth noting however, that statebuilding at least attempts to refocus on a key component of this agenda, namely the role of the local state. Unfortunately both literatures share one significant shortcoming: they have both framed the study of peacebuilding as if all the power rests in the hands of external actors and local actors have little or no significance. Sending (2011) strongly demonstrates that there is a false but common belief among international peacebuilders that their international legitimacy will translate into local legitimacy. He says that in focusing on external actors, students of peacebuilding cannot truly provide evidence of whether or not external actors are causally significant in shaping peacebuilding outcomes in a particular country (p.59). This is because while peacebuilding is envisioned as a collaborative endeavor between international peacebuilders and local actors (mainly governments), little is known about the ways in which host states conceive and operationalize peacebuilding, the dynamics of the interaction between them and international actors, and how these affect the broader outcomes of the peace mission.

Even more importantly, in the context of African post-conflict countries, Séverine Autesserre (2010) noted the same tendency to overlook the agency, power and interests of key local actors. Furthermore, African conflicts and post conflict situations are also particularly challenging for peacebuilding theorists and practitioners, as there is currently no consensus on the role, aims, and effects of continental and international peacebuilding programs (Curtis & Dzinesa, 2012). These authors explain that this is because the practices of peacebuilding have played out differently in different regions or countries. They also noted that peacebuilding ideas and initiatives are at times reinforced, questioned, subverted, or re-appropriated and redesigned by different African actors. I would go even further and side with Meera Sabaratnam (2011)'s observation on what she called an 'increasingly confident global South', which shows skepticism towards traditional forms of assistance and the presumed better capabilities of the North (p.27). It is however worth mentioning that it is within the paradigm of statebuilding that Barnett and Zürcher's (2009) theory of 'The Peacebuilders Contract' is rooted, as it argues that peacebuilding is the result of cooperation between states, subnational elites and international peacebuilders. It's a framework that aims to take into consideration the presence, the power and the ideas of local actors. According to the authors, the overall outcomes of a peace project will be determined by the outcome of negotiations between peace builders and local elites (Barnett & Zürcher, 2009).

d. The operationalization of peacebuilding and dissemination of norms

It is important then, as a starting point, to first clarify how IOs conceptualize and operationalize peacebuilding. Barnett et al. write that "if success is measured in terms of the institutionalization of the concept of peacebuilding, then it appears to be a resounding success" (Barnett et al., 2007, p. 35). In a study conducted in 2005 right before the establishment of the

UN's Peacebuilding architecture, the authors found that there were critical differences regarding the conceptualization and operationalization of peacebuilding among the ever increasing number of international organizations using the concept to frame their activities in post-conflict settings. The authors found that the common characteristic among all the aliases of peacebuilding was that it was understood as external intervention. They also found that different agencies, including within the UN system, used it to mean a variety of related but not synonymous activities.

According to Barnet et al., the UN Secretariat views peacebuilding as a complement to its peacemaking and peacekeeping functions, by creating a positive peace. Before the establishment of the PBC, the lead on defining peacebuilding was within the mandate of the Department of Political Affairs (hosted within the Secretariat) and the UNDP was tasked with peacebuilding assistance programs (Barnet et al., 2007). It remains unclear how today, eight years after the establishment of the PBC, the three departments collaborate (or fail to do so). But one thing is certain: the question of coordination among different peacebuilding programs within the UN system has been cited as one of the most challenging issues that affect peacebuilding by the UN in countries where it operates.

Outside of the UN system, as Barnet et al. have noted, there is even greater diversity in the use of the concept of peacebuilding. The European Commission for example has a preference for using conflict prevention and reconstruction, whereas the agencies within governments of the US, UK and others will use terms such as conflict management, stabilization, post-conflict recovery and so on. Generally speaking however, Barnet et al have argued that the popular use of peacebuilding can be attributed to the fact that international actors view it as a way to broaden

their humanitarian and international agendas but most importantly, as "an important opportunity to demonstrate their continued relevance" (Barnet et al., 2007, p. 43).

These authors are very astute in arguing that it is the ambiguities inherent to the concept of peacebuilding that diverse international actors find so advantageous, since "one of the concept's talents is to camouflage divisions over how to handle the post conflict challenge" (p. 44). It appears then that there is a consensus around the idea that international peacebuilding is inherently good and preferable to any other form of international intervention, but that approaches to its implementation remain highly contentious. Barnett et al.'s argument established that different and often diverging interpretations of peacebuilding mask differences in peacebuilding practices and strategies: different agencies have different priorities and most programs fail to satisfy long and short term demands of peacebuilding. More importantly however, Barnett et al. find that many programs fail to give concentrated attention and resources to state institutions.

III. The politics of building Peace in Africa

Before moving forward, it is important to address the particularities and challenges of building peace in Africa, as well as the overall space that the UN and its initiatives occupy in peacebuilding on the continent. As Curtis & Dzinesa (2012) have argued, Africa is indeed a contested space for peacebuilding, "the site of a large number of international and continental projects to promote peace" (p.5). They show that increased attention to peacebuilding in Africa, particularly in sub-Saharan Africa, is indicative of a growing attention from the international community and its efforts to end wars or prevent them from restarting. So when approaching the issues surrounding the PBC's work in Burundi, it is essential to remember that the PBC is not the

only peacebuilding actor on the continent and that the PBC's programs and practices don't exist in a vacuum, but alongside local, regional and continental peacebuilding ideas and initiatives.

In light of this, it is important to understand that the PBC came in as yet another player to enter what was already a crowded field. I also agree with Curtis & Dzinesa on the subject, as they point out that Africa remains the continent most in need of effective peacebuilding because many of its countries lack strong institutions and financial capacities to deter fighters from reversion to conflict. The authors show that in many African countries, international, regional and continental bodies have been seeking a role in peacebuilding and their ideas and practices have played out differently in different locales. In short, the authors argue, peacebuilding program trajectories are multifaceted: there is no one peacebuilding size that fits all. Thus the importance of exploring how peacebuilding ideas and programs have played out and adapted to the particularities of post-conflict countries in Africa.

First, in retracing the trajectory of the concept of peacebuilding in Africa, Curtis & Dzinesa (2012) highlighted that peacebuilding is not a new preoccupation in Africa, having been addressed in different way in different African countries over time. Throughout history, different African kingdoms found ways to establish and sustain peace in their countries following periods of conflicts or violence. In terms of international post-conflict peacebuilding, the first United Nations post-conflict peace-building support office of its kind was established in 1997 in Liberia, following the country's civil-war. This office was tasked primarily with providing support to the government following the first post-war national elections. It was also intended to mobilize international support for the implementation of reconstruction (UNOMIL documents, S/PRST/1997/41, 1997).

The publication of the UN's *An Agenda for Peace* didn't just result into the creation international agencies dealing with post-conflict reconstruction in Africa; it also pushed the African Union and subregional organizations to develop units and initiatives tasked with peacebuilding. These include the 1993 Mechanism for Conflict Prevention, Management, and Resolution (established by the Organization of African Unity (OAU)), as well as the 1999 Mechanism for Conflict Prevention, Resolution and Peace-keeping (established by the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS)). Subsequently, a number of other initiatives were created, including the AU Panel of the Wise in 2007 and the AU Peace and Security Council. These continental and regional bodies show that African countries were becoming more and more involved in crafting solutions to conflict resolution and post-conflict reconstruction. In recent years, countries such as Rwanda, South Africa, Burundi, Comoros and others, have participated in regional peacekeeping missions on the continent.

One of the main critiques of international peacebuilding programming in Africa is, as Curtis (2013) shows, that it is driven by external ideas and by the disciplining power of external norms. Curtis argues that these ideas lack meaning from within African countries. She echoes Isaac O. Albert (2008, p.36) who argues that "Western conception of peace place heavy emphasis on prosperity and order whereas African conceptions are based on morality and order." Some of the other issues that scholars of peacebuilding in Africa have identified pertain to fundamental differences between 'Western liberal peace' institutions are hegemonic and "local peace" that emphasize community and family rights. But it is important to caution those who see international peacebuilding as a hegemonic project over passive recipient countries. Heathershaw (2008) has showed that countries adjust to international peacebuilding strategies. Nevertheless, there is an

inherent tension, as Curtis argued, over meanings and interpretation in the field of peacebuilding in Africa. For example, as Srinivasan (2012) shows, outside actors perceive peace agreements differently from local political actors.

There are also differences of perceptions between local and international actors when it comes to questions of national ownership. Zaum (2012) points out that the insistence on national ownership fails to recognize that in some post-conflict cases the local government and main negotiator of peacebuilding programs has not earned its sovereignty, thus lacking legitimacy – and making it impossible to define whose ownership international peacebuilders refer to. Finally, there is also the dimension of political incentives of conflicts. As Lemarchand (2012) has argued, local power holders in the Great Lakes region of Africa, where Burundi is located, have made a profit out of the many peacebuilding programs and initiatives and the large amounts of foreign aid money that came with it.

IV.   Conclusion

As discussed above, IOs tasked with the practice of peacebuilding operate in an ambiguous environment. Nonetheless, IOs that are active in peacebuilding play a significant role in disseminating international norms. In fact, it would be wrong to think of the practice of peacebuilding as a "normatively neutral," as Paris (2000, p.36)) has explained. He argues that peacebuilding agencies promote Western liberal ideas and serve as "transmission belts" (p.37) conveying domestic governance norms. As a result, Paris continues, host countries of peacebuilding operations have institutions that replicate those exact liberal ideas.

Similarly, Jenkins (2008) argues that within two years of its existence, the UN Peacebuilding Commission (PBC) had begun the dissemination of international norms. According to Jenkins, the PBC's institutional design reversed the traditional practice of donor-led agenda setting and privileged instead a new norm focusing on the primacy of the host state central government. Jenkins defined this particular norm as an 'emerging norm' operating in the realm of international development. There are of course many unanswered questions in Jenkins' argument, including ways in which such norms are diffused. Nevertheless, the central argument of both authors stands: that peacebuilding institutions such as the PBC are designed to disseminate international norms of domestic governance with the intent to influence the behavior of states hosting peacebuilding missions.

This argument is at the heart of the idea that peacebuilding is a negotiation in and of itself, a field with many actors, both local and international, and in fact, I contend, an inherently 'normative environment'. And yet, no one tells us how the process of negotiation really happens in practice. The literature is silent concerning the dynamics between local states and the international peacebuilding agencies *before and during* the peacebuilding process. There is very little to explain about, for example, the process of *qualifying* as a country in need of peacebuilding, and there is little debate on the question of *consent* – particularly on how to maintain it – within the peacebuilding process. As a result, there is little explanation on how international institutions of peacebuilding negotiate the sovereignty of the host state. Since peacebuilding always involves intervening in a post-conflict country with a functioning state (however minimally), it is paramount to understand how international institutions approach and negotiate the political dynamics that arise when sovereignty is concerned.

Chapter Three: Theoretical Framework

I.   Introduction

A decade and half ago, Paris (2000) lamented that the study of peace operations focused primarily on practical and policy-related issues instead of trying to build bridges with larger theoretical debates in the discipline of political science. Even though the institutionalization of peacebuilding has resulted in an increase in the study of peace operations over the last decade, this field is still too limited both in scope and in depth of its enquiry. There are still fundamental questions regarding peace and peacebuilding that haven't even been asked, let alone analyzed. Moreover, since the institutionalization of peacebuilding is relatively recent, it is still too soon to analyze the accuracy and the effectiveness of current theoretical underpinnings.

For now, I wish to take Paris's (2000) call to heart, and engage in an analysis of the relationship between peacebuilding and the dynamics of international politics. The core of this thesis focuses on analyzing how the Peacebuilding Commission has approached the principle of sovereignty of the host state, and on how it navigates the normative environment within which its peacebuilding mission unfolds.

This research adopts peacebuilding as its broader conceptual focus and by doing so, chooses a post-conflict approach to explain how international peacebuilding institutions negotiate the sovereignties of the conflict-ridden countries in which they intervene. This study thus supplements classic liberal peacebuilding theories – outlined in the last chapter – with its particular attention to theories of state sovereignty as well as theories on the delegation of sovereignty to international organizations. In pursuing this approach, I thus integrate concepts of sovereignty and of delegation of sovereignty to the theorization of peacebuilding.

In this chapter, I outline theoretical approaches that have guided me and informed the data analysis; I also address specific preconceived ideas that I bring to the research as well as areas of concern and ambiguities that I encountered. The main question that guides my research is: How do international peacebuilding institutions negotiate with the sovereignty of the host country? To answer the research question, I will be utilizing Robert Jackson's 'Quasi-states' theorization of Third World states in the first part of the chapter, to draw comparisons with the "nature of the state" in post-conflict settings.

In the second part of the chapter, I introduce and discuss David A. Lake's concepts of delegating and pooling sovereignty within the context of international organizations. Here, special emphasis will be given to issues associated with pooling of sovereignty in international organizations, to illustrate the application of sovereignty as a negotiated concept. Given the complex normative environment in which peacebuilding happens, I want to argue that sovereignty negotiation happens on three different points: at the first point, a post-conflict quasi-state that expresses (or not) its need for the international community's support for peace consolidation, all the while ensuring that it maintains its full sovereignty. At the second point, the same weak-state, as a member of a structure such as the UN in which it can voice its interests and pool its sovereignty and where it is allowed to pool with other member states and give a specific body the mandate of peacebuilding, all the while remaining a sovereign nation that needs to give consent for any peacebuilding actions to take place. And at the third and last point, when peacebuilding processes have started and the IO works to ensure that consent is obtained from the host-state and maintained throughout the peacebuilding process. The chapter concludes by highlighting the need for greater

and better theorization of peacebuilding to take into consideration the importance of normative dynamics in post-conflict settings.

II. Quasi-states and international theory

a. A brief introduction to 'quasi-states' theory in international relations

Before delving into Robert Jackson's ideas and views, it is important to situate them historically. Jackson was one of the first Western (and North-American) scholars to integrate Third World states – which had emerged from their colonial past – in the study the international states systems. His objective, he explained, was to explicate the character of these states, and to consider the implication of their emergence for the broader theory of international relations. In 1990, after the end of the Cold War, he published one of his most notable books - *Quasi-states* – on which part of my theoretical framework is based. The book depicted a rather bleak picture of these post-independence states, for whom sovereignty was perhaps a curse in disguise. It is worth clarifying that I draw a comparison between the chaotic structures of post-independence states that Jackson describes and contemporary post-conflict settings.

Jackson's arguments matter for three reasons: a) his description of the concept of "Quasi-states" finds its full application in instances of post conflict countries such as the one we are concerned with in this research. "Quasi-states enjoy equal sovereignty … but they lack established institutions capable of constraining and outlasting individuals who occupy their offices" (Jackson, 1990, p. 22). b) Jackson offers a solid analysis of the norms and rules on which post-colonial society is based, which in turn allows us to develop an understanding of how international institutions have evolved since the independence era of former colonies as well as the values that motivate international initiatives such as peacebuilding, designed to consolidate former colonies.

c) Jackson's arguments also demonstrate how, since independence, the international society has positioned itself to accommodate what he called "an insurance policy for marginal states," (p. 24) but more importantly how former colonies have grown to realize their full authority under this system. "Sovereignty gave ex-colonial peoples a legitimate voice in world affairs and membership in international organizations, many designed expressly for underdeveloped countries" (p. 25).

b. Why use Quasi-states theory in peacebuilding research?

Jackson's arguments are important for this research first because they give us means of understanding the nature of the sovereignty of Third-World countries such as Burundi, which primarily exist as Robert Jackson has argued, not by their own government's capabilities but as wards of the international community. When Jackson (1990) investigated the international normative framework that upholds sovereign statehood in these states he called them "quasi-states". This appellation was adequate because it illustrated the fact that these states lacked "the marks and merits of empirical statehood postulated by positive sovereignty" (p.1). According to the author, these states are primarily juridical because they possess juridical statehood, but they are not empowered domestically and consequently "lack the institutional features of sovereign states as also defined by classical law" (p. 2). By features, Jackson refers among other things to the political will and the institutional authority to grant and sustain civil rights and economic welfare to their citizens.

It is not that he opposes independence of former colonies; rather, Jackson is legitimately preoccupied with the 'quality of the sovereignty' that the former colonies got in the process. Even though these states have been enfranchised by the international society, Jackson found that the benefits of independence remained confined to small groups of elites and were not extended to the

citizenry at large. In this context, these states are 'quasi-states' because "they are still far from complete, so to speak, and empirical statehood in large measure still remains to be built" (p.21).

Jackson's remarks ring even truer today, as the UN continues to struggle to find a way to protect former colonies from being dismantled as a result of the ongoing security crises of the last half-century. Contemporary conflicts that states in the developing world are dealing with – whether ethnic or of other kinds – find their roots in their colonial past; colonial rule weakened and fundamentally altered the traditional political structures of these countries and left them with new structures organized in new political entities called 'states'. Fearon and Laitin (2004) noticed that the UN peacebuilding agenda was increasingly creeping towards state building, and saw this as an unavoidable development, especially in the case of fragile states where there was no infrastructure. This claim is paramount as it defines the context in which many UN missions have been operating over the last decade or so. But more importantly, it demonstrates how peacebuilding is yet another initiative by the international community to consolidate the sovereignty of fragile states, thus preventing them from falling apart.

Jackson's arguments are centered on the idea that it was by the will of the international society that what he calls 'marginal entities' were born, and the same society continues to ensure their political and economic survival to this day. I would further argue that peacebuilding adds a third layer to the roles that have been undertaken by the international society since independence, one of ensuring peaceful survival of fragile states. Whereas political weakness and economic fragility are traditional threats to sovereignty, Jackson argues that in the case of quasi-states, these are reasons for their very survival. "The juridical cart is now before the empirical horse." (p. 24). He

says that today's "domestic disorganization and illegitimacy" of some states has warrantied them an "unqualified right to exist and high prospects for survival" (p.28).

c. Quasi-states theory and sovereignty

Second, Jackson's concepts of positive and negative sovereignty allow us to understand that sovereignty is both relative and measurable. Ultimately, this notion is key to analyzing the sovereign statehood of post-conflict countries in which peacebuilding processes take place today. For him, 'Negative sovereignty' is to be understood as a distinctive form of liberty acquired by former colonies as a consequence of international enfranchisement, a 'formal-legal entitlement' of sorts conferred by the international community.

The question here isn't one of state capabilities, since, as Jackson is quick to note, inequality between states is an accepted feature of international relations. Rather, the issue is the "way that inequality and underdevelopment is conceived, evaluated, and responded to by international society" (p. 23). Jackson laments how ramshackle states today "are not allowed to disappear juridically even if for all intents and purposes they have already fallen" (p. 23). In this context, the author believes that though the international society can help provide governments with 'negative sovereignty' through the act of general recognition, it cannot be the case with 'positive sovereignty' since the latter depends on the actions and resources of governments and their populations.

What we will posit in Jackson's identification of the two concepts of positive and negative sovereignties, and more so of the gap that exists between them is the idea that sovereignty is relative and not absolute. "There can be no complete mastery either for a state or an individual: it is always a matter of degree" (p.30). Successful sovereign states, Jackson argues, are those that are

inherently capable of providing their citizens with "shelter against internal and external threats enabling not only an orderly and safe but also potentially a prosperous and cultivated way of life."

Jackson argues that Third World states cannot claim sovereignty, since sovereignty presupposes responsibility – both outward towards other states and inward to individual citizens. The other side of this coin is positive sovereignty, which supposes that governments have capabilities to be their own masters and can provide "political goods for their citizens" (p.29). Here, it's worth mentioning that Jackson's argument is flawed in the sense that he fails to define how those capabilities are to be acquired by states in the first place. Ultimately though, positive sovereignty is, according to him, "the distinctive overall feature of a 'developed' state" (p.29).

From his definition of quasi-states we will posit his observation that they are creatures of changes in the rules of membership and modes of operation of international society. He notes, quite rightly, that the right way of understanding quasi-states isn't at the level of the state as such, but the "state-system and particularly its new accommodating norms" (p.26). Here, Jackson recommends that we move away from analyzing Third World states (or in our case post-conflict states) as states on their own merit, but in relation to the system that has fostered their existence and caters to their survival. It's here that I contend that peacebuilding is a continuation of this process of catering to the survival of states that would otherwise fall into pieces.

I also argue that the establishment of the UN Peacebuilding Commission in 2006 is the latest culmination of the superstructures put in place by the international community to compensate for the absence of capabilities demonstrated by quasi-states. Though one might detect a hint of irony and pessimism in Jackson's anti-international interventions stand in securing ramshackle states,

he does pose interesting questions especially as we navigate the question of international interventions embedded within peacebuilding itself and supported by the international community.

When he argues that the international society has instituted entitlements for marginal states and that as a result, a "new type of sovereign state which is independent in law but insubstantial in reality and materially dependent on other states for its welfare" (p.43) has emerged, Jackson sums up the political environment under which peacebuilding itself operates. Many states in post-conflict are "juridical" states in their own right but cannot survive without the resources provided by other, more powerful states and institutions of the international society.

The third and last point that we will draw from Jackson's analysis of quasi-states has to do with what he termed 'international affirmative action', through which entitlement and assistance are provided to a minority of people who qualify for them. The idea, as Jackson notes, is to extend preferential treatment to those who need it to compensate for their disadvantages. International affirmative action starts from the idea that the global economic playing field isn't level and as such, Jackson remarked, less developed states are not yet in a position to take full advantage of the traditional rules. The goal has been to make the playing field "if not level for such countries at least less steeply inclined" (p.135) against some states. In international relations, Jackson noted that Third World states represent a disadvantaged group and therefore come across as meriting special consideration and assistance. So for him, international affirmative action is "a moral practice that attempts to fit into a liberal world order… to reach a modest distance beyond negative sovereignty" (p.134). It is also in this context, I contend, that liberal peacebuilding is a forward-looking expectation that in the long run, a state will develop capabilities associated with positive sovereignty.

Jackson notes that sovereignty also gave former colonies a legitimate voice in world politics and facilitated their achievement of global standing, influence and support. Sovereignty also allowed quasi-states to become members of international organizations that were expressly created for them. In fact, he explains that the existence of the United Nations has contributed to the trend by helping quasi-states organize themselves into powerful states and gain weight that they would not otherwise have had. I agree with the premise in Jackson's statement that by being members of the United Nations, quasi-states have acquired a higher – more formal and powerful - status and political weight that they wouldn't have had if they were not part of it. Here, Jackson demonstrates that quasi-states have taken advantage of their newly acquired status and quickly learned to capitalize on their membership in international organizations – particularly in international economic relations – and how to profit from the arrangements that these organizations offer. "In other words, the sovereignty of the Third World presupposes a new kind of international community in which self-determination and development are entailed primary legal norms" (p. 148). I would go even further and argue that being part of the UN has strengthened the legitimacy and the sovereignty of these countries.

It is also safe to assume that the trend Jackson observed, in which quasi-states aim to take advantage of the "sovereignty" they had acquired has not changed, and in fact has increased. Jackson remarks that quasi-states see post-decolonization international rules (in trade or finance mostly) as Western instruments designed to continue exploiting them (p. 124). He also notes that they were more and more "vocal and passionate advocates of nonintervention and have no desire to repudiate the classical law which upholds their sovereign immunity." (p.118). Here I also agree with Jackson that "state-building is a domestic process occurring over a long period of time that

can only be brought about by the combined wills, efforts, and responsibilities of governments and populations. The community of states at most can only assist or hinder it" (p.139).

d. Quasi-states and the issue of legitimacy

Quasi-states are good international citizens, Jackson observed, and they enjoy the fact that the UN accommodates them as full and equal members regardless of their domestic situations. Internally however, Jackson finds that sovereignty has only served the elites within them, giving them a strong incentive to consolidate power, and fostering animosity by the rivals of these elites who keep on fighting to capture the same privileges, through the constant struggle for power of the last decades. Jackson's description of quasi-states is comparable to today's situation in post-war countries. On the African continent, countries in transition from violent wars such as Burundi are legitimate in the sense Jackson describes above, but internal power struggles and the states' inability to protect their citizens continue to call their very sovereign character into question.

What we should take away from Jackson's overall argument here is the existence of a normative paradox in relation to quasi-states. There is a dilemma reflected in how these states will demand both development support and special consideration as well as sovereign independence from the international community. "In short, in the real world of international relations one cannot have one's cake and eat it" (p. 138). In the case of post-war countries on the UN peacebuilding agenda, there is little doubt that this is what has been happening: the same countries that demand full support from the international community – via international organizations or mechanisms – to reconstruct themselves after conflicts still want to maintain their full sovereignty from the international community.

III. International organizations and sovereignty negotiation

a. Sovereignty in international politics

We have argued that post-conflict countries don't operate from a place of conventional autonomous sovereignty. Rather, their sovereignty is inherently ambiguous, holding juridical legitimacy and inviolability, but without the necessary material means for states to enforce it and provide the decent governance that should go with sovereignty. Nonetheless, just because many quasi-states have no solid domestic structures doesn't mean that they lose sovereignty. In fact, Krasner (2004) has argued this very point, asserting that in parts of the world where wars and conflicts are endemic and even when sovereignty has failed, many fragile states maintain territorial and international sovereignty that is regarded as legitimate. This means that peacebuilding operations in post conflict settings do not happen in a normative vacuum, but rather in an environment in which sovereignty exists, albeit in a rather problematic form.

To examine the process under which peacebuilding happens, through peacebuilding institutions in the context of sovereignty, I will draw upon David Lake's arguments (Lake, 2007). This is because first, Lake (like Jackson) challenges the conventional form of sovereignty by arguing that sovereignty is not only relative but also "eminently divisible" (p. 219). For Lake, sovereignty (or quasi-sovereignty) is not a condition set in stone but a conceptual norm that has evolved in time and history. To him, though sovereignty is a robust concept, in practice it has been disaggregated into many forms over time. Lake explains that the classical view of Westphalian sovereignty is in dispute, since it has been impossible to prove the nascent principle of sovereignty in practice, and argues that what was agreed at Westphalia and codified in subsequent treaties (Munster and Osnabruck) is different from popular wisdom on the subject.

"It's the myth of Westphalia, rather than Westphalia itself, on which today's understanding of the principle of sovereignty rests" (p.225). Moreover, in addition to occupying a central place in our analysis of post-conflict, non-Western countries, the debate on sovereignty is far from being settled among Western nations themselves. This means that we can safely assume that this conception of sovereignty by Western thinkers – or lack of a clear conception – has permeated the conception of sovereignty in other, non-Western countries. But more importantly, it goes to show that sovereignty remains a contentious field in international relations, whether in relation to Western or non-Western states.

Secondly, not only does Lake believe that sovereignty is relative; he believes that it is divisible. In the contemporary world, he explains that the idea of indivisibility of sovereignty is "asserted as part of the state building process against the vestiges of colonialism" (p.227). To him, new states created since 1945 had to be consolidated in the face of strong former colonial powers and other forms of authority. Here, Lake strengthens Jackson's initial point on the benefits of sovereignty to weak states by stating that they have since depended on the Westphalian conception of sovereignty and especially on the principle of indivisibility to justify and maintain their rule. But sovereignty is and has been divisible, as Lake demonstrates, when he enumerates examples of how it was often violated over the last decades; the most notable one being the now well established practice of restricting how states treat their subjects as well as the numerous forcible interventions in states where governments failed to protect their citizens.

Thirdly, since sovereignty is divisible, history has shown that it can also be delegated in parts to IOs, when states decide to delegate authority for one reason or other. Lake argues, quite righty, that states have been delegating limited forms of sovereignty with no harm to themselves

or to the robustness of the principle of indivisibility. Lake dismisses those critics who fear that delegating sovereignty is a threat, by reminding them that the rise of the notion of juridical sovereignty as well as the number of new states over recent years is a proof that sovereignty and contemporary statehood are as robust as ever. I also agree with Lake's fundamental argument that external intervention – or the idea of the divisibility and delegation of sovereignty – can overtake or replace state sovereignty. If anything, when there is a governance deficit, we are more likely to see the emergence of new forms of sovereignty as I have argued above, and not a complete loss of sovereignty. Lake masterfully argues that delegating sovereignty to IOs is not a threat to sovereignty itself. Rather, Lake sees IOs as agents of states and over which governments retain the ultimate authority.

Lake agrees that IOs are more or less autonomous and influential actors and that bureaucrats within IOs are consequential and seeking to maximizing their autonomy. But Lake is right to point out the very important role that states, which oversee and control the IOs, play in seeking to counter any potential opportunism by IOs. In delegating sovereignty, Lake has argued that states may indeed choose to delegate authority to organizations that suit their own interests. Though this is often the case with powerful states, as Jackson has argued, it is worth remembering that quasi-states use their full memberships within structures such as the UN or even some authority within international organizations that they are part of, to assert their own power and political agendas. Moving forward, we will also posit that like other IOs described here, peacebuilding institutions are international and influential actors in their own right, or "sets of rules that constrain or empower member states and serve to facilitate cooperation (p. 221).

b. Negotiated sovereignty: Delegating and pooling authority

Lake defines delegation as a "conditional grant of authority" (p.228) through which states choose to delegate powers to external agents when there are clear incentive that the agent (IO) is more likely to positively change the status quo to their benefit. "By screening possible agents, the principal can hire agents with preferences more similar to its own, or by using higher powered incentives, the principal can induce the agent to offer appropriate proposals." (p. 229).

Delegating responsibility to IOs - when states choose to delegate powers to an international body designed to craft and implement collective policies – has obviously the potential to compromise sovereignty, but as Lake explains, it is by far the best way to bring about solutions to global problems, such as nuclear proliferation, or building peace conflict-ridden areas. This means that a collective solution is better than what a state would be able to achieve on its own. In the case of peacebuilding action, as Rubin (2006) has explained, international actors choose to delegate some sovereign functions to a multilateral entity that can reinforce institutions responsible for the reconstruction of the nation-state. In this sense, the UN Peacebuilding Commission can be defined as an international decision-making structure that, as Rubin (2006) states, acts as "a counterpart to the recipient national government and potentially bring order to the anarchy that invariably flows from the multiple agendas, doctrines and aid budgets of the array of external actors involved in peacebuilding" (p.175). Lake has emphasized this point by arguing that sovereignty is delegated to an IO with the intent that the latter carries policy implementation that the international community at large could not enact on its own. In this process, Lake has noted that principals (delegating states) have to weigh the direct costs of these policies, their implementation as well as the authority over the IOs before they mandate them for the task.

Lake also makes an important observation, when he says that actions associated with delegating powers (and tasks) to IOs and pooling (collective pooling of resources) are empowering for states, since states remain the ultimate power holders with the ability to delegate to IOs. This point is important in understanding how powerful even post-conflict countries with a high democratic deficit remain towards the IOs mandated to help them recover from conflict.

Still on the issue of delegation, Lake does not find longer chains of delegation to be problematic since "what matters is whether the knowledge and incentive conditions are met" by the agent to the benefit of the principal (p. 230). More importantly, though he acknowledges that the issue of accountability is important, Lake argues that the debate should not be about whether delegation to IOs is likely to fail but rather "the precise conditions in which a specific act of delegation occurs" (p. 231).

The logic of delegation thus serves as proof that sovereignty is constantly negotiated between states and IOs. But Lake finds that delegating sovereignty to an IO agent and pooling sovereignty in an IO are analytically two different activities. According to him, delegation is used as a "hierarchical relationship in which an agent receives a conditional grant of authority to act for a principal under some specified conditions" (p. 231). But there is another type of delegation, less common, that Lake defines as pooling sovereignty, or when 'a state transfers authority to a collective decision- making body, most typically an IO, to set policy in a given area'. It is this type of grant of authority at the interstate level that this thesis will pay more attention to.

As Lake explains, in the pooling of sovereignty, the transfer of authority from principal to agent can be conditional and revocable, or not, and the state can retain residual rights of control, or not. Lake says that in pooling sovereignty, "the fewer the conditions, the harder it is to revoke

authority and the fewer the residual rights of control retained, the greater the transfer of authority will be" (p.231). As a result, this complex structure presents strategic challenges for individual countries, especially if they were free to set policy at the national level and have now to abide by a policy made by a collective of member countries with different preferences. This raises questions as to whether or not the individual interests of the country are being served by its delegation of authority to an IO (p. 232). But Lake is cautious: he does not equate this with the idea of IOs as escaping control of the member states, since states are trading off between a "unilateral policy closer to their preferences and a collective policy that is more efficacious in addressing some common problem" (p. 232). Unlike in the logic of delegation – which mandates IOs to propose solution to common problems – pooling occurs only when the collective decision is binding for member states. Lake also adds that states pool sovereignty before delegating to an IO agent, citing the example of the United Nations Security Council deciding (pooling) on a common policy and then delegating to a specific agency or body. This can also be observed in the Security Council's decision to establish the UN Peacebuilding architecture in 2006. Lake explains that pooling before delegating introduces strategic complexities, by adding extra pooling points at which policy decisions are to be made. At the international level, delegation to IOs proceeds through two pooling points: first, from citizens through their governments and second, from governments through IOs, which then hire a professional staff to implement their decisions.

Lake acknowledges that in pooling sovereignty, there is a certain compromise of national sovereignty for the benefit of obtaining a policy that solves a problem. However, and this is key, Lake acknowledges that pooling sovereignty does not always run smoothly. He says that since institutions affect how preferences of member states are aggregated into a collective action, some

states may be left aggrieved unless national preferences are identical to those of the institution or other member states. In the end, Lake argues that institutions are left to minimize the inherent bias of collective decision making in an attempt to mitigate any dissatisfaction of states, but "they cannot ultimately solve the problem of disparate preferences and collective choice inherent in pooling sovereignty" (p. 233). It is for this reason that monitoring and enforcement mechanisms are some of the tools that states use to keep an eye on what IOs as their agents are doing with the power they received from them, as well as to ensure that concerns about accountability are addressed. Ultimately, Lake argues that delegation to IOs is beneficial because it facilitates cooperation and improves welfare while remaining controlled by states, even though there is a possibility that the final decision may be different from the goal envisioned by domestic actors. It's important to note here that Lake's theory of delegation and pooling of sovereignty entails fundamentally a decision on the part of a state to decide when and how it delegates or pools its sovereignty. This means that the state then has a choice, hence retains the power to delegate or pool where its interests are. This is very important because in the case of quasi states, states get to choose where and when pooling their sovereignty represent a significant gain for their interests. As Jackson has also shown, since pooling and delegating powers essentially allows them to exercise their international sovereignty, one can argue that this very exercise does indeed legitimize quasi-states without fundamentally altering their domestic politics or dismantling the systems through which government elites in these countries benefit from international recognition and legitimation.

c. Why use a theory of sovereignty delegation in peacebuilding?

When peacebuilding is concerned, delegating powers to a specific body– in this instance the UN through its Peacebuilding architecture – clearly benefits post-war countries, on two distinct levels: as member states, they are able to claim the legitimacy required to participate in a collective action such as defining and designing the international peace agenda. In addition to this inherently strong status they have by being UN member states, by participating in the design and operationalization of a body such as the Peacebuilding commission, an institution equipped to identify, facilitate and coordinate peace processes that no single member state would be able to do on its own, these countries also acquire another status, that of being the 'principal' of the institution itself. In a sense, even in situations where post-war countries are weak and have been identified as countries of focus for peacebuilding efforts, their sovereignty within the global political system still gives them enough power to influence the mandate of the IOs and defend their own interests through IOs they have accepted.

In this sense, it is clear that sovereignty is divisible and this in fact can lead to finding solutions for global problems. But as Lake has clearly demonstrated, one cannot ignore that member states, even when they are willing to delegate sovereignties to an IO, remain vigilant about their own interests and the actions of the IOs they have mandated.

From the discussion above, it is clear that sovereignty is not absolute but rather relative. And because sovereignty can be divided, delegated and pooled, it is evident that sovereignty is negotiable, and that this negotiation happens at different levels depending on the problem that the international community is faced with. I contend that there are three distinct points where sovereignty is negotiated with regards to post-war countries and peacebuilding: when the country

expresses the need for peacebuilding and post conflict reconstruction support but maintains its full sovereignty, when, as a member state of the UN it pools its sovereignty with other member states to design the IO's mandate and operationalize the peacebuilding agenda, and finally, when peacebuilding has already started and the IO is asked to ensure that consent is obtained from the host-state and maintained throughout the peacebuilding mission. It's unclear how this happens in reality and just how much an IO tasked with peacebuilding can challenge the sovereignty of the host state since the host state, as a member state of the UN, is also its principal.

The levels of negotiation of sovereignty clearly suggest the possibilities of tensions between the 'license to intervene' implied in the concept and mandates of peacebuilding, and the requirements for host state consent and inferred respect for its legitimacy. These structural tensions can limit the effectiveness of peacebuilding interventions and impede the work of the organization tasked with peacebuilding in the host-state. Scholarly literature on the subject is clear: sovereignty is an evolving norm. In peacebuilding however, this norm also becomes and is the only constant, as I have demonstrated above. In better theorizing these points of 'tension', it's my contention that analyses of the interaction between peacebuilding IOs and host-states will point towards more encompassing practices of international peacebuilding.

IV.   Conclusion

The political theories of both Jackson and Lake are complementary because they allow us to form a picture of the political game between states and international organizations, with a special emphasis on quasi-states. They also offer a good starting point for theorization. Some of these tensions will remain fundamentally unresolvable – as Jackson has realized, once a state is born, a state is essentially what it is – since normative principles of sovereignty and consent are

evolving. Still, better, more robust theorization would be valuable to clarifying where and how this unfolds, as well as with what policy consequences. In the following chapters, I illustrate how these tensions occur at the field level and how they affect the outcomes of peacebuilding.

Chapter Four: The UN Peacebuilding Project

I. Introduction

In order to understand the PBC's intervention in Burundi, it is essential to understand the PBC's institutional design and to situate it within the overall UN "peacebuilding project" and apparatus. This chapter aims to offer an overview of the PBC's rationale, the context in which it was created, its mandate and its modus operandi. Whilst examining the PBC's organisational structure, this chapter will also briefly touch upon further supportive structures, namely the Peacebuilding Fund (PBF) and the Peacebuilding Support Office (PBSO), which, along with the PBC, constitute the UN's peacebuilding architecture (PBA). This architecture also encompasses other UN agencies such as UNDP, UNICEF and others, although these agencies, as Jenkins (2013) has shown, have a slightly different way to approach peacebuilding both as a concept and as a mandate. It is important to note here that, as Hearn, Bujones and Kugel (2014) explain, the PBA was intended to build synergies and coherence of the UN's (institutional and member-state) peacebuilding efforts. The authors point out however that the PBA was not created as a new operational arm or set of self-standing entities within the UN. They also note that many still argue that the PBA, which includes the PBC, PBSO and PBF, should simply include the full spectrum of UN institutions, tools and member states. For the purpose of this thesis, we refer to the PBA as composed of the PBC, PBSO and PBF, all tasked with bringing coherence to UN's peacebuilding efforts.

While the information compiled in this chapter will not cover all the facets of the UN Peacebuilding project, for the purpose of our analysis it is crucial to situate the PBC within the overall international peacebuilding field, and understand the particular issues that can help put our

analysis in context. This chapter will introduce a discussion concerning the findings of relevant comprehensive reviews of the PBC's performance and impact on the ground since its inception ten years ago. This chapter articulates where and how the PBC fits into the overall UN peacebuilding project, and shows the PBC as yet another entity ill equipped to tackle some of the challenges that are associated with rebuilding nations after conflict. The implication for this argument is simple: for an effective peacebuilding agenda, international peacebuilders must have backed by the international community, giving them solid political powers to act on their behalf in rebuilding peace in war-torn countries. Overall, this chapter argues that UN peacebuilding entities reflect the prevailing concept of international peacebuilding while at the same time being challenged by increasingly vocal post conflict countries that are seeking more autonomy in defining the peacebuilding agenda and its implementation.

II. The United Nations and the rationale for international peacebuilding

Beyond exploring the peacebuilding architecture and how its different entities relate and complete each other, it is vital to understand the global geopolitical environment in which the PBC and its supporting structures were created. Up until the creation of the PBC in 2005, there was no coordinating structure within the UN that focused solely on peacebuilding initiatives in countries emerging from wars. In this sense, the creation of the PBC and supporting entities represented a significant move on two fronts: it was part of a process to kick start a reform within the UN as a whole as well as serving as a focal point in rethinking the UN's role in international peacekeeping.

As Paris and Russett (1999) have demonstrated, since the end of the Cold war, the international community in general and the UN in particular have struggled to respond to civil conflicts and curb the violence they engender. Observers saw the UN peacekeeping failures in

Rwanda, Somalia and Bosnia in the late 1990s as evidence that the UN system was ill-equipped to intervene in places where there was no legitimate political institutions. Others used the same argument to showcase what they saw as institutional gaps within the UN system, notably a lack of coherence between the mandate to intervene, the security conditions on the ground, and conflicting agendas and priorities between the Security Council, member states and of course the country in which the violence occurs (Heywood, 2011). Both these critiques signal that there was disappointment in the ways that the UN was responding to conflict and post-conflict situations, and that a reform was needed.

When the report of the Panel on United Nations Peace Operations, commonly referred to as the 'Brahimi report' came out, it argued for the establishment of post-conflict peacebuilding structures. It also presented post-conflict peacebuilding activities as the responsibility of the UN, given its security mandate (Brahimi report, 2000, para. 6). In an attempt to respond to the criticisms, and curb the increasing disappointment of many member states at the UN, the Secretary-General's report, *In Larger Freedom: Towards Development, Security and Human Rights for All*, of March 2005 offered a new vision on UN management reform, and proposed the creation of the Peacebuilding Commission among other recommendations. This shows that the PBC was put in a place in an attempt by the UN to provide an answer to an internal, systemic, problem as well as offer a way forward in reforming peace missions. It would not be an understatement to say that the PBC was created with high expectations but with very modest resources.

But it was clear from its early days, as many observers including Jenkins (2013) have said, that the PBA was ill equipped to deliver on the wide array of functions assigned by its founding

resolutions. This, Jenkins argues, is due to a "combination of its organizational structure and the political circumstances surrounding its creation" (p.75). Jenkins also shows that the PBC was born into 'an unpromising institutional environment' in a UN where bureaucratic power and political infighting were common. Besides being born in a contentious argument, the PBC has very few powers other than its direct link to the Security Council (Jenkins, 2013, p.76).

The founding resolutions are unclear as to what the PBC could 'really do' to compel wealthy states to honour their commitments to contributing resources, or post-conflict countries to keep up their end of the bargain. This then begs the question, understandably, of just how much potential and influence the institution holds, and how it justifies its existence in its engagements with post-conflict countries.

In summary, I approach the analysis of the creation and operationalization of the PBC in a four-point perspective: an unclear definition of the concept of peacebuilding; a mandate that was too broad; an unpromisingly bleak institutional environment within which peacebuilding expectations were shaped; and, as I argue in the following paragraph, a rapidly changing global political environment but one in which state sovereignty remains an important determinant of the outcomes peacebuilding itself. To put it simply, the decision for a post-conflict country to use "sovereignty" in respect to expressing its disagreements from the vision of international peacebuilders, or failure to put in place the conditions of ownership of the peacebuilding agenda, has great effect on the potential outcomes for local peace.

III. The origins of the UN Peacebuilding Commission.

In September 2003, then UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan made a speech before the General Assembly, focusing on the need for the United Nations to come to a consensus on an overarching peace and security framework. Following this speech, Annan established the *High Level Panel on Threats, Challenges, and Change,* a group of eminent personalities tasked with analyzing that question and recommending potential collective responses, including a review of different organs of the UN. A year later, the Panel's report, "*A more secure world: our shared responsibility*" laid foundations for a new vision of collective security. The authors of the report identified, among other things, that the UN lacked an entity designed explicitly to avoid state collapse. They advocated for better international regulatory frameworks and norms, concluding that: "strengthening the United Nations capacity for peacebuilding in the widest sense must be a priority for the organization." This was linked directly to a recommendation for the establishment of the Peacebuilding Commission (PBC) (HLP Report, 2004, para 263).

In this report, the authors conceived the PBC as a " a single intergovernmental organ dedicated to peacebuilding, empowered to monitor and pay close attention to countries at risk, ensure concerted action by donors, agencies, programmes and financial institutions, and mobilize financial resources for sustainable peace."(HLP Report, para 225). To enable the PBC to carry out its mission, the authors also recommended the creation of an entirely separate support system composed of an administrative entity and a fund. In 2005, the Peacebuilding Commission was officially established and endorsed at the World Summit, and the UN General Assembly confirmed the creation of the PBC in December of the same year. It was to act as an intergovernmental body

that will oversee countries in crisis by acting as a coordinating body of international community peace strategies.

Specifically, the PBC's mandate was to draw attention to countries at risk of relapse into conflict, by crafting a plan of action and coordinating donor responses and strategies for better post-conflict recovery outcomes (Jenkins, 2013). As it stands now, the PBC is the cornerstone of the UN's Peacebuilding architecture (PBA). The Peacebuilding Support Office (PBSO) and the Peacebuilding Fund (PBF) support its activities.

It would be a mistake, despite appearances, to think of the establishment of the PBC as one straightforward process. Security Council Resolution SC 1645(2005) and General Assembly Resolution A/60/180 determined that the PBC would act as a subsidiary body of both the SC and the General Assembly, that will act as an advisory body, filling the gap by dedicating itself exclusively to countries emerging from conflict. The resolutions also determined the overall mandate and structure of the PBC, as well as ways through which countries would be referred to the PBC.

As Jenkins (2013) explains, the roots of the UN Peacebuilding architecture as a whole are to be found far back in time, in the wars of the last decades of the 20th century, which "spurred the creation of a more systematic approach to peacebuilding" (p.45). Over the years, there have been several initiatives and proposals for reform of the UN structures that have influenced its creation. "While the PBA is new, it rests atop an existing, at times precarious, substratum of organizations and a history of partially implemented institutional reforms" (p.44).
Jenkins also says that since the PBA's creation, the precise mandate of each of its components as well as respective responsibilities have been sources of much debate and disagreements, as I will

also show below. It should be noted, at this point, that although the PBC is an autonomous body, its name is often used loosely to refer to all three components of the UN peacebuilding architecture.

IV.   PBC's mandate and structure

The collective belief behind the conception and operationalization of the PBC can be explained in a two-fold summary; that many post-war countries face a dire lack of political attention from the international community and that the UN lacked an institutional anchor within its system to assist these countries in a continued and sustained way from relief to development. As an intergovernmental body, the PBC was created precisely to fill that gap and was assigned by the General Assembly Resolution (2005: 2) the following mandate:

"(a) To bring together all relevant actors to marshal resources and to advise on and propose integrated strategies for post-conflict peace- building and recovery;

(b) To focus attention on the reconstruction and institution-building efforts necessary for recovery from conflict and to support the development of integrated strategies in order to lay the foundation for sustainable development;

(c) To provide recommendations and information to improve the coordination of all relevant actors within and outside the United Nations, to develop best practices, to help to ensure predictable financing for early recovery activities and to extend the period of attention given by the international community to post conflict recovery."

Through its mandate, the PBC's role is one of gatekeeper, tasked with highlighting issues that threaten peace in countries on its agenda, bringing together relevant actors as a way to garner political attention, coordinating resources and advising the UN on strategies for sustainable peace. The PBC is made up of 31 member states that serve a two-year term on a rotational basis. Members come from five constituencies: seven from the Security Council; seven from the General Assembly; seven from the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC); five of the top 10 troop-contributing countries to peace operations; and five of the top teen financial contributors to peace operations.

Tryggestad (2010) says that initially, the members of the UN Security Council wanted to create a small forum, maximum 20 members, chosen on the basis of merit and knowledge of relevant issue areas. But it would have been impossible, within the above quotas, to avoid the PBC being perceived as yet another Western countries' attempt to dominate the new institution. According to Tryggestad, while the discussions concerning the PBC were still at their beginning, fears of establishing yet another politicized organ at the UN quickly to emerged among countries of the G-77 and it became clear that the PBC would also have to reflect adequate 'regional balance', by including memberships from under-represented regions. In its overall composition, the PBC operates on three levels:

(1) The Organizational committee, made of all 31 members and whose role is to refine the rules of procedures of the commission, to decide on its program and responsible for the annual reports to the Security Council and the General Assembly. The committee also elects a chair from among its members, all of whom theoretically have a veto.

(2) Country-specific configurations (CSC), through which the PBC convenes and deliberates for each individual post-conflict country on its agenda.

(3) Working Group on Lessons Learned (WGLL), tasked with identifying and learning from previous international engagements, as well as helping generate consensus on best approaches to state building (Peacebuilding Commission, 2008a).

Jenkins (2013) explains that although there are several routes for a country to be placed on the PBC's agenda, 'it requires the consent of at least the country concerned, PBC members, the Security Council, and the Secretary-General. Member states can request to be put on the agenda of the PBC (this applies preferably to those emerging from conflict) or the recommendation can come from the General Assembly or the Security Council, but the to be placed on the agenda of the PBC, the founding resolution of the PBC is clear that the interests of the country of focus and the national ownership of the peacebuilding agenda are paramount.

The founding resolutions do not provide a clear definition of peacebuilding itself, but they identify a number of conditions that must be met for the optimization of peacebuilding results. One of those conditions is the importance of ensuring that the peacebuilding process is done in consultation with civil society, non-governmental organizations, regional and sub-regional organisations as well as the private sector. As of January 2016 – more than ten years after the establishment of the PBC – just six countries have been referred to the PBC: Burundi and Sierra Leone were the first to be referred, followed by the Central African Republic, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, and Liberia.

V. PBC's supporting entities

The resolutions that established the PBC also formally authorized the creation of the Peacebuilding Support Office (PBSO), launched in October 2006 and led by the Assistant Secretary-General for Peacebuilding Support. Jenkins (2013) says that PBSO has no operational mandate as it does not manage or implement programs as part of UN missions. Instead, the PBSO is tasked with providing administrative support to the PBC, by among other things helping with the organization of working sessions of the Country Specific Configurations or CSCs, and arranging field visits to countries on the PBC's agenda. In addition, Jenkins explains, the PBSO was created to serve as a 'repository of best practice in the area of post-conflict peacebuilding', a task it is to carry by organizing and facilitating exchanges and dissemination of knowledge on peacebuilding within and beyond the UN system.

Relatively small and composed of "qualified experts", according to the founding resolutions of the PBC, the PBSO was designed to "assist and support the Peacebuilding Commission (PBC) with strategic advice and policy guidance, administer the Peacebuilding Fund (PBF) and to serve the Secretary-General in coordinating United Nations agencies in their peacebuilding efforts" (PBSO, 2016).

There is not much information to explain the rationale behind the establishment of the PBSO as a separate entity from the PBC itself, but the office's internal structure is organized in a way that clearly shows that the founding resolutions envisioned an internal mechanism that would ensure that the operations of the PBC run smoothly and that the overall coordination of peacebuilding activities of the Secretariat are coherent. To that effect, PBSO is made of three

branches; the Peacebuilding Commission Support Branch, the Policy, Planning and Application Branch and the Financing for Peacebuilding Branch (PBSO, 2016).

As for the Peacebuilding Fund (PBF), it was meant to support the PBC's work in improving the mobilization of financial resources. The rationale behind its creation, according to UN documents, was to prevent disruptions in funding for countries in transition from war to peace. These countries have passed the humanitarian-response stage but they are not quite at the stage where donor funding is enough to reach the people and institutions that need it. The PBF is a multi-year fund based on voluntary contributions, which, according to UN documents, has a target of US$250 million, and is designed to provide initial funding to kick start recovery in countries coming out of conflicts. The PBF exists primarily to assist with immediate peacebuilding needs in countries on the PBC agenda, but is not exclusive to them and can also fund peacebuilding activities in countries referred by the Secretary-General.

According to the business plan on its website, PBF has the capacity to fund peacebuilding activities in approximately 20 countries. As of January 2016, PBF has funded and completed its programs in three countries, and still supports ongoing peacebuilding activities in 28 countries, with more than half of them on the African continent (Peacebuilding Fund, 2015). As per the founding resolutions, PBF operates and is governed in accordance with Terms of References subject to regular reviews. These terms of References are clear on the need to 'secure strong national commitment' and the fund's priority plan must 'align to existing strategic transition plans where they exist, and ensure complementarity' (Peacebuilding Fund, 2015).

In his analysis of how these three pillars of the UN peacebuilding architecture operate and the relationship they have with each other, Jenkins (2013) finds that there is an inherent ambiguity

within the resolutions that established the PBA, illustrated by the fact that there was no shared working definition of peacebuilding – suggesting that peacebuilding means different things to different people within the PBA itself. Moreover, Jenkins notes that the founding resolutions were unclear as to how the roles assigned to the PBC, PBSO and PBF could be translated into concrete actions. He notes for example that the PBSO has struggled to organize itself, changing its internal structure numerous times and over a long period and failing to retain specialized skills in order to operate effectively (Jenkins 2013, p.48.)

The author also speaks of an ill-defined relationship between the PBF and the PBC, as it is unclear where the control of the global fund lies. The profusion of ambiguities within the PBA as a whole, Jenkins (2013:51) writes, has resulted in different and often contradictory peacebuilding agendas by various actors within the UN and beyond, all using the PBC to advance their own interests. But more alarmingly, Jenkins sees competition among stakeholders in the three components of the PBA, where each of them has tried to demonstrate its 'unique comparative advantage in the field of post-conflict peacebuilding' (Jenkins, 2013:52).

The UN's move to create three distinct entities was done in an attempt to fill the gap in its own machinery with regards to post conflict reconstruction. As the founding resolutions of the PBC show, these entities were designed to strengthen the Organization's capacity to sustain peace. However, their establishment also points to a number of fundamental issues in the Organization's approach to building peace. Why create small, marginalized and under resourced entities and then task them with such an important task as international coordination of peacebuilding? Many scholars have illuminated some of the main issues about the UN's vision of peacebuilding, but specifically, I contend here that the structure of these entities actually tells us that although the UN

may have had a grand plan concerning its role in sustaining international peace by making peace one of its core tasks, the Organization is continually challenged with how to integrate peacebuilding as a systemic principle in its own structure. It is also important to remember here I speak of attributing agency to the UN in the relative terms, since the organization's actions are ultimately determined by the member-states depending on their individual motivations and interests.

VI.   A decade of building peace: PBC's performance.

While the PBC is now well established and the UN Peacebuilding architecture has undergone two major comprehensive reviews, the consensus among observers is that it has failed to meet the expectations that came with its establishment 10 years ago. I agree with Jenkins (2013), who I believe offers one of the most fundamental critiques of the PBC, when he states that the primary problem of international peacebuilding has been twofold: lack of strategic coherence among peacebuilders, matched with insufficient understanding of the complexities of peacebuilding – namely its inherent tensions and contradictions.

In 2010, half decade after its creation, a panel was established to examine if the PBC had been able to meet the expectations set out in the founding resolutions. The PBC's first review was a six months internal process, conducted by co-facilitators appointed by the Secretary-General, which set out to examine the experiences with the countries on the agenda of the commission (at the time, there were four countries on the PBC's agenda – Burundi and Sierra Leone (2006), Guinea-Bissau (2007), and the Central African Republic (2008). The review addressed issues ranging from re-thinking the complexity of peacebuilding to the importance of national ownership

to internal operations within the PBC, among others, as a way to measure the impact and effectiveness of the commission against its mandate (United Nations 2010, 9-12.)

The report's co-facilitators first noted that there was great disappointment among representatives of countries that had been enthusiastic at the creation of the PBC, and that there was still a widespread lack of knowledge and understanding about the Commission's role and potential. The report addressed six themes: the complexity of peacebuilding; the imperative of national ownership; the illusion of sequencing; the urgency of resource mobilization; the importance of the contribution of women; and the need for connection with the field.

On the complexity of peacebuilding, the report found that the PBC still had to "define precisely its added value" (UNPBC REVIEW 2010, para.14.) Related to this, the report also addressed the assumption that peacebuilding as both concept and practice is still viewed differently among various international actors and this affects the PBC's abilities to define success stories of building peace.

The review's co-facilitators were blunt: the PBC had not met the expectations stated in its founding resolutions. Many observers agreed, arguing that the PBC had failed to go from mantra to substance, and was inadequate in its attempts to conceptualize and operationalize its mandate. Tschirgi (2010) stated that while every peacebuilding context differed from country to country, the PBC had remained "'*path dependent*' replicating the same approach in successive countries" (p.4).

In the programs within the countries on its agenda then, the PBC seemed, from the observations outlined in the review, to follow a pattern of peacebuilding that had failed in the past.

This raises the question of how its own Lessons Learned Working Group was operating and how it supported the overall commission in fulfilling its mandate of learning from local contexts.

This last point was important since the co-facilitators of the report demonstrated that the PBC had failed to hold its peacebuilding partners to their commitments and had been unable to marshal the relevant resources for its operations. Overall, the 2010 review, while acknowledging that the PBC had fallen short of its founding expectations, was surprisingly generous; preferring to highlight what had already been achieved as modest but solid success. The report also suggested that it was too early to know if the PBC could really rise to the peacebuilding challenge, and advocated a 'conscious-recommitment to peacebuilding at the very heart of the Organization's work. I contend that, overall, what emerges from its first review is that early on, it was clear that the PBC had not been given adequate enforcement mechanisms to hold peacebuilding partners to their commitments.

In response to the 2010 assessment, the PBC's organizational committee presented a "Roadmap of Actions" to the General Assembly, outlining actions that were going to enable it to improve the effectiveness of its country-configurations (PBC Roadmap, 2012.) Among other objectives, the PBC re-committed to exploring ways to attract new resources including forging partnerships with philanthropic organizations and the private sector (para. 3). Three years later, the PBC went through another comprehensive review. The Secretary-General appointed a panel of seven experts to review the activities of the PBC and prepare a report to be presented to the Security Council. Concurrently, while the panel was preparing the 2015 report, two other panels were reviewing related issues of security and peace operations: The High-Level Independent Panel on UN Peace Operations (established in 2014) and the High-Level Advisory Group for the Global

Study on the Implementation of Security Council Resolution 1325 (on Security). This rather critical evaluation of the PBC's record up to 2015 centered around the premise that the shortcomings in building peace in the UN's institutional machinery are beyond the control of the PBC and its supporting entities; rather they are "systemic in nature" because they result from a "generalized misunderstanding of peacebuilding and, even more, from the fragmentation of the UN into separate 'silos'" (PBC Review, 2015, p. 7.)

Informed by experiences in five post-conflict countries - Burundi, Sierra Leone, Central African Republic, South Sudan and Timor-Leste – the review painted another bleak picture of the UN Peacebuilding architecture (PBC Review, 2015, p. 8.). The review's authors recommended a "fresh look not only at the specialized architecture itself, but at the whole approach to peacebuilding taken by the United Nations at large" (p.8).

This particular review has important implications for our analysis of the relationship between the PBC and how it has navigated the sovereignty of the countries on its agenda. Throughout the report, among a vast array of measures proposed to improve the effectiveness of the PBC, there are two recurring themes that are essential to our analysis. The first has to do with promoting coherence at the intergovernmental level, where the co-facilitators of the report urge the PBC to renew its commitment to advocacy and coordination of both resources and peacebuilding actors. The second has to do with improving national leadership, where "peacebuilding processes are 'nationally owned' in the fullest sense" (PBC Review, 2015, p. 9.) While it acknowledges that there has been an evolution of the understanding of the peacebuilding challenge, showcased in the efforts by the UN and other international and regional actors to support conflict resolution and nation-building activities, the report identifies that there is still a lack of a

clear working definition of peacebuilding. In fact, the report proposes a new term – Sustaining

peace – and advocates for expanding the scope of application of peacebuilding, by recommending

that it be liberated from the "strict limitation to post-conflict contexts." (para.26)

The second theme is about local ownership of peacebuilding projects: although the report identifies

national ownership as key to the success of peacebuilding activities, it still recognizes the existing

challenges when it comes to agreements on which national institutions and sectors are to receive

priority attention when designing the peace agenda. These sticking points tell of fundamental

limitations on the part of the PBA in general, and of the PBC in particular, in justifying its raison

d'être. It is legitimate to wonder if the failure to agree on a working definition of peacebuilding

has not had an impact on the work of the PBC and its role among other actors. It is fair to wonder

if failing to explain their role and mandate – an issue identified in the 2010 report – isn't the reason

why, ten years later, there has not been strong demand from post-conflict countries for the PBC's

assistance, despite the fact that there are more countries struggling with re-construction. The 2015

report acknowledges this fact, stating that despite concerns, back in 2005, that the number of

countries wishing to be considered would overwhelm the Commission's capacity, this had proved

not to be the case (para.45)

But more importantly, it is legitimate to question whether the lack of a clear peacebuilding

mandate – namely how the PBC was equipped to meet the lofty expectations of its founding

resolutions – is what is pushing some countries on its agenda (including our case study of Burundi)

to initiate a process of disengagement. Even the 2015 review's authors concede that being a

country of focus for the PBC does indeed come with potential downsides, where countries perceive

it as "an indication of dysfunctionality" (para.46).

Moreover, given the fact that the PBC considers, within its mandate, that national ownership is paramount to its work, the 2015 comprehensive review paints a rather dim picture of its achievements, with the authors stating that "the Commission has not yet been able to generate a full sense of national ownership in critical areas" (para. 49). The reviewers emphasized the importance of assisting local actors to fully engage with the peacebuilding planning process, from early on.

Before I conclude this section, it is important to remember here that both the 2010 and the 2015 comprehensive reviews were conducted internally within the United Nations. It seems likely that an independent strategic review of the peacebuilding architecture would be more ambitious in measuring the impact of the PBC against its threshold of success.

VII.   Conclusion

This chapter described in details, the origins of the PBC, from concept to commission. It argued that the commission was founded with lofty expectations and given limited resources to carry its mandate. This chapter also argues that there were limitations in the way PBC presents itself and the promises it holds for a post-conflict country – and perhaps more importantly how much power it is able to exercise and how this power influences the design and implementation of the peace agenda. The 2010 and 2015 reviews of the PBC's activities confirm that the commission does indeed lack the required weight and solidity and recommend a restructuring of the PBC to cultivate and maintain the confidence of the countries on its agenda. Moreover, this chapter also argues that building peace in Africa comes with a particular set of challenges, many of which the PBC is not well equipped to deal with. As noted in paragraphs above, African post conflict countries are not mere passive actors but increasingly vocal and active in seeking to redefine and using

peacebuilding projects to further their own political agenda. They use national sovereignty and ownership to assert themselves and thus making peacebuilding an ostensibly contentious field in which sovereignty is an important determinant of outcomes.

In the following chapter, the experiences of the PBC in Burundi illustrate the complexities associated with building peace in Africa in general and how the PBC negotiate with the host country in a contentiously political environment.

Chapter Five: The PBC in the field: The case of Burundi

I.   Introduction

Having discussed the conception and the operationalization of the PBC and drawing attention

to the particular limits that prevent the Commission from being an effective institution, as

demonstrated by the 2010 and the 2015 comprehensive reviews of the PBA, the following chapter

focuses on the environment in which the PBC operates on the ground. To better understand how

the PBC engages with a sovereign state, the following chapter provides a background on Burundi,

and examines the processes through which Burundi came to be one of the first two countries of

concentration for the UN Peacebuilding Commission in 2006. I then discuss the highlights of PBC

efforts to put Burundi on a solid institutional footing, and finally offer a potential explanation of

the PBC's limitations to engaging fully with the local national government to help prevent

lingering outbreaks of violence and potentially a relapse into conflict.

In order to understand how Burundi came to be on the agenda of the PBC, it is important to

contextualize its decades-long civil war, which, up until 2005, was one of the longest civil wars

on the African continent. I will start by offering a brief overview, from a historical-political

perspective, of the Burundian civil war from 1972 to 2005. In subsequent sections, I discuss the

UN's peace engagements in Burundi, as well as the influence these engagements – along with the

Arusha Peace Agreement – had in defining the circumstances under which the country was put on

the PBC agenda. Finally, I discuss the limits to the abilities of the PBC – and the international

community – to foster and consolidate peace, despite power-sharing agreements and electoral

reforms, in a politically fractured environment, in which the central government remains highly

resistant.

II.   Burundi: A political-historical overview.

a.   Key facts on Burundi and its history

Accounting for any of Africa's armed conflicts and civil wars is no easy task. As Williams (2011) writes, the available data about what goes on before, during and after a conflict in Africa is extremely poor. In the case of Burundi, this problem is exacerbated by the fact that there is very little historical record of what happened in the years prior to the colonization period of the early 1900s (Chretien, 2003). Lemarchand (1996) remarked that the pre-colonial history of Burundi is a tangled web because oral traditions have been manipulated to serve particular interests. Nonetheless, a glance at the academic literature on Burundi shows a country that is not talked about outside of the handful of Francophone African studies scholars, though in recent years, an increasing number among Anglophone scholars and researchers have taken an interest in this country, largely because of its proximity and similarities to Rwanda.

Before I delve into specific issues pertaining to peace in Burundi, a brief overview of the country is necessary. Burundi is a land-locked country located in the eastern central part of Africa, just south of the Equator. One of the smallest countries on the continent, Burundi occupies an area of 27,830 km² in size. According to World Bank date, Burundi has an estimated population of 10.82 million inhabitants and has the second-largest population density in Sub-Saharan Africa. Among its most known features is its ethnic composition: roughly 85% Hutu, 14% Tutsi, 1% Twa, and some Ganwa (the extended royal family in Burundi is considered a separate 'ethnic' group). It should be noted here that these figures are used repeatedly in academic and non-academic descriptions of the Burundian population but they are not exhaustive and it is impossible to verify their accuracy– the country's most recent comprehensive household survey was in 2008 and it did not record ethnic demographics of the population.

The Burundian conflict is fundamentally political, but one with deeply problematic ethnic dimensions. The ethnic problem is complex and runs deep into Burundian societies, but it is hard to pin point the real ethnic differences between Burundians. Prior to the arrival of colonial powers, Burundi was one of the many centralized kingdoms in the Great Lakes region. Like other (larger) kingdoms in the region, Burundi was an expansionist kingdom, with a standing (royal) army, a judicial system and an organized administrative structure. Pre-colonial Burundi was ruled by a highly organized political apparatus in which the ruling chiefs were from the Ganwa royal family first, but where other representatives could also come from Tutsis and Hutu families (but never Twas)[5]. In 1890, Burundi along with Rwanda was incorporated into German East Africa, but the then ruler of the land, King Mwezi Gisabo, never fully accepted the German rule; instead, he forced them to rule indirectly through him and the other Ganwa princes (Watt, 2008). After the First World War, the League of Nations mandated Belgium to take over the Ruanda-Urundi protectorate and lead the two countries to independence. As was the case in many other societies in Africa, colonization affected and changed the balance of power within local social groups, particularly between the ruling class groups of Ganwa and other Tutsis and later the Hutus. According to Nkurunziza and Ngaruko (2005), Belgium's colonial policy exacerbated the social and economic distinctions between Hutus and Tutsis, pitting them against each other. It is also said that during the Belgians' earlier years, the Tutsis were privileged by colonial rule. "The colonial power institutionalized the domination of Hutus by Tutsis through extremely rigid rules and policies clearly biased against the Hutus" (Nkurunziza &Ngaruko, 2005, p.4). Gahama (1983) describes

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5 For more on pre-colonial Burundi and the different ranks among the ruling class see Gahama (2001), in his book Le Burundi sous administration belge, Paris, Editions Karthala.

the many changes that were brought by the Belgian colonialists in altering how power was distributed among members of the ruling class, pitting Ganwa mainly against other Tutsis and by extension affecting the overall ethnic balance that had existed prior to colonization. The result of what Gahama (1983) described as political manipulation by the Belgian colonialists was the overall weakening of the Burundian monarchy.

By 1947, when the United Nations replaced the Belgian mandate by a trusteeship with the objective of pushing colonial rulers to democratize Burundi and Rwanda, the Belgian attitude towards the Tutsis had radically changed. Nkurunziza and Ngaruko (2005) noted that Tutsis' "rebellious attitudes" had pushed the Belgians to change policies and become closer with the Hutus. What followed were decades of politically motivated ethnic violence that some scholars such as Lemarchand (1996) have gone so far as to describe it as a genocide.

According to Watt (2008), Burundi has known three great tragedies. The first was the assassination of Prince Louis Rwagasore, an intellectual and idealist Ganwa prince who had a vision for a united and strong country. He won the pre-independence election of 1961, but failed to obtain the backing of the Belgian administration as it believed him to be pro-communist and anti-Belgian. He was assassinated three weeks after his election. Rwagasore's death marked a turning point in the history of Burundi, and is credited, along with the 1962 independence and the political turmoil that ensued to have pushed another Ganwa, King Mwambutsa to leave the country in 1965 and never return. A year later, the monarchy would be permanently abolished when Michael Micombero, a young Tutsi army captain removed Mwambutsa's son, Ntare V.

In the spring of 1972, ten years after its independence, Burundi would know its second and possibly most defining tragedy of its post-independence history. By then President Micombero had successfully established a dictatorship by abolishing parliament and excluding Hutus from the army and the public service as well as effectively alienating Tutsis who were not from his region of Bururi (Watt, 2008). A failed Tutsi coup and a Hutu revolt in April 1972 pushed Micombero to unleash a terrible revenge on the Hutus, killing more than 200,000 of them as well as a significant minority of Tutsis. He would also push another 300,000 Hutus into exile, mostly in neighboring Tanzania. Many in the international community condemned these government-initiated killings and some experts like Rene Lemarchand (2002) went so far as to call them genocide. For others, like Watt (2008), "the first concrete result of the government-led carnage will be the creation of Palipehutu (Party for the Liberation of the Hutu People) in 1980, a first step towards eventual revenge" (p. 38).

Between 1975 and early 1987, power remained solidly concentrated in the hands of a few Tutsis elites, who aimed to crush the smallest sign of protest from Hutus or the few Tutsis who were unhappy with the regime. According to Watt (2008), this was also the worst time to be a Hutu; they were still traumatized by the 1972 events, and it was hard for them to go to school or have a job. It is not surprising then that this climate of fear and exclusion would lead to the third political tragedy of Burundi's tormented recent history. In the early 1990s, as political parties were starting to come to the fore in many African countries, the Burundi Democratic Front (Frodebu), led by Melchior Ndadaye, a popular and charismatic Hutu politician, decided to challenge then President Pierre Buyoya. On June 1, 1993, in an unforeseen turn of events, Frodebu won the national election against Buyoya's Uprona. Despite Buyoya's public acceptance of the results of

the election, he and his party refused to be in the opposition. Four months after the election of the country's first Hutu president, a Tutsi soldier assassinated Melchior Ndadaye, pushing the country into yet another tragic crisis. Violence erupted throughout the country. It is estimated that around 50,000 Tutsis were killed by angry mobs of Hutus, and in retaliation, the government's army carried out systematic revenge killings, pushing more than half a million Hutus into exile (Watt, 2008).

From 1993 up until 2005, the country lived in what can be called a permanent state of instability and intra-societal violence. Hutu villagers continued to be assaulted or killed by government soldiers and in response to government led violence; Hutu rebel groups were formed and took to fighting against the government's army for the following decade.

b. The Burundian civil war and the Arusha Peace Agreement (1993-2005)

The assassination of Melchior Ndadaye in October 1993 plunged the country into a spiralling cycle of violence, as some Hutu members of his party carried out massacres against their Tutsi neighbours in retaliation of his death. This was shortly followed by reprisals from the government army. It is estimated that 500,000 Burundians (both Hutus and Tutsis) were killed during this time and thousands of Hutus went in exile in neighbouring countries, mainly in Rwanda and Tanzania. It is also during this time that a number of mostly Hutu groups took the weapons to fight the government and its army. The most well-known among the rebel groups were the National Council for the Defence of Democracy and the Forces for the Defence of Democracy (identified by its French acronym, CNDD-FDD) and the Party for the Liberation of the Hutu People and National Forces of Liberation (PALIPEHUTU-FNL).

In January 1994, in an attempt to calm the increasingly angry Hutu population, the Tutsi dominated Burundian parliament appointed Cyprien Ntaryamira, another Hutu, to serve as interim president. But he would be killed shortly after, on the eve of the Rwandan genocide of April 1994, with his Rwandan counterpart, when the plane carrying them was shot down over Kigali, the Rwandan capital.

In the subsequent months, the Rwandan genocide against the Tutsis would exacerbate the ethnic tensions in Burundi, as Watt (2008) documents, because it pushed the Burundian Tutsi elite in to tightening even more their grip on power for fear of falling victim to Hutus, whom the Burundian government feared would take examples from the Rwandan Hutus. The overall insecurity in the region also increased political unrest in Burundi, leading notably to the 1995 massacre of Hutu refugees in Bujumbura, the capital, where some Hutus had left the interior of the country because of the fighting between the rebels and the government army.

After a year of high insecurity in Burundi, ex-president Pierre Buyoya seized power for a second time in 1996, promising the population to bring about peace and unity. But his coup d'état was universally condemned, pushing the international community to withdraw its foreign aid. Violence continued through a cycle of intra-ethnic killings, with Hutu rebels killing Tutsis and the government army retaliating. As Nindorera (2012) explained, the rebel movements' aims were two-fold: they wanted the government to institute democratic majority rule (which would give more political standing to the majority Hutus) as well as reform the Tutsi-dominated army, which Hutus viewed as the "center of power" (p. 9).

Regional countries, alarmed by the increasing violence, also condemned the incessant killings and voted unanimously to impose an embargo on Burundi. By 1998, the country was in a

state of near collapse, both socially and economically. The worsening economic and security situation forced Buyoya's government to enter negotiations with Hutu rebels, and in June 1998 in Arusha (Tanzania) Buyoya and his parliament agreed on a transitional constitution but under which he would remain president.

Burundi's civil war is perhaps best known for one key characteristic: the involvement and commitment to its resolution by its regional neighbours – especially Tanzania's ex-president Julius Nyerere - and the management of the process by South Africa's Nelson Mandela and the South African government. First initiated by Nyerere in 1998, the Arusha Peace Accords as they are commonly referred to sought to address the root causes of the conflict (ethnic divisions) before devising a structure that would help the Burundian state respond to the conflict through solid democratic institutions (Daley, 2007). After many protracted negotiations, in 2000, under the mediation of Nyerere, Buyoya's government and three Tutsi political parties in his parliament agreed to sign a peace and reconciliation agreement but he failed to enlist the signatures of the two main Hutu parties and no ceasefire was agreed upon.

The 2000 Arusha Peace Agreement, also known as the Arusha Accords, are central to the resolution of the conflict but also to the efforts to restore peace that followed. Boschoff, Vrey & Rautenbach (2010) identified four tenets to the Agreements, and these later provided for a peacebuilding framework to put Burundi back on track including a power-sharing agreement, a judicial and military reform to decrease Tutsi domination, the establishment of a Truth and Reconciliation committee and independent investigation into crimes of genocide, and finally an international peacekeeping force to oversee the transition.

In 2003, under Mandela's mediation, CNDD-FDD led by Pierre Nkurunziza signed a ceasefire agreement with the Burundian government, then led by Domitien Ndayizeye. It is noteworthy that during the mediation process, Mandela himself is said to have analyzed the Burundian situation through his South African experiences. Watt (2008) has explained, for example, that the "85 per cent (Hutus) – 14 per cent (Tutsi) ethnic statistic put him in mind of the black-white percentage in his own country" (Watt, 2008, p.69). According to the same author, this resulted in Mandela being accused by some of the Tutsis in the government of practicing favoritism. Nevertheless, this agreement signalled the end of the civil war and the beginning of a reconstruction process.

This ceasefire was the first breakthrough in the Burundian conflict resolution process and remains to this day the principle highlight of the Arusha Peace processes between the Burundian rebels and the Hutu rebels. In April of the same year, as per the resolutions of the Peace agreements, the African Union also agreed on sending a peacekeeping mission in Burundi (composed essentially of South African peace keepers) to help with the implementation of the Arusha agreement, which was later incorporated into Burundi's constitution.

Even though, as Nindorera (2012) explains, a smaller Hutu rebel group, Forces for National Liberation (FNL), led by Agathon Rwasa, refused to sign the agreement and chose to remain active, the agreement was nonetheless instrumental in ending violence in the zones that CNDD-FDD controlled and in allowing the movement to join the government and later participate in the 2005 elections (Goshal et al., 2009). In June 2004, the UN replaced AMIB with a UN Peace support mission (ONUB), with a primary task of overseeing the implementation of the ceasefire protocols and assisting the country in its first general elections in 2005.

After the first general elections, the United Nations replaced ONUB with the UN Integrated Office in Burundi (BINUB), with a special mandate to reform the security sector with a particular emphasis on combatant demobilization and arms control. Meanwhile, the government continued to have talks with Rwasa's PALIPEHUTU-FNL rebel army throughout the first general elections period and would only sign a ceasefire agreement in September 2006. This agreement however was not to be implemented until May 2008. The Burundian peace process was finally declared 'completed' in 2009, after the FNL had agreed to start handing over its weapons, demobilizing combatants to Burundi military barracks and registering as a political party.

Nindorera (2012) argues that as the first to join the government and negotiate in good faith, CNDD-FDD had a relatively easy transition to political party in its own right, with a solid ideological standing. Later, CNDD-FDD would go on to win the 2005 elections and then the 2010 ones, thus maintaining former rebel leader Jean Pierre Nkurunziza as president and changing forever the Burundian political landscape. Nindorera says that since 2005, CNDD-FDD has consolidated its transition from rebel army to political player, and has remained in control of all local and national institutions in Burundi. Moving forward, one thing to keep in mind is that despite the Burundian conflict often being analysed through ethnic lenses, it is actually not the case that Burundians mobilize politically along ethnic lines. In fact, I am in complete agreement with Brachet and Wolpe (2005), who see the chronic post- independence violence in Burundi as "fundamentally an elite-driven and manipulated conflict" (Brachet and Wolpe 2005, p.1).

III.   PBC in action: Burundi case study

a.   Genesis of the PBC's engagement with Burundi

As demonstrated in the previous sections of this chapter, Burundi was undergoing tremendous political turmoil when it was placed on the PBC's agenda in June 2006. After two decades of protracted fighting and deep ethnic divisions, the country had just held its first post-peace accords elections in 2005, and one of the two main rebel groups was still fighting. International peacekeepers were also still present in the country to facilitate a democratic and peaceful transition. Following a referral from the UN Security Council, Burundi was put on the agenda of the PBC six months after the creation of the Commission. UN documents show that the PBC held its first meetings on the situation in Burundi (and Sierra Leone – the other case) in October and December of that year, with the purpose of identifying "critical challenges that needed to be addressed in both countries to lay the foundation for sustainable peace and create the enabling environment for development and reconstruction" (UN, S/2006/1050:4).

In the case of Burundi, the letter of referral of the Security Council makes it clear that the country had "expressed its desire to be on the agenda of the PBC" and that initial assessment showed that the PBC was satisfied by the government's efforts in identifying priority areas such as demobilization of combatants and judicial sector reforms. It is unclear however, at this early point in time, if and how much information the new Burundian government had in relation to the mandate of the PBC and how the processes were going to be facilitated. It was identified that the PBC would work with the government to focus on four key areas: good governance, strengthening the rule of law, community recovery, and land ownership. Immediately after being placed on the agenda of the PBC, through the PBSO a mapping exercise was launched to gather and analyze

information relating to the availability of financial resources as well as identifying gaps in resources for Burundi. Tabled in October 2007, a preliminary analysis concluded that Burundi was "a "cas d'école", as the country experiences typical challenges for external resource mobilization" (PBSO, 2007).

b. Key points of the strategic framework for peacebuilding in Burundi

Early on, there was an indication that the PBC needed to demonstrate to the Burundian government its added value, since it was joining in a field in which it was one among a multitude of local, regional and international actors. Given the presence of an existing UN mission (BINUB), other UN institutions such as UNDP, international development agencies, regional peacekeeping missions (South African National Defence Forces), Murithi and Scanlon (2006) argue that the PBC – as an advisory body – had to demonstrate its own comparative strength vis à vis other peacebuilding operations in the country. Minutes of the early meetings with the PBC show that the government of Burundi was clearly expecting the PBC to fulfill its promise to start raising funds as soon as possible.

Minutes of early meetings demonstrate a clear pattern of confusion around the development of a Strategic Framework for Burundi (where stakeholders and the government of Burundi were to outline their commitments for building peace) and the nature of the Commission's engagement with other countries and UN bodies, particularly on the issue of adopting a document that "spells out the commitments of actors other than the PBC (IFIs, civil society, international donors…)," (Together for a better peace, June 2007). At the same time, there were fears that if this document were not adopted, this would compromise the PBC's

standing and the seriousness of its commitment to Burundi (Together for a better peace, June 2007).

The PBC's Burundi Configuration finally endorsed the Strategic Framework for Peacebuilding in Burundi (SFPB) in June 2007, and notifications were sent to the Security Council, General Assembly and ECOSOC concerning the principles of collaboration and mutual engagement of the government of Burundi and all the other stakeholders, as well as agreed upon mechanisms for review and progress monitoring. The document was adopted seven months after Burundi was put on the agenda of the PBC, and after consultation with the government of Burundi, the United Nations Integrated Office in Burundi (BINUB), and other key stakeholders. The SFPB was centered around six objectives: promoting good governance; completing the implementation of the ceasefire agreement with PALIPEHUTU-FNL; reforming the security sector and disarming former combatants, initiating a judicial reform process with particular emphasis on transitional justice mechanisms; tackling the land issue (a key point within the National Poverty Reduction Strategy); and ensuring a full participation of women and their priorities in the implementation of peacebuilding policies (PBC/1/BDI/4).

The SFPB also identified a number of challenges and risks that could potentially affect the implementation of peace interventions in Burundi, whether they are from the government or from its international partners. Among them were the vital importance of consultations and dialogues between all actors and the Burundian people on how to consolidate the culture of democracy. It puts a particular hope in the new institutions (the government, parliament and locally elected authorities) and the legitimacy they carry since the election of 2005, but also recognized that a culture of corruption, political contradictions within the governing elites and

the issue of refugee (and ex-combatant) reintegration carried great risks to the fragile peace in post-conflict Burundi (para.19)

Moreover, the SFPB also acknowledged the need to combat a culture of impunity and the importance of establishing a free judicial system; without transitional justice and reconciliation mechanisms allowing people to recall the waves of violence since independence, the country would still be far from sustainable peace (para.21). It should be noted here that to date, there are no consultations on the questions of establishing either a truth and reconciliation process or a special tribunal for crimes of genocide or crimes against humanity committed in Burundi from independence to 2005.

Finally, the SFPB also identified the issue of land and socio-economic recovery as a key challenge to peace, especially in the context that many Burundians had had to leave their land and go into exile during the previous three decades. The document makes mention of the need for the State to implement agrarian and basic social protection reforms (para. 35). In addition, the failure to mobilize and coordinate international assistance, the lack of full and empowered participation of women, as well as issues of instability in the Great Lakes region, were also identified as likely to weaken the peace process and efforts in Burundi.

The SFPB outlined the mutual agreements between the government of Burundi and the PBC. The government agreed to abide by all the objectives of the framework, with a particular emphasis on observing the Constitution and initiating a framework for national dialogue on peace consolidation (PBC/1/BDI/4, p. 13). It also agreed to reform the public service and to promote anti-corruption practices. The PBC, on the other hand, agreed to provide "sustained attention to and support the mobilization of resources to Burundi", advocate for the country within the

international community and within the UN system, and encourage a broader donor base for Burundi (PBC/1/BDI/4, p. 14). Finally, the PBC promised its support to Burundi in working towards integrating other peacebuilding initiatives in the Great Lakes region.

In summary, the SFPB is a document that shows promise that both the international community and the government of Burundi wanted to get their act together. It was also intended to set the general context in which the intervention of the PBC in Burundi would be undertaken. It presents the PBC's engagement with Burundi as a long-term process and shows the commitments of those involved as well as the potential issues likely to affect peace outcomes in the country. However, this strategic framework also raises important questions of just how encompassing international peacebuilding strategies really are and should be. First, it positions the government of Burundi (GoB) as the principal agent behind all the reforms needed to achieve and sustain peace. As Futamura, Newman and Tadjbakhsh (2010) have argued, liberal peacebuilding promoted by the UN envisions the state as the main driving force behind democratic governance reforms and market-based economic reforms. But the authors have argued that this approach, which often comes with a very limited understanding of the local political culture and dynamics, is at risk of being perceived as intrusive and "reduced to a technical exercise, with the implication being that peacebuilding assistance is essentially value-free and does not represent important choices and interests." (p.2)

In agreement with Futamura et al., I contend that this strategy is lacking in two major respects: first it doesn't specify how, if at all, the PBC was going to assist the government of Burundi in shaping its internal government policies to meet the purposes of this general outline of the broader intervention. After all, the saying goes that the devil is in the details, and since all

the stakeholders agreed that the government of Burundi lacked the technical, human and financial resources to manage state business, then it is legitimate to wonder why there is no provision in this framework, addressing this issue.

Second, the framework leaves aside some outstanding issues regarding the timeline of the PBC's engagement in Burundi and the clear role that the government of Burundi would play in the process. In fact, the strategy for peacebuilding presents the government of Burundi as the 'implementer of business' and that there is little to no information on how the collaboration between the PBC, the government, and the UN office in Burundi was going to work. In fact, when there were issues between the government of Burundi and BNUB and the government was expelling BNUB's executives, the Chair of the PBC's configuration on Burundi raised the point that without the presence of BNUB, the PBC would not be able to operate effectively.

c. Building peace in Burundi: Successes and challenges

The PBC's collaboration and overall partnership in Burundi is part and parcel of the UN's presence in Burundi. And many of the challenges and successes observed in peacebuilding projects in the country are linked to the experiences and leadership of the UN representation. As explained above, from January 2007, the UN Integrated Office in Burundi (commonly known as BNUB, the French acronym of Bureau des Nations Unies au Burundi) replaced ONUB – Opération des Nations Unies au Burundi –, which was an active peacekeeping mission from June 2004 until 31 December 2006. The decision to transition from a peacekeeping mission to a peacebuilding one was motivated by the need for a "follow-on structure that could sustain an adequate level of delivery in human rights, transitional justice and security sector reform, and peace and governance" (p. 3) in Burundi, primarily in order to "offset the departure of

peacekeepers at a time when security sector reform, particularly of the police, was in its infancy" (UNDPKO, 2008, p. 3). BNUB was established as a "mechanism to bring a coherent and coordinated response of the UN to peace consolidation challenges in Burundi" (p. 3), an interim political structure to help Burundi transition from the immediate post-war environment to a development-focused agenda.

In terms of where BNUB's mandate met the PBC's parameters, it is through BNUB that the government of Burundi was able to acquire assistance to develop its peacebuilding priorities in 2006 and BNUB also acted as co-chair of the Burundi Joint PBF Steering Committee (UNDPKO, 2008). In principle, the BNUB office was tasked to work directly with the government of Burundi to strengthen its capacities in addressing the structural roots of the conflict and build effective institutions for recovery and development. But in practice, the relationship between BNUB and the government of Burundi was complicated and strained.

First, there was no formal pre-existing exit strategy for ONUB when, right after the 2005 elections, the newly elected government asked the UN to transition from peacekeeping to peacebuilding thus closing the peacekeeping mission (UNDPKO, 2008). In his report to the Executive Representative of the Secretary-General in Burundi, Ženja Bašagic, then Best Practices Officer of the mission wrote that BNUB had been greatly incapacitated from the beginning, starting from when ONUB was asked to leave the country after the 2005 elections. The mission lost many senior staff members and this affected both the internal operations of the mission and its overall relationship and level of trust with the government of Burundi.

Second, since assuming its mandate, BNUB dedicated itself to "the transition and planning for integration and restoring and sustaining a cooperative trusting working relation

between the Government and the UN," (UNDPKO, 2008, p. 8), which proved to be a hard task to fulfill because the government was impatient to move from a post-conflict setting to a development-focused agenda. Khadiagala (2013) says that since 2007, BNUB and the PBC had actively engaged in initiatives to facilitate dialogue on governance reforms, bringing together parliamentarians, civil society and members of the media to discuss civil education and reconciliation. These peacebuilding initiatives were however not without their own set of challenges. A number of times, disagreements between the government of Burundi and the UN's office in the country were so serious that the government expelled the UN's representative in the country to signify its discontent. For example, in late 2014, the UN's security advisor was expelled after BNUB had documented a substantial number of human rights violations in the country, including an alleged distribution of weapons to the *Imbonerakure*, a para-military youth group often accused of threatening and intimidating or even assaulting members of the opposition and journalists.

News reports and BINUB reports show a clear pattern whereby BNUB was unable to challenge the new GoB. First, there is the fact that its predecessor, ONUB, had deployed quite late in Burundi, arriving, as Jackson (2006) shows, a mere five months before the end of the Burundian transitional period in 2004, with very little time to carry out the core tasks of its mandate including to oversee the electoral process and the disarmament of former combatants. Jackson says that the implication of this timing was that ONUB was under pressure of being seen on the side of the local political actors who wished to extend the transitional period. There was also the perception that it was on the side of the former powers of UPRONA and FRODEBU and had little knowledge and understanding of internal dynamics within CNDD-FDD and FNL-

PALIPEHUTU (Jackson, 2006). These perceived biases on the part of the UN mission in Burundi have continued since then and as Jackson argues, affected negatively the relationship between the new Hutu elite in power in Burundi and subsequent UN representatives in the country.

They also show a government of Burundi that didn't want anybody involved in its business. The relationship remained greatly strained until the end of 2014 when the government of Burundi expressed again its desire to close the UN mission in the country. On December 31, 2014, BINUB completed its mandate and closed its office in Burundi, transferring its responsibilities to the UN Country Team (agencies and programmes of the local UN Development Assistance Framework). As BINUB closed its offices, the UN's Electoral Mission in the country started its Security Council mandate to follow and report on the 2015 elections.

However, despite the complexities of this politically charged environment in which the PBC operated, and despite functioning through a UN mission that was incapacitated and struggling to build a stable, trustful relationship with the government of Burundi, Burundi has largely been seen as a peacebuilding success story. Discussing the issue of power-sharing and post conflict governance in Burundi, Curtis (2013) clearly demonstrates that Burundi is undeniably safer than it was two and half decades ago and that ethnicity is no longer the most important characteristic of its conflict.

In terms of the last ten years of the PBC's engagement in Burundi, the Commission's activities have been viewed as largely positive, although Hearn, Bujones & Kugel (2014) make it clear, in their independent evaluation of the UN Peacebuilding Architecture, that the PBC still faces major obstacles in countries where it operates, including scepticism as to what the PBC can offer and its effectiveness in harnessing adequate coordination in situations where the country

threatens a return to violence. The authors' report also points to another major obstacle, regarding a lack of clarity on the authorities, tools and resources the PBC has at its disposal that enable it to fulfill its mandate.

Nevertheless, a 2007 report by actors in the development field in Burundi (Action AID, CAFOD, and CARE International UK) found that the PBC had made an important contribution to Burundi up to that time, particularly in terms of keeping international attention focused on the country and gathering financial support. The report states that the PBC had been successful in facilitating increased participation of civil society members and women in PBF funded projects. The PBC was also instrumental in the development of the *Cadre de dialogue et de Concertation,* a project intended to support an inclusive and open national political dialogue.

In their independent evaluation of the PBF in Burundi, Campbell et al. (2014) concluded that some of the projects that the PBF funded made a crucial positive contribution to Burundi's peacebuilding process. The report noted that PBF funded projects had helped unblock deadlocks in the Burundian parliament in 2007 and in 2013, facilitated the integration of the FNL rebel group into Burundian political space, assisted provinces dealing with high numbers of IDPs and former combatants, and supported national dialogue workshops towards the preparation of the 2015 elections (Campbell et al., 2014, p. 5). Campbell's report also found that these projects had supported the country's institutional reforms, such as the establishment of the Independent National Commission for Human Rights (CNIDH). An evaluation by Street et al. (2008) had also previously found that the PBC had delivered on its promise to keep the international community's attention focused on Burundi.

Khadiagala (2013) also identified the integration of Burundi within the East African Community as a key success to be attributed to the PBC. He writes that helping the country integrate into EAC was a vital objective of the PBC, which was done by strengthening the national institutions that play a role in regional integration, as well as making regional integration one of the key points in the Strategic Peacebuilding Framework.

It is however impossible not to question this supposed "success" story, in light of the current political turmoil in Burundi, ongoing since the 2010 elections. Given the current situation, it is legitimate to question the solidity of the democratic institutions that were created under the peacebuilding framework. Since 2010, PBC reports and minutes of meetings of the PBC Burundi configuration show a growing concern over alleged muzzling of political opponents and journalists, violence against some members of the opposition, etc.

In the spring of 2015, after President Nkurunziza announced that he would seek a third mandate, protestors took to the streets to denounce his actions, arguing that the Hutu president was mis-interpreting article 96 of the Burundian constitution. This article allows a president to be elected by universal suffrage with a first mandate renewable only once. But the constitution also allows, in article 302, that the first post-transition president be elected by indirect vote in the national assembly. Nkurunziza and his party argued that he could seek a third mandate by universal suffrage because technically his first mandate was excluded from the allowed number of term limits prescribed by article 302.

Since then, opponents and members of the international community have strongly condemned his actions, and protests have become more and more violent in the country, followed by arrests and thousands of Burundians including journalists and civil rights activists fleeing to

neighboring countries in the Great Lakes region. At the time of this thesis' writing, protests and killings are still ongoing in the streets of Bujumbura.

But the main challenge that the PBC has had to face has been to find appropriate approaches to deal with the government and its management of domestic issues. In 2010, there were signs that the government of Pierre Nkurunziza was having trouble solidifying democratic institutions and between 2010 and 2015, the PBC has registered a record number of alarming signs that the country could relapse in violence. First, as Vircoulon (2014, 2015) has consistently documented, the 2010 election was deeply problematic because the government of Nkurunziza made it impossible for the opposition to fully participate in the electoral process – taking part only in the ones at the communal level – which raises a key issue on the legality and the legitimacy of Nkurunziza's candidacy. But more importantly, during and after the 2010 election, questions were raised about CNDD's real commitment to the power-sharing principles and the spirit of the Arusha Agreements. What permeates records from meetings within the PBC is the clear fact that the GoB had been unable to implement some of its key conditions such as a national reconciliation commission and a tribunal for war crimes committed during the civil war (1993-2005).

As a result of the GoB's inability or unwillingness to answer to why it wasn't ensuring that the Arusha agreements are respected and implemented, the country has been unable to move forward on a path of sustainable peace. Between 2010 and 2015, the PBC's meetings on the political situation in Burundi have discussed issues ranging from the government's stifling of the opposition and the media, to the GoB's alleged training of a para-military youth wing to carry out acts of violence against members of the opposition thus failing to depoliticize its security sector, and to recently the corruption of its political class.

Furthermore, it is unclear if the PBC was prepared to work with Burundi and other actors to address what is arguably one of the most paralyzing issues in the country: the lack of political coherence within its political apparatus. The Burundian political scene has always been crowded, by political parties and rebel movements who often were not well equipped or clear enough as to where they stood ideologically and what their political goals and agendas were. As Nindorera (2012) says, this was what accounts for innumerable internal divisions, skirmishes between former rebel leaders turned politicians, and conflicts of interest among allies. Khadiagala (2013) says that in the wake of the 2010 election, there were already signs that the international community was unable to foster meaningful consensus in such a fragmented political environment. The author also argues that as early as 2008, Burundian professionals were already sounding the alarm that the country could go back to violence, because, among other things, there were "bitter conflicts both within the CNDD-FDD and across the entire political spectrum" (p.113)

IV. Conclusion

In this chapter, I have provided an overview of the key elements in the political history of Burundi and its civil war, as well as the roles of regional and international actors in finding a resolution to years of political strife in the country. In this political environment in which the PBC has operated in Burundi over the past ten years, I argue that the interplay between different actors and the government of Burundi points to the fundamental fact that although these actors are theoretically committed to finding a sustainable path to peace, they have different conceptions of what that path should look like and how to get there. For example, on the one hand, the process through which Burundi came to be on the agenda of the Peacebuilding

Commission shows that the expectations of the government of Burundi were primarily to secure funding for post-conflict projects. Campbell's evaluation (2014) shows that this expectation was made a key priority on the PBF's agenda as soon as Burundi was placed on the list of countries of focus of the PBC. Initially, the PBF allocated US$ 35 million to Burundi (in 2007) to fund projects from 2007-2010. An additional US$ 5 million were allocated in 2010. A year later, in 2011, US$ 9.2 million was allocated to Burundi to fund the reintegration of people affected by conflict, such as former combatants, returned refugees, and internally displaced persons. Both the first and second tranche of the PBF funds were allocated to Burundi through UN entities – UNDP, UNHCR, UNFPA, UN Women, FAO and ILO. On the other hand however, the incapacity of the UN's office in the country to build a strong relationship with the government or at the very least understand the new ruling class's priorities and challenge them – as the following chapter shows – as well as the relatively modest sums of money allocated to peacebuilding projects in Burundi all point to the limitations of the Peacebuilding Architecture to deliver on its promises and expectations.

Given the current fragility of the political situation in Burundi and the ongoing violence in the country, it is my analysis that international actors who introduced peacebuilding there in the first place over estimated the assumed "successes" of peacebuilding in Burundi. Specifically, the design of the strategic framework that has guided the PBC's engagement in Burundi may have helped introduce new institutions but it has not affected the basic make-up of the state which remains deeply rooted in a culture of political violence both in the country's political discourse and practices, which the current turmoil illustrates.

It is unclear if peacebuilding, as encapsulated by the PBC, addresses the issues of structural violence. Indeed, it seems unlikely that it does, as Curtis (2013) has argued, after documenting the PBC's inability to address the militarisation of governance in Burundi, which has now reached critically high levels. Currently, human rights organizations and Burundi civil society are openly accusing the government of mobilizing youth movements into quasi-military organizations and of distributing weapons (International Crisis Group, 2015). The current crisis, according to many professionals and observers, is starting to look much like it will soon give way to yet another armed conflict. As of March 2016, Human Rights Watch has documented an alarming number of politically motivated abductions of civilians, under the radar killings by the police or intelligence security, as well as an increase in the number of attacks by armed opposition groups (Human Rights Watch, February 2016).

I contend that the strategic framework for peace in Burundi as it is backed by the PBC fails on a number of key points: first it doesn't make any mention of the mechanisms in place to hold the GoB to its commitment to the power-sharing agreements of the Arusha accords and it fails to put special emphasis on how the security sector reforms and the reintegration of former combatants in civilian and political life were going to be carried out in a way that would contribute to national unity. But perhaps more to the point, the peace agenda in Burundi as proposed by the government under the advice and guidance of the PBC fails fundamentally to demonstrate a clear, long-term, political role for the international community in Burundi. And without such political engagement by the UN and other countries or international organizations, it is hard to imagine how there could then be an adequate political response when a political crisis with potential to become violent – such as the current one – emerges.

Chapter Six: Conclusion

I.   Introduction

When the United Nations created its Peacebuilding architecture and mandated the Peacebuilding Commission (PBC) to advise and make recommendations to different peacebuilding actors, including sovereign governments, it reaffirmed once again its unique role in international peacebuilding. Despite this widely accepted status, there remains great uncertainty as to how the UN manages this role, particularly as it relates to the relationships that exist between the organization, the international peacebuilding agenda and the countries in which this agenda is implemented. How do peacebuilding-mandated organizations such as the PBC navigate the normative cross currents and intricacies linked to the sovereignty of post war countries? This research focused on Burundi and examines the relationship between the PBC and the government of Burundi since the latter was put on the agenda of the PBC a decade ago (2006-2016).

Before summarizing the core findings of my research, I will briefly address two important points: one about how this work fits into the larger body of knowledge on peacebuilding and state building, the other about the limitations of this research. As many scholars of international peacebuilding, both its proponents and its critics, would agree, the existing international peacebuilding model has consistently failed in giving due attention to the domestic political games at play in post-conflict countries before and during the implementation of the peacebuilding agenda. The purpose of this research was to highlight a fundamental architectural flaw that constitutes a structural impediment to a stable understanding concerning the relationship between the PBC and the government of Burundi around the question of negotiated sovereignty. It is my hope that the core findings of this research contribute to a deeper and more profound explanation

of what otherwise looks like ineffective decision-making in the practice of international peacebuilding.

This research was limited both in scope and methodology. Though there was an attempt to offer a comprehensive view of the PBC's activities and undertakings in Burundi, it is important to note that since most of the internal communications between the PBC Chair and the government's representatives are of a diplomatic nature, I was not privy to their contents. Such conversations would have provided me with a much deeper understanding of the nature of the relationship between the two entities. In terms of methodology, this analysis was limited to the documents and material available on the Internet, and would have been enhanced by interviews and in-person meetings with other members of the PBC and those who facilitate its activities in Burundi. Furthermore, as an African-born researcher, although I tried to remain as neutral as possible in my analysis, I think it is appropriate to acknowledge a cultural bias against Western interventions that might have affected my presentation of the research.

The previous chapters provide the necessary background to understand first, the origins and mandate of the PBC (Chapter 3), and then the genesis and overview of the Burundian conflict and current political situation (Chapter 4). This final chapter presents the core findings of my analysis by reflecting on how, within the context of peacebuilding, the UN system and the PBC in particular perceive sovereignty and how the PBC has navigated the sovereignty of the Burundian state. In this analysis, I explore the way in which "negotiated sovereignty" is indeed a constant in the practice of peacebuilding and that as a consequence, this negotiation affects and changes the political terms of engagement in international peacebuilding. The result, I contend, is a lack of

stability and political coherence in the understandings of the peacebuilding agenda between the PBC and the government of Burundi.

II.   Negotiating sovereignty in peacebuilding: Addressing key questions

Addressing this thesis' key questions requires briefly revisiting its theoretical argument and the UN's paradoxical approach to Burundian sovereignty. As argued in previous chapters, my analysis is informed by theories developed by Robert Jackson's on 'Quasi-states' theorization of Third World states, as well as David A. Lake's concepts of delegating and pooling sovereignty within the context of international organizations. Specific to Third World countries, Jackson's "Quasi-states" theories allow us to explain the "nature of the state" in post-conflict settings and show their place in international politics. David Lake's concepts show that in general, sovereignty is malleable, and that despite being thought of as binary (that it is there or it isn't), sovereignty is negotiable and international organizations do play a key role in this negotiation. In focusing on the nature of the Burundian state and the role it plays in the implementation of the international peace agenda, this research aims to demonstrate that not only key local actors conceived and operationalized peacebuilding differently than international actors, but also their power and interests challenged those of the international peacebuilders. The result, I contend, is that peacebuilding in Burundi is continually negotiated between the PBC and the GoB. This negotiation between the Commission and the sovereignty of the Burundian state is a key constant in peacebuilding and contributes to shaping the outcomes and the effectiveness of the international peace agenda in the country. In light of the theoretical foundation provided by Jackson and Lake, the core of this analysis is the argument that despite a well-intended

international intervention spearheaded by the PBC in Burundi, peacebuilding in Burundi was contested and therefore constrained in its effectiveness. Within this contestation, the PBC had to negotiate its own role and impact with a national ruling party that has been increasingly invoking its sovereignty to counter the implementation of certain key programs of the international peace agenda. I conclude that this constant negotiation has affected the peace process overall and more importantly raises important questions as to the future and stability of the democratic institutions that were envisioned when Burundi was first put on the agenda of the PBC.

1) **Quasi but sovereign states? The PBC's paradoxical approach to the sovereignty of the countries on its agenda.**

The underlying philosophy of the UN Peacebuilding architecture emphasizes the principles of state sovereignty and national ownership of the countries on its agenda. The founding resolutions of the Peacebuilding Commission (resolution 60/180 and resolution 1645) are unequivocal on this subject: respect for sovereignty and the principle of national ownership of countries of focus are key to the effectiveness and the success of the peacebuilding agenda. In February 2015, while addressing the Security Council, Secretary-General Ban Ki Moon reiterated that the UN's shared work is based "on consent and respect for the sovereign equality of all members of the United Nations, which the Charter recognizes as a basic principle" (Ban Ki-Moon, 2015, para. 3).

In practice however, the experiences of the UN Peacebuilding architecture in Burundi clearly demonstrate that the application of these principles is far from being a straightforward process. They illustrate some inherent paradoxes in the way international peacebuilders approach

the sovereignty of post-conflict countries and show a stark lack of shared understanding around the concepts of sovereignty, consent, and national ownership of the peacebuilding agenda.

It is important to start by pointing out that these concepts are not defined in any of the instruments of engagement of the PBC in Burundi: not the Priority Plan, the Strategic Peacebuilding plan or the reviews of the PBC's activities in Burundi. Not only was there no common definition of peacebuilding when the PBC was founded. As I have showed in Chapter 3, there was also no shared nomenclature concerning the concepts that were so closely linked to peacebuilding. In the absence of precise vocabulary concerning these terms as well as their meanings at the strategic and operational level, I contend that these terms can very well mean different things to different stakeholders, depending on the political context of the moment. Arguably, the fact that these concepts are hotly contested makes it quite implausible to insist on a precise consensus on their vocabulary. It could also be argued that political actors should and would be reluctant to openly recognize these ambiguities. But I could counter-argue that there should at least be an acknowledgement that these terms mean different things to different actors – this is even more important in the African context where it is important to take into account local and cultural views on what peace means and how to achieve and maintain it.

In April 2006, four months after the creation of the PBC, the president of Burundi wrote to the UN Secretary General to express his country's desire to be put on the PBC's agenda. Two months later, his government, via its UN ambassador in New York, reiterated the sentiment through a formal letter of request to the President of the UN Security Council. Expressing the desire to be placed on the PBC's agenda and clear consent to being on the agenda are pre-requisites to becoming a country of focus of the Commission (Jenkins, 2013). But as Jenkins (2013) writes,

at the time of their admission, the first countries to be put on the agenda of the PBC (Sierra Leone and Burundi) did not have a clear grasp of the full implications of the PBC for their respective countries, nor did other stakeholders. He, along with many other observers, says that the governments of these countries were drawn by the potential to access financial assistance from the Peacebuilding Fund and knew little about how the PBC was going to engage with them or the influence it would have compared to other advocacy groups (p.68). Given that there was no historical precedent from which to reason, it is not surprising that these countries could not know much about what the new Commission was about. But in his reports on the initial consultations with the government of Burundi, the Chair of the PBC confirms that the country's expectations Vis a Vis the PBC were primarily about financial support to kick start national peacebuilding priorities (S/2006/1050). I contend here that since the primary expectation of the government of Burundi was to acquire funds, it is important to understand that their consent to be put on the agenda was tied to how the PBC was going to facilitate that action and not necessarily to the entire mandate of the PBC. Moreover, there are no details, within the terms of engagement of the PBC in Burundi, on how the consent the PBC sought from the government at the beginning of the process was to be maintained, and particularly what would happen if the PBC was unable to deliver on its promise to help raise development funds from different international donors.

Understanding the nature of the 'consent' given by the government of Burundi, as well as the context in which it was given, is of utmost importance. The period spanning from 2005-2006 was a particularly intense time in Burundi's politics, both nationally and internationally. Jackson (2006) writes that as soon as the new CNDD-FDD majority government was sworn in, in December 2005, it started pressuring the UN to reshape its engagement in the country. The

government was pushing the UN to terminate its peacekeeping mission and re-orient itself towards development areas such as education and health. The government was eager to forge ahead with a development agenda, as it perceived a peacekeeping mission as counter to its attracting international investors for example. This pressure, Jackson says, was strongly resisted within the UN; the organization chose instead to replace its peacekeepers by an integrated political mission, a mere 16 months after the inauguration of Nkurunziza's government.

The move to replace AMIB by ONUB, according to many observers, cast the UN mission in Burundi as having made "a political miscalculation in its relations with the new government" (Jackson, 2006, p.4). But more importantly, not only did the new integrated UN presence in Burundi have little time to position itself in the aftermath of the elections, it was clear early on that "the new CNDD-FDD government arrived determined to deal decisively with a UN mission it perceived as its principal rival" (p.5). It is important to point out that the PBC's adoption of Burundi happened at a time when there was a great deal of distrust between the government and the UN local mission. Among other things, the government was accusing the local UN mission of having been too cozy with the previous regime. Jackson writes that the new Burundian government's overall view was that "the UN's approaches towards it were too little too late" (p.6), because, as explained in chapter 5, the UN's mission in Burundi had been long perceived as being on the side of the former (Tutsi) government side and knew little of the internal dynamics of the new Hutu elite (and former rebel leaders in particular).

The Chairman of the PBC convened two country-specific meetings on Burundi in October and December 2006 to identify the priorities that needed to be addressed. The PBC also urged Burundi to develop programmes for responding to those priorities. After the meeting, the

Chairman noted in his report to the UN Security Council that there was "an assurance from the Governments of the two countries (Burundi and Sierra Leone) that they are committed to maintaining the path to peace and an expectation regarding strengthened international support for their national peacebuilding priorities, including from the Peacebuilding Fund" (S/2006/1050 para 23). Given the particularly tense relationship with the UN, was 'an assurance' of commitment from the new government enough to move forward with such an ambitious agenda? It is fair to argue that a more satisfactory basis for moving forward would have been to stick to helping with the implementation of the Arusha agreements, the only basis under which the country had been able to come out of the civil war. The PBC should then have been more demanding towards the GoB, including suggesting possible venues of international political engagement and mediation in areas where the government was hesitant to collaborate, such as the reconciliation process and disarmament of ex combatants. This would have sent unmitigated signals that the international community in general, and the UN in particular, were serious about not letting Burundi fall back into conflict. At the same time however, and to show fairness, the PBC would also have been required to show how it was going to help ensure the necessary resources were available and ultimately which mechanisms – clear to all involved – were in place to hold PBC member states and key donors to their own commitments.

After decades of fighting, the newly elected government of Burundi led by president Nkurunziza gained power in a radical shake up of the country's political landscape. As early as six months after the ruling CNDD/FDD's arrival in power, political observers were already pointing to the possibility of violent disputes within Burundi's Hutu parties and calling for an international engagement that would focus on an active involvement of local civil society and the

international community's "strong pressure as warranted" to encourage the new government's implementation of the Arusha Peace Accords and reconciliation processes, both of which are part and parcel of the success of the country's peace agenda. Although the PBC recognized these issues, and the precarious political situation, it is unclear if it saw it fit to examine the question of just how much power it held and how much pressure it could potentially put on the government. Given the weak condition of Burundi after the war, the fragility of the institutions during the transitional period and what experts were saying about the infighting within Burundi's new Hutu elite, it is unclear how the PBC intended to navigate this highly volatile political environment or if this fundamental question was even discussed prior to engagement.

Far from being simply rhetorical, this question also points to a sovereignty paradox that is characteristic of the PBC's overall approach in Burundi. On the one hand, the PBC recognized that the government of Burundi - emerging from war – was weak and fragile, politically, socially and economically. Up until 2013, certain parts of the Burundian territory were still under the control of the FNL Palipehutu rebels and there were still a significant number of its citizens living in refugee camps in neighboring countries or in camps in the country. Indeed, putting Burundi onto the PBC's agenda is part of a long process through which the country was viewed as less-than-fully sovereign: even though the country was never officially placed under the trusteeship of the UN, as I have argued in chapter four, Burundi's transition to peace was facilitated by a gradual winding down of UN and AU peace operations which created a 'trusteeship-like' situation. In the years during and following the Arusha peace process, the UN mission in Burundi has gone through different transformations, at the heart of which was the clear belief that the interventions of the international community (and the regional actors such as the African Union) were key to helping

the country move from war to self-governance. The changing nature of the UN presence in Burundi over the years – at times providing security to the population, serving as the key electoral observers, ensuring the implementation of ceasefires etc. - shows a UN that was present in the day-to-day business of Burundi. Whether these operations were justifiable or effective, the point remains that the UN's presence in Burundi was part of a complex political situation where international actors continuously challenged its sovereignty.

Paradoxically, the PBC's decision to have Burundi on its agenda does serve to reinforce the country's international sovereignty. It is also important to remember here that Burundi's crises, as many other in Africa, were neglected crises, in the sense that except for the UN and regional attention, the country was not traditionally high on the attention list of major international donors. By its mandate, the PBC was to champion Burundi among international donors and serve as 'accompagnateur' of the Burundian government and facilitate the process transiting from the Arusha peace agreements to peace and development. There was a high level of urgency to help stabilize the country after the 2005 elections and reward Burundi for what was then viewed as a successful power-sharing agreement. Thus, the PBC was easily satisfied by the assurance that the government was committed to the same peace agenda.

On the other hand however, the PBC recognized Burundi as sovereign state, and respected the full authority of the new governing apparatus following the 2005 elections as the main pillar of the peace agenda in the country. The reports of the PBC's meetings on Burundi in 2006 show that peacebuilding priorities were to be identified with full participation and input from civil society groups in Burundi and not just the government but it is unclear if the PBC did take into account the government's and the civil society's biased ethnic representation as well as the lack

of sufficient resources to conduct country wide consultations to identify potential challenges to peace in the country. For example, Stronach (2012) writes that Burundi's civil society groups were overwhelmingly represented in the capital, Bujumbura, and were composed mainly of members of the Tutsi elite and therefore disconnected from the realities of the ordinary rural population.

This inherently complex approach to the sovereignty of post-conflict countries puts the PBC in a particularly ambiguous and incoherent position among other international peacebuilding agencies. As an intergovernmental advisory body with no enforcement mechanisms, it is ill equipped to bargain with post-conflict states, especially those that are not particularly receptive to the UN's overarching authority. It is an underfunded, under-resourced entity with no power to hold any of the stakeholders involved to account. It acts exactly the way former Norwegian State Secretary of Foreign Affairs, Jan Egeland (1999) warned peacebuilders against, when he wrote that international peacebuilders should always remember that there are influential political, military and economic incentives to continue conflict. "A third party should not naively believe the stated intentions of the leaders involved"[6] (p.544).

Nevertheless, the sovereignty paradox towards Burundi on the part of the PBC is far from being a novelty. As Jenkins (2013) explains, states emerging from conflict are able to enter into international agreements even when they exhibit signs of incomplete sovereignty. This incomplete sovereignty is explained by their inability to control their people or borders or even maintain adequate institutional presence over the entire national territory. They can and often benefit however from what Jackson (1990) and other scholars of sovereignty call the "international

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[6] More on this can be found in Jan Egeland, "The Oslo Accord: Multiparty Facilitation through the Norwegian Channel," in CA Crocker, FO Hampson and PAall, eds, Herding cats: Multiparty Mediation in a Complex World (Washington, DC, United States Institute for Peace, 1999) p.544.

sovereignty" of weak or quasi-states. The short explanation of such a situation is that, as Englebert (2009) puts it, a state is sovereign even when it lacks domestic qualities of a sovereign state. He goes even further to say that "it is international sovereignty that confers institutions, agencies, and officers of the African state the main source of their command" (Englebert, 2009, p.62). The UN Peacebuilding commission here joins other international bodies in recognizing the Burundian state as a sovereign, autonomous state even when the state is disconnected from the usual "social contracting, historical legitimacy, social homogeneity, endogenous class domination, or other domestic foundations" that characterize a state (Englebert (2009, p.84).

2) Navigating ambiguous sovereignty: How does the PBC deal with the governments of the countries on its agenda?

The PBC recognizes the "international sovereignty" of its countries of focus both in principle and in practice. First, as a UN body mandated by the UN Security Council, the PBC is an agent of all UN member states. As Lake (2006) explains, when it comes to deciding on a common policy, in this case peacebuilding policy, governments of UN member states will "pool" their sovereignty together enabling specialized IOs such as the PBC to set out and implement that policy.

What Lake's theory of delegating and pooling sovereignty allows us to see is the strategic complexity of the relationship between the PBC and countries on its agenda. Because Burundi is a member state of the UN and as such has a say in matters related to its sovereignty, it plays two roles in this complex structure: together with other UN members states, it participated in proposing a solution concerning how to rebuild war-torn countries and by the nature of the UN system, Burundi pooled its own sovereignty along with other states before delegating to an IO (the PBC)

to determine and implement adequate post-conflict peacebuilding policies. At the same time however, as an individual state concerned by those policies, it is the further actions that Burundi will undertake and how much of its sovereignty it is willing to negotiate that will determine the nature of the implementation of peacebuilding policies. To understand how this tension is illustrated in the case of the Burundi – PBC relationship, I offer two key points: the PBC was established as a UN special body for international peacebuilding and tasked to advise Burundi on its path to peace and keep it on the donors' agenda. With its 31 states membership, the PBC's purpose among other things is to serve as venue for crafting and drafting individualized peacebuilding strategies in collaboration with countries emerging from wars. These strategies and other agreements are binding once the concerned countries, in this case Burundi, ratify them.

But since the PBC is also tasked with following up on assisting the country through the peace process, the second point of tension is related to how then the organization will position itself if there is domestic contestation on some of the key projects of the peace agenda.

Lake's theories show that in this particularly complicated decision-making structure, the fact that member states would have delegated their sovereignty to IOs such as the PBC isn't enough for policies to be implemented. IOs still have to negotiate with the sovereignty of individual states in which their policies are to be implemented. As Lake explains, individual states – even post-conflict 'ramshackle' states - will make decisions based on "whether or not their interest is being served by delegation to an IO" (p.8). Burundi is a case in point.

First, there is the issue of the overall domestic impact of the changes supported and promoted by the PBC. Jenkins (2010) writes that members of the PBC strongly speak out on the need to prioritise 'national ownership' in the advice it provides to Burundi and other countries on

its agenda. They argue that the peacebuilding strategies for these countries must be 'home-grown' and as a result, the PBC has tended to reiterate the importance of national ownership as well as the important place that the Paris Declaration[7] principles hold. That is because, Jenkins argues, the general belief among international donors is that without considerable external pressure, politically difficult policy measures will not be implemented, or will be implemented in ways that advance the interests of influential elites *versus* those of the country as a whole.

It is important to remember here that the PBC's role in countries on its agenda isn't about picking winners or even playing the role of a political referee. The PBC, through the chair of the country configuration, plays a role that is primarily diplomatic. It works at defining and implementing the overall peacebuilding strategy and key priorities in Burundi. The chair is expected to raise issues of concern with the government and the civil society. In addition, the PBC's chair plays a fundraising role and is expected to help maintain donors' attention on Burundi.

Nonetheless, the PBC promotes change and as Jenkins points out, the PBC is confronted with the paradox of promoting change through governments whose leaders are often resistant to it. On the on hand, donors see " the merits of government 'buy in' to reform agendas they seek to promote, and recognise the long-term nature of the fundamental transformations they are attempting to bring about" (Jenkins, 2008, p. 10). On the other hand, donors realize that governments of post-conflict countries aren't always convinced of the benefits of restructuring

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7 The Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness adopted five principles to make aid more effective: ownership, alignment, and harmonization, managing for result and mutual accountability. The OECD took it upon itself to spearhead the enforcement of these principles, with backing from World Bank, and other donors with the intent to put the onus on recipient countries.
 More on the principles of the Paris Declaration, the logic of "national ownership" and African countries' reactions to it, see Norman Girvan (2007), Anders (2005), OECD (2008) and Whitfield and Fraser (2009).

their institutions. I agree with Jenkins that aid-dependent countries' leaders are often reluctant to undertake change, not because they lack a clear understanding of what is expected of them but because they have different motivations than donors. More so in post-conflict countries than in traditional aid-receiving countries, Jenkins says that in cases of rampant corruption or clear human rights violations, international donors have tended to forego the principle of national ownership and used tough measures including aid conditionality to force local governments to address certain issues.

Interestingly enough however, it is not only donors that view 'national ownership' as a panacea. Fraser (2008) writes that aid-recipient countries, some of them in post-conflict situations, have used this language favoured by international donor agencies either to negotiate more aid or to affirm their sovereignty and perpetuate violence or other anti-democratic practices. Stronach (2012) says that in Burundi, the ruling CNDD/FDD party has invoking 'sovereignty' or 'local ownership' to limit the involvement of the international community and thus perpetuate structural violence and political intimidation. Again, this illustrates how the PBC, as an intergovernmental body tasked with coordinating peacebuilding activities among different stakeholders, stands between different parties that often have discordant interests, as well as different understandings of each other's motivations.

To understand how the PBC dealt with the government of Burundi, it is important to explain briefly the mechanisms that are in place for this purpose. As explained in Chapter 4, the members of the PBC's Burundi configuration, the representatives of the government, the UN, and representatives of the civil society all participated in contributing their perspectives to the PBC's membership and to informing the overall strategy of the PBC in the country. But the Peacebuilding

Priority Plan in Burundi was designed primarily with input from UN staff in the country, key international partners, civil society groups and the government. Campbell et al. (2014), in their astute analysis of the PBC in Burundi, explain that the country configuration chair had been particularly crucial specifically because s/he is a representative of a member state and could speak with governments, donors, and other actors with authority.

More importantly, given the permanently tense relationship between local UN staff and the government of Burundi, which regularly declared top UN representatives in the country *Persona Non Grata*, the report's authors say that the chair of the PBC's Burundi configuration had more political weight and support as both the UN and their individual government back them. In this sense, Campbell's report shows that unlike the UN staff in Burundi, the Chair can afford to take more political risks and apply direct pressure on the host government.

Moreover, the Chair of the PBC Burundi configuration is even more important because of the relatively low political importance that Burundi holds for many of the country members of the PBC at large. According to the evaluation report, an international diplomat who first and foremost represents his/her individual member state holds this position. As such, Campbell et al. argue, the position relies heavily on the Chair's diplomatic and fundraising skills, as well as the support provided by both the PBSO and their respective government. Here, the authors point out an important fact: configuration chairs have been key at mobilizing funding from their own governments, such as Sweden and Japan, which were not traditional aid donors for Burundi. In summary, I agree with them when they argue that in Burundi, "the original idea of the PBC as being an intergovernmental body that can prevent post-conflict countries from falling back into

war has been whittled down to one important and potentially powerful position" (Campbell et al., 2014, p.40).

Peacebuilding literature, through the works of Paris (2004), Doyle and Sambanis (2006), Krasner (2004) and others, shows that post-conflict interventions are undoubtedly destabilizing to the states emerging from wars and to their autonomy to self-govern. What Campbell et al. (2014) and Jackson (2006) show concerning the peacebuilding process in Burundi is two-fold: 1) as discussed above, that domestic political dynamics play a heavy role in determining the outcomes of peacebuilding, thus demonstrating the political nature of peacebuilding itself; and 2) more importantly, as the analysis below shows, that peacebuilding is done through a clear and constant pattern of negotiation with the sovereignty of the host country.

3) **What are the implications of sovereignty negotiation on post-conflict peacebuilding as championed by the PBC?**

Immediately after the elections of 2005, there were already signs that CNDD/FDD was going to undertake strategies that would assert its power over Burundi's national resources and particularly control of the national defence forces. The issue of the national defence forces had been a key source of contention during the Arusha Peace negotiations. As early as 2006, International Crisis Group was reporting that the government was arming *Imbonerakure,* a quasi-military group of the party's youth movement. Right about the time that Burundi was put on the agenda of the PBC, despite the fact that international peacebuilders acknowledged the disturbing nature of the government's actions, the focus remained on preparing for the next elections (in 2010), even though civil society and prominent human rights groups were calling for the international community to be more "tough" on the government.

A meaningful peacebuilding strategy would have required the severing of CNDD/FDD stranglehold on power as soon as possible. But as Jackson (2006) showed, this was not the case since the UN, then in the middle of restructuring its mission in Burundi, was late to learn about the internal dynamics of the party and was misguided in its initial efforts to build trust with the incoming government. The result, as observers of the Burundi political scene show, was a staggering disconnect between the domestic political realities in Burundi - particularly on where the balance of power lies within the local political elite – and the peacebuilding strategies designed for the country as they were encapsulated by the PBC.

On lessons learned by the UN in Burundi, Stephen Jackson (2006) writes that despite the UN's long engagement in the country, and considerable contact with the political class, ONUB had great difficulty gathering intelligence and transforming this intelligence into strategic analysis that would serve to inform and advise higher management. For example, the author says that ONUB was late to understand CNDD's likely victory in 2005 and how this victory was changing the political dynamics within the Great Lakes region. As a result, Jackson says that the UN found it hard to work with some key members of the new government, including the top management of CNDD/FDD.

Furthermore, in the 2010 independent evaluation of the Peacebuilding Fund Projects in Burundi, Susanna Campbell identified an interesting trend: despite signing up to implement the peace strategy as a whole, the government was making a clear distinction between projects that it would fully endorse and support and those that it wasn't very committed to. A closer look at these projects show that the PBC had to contend with a government that was willing to let certain target institutions be available for implementation of particular peacebuilding projects, and withhold

certain others. For example, Campbell (2010) found that projects targeting anti-corruption practices, the creation of a National Human Rights Commission or a National Reconciliation commission targeted national institutions that were not yet ready for the kind of reform proposed by the UN peacebuilding architecture. As a result, the local government, despite agreeing in principle to these projects being part of the national strategy for peacebuilding, did not provide the necessary support to advance change. "It would have undoubtedly been helpful if UN and GoB leadership had advocated for greater institutional buy in, which did not take place in these projects" (p.10). Campbell found that projects most likely to be effective were those that focused on capacity building. She concluded that in Burundi, the PBC, but in particular the Joint steering committee (JSC) of the PBF, had to readjust its strategies and focus on building a solid relationship with the government, including holding JSC meetings in Burundi as a way to increase their efficiency and strategic focus. She also suggested that PBSO consider changing some of the principles of fund allocation to Burundi, including not promising an exact funding amount before there are enough details of the intervention as to avoid 'peace disappointments'.

Five years after this evaluation, the same author conducted another independent evaluation of peacebuilding projects funded through the PBF. This time, Campbell et al. (2014) focused on projects implemented in Burundi between 2007 and 2013. As explained in a previous section of this chapter, Campbell et al. also confirmed that immediately before and during the time Burundi was receiving funding from the PBF, its government put considerable pressure on the UN and influenced the UN Mission and the content of the PBF project portfolio. "While the PBF holds national ownership as a core principle, the situation in Burundi was somewhat unique in terms of the pressure that the Burundian Government placed on the UN in Burundi and the staff of the UN

Mission's uncertainty as to how long they would remain in Burundi " (p.12). The numerous negotiations conducted by the government of Burundi between 2013-2015, asking the UN to close its mission and leave only the UNCT (which does not have a UN Security Council mandate) have affected the work and standing of the PBC's activities in the country. The various transformations of the UN Mission in Burundi have formed the bulk of the discussion topics within the PBC's Burundi configuration since the beginning. Most of these discussions spoke about how the closure of the UN Mission would also mean the end of the PBC's engagement with Burundi.

Moreover, the evaluation report found that democracy and good governance reform projects were still particularly challenging to implement in Burundi. The anti-corruption project failed to enlist the government's support, which continued to delay the reform of the broader legal and judicial system of the country. It also pointed out that despite the fact that national and local courts were overloaded with land disputes and despite an increasing number of human rights violations against members of the opposition, the UN had not been successful in addressing these issues even though in some cases it had withheld funding for some PBF funded projects in a move to pressure the government. And even after PBF had supported the creation of the National Independent Commission for Human Rights (CNIDH) – the PBC worked hard to ensure CNIDH conformed to international standards – Campbell and her research team concluded that there was no overarching strategy for funding support to the areas of justice and human rights in Burundi.

On the same issue of land disputes, Campbell et al. (2014) found that the increasingly polarized political environment was affecting the National Land Commission (CNTB), which had been created with support and financial resources from the United Nations. Observers show that after the 2010 elections, CNTB was increasingly being perceived as an instrument of the

government (Africa Report # 214, International Crisis Group, 2014), and that instead of solving land disputes in a conciliatory manner, was working at restoring land and property to former Hutu refugees now returning home, often dispossessing current occupants – most of whom are Tutsis.

Back in New York, the meetings of the PBC country configurations were reflecting the same problems that researchers such as Campbell et al. (2014) had found in the field: a lack of coherence in the overall peacebuilding strategy and a government that was increasingly circumscribing the national political arena in favour of certain (Hutu) elites.

Shortly before the elections of 2010, at a working lunch meeting of the PBC configuration on Burundi, the representative of Germany announced that his country was committing to an increase of 5 million Euros to the PBF and then inquired what the PBC's role was going to be in the post 2010 elections period. The Burundian ambassador's response was that details on the PBC's role would be discussed "in the context of the future configuration of the UN in Burundi." The issues of the UN engagement in Burundi continued to dominate in subsequent briefings of the PBC Burundi configuration, with the Burundian representative insisting that the UN should focus on establishing a "normal development partnership" instead of a continuing transition with Burundi. Surprisingly enough however, the representative of the government maintained that his country was willing to continue working with the PBC (UN PBC, November 2010). But it is unclear if this was Burundi's true intention.

But perhaps one of the most striking observations on the PBC in Burundi is how irrelevant it seemed to be to the national government. Not only was the PBC's overall place questioned and challenged in the context of the UN presence in Burundi, the Commission also had to position itself with regard to its role in some peacebuilding processes. For example, in his visit to Burundi

in April 2012, the Chair of the PBC configuration was in Bujumbura to discuss the role of the PBC in the process of the implementation of the Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (PRSP-2), especially since the government had already briefed international financial institutions such as the World Bank on that subject (UN PBC, April 2012).

Furthermore, PBC's informal and formal meetings of the Burundi configuration also showed a pattern of increased resistance to respecting the spirit of the peace agenda on the part of the GoB. In the months leading up to the 2015 elections in particular, the central government was increasingly resistant to changes that were proposed in the overall peacebuilding strategies contained in the SFPB. For example, in 2010, PBC meetings (UN PBC, September 2010) showed that there were tensions and disagreements between international partners and the government with regards to its governance and anti-corruption strategy. The partners were advocating for a more adequate forum for political dialogue, one that would include local civil society groups. The PBC recommended that the government establish a National Strategy for Good Governance and Fight against Corruption. A 2015 external evaluation of this strategy, funded by the Belgian Technical Cooperation agency, found that despite the creation of the strategy, the government had not committed to the implementation of even the minimal changes required including speeding up the settlement of cases of corruption that were already before the courts. More recently, the GoB, through ONELOP (*Observatoire national des élections et des organisations pour le progrès*) a national initiative for electoral observation, has invoked its sovereignty numerous times while asking "western powers" to respect the "opinions" of the Burundian state (Harelimana, 2015).

The formal meetings of the PBC do not show that GoB was ever openly confrontational. However, these meetings show an interesting dichotomy: on the one hand, the optimism of the

Chair of the configuration about the volatile environment in Burundi – on every occasion participants make mention that Burundi is not at "war", while on the other hand, the meetings were becoming more and more repetitive in their conclusions: there are "deep concerns" about the deterioration of the political situation and human rights violations in Burundi, and the "gap" created by the closing of BNUB's office and what it means for the future of the PBC in the country.

Furthermore, meetings leading to the 2015 elections show a PBC that was still trying to redefine its role in Burundi and lacked an exit strategy should there be one. In an informal meeting held in July 2015, the Chair of the Burundi configuration acknowledged that the aggravation of the crisis in Burundi was threatening the peace and stability in the country. He held a meeting after a return from Bujumbura where he had intended to meet with President Nkurunziza, but the meeting was never held. He said that the PBC should continue to provide "political accompaniment" to Burundi (UN PBC, July 2015).

Over time, as Campbell et al. (2014) shows, the frequency of the Burundi configuration meetings declined. Coincidentally, the meetings declined as the peace in the country was being increasingly threatened. At the latest meeting prior to the completion of this thesis, in February 2016, the Chair of the Burundi configuration said that the prevailing political crisis was greatly affecting the socio-economic situation in the country. He went on to state that, from now onward, the PBC would be focusing on "raising awareness on the economic impact of the crisis and the human rights situation in the country" (UN PBC, February 2016, para. 2). Meanwhile, the representative of the government of Burundi, also present at the configuration meeting, refuted accusations that his government was behind the increased acts of violence and the African Union was considering deploying a peacekeeping mission in Burundi.

In the end, and most centrally to the argument of this research, the PBC was unable to consistently support the high expectations generated by its agenda in Burundi because of a lack of resources and great difficulties building an identity that could inspire trust from the government of Burundi. Faced with a government with overall unwillingness to implement the hardest policy changes (a national reconciliation process, land and judicial reforms, etc.), the PBC could only go so far. Beyond the ability to call the government out on its actions, the PBC lacks the enforcement power that would have been necessary in the bargaining space in which it operates; the Commission is rather in a permanent condition of weakness.

III.   Conclusion.

The primary goal of this research was to question the widely reputed assumption that peacebuilding in Burundi was a success and show that instead, because of the government's increasing defensiveness concerning its sovereignty, peacebuilding in Burundi has become less and less successful. This lack of success, I argued, can be accounted for, at least partly, because of the constant negotiation of sovereignty and the relationship between the PBC and the legitimate government of the country on its agenda. This negotiation gives way to constantly changing priorities and political terms of engagement as demonstrated by the particular issue of the UN presence in Burundi. It also results in a lack of stability in the understandings between these two bodies on what peacebuilding priorities should be. In the end, what this research has sought to show is that fundamental theoretical problems with the nature of peacebuilding lead to a certain critical, real world limitation to peacebuilding operations in practice. The result in the specific case of Burundi is that the future of the PBC operation is rendered, at best, increasingly fragile.

This research is underwritten by the conviction that African post conflict countries are not mere passive actors but increasingly vocal and active in seeking to redefine the terms of peacebuilding interventions and using peacebuilding projects to further their own political agenda. They use national sovereignty and ownership to assert themselves and thus make peacebuilding a contentious field in which sovereignty is an important determinant of outcomes. Moving forward, it is my hope that the analysis provided in this thesis serves as a starting point for further research into exploring the conditions under which peacebuilding occurs, and the results that flow from it. Practitioners and theorists of peacebuilding could benefit from solid theories that help interpret the nature of the relationship between international organizations tasked with peacebuilding and host states in which of peacebuilding operations occur.

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